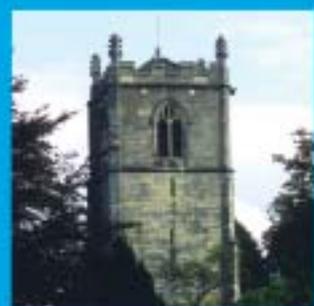
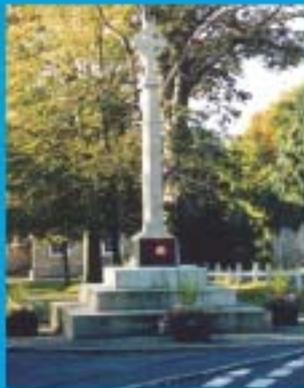


Village Design Statement

THORP ARCH PARISH PLAN



INTRODUCTION

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARISH PLAN AND VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

The Parish Plan, which includes the Village Design Statement, has been produced through the Countryside Agency's Vital Village initiative and relates to the village of Thorp Arch and to the other areas within the parish boundary. It is based on an extensive involvement in the views of the community by:

- The Parish Council application, following the well-attended annual meeting, to the **Countryside Agency** for funding, which was approved on 9 Aug 2002.
- Formation of a **Steering Group** and **Sub Groups** to develop the Parish Plan (PP) and the Village Design Statement (VDS) and consult with the community, representatives of Leeds City Council, consultants and Ward Councillors.
- **Questionnaire Survey** incorporating questions relevant to the PP and VDS issued to all 257 identified households in the parish.
- **Public Meetings** to discuss the survey results and the draft PP and VDS before presentation to the Parish Council and submission of the VDS to Leeds City Council for consideration as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

This document, the VDS, contains historical and background information as well as the analysis of landscape, built environment, roads and access, and the aspirations of the community derived from the process above. The remainder of the Parish Plan, which contains detailed results of surveys and the Action Plans to implement the Parish Plan, is published in a separate document, 'A Vision for Thorp Arch'.

The VDS is intended to help guide decisions in relation to development in Thorp Arch Parish and identify opportunities to preserve and enhance the settlements and their rural setting. It can also be used locally where planning permission is not required to inspire good design and



■ Thorp Arch Village
- the character is defined by closely knit stone buildings hedgerows and mature trees

help ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy the heritage of the village and its surroundings. The varied character and qualities of the landscape and buildings are briefly described and illustrated and the VDS highlights issues such as highways and access. Design guidelines and aspirations that reflect the views of the people of Thorp Arch Parish are presented.

The VDS is based on guidance issued by the Countryside Agency and has been developed within the framework of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan, which was adopted by Leeds City Council on 1st August 2001. The VDS was approved as Supplementary Planning Guidance on.....2004 for use whenever relevant to the exercise of its powers as the Local Planning Authority.

LOCATION AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

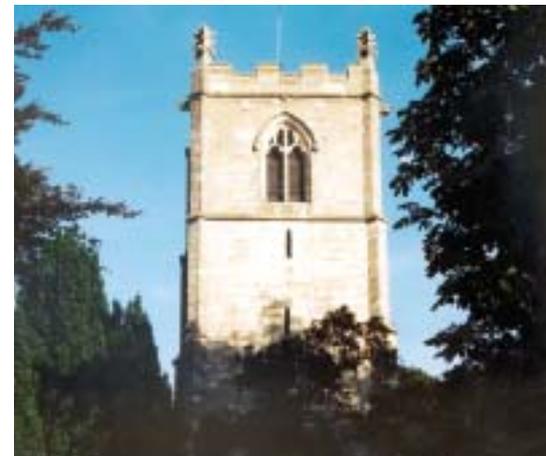
Thorp Arch is a small settlement, within the NE quadrant of the Leeds City Council metropolitan district and lying to the east of the A1 and midway between Leeds, Harrogate and York. The parish is mainly rural in character and contains the old village, within a conservation area, part of the Thorp Arch Trading Estate, Wealstun Prison and a number of other small new developments some distance from the village. There is the possibility of a major mixed-use development within the bounds of Thorp Arch Trading Estate, including some 1500 houses and associated community facilities.

HISTORICAL INFLUENCES

FROM DOMESDAY TO THE 19TH CENTURY

The name Thorp, without the final 'e' common in modern spelling, in Thorp Arch is close to the original Danish spelling and the settlement can be traced to that period.

Thorp, meaning village or hamlet, is mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086); its estimated population at that time was 59 compared with 41 for Wetherby. The full name of the settlement derives from immediately after the Norman Conquest when it was given to Osbern de Arques, becoming Thorp d'Archis and thence Thorp Arch. The earliest parts of the present church are of Norman origin. It was originally the mother church for Walton and baptisms and burials for Walton were carried out at All Saints', Thorp Arch until 1369.



■ All Saints Church Thorp Arch
- an important local landmark

The population survived the Black Death and other problems of the late Middle Ages while a number of other villages in the area disappeared. The Compton Returns in 1676 give the number of communicants (over 16) as 148 and, since everyone was obliged to attend church at that time, suggests an adult population similar to that figure. Ownership of the manor passed through various hands until purchased by a wealthy East Indies merchant, Sir John Lewis, in 1654. It passed into the hands of his granddaughter, Lady Elizabeth Hastings, whose benefactions still support the Lady Elizabeth Hastings School, which she founded, All Saints' Church and 'deserving' residents of the parish. She died in 1739 but her trust deed has greatly influenced the history of Thorp Arch.

In 1748, William Gossip, having married the heiress Anne Wilmer, purchased the estate of Thorp Arch from Ladies Ann and Frances Hastings. He engaged John Carr of York, at that time relatively unknown, to design Thorp Arch Hall. It was built by local men from magnesian limestone quarried in Thorp Arch on the bluff by the river



■ Thorp Arch Hall
- designed by John Carr 1750

and at Flint Mill. Gossip was also responsible for rebuilding Thorp Arch church in 1756.

Initiated by William Gossip supported by Sir Thomas Gasgoigne, lord of the manor of Clifford, and Lord Bingley, the elegant single-track stone bridge was completed in 1772, to provide a good and safe crossing in place of the ford, previously the only



■ View of Weir taken from Bridge at Thorp Arch
- an important view point to the River Wharfe



means of crossing the River Wharfe. Gossip also improved buildings on the estate including, for example, Flint Mill Grange.

