

# Runnymede 2030

## Green Belt Village Review

### *Stage 1 Update*



January 2018

*This page is intentionally blank*

# Contents

- 1. Introduction & Policy Context ..... 1**
  - The Green Belt in Runnymede ..... 1
  - Purpose of the Review ..... 1
  - Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts..... 1
  - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) ..... 2
  - Runnymede Local Plan: Saved Policies 2007 ..... 3
  - Green Belt Evidence ..... 3
- 2. Comparative Studies..... 5**
- 3. Methodology ..... 8**
  - Defining Villages in the Green Belt ..... 8
  - Green Belt Review Criteria ..... 9
  - Review Stages .....10
- 4. Green Belt Assessment .....14**
  - Stage 1.....14
  - Stage 2.....19
  - Stages 3 & 4.....22
  - Stage 5.....24
  - Stage 6.....25
  - Appendix A: Areas not Subject to Further Consideration .....26
  - Appendix B: Plans of Areas for Further Consideration.....33
  - Appendix C: Assessment of Character of Green Belt Villages & Impact on Openness ..37
  - Appendix D: Plan & Photos of Assessment Area.....51
  
- Table 2-1: Comparison Studies ..... 5**
- Table 3-1: Description of Openness within Village Boundary.....11**
- Table 3-2: Description of Openness within Surrounding Green Belt.....12**
- Table 4-1: Excluded Areas .....14**
- Table 4-2: Areas for Further Consideration - Lyne.....17**
- Table 4-3: Areas for Further Consideration -Stroude .....17**
- Table 4-4 – Areas for Further Consideration -Thorpe .....18**
- Table 4-5: Summary of Thorpe Village Assessment.....23**
  
- Plan 4-1: Extent of Runnymede Local Plan Saved Policy GB2 .....20**
- Plan 4-2: Extent of Thorpe Character Areas .....21**
- Plan 4-3: Boundary for Reviewing the Character of Thorpe Village .....22**



# 1. Introduction & Policy Context

## The Green Belt in Runnymede

- 1.1 The Green Belt in Runnymede forms part of the wider area of strategic Green Belt which runs around and within the outer edge of London including neighbouring authority areas within Surrey. The Green Belt in Surrey was first designated through the Surrey Development Plan 1958 and was subsequently confirmed in Runnymede through the 1986 Borough Local Plan. Aside from some minor transfers of land to the neighbouring authority of Windsor & Maidenhead in 1991 and transfer from the Borough of Spelthorne in 1997, the extent of Green Belt in Runnymede remains the same as confirmed in 1986<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 At the time of the current Local Plan (2001), Green Belt designation covers some 79% of the Borough of Runnymede within which lies the main urban settlement areas of Addlestone, Chertsey and Egham, along with the smaller settlements of Englefield Green, New Haw, Virginia Water, Woodham and the village of Ottershaw. The 1988 Department of Environment (DOE) booklet *The Green Belts*, states that the western sector of the London Green Belt, within which Runnymede lies is one of the most fragmented.

## Purpose of the Review

- 1.3 The purpose of this review is to determine whether any of the areas of built development which lie outside of designated settlements in Runnymede should be considered a 'village' and if so, whether they should remain within ('washed over') or excluded from the Green Belt.
- 1.4 Unlike the general extent of the Green Belt in Runnymede, there is specific advice in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out how villages within the Green Belt should be treated for planning purposes. As such, this review is different (but complementary) to the general reviews of the Green Belt undertaken on behalf of the Borough Council by Arup. This review only considers whether the area within the envelope of a village should or should not be excluded from the Green Belt and not whether a village should be extended into the Green Belt. This would be dealt with by other guidance on reviewing Green Belt boundaries set out in the NPPF.

## Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts

- 1.5 Whilst superseded the national Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: *Green Belts* (PPG2) is useful for context in terms of how national policy on treating villages within Green Belt areas has changed. Paragraph 2.6 of PPG2 set out that once Green Belt boundaries have been defined in Local Plans they should only be altered exceptionally and paragraph 2.10 went on to state that when drawing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development.
- 1.6 Paragraph 2.11 of PPG2 set out how existing villages in the Green Belt should be treated. It set out that villages could be treated in one of three ways, either
- If no new building is allowed other than for agriculture/forestry, essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and limited extension/alteration or

---

<sup>1</sup> Runnymede Green Belt Review (2014) Arup. Available at: <https://www.runnymede.gov.uk/article/9200/Green-Belt-policy-documents-and-guidance>

replacement of existing dwellings, then the village should be included in the Green Belt and the Green Belt designation carried across or 'washed over'.

- If infilling only is proposed, the village should either be 'washed over' and listed in the plan or should be inset (excluded) from the Green Belt.
- If limited development or limited expansion is proposed the village should be inset from the Green Belt.

1.7 In the first bullet above, a village 'washed over' by the Green Belt is subject to normal national Green Belt policies on the restriction of development save for a few exceptions. In the second bullet, local authorities could draw a boundary around a Green Belt village, list it in the Local Plan and allow infill development as well as the normal Green Belt exceptions or they could exclude the village altogether but only allow infill and the exceptions rather than treat the village as settlement. In the third bullet, a village can be excluded from the Green Belt which would allow limited redevelopment or expansion opportunities.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>2</sup>**

1.8 In 2012 the National Planning Policy Framework replaced the suite of Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Statements, including the note on Green Belts into a single streamlined document. Much of the guidance on Green Belt in the NPPF is the same or similar to PPG2, in terms of the restrictive nature of Green Belts to development. However, there are some differences with respect to how villages in Green Belt areas should be treated.

1.9 Like PPG2 paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that once established Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances through the review of the Local Plan and paragraph 84 that if reviewing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. Paragraph 85 sets out criteria which should be taken into account when defining Green Belt boundaries.

1.10 Paragraph 86 of the NPPF sets out how villages in the Green Belt should be treated and states that: -

*'If it is necessary to prevent development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.'*

1.11 As such, whether a village should be included or excluded from the Green Belt now rests on the contribution that the open character of a village has on the openness of the Green Belt, rather than defining a village in the Green Belt in terms of the restriction of certain types of development. In terms of 'openness', the courts have held that it is epitomised by land that is not built upon and can include factors relevant to the visual impact on openness<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>2</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (2012) CLG. Available at: <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> Heath & Hampstead Society v London Borough of Camden [2007] EWHC 977 (Admin) & Turner vs East Dorset Council [2015] EWHC 2788 (Admin)



## **Runnymede Local Plan: Saved Policies 2007<sup>4</sup>**

- 1.12 The Runnymede Local Plan was adopted in 2001 and was prepared with regard to the now superseded national Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Statements. The majority of the policies in the 2001 Local Plan were saved in 2007 and are still in force and a material consideration in determining planning applications. The saved Green Belt policies in the Local Plan are largely consistent with the now superseded PPG2 and include policies for the control of development within the Green Belt including specific policies for the settlement of Thorpe which is 'washed over' by the Green Belt, the Wentworth Estate and Hurst Lane, Stroude.
- 1.13 In relation to the settlement of Thorpe, although the settlement is 'washed over' by the Green Belt, saved Policy GB2 of the 2001 Local Plan allows infilling, appropriate small-scale community, service or employment facilities and small-scale housing developments. The range of allowable development set out in Policy GB2 therefore goes beyond that which was set out in national policy at the time in PPG2. The Local Plan Policies Map shows the extent of the settlement of Thorpe where saved Policy GB2 applies. Those areas in the settlement of Thorpe not covered by saved Policy GB2 are subject to national Green Belt policy restrictions as set out in the NPPF.
- 1.14 Policy GB12 covers the Wentworth Estate and sets out that due to the special character of the estate Green Belt policies will apply and that the part of the estate that lies within the settlement area will have density controlled by Policy H09. Policy GB13 covers Hurst Lane, Stroude and states that despite the unusual plot size and shape of residential curtilages, the Borough will apply Green Belt policy, with no infilling allowed.

## **Green Belt Evidence**

- 1.15 In gathering evidence for its new Local Plan, Arup on behalf of Runnymede Borough Council has undertaken Green Belt Reviews<sup>5</sup>. The Stage 1 Review considered whether the Green Belt in Runnymede still fulfilled its purposes as set out in paragraph 80 of the NPPF, that is:
- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
  - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
  - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 1.16 The review split the Green Belt into separate land parcels which were then assessed against a set of criteria that Arup developed in collaboration with the Council and in consultation with Duty to Cooperate partners. The assessment scored each land parcel in terms of how well it met the purposes of the Green Belt as set out in paragraph 80 of the NPPF.
- 1.17 The Green Belt review considered land parcels without taking account of any constraints but further refined the parcels after a general review to take account of absolute and non-absolute constraints. A number of parcels included areas of the Green Belt which contain a greater degree of built development than would normally be

---

<sup>4</sup> Runnymede Local Plan 2001 Saved Policies (2007) RBC. Available at: <https://www.runnymede.gov.uk/article/5238/Local-Plan-2001-Current>

<sup>5</sup> Runnymede Stages 1 & 2 Green Belt Reviews (2014) & (2017) Arup. Available at: <https://www.runnymede.gov.uk/article/11311/Green-Belt-Review>

expected, but the review did not consider whether they should be excluded from the Green Belt with respect to paragraph 86 of the NPPF. Therefore for completeness and to compliment the Arup work, this review considers whether these areas should continue to be 'washed over' by the Green Belt or excluded. It is considered that should an area not meet the tests as set out in paragraph 86 of the NPPF for its continued inclusion within the Green Belt, that this would constitute the 'exceptional circumstances' required by paragraph 83 to alter Green Belt boundaries around these locations. If it was deemed necessary to alter boundaries, this would be done in accordance with Paragraphs 83, 84 and 85 of the NPPF.



## 2. Comparative Studies

- 2.1 In order to consider an appropriate methodology for assessing Green Belt settlement areas in line with paragraph 86 of the NPPF, a review of comparative studies was undertaken to check whether a consistent approach has been established elsewhere. There are relatively few studies undertaken in other local authority areas for comparison and in total four other studies were identified, two of which have been undertaken for other authority areas in Surrey. Table 2-1 sets out details of the comparator studies.

**Table 2-1: Comparison Studies**

Authority Area	Study Methodology
<p>Guildford Borough Council</p> <p>Guildford Green Belt &amp; Countryside Study (2013)<sup>6</sup> Volume IV</p> <p>Undertaken by Pegasus Planning</p>	<p>Several stages to consider villages washed over by the Green Belt including –</p> <p>Stage 1 – Assess the degree of openness within each village by considering urban form, density and extent of developed land.</p> <p>Stage 2 – Assess surroundings of and potential new Green Belt boundaries for each village.</p> <p>Stage 3 – Assess suitability of each village for inseting and defining potential boundaries with the following criteria:</p> <p>Does the majority of the village exhibit open character?</p> <p>Do open areas within the village generally appear continuous with surrounding open land beyond the village – from within/or outside the village?</p> <p>Do the majority of the village edges exhibit incomplete, indistinguishable boundaries that would not permit the provision of new Green Belt boundaries in accordance with the requirements of NPPF paragraph 85.</p> <p>If responses to the criteria were all positive then the village was not considered suitable for inseting from the Green Belt and if all negative then the village was considered suitable for inseting.</p>
<p>Selby District Council</p> <p>A Study of the Green Belt, Strategic Countryside Gaps, Safeguarded Land and Development Limits for Plan Selby: Method Statement for Villages Affected by the Green</p>	<p>Considers villages in the Green Belt which could be inset. The methodology is based on assessing the openness of villages and involves a number of stages including:</p> <p>Stage 1 – Identify all villages in the Green Belt to be considered in the assessment;</p> <p>Stage 2 – Identify current defined settlement boundaries for a village on a plan.</p>

<sup>6</sup> Available at: <http://www.guildford.gov.uk/gbcs>

Authority Area	Study Methodology
<p>Belt: Determining Their Status Within or Outside the Green Belt (2015)<sup>7</sup></p> <p>Undertaken by Arup</p>	<p>Stage 3 – Review and map the degree of openness within the village based on density of development – Is the majority of the village considered to be open in character? Suggested criteria include:</p> <p>Low – Area has open character with infrequent buildings  Medium – Area has a built character with frequent open spaces forming notable elements  High – Area dominated by built form with little open space</p> <p>Stage 4 – Review and map the relationship of the village with the Green Belt</p> <p>Stage 5 – Decide whether the village is to be inset or ‘washed over’.</p> <p>Stage 6 – Identify new ‘development limit’ and Green Belt boundary if village is to be inset.</p>
<p>Woking Borough Council</p> <p>Woking Green Belt Review (2013)<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Undertaken by Peter Brett Associates</p>	<p>Review of the entire Green Belt in terms of qualitative analysis by assessing the Green Belt against each of the purposes set out in the NPPF against the following criteria:</p> <p>Critical Importance - Where land is ‘Fundamental’ to the Purpose, justifying its continued retention and protection within Green Belt.</p> <p>Major Importance - Land is of Major Importance to the Green Belt and Development would substantially conflict with the purposes of the GB.</p> <p>Moderate Importance - Where land is of ‘Moderate’ importance to the Green Belt Purpose, and where development would conflict significantly with it.</p> <p>Slight/Negligible - Where land is of Minor/Negligible’ importance to the Green Belt Purpose, and where development would have limited/negligible conflict with it.</p> <p>No Importance - Land where development would have no impact on this purpose of Green Belt.</p> <p>Study considers landscape character to assess ability of the landscape to accommodate change which informs openness and reaching conclusions around safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment.</p> <p>Provides general recommendations for inseting/washing over.</p>

<sup>7</sup> Available at:

[http://www.selby.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/150622\\_Method\\_Statement\\_for\\_determining\\_status\\_of\\_Green\\_Belt\\_in\\_Villages.pdf](http://www.selby.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/150622_Method_Statement_for_determining_status_of_Green_Belt_in_Villages.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Available at: <http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/policy/ldfresearch/greenbeltreview>

Authority Area	Study Methodology
Vale of White Horse District Council Green Belt Review (2014) <sup>9</sup> Phase 1 & 2 Undertaken by Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd/Terra Firma Consultancy	Review of the entire Green Belt in the Vale of White Horse with a section on villages for inclusions as inset settlements in the Green Belt. Although no specific criteria identified, the review considered whether a village was 'open' in nature and contributed to the openness of adjoining land in the Green Belt.

