

# Copmanthorpe Neighbourhood Plan

## Part 2



# Copmanthorpe Village Design Statement

November 2022





# Copmanthorpe Village Design Statement

*Originally published in February 2003 by Copmanthorpe Village Design Group, adopted by City of York Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance on 28th November 2003 and revised and updated by Copmanthorpe Neighbourhood Planning Group in April 2022.*

## 1. The Copmanthorpe Village Design Statement aims to:

- a) guide and influence the design of development in a way that preserves and enhances the character and distinctiveness of Copmanthorpe
- b) contribute the views, local knowledge and interests of residents in the design and development of their village
- c) promote appropriate standards of design through clear guidelines so that development and change make a positive contribution to the village
- d) provide a practical tool for householders, developers, builders and their designers
- e) assist the decision-making process in response to planning applications

## 2. What is the Village Design Statement?

- a) It describes the character of our village and identifies the qualities and features that are highly valued by its residents.
- b) It was originally created through a process of resident participation, workshops and public meetings. The Statement was written by a group of its residents, who formed Copmanthorpe Village Design Group.
- c) The original document was supported by Copmanthorpe Parish Council and City of York Council who approved it as Supplementary Planning Guidance on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2002. It has been cited many times over the years in considering planning applications.
- d) It has now been re-examined by Copmanthorpe Neighbourhood Planning Group to update it for incorporation into the Copmanthorpe Neighbourhood Plan.

## 3. Who is it For?

- a) The Village Design Statement, as part of the Copmanthorpe Neighbourhood Plan, carries the same weight as the Plan and, as such, will be part of the process of determining planning applications.

## 4. How Does it Work?

- a) The Village Design Statement becomes an integral part of the Neighbourhood Plan and carries the same weight in law

## 5. Village Context

- a) The village lies on the first contoured rise from the River Ouse flood plain In the Vale of York, four miles southwest from the historic city of York.
- b) The core of the settlement is contained within a triangle formed by the A64 trunk road to the north, the main East Coast railway line to the East and highly fertile arable farmland and open countryside to the South and West.
- c) A relatively small number of houses, surrounded by Green Belt, lie east of the railway line which effectively divides the village into two parts.

## 6. Location & History



a) Mentioned in the Domesday Book, the village origins go back more than a thousand years. The name 'Copmanthorpe' is of Viking origin meaning 'merchants' settlement'. A Roman road that linked York with Tadcaster can be traced through the village along Colton Lane and Top Lane.

b) Around the time that St.Giles' Church was built in 1180, the Order of the Knights Templars founded a settlement at the East end of the village, known as Temple Copmanthorpe. The large quality of fine stone in the boundary walls along Main Street and

Back Lane and in some farm buildings is thought to be from the original Preceptory buildings. Names survive in that part of the village such as Temple Lane, Temple Garth, Temple Hill and Temple Field.

c) Over the medieval period the settlement developed into an agricultural community and from this period names still survive, e.g. York Field, West Field and Temple Field. The area between the two original village streets, Main Street and Back Lane, was divided up into long thin burgage plots and later expanded west across Back Lane, being worked as crofts and occupied by tenants.



d) Many of the ancient field boundaries have survived. The last remaining croft boundaries with their hedgerows were on the corner of Back Lane and Low Westfield Road (recently lost to development). Up until 1839, when the railway opened, the village remained a collection of farms and crofts with a population of about 300 people.

e) In the Victorian period only small scale developments took place, most of which are located in what has since become the Conservation Area.

## 7. Village Context

a) The inter war years saw isolated ribbon development start along Top Lane from its junction with the A64; it is from this period that the village changed from an agricultural community to a dormitory settlement for York and Leeds. In 1969 the village was selected to meet York's overspill problems being designated as a "settlement capable of substantial expansion without significant loss of character"!

b) The population of Copmanthorpe stands at 4,300 (2011 census) having more than quadrupled since 1961, so that there are now more than 1,750 houses within the village.

c) Young people and children form a large part of our village community and their views about their environment were included in this Statement. Over a hundred youngsters stated that they enjoy their journey to school; the majority prefer to walk and like the fresh air and exercise. Some would like to cycle but are aware of the dangers; many recorded their concerns over car pollution and the number and speed of cars in the vicinity of the school. Most responded positively in liking the open spaces for playing, including their gardens, the Recreation Centre, school playing fields and other play areas where they feel safe and away from danger.

