



**RUFFORTH VILLAGE
DESIGN STATEMENT**





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KEY TO COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

Front Cover
All Saints' Church, village pump and phone box, various architectural features.

Back Cover
Village Hall, All Saints' Church spire, The Gables, various architectural features.

Inside Front Cover
Village pump, All Saints' Church, Tankard Inn, various other features.

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Rufforth Village Design Statement



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Consultation with Public and interested Bodies

Consultation on the Village Design Statement has taken place throughout the process.

Explanatory leaflets were circulated to all residents. A workshop was held to gather information, ideas and photographs. Coffee mornings to invite discussion and comments took place. These included exhibitions of materials collected. A display was mounted in the village shop. A viewing morning was organised to display the draft Village Design Statement, at which comments were noted and included in revision.

It is accepted that some points reflect aspirations of villagers, not all of which lie within the powers of the local planning authority.

This document has been accepted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the City of York Council's emerging draft local plan on 23rd September 2004.

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Why a Village Design Statement?

“The purpose of the Village Design Statement is to manage change its concern is about how planned development should be carried out so that it is in harmony with its setting and contributes to the conservation, and where possible, the enhancement of the local environment” *Countryside Commission Booklet p 6. CCP 501 (now Countryside Agency)*

Aim of the Village Design Statement

The Rufforth Village Design Statement has been prepared by local residents and is supported by the Parish Council. It is hoped that it will influence design and development in the village. As a Supplementary Planning Guidance its recommendations will be taken into account when planning applications are considered. It is also to raise awareness among local residents that small changes within “permitted development” such as, replacement windows, extensions, removal of boundaries etc. can erode the character of the village.

Location

Rufforth lies in the Vale of York astride the B1224 York – Wetherby road. It is approximately 5 miles from York, 8.5 miles from Wetherby and 20 miles from Leeds.

Formerly in the West Riding of Yorkshire it is now in North Yorkshire and administered by the City of York Council.



Aerial view of Rufforth

History

A settlement at what is now Rufforth existed from Saxon times. An entry in the Domesday Book deals with the land ownership in Norman times. Modern names such as Southfield, Lowfield and Noddery’s (North) Field are derived from the medieval field system.

In the 18th century a large area to the east of Rufforth became part of the Harewood Estate, hence the name Harewood Whin for the Yorwaste refuse disposal site. Also in the 18th century two “cuts” or wide ditches, the Old and the New, drained Rufforth Ings to the west and brought more land into cultivation. The

Enclosures Acts Awards of 1795 apportioned land among the villagers giving Rufforth its modern form. The Act also awarded the village pond to be used as a watering place and the sand pit to be used for the upkeep of highways. Owners of the allotted lands were requested to preserve and maintain the specific ancient pathways passing through their land, these paths being there before the farmsteads.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the Middlewood family had great influences on Rufforth. They rebuilt the Church, built the Village Institute (now Village Hall), Rufforth Hall and two farms, East View and Hawthorn House in distinctive style. They also gave Rufforth Manor to York diocese for use as a vicarage. The Second World War saw the building of Rufforth Airfield, now mostly returned to agriculture but still used by gliding and microlight clubs. One former hangar is now a warehouse and distribution centre.

Listed Buildings within Rufforth parish;

- Church of All Saints, Grade II
- Pear Tree Farm House, Main Street, Grade II
- Village Pump and Trough, Main Street, Grade II

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DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 1 Recognise that Rufforth is an ancient village and be aware of its past in all future developments.
- 2 Retain and maintain historic features (including the sandpit, pond, phone box, village pump and pinfold).

Population and Employment

The population of Rufforth is approximately 560 which includes a cross section of all age groups. There is little full-time employment in the village, with people commuting to York, Wetherby, Harrogate, Leeds and further afield. Small businesses providing local employment include: farms, the Tankard Inn, the shop/post office, the airfield, warehousing/distribution company and Harewood Whin waste disposal site. The primary school also provides local employment.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 3 Encourage small businesses appropriate to a village within the green belt.
- 4 The current bus service, adequate for the most part, should be improved to facilitate journeys to and from work.

- 5 Maintain and improve facilities for the elderly such as the Village Hall; and new housing should accommodate the needs of elderly occupants.

