

AGENDA ITEM No. 7.

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: BELLSHILL & DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE	Subject: Small Communities Programme
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT	
Date: 9th September 2004	Ref: MA.Dev.3(4)/RF

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the operation of the Small Communities Programme.

2. Background

- 2.1 North Lanarkshire Council has funds available from the Capital Budget for the specific purpose of implementing environmental improvements works in small communities throughout North Lanarkshire.
- 2.2 In previous years the allocation of monies to the Small Communities Initiative has been considerably less than the proposed budget for the next three financial years. The Planning Department has been the main instigator of projects and identified sites that presented an opportunity to carry out small scale works in areas that did not benefit from existing Town Centre improvement schemes.

3. Small Communities Budget

- 3.1 As a result of the proposed increase in the financial allocation to this budget, a formal arrangement will allow the Area Committee to support community enhancement projects and give opportunities to target resources towards meeting local priorities.
- 3.2 In addition the Area Committee, community groups and individual members of the public will be given the opportunity to put forward ideas for small scale capital improvements for consideration.

4. Organisation

- 4.1 While funds will be allocated pro rata to the Area Committees, the Small Communities Budget will be held within the Planning & Environment account. By ensuring that successful bidders are not encumbered with financial and administrative obligations, best value can be gained from the available funding and, auditing and financial control can be maintained to the Council's standards.
- 4.2 During project implementation progress reports will be presented to the Area Committee thus making the process visible and accountable.
- 4.3 The bids for project funding will be considered by officers of the Planning & Environment Department, in relation to deliverability and criteria detailed later in this report. The Area Committee would then be presented with projects that are considered feasible along with estimated costs, allowing the Committee to effectively sanction their implementation.

5. Publicity

- 5.1 It is envisaged the Small Communities Budget will be advertised on North Lanarkshire Council website and be subject to Press Releases and media coverage. Submissions could then be made on-line or in writing.

- 5.2 The promotional material from the Council would ask the public to contact the Department via the on-line form or phone to discuss ideas or e-mail with information such as:
- Idea - Brief description of the idea
 - Location - Where will it be carried out?
 - Benefits - Who will benefit from the idea?
 - Ownership - If it is on privately owned property give the name and address of the owner
 - Background - Has the idea been put forward to the Council before?
 - Partnership working - Has funding been sought/ secured from others? Would anyone else be prepared to make a contribution towards the cost of this work?

6. Proposal

- 6.1 The Small Communities Fund has been set up to promote and make funds available for environmental improvement schemes, with the objective of seeking ideas from the public that they consider would make their area a better place to live.
- 6.2 The ideas and suggestions made by the Area Committee, community groups or members of the public has to conform with the following criteria:
Projects should
- (i) have a direct, lasting and noticeable improvement to the appearance or ease of use of an area or street
 - (ii) be publicly visible and accessible
 - (iii) improve community safety
 - (iv) benefit a large number of people
 - (v) have local support
 - (vi) supplement the operational programme of council departments
 - (vii) be small and easy to implement
- 6.3 It should be noted that proposals be targeted towards smaller projects, though it may be possible to implement some larger projects, such as the enhancement of local shop forecourts. Any schemes such as this would need to undertaken in partnership with the property owners as well as with additional funding.

7. Potential Sites for Improvements

- 7.1 Although it is foreseen that the Area Committee and members of the public would come forward with ideas, it is also recognised that projects could be suggested by the Planning & Environment Department to stimulate thoughts and to ensure that budgets are spent.
- 7.2 Sites for improvement have been listed below. The list of sites identified is not exhaustive, and instead is indicative of the type of projects that the budget could be spent on. An approximate cost for each project has been given below. It should be noted that the costs are estimated and that further work would be required to ascertain a detailed cost and design.
- 7.3 The following sites have been identified as potential sites for improvements in the Bellshill area. The sites are within Council ownership (source: PISA).

Site Ref	Site Location	Comments
B.1	Holytown – Alexandria Quadrant	This is a prominent site located on Main Street. Improvements to the site would provide a community space, linking to the adjacent footpath network and create activity. The site is within Council ownership. (£75,000)
B.2	Orbiston – Local Shopping Area and Open Spaces	There are large grassed areas within Orbiston, which could be enhanced through environmental improvements. There is the option to improve open space areas and the surrounding area of the local shops at Lawmuir Road, where improvements to hard and soft landscaping could be implemented.

