



**THRILOW &
HEATHFIELD**

PARISH CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Version 2 February 2020

A document jointly undertaken by Thriplow
Neighbourhood Plan group and Chartered
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INTRODUCTION and LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

What is Landscape Character Assessment?

1. Landscape is understood as a result of the interaction of the natural and physical components of the environment, with the human element - historical and cultural interventions over time. Landscape Character describes the variations in physical, natural and cultural attributes that relate to the landscape, as well as its experiential characteristics, such as tranquillity. Landscape is not just experienced visually, but through sounds, smells, memories and cultural associations.
2. Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is the process of identifying and analysing variation in the character of the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive and create a 'sense of place'. The methods for undertaking LCAs is set out in 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (published by Natural England, 2014).
3. This study also includes elements of townscape assessment where landscape and built form interface. Townscape character assessment looks at the variations in the character of the built form of settlements and highlights indicators of value. A definition of townscape is given in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment (version 3) ¹ as: *"the landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings, the relationship between them, the different types of urban open spaces, including green spaces and the relationship between buildings and open spaces."* (Paragraph 2.7, p16) Guidance on the undertaking of Townscape assessments are less formalised than for rural landscapes, the Landscape Institute published a guidance note in 2017 ².
4. Both types of assessment help to inform, plan and manage change, and can be useful when undertaken at a scale appropriate to neighbourhood plan-making. They help understand the ability of different landscape or townscapes to withstand different types of development pressures and draw out the particular issues to which any future development should respond.
5. Thriplow is a commuter belt village of Cambridge with good connections to the motorway network. It's topography and landscape setting offer little constraint to expansion so it is likely to face pressure for expansion in the face of any future Green Belt policy review.

Landscape classifications and references

6. Landscape character assessment analyses differences in topography, soils, hydrology, woodland and tree cover, land use and farm type, settlement patterns, and perceptual experience. These physical and human influences combine to create the unique and distinctive characteristics found in different landscapes.
7. Landscape character assessment can be applied at different scales from the national to the local, parish level. In classifying landscapes, two categories may be identified:

¹ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (GLVIA3) (Landscape Institute and Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013);

² Townscape Character Assessment LI Technical Information Note 05/2017. Revised April 2018. Townscape Character Assessment Technical Information Note.

Landscape character **types** - these are landscapes with broadly similar combinations of geology, landform, vegetation, land use, field and settlement patterns. They repeat across a landscape so that landscapes belonging to a particular type such as 'Valley Meadowlands', may be found in different places.

Landscape **areas** -Landscape character **areas** - these are unique areas that occur in only one place and are therefore geographically specific. They have their own individual character and identity.

Purpose of this appraisal

8. This succinct parish character assessment has two key purposes;
 - a) to provide a framework for understanding the different patterns of landscape and settlement elements across the parish and their relative value and importance;
 - b) to help understand different sensitivities along the village's fringes and open spaces, and develop appropriate neighbourhood plan policies in response
9. It will provide the Neighbourhood Plan group direction for making sound decisions in relation to spatial planning, to help explain to residents and land owners why any such decisions were taken, and convey to developers the importance of paying attention to 'sense of place', and to identify and protect aspects of value.
10. Taking this landscape character led approach to plan making will be beneficial as it places local distinctiveness at the heart of decision making. It ensures highly valued places and views are identified and protected and any new development is directed into the most appropriate locations. It also promotes understanding of any landscape enhancement opportunities that could be integrated into a Neighbourhood Plan.
11. The assessment is relatively brief and is the result of a combination of characterisation mapping by the NP group and then completion of the supporting text descriptions by Chartered Landscape Architect Lucy Batchelor-Wylam CMLI.

CONTEXT

Brief history of the settlement

12. Thriplow parish lies 10 km. north-east of Royston and 11 km south-west of Cambridge. The land rises from 25 metres in the north and east to 50 metres in the southern corner. The north and middle parts of the parish lie on the Lower and Middle Chalk geology, overlaid with freely draining lime-rich loamy soils, with patches of Taelle Gravel on the higher ground in the south.

13. The village of Thriplow developed in a shallow valley, south-west of its church, which was built on the same elevated land on which a Bronze Age tumulus was discovered. Since medieval times it has been formed of a loose grid of lanes that served a number of manors - there were four recorded by the 14th century – The Bury, Barenton's, Bacons and Crouchmans. It has been suggested that the village's three main streets may have originated as tracks connecting the manors to the branches of the Icknield Way.
14. Today the parish of Thriplow is divided into two wards, the older village of Thriplow and Heathfield, a smaller community to the southeast, separated from the village by a belt of farmland, that was built to serve the military base at Duxford.
15. Together, the roads make a broadly ring-like form, formed by Church Street, Farm Lane, Lower Street and School Lane, with Middle Street cutting through the middle of the ring in a north-south direction. Perpendicular footpaths link the lanes east-west across the meadows that provide separation to the settled lanes.
16. The parish has continued, since medieval times, to be important for arable farming, and the fertile soils here were cultivated on a three-course rotation in open field systems around the village until enclosure in 1840. The scattered cottages along the lanes would have been added over the centuries to serve as accommodation for farm workers and together with the farm houses contribute notably to the character of the village. A number of timber-framed houses survive, including Gowards, a late medieval house altered in the early 17th century, Bassets or Bury Farm, a two-storeyed timber-framed and jettied house built in the second quarter of the 16th century, with a two-gabled extension added to the south in the 1560s, and Cochranes, a 17th-century farmhouse much altered in the 19th century.