2.2 As such, from the comparator studies highlighted in Table 2-1 it would appear that the majority have based their methodology on assessing the openness of a Green Belt settlement and its relationship with the openness of the Green Belt rather than based on landscape value.

---

<sup>9</sup> Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?>

### 3. Methodology

#### Defining Villages in the Green Belt

- 3.1 Within the Green Belt in Runnymede there are a number of areas of built development which are 'washed over' or within the Green Belt. Paragraph 86 of the NPPF sets out whether a village should be included or excluded from the Green Belt in terms of its open character and effect on the openness of the Green Belt. It should be noted that the PPG uses the term 'village' and as such, paragraph 86 would not apply to all forms of built development 'washed over' by or within the Green Belt.
- 3.2 Therefore it is important to consider the definition of a 'village' for NPPF paragraph 86 purposes, or settlement areas washed over by the Green Belt which could function as a village.
- 3.3 There is no national guidance on how to categorise settlements. According to the Oxford English Dictionary a village is defined as '*a group of houses and associated buildings, larger than a hamlet and smaller than a town, situated in a rural area*' and the definition of a hamlet is '*A small settlement, generally one smaller than a village and strictly (in Britain) one without a Church*'. The National Geographic website<sup>10</sup> defines a village as '*A village is a small settlement usually found in a rural setting. It is generally larger than a hamlet, but smaller than a town. Some geographers specifically define a village as having between 500 and 2,500 inhabitants*'.
- 3.4 The Office of National Statistics (ONS) has prepared the latest Rural-Urban classification, published in August 2013 and based on 2011 data. The Rural-Urban classification is used to distinguish rural and urban areas in the UK. Page 17 of the Rural-Urban Classification User Guide<sup>11</sup> sets out the difference between a hamlet and a village. It states that a hamlet is based on the convention in historical geography of a cluster of three to eight farmsteads which may be augmented with additional properties. A village however contains a clear core and is defined on a distinctive density profile rather than the size of the population.
- 3.5 Page 17 of the User Guide also states that some small clusters of properties are neither hamlets nor villages but could be traditional rural settlement forms, isolated dwellings or small groups of dwellings such as single terraces associated with former mining or rural industrial activity or more recent forms such as retirement villages.
- 3.6 The South East Plan also included some guidance on defining types of settlement/service centres. Although the South East Plan has been revoked, its approach to settlement hierarchy is a useful guide. Supporting text to the now revoked Policy BE5 of the South East Plan, defined a village as settlements with populations less than 3,000.
- 3.7 Another way to consider whether an area is or functions as a village is in terms of the services and facilities it provides to the local community. Those areas which may be somewhat developed but lack a range of services are unlikely to function as a village or a settlement which functions like a village. Again there is no guidance on the level of service provision, however, services and facilities could include local convenience

---

<sup>10</sup> <http://education.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/village/>

<sup>11</sup> The 2011 Rural-Urban Classification for Small Area Geographies: A User Guide and Frequently Asked Questions (v1.0) (2013) ONS. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/2011-rural-urban-classification>

shops/post office, school, place of worship, village/community hall, public house, local health facilities etc.

- 3.8 At an early stage certain patterns of development will be excluded from further consideration simply because they would not be large enough or have enough critical mass to function as a village or because they have no services/facilities of their own. Exclusions also include development in the Green Belt which adjoin settlement boundaries or where there is no clear boundary or edge between a settlement and the built form. These areas function more as a continuation of the settlement rather than a separate area.
- 3.9 For those patterns of built development which could be considered as villages or settlements which function as villages, these will be tested against whether they could realistically be considered a 'village' for NPPF paragraph 86 purposes, in terms of their form, population and service provision.
- 3.10 As not all built areas within the Green Belt will correspond to a specific ward, the population count will be estimated based on the number of dwellings in a developed area multiplied by the average household size for that particular ward as at the 2011 census. The population count will be taken from the areas chosen for further consideration as defined on plans set out in Appendix B.

### **Green Belt Review Criteria**

- 3.11 The starting point for considering whether a village should be 'washed over' by the Green Belt or excluded is set out in paragraph 86 of the NPPF which states:  
  
*'If it is necessary to prevent development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.'*
- 3.12 As such, it is the open character of a village and the contribution it makes to the openness of the Green Belt which needs to be considered in determining whether it should be 'washed over' or excluded. Therefore it will be important to prepare a methodology which can define the open character of a village and openness in terms of its impact on the Green Belt.
- 3.13 The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) publication *Planning on the Doorstep: The Big Issues – Green Belt*<sup>12</sup> considers that a review of the Green Belt should focus on the 5 purposes as set out in paragraph 80 of the NPPF and states that '*The strict application of the Green Belt purposes would also mean, therefore, that the quality of the landscape of an area **should not be a consideration** when assessing the contribution of Green Belt to the fulfilment of Green Belt purposes*'
- 3.14 The PAS publication therefore further reinforces that the focus should be on assessing openness and not landscape quality and as such this methodology has sought to develop criteria based on the comparative studies which focussed on openness.
- 3.15 This methodology proposes a number of stages for assessing the open character of a village and the contribution that it makes (or not) to the openness of the Green Belt.

---

<sup>12</sup> Planning on the Doorstep: The Big Issues – Green Belt (2015) Planning Advisory Service. Available at: [http://www.pas.gov.uk/councillors-page/-/journal\\_content/56/332612/6209939/ARTICLE](http://www.pas.gov.uk/councillors-page/-/journal_content/56/332612/6209939/ARTICLE)

## **Review Stages**

### **Stage 1**

- 3.16 The first stage will identify developed areas in Runnymede which are currently ‘washed over’ by (included within) the Green Belt and which could be considered ‘villages’ or ‘settlements which function as a village’ for the purposes of NPPF paragraph 86. Paragraphs 3.1 to 3.10 of this assessment sets out the methodology for doing this.

### **Stage 2**

- 3.17 Where an area is considered for review, identify a boundary around the village for the purposes of a working assessment. As no settlement boundaries have previously been drawn around developed areas washed over by the Green Belt, there are currently no working boundaries, although the extent of saved Policy GB2 of the Runnymede Local Plan covering Thorpe is defined. This may need to be refined for review purposes, although at this stage the aim is to establish a boundary for assessment purposes only, rather than reflect any precise boundary at this particular stage.

### **Stage 3**

- 3.18 Consider whether the village has an open character. An Urban Character Appraisal was undertaken by the Borough Council in 2009<sup>13</sup>. This considered the character of various urban areas within the Borough at a strategic rather than detailed scale.
- 3.19 The conclusions from that appraisal will be taken into account where they cover a village in this review. Building on this work a more detailed consideration of a village’s character will include the following:

Density – Consider the density of built/residential development as a whole and how this differs (or not) across the village area;

Scale & Form - Consider different development forms and how this changes (or not) across the village area taking into account:

- Type of dwelling – flatted, terraced, semi-detached, detached
- Plot size – small, medium, large
- Building heights – one, two or more storeys in height
- Enclosures or barriers - natural or man-made
- Extent of open space or gaps in frontages – Are there any open areas within the village boundary or gaps in frontages? Are views restricted or if gaps in frontages are evident are views through obscured and by what?

Topography – flat, undulating, sloped, rolling. Significant stands of trees/hedgerows.

- 3.20 The above parameters should aid in determining whether a village (or parts of it) has an open character or not or the degree of open character exhibited and whether this is low, medium or high. To consider the degree of open character the criteria developed

---

<sup>13</sup> Urban Area Character Appraisal (2009) Runnymede Borough Council. Available at: <https://www.runnymede.gov.uk/article/5242/Design-and-Built-Environment-policy-documents-and-guidance>

in comparator studies has been taken as a guide. As such, the degree of open character can be described as set out in Table 3-1.

**Table 3-1: Description of Open Character within Village Boundary**

Degree of Open Character	Definition
Low	Area dominated by built form with closely spaced two story or higher flats, terraces or semi-detached/detached properties set in modest/small plots in uniform patterns or blocks. Enclosures predominantly man-made. Open areas are few or incidental with limited gaps in frontages restricting or partially restricting short views through. Any longer views through gaps are obscured or partially obscured predominantly by built development. Limited stands of trees/copses or non-landscaped vegetation.
Medium	Area has a built character with clusters of detached/semi-detached single/two storey dwellings set in modest plots. Modest gaps in frontages with largely unrestricted short views through. Longer views partially obscured by built development or obscured/partially obscured by vegetation. Enclosures either natural or man-made. Modest amount of open areas within the village boundary.
High	Buildings are dispersed within the village boundary and are predominantly detached single/two storey set in large plots. Extensive gaps between development with short views predominantly unrestricted and long views unobscured or partially obscured by vegetation. Enclosures are either natural or if man made are low lying or obscured by vegetation. Open areas present throughout the village boundary.

**Stage 4**

- 3.21 Consider the relationship that the village has with the openness of the surrounding Green Belt based on:
- Views into and out of the village along its periphery and whether views in/out are restricted and/or obscured and if so, whether by natural, man-made or topographical features.
  - Relationship between open or private amenity areas on the periphery of the village and the surrounding Green Belt and how these interact with any gap to an adjacent settlement or development.
- 3.22 As such the degree to which a village contributes to the openness of the Green Belt can be described as set out in Table 3-2.



**Table 3-2: Description of Openness within Surrounding Green Belt**

Degree of Openness	Definition
Low	Views into and out of the village are largely restricted or partially restricted by built development or topography with any views through obscured predominantly by built development. No continuance of open areas into the surrounding Green Belt. Majority of village boundary clearly defined.
Medium	Views into and out of the village partially restricted by built development or topography or restricted by vegetation. Views through partially obscured by built development or vegetation. Few open areas continue into surrounding area. Part of village boundary clearly defined but other parts unclear.
High	Views into and out of the village are largely unrestricted by built development or topography and/or only partially by vegetation. Views through unobscured by built development or only partially by vegetation. Open areas continue into the surrounding Green Belt. No clearly defined village boundary.

**Stage 5**

- 3.23 A decision will be made as to whether a village should be ‘washed over’ by the Green Belt or if it should be excluded based on the results from stages 3 and 4. It is likely that different areas of a village will exhibit different density and forms of development rather than exhibit a uniform pattern. Similarly views into or out of a village from different locations will exhibit different levels of restriction and boundaries are likely to be distinct/indistinct in different areas. Where this is the case, a view will be taken as to how different areas combine to produce an overall degree of open character or openness (or not).
- 3.24 As such, if the majority of the village is considered to have a high degree of open character and its impact on the openness of the Green Belt is high then the village should be ‘washed over’.
- 3.25 If the majority of the village exhibits a low open character with a low impact on the openness of the surrounding Green Belt, the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.
- 3.26 However there will be occasions which are less clear cut, for instance, a village is open in character but does not make a contribution to the openness of the Green Belt or is not open in character but does make a contribution. There will also be occasions where villages show a degree of both open/closed characteristics and a degree of contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, but not uniformly across the whole village area. In these instances it will be necessary to form a view as to whether the village should be ‘washed over’ or excluded, accepting that some areas may still exhibit a much higher or lower degree of open character or contribution to openness. If it is considered that a village should be excluded then consideration could be given to whether areas of a village should remain ‘washed over’ and others excluded.

## **Stage 6**

If a decision has been made to exclude a village (or parts of) from the Green Belt, then a more in-depth and finer consideration of the village boundary will be undertaken taking account of paragraphs 83, 84 and 85 of the NPPF.

## 4. Green Belt Assessment

### Stage 1

- 4.1 Stage 1 of this assessment as described in section 3 of this review considers whether areas within Runnymede which are 'washed over' by the Green Belt could be considered as villages for the purposes of paragraph 86 of the NPPF. As set out in paragraph 3.8 of this assessment there are some areas of built development within the Green Belt which can be ruled out without further assessment. This is because they do not function as a village or because there is no clear edge between settlement and the built form or it is a continuation of a settlement area. The areas which will not be subject to further consideration are set out in Table 4-1 with a justification.

