The Environment

INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this Plan is to preserve the characteristic and valued features of Tur Langton – its environment – while meeting the housing needs of the District and securing the long-term social and economic viability of the parish. As set out below, the locations of the most significant features of the natural, historical and cultural environment provide a framework within which new infrastructure can be developed strategically.

The modern natural, historical and cultural environment of Tur Langton is the direct result of two millennia of history – in detail, this is a unique story, not like that of any other place – overlaid onto a topography based on geology and the complex interaction between the natural environment and human activity.

Tur Langton is on the south side of a ridge separating the valleys of the rivers Welland and Soar; this ridge is a significant regional feature from which water drains either east, to the Wash, or north, to the Humber estuary. The section of this ridge in the parish is made of Jurassic rock – mostly clay and siltstone – but this is buried, except in the main river valleys, by interlayered glacial clay, sand and gravel. It is the complicated sequence and pattern of these different 'superficial' deposits that has largely determined the distributions of natural habitats and the area's human settlers' choices of where to live, what to build with and how to farm the land.

People passed through here in deep prehistoric time, but their numbers were low and they left only the few stone artefacts they dropped: they did not live in permanent settlements. By the last century BC, however, native 'British' people had territories, with permanent settlements and crops, in the area. 'Glenne' to the north and 'Bowden' to the south are probable late prehistoric tribal centres. During the Roman occupation the local native inhabitants were more or less assimilated into Roman society; in Tur Langton there are several archaeological sites at the locations of Romano-British farmsteads and villas.

Continuity of occupation between Romano-British Tur Langton and the following Anglo-Saxon 'invasions' is likely, but can't be proved. The first of the new wave of settlers from Europe arrived in the 7th century, establishing the basis of our modern pattern of villages and parishes as they advanced out of East Anglia, up the Welland valley and over the Langton/Kibworth ridge and into the midlands. Tur Langton was one of a group of six 'nucleated villages' (previous settlements had been scattered villas and farmsteads) established then in the small territory known today as 'the Langtons'.

Tur Langton has therefore been continuously occupied, on the same site and with roughly the same territorial boundaries (the modern parish), for at least 1200 years. Its site was probably chosen for its aspect and its patches of gravelly soil – better than Leicestershire clay for living on, and with springs of fresh water nearby. It was originally 'Tyrli's place' (*Terlintone* in 1086), or possibly '*Terlingaton'* in which the '*inga*' part means 'of the people of…'. In any case, the modern two-word name Tur Langton is apparently a 17th century documentary error, a mistaken assumption that the village was another Langton, like East and Thorpe.

Tur Langton, Shangton and the four Langtons were the villages and surrounding farmland constituting an early medieval (pre-Conquest) 'Langton Hundred'. Tur Langton was a Manor, the property of a Norman baron, by the time of the Domesday survey in 1086. Its mother church was St Peter's in Church Langton; Tur Langton's 13th century Chapel of St Andrew was largely demolished in1866 but the footings and floor survive as an important Scheduled Monument.

The village had its own open fields, with the associated system of land management and ownership, from perhaps the 10th century until the Enclosures of 1792. This is the date after which most of the parish's open land became permanent grass, some of which still survives close to the village and among the 20th and 21st century intensive arable farmland.

The recorded population in 1086 was 39. The village was probably at its largest and most populous (until the 20th century) in the 13th century, as shown by the areas of medieval earthworks (house

platforms and lanes) outside the modern built-up area. Climate change and bubonic plague thereafter reduced the population, and the village contracted; there were 138 communicants in 1676. It grew again to become the largest village among the Langtons during the 19th century. The total population was 350 in 1841. It then declined to 188 by 1921, but has risen through the last century, with new, small-scale development, to about XXX.

The present layout of the village undoubtedly preserves much of that of the medieval settlement (less the 14th century abandoned sections), with its wide main street, lanes, closes, cottages and crofts, and the manor house (Tur Langton was the only village in the Hundred to have its own residential manorial lord) at its western end. The oldest domestic buildings, however, date mainly from the 17th and 18th centuries. There is a strong community wish to protect this historic, domestic-scale, rural layout by sensitive, strategic planning of new development.

Such a long history of settlement and farming has resulted in a relatively impoverished natural environment in the parish. This raises the importance and value (both for biodiversity and the community) of the semi-natural features and sites that do exist. Undeveloped areas across the parish, but especially within and close to the village, include areas of habitat of high local importance for wildlife. Consequently particular effort has been put into identifying and evaluating these sites, along with those of local historical and cultural importance, by undertaking an *environmental inventory* of the whole Plan Area (Appendices X and Y) to provide a robust evidence base for the environmental polices in the Plan.

Main sources:
Settlement, territory and land use in the East Midlands: The Langton Hundred c.150BC – c.AD1350 Bowman, P., 1995 (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leicester)
A history of the County of Leicestershire Volume 5, Gartree Hundred (Victoria County History, 1964) via british-history.ac.uk

1. Local Green Spaces

An environmental inventory (map and list, Appendices X and Y) of all undeveloped land in the Parish was carried out between May and September 2016. Information was compiled from existing sources (national and/or local designations, records and mapping), fieldwork and local knowledge and records, combined with the results of the consultation (open events and questionnaires) with residents conducted for this Plan.

Of the (estimated) 152 parcels of undeveloped land in Tur Langton, vvv were identified as having significant environmental (natural, historical and/or cultural) features. These features have been listed to provide the evidence base for the *environment* component of *sustainable development* in the Plan Area.

