

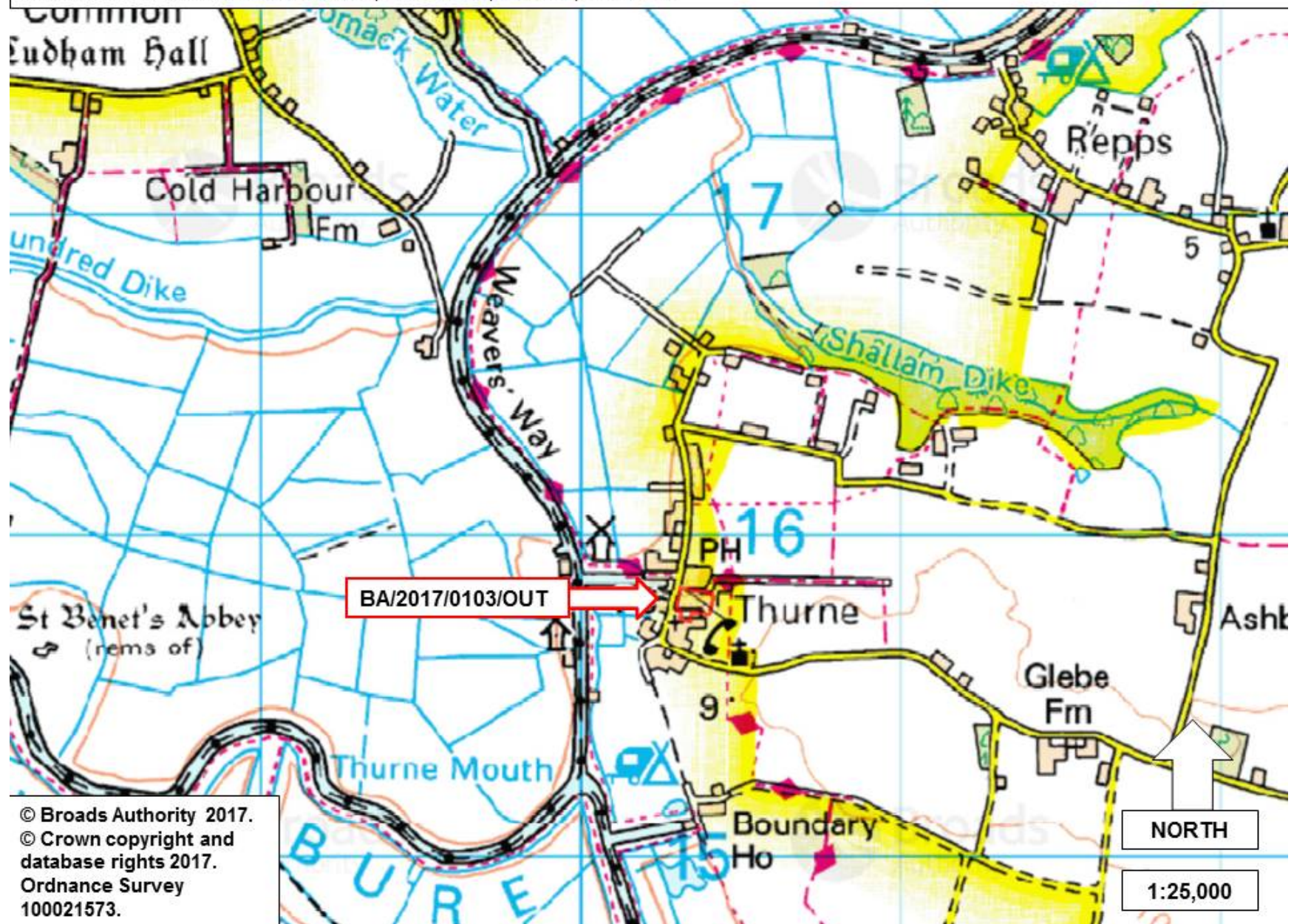
Reference:

BA/2017/0103/OUT

Location

Hedera House, the Street, Thurne

BA/2017/0103/OUT - Hedera House, The Street, Thurne, NR29 3AP



Application for Determination

Parish	Thurne		
Reference	BA/2017/0103/OUT	Target date	03 August 2017
Location	Hedera House, The Street, Thurne, NR29 3AP		
Proposal	Outline application to redevelop Hedera House to form 6 residential dwellings and 10 new holiday cottages		
Applicant	Mr Delf		
Recommendation	Approve subject to conditions		
Reason for referral to Committee	Objections received		