Landscape

Rufforth lies within the York Green Belt. It is a ribbon development village built on a sandy ridge in the middle of lower lying clay land, with a high water table. Before it was drained the surrounding land was a marsh with areas of standing water. The countryside around Rufforth is mostly flat, open, agricultural land with many large fields. In contrast, small strip fields, once attached to individual small-holdings, remain apparent behind the village properties.



Strip fields

Although the land is flat the open aspect allows more distant views including the White Horse at Kilburn about 20 miles away.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 6 Any development should respect, maintain, or provide views through to the open countryside and the White Horse.
- 7 Preserve pattern of strip fields.

Flora and Fauna

The pattern of the old field systems is very apparent in the mature hedgerows around Rufforth. Native hedgerow species are generally used, blackthorn and hawthorn are particularly noticeable in spring. The wide and largely uncut verges immediately adjacent to the village attract a wide variety of insects, birds and mammals. While there is little actual woodland around Rufforth there are many copses. The trees planted to screen Harewood Whin refuse disposal facility are welcome modern additions to the tree population. Native species are generally used. Notable trees are the Horse Chestnut in the village garden, which has a Tree Preservation Order. The Yews in the school grounds are said to have been

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planted because bodies from the battle of Marston Moor (1644) lie buried beneath. Barn, Tawny and Little owls are often seen hunting along the perimeters of the village and curlews frequent the meadows and airfield. Many other resident and visiting birds are seen and heard throughout the village. Deer are seen on the village outskirts. To the north-west of the village are the pond and sand pit (Sand Dyke Nature Reserve).

DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 8 *Use native species in new planting schemes (e.g. Harewood Whin screening).*
- 9 *Maintain the management regime of uncut verges, for wildlife.*

Settlement Patterns

Rufforth has developed from a line of cottages and small-holdings into the street village it is today. Gaps between the original houses on either side of the B1224 have been filled in with newer houses. Small housing developments in farm yards and paddocks, once adjacent to the road, have created a number of culs-de-sac e.g.. Maythorpe, Church Farm Close, Yew Tree Close and Milestone Avenue. All have less than 20 residences. A large cul-de-sac at Southfield Close has

26 homes. A similar pattern has followed with Council built houses at Bradley Crescent and the Avenue. Open countryside can be glimpsed between the houses. There are a few houses outside the main village envelope; these are mostly farms or former farms. The village is therefore a compact area of housing surrounded by open countryside. Its boundaries are clearly defined at the south eastern end by playing fields and the burial ground and at the north west by the allotments. These allotments developed from a scheme to give men returning from the First World War a small plot of land on which to grow vegetables and keep livestock.



Village garden

Along the village main street (B1224) there are a number of small, green, open spaces. On the approach to the village

from York is the old Pinfold used in the past for holding stray livestock. Adjacent to the shop/post office at the south eastern end of the village is a small triangular green with a seat. The village garden, facing the Chapel, has paths depicting the runway layout at Rufforth Airfield. This was a Millennium project The old village pump and trough (listed) are also situated here. The red GPO telephone box is a feature of the village which should be preserved. Outside the Church is another attractive open area with seating.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 10 *Any future residential and commercial developments must retain the rural character of Rufforth; they should be small in scale and complement existing density.*
- 11 *Any development at periphery of the village should be of an appropriate design and scale so as to not adversely affect the character of the setting and entrances to the village.*
- 12 *All new buildings should be designed in such a way as to promote crime prevention and ideally meet the security requirements of the police 'Secured by Design' Award scheme.*

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Residential Buildings

There are one or two houses dating from the 18th century e.g.. Coniston House and Pear Tree Farm. Some 19th century properties, mostly adjacent to the road, are East View, The Gables (1880), Croft House, Ashville Farmhouse (1830), Manor Farm and Hawthorn House. Well outside the main village is Rufforth Hall (1860). However most housing in Rufforth was built in the 20th century in various styles and types often in small culs-de-sac as previously mentioned. The properties in the cul-de-sac vary in size from two-bedroom semi-detached bungalows to large detached houses. This creates a variety of residential units which house the varied population needed to support the school, shop/post office, village hall and other village institutions. We would wish to maintain this diverse population and therefore need a range of house sizes, including more affordable housing. Most recent development has been of larger properties and if this continues it could endanger the social mix of the community. Throughout the village most houses have driveways which ensure that the roads are generally clear of parked vehicles. Front gardens, wide verges and pavements give an open and uncrowded appearance as shown below.