**Table 4-1: Areas not Subject to Further Consideration**

Area	Justification
Addlestone Moor	Generally linear form of residential development accessed from the St Peter's roundabout and the area lies adjacent to Chertsey. Area contains a children's nursery and Club House along with a Fire Station and Philip Southcote School. The Runnymede Centre and Youth Centre (Now a secondary free school) lie just to the north, although these are also connected with Chertsey rather than being specific to Addlestone Moor. Not considered to be enough critical mass to function as a village and the area is only separated from Chertsey by the busy A317 Chertsey Road. As such, the area appears somewhat continuous rather than appearing as a separate area.
Callow Hill, Virginia Water	Small cluster of residential dwellings with only one service provided in the form of The Rose and Olive Branch public house. Whilst the area is not continuous with the settlement at Virginia Water to the south or Englefield Green to the north, there is not enough critical mass to function as a village even if Virginia Beeches and Hollow Lane are considered as well.
Hamm Court Estate, Weybridge	Predominantly linear form of residential development set along the River Thames with no services or facilities. Does not function as a village.
Hurst Lane, Egham	Collection of large residential properties set in large plots with commercial use in northern area. Area is not served by any services/facilities. Appears more of a linear form of development rather than functioning as a village.
Longcross Rd/Kitsmead Lane, Longcross	Small cluster of residential dwellings either side of Longcross Road and adjacent Kitsmead Lane. No services or facilities

Area	Justification
	other than the Old School café on the junction with Accommodation Road. Not enough critical mass to function as a village.
Ottershaw Park, Ottershaw	Private estate formed from clusters of residential properties interspersed around a large mansion house and grounds with small areas of woodland and copses between. No services available and the area does not function as a village.
Ridgemean Road, Englefield Green	Cluster of residential dwellings to the west of Englefield Green. Contains a playing field and Bishopsgate School, however not enough critical mass to function as a village even if development at Bishopsgate Road and north end of Wick Lane is included. The area also sits close to the boundary with Englefield Green.
Sandhills Lane/Green Road, Thorpe Green	Generally linear form of development extending eastwards from Virginia Water. Services/facilities include The Rose & Crown public house, allotments at Lyne Lane and children's playing space on the green. Generally a continuous form of development with no clear boundary and does not function as a village.
Stonehill Road, Stonehill	Generally linear form of development along Stonehill Road from the boundary with Surrey Heath to Accommodation Road. Further residential dwellings at Stonehill Crescent a short unmade Road off Stonehill Road. Large commercial premises at Forest Gate Farm. No services or facilities and does not have enough critical mass to function as a village.
Wentworth Estate, Virginia Water	Area contains a substantial number of typically large residential dwellings sitting in large plots and set within the Wentworth Estate. Clusters of dwellings within the estate are separated from each other by the golf course. The area does contain a private leisure centre, but no other services. The north east of the area adjoins the settlement boundary with Virginia Water. Given the separation between pockets of development, the area appears as separate clusters of development dispersed around the Wentworth Estate rather than a single continuous area and does not function as a village.

Area	Justification
Woburn Hill, Addlestone	Small cluster of dwellings either side of the A317 Woburn Hill with the south side continuing on from the settlement of Addlestone. No services present and not considered to have enough critical mass to function as a village. The area sits adjacent to the settlement boundary with Addlestone rather than being a separate area.

4.2 Areas identified for a greater degree of scrutiny are set out in Tables 4-2 to 4-4 along with conclusions on whether they function as a 'village' for NPPF paragraph 86 purposes.

**Table 4-2: Areas for Further Consideration - Lyne**

Brief Description of Area	Population	Service/Facilities Provided
<p>North of Lyne characterised by dispersed residential dwellings and agricultural buildings set amongst agricultural and equestrian uses with open land for grazing/pasture with some commercial use. Development around a central area is largely linear along both Lyne Lane and Almnors Road with Fangrove Mobile Home Park just to the south of Almnors Road and gaps between frontages to the west. Southern end of Lyne is characterised by dispersed development with limited residential dwellings, some small commercial units and Lyne &amp; Longcross C of E Infant School and Holy Trinity Church.</p>	950	<p>Village Hall                      Recreation Ground                      Equipped Play Area                      Public House                      Primary School                      Church                      Sports Pitch</p>
Conclusion		
<p>Whilst there is considered to be a more developed central area of Lyne primarily around the junction with and along Almnors Road &amp; Fangrove Mobile Home Park, the form of development is largely linear with dispersed developments to the northern &amp; southern ends. The area is served by some essential facilities such as a school, public house and village hall but these are limited and widely dispersed along Lyne Lane. Whilst its population is approximately 950 (inc Fangrove Mobile Home Park), given its form and services provided it is considered that Lyne should not be considered a village for NPPF purposes and as such a review of its Green Belt status under paragraph 86 of the NPPF is not appropriate.</p>		

**Table 4-3: Areas for Further Consideration -Stroude**

Brief Description of Form of Development	Population	Service/Facilities Provided
<p>Stroude Road is predominantly a mix of detached/semi-detached dwellings set in modest to small plots in a linear form of development with significant gap in frontage in south western area. Oak Tree Nursery and Highmoor farm to rear of dwellings on east side both accessed from Stroude Road and interspersed with open areas formed from allotments, a play area and equestrian/agricultural uses. Development in north area of Stroude Road is sparse with extensive gaps formed from open areas/agricultural land separating small clusters of detached/semi-detached dwellings and the Great Fosters Hotel and Milton Park/Milton Park Farm.</p>	560	<p>Recreation Ground                      Play Area</p>
Conclusion		
<p>Whilst there is considered to be a more developed area of Stroude primarily to the south and centre areas of Stroude Road, the form of development is largely linear, with dispersed developments at the northern end. The area is only served by informal recreational facilities. Whilst there is the perception of a small gap from Virginia Water to the Royal Standard B&amp;B (Green Belt), the reality is that Lambly Hill (urban area) and land between Lambly Hill and Chapel Square, which sits in the urban area of Virginia Water are continuous. As such Stroude is more of a continuation from Virginia Water, rather than a clearly defined and separate area. Therefore, given its form and the level of facilities provided it is considered that Stroude should not be considered a village for NPPF purposes and as such a review of its Green Belt status under paragraph 86 of the NPPF is not appropriate.</p>		

**Table 4-4 – Areas for Further Consideration -Thorpe**

Brief Description of Form of Development	Population	Service/Facilities Provided
<p>The central area of Thorpe is characterised by higher density development bounded by Village Road, Western Avenue, Rosemary Lane and Green Road with The Gower and Fleetway set within. The outer edges of Thorpe are characterised by lower density forms of development typically, but not exclusively formed by detached dwellings set in larger plots with gaps between comprising a recreation area, sports pitch, Fleming Garden and private amenity space. The east side of Thorpe is set within the Thorpe Conservation Area and is dominated by the Tasis American School and its school buildings and playing/sports fields with dispersed residential and agricultural buildings at the edge or between the school and around St Mary’s Church. Part of the eastern side of Thorpe is also within the Thorpe Park Major Developed Site (MDS) designation. Bourne Meadow cul-de-sac lies to the far south west corner of Thorpe with the Giles Travers Close cul-de-sac to the north east.</p> <p>Thorpe Industrial Estate is separated from Thorpe by open areas including the school playing fields at Tasis and agricultural land. The estate is not within the Green Belt but a row of detached dwellings, community hall and cemetery to the south east of the estate are, which are also separated from Thorpe.</p>	<p>1,000</p>	<p>Community Hall                      Recreation Ground                      Equipped Play Area                      Public House                      Primary School                      Church                      Post Office/Convenience Store                      Sports Pitch</p>
Conclusion		
<p>Rather than being a linear form of development, the built form radiates from a higher density central area interspersed with connected roads which to some degree encircle the central area, with development on the edges. The area is served by a reasonable range of services including a local convenience store/post office, school, church and community/church halls and sports pitches. Although reasonably dispersed, three services fall within the central area described above including the school, convenience store/post office and public house with the Frank Muir Memorial field on the western edge of this central area and St Mary’s Church on the east. Given its central core and number and type of services and population of approximately 1,000, it is considered that Thorpe should be defined as a village for NPPF purposes and a review under paragraph 86 of the NPPF is warranted.</p>		



- 4.3 As such, from the areas identified for further consideration only Thorpe is considered to function as a village for the purposes of NPPF paragraph 86. Therefore, an assessment will now be made as to the degree of open character that Thorpe exhibits and the contribution Thorpe makes to the openness of the surrounding Green Belt and whether the village should continue to be 'washed over', excluded or partly excluded.

## Stage 2

- 4.4 Before assessing the open character of Thorpe and the contribution this has on the openness of the Green Belt, it is relevant for context to consider the assessment of the land parcel relating to Thorpe as set out in the Runnymede Stage 1 Green Belt Review undertaken by Arup and the potential boundary for review purposes. Thorpe is identified in land parcel 12, which covers the entire village of Thorpe, Thorpe Park and all land designated as Green Belt between the B388 Thorpe by-pass to the west and the A320 Chertsey Lane to the east and bounded by the Thorpe Industrial Estate and Egham Hythe to the north and the M3 to the south.

- 4.5 The Runnymede Stage 1 Green Belt Review gave the land parcel a total score of 10/10 for checking unrestricted sprawl, 3/5 for preventing neighbouring towns merging and 3/5 for safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The assessment of parcel 12 stated:

- The northern part of the parcel protects open land from urban sprawl;
- The boundary to Egham Hythe/Chertsey Lane provides an essential barrier to development;
- Provides a largely essential gap between Egham and Staines-upon-Thames with western portion providing a largely essential gap between Egham and Thorpe, although the scale of the gap may allow some scope for development;
- Despite containing Thorpe and Thorpe Park the parcel retains a largely open character to the north with 15-20% of the parcel covered by development.

- 4.6 Having undertaken a general assessment of parcel 12, a further assessment based on absolute and non-absolute constraints was undertaken as refined areas. Several small areas within parcel 12 were identified, including a small area within the village of Thorpe. The assessment of refined area 12 states:

*'A number of small, dispersed areas of further refined land remain in the General Area. While their development would not compromise the ability of the Green Belt to meet Purposes 1 and 2, aside from a small area within the village of Thorpe and another contiguous to the Thorpe Industrial Estate, they are all geographically remote from existing settlements and insufficient in size to support stand-alone settlements. There is also a risk that the development of these areas would compromise the non-fragmented swathe of Green Belt between Chertsey and Egham Hythe (Purpose 3).*

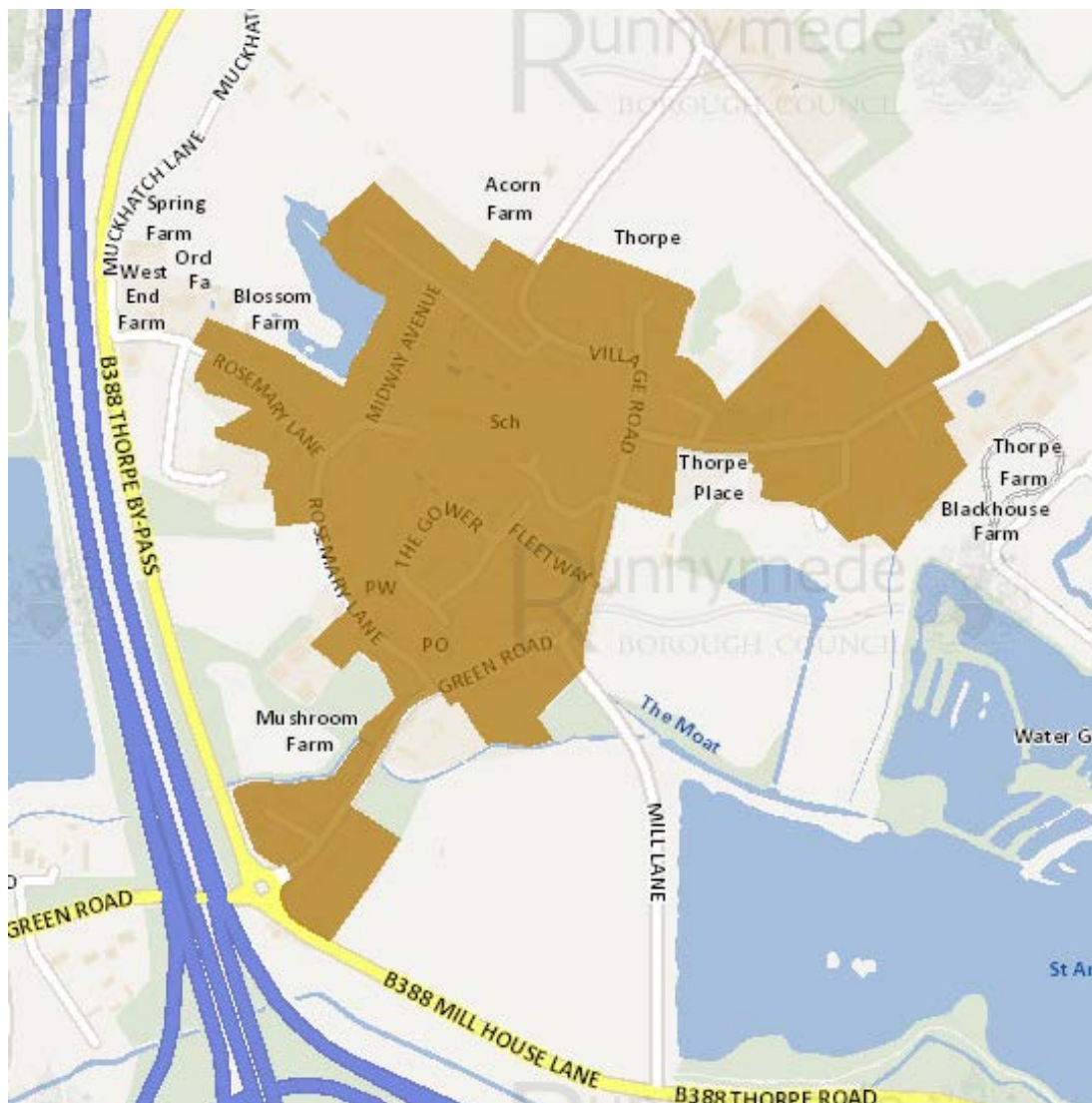
*Given the special development policies that apply to Thorpe within the Local Plan Saved Policies and assuming these are retained in the emerging Local Plan, there is no case for removing the small fragment of further refined land within the village from the Green Belt, whilst the small area contiguous to the Thorpe Industrial Estate already contains dwelling houses and is unlikely to have significant further development potential.'*

- 4.7 However the Arup assessment, both for general and refined areas, is based on the methodology of considering the function of the Green Belt against its purposes as set

out in paragraph 80 of the NPPF. These are not the same tests when considering whether a village should be ‘washed over’ or excluded from the Green Belt as set out in paragraph 86 of the NPPF. Although openness was assessed against purpose three in the Green Belt Review (to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment), this was in relation to the wider Green Belt rather than the open character (or not) of the village of Thorpe and its contribution to the openness of the surrounding Green Belt. Neither did the review consider in any detail the edge of Thorpe and its relationship with the Green Belt or its boundaries. Therefore the review and this assessment perform different, but complementary, tasks.

