

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
DEVELOPMENT LAND ALLOCATIONS DPD**

POSITION STATEMENT No DLA04

Other Retail Issues

Objectors

Kent County Council Property Group (174.02)
Tesco Stores Ltd (252.05, 252.06 and 252.07)

TONBRIDGE & MALLING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Position Statement No DLA04

Other Retail Issues

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Position Statement addresses representations that have been received relating to Policy R1 (other than those relating to Quarry Wood which are dealt with in Position Statement DLA02). Policy R1 sets out the Council's approach to retail development in the Borough and identifies the retail hierarchy and the development that would be acceptable in each of these areas pursuant to Core Policy CP23.
- 1.2 There are two specific issues raised in objection to this approach. The first is from Kent County Council Property Group objecting to the proposed amendment to the boundary of the Martin Square/Larkfield District Centre and the exclusion of Larkfield Library. The Second issues is raised by Tesco Stores Ltd. objecting to the designation of Lunsford Park as an Out-of-Centre Retail Facility, a change from the Tonbridge & Malling Borough Local Plan (1998) where it was designated as a District Centre.

2 The Borough Council Position

- 2.1 The Borough Council's strategic position to retail development is set out in Core Strategy Policy CP23. Policy R1 in the Development Land Allocations DPD identifies on the proposals map the extent of the retail centres to which the Core Policy applies and the more detailed policy applying to the hierarchy areas.
- 2.2 Martin Square comprises a scattered but interlinked group of mixed retail and business uses centred on the formally planned Martin Square itself and a strip development along London Road/A20. A large Somerfield Store is the main retail focus of the centre, the remaining premises are small scale in character. There are some institutional activities within Martin Square, being a KCC Public Library, an Old Peoples Home and a Doctor's Surgery and Health Clinic. There is also on-site parking provision to serve the District Centre. Generally, the development at Martin Square itself and the Somerfield Store is well maintained, but the remainder of the centre, focused on London Road/A20, has a generally run-down appearance.
- 2.3 The definition of Martin Square in the Local Plan included some "institutional" uses (the library and old people's home) and excluded some existing business uses and the major parking areas associated with Martin Square itself and the Somerfield Store. This created a relatively large centre and a somewhat disjointed picture of Martin Square as a retail centre. The intention of the re-evaluation of Martin Square in the Development Land Allocations DPD was to include all activities within the centre that provide retail and non-retail services. However, it was considered more appropriate to exclude the libraries at Martin Square along with the old people's home and at Borough Green with the village hall because unlike in the other District Centres, these facilities were not integral to the area and are physically separate from the core area.
- 2.4 The Council's position in relation to the designation of Lunsford Park to an Out-of-Centre Retail Facility was dealt with at the Core Strategy Examination and is set out in Position Statement CS09 and Rebuttal Statement CS09.

3 Response to Objections

- 3.1 Kent County Council Property Group (174.02) objects to the exclusion of the library at Martin Square from the boundary of the District Centre.

Response: *The PPS6 definition of a District Centre includes public facilities such as libraries. The public libraries in the District Centres of West Malling and Snodland occupy retail space within in the respective High Streets, form an integral part of the commercial area and have therefore been included in the District Centre definition. On the other hand, the public libraries in the District Centres of Borough Green and Martin Square are free-standing and quite separate from the core part of their respective District Centres and were, therefore, not included within the defined areas and this is the Council's preferred approach.*

*However, if in the light of the definitions in PPS6, the Inspector considers it more appropriate to include the public library at Martin Square in the definition of the District Centre then, for consistency, the public library and village hall at Borough Green should likewise be included in that District centre boundary, as illustrated in **Annex A** and **Annex B** of this Position Statement. However, the Borough Council considers that the plan is sound without making these changes.*