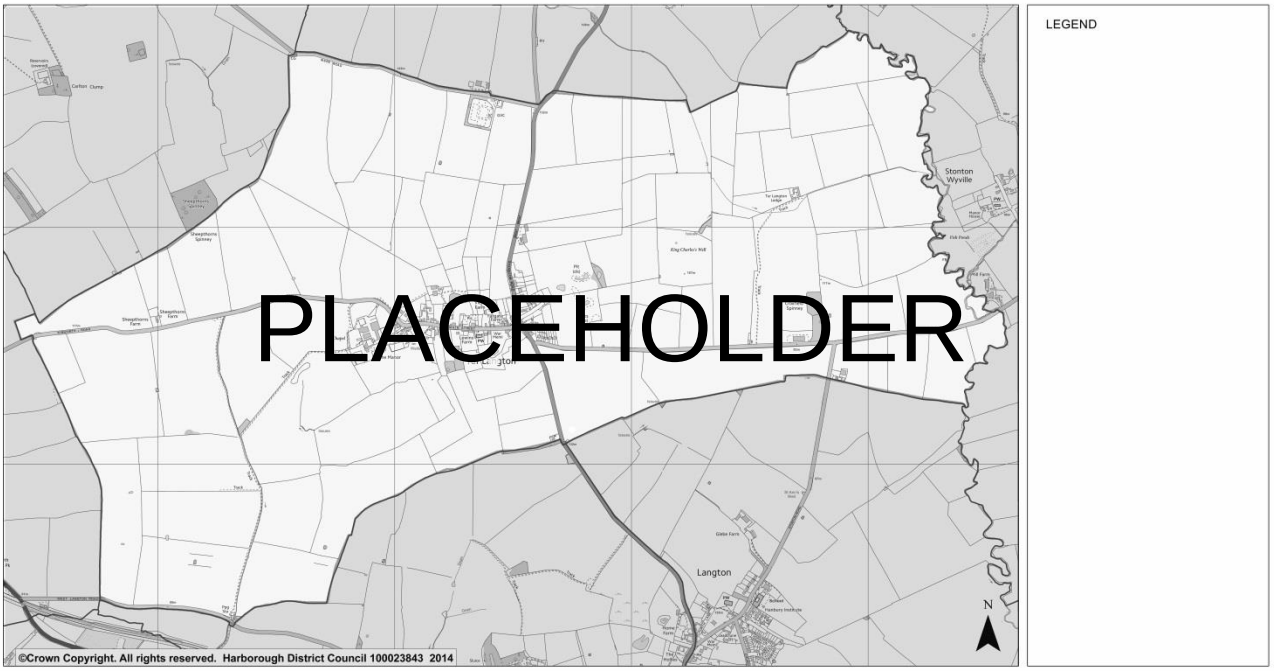
The mm inventory sites of most significance for biodiversity, history and community value were scored against the nine criteria for Local Green Space eligibility in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2012*. [Number] sites score 70% or more of the maximum possible, and are proposed for designation as Local Green Spaces. Their statutory protection will ensure that these six most important places in Tur Langton's unique natural and human landscape are protected.

Note: Local Green Space designation provides statutory protection of small-scale, bounded parcels of land against development, subject to certain conditions. Designation does not confer rights of public access beyond any already in force, nor does it affect a landowner's other property rights.

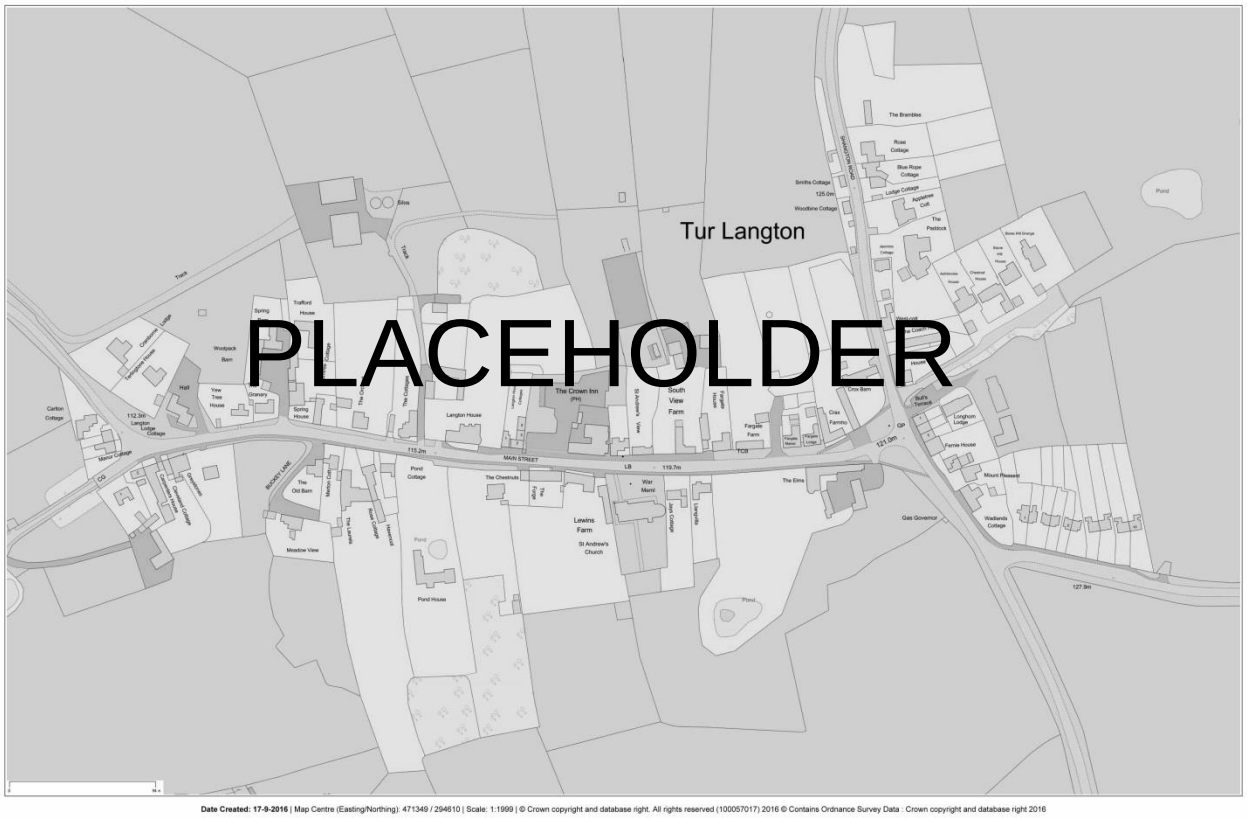
POLICY ENV 1: PROTECTION OF LOCAL GREEN SPACES - Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have an adverse effect on, an identified Local Green Space (listed below and mapped in figures x1, x2) will not be supported, other than in very special circumstances in accordance with District and national planning policies.