## 8. Design Guidelines

*All developments must be designed with children's health and safety in mind to:*

1. *include safe cycling and walking routes to the school and other children's facilities*
2. *have adequate and safe spaces for children to play close to home*
3. *reduce vehicle movements and speed*

## 9. Landscape Setting

a) Copmanthorpe is one of a small cluster of villages surrounded by countryside in close proximity to York. Our village has a distinct landscape setting characterised mainly by large arable fields bounded by native hedgerows and trees, all of which lie within the Green Belt. The exception to this open countryside setting is to the North beyond the A64. Here the village is edged by tree belts and woodland of the local golf club and Askham Bog (SSSI).

b) Manor Heath is the main entrance to the village via a slip road from the A64 and gives a visual impression of a village set behind native hedges and mature trees. Access from the East was previously via a slip road from the A64 onto Tadcaster Road but in 2002 this was shut and a new winding minor road gives a green gateway to our village and offers a much better impression of a distinct, self-contained village.

c) The Western approach from the direction of Leeds by the A64 or Colton Lane is level and bordered by arable and pasture fields. Mature hedgerows and trees together with grass strips soften this edge to give a green aspect with housing set well back from the road.



Prime agricultural land to the west of Copmanthorpe - looking West from Manor Heath

d) From Bishopthorpe the arable land is flat and stretches on the South side of the road all the way to the railway bridge. Immediately East of the railway bridge the allotments separate the village into two parts.

e) A network of tracks and paths edged with hedgerows and trees extends from the surrounding countryside into the heart of the village to create a web of formal and informal walkways, linking the old and new areas of the village with its landscape setting. A designated footpath leads from Old Moor Lane to the neighbouring village of Colton and a public footpath, Yorkfield Lane, designated in 2021, runs from the centre of the village to the north eastern side of Site 1, CNP2 (Allocated Sites).

## 10. Design Guidelines

1. *For all future development the guiding principle should be that it should look as though the landscape and its distinctive features came first, the building development second*
2. *Any development must ensure that the village remains separate from neighbouring built up areas. The strategic gap between Copmanthorpe and Bishopthorpe needs to be maintained.*
3. *All existing locally distinctive landscape features surrounding the village should be preserved and enhanced as part of any development. This should provide additional features for villagers, the flora and fauna, eg trees, hedges, ponds, footpaths, open spaces, etc*



## 11. Flora & Fauna

a) Copmanthorpe is fortunate in having Askham Bog, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, on its doorstep. The site is home to some outstanding plant species including the rare Royal Fern, Water Violet and a number of Sphagnum species.



b) The open farmland surrounding the village is readily accessible to villagers to see wildlife including fox, badger, brown hare, hedgehog and Roe deer. In the fields off Back Lane, the nationally scarce Lesser Whitethroat reappears annually to breed and the Oystercatcher is seen annually. Butterfly species are numerous along Back Lane, less common species such as Painted Lady and Clouded Yellow and the Silver-Y-Moth have been noted in recent years. The village would be a far poorer place if birds and insects such as these were to disappear in the coming years due to loss of habitat.

c) Changing farming methods and loss of habitat are thought to be responsible for the decline of the water vole as well as many bird species, such as the Tree Sparrow, Corn Bunting and Skylark, which until recently were a familiar sight in the land surrounding the village.

d) The native hedgerows and mature trees extend from the surrounding open countryside into the village like green fingers. Hedgerows represent corridors along which wildlife can move from one area to another. They are a valuable refuge providing nesting sites and shelter for wildlife whilst also softening the boundary of the built environment.



