

# Thorpe on the Hill



**Neighbourhood Plan  
2016 - 2036**

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## Foreword

Thorpe on the Hill Parish Council has always placed the views of the Parish and its Parishioners at the heart of its decision making process. It made the decision to start on the path of producing a Neighbourhood Plan in the very early days of the process and a group of dedicated Parishioners came forward to form a Steering Group. This work produced the Village Plan which was published in December 2014 and forms the basis of this Neighbourhood Development Plan.

It would be fair to say that the Parish has seen challenging times over the past few years regarding to the number of planning applications received. But throughout this time the views of the Parishioners have been taken into account when the Parish Council has passed comment on the applications. There will be more challenges on the way, of varying nature and complexity, but working together will hopefully deliver the overall aim and objective which is to preserve, protect and enhance the quality of life for those living and working in the Parish.

All the policies in this plan work towards that goal in a fair and acceptable basis. The views received during the consultations have been examined and worked into the policies with this goal in mind.

Finally we would like to thank all those who took part in the research and work behind this document. It was hard work but I hope you will all join with us on the Parish Council to say "really well done, good job".

The Parish Council hopes you will support the Plan and commends it to you.

It's your Parish, your future and your plan.

*Thorpe on the Hill Parish Council*

Parish Councillors: Chris Martin, Bob Sheldon, Steve North, Rod Andrew, Nev Williams, Caterina Scott

# 1. Introduction

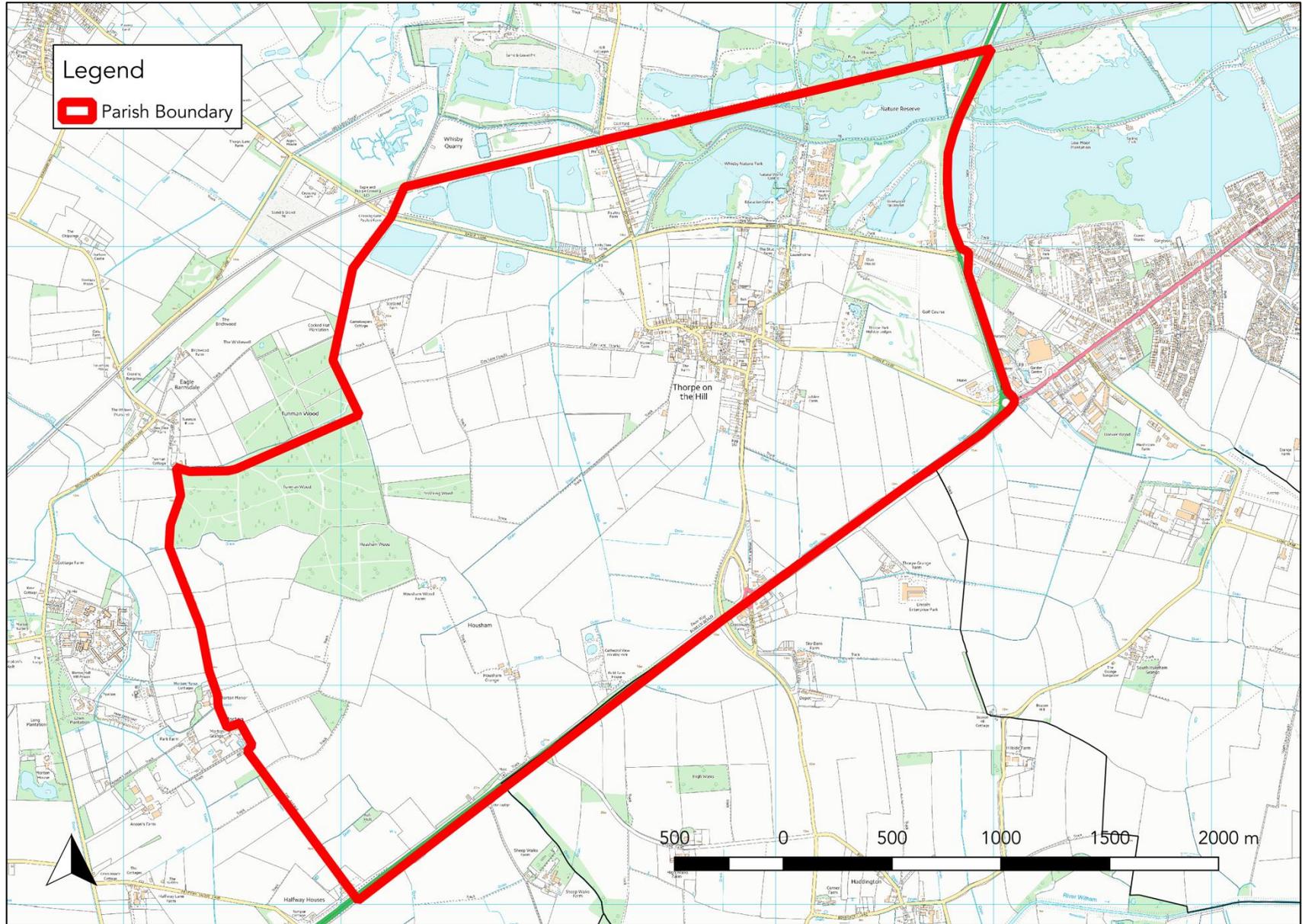
- 1.1. Thorpe on the Hill Parish Council<sup>1</sup> (**“the Parish Council”**) has prepared a Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated by the local planning authority, North Kesteven District Council (NKDC)<sup>2</sup>, under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The designated area covered by the plan (**“the Neighbourhood Area”**) is shown in Plan 1 below and equates to the whole of the Parish of Thorpe on the Hill.
- 1.2. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2036 (**“the Plan Period”**).

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<sup>1</sup> Thorpe on the Hill Parish Council is the ‘qualifying body’ for the Neighbourhood Area covering the whole of the Parish of Thorpe on the Hill

<sup>2</sup> The Neighbourhood Area was designated by NKDC on September 11th 2014

**Map 1: Thorpe on the Hill Parish Boundary and Neighbourhood Area boundary**



## About Neighbourhood Plans

- 1.3. Neighbourhood plans provide local communities with the chance to shape the future development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, the neighbourhood plan is formally 'made' by the District Council, at which point it becomes part of the statutory development plan, alongside the Local Plan. The development plan is used to make decisions on planning applications and as such this neighbourhood plan will be central in guiding these decisions on planning applications in our area.
- 1.4. Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, neighbourhood plans must meet some 'basic conditions'. They must:
  - have regard to national policy and advice;
  - contribute to the delivery of sustainable development;
  - be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan;
  - not breach EU obligations and be compatible with them; and,
  - not have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012).
- 1.5. As well as satisfying those requirements, Parish Councils must be able to show that they have properly consulted local people and other relevant organisations during the process of making Neighbourhood Plans, and that they have followed the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 1.6. An independent examiner will test these requirements and, if satisfied, will recommend to the local planning authority, North Kesteven District Council (NKDC) that the Neighbourhood Plan should be put to a referendum of the Neighbourhood Area electorate.

## Developing the Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.7. The Parish Council sought the community's opinion on local issues through a number of consultative exercises (described further in the Consultation Statement submitted alongside this neighbourhood plan). It has reviewed existing and emerging national and local planning policies and how they may affect this area. Based on this work, a number of Neighbourhood Plan policies have been developed.
- 1.8. A formal 6 week (regulation 14) consultation exercise was undertaken on a full draft of the Neighbourhood Plan between 12th November and 24th December 2016,

involving Statutory Consultees and the general public.

- 1.9. A Strategic Environmental Assessment scoping study has been carried out by the District Council and it has recommended there are no significant environmental effects resulting from the Plan and that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

## How is this Plan Organised?

1.10. This Plan is divided into three sections:

**Part 1: A Vision for Thorpe on the Hill**, which sets out:

- a brief description of the Parish today;
- the issues that have influenced the vision; and
- the Vision Statement and Core Objectives.

**Part 2: Neighbourhood Plan Policies**, which sets out planning policies to support the overall vision.

**Part 3: Parish Priorities**, which sets out other priorities for the Parish Council. These are not land use planning policies, but comprise matters of importance to the local community.