Gable Park

DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 13 *New developments should include off-road parking wherever possible.*
- 14 *Encourage affordable housing.*
- 15 *Gardens and open spaces between buildings contribute to the rural charm of the village and should be retained. There should be a presumption against the sub-division of these spaces when future planning applications are considered.*
- 16 *Extensions should harmonise with neighbouring properties and spaces.*

17 *Height of buildings should be in keeping with adjacent properties.*

18 *Maintain informal building lines, front gardens and wide verges.*

19 *Maintain a mixture of building styles and sizes.*

20 *Satellite dishes should be located discreetly to avoid front elevations.*

Building Materials

Most buildings are of brick construction, using predominantly red bricks of various types and shades. Roofs are generally of slate or red Yorkshire pantiles. Pear Tree Farm, the Laurels adjoining it and the Barn behind are built of stone. Pear Tree Farm is the only listed house in the village. Two of the older properties, Coniston House and Milestone are rendered, as are a small number of other properties. The houses are no more than two storeys high, the Church being the tallest building in the village. Many of the houses have chimneys and a significant number of houses both old and new have decorative details in the brick work.

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Roofs are generally of slate or red Yorkshire pantiles

DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 21 New developments to use materials in sympathy with existing.*
- 22 Red brick of various shades is the preferred building material.*
- 23 Pantiles or slates are preferred for roofs.*

Rufforth Airfield

This was built for the RAF in 1942 between the B1224 and Bradley Lane. It was vacated by the RAF in the 1970's and has been returned mostly to agricultural use. The York Gliding Centre has operated on the site for 40 years

having good relations with village residents. A Microlight Club also operates from the airfield. Both clubs have agreements not to over fly the village. The old RAF accommodations at Harewood Whin have become a refuse disposal site, but are designated to be returned to agricultural use and the footpath reinstated. The village playing fields on the edge of the airfield provide a significant village amenity, with facilities for football, netball, cricket and tennis. The recently extended club-house and children's play area are also sited here.

Alongside one of the runways there is a public footpath which is well used by walkers and dog owners. The York outer ring road currently marks the boundary of urban development associated with York.

The open space between the ring road and the village, including the airfield, should be maintained to keep the identity of Rufforth as a separate village community, despite pressures for development here.

York Gliding Centre has a "safeguarding" plan lodged with the local authority, which precludes certain developments above specific heights at defined distances from the airfield.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 24 The airfield, used by people from a wide area, acts as a "green lung" between York and Rufforth. This important facility should therefore be maintained.*
- 25 Discourage any large scale development in this area.*
- 26 Recreational developments appropriate to the greenbelt should be encouraged on the airfield to complement existing activities.*
- 27 Maintain the integrity of the greenbelt surrounding Rufforth, to ensure that the village remains separate from neighbouring built-up areas.*

Amenities and Activities

Rufforth has a church, chapel, public house, shop/post office, village hall, primary school and a sports pavilion. The village hall is well used by the pre-school, over 60's club, WI and for numerous regular meetings, social occasions and activities.

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Village Hall

At the south eastern end of the village adjoining the airfield are excellent sports facilities. Outside the main village area is a former equestrian centre where regular car boot sales take place.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

28 Every effort should be made to support and prevent the loss of the amenities in Rufforth.

29 Retain land for existing sports facilities and play area.

Roads, Paths and Infrastructure

The B1224 follows a winding course through the village with several sharp

bends. This makes parking on the roadside undesirable although it is not prohibited. Most traffic calming measures have been implemented outside the school. In the main village area the road has pavements on both sides. Bradley Lane, a minor road joining the village to outlying farms and adjacent villages, has a pavement on one side only. For long term traffic reduction a bypass has been suggested by some residents.

Footpaths or bridle ways link the village with Hutton Wandesley, Hessay and Askham Richard. These and other shorter paths are well used by walkers.

Street lighting is adequate without being obtrusive. Overhead cables for electricity and telephone detract from the street-scape.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

30 Improved access to village pond and Sand Dyke Nature Reserve.

31 Re-instate footpath to Harewood Whin, increase access to site when practical.

32 Investigate the possibility of traffic safety measures to reduce heavy vehicle movements and the speed of vehicles passing through the village.

