

**GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN PART 1 – THE STRATEGY  
Regulation 18 Consultation**

**THORPE END SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY**

**Supplemental Statement in Support of  
Representation to Q46**

**On behalf of Robert and Joy Gower**

**March 2020**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This representation has been submitted to the Greater Norwich Local Plan Draft Strategy to support the principle of the draft Thorpe End Settlement Boundary and an adjustment to the boundary to include land adjacent to 50 Thorpe End. A representation was previously submitted to the Greater Norwich Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation in December 2018 (reference GNLP3006).

It is understood that the reappraisal of Settlement Boundaries is yet to be undertaken in time for consultation at Regulation 19 stage however it is noted on the interactive map that a draft Settlement Boundary is identified for Thorpe End (Figure 0 below). The principle of a Settlement Boundary for Thorpe End is supported. However, the Settlement Boundary should be adjusted to reflect the true physical boundary now apparent on the ground, which has come about due to changes in land use over the last 10 years, and would include the plot of land adjacent to 50 Thorpe End.

For this reason, the Growth Triangle Area Action Plan Policy GT2 Landscape Buffer designation of this strip of land is out of date and should be removed. Please refer to Section 5.2 for full details.

The adjustment of the Settlement Boundary and removal of the GT2 designation would create the potential for a housing windfall plot for one dwelling under Greater Norwich Local Plan Policy 7.4, when adopted, which supports windfall development within Settlement Boundaries. The acceptability of housing windfall development on the site would be considered at the appropriate time via the submission of a planning application, and determined under Policy 7.5, the saved Broadland Development Management Policies 2015, the Growth Triangle Area Action Plan 2016 and the Great Plumstead, Little Plumstead and Thorpe End Garden Village Neighbourhood

Plan 2015. However, for information purposes, this Statement includes an appraisal of these policies, which is extracted in part from a previous submission dated March 2019.

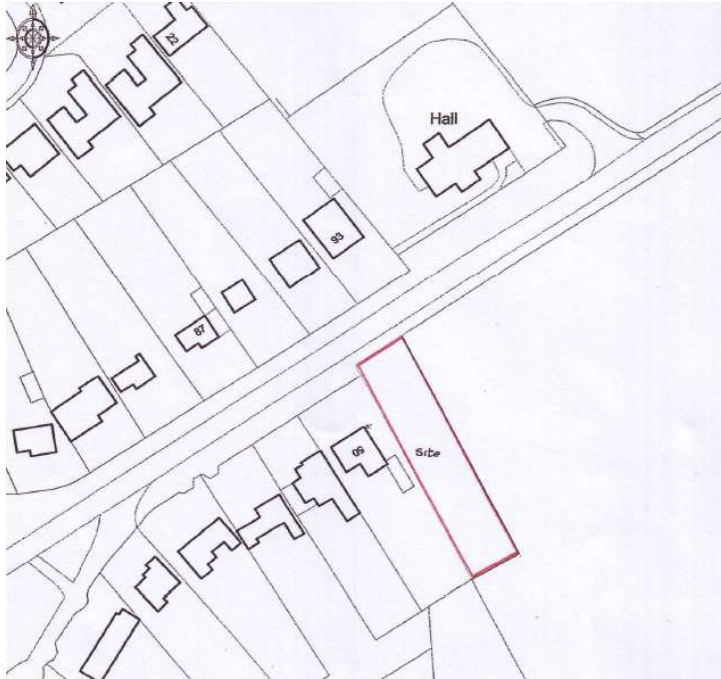


Figure 0: Extract from Greater Norwich Local Plan Interactive Map

## 1.2 Site Location and Description

The site is a fenced vacant parcel of land adjacent to 50 Plumstead Road to the east of Thorpe End (see site location in Figure 1).