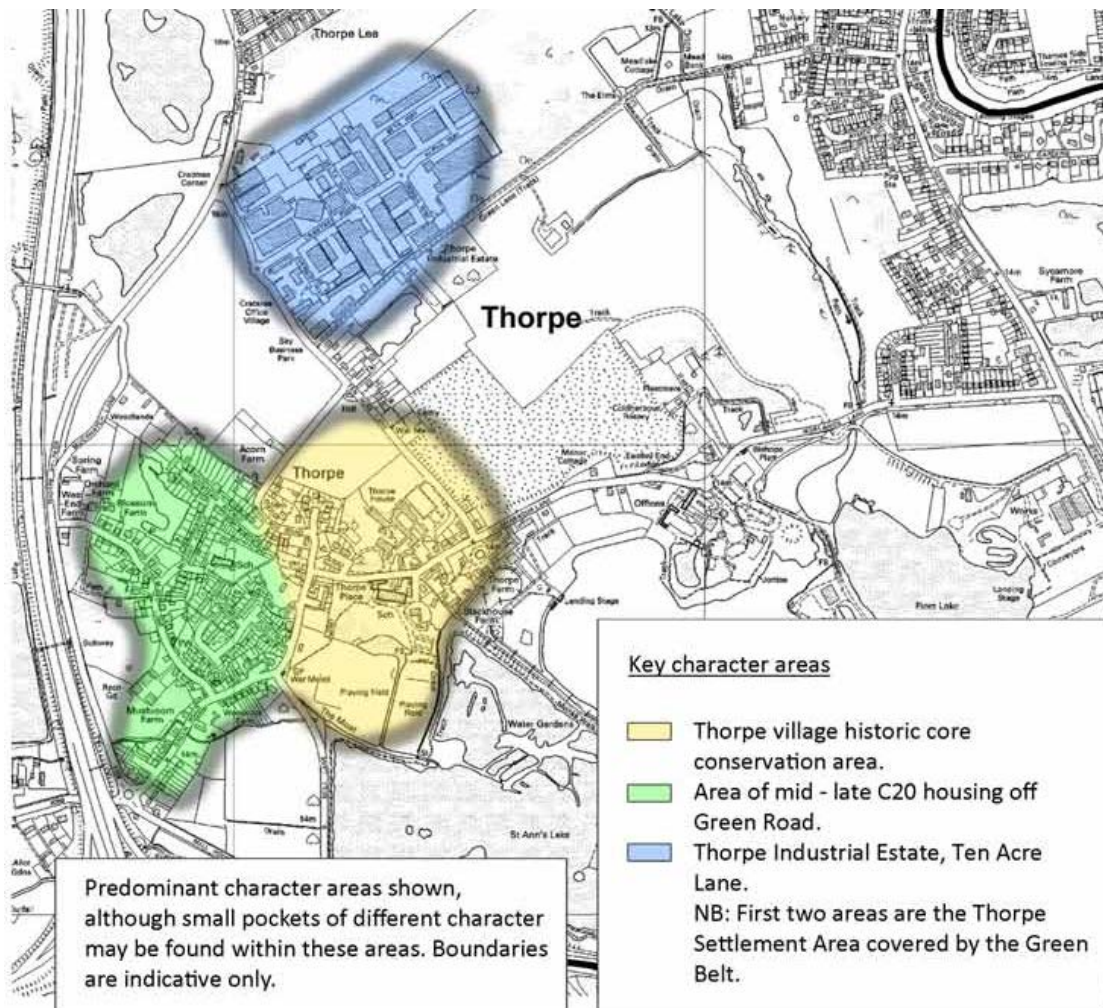
- 4.8 Saved Policy GB2 of the Runnymede Local Plan is specific to Thorpe with the Policies map showing the extent of the policy. The policy largely covers the built part of the village and allows a greater degree of flexibility to development than national policy on Green Belts. Plan 4-1 shows the extent of the policy designation.

**Plan 4-1: Extent of Runnymede Local Plan Saved Policy GB2**



- 4.9 The Urban Character Appraisal of 2009 includes a plan of the key character areas and shows a wider area than the extent of Policy GB2. Plan 4-2 shows the extent of the character areas in Thorpe.

## Plan 4-2: Extent of Thorpe Character Areas



4.10 For the purposes of Stage 3 of this review, it is considered that the general extent of Policy GB2 should be the basis for reviewing the character of Thorpe village. This is because the key character area plan encompasses open areas forming playing fields to the north and south of the Tasis site which are within the open Green Belt rather than being within the built envelope of the village. However, the extent of the area covered by Policy GB2 will be widened slightly for review purposes to encompass additional areas including:

- Private amenity space to the rear of properties on the north side of Western Avenue;
- Car parking area to the south of St Mary's Church;
- Buildings and Tennis Courts in the north Tasis site;
- Agricultural buildings and dwellings from Westholme to Ten Acre Lane on Coldharbour Lane;
- Farmhouse and agricultural buildings at Woodcock Hall Farm;
- Mushroom Farm at and land to western end of Rosemary Lane;



4.11 Although Plan 4-2 shows the Thorpe Industrial Estate, this site is already situated within the urban area and does not form part of this review. The final boundary for the purposes of reviewing the character of Thorpe Village only, is set out in Plan 4-3.

**Plan 4-3: Boundary for Reviewing the Character of Thorpe Village**



**Stages 3 & 4**

4.12 The Urban Character Area Appraisal 2009, considered the character of Thorpe village at a high level. The appraisal highlighted local character areas within Thorpe including a historic core around Village Road and Coldharbour Lane and an area of mid-late C20 housing around Green Road and Rosemary Lane. The appraisal found the following:

- Relatively flat landscape, lakes to the south and river to the east with ‘green’ lanes between forming an enclosed setting with no significant long distance views;
- Predominant use is housing of varying character;

- Historic street pattern within the village conservation area with strong sense of enclosure created by buildings and walls. Housing areas include cul-de-sacs and street layouts difficult to navigate and lacking a clear hierarchy;
- Traditional materials, buildings and architectural forms clearly defined in the conservation area but eroded in later forms of development within the village;
- Public realm limited to Church Approach. Open Green Belt countryside surrounds the urban areas providing visual open space;
- Network of public footpaths, but access and permeability is less evident in more recent housing areas;

4.13 In assessing the character of Thorpe and its contribution to the openness of the surrounding Green Belt the findings of the Urban Character Appraisal have been taken into account. However, for the purposes of this review a more detailed consideration of character has been undertaken informed by a site visit undertaken on 6 January 2016. The assessment results can be seen in full in Appendix C and are summarised in Table 4-5.

**Table 4-5: Summary of Thorpe Village Assessment**

<b>Character of the Village</b>
<p>The village of Thorpe shows mixed characteristics with some locations open and others where development is tighter.</p> <p>Distinct central area around Fleetway/The Gower/East Rosemary Lane and north of Green Road, which shows a higher density form of development with uniform or relatively uniform patterns of development, smaller gaps between buildings and more restricted views out of and through the village. Although development at Western Avenue and Midway Avenue is not particularly dense at 17dph, it does show a reasonably uniform pattern of development. Open space around the school site holds restricted views either due to school buildings or by the proximity of fencing or walls along the eastern and southern edge of the footway running north from The Gower to Village Road. To the east, the area around the junction of Coldharbour Lane and Village Road shows a clustering of built development as is the case within the Tasis site exhibiting a tight clustering of larger school buildings. The clustering of buildings coupled with 2m-3m high walls running from Church Approach to the junction of Village Road give this area a sense of enclosure.</p> <p>Outside of the central area and developed part of the Tasis site, the village does portray more open characteristics. South of Village Road around the junction of Mill Lane/Green Road is relatively open with single storey development to the north and wide visibility splays around the war memorial bounded by green verges. Largely unrestricted views east across Tasis playing fields and open entrance to Anners Close. This area, along with the western side of Rosemary Lane, eastern end of Coldharbour Lane and south side of Green Road are less dense with larger gaps in frontages and views largely obscured or partially obscured by vegetation. The same is evident at Church approach with short open views to St Mary's Church from Coldharbour Lane and the western end of Rosemary Lane with short open views southwards.</p> <p>Therefore, Thorpe is considered to show a less open central and eastern area with the peripheries of the village more open in character.</p> <p>Overall Rank: Medium</p>

## Contribution to Openness of the Green Belt

Green Belt surrounding the village of Thorpe is a virtually continuous area of land encircling the village with short breaks for highways between. Surrounding Green Belt is largely open in character with limited development. There are more significant breaks in the openness of the Green Belt that encircles the village and which do not connect well to each other. This can be seen by development at Green Road/Bourne Meadow breaking the openness of the Green Belt between the north west and south west and the Tasis school buildings and walls along Coldharbour Lane breaking the openness between the north east and south east. There is very little open or green space within the village which forms a continuous area into the Green Belt. Tasis School playing fields and Frank Muir Memorial Fields sit on the edge of rather than within the village envelope. Views into and through the village from the surrounding Green Belt are largely restricted by built development especially at Coldharbour Lane around the Tasis site and to the south of the Frank Muir Memorial Field and within Fleetway/The Gower.

Numerous locations where boundaries are relatively strong giving a sense of development, either because of built development in private amenity areas or because boundaries are relatively close to the built edge. This is evident when viewing the village from the industrial estate, south of Green Road and south toward Bourne Meadow/Green Road.

Aspects which contribute to the openness of the Green Belt include land around Woodcock Hall Farm which form breaks in the frontage and between residential developments along the south side of Green Road. The area around Muckhatch Lane heading west into the village is largely undeveloped and the wooded copse to the south east and north of the Frank Muir Memorial Field forms a significant contribution. The lack of development around Croft Farm/Elmside up to dwellings on Rosemary Lane and between Yewtrees and the Tasis buildings to the south of Coldharbour Lane also contributes towards the Green Belt's openness. There are also areas where the boundaries between the surrounding Green Belt and built form within the village are relatively indistinct such as the east side of Green Road, around the Tasis site and agricultural buildings to the east of Coldharbour Lane as well as the western end of Rosemary Lane.

As such, the contribution that the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt as a whole is medium, but recognising that some areas offer little contribution, but others around some of the periphery offer a higher contribution.

Overall Rank on Contribution to Openness: Medium

### Stage 5

- 4.14 Stage 5 of the review methodology indicates that where the character of a village or its contribution to openness is unclear, then a judgement should be made whether the village should be 'washed' over or excluded from the Green Belt.
- 4.15 Stages 3 and 4 of this assessment have concluded a medium degree of open character within the village and a medium contribution towards the openness of the Green Belt. As such a judgement will need to be made whether to 'wash over' or exclude the village of Thorpe from the Green Belt.
- 4.16 In terms of character of the village, stage 3 concluded that the central area of the village was largely closed with higher densities and more uniform patterns of development with tighter clusters of dwellings/buildings restricting views. The periphery

of the village on the other hand was more open in character with less dense development and larger gaps between buildings. However, it is considered that the larger area of the village offers a lower degree of open character and even some areas on the periphery do not offer an open character such as around Bourne Meadows, Giles Travers Close and Western Avenue.

- 4.17 The test in paragraph 86 of the NPPF is the contribution the open character of a village makes to the openness of the Green Belt. This implies that if a village does not have an open character then it does not make a contribution to the openness of the Green Belt and by default the second test is not required. Although it is considered that the larger area of the village demonstrates a lower degree of open character, there are still open aspects and for completeness the contribution the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt should be considered.
- 4.18 Stage 4 found that just as there were areas which contributed to the openness of the Green Belt there were others which did not. Whilst the Green Belt outside of the village is predominantly open, it is the 'edge' areas and margin between the Green Belt and built envelope which requires greatest scrutiny taking account of the definition of openness which is 'land that is not built upon' but also taking account of visual impact.
- 4.19 In the majority of areas village 'edges' were formed from strong or relatively strong boundary features forming a built 'edge' between the village envelope and Green Belt. This is the case with Bourne Meadows, Western Avenue and north of Village Road/Giles Travers Close and around parts of the Tasis site. This is compounded by private amenity areas to these residential dwellings either being relatively small containing outbuildings/extensions or containing hard boundary features. With the lack of open areas within the village envelope continuing into the Green Belt this adds to the larger part of the village making a lower contribution to the physical and visual openness of the Green Belt.
- 4.20 On balance, it is recommended given that the larger area of the village demonstrates a lower degree of open character or lower contribution to the openness of the Green Belt and that the Village of Thorpe should be excluded from the Green Belt. As such, it is considered that 'exceptional circumstances' exist to alter Green Belt boundaries to the village of Thorpe.

## **Stage 6**

- 4.21 As there is a recommendation to exclude the village of Thorpe from the Green Belt the next stage is to consider detailed boundaries around the village. This will be set out in a stage 2 review and in accordance with paragraphs 83, 84 and 85 of the NPPF.



