

Consultative Draft Conservation Area Appraisal



**This draft is produced for consultation purposes only
and has not been approved by West Lothian Council.**

West Lothian Council - Planning Services

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1.0 Introduction to the conservation area

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that conservation areas *"are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance"*. Local authorities have a statutory duty to identify and designate such areas.

A Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) is a management tool augmenting other legislative provisions and guidance which helps identify the special interest, and changing needs of an area.

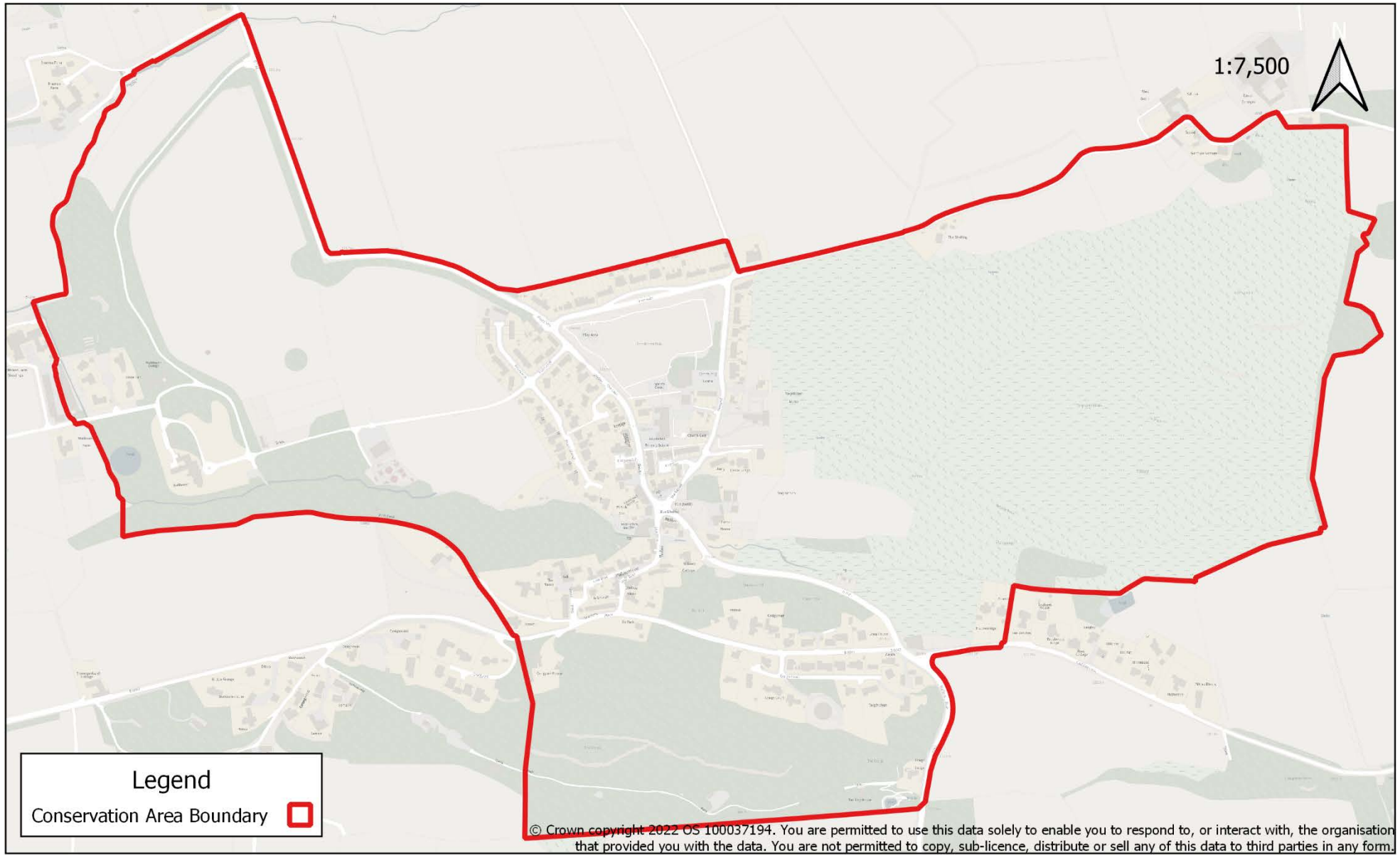
An appraisal provides the initial information to develop an action plan in relation to protecting and managing the factors which have led to an area being designated as a conservation area.

Many 'permitted development' rights are removed within a conservation area and brings the following works, including demolition of unlisted buildings and structures, the removal of, or work to trees, and small house alterations and extensions (including the installation of satellite dishes, roof alterations, stone cleaning or painting of the exterior) under planning control.

Torphichen is one of 10 conservation areas in West Lothian. It was designated in 1976 and is centred on the Torphichen Preceptory, a Scheduled Monument of national importance, and it embraces a number of listed buildings. It also encompasses the surrounding village and a broad sweep of hills to the east which contributes to its distinctive setting.

This village of Torphichen comprises mostly residential buildings but also a traditional Inn, a primary school, Post Office, and the historically significant Torphichen Kirk, all of which are situated around the village green. There are 13 Listed Buildings in the conservation area, 6 of which are Category B listed and 7 of which are C listed. There are also 3 Scheduled Monuments within the conservation area boundary. Details are provided at 6.2.





2.0 Purpose of a conservation area appraisal

It is a statutory requirement in terms of the 1997 Act for local authorities to periodically review conservation area boundaries and consider whether new conservation area designations are appropriate and this appraisal contributes to the discharging of that obligation.

Conservation area appraisals are part of the ongoing management of conservation areas and are prepared in accordance with a methodology based on the advice of Scottish Ministers set out in Planning Advice Note 71: Conservation Area Management (2004). Additional guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out in the [Historic Environment Policy for Scotland \(HEPS\)](#) and [Managing Change in the Historic Environment](#).

The purpose of a conservation area appraisal is not to prevent change but to manage it, to help define and evaluate the character and appearance of the conservation area and to identify the special architectural or historical interest of the area along with those key elements that contribute to its character and appearance.

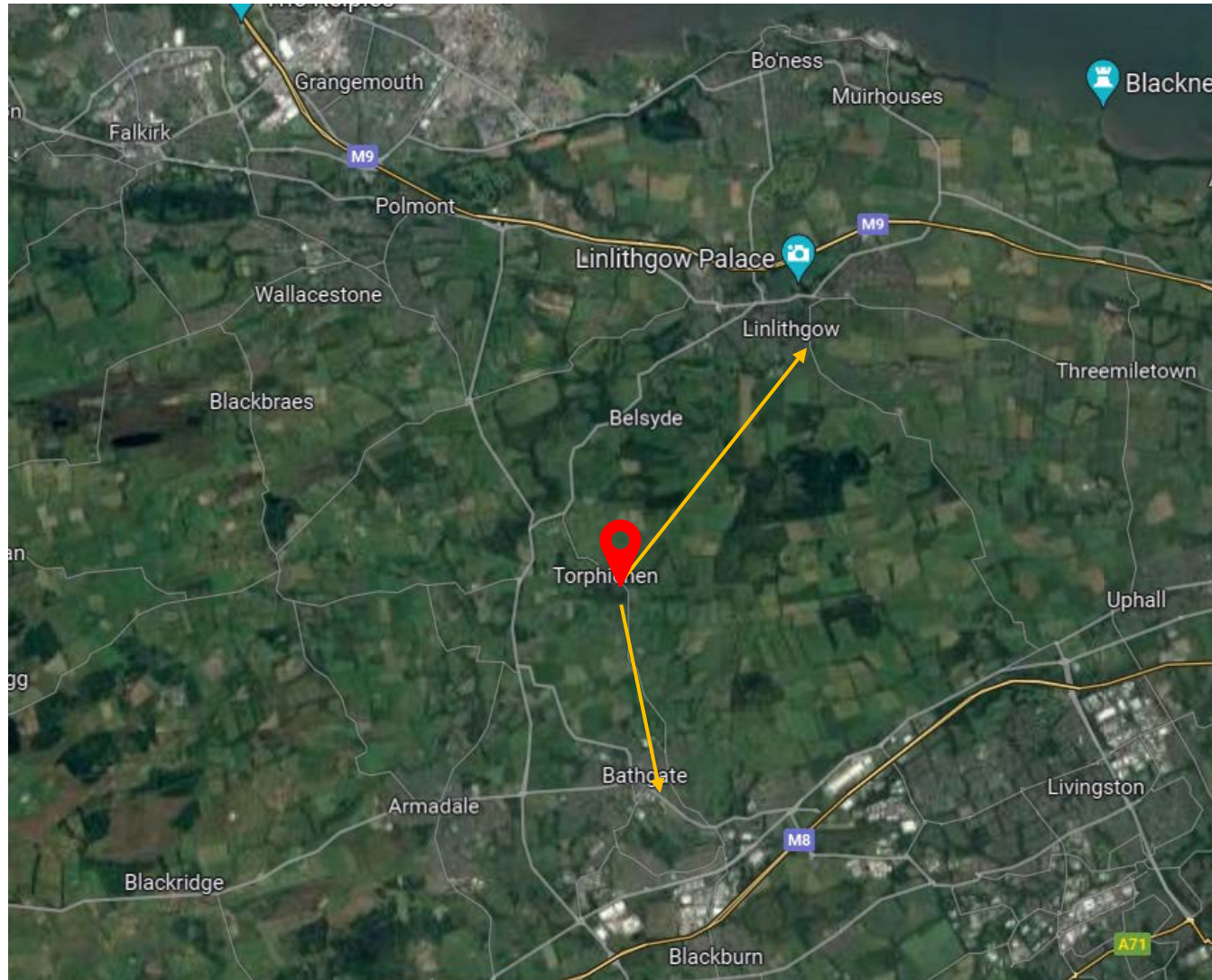
The area's special features and changing needs are assessed through a process which includes researching and highlighting its historical development and carrying out a townscape analysis and it provides a framework for managing change in a way which continues to enhance the historic character of the area.

An appraisal is intended to raise awareness of the area's special qualities within local communities. It provides an agreed basis of understanding of what makes an area special which in creates an understanding informs and provides the context in which decisions can be made on proposals which may affect that character.



An appraisal also provides an opportunity to reconsider conservation area boundaries, to make certain that they accurately reflect what is of special interest and ensure that they are logically drawn.