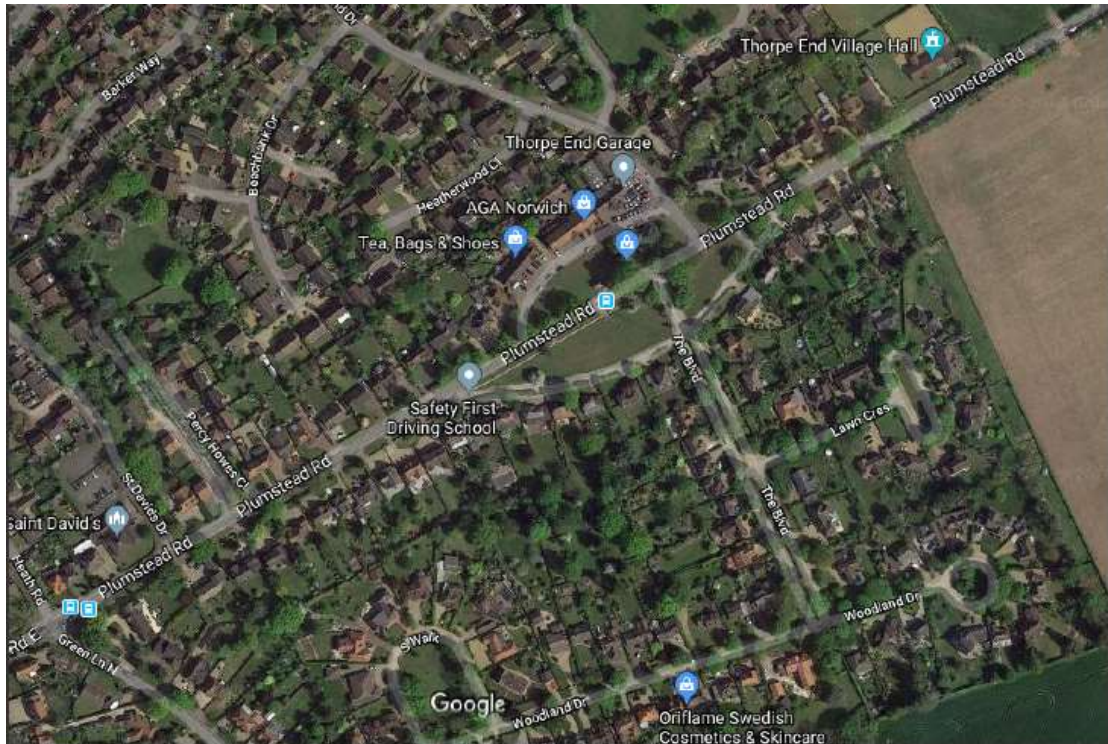
The plot is approximately 14 metres wide and 62 metres deep with hedgerow on the frontage and trees and shrubs on the west boundary with 50 Plumstead Road. There is a post and rail fence on the east boundary, in line with the boundaries of the rear gardens of Lawn Crescent and Woodland Drive.



**Figure 1:** Site location

### **1.3 Site Surroundings**

In 2008, the owner of the adjacent field sold an approximately 14 metre wide strip of land to all the adjacent homeowners. As can be seen from the aerial photographs (Figures 2, 3 and 4), most of the properties have subsequently used this land as residential curtilage and a new boundary has become established and matured. Being over 10 years, the use of this land as residential curtilage is now an established use.



**Figure 2:** Aerial view of south east boundary of Thorpe End



**Figure 3:** Aerial view of south east boundary of Thorpe End viewed from the east



**Figure 4:** Plot of land adjacent to 50 Thorpe End and adjacent residential curtilages extending beyond current settlement boundary

50 Plumstead Road was sold in 2009 so is in a different ownership to the 14 metre strip of land which was not required by the purchasers of the house. The land has remained fenced and is no longer in agricultural use.

The development along Plumstead Road is predominately large two storey detached dwellings of various designs within regular sized linear plots.

50 Plumstead Road immediately to the west and 89 Plumstead Road opposite are two storey houses. To the north and north east of the site are two bungalows (91 and 93 Plumstead Road) and a single storey village hall and its grounds. As can be seen from the aerial photos (Figures 2 and 3), the building line on the north side of Plumstead Road extends 25 metres further east than the building line on the south side of Plumstead Road.

The plot is adjacent and opposite to, but outside of, the Thorpe End Garden Village Conservation Area (see Figure 5).