## **Appendix A: Areas not Subject to Further Consideration**

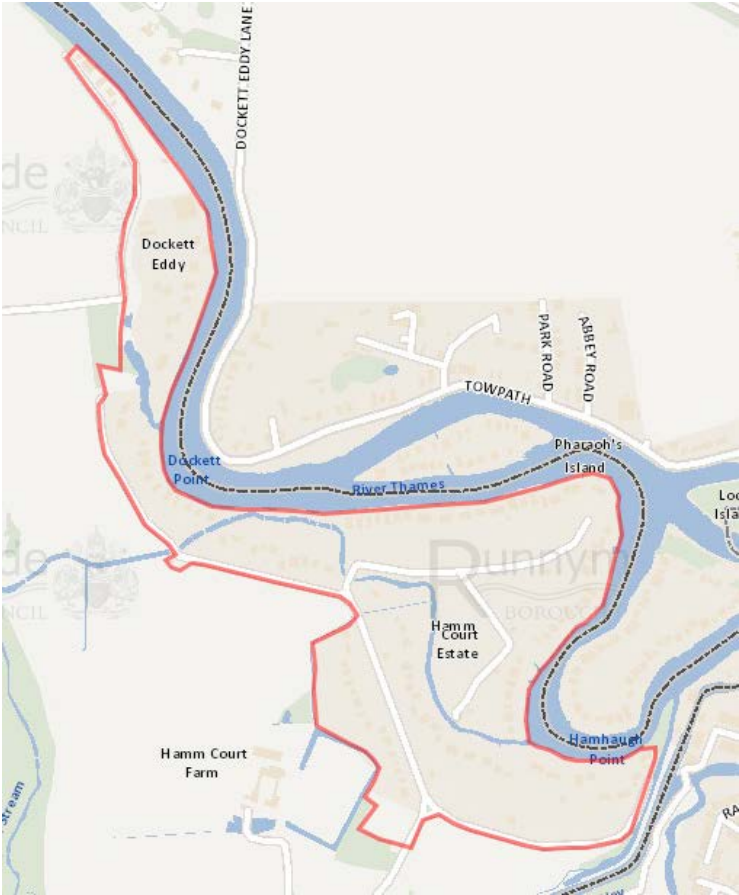
## Addlestone Moor



## Callow Hill, Virginia Water



### Hamm Court Estate, Weybridge



### Hurst Lane, Egham



## Longcross Road/Kitsmead Lane, Longcross



## Ottershaw Park, Ottershaw





**Ridgemean Road, Englefield Green**



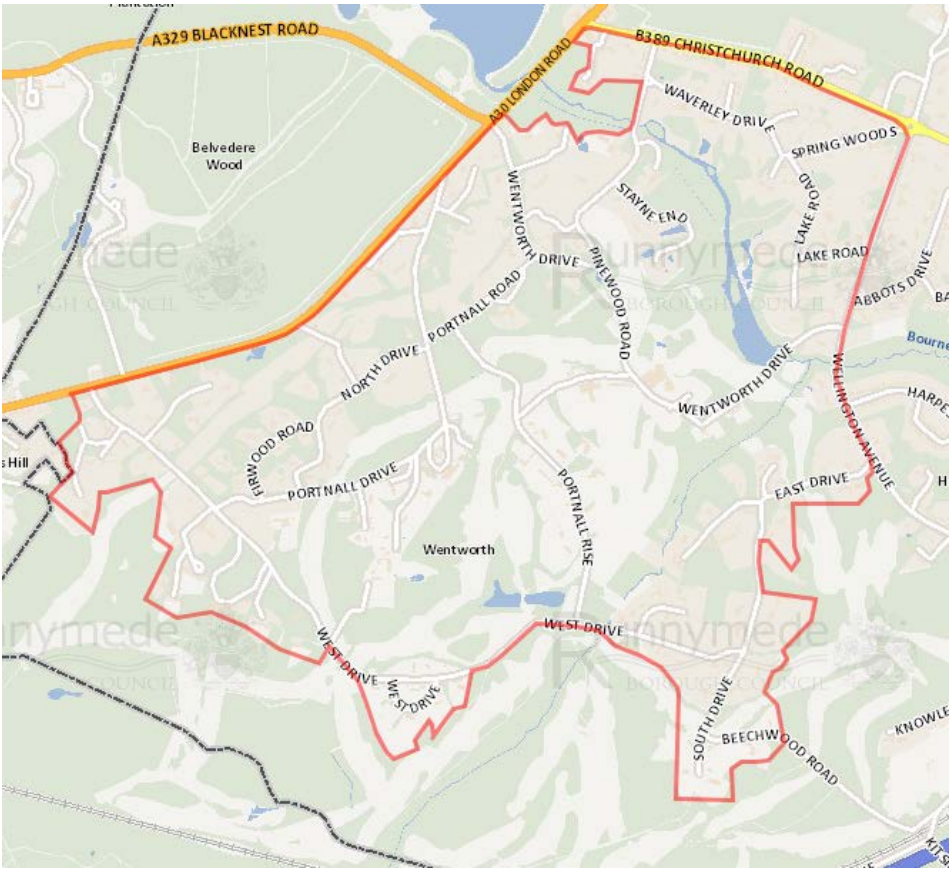
**Sandhills Lane, Virginia Water**



**Stonehill, Stonehill Road**



**Wentworth Estate, Virginia Water**



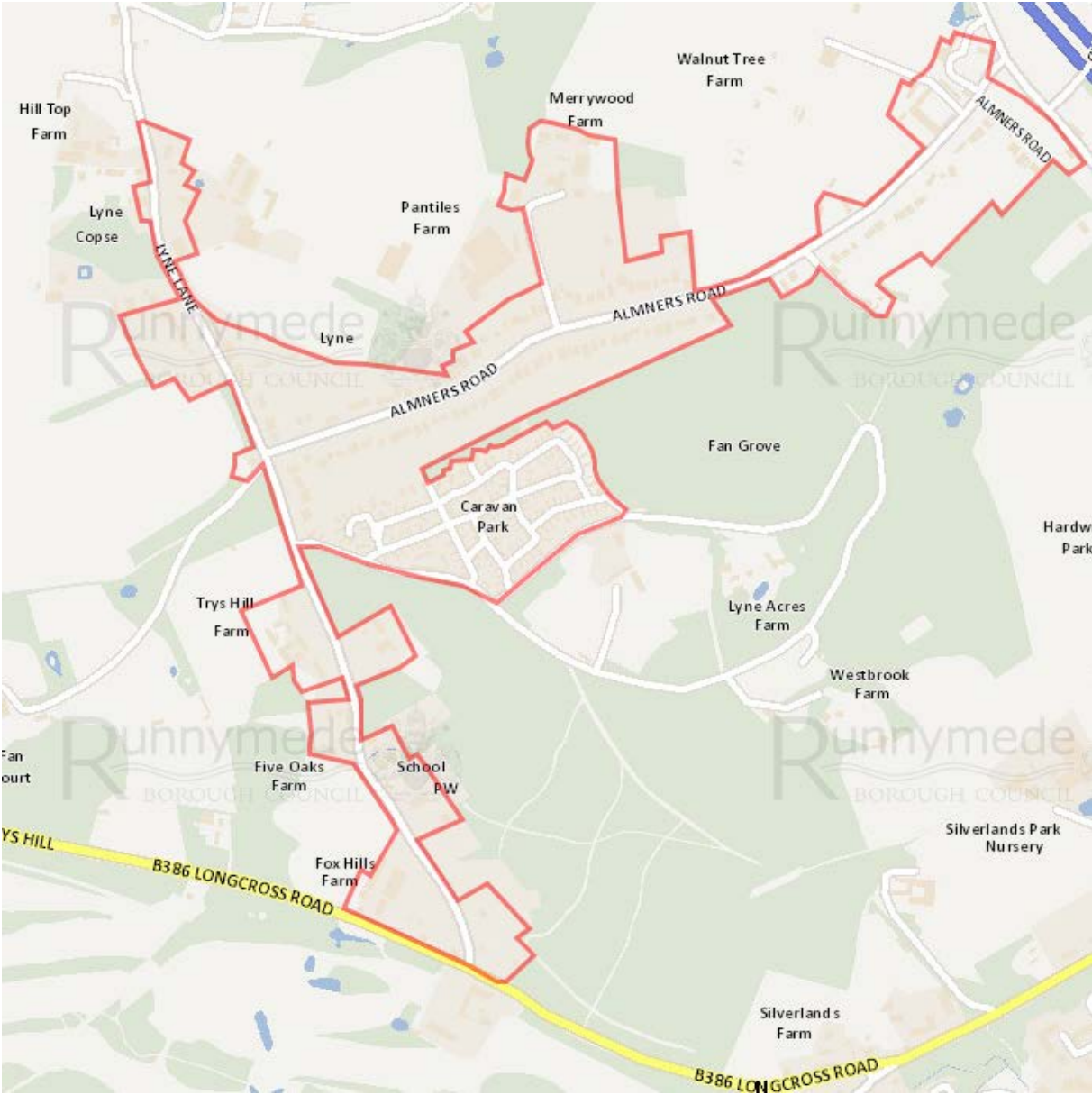
**Woburn Hill, Addlestone**



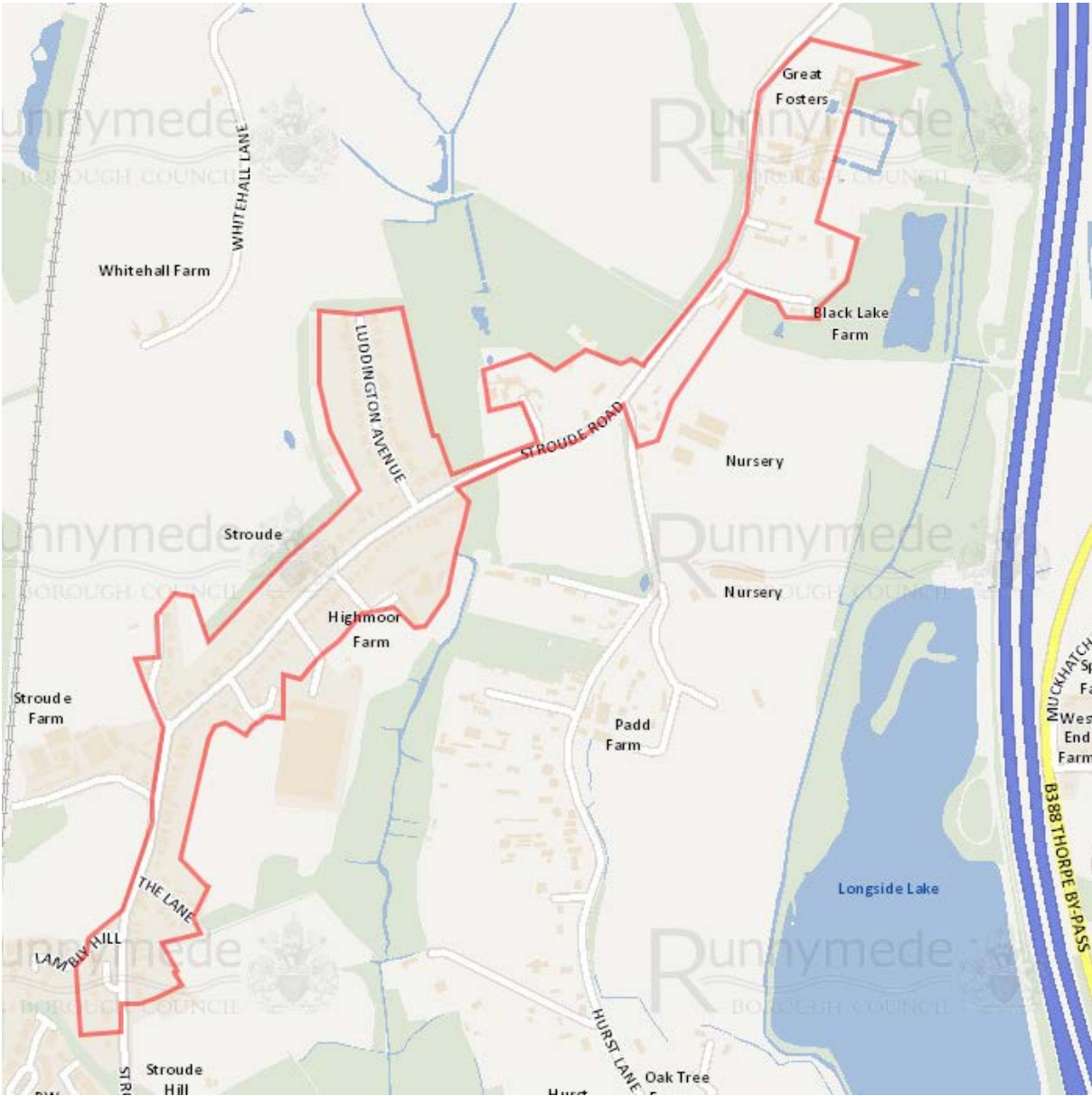


## **Appendix B: Plans of Areas for Further Consideration**

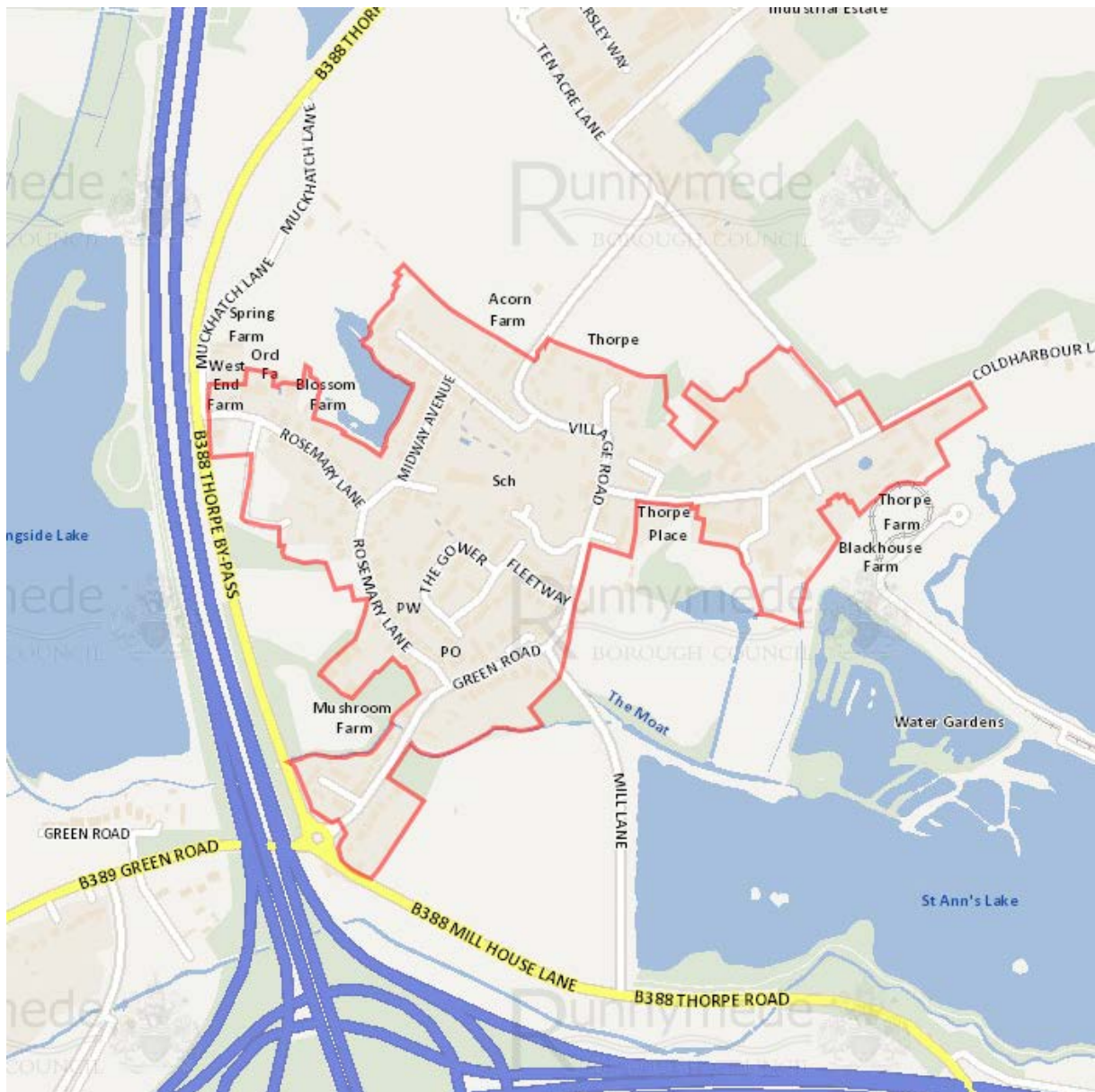
Lyne



**Stroude**



# Thorpe



## **Appendix C: Assessment of Character of Green Belt Villages & Impact on Openness**

## Thorpe

### Character of Village

#### Coldharbour Lane

*Density* – Total area 7.83ha. Average residential density 18dph. Approximate footprint of non-residential development 1.4ha or 18% of land area.

#### *Scale & Form*

West from Westholme the area is characterised at its eastern end with dispersed residential or single storey agricultural buildings partly screened by low lying man-made structures or vegetation. Large spaces between buildings give partially restricted views to the southwest and southeast. West from Ten Acre Lane, highway is partly bounded by 2m high brick wall to the north and to the south 1.8m high wall set back from highway. Thorpe Nursery pre-school enclosed by low lying man-made enclosure allowing partial views through to the south/southeast. To the north residential development is largely one to one and half storeys in height with 10-15m gaps between and enclosed either by continuation of wall bounding the highway or low lying man-made structures with views restricted to the north. One and half story village hall sits tight against footway and Black House Farm development of two storey dwellings set in courtyard arrangement to the rear restricts views to the south/southwest with stand of vegetation restricting views to south east.

Development opens up around Church Approach with one and half to two storey cottages enclosed by natural structures with short views to St Mary's Church. Westwards, the northern and southern area is dominated by the Tasis site with large two/two and half storey school buildings and associated areas for car parking, games courts and playing fields to the north with 2/3 storey school buildings sitting in a tight cluster to the south. 2-3m high wall runs to the junction with Village Road generally restricting longer views north and south. Coldharbour Close cul-de-sac is set behind a 1.8m wall and largely comprises one to one and half storey dwellings partially restricting views to the north.

*Topography* – Generally flat, with slight rise from Coldharbour Lane to St Mary's Church. Stands or individual trees front the highway with occasional hedging forming front boundary enclosures.

**Overall** – Whilst some views are partially restricted, it is considered given the form of built development, that the eastern area of Coldharbour Lane is largely open in character from Ten Acre Lane to Black House Farm. Westwards, the Tasis site dominates with views restricted northwards by extensive school buildings and to the south by a reasonably tight cluster of school buildings. 2m-3m high walling running the length of Coldharbour Lane from Church Approach to the junction with Village Road also gives a sense of enclosure. However, large gaps lie between school buildings and neighbouring dwellings close to the junction with Village Road and the area around Church Approach is more open in character. Given this mix of characteristics the Coldharbour Lane area is considered to show a medium degree of open character.



## **Village Road**

*Density* – Total Area 4.4ha. Average residential density 19dph. Approximate footprint of non-residential floorspace 400sqm

### *Scale & Form*

Moving north from Fleetway views to the west are largely restricted by a two storey detached and short row of two storey terrace dwellings and vegetation. Vegetation largely obscures views eastwards across the south Tasis site with a pair of semi-detached dwellings sat behind a 1.5m-1.8m high wall partially restricting views east across open playing fields and vegetation partially obscuring views north eastwards. 2m high wall continues adjacent to highway enclosing Fleming Garden further restricting views eastwards before ending at Yewtrees, a row of terraced two storey dwellings and single storey garage block partially restricting views east. Westwards the area is more open in character around the entrance to the small cul-de-sac at Anners Close but views are largely restricted westwards by vegetation adjacent the footway.

A short row of two storey terraced cottages/detached cottage and cluster of buildings including the Red Lion Public House are positioned around the junction with Coldharbour Lane fronting the highway restricting views east and west but framing the view south along Village Road. Moving north past the junction with Coldharbour Lane, the rear of Coldharbour Close is enclosed by a 1.5m-1.8m high wall which, with the dwellings in the cul-de-sac and the junction of Coldharbour Lane partially restricts views to the east/northeast but gaps between dwellings allow partially obscured views through. Cul-de-sac of two storey link detached/detached residential dwellings at Giles Travers Close sits further north with entrance to cul-de-sac enclosed by 1.5m-1.8m high walls/fencing abutting the footway. Largely restricts views north, east and west, although gaps between corner plots allow obscured views through. Moving further north the east side of Village Road is characterised by larger detached single and two storey dwellings set back from the highway with some open frontages allowing partially obscured views through gaps between dwellings and some with 2m high hedgerows restricting views. To the west are largely detached/semi-detached two storey dwellings with reasonable gaps between allowing obscured views south and west.

*Topography* – Generally flat with slight rise in elevation from south to north. Small stands or individual trees with occasional hedgerows adjacent highway.

**Overall** – Southern area dominated by open space around Tasis playing fields although views are partially restricted to the east by walls and to the east and west by dwellings on Village Road. Detached dwellings in the northern area do partially restrict views through and out of the village with longer views obscured by vegetation between dwellings. The number of dwellings are limited to short rows or few detached/semi-detached with either large gaps between rows or reasonable gaps between detached dwellings. Tight cluster of buildings around the junction with Coldharbour Lane gives a more enclosed feel at this location. Given the mix of characteristics, overall the Village Road area is considered to have a medium to high degree of open character.

## **Midway/Western Avenue**

*Density* – Total Area 4.28ha. Average residential density 17dph. Footprint of approximately 1,600sqm of non-residential floorspace.

### *Scale & Form*

Midway Avenue contains a number of smaller detached/semi-detached dwellings at its southern end and by larger detached/semi-detached single and two storey dwellings moving north from Long Timbers and into Western Avenue. Views south are framed by vegetation along The Bence and Rosemary Lane. Driveways to front of properties formed from block paving/gravel/tarmac with low lying man-made or natural front boundary treatments. Reasonable gaps between properties with views partially restricted and views through gaps partially obscured by vegetation or built development.