3.0 Location and geography



Torphichen is situated in the North West area of West Lothian. It is approximately 2 miles NNW of Bathgate town centre, 3 miles SSW of Linlithgow town centre, and 8 miles NW of Livingston town centre, which is the largest West Lothian town.

The conservation area boundary extends west of the village and includes Wallhouse Mansion and its grounds. It also extends eastwards to the Torphichen Hills, including Gomyre Hill and the prehistoric Castlethorn Hill Fort and Standing Stones which is a scheduled monument.

There are a number of major access roads in close proximity to Torphichen Village, making it easily commutable and also accessible by the rail links located in nearby Linlithgow and Bathgate.

4.0 Climate

Temperature

Temperatures in Torphichen are variable throughout the year. The warmest summer month is July, with temperatures ranging from a low of 9.8°Celsius to a high of 4.6° Celsius. The coldest winter month is most often January, with temperatures ranging from a low of 1°Celsius to a high of 4.6°Celsius.

Rainfall

The average annual precipitation for Torphichen is 185mm. This 185mm of precipitation falls over an average of 126.9 days per year.

Climate Changes

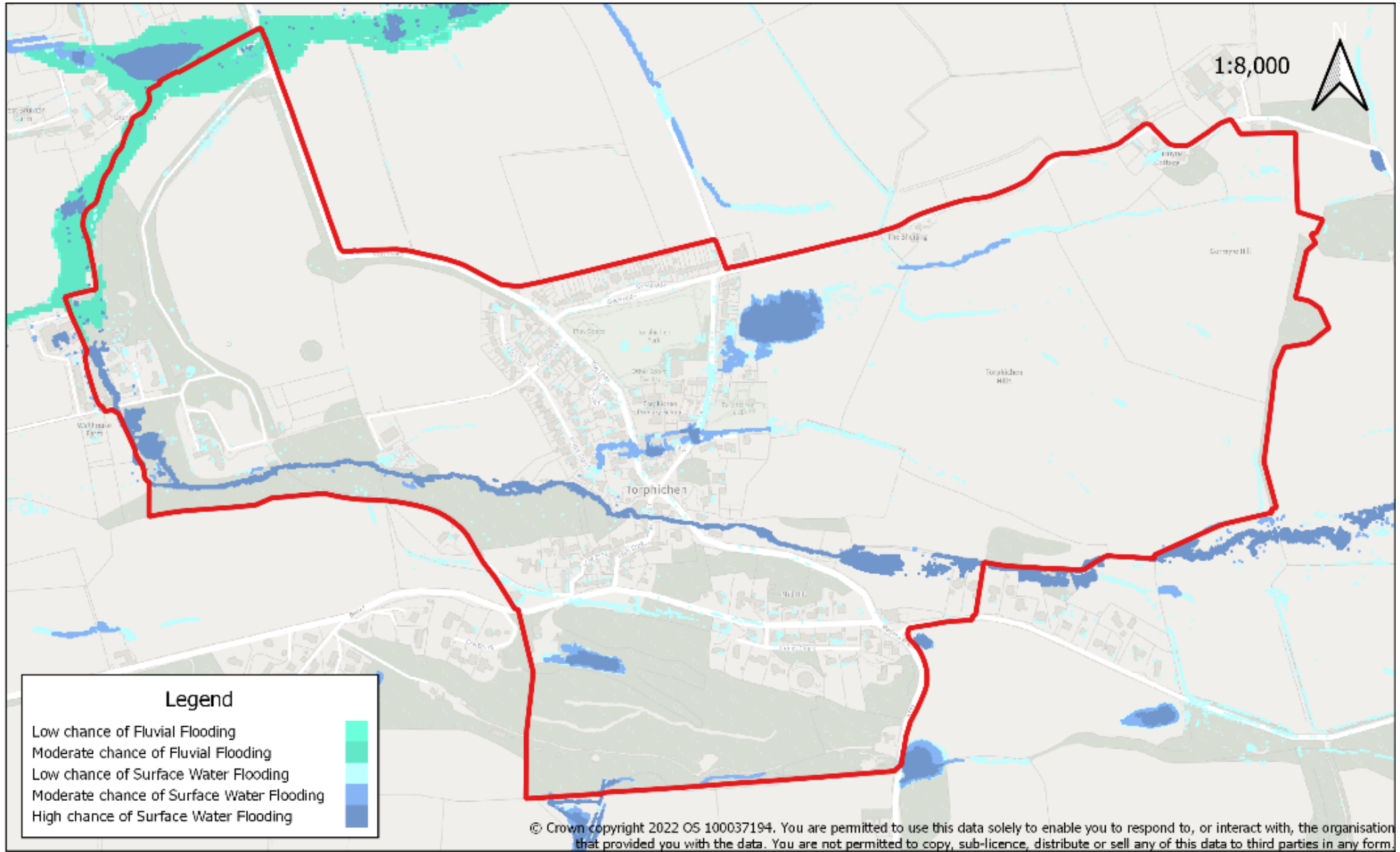
These weather patterns are expected to be impacted by the effects of climate change. It is expected that Torphichen will largely mirror nationwide changes in weather patterns and so experience hotter, drier springs and summers with the risk of milder, wetter autumns and winters. There is a higher risk of extreme weather events including heat waves, droughts, cold waves and floods.

Flood Risk

A Flood Risk Map, sourced from the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), highlights the risk of surface water flooding from increased rainfall.

The map shows the areas with a moderate to high chance of Surface water and Fluvial flooding per year. Areas shown as high risk indicate that there is a 10% chance of flooding per year, while areas marked as having a moderate risk have a 0.5% chance on flooding per year. Areas shown with low risk suggests that they have a 0.1% chance of flooding per year.

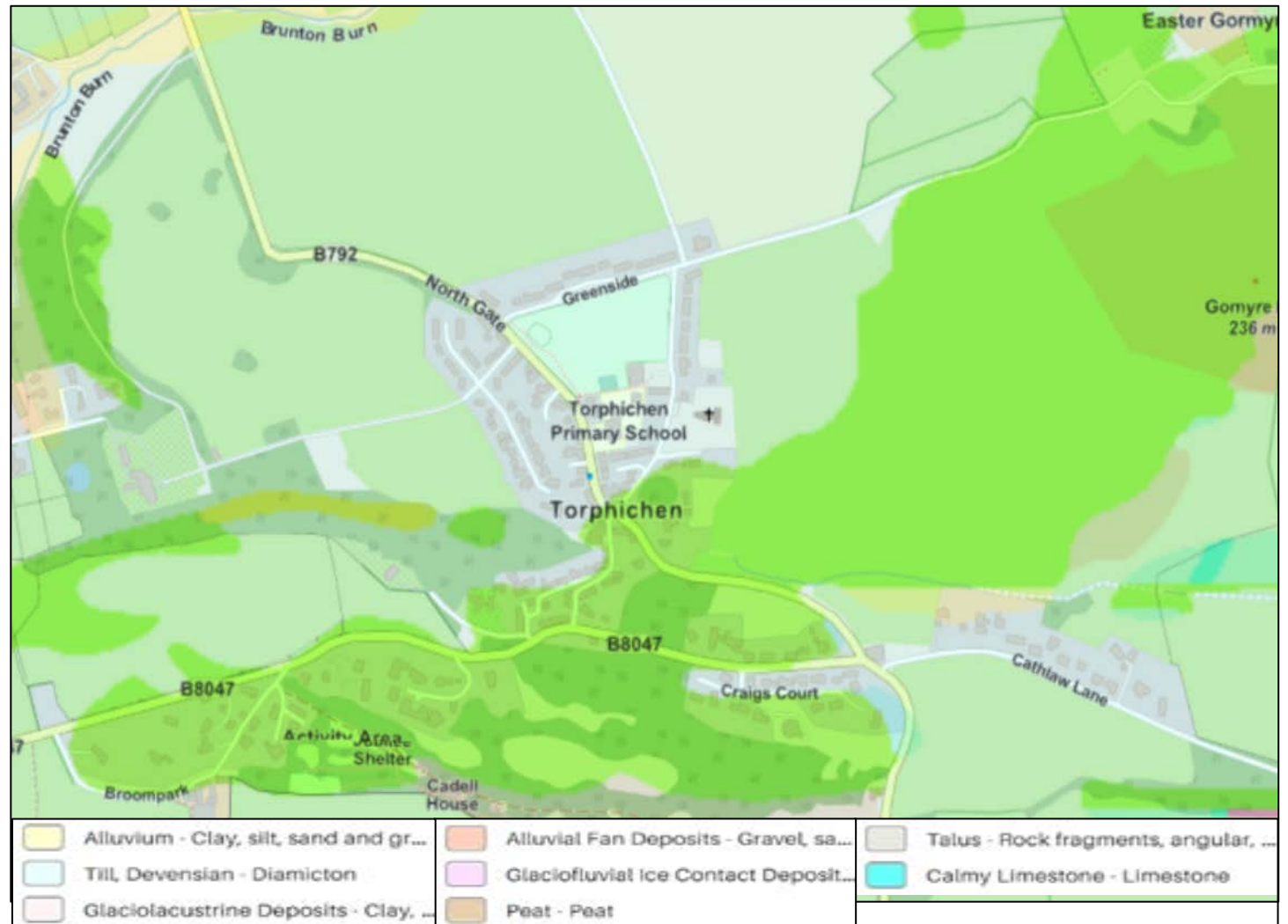
Specifically, the Brunton Burn stream has a 10% annual risk of flooding as well as a field immediately North of the Preceptory. Flooding therefore poses the risk of damage to listed buildings in the area as well as damage to other buildings and features that maintain the character of the Conservation Area. It is important that when any new development is being proposed the implementation of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) is used to manage any potential flood risk.



5.0 Geology

The bedrock geology of Torphichen is predominantly *Midland Valley Sill-complex* Igneous bedrock formed during the Carboniferous period (shown green). There is a small area of *Passage Formation* sedimentary bedrock (shown yellow) in the west of the conservation area towards Wallhouse.

The dominant superficial geology across this area is described as Till, *Devensian - Diamicton*. A sedimentary superficial deposit formed during the Quaternary period. There are smaller scattered areas of *Talus* rock fragments formed during the Quaternary period found between the village and Gomyre Hill as well as areas of *Alluvium* (clay, silt, sand and gravel) to the East and South of the village.



