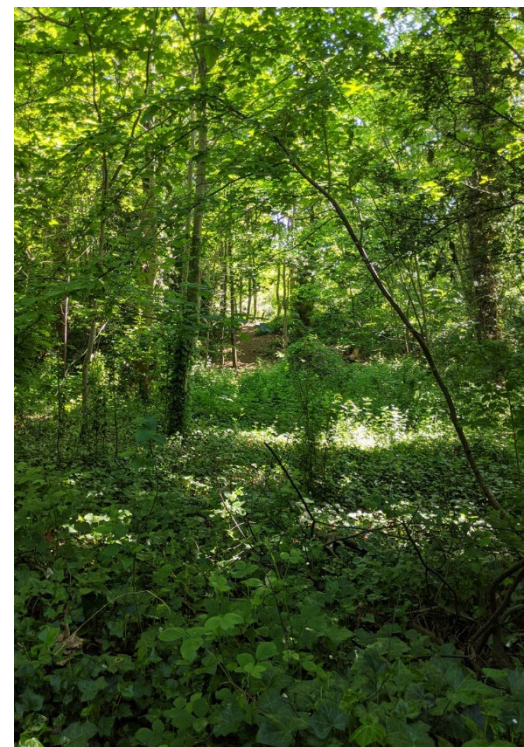


# Thorpe St Andrew Town Council Neighbourhood Development Plan Updated SEA and HRA Screening Statements May 2023



THORPE ST ANDREW TOWN COUNCIL



## **Contents**

1. Introduction
2. SEA Legislative background
3. HRA Legislative background
4. Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Consultation June-August 2021
5. Changes to the Neighbourhood Plan following the Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Consultation
6. Updated: Screening Outcome

Appendix A: Thorpe St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Appendix B: Map showing the Thorpe St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Broads Authority Boundary.

Appendix C: Responses from Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority

## **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to update the existing Thorpe St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report and Determination . The original combined report was produced in co-operation with Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority in February 2021 and used an emerging version of the 2021 Pre-Submission Regulation 14 Draft of the Neighbourhood Plan as a basis for the screening process.

## **2. SEA Legislative Background**

The requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment is contained within European Directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the Environment'. The SEA Directive is transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. If there is a likelihood that the neighbourhood plan could cause negative environmental effects, a SEA Assessment will be necessary. As part of the legal requirements, the 2021 screening assessment was prepared.

The outcome of the Screening Determination was that the screening process findings clearly identified that the Thorpe St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan was not likely to have significant environmental effects, due to the absence of any land allocations for development, or promotion of any significant new development. It was therefore considered that a full SEA was not required. This was also corroborated by the responses received from the three Statutory Environmental Bodies, as shown in Appendix C of the Screening Report and Determination dated February 2021.

## **3. HRA Legislative Background**

The original HRA Screening Report was undertaken by Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority in 2019. The aim of the screening was to assess whether there will be any likely significant impacts on designated European sites either within or in relative proximity to the designated neighbourhood area of the Neighbourhood Plan (i.e. the civil parish of Thorpe St. Andrew).

Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive states that:

*Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [European] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.*

The purpose of the Habitat Regulations Assessment is therefore to ensure the protection of European (Natura 2000) sites. These sites are designed to form an ecologically coherent network of designated sites across the whole of Europe. Referred to as 'European Designated Sites', Natura 2000 sites include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas for Conservation (SAC). As a matter of policy the Government also expect authorities to treat Ramsar sites, candidate SAC (cSAC) and proposed SPAs (pSPA) as if they are European sites for the purpose of considering development proposals that may affect them.

One of the basic conditions of Neighbourhood Plans, prescribed by Regulation 32 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) is that the plan:

*...is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).*

Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (CHSR) puts into effect the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (see 2.1 above) and requires that:

*(1) Where a land use plan –*

*(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and*

*(b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site,*

*the plan-making authority must before the plan is given effect, make an appropriate assessment of the implications of the site in view of that site's conservation objectives.*

Regulation 106 of the CHSR requires that:

*A qualifying body which submits a proposal for a neighbourhood development plan must provide such information as the competent authority may reasonably require for the purposes of the assessment under regulation 102 or to enable them to determine whether that assessment is required.*

As the 'competent authority' for these purposes, Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority produced the screening report to determine whether a full Habitats Regulations Assessment is required.