1 Background

- 1.1 The application site comprises an area of 0.8 hectares known as Hedera House located on the east side of The Street in Thurne, close to the centre of the village. Thurne is comprised of a village centre which includes the Staithe, a shop, and a public house, with development around the Staithe area and north and south along The Street, and a small amount along Church Street. Residential development is effectively in sections, with a cluster at the southern end of The Street and Church around where the road turns 90 degrees to run roughly parallel to the River Thurne, a couple of properties opposite the application site, there are then properties on the northern side of the Staithe, following which there is a stretch of housing along the west side of The Street, followed by a stretch of housing along the east side of The Street. There are a number of farm buildings, predominantly around the application site, and a Methodist Church immediately south of the site. The depth of developed plots in Thurne in terms of distance from street frontage to rear boundary is reasonably regular with the notable exception of a bulge on the eastern side of The Street. This section comprises the Hedera House site and sections of farm buildings on either side, with some residential development on the northern side of Hedera House continuing a little further eastward.
- 1.2 The Hedera House site is predominantly rectangular save for a much smaller rectangular protrusion at the south of the site and to the rear of the Methodist Church. The western boundary of the site is along The Street for a distance of 65 metres although it is noted that at present the site has its back to the street with a tall hedge along the majority of the street frontage. The site comprises a large 2-storey dwelling located roughly in the centre of the site which offers

holiday accommodation for up to 12 people, 10 holiday chalet bungalows comprising 7 units adjacent to the northern boundary, 1 adjacent to the western boundary and 2 within the small rectangular protrusion at the south of the site, and an open air enclosed swimming pool which is located in the south-eastern corner of the site.

- 1.3 The 2-storey dwelling known as 'Hedera House' is a large dwelling but is not a dominating presence in terms of views from the surrounding area owing to the size of the site within which it sits and the level of screening surrounding the site. Anecdotal evidence suggests the house was previously the farmhouse for one of the surrounding farms but was subdivided from the original property and subsequently the site developed for tourism purposes. The building is fairly unremarkable and has been extended unsympathetically to the rear which creates a cluttered and jumbled appearance so that only from the front does the building have any appeal. It is noted that the traditional joinery has been replaced by modern windows which further undermine the appearance of the property.
- 1.4 The 10 holiday chalets are single storey with an extremely slight mono-pitch to the roof. There appear to be two sizes although the differences are reasonably minor and the uniform appearance of cream colour rendered walls, white eaves with an overhang to the front featuring two metal V-shaped supports allows for a calm rhythm of appearance. However, the chalets have no visual merit and are accurately described in a 1991 planning decision notice as 'of a poor standard of design'. The swimming pool is enclosed on all sides but has the unfortunate appearance of a static caravan with the roof cut off and therefore has no visual merit.
- 1.5 The boundary treatments are varied. The western boundary which fronts The Street mostly comprises a tall hedge although there is a vehicle access opening at the southern end and a section of the hedge is absent towards the southern end, both of which allow views of the site. The northern boundary is mostly tree lined, with an opening adjacent to The Street which allows pedestrian access, and at the northern end there is a barn on neighbouring land adjacent to the boundary. The eastern boundary is a mix of trees, hedge, and fencing, with one noticeable gap in the boundary which is partly filled by a low post and rail fence. The southern boundary features trees adjacent to the church, close boarded fencing, and a pair of large barns with a brick wall in between. The overall appearance lacks clear form or approach in terms of boundary treatment or appearance. The site is mostly screened from public vantage points along The Street with occasional views of the site, and has a fairly open appearance to the eastern boundary which can be viewed from public footpaths which run parallel to the boundary and form part of the Weavers' Way.
- 1.6 This application follows a previous application which was submitted in 2016. Concerns were raised in relation to design and site layout and discussions were held with the Agent for the application. Revised plans were not submitted and a significant time elapsed before any agreement on a way forward occurred, it was therefore considered appropriate to request that the application be withdrawn and the scheme resubmitted to ensure a clarity of approach. There

was further delay in the scheme being resubmitted and a substantial amount of time has passed since the original submission. The submitted scheme is not markedly different from the previous proposal but has sought to address design issues and make alterations to the site layout.

2 Proposals

- 2.1 An outline planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing buildings on site and a redevelopment of the site to provide a mixture of replacement holiday accommodation comprising 10 units, and residential dwellinghouses as enabling development.
- 2.2 The site would effectively be divided into two halves with the western half comprising the tourism element, and the eastern half comprising the residential element. The split in terms of site area is roughly 50/50.
- 2.3 The proposed holiday accommodation comprises three different building designs. Two pairs of semi-detached 2-storey units located within the rectangular protrusion at the south of the site. A short terrace of three units and a semi-detached pair with an appearance of 1.5 storeys sited to the western side of the site at an angle of 18 degrees to The Street. A single bungalow described as 'disabled friendly' sited adjacent to the northern boundary. All holiday accommodation would be 2-bedroom units.
- 2.4 The proposed residential accommodation comprises three different styles based on a common design approach which features a main 2-storey element with either one or two 'wings' which are 1.5 storeys. Each unit features its own driveway, integral garage, and private amenity space. The provision would be three 3-bedroom houses and three 4-bedroom houses.
- 2.5 The submitted application indicates that the only matter to be reserved would be landscaping, although it is noted that the submitted plans do not feature a full set of elevations and upon raising this issue with the Agent it was accepted that some aspects of appearance would also be reserved.

