

AGENDA ITEM NO: 8/3(k)

Parish:	Thornham	
Proposal:	Construction of three houses	
Location:	The Castle High Street Thornham Hunstanton	
Applicant:	Mrs Julie Wood	
Case No:	17/00661/F (Full Application)	
Case Officer:	Mrs K Lawty	Date for Determination: 30 May 2017

Reasons for Referral to Planning Committee – The views of Thornham Parish Council are contrary to the Officer recommendation.

Case Summary

The application is made for full planning permission for the erection of one x 5 bed and two x 4 bed properties on land at the Castle, High Street, Thornham.

The site is located to the southern side of High Street, Thornham at its junction with Castle Cottages which is a cul-de-sac development of 25 homes (see location plan).

The frontage development to High Street to the east of the site consists of 3 pairs of semi-detached 2 storey dwellings which along with the homes on the eastern side of Castle Cottages form the eastern edge of the defined village.

Within this part of the village the High Street forms the village edge, with open countryside and the salt marshes to the northern side of High Street.

The site itself is currently side garden associated with The Castle which is a nicely proportioned 2 storey stone house with red brick detailing with an existing stone and brick outbuilding to its south.

The Castle (including the application site) forms the eastern boundary of the Thornham Conservation Area. Both the Castle and the adjacent building Castle Bungalow as noted on the conservation area map as 'important unlisted buildings'.

The site has residential development on 3 sides and is within the built framework of the village.

Key Issues

Principle of development
Form and character and Impact on Heritage Assets
Impact on landscape amenity
Boundary treatment
Highways
Residential Amenity

Recommendation

APPROVE

THE APPLICATION

The application is made for full planning permission for the erection of two No. 4 bedroom dwellings and one 5 bed dwelling (shown on the plans as 4 bedrooms plus a hobby room) with associated garaging parking and landscaping.

Each property is of bespoke design with Unit 1 fronting the High Street and Units 2 and 3 fronting Castle Cottages. Unit 1 is proposed to be constructed from chalk with brick detailing to the principal elevations, with some oak cladding and render detailing and a clay pantile roof.

Plot 2 is proposed to be of flint cobbles with brick detailing to the principal elevation, with brick to the side and rear elevations and a clay pantile roof.

Plot 3 is shown as render with some cedar cladding detailing and a clay pantile roof.

Each plot incorporates solar panels on the southern elevation of the roof.

The application also includes the removal of the hedgerow to the existing garden boundary and its replacement with a brick and chalk wall set back in the north eastern corner of the site. The existing low retaining wall will remain in place with the new wall set back behind the visibility splay. This will allow for improved highways visibility for all users of Castle Cottages.

SUPPORTING CASE

The application is supported by an extensive design and access statement which sets out the physical and policy constraints of the site and how these have been addressed within the design.

PLANNING HISTORY None

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Parish Council: OBJECT - Thornham Parish Council would like to recommend refusal on the above application on the grounds that it is not in keeping with the area, due to density and ridge height and over development of the site.

Highways Authority: NO OBJECTION – conditionally.

Conservation Area Advisory Panel: NO OBJECTION – conditionally. The Panel considered the proposal and suggested that the front elevation to Plot 2 needed addressing in terms of fenestration which should be greatly simplified and materials which should also be random clunch to be more in-keeping with Thornham.

It was also suggested that the dormers be changed to catslide windows and the timber cladding and UPVC windows be removed from the scheme.

In conclusion the Panel considered that the principle of development was acceptable. The design was also acceptable subject to amendments to the dormers, fenestration and materials.

Conservation Officer: NO OBJECTION – conditionally. Concur with views of CAAP; re: realignment of the wall - walls of varying height are a key feature of Thornham Conservation Area especially along the main road (A149) so no objection but request sample panel condition.

CSNN: NO OBJECTION - conditionally.

Environmental Quality: NO COMMENTS re: contaminated land or air quality.

Natural England: NO OBJECTION - suggest further consultation with the AONB and Norfolk Coastal Partnership.

Norfolk Coastal Partnership: NO OBJECTION

REPRESENTATIONS

2 representations received referring to the following:-

- No objection but concerned at access to my property during building works
- Will sewage and water mains be upgraded to meet the extra demand of these houses as pressure is not good now?
- I think the architect has made very good use of the land available and now that the Highways Department has made their amendments there should be less of a problem for traffic joining the A149. The fact that there has not been an accident in the last 40 years is, in my opinion, partly due to luck and partly to the great care that local resident drivers take.
- I am surprised that plot 2 will have rooms in the roof which, in effect, makes it the only three storey dwelling on the estate and I would have thought that a bungalow on plot 3 would have been more appropriate to tie in with the existing bungalows on that side of the road.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Practice Guidance - Provides National Planning Practice Guidance, in support of and in addition to the NPPF