**St Michael's  
Church**

Photograph Tony Magri

# A vision for Thorpe on the Hill

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## 2. Background to the Parish

2.1. Thorpe on the Hill is situated almost half way between Lincoln and Newark, and a mile from the A46 - the ancient Roman road known as the Fosse Way. The village was called a "thorpe" by Scandinavian settlers of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, which describes a small clustered settlement dependent on a larger more important neighbour – in this case Doddington - and it is on a hill, hence the name. Thorpe has developed in a completely different manner from its neighbor, Doddington, and now, a thousand years later, they are very different types of village. Doddington has remained what used to be called a 'close' or 'closed' village, with the land very much under the sway of a single landlord. In contrast property in Thorpe on the Hill has long been divided up between many different owners.

2.2. When the Thorpe on the Hill Enclosure Act was passed by Parliament, in 1773, there were at least 6 owners of large holdings in the open fields. These landowners saw the multitude of ownerships and rights in the fields as a barrier to improving the land and farming it efficiently, so they petitioned Parliament for the re-allocation of Parish resources to concentrate each owner's land in one single block. The result was the creation of about a dozen farms, some of which were located out in the fields for example Dankers Farm, Jubilee Farm, Skybarn Farm and Scotland Farm.

2.3. By the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, then, Thorpe on the Hill was very much an agricultural centre with perhaps as many as a dozen working farms, ranging in size from small-holdings of less than a dozen acres.

2.4. By this time the village had already begun to change. In 1843, the short-lived Ebenezer Brick Works had been established and in 1846 the village benefitted from a new train station connecting it to the wider train network through the Midland Railway line. However, no trains have stopped since the 1960s. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, gravel extraction vied with agriculture as the village's main industry, but from the 1960s onwards, both were supplanted by commuters, who work in one of the surrounding towns and cities.

2.5. The village first acquired a formal primary school in 1899 and this continues to be a vibrant part of the community. Visitors are still greeted by the Parish church of St Michael as they approach the village from the south, along Fosse Lane. There has been a church on this site since at least the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

2.6. In the later 20<sup>th</sup> century, Thorpe on the Hill started to lose some of the businesses that distinguished it as a self-sustaining community. In particular, the village carpenter,

tailor, shop and post office have all disappeared since 1945, leaving only the mechanical engineer trading in Fosse Lane.

### **Population and Housing**

2.7. According to the 2011 Census, Thorpe on the Hill has 558 residents, with a mean age of 42 and a median age of 44, slightly older than the East Midlands average. Even though the population has grown since 2001, it has 'aged' quite markedly: over 30% of the 2011 population are over 60, compared to 24.2% in 2001, the percentage of people in the 45 to 59 age group dropped from 31% to 24.4%.

2.8. The Parish is formed of 228 households in total, of which approximately 22% are occupied by just one person; the remaining households average 2.7 people. One household out of 4 is occupied entirely by pensioners, while 27% has dependent children.

2.9. The vast majority of households (85.5%) own the house they live in, and more than half of them (47.8% of total households) own it outright. Only 6.1% of the population lives in social rented accommodation, much lower than the regional comparator.

2.10. Houses and bungalows form the majority of the dwellings, with 81.6% of all dwellings being detached and 16.7% semi-detached. Almost half of dwellings have more than four bedrooms.

2.11. There are eleven grade II listed buildings, of which six lie within the main village. Even though the village is not part of a Conservation Area, a number of other buildings have been identified in the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base as being of high local historic value with respect to their design and the contribution they make to village character.

2.12. Over recent years there has been a dramatic increase in the number of planning applications for new housing development in the Parish. Some have been refused, but a significant number have been approved on sites that contribute to the expansion of the built up part of the village. Whilst some residents have welcomed developments as a potential support to local facilities, others have not felt it to be appropriate and some development is considered to have been out of character for the village. One of the aims of this Neighbourhood Plan is to rationalise further development and ensure new dwellings are consistent and respectful of Thorpe on the Hill's character and settings.

### **Employment and Business**

2.13. The majority of the working age population is in employment (62.4%), with the percentage of self-employed twice the county average. The unemployment rate is

significantly lower than the county rate (2.3%, compared to 3.8%). More than 45% of Thorpe on the Hill's economically active population is employed in high paid jobs (managers and directors, professional and associate professional occupations, or technical occupations), which is consistent with the high level of educational attainment of the population as a whole: 31% of Thorpe on the Hill's adult population have a Level 4 Qualification or above, while as little as 18.2% have no qualifications at all (Lincolnshire percentages are respectively 21.3% and 26.1%). The share of population employed in manual or unskilled jobs is lower than district and county comparators, even though the percentage of workers in farming and agriculture in Thorpe on the Hill is higher than North Kesteven and Lincolnshire as a whole.

2.14. Support for the encouragement of additional business activities in the Parish divides the community, as highlighted by a questionnaire administered by the Parish Council in 2013, with 46.5% of the respondents in favour and 41.4% against it. Among those in favour, there is a clear preference for leisure and recreation activities and for small business development.

2.15. Thorpe on the Hill has a number of assets that are of interest to visitors to Lincolnshire, and a few hospitality facilities such as a hotel, B&B, caravan park and camping site. It is recognised that by attracting visitors through tourism activities and publicity, Thorpe on the Hill can generate significant income that will further support local businesses and deliver new jobs, creating new employment and additional income opportunities for residents. The Parish Council therefore aims to enhance the local environment and provide learning, cultural and recreational opportunities for both Parishioners and visitors.

### **Transport and Traffic**

2.16. An analysis of the methods of travel to work suggest that 10% of the economically active population work from home and another 10% walk or cycle to work inside the Parish boundary (data is consistent with the percentage of people working within the Parish - approximately 14.2% according to the Parish questionnaire). Only 11 people use public transport to go to work, while 193 people (70%) travel to work by car or motorcycle. This data is consistent with the high car ownership rate, with almost 60% of the households owning more than 2 cars or vans.

2.17. The high rate of car ownership and the village's location contribute to, and exacerbate, traffic problems. The village is located 0.6 miles north-east of the A46 and is connected to it by Middle Lane and Fosse Lane, running respectively east-west and north-south. The former becomes Lincoln Road and cuts through the village, turning north just outside the village curtilage (Station Road) to meet Moor Lane, another main access to the A46. Notwithstanding the restriction on heavy lorries, there is an issue with the volume of traffic now using the road when the Lincoln by-pass is busy or blocked. Traffic does not

always keep to the speed limit, especially on the approaches to the village, and parking connected with parents dropping pupils off at the school is perceived as a problem. The Parish Council is attempting to address these issues and has a report from an independent traffic consultant, which suggests solutions.

2.18. The results of the questionnaire circulated by the Parish Council in 2013 show that the majority of the population rate existing footpaths as adequate, and highly value the network of bridleway and public footpaths that connect the village to the surrounding countryside. There are a few dedicated cycle routes within the Parish, so most cyclists have to use trafficked streets to access facilities and employment around the South Hykeham and Teal Park areas . The survey shows that 55.6% of the respondents believed public transport to be inadequate.

### **Community and Leisure**

2.19. The lack of adequate public transport affects the younger residents particularly, since activities in the village are limited and they cannot easily travel independently to reach other places.

2.20. The Parish does have an active Scout group consisting of Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. THREDS is an umbrella group that provides social activities for all ages, although it mainly attracts older residents. THREDS includes a walking group, book club, handicraft club, social club and a bridge club. Another important community group is the outdoor bowls club, whose members play on a green at the Oliver Roper Recreation Centre, and an active fly-fishing group who meet at the Oliver Roper Parish Meeting Room.

2.21. There is a children's play area at the Oliver Roper Centre (considered 'excellent' or 'good' by the majority of questionnaire respondents). The village offers a number of other community facilities, including the Parish Meeting Room, a Community Cafe, ORPMR Tennis court, the Mobile Library, allotments and a playing field shared with the school, as well as the Railway Inn pub and the Lincoln Golf Centre. Whisby Nature Park is also a greatly valued resource within the Parish, offering a visitor centre and café, walking, bird-watching and other activities available.

### **Environment, Design Quality and Sustainability**

2.22. Although very little, if anything, can be considered as truly natural, the residents of Thorpe on the Hill care very much about their significant green (agricultural and semi-natural) and blue (fresh water) surroundings.

