

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS: WARD 3 – DENNY AND BANKNOCK
Meeting: FALKIRK COUNCIL
Date: 16 DECEMBER 2015
Author: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council is required by Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983, as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006, to divide its area into polling districts for the purpose of Parliamentary elections for so much of any constituency as is situated in its area and to keep these polling districts under review. The last full review of polling districts and polling places was carried out in 2013, with a report to Council on 11 December 2013. Council adopted the revised Polling Scheme for a five year period, subject to ad hoc changes being reported to Council.
- 1.2 Section 18C of the 1983 Act authorises local authorities to carry out at any time a review of a particular polling district or polling place. The purpose of this report is (a) to outline the implications for the current polling scheme of a planning application granted earlier this year and (b) to seek Members' approval of proposed changes to two polling districts in Ward 3 – Denny and Banknock as a consequence of the planning permission granted.

2 THE CURRENT WARD 3 POLLING SCHEME

- 2.1 Ward 3 – Denny and Banknock comprises seven polling districts and has an electorate of approximately 14,400. The current polling scheme, most recently updated for use at a local government by-election in August 2015, is attached at Appendix 1. The polling scheme was introduced in advance of the European Parliamentary Elections and Scottish Independence Referendum in 2014 and was the result of a comprehensive review, as mentioned above. It was subsequently used for the UK Parliamentary General Election in May 2015 and the local government by-election held in August 2015 following the resignation of a local Member.
- 2.2 The current polling scheme is satisfactory in terms of elector numbers and polling places. There are currently seven polling places and 15 polling stations in this Ward, with the smallest polling station, at Allandale Bowling Club, having an electorate of 266 at August 2015 and the largest, at Banknock Community Hall, having an electorate of 1,392. While these figures are current at August 2015, it should be noted that electorate statistics fluctuate slightly from one electoral event to the next.
- 2.3 The polling places vary in terms of numbers of polling stations and electors, depending on the type of election and the optimum electorate allocation, which is determined on the basis of anticipated turnout. The scheme as used in August 2015 comprised the following:

- Polling places with one station – 2:
 - Fankerton Village Hall (Polling District FW310) – electorate of 553
 - Allandale Bowling Club (Polling District FW330) – electorate of 266
- Polling places with two stations – 3:
 - Dunipace Church Hall (Polling District FW300) – electorate of 2,026
 - Denny Westpark Church Hall (Polling District FW305) – electorate of 2,346
 - Banknock Community Centre (Polling District FW325) – electorate of 2,515
- Polling places with three stations – 1:
 - Archibald Russell Centre (Polling District FW321) – electorate of 2,725
- Polling places with four stations – 1
 - Nethermain Primary School (Polling District FW316) – electorate of 3,983

3 REASON FOR CHANGE

- 3.1 Planning permission was granted in May 2015 to Bett Homes and Callendar Estates for the development of 307 new homes at Mydub Farm, Glasgow Road, Denny. Through time, this is likely to increase the local population by approximately 450-600 additional electors. As a consequence, the existing polling scheme for the local area has been reviewed to allow consideration of the implications of the increase in population in terms of electorate statistics and polling places.
- 3.2 Taking account of relevant local information, including schools catchment areas, communities, road layouts and premises available, officers presented two options for consideration by the four local Members, as noted within section 4 below.

4 OPTIONS

- 4.1 Option 1 – allocate the new housing to polling district FW316 and use the new distributor road as the southern boundary. The polling place for this polling district is Nethermain Primary School, where the electorate statistics would increase to approximately 4,600 and would necessitate a 5th polling station within an already busy polling place, depending on the type of election and the anticipated turnout.
- 4.2 Option 2 – allocate the new development to polling district FW321, using the southern boundary of the existing development in Demoreham Avenue as the northern boundary. The polling place for this polling district is the Archibald Russell Centre, where the electorate would increase to approximately 3,300.
- 4.3 Maps identifying the location of the new development and the options as outlined above are attached at Appendices 2 and 3.
- 4.4 Having taken a detailed look at the implications of both options, the preference of officers would be Option 2. As noted within paragraph 2.3 above, polling district FW316 is currently the biggest polling district in the Falkirk Council area, with its polling place (Nethermain Primary School) already nearing capacity. Polling district FW321, on the other hand, currently has an allocation of approximately 2,700 electors and a polling

place (the Archibald Russell Centre) which could accommodate the additional c450-600 electors.