National Planning Practice Guidance - Provides National Planning Practice Guidance, in support of and in addition to the NPPF

LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

CS01 - Spatial Strategy

CS02 - The Settlement Hierarchy

CS06 - Development in Rural Areas

CS08 - Sustainable Development

SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016

DM1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

DM15 – Environment, Design and Amenity

DM17 - Parking Provision in New Development

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- Principle of development
- Form and character and Impact on Heritage Assets
- Impact on landscape amenity
- Boundary treatment
- Highways
- Residential Amenity

Principle of development;

The site lies within the village boundary of Thornham, which is identified in the Core strategy settlement hierarchy (CS02) as a 'rural village'. Policy CS02 goes on to confirm that within rural villages limited minor development will be permitted which meets the needs of settlements and helps to sustain existing services in accordance with Policy CS06 Development in rural areas.

The principle of development on this site is considered acceptable subject to compliance with other material policies in relation to impact and design.

Form and character and Impact on Heritage Assets

The proposal is for the construction of three dwellings on garden land associated with the property known as The Castle, an existing detached, two storey property set on the southern side of High Street, Thornham.

All new vehicle accesses into the site are from Castle Cottages to the south east of the property.

The site lies at the eastern most end of the Thornham conservation area and is significant when viewed entering the village from the east, marking the transition from more modern housing to more traditional. Although the site is devoid of buildings, it is bounded by an established hedge and it does not form an open space which is typical of the vicinity or has any significant merit.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), specifically paragraphs 131 and 132, state that: "When determining planning applications, local authorities should take account of: the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and the desirability of sustaining and enhancing heritage assets. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting".

The Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) places statutory duties upon Local Planning Authorities. Section 72 requires the LPA to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area when determining applications affecting buildings or land within the Conservation Area or its setting.

Furthermore, Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy states that "The historic and built environment play a crucial role in delivering environmental quality and well-being. Therefore the Council will preserve and where appropriate enhance its qualities and characteristics.

Policies CS08 and DM 15 of the development plan require new development to be well designed and to have due regard to the surrounding built form and local environment. This is derived from the NPPF which emphasises the importance of good design as an important aspect of sustainable development. CS08 also promotes the optimising of site potential, whilst protecting and enhancing the historic environment.

The design of the proposed dwellings takes reference from the more traditional properties and incorporates the use of traditional design elements and building materials.

Plot one fronts the High Street and forms an appropriate northern aspect to the site, following the line of The Castle and Castle Bungalow to create an attractive frontage.

The proposal makes best use of the site in terms of coverage. The design of the plots and detailing of the design, coupled with the appropriate building materials, are considered appropriate to the locality. The use of traditional chalk and flint will be apparent on this prominent site when viewed entering the village from the east.

Access and parking for the development are acceptable and in accordance with policy.

The concerns of the Parish Council relating to density, ridge height and over development are noted but not shared. The plot widths are similar to others in the vicinity. Unit 2 does utilise the loft space for additional accommodation but, as the DAS explains, the ridge and eaves heights (5.5 metre eaves height and 8.5 metre ridge height) are comparable with other existing development to the west of the plot and there remains an appropriate amount of spacing around the buildings so that the proposed development does not appear to be overdeveloped.

Plot 3 is of two storey height. The property to the south adjoining this plot, No. 17, is a bungalow. To mark the transition from single to two storey Plot 3 has been designed so that the single storey garage and utility room is closest to No. 17. The roof then pitches away from this property leading up to the main two storey part of the house.

The CAAP and Conservation Officer raised no objection to the proposal, although suggested some amendments to the dormers, fenestration and materials. These amendments have largely been incorporated into the proposed scheme which now better reflects the character of the area. Some of the oak and cedar cladding has been retained in moderation to add interest to the designs.

On balance it is considered that the proposed development adequately relates to the surrounding development and that the character of the conservation area is preserved.

Impact on Landscape Amenity

The whole site is within the AONB. The NPPF states, nationally designated areas such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), have been confirmed by the Government as

having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside should therefore be given great weight in planning policies and development control decisions in these areas. Any development on this site would need to comply with these provisions.

The site is surrounded by existing development on three sides and is seen in the context of its surrounding built development. Accordingly it is not considered to have a significant impact on the amenity of the area or to the wider landscape of the AONB, and as such is considered to accord with the provision of Core Strategy CS12 and NPPF policy.

The Norfolk Coast Partnership raises no objection to this application.

Boundary treatment

The site has an existing and prominent boundary to High Street which wraps around to Castle Cottages.

Along the High Street frontage there is a small flint and brick wall with an established conifer hedge behind it. The wall finishes at the junction with Castle Cottages but the hedge follows the site boundary and is a mix of conifer and beech.

In order to achieve the new access points and necessary visibility the hedge along Castle Cottages needs to be removed and set back into the site.

