

THORPE

CONSERVATION AREA

Torp

'village'



The district around Thorpe has been favoured for settlement since early prehistoric times. Numerous archaeological discoveries have been made, especially from the gravel pits and other recent developments which surround the village.

At Thorpe Lea Nurseries, for instance, settlements of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman date have been found.



Thorpe Village might, indeed, be the successor to these settlements. It must have existed in some form by 672 when it was granted by King Frithuwold to endow Chertsey Abbey. It remained dependent on the monastery for many centuries: For example it was not until 1428 that the church (which existed from at least the 12th century) acquired from the monks the right to bury its own parishioners.

Church Approach retains the tranquil feeling of a former era. Many periods have contributed to the overall effect. The church has a 16th century tower, while the south transept (gable end to left) is dated 1485. The earliest portions of the church are 12th century. The Lych gate is 19th century date, while The Lodge (right: formerly Thorpe House Cottage) is a nice 18th century house.

At the present day the houses within the conservation area form an attractive mix of farmhouses, cottages and more substantial residences.

The roads tend to be narrow and appear more so in places because of the high brick walls which abut them.

One of these bears the date 1613: the house within, Spelthorne St. Mary, belongs to the early 19th century but is on the site of the medieval manor house. The form of



The exterior of Thorpe House was remodelled in the early 18th century in the Baroque style. It is interesting to note that the front elevation, although apparently symmetrical is not actually balanced.

the medieval village is uncertain, but may not have been very different to that shown in Rocque's map of 1768 (right). This, in turn, is very similar to the modern village.

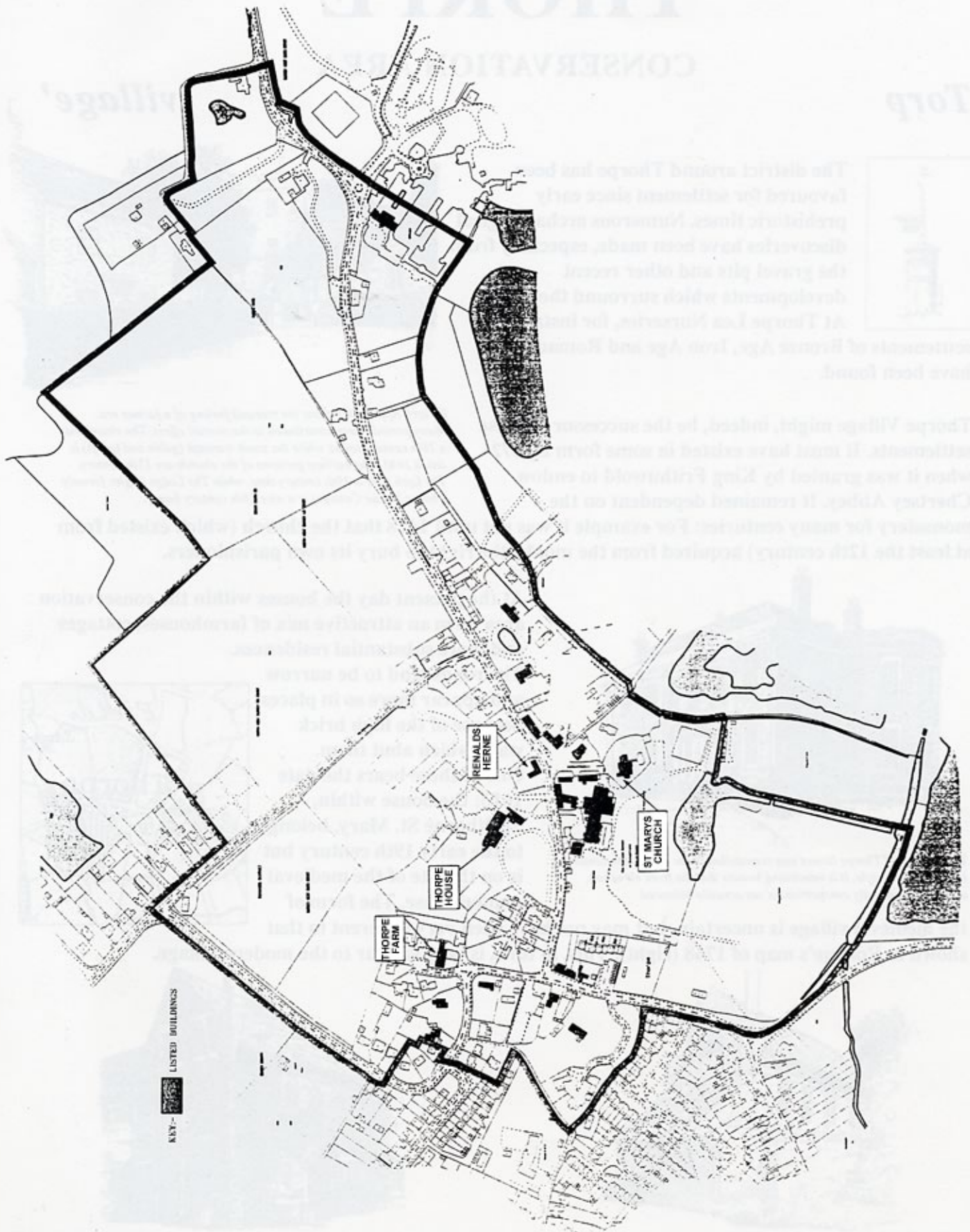


The front and east elevations of Renald's Herne, Coldharbour Rd, presents an attractive vernacular style using local materials. It is 18th century with a later single-storey extension.



The rear elevation of Thorpe Farm, Village Road, shows the timber framing of the 17th century core of the building. This is hidden behind later remodelling on other elevations.

The surrounding landscape has been ravaged by motorways and gravel pits. Thorpe, however forms a surprising and delightful survival, which still retains the ability to evoke the feel of a rural community before the coming of the railways.



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