There were two stone built water mills with associated weirs. The Manor Mill near the bridge is mentioned in the Domesday Book. In 1301 it was recorded as having both a corn mill and a fullers mill for beating and thickening cloth. Two water wheels were still in operation in 1940 for grinding flour and the production of animal feed but milling had stopped by 1958. After some time in use for production of electric blankets, it was eventually bought by a developer and converted into residential use. Flint Mill, one and a quarter miles upstream from the bridge, is believed to have been built around 1772, initially as a corn mill. The adjoining Flint Mill Grange was probably also built about this time. Flint Mill was converted around 1774 to crushing flint, used by Leeds Pottery for producing creamware.

By the beginning of the 1800s, financial problems with the pottery ended the flint crushing and the mill reverted to agricultural use. Milling ended in 1954 and the mill was then bought from the Hatfield Estate in 1977 and converted to residential use, with the workings restored and retained within the house.

There were eleven farmers, holding more than 30 acres, in 1841; by 1891 this had dropped to eight. Forty percent of the population in 1841 were farm labourers; by 1891 only seventeen percent were involved in agriculture, heralding the end of the period of the township based mainly on land tenure. A butcher, grocer and post office were in operation later in the century. The first mention of an inn was 1838. The Goats Head, as it then was had a thatched roof. It was pulled down and the Pax Inn was built in 1883.

THORP ARCH GRANGE

A new boarding school for young gentlemen was built at Thorp Arch Grange in the 1840s. The school later went through a number of uses until it eventually came under the control of Leeds City Council and was used for young people in local authority care. It was then sold to a builder who developed it as office accommodation. Leeds United Football Club became interested in the playing fields in 1993 and bought Thorp Arch Grange to create their football academy.

THE RAILWAY

Articles of agreement were signed in 1846 between Randall Gossip (now called Hatfield) and the York and North Midland Railway Company to build a railway from Harrogate through Thorp Arch to Church Fenton, linking with the York to London railway. Thorp Arch Station, now a private house, was built on the Thorp Arch to Walton road, midway between the two villages. A railway crossing and two semi-detached gatehouses were built on the Walton to Wetherby road. The line had the dubious distinction of being the first of the Beeching closures. The tracks have all gone and the opportunity of developing effective commuter rail links to Leeds from Thorp Arch, Collingham and Wetherby is now lost.

THE ORDNANCE FACTORY, TRADING ESTATE AND BRITISH LIBRARY LENDING DIVISION

The Second World War brought lasting changes to Thorp Arch and its rural environment. In 1940, the Ministry of Supply was looking for good inland sites for munitions manufacture, out of the way of enemy bombers and where accidental explosions would not cause risk to concentrations of housing.

Thorp Arch offered a good site with a local railway and easy access to the A1 to transport goods and enable workers to travel to the site. Against a public outcry, land was acquired from three farms in Thorp Arch and Walton by compulsory purchase order - as well as Trust Farm, the only farm held by the Lady Elizabeth Hastings Trust in this parish. At its operational peak, the site employed over 10,000 workers in 500 buildings with 25 miles of internal railways and nine miles of roads. Some housing was built including four houses for senior staff and seventeen bungalows on the road to the station.

Of the 13 ordnance factories built during the war, Thorp Arch is the only one where buildings and blast berms can still be preserved as a historical site. The site was used to store surplus war material between 1945 and 1950 and reopened for munitions manufacture during the Korean War (1950-53). After that war the site was partly decontaminated. A local entrepreneur bought the site in the early 1960s and developed the Trading Estate and the Buywell shopping centre. The site, now employing some 2500 staff in 90-100



■ Thorp Arch Trading Estate
- new buildings and evidence of historic ordnance factory

commercial enterprises, is currently owned by Hanover Properties who plan further development including up to 1500 new homes, subject to planning consent. The National Lending Library for Science and Technology occupied part of the site, in Walton parish, in the 1960s. It became the Lending Division of the British Library in 1973, steadily growing and now employing some 2000 staff. It, too, is looking to expand its floorspace.

WEALSTUN PRISON

In 1950, near the main entrance to the munitions factory, a remand centre was built to house about 200 young offenders; a third wing was added in 1980 to house a further 100. It was converted into a Category C prison for adults in 1988 and a fourth wing added in 1996. In 1995, the Thorp Arch Category C prison and the open Rudgate Category D prison next to it were merged to form Wealstun Prison. It now holds 750 inmates and there are expansion plans to increase the number to 892.

THE MARGUERITE HEPTON MEMORIAL HOME

Mr Arthur Hepton provided the site for the Memorial Home to the Leeds Invalid Children's Society in gratitude at the recovery of his daughter, Marguerite, from tuberculosis. Opened in 1910 as a home for up to twenty children with tubercular related orthopedic problems, by 1942 it accommodated 80 children and thirty seven staff. Its final use was as an old people's home and a children's nursery. The owner closed it in about 2000 because it was claimed to be uneconomic. In 2003, following an appeal against refusal of planning permission, the Public Inquiry Inspector found in favour of the developer and allowed development of 7 flats and 55 houses on the site.



■ Lady Hastings School



THE COMMUNITY

The parish community currently consists of some 270 dwellings, mostly owner-occupied, and approximately 700 residents. Only 257 were identified as occupied from the electoral roll at the time of the survey. The number of dwellings has more than tripled since 1939. While the last village shops closed about twenty years ago, there are good shopping facilities close by in Boston Spa and just slightly further away in Wetherby. The village has a very good primary school that also serves as a centre for community activities. The Parish Plan survey responses indicate that it is very important to the community and there is a desire to make more use of the school. There is a public house in the village and a parish church.

The cricket ground is an important feature in the centre of the village. Thorp Arch and Boston Spa Cricket Club was founded in



■ Cricket Club
- in the centre of Thorp Arch Village

THE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

1873 and has thriving senior and junior sides. The land is owned by the Hatfeild Estate who submitted a housing application for the site in 1998 but withdrew the application after strong local objections and Leeds City Council's view that it was unacceptable because it contravened planning policy guidelines (PPG3) and UDP Policies N6 and N1; there were also problems of access to the site. Nevertheless, the estate will not provide a lease to enable the cricket club and community to improve facilities on the site, which is a significant constraint to some aspirations in the Parish Plan.

Thorp Arch Village Society has a membership of over 150, a significant proportion of the adult population, and exists both to conserve the village community and to provide social activities. There is a tennis



■ Thorp Arch Tennis Club
- on eastern edge of village

club, with membership open only to residents of the parish, which was provided through a Silver Jubilee appeal and the generosity of the Hatfeild Estate in providing the land. There are also branches of the Yorkshire Countrywomen's Association, the Mothers Union, a Community Association and church-based groups for younger children. There is, however, no playground or any playgroup or nursery facility since the closure of the Marguerite Hepton nursing home and nursery.

