

Parish:	Thornham	
Proposal:	Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of 3 replacement dwellings	
Location:	Quavers High Street Thornham Hunstanton	
Applicant:	Postland Developments	
Case No:	20/00871/F (Full Application)	
Case Officer:	Mrs K Lawty	Date for Determination: 28 August 2020

Reason for Referral to Planning Committee – Parish council objection and referred by sifting panel.

Neighbourhood Plan: No

Case Summary

This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing dwelling and construction of 3 replacement dwellings on land at Quavers, High Street, Thornham.

The site is accessed from the southern side of High Street, but the main application site is set behind properties fronting the High Street (see location plan). The site has residential development on all 4 sides and is within the settlement of Thornham, which is a Rural Village.

To the east of the site is garden land associated with The Oak House on the High Street, to the north are a mix of properties backing onto the site and to the west is a pair of residential properties currently under construction.

To the south are properties accessed from Hall Lane to the west.

The site itself is currently side garden associated with property known as ‘Quavers’ which is a one and a half storey detached dwelling.

The whole village is within the AONB. The access to the site and the High Street properties are within the Thornham Conservation Area, however, the main application site is outside.

Planning permission has previously been approved on the site for redevelopment of the site for two dwellings.

Key Issues

- Principle of Development
- Impact on AONB
- Form and character
- Impact upon Designated Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety
- Trees
- Other Material Considerations.

Recommendation

APPROVE

THE APPLICATION

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To the east of the site is garden land associated with Oak House on the High Street, to the north are a mix of properties backing onto the site and to the west is a pair of residential properties currently under construction.

To the south are properties accessed from Hall Lane to the west.

The site itself is currently side garden associated with property known as 'Quavers' which is a one and a half storey detached dwelling.

The whole village is within the AONB. The access to the site and the High Street properties are within the Thornham Conservation Area, however, the main application site is outside.

Planning permission has previously been approved on the site for redevelopment of the site for two dwellings in 2017 (ref: 17/01994/O), and the refurbishment of the property with construction of associated annexe (17/00297/F).

The proposal would result in 2 No. 3 bedroom properties and 1 No. 2 bedroom property. Each property is proposed to be constructed of red brick, flint panel detailing and red clay pantile roofs.

Each property has the required amount of parking spaces; 3 spaces for the 3 bedroom units and 2 spaces for the 2 bedroom unit.

SUPPORTING CASE

This application seeks to construct 2 additional dwellings on a site known as Quavers in the centre of Thornham.

The proposals have received no objection from Highways, Richard Fisher or The Conservation team.

Following an objection from a local resident their comments were taken on board and the scheme adjusted accordingly. Thornham Parish Council object on the basis of 9 houses using a private drive however this is within the Norfolk standard and the access has been previously adjusted to accommodate required vision splays.

The density of housing is comparable to adjacent sites and benefits from an open courtyard feel at its centre.

The scheme has been put forward by Postland Developments who have a reputation for constructing dwellings of the highest standards. The scheme put before the committee is of no exception with the use of good quality local stone and attention to detail. It is the developer's intension to start this scheme early 2021 and deliver by the end of 2021. They have been proactive in liaising with the local residents and will continue to do so in order to minimise disruption.

We strongly feel that this application should be approved.

PLANNING HISTORY

20/00011/PREAPP: INFORMAL - Likely to refuse: 13/03/20 – Pre-Application Advice (Outline with Consultations) and a meeting with a planning officer: Demolition of existing dwelling, construction of three new dwellings and associated works – Quavers High Street Thornham Hunstanton Norfolk E36 6LY

17/01994/O: Application Permitted: 19/12/17 - Demolition of existing dwelling and garage and construction of 2 new detached dwellings. - Quavers High Street Thornham Hunstanton Norfolk PE36 6LY

17/00297/F: Application Permitted: 28/04/17 - Construction of attached single storey annex and associated refurbishment and alteration of dwelling and demolition of detached garage – Quavers High Street Thornham Hunstanton Norfolk PE36 6LY

16/00129/PREAPP: INFORMAL - Likely to refuse: 23/09/16 – Pre-Application: Renovation and erection of dwelling/s – Quavers High Street Thornham Hunstanton Norfolk PE36 6LY

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Parish Council: OBJECT– overdevelopment of the site and the fact that nine properties using the original driveway of a dwelling; this being the only access onto the busy A149.

