



**Thurlaston  
Warwickshire**

# **Village Design Statement**

Thurlaston Parish Council  
WARWICKSHIRE

<https://www.thurlaston-pc.gov.uk>

## Thurlaston Warwickshire - Village Design Statement

### Version

3.0

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this document are accurate at the date of publication, Thurlaston Parish Council does not accept liability for any error or omission.

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	Person responsible for this version	Date
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<b>References</b>	<p>Thurlaston Conservation Area Appraisal:  <a href="https://www.rugby.gov.uk/downloads/file/41/thurlaston">https://www.rugby.gov.uk/downloads/file/41/thurlaston</a></p> <p>RBC Local Plan: <a href="https://www.rugby.gov.uk/localplan">https://www.rugby.gov.uk/localplan</a></p> <p>South-West Rugby Supplementary Planning Document:  <a href="https://www.rugby.gov.uk/directory/25/our_planning_strategies_policies_and_evidence/category/92">https://www.rugby.gov.uk/directory/25/our_planning_strategies_policies_and_evidence/category/92</a>  <a href="https://www.rugby.gov.uk/directory_record/16773/south_west_rugby_masterplan_supplementary_planning_document_spd/category/92/supplementary_planning_documents">https://www.rugby.gov.uk/directory_record/16773/south_west_rugby_masterplan_supplementary_planning_document_spd/category/92/supplementary_planning_documents</a></p> <p>Landscape and Visual Appraisal for Thurlaston Parish Council (prepared by the Landscape Partnership, 11th February 2021)</p> <p>Planning Applications made within the Parish of Thurlaston in Warwickshire:  <a href="https://www.thurlaston-pc.gov.uk/Planning_16961.aspx">https://www.thurlaston-pc.gov.uk/Planning_16961.aspx</a></p>
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## 1. Introduction

This Village Design Statement (“VDS”) was originally produced in 2003 by residents of Thurlaston (Warwickshire) to capture features of the village that are unique, characteristic and should be preserved.

Thurlaston Parish Council (“TPC”) subsequently reviewed and amended it in 2015-2016, to recognise changes made to the village during the interim. A new version was formally submitted to and adopted by Rugby Borough Council (“RBC”) in August 2016.

TPC produced this updated edition in 2021 in response to guidance that a VDS is updated and adopted formally every 5 years to maintain its accuracy and validity as a planning reference document. RBC Planning may use this VDS as a supplementary source of information when considering planning applications that impact Thurlaston; RBC confirmed that although an older VDS will still be consulted, it will carry less weight than one adopted within the five-year stipulation.

This edition reflects a greater emphasis on planning, due to the amount of development activity in play in 2021. The RBC Local Plan (“LP”) and the South-West Rugby Supplementary Planning Document (“SPD”) were adopted recently and a detailed planning application for two large warehouses within Thurlaston Parish was reviewed and approved during H1 2021. In addition, three significant planning applications were submitted to RBC between November 2020 and July 2021, all having a potential impact on the Village centre and the Thurlaston Conservation Area (“TCA”).

The visual and landscape detailing in this edition is enhanced. In Q1 2021, TPC commissioned a suitably-qualified consultancy to complete a Landscape and Visual Assessment in response to a planning application. The report focussed on a specific site close to the Village centre, but it contained a great deal of information applicable to the Village as a whole. Where appropriate, information from this report has been incorporated, which has enriched the visual and landscape content significantly.

The subject of the VDS is the Village’s Settlement Area itself, rather than its surrounds or the Parish taking its name, so note that dwellings outside of the Settlement Area are not part of the main focus. Some areas surrounding the settlement are described elsewhere in the VDS, where their inclusion provides relevant context to the Settlement Area.



## 2. History

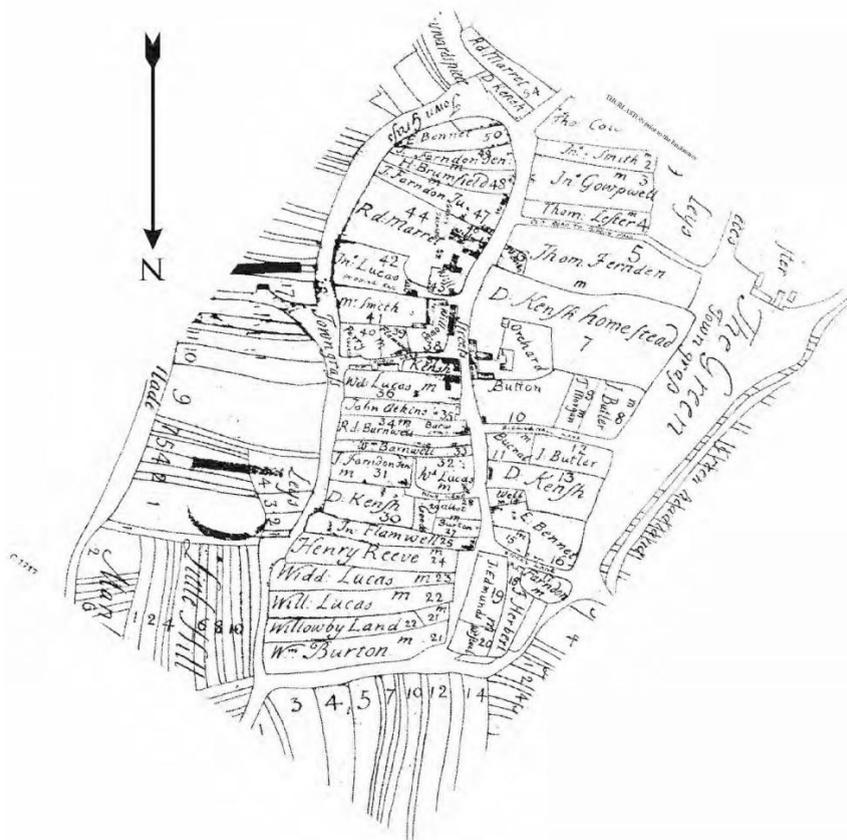
### 2.1 Origins

Thurlaston is an ancient village that was recorded in the Domesday Book (1086), in which its name, "Torlavestone", suggests it was once owned by a Scandinavian, Thorleifr (the Danelaw boundary was only a few miles to the east).

From the 13<sup>th</sup> century through to 1538, Thurlaston was owned by the Monks of Pipewell in Northamptonshire. They built a "Grange" on a field named Stokeswell Furlong ('Grange' meaning farm), and records from 1315 state this was the home of John de la Byging. The precise location of the original Grange is uncertain, but evidence suggests it was at, or close to, Biggin Hall Farm, where there is part of an old moat in the orchard, and old vaults (now filled in) to the rear of the farmhouse. The current Biggin Hall Lane did not exist then – the road to Biggin Hall Farm ran from opposite Grays Orchard.

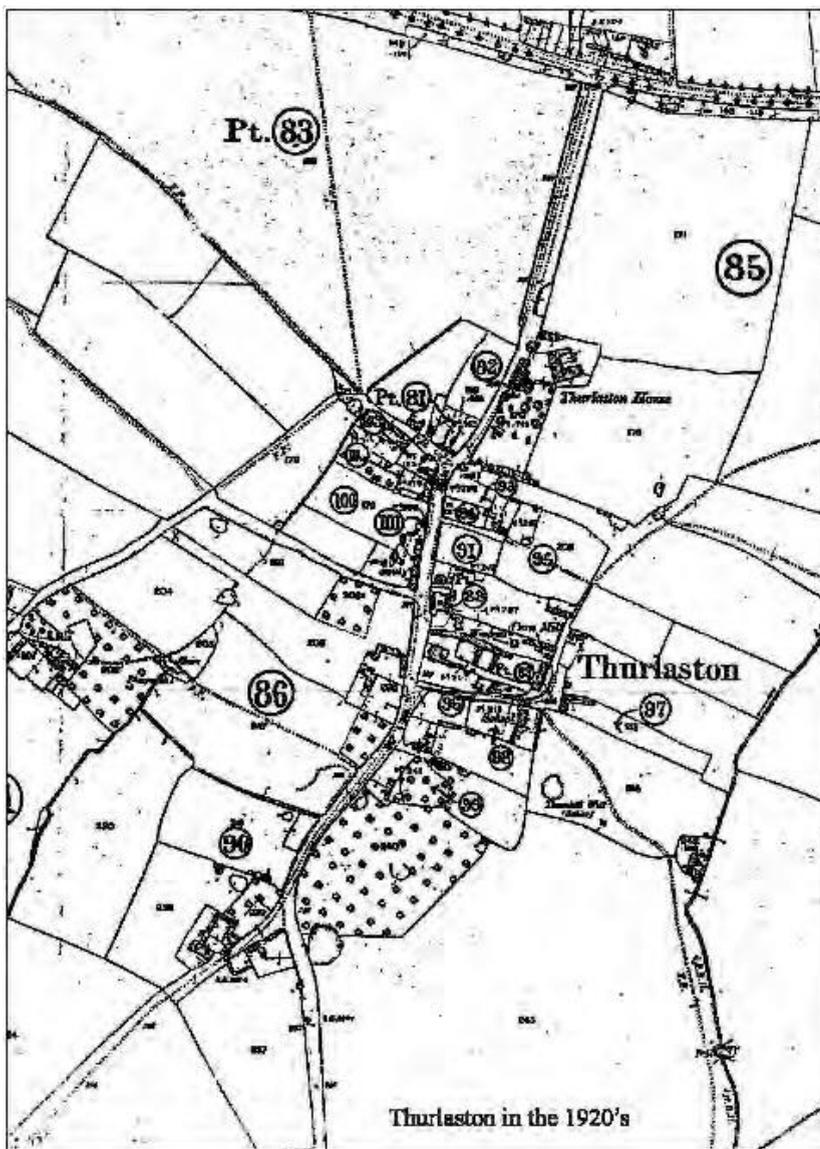
There was a church dedicated to St. Edmund in Thurlaston (site unknown) many years before the current Church of St Edmund was built. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, Robert Stretton, Bishop of Coventry, gave licence to inhabitants to have a divine service for two years, but Lord Berkleys' officers pulled the church down. Dressed sandstone is found here and there in the village, which is believed to from the old church (the nearest local sources of sandstone are at Bubbenhall and Kenilworth). There was a way, or "Common Churchway", leading from Thurlaston to Dunchurch across the fields from where The Gardens is today. This had to be no less than 8 ft wide for the use of coffin bearers, as there was never a churchyard at Thurlaston.

Prior to the Enclosure Acts of the eighteenth century, the village was farmed in strips fronting onto what is now Main Street, and running between Main Street and a parallel pathway to the East. A map of the village in 1717 is shown below.



Thurlaston is one of the 25 parishes that contributed annually to "Wroth Silver at Knightlow. At Sunrise on November 11th, an ancient levy is paid to Lord of the Manor, his Grace, Duke of Buccleuch (Thurlaston's contribution amounts to two and a half old pence). The custom is about 800 years old, but these days the ceremony is preserved unofficially by private individuals.

Pipewell Cottage, at the corner of Main Street and Pudding Bag Lane, is the oldest remaining dwelling in Thurlaston. Old deeds state it belonged to a charity at Willoughby and was expected to supply two men for the King's Army, complete with uniforms. Part of Pipewell Cottage is 15th century, having cruck beams from ground to apex (ridge) of the house and some wattle and daub walls.



Before the Twentieth Century, Thurlaston was a thriving, agricultural village owned by the Duke of Buccleuch. The local economy centred on agriculture, as reflected by the farm buildings at Stanleys Farm's and the Mill. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century there were at least 20 thatched cottages in the village, seven of them on the A45.

The Church of St. Edmund was built in 1848, costing £11,000 and paid for by public subscription, the site given by Lord John Scott. It was a school during the week and was attended by over 50 children in the 1880s. On Sundays it was used as a church for divine service. Church House, located in the tower of the church building, housed the teacher until 1905, when the day school was closed. The church was licensed for public worship and furnished as a church in 1925. The field below the church, known as Thornhill Field, had a saline well used as a communal well by the inhabitants of Thurlaston, the water having a similar salt mineral content as Leamington Spa water.

As well as farming, the village had shopkeepers, a blacksmith, miller and publicans (there were four public houses). Electricity was brought into the village in 1931 and street lighting arrived in 1952. The first public telephone in the village was placed openly on the wall inside the Post Office. There is still farming in and around the village, but very little other commercial activity remains. This leaves an attractive, peaceful and relatively prosperous settlement of mixed, higher than average priced housing. Nearly all residents are retired or commute to Rugby, Coventry, or further afield. In 2021, the Register of Electors recorded a total of 144 dwellings and 286 residents. Public transport amounts to five or six buses each weekday from Coventry Road to Rugby and Coventry.