The Parish Council consists of five members elected for a four-year term and represents the community with all statutory authorities. A church and community magazine shared with Walton, "The Causeway", is distributed freely each month to all households, with church information, reports of meetings of the two parish councils and other community information and features.

CURRENT LAND OWNERSHIP

The Parish Council only own the village green, consisting of an upper and lower green on each side of the road through the village; there is no other publicly owned amenity space.

A major landowner, described above, is Hanover Properties who now own all of the Trading Estate. Her Majesty's Prison has sold most of the properties formerly occupied by prison staff including an area (currently an open space) to a developer who has yet to make use of it. It still owns a considerable area of land outside the prison used for car parking and sports fields.

Some of this area could potentially be used for community facilities. Within the last few years, the Hatfeild Estate sold Bridge Farm and Hall Farm, the only two active farms left in the parish, to the respective tenant farmers who are mainly involved in arable farming with some sheep grazing.

Flint Mill Grange Farm ceased to operate some while ago but the land associated with it is still owned by the Hatfeild Estate and farmed by Hall Farm. Apart from that and the cricket field, the Hatfeild Estate own all of the land bounded by Dowkell Lane, Church Causeway and the village, a further triangular area on the other side of Dowkell Lane up to Thorp Arch Grange, the old railway as well as some other small areas. The Lady Elizabeth Hastings Charitable Trust owns a small area to the north of Dowkell Lane.

The areas close to or in the village owned by the Hatfeild Estate and the Lady Elizabeth Hastings Charitable Trust clearly have significant value if any development on them was approved but this seems unlikely, given that they abut the boundaries of the conservation area and include areas where the medieval field system is still apparent.

However, the owners have indicated an unwillingness to provide a lease or any other arrangement to make some of the area available for improvements in school or cricket club facilities. This may be a constraint on some aspects of the Parish Plan.

COUNTRYSIDE AND LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF THORP ARCH PARISH

The Leeds Landscape Assessment published in 1994 was commissioned by Leeds City Council and provides a starting point for the description of landscape character. The assessment identifies different landscape areas within the Leeds boundary. Thorp Arch Parish is included in an area of limestone villages and farmland. According to the survey this is characterised by the charming villages of Thorp Arch, Boston Spa, Clifford and Walton. A thick layer of boulder clay and other glacial deposits covers the northern part of the parish and the southern part overlies well-drained magnesian limestone. Overall the parish consists of gently undulating mainly arable farmland interspersed with settlements.

To the north of the parish hedgerows and isolated hedgerow trees enclose large fields. Some of the hedgerows are low and have significant gaps in them. The disused railway line, which bisects the parish from north west to south east, is designated as a Leeds Nature Area and is an important feature in terms of wildlife. The trees along the railway line act as a screen between farmland and settlements.



■ Eastern edge of Thorp Arch Village

Most of the land between the disused railway line and the River Wharfe is designated a Special Landscape Area in the Unitary Development Plan. Woodland interspersed with areas of pasture and a high scenic and wildlife quality characterises this part of the Parish. There is evidence of medieval ridge and furrow farmland in



■ Farmland to north side of Thorp Arch Parish

the area between the Thorp Arch Village and the church and the area includes the historic parkland estate of Thorp Arch Hall.

The River Wharfe meanders through the limestone belt on the southern edge of the parish. It has defined a steep sided valley with a dramatic rock face called Jackdaw Crag on the Boston Spa side of the river. Flood defenses preclude regular flooding of adjacent meadows although this does occur intermittently when the river is in spate. A weir on the river adds to the beautiful setting, particularly when viewed from the historic bridge at Thorp Arch. This area is characterised by steeply wooded banks, particularly on the southern edge. Mature deciduous trees overhang the river and, where woodland does not extend to the edge, narrow strips of farmland lie directly along the banks. Further east from Thorp Arch, the riverbanks become less wooded and a series of open grassed terraces are evident.

The predominantly rural nature of the area is broken by a number of large buildings associated with or adjacent to the Thorp Arch Trading Estate. Although from a distance the bulk of the estate buildings are relatively unobtrusive, some, such as a complex of large blue roofed sheds, are particularly prominent. Close by, however many of the buildings are visible, due to

some of the planting in and around the estate being in poor condition.

The most visible and intrusive building on the rural landscape is the massive concrete structure of the British Library Lending Division. It is a significant landmark that can be seen from a great distance. Nearby Wealstun Prison also dominates the surrounding area and includes large blocks, high fences and extensive car parking facilities for staff and visitors. A more recent prominent development is the Leeds United Football Academy that includes 8 football pitches, some with floodlighting, and a large indoor training barn. Some planted mounds have been added with a view to provide screening. The parish includes three Sites of Ecological and Geological Interest (SEGI) and two designated Leeds Nature Areas (LNAs). Details of these are shown on the plan. Leeds City Council holds records of protected species found in the parish but exact locations cannot be disclosed because of the sensitivity of such creatures to disturbance. They include great crested newts, otters, bats, badgers and white-clawed crayfish.

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE

One of the special features of the area is the contrast between the limestone villages, surrounded by small pockets of wooded pasture and remnant parkland and the open arable areas that occur elsewhere. The pastoral and remnant parkland areas are losing some of their characteristic features such as parkland walls around Thorp Arch Hall and trees on the old avenue which runs adjacent to the Wharfe from the South Lodge to the Hall. In the

more open arable areas, gaps in some of the hedges have appeared and some hedgerow trees are in poor condition. The river environment has undergone little noticeable change in recent years although flood prevention berms have been built in places. Many of its characteristic features remain intact with much of the river noted



■ Farmland to east side of Thorp Arch Parish

for its wildlife importance. Tree cover has however largely disappeared from the northern riverbank east of Thorp Arch with large fields of arable land stretching down to the waters edge. Urban influences such as large buildings, growth in motor traffic and potential new developments threaten the predominantly rural character of the parish and the general modernisation of features such as signs and street furniture can also have a negative impact.