B.3	Fencing – Edinburgh Road / Boness Road	Improving the fencing would enhance the environment on this main thorough route. (£5,000)
B.4	Viewpark – Open Space to the rear of Laburnum Road	The large area of open space to the rear of Laburnum Road adjacent to Righead Industrial Estate has been identified as a problem area. The Small Communities budget may provide financial assistance to remedy the issues. (£30,000-50,000).
B.5	Hattonrigg - Underpass at Emma Jay Road	Potential exists to upgrade the existing underpass that is an important link to the town centre. Improvements may include new lighting and tiling to the underpass, with possible enhancements adjacent areas.
B.6	Mansfield Road – Local Shopping Area and Open Spaces	There is potential to enhance the intervening open spaces together with the local shops at the Mansfield Road area.

8. Recommendations

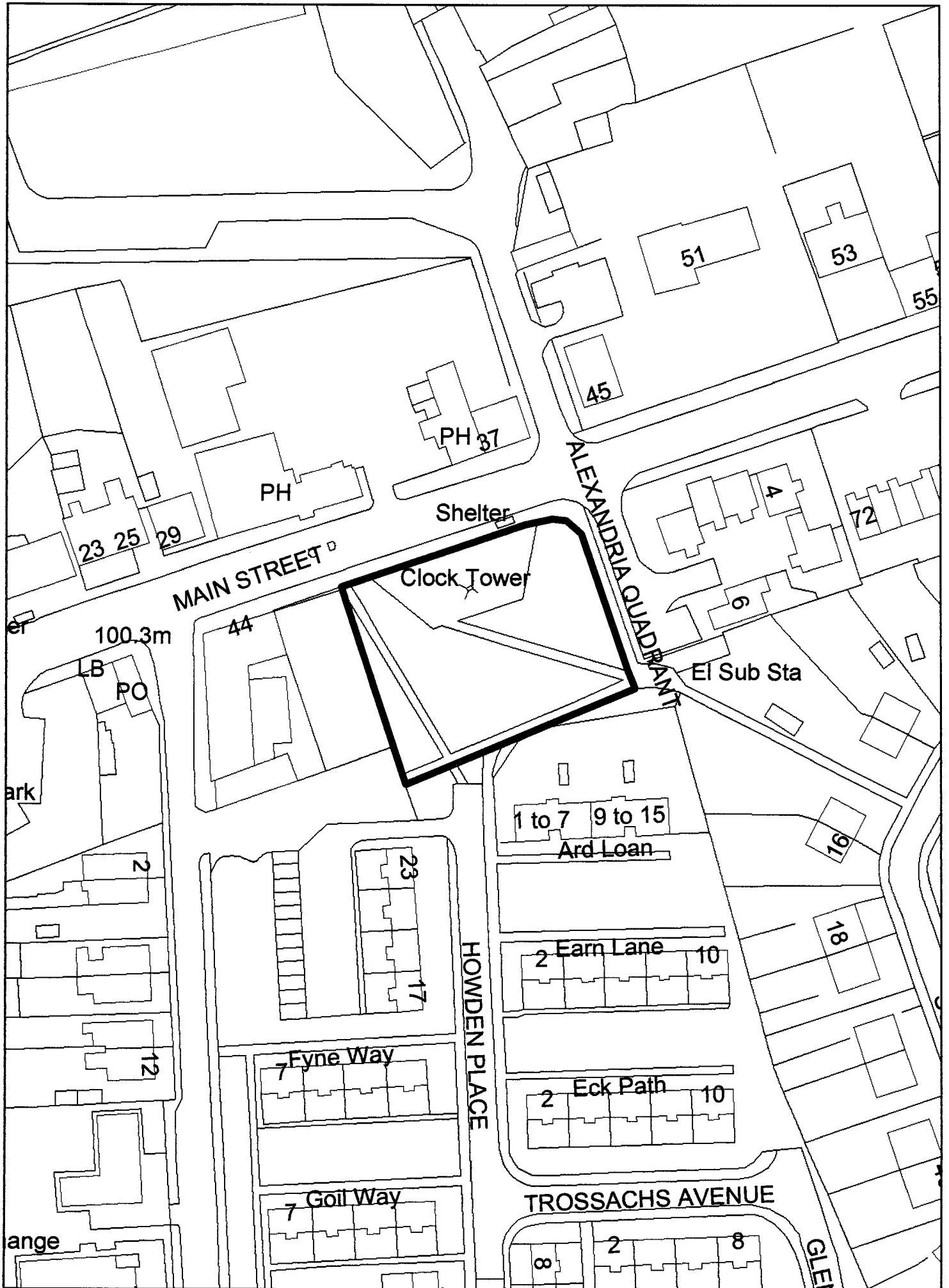
- 8.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes:-
(1) The operation of the Small Communities Programme.