[LIST]

Local Green Spaces (Plan Area)



Local Green Spaces (central)



2. Other Important Open Space

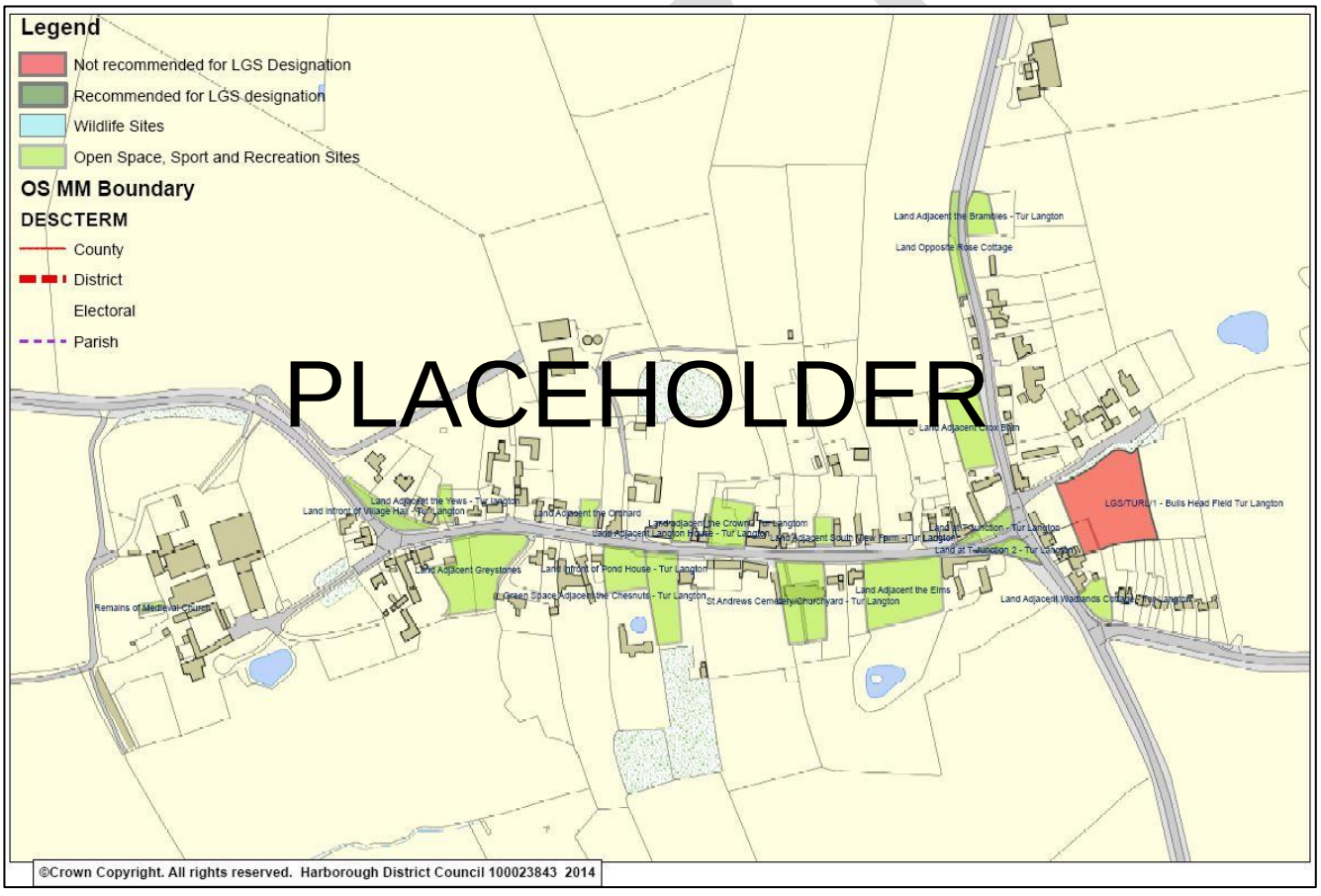
In addition to the Local Green Spaces listed above, the Environmental Inventory identified a number of other open spaces in the built-up area of importance for maintaining the characteristic village layout. This is known to be a result of historic redevelopment and rebuilding within the medieval

pattern of wide main street, house plots, gardens, lanes, closes and crofts. The roadside verges, small greens and open spaces between and behind the houses are distinctive and highly valued.

Although not appropriate for Local Green Space designation, they are a vital part of the special character of Tur Langton and merit protection and enhancement. Designation, or confirmation of existing designation, in the appropriate categories of Harborough District Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreation (OSSR) sites typology has been proposed in the Council's *Green Spaces* consultation documents (2016). The community fully supports all these OSSR designations.

Community Action ENV 1: OTHER IMPORTANT OPEN SPACE - The Parish Council and the community will actively work with Harborough District Council and other partners to secure or continue protection of the locations and features of the following sites (map below) as designated Open Space, Sport and Recreation (OSSR) sites in the typological classes noted.

[list – all as mapped below, less any proposed as LGS, plus ?any new ones]



3. Other sites of environmental significance

The remaining natural and historical environment sites identified in the inventory are all significant at parish level. The natural environment sites are mainly those where *priority habitats* occur or where *priority species* have been recorded as breeding or as regular visitors. Policy ENV 5, below, deals with the community's wish to promote protection of these priority habitats, priority species and species of conservation concern, in general; this policy deals with the identified site-specific occurrences.