■ View to Walton and British Library - showing gaps in hedges



Prominent stand of trees by Wood Lane



River Wharfe at Jackdaw Grag SEGI

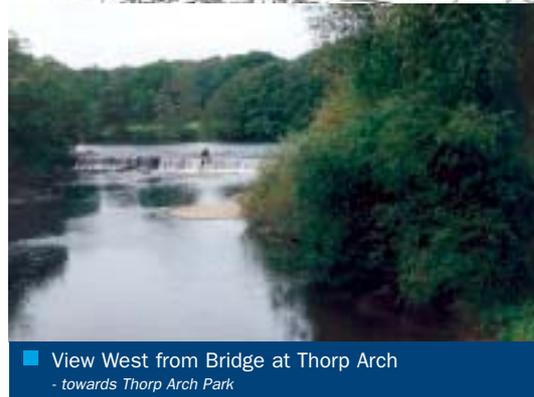


Thorp Arch park beech avenue



KEY

- Special Landscape Area
- Parish Boundary
- Leeds Nature Areas (LNA) and sites of ecological/geological interest (SEGI)



View West from Bridge at Thorp Arch
- towards Thorp Arch Park

COUNTRYSIDE & LANDSCAPE



■ Land & Hedgerows North of Wetherby Road
- towards Sykes House Farm



■ Mature trees along disused railway line



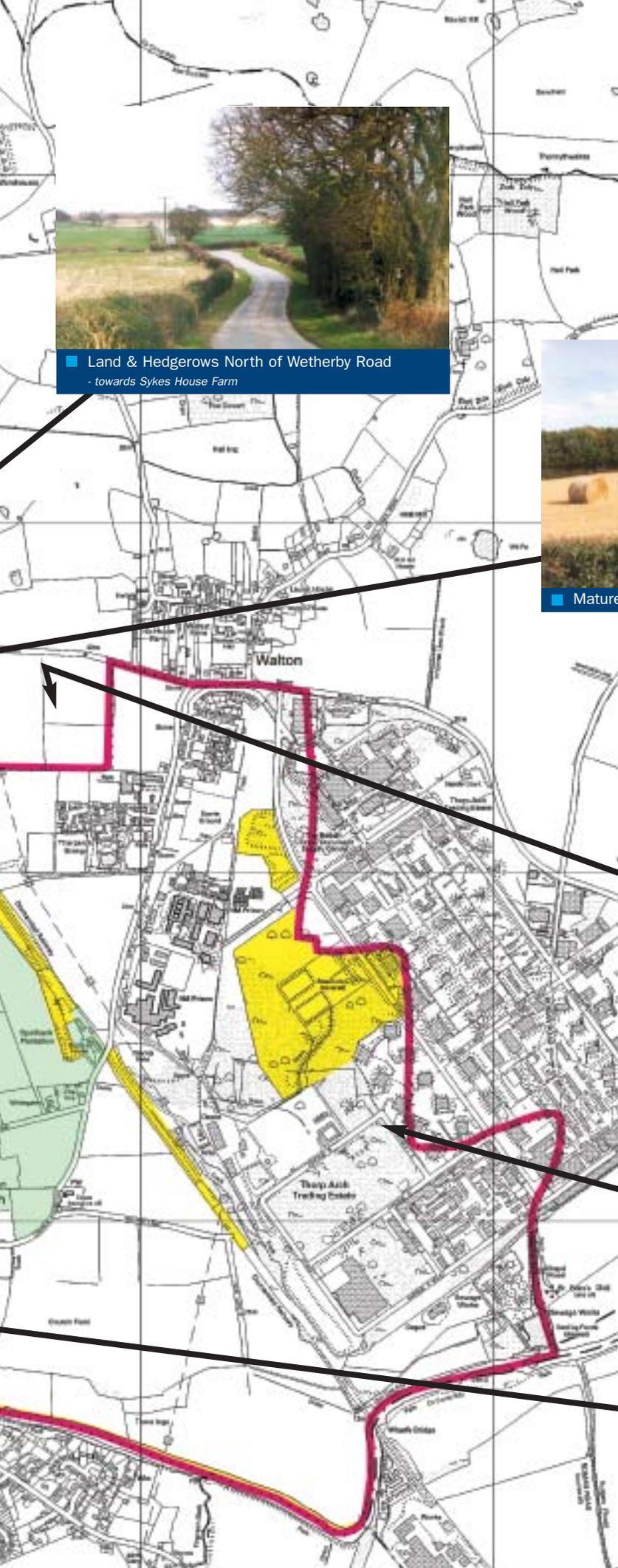
■ View to Rudgate and British Library



■ Thorp Arch Trading Estate
- areas of ecological significance



■ View East from Bridge (SEGI)



COUNTRYSIDE AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES AND ASPIRATIONS

The Leeds Landscape Assessment proposed an overall management strategy aimed at protecting the integrity and character of the limestone villages and their immediate surrounds and restoration of remnant parkland and traditional farmland features when they are in decline.

The following guidelines are based on those developed for the Assessment and have been extended and updated in light of specific local observations and aspirations identified by residents of the Parish.

Overall it is important to maintain the distinction between open landscape and developed areas by avoiding suburban sprawl and by enhancing the visual boundaries to settlements. In relation to the landscape the conservation of the existing features including hedgerows, woodlands, significant trees, parkland as well as the riverside environment is a priority. The productive importance of agricultural land must be balanced with the need for a sustainable environment and wherever possible measures should be taken to enhance diversity of wildlife and improve the landscape for the enjoyment of people.

To achieve this there is a need to:

- A1** Take opportunities to plant deciduous woodland and trees, though not on magnesian limestone grassland, to reduce the landscape impact of visually intrusive buildings at Thorp Arch Trading Estate and Wealstun Prison by, for example, Planning conditions.
- A2** Conserve and enhance the continuity and wooded character of the disused railway line, subject to safeguarding of protected species, through encouragement of natural regeneration and tree planting while at the same time supporting its use for pedestrians and cyclists.
- A3** Conserve and restore remnant areas of parkland and parkland walls around Thorp Arch Hall.
- A4** Identify opportunities to encourage natural regeneration and tree planting to enhance the riverside.
- A5** Maintain and enhance the landscape pattern of fields bounded with hedges, small woodlands and isolated groups of buildings such as Flint Mill Grange through promoting new hedge and tree planting to improve the landscape and encourage wildlife.
- A6** Identify hedgerows, hedgerow trees and parkland trees that are in poor condition and seek opportunities to restore them using local species.
- A7** Identify and safeguard views to significant landmarks and buildings of merit such as local churches and Thorp Arch Hall.
- A8** Ensure that new developments are assimilated into the landscape with appropriate planting.
- A9** Ensure that new developments on the Thorp Arch Trading Estate and the British Library are in recessive colours to reduce the visual impact.