2.23. Whisby Nature Park and the land around it are of significance that warrants a number of designations - County Wildlife Site, Local Natural Reserve, Green Wedge, Natural and Semi-Natural Green-space.

2.24. The Parish hosts a number of other sites of high biodiversity value too, such as Tunman Wood (a designated County Wildlife Site and Ancient Woodland 1 mile west of the village), a traditional orchard, historic grassland sites at the top of Clay Lane and next to Little Thorpe Lane, fresh water lakes and over 50 Ha of Priority Habitats (Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership designation), such as Lowland Meadow, Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, Reed Beds and Wet Woodland. In addition, there is a good sized church yard which provides a habitat for a diverse range of species.

2.25. Both Tunman Wood and Whisby Nature Park are included in the Witham Valley Country Park (A Wildlife Trust Local Living Landscape). Most of this area has a layer of protection granted by designations or district level planning policies. The countryside surrounding the village lies within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 48, and has a pivotal importance in terms of agricultural use, habitat conservation, characterisation, leisure and landscape value.

2.26. The network of public footpaths and bridleways is generally well used by villagers, especially those paths around the western boundary of the Parish. The paths at Whisby Nature Park are also very well used by visitors, of which there are about 150,000 annually. Many of these paths are both wheelchair and pushchair friendly and there is the added advantage of fully accessible toilet facilities. The main cycle route crossing the Parish is the Sustrans Regional Route 93, which allows people to cycle safely to Whisby Nature Park from the centre of Lincoln or make a detour to the Nature Park from the National Route at Eagle. In addition, there are some relatively traffic free roads (except during 'rush hour') which link to others in adjacent Parishes. It is one of the aims of this plan to preserve and enhance the network of footpath and cycle routes for both residents' and visitors' use.

2.27. The current flood maps, prepared by the Environment Agency, indicate only a low risk of flooding across the Parish.

## 3. Our Vision and Objectives

### Key Issues

Broadly, the main issues that have emerged as being of concern to many people within the local community are:

- Housing:** How to ensure that the scale, location and type of new housing enables reasonable additional choice without detracting from Thorpe's character as a small, rural village and a rural Parish.
- Built Environment:** How to protect the character of the Village and Parish, and their heritage assets, whilst allowing for an appropriate level of new development and change.
- Transport and Traffic:** How to minimise adverse effects of traffic using roads in to, out of and through the village, whilst maintaining and improving accessibility to facilities and services for local people.
- Community Facilities:** How to preserve and enhance Thorpe's community spirit and protect the local facilities that people value.
- Natural environment:** How best to protect the landscape, support agricultural change, improve access to the countryside and protect and enhance habitats and biodiversity.
- Employment:** How to support increased provision of local employment opportunities, whilst protecting the amenities that people living in Thorpe value.

### Vision

The purpose of a neighbourhood plan is to influence change, steering it in directions that are in the best interests of the community as a whole. This Neighbourhood Plan is based on the following vision for change in Thorpe on the Hill over the next 20 years.

***Over the period of this Neighbourhood Plan, Thorpe on the Hill will continue to be a thriving and vibrant community. Treasured natural assets, the distinctive characteristics of the village and the rural landscape that surrounds it will be protected and enhanced where opportunities arise. Modest growth will contribute to the Parish becoming an even better place in which to live, work and to visit.***

## Objectives

The following objectives are based on the Vision and they provide the context for the Neighbourhood Plan's Policies (in the next section) and Parish Priorities (section 3).

### Objective 1

To ensure that any new development harmonises with the landscape character of our Parish and the “townscape” character of our village.

### Objective 2

To allow for development of a type and scale sufficient to meet local needs and support our local facilities, without detracting from Thorpe's essential character as a small, rural village and community.

### Objective 3

To protect and enhance our open spaces that are valued for their contribution to recreation, visual amenity, ecology and biodiversity, and landscape character and quality.

### Objective 4

To cherish and respect our heritage by ensuring that new buildings complement their built and natural surroundings.

### Objective 5

To support and protect our community facilities.

### Objective 6

To ensure our Parishioners and businesses have convenient and safe access to the facilities and places they need to travel to, whilst seeking to minimise harmful emissions and avoid high levels of traffic through the village.

# Neighbourhood Plan Policies

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Once this Neighbourhood Plan is “made” planning applications will be decided against the policies set out in the following pages and the wider policies of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Development proposals will be judged against the whole suite of relevant policies in the Development Plan (i.e. all the relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan together).

## 4. Residential Development

### Policy 1: Residential Development

1. Residential development will only be supported where there is up to date local evidence of a specific housing need and will be considered against the following sequential order:

- a) suitable brownfield sites or infill sites within the village curtilage (defined on Map 2 of this Neighbourhood Plan);
- b) brownfield sites adjacent to the village curtilage; and,
- c) greenfield sites adjacent to the village curtilage.

Proposals for development of a site lower in the sequential order will only be supported if it is demonstrated that no sites higher in the order are available or suitable.

2. Where planning permission is required, a proposal to convert or redevelop a non-residential building must demonstrate that the amenity of future occupiers and neighbours has been taken into account and that the proposal will not result in significant harm to residential amenity. Such a proposal should also demonstrate that it would not lead to a significant reduction in employment opportunities, or the loss of local services, unless the provision of such services is demonstrated to no longer be viable further to an active twelve month marketing period.

4.1. The scale of residential growth expected to be delivered in Thorpe on the Hill is set out in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. It identifies a figure of 15% growth over the plan period (from 2012 - 2036), which means that by 2036 the village is expected to grow by 33 dwellings. The Local Plan acknowledges that 1 dwelling had already been constructed and a further 2 dwellings granted planning permission at the time of the study (the calculations are correct as at 31 March 2017), reducing the growth figure to 30 dwellings. Since that time, planning permission has been granted for more than 30 dwellings, as shown in Table 1 below and on Map 2, opposite. Consequently, the Neighbourhood Area has met its housing land requirements, as set out in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and has made a considerable contribution to the national policy aim of boosting significantly the supply of housing."

Reference	Location	Planning Application Ref	No of Dwellings
HOU1	<b>22 Lincoln Lane</b>	<b>15/0448/OUT</b>	<b>1</b>
HOU2	<b>Sundown, 19 Little Thorpe Lane</b>	<b>16/1259/FUL</b>	<b>1</b>
HOU3	<b>Hill Close Farm, Lincoln Lane</b>	<b>15/0501/FUL</b>	<b>10</b>
HOU4	<b>Middle Lane</b>	<b>15/0054/OUT</b>	<b>23</b>
HOU5	<b>Land at Hill Close Farm, School Lane</b>	<b>15/1372/OUT</b>	<b>1</b>
HOU6	<b>Land at Westfield Lane</b>	<b>15/0701/OUT</b>	<b>9</b>
Total			<b>45</b>