**Figure 5:** Thorpe End Garden Village Conservation Area

The land to the east of the site is a 6 hectare arable triangular field bounded by Thorpe End to the south west, a railway line to the east and Plumstead Road to the north west, which has a tall, thick hedge along its entire length. The hedge screens views of the site and the existing village on the south side of Plumstead Road when approaching the village from the east.

The A1270 has been constructed 500 metres to the north east and south east of Thorpe End.



**Figure 6:** View of hedge screening site from Plumstead Road

#### **1.4 Sustainable Access to Services**

In Thorpe End there is a post office shop, hair dressers and bus stop 150 metres to the west, the village hall 30 metres to the east and several areas of amenity open space and playground within 400 metres.

The regular bus service runs every half hour Monday to Saturday and every hour on Sundays to Hoveton, Rackheath, Great and Little Plumstead, Norwich Railway Station and Norwich City Centre. This provides access to employment, services, Dussindale Primary School, Rackheath Primary School and Little Plumstead Primary School.

Thorpe St Andrew School and Sixth Form is 1.5 miles (7 minutes cycling) and the Open Academy is 2.4 miles (13 minutes cycling). Norwich Train Station is 3.5 miles (18 minutes cycling) and Norwich City Centre just 4.1 miles (23 minutes cycling) (to City Hall). Therefore there is very good accessibility to

employment, education, shops and services by public transport, walking and cycling.

Appendix 5 of the Greater Norwich Local Plan Draft Strategy includes Thorpe End within the Great and Little Plumstead Village Cluster.

### **1.5 Planning History**

Planning application 20091221 for a house and garage on the plot was refused on 2 December 2009 and dismissed at appeal (reference APP/K2610/A/10/2127169) on 28 September 2010 as being contrary to the policy at the time (the Broadland District Local Plan Replacement 2006) which resisted development outside of the Settlement Boundary.

A subsequent pre-application enquiry for a single dwelling was submitted to Broadland District Council (6 July 2017) who responded by letter dated (reference ENQ20170310, 19 July 2017) (Appendix 1).

The pre-application advice was as follows:

- In terms of the economic and social criteria, one new dwelling would make a positive contribution to the housing supply shortfall and provide some short-term economic benefits through its construction.
- In relation to the social role of sustainable development, the site lies close to the settlement limit of Thorpe End in close proximity to a reasonable level of services and facilities in Great Plumstead and Little Plumstead.
- In relation to the environmental role of sustainable development, careful attention would need to be paid to the existing and proposed landscaping, particularly in relation to the eastern boundary.

- Recommended seeking pre-application advice from NCC Highways on the acceptability of the access.
- Further investigation may be required in respect of archaeology.
- Design and layout should respect and reflect the local character and heritage.
- Any application should take into account the relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

This Statement seeks to consider how windfall development for a single dwelling may be considered acceptable in principle under Greater Norwich Local Plan Policy 7.4, with reference to the pre-application advice given by BDC in 2017, and Development Plan policies that will be saved following the adoption of the Greater Norwich Local Plan.

## **2.0 DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **2.1 Broadland District Council Development Management DPD 2015**

The Development Management DPD Policies Map indicates the site immediately abuts the Thorpe End Conservation Area and lies within the Growth Triangle Area Action Plan (Figure 7).

 Conservation Areas



Figure 7: Extract from Development Management DPD Policies Map 2015

## 2.2 Growth Triangle Area Action Plan (July 2016)

The Proposed Allocations map (Figure 8) shows the site immediately abuts the existing settlement of Thorpe End and is located on the edge of the Policy GT2 Landscape Buffer designation.



Figure 8: Extract from Growth Triangle Area Action Plan (July 2016)

**Policy GT2 - Landscape Buffer** is described as “An area which will form the landscape setting to the future built edge of Norwich”. In relation to Thorpe End, the policy states “An area surrounding Thorpe End which would form an appropriate landscape setting to the garden village is identified on the policies map. Development will not be permitted that would significantly intrude on the sense of separation between Thorpe End and new development.”

This policy is addressed in full at Section 5.2, which demonstrates that the scale and location of the amended Settlement Boundary or windfall development would not have an adverse effect on the purpose and function of the Landscape Buffer.