David M. Porph
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

(25 August 2004)

Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information about this report, please contact Ruth Findlay on 01236 616467.



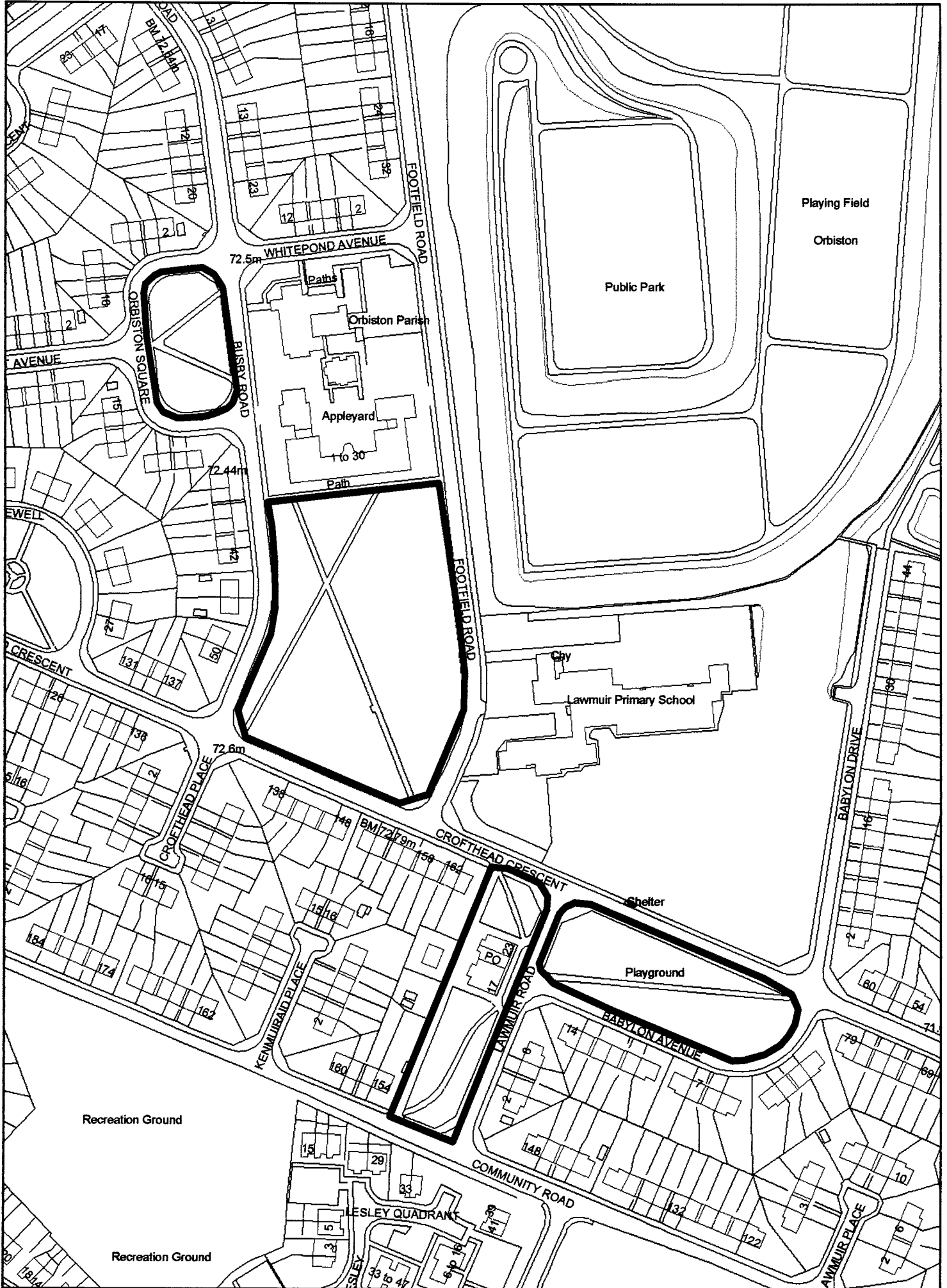