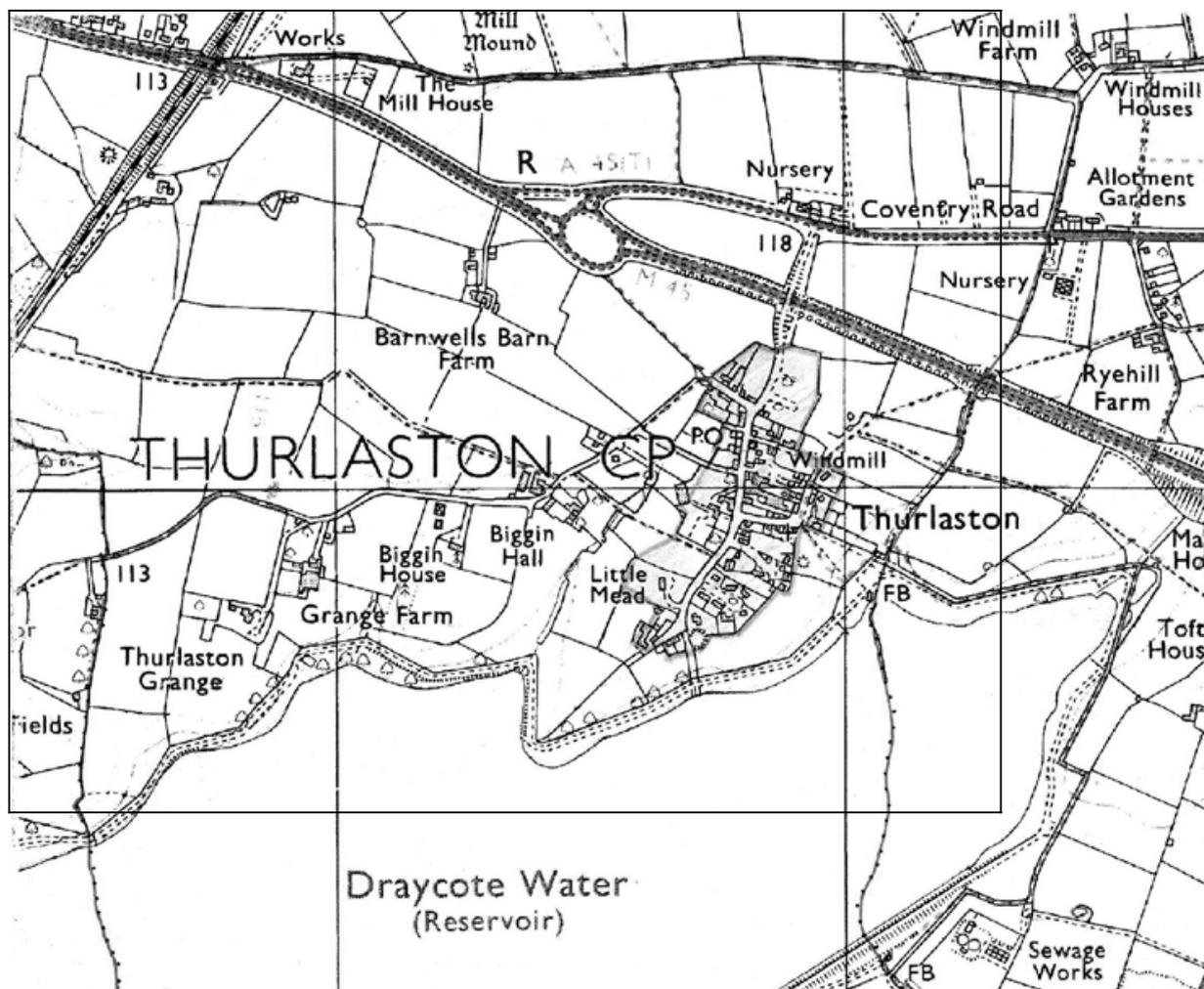
## 2.2 Development Planning Applications

TPC is made aware of, and has the opportunity to comment on, planning applications within the Parish. TPC responses are made within the guidelines and the objectives of the Village Design Statement and the Conservation Area Appraisal documents. Applications may be viewed on the Rugby Borough Planning Portal and TPC's procedures for appraising planning applications, planning application summaries and associated comments and responses are published on the TPC Website.

Thurlaston is a small Warwickshire village within the Parish of Thurlaston, situated about 4 miles south west of Rugby and a mile west of Dunchurch. Its coordinates are 52.33°N, 1.31°W (National Grid Reference SP468712).

The Dunsmore Area, which includes Thurlaston, consists of low ridges and valleys lying between Leamington Spa, Coventry and Rugby. The core of the region comprises an area of former heath associated with the low glacial plateau running from Cubbington to Hillmorton. It is primarily a planned landscape of large fields and small villages.

The Village is situated on a gravel and sandy ridge, overlooking a clay based valley on the edge of a plateau (Dunsmore Heath) at 110m to 120m AOD (350 feet above sea level). It has attractive views into the countryside on all sides, particularly to the south across the valley, which is now filled by a reservoir called Draycote Water. The M45 to the north and Draycote Water to the south form distinct boundaries to the main settlement, although there are significant secondary settlements on Biggin Hall Lane to the west and on Coventry Road, to the north of the M45. A bridge over the M45 is the only vehicular approach to the village.



The village is predominantly linear in form with Main Street the primary historical route. A number of historical lanes and public rights of way diverge from Main Street, as well as more modern cul-de-sacs. Although Pipewell Cottage has origins dating from the C15 or C16 the majority of the historic buildings within the village date from the C18 such as Stanleys Farmhouse, the Old Forge and The Mill. Many of the other buildings date from the mid-C19 suggesting different methods of agriculture led to modernisation and expansion of the village. The village grew significantly in the 1960s with open plan housing along Main Street, open plan cul-de-sacs and infill developments.

The settlement boundary is defined in part in the RBC Local Plan; for example, the fields and woodlands to the rear of the Care Home are outside of the settlement boundary and clearly have a rural character. Open areas, together with native hedgerows, make an important contribution to the character of the settlement surrounds, some contributing to the character of the Conservation Area in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

Further details relating to the landscape character, geology,

### **2.3 Surrounding Countryside**

The countryside surrounding Thurlaston is open farmland to the north, east and west, and Draycote Water to the south. The farmland is mainly grazing pasture for sheep and cattle. Countryside permeates into the heart of the village from the west along Biggin Hall Lane. The combination of countryside and dwellings is part of the village heritage and history.

### **2.4 The Approaches**

The surrounding “openness” of countryside and water is a feature of all routes into the village. The footpath route from the south east (below) is picturesque, with the Village Church, Mill and housing visible on the higher ground, over the undulating farmland and Draycote Water.



The footpath/bridleway route from the west commences near the village of Draycote through an ancient meadow and rises up to higher, undulating farmland, a golf course and the cul-de-sac end of Biggin Hall Lane (pictured below). Walking into the village along Biggin Hall Lane gives views of Draycote Water below and passes farmhouses and other houses and bungalows before the mill and other properties in the heart of the village come into view.



The only vehicular approach to Thurlaston is a turn off the Coventry Road (B4429). On the opposite side of the Coventry Road are residential properties, including those adjacent to the market garden. These detached properties are a mix of old cottages and more modern developments, the most recent still under construction at the Dunsmore Garage site. These properties have open countryside to the rear, but are affected by noise from the busy Coventry Road to the front.



Many drivers do not observe the 50 miles per hour speed restriction on the B4429, which is a potential hazard for traffic entering and leaving the Thurlaston turn.

As one turns off the Coventry Road, the main village is entered over a bridge spanning the M45. The bridge approaches are densely wooded with conifers and deciduous trees, mainly planted at the time the bridge was constructed. Replacement planting will be necessary over time to retain the character of the approach to the village, as will maintenance of the highway boundary fence on the eastern side of the road.

The village became a 20 miles per hour speed limit area in 2015, but this is often ignored by drivers. Speeding is raised as a concern with Thurlaston Parish Council by local residents regularly. The bridge over the M45 is narrow, which encourages drivers to proceed more slowly, but speeds often increase as the road broadens and traffic progresses down the hill towards the main settlement within the Village Boundary. Further traffic calming measures could be taken to improve safety in our community, but these would require significant changes to Main Street.

## 2.5 Landscape Setting – Design Guidelines

Reference	Design Guideline Description
DS-1	The views from the south east across farmland and Draycote Water are particularly important and should not be damaged by future developments.
DS-2	The rural character of the approach along Biggin Hall Lane should be preserved and enhanced by appropriate landscaping.
DS-3	The approach from the Coventry Road should be maintained by appropriate replacement planting and by continual maintenance of the highway boundary fence on the eastern side of the road.
DS-4	A refuge crossing was installed in 2010 approximately 30 metres from the junction to Main Street with an illuminated bollard to provide safer crossing of Coventry Road for residents, especially schoolchildren, to catch bus transport. This improves awareness of the junction with Main Street. This should be retained or perhaps enhanced as developments in the immediate area impact transport usage and volumes.
DS-5	The current form of Thurlaston is based on a single historic street (Main Street) which intersects with various lanes and cul-de-sacs. The settlement has a compact, linear form. There is a small cluster of isolated development at Biggin Hall Lane. Proposals to build on the land between the main village and the isolated development at Biggin Hall Lane would result in a loss of separation and create a hard urban edge. A deep development to either side of Main Street risks compromising the linear form of the settlement. These types of development should be avoided.
DS-6	The countryside contributes to the setting of the village, particularly where open ground offers a direct connection to the surrounding countryside. Open areas around the Village are an important part of its character, and the undeveloped land beyond allow for open views. Development applications that damage this setting should be rejected.
DS-7	Future proposed developments should not infringe on the landscape setting of listed buildings (The Old Forge, Pipewell Cottage, Stanleys Farm and The Mill) and the Conservation Area.

### 3. Settlement Pattern

Thurlaston has grown over time through many individual developments of single, or small clusters of, dwellings. Main Street runs through the Village end-to-end, providing a backbone for a linear pattern of development.

For the purposes of analysis, the Village Settlement Area has been divided into three zones, as follows (and as illustrated in Figure 1 further below):

1. Zone A: The Village Entrance (colour-coded lilac)
2. Zone B: The Heart of the Village (colour-coded green)
3. Zone C: The End of the Village (colour-coded orange)

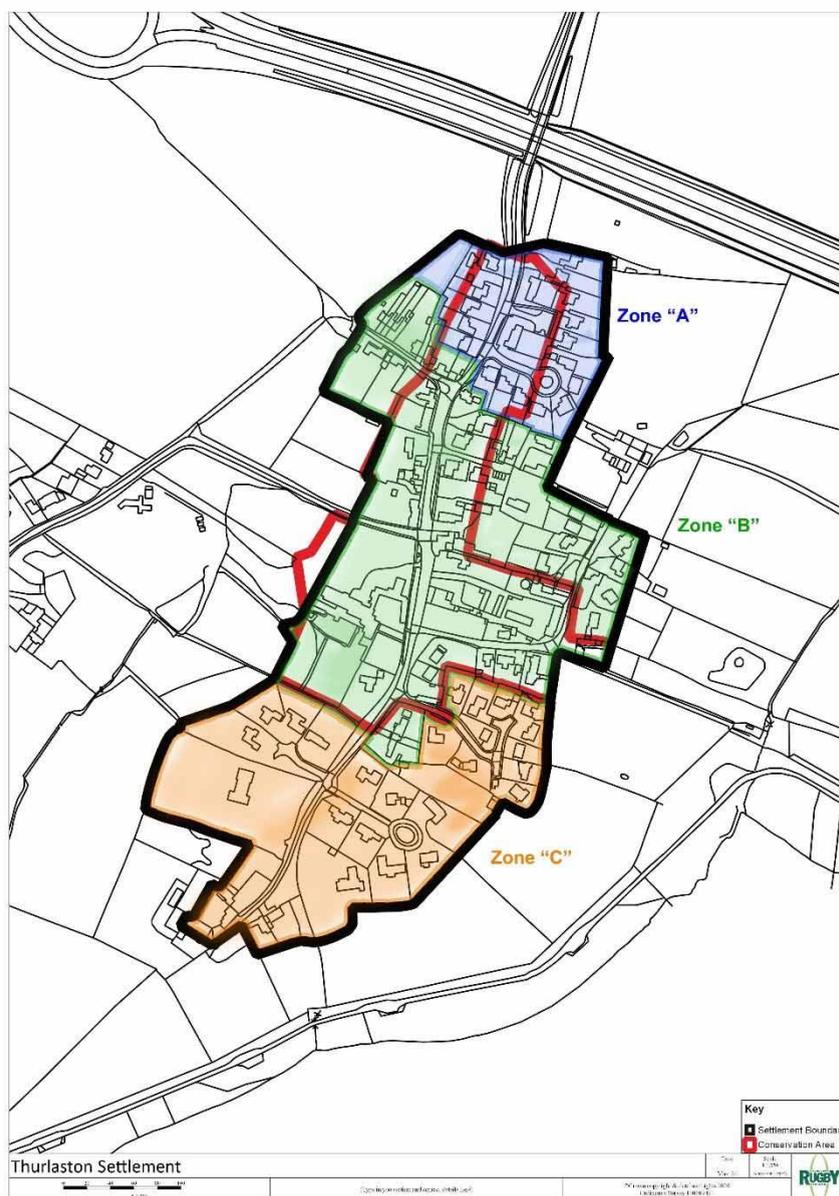


Figure 1 – The Village Settlement Area Zones

Note that the red line in Figures 1-4 show the boundary of the Thurlaston Conservation Area.