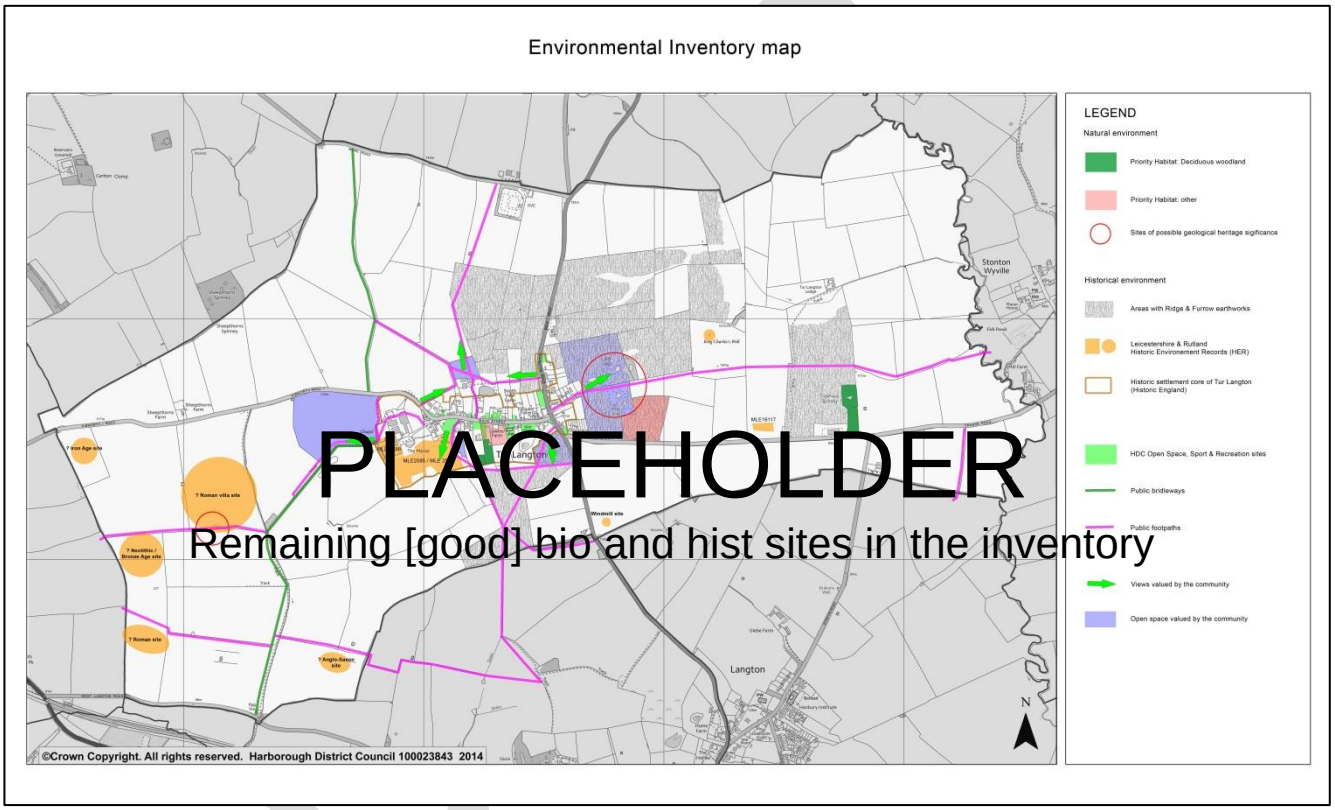
The historical environment sites comprise parcels of land of known (Historic England and Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Records) or of local history significance. Are there any

more historical sites (with extant expression) that aren't already proposed as LGS or statutorily protected?

DO YOU WANT TO HAVE A 'LOCAL LIST' OF IMPORTANT BUILDINGS (below the level of statutory Listing?

POLICY ENV 3: PROTECTION OF OTHER SITES OF ENVIRONMENTAL (NATURAL AND HISTORICAL) SIGNIFICANCE – The following sites (environmental inventory, appendix XX, and map figure 1) have been identified as being of local significance for wildlife and/or history. They are important in their own right and are locally valued. Development proposals that affect them will be expected to protect or enhance the identified features

[LIST]



4. Trees, woodland and hedges

The landscape history of Tur Langton means there is a noticeable lack of trees in the open country. The parish has standard trees in its hedgerows, but only three small woodlands/spinneys; there is no extensive or mature woodland at all. The main 'wooded' area is the village itself, thanks largely to 18th to 21st century ornamental plantings, but even here no Tree Preservation Orders are in place and the only protection is that afforded under the provisions of the Conservation Area.

All hedges, except one on a short section of the parish boundary between Tur Langton and West Langton, appear to be on field boundaries established by or after the Enclosure Award of 1791; most are hawthorn/blackthorn with ash standards, and are thus not regarded as of high biodiversity value. However they are considered by the community to be of high landscape value.

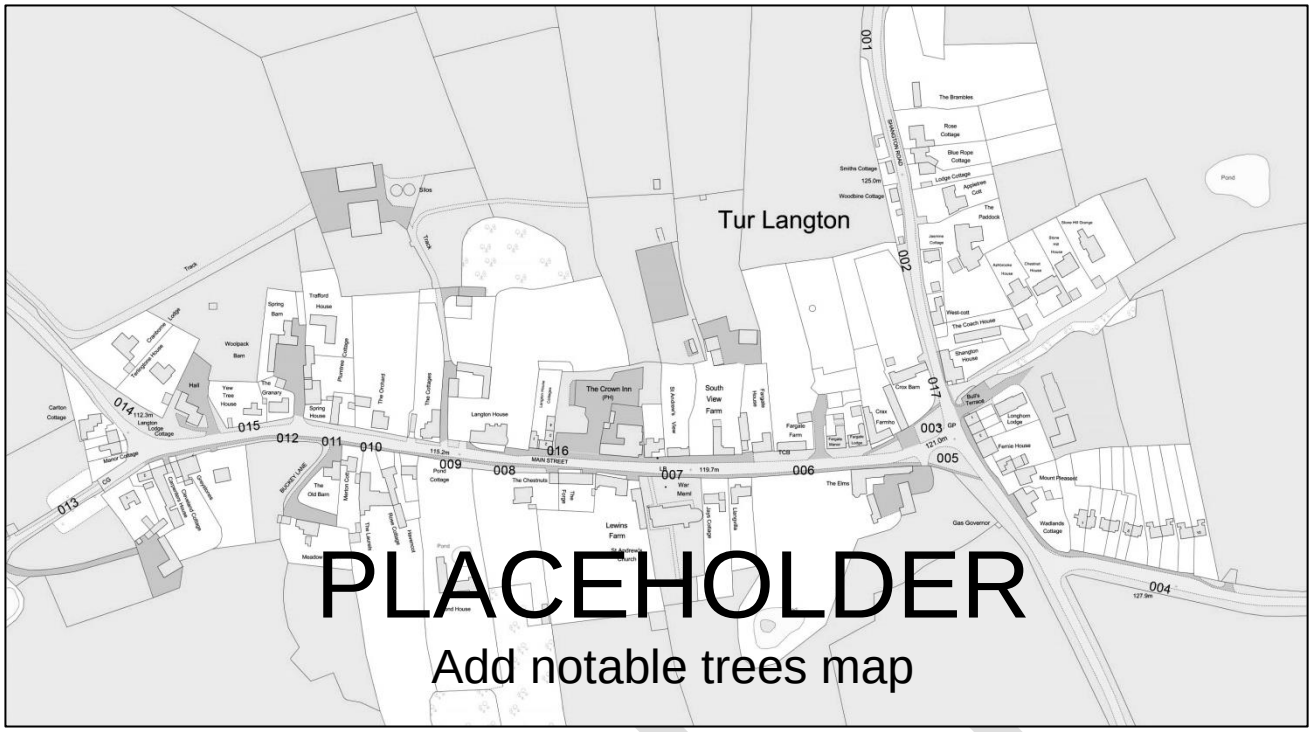
This policy ensures that the landscape and ecological value of the remaining woodland and trees in the parish is recognised in the Planning process, including provisions for conservation, new planting and replacement in new development.