The outcome of the HRA Screening concluded that:

*" there will be no likely significant effect of the proposed Thorpe St. Andrew Neighbourhood Plan on the highlighted European designations to the south-east of the parish, and therefore a full Appropriate Assessment is not required. None of the policies within the draft Neighbourhood Plan allocates any sites for future development in the parish, which possibly would have a negative impact. Only two policies are site specific (Policies 1 and 6), but these, respectively, seek to protect identified green spaces of local importance from future development, and enhance current employment areas, where appropriate. This screening assessment has been performed in relation to the draft version of the Plan which is intended*

*to be subject to Reg. 14 pre-submission consultation. Once the final draft of the Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority, the authorities will review the policies therein to see if there have been any significant changes. If so, then the local planning authorities may decide to update this assessment at that time”.*

This assessment report was sent to Natural England for comments in November 2019, as the appropriate nature conservation body specified by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and they responded in December 2019, to confirm that Natural England agreed with the conclusions of the HRA Screening. The response is contained within the HRA Screening Report.

#### **4. Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Consultation**

The Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Consultation was undertaken on the Neighbourhood Plan between 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021. Consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan was launched via a programme of seven community engagement drop-in style events held at the Town Hall, where members of the Working Group and the Town Council were available to answer questions on the Plan and to encourage local residents to comment on the draft plan in writing. Hard copies of the Neighbourhood Plan were available to view at the Town Council offices. The events were promoted using social media, the mailing list and the newsletter.

In addition to the community engagement, the Neighbourhood Plan was also available on the Town Council website with an accompanying Survey Monkey form which could be filled in to submit comments. All statutory consultees were notified including Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority, local interest groups and landowners.

At the end of the Regulation 14 consultation responses had been received from :

- Broads Authority
- Natural England
- Norfolk County Council
- Broadland District Council
- Historic England
- National Grid
- Norfolk Constabulary
- Barton Wilmore
- Sport England
- Broads Drainage Board
- 35 individuals

## **5. Changes to the Neighbourhood Plan following the Regulation 14 Consultation**

All comments received during the consultation are shown in the table in **Appendix F** of the **Consultation Statement** (March 2023) which accompanies the submission version of the Thorpe St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan. Following the end of the consultation period, all representations were analysed and a number of amendments to the Plan were agreed as a result of issues raised during the consultation period. The main changes to the Neighbourhood Plan are summarised as follows:

### **General**

- Updates to reflect the publication of the July 2021 NPPF and other national guidance references.
- Updates to reflect latest position with the Greater Norwich Local Plan.
- Updates to reflect the latest position with the Broads Local Plan position.
- General factual updating.
- Clarification of general text and process.
- More detail on the characteristics of the Parish itself added to Chapter 3.

### **Policies**

**Policy 1:** Required review to refer to those spaces worthy of LGS designation and those that require other protection e.g. biodiversity/geodiversity.

- Broadened to become more of a natural environment policy with specific protection for specific sites.
- General tightening up of wording and justification of supporting text in some areas.
- More detail added to the Local Green Space Assessments.
- Mapping updates

**Policy 2:** Recast to make it a specific design policy and include more detail on materials, layout, density, design, landscaping, eco design, secure by design, character etc consistent with changes to the NPPF.

**Policy 3:** Minor clarifications

- Incorporation of reference to NCC and Broadland parking standards

**Policy 4:** Recast to make solely an amenity policy and relocated design elements to Policy 2

**Policy 5:** Reviewed for conformity with Broads Local Plan policies.

**Policy 6:** Minor clarifications

- Tighten wording to be more specific.
- Update in the light of Use Classes Order Revisions
- Mapping updates

**Policy 7:** Recast to ensure both protection of existing amenities and guidance for the creation of new facilities are covered.