Since completion of the reservoir in 1970, Main Street has terminated in a cul-de-sac at the southern end of the Village, with the Coventry Road junction serving as the only entry/exit point. Prior to construction of Draycote Water, the road continued beyond the Village and across the valley, joining the A426 on the other side of the reservoir near to the current Draycote Water Visitor Centre.

A series of housing developments also began in 1970, some of which departed from the previous linear pattern – more so to the East of Main Street. Approximately 60% of the 100 or so houses within the Settlement Boundary were built after the Second World War, mainly during the 1970's and 1980's; the remaining 40% were built mainly in the Nineteenth Century, and all but three of these older properties are in Zone B.

Residences on Biggin Hall Lane are excluded from the zones analysis, because they fall outside of the Village Settlement. However these are covered elsewhere in this document, as they are near to the Village and within the Parish, and are therefore an important part of the surrounding context. Note also that the only roadway access for BHL residents is through the Village.

### 3.1 Zone “A” - The Village Entrance

Main Street from the bridge over the M45 to the junction with Stocks Lane, including “The Gardens” and “Beech Drive”.

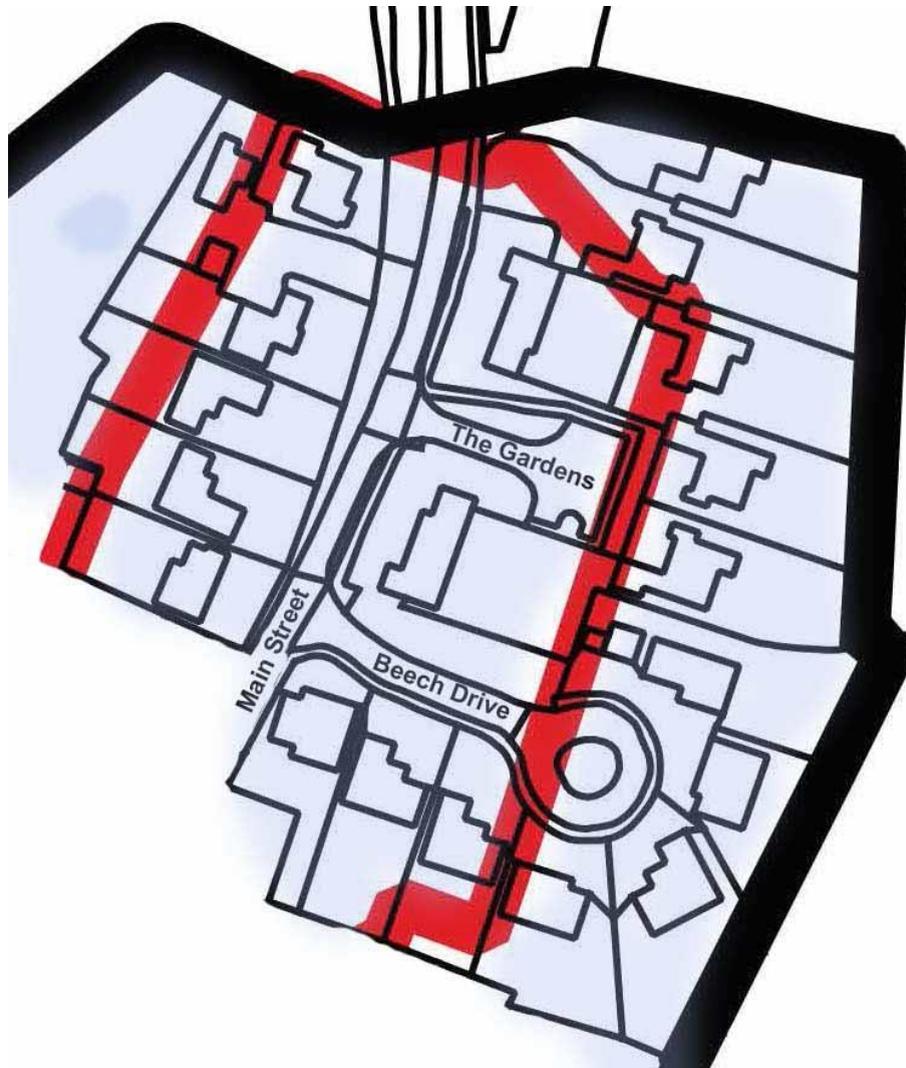


Figure 2: Zone A

The road curves and widens as it enters the housing area, giving an initial impression of good quality properties in a well landscaped setting. All the property is less than 60 years old and the first group of seven on the left as one enters the village received a design award when built. A number of the properties have large gardens and views to the rear over open countryside. Short cul-de-sac and access courts lead off Main Street.

The public space of grass verges merging with front gardens includes several specimen trees. There are sections of the original hedgerow on the west side and sections of brick wall on the east. The wall was built over 100 years ago to front the original manor house which was demolished to make way for present housing. The contrast of hedge line on one side of the road and more open plan on the other, together with the trees, give this area an attractive, landscaped character, which is enhanced by the gentle curve of the road. After Beech Drive, there is a natural end to this entrance zone, with a projecting property on the left as the road curves around it into the older heart of the village. Below is the view from the southern edge of Zone A towards the M45 Motorway Bridge and Coventry Road, showing the wall on Main Street at the southern corner of Beech Drive



The properties are all built of red/brown brick with roofs mainly of small brown plain tiles, although houses on Beech Drive have larger grey/brown concrete “slates”.

Some residents of Area “A” find noise from fast moving traffic on the nearby M45 intrusive, particularly when the road is wet and the wind is from the north east. Any future resurfacing of the road should take this into account. This problem is fully recognised by Highways and measures have been taken in the past to use latest technologies and materials to reduce noise nuisance.

There are no obvious opportunities for further development within this Area, apart from house extensions, which should be in keeping with the form, scale and materials of the existing property. Any future development in the fields adjoining the M45 would be unacceptable, as they are outside the Village Boundary, and within Warwickshire’s Area of Special Landscape Value. Further tree planting of appropriate species and reinforcement/replacement of the hedge line on the west of Main Street should be encouraged to maintain the landscaped character of the area and reduce M45/A45 traffic noise.

### ***3.1.1 Zone A Design Guidelines***

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Design Guideline Description</b>
DS-8	All the properties within this Area were built after 1970. Any future development is likely to be restricted to house extensions, which should be in context with the scale form, materials and character of the original property.
DS-9	The existing pattern of development is of detached properties in relatively spacious plots. In order to retain this character, bulky two storey extensions close to the side boundaries should be avoided.
DS-10	Fences, railings, gates and other features should be in keeping with the character of the particular property and be simple rather than ornate to reflect the rural character of the village.

DS-11	The red/orange brick boundary wall on the east side of Main Street is a feature which should be retained.
DS-12	Reinforcement/replacement of the hedge line on the west side of Main Street should be encouraged.
DS-13	Maintenance of existing feature trees and further planting of appropriate tree species in simple grass verges should be encouraged to reinforce the landscaped character of the area.

### 3.2 Zone “B” - The Heart of the Village

Main Street from Stocks Lane to the Public Footpath at the side of Moat Close, including Stocks Lane, Church Walk, Biggin Hall Lane, and Church Lane.

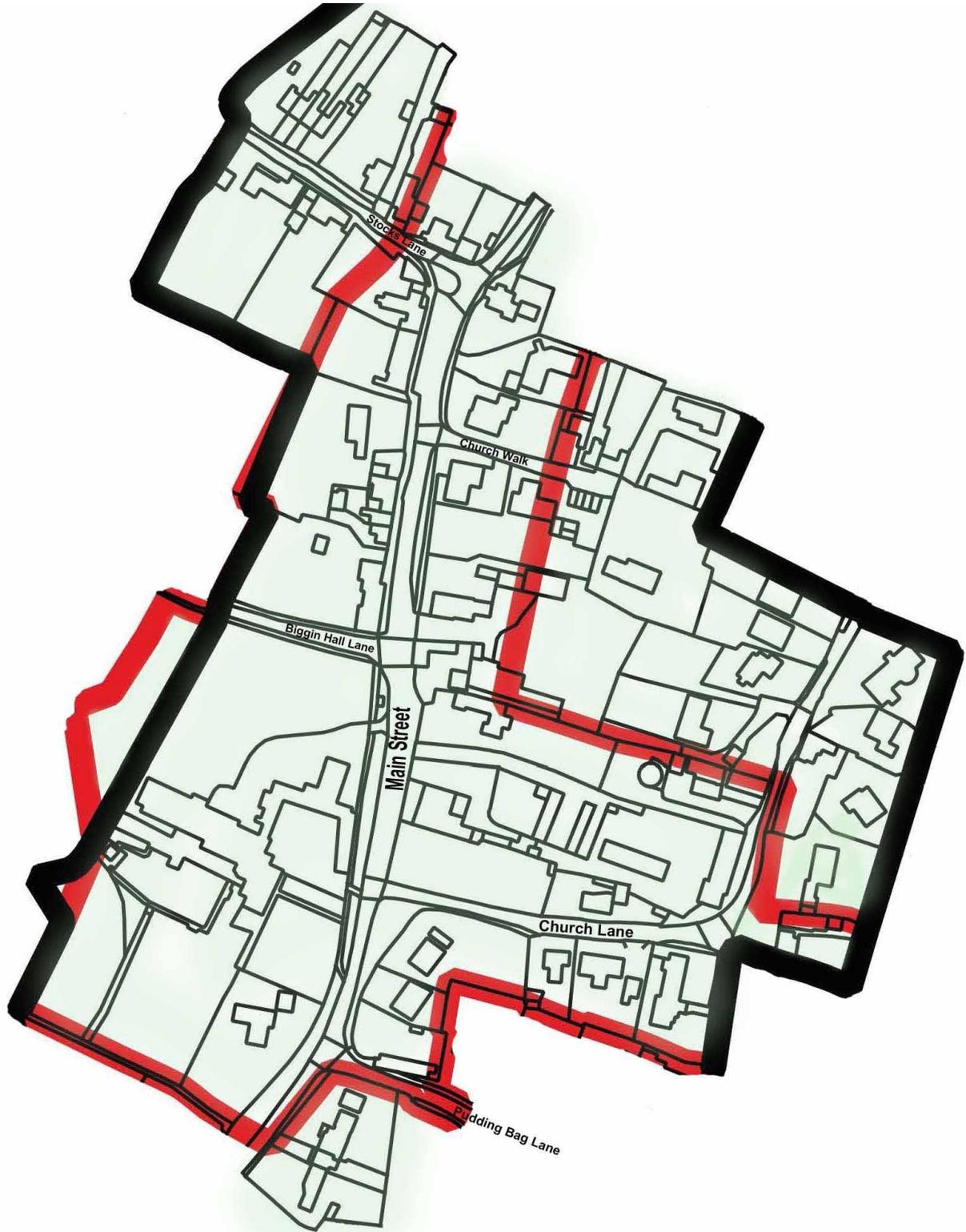


Figure 3: Zone B



The Stocks, looking down Stocks Lane

Zone B includes the original “heart” of the village, which once contained public houses, shops and the blacksmith and is still recognisable as the village centre, even though the “working” village businesses are long gone. Thurlaston Meadows Care Home is the only substantial business left in the Village. This is also the heart of the Thurlaston Conservation Area.

Older properties are in the majority along this stretch of Main Street, mainly with windows containing small glass panes and walls of mellowed red/orange, flush pointed brick. The brick is also used in prominent sections of garden boundary walls. Roofs are mainly of small, plain red/brown tiles or blue/black natural slate, with one of corrugated sheeting and one substantial thatched dwelling.

The properties are of varied character and size, the largest being Thurlaston Meadows Care Home, which was formerly a substantial private residence, is Victorian in character and fits well into the village environment. Its later extensions are hidden from view along Main Street. On the opposite side of Main Street from the Care Home is Stanleys Farm, which is a listed building and reminder of the former agricultural nature of Thurlaston, with its commanding presence and range of barns round a farmyard. The Care Home and Stanleys Farm are both larger properties in extended grounds, reflecting their original status within the community.

Small cottages and larger properties, both older and more modern, some built directly on to the street, others more open and set back, all contribute to the interesting and varied street scene. The views of Main Street from either end, are enhanced by mature trees and grass verges.

The roadway is of irregular width, but is wide enough for two-way traffic, except when there are cars parked to the sides. The predominance of gently curving grass verges with barely visible kerbstones between the road and pavements add to the rural charm.

There is a bus shelter outside the Care Home Wall, which is built of rustic boarding with a slated roof. Buses ceased to service the Village itself, because there was nowhere for them to turn around once the reservoir brought Main Street to a cul-de-sac, so the shelter is used by residents for book swapping, a dry place for collection of newspapers and a feature for the local art groups and children to decorate. Nearby is a public telephone box, which no longer houses a telephone, but is used to house a defibrillator. Opposite to the bus shelter is the Village Noticeboard. "Victorian" style street lights fit in well with this older part of the village.