Specific landscape features and views are referred to in the illustrations and shown on the maps.



■ View along River Wharfe to mill buildings from Thorp Arch park

SETTLEMENTS AND BUILDINGS

The Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

The conservation area in Thorp Arch was designated in 1969 as part of the Boston Spa and Thorp Arch conservation area by the West Riding County Council. It is understood that it was included as an example of an estate village and for the Georgian housing within the area as well as for more historic features. The area includes all of the old village and the newer housing of Thorp Arch Park. The boundary is shown on the map. There are a number of other listed buildings outside the boundary of the conservation area including Thorp Arch Hall and Flint Mill Grange.

Thorp Arch Parish consists of a number of distinctive residential areas:

• Thorp Arch Village

Within the conservation area, it includes the historic village and several typical estate workers' cottages, some dating from 1844, of traditional coursed limestone. The main street, called The Village, is characterised by close-knit buildings interspersed with stone walls and compact front gardens. A number of these houses have distinctive gable ends with overhanging eaves, clustered chimneys and simple arched windows. To the south there are the village greens, upper and lower, surrounded by the historic core of the village, which includes the Manor House, the old former general store and the South Lodge to Thorp Arch Hall. Most of the houses have Georgian or Victorian sash windows, grey slate roofs and are two storeys high though there are a few in The Village which have windows in the roof space, either on the gable end or as dormers.

The remainder of the village consists of two storey houses. There are a number of houses of early 20th century vintage between the village green and the church, up to the boundary of the conservation area. Thorp Arch Village also includes more modern neo-Georgian housing developed in the 1960's in a sympathetic manner to the existing village. This housing in Thorp Arch Park and in two infill sites, Mulberry Garth and Peartree Acre, off The Village was built

with large plots with low stub walls (typically 350mm) at the front and open well-planted front gardens producing a pleasing environment that characterises the development. However, recently, some of this distinctive character has been lost by enclosure of the front gardens by high walls, gates and railings. To address these issues, the householder Team in Leeds City Council Planning Services has recently adopted an approach whereby some enclosure and security measures are permitted whilst attempting to safeguard the open character of the estate. Where recommendations to protect the attractive environment of Thorp Arch Park are made, they should also be assumed to include the two infill developments.

The Hall on the western edge of the village was built in the 1750's. A grade II* listed building of modest proportions, it was designed by John Carr of York and overlooks parkland adjacent to the River Wharfe and towards the village. There are now only two working farms in Thorp Arch, both of which are in, or close to, the conservation area. The compact nature of the Thorp Arch Village and the open plan style of development contribute significantly to the social life and interaction as a village community.

• Thorp Arch Grange and Wealstun Prison Area

An area of housing around the prison dates from the building of the munitions factory or built subsequently as housing for prison staff. Most of this is now privately owned. The newer housing of Walton Chase, built during the 1990's has been developed in a village style. All of this housing is two storeys high, mostly detached. It lies between Thorp Arch Grange and the Marguerite Hepton site that has itself now been approved for housing re-development and named by the developers as St Marguerite Manor. This area also contains four houses built in the 1940s. All of the current housing is two storeys except for two wartime flat-roofed bungalows and two wartime two houses originally built with flat roofs and which have had a pitched roof conversion to create two and a half storeys. However, contrary to local objections the Planning Inspector has allowed the Marguerite Hepton site to be developed with two and a



■ Thorp Arch Village House
- with unique chimney, eaves and window details



■ Village Green
- provides an open setting for adjacent houses

half storey blocks of town houses.

The area is, to some extent, dominated by the prison and more recently by the football academy. Despite this it has many attractive features and its layout offers further opportunities for landscape and building improvements that will enhance its character.

• Outlying housing

Some of the outlying housing was built in the 19th Century and includes conversions such as the old railway station, Flint Mill and Flint Mill Grange which used to be a working farm.



■ Flint Mill Grange
- An attractive group of buildings within the wider landscape



■ Thorp Arch Hall
- a significant landmark within Thorp Arch park



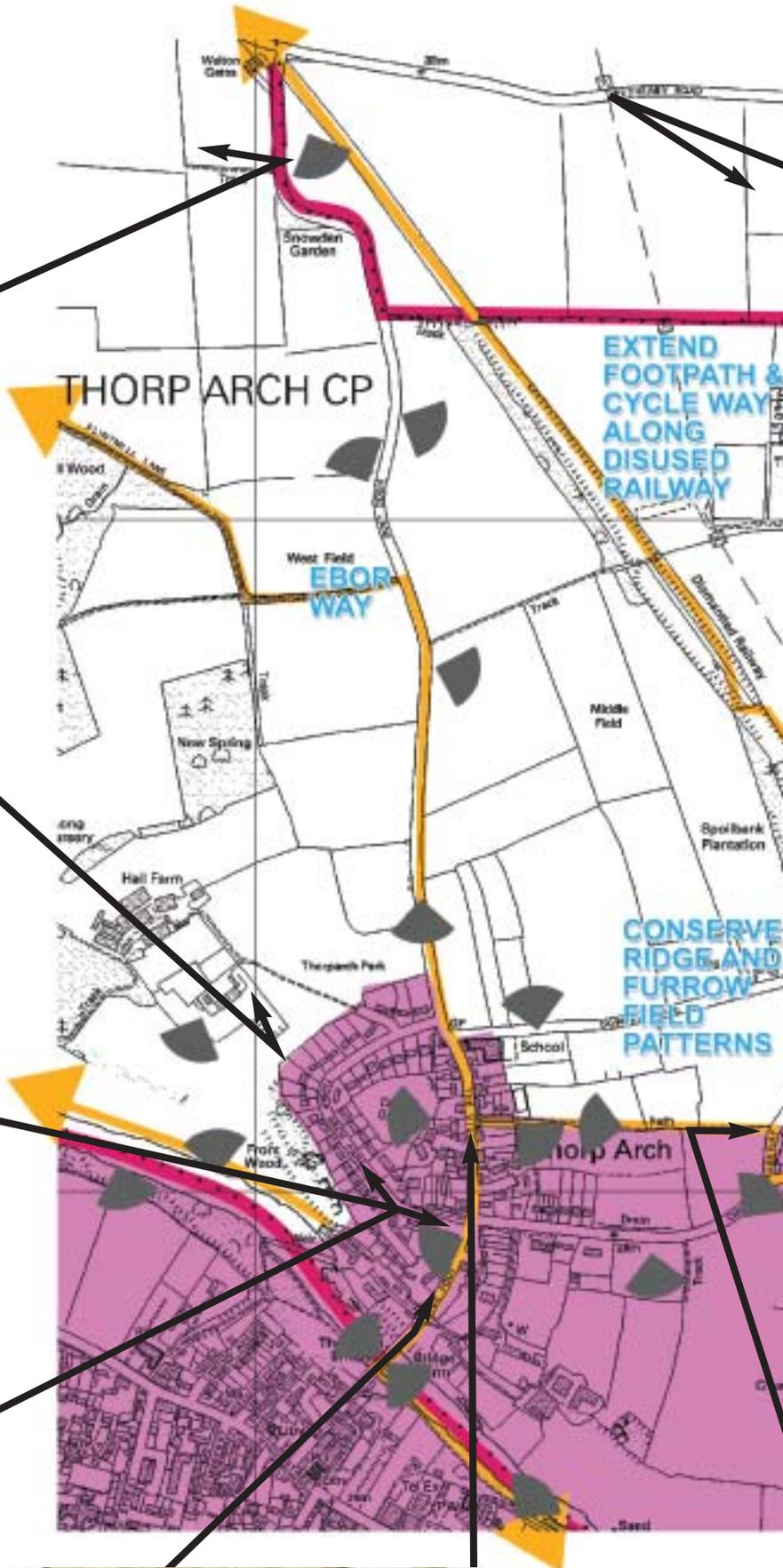
■ Thorp Arch Park
- mature plants are an important feature of the road