33 The use of footpaths should be encouraged through improved access; all public rights of way should be clearly defined, kept free from obstruction and their distinctive character maintained.

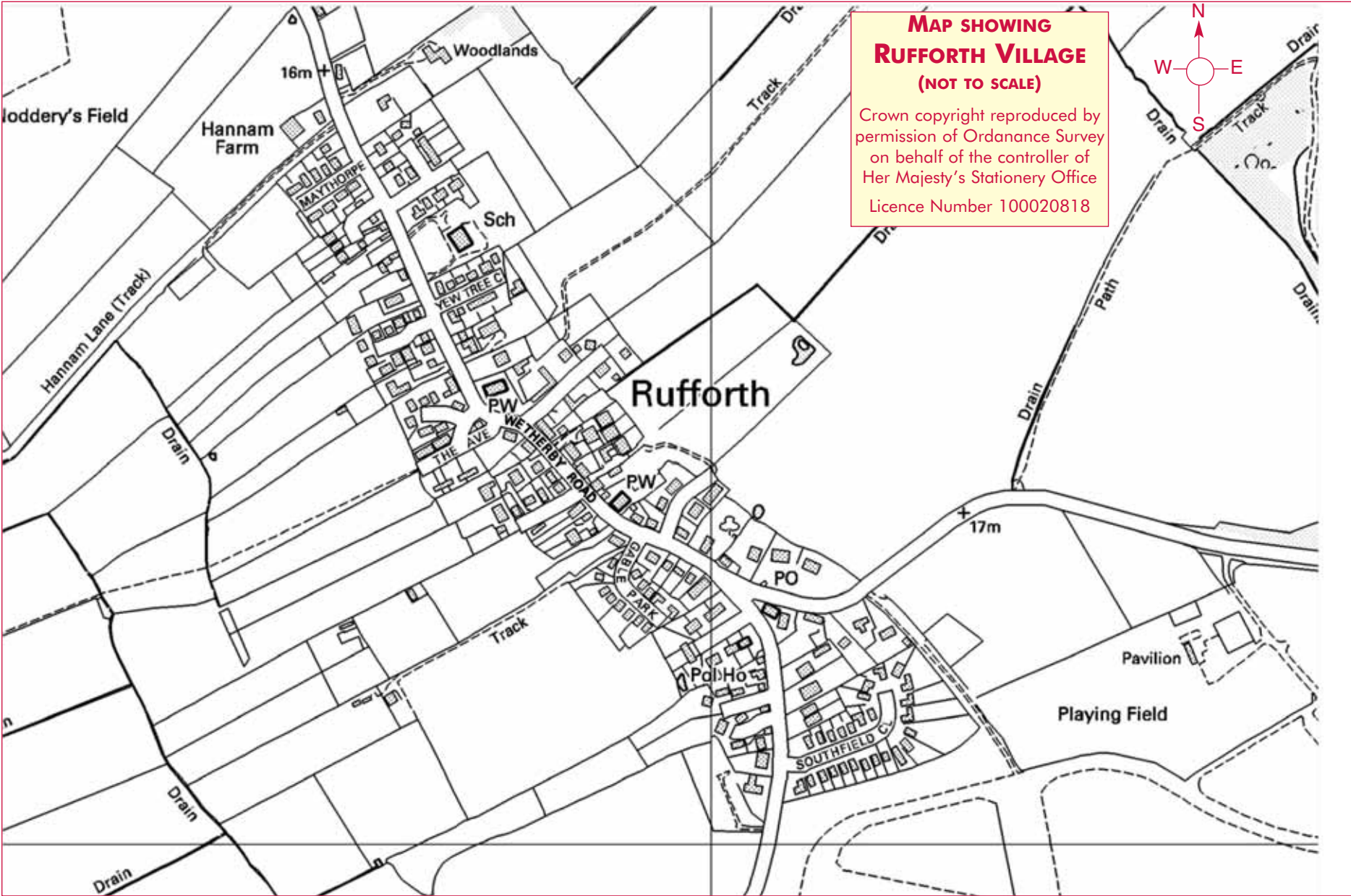
34 Wherever practical, in future developments and when renewing utilities, underground routing is preferred.