On entering Zone B from Zone A, Stocks Lane is immediately on the right, beginning with a small grassy island which contains the (rebuilt) stocks, a wooden seat and an oak tree from which a good view of the whole lane can be gained. Stocks Lane is a cul-de-sac that retains a distinctively rural village look, with trees dominating its end. An old farmhouse on the left and old residential properties on the right lend to its aged character, whilst a more modern property at the end remains hidden from the view from Main Street.

A further 50 yards along Main Street on the left is Church Walk, which is also a cul-de-sac of about 100 yards, giving access to a number of properties. The lane is narrow without pavements or verges, and allows for only single-vehicle passageway for most of its length. It has a few terraced houses and a cottage, which lend some village character, and then a modern property on the right, which is well concealed, and several larger and post-war houses towards the end, again set to the sides and not visible from Main Street (three of the houses built on the land at the end of Church Walk received planning permission in 2003 and were built thereafter, one of which is accessed from Church Walk and the other two accessed from Church Lane. The lane terminates, becoming a gated farm track and public footpath.



Church Walk (from Main Street)



Biggin Hall Lane from Main Street

Beyond Church Walk along Main Street on the right is Biggin Hall Lane, which has a distinctive rural character (as described in the Conservation Area Appraisal) and offers views towards the surrounding countryside. For the most part, it has undeveloped and open land on either side with occasional single, or small clusters of existing residences. It has a rural character and provides a strong visual connection between the village and its surrounding countryside. Except for the existing buildings, the lane is dark at night, which is a key part of its character at night time.

On the northern corner of Main Street and Biggin Hall Lane is a listed property called The Old Forge, with the Care Home grounds forming the southern corner. There are no other properties visible down Biggin Hall Lane from Main Street and it presents as a typical English country lane, with verges and hedgerows. The roadway wraps around the western and northern boundary of the Care Home grounds, turning sharply southwards towards the first dwelling on the left hand side, which is Patricksfield, a residential property built in the Twentieth Century and set within a large, well-vegetated garden of a garden character with generous planting and a range of shrubs and mature trees, including ornamental varieties. There is a block of woodland in the crook of the sharp bend between Patricksfield and Main Street without which there would be a harsher urban edge between the settlement area and the surrounding countryside. A well-maintained, native hedge borders the lane.

Patricksfield marks the beginning of a cluster of isolated C20 properties, the rest of them all on the right hand side, backing onto woodland and farmland to the west. To the north is an expanse of open countryside which forms part of the setting of the Village. There is a clear separation of fields and meadows between the Village Settlement Area and this isolated cluster. Beyond this cluster there are another half dozen or so properties further along Biggin Hall Lane, including Thurlaston Grange and some older properties (mainly farmhouses and barn conversions) towards the end of the lane. All of the Biggin Hall Lane dwellings lie outside of the Village Settlement and within Warwickshire's Area of Special Landscape Value. Any further development on Biggin Hall Lane should be restricted to extensions of existing properties and barn conversions, which should be in keeping with the form, scale and materials of the existing properties.



Biggin Hall Lane at the sharp turn southwards towards the first isolated cluster of dwellings

The importance of Biggin Hall Lane lies in its rural character, including fine views to and from Draycote Water and its use to access public footpaths and bridleways across fields, the golf course and woods, and links to surrounding areas. The rural character should be preserved and enhanced wherever possible by appropriate landscaping.

The Care Home is located to the west of Main Street. The OS map of 1887 shows that the surrounding land to the rear originally consisted of agricultural land and what appears to be a farmyard, adjoining Main Street. The OS map of 1960 shows that a large property has been constructed on the site, which forms part of the existing care home. It appears that some of the original farm buildings were adapted and retained, and now form part of the Care Home with some more modern extensions. The areas immediately adjoining the home have a domestic quality which includes areas for parking, a terrace and areas of mown grass. The buildings are situated within fields and pastures which once formed part of a farm, though active agricultural use has now ceased. Whilst the buildings have been subsequently adapted and extended, the grounds retain a countryside character. The original buildings might be considered non-designated heritage assets and the frontage wall makes an important contribution to the character of Main Street and the village as a whole.

The eastern area of the Care Home grounds, including the building itself, is included within the Conservation Area and the Conservation Area Appraisal makes reference to open areas within the site as a positive feature.

The Old Forge lies directly opposite the Care Home across Biggin Hall lane, and Stanleys Farmhouse is directly opposite the Care Home across Main Street, so the Care Home site is an important part of the existing landscape setting of these Grade II listed buildings. The Old Forge overlooks an area of open space within the Care Home, which retains its original agricultural character and links with the wider countryside. Any building development on this existing open space would urbanise the setting considerably and damage its agricultural character. The Old Forge, Stanleys Farm, and Thurlaston Meadows Care Home are situated within the historic core of the village; new buildings in this area would dilute the historic character of the village by introducing modernity.

Views from the ground floor of Stanleys Farmhouse are limited by the wall in front of the Care Home, but views over the wall are available from the upstairs windows. The open space within the Care Home grounds preserves the countryside setting of Stanleys Farm, The Old Forge, The Windmill and the Centre of the Village in general, including parts within the Thurlaston Conservation Area. The introduction of new development would have a direct impact on the existing countryside setting of these listed buildings as the site would take on an urbanised character. This would have an adverse effect on the setting of these buildings.

A private dwelling on Main Street is indented into the south-eastern corner of the Care Home, consisting of a medium-sized garden and a modern house. The southern Care Home grounds are bounded by a footpath, which runs between it and Moat Close (a short cul-de-sac of modern properties in Zone C). Remaining sections of the Care Home grounds adjoin pastures connecting with the wider countryside. The land to the rear of the Care Home (to the west) includes gardens, meadowland, a disused sheep-wash and several small areas of woodland. Large parts of the surrounding land is still shown on the map as agricultural fields and the Local Plan map excludes much of this from the Thurlaston settlement boundary. Beyond is a separate residential dwelling called Patricksfield. Between the Care Home and Patricks Field is a minor valley of pleasant aspect consisting of several parcels of undeveloped land that have the character of meadows and woodland and the landform is generally unaltered from its natural state. Some of the original rural hedge lines survive and now consist of mature trees. The disused sheep-wash, which is considered a heritage asset, and a pond at the base of the Patricks Field garden are both identifiable on OS maps. The pond, which is bordered in part by mature trees releases water into a small stream which flows southwards into Draycote Water (Reservoir). A large part of this area was considered to form part of the countryside, and Patricksfield and nearby residential dwellings on Biggin Hall Lane were

considered isolated developments within the countryside by a landscape and visual report commissioned by TPC in 2021.

To the east of Main Street there are historic buildings within the Conservation Area including Stanleys Farm, which is grade II listed, and its associated farm buildings.



The remainder of Zone B covers the remaining properties on Main Street either side of Church Lane to the public footpath at the side of Moat Close and those fronting onto Church Lane. On entering Church Lane, there is a high red/orange brick wall enclosing the garden of Stanleys Farm on one side and a grassed area with hawthorn trees and an old (non-working) village pump on the other.



Church Lane itself is narrow with no footpaths

The brick wall on the left leads the eye to an old thatched cottage with small leaded bay windows and an eye-brow window in the roof. On the right (south side), a hedge leads to the Village Hall, a modern house and the Church. Beyond the Church are fine views over fields and Draycote Water.



The Village Hall was erected on land given by Deed of Gift by a local resident in 1946. The Village Hall is registered as a charity and managed by the Village Hall Committee. The Hall consists of two ex-Army huts erected by local residents and has been a Village landmark for many years.

The architect for the Church was William Butterfield, who designed New School and the Chapel at Rugby School and St. Andrews Church in Rugby. Erected in 1848, it was used as a school until 1905, with Sunday services being held. The tower housed the headmistress, and is still used as residential accommodation. In 1905, the church was licensed for public worship and furnished as a church in 1925. It is built in brick with a tiled roof and interesting ridge tiles. It has a similarly tiled porch with benches on either side. The stained glass window, designed by Melanie Pope, was installed in 1997, and paid for by a generous local family. The Church is not used for burials, and marriages are by special licence only. A wooden cross to mark the Millennium was erected under the stained glass window outside the Church.

At the church, the lane bends sharply to the left around a substantial brick barn. On the west side is the Mill, now converted to a dwelling and an iconic local landmark. Two cottages are situated on the right hand side of the Mill's driveway and there are two older cottages set back behind a wide grass verge.

Beyond the Mill and older cottages there is one older cottage and the rest of the dwellings are more modern houses and bungalows. Church Lane ends at a farm gateway that leads to a complex of farm buildings that are still in use, a bridleway/footpath towards Toft, and a gated farm track to the left that joins back onto Church Walk.

The properties on Church Lane are varied in form and character - about half of them have white painted or rendered walls, while the others are of a more traditional red/orange brick or lighter brown modern brick. Some roofs are of blue/black natural slate or small red/brown plain tiles in keeping with the older properties, whilst others have larger concrete “slates” or profiled roof tiles and there is one thatched cottage.

Main Street from Church Lane to Moat Close has a pleasant mixture of house styles, ranging from improved brick-built cottages to post-war housing of varying styles. There are no pavements, but wide and well-kept verges create a bosky look, enhanced by the presence of a wooded coppice in the grounds of Warwickshire Private Nursing Home. To maintain the character of this area, it is important that the coppice site and its trees are retained, and that new trees are planted and a traditional mixed hedge is planted along the boundary to Main Street. New tree planting of appropriate species could also take place on the grass verge.

Nut Coppice was built and has had a number of owners who have undertaken extensions and the current name (2015) is Beechwood House. There are Tree Preservation Orders applicable on this property.

Pudding Bag Lane is distinguished by the presence at its entrance of “Pipewell Cottage”, a cruck-built, Grade 2 listed thatched house dating back to the 15th C, the oldest house in Thurlaston.

Planning permission was granted prior to the 2003 edition of this document for one dwelling house within the coppice to the south of Warwickshire Private Nursing Home, and for two houses in the field at the end of Church Lane, just before it becomes a bridleway, all of which have since been built. The two houses at the end of Church Lane are part of the planning permission which has a third house accessed from Church Walk. The character of the public footpath linking Church Walk and Church Lane should be an important consideration in the implementation of this permission.

Other possibilities for future development in Church Lane may be restricted due to the limited traffic capacity of the narrow lane. The brick barn on the corner may have potential for conversion, together with other farm buildings nearby.

Malt House on Main Street has a large garden area to the rear, which is also accessible from Church Walk. At the time of writing there is an open application for building six new dwellings across this garden area (R21/0477 - The Malt House, Main Street, Thurlaston, CV23 9JS Erection of 6 dwellings).

Any new development should be sensitively designed with walls preferably of red/orange brick and roofs of natural slate or small red/brown plain tiles. The materials and landscaping of the external areas around buildings are equally important.

### 3.2.1 Zone B Design Guidelines

Reference	Design Guideline Description
DS-14	<p>The older properties in the heart of the village have white painted windows divided into small glass panes and walls of mellow red/orange flush pointed brick. A few walls are of white render or white painted bricks. Roofs are mainly of small plain red/brown tiles or blue/black natural slate. Any new development should take account of these predominant materials and the scale, form and character of older properties. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• roof lines varied in height and roofs at 400 pitch or more</li> <li>• apparent height of buildings reduced. e.g. by incorporating part of the first floor within the roof space</li> <li>• chimneys incorporated with traditional details</li> <li>• more, smaller, window openings of varying sizes in preference to fewer,</li> </ul>

	<p>larger, openings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• timber windows, doors and other external features generally painted white</li> <li>• parking and garaging to the side and rear, rather to the front</li> <li>• development close to the front boundary</li> <li>• front boundary treatments to respect the traditional rural character, which are predominantly brick walls in this area. Traditional mixed hedges and post and rail fences may also be acceptable in some cases.</li> </ul>
DS-15	Any new development of two houses or more should vary the design and size of the individual houses as much as possible.
DS-16	It is important to retain the rural character of the public footpath linking Church Walk and Church Lane.
DS-17	It is considered essential that the view from Main Street down Biggin Hall Lane remains as it is now - a country lane with verges and hedgerows and with open views beyond.
DS-18	Boundary walls along Main Street; around the Nursing Home site and around Stanleys Farm site should remain as important elements in the street scene.
DS-19	The materials used for external areas around buildings should reflect the rural character of the village.
DS-20	It is important to retain the fields, meadows and wooded areas to the West of Main Street, which are outside of the settlement boundary and effectively form part of the countryside. Developments that alter the land use in these areas from semi-rural, undeveloped land, to residential use would fundamentally alter its countryside character.
DS-21	The visual impact of suburbanising features of developments, such as buildings, roads, parking and associated garden paraphernalia, should be considered and mitigated carefully to avoid impact on the visual amenity of the Village.
DS-22	Thurlaston is a “dark village” – the amount and impact of lighting should be considered and unambiguous conditions applied to mitigate impact.
DS-23	Trees and other green vegetation are important parts of the Village’s visual character and their loss should be avoided.
DS-24	Development impact on Thurlaston’s linear settlement form should be considered and mitigated.
DS-25	Negative effect on the landscape setting of the village should be avoided
DS-26	Negative effect on views which are noted within the Conservation Area Appraisal
DS-27	Change in the character of Biggin Hall Lane
DS-28	Change in the character of public footpath Thurlaston R310/1