Highways Authority: NO OBJECTION - conditionally

Natural England: NO OBJECTION - Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites

Arboricultural Officer: NO OBJECTION - conditionally

Environmental Health & Housing - Environmental Quality: NO OBJECTION – recommend informative re: asbestos

Conservation Officer: NO OBJECTION - The site is just out of the Thornham Conservation Area, although the access to the site is within the CA. Impact upon the setting of the conservation area and any possible harm will need to be considered. A previous consent allowed two houses on the site, which was felt to preserve the character of the conservation area.

The layout of the proposal has improved since the pre app. The courtyard feel of the proposal has been softened, and the proposal does relate more to the more spacious plots, not within the conservation area but around the application site. The tree planting to the south of the site will also contribute to this. The design is also acceptable for the location.

Of more concern is the boundaries within the site, especially that forming the enclosure to plot 3, which looks to consist of a wall, although this is not marked on the key to the site plan. Could alternative boundaries be considered here? A good hedge would be the ideal as this would provide privacy to the house but ensure that the chance of a courtyard feel to the proposal is reduced.

On balance, this application in its amended state will have a neutral impact upon the setting of the Thornham Conservation Area.

Historic England: No comments

Housing Development Officer: No affordable housing contribution required.

Norfolk Coastal Partnership: NO OBJECTION - Please condition external lighting:

National Planning Policy Framework Clause 125 and Norfolk County Council's Environmental Lighting Zones Policy both recognise the importance of preserving dark landscapes and dark skies. In order to minimise light pollution, we recommend that any outdoor lights associated with this proposed development should be:

- 1) fully shielded (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fitments)
- 2) directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards)
- 3) switched on only when needed (no dusk to dawn lamps)
- 4) white light low-energy lamps (LED, metal halide or fluorescent) and not orange or pink sodium sources

Please also refer to the Institute of Lighting Professionals, Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Lights which gives guidance for lighting in an AONB.

REPRESENTATIONS

ONE representation referring to the following:-

- To accommodate three dwellings on the site would mean that the eastern walls of two of the proposed structures would be very close to the western boundary of our property
- We are concerned that their height may reduce exposure to natural light from the west with consequences for our garden

- We are concerned from the aspect of privacy about overlook from first floor windows and roof lights of the three intended dwellings
- Nothing should be done by over construction to compromise the integrity and privacy of The Oak House, which (together with its extensive garden) dates back to at least 1700, thus making it one of the oldest buildings in the village
- The site has been unoccupied since at least 2016 and neglect of the garden has had a negative impact on our garden from masses of weeds, brambles and ivy. If the proposal is approved or modified, it is essential that the Council insists on rapid implementation to avoid further damaging neglect.

LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

CS01 - Spatial Strategy

CS02 - The Settlement Hierarchy

CS06 - Development in Rural Areas

CS08 - Sustainable Development

CS09 - Housing Distribution

CS12 - Environmental Assets

SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016

DM1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

DM2 – Development Boundaries

DM15 – Environment, Design and Amenity

DM17 - Parking Provision in New Development

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

National Design Guide 2019

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The key issues identified in the consideration of this application were as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Impact on AONB
- Impact upon Designated Heritage Assets
- Form and character
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety
- Other Material Considerations.

Principle of Development

In the Core Strategy Thornham is a Rural Village where limited growth would be appropriate in terms of sustainability and the principle would accord with policies contained within the Core Strategy and NPPF.

The site is within the settlement of Thornham, which is classed as a Rural Village in the Site Allocations & Development Management Policies Plan (SADMPP), where limited growth will be permitted which meets the needs of the settlement.

Thornham Parish Council has prepared a Neighbourhood Plan and the Draft has been on public consultation for the statutory 6 weeks (under Regulation 14). However, it has not yet gone through examination or referendum, so has not yet been adopted, and is not yet at a stage where it would be given weight in decision making as part of the Development Plan. However it is a material consideration, and relevant policies are considered below.

