

Strensall with Towthorpe

Village Design Statement

**Third Final Draft
May 2014**

This Village Design Statement (VDS) was approved on (to follow) as a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to the City of York Council's draft Local Plan. SPDs provide further details regarding policies in Development Plan Documents and hold significant weight as a material consideration in the determination of planning decisions. This SPD will ultimately form part of the City of York Local Plan as a supporting document linked to design policies.

This VDS covers all areas of Strensall with Towthorpe within the existing Parish boundaries. However, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) owns a significant estate within these boundaries and a large portion of the MOD housing stock on this estate is now privatised. We expect the MOD and the owners of the privatised housing stock to conform to the spirit of this VDS for any future development.

The contribution of minor details such as windows and boundary treatments often cannot be controlled through the development control process. This means that the role of the individual property owner is crucial to maintaining a traditional aspect to the Village. The VDS includes some aspirational elements that are outside current planning regulations.

Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council appealed for assistance in developing a VDS for Strensall with Towthorpe in April 2010. By November 2010, the Parish Council and interested Villagers had developed the Terms of Reference for a Working Group. This initial work had to take into account the fact that, at that stage of a new Government, the future of the Local Plan and the validity of a VDS for the Village were unclear. In the event, it was decided that the Working Group would not develop a Neighbourhood Plan but would concentrate on producing a VDS. By June 2012, a group of interested Villagers had identified itself. Displays were set up at the Queen's Jubilee Celebration that month and at the Village Show in September 2012, to recruit additional members and to inform Villagers about the requirements of a VDS. From August 2012, the Working Group met on a monthly basis to research and to develop the VDS. These meetings were well publicised and open to all Villagers. In February 2013, a Charter for the Working Group was agreed and a website was set up to allow access to all Villagers to ongoing work and decisions. The draft VDS has been available on the website for comment since its inception in April 2013. Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council was regularly briefed in open session on progress with work and on the changing intentions and requirements of the Working Group. In addition, regular articles were placed in Outreach Magazine which is delivered to every household in Strensall with Towthorpe on a

monthly basis. In July and August 2013, a survey of Villagers was carried out both on line and through a questionnaire. This process was funded by the Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council and a City of York Council Community Grant. The questionnaire was delivered to every household in the Village on two occasions during this period, once as an enclosure to Outreach Magazine and once as a letterbox delivery. The release of the questionnaire was also covered in articles on Minster Radio and in Outreach Magazine. All businesses in Strensall with Towthorpe acted as both information stands and collection points for the questionnaires. The response rate was 13 percent of the households in the Village. Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council was briefed on the results of the survey and presented with the analysis of the data in November 2013. From November 2013, the results of the survey have been published both on the website and through Outreach Magazine. These results underpin this VDS as they are the only accurate assessment of the views of our Villagers. An Open Evening on the draft VDS was held in early December 2013.

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Looking towards Sheriff Hutton and Strensall Cemetery from New Lane.

People.



The start of the Diamond Jubilee Parade, West End, Strensall

The 6,500 people of the Village are characterised both by those whose families have been here for generations and the many who have moved here within the last thirty years.

Our Villagers work in local businesses in York and further afield in Leeds and the wider North East. The Village is surrounded by countryside and arable farming land but this employs only a small number of Villagers.

There are some 40 thriving community organisations within the Village, ranging from the Strensall Local History Group to the Brownies. Strensall Tigers is a successful youth Football team.

How We See Ourselves.

Our Villagers say that they live in a community with a friendly atmosphere, that is of an appropriate size and has the character of a good Village. They see their Village as attractive. They wish to maintain the style of its older buildings and the green areas that exist within the Village boundary.

Strensall with Towthorpe is a low crime area and is seen as a safe place to live. The range of shops and pubs is seen as a key part of Village life as is the regular bus service to York. The Churches play a large part in community life as does the Library, the Robert Wilkinson School and the Post Office, all of which are seen as essential amenities.



The Village, Strensall

Access for walking to the River Foss and to the wider countryside adds a premium to life in the Village. The Village has a small number of green areas within its boundaries. It is also surrounded by countryside and the Strensall Military Training Area (known as Strensall Common), to which the Ministry of Defence allows restricted public access. These make Strensall with Towthorpe a very pleasant place for people to live.

What We Would Like To See.

Our Villagers have hopes and concerns for the future. It is clear that there will be further development within the Village. Our Villagers require that all development is preceded by improvements to traffic flow, school capacity, play areas and land drainage.

There are many views among the Villagers about how best to alleviate the traffic flow within the Village. These range from one-way flow systems, speed restrictions and restricted parking to the provision of additional parking areas.

There is currently no provision for safe cycling within the Village or from the Village to the A1237. This means that Villagers tend towards the use of private cars and public transport. The development of cycle paths and a safe cycle route to Monks Cross and Clifton Moor would be very useful to the Villagers.

A railway station in the Village is seen as a very popular option by our Villagers.

The First Bus service is valued and much used within the Village. It is, however, not easily accessible from many parts of the Village. In addition, it contributes and is subject to the traffic congestion in the centre of the Village.



The First Bus Service in the Village centre during shopping time

Spaces for more schoolchildren could be made available by the building of an additional primary school in the Village. A partnership could be developed with the existing Robert Wilkinson Primary Academy which is already one of the largest schools in York.

Play areas for younger children should be made available as each new

residential development is built. But there remains the need for investment in space and facilities for the youth of the Village.

A study on land drainage is required so that our Villagers can be sure that the flood risk within the Village boundary is minimised.

Strensall with Towthorpe is not a town. It is an ancient rural development mentioned in the Domesday Book. Our Villagers would like to ensure that all future developments acknowledge the special attributes that make our Village such a good place to live.

Settlement Patterns.