### **2.3 Great Plumstead, Little Plumstead and Thorpe End Garden Village Neighbourhood Plan (July 2015)**

The Neighbourhood Plan’s Vision is to promote development that is “appropriate, thoughtful and well designed”.

**Policy 1** states “...it is important that coalescence is avoided between Thorpe End Garden Village and development relating to the surrounding settlements, ensuring that Thorpe End Garden Village retains the appearance and character of a separate “garden village”.”

**Policy 2** requires that new development should deliver a high quality of design. The supporting text states there is a desire to keep the “rural” feel, and for development to be in keeping with the existing built form, preserve the open and green character of the village and protect the Conservation Area. It recognises how self-build was one of the fundamental principles used in the creation of Thorpe End Garden Village and as part of the community feedback local residents expressed both keenness to self-build and concern in finding local land to facilitate this.

Policies related to landscape, heritage and design are addressed at Section 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4, demonstrating how the proposal accords with the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **3.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF) 2019**

BDC’s pre-application letter (17 July 2017) referred to paragraphs 7-8, 14 and 49 of the NPPF (March 2012) which were relevant at the time the advice was given. The NPPF has subsequently been revised in July 2018 and again in February 2019. The corresponding paragraphs of the NPPF 2019 are set out below with an explanation of how they have been revised since BDC’s pre-application advice letter.

Paragraphs 7-8 (NPPF 2012) have been revised to paragraphs 8-9 (NPPF 2019), which also describes the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainable development. The environmental objective now refers to making effective use of land. It is clarified that the objectives are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged and that

decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions.

The reference to “making effective use of land” has been added to the description of the environmental objective of sustainable development and has also been added as a new chapter in the NPPF 2019. Paragraph 117 states “*Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment...*” and paragraph 118 states: “*Planning policies and decisions should: d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land...*”.

Due to changes of use of the surrounding land, the site is no longer in agricultural use and could not efficiently be returned to agricultural use so the land is derelict and under-utilised.

The NPPF 2019 paragraph 189 states: “*In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.*” Paragraph 192 states: “*In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*” Paragraph 200 states “*Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.*”

A Heritage Appraisal is undertaken at Section 4.0 with reference to the Thorpe End Garden Village Conservation Area Character Statement (March 2010) and demonstrates how there would be no adverse impact on the



Conservation Area and that there is an opportunity to make a positive contribution to its setting.

NPPF Paragraph 59 states: *“To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed”*. Paragraph 61 refers to the requirement to cater for the demand for people wishing to commission or built their own homes. Paragraph 68 recognises the important contribution of small sized sites in meeting the housing requirement of an area so encourages local authorities to support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions.

#### **4.0 HERITAGE APRAISAL**

NPPF Paragraph 11 requires an assessment of whether the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed. The only relevant policy referred to in the footnote are those relating to impact on designated heritage assets.

Therefore, this Section describes the significance of the Conservation Area, including any contribution made by its setting, and assesses any likely impact from the proposed development, in accordance with NPPF Paragraph 189.

The following extracts are taken from the Thorpe End Garden Village Conservation Area Character Statement (Broadland District Council, March 2010).

*“The development of the Thorpe End Garden Village has its roots in the “garden city” tradition of the early 1900s. Thorpe End was created by Percy Howes & Co from the 1930s with the aim of creating a new village in commuting distance of the city in rural surroundings, and the village is still separated from the city by woodland. They provided the infrastructure, including the shops, post office and bus shelter, wide grass verges, tree lined*

*roads and a green open space at its heart and at selected places within the development.”*

The proposal is adjacent to but outside of the Conservation Area so none of the features described above would be affected.

*“House designs were not stipulated but the use of "mellow bricks" and thatched roofs were encouraged to lend the development an "old-world character". The houses were to be built a density of no more than three to the acre.”*

*“The area to the north of Thorpe End was built later due to interruption by the war and is of a different character, so was not included in the Conservation Area boundary.”*

*“The boundaries of the Conservation Area are drawn tightly around the areas identified as of special interest”.* The Character Appraisal describes the form and character of the following distinct areas: the Village Green (both sides of Plumstead Road), Plumstead Road (excluding the Central Green), Green Lane North, and the roads with the 1930s development south of Plumstead Road.