35 Encourage provision of safe cycling routes to link to existing city cycle network.

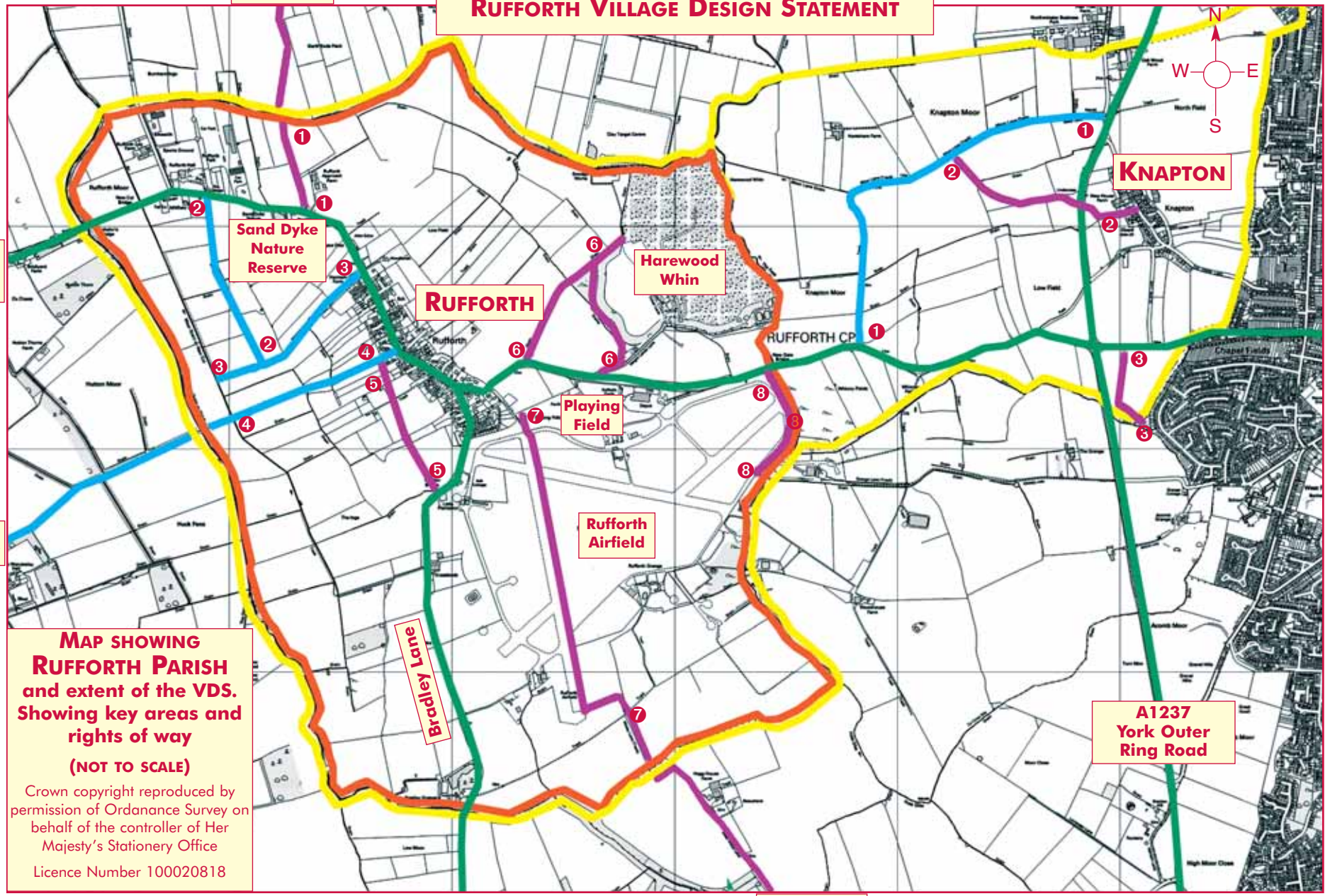
36 Any advertising or signage should respect the context of the village; it should be low key (colour, size and lighting).

37 The design of future lighting, signage and street furniture should be sensitive to the context of the village.

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MAP SHOWING RUFFORTH PARISH and extent of the VDS. Showing key areas and rights of way (NOT TO SCALE)

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- = Rufforth and Knapton parish boundry
- = Extent of Rufforth Village Statement coverage
- = Main Roads
- = Bridleway
- = Footpaths
- = Identifies footpath numbers