6.0 History and architecture



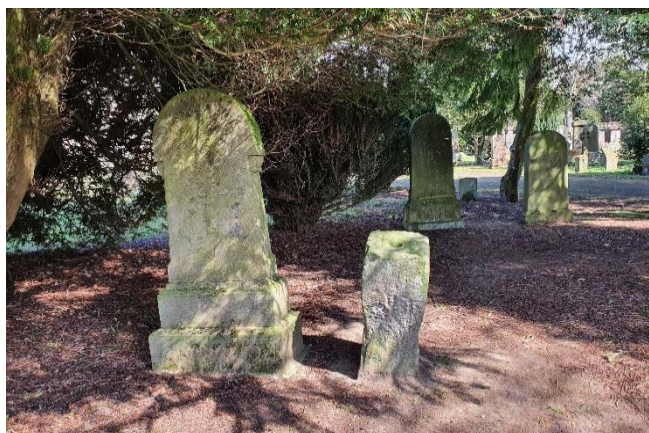
6.1 Historic Background

Much of Torphichen's history is centred on the Preceptory. The Preceptory was built around an existing church which was established by St Ninian. Speculation of a pagan place of worship predates the Christian worship structure first erected in the 12th Century.

After the first crusade, the Knights Hospitaller were formed by Brother Gerard de Saxo. The hospitallers were established in St John the Baptist Hospital in Jerusalem. The Knights Hospitaller were invited to Scotland in 1132 by King David I. The Knights Hospitaller were transferred the lands of the Knights Templar after their suppression in 1312. Torphichen benefitted greatly from this transfer of land. The Preceptory effectively became the Scottish base for the Knights Hospitallers.

The Preceptory played a key part during the Scottish Wars of Independence. It hosted the last Parliament of William Wallace in 1298 before his defeat and capture by English forces at Falkirk. Edward II of England also received treatment here following a horse riding injury.

The monument is of national importance because of its potential to contribute to our broader understanding of medieval ecclesiastical architecture and practice. More particularly this Preceptory was the only house of the Knights Hospitaller or Knights of St. John founded in Scotland and as such holds an important place in their history and also in the history of Torphichen and the surrounding area.








There are 5 refuge/ sanctuary stones or “stanes” in and around Torphichen, which were placed to delineate a 1 (Scots) mile radius around the Preceptory. These 5 stones are now identified and protected as Scheduled Monuments. Historically, the area falling within the boundary of the Stanes functioned as a sanctuary or refuge area for people escaping persecution and where pilgrims and local people could be guaranteed safety and protection and the right to a fair trial.




The Jubilee Well which is located in the square dates back to 1897 and was built and dedicated to Queen Victoria for her Diamond Jubilee. In 2022, for Queen Elizabeth’s Platinum Jubilee, an ancient horse chestnut tree in the rear of Torphichen Kirk & Preceptory Yard was dedicated in Her Majesty’s honour. The tree is one of 70 ancient trees dedicated across the UK as part of the Queen’s Green Canopy project.















Castlethron Hillfort and standing stones, is one of the oldest settlements in the conservation area, and it is a scheduled monument. The prehistoric fort served both domestic and defensive purpose. This monument is of national importance as an example of a prehistoric enclosed settlement, which has the potential to increase considerably our understanding of prehistoric domestic life in this area.





6.2 Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments

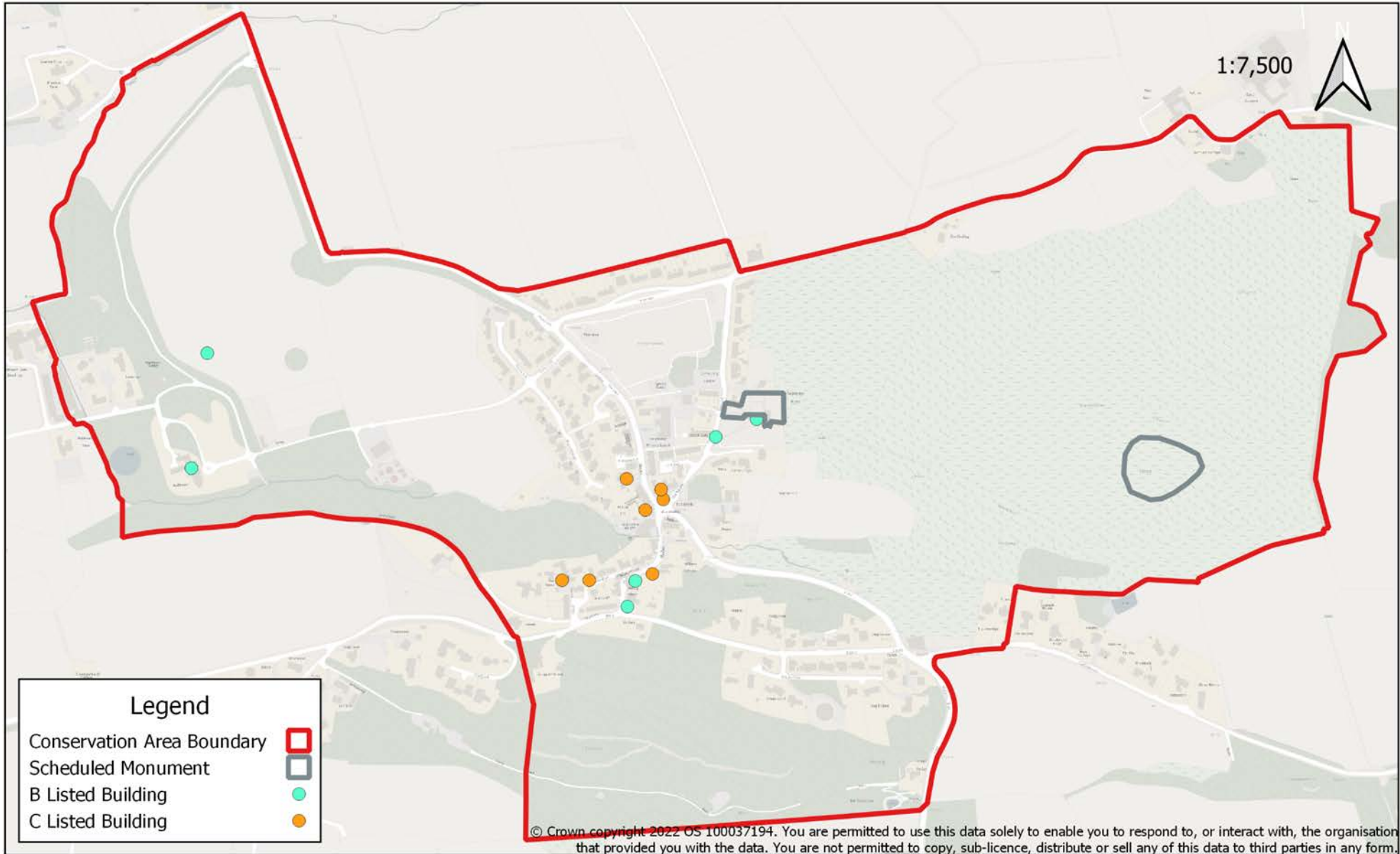
Name/Listing Type & No./ Function/Address	Current Photograph (where available)	Current Photograph (where available)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torphichen Kirk • B Listed building - LB14533 • Bowyett, EH48 4LZ • Kirk <p>1836</p>		 <p>https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1152366</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torphichen Kirkyard Gatehouse • B Listed building - LB14534 • Bowyett, EH48 4LZ • Kirkyard Gatehouse <p>1975 – 1976</p>		 <p>https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1647971</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wallhouse • B Listed building - LB19704 • Wallhouse, EH48 4NQ • Residence <p>1975 - 1976</p>		 <p>https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1647968</p>

Name/Listing Type & No./ Function/Address	Current Photograph (where available)	Current Photograph (where available)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wallhouse Doocot • B Listed building - LB14549 • Wallhouse, EH48 4NQ • Doocot <p>1975 - 1976</p>		 <p>https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1647966</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewforth • B Listed building - LB14540 • 6 High Brae, EH48 4LX • Residence 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sundial • B Listed building - LB14541 • High Brae, EH48 4LX • Sundial 		

Name/Listing Type & No./ Function/Address	Current Photograph (where available)	Current Photograph (where available)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jubilee Well • C Listed building - LB14535 • 2 The Square, EH48 4LY • Historic Well <p>1975 – 1976</p>		 <p>https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1647972</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rose Cottage (Old Smithy) • C Listed building - LB14538 • 5 The Loan, EH48 4NF • Residence <p>1975 - 1976</p>		 <p>https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1647983</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hill House • C Listed building - LB14539 • 8 High Brae, EH48 4LX • Residence <p>1975 – 1976</p>		 <p>https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1647978</p>

Name/Listing Type & No./ Function/Address	Current Photograph (where available)	Current Photograph (where available)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torphichen Free Church • C Listed building - LB14542 • 6 Manse Road, EH48 4LT • Church Hall <p>1975 - 1976</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirk House • C Listed building - LB14537 • 8 The Square, EH48 4LY • Residence <p>1975 - 1976</p>		 <p>https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1647975</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cottages • C Listed building - LB 14536 • 1-4 The Square, EH48 4LY <p>1 Post Office & Shop 2 Residence 3 Residence 4 Architecture practice</p>		 <p>https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1647974 https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1647973</p>

Name/Listing Type & No./ Function/Address	Current Photograph (where available)	Current Photograph (where available)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ivy Cottage • C Listed building - LB18189 • 1 Low Brae, EH48 4LU • Residence 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torphichen Preceptory • Scheduled Monument – SM90305 • Bowyett, EH48 4LZ • Torphichen Refuge Stone • Scheduled Monument – SM1903 • Bowyett, EH48 4LZ 1990 / 1924 		 <p>https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1215858</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castlethorn Hill Fort • Scheduled Monument – SM11242 • 500m ESE of Mains • Standing Stones 		 <p>https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1729214</p>



6.3 Architectural analysis



Torphichen is a small village that historically surrounded a central village green and the architecture varies from 12th century to modern day. There are many traditional buildings that lie within the conservation area boundary but 6 are Category B listed buildings and 7 are Category C listed buildings.

The most architecturally significant building is the Torphichen Preceptory and Kirk. The use of ribbed vaults, large ornate, pointed arch windows and buttresses are typical of the gothic architectural style in which the preceptory was built and the Preceptory remains are now protected as a scheduled monument. The remains consist on the North and South transepts, and the crossing surmounted by a bell tower, all of which stand together with the foundations of a domestic cloister to the North, and the remains of the choir to the East. The remains are of 12th century foundation, with major additions that were constructed from the 14th to 15th century. The monument has a significant role to play in helping gain a better understanding of medieval ecclesiastical architecture and practice.