### 3.3 Zone “C” – The End of the Village

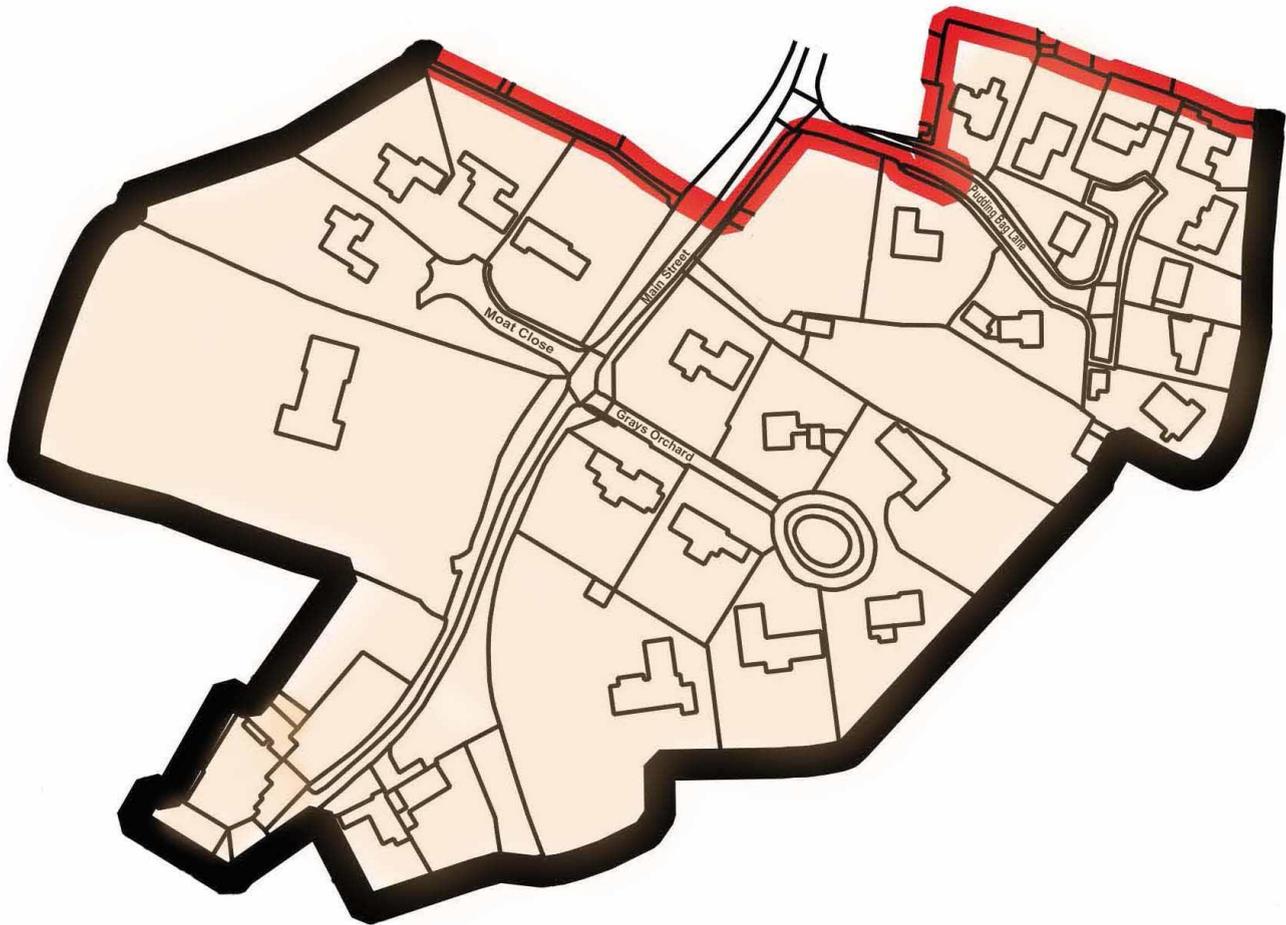


Figure 4: Zone C

Zone C comprises of the remainder of the Village, taking in Pudding Bag Lane (except for Pipewell Cottage on the Corner on Main Street), Moat Close, Grays Orchard, and properties that front onto Main Street from Pudding Bag Lane to the end of Main Street.

Pudding Bag Lane beyond Pipewell Cottage originally consisted of nine detached houses and two bungalows built in the 1960's and 1970's. One of the bungalows was replaced in 2019-2020 with two detached dormer bungalows (R19/1044, outline planning permission).

Properties on the east side of the road have fine views over Draycote Water and beyond. The rears of these properties are prominent when approaching the Village from fields surrounding the reservoir.

There is a mix of styles, but all are of brick construction with lower pitched rooves covered with concrete tiles. There is a spacious character given by the open plan gardens and curvature of the road, which adds interest. There are formal pavements on both sides of the road.

Further down Main Street, beyond Pudding Bag Lane are Moat Close and Grays Orchard, both cul-de-sacs and almost exactly opposite to each other across Main Street. Viewed from Main Street, these two closes have individual and distinctive characters. They were built within a decade of each other and care was taken during both original developments to plant trees, which are now mature and prominent.

Grays Orchard (below) is a private road comprising seven dwellings built in the early 1960's and was entered over a cattle grid until recent years. All of the properties were individually designed and show distinctive and sometimes avant-garde designs. The front gardens are enclosed except at the end of the close, where the road encircles a pond, where the three houses are built to face away from the road to emphasise the views over Draycote Water and the countryside beyond. The architectural diversity is very evident with external shapes, angles, pitches and materials. There are no pavements. One house was replaced circa 2013 with a German designed Stommel Haus system clearly fitting the individual design nature of the rest of the street.



Moat Close (below) comprises of four dwellings built in the 1970's, all having open plan frontages leading directly on to a pavement that runs down one side of the road. The buildings, one of which is single storey, are brick built with pitched, tiled roofs and form a pleasing whole.



There are only six dwellings beyond Moat Close, which is dominated by three large properties, one house built in the middle of the 18th C. and two bungalows built in 2000 and 2002. The other houses were built in the 19th C. and in the 60's. This gives a huge diversity of styles, but like the rest of Thurlaston, the predominance of brick and tiles gives a pleasing appearance.

In approaching the end of the village, the character of Main Street changes from the central area where the additional width of the tarmacked roadway runs either up to the front walls of the properties or to brick walls.

A feature of this area is the kerb-less grass verges on either side with a heavy background landscaping of boundary hedges and walls with the properties set back. These grass verges are a key element of the street scene. The end of Main Street provides one of the main focuses of the settlement, with open views over Draycote Water and beyond.



View to the end of the Village

### 3.3.1 Zone C Design Guidelines

Reference	Design Guideline Description
DS-29	Extensions to existing properties should be in context with the scale, form, materials and character of the original property.
DS-30	In order to retain the character of detached properties in relatively spacious plots, extensions should be avoided that significantly reduce the landscape setting around the front and sides of houses.
DS-31	Fences, railings, gates and other features should be in keeping with the character of the particular property and should be simple rather than ornate to reflect the rural character of the village.
DS-32	Any development should be in keeping with the character of the immediate area, in terms of density, layout and landscaping.
DS-33	The kerb-less grass verges with boundary hedges and walls and properties set back are a feature of Main Street in this part of the village. This character is important and must be retained.

## **4. Visual Assessment**

In defining landscape, the adopted definition agreed by the European Landscape Convention (Florence: Council of Europe 2000), states that the landscape is: “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”. The process to understand how landscape features, landscape character and views are affected is informed by the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA).

### **4.1 Appraisal of Visual Impact**

Appraisal of impact of a proposed development on existing landscape and built features should take into account the relationship of the features with local and wider landscape characteristics, the contribution of these features to views and the presence of statutory, non-statutory or local landscape-related designations and planning policies. A visual appraisal should include consideration of the effects of the proposals upon the landscape of the site itself, and the local and wider landscape character, and establish the extent to which the development would be visible and any changes to views. There should be consideration given to seasonal variation, direct and indirect effects, and a comparison of the effects in the first year following completion and after a period of 10 years once any planting has established. Note that change may be experienced as an adverse, beneficial or neutral influence.

Proposed developments that impact landscape character or visual amenity significantly within the Village should be supported by a proper impact appraisal. In 2021, TPC commissioned an independent Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) for the purpose of understanding and being fully informed on the likely landscape and visual effects for a proposed development. This study was very informative in its consideration of effects on features in and around the Village, such as the obscuring of natural landforms, substantial extension/expansion of the settlement area, sealing of soils, land use alteration from semi-rural/undeveloped land to residential, removal of trees, loss of surrounding woodland, potential creation of harsh urban edges, and retention of countryside character.

### **4.2 Negative Effects on Landscape Character**

Summary of types of negative effects on landscape character that should be avoided:

- Changes to character at a site, including the introduction of suburbanising features such as buildings, roads, parking and associated garden paraphernalia to previously rural sites.
- Introduction of lighting.
- Loss of trees and woodland.
- Change to the settlement form and connection of the Main Village with existing isolated developments (e.g. at Biggin Hall Lane).
- Negative effects on the landscape setting of the village
- Negative effects on views noted within the Conservation Area Appraisal
- Changes to the character of the approaches and public footpaths in and around the Village, particularly where these impact the views from the thoroughfare or the views from the surrounding countryside.

Views towards the Village, such as that from Biggin Hall Lane, are considered particularly sensitive as they are noted in the Conservation Area Appraisal. Urbanising influences of new buildings on these views should be reviewed in detail and avoided where there is a negative effect.

Care must be taken where proposals effect landscape-related designations, the most important of which is the Conservation Area and its landscape setting. The contribution of open space to the Conservation Area's character must be taken into account, as its loss will urbanise its character and infringe upon its rural setting. The spread of developments to either side of Main Street will dilute the settlement's linear character and interrupt the link between the Conservation Area and its countryside setting, which is an important component of the existing character of the Conservation Area. These considerations, including landscape setting urbanisation, also apply to The Old Forge, Stanleys Farmhouse and The Windmill, which are all listed buildings, and to the character of public footpaths.

### 4.3 Representative Viewpoints

The visibility of the Village is influenced by its buildings, roadways, verges, vegetation within the wider landscape.

A set of six representative viewpoints have been selected to describe the Village's visual context from within the Village and from the surrounds, including longer-distanced views. These may be useful in appraising the likely effects of a proposed redevelopment as experienced by visual receptors (i.e. people) at these points. They are all publicly accessible and encompass a variety of geographical locations at varying distances from the Village centre.

#### 4.3.1 Viewpoint 1

Viewpoint 1 of the wall of the Thurlaston Meadows Care Home from Main Street:



This is representative of the view from private properties on Main Street including Stanleys Farm (Grade II listed), showing a central and historic section of Main Street and containing the historic brick wall on the site frontage of the Care Home. Converted buildings and a more modern extension of the Care Home are also visible beyond the wall. The existing features within the view contribute considerably to the character of the Conservation Area and this view is therefore particularly sensitive to inappropriate development.

The undeveloped land to the side of the Care Home extends from Main Street within the Conservation Area, and connects the Village Centre to the surrounding countryside, uninterrupted by buildings.

### 4.3.2 Viewpoint 2

The view along Biggin Hall Lane looking west, away from the Village Centre is an identified view in the Conservation Area Appraisal. Other views available along Biggin Hall Lane to the surrounding countryside form an important part of the setting of the Conservation Area.



Biggin Hall Lane has an attractive rural quality, it is bound by native hedgerows and the hedgerow at Viewpoint 2 is dense and neatly maintained. There is currently little or no reference to built form within the view, despite the close proximity of the village edge.

The land on both sides of the lane has a rural character with views available over the native hedges to meadows and trees. The hedge and existing mature trees, along with the more distant prominent block of woodland, form an important part of the current street scene; the surrounds are perceived as countryside.

### 4.3.3 Viewpoint 3

The view from Biggin Hall Lane looking east is an identified view in the Conservation Area Appraisal.



Views are available along Biggin Hall Lane to historic properties on Main Street. Stanley's Farm (Listed Grade II) and the Mill are both visible within the view. The lane is bound here by native hedgerows that are dense and neatly maintained. The land within the site has a rural character and the undeveloped land thereabouts forms an important part of the landscape setting of the Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area. The existing features within the view contribute considerably to the character of the Conservation Area and this view is therefore particularly sensitive to inappropriate development. Any proposed development would have potential to endanger the view by introducing buildings that are more prominent than the historic buildings and/or obscuring views to Stanley's Farm by introducing an urbanised appearance, and breaking the skyline and direct link between the surrounding countryside and the Conservation Area.