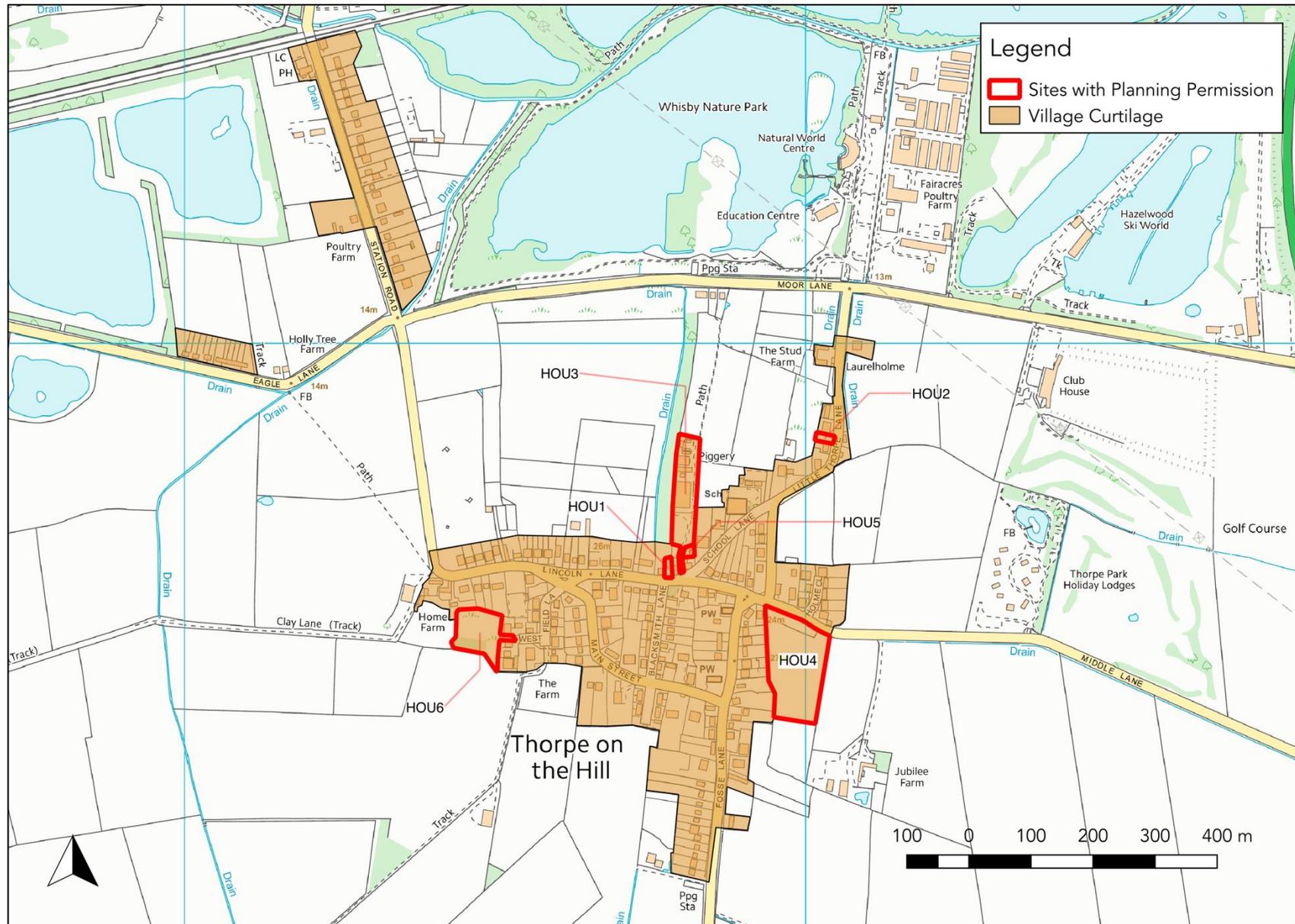
4.2. From responses to consultations carried out during the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan, a clear desire emerged for growth to be of a scale and rate that could be absorbed without altering Thorpe on the Hills's small-village character and without over-burdening existing facilities, services and infrastructure. In light of this, it is understandable that the flurry of planning applications and overall number of dwellings permitted in the past year have concerned many residents.

4.3. Taking into account recent permissions, any further residential development in the Neighbourhood Area should be supported by a local housing need assessment that provides robust and objectively assessed data to demonstrate that the proposal responds to a housing need that will not be met through development already permitted in the Parish. As described in the policy, infill and brownfield development will be given priority over greenfield development that would extend the built area of the village outwards.

4.4. This Neighbourhood Plan defines the village curtilage, and also identifies the sites with permission for residential development, referred to in Table 1.

4.5. The curtilage reflects the existing built form, the need to maintain its "walkability" and compactness, and the need to preserve the existing landscape and countryside setting surrounding the village. Any land and buildings outside the boundary line will usually be considered as being within the countryside where residential and other forms of major development will be limited to development that is inherently appropriate in the open countryside (as defined in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and National Planning Guidance). A detailed description of the village curtilage is provided as part of the supporting evidence for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Map 2: Site allocations and village curtilage



## 5. Local Employment

### Policy 2: Local Employment

1. Proposals for householder development that enables working from home, or for development that enables businesses to operate from integrated home/work locations, will be supported provided that:
  - a) the proposal will not result in conflict with neighbouring uses and will not have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity;
  - b) adequate access and parking can be achieved for the proposed use; and,
  - c) the scale and form of the proposal respects local character and is in keeping with its surroundings.
2. Proposals for the proportionate expansion of existing business sites will be supported provided that:
  - a) the proposal will not result in conflict with neighbouring uses and will not result in an unacceptable impact on the amenities that occupiers of nearby premises or users of the nearby countryside may reasonably expect to enjoy; and,
  - b) the scale and form of the proposal does not adversely affect the rural setting of the village.

5.1. Policy LP5 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan provides scope and guidance for new commercial development (including new retail provision) within the countryside and rural areas of the district, and it is not the intention of this Neighbourhood Plan to repeat these policy provisions.

5.2. Most of Thorpe on the Hill's employed residents travel to other places to work. Although it is unlikely that this will change dramatically over the period of this Plan, it is important to recognise that there are local employers and there is scope for further local employment as working patterns change and opportunities arise. Consultation about the Neighbourhood Plan has included the business community within the Parish and a questionnaire was issued in 2016 although no significant proposals or intentions were revealed through this process. Should new commercial developments emerge over the period of this plan, the Parish Council will be particularly supportive of businesses that actively seek to employ residents of the Parish as part of their recruitment strategy.

5.3. If more people were able to work closer to their homes – or from their homes – and chose to do so, there would probably be a bit less traffic and associated pollution, a bit more support for local services (because more people would be spending more of their time – and, perhaps, money locally), and a gradually increasing synergy between local businesses.

5.4. From the consultation responses, it appears that there is support for the principle of increasing local employment – including self-employment and working from home, as well as the possibility of allowing development to accommodate some slightly larger businesses where this will not detract from the residential and environmental amenities that people value in the Parish. Policy 2 is intended to enable and allow for that sort of change, without seeking either to predict or to prescribe the forms that change might take.

## 6. Natural Environment

### Biodiversity

#### Policy 3: Biodiversity

Development should minimise its impact on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible. The following measures to protect and enhance local biodiversity will be supported:

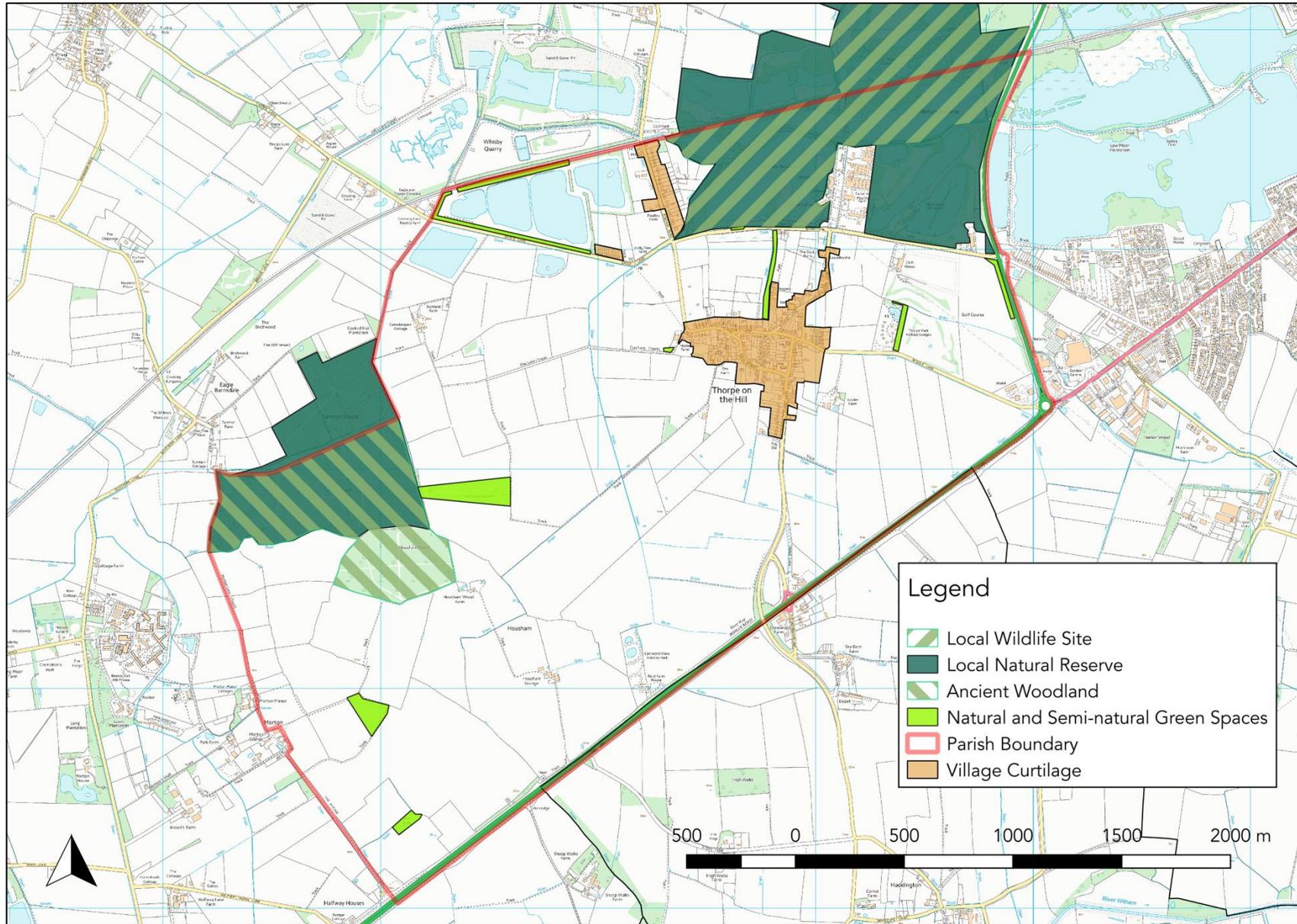
- a) the preservation of ecological networks, especially those between built-up areas;
- b) the protection of ancient trees or trees of arboricultural value;
- c) the preservation, restoration and re-creation of wildlife habitats, and the protection and recovery of priority species; and,
- d) the provision of a net gain in flora and fauna.

