


Policy PUBTSA 2

Thorpe Island Inset Map 

Development on Thorpe Island will be managed to:

- 1) maintain and enhance:
  - i) the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
  - ii) the visual amenity and the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers;
  - iii) the contribution of the island to the wider landscape of the River Yare; and
  - iv) the navigational value of the Yare and the New Cut; and
- 2) avoid any significant increase in:
  - v) the intensity or extent of mooring use; or
  - vi) the intensity or extent of on-shore development required to support any lawful mooring uses,
  - vii) vehicular traffic using the bridge; or
  - viii) dinghy access likely to lead to the mooring or storage of dinghies (or other small craft) on the Thorpe shore, unless specific and satisfactory provision has been made for this; or
  - ix) car parking in the Thorpe area, unless specific and satisfactory provision has been made for this; or
  - x) risk of groundwater or river water pollution; or
  - xi) flood risk, and reducing flood risk where practicable.

For planning purposes, the island is split into three parts to which the following applies:

a) Eastern End of Thorpe Island

This part of the island is retained in boatyard usage. Well-designed upgrades or renewals to the existing buildings that reflect this part of the island being in the conservation area, in the urban/rural transition area as well as being a gateway into Norwich will be supported. Any proposals must also improve the landscaping of this part of the island. In relation to the private moorings along the river frontage, proposals which seek to give more order and improve the appearance of these moorings and the associated paraphernalia on the island itself will be supported. Any proposals for permanent residential moorings will need to comply with the requirements of **PODM35**.

b) Central part of Thorpe Island

Continued use of this area for low key recreation and private amenity space is supported.

c) Western end of Thorpe Island (including the basin)

This part of the island will be used for low key uses. Proposals which remove the poor quality structures and paraphernalia will be welcomed. Proposals shall make significant improvement to the visual appearance of the area and provide biodiversity enhancements.

Within the basin, the provision of private moorings for up to 25 vessels is acceptable, subject to the satisfactory provision of well-designed on-site car parking, refuse storage and disposal, sewage disposal and upgrades to the bridge. Significant improvements will also be required to the

landscaping. These moorings shall be only private moorings and not residential moorings. Moorings shall be laid out in an informal configuration to avoid regimentation in appearance. Proposals for the basin must include the removal and suitable disposal of the sunken vessels to improve the visual appearance of the area as well as enable safe usage of the basin.

Moorings will only be allowed within the basin and not along the river frontage

No other development shall be permitted on the Western end of the Island.

#### CONSTRAINTS & FEATURES

- Almost the whole of Thorpe Island is within the Thorpe St Andrew with Thorpe Island Conservation Area. (Only the railway line along the southern edge of the Island is excluded.)
- Almost the whole of the Island is in high flood risk zones (EA zone 3; SFRA mainly zone 3b, some 3a and 2).
- The Island is in an area of safeguarded minerals (sand and gravel) resources, but the Minerals Planning Authority has advised this is unlikely to constrain the type and scale of development supported by the Policy.
- Bridges constrain types and size of vessels entering the river from the cut.
- For the Eastern and Central parts of the Island, there is no pedestrian or vehicular access from land; access is only by boat.
- Narrow vehicular access via a bridge to the Western end of Thorpe Island.
- Amenity of varying neighbouring uses.
- Limited utilities provision
- Active railway line.
- Mooring basin.
- Sunken vessels within basin.
- Rural/urban transition area.
- Outside development boundary.

#### Reasoned Justification

The semi-natural appearance which much of the Island provides is an important backdrop to views from Thorpe Green and its environs, and more generally to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It also provides a semi-natural view from the riverside path in Whitlingham Country Park, screening the traffic and urban development of Thorpe St. Andrew and helping provide a more tranquil and semi-rural character to the Whitlingham Country Park.

Since the closure of the hire boatyards that previously operated from the Island a whole series of uses and operations, many unauthorised, have given rise to complaints from neighbouring occupiers and the Town Council and successive enforcement actions by the Authority, decisions by the Planning Inspectorate and subsequent legal judgements by courts. (The residential occupancy of the former boatyard office and the operation of a boatyard at the eastern end of the Island are legitimate (Area A))

The Island has very limited access. A narrow bridge to the west does connect the Island to the shore, but is very narrow, with poor alignment and emerges in a small residential estate, and is not a suitable route for significant traffic or heavy vehicles. There is a serious shortage of parking in the vicinity to serve local residents and business, and visitors to the popular riverside area of Thorpe Green.

Significant development or additional occupation of the Island would give rise to additional pressure on this already limited capacity. Access to the Island is primarily by boat, but this, too, is constrained. Boat access to the north side of the island from the main river (New Cut) is constrained by shoal water and the low air draught (clearance height) of the railway bridges at both ends of the Island, while the railway along the south edge of the island rules out direct access to the island from the main river. Therefore further substantial development of the Island is not compatible with the very limited access to the island, the lack of available car parking in the environs, the island's contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the wider landscape in the vicinity.

The EA highlights that the site lies within its designated Source Protection Zone 1, and the importance here of avoiding the risk of pollution to the groundwater resources. It also emphasises the need to address the risks of water pollution for waterside sites in industrial/boatyard use.