In 1870-72, John Marius Wilson's Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales described Strensall like this:

STRENSALL, a parish in the district of York and N. R. Yorkshire; on the York and Scarborough railway, 6¼ miles NNE of York. It has a station on the railway, and a post-office under York. Acres, 2,212. Real property, £3,351. Pop., 406. Houses, 97. The property is much subdivided. The living is a vicarage in the diocese of York. Value, £300. Patron, the Archbishop of York. The church was rebuilt in 1866.*

The key economic activities in the village over the years have relied heavily on the Tannery, the Brickworks and support to the Army. Other employment has generally come from farming.



The Tannery, Strensall now demolished

Population.

Year	1811	1881	1911	1991	2001	2011
Total Population	424	446	710	4432	5479	6047
Growth Pattern (increase in Population)	0	22	264	3722	1047	568

The 1881 census records the population as being 446. The 2013 estimated population of Strensall with Towthorpe is about 6500. The table shows that in the century between 1811–1911 the growth in population was 264 residents. Between 1991–2013 the population grew by an additional 2068 residents.

The basic infrastructure of the Village has not changed to match the increase in population. The majority of our Villagers believe that this level of expansion is unsustainable. They believe that further investment in the infrastructure of the Village is necessary before any further development. They see the current infrastructure and supporting services as being at saturation level.

53 dwellings are under construction on the site of the Tannery (H32 2.22ha), 102 dwellings on land at Brecks Lane have been approved but are subject to a

Public Inquiry (H27 3.90ha), and two further sites are currently under consideration as part of the emerging Local Plan (H30 2.53ha estimated 61 dwellings on land to the south of Strensall Village, and SF1 29ha, land south of Strensall Village to be safeguarded for longer term development needs beyond the current plan period (15 years).)

Strensall Military Training Area (formerly Strensall and Towthorpe Common).



Strensall Military Training Area

The War Department purchased Strensall and Towthorpe Common in 1884. The lawful use of the Common is governed by three legal publications, Strensall Common Act 1884; Strensall Common Regulations and Strensall Common Bylaws, approved by Act of Parliament.

Troops were initially accommodated in tents but the bivouac areas were wet and unhealthy. Building of Strensall Camp, now known as Queen Elizabeth II Barracks, began in 1884. By the outbreak of the First World War Strensall had become a small garrison town, complete with rifle ranges, training areas, barrack accommodation and a medical centre.

Thousands of soldiers were trained in the Strensall area during the two World Wars. For much of the period since the Second World War, the barracks was an Infantry Depot and the home of the Yorkshire, Lancashire and Irish Regiments of Foot. Today the barracks is the home of HQ 2nd Medical Brigade, 34th Field Hospital and other smaller units.

Strensall Common Act 1884 allows the general public to use some of the land

for recreation and exercise when it is not in use for military training purposes. The Military Training Area is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Village Context.



The Village, Strensall

History.

The village of Strensall was included in the Domesday Book of 1086. The name Strensall probably derived from the Anglo Saxon word “Streonaeshalch”, a combination of “Streona”, a personal name and “halch”, the word for a corner or nook of land. There might have been settlements around the Village during earlier periods.

Prehistoric and Roman remains have been found in the area suggesting it may have been a convenient crossing point of the River Foss. It is possible that the village was the site of the Synod of Whitby in 660 AD, possibly indicating an early monastic site. At this early period, Strensall lay within the Forest of Galtres, a heavily wooded area which stretched north of York beyond Easingwold.

Throughout the 13th Century the Prebendaries of Strensall (one of the Canons of St Peter’s York) developed their own hunting preserve on the edge of the Royal Forest. Hall Farm, formerly known as Strensall Hall, occupied a moated site which was probably the administrative centre of the village from the earlier medieval period.

A pattern of enclosures and curved, reversed “S” field boundaries survive to the southeast of The Village and Southfields Road in Strensall. These preserve the alignment of and, in some cases, earthworks of the ridge and furrow that formed one of the medieval open fields associated with Strensall.

Towthorpe is a small hamlet which has survived as a peaceful cluster of 19th Century or earlier brick farmhouses and farm buildings set in the countryside on the southwestern side of Strensall.



Towthorpe - The conversion of agricultural buildings

Traditional Layout.

The heart of the Village has an attractive and informal mixture of well-proportioned 18th Century and 19th Century detached houses and vernacular cottages. A sense of unity arises from their shared scale, a height of 2 storeys and use of traditional materials. This is mostly pinkish-brown brickwork with pantile or Welsh slate roofing. Buildings are positioned at slightly varying distances and angles to the street frontage, some gable end on to the street and most, traditionally, with small front gardens enclosed by walls, railings or hedges.



The Grange, Strensall

The eastern section of The Village appears quite intimate as the street curves and undulates gently, with subtle variations in carriageway width and some buildings huddling closer to the street frontage. Trees and hedges add to the feeling of enclosure and ‘protection’. The more traditional areas of the village demonstrate a sense of continuity of character.

The boundaries of properties along The Village are boundaries that existed in the medieval period. Generally, each plot or ‘garth’ would hold a farmstead. Adjoining the River Foss, Strensall has retained its traditional outer edge. This is an interesting haphazard arrangement of boundary walls, outbuildings and small irregularly-shaped fields. The line of Church Lane is important historically, though ‘suburbanisation’ of its character has resulted from infill development. The link to the past remains the sudden view of open landscape beyond the trees of St Mary’s Churchyard contrasted with the small scale enclaves of buildings going through to Church View. This helps retain a valuable rural quality. Trees are also important to the setting of the Manor House.



Manor House Farmhouse, Strensall

Places of Worship.

There are three places of worship in the Village, the Church of St Mary the Virgin, the Methodist Church and the Garrison Church.



Church of St Mary the Virgin.

Church of St Mary the Virgin.