The Kirk/ New parish church was constructed in 1756. The church was built in a traditional T-plan. The original nave of the preceptory was dismantled but part of it was used in the construction of the new parish Church. This however is not included in the preceptory scheduling. The North wall of the preceptory was also incorporated in the construction of the Church. The materials used in the construction of the Church are coursed rubble for the envelope, and slate for the skew-gabled roof. The Church includes a 'bird-cage' belfry with a bell by John Meikle dated 1700, round headed windows, the fore-stair of the South arm. Later 19th century additions at the West end include plaster ceilings, lofts, pulpits, as well as folding communion pews.



The Gatehouse was built sometime after the church but the same style and materials were used in its construction. The envelope and chimney materials consist of random rubble, and the material used for the skew-gabled roof is slate.



Other significant 18th century buildings in the area include the imposing Wallhouse mansion and doocot constructed during the 1840s. Originally built for the Gillon family, Wallhouse was rebuilt by James Maitland Wardrop in 1855 who added the side wings and rear tower. This category B-listed house is hidden from view behind mature dense woodland. The large castellated gothic mansion is double storey, and was built using ashlar stone for the envelope of the building, and slate for the piended (hipped) roofs, behind crenelated parapets. The central block, has 5 bays, a porch, end wings, and a rear tower. The octagonal Wallhouse doocot, is a double storey built using random rubble string-course for the envelope. The doocot is roofless, with a rounded arch entrance, and chase with hood-moulding.



Hill House is a traditional 18th century double storey building. The building envelope was constructed using modern pebble-dash masonry, and the skew-gabled roof was constructed in slate. The building has a common terrace in the front, just off of the road. Ivy cottage is located in close proximity to hill house, and is also a traditional 18th century house. The single storey house was built using random rubble, with a lime wash finish on the front of the house. Clay Pantile was used in the construction of the skew-gabled roof.



Other significant buildings in Torphichen include 5 19th century C listed buildings. Kirk House and Viewforth were both designed in the Georgian architectural style. Both buildings have slate skew-gabled roofs, and are both double storey houses. Kirk House was built using random rubble and has moulded door architraves, and a frieze inscribed "1802". Viewforth was constructed using Whitestone, and fillet string courses. There is a cornice above the doorway on the terrace, which is approached by steps.



Torphichen Free Church/ church hall is also a 19th century building. This building was designed and built in the Norman Revival style in 1843. The building envelope was constructed using droved and stugged ashlar, with dressed facework. The roof was constructed using slate. The building has laticed windows, with the front windows being round-headed and the side windows being lintelled. The building also has a tower with a belfry projecting from the front end. This building was one of the earliest buildings erected by the free church.



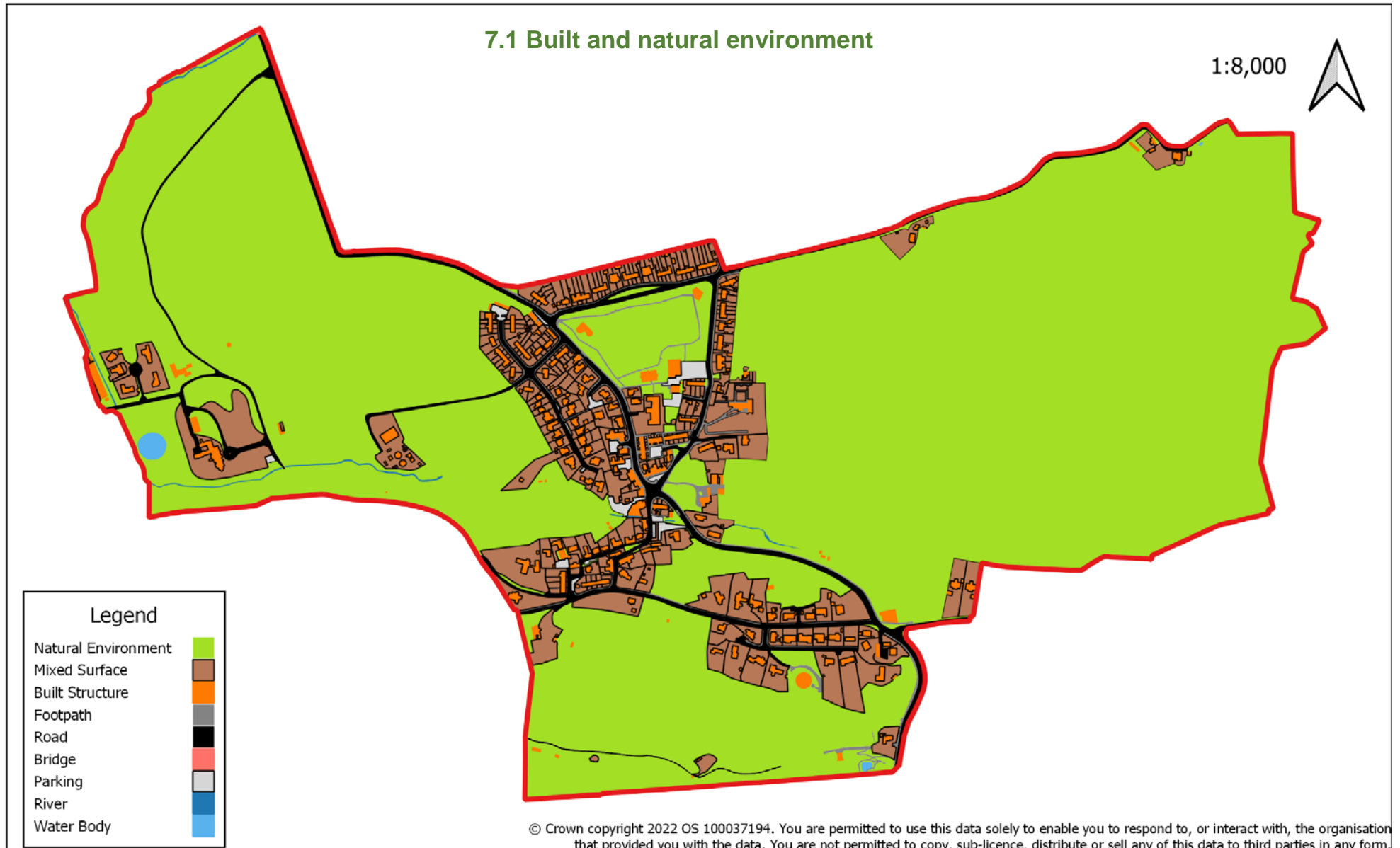
Other 19th century buildings include cottages 1-4 The Square, and Rose Cottage. Rose cottage is a single-story house which functioned previously as a smithy. The envelope of the cottage was constructed using squared rubble with flush margins. The roof of the cottage was constructed out of slate and has skewed and coped end stacks. The cottage face has a centred door with an architrave, and a window on either side of the door. The wing to the left was also built with rubble and slate roof, which has a roof light. The cottage still maintains the original sashes. Cottages 1-4 The Square are traditional 1½ story cottage, with 4 dormers in the centre. The building is 4 individual properties.

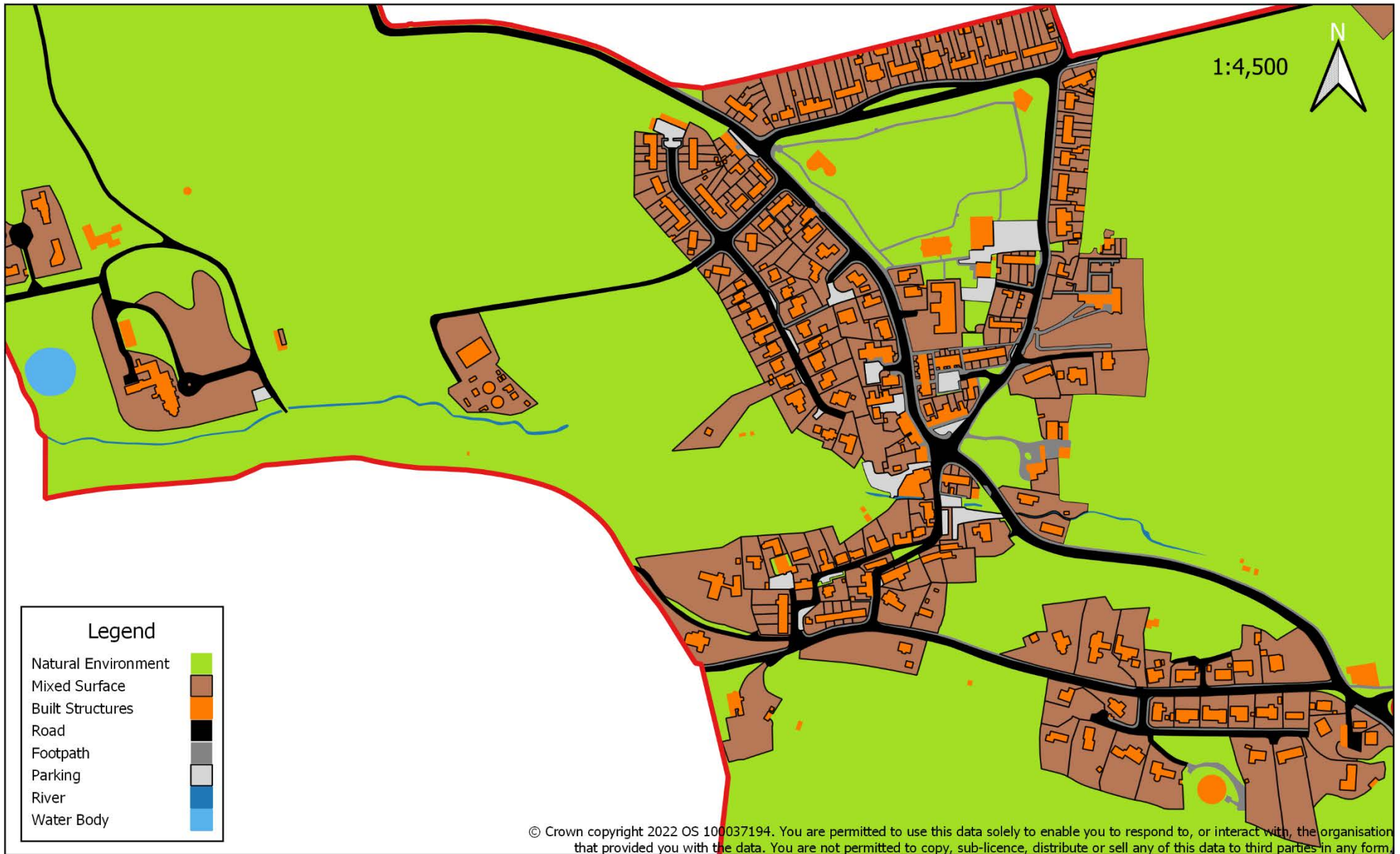


The majority of the residential buildings in Torphichen are however more contemporary. A large number of houses are post-war and were originally constructed as council housing.