The identified lack of woodland in the wider parish is addressed in Policy ENV 5.

POLICY ENV 4 IMPORTANT WOODLAND, TREES AND HEDGES - Development proposals that will affect trees, woodland and hedges of environmental (biodiversity, historical, arboricultural) significance, or of landscape or amenity value, will be resisted. Proposals for new build housing should be designed to retain such trees and hedges where possible. Where destruction cannot be avoided developers will be required to plant replacement trees (on a two-for-one basis) or hedges either on the site or elsewhere in the parish.

The Parish Council will continue to identify trees and woodland of value, as above, for recommendation to the Planning Authority for Tree Preservation Orders.

One species-rich, pre-Enclosure hedge identified as of high historical and ecological importance (figure N below) is proposed for notification as a non-designated heritage asset.



5. Biodiversity

Tur Langton has relatively few substantial sites of importance for wildlife, meaning that biodiversity overall is relatively low. The need for every community to make its own contribution to reversing the current threats to and loss of priority habitats and species is recognised in the parish.

Biodiversity enhancement (species and habitats) is supported by the National Planning policy Framework, which is itself compliant with the European Habitats Directive 1992 (*Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora*) and the UK *Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations, 2010, Amended 2012*.

The Policy and Community Action here provide for three proactive measures: having up-to-date information about Parish wildlife; requiring developers to take biodiversity into account in their proposals; and mobilising the community to create new, and manage existing, habitats to enhance biodiversity.

POLICY ENV 5: BIODIVERSITY

Development proposals will be expected to safeguard significant local habitats and species, especially those protected by relevant English and European legislation, and, where possible, to create new habitats for wildlife.

COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 2: BIODIVERSITY

a) The Parish Council in conjunction will other bodies will keep updated the environmental inventory list of known sites of biodiversity interest prepared for this Plan (Appendices 1 and 2, map on next page);

b) The Parish Council will actively seek to work with community groups, landowners, funders and other organisations to enhance the biodiversity of the Parish by creating and/or managing habitat sites (e.g. wildflower meadows, woodland, wetland) on suitable parcels of land.

6. Ridge and furrow

A characteristic feature of Tur Langton is the survival of a number of ridge and furrow fields, some close to the village and others in a group to its northeast. Much of the grassland in the west of the parish has been converted to arable over the past 30 years. A survey in 2016 confirmed the extant distribution of ridge and furrow by comparison with Google Earth photography dating from 2011. The Inventory map (Appendix X) shows all visible ridge and furrow in the parish, while the map below shows those selected as being the best-preserved and thus considered to be worthy of protection.

Like almost all other rural settlements in the Midlands (and across lowland northwest Europe), medieval Tur Langton village was surrounded by three open fields until the time of its Enclosure in 1791. On the heavy clay of east Leicestershire, the contemporary simple plough with a non-reversible coulter pulled by teams of oxen produced permanent, large-scale ridges and furrows. After Enclosure, when the old ploughlands were converted largely to grazing land, the ridges and furrows were 'fossilised', preserving the medieval pattern of lands beneath the new enclosure hedges and fields. However, a second agricultural revolution in the 20th century saw the conversion of the grazing fields back to arable by deep ploughing, resulting in the final destruction of a large proportion ridge and furrow earthworks.

Reflecting the national trend (loss of between 85% and 100% per Parish, mostly since 1940), Tur Langton has seen a significant decline in ridge and furrow fields. Only some 20 of the c.150 fields (13% by number), 67 hectares of the 556 hectares of open land (c. 12% by area) in the parish now retain well-preserved examples (map below).