■ The Village Green
- and traditional stone cottages

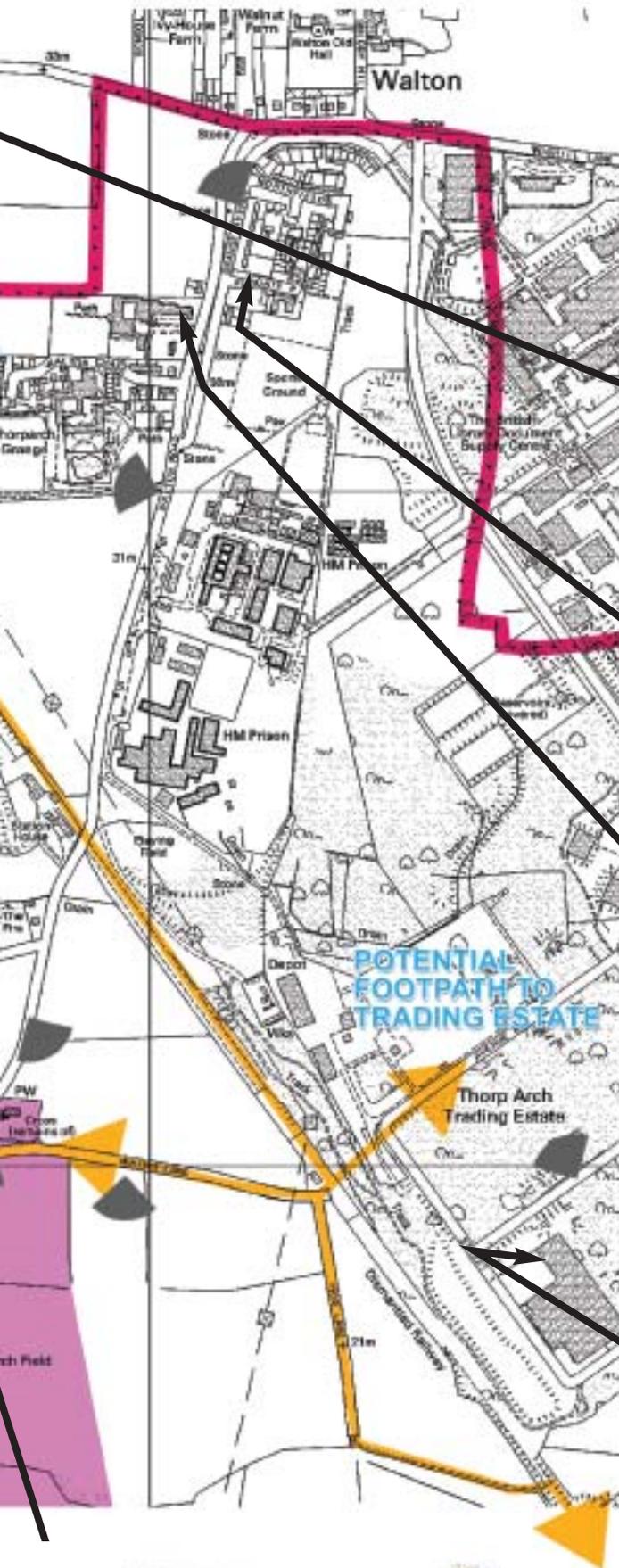


■ The Village
- with typical estate workers cottages



■ The Pax
- public house

SETTLEMENTS & BUILDINGS



Walton Village - View from Wetherby Road
- prominent British Library Building



Rudgate Park
- trees and hedges are an important feature



Walton Chase
- a small scale village style development



Thorp Arch Trading Estate
- prominent new factory buildings need screening from south



All Saints Church Thorp Arch
- a prominent local landmark

KEY

- Conservation Area
- Existing & Potential Footpaths
- Parish Boundary
- Important View Points

Built environment within the Parish also includes:

- Wealstun Prison, close to both the housing developed with the munitions factory and the new development at Walton Chase, is at odds with the rural environment. It started as a small remand centre but has been significantly tails expanded with large slab-sided buildings, security walls and fences and a very large car park. It has security lighting producing some light pollution in the area. As Crown land, the prison does not have to go through the normal planning process for new buildings but, under Circular Instruction 18/84, is required to consult with the local planning authority before building new facilities.

- The Leeds United Football Academy utilises a listed building, Thorp Arch Grange, and also includes large industrial scale buildings as well as pitches and floodlights.

- Thorp Arch Trading Estate laid out on a grid pattern was originally developed as a munitions factory that today is of historic significance. With the exception of the British Library Lending Division and some industrial buildings, trees and hedges largely hide it. Vestiges remain of Rudgate, a Roman road that crossed the site. The site also contains open land and areas of ecological significance (SEGI).

DESIGN GUIDELINES & ASPIRATIONS

There are strong local concerns about the impact on the community and environment of inclusion of Thorp Arch Trading Estate as a Strategic Housing Site in the Review of the UDP. The proposal Involves 1500 new houses and is to be considered at Public Inquiry in February 2005. If approved, the Parish would wish to ensure the style of building conformed with its rural location and adequate measures taken to ameliorate the impact of the development and the problems which the volume of additional traffic will generate.