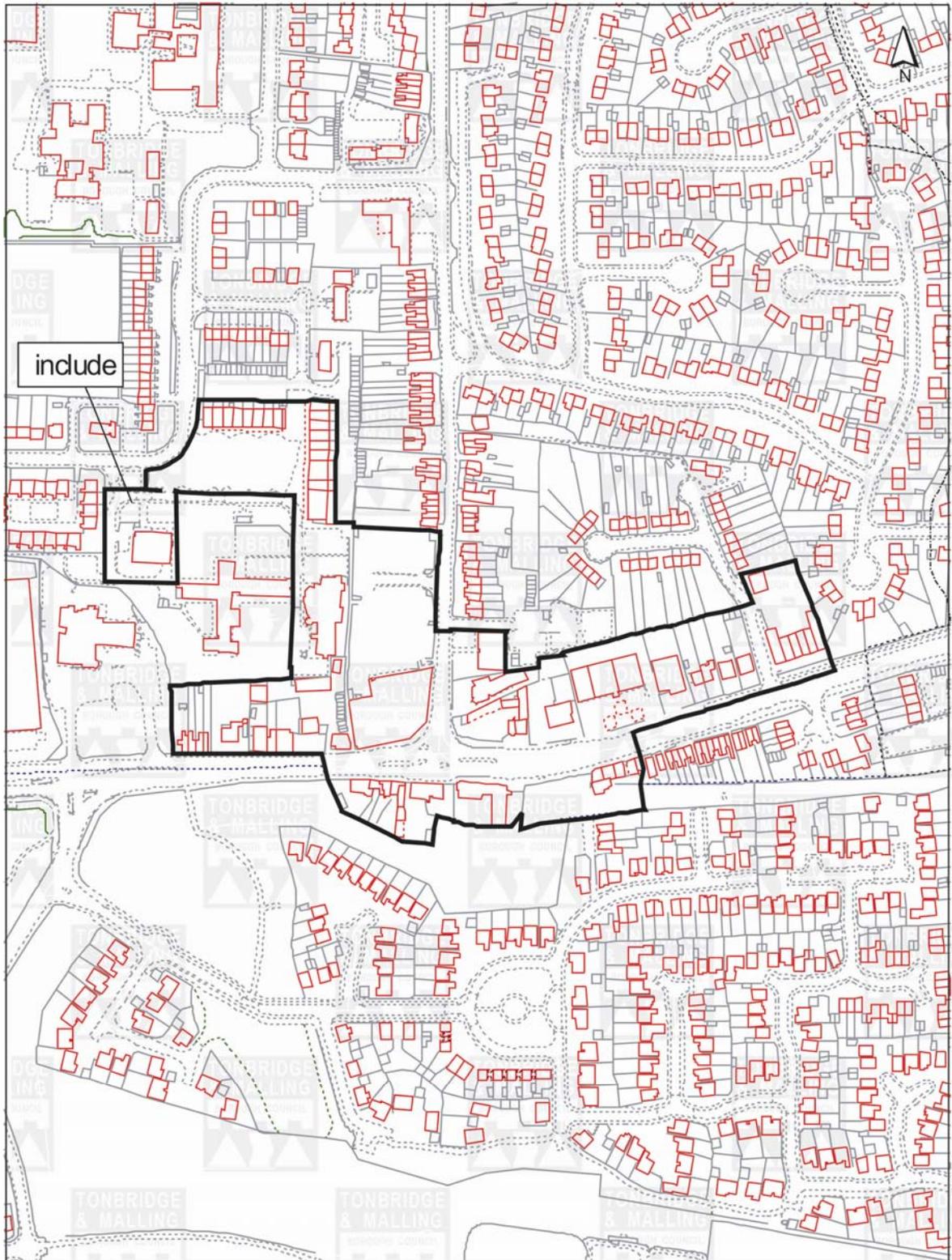
- 3.2 Tesco Stores Ltd. (252.05, 06 and 07) object to the identification of Lunsford Park as an "Out-of-Centre" retail location in Policy R1 for the reasons set out in their objections to the Core Strategy Policy CP23.

Response: *The Council's position remains the same as discussed at the Core Strategy Examination and set out in Position Statement CS09 and Rebuttal Statement CO09.*

4 Conclusions

- 4.1 Policy R1 dealing with Retail development is considered to be sound without change. However, if the Inspector considers amendments to the boundary of Martin Square is appropriate then a corresponding change would also need to be made to the boundary of the District Centre at Borough Green. If these changes were to be proposed they are not considered to be of such significance that further public consultation or Sustainability Appraisal would be necessary.