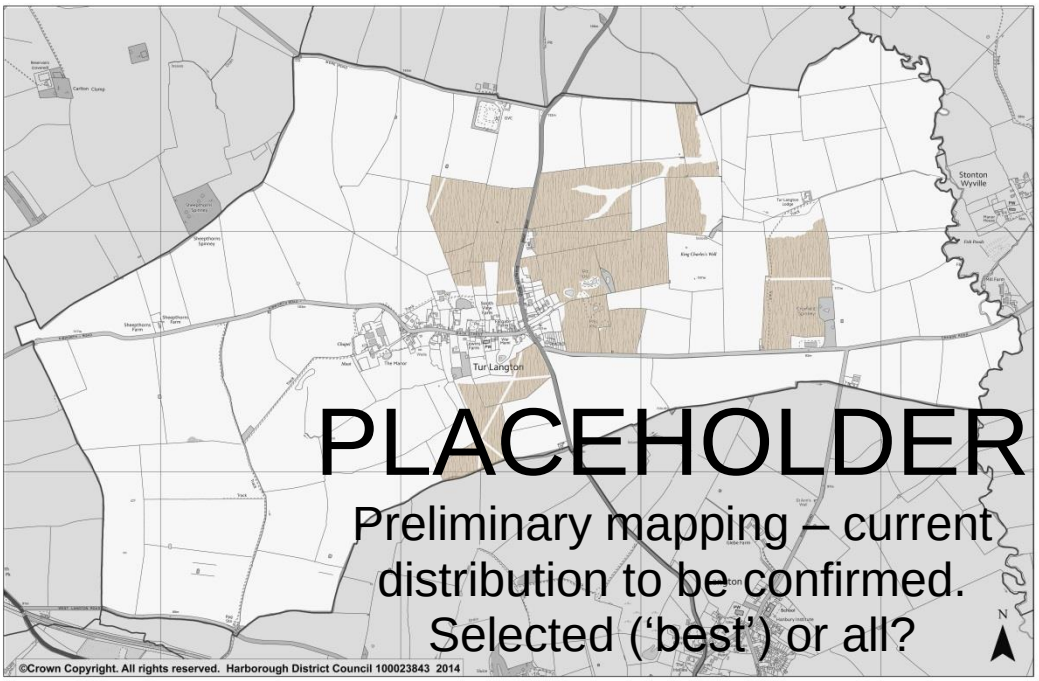
In English legislation, except for the few that are also Scheduled Monuments, ridge and furrow fields are not statutorily protected, despite a recognition that "as the open field system was once commonplace in NW Europe, these [surviving] sites take on an international importance" (English Heritage, 2012).

While individual fields in Tur Langton are not considered to be of international importance, they are an important part of the distinctive character of the parish and provide a link to its historic past. They are valued by the local community and any further, avoidable, loss of ridge and furrow in Tur Langton would be irreversibly detrimental. This policy not only seeks to protect the remaining ridge and furrow fields from development, but highlights their importance to the community, especially bearing in mind that many of the threats to ridge and furrow fields often involve types of development and practices that do not require planning approval.

Reference: Hall, D 2001. *Turning the Plough. Midland open fields: landscape character and proposals for management*. English Heritage and Northamptonshire County Council

POLICY ENV 6: RIDGE AND FURROW FIELDS – The surviving areas of ridge and furrow earthworks are non-designated heritage assets and any harm arising from a development proposal or change of land use requiring planning approval will need to be balanced against their significance as heritage assets.

Sites with well-preserved ridge and furrow earthworks



7. Views

Important views have been identified and mapped using an analysis of the community consultations and fieldwork undertaken for the Plan.

Because views frame and delineate open spaces in the countryside, they are regarded by the community as essential for protecting the valued rural context of the village and for maintaining its geographical and landscape relationship with the rest of the parish (its historic territory).

POLICY ENV 7 PROTECTION OF IMPORTANT VIEWS

Development that impacts in any way on the following locally important and valued views (map below) will be strongly resisted:

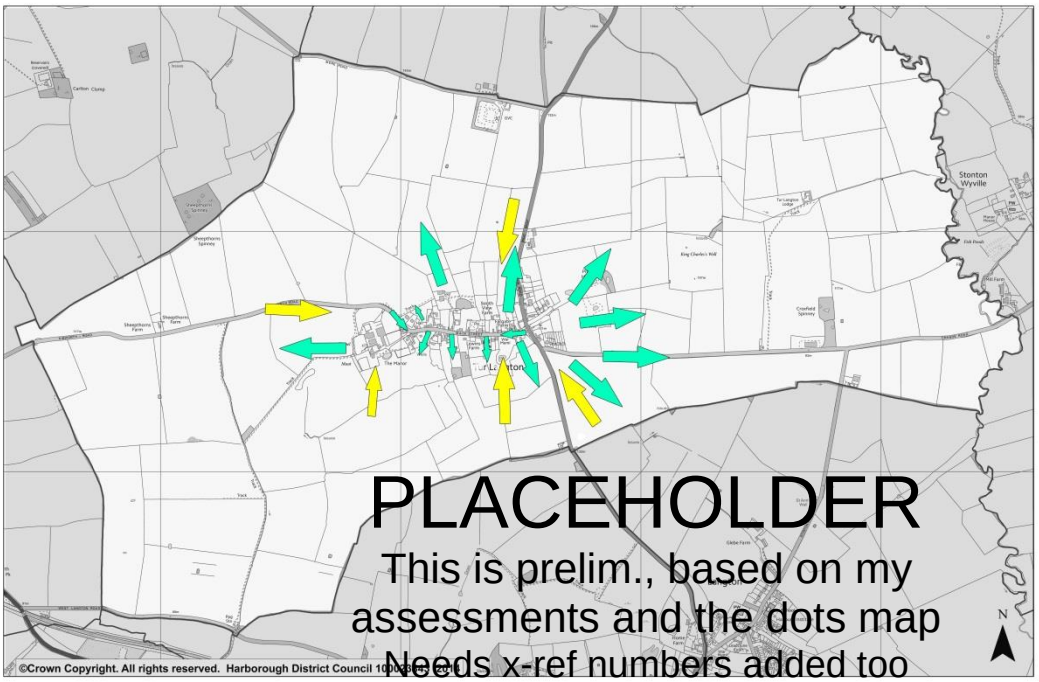
[x-ref numbers - List with short descriptions]

A.

B.

Etc.

Important views



8. Rights of Way

The parish is relatively well served by public footpaths and bridleways. Most, however, follow medieval trackways connecting the village with neighbouring settlements, so circular recreational routes often necessitate use of a public highway with no footway for part of the walk.

Country walking brings benefits as a leisure activity that contributes to health and wellbeing, but the present incomplete network does not encourage widespread participation. Where possible the existing network should be extended and enhanced, with more radial paths generally and the development of circular or interconnecting routes.

The Community Action expresses a local aspiration for creating better, safer circular routes for recreation to support the known benefits to physical and mental wellbeing of walking and other forms of exercise.