#### 4.3.4 Viewpoint 4

View from Footpath Thurlaston R310/1 – the footpath commences on Main Street between Thurlaston Meadows Care Home and Moat Close. It runs along the southern perimeter of the Care Home grounds, dipping down across a meadow into a small hollow that contains a disused sheep wash and pond at the bottom of Patricks Field, before rising uphill to meet BHL near to an isolated settlement cluster of dwellings.



Views from the easternmost section of the path (closest to Main Street) are contained by vegetation and garden fencing and hedges, but open views are available from the rest of the path. The view also takes in a large garden at Patricks Field that includes ornamental planting. Looking southwards from the path the ground falls away towards Draycote Water with views available over fields towards the reservoir.



The scene is stunningly beautiful in the style of an idyllic English landscape and its conservation is very important to residents of Thurlaston, as was illustrated by a Parish Council survey conducted in December 2020.

#### **4.3.5 Viewpoint 5**

View from Footpath Thurlaston R185/1 - a relatively short path situated on the edge of the plateau and within the countryside, providing a link between Stocks Lane and Biggin Hall Lane. The view expands across the land behind the Care Home with a pastoral field in the foreground dropping away across a slight hollow, with the Care Home and the Village visible in the background. The view includes an important block of woodland on the farther side of BHL.



#### **4.3.6 Viewpoint 6**

The view from Church Lane extends along the lane, which is bound by a brick wall on one side and a hedge on the other.



## 4.4 Visual Assessment Design Guidelines

Reference	Design Guideline Description
DS-34	All proposed developments should consider visual impact. Where the change is significant, a visual appraisal should be conducted to include consideration of the effects of the proposal upon the landscape of the site itself, the local and wider landscape character, and establish the extent to which the development would be visible and alter any views. Consideration should be given to seasonal variation, direct and indirect effects, and a comparison of the effects in the first year following completion and after a period of 10 years once any planting has established.
DS-35	Proposed developments that have a significant impact on landscape character or visual amenity within the Village should be supported by a proper appraisal that considers the types of effect on features in and around the Village, such as the obscuring of natural landforms, substantial extension/expansion of the settlement area, sealing of soils, altering land use from semi-rural, undeveloped land, to residential use, removal of trees, loss of surrounding woodland and potential creation of harsh urban edges, and retaining a countryside character.
DS-36	<p>The following types of negative effects on landscape character should be avoided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to character at a site, including the introduction of suburbanising features such as buildings, roads, parking and associated garden paraphernalia to previously rural sites.</li> <li>• Introduction of lighting (Thurlaston is a Dark Village).</li> <li>• Loss of trees and woodland.</li> <li>• Change to the settlement form and connection of the Main Village with existing isolated developments (e.g. at Biggin Hall Lane).</li> <li>• Negative effects on the landscape setting of the village.</li> <li>• Negative effects on views noted within the Conservation Area Appraisal</li> <li>• Changes to the character of the approaches and public footpaths in and around the Village, particularly where these impact the views from the thoroughfare or the views from the surrounding countryside.</li> </ul> <p>Note that change may be experienced as an adverse, beneficial or neutral influence.</p>
DS-37	Views towards the Village, such as that from Biggin Hall Lane, are considered particularly sensitive as they are noted in the Conservation Area Appraisal. Urbanising influences of new buildings on these views should be reviewed in detail and avoided where there is a negative effect.
DS-38	Developments that effect and/or damage landscape-related designations, especially the Conservation Area and its landscape setting, should be avoided.
DS-39	Developments that reduce the contribution of open space to the character of the Conservation Area must be avoided, as its loss will urbanise its character and infringe upon its rural setting.
DS-40	Developments to either side of Main Street that dilute the linear character of the settlement and interrupt the link between the Conservation Area and its countryside setting should be avoided; the setting is a fundamentally important component of the character of the Conservation Area.
DS-41	Developments that impact landscape setting or urbanisation around the listed buildings (The Old Forge, Stanleys Farmhouse, Pipwell Cottage, St. Edmunds Church and The Windmill), or public footpaths should be avoided.
DS-42	Developments that impact the character of the public footpaths that run through and around the Village should be avoided.
DS-43	Viewpoints 2 and 3: These views contribute considerably to the character of the Conservation Area and are particularly sensitive to introduction of features that diminish the prominence of, or obscure views to/from, or urbanise the setting or appearance of the historic buildings (Stanleys Farm, The Mill, The Old Forge). Negative impacts on these views should be avoided.

DS-44	Viewpoint 3: This is a view of the Village skyline and the area is a direct link between the surrounding countryside and the Conservation Area. Negative impacts on this view of the Village skyline and/or on this area's nature in directly linking the surrounding countryside to the Conservation Area should be avoided.
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## 5. Thurlaston Conservation Area

The concept of Conservation Areas was first introduced in the Civic Amenities Act 1967 in which local authorities were encouraged to determine which parts of their area could be defined as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”, recognising the architectural or historic interest not only of individual buildings, but also to groups of buildings, the relationship of one building to another, and the quality and character of the spaces between them.

The positive identification of a Conservation Area helps focus attention on its qualities and encourages a sensitive approach to any proposed development. The Local Planning Authority will exercise particular care to ensure that change, where it occurs, will preserve or enhance the character of an area.

Thurlaston is a linear village and its Conservation Area is centred on Main Street (see Figures 1-4, where the boundary is marked as a red line). The Conservation Area boundary takes in the principal historical properties to either side of Main Street, including the all of the listed buildings in the Village, Thurlaston Meadows Care Home buildings and eastern parts of the Care Home grounds.

Rugby Borough Council has published a Conservation Area Appraisal for Thurlaston and the landscape setting of the Village is fundamentally important in establishing the character of the Conservation Area. The location and context of the village is described in the Conservation Area Appraisal as follows:

*“Thurlaston is a relatively small village set in countryside and as the form is broadly linear the presence of the surrounding countryside is often apparent. Agricultural land surrounds the settlement. The countryside permeates into the village from the northern approach and from the west along Biggin Hall Lane.”*

The Conservation Area Appraisal notes that the current condition of the buildings and the land within the Conservation Area is good, but that it may be subject to development pressures. These development pressures could potentially dilute the special qualities of the Conservation Area.

The general character and form of the village is described as follows:

*“Thurlaston is a relatively small settlement of linear form with Main Street being the central north to south spine. A number of lanes branch off Main Street with some historic development to the east and west. Modern cul-de-sacs mainly consisting of open plan development. Biggin Hall Lane, a narrow road surrounded by countryside, leads to sporadic development outside the village. The narrowness of the lanes provides a sense of enclosure which contrasts with the wide space of Main Street.”*

It is notable that Thurlaston is described as “a relatively small settlement of linear form”. Biggin Hall Lane is also explicitly described as “a narrow road surrounded by countryside”. Both of these features are sensitive to change.

The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies four character areas: the 1960s and later modern entrance to the village, the historic central core, the Care Home, and the area centring on Stanleys Farm. The appraisal states that:

*“Landscaping is a dominant feature in the Conservation Area. The rural setting of the village is reflected within the village with mature trees, shrubs, hedges and grass verges. The result is a landscape-dominated character, with many views framed by a backdrop of mature trees”.*

The landscape setting of the Conservation Area is described as follows:

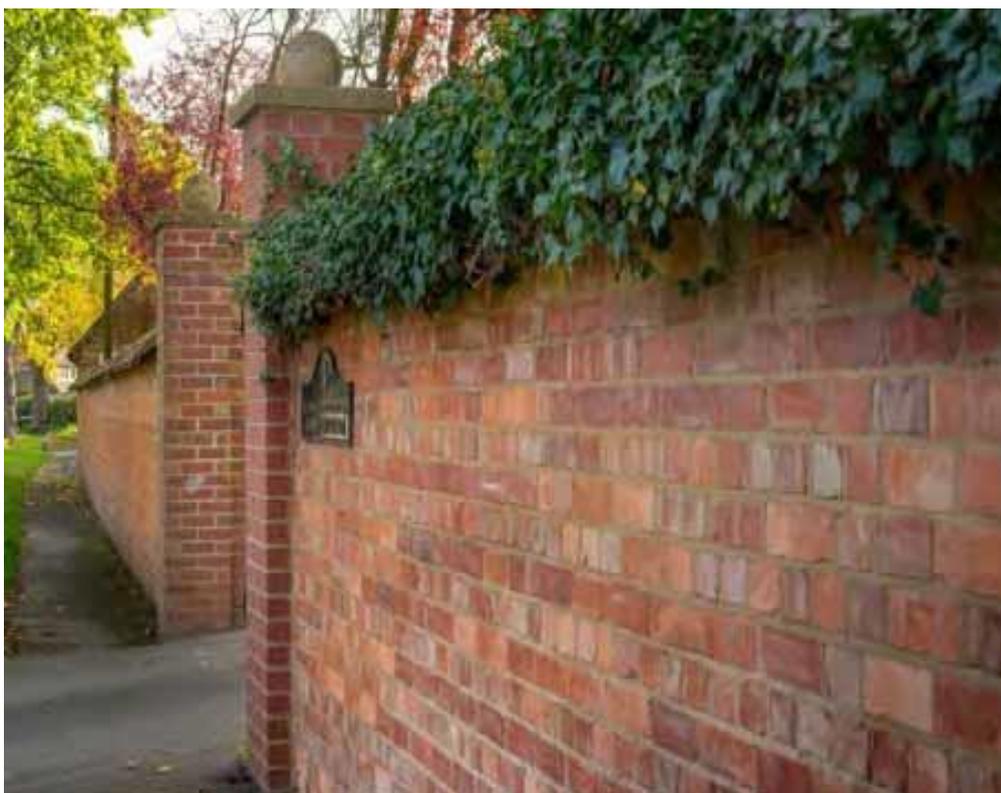
*“The village remains strongly linked to the countryside setting. From outside the village the landscaping prevents views of the majority of buildings, trees on the approach effectively screen the buildings. From Biggin Hall Lane views of buildings are limited other than the nursing home [Thurlaston Meadows Care Home]. From the southern end of the village the route of Main Street and the landscaped boundaries prevents clear views of many buildings. There is a close relationship between Main Street and the countryside on the western side since development is narrow and butts up to the highway.”*

The Appraisal also makes explicit reference to open spaces within the Conservation Area and the contribution which these spaces make to the character of the Conservation Area:

*“Open and undeveloped land forms part of the Conservation Area. Many of the buildings are served by relatively large gardens to the rear or side. The land forming Stanleys Farm is an extensive parcel of largely undeveloped space viewed from Main Street and Church Lane. The largest open space is around the nursing home [Thurlaston Meadows]. This land to the north and south of the complex provides a spacious setting, a dominant garden and agricultural feature within the Conservation Area.”*



Trees in “The Gardens”



Boundary wall of the Nursing Home facing Main Street

## 5.1 Conservation Area Design Guidelines

New developments or alterations within or adjacent to the Conservation Area are particularly sensitive to the special character of the area.

Conservation Area Consent is required to demolish most buildings and also before demolishing walls or fences of certain heights and locations. Consent is unlikely to be given for the removal of a feature which is of historical or visual significance and which contributes to the essential character of the area. Trees within the Conservation Area have similar protection to those subject to a Tree Preservation Order in that notice is usually required to lop or fell any tree within the area.