17. The ring-like circulation pattern, where clusters of built form is interspersed with grazed pastures, remains clearly legible today. The historic pattern has been disrupted by only modest modern infill in the 20th/21st century and, on the whole, the village has experienced limited change in the 20th century and much open land remains within the village which remains key to its character.
18. Whilst infill has occurred along Church Street, Lower Lane and Middle Street, twentieth-century change is mainly focused in the northwest corner of the village where the local authority housing (1960s?) was sited north of Fowlmere Road. Here the planned runs and estates of local authority housing is a departure from the more organic character of the rest of the village, but these built forms are nevertheless a familiar sight, constructed in most East Anglian parishes in this era, and are part of the story of our villages.

Heathfield

19. Heathfield is a settlement opposite the Duxford Imperial War Museum (formerly RAF Duxford) on the A505 about a mile to the south of Thriplow village. The airfield started in 1917/18 with many of the buildings being built by German prisoners of war. Housing built for RAF staff based at Duxford followed very soon after, probably starting in the early 1920's. Houses at the eastern end were for the officers and these are in the neighbouring parish of Whittlesford. The Heathfield houses in Kingsway, Woburn Place and Whitehall Gardens (some 125 houses) were to house the 'other ranks'. They were built over a period of time, with the last houses in Kingsway dating from the 1950's & 60's. When they were no longer needed for military personnel they were sold off to private individuals. Many of these houses have since been extended and modernised by their owners which has brought some individuality to the street scenes.
20. Since the 1990's Heathfield has since seen three further modern developments, Pepperslade, Hurdles Way and Ringstone and there are now some 300 houses at Heathfield. With each of the three modern developments there were planning requirements for public open space to be provided which has resulted in a large open space to the north of Pepperslade and two smaller ones to the west of Ringstone and Hurdles Way.
21. These go some way to offsetting the environmental issues which affect the

settlement. Owing to its location alongside the busy A505 it suffers road noise and air pollution, and its eastern edge is just 1km from the M11. It also has a lack of social facilities such as a community hall, school, pub or shop. Some Heathfield families use Thriplow school and the other village facilities, but access is not easy. There is an indirect pedestrian/cycle route but otherwise travel has to be by car via the busy A505.

22. The Parish Council would like to encourage better connections between the two parts of the parish which would lead to more integration and cooperation within the parish.

POLICY

The Local Plan and landscape

23. The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan was adopted on 27th September 2018. It defines settlement boundaries whereby Thriplow village is separated into two 'clusters, and Heathfield forms a third to the southeast. The Cambridge Green Belt designation covers all the landscape around and between the three clusters (save for some small backland parcels - sometimes referred to as 'white' land).
24. The Local Plan states in relation to Green Belt: 'The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts, and this is set out in the NPPF (2012). The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, and a specific function of some Green Belts, such as the one around Cambridge, is to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns'. This designation provides a considerable level of protection to the landscape around the village in relation to future development.
25. Further protection is assigned to some of the open land within the village. Thriplow village the two settlement clusters are separated by open, grazed meadows which divide the east and west ends of School Lane into different clusters. Green spaces appears to flow through the heart of the village here. For this reason, the fringes of the open space in the middle of School Lane are designated under a policy heading 'Important countryside frontage' which identifies and values the contribution their openness makes to local character.
26. The southern half of the parish is in the Cambridge Green belt. This policy

designation protects a wide belt of land around Cambridge from development, as set out in the National Policy Planning Framework, and carried forward under policy S4 of the South Cambs Local Plan. It reiterates new development in the GreenBelt will only be approved in accordance with national policy, which states District Councils may give consent in "exceptional circumstances" as set out in para 145. This can include limited infilling or affordable housing on village edges. Local landscape character assessments are useful to help determine the appropriateness of any proposal in terms of landscape impact.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

27. Nationally, Natural England divides the country into 159 National Character Areas (NCAs). It publishes a guidance document for each area. Each profile includes a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape, and give it a unique 'sense of place'. Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) are also included which look to develop the baseline identified into a more sustainable scenario. These should be referred to in any formulation of landscape protection or enhancement policies.
28. Thriplow lies within NCA 87 East Anglian Chalk³. In brief, this describes a landscape of a visually simple, uninterrupted, open landscape of smooth, rolling chalkland hills under cereal production. The large regular fields are enclosed by low hawthorn hedges, with few trees, straight roads and sometimes expansive views to the north. It notes settlement was historically limited, but over the last 50 years towns – including the city of Cambridge – and commuter villages have grown rapidly. There is pressure for more development, which is adding to the demand for water and is likely to further reduce the tranquillity of the NCA.

³ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6417815967891456>



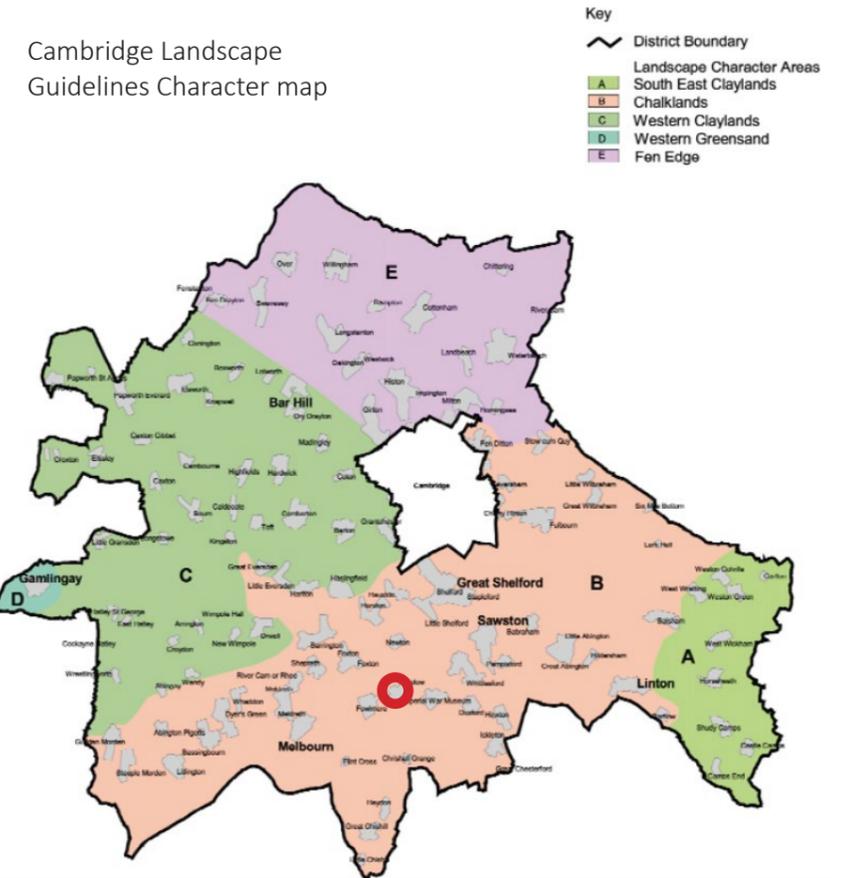
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OVERVIEW

County/district level

29. Often a district level assessment is available, from which a parish study can be developed. However, South Cambridgeshire do not have a district level assessment so it was not possible to directly develop this parish level from it. Instead, the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (1991) remain extant and constitute the baseline evaluation of landscape character in the County. The Guidelines put Thriplow into the rolling 'Chalklands' landscape type which occur to the south and south east of Cambridge extending towards Newmarket in the east and Royston in the west.
30. The assessment notes the impact long-standing settlement has had on the landscape such as Roman roads, Anglo-Saxon earthworks and the large fields resulting from medieval open farming systems. The area is described as being devoted to growing cereal crops despite the poor thin soils found here overlying the chalk. It notes a somewhat denuded, large scale, geometric agricultural landscape of wide open arable fields, broken up in the east by woodland and shelter belts but sometimes only by hedges elsewhere. Where found, trees and woodland are important for visual relief, emphasises the rolling landform and are important contributors to character, especially where they take the form of distinctive beech hangers.
31. It states the aims for improvement and management in this area should be:
 - plant new beech hangers on suitable hill tops
 - manage and recreate species-rich chalk grassland and verges
 - manage existing shelter belts to ensure their continuation
 - create new woodlands and belts to break up expanses of farmland (beech, ash, lime, hornbeam)
 - enhance river corridors, enhance systems of wet wood and meadows into species rich habitats
 - conserve, replant and manage hedgerows
 - Improve footpaths
 - Improve the corridor of the M11 with structural native planting for better visual integration
 - conserve historic linear dykes and express them in the landscape more clearly.

Character of the landscape setting

32. The setting of the village is well represented by the County description above. Thriplow village is surrounded by very gently rolling arable land arranged in large, straight sided fields. This is a result of the open field systems operated in the medieval era, late inclosure and significant modification from mid 20th century. But whilst openness is the prevailing feel, the arable landscape is interrupted by limited tree cover, arranged in narrow, linear shelter belts. Despite their relative scarcity, where present, trees have a strong impact on the visual experience.
33. The low-lying corridor of the Hoffer brook is well vegetated and cuts a more organic form through the arable lands to the east. It partly defines the parish boundary here and provides visual containment. Large trees, often sizeable poplar or willow, fringe the farmland and provide enclosure. Pockets of semi-natural wet habitats found here as well as modification from the creation of fishing ponds, add richness to an otherwise often denuded wider landscape. Public Open spaces and a footpath on the north side of at Heathfield connect into this wet corridor and offer scenic recreational opportunities.
34. The settlement pattern takes the form of vegetated settlement clusters, linked by straight roads, set within open farmland, with only very occasional scattered settlement or farmsteads in between. South of Thriplow, the moderate-scale structures at KWS agricultural seed research centre, enclosed by tree belts, interrupts the prevailing openness (as well as interrupting the natural access route between Thriplow and Heathfield). The openness is a key sensitivity of the landscape.
35. Views within the settlement tend to be confined. Longer views out to the wider landscape are only to be experienced once outside the vegetated peripheries of the village fringes. Here, the views are long to the south, contained only by the rising slopes of the distant chalk ridge to the south. Plantation and copses along the ridgeline here add interest and draw the eye. Thriplow church tower is a prominent local landmark seen on higher ground on the approach to Thriplow from the north, and in views from the footpaths to the east.
36. The parish character area descriptions that follow provide a description of the character within the settlement itself.