3 Site history

- 3.1 BA/1990/3082/HISTAP - Single storey extension to chalets. Approved with conditions, March 1990.
BA/1991/0055/HISTAP - Alterations to chalets to form new bedrooms with en suite facilities. Refused, September 1991.
BA/1991/0083/HISTAP - Alterations to chalets to form new bedrooms with en-suite facilities. Approved with conditions, January 1992.
BA/2016/0009/OUT - Redevelop Hedera House to form 6 residential dwellings and 10 new holiday cottages. Withdrawn

4 Consultation

Parish Council - the Parish Council commented as follows:

- 1: We strongly agree with the points set out by Mr Malcolm Cater in his comments to you and presented to a meeting of the Parish Council.
- 2: This application seems to ignore Local Plan policy which states:
 - i) The majority of the site be retained in holiday accommodation. More than half the site is for large private housing.
 - ii) A layout, form and design which strengthens the rural characteristics of the village. The application fails to address this.
- 3: We agree the site is tired and in need of an upgrade.
We feel the replacement holiday units should be single storey, the proposed two storey cottages will be too intrusive, particularly as they are close to existing properties.
- 4: Bearing in mind Thurne is a very small village, to create what is in effect a mini housing estate right in the middle would detrimentally alter the character of the village.

Thurne Community Action Group (TCAG) - A number of points raised which are summarised as follows:

- o Tourism is important to village, modernising this site is welcomed, important not to damage character of the village.
- o Two storey development in heart of village will be visually prominent and spoil rural nature of village.
- o Loss of Hedera House is disturbing to TCAG, there is a strong case for retention.
- o Concerns over drainage and run-off.
- o Concerns over increase in traffic.
- o Management of holiday chalets needs to be clarified.
- o Opportunity here to do something exciting and imaginative, not reflected in this plan.

NCC Highways - No objection subject to conditions and informative.

Internal Drainage Board - As stated within the FRA the site falls within the Drainage district of the Broads Internal Drainage Board. Any change to the impermeable area of the site or the positive discharge to the drainage system, may result in increased flows (by rate and/or volume) entering the district, which will need to be dealt with by the boards infrastructure.

Therefore further details will be required from the applicant to confirm how excess surface water from the site will be dealt with and of any change to the drainage characteristics of the site.

Land Drainage consent may be required as may a one off surface water discharge contribution. Details of this and the charges associated can be found on our website.

Environment Agency - No objection on flood risk grounds providing that the LPA have taken into account flood risk considerations.

BA Ecologist - No objection subject to conditions.

BA Tree Officer - No objection raised over loss of trees to centre of the site.
Concern raised about loss of hedge to western boundary to provide visibility

splay, request made to confirm if this is necessary, any loss should be mitigated and secured by planning condition.

BA Landscape Officer - Concerns raised and current proposal not supported. The outline application does not seek approval of landscaping, however matters of landscape and setting are relevant to the acceptability of a proposal given the nature of the site and its location. The site sits within an area of relatively open arable land, with some long views towards the settlement of Thurne, in particular from Church Road/Thurne Road and Repps Road to the south, due to slightly higher elevation.

The proposals locate the holiday accommodation along The Street and larger units of market housing to the east of the site. This is positive in terms of the development maintaining a green frontage and providing character in keeping with the village from The Street itself, however the form and layout of the development from the wider setting is of some concern. It is acknowledged that the housing types proposed have been designed with relatively low profile roof heights and styles and variation in roof form, all of which will likely assist in minimizing the impact on the wider views, however I am unconvinced that the same consideration has been applied to the layout. Currently the site is not readily identifiable from surrounding views due to the built form being at a scale similar to surrounding development. The introduction of larger scale built form and at a higher density is likely to make the development a visible introduction within the wider setting of existing buildings in the area and increase the sense of density and scale perceived from wider views.

In order to limit any notable increase in density and massing of the existing settlement, the layout of the eastern part of the site could be reconsidered to ensure it responds more sensitively. More information could also be provided about the rationale behind the current layout beyond simple consideration of the marketability of units. In addition the use of boundary treatments around the site will have the potential to either add further negative impact to the proposals or to partially mitigate the proposals. The applicant may therefore wish to consider these issues and provide additional information.

Without a full application, or landscape forming part of the matters for outline approval, it is difficult to determine the full extent of the impact of the proposals on the surroundings and establish suitable measures to integrate the development into its setting and mitigate any change. I conclude that currently the application lacks sufficient information to demonstrate that there would not be a visual impact and some impact on the character of the landscape setting. Therefore, in landscape terms I would be unable to support the current outline proposal due to a lack of certainty over the impact it would have on the wider setting.