There are no buildings within the conservation area which are listed on the Buildings at Risk Register (BARR). BARR identifies properties of architectural or historic merit that are considered to be at risk.

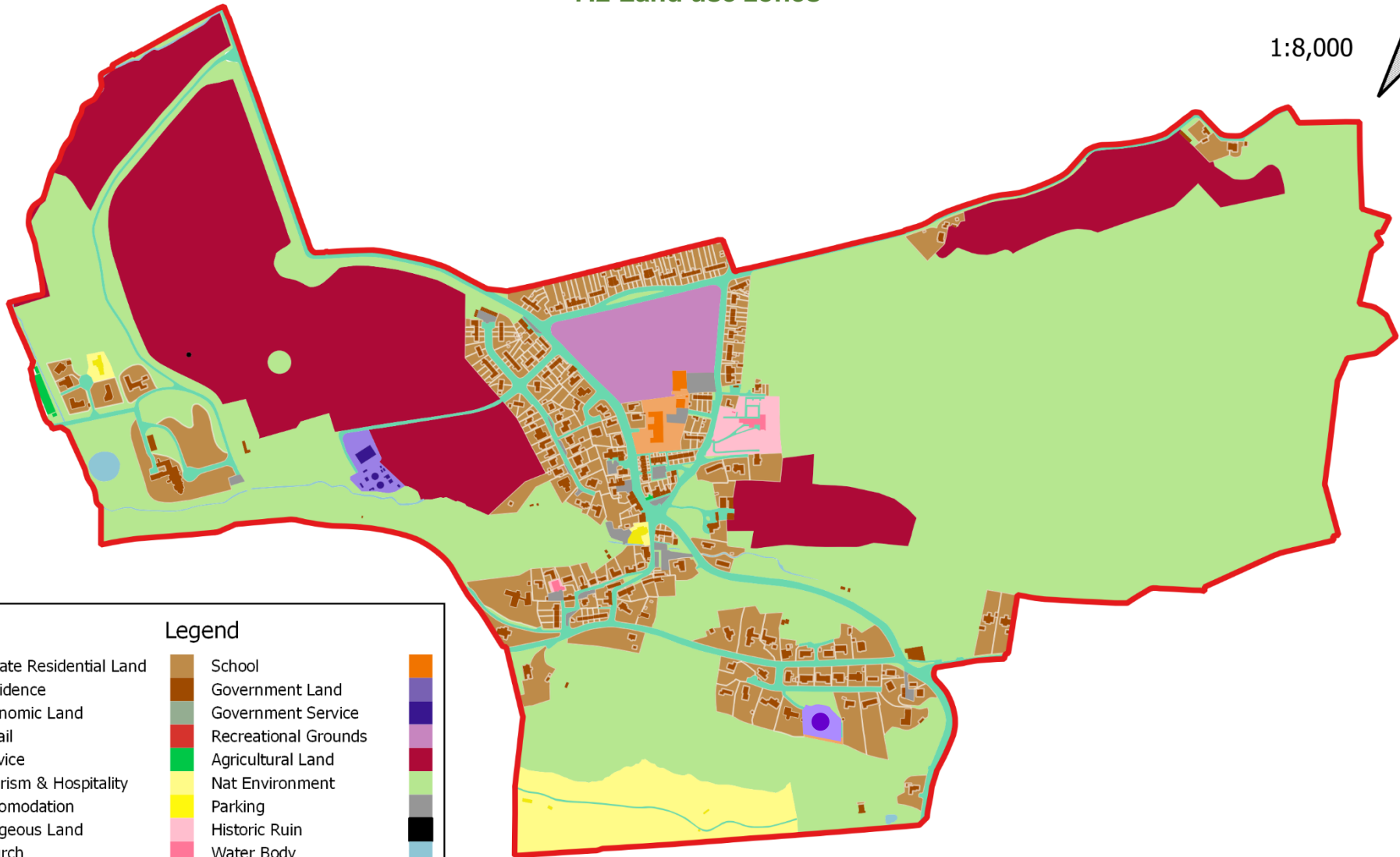
7.0 Urban analysis





7.2 Land use zones

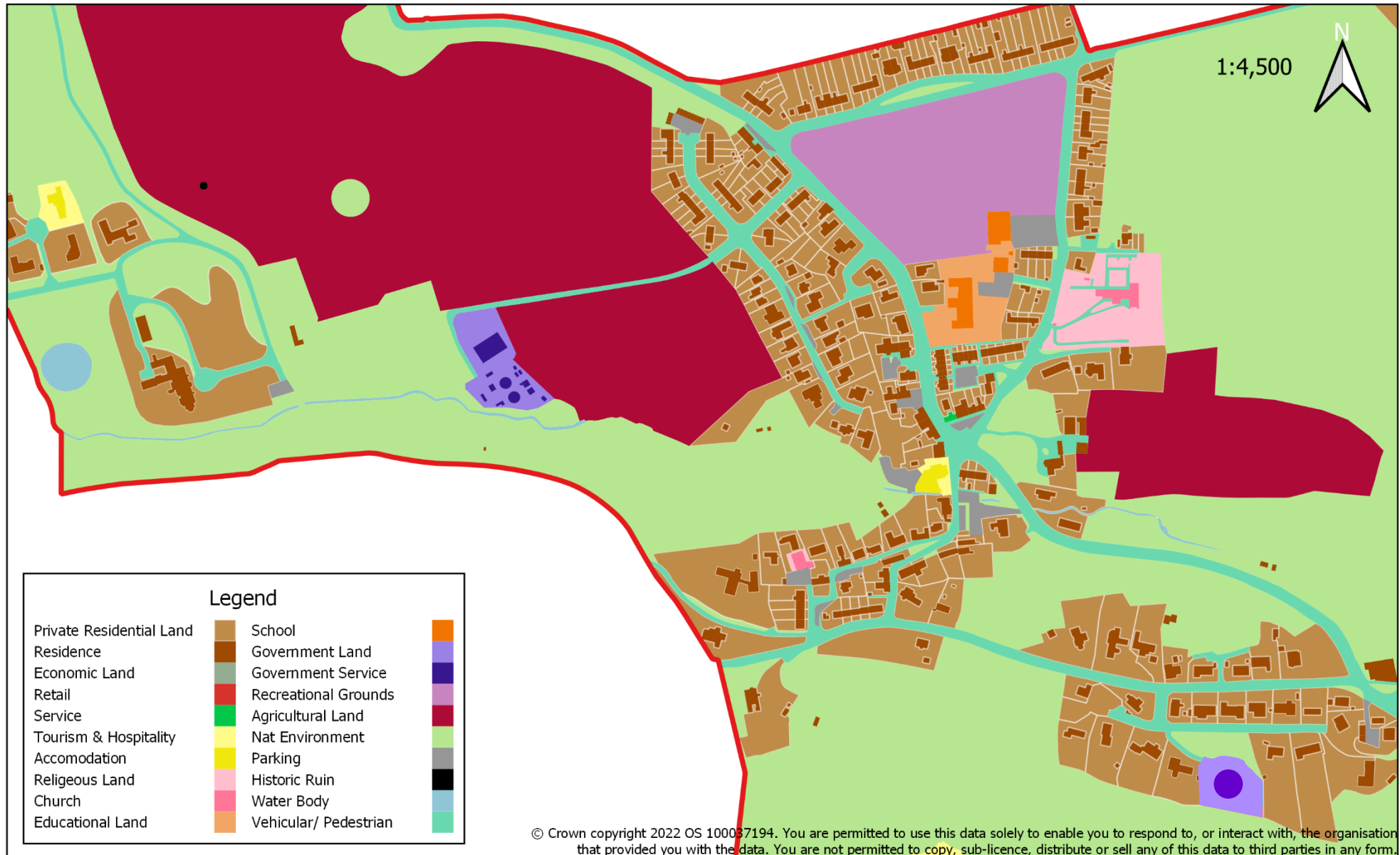
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Legend

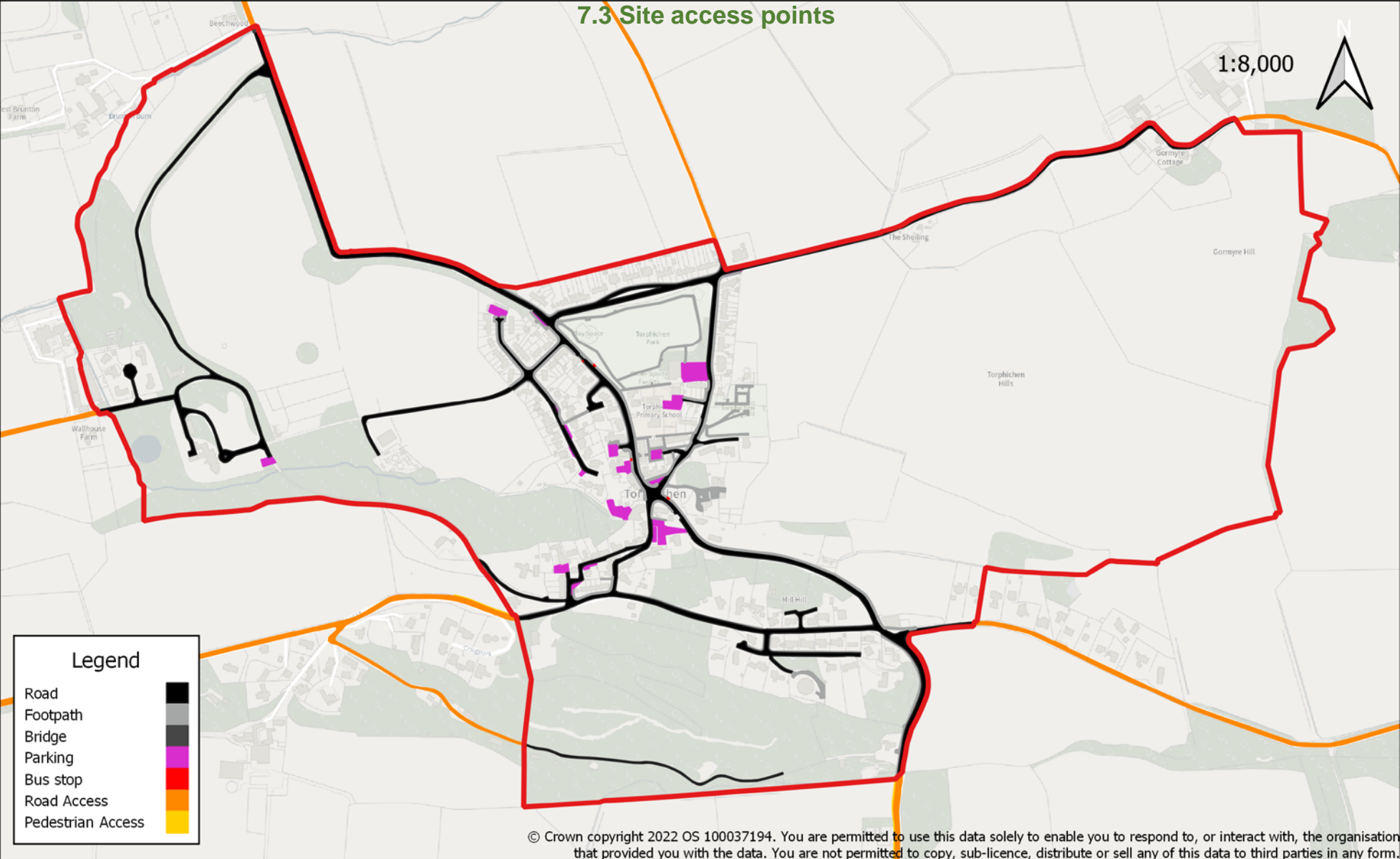
Private Residential Land	School	
Residence	Government Land	
Economic Land	Government Service	
Retail	Recreational Grounds	
Service	Agricultural Land	
Tourism & Hospitality	Nat Environment	
Accommodation	Parking	
Religious Land	Historic Ruin	
Church	Water Body	
Educational Land	Vehicular/ Pedestrian	