The site has previously been considered appropriate for an increase in the number of dwellings on the site and the principle has been established for two dwellings in place of the existing single, detached property. This is a material consideration.

Impact on the AONB

The whole of Thornham village 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 so is not currently visible from outside the confines of the village. The amount of built form across the site would be significantly greater than the existing dwelling but the heights of the roofs are not greater than surrounding development.

Accordingly there are no implications for the wider landscape character of the AONB in this part of the borough. The Norfolk Coast Partnership raise no objection subject to conditions relating to the sensitive lighting of the site.

Form and Character

In addition to the policies of the Core Strategy and the SADMPP, attention is drawn to the policies of the emerging Thornham Neighbourhood Plan, in particular Policies H1 and H3 which relate to housing development in the development boundary and also the size of dwellings in the village. Policy D1 is also particularly relevant as it considers design principles for new development.

New residential development should also be in keeping with surrounding development in terms of form and character. New development should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity. It should add to the overall quality of the area.

The garden to Quavers is large with existing planting to the boundaries. The planting to the southern part of the site is denser and forms a soft and enclosed characteristic.

Previously planning permission has been approved to increase the amount of built form on the site to accommodate two dwellings on the site (ref: 17/01994/O). Permission has also

been granted for an annex to the existing property (17/00297/F). The planning history of the site is a material consideration.

It is of note that the site boundary to the north has changed since consideration of the previous planning applications on the site. Some amending of boundaries has occurred and a new dwelling has been approved on land to the north western boundary. This current application site is therefore slightly larger than the site previously considered acceptable for two dwellings.

This current proposal seeks a third dwelling on the site. The proposed development is set in a courtyard layout, with two dwellings set side by side in line with the development approved (and currently under construction) to the west. The third dwelling is located to the north east corner.

A pre-application submission was considered by the local planning authority for three dwellings on this site, where concerns were raised. Whilst no detailed elevation plans were submitted at pre-application stage and no detailed comments were given regarding the impact on scale or appearance, it was concluded that the submitted proposal appeared cramped and contrived.

It was considered that the site would be more suited to fewer units on the site, which would allow more spacing around the dwellings and be more in keeping with surrounding development. Officers advised that if the pre-application submission was submitted it was unlikely to be supported.

This application has still been submitted for three dwellings on the site but it is important to note that key changes have been made in an attempt to overcome the concerns at pre-application stage. Following feedback received through the public consultation of this current application, a further set of amended plans have also been submitted.

The following changes have been made:

- The footprint of each of the dwellings has been reduced and therefore the mass of the buildings and amount of built form on the site has been reduced
- The dwellings have been pulled further away from the site boundaries to improve the amount of space around each unit and allow for soft boundary treatment
- The garaging has been removed from each unit to reduce the amount of buildings and retain a sense of openness
- More landscaping has been introduced into the layout to improve the visual amenity

The application site is sited behind other existing dwellings and there are no public views of the site. Plots 1 and 2 are in line with the two dwellings under construction to the west and the third dwelling to the north east corner encloses the courtyard.

The design of the houses is in keeping with other surrounding house designs and are shown to be constructed of local found materials, including red brick, flint panelling and red clay pan tiles.

When comparing the layout to other surrounding development the house and plot sizes are not out of keeping. The layout of the shared courtyard area, with areas of landscaping between parking spaces, means that the car parking should no longer dominate the courtyard.

It is considered that the proposed development is now of a scale, density, layout and design that is compatible with the character and appearance of this part of Thornham. There are no

public views of the site, although there may be glimpses of the roof slopes from the main A149 through gaps between existing buildings.

On balance, it is considered that the amended plans now under consideration will not result in harm to the character of the area. The design of the dwellings takes reference from local design elements and reinforces the distinctiveness and quality of the area. The reduction in the scale of the dwellings and the landscaping to the shared courtyard results in a scheme where the built form will no longer dominate the site or result in a cramped form of development.

It is considered the proposal accords with existing national and local plan policy and also follows the principles of the emerging neighbourhood plan with regard to design principles for new development and new housing in the settlement boundary.

Impact on Conservation Area

Much of the village of Thornham is within a Conservation Area. The property, Quavers, and the garden land to the south are outside the Conservation Area but the access and part of the northern section of the site are within.