6.1. The residents of Thorpe on the Hill care very much about the significant green (agricultural and semi-natural) and blue (fresh water) surroundings that make up a large part of the Parish. The ecological role of these areas and the need to protect and enhance their local biodiversity and wildlife value is recognised by the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership and is reflected in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

6.2. The Parish hosts a significant portion of Whisby Nature Park which is a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) and Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and is particularly important for its wetland environment. Tunman Woodland is also a LWS as well as being an area of Ancient Woodland. These two areas are shown on Map 3 below and are given considerable protection through the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

6.3. However, these two areas of the Parish form only part of its rich biodiversity: fresh water lakes, historic grassland, a number of TPOs, deciduous woodland and historic hedgerows all contribute to its overall quality. These assets are not identified in the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping Study, but they are identified as Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces in the Central Lincolnshire Open Space Audit and Provision Standard Assessment (shown on Map 3 as "green space") and their biodiversity importance is highlighted in the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Plan (2011).

Map 3: Areas of biodiversity value



## Green Spaces and Green Infrastructure

### Policy 4: Green Spaces and Green Infrastructure

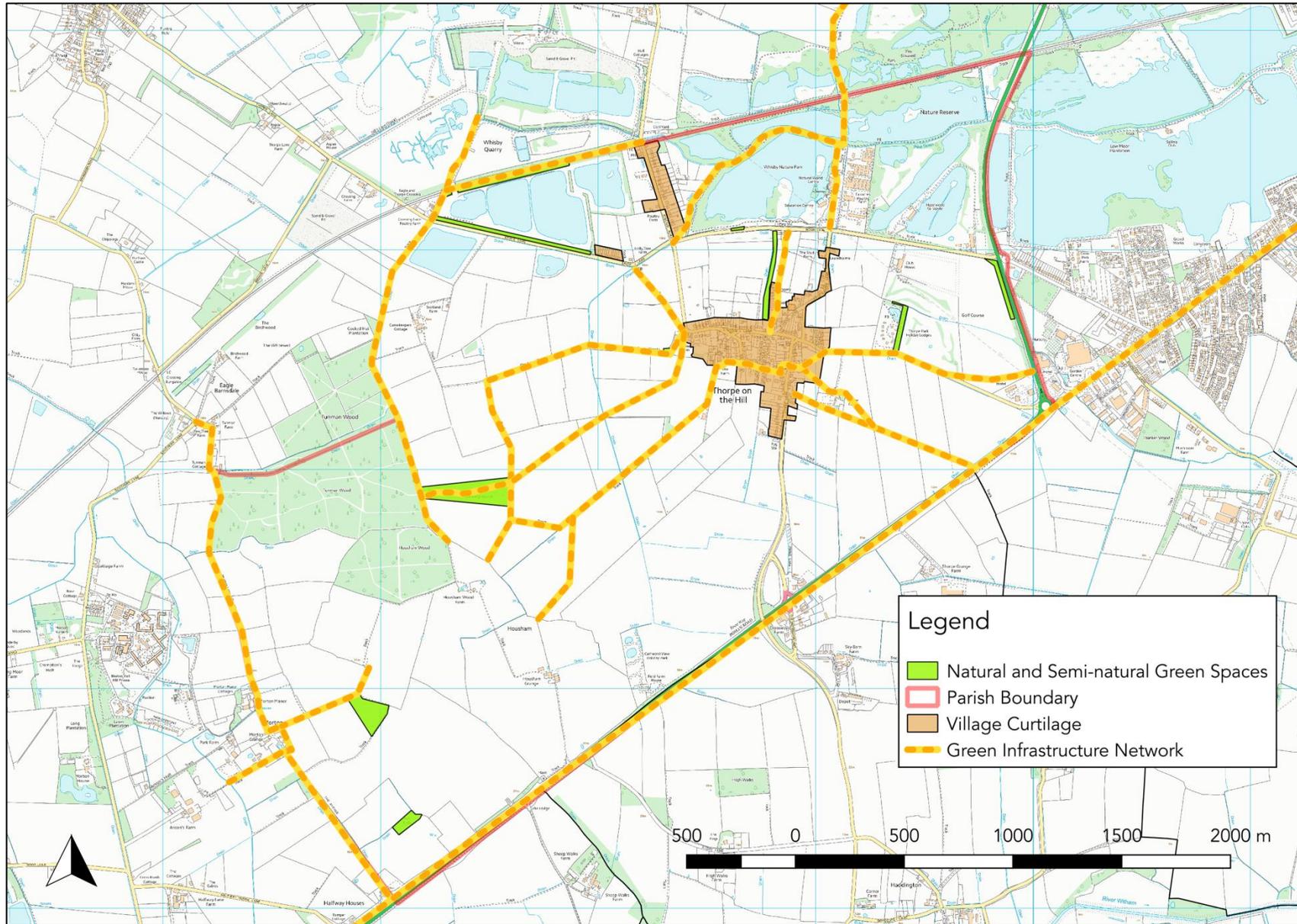
1. Development should protect public rights of way and the enhancement of public rights of way will be supported.
2. Where necessary to mitigate the impact of a development proposal, proportionate contributions will be sought to improve existing or deliver new green spaces or other green infrastructure. The delivery of new, or improvements to, green spaces or green infrastructure will be supported.

6.4. Whisby Nature Park and Tunman Woods, along with the network of bridleways, footpaths and cycle routes connecting different green spaces across the Parish are valued for the range of benefits they bring, including: physical and mental health, connectivity, leisure, sense of place, mitigation of climate change effects, visitor attractions and landscape character.

6.5. Within the village curtilage, the triangle of land on which there are mature trees between Main Street and Lincoln Lane is designated as an Important Open Space in the Local Plan and is afforded protection from development under policy LP23. The other areas of Green Spaces and Green Infrastructure shown on Map 4 are identified as Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces in the Central Lincolnshire Open Space Audit and Provision Standard Assessment (both publicly and non-publicly accessible). Within this Neighbourhood Plan, they are collectively termed Green Spaces.

6.6. Almost all the Parish falls within the Strategic Green Corridor, as identified in the Central Lincolnshire Green Infrastructure Study, and it is crossed by Strategic Green Access Links. The network of footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths and quiet lanes is of pivotal importance for both residents and visitors, as it is widely used to access open spaces, and the countryside from the village and to reach other settlements. The network of Green Infrastructure shown on Map 4 is also identified on the Public Rights of Way Improvements Plan and the Green Infrastructure Study for Central Lincolnshire. It is protected through Policy LP20 of the Local Plan.