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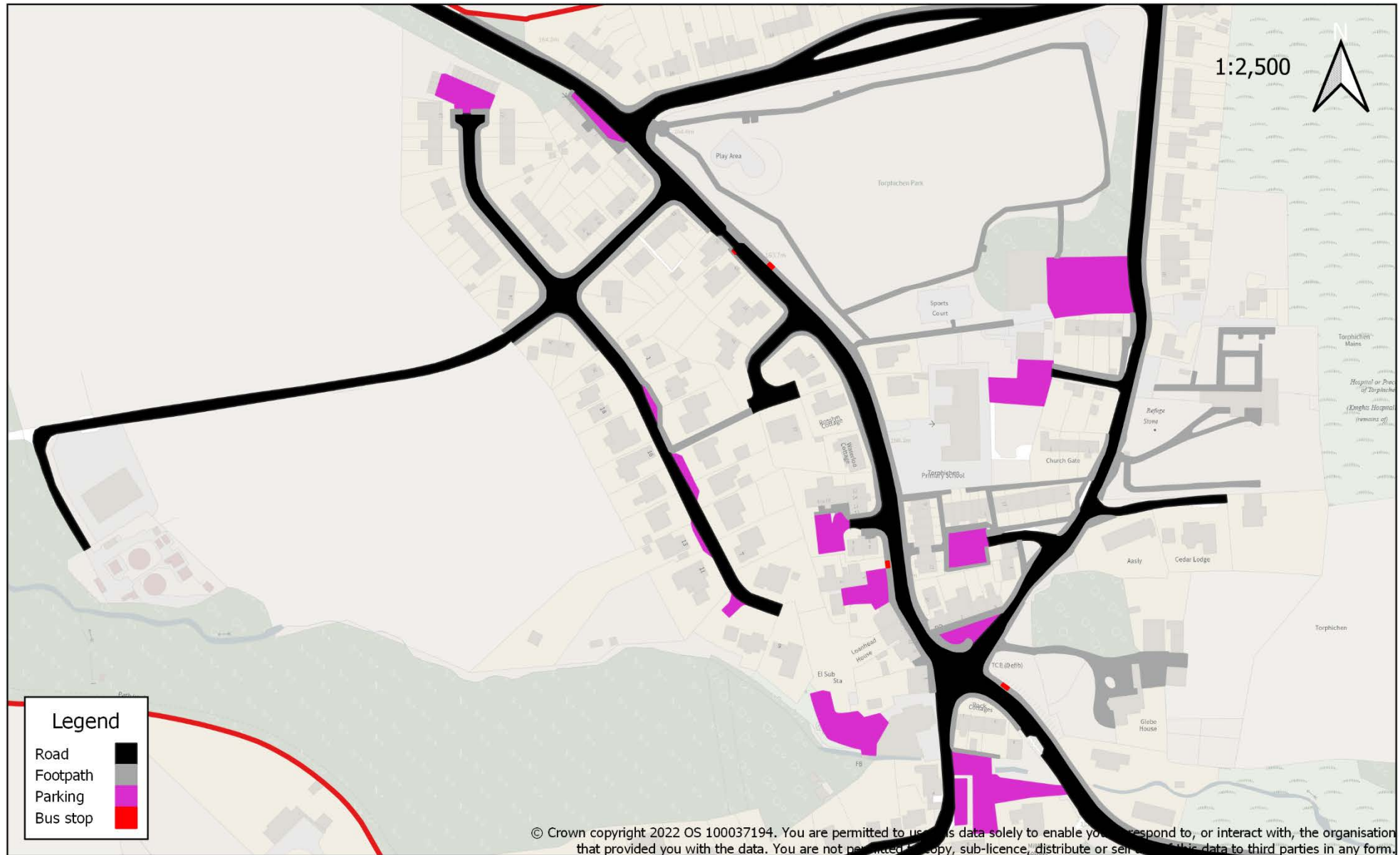


7.3 Site access points

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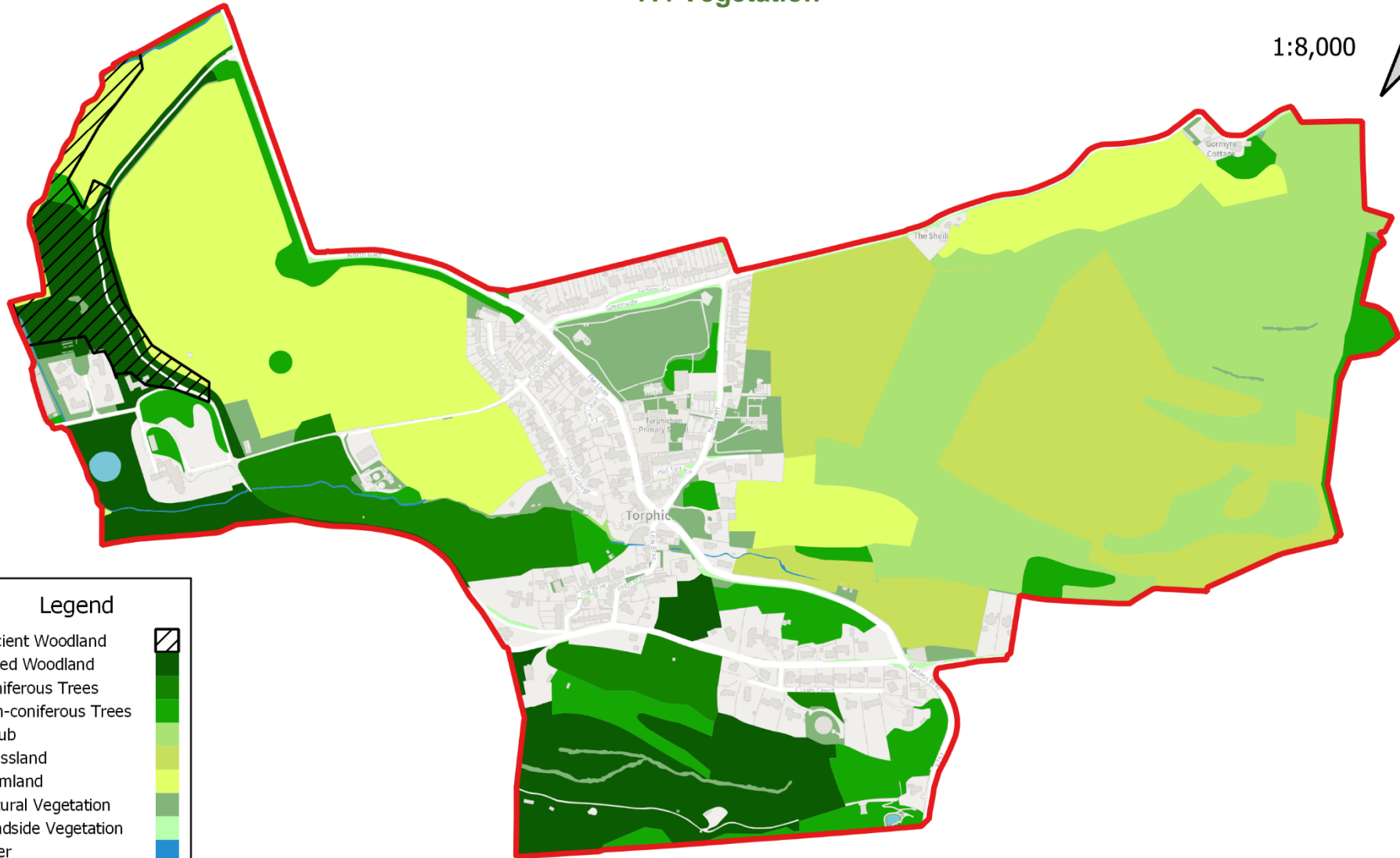
Legend