The first church on this site is thought to have been built between 1100-1150 AD and was dedicated to St James. This would have been a Norman structure with rubble infilling in the walls. The doorways and window frames would have been of Tadcaster stone. Between 1801-1803 the church was completely rebuilt with local bricks and painted deal pews. Due to weather damage this

structure deteriorated and was completely replaced by the present church in 1866. The church is generally known as St Mary's Church.

Strensall Methodist Church.

The first Methodist Chapel in the Village was St Mary's Hall in Church Lane. It was built in 1879, the porch being added in 1895, but the building was too small for the Methodist community's needs. It then became a dwelling house until 1983 and it has now fallen into disrepair. The new Methodist Church was built on The Village in 1895, on the site of the "Village Pinfold", a holding pen for stray animals. The Church was built on a scale better to serve the expanding Methodist community. The Villagers still use the expression "the Methodist Chapel" for this Church.



Strensall Methodist Church

The Garrison Church.

The Garrison Church, St Wilfrid's, is on the edge of Queen Elizabeth II Barracks. This brick built church was commissioned by the War Office and was completed in 1934. A feature of the church is its stained glass windows depicting the badges of the regiments which were based at the camp throughout the years.



St Wilfrid's Garrison Church

Strensall Cemetery (Burial Ground).

Strensall Cemetery is located on Sheriff Hutton Road, Strensall. The Cemetery was consecrated in 1995 and is non-denominational. The rules and conditions for this Cemetery have been based on those used for the Churchyard at St. Mary's Church and are designed to balance the wishes of the bereaved with a discrete place of rest. The aim of the Burial Authority, the Parish Council, is to maintain a valuable heritage and perpetuate a record of our local community in a tasteful and acceptable manner. There are spaces for the interment of cremated remains and also for burials. There is a small memorial garden for friends and relatives to plant small shrubs or spring bulbs together with plaques or ornaments which are not permitted on the graves themselves.

Quaker Burial Ground.

A Quaker Burial Ground was sited on land to the north of the War Memorial and the old Village pond and is marked on the 1852 Ordnance Survey Map. The records of who was buried there and when, appear to have been lost. Whether there was a Quaker Meeting House in Strensall is open to debate. The burials are likely to have taken place very early in the 18th Century and may have been disturbed by building in the area.



Strensall War Memorial

The River Foss.

The River Foss provides one of the boundaries of the Village. It also hosts two of the finest historical architectural features of the Village - its bridges. Historically, the River Foss provided the water requirements for the Tannery; the Village's sewer system; and a means of transportation for agricultural products, such as flax and wheat, as well as bricks from the local brickworks. These were the Village's main economic output in the 18th and 19th Centuries. Nowadays, the Foss Walk, Centenary Way and Ebor Way allow both sides of River Foss to be used by walkers.

The Foss Navigation Company.

The Foss Navigation Company was formed in 1793 with the intention of forming a navigable canal between the junction of the Rivers Foss and Ouse in York to Stillington Mill. Between 1796-1797 two locks and two bridges (Strensall New Bridge and Strensall Bridge) were constructed as part of this work. Strensall Bridge was designed by the eminent York architect John Carr.



Strensall Bridge - John Carr's Bridge

The River Foss was canalised and a new canal was dug north from Strensall to Sheriff Hutton Bridge. Due to financial limitations, the work stopped in 1805 half a mile west of Sheriff Hutton Bridge.

During its working life, the canal carried important cargo of coal, lime, farm produce and building materials. In 1845 the York to Scarborough railway opened, taking most of the cargo and revenue from the canal and causing its closure. In a short walk along the River Foss you can still see the industrial archaeology left over from the canal, including lock walls, sluice gates, winding gear, and the historic Strensall New Bridge.



Strensall New Bridge - "Old Humpy"

Landscape Setting.

Approaches.

There are five approach routes into Strensall and Towthorpe. Two are from Haxby; one is from Flaxton; one is from Sheriff Hutton; and one is from York. Although the Flaxton Road and Ox Carr Lane skirt round the centre of the Village, all the other approaches lead in to the centre of the Village.

Housing developments in the Village since the 1970s have resulted in a significant increase of vehicular traffic through the Village Conservation Area. The traffic moving on the shortest route between the new developments will pass through the Village centre. There is considerable concern over the issue of congestion resulting from roadside parking along this stretch of road.

The natural bottleneck within the Village is its centre, based around the junction with the Sheriff Hutton road. Traffic often grinds to a halt as through traffic competes with the bus service and shoppers' parking. In addition, the three level crossings and the roundabout at the junction of Ox Carr Lane and the York Road cause periodic delays on most days.



Looking West from York Road - Winter fields at Sunset.

Strensall Conservation Area.

Strensall Conservation Area¹ is defined as an area of special architectural and

¹Strensall Conservation Area Appraisal - November 2010, Strensall Railway Buildings Conservation Area Appraisal - March 2011 and Towthorpe Conservation Area Appraisal - November 2010 are available on the City

historic interest. It was first designated in 1979 and included The Village and Church Lane which make up the linear street character of the historic Village. Many traditional side lanes and yards survive along The Village, a legacy of the medieval street pattern.

In 2001, the Conservation Area was extended to the north and north west from Bone Dyke to the rear of Netherwoods. This extension included Strensall Bridge and the riverside pasture land and paddocks to Strensall New Bridge. It was also expanded to the west, following West End and to the south along Princess Road.

In 2011, it was extended to include housing to the north of Southfields Road, properties associated with the railway along Princess Road, Moor Lane and the former towpath.

Towthorpe Conservation Area.

The Towthorpe Conservation Area was designated in 2001. It includes Towthorpe Moat and also Low Farm Farmhouse, a Grade 2 listed building which retains the original internal doors and baluster staircase. Development which has taken place is sympathetic to the existing 19th Century or earlier brick buildings. Much of the Strensall Military Training Area including part of the Barracks is also located in Towthorpe, as is the Barley Rise development.