■ Housing near Wealston Prison



■ Leeds United Training Facilities - lighting columns and pylons dominate the landscape



■ Thorp Arch Trading Estate - showing large scale of some development

Design Guidelines and Aspirations - Thorp Arch Village Generally

- B1** Maintain the character and pattern of existing village boundaries such as hedgerows interspersed with indigenous trees.
- B2** Keep and enhance open spaces for visual and recreational use including the Village Green and the Cricket Ground.
- B3** Maintain the unique character of street scenes including stonewalls in The Village, and grass verges and large front gardens of Church Causeway.
- B4** Preserve historic features such as listed buildings, boundary walls and architectural details as indicated in the description and illustrations.
- B5** Any new building development, including extensions, should be in proportion with existing houses and existing/established architectural character, both for the older village houses and newer houses in Thorp Arch Park and should maintain the architectural style of their immediate environment.
- B6** Keep significant views towards and from the village as illustrated on the plans



■ Thorp Arch Trading Estate - utilisation of bunkers of the historic ordnance factory



■ Thorp Arch Park
- low walls and planting are an important feature

Design Guidelines and Aspirations - Thorp Arch Park

- C1** Maintain the open plan character and retain, as far as possible, the original separation between buildings.
- C2** Extensions should not be built in front of the original building line of house and garage
- C3** Where residents request planning permission for gates and higher walls on the front of properties, the following should be applied to planning consents:
 - a) heights should not exceed 0.4m for stub walls, 1.5m for wall and gate pillars and 1.3m for railings.
 - b) pillar spacing should be not less than 5m
 - c) gates should be no more than 1.7m at their highest point and gate pillars set back 1 to 2m from the line of wall.

Design Guidelines and Aspirations

- Thorp Arch Grange and Wealstun Prison Area

- D1** Seek to ameliorate the visual impact of the Prison and Football Academy through tree planting in appropriate areas.
- D2** Seek significant new planting on any new development in that area.
- D3** Keep and enhance open and recreational space around the housing and prison through landscape planning and sensitive design. The prison should be encouraged to improve its boundaries with hedge and tree planting.
- D4** Strengthen existing boundaries around housing areas with planting to reduce impact of suburban sprawl and enhance the character of separate housing areas. In particular, the field between the new development of St Marguerite Manor should be protected from development to retain the gap between Thorp Arch and Walton.
- D5** Reflect the rural context of the area in the scale and proportion of any new housing developments. New housing should not normally exceed two storeys and extensions should respect the character of the existing built form and materials.
- D6** Keep significant views to open landscape and landmarks such as Walton Church. These should be established and maintained from key locations such as entry points, bus stops and public footpaths.

Design Guidelines and Aspirations

Thorp Arch Trading Estate (if approved for housing)

- E1** Conserve natural history and significant historic features in any new developments. This includes the areas of ecological significance as well as the overall layout and key historic elements of the former munitions factory.
- E2** Enhance the character of the area through sustainable as well as innovative building and landscape design whilst building within the discipline of the grid layout and by establishing a coherent built form with a unique character.
- E3** Reflect the rural context of the estate in the height, scale, proportion and colour of new housing and other developments. Any new development should not dominate surrounding areas. Open areas between existing housing and buildings must be maintained and improved where possible and boundaries retained. New housing should be predominately two storeys maximum with occasional two and a half storey/three storey exceptions.
- E4** Develop measures to minimise the environmental impact of any increase in traffic in the rural environment and in the villages of Thorp Arch and Walton..



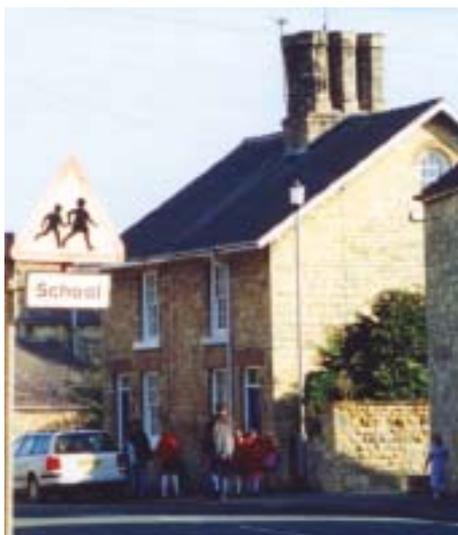
■ Rudgate Park provides an open setting for adjacent houses

HIGHWAYS & ACCESS

ACCESS TO THORP ARCH AND HAZARDS

Thorp Arch currently has access to the A1, some two miles away, either through Boston Spa or by Walton Road to the access point near Wetherby. This latter direct A1 access is likely to be removed as part of the proposed A1 upgrade scheme, which could cause more traffic to use the Boston Spa route. Access to Boston Spa is restricted by the 230 year old single-track bridge and by the relatively narrow Wood Lane used by traffic travelling to Wetherby and to the A1. There is a slightly wider road, Church Causeway, leading from the village to Walton, which is considered by residents to be increasingly heavily used by traffic to and from the Trading Estate.

All of the access roads have been identified by residents in the Parish Plan survey



■ The Village
- well used by pedestrians and vehicles

as having speed and traffic volume problems, particularly with future traffic growth.

ROAD SAFETY IN THE VILLAGE

Residents consider that there is a significant safety problem near the school at the junction of Dowkell Lane, Wood Lane and The Village. Depending on the state of maintenance of verges, oncoming vehicles from Wood Lane can be hidden until quite close. However at the start and finish of

the school day the problem is exacerbated. By using some of the playing field area, the school created off-road staff parking some few years ago. However most of the children live outside the village and parents use cars to deliver and collect them, parking on Dowkell Lane and



■ Road Safety
- cars parked near school

The Village, and creating a safety hazard at this particularly difficult junction.

There are currently no traffic calming measures in the village and most respondents to the survey are concerned about the risk and the volume of through traffic, which has increased considerably over the last twenty years. The 30mph limits start immediately on the boundary of the village. Outside that and despite the considerable number of bends by the church and housing by the prison and there is only the national 60mph limit up to Walton.



■ The Bridge at Thorp Arch
- a road hazard for pedestrians

There is concern that the proposal to close off the A1 access from Walton Road will greatly increase the volume of traffic through the village, as witnessed during the closure for maintenance of the Wharfe bridge on the old Wetherby bypass during the early part of 2003

The major risk of accident perceived by residents is in the middle of the village at the village green where there is an exit from Thorp Arch Park and a busy junction to Church Causeway with what residents consider to be blind bends both from the village and from the bridge.