- Road
- Footpath
- Parking
- Bus stop

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7.4 Vegetation

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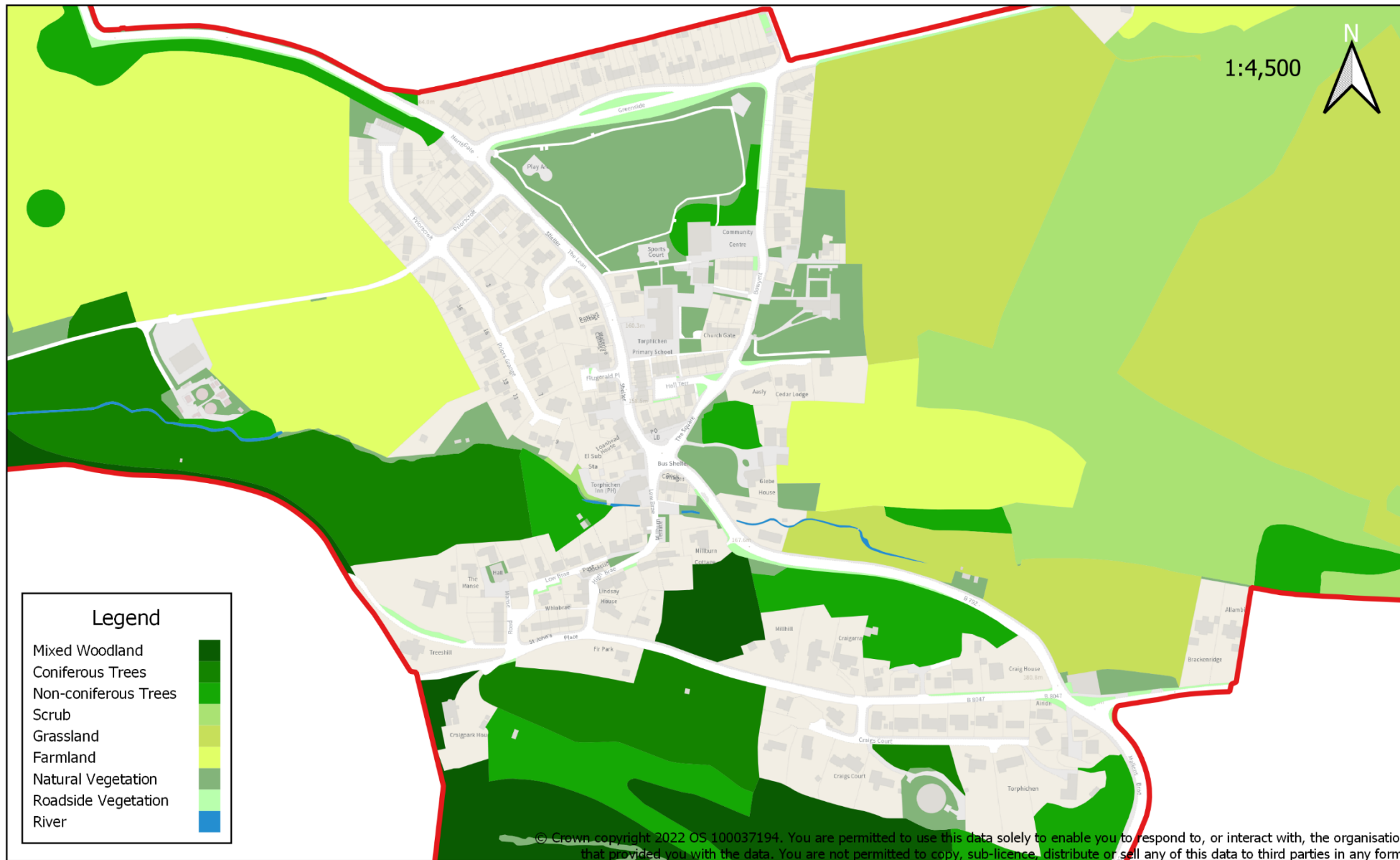


Legend

- Ancient Woodland
- Mixed Woodland
- Coniferous Trees
- Non-coniferous Trees
- Scrub
- Grassland
- Farmland
- Natural Vegetation
- Roadside Vegetation
- River
- Water Body



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7.5 Patterns of growth

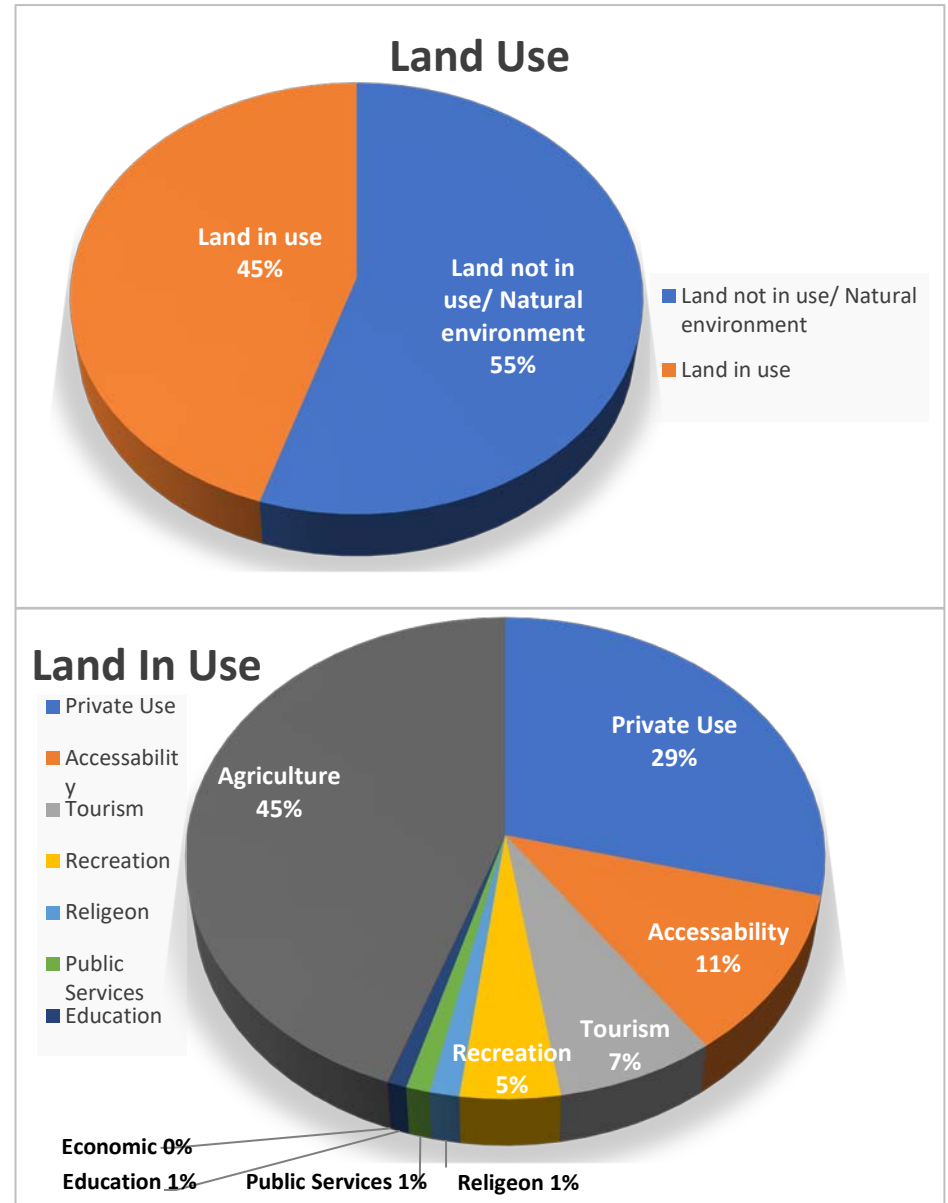
The 2011 Census indicates that Torphichen had a population of 510. This is known to have increased to 710 by 2016 and it is expected to continue growing in the future. The Census shows that in terms of ethnicity of the population the village defined itself as 98.8% British which is marginally greater (by some 2%) than the Scottish average.

The main function of Torphichen village today is residential, albeit that it was historically aligned with agriculture. However, the Preceptory in Torphichen was also the Scottish base to the Knights Hospitaller of the Order of St John of Jerusalem who provided shelter and protection to visitors visiting the Holy Land and which greatly elevated the importance of Torphichen.

Today the remains of the Preceptory are largely an historic legacy for touristic and local use leaving the residential use the most prominent function of the Village.

45% of the land within the Torphichen conservation area boundary has some description of functional use while the remaining 55% is not in any defined use and is part of what is best described as 'the natural environment' and includes forestry, rivers, ponds etc.

Of the land that is in use, agriculture is by far the most predominant.



7.6 Building function evolution

The majority of the buildings in Torphichen are in residential use and many of the contemporary buildings were originally constructed as council houses during the early 1960's.

Some of the older buildings were not however originally built as dwellings, an example being Rose cottage near the Square which functioned as the village smithy.

Wallhouse mansion was originally conceived as a private country house but was later owned by West Lothian County Council who used it as a children's home from the late 1940s, and thereafter by several different private companies. Part of the expansive Wallhouse estate, some 26 hectares, was developed for housing, including the walled garden. Today, Wallhouse mansion has reverted to its original residential use but the associated Doocot on the estate is now vacant and derelict.

Torphichen Preceptory was of course built for religious purposes but the Preceptory was much larger than the structure that can be seen today. Historically, there was a larger complex of buildings consisting of the transepts, nave, cloister, refectory, doocot, an arch, a gatehouse, water mill with a dam. The remains of the preceptory now serve as a tourist attraction and museum. The Parish church is nevertheless still actively used for religious ceremonies and other events.

Much of what can be seen today at the Kirkyard dates from the 1400s. The Gatehouse at the Kirkyard previously functioned as the offertory, but this is no longer the case.



8.0 Issues and action plan

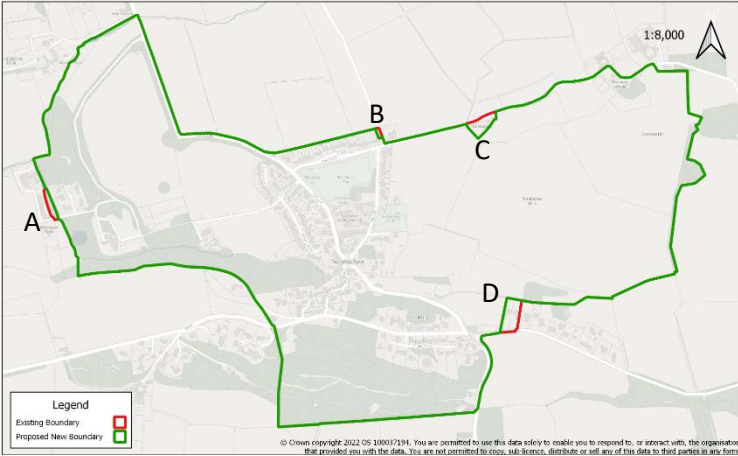




Having carried out an assessment of the conservation area it has been possible to identify a number of key issues which it is concluded have the potential to have a detrimental impact on the conservation area if they go unchecked. These can be broadly summarised as:



- The replacement of traditional materials has led to a loss of historic fabric and a negative impact on the character of the conservation area.
- Modern development in the area has not always been sympathetic to the character of the area in terms of materials, design, plot size and density. This has consequently had a negative impact on the character of the conservation area.
- The public realm is in some parts utilitarian in character and can detract from the high quality historic built environment. In other areas the more traditional streetscape is in need of repair.