B.1 Holytown - Alexandria Quadrant

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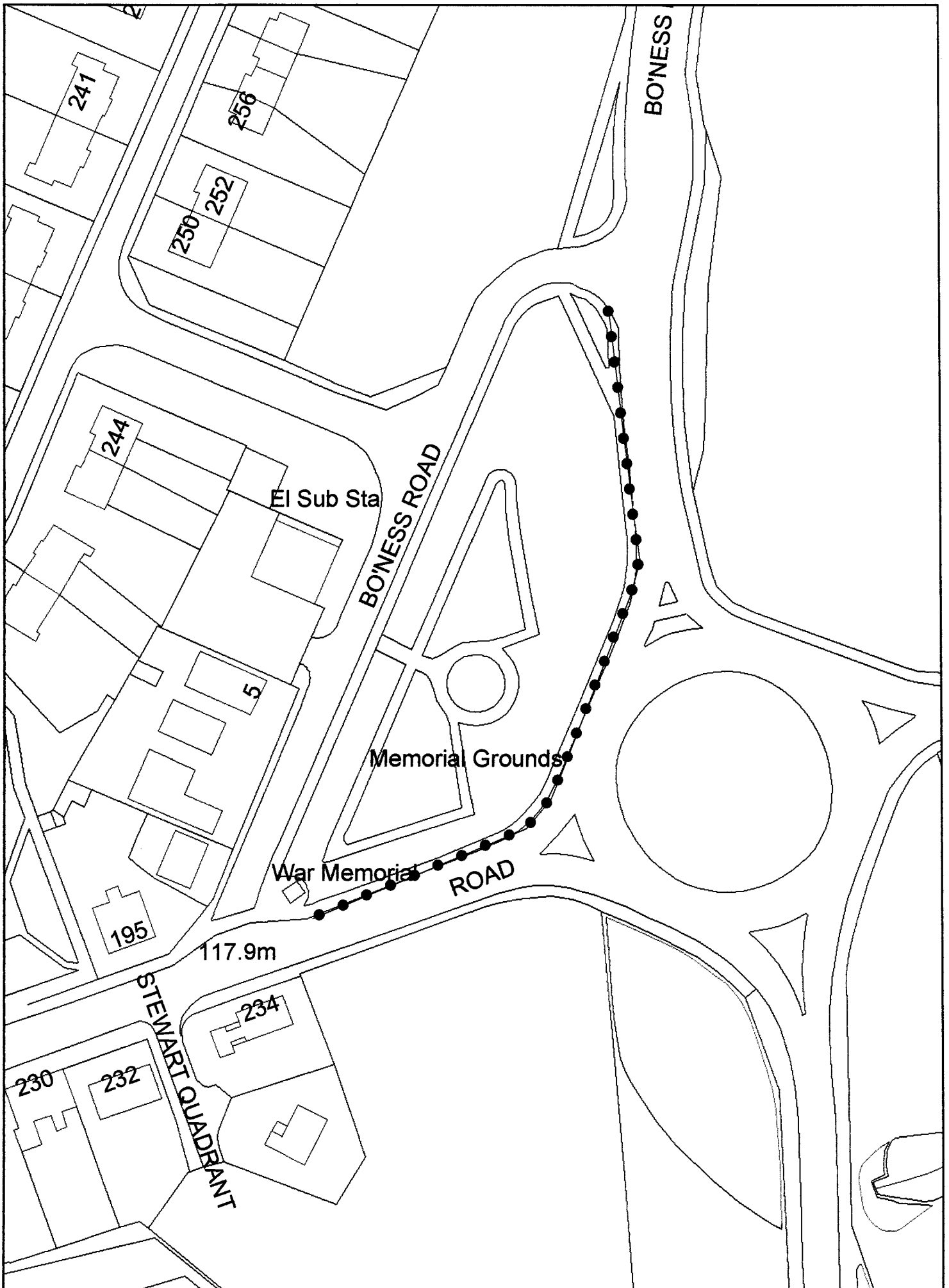
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**B.2 Obriston - Local Shopping Area/
 Open Spaces**