View over gently rolling open farmland towards ridgeline towards the southwest



Map 1: Village Character areas



These character areas were drawn up by the Neighbourhood Plan group after field-walks of the village. The areas are generally geographically assigned, and based on the road layout. Boundaries were positioned at nodal points and/or where a notable change in character was experienced. The areas were then drawn up and described with help from a professional landscape architect under agreed set headings. Each character area is described and mapped on the following pages.

Character Areas:

- TP1 - Church Street
- TP2 - Brook Road & School Lane
- TP3 - Middle Street & Farm Lane
- TP4 - The Green
- TP5 - Seralds Croft Lane & Fowlmere Road
- TP6 - Lodge Road and Lower Street
- HF1 Heathfield

Map 2: Thriplow village

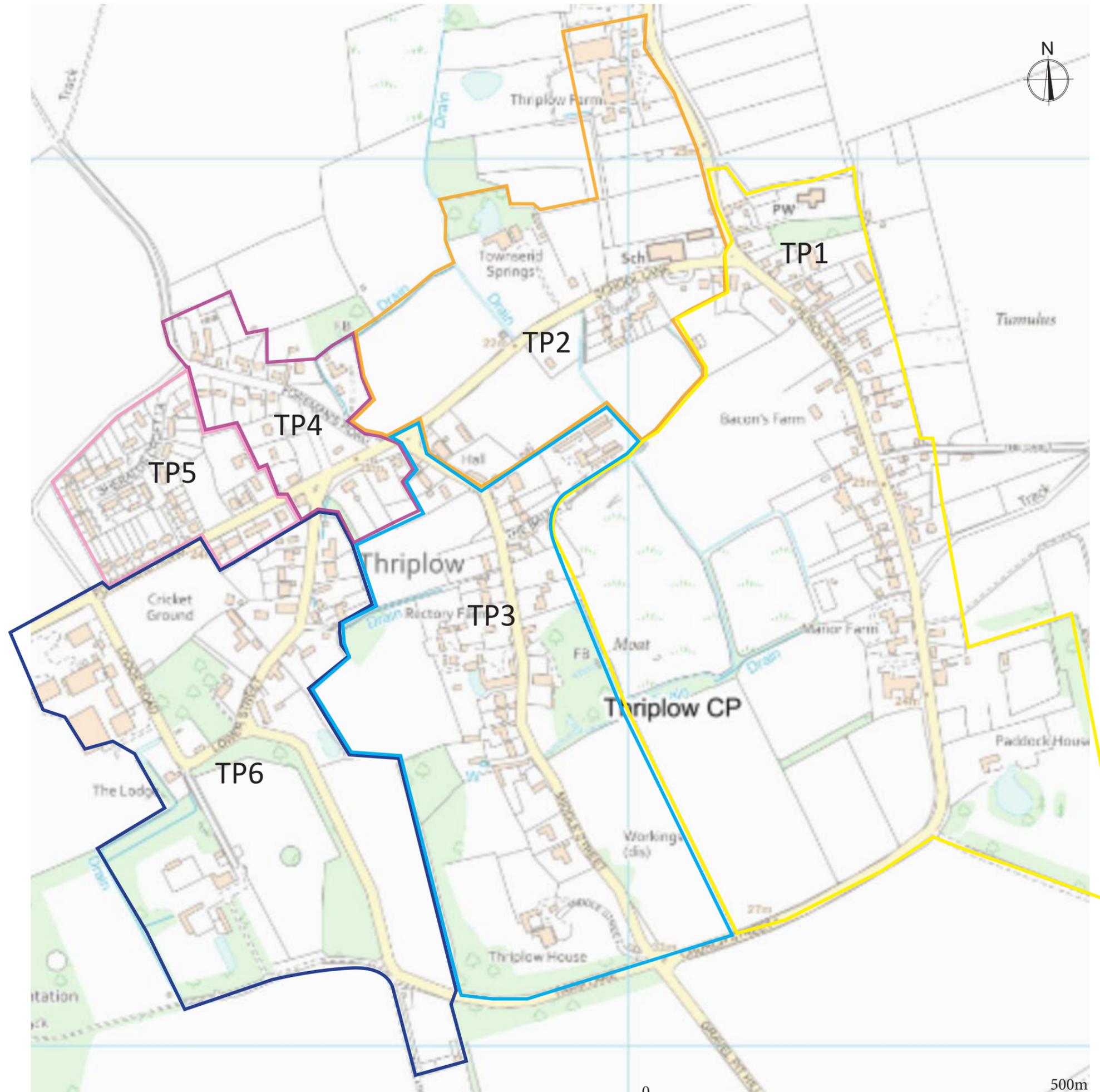
The Neighbourhood Plan group divided Thriplow village into 6 character areas.