Low Farm Farmhouse Towthorpe

of York Council website should further detailed information be required.

Strensall Railway Buildings Conservation Area.

The east end of Strensall was developed from the mid-1840s as a result of the arrival of the railway in the Village. This was the first expansion of the Village outside its historic core. This Conservation Area was designated in 2001 as a result of action by the Parish Council. It was further expanded in 2011 following public consultation. It includes the former Station Yard and its storage facilities as well as 93-103 The Village, late 19th Century brick-built small terrace houses erected for both the railway workers and those employed at the local brickworks. The old Station House is a listed building, which forms a group with the Signal Box. This Signal Box is the last of its kind on the York-Scarborough railway line.



Strensall Signal Box

Allotments.

Allotments are in great demand in the Village and there are waiting lists to become an allotment holder. There are two allotment areas within the Village. Both are owned by the City of York Council. The Northfields Allotment is leased to the Parish Council and there are eighteen plots on it. Eight are full size plots, each of approximately 320 square yards. Ten are half size plots of approximately 160 square yards. The New Lane Allotment consists of 20 plots, each of approximately 150 square yards, which are managed by a Villager on behalf of the the City of York Council. These allotments were provided by Hogg The Builder as a condition of being allowed to build in the old railway sidings. Hogg provided top soil, drainage, a water supply, and a purpose built tool shed within 10 internal cubicles for tool storage.

Sports and Recreational Facilities.

There are limited sports and recreational facilities in Strensall with Towthorpe which are immediately accessible to the general public. The sporting facilities available to the community are covered below. Those available to the Army community are not.

Strensall Community and Youth Sports Association (SCYSA).

Strensall Community and Youth Sports Association (SCYSA) is a new community-based organisation set up in December 2012. It became a Registered Charity in 2013 and has obtained the lease for the sports facility at Durlston Drive. It is committed to providing a first class sporting environment for the Village. It has recently refurbished the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and a netball association is now using it. There are 3 tennis courts and the football pitch has a variety of configurations according to need. The clubhouse is in the process of being upgraded to increase hire use to generate revenue for SCYSA. Continual fundraising is taking place within the Village to increase the facilities available.



Northfields Playground

Playground Sites.

There are two playground sites in the Village. Northfields has both an area for children up to the age of 14 as well as a fenced area for smaller children which incorporates a picnic area. Pasture Close has a fenced football area and a

separate playground for smaller children. Both sites are very well used. No large development in the Village has been provided with its own playground areas.

The York Golf Club.



Clubhouse, the York Golf Club

The York Golf Club, the oldest golf club in the area, was established in 1890 as a members' club. The Club is a non-profit making organisation which reinvests all surplus income back into the Club. It is a Community Amateur Sports Club under the terms of the Finance Act 2002 and it provides sporting and related social facilities to the community. It prides itself on its Junior and Lady Golfer starter programmes. The course itself is a serene blend of parkland and heathland with a definite emphasis on natural beauty rather than artificial features. It measures 6290 yards (Men's Competition Tees) and the greens are acclaimed to be among the finest in North Yorkshire. The Club has invested heavily in improving the drainage of the course in recent years.

Strensall Bowling Club



Strensall Bowling Club

Strensall Bowling Club is a thriving organisation founded in 1934. The Club is a self-supporting members' club which encourages membership across the ages from within the community. Its Bowling Green is one of the finest in North Yorkshire. It is the treasured result of dedication by members and advice from York Golf Club.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

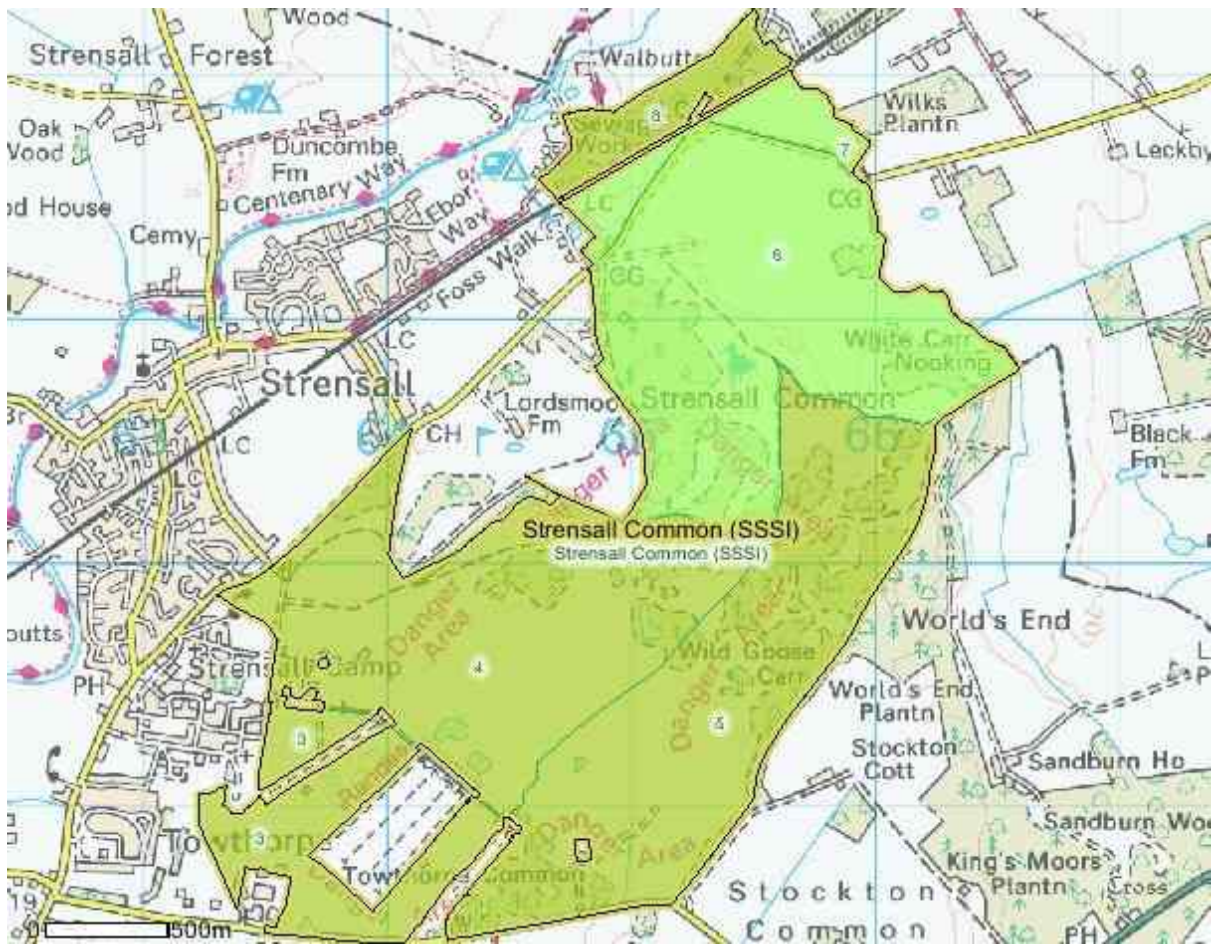
Strensall Military Training Area (Strensall and Towthorpe Common) was designated as a Site of Special Scientific interest (SSSI) in 1965. It is a rich and varied environment with a wealth of wildlife. It is one of only two extensive lowland heaths remaining in the Vale of York. The site, of some 600 hectares, is an internationally important lowland heath. It is of great importance to wildlife and harbours rare species of flora and fauna, including moths, flowers and ferns. The heathland is maintained by a tenant farmer whose sheep and cattle graze the site throughout the year.