## 12. Design Guidelines

1. *Any future developments must maintain and enhance habitat diversity through preserving and expanding features such as native hedgerows and trees*
2. *Ease of access for appropriate recreation purposes to surrounding countryside will be maintained in any future development*

## 13. Settlement Pattern Character

a) The A64 road, railway and Green Belt have effectively limited the overall shape and size of our village. Developments between the 1960s and the end of the millennium have almost completely filled-in this area. Recent developments have been limited to in-filling remaining open spaces, with the result that our village feels more dense and compact. There is concern over how much more development can be accommodated without encroaching into the green belt. There are now few open spaces left for development within the established village boundaries.



b) The centre of our village is the oldest part, around the Norman Church, Station Road and the two small village greens (Low Green & Memorial Green) and Main Street. It is here that most of the village facilities are located, including a number of shops, Post Office, library, doctors' surgeries, village pub and food outlets. Adjacent to this area are the school and recreation centre, both of which have playing fields that represent the only sizeable open areas left within the village.

c) The remainder of the village is characterised by a number of distinct housing areas that have been developed in stages around the village centre between the 1960s and the end of the millennium. These four decades saw new housing developments that have taken our village to its present size.

## 14. Streets and Footpaths

a) All three main entrances to Copmanthorpe lead towards the centre of the village with Main Street as the only through road. Recent housing developments in the village have resulted in a significant increase in vehicular traffic through the Conservation Area. There is considerable concern over safety issues resulting from excessive speeding and volume of traffic; this, combined with roadside parking, has created congestion and conflict between drivers and pedestrians.

b) Most roads within the village serve a series of housing estates based on the 1960s – 2000 developments. Here there are a considerable number of cul-de-sacs which are valued for enabling children to play in relative safety.

c) Many of the village roads outside the Conservation Area have footpaths to each side, often separated from the road by grass verges, with housing generally set further back. This creates a feeling of openness that provides an effective counter-balance to the density of housing.

d) There is an extensive network of footpaths, independent of the road system, in and around the village. Most footpaths are well used; some are very ancient, such as Yorkfield Lane (designated as a Public Right of Way in 2021) which forms part of the Ebor Way, a long-distance walk. Many of the older footpaths follow old field boundaries and are characterised by mature native hedges and trees. Paths within housing estates link to this established network.

## 15. Trees and Hedges

a) There are a good number of established trees of a variety of species in the older parts of our village, whilst others have been planted more recently as part of new development; a large number of Tree Preservation Orders apply. Trees are the tallest feature of the village; notable amongst the existing trees is a very fine Beech tree in Main Street and the Cherry trees on Horseman Lane, whose blossom adds welcome colour when approaching the village centre in spring and which hark back to the cherry orchards which surrounded the village in Edwardian times. Top Lane has an array of seasonal blossoms and well-established trees.

b) There are many old native hedges, some protected under the Environment Act, 1995, which provide an important refuge for wildlife. Within the village there is only one small wood, situated around Copmanthorpe Manor (now much reduced), though Copmanthorpe Wood, beyond the Southern edge of the village, is listed as a 'non-statutory site of nature conservation value'. Trees and hedges are highly valued by villagers and merit high priority when development is under consideration.

## 16. Open Spaces

a) The two village greens are important in providing a 'green heart' for Copmanthorpe. These public spaces have a particular social and community value. Low Green is without pavements and is used for the village May Fair and Christmas grotto. Memorial Green, with a pavement to one side, serves as a popular meeting point and includes the village's war memorial. Both spaces are registered Village Greens and are characterised by well-kept grass and mature trees and are enclosed by characterful buildings. In addition, the village burial ground, on Old Moor Lane, provides a peaceful space with mature trees and views across open farmland to the west.







b) The churchyard of St Giles Church and the recently extended Parish burial ground are both important features. There is also a large, well-used allotment area to the South Eastern edge of the village and the new Tadcaster Road Link includes a large area sown with wild flowers between bushes and bordering a balance pond. Larger gardens, often in the older parts of the village, also make a significant contribution. There has been appreciable infill development in recent years, regrettably diminishing the amount of green open space.

## 17. Views

a) There are some impressive views, looking in and looking out of our village. From the top of Manor Heath and Pike Hills Mount, York Minster and the famous White Horse at Kilburn (20 miles away) are clearly visible. Looking from the village there are many fine views of the open countryside. These views, and others, are unique and much cherished.