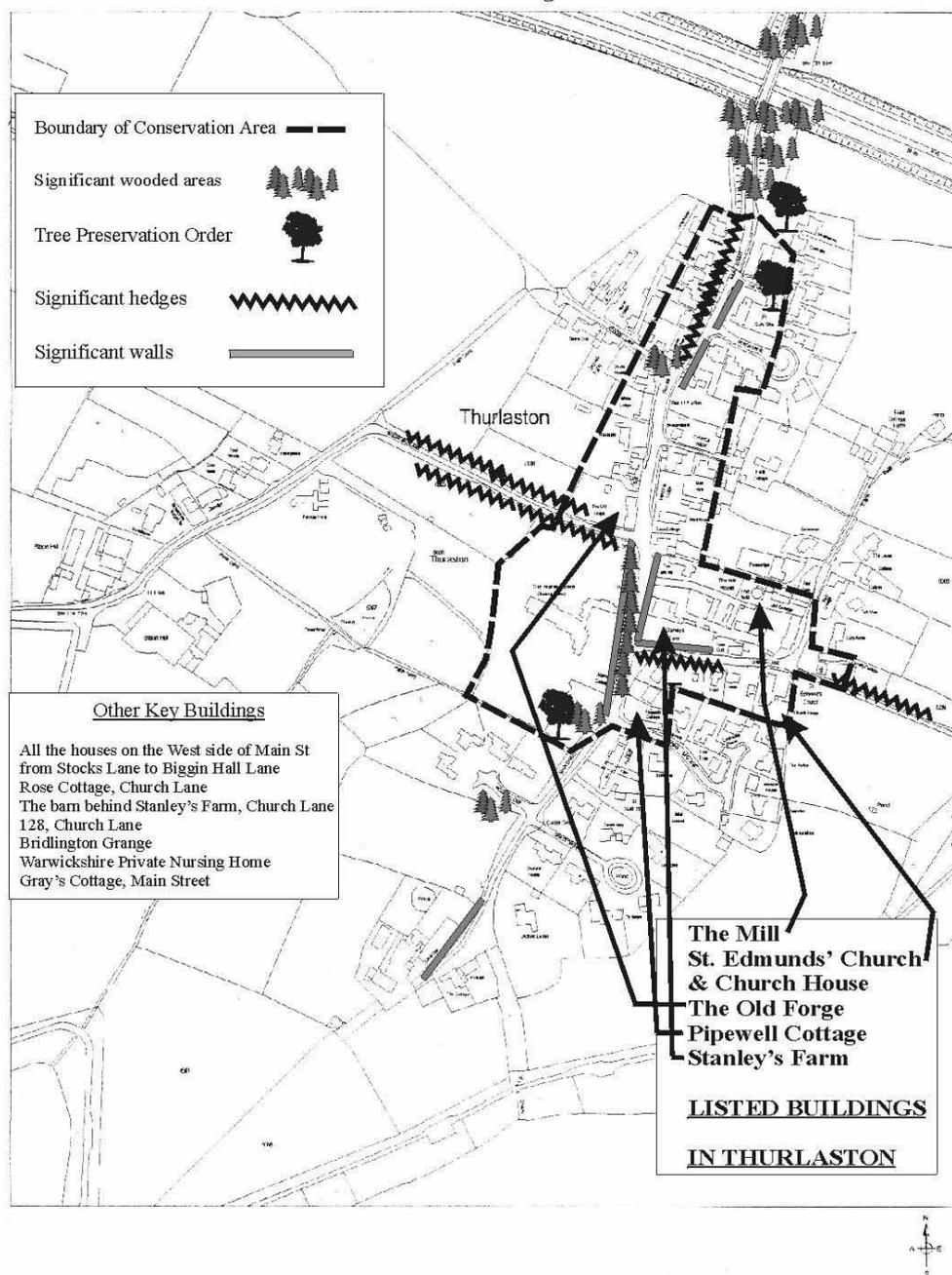
Reference	Design Guideline Description
DS-45	Development proposals should be refused where they have a direct effect on the character of the Conservation Area and its landscape setting, including impacts on surrounding open spaces that contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.
DS-46	The linear form of the village is described within the Conservation Area Appraisal, and the importance of the landscape setting is also highlighted. Biggin Hall Lane is one of the main public routes from which the rural setting of the village can be appreciated, and areas, such as this, that play an important role in maintaining these views should be conserved.
DS-47	The impact of proposed developments that introduce new roads and buildings within the Conservation Area itself must be assessed carefully. The contribution of the open space to the character of the Conservation Area would be lost as a result of introducing such urban structures and should be refused.
DS-48	Settlement form: As described in the Conservation Area Appraisal: <i>“Thurlaston is a relatively small village set in countryside and as the form is broadly linear the presence of the surrounding countryside is often apparent”</i> . Proposed developments that would extend westwards from Main Street would dilute the linear character of the settlement and inevitably make the surrounding countryside less

	apparent and should be refused therefore.
DS-49	The landscape setting of the Conservation Area is explicitly mentioned in the Conservation Area Appraisal: <i>“The village remains strongly linked to the countryside setting”</i> . Proposals that would interpose a block of modern development between the historic core of the village on Main Street and the surrounding countryside would interrupt this link and should be avoided.
DS-50	The degree of interruption of views towards historic buildings on Main Street, and also the infringement on views out from the Conservation Area to the surrounding countryside must be assessed in detail. Many of the existing views are across open meadows with an attractive rural quality, and changes to the character of such views risk permanent damage the rural setting of the Conservation Area, even where the remaining view to the countryside is retained, but is significantly narrower, or otherwise negatively impacted. Developments that interrupt or diminish the Conservation Areas connection with the surrounding countryside should be refused.
DS-51	Development applications that have a significant adverse effect on the character of the Conservation Area itself, or that infringe on the rural setting of the Conservation Area should be refused.

## 6. Landscape-Related Designations

The Local Planning Authority considers all development proposals in the context of policies contained in the Local Plan of the Borough Council, but there are other statutory controls, in addition to the Conservation Area Appraisal, which help retain the present village character.

**Boundary of Conservation Area, Significant wooded areas, hedges, walls and location of listed buildings**



### 6.1 Listed Buildings

Listed Buildings are buildings or structures of special architectural or historic interest. Listed Buildings are protected by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. There are five Grade II listed buildings within the village of Thurlaston.

These buildings are considered of special architectural or historical interest and are included in a

statutory list. The term “Listed Building” also includes other structures within the curtilage which have been there since before 1st July 1948 e.g. barns or outhouses in a garden. Apart from a few buildings of exceptional interest or importance, the vast majority (94%) are Grade II listed, i.e. buildings of special interest which warrant every effort to preserve all their important features.

### ***6.1.1 Stanleys Farmhouse, Main Street***

Stanleys Farmhouse, Grade II, Main Street, C18, with early C19 right wing and alterations and a small mid/late C19 rear range, Flemish bond brick with a tile roof. The building fronts onto the western side of Main Street, directly opposite to Thurlaston Meadows Care Home. C18 Farmhouse with early C19 right wing and alterations. Small late C19 range at rear. Flemish bond brickwork and some chequer brickwork and small plain tile roof. Central early C19 porch with tall 18 pane staircase sash window above. Sash windows with moulded frames.



### ***6.1.2 The Old Forge, Main Street***

The Old Forge, Grade II, Main Street, cottage and former forge, C18, Flemish bond brick with thatched roof. The building lies at the intersection of Main Street and Biggin Hall Lane, directly opposite to the Thurlaston Meadows Care Home grounds on BHL. C18 cottage and former forge in three units. The left hand cottage is one storey and attic. The former forge is probably the single storey central unit. The right hand unit is a C20 addition. Flemish bond brickwork and a thatched roof. Left hand gable is timber framed with brick infill.



### **6.1.3 *The Mill, Church Lane***

The Mill, Church Lane, Grade II Windmill, converted to house. Late C18; converted 1970s. The windmill is set behind the properties on Main Street.

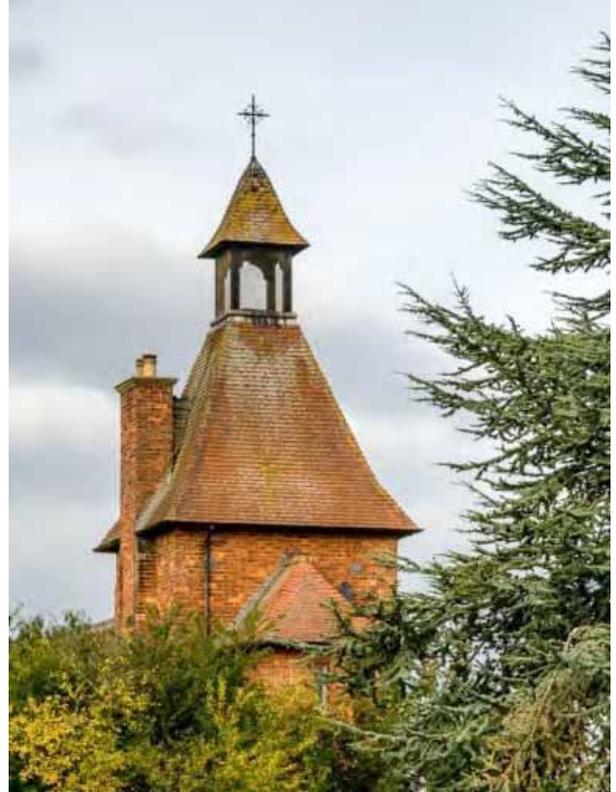
Late C18 windmill, converted to a house in the 1970's. English bond flared brickwork with C20 small plain tiled conical roof. Tapering circular plan five storeys high. Mid C20 glazed door, timber steps and open porch. Mid/late C20 one light casement windows, some with brick segmental arches.



### **6.1.4 *Saint Edmund's Church and Church House, Church Lane***

Church House, Church Lane, Grade II, 1849, built as a chapel-school, to be used as a school during the week and a church on Sunday, with schoolmaster's house attached.

Built as a chapel/school, to be used as a school during the week and a church on Sunday, with schoolteacher's house attached. Designed by William Butterworth, 1849. Flemish bond brickwork and small plain tile roof with ridge cresting. Three light east window with Gothic tracery. Limestone tracery throughout. The tower has a pyramid roof and arched wood bellcote.



### ***6.1.5 Pipewell Cottage, Pudding Bag Lane***

Pipewell Cottage, Pudding Bag Lane, Grade II, probably C15/C16 origins, with later alterations, one storey with attic. The property fronts onto Pudding Bag Lane but the side elevation and garden are visible from Main Street.

Probably C15/C16 origins with later additions. Cruck construction. Large timber framing with whitewashed brick infill. Right return wall and rear wall rendered and possibly rebuilt. Thatched roof with deep boarded eaves. C19 whitewashed brick range to the left has slate roof.



## 6.2 Public Rights of Way

Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are designated routes accessible year-round to the public. These include public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways, and byways open to all traffic (BOATs). There are a number of public rights of way in the wider landscape in and around Thurlaston, including:

- Thurlaston R185/1 leading north-eastwards from Biggin Hall Lane to connect with Stocks Lane
- Thurlaston R185a/1 leading north-westwards from Stocks Lane to end at the A45 Coventry Road
- Thurlaston R168d/1 leads northwards from Coventry Road to meet Thurlaston R168/3
- Thurlaston R337/1 forms an eastward continuation of Church Walk
- Thurlaston R175x/1 and Thurlaston R175y/1 continue north-eastwards from Church Lane through open countryside to the east of the village. The path then crosses beneath the M45 and continues to the north as Dunchurch R175.
- Thurlaston R175a is a bridleway which begins from the eastern edge of the village and travels eastwards to end at Toft Lane.
- Thurlaston R235b/2 leads eastward from Thurlaston, descends towards Draycote Water, and follows a route around part of the reservoir.
- Thurlaston R183b/1 leads westwards from Biggin Hall Lane, initially across fields, and then across the Whitefields Golf Course.
- Thurlaston R1844/1 continues westwards from the end of Biggin Hall Lane across open countryside.

Any proposed development that has an impact on a public right of way should document the effect on quality and quantity of green infrastructure networks, protection/enhancement of physical access, and how any proposed mitigations would be implemented.

The impact on the experience of footpath users must be assessed - e.g. if the surrounds take on a more urbanised character and/or new buildings are in closer proximity to the viewer and would completely change the view. Visual clutter associated with residential development, including vehicles and garden paraphernalia such as washing lines, sheds, etc., would further affect the view.

## 7. Roads

The public roadways are spaces for everyone's use, so their treatment and visual appearance is as important as considerations relating to buildings.

### 7.1 Kerbs, Verges and Enclosures

An absence of harsh kerbs to the carriageway, the predominance of grass verges, and boundary wall and hedge enclosures are important elements of the Thurlaston street scene. Existing granite-sett kerbs should be retained and could be used elsewhere along Main Street to replace existing white lines and differentiate the carriageway from adjoining footway/parking areas. Surfacing these footway/parking areas with a material of rural character such as fine bound stone would reduce the area of tarmacadam and apparent width of road.



### 7.2 Traffic Control

Residents have complained consistently over many decades about vehicles exceeding the speed limit (which is 20 mph) and inconsiderate parking. These issues have certainly been reported to the Parish Council on numerous occasions during the current term (2019-23).

These behaviours are unlikely to change unless traffic calming methods are implemented, such as speed bumps or chicanes, and areas where parking would be inconsiderate are marked with double yellow lines. Some local residents oppose implementing such measures on the basis they would spoil the rural character of the village. It should be noted that Warwickshire County Council is responsible for local public highways and its authority would be needed to apply any such changes.

### 7.3 Property Boundaries

The boundary treatment of any new development should follow the pattern established in that area of the village preferably with brick walls and hedges, or post and rail fences of a rural character.



## 7.4 Street Furniture

Street nameplates are either cast signs, generally attached to buildings or freestanding more modern signs in a steel frame. Where signs require attention, either to the nameplate itself or to the supporting structure, consideration could be given to using signs of a consistent design.

Highway signs in general are less obtrusive if supporting poles are painted a very dark green or brown. In some cases, signs may be grouped on single poles. Roadside salt bins that are only in use for a short time each year may be painted in a very dark green or brown and located as unobtrusively as possible.

There are a number of street lamps in a Victorian style which were considered appropriate for the heart of the village. They would be less appropriate for the areas of 1970's housing, where a simple modern design is more in character.



Other features in the street scene include the village stocks and its immediate setting; a bus stop of a suitably rural character; an old-style post box on Main Street near to Church Walk and the telephone kiosk, which is modern and used to house a defibrillator (an older-style, red kiosk would be better suited to the village centre context).