These are each focused around a geographic part of the village, and divided where differences in the characteristics of built form and open space are felt. A further character area is assigned to Heathfield.

The outer boundaries with countryside do not necessarily relate to local plan policy boundaries but extend to include all contiguous built up areas adjacent to the village edges to assess their contribution to character. .

Character Areas:

- TP1 - Church Street
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- TP6 - Lodge Road and Lower Street



CHARACTER APPRAISAL

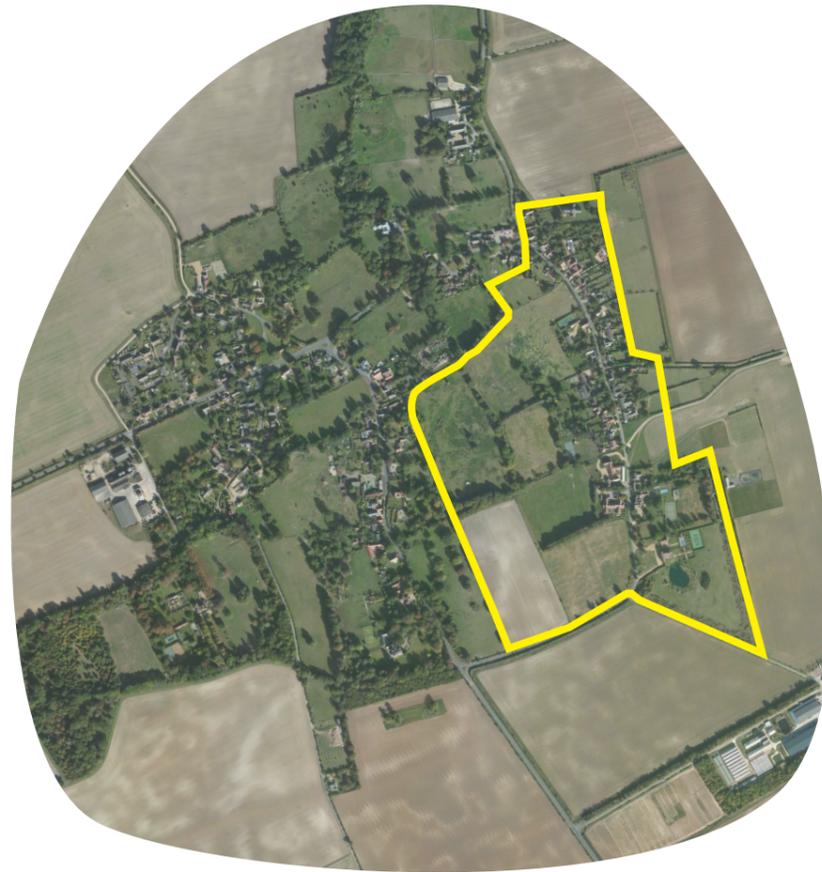
TP1 — CHURCH STREET CHARACTER AREA

Location and description

The character area takes in the loop of Church Street from just east of its junction with Middle Street in the south, to the small green at the junction with School Lane and Brook Road to the north, taking in the properties to the east of the green and the church which sits on the northern edge of the village.

Settlement here forms the eastern extents of the village, and the lane would have originally served the two old farmsteads found here. Today it comprises a mix of old and newer properties as well as a commercial (office) site, but most of its area is formed of the network of meadows that back properties on the west side of Church Street and separate it from Middle Street.

Church Street itself has a fairly flat feel, it sits between the 30m and 25m contour, but land falls almost imperceptibly to soggy meadows to the west, divided by straight drainage ditches, and rises gently to the north east to a shallow hill that is just high enough to contain longer views out to the east.



Settlement pattern and character of built form

Church Street is a very gently winding settled lane and is settled in a linear, generally 'one plot deep' arrangement of properties with well vegetated curtilages. A number of often striking historic farmhouses and cottages are scattered along the lane, often set close or directly onto the roadside, (no footways) where they contribute strongly to the historic feel. Infill by more modern properties over time has given rise to a more or less continuous building line, but where gaps are encountered, the sudden longer views into farmland or meadows are attractive and contribute to a sense of prevailing ruralness.

Twentieth century additions to the housing stock have been reasonably well absorbed into the historic pattern, disrupting it by sometimes sitting back behind the primary building line, and their presence only highlighted by modern materials on access points or curtilages. A large modern, but classic designed house - Paddock House - sits in extensive grounds at the southern end of Church Street and provides a sense of an 'gateway' to the village on the southern approach.

Materials are mixed but rendered timber framed houses are the historic vernacular. Roofs are a mix of plain tiles, with some thatch. More recent additions to the housing stock are of mixed architectural merit, and have expanded the range of materials now seen.

Trees are important along the lane and along with grass banks, hedges and shrubs they provide softening and strengthen the rural, village edge feel.

Open spaces and interactions with settlement

The pattern of open space and settlement is distinctive in Thriplow; here a wide belt of small and medium sized meadows separate the historic Middle and Church Streets and provide a rural backdrop and setting, often grazed by sheep. Equine land use is also present. Fringed with trees the meadows offer only occasional glimpses of other parts of the village in summer conditions.

Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

There are 12 listed buildings, including 3 no. Grade two star listed, several of which are attractive thatched cottages. The character area is entirely in the Conservation Area. Two historic farmsteads Bacons Farm and Manor farm have associated clusters of barns and out buildings. Much of the area is therefore highly sensitive in heritage terms.

Footpaths connect into Church Street at intervals from the east and west. Church Street forms part of the resulting circular walks highly valued by villagers.

Perceptual and visual experience - important views

The overriding sense is of a quiet, narrow village edge lane set in a pastoral backdrop - views into meadows both from the south and from north of Bacons Farm are important for conveying this sense of ruralness and should be preserved.



View westwards into meadows, just north of Bacons Farm. Trees help screen the rest of the village from view



Much less of a 'street' than a quiet lane



Historic buildings make important contribution



The grand Paddock House provides a sense of arrival from the south

CHARACTER APPRAISAL

TP2 — BROOK ROAD & SCHOOL LANE CHARACTER AREA

Location and description

The character area is in the north east corner of the village and takes in Brook Road from Thriplow Farm on the far northern edges of the village, and then west along School Lane into the heart of the village as far as the triangular green at the junction with Middle Street.

Land use in the character area is mainly pasture, poorly drained land that is associated with the little brook, which rises in the streams and ditches that divide the damp meadows in the centre of the village, before flowing northwards to join the Hoffer Brook at Newton. These pastures form part of the 'streetscene' at the heart of the village.

Settlement here is sparse and this part of the village comprises only a small number of dwellings in addition to the farmstead and the school.

The land has a flat feel, sits on and around the 25m contour, Brook Road rising briefly where it rides over the toe of the shallow hill found east of the Church Street junction, slightly elevated land on which St George church is sited so it forms a landmark in views from the north.



Settlement pattern and character of built form

Old maps show that historically Brook and School Road were not settled - the school was the first built form to appear in the late 1860s on the north/west side of the road. Thriplow Farm and other dwellings were added in the 20th century - Pigeons Close is a small low density late twentieth century housing estate set within maturing trees that is relatively unobtrusive. Townsend Springs is a large house set within tree cover in extensive grounds.

The original parts of the Victorian school buildings are buff brick with red brick detailing. Recent additions use brick and render.

Open spaces and interactions with settlement

The built areas of the village are permeable to belts of countryside which pass right through it. Pastures form the dominant land use and sit between and behind the built form. Often lined by hedges, scattered with large trees, and sometimes grazed by cattle or sheep they convey a strong sense of ruralness and historic continuity and are a key contributor to the sense of Thriplow's distinctiveness.

Links with Thriplow Meadows (SSSI) to the north, wet meadow known for its marsh orchids.

Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

There are no listed buildings in this character area although the northern edges of the village falls within the setting of Grade II* St. George's Church which sits to the east.

Much of the village edge falls within the villages extensive Conservation Area. The open spaces that separate clusters of built form are considered as much part of the historic character of the village as the built form.

There are no footpaths but access is permitted into Thriplow Meadows

Perceptual and visual experience - important views

Approach from the north dominated by estate farm feel at Thriplow Farm with well managed hedges and a large swathe of equestrian land use. The church sits prominently on the skyline on the approach to the village edge and is a key landmark. The rest of the village is generally out of sight.



View along School Lane towards village centre



Parkland-scale trees glimpsed in meadows



Cattle undertake 'conservation' grazing



Low density late 20th century housing at Pigeons Close



Thriplow Primary School



The Chauffeurs Cottage



PARISH CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

CHARACTER APPRAISAL

TP3 — MIDDLE STREET & FARM LANE CHARACTER AREA

Location and description

The character area covers the centre and south of the village and takes in Middle Street from its junction with Church Street in the south, to the small green at its junction with School Lane to the north. Wider than Church Street it forms the main route into the village from the south.

It comprises often large properties in deep plots either side of the road, and includes properties on The Baulk in the north, a small lane that serves a small holding on the east side.

Much of the character area is comprised of the network of small meadows that back the settlement.

The land has a flat feel, sits on and around the 25m contour.



Settlement pattern and character of built form

Middle Street is a gently winding road with settlement arranged at low density along it. It originally served farms spaced at intervals along the street - three are mapped in 1905. Farmhouses and agricultural complexes and conversions continue to shape the street scene, (unconverted farmyard at Rectory Farm) often arranged with the gables onto the street and enclosed by brick or flint walls. Characteristic detail on barns adds distinctiveness. Vernacular materials are plain and pan-tiled roofs, white rendered houses, flint garden walls, some cottages have slate roofs.

Open spaces and interactions with settlement

A historic pattern of small pastures still surround the farms, often lined by hedges and with scattered picturesque old trees. Extensive orchards, shown on late 19th century maps, have since been lost. The Pastures sit between and behind the built form and are sometimes part of the 'streetscene'. Mature trees mark garden curtilages and play a strong role in the skyline such as the pines at Rectory Farm.

Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

The character area is highly sensitive from a heritage point of view. There are 7 listed buildings. The existing house at Thriplow Manor (Grade II*) now sits slightly to the west of the site of the original Barentons manor house which was enclosed by a moat and around which settlement developed. Towards is a Listed Grade II house on the west side of Middle st, with a fine unpollarded oak tree in front garden.