Representations

Four responses to the public consultation were received from Thurne residents which raised a number of points which are summarised as follows:

- Loss of Hedera House building should be avoided.
- Consideration should be given to refurbish the existing accommodation.
- Viability arguments are contradictory and lacking justification
- No justification that the holiday accommodation is much needed.
- Concern that houses will be built and holiday accommodation not.
- Concern over use of holiday accommodation as residential
- Planning permission required for change of use.
- New homes are considered to be 'executive' style, they do not reflect village architecture or improve quality of built environment.
- Cul-de-sac style does not exist in village.
- No provision of affordable housing.
- Lack of mix of house sizes
- Two storey holiday accommodation would be more intrusive, overbearing, and result in a loss of amenity.
- Increase in traffic a hazard for pedestrians, cyclists, and animals.
- Drainage is an important issue.
- Contention that development will contribute to local economy is questioned.
- Application reduces holiday accommodation provision.
- Flood risk assessment is incorrect.
- No specific need for housing in Thurne.
- Lack of supporting infrastructure.
- Contrary to Core Strategy CS18, CS19, CS20, CS21, and CS24.
- Contrary to Development Plan DP22-30 excluding DP25.
- Sewage treatment needs to be addressed.
- No consultation over emergency access.

5 Policies

5.1 The following Policy has been assessed for consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and has been found to be consistent and can therefore be afforded full weight in the consideration and determination of this application. [NPPF](#)

5.2 Site Specific Policies Local Plan (adopted 2014)

http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/469620/Adopted-Site-Specific-Policies-Local-Plan-11-July-2014-with-front-cover.pdf (Page 90/91)

THU1 - Tourism Development at Hedera House, Thurne

Neighbourhood Plans

5.3 There is no Neighbourhood Plan in force in this area.

6 Assessment

- 6.1 The proposal is for the redevelopment of the Hedera House site in the village of Thurne. The proposal seeks a comprehensive redevelopment which would involve the demolition of all structures currently on the site, the division of the site into part residential comprising 6 houses and part holiday accommodation comprising 10 units.
- 6.2 The main issues in the determination of this application are the principle of the development, design and layout, landscape, neighbour amenity, trees and ecology, highways, flood risk, and developer contributions.

Principle of development

- 6.3 The site is currently in tourism use primarily providing holiday accommodation in the form of chalets. There is a large old dwellinghouse on the site but according to the documents submitted with the application this is also utilised to provide holiday accommodation. Whilst the principle of holiday accommodation provision is well established and accepted, there is no current residential use and the proposed use of part of the site to provide residential housing must be considered as a new residential development.
- 6.4 Site Specific Policy THU1 relates to Thurne and specifically the Hedera House site. The Policy states:

“Land at Hedera House is allocated for tourism- uses, with a proportionate amount of general market housing as enabling development. Development proposals on this site shall provide the following:

- (i) The majority of the site to be retained in holiday accommodation available as short-stay lets;
- (ii) The proportion of the site to be developed for general market housing shall be only that required to deliver satisfactory redevelopment, renovation or upgrading of the existing holiday accommodation. This shall be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Broads Authority, in a viability assessment of the proposed development which shall be prepared by an independent chartered surveyor;
- (iii) A layout, form and design which strengthens the rural character of the village and its location in a national park equivalent area and reinforce local distinctiveness and landscape character;
- (iv) Retention of mature hedgerows and provision of suitable boundary landscaping and areas of open space to retain a spacious and ‘green’ approach within the site appropriate for a rural village;
- (v) Demonstration that there is adequate capacity in water recycling centre (sewage treatment works) and the foul sewerage network to serve the proposed development and that proposals demonstrate they will not have an adverse impact on surface or ground water in terms of quality and quantity;
- (vi) Protect the amenities of nearby residents;
- (vii) Adequate vehicular access compatible with the above criteria; and

- (viii) Proposals must ensure no adverse effects on the conservation objectives and qualifying features of the nearby SSSI.

The inclusion of ancillary facilities (for example the retention of the swimming pool and/or games room) for the benefit of visitors or residents would be welcomed, subject to it not compromising the provision of a suitable scheme.”

- 6.5 The preamble to the policy states that ‘Open market residential development is considered to be an appropriate and complementary land use for the Hedera House site redevelopment’. It is considered that the proposed use of part of the site for residential development is acceptable in the broadest principle, but that analysis of the criteria for assessment within Site Specific Policy THU1 is essential in considering whether the current proposal is itself acceptable in policy terms. Each point is considered in turn.

Site Use Distribution

- 6.6 In essence the criteria under (i) and (ii) of Policy THU1 are interlinked. In order to deliver a viable development it is accepted that general market housing would need to be provided as enabling development. Criteria (ii) states clearly that ‘The proportion of the site to be developed for general market housing shall be only that required to deliver satisfactory redevelopment’, whilst criteria (i) states that ‘The majority of the site to be retained in holiday accommodation available as short-stay lets’.
- 6.7 The submitted application includes a viability assessment prepared by an independent chartered surveyor as required by Policy THU1. The assessment shows that a minimum of 6 general market houses would be required in order to make the proposed development viable. This assessment has been independently reviewed in order to test the accuracy of the stated calculation and the following conclusions were drawn:
- The viability appraisals are based upon the demolition of the existing holiday chalet accommodation and replacement with ten new units together with enabling development involving the removal of the existing dwelling and the construction of six open market detached dwellings.
 - The Viability Assessment provides limited supporting evidence justifying the assumptions, costs and values used in the appraisals. Whilst I do not necessarily agree with all assumptions and inputs used, however, in my opinion, those used are not wholly unreasonable.
 - I consider the appraisals to be a fair assessment of the relative viability of the two parts of the proposed development and provide both landowner and developer with a fair return sufficient to ensure that the development of the proposed open market housing will enable the delivery of the new holiday accommodation.