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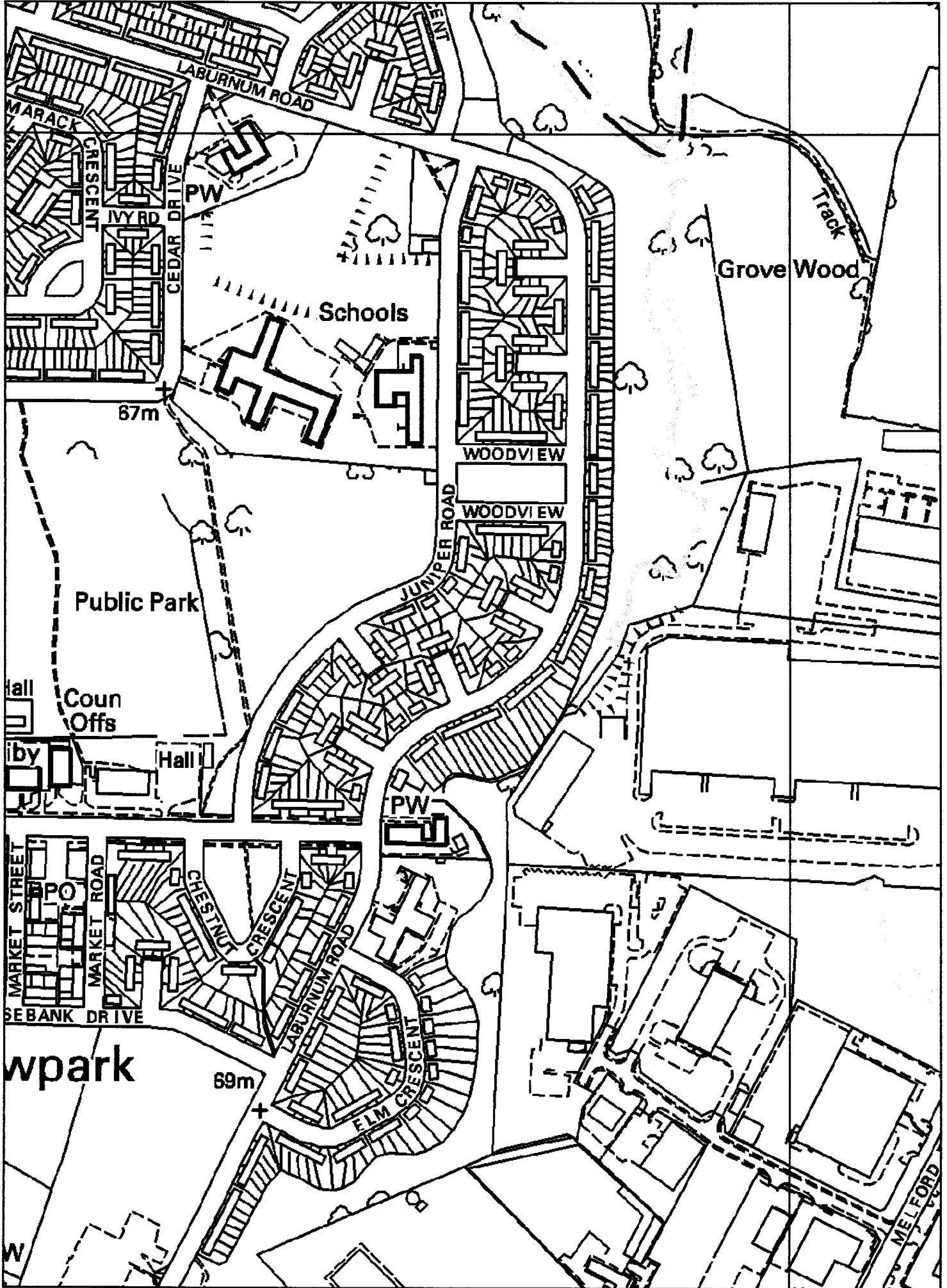
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**B.3 Fencing -
Edinburgh Road/Boness Road**