There is a prevalence of overhead telecommunication cables and even electricity supply cables which detract from the street scene.

## 7.5 Soft Landscaping

Trees and boundary hedges are important contributors to the village character. Rugby Borough Council ("RBC") has rules and advice for tree maintenance within the village, as stated below.

People living within the Conservation Area must give six weeks' notice to RBC before carrying out work to trees that are not protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). This can be done using a tree works application form (available from RBC offices or website) or via email or letter which must still include the information required by the form. This is called a section 211 notice. This gives the Local Planning Authority (LPA) an opportunity to consider whether a TPO should be made to protect the tree(s). The only way the LPA can stop the works is by applying a TPO.

**Is a section 211 notice required for a tree of any size?** At present, people are not required to submit a section 211 notice to the local planning authority for:

- the cutting down, topping or lopping or uprooting of a tree whose diameter does not exceed 75 millimetres; or
- the cutting down or uprooting of a tree, whose diameter does not exceed 100 millimetres, for the sole purpose of improving the growth of other trees (e.g. thinning as part of forestry operations).

In either case, the diameter of the tree is to be measured over the bark of the tree at 1.5 metres above ground level.

Applications to prune/remove trees with preservation orders must be done so on the tree works application form only. If you believe there are some substantial trees around which are located outside of the conservation area the LPA do have powers to protect them as long as they qualify under set criteria and are considered to be a public amenity. Therefore we would look at the condition of the tree, the relative public visibility, retention span (in years), threat level and any other factors e.g. Impact of trees in a group.

If trees in domestic gardens do not have a TPO on them, are located outside the conservation area or do not have a planning condition attached to them there would be no restrictions in removing/pruning the tree in question.

Currently the village has the following Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's):

TR 4.8	Trees at Beechwood, formerly Nut Coppice, on Main Street
TR 4.11	Trees at "Fernleigh" "Clydefan" Main Street and "1 The Gardens"
TR 4.298	The Mill, Thurlaston, Church Lane (Silver Birch)
	The land behind Thurlaston Care Home
	Patrickfield

New and replacement tree planting of appropriate indigenous species should be considered wherever practicable in order to maintain the landscaped character of the village in future years.

Simple grass verges with trees help retain the rural character.

There are opportunities for reinforcing existing hedge lines and for new boundary hedges which are more characteristic than open frontages. Traditional mixed hedges are more appropriate than leylandii or laurel.

## **8. The Future**

Thurlaston Parish must be prepared for fundamental changes to its surroundings in the coming decade, mainly due to aspects of RBC's Local Plan that will bring large warehouses into the Parish and see the building of thousands of new houses to the north of Coventry Road. There are also proposed changes within and close to the heart of the Village, and the passage of time will require the maintenance of Thurlaston's community assets.

### **8.1 Community Buildings (Village Hall & St Edmund's Church)**

Thurlaston Village Hall maintenance has been a constant requirement since it was purchased as two army huts in 1946 with money subscribed by the people of Thurlaston. It is sited on land given by Miss Stanley, who lived at the Mill House and was a Sunday-School teacher and organist at the Church, where there is a memorial plaque to her. It has served the Village well, but it is small, has no parking area and is on a site with no significant scope for expansion. The narrowness of Church Lane has only a few spaces for parking and would make a building project very difficult. For these reasons the current site is unlikely to be suitable for building a larger, replacement building.

The only other communal building in the Village is St Edmund's Church. The congregation has dwindled in recent years and whilst many residents would like to retain the Church, very few attend its services regularly. There are concerns about the future costs for maintaining the roof and ceiling, which may require significant repair in the short-medium term.

Utilising the Church building as both community hall and church has been raised, but this would require agreement from the Church and almost certainly considerable expertise and investment. The only other obvious option for replacing the current village hall would be to find a new site and erect a new building, which would also incur considerable expertise and costs.

### **8.2 Impact of the Local Plan & SW Rugby SPD**

Rugby Borough Council adopted its Local Plan in 2019. This includes plans for SW Rugby that will fill in the green fields bounded by Rugby, Cawston, Dunchurch and Thurlaston with housing and, immediately to the north of Coventry Road, warehouses. The local population increase is estimated at an extra 5,000 people, which will have add pressure to services and infrastructure.

Detailed Applications to construct large warehouses and a power station within the Parish boundary were passed in 2021. RBC's Planning Committee granted outline approval to Tritax Symmetry in 2020 for the whole of the warehouses site under application R16/2569 and has waived a condition that reduced the original heights by 3 metres. The proximity of the industrial units raises the prospect of increased noise, light and traffic pollution.

The junction of Main Street & Coventry Road is the only entrance and exit from the Village. With the prospect of increased traffic volume there are concerns that the flow of exit traffic will be slowed and give rise to queuing. The result may be that changes to the junction will be needed, such as traffic lights and the impact will be exacerbated by warehouse and housing site works and the planned changes to the road layout at the M45/A45 roundabout, where the plan is for the Coventry Road to end at a T-junction to a new road that provides the new warehouses with direct access to the roundabout.

The degree of disruption will depend on how successfully RBC manages the Local Plan implementation, and a key aspect to this will be ensuring that pre-requisites, such as building the new relief roads, are completed on time. TPC has highlighted to RBC the absence of a program manager to oversee Local Plan developments in SW Rugby. As these developments fill in the gaps between Rugby and the Coventry Road, a lack of alignment of neighbouring developments will cause additional disruption.

The current Thurlaston Parish Council, and vast majority of Parish residents, want to maintain the

Village's present design and character, and to conserve Thurlaston as distinct village settlement. The Local Plan is already adopted and will extend Rugby's conurbation close to Thurlaston's Village boundary. The challenge for the coming decade will be to counter further development creep across the remaining rural strip, which would result in Thurlaston becoming a "suburb" of Rugby.

### **8.3 Climate Change**

Climate Change is now accepted as fact by the most nations and the UK Government, in common with many others around the Globe, has started to take measures to reduce exacerbation caused by human activities.

In 2019, the UK Parliament set a commitment in law to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. RBC declared a "Climate Emergency" in 2019 and states that it "wants to do everything it can to help reduce carbon emissions and help to achieve this national target" and that "Achieving net zero will involve many changes to the way we currently do things – such as the way we heat our homes, the type of transport we use, how we build our homes and buildings, how we value nature and the food that we eat".

At present, the standards applied to new developments continue to allow for certain non-sustainable materials and practices to continue. Many minimum standards are set nationally and the net outcome is often disappointing – for example, RBC approved the construction of a brand new, gas-powered energy centre on the Tritax warehouses site.

Thurlaston Parish Council's policy has been to support developments that apply high standards and take a strategic approach to sustainability, and to counter non-sustainable proposals.

## 9. Summary

Thurlaston is a small, attractive, Warwickshire village with a particular character due, in part, to its location on the edge of Dunsmore Heath, overlooking Draycote Water.

It is also unusual in having only one vehicular entrance and exit, which contributes to its feel as a “place apart” with a strong community spirit, despite its lack of a village shop, a public house or sports field.

In a small village such as Thurlaston, the countryside is always present and the juxtaposition of open spaces and buildings and the ease of access to the countryside are important features.

It is a village, not a suburb, and as such has developed over a long period of time as is typified particularly by the variety of older properties in the original heart of the village.

This diversity of properties is a particular characteristic, it being difficult to find two properties exactly the same in design and plot layout even amongst those built since the 1970's.

Apart from one or two large, older, properties which are linked together, most of the properties are detached in relatively large plots, although there are a few small terraces of older cottages usually with long rear gardens.

The generally large plots allow the landscaped spaces between and around properties to assume greater importance than in most suburbs or modern estates.

Trees, in gardens and on grass verges, together with boundary walls and hedges are important contributions to the village character.

The widths and layout of the roads and footpaths mainly along the lines of ancient tracks, are also of a particular character difficult to recreate using modern standards.

Development, apart from appropriate barn conversions or house extensions would be strongly resisted on any sites outside the Village Boundary.

Within the Boundary, there are a few opportunities for well-designed properties which preserve or enhance the particular character of the village.

## **10. Acknowledgements**

Thurlaston Parish Council has produced this VDS based on the valuable work put into previous versions and would like to thank the many people who contributed to the issues of 2003 and 2016.

We also acknowledge the influence of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal prepared for Thurlaston Parish Council by the Landscape Partnership in February 2021, which gave a detailed appraisal of areas close to the village centre and surrounding landscape and included the context of key rules and guidance for assessing potential impacts of new planning developments on visual amenity.

If you have any comments or feedback relating to this 2021 edition of the VDS, please contact the Thurlaston Parish Clerk at [parish.clerk@thurlaston.org.uk](mailto:parish.clerk@thurlaston.org.uk)

## 11. Appendix 1: Commissioning a Landscape and Visual Assessment

Any landscape and visual assessment (“LVA”) in relation to a specific development should be commissioned with a Chartered Landscape Architect who is a member of the Landscape Institute.

### The assessment should include:

- Who made the assessment and when, including the date of the site visit.
- The prevailing aspect and conditions during the site visit – e.g. on a reasonably clear day, from adjacent land, local rights of way, and public locations (e.g. areas with recreational access); note of time of year, deciduous tree leaf condition, and exertion of presence of ephemeral vegetation, such as grasses and herbaceous plants).
- Details of the findings and any adverse effects on the character of the surrounding landscape and its visual amenity, as arising from the development, with supporting figures to provide baseline data relating to the site’s landscape and visual context, together with photographs and visualisations.
- Desktop study to identify an indicative zone of visual influence, any local statutory and non-statutory landscape-related designations, local public rights of way, and existing landscape character assessments covering the site and its vicinity.
- Field study to:
  - verify local landscape characteristics;
  - provide commentary on the condition, sensitivity and capacity of the local landscape character to accommodate change of the type and scale proposed;
  - appraise the contribution of any landscape features within the site that might be lost or altered;
  - identify, and provide commentary on, the sensitivity of key visual receptors;
  - and compare the existing views observed by visual receptors at representative viewpoints, with those likely to be experienced as a result of the development.
- Consideration of the ability of the proposed landscape strategy to offset or negate any landscape and visual effects.
- Identification of any broad mitigation measures that may be required if the proposed development is to be considered acceptable.
- Identification of any residual landscape and visual effects.

### Assumptions and Limitations

An LVA should list the assumptions made in respect of the assessment:

- The development summary upon which the assessment is based.
- The appraisal’s baseline timing (e.g. year is 2021).
- That existing vegetation will continue to grow at rates typical of the species, and its location and maturity.
- Any proposed tree, shrub and hedge planting assumed growth rates (e.g. an assumption that no growth will take place in the first year, as the plants adjust to their new growing environments, and thereafter trees/shrubs will grow at a rate of approximately 200 to 300mm/year, and hedges at approximately 200mm/year (average expected growth rates for typical species growing on the identified soil type, drainage and fertility rate that are likely to be present at the site).
- The receptor for a view from a public right of way, within public open space, or within a residential property is represented as an adult standing with an eye height of 1.6m.

Visual effects are assessed on the basis of good visibility. Visual effects can be expected to vary, e.g. poor visibility at times of low cloud, rainfall and dusk. At these times, a reduction in visual clarity, colour and contrast would be experienced. Reduced visibility would limit the extent of view possible particularly in mid to long distance views. Consequently, the assessment of effects is based on the worst-case scenario, where the proposed development would be most visible.

Extent of use of public rights of way is based on known information (e.g. if the right of way forms part of a promoted route at a local or national level), signage, and circumstantial evidence at the time of the survey such as recent disturbance of grass and crops, a clearly defined path, extent of wear, and the number of people/horses using the right of way at the time of the survey. The extent of use of a road is based on the number of vehicles observed using the road at the time of the survey and as could reasonably be expected for the class of road.

Whether or not any private property was accessed in undertaking the assessment, other than the development site itself. It is generally considered impracticable to seek approval for access to residential properties or other buildings to assess the effect on views from each window in a property or adjoining land, so assessment is typically on the nearest publicly accessible location, which will usually be a road or public right of way, or on views within the site looking outwards. Professional judgement is used to extrapolate what the likely effect on views would be from windows, making allowances for changes in height, e.g. from a first-floor window.

## 12. Appendix 2: Prepare Your Own Assessment

The extension, alteration or “modernisation” of existing properties can have a significant impact on the village character.

If you are considering the alteration of an existing property in any way, it may help to look at it and adjoining properties from some distance, noting down any characteristics and distinctive features.

- CONSIDER the age of the property and the style and detailing of that time.
- STUDY the details of materials, windows, doors, eaves etc.
- CONSIDER if the proposed changes prejudice the distinctive characteristics of the property.
- REMEMBER that something relatively simple, such as the installation of a new front door or double glazing with UPVC frames can have a major effect on appearance and character.
- REMEMBER that Thurlaston is a small village in the countryside, not a suburb of the town and this should be reflected in any building, boundary treatments and landscaping.
- ASK for advice from the Conservation Office at Rugby Borough Council.
- CONSIDER restoring your property to its original design.