**Map 4: Green Spaces and Green Infrastructure**



## Landscape and Views

### Policy 5: Landscape and Views

Development outside the village curtilage should not reduce the separate identity of Thorpe on the Hill by reducing the existing gap between the village curtilage and the A46; and must respect the unique layout and pattern of the enclosure landscape of Thorpe on the Hill, as well as field boundaries such as hedges and trees. Development must also take account of the important views identified on Map 5. The preservation and enhancement of these views will be supported.

6.7. The entire Parish of Thorpe on the Hill lies squarely within the area defined in the Lincolnshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (2011) defined as Lincolnshire: Character Zone TVL2. This zone is a small sub-set of the much larger Natural England Character Area defined as No.48: Trent and Belvoir Vales.

6.8. Thorpe on the Hill is a typical Parish in this Character Zone. The built environment is almost exactly as described in the adopted description of the Character Zone. It contains a large block of ancient woodland in the eastern part of the Parish (much of it formerly in the Parish of Aubourn-cum-Haddington). There are also strips of woodland along the minor roads in the northern part of the Parish.

6.9. Characteristically, Thorpe's rural landscape is mostly made up of arable fields, which are arranged in a generally rectilinear pattern, with straight field boundaries, often at right-angles to each other. Field boundaries here are also very often formed by hedges rather than drainage ditches and the hedges are usually multi-species, though with hawthorn predominating and occasional standards.

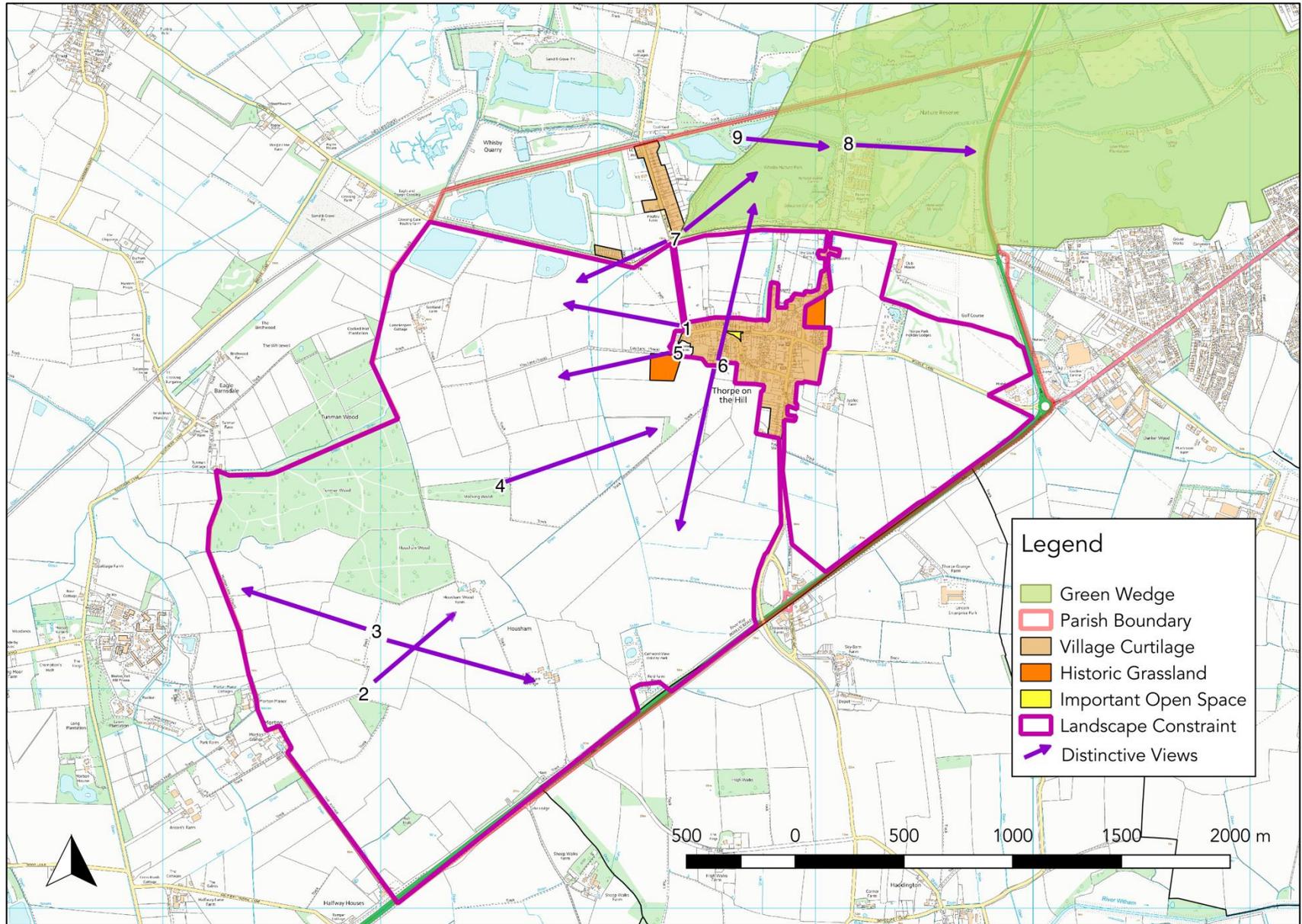
6.10. The modern Parish lies north of the Fosse Way and was enclosed in 1774. Several versions of the map recording the subdivision of the landscape and the newly-created field boundaries have survived. Using these maps it has been calculated that there has been something like a thirty percent loss of hedged field boundaries (by length) since the late eighteenth century. This relatively small loss-rate means that the structure of the post-enclosure landscape and much of its detail, both physically, and in terms of natural environment, has survived into the present day. The hawthorns and the standards are both likely to have been first planted in 1774.

6.11. Map 5 shows those areas where this enclosure landscape, created in 1774, survives well (Historic Enclosure Landscape). As is also characteristic, these areas of historic landscape survival in Thorpe lie predominantly within the former medieval open fields (East Field, Middle Field and West Field). The area of former village common, along the northern edge of the Parish, which was also enclosed in 1774, has now lost almost all of its enclosure boundaries, and an entirely new landscape has been created by gravel extraction.

6.12. Within the predominantly arable enclosure landscape, Thorpe also retains a number of small enclosures of permanent pasture adjacent to the nucleated settlement, where the remains of the medieval open-field agriculture can still be seen in the form of rare ridge-and-furrow earthworks. These particular areas are shown as Historic Grassland on Map 5.

6.13. The Parish Council has identified a number of distinctive views that need to be considered in development proposals within the Parish. These are shown by direction on Map 5 and also described in further detail at Appendix 2.

Map 5: Landscape character and features



## 7. Design

### **Policy 6: Design and Character of Development**

Development should complement the established character of Thorpe on the Hill, taking into account the Village Character Assessment and the Thorpe on the Hill Design Guidance. In so doing, development should, where appropriate, take account of:

- a) the impact of new buildings and structures on important views in and out of the village (as identified in the Design Guidance) and on the setting of the village within the wider landscape;
- b) the visual impact of materials used for external walls and roofs, ideally selected from a locally distinctive palette;
- c) the ways in which the overall form, scale, shape and proportions of new buildings and extensions relate to neighbouring buildings and impact on the character and appearance of the village as a whole;
- d) the visual importance of defining boundaries - particularly boundaries between public and private realms - in ways that are consistent with the mixture of hedges and brick walls that traditionally contributed to the character and distinctiveness of the village;
- e) locally distinctive architectural features and styles that can be incorporated into the construction of new buildings and structures; and,
- f) incorporating best practices in the provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage.

Proposals for development should demonstrate how the above factors have been taken into account.

7.1. The design quality of new developments is important to local people and it is clear from responses to the consultations that have been carried out that there is a desire for new buildings to be sited, designed and constructed so as to complement and strengthen Thorpe on the Hill's character and identity.