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.

The NPPF and Development Plan policies also reflect this approach.

The Conservation Area Advisory Panel commented on the pre-application proposal and raised concern about the third unit to the northern part of the site which would result in a scheme that was too cramped and out of keeping. However, they did not raise concern about the impact on the conservation area.

The Conservation Team has commented that the layout of the proposal has improved since the pre app. The courtyard feel of the proposal has been softened, and the proposal does relate more to the more spacious plots, not within the conservation area but around the application site.

The Conservation Officer comments that the tree planting to the south of the site will also contribute to character and the designs of the dwellings are acceptable for the location.

The Conservation Officer commented that a soft boundary to the private garden of Plot 3, such as a tall hedge, would provide privacy to the house but ensure that the chance of a courtyard feel to the proposal is reduced. However, the wall was encouraged by your officers as offering a more permanent privacy screen in preference to a timber fence, as walling is a common feature in this part of Thornham.

On balance, the Conservation Officer considers this application in its amended state will have a neutral impact upon the setting of the Thornham Conservation Area.

Highways

The Parish Council raises concern about the amount of dwellings using this access point onto the High Street. Under previous planning approvals on adjoining sites works have been

undertaken to the walling at the front of the site where the access road joins the High Street. This means that adequate visibility splays can be provided.

The Highways Authority raises no objection to the proposal, subject to appropriate conditions.

Residential Amenity

The proposed dwellings have been designed to avoid neighbour amenity issues. Plots 1 and 2 have low eaves and projections are one and a half storey instead of full two storey height. Plot 3 is a more modest two bedroom property of one and a half storey height.

The submitted amended plans show a better relationship with neighbouring properties as the amount of spacing to the boundaries has been increased.

The placing of windows has been considered to minimise overlooking of neighbouring properties. It is recommended, however, that a north facing secondary bedroom window to Plot 3 is fitted with obscure glazing and retained as such to avoid overlooking. Also that a condition is imposed removing permitted development rights for extensions to the roof of Plot 3 to prevent any future potential neighbour amenity issues.

It is considered the scheme will not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking, being overshadowed or the dwellings being over bearing.

Trees

There are a mix of garden trees and shrubs of various ages on the site. None are covered by a tree protection order and are outside the conservation area.

The application has been supported by a Tree Report which identifies the trees and indicates those to be retained or removed. The report also includes an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, details of root protection areas and tree protection measures.

A total of 22 trees were surveyed. 16 will need to be removed either for construction purposes or due to poor health. None of the trees to be removed are of high quality; they are of moderate to low quality or either dead, diseased or dying. The remainder will need protection during construction and details of this are already set out in the Tree Report.

The site plans show a landscape buffer with native tree and hedge planting to the southern part of the site and details can be secured through planning conditions.

The Arboricultural Officer raises no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of planning conditions ensuring the works follow the details of the tree report and that details of replacement planting are submitted.

Other matters

An asbestos survey has been submitted with the application and the Environmental Protection Team recommend an informative be added to any permission drawing attention to The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR 2012) which will need to be adhered to.

Third party comments have largely been addressed above. A wish for the rapid implementation of development on this site is noted but this is not something that can be

enforced by the lpa, although the standard 3 year time limit to commence development is normally considered to encourage development in a realistic timeframe.

Summary

Development for two dwellings on the historic garden area of Quavers has previously been found to be acceptable. The boundary of the application site to the north has been extended to include a parcel of garden land of a neighbouring property, so the site is now slightly larger than the application sites previously considered.

This proposal for three dwellings on the site shows a two bedroom, detached property of one and a half storeys to the north east corner of the site in addition to the two, detached at the southern part of the site. The resulting layout would create a shared courtyard for parking and turning for all three properties.

The plans, as amended, have reduced the scale and footprint of the proposed dwellings and increased the amount of spacing around each property. Landscaping has been incorporated into the courtyard area and the development no longer looks unduly cramped or contrived.

The design of each dwelling takes sufficient reference from surrounding development to reinforce local characteristics. In this regard it is considered the proposal accords with the provisions of Policies CS06, CS08, CS12 and DM15 with regard to maintaining local character and a high quality environment, responding to local context and character, preserving the qualities and characteristics of the village and responding sensitively and sympathetically to the local setting and spacing between buildings.