The enhancement of the conservation area will therefore come from addressing the issues set out in [Annex 1](#).



Although the majority of the buildings in the Torphichen conservation area appear to be in a reasonable physical condition the area as a whole is nevertheless at risk from small changes which can cumulatively dilute the special character of the area. Examples which have adversely affected some of the buildings in the conservation area include the replacement of original timber windows or doors with inappropriate materials such as uPVC or unsympathetic designs or methods of opening; the replacement of natural roof coverings; and removal, inappropriate repair or poor modern equivalents of boundary treatments. These changes in detailing and the loss of original features effect both the external appearance of individual buildings and the local streetscape more generally. It is therefore important that future changes are more sympathetically managed, ensuring that appropriate materials and designs are used wherever it is appropriate to do so, in order to protect and enhance the overall character of the conservation area.


Annex 1



Problematic Area	Photographic Evidence	Action Plan
<p>Some of the areas in the conservation area, add no significant historical, cultural or architectural significance to the area. 4 insignificant areas have been identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Agricultural shed. B. Roadside sheds for nearby residential properties. C. Unlisted residential building. D. 2 Unlisted residential buildings. <p>The accompanying map shows the proposed boundary adjustments in green, and the existing boundary in red.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY</p>  <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 50%;">  </div> <div style="width: 50%;">  </div> <div style="width: 50%;">  </div> <div style="width: 50%;">  </div> </div>	<p>The conservation area boundary should be adjusted to exclude these 4 areas from the Torphichen Conservation Area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The conservation area boundary should be adjusted to run along the western property line to exclude the agricultural sheds. B. The conservation area boundary should be adjusted to run along the rear side of the sheds/ along the western property line of the adjacent residential property excluding the sheds. C. The conservation area boundary should be adjusted to run around the residential lot along the East, South and West property line excluding this lot. D. The conservation area boundary should be adjusted to run around the two residential lots, along the west and north property lines excluding the two lots.

Problematic Area	Photographic Evidence	Action Plan
<p>On the grounds of the preceptory is a Lamp Post. The post is in a state of disrepair with flaking paint and damage to the wooden structure.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Preceptory</p> 	<p>It is recommended the post is repaired appropriately and repainted black (preferably not high gloss).</p> <p>Alternatively, the wooden post could be replaced entirely, including an internal hollow to allow the containment of the unsightly loose cable that can be seen trailing the length of the post.</p> <p>At the time of visiting it is unclear if the Lamp is in working order. It is recommended that the lamp be repaired to full working order if so required.</p>
<p>The South window of the Preceptory is in a state of disrepair. The window is not structurally sound and is blocked off by metal fencing. due to risk of collapse, damage and/or risk of injury.</p>		<p>It is recommended that appropriate repair work is undertaken as a priority to repair the masonry of the window frame and to replace missing glass panes and brickwork.</p> <p>Actions should be undertaken to ensure the condition & structure of the building is of a safe standard.</p>

Problematic Area	Photographic Evidence	Action Plan
<p>The presence of the metal fencing, due to the above-mentioned safety risks, deducts from the aesthetic and visitor experience of the Preceptory.</p>		<p>After measures have been put in place to ensure that the building structure is of a safe standard, there will no longer be a need for any unsightly metal fencing. Fencing can then be removed to enhance the aesthetic of the building, as well as the overall visitor experience.</p>
<p>The scarring on the East wall of the Preceptory is categorised under the building listing order and so are its protected characteristics. These marks indicate where previous structures ajoined the Preceptory.</p> <p>The grouting/ pointing has eroded away over time leaving much of the stone work open to the elements leading to futher erosion of the façade, and loss of stone work.</p> <p>The fireplace is also a noted feature in need of repair.</p>		<p>The characteristics on the building façade should be repaired and re-pointed in order to preserve the existing stonework. Repair work will reduce erosion significantly. This will also improve the overall appearance of the historic features.</p> <p>If the necessary works are not carried out to the façade, these characteristics will eventually fall apart/ crumble over time. This would ultimately lead to structural failure, as well as loss of significant historic evidence.</p>

Problematic Area	Photographic Evidence	Action Plan
<p>There is no information plaque on display for visitors informing them about the previous structures of the Preceptory, and what has caused the scarring on the building façade.</p>		<p>The plaque should be free standing at an area where visitors can view the scarring features clearly, but will not distract from the overall aesthetic of the Preceptory. It should not be mounted to an exterior wall.</p>
<p>There is a small gatehouse located on the South Eastern Boundary of the Preceptory Kirkyard. This listed building is in a safe condition but would benefit from light repair work and maintenance. The East wall would benefit from repair work the most.</p> <p>The condition of the gutter is not visually acceptable.</p> <p>The door also requires repainting.</p> <p>There is a single slate missing from the Southern roof gable.</p>		<p>The gate house grouting should either be touched up or in some areas redone completely. The appropriate non-corrosive cement should be used.</p> <p>The gutters should be repaired and repainted black, wherever necessary. Preferably the paint used should not be high gloss.</p> <p>The same paint should be used on the door.</p> <p>The missing slate should be replaced with an appropriate matching slate.</p>

Problematic Area	Photographic Evidence	Action Plan
<p>The Kirkyard boundary wall (partially pictured adjoining the gatehouse) requires sporadic repairs to ensure its continued stability.</p>		<p>The boundary wall requires re-grouting with non-corrosive cement and the replacement of missing stones.</p>
<p>The Preceptory Refuge Stone is located on the Preceptory grounds beneath a mature tree, alongside a headstone as pictured.</p> <p>There is no information plaque displaying information about the history and significance of the refuge stone.</p>		<p>It is recommended that the stone is erected correctly upright and that a free-standing information plaque is included to display the story and significance of the Refuge Stone.</p>
<p>Pathways in the kirkyard are not in great condition.</p>		<p>The overall aesthetic of the kirkyard would benefit from the improvement of the pathways.</p>

Problematic Area	Photographic Evidence	Action Plan
Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments		
<p>Davidson's independent Village Store is recognised for its value as a community asset. However the western façade of the building is not in a good condition. There is damage to the exterior wall & chimney where the roughcasting is flaking away & there is cracking between the brickwork.</p> <p>The stone posts standing at the entrance, are showing signs of erosion.</p> <p>The gutters are looking tacky and are in need of improvement.</p>		<p>It is recommended that the chimney is regouted using a non-corrosive material and that the roughcast is either repaired or completely removed to expose the original stonework.</p> <p>It is recommended that the worn bricks are replaced with matching counter parts of the same material.</p> <p>Gutters should be repainted and repaired where needed. The appropriate black paint should be used for this. Paint should not be high gloss.</p>
<p>Located in the garden of the private Rosebank residence, this sundial is dated from 1660 as is a category B scheduled building. The sundial appears in relatively good condition. Preventative erosion measures should be put in place, rather than restorative measures.</p> <p>There is no information available at the site of the sundial explaining its significance.</p>		<p>It is recommended action is taken to prevent any further erosion to the stone.</p> <p>Due to its location on a private property, any public information plaque must be located out with the boundaries of the residence or mounted to the exterior wall of the property, facing the public footpath.</p>

Problematic Area	Photographic Evidence	Action Plan
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Also present in this location, is a partial statue. The statue is under investigation by Historic Environment Scotland as it is believed to pre-date the sundial. It is thought to have depicted a sitting woman however it is missing the upper portion of the figurine and is significantly eroded.

The statue is currently not listed under any designated protections, but HES has not ruled this out.



It is recommended that the statue is considered alongside the Sundial and that no action is taken with it until HES or the appropriate authority determine its historical significance.

An information plaque would be an appropriate addition but it is recognised that the statue is located on a residential property. This will restrict access to the statue and the type of plaque used.

Signage		
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The Signage on Davidsons Village Store is inappropriate for a listed building in a conservation area. The sign is out of character and is not sensitive to the building façade.



The exterior display of the premises could be improved in line with the conservation area guidance. The large tartan signage outside could be replaced with traditionally styled text signage similar to that of the Torphichen Inn. The correct proportions should be applied.

Problematic Area	Photographic Evidence	Action Plan
<p>Railings outside the village shop and post office are not in great condition. The paint is coming off the railings.</p>	<p data-bbox="891 295 1384 327">Bollards, Railings and Lamp Posts</p> 	<p>The overall aesthetic of the shop and the area would benefit from the repainting of these railings. Preferably in a non-high gloss black paint.</p>

9.0 Advice for property owners and occupiers

The character of conservation areas can be compromised over time by seemingly minor alterations but which collectively lead to a loss of historic character and it's one of the reasons that some works and alterations which might ordinarily be undertaken elsewhere without the requirement for planning permission are brought within planning control.

Alterations to the exterior or structure of any building within the conservation area will in most instances require planning permission. For example: alterations to a roof, installing a dormer window, installing a satellite receiver (which is visible from a road), replacing original windows, stone cleaning, painting the exterior of a building and fixing illuminated signage.

There are specific policies in the [West Lothian Local Development Plan](#) that relate to development in conservation areas and/or affect listed buildings and scheduled monuments and which should be taken account of in the first instance. These include Policies HOU 3, ENV 24, ENV 28, ENV 29 and ENV 33.

More recently, [National Planning Framework 4](#) has been published and Policy 7 – Historic Assets and Places refers.

The council has also prepared planning guidance on a number of subject matters which may also be informative, including [The Historic Environment](#), [Shopfronts and Advertisements in Conservation Areas](#), [House Extension & Alteration Design Guide](#) and [Alteration and Replacement of Windows in Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas](#).

However, it's not just buildings that are protected. Works to trees in the conservation area are also controlled with formal permission required for their lopping and felling. The process for obtaining permission is set out on the council's [website](#).

The council encourages anyone who is considering undertaking works within the conservation area but is unsure if planning permission is required to contact the council's Development Management team, either by [email](#) or by writing to the team at Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, EH54 6FF.

Torphichen Conservation Appraisal

Approved by West Lothian Council Executive

DATE TO BE INSERTED

West Lothian Council, Development Planning & Environment, Civic Centre, Howden Road South, Livingston, EH54 6FF

Tel: 01506 28 00 00 Email: DPgeneral@westlothian.gov.uk