7.2. Policy 6 does not seek to stifle design innovation, nor resist modern designs where they are appropriate, particularly in respect to sustainable design and construction. This policy merely seeks to ensure that development proposals are carefully considered and designed in a manner, which is complimentary to the existing village context. It aims to see that new development, as well as alterations and extensions to existing buildings, are in keeping with the character. For most development it will be helpful to check that it is compatible and complementary with the key characteristics of the village. Wherever possible, new development should help to strengthen, reinforce or where necessary, restore distinctive landscape character.

7.3. Further detail on the character of Thorpe on the Hill is set out in the 'Character Assessment' and should be used as a basis for understanding the character of the village and progressing development proposals, which respond positively to this character. The Design Guidance emerged from the Character Assessment work and sets out a number of core design principles, recommendations for materials and other distinguishing features as well as a series of key village-scape views around the village that should be respected. Both documents form part of the evidence base for this Neighbourhood Plan and are available to view on the Parish Council's website.

7.4. Information submitted with planning applications should provide sufficient information to explain how the guidance and considerations referred to above have been taken into account in the design of the proposed development.

7.5. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework, this policy requires that development should contribute positively and ensure the design responds to the local character and history of the Parish.

# Parish Priorities

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Thorpe on the Hill Parish Council will continue to engage actively with Parishioners to encourage their involvement in the following Parish Priorities. It will do so by establishing an effective communication network and through both the Annual Parish Meeting and public time at Parish Meetings.

The priorities set out in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan take into account matters of importance to the community that cannot be addressed through land use planning policies at the time of the Plan's preparation. However, should the issues and challenges evolve over time to feature land-use matters then it may be necessary to update the planning policies in this Plan as part of the review process.

For clarity, the following Parish Priorities have no material weight as land use planning policies, but set out matters that are of importance to the local community.



## Parish footpaths

Photograph Tony Magri

## 8. Community Well-being, Leisure and Recreation

8.1. The purpose of the leisure and recreation priorities are to:

- Encourage the use of existing recreations and leisure Parish facilities to their maximum capacity;
- Develop new recreations and leisure Parish facilities to meet the needs of Parishioners;
- Maximise the use of the Oliver Roper Parish Meeting Room, thereby increasing the income;
- Work with the Parish primary school to increase the use of the shared playing field outside school times; and,
- Encourage the use of footpaths and bridleways.

The Parish Council will seek to achieve the following:

### OLIVER ROPER PARISH MEETING ROOM (ORPMR)

Support the Parish Council in its aim to maximise the income and use of the ORPMR through increased promotion and publicity of its facilities. Investigate the possibility of physically expanding the ORPMR to meet the needs of the wider community.

### SPORTING AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Encourage and support the development of additional sporting and social activities especially those suitable for children and young adults

### PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Seek to ensure that the existing children's playground equipment is well maintained and improved and support the development of equipment for older children within the Parish.

### YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Engage with relevant Community Development organisations to explore the possibility of setting up and organising sports clubs/activities for children and young adults.

### FOOTPATH/CYCLE PATH

Explore the possibility of linking, either by footpath or cycle path, a route through the countryside that reflects the Lincoln commuter route, to produce benefits in health and to reduce pollution

### PARISH WALKS

1. Promote the existing Stepping Out Leaflet - Thorpe on the Hill and Tunman Wood, Way Marked trails and Whisby Nature Park walks which cover the majority of the walkable footpaths in the Parish.
2. Explore the production of a Parish Local Walks leaflet combining all walks in the Parish

### LINKS WITH SCHOOLS

Develop positive links with the Primary School for the use of facilities within the Parish, and also Robert Pattinson and North Kesteven schools with regard to the use of their facilities.

### VILLAGE COMMUNICATION

As new communication methods are introduced, identify and use new communication streams such as different forms of social media to provide information to all ages of the Parish.

## 9. Local Economy

9.1. The purpose of the following priorities are to:

- Promote economic growth in order to create local jobs and prosperity, particularly through tourism business activity;
- Preserve and protect Thorpe on the Hill's built and natural heritage; and,
- Seek to increase access and enhance the facilities and opportunities for non-work based cultural activities for all Thorpe on the Hill Parishioners and visitors.

The Parish Council will seek to achieve the following:

### PROMOTE TOURISM

Promote tourism within the Parish and establish Thorpe on the Hill as a tourist location. The community of Thorpe on the Hill will work with the County and District Councils plus other regional and national organisations to publicise Thorpe on the Hill tourism sites.

### VILLAGE TRAILS

The main vehicle for promotion of Thorpe on the Hill tourism will be the launch of a Parish Trail leaflet which will identify existing sites of interest within the Parish. This will be done in conjunction with North Kesteven District Council as appropriate.

#### MAINTENANCE OF TOURISM AND PUBLIC SITES

Existing tourism facilities should be improved and better maintained where necessary via dedicated management. This includes the control of litter within the village and along the highways. The Parish Council and volunteers will seek additional external funding from available resources as necessary working with local businesses where there is evidence of litter from their premises.

#### SIGNAGES FOR LOCAL ATTRACTION AND BUSINESSES

Promote additional signage and the distribution of publicity material, using existing tourism networks, local and regional web sites etc.

#### ADDITIONAL PUBLIC FACILITIES

The need for additional facilities such as car parks, public toilets, cafeteria etc will be investigated and identified to support these policies and funding sought. Development proposals will be supported when appropriate.

#### TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

Local residents with suitable facilities will be encouraged to provide tourist accommodation.

#### TOURING CARAVAN PARK

The use of the existing touring caravan park will be encouraged, publicised and supported.

#### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Work with all relevant bodies and organisations to protect and enhance the natural environmental assets in the Parish through:

- Creating new wildlife habitats and linking them;
- Re-establishing hedgerows along field and Parish boundaries, including the filling of gaps, with native species;
- Planting native species of trees within hedgerows and within the village ;
- Protecting more trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs);
- Protecting the remaining orchards within the Parish by ensuring the land is not used for building or development, and that the trees are well maintained and protected; and,
- Promoting new Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs).

## 10. Roads, Traffic Management and Accessibility

10.1. The purpose of these priorities are to:

- Reduce village road congestion;
- Reduce the speed of traffic through the village;
- Improve accessibility and safety of Thorpe on the Hill footpaths for all age groups;
- Improve the road safety of entrance and exit junctions to the village; and
- Ensure the 7.5 tonne limit is observed.

The Parish Council will seek to achieve the following:

### SPEED LIMITES

The Parish Council will consult with Lincolnshire County Council Highways to introduce, discuss and implement the recently commissioned traffic report

### DROP KERBS

The Parish Council will consult with Lincolnshire County Council Highways to install dropped kerbs to improve footpath accessibility for all users

### PARKING

The Parish Council will advertise the use of the existing car parking at the Oliver Roper Parish Meeting Room and expand the facility by opening up one of the tennis courts on a permanent basis. It will work with the school to encourage school traffic to use this facility rather than parking on the road.

### ROAD MAINTENANCE

The Parish Council will consult with Lincolnshire County Council Highways to provide better road maintenance, including drainage, within the Parish

### LINCOLN SOUTHERN BYPASS

The Parish Council will engage with Lincolnshire County Council Highways to ensure any future proposals for the bypass deliver positive impacts to the Parish.

## 11. Glossary of Terms

<b>Design and Access statement</b>	A concise report to explain how a proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users.
<b>Affordable housing</b>	Includes social, rented and shared ownership housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market, but specifically excludes low cost market housing.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	Is the term for the variety within and between all species of plants, animals and micro-organisms and the ecosystems within which they live and interact.
<b>Brownfield land/site</b>	Is referred to in the NPPF, paragraph 17, as “previously developed land”. This is defined in the NPPF glossary as “Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.
<b>Built environment</b>	The manmade surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, ranging in scale from buildings and parks or green space to neighbourhoods and cities including their supporting infrastructure
<b>Community facilities</b>	Land or buildings used to help meet health, educational and social needs in terms of developing and maintaining the health and well-being of all in the community.
<b>Community engagement</b>	The process of firms, town and Parish councils working collaboratively with community groups to address issues that impact the well-being of those groups.
<b>Conservation area</b>	An area designated under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as being of 'special architectural or historical interest', the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.
<b>Village Curtilage</b>	A boundary traditionally marking the area around a settlement within which permission for development can be applied for.
<b>Development</b>	Development is defined in planning terms under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. Broadly, it is considered to be 'the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land'. Most, but not all, forms of development require planning permission.
<b>Development plan</b>	Adopted documents that are used to determine planning applications.