POLICY ENV 8: FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS

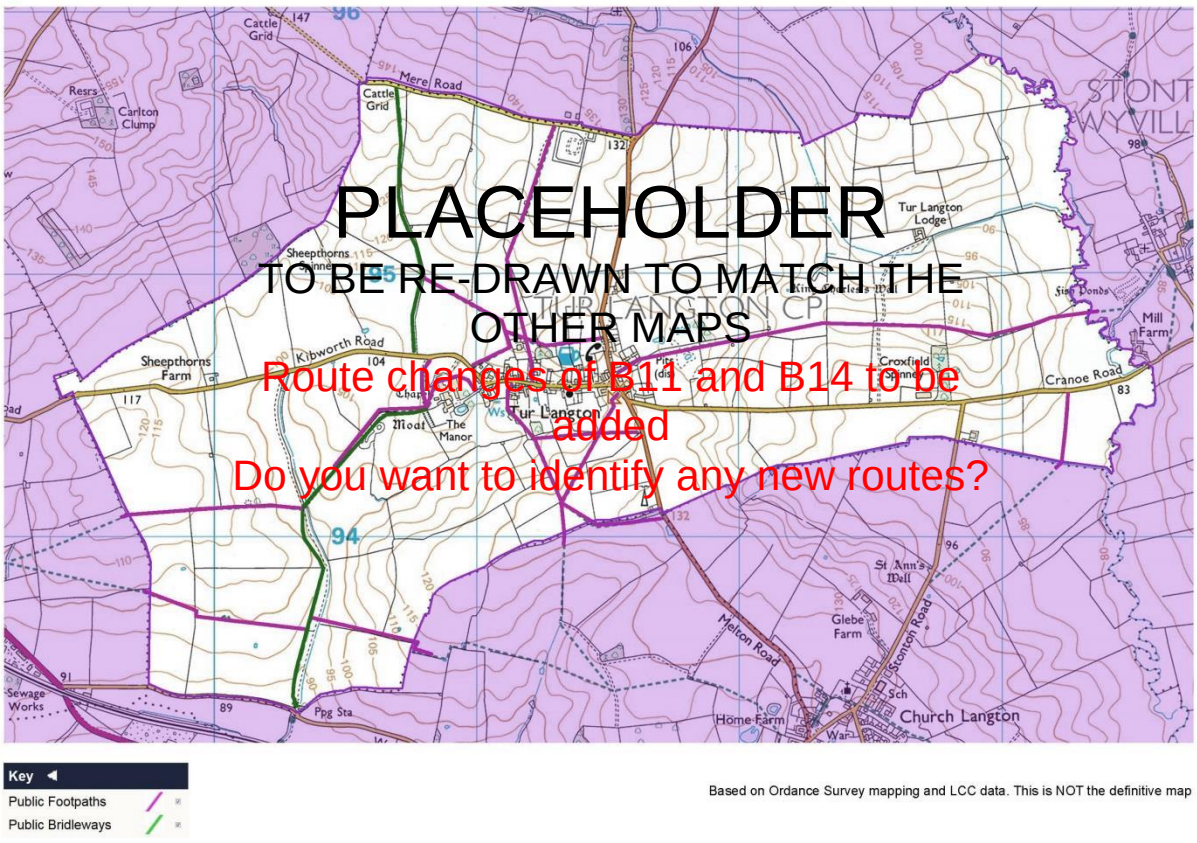
Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, the existing network of footpaths will not be supported.

COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 3: FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS

The Parish Council will monitor the condition of the existing network of footpaths and bridleways, and work with the responsible Local Authority departments and with the community and landowners to ensure that the network is maintained in a safe, useable condition.

The Parish Council will actively seek to work with landowners, Leicestershire County Council and other bodies to create and maintain enhancements to the present network of walking routes in the parish.

Tur Langton: Public Rights of Way



9. Sustainable development

Please review this section: it could be better drafted by the Group, I think!

NB I have adapted the relevant parts of the Bulls Head planning consent document in the policy itself – have I missed anything?

Tur Langton residents expressed a wish for their community to play its part in the sustainable development of the District. The intention is not to prevent all development, but to remind potential developers that the community, through the Parish Council and the Planning system, will scrutinise all development proposals for their sustainability. Policy ENV 10 deals with the related issues of sustainable drainage.

Neither does the community intend to resist all proposals for energy generation equipment and facilities; instead, it lists the criteria by which the community and its elected representatives will judge all planning proposals, including those for wind and solar energy generation. Future technologies for renewable, sustainable energy generation will be evaluated positively by the community, using the same criteria.

Finally, acceptance of the need to add new houses and other appropriate development to secure the future sustainability of the community is tempered by a wish to ensure that such new development is designed and built so as to enhance the built landscape of the village, and also to make its contribution to maintaining or increasing the biodiversity of the parish.

POLICY ENV 9: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals that are compliant with the aims of a low carbon economy, and contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change including sustainable design, energy generation, drainage and construction techniques and practices will be viewed positively, where (whether in isolation or in combination with existing developments) the development:

a. Does not have an adverse impact (such as noise, visual impact, reflections, shadow flicker, water pollution, smell, air quality, gaseous or particulate emissions) on the health, wellbeing or amenities of local residents and visitors;

b. Does not have an adverse impact on the area in relation to views or the character of the surrounding landscape; and

c. Is of an appropriate scale for the size, character and level of other facilities, the built environment and services in Tur Langton parish.

In addition:

d. A schedule indicating the materials and finished used in the construction and on external surfaces of buildings and freestanding walls will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and through them to the parish council

e. Full details of both hard and soft landscaping works, including where appropriate the materials to be used, will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and through them to the parish council

f. As in Policy ENV 4, existing hedgerows and mature trees should be retained as part of the development's landscaping proposals or, where this is demonstrably not practicable, replaced with new plantings on a like-for like basis using native species

g. Windows and doors should be painted softwood or English hardwood and retained as such in perpetuity

h. Provision should be made for wildlife, including roof design and construction meeting RSPB recommendations for internal bird nestboxes, and use of hedges (or fences with ground-level gaps) to maintain connectivity of habitat for hedgehogs.