- 4.5 The access to the development is from the new distributor road which accesses Glasgow Road opposite Nethermains Road. The route to the Archibald Russell Centre is relatively straightforward, while access to Nethermains Primary School is slightly more complicated, with the main access being off Bulloch Crescent. In addition, the new development will be in the catchment area for Denny Primary School, which would suggest that, generally speaking, parents will not be familiar with the route and access to Nethermains Primary School. The distance from Glasgow Road to the two polling places is very similar.

5 CONSULTATION AND FEEDBACK

- 5.1 In accordance with standard practice, the proposals drawn up by officers were presented to the four local Members for the affected Ward, for consultation and discussion.
- 5.2 Three of the four Members met with the Research and Information Team Leader to discuss the implications of the options presented. All three were in favour of the Archibald Russell Centre as their preferred option, ie Option 2 as noted at paragraph 4.2 above.
- 5.3 An additional observation received from one local Member was that the area around the Archibald Russell Centre and nearby Head of Muir Primary School would benefit from some form of traffic management around school starting and finishing times on polling day, when the area is particularly busy with cars and the Archibald Russell Centre is used for parking while children are being dropped off at or picked up from school. While this is worth investigating, it should be noted that, from May 2017, it is possible that in-service days will be held on May polling days (traditionally the first Thursday), with the result that all schools would be closed to pupils.
- 5.4 A further suggestion made by two local Members was that the Community Fire Station, situated at 63 Glasgow Road, Denny, be considered as an alternative polling place to Nethermains Primary School. Again, this is a suggestion worth investigating although it is probable that this would be included in the next full review of polling districts and polling places scheduled to commence on or shortly after 1 October 2018.
- 5.5 No views were submitted by the fourth local Member for Ward 3.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

- 6.1 Taking the views of the local Members into account along with the guidance and advice offered by the officers involved in this exercise, it is suggested that Option 2, as outlined at paragraph 4.2 above, is the preferred option. This forms the basis of the recommendations at paragraph 8 below.

7. FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications in addition to the current costs associated with the provision of polling places. A payment of £100 is made to the Archibald Russell Centre for its use as a polling place per electoral event. There is no proposal at present for this

to change, although it should be recognised that an incremental increase might be applied over the coming years.

7.2 As previously stated, there is a legislative requirement to review all polling places, in terms of the Representation of the People Act 1983 as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006 and the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. The next scheduled review must be carried out and completed within 16 months of 1 October 2018.

7.3 All premises detailed in the proposals contained within the Report are fully compliant with Disability Discrimination legislative requirements.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Members are invited to:-

- a) note the terms of the Report and the comments received following consultation with the elected Members for Ward 3 – Denny and Banknock;
- b) note the proposal to investigate further the suggestion of traffic management on polling days at the Archibald Russell Centre, subject to Head of Muir Primary School remaining open on these days;
- c) note the proposal to consider the use of the Community Fire Station in Denny as an alternative polling place to Nethermain Primary School, potentially as part of the next full review, and
- d) approve the use of the Archibald Russell Centre, Haypark Road, Dennyloanhead, as the polling place for the new development at Mydub Farm, Glasgow Road, Denny and amend the polling scheme for polling district FW321 to reflect this change.

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Date: 23 November 2015

**Contact Officers: Dale Robb, Business and Members' Services Manager (ext 6111)
Jennifer Boag, Team Leader (Research and Information) (ext 6016)**

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1 Report to Falkirk Council on 11 December 2013 – Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2013/14
- 2 Legislation referred to within the Report

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone 01324 506111 and ask for Dale Robb

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BY-ELECTION – THURSDAY 13 AUGUST 2015