- Minor rewording
- Incorporate reference to the accessibility of user groups.

**Policy 8:** Review to ensure clear guidance provided for designated assets but do not repeat national guidance.

### **Implementation and Monitoring**

- Section requires more detail on review period and responsibilities for monitoring.

### **Appendices**

- Review character statement for clarity and for specific guidance
- Review all mapping for clarity and accuracy.

## **6: Updated Screening outcome**

The above changes to the Thorpe St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan are largely changes relating to factual updates, clarifications, updated policy justification and mapping updates.

There are no substantive changes to policy direction, no additional policies, nor does the plan make any specific allocations. It is therefore concluded that the updated and amended Regulation 16 Submission Version of the Thorpe St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan, March 2023, is not likely to have significant environmental effects, due to the fact that its content remains substantially the same as the Pre-Submission Version. The amended plan still has an absence of any land allocations for development, or promotion of any significant new development.

It is therefore considered that as the amended Neighbourhood Plan substantially remains the same as the Pre-Submission Version that the outcome of any further SEA or HRA Screenings on the amended Thorpe St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan would also be substantially the same and therefore are considered not to be required.

Both Broadland District Council and The Broads Authority have been consulted on this updated Screening Statement and their responses are contained in **Appendix C**. Both Authorities have concluded that the Screening Outcome remains the same.



## **Appendix A: Amended Neighbourhood Plan policies.**

### **Policy 1 - Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment**

#### **Thorpe St Andrew NDP Policy 1: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment**

Development should minimise the disruption of habitats and seek to conserve and enhance existing environmentally important sites, for their openness, their undeveloped character and/or their geodiversity or biodiversity value, this includes County Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves and sites of Geodiversity Value. Development in areas of local importance (listed below) including valued green and open spaces should only be permitted where it is consistent with the relevant designation of the site.

The areas marked with an asterisk \* below are proposed as Local Green Spaces . The consideration of proposals for development in these areas should be consistent with those for managing Green Belt.

This includes:

- 1) Racecourse Plantation (County Wildlife Site)
- 2) Belmore Plantation \*
- 3) Brown's Plantation\*
- 4) Thorpe Island (Broads Authority Executive Area, Open Space in the BLP and Tree Preservation Order)
- 5) Cary's Meadow\* (Broads Authority Executive Area)
- 6) River Green\* (Broads Authority Executive Area)
- 7) Sir George Morse Park\*
- 8) Gargle Hill Woodland\*
- 9) Fitzmaurice Park\*
- 10) Laundry Lane Tree Plantation\*
- 11) Weston Pits\* (County Geodiversity Site)
- 12) Townpit Plantation\* (Candidate County Geodiversity Site)
- 13) Chapel Lane Pit/South Avenue Dell\* (Candidate County Geodiversity Site)
- 14) Thorpe Marshes/St Andrew Broad (Broads Authority Executive Area and Local Nature Reserve))
- 15) Thorpe Ridge\*(Candidate County Geodiversity Site and Ancient Woodland)
- 16) Weston Wood\*

## **Policy 2 - Creating a strong Sense of Place**

New development will be well-designed to complement the character of the area of Thorpe St Andrew in which it is to be located and reflect its local distinctiveness as set out in the accompanying Thorpe St Andrew character statement (Appendix A).

In particular, development should respect the sensitivities of the following locally important landscape areas:

- 1) The area to the east of the settlement, in which there is a transition from the urban to the rural, and which acts as a 'gateway' to the city and to the Broads.
- 2) The Thorpe Ridge landscape and the riverside character of the southern area of the settlement.
- 3) The Thorpe St Andrew conservation area

In addition, and to ensure the creation of a strong sense of place, development is encouraged to:

- a) Respect the existing settlement pattern and scale in order to preserve its character
- b) Integrate with existing paths, streets and other connections as well as natural features such as tree groups, hedgerows and public rights of way
- c) Reinforce the established character of streets, greens and spaces
- d) Be orientated to maximise solar gain, daylight and sunlight
- e) Use contextually appropriate high-quality materials including sustainable and traditional materials
- f) Use a range of boundary treatments including walling, hedging and new tree planting which reinforce the character of the area and ensure that development edges are visually attractive
- g) include measures which will help to offset or mitigate climate change whilst minimising visual impact
- h) Use sustainable drainage systems to protect against pollution, provide drainage and wider amenity, recreational and biodiversity benefits.
- i) Avoid the use of hard-standings and encourage the use of loose and porous surfaces e.g. for driveways to help manage surface water and drainage
- j) conform to the principles of Secured by Design to help create safe spaces and neighbourhoods

### **Policy 3 - Connectivity and Ensuring Adequate Car Parking**

Applications for new housing developments are encouraged to make provision for the following:

- 1) Sufficient on plot parking to accommodate the needs of residents and to minimise the need for additional on street parking, provided either at the rear, front or side of the property. Street layouts should seek to orientate dwellings onto pedestrian routes and encourage walking to local services.
- 2) a cycling and walking friendly neighbourhood by applying highway design principles which should not prioritise the movement function of streets at the expense of quality of place;
- 3) Pedestrian and cycle routes which are well connected, well designed, safe to use and suitable for a range of users including those with limited mobility.
4. The need to have sufficient off-street parking to maintain a pleasant visual environment and avoid streetscapes that are dominated by cars, based on the following table

Bedrooms	Minimum number of car parking spaces to be provided
1 or 2	2
3	3
4 (and more)	4

### **Policy 4: Protecting Resident Amenity**

- 1) The development of new housing close to existing homes shall seek to safeguard existing levels of amenity through:
  - a) Ensuring that the height of new residential buildings or extensions is compatible with and respects the surrounding residential area and not impact on the amenity of adjoining properties,
  - b) Promoting the 'open feel' of streets at the front of existing houses where appropriate, with new front gardens provided that are of a similar size to those enjoyed by existing development
- 2) When assessing the impact of the occupation, operation and construction of a development on amenity, consideration will be given to:
  - a) Overlooking of windows of habitable rooms and private amenity space.
  - b) Overshadowing of private amenity space.
  - c) Loss of daylight and/or sunlight to existing windows of habitable rooms.
  - d) Overbearing impact/visual dominance.
  - e) Light pollution.
  - f) Airborne pollutants.
  - g) Odours.

- h) Noise pollution and disturbance.
- i) Vibration.
- j) Insects and vermin; and
- k) Provision of a satisfactory and usable external amenity space to residential properties in keeping with the character of the immediate surrounding area.

### Policy 5: Residential Mooring

The development of a new moorings for residential boats, alterations to or replacement of an existing residential boat or the construction of jetties, platforms and sheds associated with residential boat moorings should meet the following criteria:

- 1) The proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the natural or historic environment.
- 2) Areas of mixed moorings will retain their open feel and maintain the existing wide views across the River Yare
- 3) Suitable waste disposal facilities are provided.
- 4) Safe and suitable access for emergency service vehicles, preferably by road is provided.
- 5) Adequate car parking for each residential boat is provided, based on the standards in the table below

Bedrooms on board (berths)	Minimum number of car parking spaces to be provided
1	1
2 (and more)	2

### Policy 6: Promoting and Protecting Employment

Existing employment areas should be retained and expanded whilst they remain viable and expanded where appropriate, specifically:

- 1) **North:** Retail service, and hospitality businesses clustered on Thunder Lane, Plumstead Road and South Hill Road
- 2) **South:** Smaller business units and hospitality along Yarmouth Road, Bungalow Lane, Gordon Avenue and on St Williams Way
- 3) **East:** Sainsbury's supermarket retail area, larger mixed-use units at the St Andrews Business Park, and Griffin Lane.

Major new residential development should include appropriate provision for retail, employment uses and live-work units to meet the day to day needs of residents and businesses and to ensure the sustainability of new communities. Where possible, such developments should seek to cluster these uses together to create mixed use areas, which will allow for the sharing of buildings, and facilities which will help to improve the

sustainability of the businesses and create opportunities for building efficiency and energy efficiency.