The north side and western end of Western Avenue is typified by detached single storey dwellings with driveways formed from block paving/gravel or tarmac and with low lying man made or natural boundary treatments. Reasonable gaps set between properties with a relatively uniform pattern of development and pair of semi-detached properties at the eastern end moving into an area of incidental green space. Views north and south restricted by built development although gaps between allow limited views through which are obscured/partially obscured by vegetation. Eastern/Southern end characterised by smaller semi-detached/detached dwellings set in smaller plots some with block paved/gravel/shingle drives. Reasonable gaps between pairs of semi-detached/detached dwellings with a mix of front boundary treatments and relatively uniform pattern of development. Views restricted/partially restricted with views through buildings obscured/partially obscured with vegetation and other built development. Area of incidental green space bounded to east by 1.8m high close boarded fence and does not continue out of the area or beyond.

Footpath runs north-south from the eastern end of The Bence along the eastern edge of Thorpe Primary School and to the rear of dwellings at Western Avenue before emerging on Village Road. Footpath gives reasonably open views across school playing field but longer views restricted by school buildings and dwellings to the north/vegetation to the south. Footpath enclosed by 1.8m close boarded/panel fencing to east side, which restricts views east and in places gives a sense of enclosure.

*Topography* – Relatively flat with slight rise in elevation from south to north. Individual trees in evidence, but vegetation largely landscaped.

**Overall** – Midway and Western Avenue formed from more uniform patterns of development with views largely restricted by built development but with gaps between allowing obscured or partially obscured views through to the north and west, especially where single storey dwellings dominate. Areas of more open character exist towards the southern end of Midway Avenue around The Bence, but the footpath to the rear of Western Avenue gives a sense of enclosure. Given this pattern of development, overall the Midway/Western Avenue area is considered to have a low/medium degree of open character.



### **Fleetway/The Gower**

*Density* – Total area 2.76ha. Average residential density 27dph. No non-residential floorspace.

#### *Scale & Form*

Fleetway and The Gower provide a higher density form of development within Thorpe, characterised by smaller semi-detached or terraced properties set in smaller plot areas and with a high degree of uniformity. Designated parking areas evident and small garage block with driveways formed from block paving/gravel/tarmac. Terraced dwellings in centre area of The Gower have driveways and garages to rear giving a more urban character. Side elevations of some dwellings at The Gower abut the adjacent footway whilst others have small incidental or landscaped strips between. Gaps between semi-detached properties fairly narrow. Views restricted by built development and where gaps between buildings exist views are obscured either by vegetation or in most instances by built development. Some small areas of incidental green space bounded by 2m high walls and do not continue into other areas of the village or beyond.

*Topography* – Generally flat with few individual trees is largely landscaped area.

**Overall** – Fleetway and The Gower exhibit a denser and tighter form of development predominated by two storey dwellings set within a uniform structure with views restricted. Given this pattern of development Fleetway/The Gower is considered to show a low degree of open character.

### **Rosemary Lane/The Bence**

*Density* – Total area 4.26ha. Average residential density 12dph. Approximate footprint of 300sqm of non-residential floorspace.

#### *Rosemary Lane*

Moving north from Green Road the eastern side of Rosemary Lane contains a mix of two storey and single story dwellings with front boundary treatments set hard up against the highway with no footway up to Two Gables after which front boundaries are set back from the highway by incidental green spaces. Western side of Rosemary Lane is dominated by detached dwellings in modest plots with a commercial use and yard (under development) formed with hardstanding sitting in between and frontages hard up against the highway with driveways formed from block paving/gravel/tarmac. Gap of around 100m between Hazel Wood and the next dwelling moving north at Westward Ho, with the Frank Muir Memorial Fields and associated car park between and behind properties at the south western end.

Varying gaps between properties some of which are restricted and obscured by built development in the south and vegetation moving north. Moving west past The Bence the northern side of Rosemary Lane contains two storey detached/semi-detached and row of terraced cottages whilst north and west, development is typified by detached one to one and a half storey dwellings in relatively large plots with Rosemary

Lane opening up on its southern side to Elmside which sits adjacent the B388 Thorpe by-pass. Driveways formed from block paving/gravel/tarmac with two storey dwellings enclosed by 2m high walls or hedges at the most westerly end at Orchard and West End Farms which sit adjacent the B388 Thorpe by-pass. Reasonable gaps between dwellings or rows of dwellings which partially restrict views to the north and south, with views opening up southwards towards the western end of Rosemary Lane but longer views south obscured by wooded copse. Boundary treatments are a mix of natural or low lying man-made features with driveways formed from block paving/gravel/tarmac but 2m high walling towards north west area. Gaps between properties at south western end are relatively extensive with largely unobscured views or partially obscured by vegetation or where front boundary treatment exceeds 1.8m. To the north western end gaps are less extensive with views partially restricted and obscured by vegetation.

#### *The Bence*

Small road with few single storey dwellings with drives formed from block paving and front boundary treatment formed from low lying or landscaped vegetation to the east but with single row of hedgerow to the west until junction with Midway Avenue. Relatively small gaps between property with views partially restricted to the east. Moving north and east along The Bence, hedgerow on southern side restricts views followed by mix of single storey/two storey dwellings with views restricted by further built development and 1.8m high close boarded fencing as road/path moves past The Gower into a single footway. Thorpe primary school sits to the north formed from two storey and single storey buildings with associated parking areas and which restricts views to the north. Views westwards from this area are restricted by vegetation.

*Topography* – Generally flat with small stands or individual trees and some hedgerows adjacent the highway.

**Overall** – Rosemary Lane has a mixed character with some parts exhibiting narrower gaps between developments with views restricted by built development, especially within the south eastern end of Rosemary Lane whilst others such as the western side are more open in character predominated by single storey dwellings with large gaps between. The difference can also be seen in densities with the more open western side having an average residential density of 13dph and the east 20dph. Given this mix of characteristics, overall it is considered that Rosemary Lane & The Bence have a medium degree of open character.

## **Green Road**

*Density* – Total area 4.12ha. Average residential density 16dph. Approximate footprint of 400sqm non-residential floorspace.