Strensall Common Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Reserve.

The Strensall Common Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Reserve was purchased from the Ministry of Defence in 1978. The Reserve, of some 43 hectares, is adjacent to the Military Training Area. It comprises a number of different habitats, the principal ones being wet heath, dry heath and birch/oak woodland. There are usually areas of standing water, particularly in winter.



Winter ponds on Strensall Common



Source: - Courtesy of Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, English Nature SSSI

Birds of Strensall Common.

Strensall Common with its open space, scattered pine trees, flooded borrow pits and acres of heather make it an ideal habitat for birds. Some 60 species have been identified using it.

Reed Buntings that can be found among the reed beds, the male in its summer plumage is unmistakable with its white collar and black hood and bib.



During summer months Woodlark and Tree Pipits can be found but are difficult to spot, the Tree Pipit is often seen hovering above silver birch trees a favoured



habitat.

Another species making a comeback on the Common is the Stonechat. Two very harsh winters have led to a decline of this bird. The Stonechat is usually found on the heathland and bushes. The male has a black hood with orange breast feathers. The Whinchat, an occasional visitor to the Common, has also declined recently. It is found on open heathland and is more recognizable by the very prominent stripe over its eyes. Its colour is less distinctive than that of the Stonechat. Both birds bob their tails when singing and calling.

About 40 species of birds breed regularly on the Common including curlew, cuckoo and woodland species such as the Green and Great Spotted Woodpecker.



The Great Spotted Woodpecker is a medium-sized woodpecker, about the same size as a blackbird. Great Spotted Woodpeckers nest in holes which they excavate in trees in woodlands (mainly broadleaved), large parks and gardens. They have a distinctive, bouncing flight but are most likely to be heard 'drumming' away at a tree trunk, performing their breeding displays. Great spotted woodpeckers probe tree trunks for insects and larvae to eat. They have extremely sticky tongues enabling them to extract the insects from their nests. In autumn and winter they will switch to eating berries and nuts and will visit peanut feeders hung in the garden.



About the size of a Collared Dove, Cuckoos are a scarce summer visitor to most of Britain, arriving in April - their familiar 'cuckoo' call heralds the start of spring. The adults leave for Africa by June or July, almost as soon as they have laid their eggs, while the young birds follow them in the autumn. Adults are 'brood-parasites' famous for laying their eggs in other birds' nests and fooling them into raising their young for them. Dunnocks, meadow pipits and reed warblers are common victims of this 'cuckolding' behaviour.

Flora and Other Fauna Found on Strensall Common and in the Surrounding Countryside.

There is a rich stock of flora and other fauna associated with the environment surrounding the Village. Strensall Common lies in a very shallow depression in the glacial clays which has subsequently been filled with lacustrine sands. The underlying basin of clay impedes drainage and the land is wet underfoot most of the year. The soils are peaty and acidic apart from occasional areas of raised leached sand. This gives it a unique flora. Over 150 plant species are found here, perhaps the most noteworthy being marsh cinquefoil and marsh gentian. Mammal records include fox, hare, badger, otter, water voles and harvest mouse. Insects include the Green and Purple Hairstreak Butterflies, Dark-Bordered Beauty Moth, Bog Bush Cricket and Glow Worm, as well as biting midges. Over 100 different species of spider have been recorded. Viviparous lizards can be seen in good numbers, sunning themselves. Adders are seen frequently and care should be taken if encountered.



Marsh Cinquefoil likes wet, boggy places, fens and peaty meadows. When it is in flower, between May and July, it is a good source of food for nectar-loving insects such as bees and hoverflies. Marsh Cinquefoil is one of a number of cinquefoils, but is unique in the UK as the only one with deep red flowers - the rest have yellow flowers. It is a member of the rose family.



The Marsh Gentian is a rare plant of acidic bogs and wet heathlands whose bright blue, trumpet-shaped flowers appear from July to October, contrasting with the pinks and purples of the heath.