With the assessment and independent review in mind it is considered that sufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the level of enabling development is reasonable and at a level which would allow for the

satisfactory redevelopment of the site whilst ensuring the need for significant investment can be made with a sound level of confidence.

- 6.8 The issue quickly arises that the level of enabling development required is at a quantity which would challenge the requirement stated in criteria (i). The western half of the development which provides the holiday accommodation has a gross area as measured on the submitted plans of 3856.4sqm. The eastern half of the development which provides the general market housing has a gross area as measured on the submitted plans of 3871.1sqm. This equates to a near 50/50 divide. It is considered that six houses on a site of this size, taking into account the need to provide reasonable setting and layout, avoid clustering or overdevelopment, and achieve acceptable levels of private amenity space, requires the portion of the site proposed and it is not considered to reasonably be at a lower level in terms of the submitted proposal.
- 6.9 Having accepted that the enabling development proposed at a level of 6 houses has been satisfactorily demonstrated to be at the minimum level required, and that the proportion of the site allocated is at a reasonable and acceptable level for the siting of 6 houses, consideration must turn to how this impacts on criteria (i) of Policy THU1. It is clear that the majority of the site would not be retained as holiday accommodation, but the thrust of the policy is to ensure a satisfactory redevelopment of the site and one which is viable. To undermine the viability of the site would undermine the prospects of the site being redeveloped. It is consistently accepted, even by those objecting to this scheme, that the site is tired and in need of redevelopment, and the existence of Site Specific Policy THU1 emphasises this. In placing enabling development at the centre of the policy it acknowledges difficult realities in redeveloping a site such as this.
- 6.10 As a basic measure the requirement for the majority of the site to be retained as holiday accommodation could be achieved by moving the dividing line between the two halves of the development a short distance to the east. This simple act of redistribution would result in a majority of the site being retained as holiday accommodation but would be a largely technical exercise without any tangible benefit. It would still be possible to provide 10 holiday units and six residential houses only with a minor change in the position of the proposed boundary between the two. The area around the holiday units and the setting this provides is considered to be generous and not in need of expansion. Conversely a reduction in the area for setting and amenity of the residential houses would have an impact on the acceptability of that element of the scheme.
- 6.11 It is further considered that the proposed scheme achieves a satisfactory redevelopment of the site. Taking into account the level of holiday accommodation currently provided, the proposed scheme achieves a reasonably comparable provision, by utilising predominantly 2-storey units the site density is increased which ensures that provision is continued and this retains this location as a dedicated tourism site. In turn the economic benefits

of such an asset in the village is sustained which helps support businesses such as the public house and shop.

- 6.12 Finally it is noted that the provision of accommodation in terms of number of units favours the holiday accommodation provision which numbers 10 as opposed to the six residential houses. It is noted that the primary difference between them is the size of the buildings and their type, with the residential being detached and the holiday units being terraced, semi-detached, and detached. Consideration could arguably be given to taking a similar approach with the residential houses and providing a different approach to the provision of accommodation with smaller units taking up less of the site and therefore having the potential to retain more of the site in holiday accommodation use. However, any reduction in the numbers proposed would result in a loss of potential value which would undermine the scheme in terms of providing a sound level of enabling development. Another possible approach would be to provide a lower quality of holiday accommodation which would require less investment and therefore require a smaller proportion of enabling development. Whilst this may assist in retaining a larger portion of the site for holiday accommodation it would not assist in bringing about a satisfactory redevelopment of the site which would raise the standard not only of the accommodation provision but also providing a character and appearance which seeks to complement the character and appearance of the village of Thurne.
- 6.13 Having regard to the above assessment it is not considered that a strict interpretation of this aspect of the policy would result in an improvement to the scheme (much less a significant one) and there is therefore no benefit to requiring the division between the element of the scheme to be revised. The proposed enabling development is considered to be the minimum required to make the scheme viable and that the approach to dividing the site between the holiday accommodation and residential housing elements is sound on this basis. The division is roughly 50/50 which allows for a reasonable balance of uses, and by siting the holiday accommodation to the western end of the site the existing interface with the village is maintained. It is therefore considered that the site use distribution is in accordance with criteria (ii) of Policy THU1 and is not considered to undermine the thrust and intention of criteria (i) of Policy THU1.
- 6.14 Having determined that the proposal is acceptable in principle and in terms of the distribution of development types across the site, consideration must be given to the layout and design of the development including siting and scale of the proposal, and the impact the works would have on the landscape of the Broads. Policy DP2 requires that development would not have a detrimental effect on a feature of landscape importance. Policy DP4 requires that development must be appropriate in terms of scale, form and massing when considered in the context of the site and the surrounding landscape and streetscape. Criteria (iii) and (iv) of Policy THU1 relate to design, landscaping, and areas of open space and are detailed above in paragraph 5.7. Policy CS1 seeks to protect the distinct landscape of the Broads and varied landscape character of both the built and natural environment.

