

17. Thornton-le-Dale

17.1 Location, Landscape Context and Setting

Thornton-le-Dale is located close to the southern boundary of the National Park, on the northern edge of the Vale of Pickering. It lies at the foot of a wooded slope, within the Limestone Hills Landscape Character Type (LCT 5). Its setting is therefore influenced by both the Limestone Hills and the Vale of Pickering.

Thornton Beck is aligned through a narrow, wooded, deeply incised valley on the northern edge of the settlement, close to a former mill, where it cuts through steeply rising ground. This beck, and its tributary water courses, has been rechannelled through the village and feature designed cascades and bridge crossings. The busy A170 is aligned through the village. The remnant 'picturesque' designed landscape of Thornton Hall provides an important part of the setting to the settlement with woodland, parkland and the former walled garden (now used as a car park) contributing to the rich heritage and bosky character of Thornton-le-Dale.

17.2 Settlement form and character

The older parts of Thornton-le-Dale are closely associated with the becks which weave through the historic core of the village, and the Pickering to Scarborough Road (now the A170). The original manorial layouts may also have influenced its development, and some of the original burgage plots can still be traced. The historic core of the village comprises many former agricultural buildings; cruck-framed cottages dating from 17th and 18th Centuries; a row of Almshouses; and occasional larger houses - including Thornton Hall - set in generous gardens and wooded grounds. The becks were landscaped and channelled in a picturesque style in the 18th Century and are an important element of the village's character.

Older buildings are generally located on lower ground and appear to nestle at the foot of rising slopes. The village has been substantially extended, with late 20th century and early 21st century housing principally located in the south-west and on rising ground at the eastern end of the village. A new housing development has also been constructed on the eastern periphery of the village. The former railway line skirts the edge of the village to the south.

17.3 Key views, approaches and gateways

There are notable views across the rooftops of the village from the old quarry to the north-east. From here it can be seen in the context of the Vale of Pickering to the south.

Key views out from the settlement are to the wooded ridge which arcs around the northern part of the village. The ridge is prominent in views along north-south aligned streets and lanes within the village. The winding Thornton Beck forms a focus in short range views within the historic core.

Key approaches to the village are from the A170 and from minor unclassified roads north and south. The village is largely hidden by the rolling landform when approaching from the west on the A170 comprising Roxby Hill manorial complex and associated ridge and furrow earthworks (a Scheduled Monument). The eastern edges of the village are more visible, principally due to the

presence of more recent housing development on its fringes which is generally more elevated than older buildings. The church tower forms a focus on the approach to the village centre when travelling westwards on the A170. The approach from the north on the minor road linking to the A169 provides a notably distinctive and attractive gateway as the route descends through dense woodland and rounds a corner into Whitbygate, which is lined with vernacular buildings on the east side, and pastures with stone walls and mature trees on the west.

The approaches on the minor roads from the south are less emphatic with newer housing more visible across flatter ground, although the presence of allotment gardens and parkland seen on the approach from Longlands Lane is attractive.

17.4 Settlement edges

Rolling landform generally provides strong visual containment of the settlement to the east and west. Steeply rising wooded slopes provide a particularly robust edge to the settlement in the north with more open sloping pastures in the north-east similarly containing linear development of older farms and cottages and infill modern housing east of All Saints Church and north of the A170. Areas of newer housing development are less strongly contained, although gently undulating landform reduces intrusion to some degree in the south-west, and trees along the former railway line partially screen housing and the caravan park sited in this area. Settlement boundaries are weak around recent housing in the east (this area lies outside of the National Park).

17.5 Heritage and nature conservation sites

The manorial earthworks of Roxby Hill are a Scheduled Monument and lie to the west of the village.

There are over 75 groups of Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area, including 17th Century almshouses on Chestnut Avenue, the thatched Beck Isle cottage and 14th Century All Saints Church.

A Conservation Area designation covers much of the older part of the village, including the small pastures lying north of the A170. It is noted that the draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (2017) recommends an extension to the Conservation Area to include the 18th century parkland lying on the southern edge of the village.

There are several Tree Protection Orders within the village, covering individual trees, as well as a line of trees along The Mount.

17.6 Summary of key elements and features which may be sensitive to development

- The becks and the associated ribbon of grassland, trees and woodlands which border them within the core of the village.
- The remnant parkland, including the playing fields and cricket ground, which form part of the designed landscape associated with Thornton Hall and which forms an important part of the landscape setting of the village.
- The steep wooded slope which backdrops the village, providing strong containment to the settlement edge and contributing to the bosky character of its setting.