With regards to the **eastern end of the Island**, the policy seeks the retention of the boat usage and allows for related improvements to the existing buildings. This mainly reflects the flood risk to the site as well as there being no pedestrian or vehicular access. This is a prominent site at the gateway to Norwich. It is located in the Conservation Area and is within the transition from rural to urban. It is also very prominent from River Green. Along the river there are many long term moorings which have associated paraphernalia on the island itself. Currently haphazard in layout and in a prominent location with views from River Green, the Authority seeks improvements to the appearance of this area.

Turning to the **central part of the island**, the usage includes boatsheds used for storing of craft, rowing facilities and amenity plots. The policy seeks to retain this low impact use.

Finally, the **western end of the island**. This has been the subject of many complaints, enforcement action, planning appeals and legal action. A summary of this can be found here: <http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/news-and-publications/news/thorpe-island-full-facts>.

#### Evidence used to inform this policy.

The policy wording reflects the most recent Planning Inspector's decision.

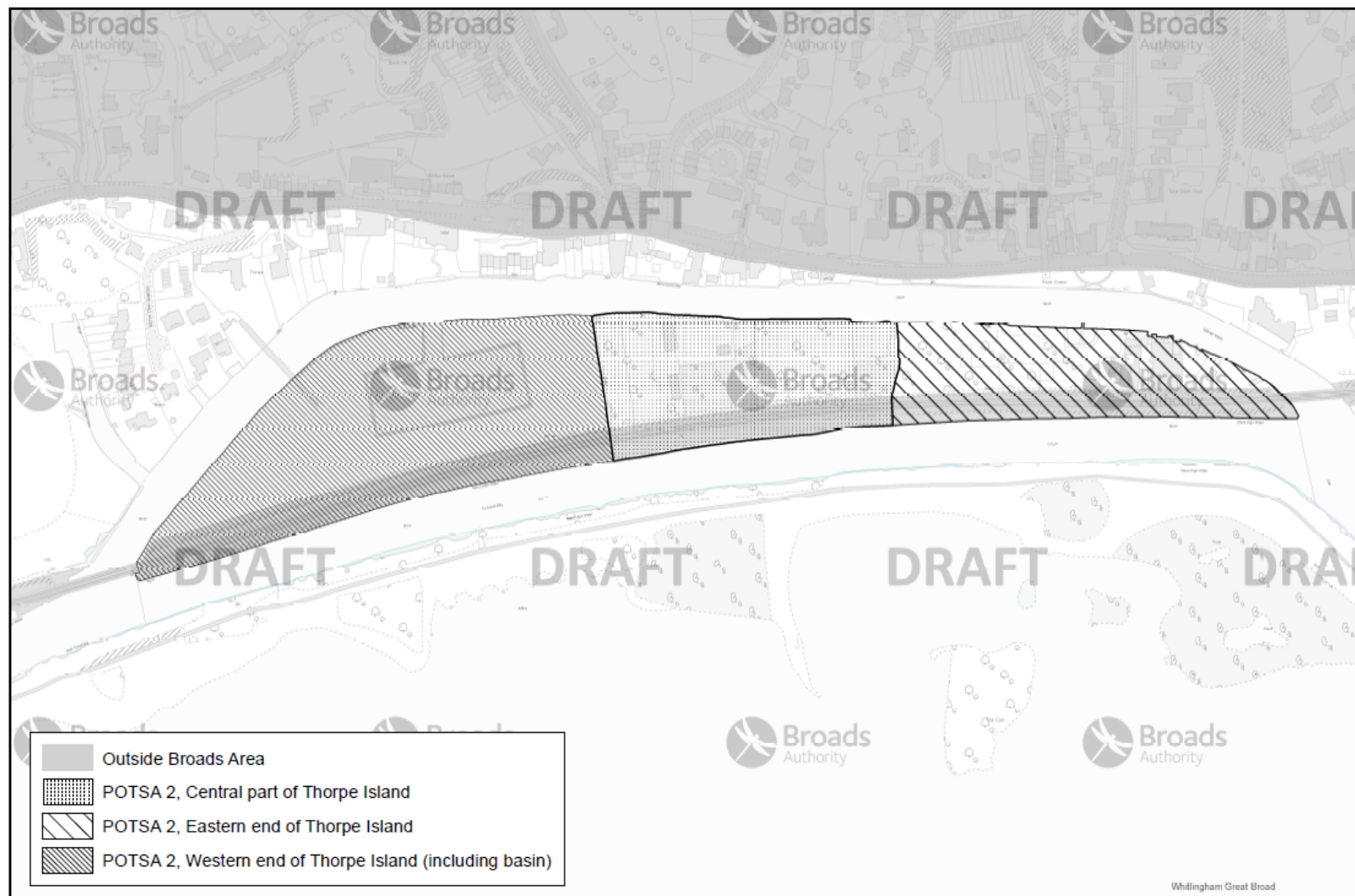
#### Monitoring Indicator.

Planning Applications in accordance with this policy.

**Broads Local Plan - Preferred Options - December 2016**

**TSA 2: Thorpe Island**

Scale 1:10000



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