The Dark Bordered Beauty Moth is a small and rare moth found in small colonies only at Strensall Common in Yorkshire and in Newham Bog in Northumberland in England. It can be seen in July and August in damp sites such as lightly wooded wet heathlands, damp grasslands and damp woodlands.



The Strensall Groundling Moth is named after Strensall Common. It was first found in Britain in the 1920s. It is much smaller than the Dark Bordered Beauty and the caterpillars live on birch trees between leaves spun together with silk. The adult moth is predominantly white and spends its days camouflaged against the bark of the birch trees.



The Adder is a relatively small, stocky snake which prefers woodland, heathland and moorland. It hunts lizards and small mammals, as well as ground-nesting birds such as Skylark and Meadow Pipit. Adders hibernate from October, emerging in the first warm days of March, which is the easiest time of year to find them basking on a log or under a warm rock.



The Water Vole lives along rivers, streams and ditches, around ponds and lakes and in marshes, reed beds and areas of wet moorland. It has colonised some stretches of the River Foss in Strensall. Look out for the signs of Water Voles such as burrows in the riverbank, often with a nibbled 'lawn' of grass around the entrance. Water Voles like to sit and eat in the same place, so piles of nibbled grass and stems may be found by the water's edge, showing a distinctive 45° angled-cut at the ends. 'Latrines' of rounded, cigar-shaped droppings may also be spotted.



Otters are one of our top predators, feeding mainly on fish, water birds, amphibians and crustaceans. Otters have their cubs in underground burrows, known as a 'holt'. Excellent and lithe swimmers, the young are in the water by 10 weeks of age. Otters are well suited to a life on the water as they have webbed feet, dense fur to keep them warm and can close their ears and nose when underwater. Otters can occasionally be seen in the River Foss.

Trees and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

In January 2014, there are 173 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in force on trees in Strensall. They cover diverse species of trees including apple; ash; beech; birch; cherry; chestnut; hawthorn; holly; hornbeam; laburnum; lime; oak; pine; rowan; sycamore; willow; and yew. Trees in conservation areas are protected. Any work on a tree in a conservation area must have permission from the City of York Council.

The majority of the TPOs cover oak trees. These trees must be safeguarded throughout their natural lifespan. Full details of the TPOs can be found on the City of York Council website.



Oak Trees on Strensall Common

Public Rights of Way and the Wider Network of Access.

There is an extensive network of public footpaths within the Parish located, in the main, within 500 metres of the River Foss. There are only 2 public bridleways and these head out further afield, one northwards towards Carr Lane, Strensall and the other southwards towards North Lane, Huntington.

The principal footpaths run along Brecks Lane and the River Foss itself. The footpaths carry the Foss Walk, Ebor Way and Centenary Way. These are regionally important promoted routes and bring passing trade to the village.

In addition to the public rights of way, there are numerous permissive routes within the Parish. The Ministry of Defence has marked out an extensive network of paths within Strensall Military Training Area (formerly Strensall and Towthorpe Common) which can be used when troop training is not taking place. There are also numerous paths between the River Foss and the Brecks which are well used.

Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council designed and maintains a footpath along the Flaxton Road. It has plans for additional footpaths but has not yet secured the funds to build them from the City of York Council.

All these paths combine to provide a good, free to use, recreational facility. This benefits the overall health and well being of Villagers and provides an opportunity to see the varied wildlife within the Parish.



Footpath running North East along the River Foss from Strensall Bridge

However, although there are footways along most of the roads, the Village lacks a network of snickets leading from the new developments in towards the centre of the Village.

There are two areas of Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act 2000) Open Access Land on Strensall Military Training Area. These are shown on the Ordnance Survey map of the area. They are, however, excepted land as they are owned by the MOD. The rules guiding their use are clearly displayed on all access points to the Military Training Area and are available from Headquarters Strensall Training Area.

Cycling.

Both Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council and Villagers have requested a safe cycle route into York over the years to allow them to access work, schools, shops and leisure facilities by bicycle. The City of York Council has identified two potential future routes as part of its Strategic Cycle Network Review in 2011/12.

The first is along Strensall Road, with an off road facility running between the Six Bells Public House mini roundabout and the A1237 which will run alongside the busy road. The second is the River Foss towpath. This would see the widening of the existing towpath and its conversion to shared use between north Strensall and York City Centre. There would also be links to Haxby, Earswick, Huntington and New Earswick along its length.

Contributions towards the provision of both routes will be sought from new developments near to or adjacent to them through the development management process.

Community Setting.

The Village Hall.

The first Village Hall in Strensall was a prefabricated Army canteen with an asbestos roof and corrugated iron cladding. During the First World War it provided home comforts for British troops serving in the Suez Canal zone in Egypt. Transported back to England after the war it found its final resting place in York Road, Strensall where it became an indispensable part of the social life of the Village. It was the venue for theatrical entertainments, whist drives, wedding receptions and every kind of meeting. During the Second World War it was again frequented by soldiers from Strensall Camp, attending weekly dances with the music provided by a local three-piece band – piano, drums and accordion.



The Village Hall

With the roof leaking and the maintenance of the old building becoming more and more difficult, serious fund raising and grant hunting started in the Village and a new hall was built at Northfields at a cost of £279,000 in 1989. It included a badminton hall, meeting room, kitchen and other facilities and in 1990 won an award as the Ryedale Village Hall of the Year. Looking to the future, the hall was designed so it could be extended and the need for this soon arose. A new function room costing £60,000 was added and officially opened by the Lord Mayor of York in 1998.

With its modern multi-purpose facilities for sport, theatrical entertainments, social and business events the hall continues to be a thriving community centre for all aspects of Village life.

Hurst Hall.

Hurst Hall, the Army Community Centre offers a programme of recreational, social activities to support the needs of military families. It encourages community cohesion for the military families and works to offer its services and facilities for the benefit of the wider community.