Layout and Design

- 6.15 The pattern of development in Thurne comprises a number of different elements. To the north of the Staithe the appearance is more open chiefly due to the siting of development on only one side of the street, first to the west and then to the east. Development around the Staithe area is more built up but still retains an open feel due to the Staithe itself. To the south of the Staithe the street scene becomes more enclosed but still retains a reasonably open feel, however it is noticeable around this part of the village that development on the eastern side of The Street spreads further from the road which gives an increased perception of depth of development. Where The Street becomes Church Street there is a small collection of houses which are obviously set back and away from the public highway which again gives a different perception to the pattern of development.
- 6.16 The layout of the application site proposes a reasonably straightforward division into two halves, with the western half of the site providing holiday accommodation and the eastern half of the site providing residential houses. This approach ensures a clear demarcation between the two uses which also contributes to providing readable clusters of development. By concentrating the holiday accommodation to the western side of the site it ensures that views from The Street achieve a degree of comprehensible development and with a layout that conforms to the overall pattern of development in the village. A similar argument can be put forward when considering views of the residential development to the eastern side of the site from public vantage points to the east, and from that vantage point the site is framed by not unsubstantial farm buildings. Views of the two site elements together would be reasonably limited to the site entrances on The Street, and even these will be diluted once landscaping elements have matured.
- 6.17 Taking each element in turn, the layout of the holiday accommodation comprises a semi-detached pair and three unit terrace roughly parallel to The Street, with the single storey unit slightly further to the north with an increased set back, and two semi-detached pairs in the rectangular protrusion at the south of the site. This is considered to spread the development reasonably evenly across this section of the site, providing a mix of established building positions, and development which reflects the pattern of development within the village. It also helps ensure that a single access point can provide access to the entire site which limits the requirement for hard surfaced areas and allows the site to be reasonably enclosed boundary wise. It is noted that the proposed buildings parallel to eastern boundary are set at an angle of 18 degrees to The Street, this is not reflective of development within Thurne but is not considered to undermine the appearance of the development or character of the village.
- 6.18 The layout of the residential housing is broadly two rows of three detached properties with a central access road. This approach is largely in keeping with existing development in Thurne in the few locations where roads run at a right angle to The Street such as on the corner with Church Street and the sites

either side of Hedera House. It is a simple layout that provides a clear pattern of development, regular siting of amenity space, a minimum level of potential overlooking, and contributes to an unfussy and less cluttered appearance when viewed from the surrounding area.

- 6.19 In terms of building design the village of Thurne features a variety of form, design, and siting, and a notable range of materials and finishes. There is a mix of single storey and two storey, traditional old buildings and more modern constructions, some buildings featuring low eaves and some with prominent front gables. There are plenty of examples of quality design alongside examples of design without obvious merit, but it seems possible to find examples across a range of architectural styles which have varied throughout the years. Across the village there are brick and render finishes, although it is noted at the southern end of the village where the subject site lies there are arguably more brick than rendered buildings. Roof coverings are predominantly pantiles, with some thatch and the odd example of slate.
- 6.20 The application proposes a few styles of building around a central theme which the submitted design and access statement describes as 'Norfolk Barn appearance'. The properties fronting The Street have a reasonably low eaves level with rooms in the roof and small traditional dormer projections. The design has a rural feel which it is considered complements the overall feel of properties in the immediate surrounds and would result in a positive addition to the street scene. The two semi-detached pairs at the south of the site have a more rudimentary appearance but are of a design and appearance which would sit comfortably within the village setting. The separation and siting of the two properties would allow for a different approach in terms of design but it is noted in terms of scale there is a comparable overall form. The bungalow is set away from the adjacent terrace row which allows for a different scale and form with a design that is simple and unfussy.
- 6.21 The design of the residential housing has a common theme of a main 2-storey element with either one or two 'wings' which are 1.5 storeys with three different configurations proposed. The design does pick up on some aspects of the village vernacular, but again with such a variety of housing design it is difficult to argue that there is a particular Thurne style. The strong front gable, here emphasised by the two storey nature of that element of the house, reflects an approach which is evident in the village, including at the immediately adjacent site. The 1.5 storey elements feature low eaves and small dormer projections which provides some level of continuity in design approach across the site. The scale of the properties is only comparable to the larger houses in Thurne, but are not considered to be of a scale that is out of keeping with the village, or overly dominant on the site. Either side of the site are varying scales of farm buildings, and in this context the scale of development would sit quite comfortably.
- 6.22 In terms of materials the submitted design and access statement envisages red brick and pantiles but concedes that this is expected to be determined at reserved matters stage and will be conditioned so. Certainly a brick and

pan-tile appearance would sit well in the village but will need a reasonable level of certainty in terms of actual type and appearance.