The area falls entirely within the extensive Conservation Area. The open spaces that separate clusters of built form are included and are considered as much part of the historic character of the village as the built form.

There are two footpaths from Middle Street connecting west to Church Street though the meadows which offer highly valued amenity and opportunity for circular routes..

Perceptual and visual experience - important views

Gently winding approach into village from south (A505) enters through tunnel-like tree cover, which contains and conceals the village from view on the approach. Sense of affluence on route to village centre from large properties and leafy grounds. Smaller modern or gentrified houses are found closer to the village centre which have in filled road side gaps.

The village is gradually revealed as the road continues to wind towards the village centre. Glimpses into pastures at intervals, often grazed by sheep, are important for defining local character and conveys a strong sense of ruralness and historic continuity.



Agricultural buildings form part of the street scene



Sheep grazing in the centre of the village



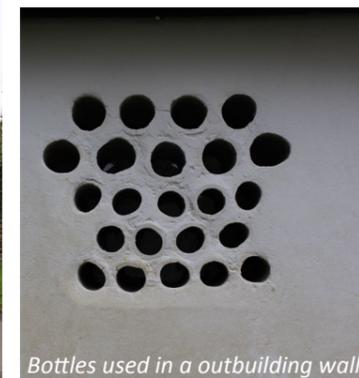
The tree lined approach from the south



Thriplow Village Hall



Thriplow Manor in extensive gardens



Bottles used in a outbuilding wall



PARISH CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

CHARACTER APPRAISAL

TP4 — THE GREEN

Location and description

This a small character area is in the north of the village and is focused around the historic Green, the triangular form of which is bisected and defined by Foreman's Road, and by the main Fowlmere Road along its southern edge. It includes the junction with Lower Street, onto which the Green Man pub faces.

The Green features a little historic Smithy which acts a local landmark on the front of the Green which is lined by trees. The village War Memorial faces on the opposite side of the main road.

A small number of properties sit back off the Green, in well vegetated plots. The character area continues north along Foremans Road and ends at the sharp bend (into 20th century Sheralds Croft) where a small farmstead is found behind two roadside cottages.



Settlement pattern and character of built form

The Settlement pattern is loose arrangement of houses scattered around the Green, mainly 17th to 19th century, with occasional modern additions which have been made to look traditional. Roofs of plain Cambs clay tiles and of greyish brick and render. No recent development is found in this area.

Houses are usually concealed within spacious plots with mature trees and hedges, which knit together visually to create a sense of enclosure.

Open spaces and interactions with built form

The unenclosed Green is dotted with trees and helps create a spacious and leafy character at the centre of the village with built form pushed to its edges. It is designated 'Local Green Space' in the Local Plan)

Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

There are two listed dwellings on the western side of the Green and the War Memorial and the Smithy on the Green are listed. Apart from the northern fringes of the character area, it is entirely within the Conservation Area. It would be considered very sensitive in heritage and landscape terms.

Perceptual and visual experience - important views

The Green has an enclosed feel and views out to the wider countryside are not easily experienced in the flat contours.

The over riding sense in this character areas is of a well kept village, with few modern additions from recent decades, with facilities and services on hand with a strong sense of historic continuity.



Distinctive tiling pattern on these two cottage roofs



The community owned pub



The Smithy is a listed building occupying the front of the Green

CHARACTER APPRAISAL

TP5 — SHERALDS CROFT & FOWLMERE ROAD CHARACTER AREA

Location and description

This is a small character area in the northwest corner of the village comprising 20th century housing built on the north side of Fowlmere Road on the village edge, and on land behind, accessed west of Foremans Lane, known as Sheralds Croft Lane. This residential area forms the gateway access point into the village from the west.

Land use enclosing the character area is simple open arable farmland laid out in very large fields.



Settlement pattern and character of built form

This is the most 'modern' part of the village where the settlement pattern is a result of the 1970s era local authority estate planning and has a less distinctive character.

Here the settlement form is compact and straight edged and density is higher than other parts of the village, although still generous by today's standards - the semi-detached houses and bungalows have good sized plots. The arrangement is notably more regularised and geometric than the more piecemeal and organic settlement growth in the rest of the village.

Sheralds Croft Lane and Fowlmere Road have council and private dwellings of one and two storeys - some of which have been enlarged after being privatised. There is a mixture of materials: brick, render, timber cladding.

Open spaces and interactions with built form

There are small areas of communal green space and deep grassed road verges within Sheralds Croft Lane that are often integrated with parking and pedestrian links.

Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

There are no listed buildings and the area is entirely excluded from the Conservation Area.

There is an important pedestrian link between Sheralds Croft and Fowlmere Road that passes beside the sheltered housing units.

Perceptual and visual experience - important views

A somewhat less distinctive feel in these roads given the more generic 1960s architecture, which was common to most villages in this era. Fowlmere is quite a wide road and there is a sense of openness - the cricket pitch opposite and the long straight stretch of Fowlmere road allows longer uninterrupted views.



The village edge viewed from farmland towards Sheralds Croft Lane



View along Sheralds Croft



Local authority built houses on north side of Fowlmere Road



Converted bungalows on south side of Fowlmere Road



CHARACTER APPRAISAL

TP6 — LODGE ROAD AND LOWER STREET CHARACTER AREA

Location and description

This is one of the larger character areas and comprises the western and south western edge of the village.