The Plumstead Road appraisal is relevant to the current site:

*"Houses on both sides, varying greatly in style and size, appear mostly to date from the original development. Where windows have been replaced they are generally in sympathy with the house. The majority have gabled roofs, which bind the houses together visually. In contrast, those with hipped roofs, appear to stand somewhat apart from their neighbours. Several houses have herringbone brickwork. One house has a discordant extension gable. But the front hedges (mostly clipped and tall), the deep setting back of the houses, the wide grass verges and the roadside trees - all requirements of Percy Howes & Co - combine to allow the natural elements to dominate the scene. The houses, in contrast, are glimpsed rather than seen full-face. The end*

*result is that would otherwise be very ordinary "ribbon development" becomes an essential part of the garden village".*

This confirms that it is the form of the existing development on Plumstead Road, being low density, with a setback building line and hedgerows, trees and grass verges, which creates the character of the Conservation Area rather than the design of the individual houses themselves. The proposed new dwelling would continue the existing linear form of development along Plumstead Road of large houses on regular sized plots, set back from Plumstead Road, retaining the verge and only requiring a small break in the hedge for the access, consistent with the other houses on Plumstead Road. The proposal would therefore be in keeping with the established density and grain of development and would not detract from the character of the Conservation Area.

*"The modern village hall now stands on the north side, just past the last house. Its design is undistinguished, but as an important community building immediately adjoining the original development and enjoying the same wide grass verge in front, its inclusion in the proposed Conservation Area is desirable."*

The village hall has already changed the character of the setting of the Conservation Area by extending development approximately 65 metres beyond the former east limit of the village. The two bungalows opposite are also modern in appearance.

The following characteristics are also described in the Character Statement:

- Landscape: Mainly oaks along Plumstead Road; tall hedges in front of houses.
- Materials: Bricks tend to be multi-red in colour and rustic in texture; tiles tend to be multi-red or dark grey. Other materials tend to include

thatch, mock half-timber and pattered brickwork (basketweave and herringbone).

The significance of the landscape setting of the Conservation Area is described: *“The immediate surroundings of the Garden Village consist of open fields and scattered woodland which are importing in reinforcing the sense of separation from other nearby settlements”*.

As described below, the character of the site and the eastern edge of the village has already been changed since the Conservation Area Character Statement in 2010 with the use of land as residential curtilages and the construction of the NDR. Given the existing change in character of the site, and the minor scale of the proposal, it would not impact on the importance of the setting of the Conservation Area in reinforcing the sense of separation from other nearby settlements. Furthermore, the development of this plot of land provides an opportunity to regularise and create a new strong eastern boundary to the village, in accordance with NPPF Paragraphs 192 and 200.

An indicative design of a four bedroom dwelling is provided in Appendix 2, which shows that it is feasible to design a dwelling that reflects the character and appearance of other dwellings in the area using traditional materials.

## **5.0 PLANNING APPRAISAL**

### **5.1 Location**

The pre-application advice previously received from BDC (July 2017, Appendix 1) stated: *“In relation to the social role of sustainable development, the site lies close to the settlement limit of Thorpe End in close proximity to a reasonable level of services and facilities in Great Plumstead and Little Plumstead”*.

As described at Section 1.4, the site also has very good accessibility to employment, education, shops and services by public transport and cycling.

Therefore, windfall development would be in accordance with the aims of DM Policy GC1, which aims to locate development sustainably.

## **5.2 Landscape**

As explained in Sections 1.2 and 1.3, and can be seen from the photographs in Figure 2, 3 and 4 and Appendix 3, the eastern boundary of Thorpe End has already extended beyond the former village limits into the area designated as Landscape Buffer under GATAAP Policy GT2.

It is proposed that the existing Landscape Buffer designation is removed from this strip of land to reflect the true physical boundary as now apparent on the ground.