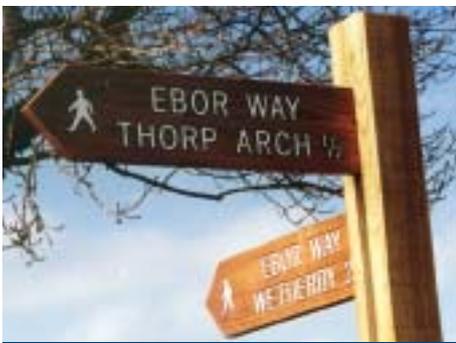
For pedestrians, the major traffic problem is the narrow footpath leading down to the bridge and the narrow footpath alongside the single lane/single - carriageway on the bridge, where speeding traffic creates a real sense of danger. The narrow width of the bridge and the cutting down to the bridge preclude any wider separation of traffic and pedestrians. Despite the recent provision of an advisory limit of 15mph residents are not conscious of any significant reduction in traffic speeds over the bridge.



■ Busy junction to Church Causeway

FOOTPATHS AND OTHER RIGHTS OF WAY

A permissive footpath has been established under DEFRA's 'Countryside Stewardship' scheme from Thorp Arch Park along the bank of the River Wharfe to Wharfeside Woods and then returning to Thorp Arch Park. There is no access from the bridge along the north side of the Wharfe to the west because of the Thorp Arch Mill. Similarly there is no access



Well designed sign posts

from the bridge to the east because of Bridge Farm and thereafter the fields are farmed to the river's edge.

There is a track through Wharfeside Woods, some way from the river, and this leaves the woods and joins Flint Mill Lane leading to Flint Mill which has not been recorded in the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way. The Ebor Way, which is a 70 mile way-marked, long distance recreational footpath from Helmsley to Ilkley, passes through Thorp Arch village centre, north along Wood Lane then west along Flint Mill Lane to the parish boundary with Wetherby just beyond Flint Mill Farm.

A public footpath leads from the centre of the village across the fields towards All Saints' Church. From the church, Whins Lane leads down towards Boston Gates and there is a track called Ings Lane leading down to the river and to the old disused and unsafe railway bridge across the Wharfe. It is recorded on the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way as Thorp Arch Public Footpath No 6.

A newly established cycleway, completed in 2003 by Leeds City Council, runs along the disused railway line from the top of Wood Lane at Walton Gates to Wetherby. Phase 2 of this route, eastwards to Thorp Arch Trading Estate and the bridge over the River Wharfe, is soon to be investigated further by Sustrans acting as agents for Leeds City Council. This route as well as being a valuable local resource for walking, cycling and (in places) horse riding also forms part of the developing National Cycle Network (Route 66 York to Harrogate)

PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS

There is a reasonably frequent bus service through Thorp Arch to Leeds, Harrogate and Wetherby. There is no bus service to York. However, there is a bus service to Tadcaster from Boston Spa and

**HIGHWAYS AND ACCESS
DESIGN GUIDELINES AND ASPIRATIONS of residents of Thorp Arch Parish**

- F1** Encourage the Highways Authority and the Parish Council to consider measures to deter Thorp Arch Trading Estate traffic, particularly goods vehicles, from using the route through the village to and from Boston Spa.
- F2** The narrow roads and sharp bends are features of the rural environment which should be retained but the Highways Authority and Parish Council should consider means of extending traffic speed restrictions areas to reduce the risks posed.
- F3** Where pathways exist on only one side of rural roads, eg Church Causeway, they should be maintained as such; elsewhere kerbs should be avoided to preserve the rural character of the area.
- F4** Establish new footpath and cycle links from Thorp Arch Trading Estate into the Parish to connect to the settlements and beyond as indicated on the Settlements and Buildings plan.
- F5** Encourage the creation of new permissive pathways to enhance the existing network
- F6** Improve public footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes throughout the Parish and where practicable along the riverside but keeping some stretches of riverbank free of public access to preserve otter refuges.
- F7** Encourage the extension of the cycleway to Wetherby, recently completed by Leeds City Council, further along the old railway line to the old River Wharfe railway bridge and investigate how the bridge might be restored to cycle and pedestrian use while continuing to encourage the regeneration and continuity of woodland in its immediate vicinity.
- F8** Where appropriate, enhance the quality of the environment through traffic calming. Any traffic calming proposals, particularly within the conservation area, must respect the visual qualities of the old Georgian village by avoiding, where possible, intrusive street furnishings. They should make effective provision for reducing traffic speed and specifically the discomfort and danger to pedestrians, both on the narrow bridge and approach to the bridge, where space is insufficient for comfortable separation from the traffic.
- F9** Seek to minimise the visual impact of new or improved roads, for example, by following the existing topography and extensive planting.



Church Causeway - with distinctive broad verges

services go from Tadcaster to York reasonably frequently.

There are no rail services accessible by public transport other than the main line stations at Harrogate and Leeds.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

While not covered in the questionnaire to residents, the subject of telecommunications installations has become very topical and in particular the siting of mobile communications masts. The Office of the

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS
DESIGN GUIDELINES AND ASPIRATIONS**

- G1** New installations should be sited and designed so as to minimise their visual impact and the ODPM's Code of Best Practice for such installations applied.
- G2** The design of new installations should be informed by the townscape or landscape where it is to be located, taking account of the local pattern of streets, spaces, building style, materials and ecology. The scale, massing and height should be considered in light of adjoining buildings, topography, general pattern of heights in area, views, vistas and landmarks.

Deputy Prime Minister has published a Code of Best Practice and the design aspirations are taken from that.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS FOR HELP

We would like to acknowledge the help given by:

Leeds City Council officers, particularly Richard Askham and Andrew Pomeroy,
in commenting and advising on the documents.

Chris Barker, Yorkshire Rural Community Council and Emma MacDonald, Countryside Agency

We would also like to recognise the volunteer work of the following members of the parish community who formed the initial Steering Group and who have also formed Working Groups, spending much time to develop the two documents.

Barry Calvert, Jane Clayton, Jayne Contreras, Ian Hall, Bob Humphreys,
Wendy Kemp, Richard Millican, Jill Marshall, Eric Rainbow, Chris Royffe,
Rob Trenholme, Ian Walker, June Warner, Richard Willatt

Historical information from David Cummings' book 'Thorp Arch' 1999

Graphics by Jonathan Morgan & Emma Stevenson

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