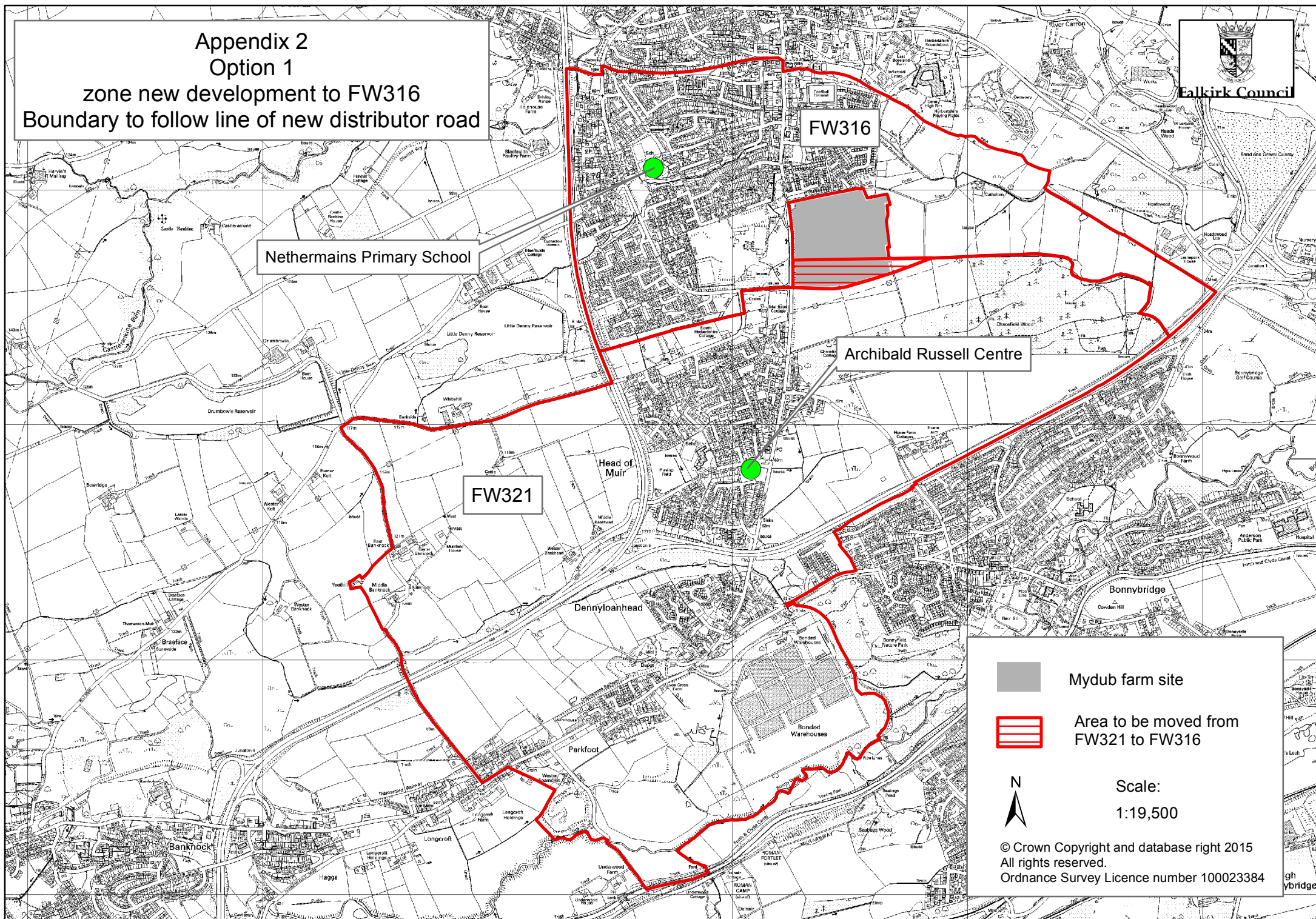
WARD 3 – DENNY AND BANKNOCK POLLING SCHEME AS AT 7 AUGUST 2015

Box No	Polling District	Polling Place	Station No	Eligible Electors at Station	Postals	Total Eligible Voters
1	FW300	Dunipace Church Hall	1	847	131	978
2	FW300	Dunipace Church Hall	2	920	128	1048
3	FW305	Denny Westpark Church Hall	1	1084	133	1217
4	FW305	Denny Westpark Church Hall	2	1008	121	1129
5	FW310	Fankerton Village Hall	1	470	83	553
6	FW316	Nethermains Primary School	1	872	108	980
7	FW316	Nethermains Primary School	2	927	130	1057
8	FW316	Nethermains Primary School	3	894	111	1005
9	FW316	Nethermains Primary School	4	802	139	941
10	FW321	Archibald Russell Centre	1	767	110	877
11	FW321	Archibald Russell Centre	2	870	88	958
12	FW321	Archibald Russell Centre	3	796	94	890
13	FW325	Banknock Community Centre	1	1010	113	1123
14	FW325	Banknock Community Centre	2	1241	151	1392
15	FW330	Allandale Bowling Club	1	247	19	266
Total for Ward 3 – Denny and Banknock (as at 7 August 2015)				12,755	1,659	14,414