- 6.23 Concerns have been raised by the Parish Council, the Thurne Community Action Group and a number of objectors about the loss of Hedera House itself. Hedera House is a brick and slate building, which is visible from public viewpoints and forms part of the familiar local landscape. Although it clearly needs maintenance, it is not an unattractive building and its retention within the scheme would have been likely to have been supported. However, it is not listed (or of a quality to justify listing) and neither is it in a Conservation Area so the Local Planning Authority has no power to require its retention. It may be regrettable that the scheme which has been developed does not include it, but this is not a planning consideration as such and the LPA can only consider whether the submitted scheme is acceptable on its merits, not whether an alternative scheme might have been better. On this basis, whilst the loss of Hedera House is regretted, this is not a matter to which weight can be given.
- 6.24 It is proposed that permitted development rights relating to extensions, roof additions, and outbuildings are removed as part of any grant of planning permission. That is not to say that reasonable outbuildings are not acceptable, but it is important to have control over their size and design.
- 6.25 In conclusion it is considered that the proposal strikes a reasonable balance in reflecting some aspects of the varied style of the village, proposing a simple and unimposing difference in design while seeking common characteristics and a reasonable level of site identity. The layout and scale would ensure that the overall scheme reads well from public vantage points, does not appear cluttered or overdeveloped, and introduces a good level of interaction with The Street. The space between the sections of development is considered acceptable, allowing for the different forms to be read in sections whilst not undermining the overall flow of development across the site. The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable with regard to DP4 of the Development Management Policies DPD and criteria (iii) and (iv) of Policy THU1 of the Site Specifics Policy.

Landscape

- 6.26 The application site is reasonably level and so when considered from within the confines of the village itself is not a prominent presence. In addition given the sections of farm buildings on either side of the site, its presence is fairly well contained. There will be views of the new development from the Staithe and logically from the river itself at certain points, but when considered within the village setting, the concentration of development in this section, and the scale of buildings on either side, the proposed development will relate well in terms of scale of development and overall appearance and is considered to be acceptable in terms of landscape when taking into account views from the west.

- 6.27 The land rises gently to the east of the village which gives it a slightly higher elevation than the village itself. To the east of the Hedera House site is open fields without obvious field boundaries and therefore the proposed development will be visible from surrounding land. Views from Church Road to the north of St Edmund church offer a wide vista of Thurne village, what becomes apparent is wide and low level spread of buildings with significant trees, Thurne Mill clearly visible in the background, and the backdrop to all this is fields on the western side of the river Thurne. To the south of the church views from Church Road allow for much more of the village detail to become obvious, views of the mill disappear, and only snatches of a backdrop beyond the village are visible. The application site can be clearly distinguished and owing to the sporadic boundary treatment single storey chalets become part of the landscape. What is most apparent is that the scale and form of development in Thurne becomes readable, and a number of buildings have a strong presence in views, this includes residential properties and farm buildings, with the significant trees becoming a more striking presence. There is a public footpath forming part of the Weavers' Way which runs directly north from the church and runs parallel to the application site at a distance of approximately 70 metres. This footpath allows clear views of Thurne and the application site.
- 6.28 Taking into account the above description any development at Hedera House will be part of the village and wider landscape. The BA Landscape Architect has reviewed the proposed scheme and has concluded that, owing to this application being outline with landscape forming part of the reserved matters, they are unable to support the current proposal. The issues cited are layout, with the larger properties forming the residential housing element being at a higher density and visible from the east of the site, and the potential for poor boundary treatments. The conclusion reached is that without landscape forming part of the submitted scheme it is difficult to determine the full extent of the impact of proposals on the surroundings and establish suitable measures to integrate the development into its setting and mitigate any change.
- 6.29 It is accepted that any development will have a visual impact, and there will be some impact on the character of the landscape setting. The key issue is whether that impact will be negative taking into the landscape character, existing development, and the development as proposed. The scale of the buildings proposed will undoubtedly result in a more obvious presence when viewed from the east, the existing site is predominantly characterised by single storey buildings, and although the 'Hedera House' building itself is not insignificant, it is the only 2-storey form on the site. However, the presence of the 'Hedera House' building does at least allow for an appreciation for the potential impact of development, and in terms of the surroundings it is not a particularly prominent presence. When viewed from the east it is the buildings either side which have a greater presence, and the application site itself is almost an anomaly in this context, therefore to provide a more apparent built presence on this site would only be that, a more apparent presence, not a negative or unacceptable presence.