### **Policy 7: Retaining and Creating Community Facilities**

Where new development is proposed, it should be supported by the appropriate levels of community infrastructure which meets the needs of new residents /communities without detriment to the services enjoyed by existing residents/communities.

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the improvement, enhancement and extension of current community facilities. New play areas and public open spaces should be preferably located close to community hubs, and other community buildings such as schools. Such spaces should be easily and safely accessible from residential areas, by pedestrian and cyclists and those with limited mobility. New green spaces should link with existing areas of green infrastructure to create ecological networks and biodiversity net gain.

The construction methods and furnishing of community buildings will be encouraged to minimise energy and water use and promote the use of alternative energy sources. Consideration should also be given to the use of green/brown roofs on community buildings and bus shelters.

Proposals that would result in any loss of community facilities will not be supported unless:

- 1) It can be demonstrated that the facilities are no longer needed or viable; or
- 2) It can be demonstrated that suitable alternative provision, with appropriate capacity already exists in an equally accessible location ; or
- 3) Suitable alternative provision will be delivered by new development in an equally accessible location.

### **Policy 8: Protecting the Historic Environment**

New development proposed within the Conservation Area, or within the curtilage of a listed building, scheduled monument, or non-designated asset (full list in Appendix B) should minimise the impact on the assets by:

- 1) Demonstrating that they have avoided or mitigated harm to the significance of the asset(s) through the design of the development.
- 2) Conserving the setting of the asset(s) setting and any aspect which contributes to their significance.
- 3) Undertaking repair and conservation work to the asset.
- 4) Including elements of design to enhance enjoyment of the historic environment.

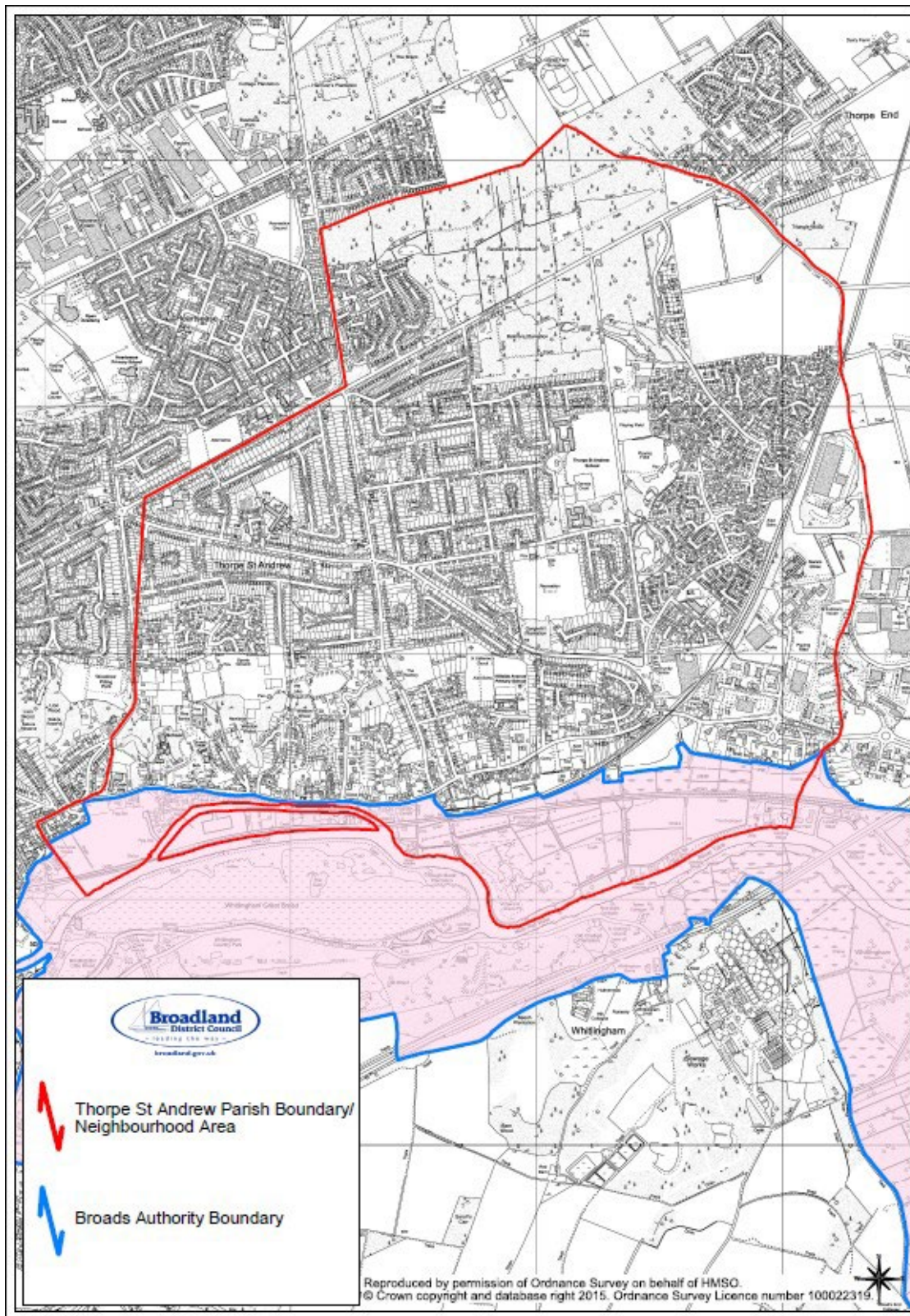
## **Thorpe St Andrew NDP Project: Improving Car Parking**