The programme is overseen by the Army Welfare Service Community Development Worker who works in partnership with the Parish Council and other Village community associations and partners to develop the provision of services.

Local Businesses.

Our Villagers value the range of their local businesses and public houses. It is

generally felt that they provide good amenities for the size of the Village. The Post Office and the Library are, in particular, held in high regard and viewed as essential assets. However, the absence of a bank is viewed as a particular disadvantage, although the availability of Cash Machines at Cost Cutter and Londis is greatly appreciated.



Strensall Post Office at the heart of the Village

The arrival of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses within the Village would be welcomed. All local businesses participate fully in the life of the Village. They make a significant contribution to the funding and support of local events and activities.

Our local businesses are concentrated into two distinct areas within the Village. The first is at Barley Rise, where there is a small 1970 era shopping complex in which 7 businesses including the Richard Fisher & Associates Dental Surgery and the Cost Cutter Supermarket have their premises. The limitation is that parking access to these shops and premises is restricted to space for about 10 vehicles and on street parking delays access to and from Barley Rise.

The second is on The Village, centred around the road junction with the Sheriff Hutton Road. This is a busy shopping area and includes the Tesco plc Supermarket, Strensall Fisheries, Boots plc and the Battleflatts Veterinary Surgery. On street parking is limited and is the cause of frequent delays and frustration on this arterial route through the Village.



Shopping Traffic on The Village

Robert Wilkinson Primary Academy

Robert Wilkinson School became a Primary Academy on 01 December 2013 within the Ebor Academy Group. It has now opted out of local authority control and is funded directly by the Government. It has retained its links with the Robert Wilkinson Charity and the Robert Wilkinson Trust. The School was founded in 1718 by an endowment in the will of Robert Wilkinson, a Yeoman Farmer from Strensall. Throughout its long history, the School has grown with the Village and remains very much a Village School. The Old Primary School in Church Lane is now a private dwelling.



Robert Wilkinson Primary Academy

As a Primary Academy it provides education for both boys and girls between the ages of 4-11. The Academy continues to benefit from the legacy of Robert Wilkinson through the charity which is managed by the Robert Wilkinson Trust, whose members serve on the School's Governing Body. The charity has funded extensive facilities, including an indoor swimming pool. In addition, there is an active support group within the Village community, the Friends of Robert Wilkinson Academy Committee, which does a great deal of valuable work for the Academy. In January 2014, the Academy is at capacity.

Strensall Health Care Centre.

The *My Health Health Care Group* runs Strensall Health Care Centre and other centres in Stamford Bridge, Dunnington and Huntington. It serves 18000 patients across an area of 200 square miles to the north east of York. It has recently been granted approval to extend its boundary northwards into the Howardian Hills. It currently has 12 doctors who have specialised in General Practice and who provide complete National Health Service community services. The practice also employs 6 directly-employed nurses. Community nurses are attached to the practice and work from their base in Strensall Health Care Centre. A Minor Illness Clinic is held each weekday morning and afternoon at Strensall Health Care Centre.



Strensall Health Care Centre

Buildings.

Medieval Patterns.

Strensall began with a typical medieval pattern of properties, with narrow-fronted plots of land that extend back on either side of a single West-East Street (the present Church Lane and The Village). The plots on the north side were bounded by the River Foss and those on the south side stretched to Back Lane (now Southfields Road).



An old driveway in the centre of the Village

Little remains of the medieval Village other than the layout of the main roads. The oldest buildings in the Village date to about the early 17th Century. The buildings in the Village reflected the social and economic environment of the North Riding of Yorkshire at that time. It was a rural agricultural society with the two major developments being the arrival of the railway and the Army.



Former Railway Housing

Listed Buildings.

Historic buildings, whether listed or not, contribute to the character and the appearance of the area.

Serial	Item	Location	Grade
1.	Berwin House, mid 18th Century House	3 Church Lane, Strensall	2
2.	The Grange	59 The Village, Strensall	2
3.	Mile Post	Opposite Main Entrance to Queen Elizabeth II Barracks. It is believed to have been stolen.	2
4.	Church of St Mary the Virgin	Church Lane, Strensall	2
5.	Strensall New Bridge, formerly listed as Strensall Low Bridge	Haxby Moor Road, Strensall	2
6.	Manor House Farmhouse, formerly listed as Strensall Hall	The Village, Strensall	2
7.	Station House	The Village, Strensall	2
8.	Strensall Bridge – John Carr’s Bridge	Sheriff Hutton Road, Strensall	2
9.	Low Farmhouse	Towthorpe Road, Towthorpe	2
10.	War Memorial	The Village, Strensall	2

Modern Housing.

Most housing within Strensall with Towthorpe was built in the last quarter of the 20th Century and there are now some 2400 dwellings in the Village with a resident population of about 6500 people. Most of the modern developments were built in varying styles and types with relatively short roadways, often small cul-de-sacs. The properties vary in size from two bedroom semi-detached houses to large detached houses.



Sheltered Housing on Southfields Road



Modern Housing

Most recent developments have been provided with driveways, garages and front gardens. This has ensured that the roads are kept clear of parked vehicles and helps to provide an open and uncrowded appearance. The varied

groupings of houses, the use of traditional bricks and tiles and conventional and restrained domestic architecture have combined to highlight the character of the Village. The result is that variety, intimacy and cohesiveness have not been sacrificed to expansion. The size of building plots has varied over the years. Where the balance between open space and building density has been maintained, there has been a significantly beneficial impact on the neighbourhood.

A feature of the Village is the considerable degree of privacy enjoyed by most residents in their homes and gardens. This is partly due to the layout of plots and the roadways and to the presence of wall, fences, hedges and trees – all part of a mature settlement. Where this is lacking, the neighbourhood is detrimentally affected.

Local Traits.