Moving west from Mill Lane the southern side of Green Road is characterised by either detached or semi-detached single storey/two storey dwellings set in modest to large plots. Between dwellings at the eastern and western end sits Woodcock Hall Farm with gaps around and between single storey farm buildings and the two storey farmhouse with wooded area to the west forming a significant break in development. Dwellings are largely set back from the highway with driveways formed from block paving/gravel/tarmac with typically low lying front boundary treatments. Views south restricted by dwellings but reasonable gaps between allow partially obscured views through.

On the northern side of Green Road moving west from Mill Lane, there are a number of semi-detached residential dwellings set back from the highway at Cottage Farm Way. Moving further west residential development is a mix of detached and semi-detached single storey/two storey dwellings set in modest plots. To the south western end of Green Road on its northern side lies Bourne Meadow a cul-de-sac of link detached/terraced properties which restricts views north. Gaps between dwellings from Bourne Meadow to junction with Rosemary Lane allow partially obscured short views between.

*Topography* – Generally flat with small stands or individual trees and wooded copse north of properties between Bourne Meadows and Rosemary Lane. Small stream flows north of Bourne Meadow before flowing south eastwards under Green Road and continues east to the south of Woodcock Hall Farm.

**Overall** – Similar to Rosemary Lane, Green Lane shows a mixed character with the southern side exhibiting a more open character and the northern side up to Rosemary Lane more developed with views restricted northwards. This is reflected by a difference in average densities of 13dph to the south side and 25dph to the north. Overall it is considered that Green Lane shows a medium degree of open character.

## **Ten Acre Lane**

Ten Acre Lane is characterised at its northern end by the Thorpe Industrial Estate. The estate is separated from Thorpe by open areas including school playing fields at Tasis and agricultural land which are partially screened to Ten Acre Lane by hedgerow, but with views through to Thorpe itself. The industrial estate is not within the Green Belt, although a row of detached dwellings to the south east of the industrial estate are in the Green Belt along with a community hall and cemetery. The southern end of Ten Acre Lane is largely bounded by hedgerow which to some degree restricts views.

**Overall** – Overall Ten Acre Lane exhibits an urban character to its north western end around Thorpe Industrial Estate. However the area is defined by open space and extensive gaps to the village of Thorpe to the south and east. As such, it is considered that the south eastern area of Ten Acre Lane shows a high degree of open character.

### **Overall Rank on Open Character**

The village of Thorpe shows mixed characteristics with some locations open and others where development is tighter and has a more closed feel or pattern of development with built development restricting views.

There appears to be a distinct central area to the village, especially around Fleetway/The Gower/East Rosemary Lane and north of Green Road, which shows a higher density form of development with uniform or relatively uniform patterns of development, smaller gaps between buildings and more restricted views out of and through the village. Although development at Western Avenue and Midway Avenue is not particularly dense at 17dph, it does show a reasonably uniform pattern of development with larger dwellings and smaller gaps between to the south east side of Western Avenue just to the north of Thorpe Primary School. Although open space does exist within this area in the form of playing fields at the school, the space around the school site holds restricted views either due to school buildings or by the proximity of fencing or walls along the eastern and southern edge of the footway running north from The Gower to Village Road. To the east, the area around the junction of Coldharbour Lane and Village Road shows a clustering of built development as is the case within the Tasis site exhibiting a tight clustering of larger school buildings. The clustering of buildings coupled with 2m-3m high walls running from Church Approach to the junction of Village Road give this area a sense of enclosure. It is around these areas that the village generally demonstrates more closed characteristics.

However, outside of a central area and developed part of the Tasis site, the village does portray more open characteristics. This is the case to the south of Village Road with the area around the junction of Mill Lane/Green Road relatively open with single storey development to the north and wide visibility splays around the war memorial bounded by green verges. Largely unrestricted views east across Tasis playing fields and the open entrance to Anners Close are also evident as well as the framing or the appearance of a lack of development when looking south from the junction with Coldharbour Lane. This area, along with the western side of Rosemary Lane, eastern end of Coldharbour Lane and south side of Green Road are less dense with larger gaps in frontages and views largely obscured or partially obscured by vegetation. The same is evident at Church approach with short open views to St Mary's Church from Coldharbour Lane and the western end of Rosemary Lane with short open views southwards.

Whilst there are exceptions to the general pattern of development in terms of density, scale and form, Thorpe is considered to show a less open central and eastern area with the peripheries of the village more open in character. Overall, it is considered that Thorpe portrays a medium degree of open character.

## Contribution to Openness of the Green Belt

### Area A

Topography - Flat with small stands of trees and/or small wooded copses evident in the north, west, and south east of the area. A small stream lies to the south running to the rear of properties at Bourne Meadow and Green Road.

Views - In the lower section, views south restricted by built development at Bourne Meadow and partially restricted at Green Road. Vegetation obscuring/partially obscuring views through to Green Road and beyond. Small play park enclosed by 1m high open fencing. Views to middle section of Area A partially obscured by vegetation and to the east by a small wooded copse. Views east into a former mushroom farm partially obscured but built development at the site, largely restricts views beyond.

In the middle section of Area A, views to the south west obscured by trees surrounding the former mushroom farm with further views restricted by built development. Eastwards views are partially restricted by a few dwellings, but predominantly by trees/vegetation. To the north and north east views are obscured/partially obscured by a small copse of woodland with some built development at Rosemary Lane visible in the background partially restricting views (in winter).

In the upper section views north from the small copse are open to the western end of Rosemary Lane then restricted by built development and obscured/partially obscured. Views east partially restricted by single storey buildings and vegetation and to the south by the wooded copse.

Views into Area A from the village are restricted by properties, built structures and vegetation along Rosemary Lane, Bourne Meadow and Green Road. Break in the frontage forming the car park entrance at Rosemary Lane and Copse Farm at its western end give the only direct views out into the Green Belt. Longer views out of the village westwards restricted by elevation of the M25 motorway.

Boundaries - Small stream forms a break between rear amenity areas at Bourne Meadow/Green Road and the Green Belt at Area A, but boundary is predominantly open chain link fencing with planting giving partially obscured views through to rear amenity areas (winter). Some boundary treatment to north side of the stream at Green Road is close boarded fencing. 1.8m high close boarded fencing with planting sits around properties on west side of Rosemary Lane adjacent to the car park at the Memorial Field. Boundaries to the north around Croft Farm formed from 1m high post and rail fencing.

### Continuance of Open Areas

Area A is largely an area of public open space which sits on the western edge of Thorpe rather than within the village, however the area

does extend northwards through and around Copse Farm/Elmside and wraps around the former mushroom farm to the south east. Private amenity areas at Bourne Meadow/Green Road and south Rosemary Lane do not have the appearance of continuing into the Green Belt although this is more indistinct to the north/north east.

**Overall** – The restrictive views to the south and built development to the edge of the stream along Bourne Meadow/Green Road coupled with a relatively well defined boundaries to the south and development to the east around the former mushroom farm gives a low/medium relationship with the openness of the Green Belt in this location. However, the open area stretches northwards and flows around Copse Farm/Elmside which, with less defined boundaries gives a higher degree of openness in this location. Overall therefore the degree of openness is considered to be medium.

## **Area B**

Topography - Flat with linear array or small stands of trees and/or small wooded copses and hedgerows evident in the west. Northern area open agricultural land bounded by hedgerows. Small lake lies to the rear of Midway Avenue.

Views – Views east-southeast from Muckhatch Lane are largely restricted by vegetation, but views across plot areas are relatively open or obscured by vegetation with occasional close boarded fencing and limited built development. Views to the north north-east from Muckhatch Lane are generally restricted by vegetation and a wall which runs along part of a footpath between Muckhatch Lane and Village Road which also has a long thin linear form of built development set on its south side. From the north at Ten Acre Lane, views are largely unrestricted across an open agricultural field up to the footpath running between Muckhatch Lane and Village Road. Views into the village are obscured or partially obscured by vegetation and limited built development to the south west and south east and with a prominent enclosure around Acorn Farm to the south east. The wall which runs part of the length of the footpath between Muckhatch Lane and Village Road partially restricts longer views south.

From the village, views out from the footpath running between Muckhatch Lane and Village Road are restricted by 1.8m-2m high close boarded fencing or walls to both sides of the footpath, although fencing to the north side ends around half way along leaving an unrestricted view north with Thorpe Industrial Estate partially obscured by vegetation in the distance.

Boundaries – Few built developments in western part of Area B until Western Avenue/Midway Avenue. Indistinct boundary edge along the western side of the village particularly around the western/northern side of the lake, but boundaries are stronger on the east side with the lake forming the rear boundaries to properties on Midway Avenue and some properties on Western Avenue. Strong boundary formed from 1.8m-2m high fencing or walls which run the length of the footpath between Muckhatch Lane and Village Road.

Continuance of Open Areas – Area B is largely formed from agricultural fields and plots of privately owned land around 8 or so dwellings. The privately owned plots are generally open in character with limited built development. The agricultural land and that around Acorn Farm

to the north is also generally open in character and as such the openness of the private plots and agricultural land do continue into one another to some degree. However, the fencing/wall and thin linear development which runs along or partially along the footpath between Muckhatch Lane and Village Road does give a perception of a separation between the private plots and agricultural land. Nevertheless, the lack of built development within both of these areas suggests that the open area is largely continuous north of Rosemary Lane, west of Midway/Western Avenue and north to Ten Acre Lane. On the other hand the private amenity areas to the rear of properties on the northern side of Western Avenue do give the appearance of a built edge to the village and not a continuation of the open area.

**Overall** – Whilst views eastwards are largely restricted by vegetation they are predominantly unrestricted by built development and open to the north from the edge of the village. Whilst views south into the village are partially restricted by built development, the overall character of the area is open. However, there is a strong edge, especially along the footpath running to the rear of Western Avenue which restricts the degree of openness. As such, it is considered that there is a high degree of openness between the village and Green Belt to the north of the western end of Rosemary Lane, west of Midway/Western Avenue and north to Ten Acre Lane, but low between the north side of Western Avenue and the Green Belt.

### **Area C**

Topography – Flat with linear arrays of hedgerow boundaries and small stands of trees.

Views – Views to the south east-south west from Village Road/Ten Acre Lane restricted by vegetation, but within Tasis site views are largely unrestricted up to the school buildings and Tennis Courts to the south east and built development on the northern edge of Village Road and at Giles Travers Close to the south west. School buildings restrict longer views to the south east and the dwellings at Giles Travers Close partially obscured by vegetation and at Village Road by 1.8m high close boarded fencing. Further to the south of Ten Acre Lane, views are restricted westwards by school buildings with longer views restricted by vegetation.

Views out of the village northwards obscured by hedgerow vegetation along Village Road/Ten Acre Lane with built development along Ten Acre Lane obscured by vegetation. Thorpe Community Hall only partially restricts views.

Boundaries – Hedgerows form the boundary to the school site along Village Road and Ten Acre Lane. 1.8m high close boarded fencing to side boundary at Village Road and vegetation/chain link fencing at Giles Travers Close gives a reasonably strong boundary to the village at this point. However within the school site some edges to buildings and the tennis courts are reasonably defined but other areas are indistinct.

Continuance of Open Areas – Area C is largely formed from school playing fields and is largely open in character. The open area forming the playing fields continues up to and around the school buildings to the south and to the rear of Coldharbour Close to the south west. However, the open area between the school buildings to the south does not have the perception of being a continuation from the playing



fields, rather a space enclosed largely by built development, children's play area and a small stand of trees/vegetation. The private amenity areas at Village Road/Giles Travers Close and Coldharbour Close do give the appearance of a built edge to the village and not a continuation of the open area.

**Overall** – Whilst views south are largely restricted by school buildings the area is predominantly open in character with open views across school playing fields to the north and south. Whilst boundaries are somewhat indistinct within the school site, the edge of the village is reasonably strong with the school playing fields and Tasis site at Village Road/Giles Travers Close and Coldharbour Close. With the perception that the open playing fields are broken by built development to the south, it is considered that there is a medium degree of openness between the village and Green Belt at this location.

#### **Area D**

Topography – Generally flat although the land falls gently in places from north to south down to lakes/reservoirs to the south east. Area interspersed with stands of trees or small copses of woods and linear arrays of trees/vegetation around lakes.

Views – From the south east to north-north west, views are partially restricted by vegetation and partially by built development in the form of agricultural buildings at Coldharbour Lane and around the St Mary's Church area. From the south-south west to north, short views are largely restricted by buildings at the Tasis site south of Coldharbour Lane and to north west by vegetation, however longer views are largely unrestricted through playing fields to the south of the Tasis site, although not further southwards past Mill Lane. Westwards views are predominantly unrestricted to the wall adjacent Village Road aside from a small amount of built development. Views north and east from Mill Lane are restricted by vegetation with occasional gaps to the playing fields at Tasis, past the lakes at the southern end of Mill Lane.

South eastwards views from the village are unrestricted across Thorpe Lakes with Thorpe Park in longer views, although when viewed from north of Coldharbour Lane this is restricted by built development and the wall fronting Coldharbour Lane. From St Mary's Church views south and south west are largely unrestricted across playing fields but partially obscured by vegetation but to the south east views are restricted by built development and partially obscured by vegetation. Views east from Village Road are restricted by a 2m high wall adjacent the highway, but within the Tasis site eastward views from Village Road are largely unrestricted but partially obscured by vegetation.

Boundaries – Reasonably indistinct boundary edge to the south east around agricultural buildings on south east side of Coldharbour Lane and indistinct around buildings at the Tasis site south of Coldharbour Lane, although the wall fronting Coldharbour Lane/Village Road and boundaries to Yewtrees are strong. Boundary edges around St Mary's Church fairly strong in places but indistinct in others.