## 18. Design Guidelines

1. *All developments must give very careful thought to the impact of increased traffic into Copmanthorpe, particularly in and around the village centre and to the possible effects of greater demands upon the school and other local amenities. Any traffic calming at the entrances to the village and within the settlement should be in character with its village setting. Standard urban solutions are not appropriate.*
2. *All development must retain the rural character of our village and reflect the many good examples that exist eg group new buildings around a village green, retain hedges, set houses well back from roads with plenty of appropriate trees and grass verges.*
3. *Retention of existing and creation of new open spaces is essential. The range and location of open spaces together with their features make them vitally important to the character of our village.*
4. *The existing network of footpaths must be retained and extended into any new development*
5. *Views, in and out of the village, are significant to the overall character of our village and must be retained and protected in the design of any new development.*

## 19. Buildings – Historical Development

a) The old centre of the village has retained much of its original character and charm. This area, centred on Main Street, Low Green and Memorial Green, was designated a Conservation Area in the 1970s and includes some Listed Buildings. It consists mostly of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings together with one of medieval origin, St Giles' Parish Church.



b) The Parish Church of St Giles dates from the late Norman period and retains a number of original features. It was extended to include its own graveyard in 1750. The brick boundary wall survives today though its iron railings were removed in 1940 and were never replaced. Nearby, the agricultural origins of the village are evident through the farmhouses and cottages. There remains one working farm in the centre of the village which makes a significant contribution to village character.





c) Unfortunately, prior to the Conservation Area designation, some fine old buildings were demolished.

d) A Tudor Manor House was demolished to make way for the shopping centre. Although the facilities are much valued its poor layout and design, including a large but poorly maintained car park, on such a prominent site has meant that this development detracts from the positive qualities of the neighbouring Conservation Area.

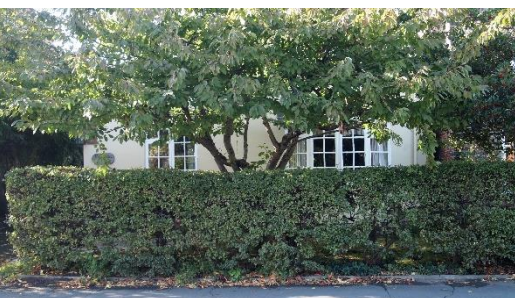
e) Between the 1960s and the end of the millennium housing developments were prolific, mainly estate housing. These developments reflect the national fashion of their time rather than the local building style. Extensions to these dwellings have added some welcome individuality and variety but have sometimes shown a lack of consideration and sensitivity to neighbouring properties. Regrettably, they have frequently led to the disappearance of front gardens for car parking.

## 20. Buildings – Conservation Area



a) A notable feature of the Conservation Area is the characterful grouping of typical buildings from the Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian eras. They form a harmonious group of detached and semi-detached, essentially two storey buildings, complementing each other in style and scale. This results in a pleasing, subtle variation in roofline and building line. Although the buildings are generally set close to each other, facing the road, there is sufficient space between them to allow for maintenance, access to rear gardens and discreet car parking.

b) Local building materials predominate; walls usually of facing brick (handmade clamps to the Georgian and early Victorian buildings, hard pressed machine-made to the late Victorian and Edwardian buildings). Some buildings are rendered and colour-washed; a few walls being constructed of locally sourced Magnesian limestone. Typically, windows and door heads to the earlier buildings are often arched. Roofs are predominantly gabled though a few are hipped, notably that of Manor Farm house. They are finished mainly in hand made clay pantiles or natural Welsh slate. Eaves levels and roof pitches vary; each building typically possessing substantial chimneystacks predominantly positioned at gable ends.



c) Most front gardens are quite small and enclosed, some with attractive mature trees and shrubs. There is a variety of boundary treatments; dwarf walls constructed from clamp brick, coursed limestone or rendered, matching the building; hedges are also common. Rear gardens are usually quite substantial in size having evolved from the original burgage plot subdivision, the ancient boundary lines still surviving. These gardens, too, are characterised by mature trees and shrub borders.

d) All this contributes to a rich and varied streetscape, helping to define the village character. Lighting and signage are generally subtle and of low visual impact and in character with its village context. Overhead cables, telegraph poles and signage in a few locations detract from the quality of the streetscape and new lighting on Main Street is brighter than before but was considered necessary for safety.