10. Sustainable drainage and flood risk

Tur Langton village is not at risk of flooding from rivers, although (need to check Flood Risk for Planning map for Zone 3 flood risk on Stonton Road (the Lipping = ?Stonton Brook bridge).

The issue is with flooding from surface water, which appears to have increased in the parish over recent years; possible causes are increased rainfall overall, more intensive rainfall events, intensification of agriculture, and new development being permitted without recognition of its effects on local hydrology. Small-scale, local flooding by surface water may not be newsworthy but it is distressing for the people affected and, countrywide, is the commonest, most widespread and costliest type.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) does not prohibit development in areas of high flood risk (e.g. Environment Agency Flood Risk Zone 3); NPPF paragraphs 100 – 103 are advisory on Local Planning Authorities. Flooding from surface water was excluded from the Government *National Flood Resilience Review* (September 2016). This Plan therefore represents a local determination to strengthen the conditions in respect of flooding and hydrology to be applied to all substantial (one or more houses / sq m area of site) development in the parish.

POLICY ENV 10: RIVERS AND FLOODING - No development of one or more new houses will be permitted within Environment Agency Flood Risk Zone 3 (Map A) or in the areas identified as at 'high risk' from flooding by surface water (Map B) without applying the sequential and exception tests referenced in paragraph 100 of the NPPF and without appropriate mitigation measures being implemented.

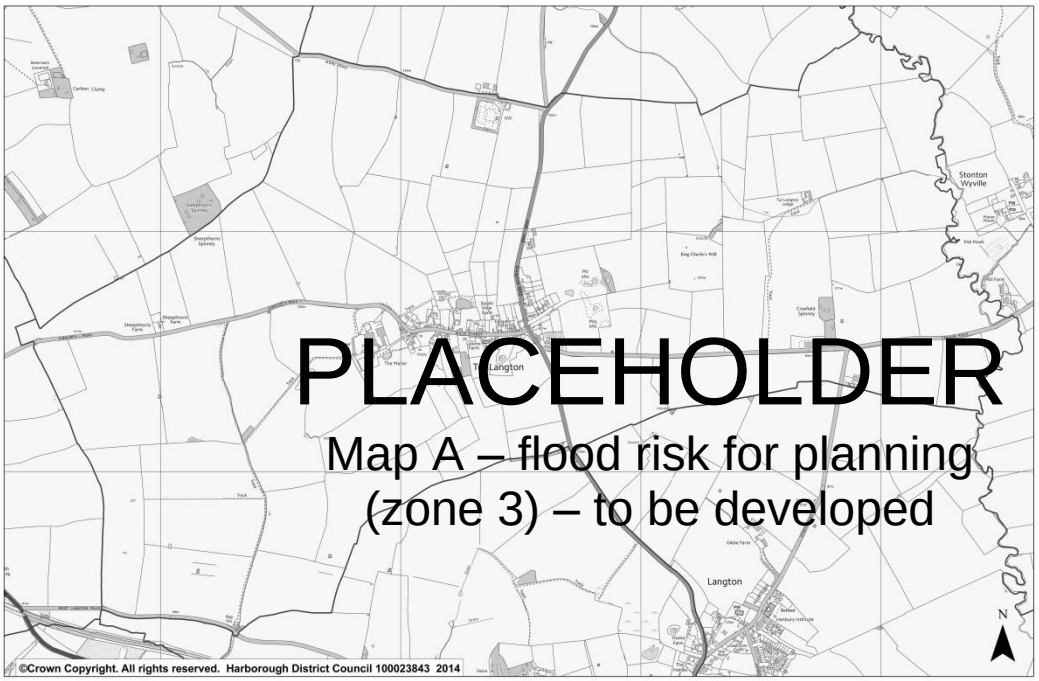
Every development proposal for one or more new buildings and/or on a site of greater than ??100m^2 in the Plan Area will be required to demonstrate that:

a) Its location takes geology, hydrology and flood risk into account;

b) Its design includes, as appropriate, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), surface water management measures and permeable surfaces; and

c) It does not increase the risk of flooding downstream.

Environmental Inventory map

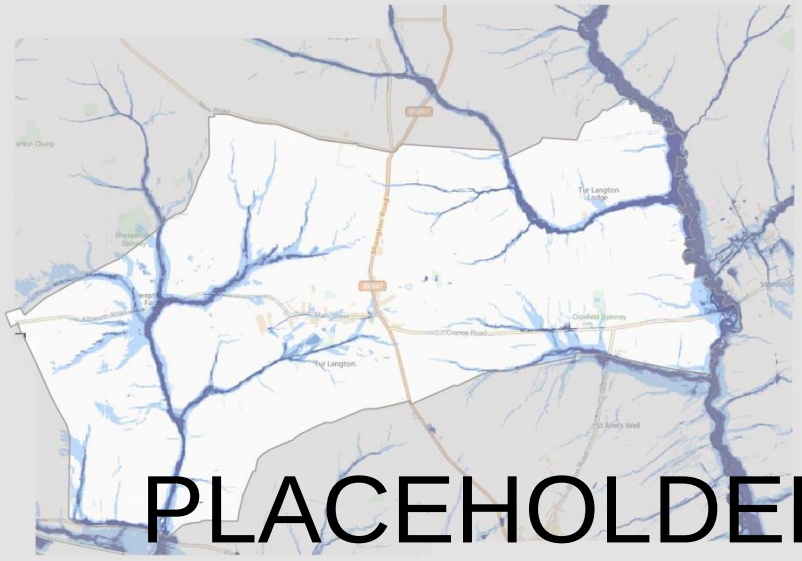


PLACEHOLDER

Map A – flood risk for planning (zone 3) – to be developed

LEGEND

Tur Langton: Risk of flooding from surface water



PLACEHOLDER

Map B – flood risk from surface water – to be redrawn

Map legend

Risk of Flooding from Surface Water

High

Medium

Low

Very Low

Base map adapted from Environment Agency information: http://watermaps.environment-agency.gov.uk/