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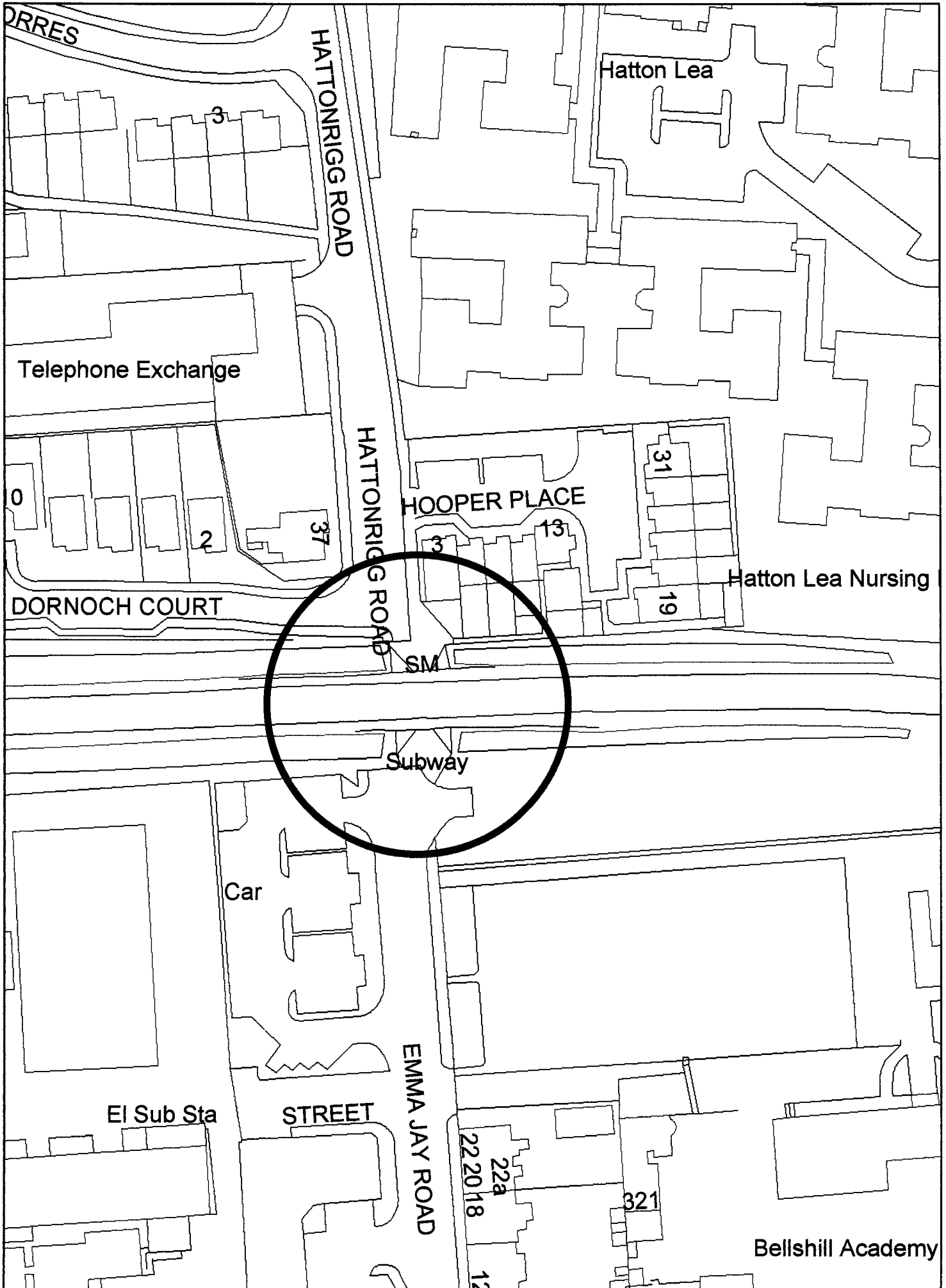
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**B.4 Viewpark - Open Space
 to rear of Laburnum Road**