<b>Ecology</b>	The relationships between groups of living things and their environments. The surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives or operates and survives; including the natural world, as a whole or in a particular geographical area, especially as affected by human activity.
<b>EU obligations</b>	Compliance with all the EU's standards and rules.
<b>Greenfield sites</b>	Considered as land which does not fall within the above "Brownfield" definition."
<b>Green infrastructure</b>	A network of fields, parks, allotments, open spaces and street vegetation which collectively forms a network of green (living) within a settlement and landscape. Good green infrastructure networks have a mixture of different types of habitat and are well linked by corridors of trees, hedgerows and other linear landscape features.
<b>Housing Needs Survey</b>	Are undertaken to establish the need for affordable housing and market housing in a given area (usually a Parish or town) and the type and mix of homes required to meet this need.
<b>Heritage asset</b>	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
<b>Infill sites</b>	A small gap within an otherwise built-up frontage or group of houses
<b>Infrastructure</b>	A collection of basic services necessary for development to take place, for example; roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities
<b>Landscape</b>	The Landform, Vertical Structures, Horizontal Structures, Vegetation, Water, and Climate.
<b>Listed buildings</b>	Is any building or structure which is included in the list of 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest'.
<b>Localism Act 2011</b>	The devolution of decision making powers from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils.
<b>Local facilities</b>	Buildings available to local people for community purposes providing education, healthcare or leisure services.
<b>Local plan</b>	Expresses the vision, objectives, overall planning strategy, and policies for their implementation across the whole District. In the case of NKDC this refers to the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
<b>Local planning Authority</b>	This is the local authority or council that is empowered by law to exercise statutory town planning functions for a particular area - in this case NKDC.
<b>Local referendum</b>	A direct vote in which communities will be asked to either accept or reject the Neighbourhood Plan
<b>National Planning Policy Framework</b>	This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied

<b>Neighbourhood Area</b>	An area has to be formally designated for a neighbourhood plan or order to be produced
<b>Neighbourhood Plan</b>	A Plan developed under the authority of the Localism Act containing detailed planning policies for a town/Parish.
<b>Policies</b>	A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual.
<b>Rural Character</b>	Includes a predominant visual landscape of open spaces, woodlands, and farms and the activities which preserve such features. It balances environmental, forest, and farm protection with rural development and recreational opportunities
<b>Neighbourhood Planning (general) Regulations 2012</b>	Legislation which governs how the whole process of establishing an area to be designated to have a Neighbourhood Plan; and the process in which such a plan is brought about before becoming enshrined in Planning Law.
<b>Visual amenity</b>	Desirable or useful features or facilities of a building or place as perceived by sight.

## **Appendix 1: How the Thorpe on the Hill Neighbourhood Plan was prepared**

There have been 2 main stages in the development of this plan, the first being the production of a Village Plan as outlined below. The Parish Council's objective was to ensure that the residents and businesses of Thorpe on the Hill had a say in all aspects of the future of the Parish.

### **Stage 1, Our Village Plan 2014**

In 2012 the Thorpe Parish Council decided that the next step in preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan would be to hold a public meeting to seek the community's views on the ground that the Plan should cover. This meeting took place in the Oliver Roper Hall on 29 October 2012, and was attended by more than 140 villagers. It not only encouraged the Parish Council to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, but there was also support for a stronger community voice in many issues of local concern.

It was agreed at that meeting that the Parish Council would organise a questionnaire within the village to establish the issues of greatest concern to the community, and then take the results of that questionnaire as the basis for the first draft of a Neighbourhood Plan. The questionnaire was issued to all of the identified individuals in the Civil Parish and the results were collected together in the summer of 2013.

99 forms were returned, out of a possible 230 issued, giving a very good response rate of about 43% - a much higher percentage return than is achieved in most public elections, for example. That winter the Parish Council tasked an independent group of villagers, all of whom had expressed an interest in helping with the job at the meeting of 29 October, with the analysis of the results from the questionnaire. In March 2014 the group began the process of analysing the questionnaire results and writing them up in form that would be useful in the subsequent stages of Plan production.

By October 2014 they had produced a 'Proposals Document' entitled Our Village Plan, which sets out the community's ambitions in a format that formed the basis for conversations with NKDC about the production of a formal Neighbourhood Plan. Our Village Plan can be found on Thorpe on the Hill Parish website.

### **Stage 2 Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan**

Early in 2015 the Parish Council asked the Steering Group to continue with their work to produce the Neighbourhood Plan in full. The Steering Group had new members join along with a new Parish Clerk and 2 new Parish Councillors. They organised themselves into Teams to begin the process of gathering any further evidence needed to support the Plan, under the headings of:

- Land allocation
- Built Environment to include housing
- Natural Environment
- Services
- Employment and local economy
- Recreation, Travel, Leisure and Tourism
- Community Wellbeing
- Funding and Publicity

This included reviewing evidence reports prepared by various bodies and preparing a neighbourhood profile using key national and local statistics to help to identify issues for the Parish. This information is provided in separate supporting documents.

All of the information gathering and consultation activity undertaken fed into an emerging set of planning policies and community priorities that were presented at a Neighbourhood Plan open day in May 2016. The feedback received during this event informed the draft Neighbourhood Plan presented in this document.

## Appendix 2: Assessment of Distinctive Landscape Views

The Parish Council considers the views identified in the publication *Views from the Hill* (100th Edition) to be the most distinctive within the Parish and worthy of protection from inappropriate development that would significantly alter these. A description of the views is provided below and is supported with photographs. The location and direction of the views are shown on Map 5 of this Neighbourhood Plan.

### View 1

*At sunset, on a clear evening, between April and September, stand on the corner where Lincoln Lane meets Station Road. The sun setting over the western quadrant of the Parish must be one of the best views around.*



**View 2**

*At any time, particularly at dusk when the cathedral is lit up, follow the footpath through Stocking Wood. At the junction, turn south along the side of Tunman and Housham Woods and continue along the path towards Morton to grid reference SK889640. Turn and look to the north east and you will see Lincoln Cathedral sitting on top of Thorpe on the Hill.*



**View 3** Retrace your steps from View 2 towards Housham Wood. This path is the highest point in the Parish. About half way along, stand and turn 360 degrees. These are the most extensive views in the village. The horizons to the left and right are several miles away.



**View 4** When the trees are in leaf, go through Stocking Wood and then turn to return to the village. Stop just before leaving the wood. Look towards the village, which will be



*framed by trees.*

**View 5**

*At any time of year and any time of day in daylight, stand at the first bend at the top of Clay Lane. Look south west over the ancient woodland of Tunman Wood.*



**View 6**

*Follow the footpath from Main Street to the wide track below what was the Scott Farmhouse. Look slightly upwards in a wide sweep from north west to south east and enjoy a classic, Lincolnshire big sky view. This is best on a clear day with the sun in the east.*



**View 7**

*When the trees are in leaf, stand at the crossroads on Station Road. Look in all directions and be amazed at the density of trees that we have in the Parish.*



**View 8:**

*It is safer to see this view from a car rather than as a pedestrian. As you cross the bridge over the A46 travelling towards the village, look north to see the hill top location of Thorpe and the surrounding 'green' space.*

*A similar view, from Beacon Hill, was painted by Peter de Wint in about 1820. The water colour currently hangs in the Usher Gallery.*



*The final two are from the part of Whisby Nature Park that falls within the Parish boundary. Both of these are best when the trees are in leaf.*

**View 9:**

*From the car park, walk beyond the visitor centre, cross the bridge over the Pike Drain, continue towards the railway line and then look for the three opportunities to view Grebe Lake on your right. The first is after a few metres, with a bench to sit on. The second is a few metres further on, where you can stand in an opening. The third (and the best, perhaps) is from the bird hide a few metres further still.*



**View 10:**

*From View 8 continue towards the railway line but turn left along the northern edge of Coot Lake. Follow the path to the end of the lake where you will find a bench to rest and enjoy the view. The view is perhaps even better when standing to the left of the very large silver birch tree on the edge of the lake.*





## **Contact details**

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