The proposal is also considered acceptable in terms of its setting within the AONB and preserves the character and appearance of the nearby Conservation Area.

There are no highway safety issues and the protection of the remaining trees can be secured through planning conditions.

Accordingly the recommendation is to approve.

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. POS01.01.05 Rev B, Proposed Site Layout
Drawing No. POS01.01.03 Rev B, Proposed Details Plot 1
Drawing No. POS01.01.04 Rev B, Proposed Details Plot 2
Drawing No. POS01.01.02 Rev -, Proposed Details Plot 3
- 2 Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 Condition: No development shall commence on any external surface of the development until a sample panel of the materials to be used for the external surfaces of the building(s) and/or extension(s) hereby permitted has been erected on the site for the inspection and written approval of the Local Planning Authority. The sample panel shall measure at least 1 metre x 1 metre using the proposed materials, mortar type, bond and pointing technique. The development shall be constructed 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: 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: Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted a visibility splay shall be provided in full accordance with the details indicated on the approved plan. The splay shall thereafter be maintained at all times free from any obstruction exceeding 1.05 metres above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway
- 5 Reason: In the interests of highway safety
- 6 Condition: Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed access /on-site car parking / turning area shall be laid out, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for that specific use.
- 6 Reason: To ensure the permanent availability of the parking / manoeuvring area, in the interests of highway safety.
- 7 Condition: No development or other operations shall commence on site until the existing trees and/or hedgerows to be retained have been protected in accordance with the details contained the Tree Report by Heritage Tree Specialists Ltd including the erection of fencing for the protection of any retained tree or hedge before any equipment, machinery, or materials are brought on to the site for the purposes of development or other operations.
- The fencing shall be retained intact for the full duration of the development until all equipment, materials and surplus materials have been removed from the site. If the fencing is damaged all operations shall cease until it is repaired in accordance with the approved details. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any fenced area in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavations be made without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.
- 7 Reason: To ensure that existing trees and hedgerows are properly protected in accordance with the NPPF. This needs to be a pre-commencement condition given the potential for damage to protected trees during the construction phase.
- 8 Condition: Prior to the first use or occupation of the development hereby approved, full details of both hard and soft landscape works shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include

finished levels or contours, hard surface materials, refuse or other storage units, street furniture, structures and other minor artefacts. Soft landscape works shall include planting plans, written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment) schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers and densities where appropriate.

- 8 Reason: To ensure that the development is properly landscaped in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with the NPPF.
- 9 Condition: All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation or use of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants that within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species as those originally planted, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written approval to any variation.
- 9 Reason: To ensure that the work is carried out within a reasonable period in accordance with the NPPF.
- 10 Condition: Notwithstanding details submitted any outdoor lights associated with this proposed development should be:
- 1) fully shielded (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fitments)
 - 2) directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards)
 - 3) switched on only when needed (no dusk to dawn lamps)
 - 4) white light low-energy lamps (LED, metal halide or fluorescent) and not orange or pink sodium sources
- 10 Reason: In accordance with the provisions of the NPPF.
- 11 Condition: Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 1, Class B of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development(England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), the enlargement of the dwelling house referred to as Plot 3,consisting of an addition or alteration to its roof, shall not be allowed without the granting of specific planning permission.
- 11 Reason: In order that the Local Planning Authority may retain control of development which might be detrimental to the amenities of the locality if otherwise allowed by the mentioned Order.
- 12 Condition: Before the first occupation of the dwellinghouse referred to as Plot 3 the first floor window to the north elevation shall be fitted with obscured glazing and any part of the window that is less than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which it is installed shall be non-opening. The window shall be permanently retained in that condition thereafter.
- 12 Reason: To protect the residential amenities of the occupiers of nearby property.
- 13 Condition: Prior to the installation of any air source heat pump(s) a detailed scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall specify the sound power levels of the proposed unit(s), identify the distance from each unit to the nearest boundary and provide details of anti-vibration

mounts, or noise attenuation measures. The scheme shall be implemented as approved, and thereafter maintained as such.

- 13 Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality in accordance with the principles of the NPPF.