Appendix 2

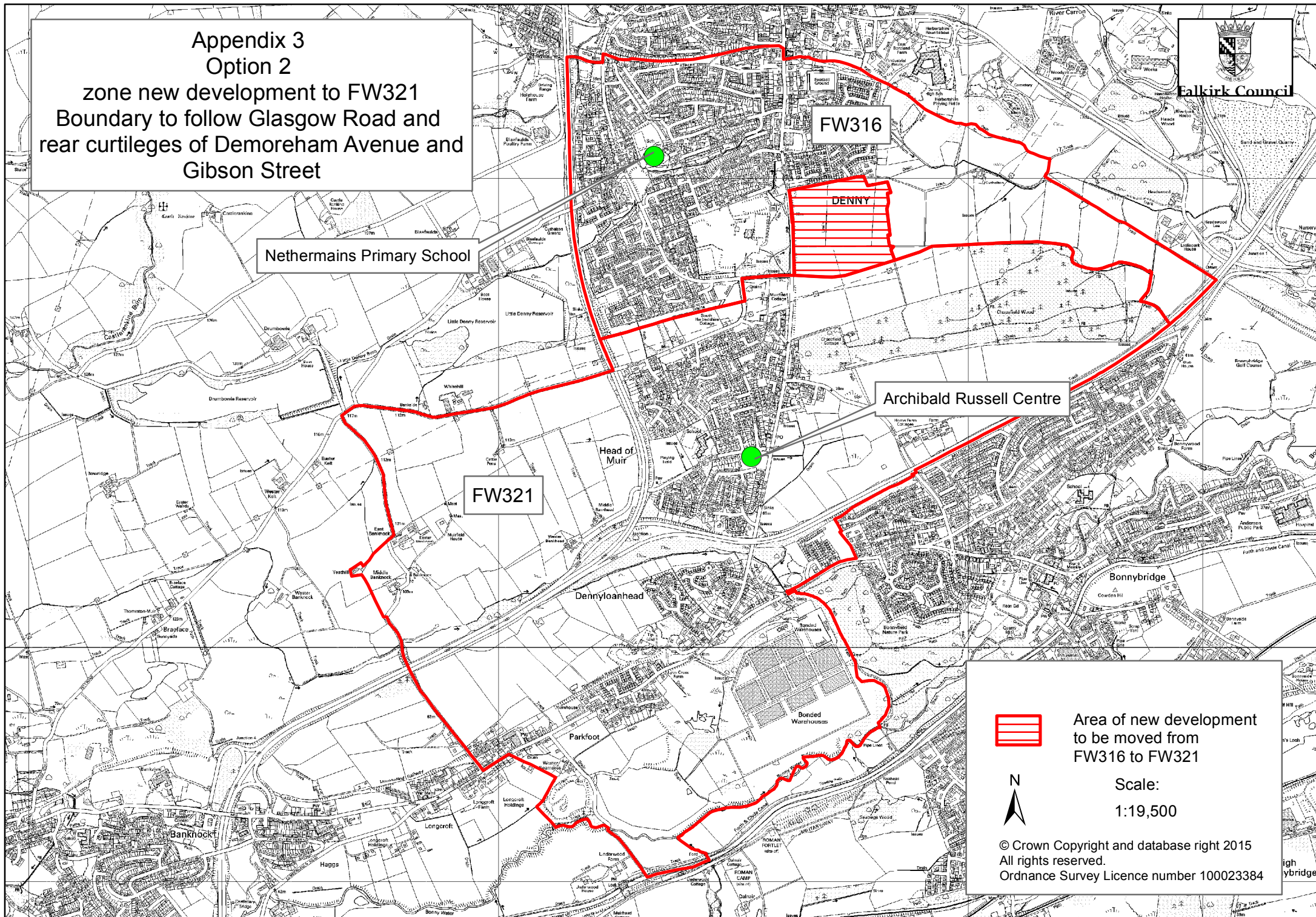
Option 1

zone new development to FW316
Boundary to follow line of new distributor road



Appendix 3
Option 2

zone new development to FW321
Boundary to follow Glasgow Road and
rear curtilages of Demoreham Avenue and
Gibson Street



Area of new development
to be moved from
FW316 to FW321



Scale:
1:19,500

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