Continuance of Open Areas – Area D is predominantly open in character with the open area stretching across the school playing fields from Village Road across the south of the Tasis site and St Mary's Church to the south east of Coldharbour Lane around Thorpe Lakes. Rather than continuing through the village, the built development at Tasis and around St Mary's Church form a reasonably tight cluster of buildings

set within the open area. Private amenity at Blackhouse Farm gives an appearance of a built edge and not continuing into the open area, but to the east of Blackhouse Farm this is more indistinct.

**Overall** – Whilst built development at the Tasis site and around St Mary's Church does restrict short views northwards, the general extent and open character of the area with largely indistinct boundaries gives a high degree of openness between the village and Green Belt especially given the gap between the Tasis buildings and Yewtrees to the west.

### **Area E**

Topography – Flat with occasional small copses of woodland/vegetation and individual trees with hedgerows to southern field boundaries. Small stream to the north east which flows under Green Road from Area A to Area E.

Views – Views north across agricultural land partially restricted by built development at Green Road although short views east-west largely unrestricted. Views partially obscured by vegetation running to the rear of dwellings at Green Road and at Woodcock Hall Farm. Gantry's at the M25 motorway and its general elevation above the surrounding area can be seen in longer views to the north and west.

From the village views from the north side of Green Road to the south are restricted by dwellings along Green Road as well as hedgerows and a small wooded copse but a gap in the frontage at Woodcock Hall Farm does allow restricted views through to the south. From rear boundaries however, views are largely unrestricted across agricultural fields.

Boundaries – Boundary edge reasonably well defined to residential dwellings along Green Road at its most western end. Edge reasonably indistinct to the rear of Woodcock Hall Farm where stream forms the break between agricultural field to the south and cluster of agricultural buildings to the north. Eastwards, boundaries rear of dwellings fronting Green Road defined by the stream flowing from Area A, which are relatively open from the south, although boundaries are relatively indistinct where a small wooded copse is sited south of Pippins, St Mary and Rydal.

Continuance of Open Areas – Area E is largely formed from open fields in either agricultural or equestrian use which run up to the southern boundary with properties along Green Road. Part of the open area continues up to Green Road as a wooded copse just west of Woodcock Hall Farm and dissects built development along Green Road. Private amenity areas at properties on the western end of Green Road do give the appearance of a built edge, although this is less well defined for those at the eastern end which have fairly long and narrow rear amenity areas. However, built development does occur in the rear amenity areas of some of these properties.

Overall - Whilst Area E is predominantly formed of open fields in agricultural or equestrian use with unrestricted short views east-west, views north are restricted by built development and partially obscured by vegetation. Given a relatively well defined boundary edge and that the open area does not largely continue into the village, it is considered that there is a medium degree of openness between the village and

Green Belt.

### **Overall Rank on Contribution to Openness of the Green Belt**

The Green Belt which surrounds the village of Thorpe is virtually a continuous area of land encircling the village with short breaks for highways between. The surrounding Green Belt is largely open in character with limited development save for a few plots of residential development towards the west at Muckhatch Lane and agricultural buildings to the east at Coldharbour Lane. However, there are more significant breaks in the openness of the Green Belt that encircles the village and which do not connect well to each other. This can be seen by development at Green Road/Bourne Meadow breaking the openness of the Green Belt between Area A and Area E and the Tasis school buildings and walls along Coldharbour Lane breaking the openness of Area C and Area D. Further, there is very little open or green space within the village itself which forms a continuous area into the Green Belt. Although the playing fields at Tasis do run up to the school buildings, these and the Frank Muir Memorial Fields sit on the edge of rather than within the village envelope. Views into and through the village from the surrounding Green Belt are largely restricted by built development especially at Coldharbour Lane around the Tasis site and to the south of the Frank Muir Memorial Field and within Fleetway/The Gower.

Whilst the character of the village was found to be more open at its periphery, this is more due to density and form of development rather than a lack of development and there are numerous locations where boundaries are relatively strong giving a sense of development and where the openness of the surrounding Green Belt does not appear to 'flow' into private amenity areas. This is either because of built development in private amenity areas or because boundaries are relatively close to the built edge. This is evident when viewing the village from the industrial estate, south of Green Road and south toward Bourne Meadow/Green Road.

Nevertheless, there are aspects which contribute to the openness of the Green Belt. The Green Belt south of Green Road runs up and around Woodcock Hall Farm forming a break in the frontage and between residential developments along the south side of Green Road, with a significant break formed by a wooded area to the west of Woodcock Hall Farm. The area around Muckhatch Lane heading west into the village is largely undeveloped and the wooded copse to the south east and north of the Frank Muir Memorial Field also forms a significant contribution to openness of the Green Belt. The lack of development around Copse Farm/Elmside up to dwellings on Rosemary Lane and between Yewtrees and the Tasis buildings to the south of Coldharbour Lane also contributes towards the Green Belt's openness in these locations. There are also areas where the boundaries between the surrounding Green Belt and built form within the village are relatively indistinct such as to dwellings to the east of Green Road, around the Tasis site and agricultural buildings to the east of Coldharbour Lane as well as the western end of Rosemary Lane.

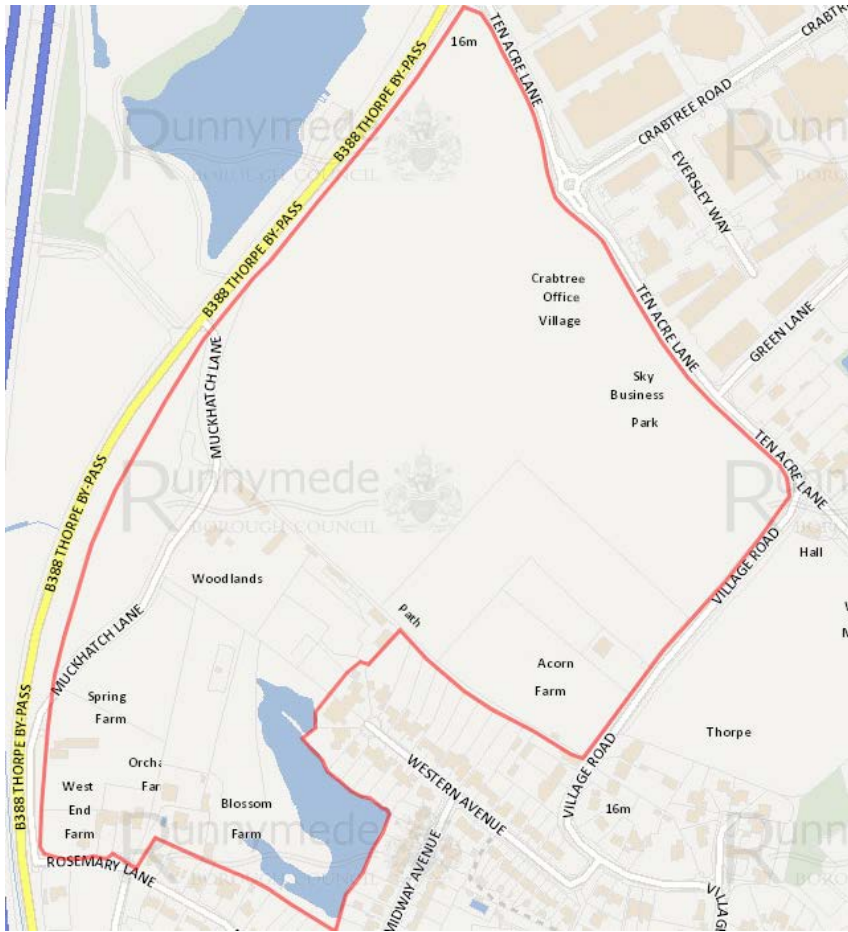
As such, the contribution that the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt as a whole is medium, but recognising that some areas offer little contribution, but others around some of the periphery offer a higher contribution.

## **Appendix D: Plan & Photos of Assessment Area**

**Area A**

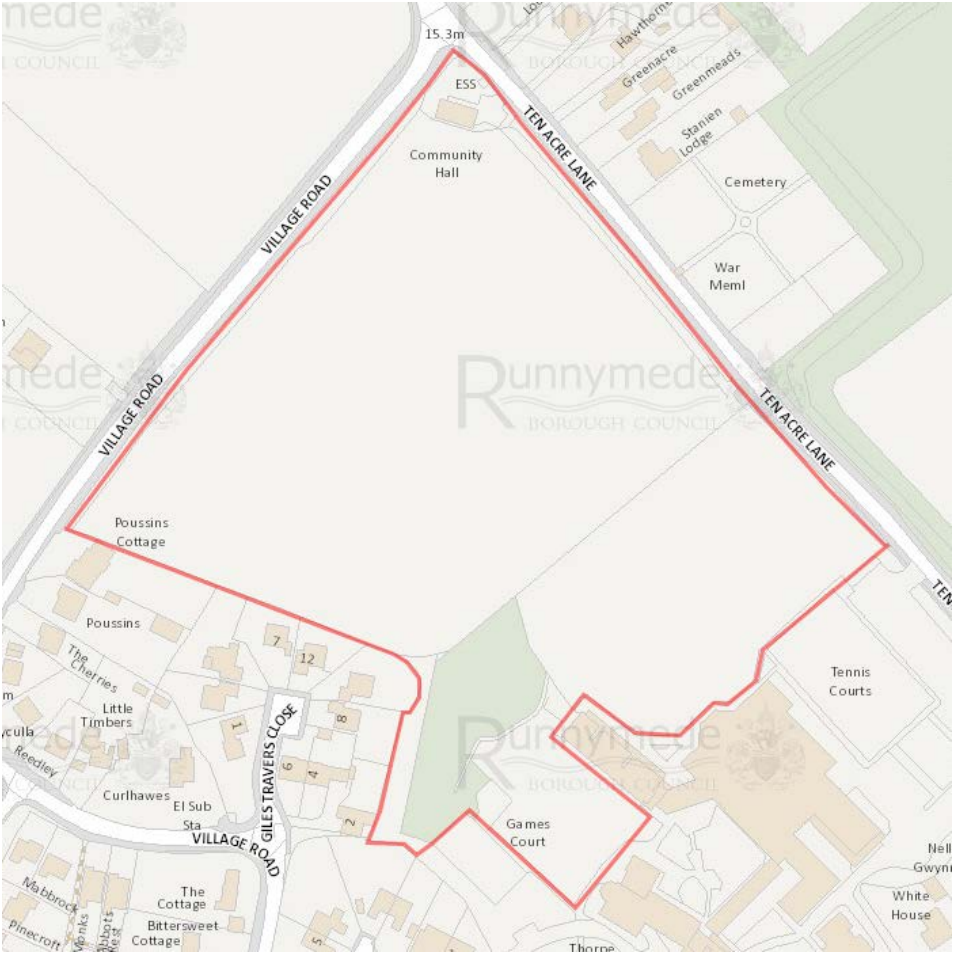


**Area B**



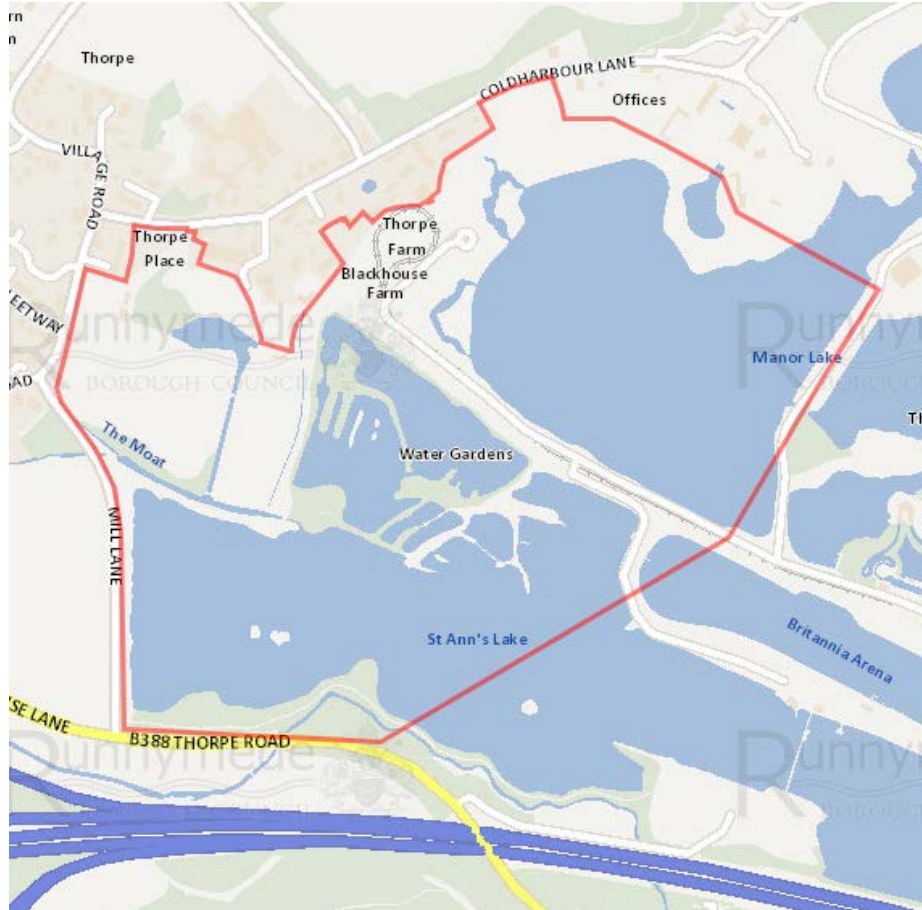


Area C






# Area D



**Area E**



*This page is intentionally blank*



All enquiries about this paper should be directed to:

Policy & Strategy Team  
Planning Business Centre

Runnymede Borough Council  
The Civic Centre  
Station Road  
Addlestone  
Surrey KT15 2AH

Tel 01932 838383

Further copies of this publication can be obtained from the above address,  
or email: [planningpolicy@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@runnymede.gov.uk)

[www.runnymede.gov.uk](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk)

2018