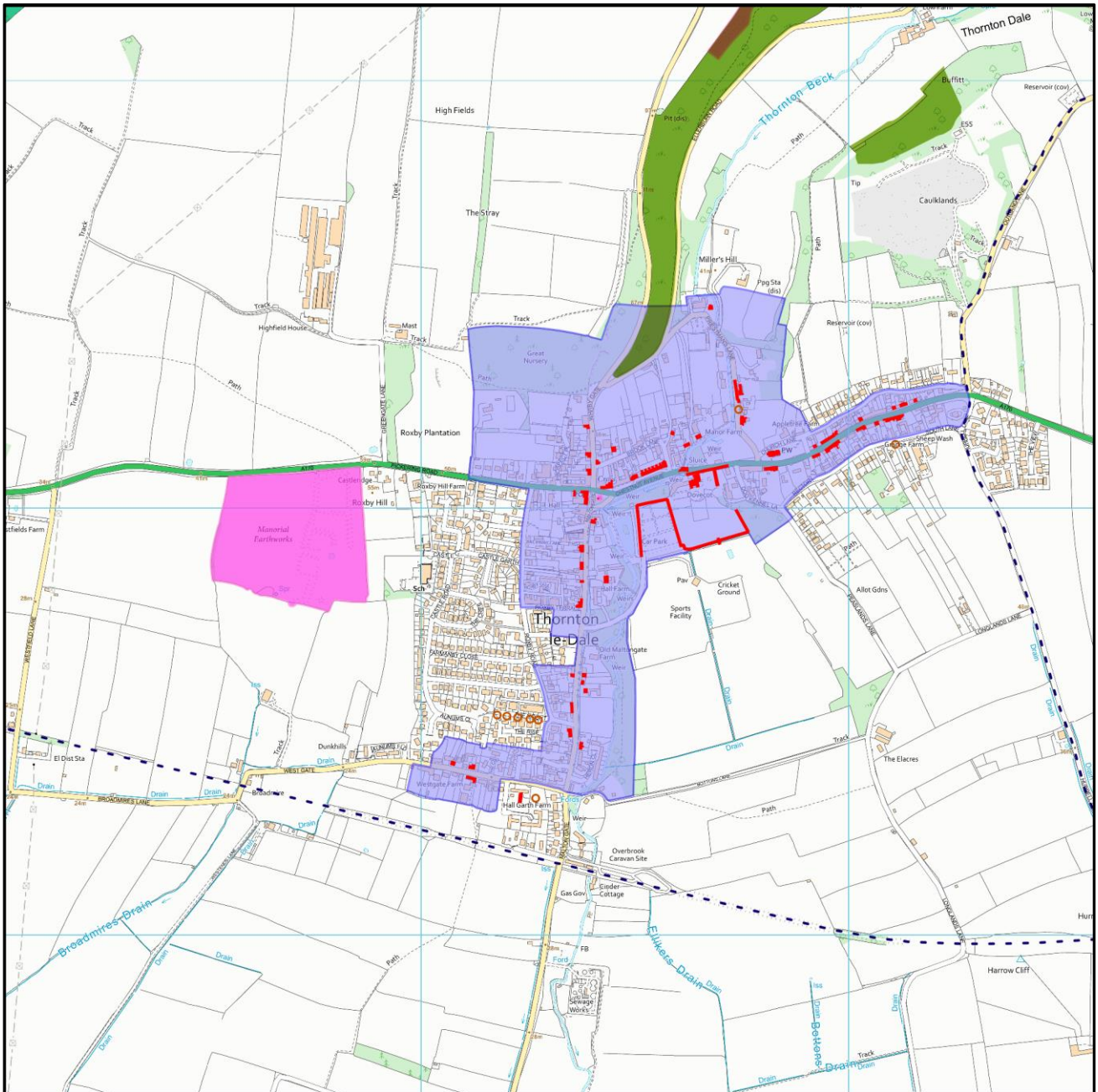
- Small linear pastures with medieval origins lying to the north of the A170. A small walled pasture grazed by sheep and lined by tall limes is particularly prominent from the A170 and from the footpath along the beck. The steeply sloping tree-rimmed pastures on the eastern side of Whitbygate are also prominent in views on the approach to the village from the north.
- The Thornton Beck valley north of the village, which includes Thornton Mill and ancient woodlands.
- The narrow roads/public footpaths aligned through the small pastures north of the A170 whose tranquil character could be affected by any development of these fields.
- The Roxby Hill Scheduled Monument and its setting to the west of the village.
- Protected trees; Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and their settings.



View taken from old quarry to the north-east of Thornton-le-Dale, showing 20th Century development along the A170, and mature trees associated with Thornton Hall. The Vale of Pickering can be seen in the distance.



Village centre view showing beck alongside road, and the wooded slope which forms the village's northern setting



Crown copyright and database rights 2020. Ordnance Survey 100021930.

North York Moors Landscape Character Assessment Update 2021

Settlement Sensitivity Study
 Thornton-le-Dale



500 m

- - National Park Boundary
- Scheduled Monuments
- Listed Buildings
- Conservation Areas
- Ancient Semi-natural Woodlands
- Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites
- Tree Preservation Orders

Map showing designated sites in Thornton-le-Dale and its environs