## 21. Design Guidelines

*As a general principle all new building developments should be of an imaginative design that enhances local distinctiveness. They should contribute to the village feel of Copmanthorpe by respecting the qualities valued by the local community and addressing the needs of its residents, which are expressed in our Village Design Statement. Developers must look beyond their site boundaries and consider how their proposals fit in with the existing village surroundings.*

*Layout design should:*

- 1. Retain and enhance site features.*
- 2. Have a good range of plot sizes and house types with buildings of similar massing to neighbouring development, normally up to two storeys in height (three storey development limited to occupation of roof space except in very exceptional circumstances).*
- 3. Include subtle variation in building line and roof line and avoid monotonous repetition.*
- 4. Provide adequate ratio of open space eg grouping buildings around a village green.*
- 5. Encourage walking and cycling by safe and direct routes to the rest of the village,*
- 6. Consider road layout carefully to encourage slow vehicular speeds, including adequate and discreet (off road) car parking provision, whilst also taking into account any possible negative consequences, particularly in the village centre.*
- 7. Minimise areas of hard surfacing and dispose of all surface water on site*
- 8. Integrate lighting and signage so that it is of low visual impact and designed in keeping with the village character; urban standards are not appropriate. Low intensity lighting using white light is preferred.*
- 9. Ensure that all existing, and any new, public utilities, services, pipes and cables are routed underground.*
- 10. Ensure that a suitably protected power source is installed in a position where it may be safely used for recharging electric cars and/or mobility scooters*

*Building design must:*

- 1. Comply with level 5 as defined in the Code for Sustainable Homes (Energy/CO2, Pollution, Water, Health and Wellbeing, Materials, Management, Surface Water)*
- 2. Acknowledge its Copmanthorpe context; innovative modern design is encouraged where it conforms to the general principle, stated above.*
- 3. Comply with local detailing, eg chimney stacks to gable ends; but arbitrary variation of materials and detailing should be avoided.*
- 4. Include a choice of materials and detailing to complement local character and avoid 'pattern book' designs*
- 5. Provide sufficient space between buildings for maintenance and to allow access (including sufficient access for the movement of waste, recycling and other bins) and adaptation / personalisation over time.*
- 6. Provide sufficient off street and garage parking space for the number of vehicles likely to be based at any particular dwelling. For guidance, a single bedroom dwelling should have enough room for two cars to be parked, either in a garage or on a driveway; a two bedroom dwelling – three spaces; a three bedroom – four spaces and a four bedroom – five spaces. Developers should consider setting garages towards the rear of dwellings to provide longer driveways (and also to avoid the possibility of 'terracing' at a later date).*
- 7. Locate satellite dishes discreetly to the rear.*
- 8. Include site boundaries of hedges and/or walls.*

*Extensions and in-fill development should be a 'good neighbour' by:*

- 1. Being set back from plot boundaries.*
- 2. Retaining neighbour's right to light and privacy.*
- 3. Avoiding locations that could link one house to its neighbours to create a terraced effect.*
- 4. Being designed to complement existing buildings, with the building line normally set back and with the roof line normally lower than the main building.*
- 5. Careful detailing with the choice of materials to complement the main building.*
- 6. Ensuring discreet (off road) car parking provision when viewed from the street. Front gardens should not be dominated by hard surfacing for additional car parking*

*Renewable Energy*

- 1. Proposals for development within the Parish (but outside the Conservation Area) of, or associated with, small domestic scale renewable energy facilities will be supported provided that it can be shown that the development:*

- a. *Would not conflict with the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and in particular:*
  - i. *Would not adversely affect areas which are of nature conservation importance*
  - ii. *Would not adversely affect the quality and character of the landscape and*
  - iii. *Would not result in the loss of agricultural land*
- b. *Would not adversely affect the amenities or safety of local residents or other users of the countryside*
- c. *Could be satisfactorily accommodated on or close to the existing rural road network without the need for significant changes which would affect the character of the surrounding area*

*Additionally, in the Conservation Area:*

1. *All developments must promote and reflect the environment, character, scale, layout and landscape and be carried out with great sensitivity respecting historic and listed buildings and their setting.*
2. *New build and/or alterations to buildings not listed, when close to or adjacent to a listed building, must respect and consider the surrounding and neighbouring environment*
3. *Design and materials must be sympathetic to the Conservation Area and the use of UPVC (PVCu) windows and doors is to be avoided*



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