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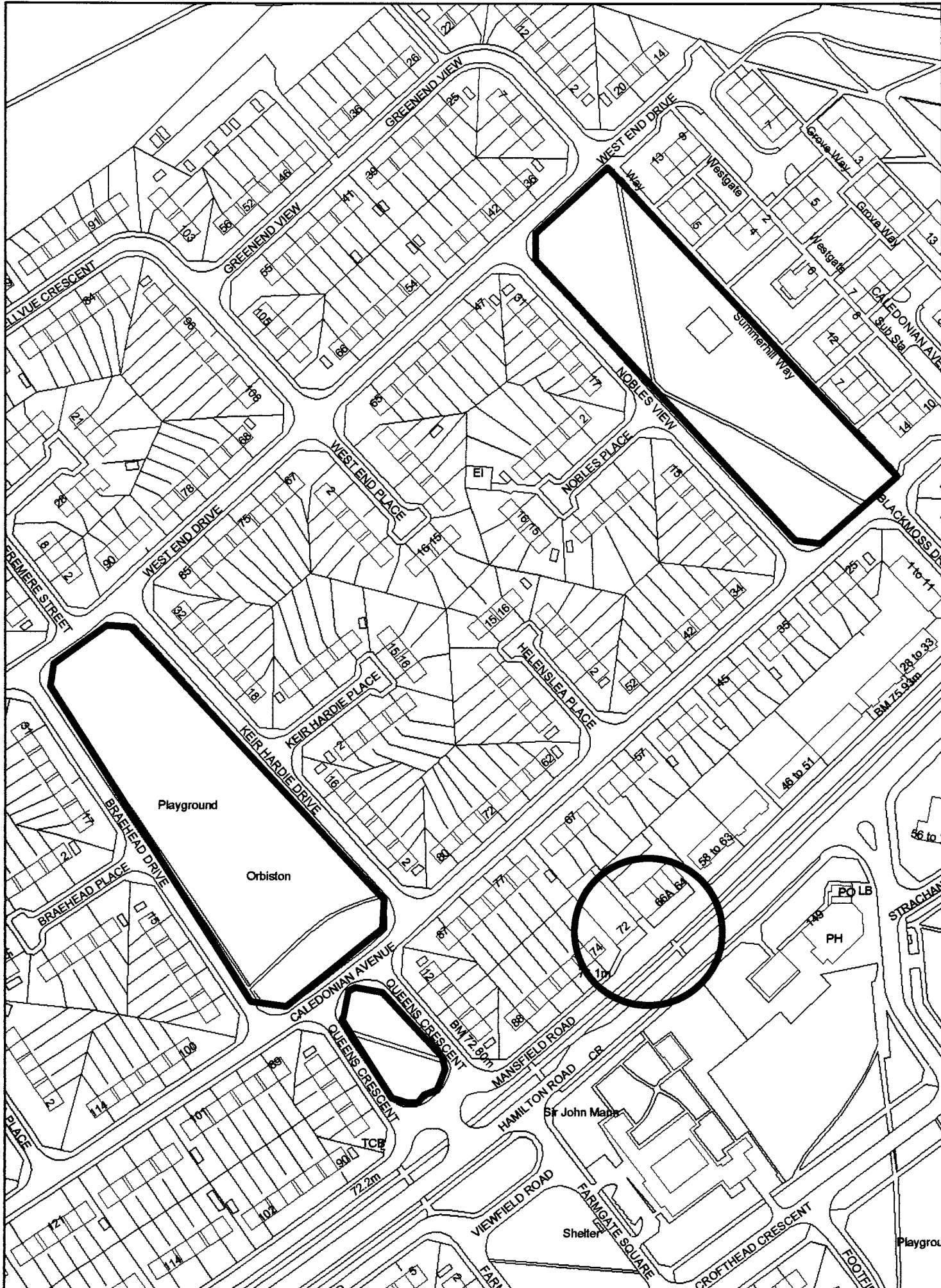
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B.5 Hattonrigg - Underpass at Emma Jay Road

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B.6 Mansfield Road - Local Shops/Open Spaces

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