It features only a few dwellings on Lower Street which leads southwest from the pub/Green. The character area includes the village cricket pitch and includes Thriplow Farm's large grain storage yard with its substantial scale agricultural buildings. Some smaller buildings in the yard are being used as a car repair business. (The site is the ongoing subject of housing development applications.)

Thriplow Place is a grand country house on the site of a medieval manor and occupies large partly formal grounds that form the southwest corner of the village. Beyond this to the south lies open farmland.



Settlement pattern and character of built form

Settlement is sparse, except for a scattering of houses along the narrow and gently winding route of Lower Street. The exception is Thriplow Bury, a grand house which occupies grounds in the south-west edge of the village, and its estate cottages which sit on the roadside. A house was first recorded here in 1279 and its extensive private grounds continue to dominate the character of this corner of the village, although the house itself is generally out of sight.

The large structures and buildings of the Grain store site dominate the skyline along the western edge of the village and form a distinctive backdrop to the cricket grounds.

Open spaces and interactions with built form

Undeveloped land makes up most of this character area, the grounds of Thriplow Place, and meadows, the cricket pitch. The amount of tree cover is relatively high and the area often feels wooded and enclosed.

Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

There are 11 listed structures or dwellings - Thriplow Place is a Grade II* part-17th-century timber-framed house now substantially altered and restored. This and its grounds are included within the Conservation Area which covers most of the character area except the grainstore/farm yard. Parts of the area would therefore be considered very sensitive in heritage and landscape terms.

Perceptual and visual experience - important views

The feel here is very wooded, with lanes often enclosed by tall hedges and trees. Woodland blocks on the west side of the village provide visual containment and prevent longer views. The associated estate cottages of Thriplow House on Lodge Lane convey the status of the house otherwise generally concealed within its grounds.

The grainstore, whilst not particularly attractive site, is nevertheless a distinctive collection of buildings and significant for reminding of the dominance and importance of agriculture, and the reason for the evolution of Thriplow into an affluent village with its substantial stock of listed buildings and grand houses.



View to the Grainstore over the cricket pitch



Estate cottage



Modern addition on Lower Lane



CHARACTER APPRAISAL

HF1 — HEATHFIELD CHARACTER AREA

Location

This character area takes in the whole of the Heathfield residential area and its associated public open spaces. It is associated with the campus of Duxford Imperial War Museum which lies adjacent, either side of the A505. Duxford was an RAF airfield, built at the end of World War I, opening in 1919 as a Flying Training School. It continued to be important through WWII and into the Cold War era until its closure in 1961.

The area was not historically a settled part of the parish, but was first developed for housing sometime around the 1960s/70s, after the closure of the airfield. Approx. 125 houses were built by the local authority, and later were sold off to private individuals. The residential area is built tightly along the southeast boundary of Thriplow parish. It's physically connected to the ex-military campus to the east, but this falls into the parish of Whittlesford and is not included in the character assessment.



Settlement pattern and character of built form

The Settlement pattern has a planned estate feel and comprises three main phases of expansion. The original residential roads were Kingsway, Woburn Place and Whitehall Gardens. Pepperslade was added later on the east side and more recently predominantly flats in Hurdles Way and Ringstone on the west side, built only in the last decade.

As the houses were built in planned phases, there is a uniformity in design and layout and materials in each zone. Brick and concrete tiles dominate the palette of materials.

In the centre of the residential zone there is commercial land use which feels somewhat out of place and associated fencing and car parking are visual detractors.

Open spaces and interactions with built form

Although the form of the settlement is tight, there are a number of small open green spaces found within in the residential areas that were mostly designed in - for example the semicircular green at the centre of Whitehall Place. These are important for providing space and opportunities for tree planting. Some are under pressure from car parking.

The residential area is somewhat inward looking and views out to countryside are not easily experienced. Much reduced sense of ruralness compared to the main village.



New flats on Ringstone



The original housing stock on Whitehall Gardens



Heathfield has two large recreational greenspaces



Modern flats on Hurdles Way

Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

There are no listed buildings and there is no Conservation Area here.

There are two area of recreational open space on the edges of Heathfield which are highly valued. A footpath also leads into countryside to the north which has woodland, farmland and a series of ponds. It also offers a pedestrian link to Thriplow but which is somewhat indirect. There is also a footpath link from Ringstone green space which heads west towards the KWS site that sits between Thriplow village and Heathfield.

Access between areas of housing built in different decades is poor. The Pepperslade residential area connects through to Heathfield only via a single narrow and awkward gap in a wall. There are problems of separation both between Heathfield and Thriplow main village, but also between different area of Heathfield itself.

Perceptual and visual experience - important views

Heathfield has a less affluent feel than the main village. It has a number of environmental issues and suffers a good deal of road noise from the busy A505 along its southern boundary to the south, and from the M11 which lies only a kilometer or so to the east.

The over-riding sense is of an estate with somewhat more suburban feel and with disconnection between its different zones. There are few opportunities for rural views owing to enclosure by trees along its boundaries with the countryside.