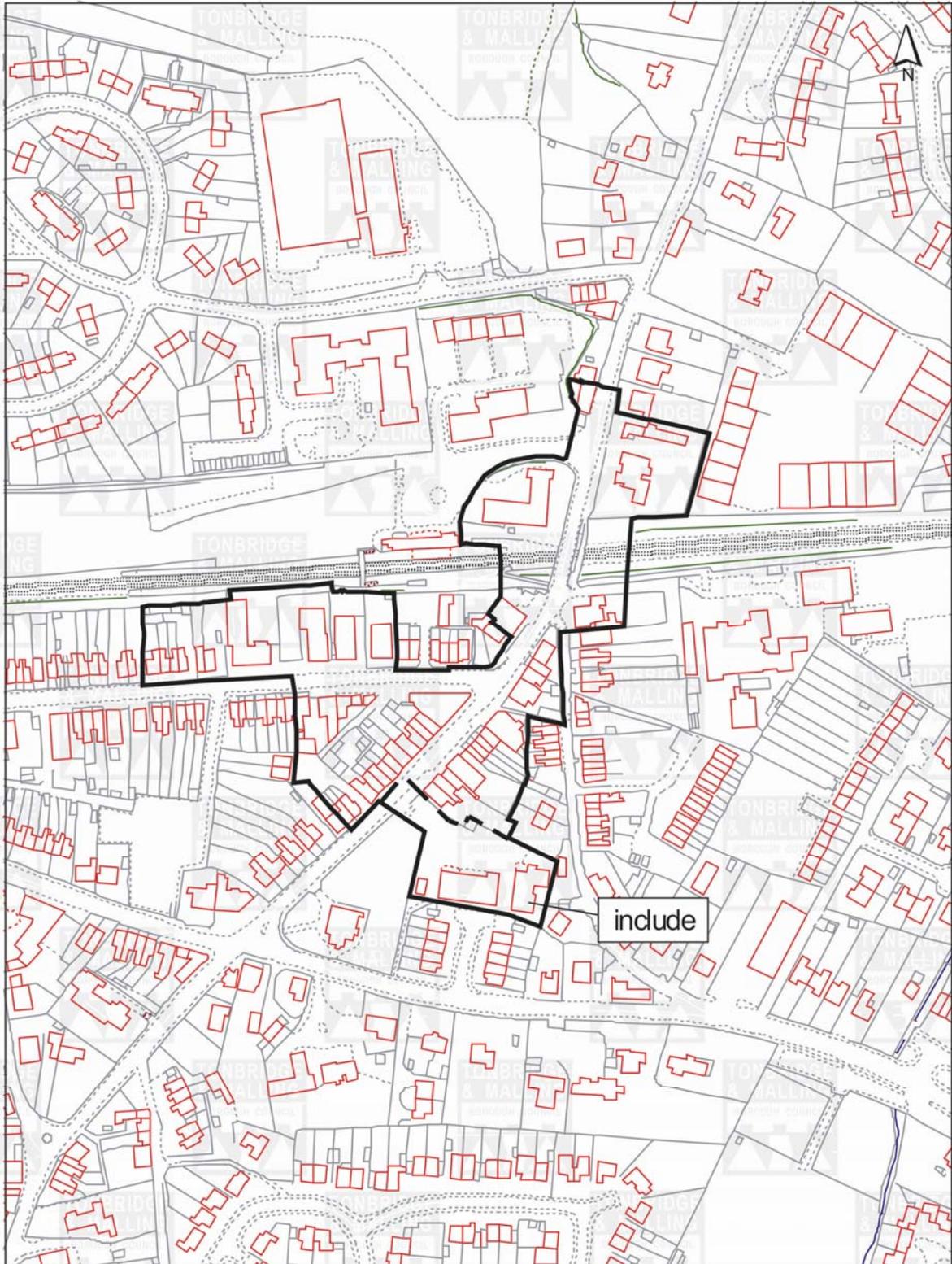
ANNEX A
Policy R1(i)(c) Martin Square, Larkfield



Scale 1: 2500

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ANNEX B
Policy R1(1)(a) Borough Green



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