The existing low retaining wall around the northern part of the site is shown to be retained in situ, but the new boundary treatment around the proposed garden area to Plot 1 is shown to be a chalk faced wall of approx. 1.2-1.5m high. This will be set back in the plot to allow improved visibility for all users of Castle Cottages. Chalk walling is in keeping with other properties along the High Street who also have stone faced front boundary walls.

Highways

The Highways Authority has been consulted and their comments are included earlier in this report. They have no fundamental objection but had a list of requirements in order to make the proposal acceptable.

Amended plans have been submitted which address these issues and the Highways Authority now have no outstanding concerns, conditionally.

The Highways Authority has commented on the use of the existing access into the property known as The Castle on the main road. The proposal would result in some improvement to the use of this existing access with the removal of the hedge and its replacement with a wall set back along the northern boundary.

The proposed scheme will result in improved visibility for all users of Castle Cottages when turning onto the A149. The scheme also proposes improvements to the footpaths along the road frontage of the application site. These benefits are a material consideration.

Residential Amenity

The relationship between the proposed dwellings and neighbouring properties has been examined and the impact upon the amenity of the occupants of these properties has been assessed. Consideration has been given to overlooking, overshadowing and whether the proposed dwellings would be overbearing.

Given the orientation of the dwellings, the spacing between them and the location of windows, it is not considered there will be a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of the existing occupants of neighbouring dwellings in terms of overlooking, being overshadowed or the proposed works being over bearing, as a result of this proposal. Similarly this opinion extends to the future occupants of the three dwellings on examining the relationship between the properties.

Other matters

The Environmental Health Team (CSNN) request conditions be imposed relating to foul and surface water details.

The site lies within 2km of a SSSI. The proposed development would not have a significant adverse effect on the features on which the SSSI is designated.

Third party comments relating to design have been addressed above. Sewage and water details can be controlled through planning condition. Third party concerns relating to the blocking of roads during the construction period are noted but this is a temporary situation and outside of the control of the LPA.

The third party supporting comments are noted.

CONCLUSION

The site is within the settlement boundary of Thornham and, as such, is in principle suitable for residential development. It is considered that the development is of appropriate design, scale and layout for the site and locality, particularly with regards the duties in relation to development within a Conservation Area.

The proposal will increase the amount of built form upon the site but is an efficient use of the land which is located within the built up area of the village and does not affect an open space worthy of protecting in the Conservation Area. It will be seen against other existing development and it is not considered to result in conflict with landscape policies to protect the special qualities of the AONB.

It is considered that having regard to neighbouring uses the proposal is acceptable in visual terms and does not cause visual harm or harm to neighbour amenity.

Conditionally the proposal is acceptable in highway safety terms and brings about improvements at the junction of Castle Cottages and the main A149, which is a benefit that can be given weight in the overall consideration of the application. The scheme raises no landscaping or ecology issues.

Accordingly on balance your officers recommend that the application is approved subject to appropriate conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

- 1 Condition The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 1 Reason To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.
- 2 Condition The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Drawing No. D:1899:1C, Site Plans
 - Drawing No. D:1899:2C, Plans and Elevations
- 2 Reason For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
- 3 Condition No development shall take place on any external surface of the development hereby permitted until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building(s) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 3 Reason To ensure a satisfactory external appearance and grouping of materials in accordance with the principles of the NPPF.
- 4 Condition Prior to first occupation/use of the development hereby permitted, a plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority indicating the positions, heights, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The boundary treatment shall be completed before the occupation/use hereby permitted is commenced or before the building(s) are occupied or in accordance with a timetable to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4 Reason To ensure that the development is compatible with the amenities of the locality in accordance with the NPPF.
- 5 Condition Notwithstanding the provision of Class A of Schedule 2, Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, (or any Order revoking, amending or re-enacting that Order) no gates, bollard, chain or other means of obstruction shall be erected across the approved access unless details have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 5 Reason In the interests of highway safety.
- 6 Condition Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted visibility splays shall be provided in full accordance with the details indicated on the approved plan. The splays shall thereafter be maintained at all times free from any obstruction exceeding 1.05 metres above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.
- 6 Reason In the interests of highway safety.
- 7 Condition Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed access, on-site car parking / turning area shall be laid out, demarcated, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for that specific use.

- 7 Reason To ensure the permanent availability of the parking / manoeuvring area, in the interests of highway safety.
- 8 Condition Notwithstanding the details indicated on the submitted drawings no works shall commence on site unless otherwise agreed in writing until a detailed scheme for the off-site highway improvement works (Footway and Accesses) as indicated on the approved plans have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority.
- 8 Reason To ensure that the highway improvement works are designed to an appropriate standard in the interest of highway safety and to protect the environment of the local highway corridor.
- 9 Condition Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the off-site highway improvement works referred to in condition 8 shall be completed to the written satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority.
- 9 Reason To ensure that the highway network is adequate to cater for the development proposed.