Some of the buildings within Strensall have rendered or painted facades, for example The Ship Public House. Although the use of render and painted brickwork is not the predominant material for external walls within the area, these buildings also contribute to the character and appearance of the area.



The Ship Public House

Local detailing includes brick cambered or flat arch lintels, and decorative banding at eaves level. Some of the earliest buildings also have triangular brick panels – known as brick tumbling on their gables.



Decorative Banding and Brick Cambered Lintel

Most retain their original features, such as sash windows and cast iron downpipes. Also, within this character area are a number of larger or more prominent detached properties which reflect the expansion of the Village during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.



Brick Tumbling

Most of the more modern buildings in this character area are constructed in a sympathetic brick and are of a simple form.



The entrance to Northfields

Design Guidelines

This document was approved on (to follow) as a draft Supplementary Planning Document to the City of York Council's draft Local Plan. Our Villagers wish the following Design Guidelines to be followed for all new development.

1. All developments should enhance the rural character of our Village.
2. The linear nature of the Village should not be exacerbated by new development at its extremities without an improvement to the road infrastructure. Further new development should be accompanied by a significant redesign of the Village infrastructure.
3. All development must give careful thought to the impact of increased traffic into the Village Conservation Areas.
4. The existing network of footpaths must be retained and improved. The design of footways, cut throughs and snickets leading to the centre of the Village must be a key aspect of any development. Every opportunity to improve, add to or enable access to the footpath network should be pursued.
5. Views in and out of the Village are significant to the overall character of our Village and must be taken into consideration in the design of any new development. The key views are:
 - a. East and Northeast from Towthorpe Bridge.
 - b. South from Duncombe Lane.
 - c. South and West towards Strensall Bridge (John Carr's Bridge) from the Foss.
 - d. West to North from the Church of St Mary the Virgin.
 - e. North from Ox Carr Lane/Flaxton Road towards Strensall Conservation Area.
 - f. North from Flaxton Road towards the Brecks.
6. The retention of existing and the creation of new open spaces are essential. The range and location of open spaces together with their features make them vitally important to the character of the Village.

7. Developers are to create a variety of new properties harmonious to the character of the Village using a mix of building styles and sizes.
8. Inclusion of green space with native broadleaved tree planting where appropriate and possible, provision of grass verges and front gardens will all help to maintain and enhance the visual and physical character of the Village. For instance, Strensall Park, Southfields Road and the Brecks Lane Estate have buildings grouped around a green. They retain hedges and houses set back from roads with plenty of appropriate trees and grass verges.
9. New developments should respect and complement the scale, density and height of neighbouring building forms and they should not detract from the character of neighbouring buildings. They should avoid large areas of unbroken walling and roof elevations.
10. The height and pitch of roofs should be compatible with, and sympathetic to surrounding property. Roofing should generally use traditional materials (clay pantiles or blue slate) and extensions or alterations must be sympathetic to the original.
11. New developments should include off road parking wherever possible.
12. New houses should be environmentally future-proof and must conform to current City of York sustainability policy.
13. New developments and extensions should use building materials appropriate to a rural Village and sympathetic to neighbouring properties. Reclaimed materials should be used where appropriate. Traditional brick details should be acknowledged but detail in new buildings should not be too elaborate in quantity and mix. Sustainable developments such as green building design and reuse of building materials should be encouraged on appropriate sites in the Village.
14. A mix of affordable housing and private homes should be encouraged.
15. Extensions and alterations should accord in style and material to existing property.
16. When former ancillary or functional outbuildings are converted,

evidence of their original use or function should be retained wherever possible.

17. Chimney stacks should be encouraged to add visual interest to the roof-scape.
18. Windows should be in proportion to the property and accord with the style of similar properties. Windows in older properties should accord with the period style of those properties. Replacements should accurately reflect the styles of the originals and the use of traditional materials and reinstatement of original window styles should be encouraged.
19. The preservation of privacy and personal space is important. Any new construction in the Village should consider whether any impact is harmful to privacy.
20. Gardens and open spaces between buildings contribute to the rural charm of the Village and should be retained wherever possible. There should be a presumption against the subdivision of these spaces where this would harm the character and visual amenities of the area.
21. Satellite dishes should be located discreetly, avoiding front elevations unless there is no reasonable alternative.
22. New buildings should be designed in such a way as to prevent crime and meet the security requirements laid down by the Police "Secured Design" scheme.
23. Any advertising or signage should be kept to a minimum and be appropriate to the Village environment. It should be low key in terms of colour, size and lighting.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Community activities are easily overlooked in a Village the size of Strensall with Towthorpe. A list of community groups is given below to recognize all that happens in the Village.

Army Welfare Service	Hurst Hall Community Fund	Village Hall	The Primary School	St Mary's Hall
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Light Bites Coffee Morning - Hurst Hall Stars - Games Club - Aspire - Dancing Groove - Inters - The Shed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little Fishes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tiny Steps - Little Chestnuts - Rainbows - Brownies - Guides - Song Box - Breakdanc e 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slimming World - Bingo - Pilates - Badminton - Fitness Group - Short Mat Bowls - Art Group - Bridge Club - Zumba Gold - Zumba Fit - Strensall Local History Group -Strensall Village Design Statement Working Group - Over 50s Group - Women's Institute - River Foss Society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kidz Klub - Swimming Club - Dancing Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strensall Art Group

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Londis	Richard Fisher and Associates Dentists	Strensall Fisheries	The Post Office	My Health Surgery
Canton Chinese Take Away	Jon Matthew Gents Hair Dresser	Strensall Library	Sun Bliss Tanning Studio	James Paul Gents Hair Dresser
The Six Bells Public House	Escape Hair Ladies Hair Dresser	The Ship Public House	Battleflatts Veterinary Surgery	D & Y Taylor Butcher and Baker
Cost Cutter	Graham and Co Ladies Hair Dresser	Boots plc	The Half Moon Public House	Tesco plc

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