The intention of Policy GT2 is to prevent coalescence between the Norwich Urban Fringe and new development. For Thorpe End, the policy states that development will not be permitted that would significantly intrude on the sense of separation between Thorpe End and new development. The 14 metre strip of land directly abutting Thorpe End is minimal in relation to the full extent of the Landscape Buffer designation so the minor adjustment to this boundary would not have an adverse impact on the function and purpose of the designation.

The character of this edge of the Landscape Buffer designation has already been altered by the long term use of much of the land as residential curtilages. The designation of this land is therefore out of date due to changing circumstances. The plot of land adjacent to 50 Plumstead Road provides an opportunity to regularise and create a new strong eastern boundary to the village.

It can be seen from the aerial photographs, the boundary adjustment would not intrude into the countryside as the village boundary on the north side of Plumstead Road would still lie approximately 12 metres east of the proposed

new boundary to the last residential property, and a further approximately 65 metres to the village hall boundary.

Furthermore, the landscape setting and character of Thorpe End has been altered due to the recent construction of the NDR.

There is a substantial frontage hedge along Plumstead Road, which would only require the removal of a small section to enable access, which is in character with other accesses along Plumstead Road, and will continue to provide significant screening of the plot and the village edge when arriving from the east. Although not visible from Plumstead Road, a new landscape boundary using native species could be planted on the eastern and southern boundaries.

In this context, the regularisation and adjustment of the village boundary and GT2 Landscape Buffer is only minor and accords with the policy aim to protect and even improve the landscape setting of Thorpe End.

The adjustment to the Settlement Boundary and potential windfall development would therefore be in accordance with the aims of DM Policy EN2, GTAAP Policy GT2 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy 1.

### **5.3 Heritage**

Section 4.0 describes the significance of the Thorpe End Garden Village Conservation Area and the contribution made by its setting. It concludes that the adjustment to the Settlement Boundary and potential windfall development would not impact on the Conservation Area or the importance of its setting and even provides an opportunity to regularise and create a new strong eastern boundary to the village, in accordance with NPPF Paragraphs 189, 192 and 200, DM Policy EN2 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy 2.

## **5.4 Design**

Appendix 2 shows that it is feasible to design a dwelling which reflects the character and appearance of other dwellings in the area using traditional materials.

There is sufficient separation from 50 Plumstead Road to safeguard residential amenity.

There is sufficient space available on the plot for parking and for turning to enable exit in forward gear and to accommodate the necessary visibility splays.

Further detail is provided in the extract of the Design and Access Statement submitted in support of planning application 20091221 (Appendix 2). The Inspector did not raise any concerns about the design or impact on residential amenity of the proposed dwelling in appeal decision APP/K2610/A/10/2127169.

The proposal would therefore be in accordance with DM Policies GC4, TS3, TS4 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy 2.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

The regularisation of the current longstanding physical boundaries of Thorpe End via an adjustment to the Settlement Boundary would provide benefits by creating a windfall plot for a single dwelling on a small site.

The proposal would be assessed at the appropriate time through the submission of the planning application under Policy 7.4 of the Greater Norwich Local Plan, when adopted. However, this Statement has demonstrated how windfall development on the site would help to achieve the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes (NPPF Paragraph 59) and is a benefit particularly in regard to the important

contribution of small sites (NPPF Paragraph 68) and those wishing to build or commission their own homes (NPPF Paragraph 61 and GNLP Draft Strategy Policy 5).

Proportionate growth of this scale is also beneficial to maintaining the vitality of small communities and services.

Due to changes of use of the surrounding land, the site is no longer in agricultural use and could not efficiently be returned to agricultural use so the land is derelict and under-utilised. Its development would be a benefit in accordance with NPPF paragraphs 8-9 and 117-118 to make the most efficient use of land.

The opportunity to regularise and create a new strong eastern boundary to the village is also a benefit, in accordance with NPPF Paragraphs 192 and 200.

In conclusion, there are numerous benefits to the proposed adjustment to the Settlement Boundary and removal of the GTAAP Policy GT2 designated from this 14m strip of land at Thorpe End, and it has been demonstrated that there are no significant adverse impacts that would outweigh these benefits.