Land off Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew could be suitable for use as car parking associated with RiverGreen, Thorpe St Andrew Parish Church and local businesses.

The site is 0.3 Ha in size and is located between the railway line to the south and Yarmouth Road to the north. To the east is housing and to the west is the Rushcutters Public House. The site was previously a Highway Depot owned by Norfolk County Council but was sold and subject to a planning application in 2002, where permission was granted for a two-storey hotel bedroom block. The site has a number of constraints including a large water outlet beneath it making development problematic.

It is an aspiration that this site be used for car parking and this will be investigated further by the Town Council.

## Appendix B: Neighbourhood Plan Area



Source: Broadland District Council

## Appendix C: Response from Broadland District Council

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2 May 2023

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Dear Thomas,

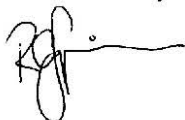
### **Updated SEA/HRA Screening Statements for Thorpe St. Andrew Neighbourhood Plan**

Thank you for consulting Broadland District Council with regard to the updated screening statements for the proposed Thorpe St. Andrew Neighbourhood Plan.

The Council agrees with section 6 of the screening statement where it is stated that, as there have been no substantive changes to policy direction, no additional policies and no specific allocations within the updated Neighbourhood Plan since the Regulation 14 consultation took place in summer 2021, the conclusions of the original SEA and HRA Screening Reports would substantially remain the same (i.e. that a full SEA and HRA are not required).

I hope this is satisfactory.

Yours sincerely



**Richard Squires**  
Senior Community Planning Officer  
Place Shaping Team

Two Councils  
One Team

**Broadland**  
District Council  
*Community at heart*

**South Norfolk**  
COUNCIL



## Appendix C: Response from Broads Authority



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28 April 2023

Dear Mr Foreman

**Re: Thorpe St Andrew Town Council Neighbourhood Development Plan Updated SEA and HRA Screening Statements April 2023**

Many thanks for engaging us with this update to the Sea and HRA screening statements.

Because there have been some amendments to the draft Neighbourhood Plan, as a result of the comments received as part of the Regulation 14 consultation, you have checked and updated the screening assessment.

Because the draft Neighbourhood Plan still does not include any land allocations for development, or promote any significant new development, the conclusion remains that full HRA and SEA are not required.

The Broads Authority consider this a reasonable approach and a reasonable conclusion.

Yours sincerely

Natalie Beal

Planning Policy Officer