- 6.30 The layout of the residential housing element is broadly in two rows which to some level would limit the perceived extent of development, this includes the orientation of the buildings. The height of the proposed buildings is not excessive, and taking into account the scale of neighbouring development would assimilate reasonably well with its surroundings. There would be some loss of through views but this would not be detrimental to the landscape character taking into account the impact of development in general at this part of the village, the views not being characteristic or an indelible feature of this location.
- 6.31 The issue relating to boundary treatments is acknowledged and uncharacteristic boundary treatments such as close boarded fencing would have a poor relationship to the existing situation. The submitted plans indicate that boundaries would be formed by natural planting, although no detail is presented in this outline application. Boundary treatments would form part of the reserved matters, and it is proposed to remove Permitted Development rights for boundary treatments to ensure that future proposals are within the control of the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.32 One final point to note is that whilst the existing chalets are fairly diminutive, their appearance is an incongruous presence in the village landscape setting both in terms of design and materials which arguably draws more attention to itself than a more subtle form of design. The proposed scheme by that measure would undoubtedly be an improvement on the existing situation.
- 6.33 In conclusion it is considered that the proposed development at Hedera House will not be an unnecessarily obvious or unwarranted presence in the wider landscape, and taking into account its setting and context would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the surrounding landscape character. Any landscape impacts are reasonably related to the scale of development in this location, and the proposal represents an improvement in the overall appearance of the site both in isolation and in relation to its surroundings. In this respect the proposed development is considered acceptable.

Neighbour Amenity

- 6.34 There are neighbouring residential properties to the west and south of the application sites, and it is noted that an objection has been received from the residents of the property on the opposite side of The Street citing a loss of amenity and a visually overbearing form of development dominating the skyline to the east.
- 6.35 There are currently two chalets, one of which is side on, adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. The boundary is comprised of a tall hedge which is open in places. The Street is a narrow road and there is no footpath. However, the proposed siting of the holiday accommodation is away from the boundary, with a separation of a minimum of 11 metres at its closest point, and 20 metres at its furthest point, taking into account the angle of the line of buildings in relation to the boundary. Further to this is the width of the road and small set back from the road of the neighbouring building, this ensures

that a separation of between 20 and 25 metres is maintained between the two built forms. The design of the buildings is such that the upper floor is within the roof which takes up a greater proportion of the buildings height than the ground floor walls, this results in a form which pitches away from the boundary. The combination of these factors is considered to mitigate any potential for the development to be unacceptably overbearing or visually enclosing. There will be some loss of skyline at certain points but this is not considered to be unacceptable taking into account the separation between properties. In terms of privacy the separation again is considered to be sufficient to overcome any concerns, and an established boundary treatment would allay concerns over the perception of being overlooked at a direct level.

- 6.36 In relation to the residential property to the south of the site, the separation between the built forms, particularly at two storey level is considered sufficient to ensure no undue loss of amenity. The proposed buildings are set away from the boundary as is the neighbouring property, and there is an access road between the two sites. The combination of these factors would ensure that the proposed development would not be visually overbearing or result in a sense of enclosure. The holiday units adjacent to the southern boundary have been designed so that there are no first floor windows to the rear elevation which would therefore ensure no loss of privacy or overlooking.
- 6.37 The proposed development is therefore acceptable with regard to Policy DP28 of the Development Management Policies DPD and criteria (vi) of Policy THU1 of the Site Specific Policies Local Plan.

Biodiversity

- 6.38 The applicants have submitted an ecological and protected species survey of the site. The report concluded that the plant communities are ecologically unremarkable, the marginal habitats are of greater ecological value, in particular the scattered trees and hedging to the north, east, and west. No evidence of protected species was found within the site, although the boundary hedges and trees contain some features that may be of value to nesting birds and foraging bats.
- 6.39 The report has been reviewed by the BA Ecologist who has raised no objections to the scheme subject to conditions including enhancements, and advice notes which will be included in any grant of planning permission in the form of Informatives. Should any enhancement measures be proposed up front Members will be updated verbally. In this respect the proposed development is considered acceptable.

Trees

- 6.40 The applicants have submitted an arboricultural impact assessment and method statement for the proposed development, this has been assessed by the BA Tree Officer. No objections have been raised to the loss of trees in the centre of the site but some concern was raised about the proposed removal of the frontage hedge in order to provide the required visibility splay. This point

was raised with the applicant's agent who confirmed that the removal was specifically a highway safety issue and that a replacement hedge would be planted behind the area of the visibility splay. It is noted that criteria (iv) of Policy THU1 requires retention of mature hedgerows but in criteria (vii) it requires highway access compatible with the other criteria. In this respect having regard to the consultation responses it would appear that these two elements are incompatible, but it would not be reasonable to refuse a scheme over the loss of an existing hedgerow, however regrettable, when highway safety considerations in this respect would outweigh that element of the assessment criteria. Taking into account the highways requirement for a visibility splay and the fairly sporadic form of the existing hedge it is considered that the loss of the hedge would be acceptable in these specific circumstances, a point which has been accepted by the BA Tree Officer. The replacement hedge would need to be detailed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority at the reserved matters stage. In this respect the proposed development is considered acceptable with regard to criteria (iv) of Policy THU1 of the Site Specific Policies Local Plan.

Flood Risk

- 6.41 The subject site is located within flood zones 1, 2, and 3. The western part of the site is within flood zone 3 up to approximately the mid-point of the 'Hedera House' building. The north-east portion of the site is with flood zone 2, with the remainder of the site in flood zone 1.
- 6.42 This is an allocated site, where the principle of mixed residential and holiday use has been accepted following consideration of all the relevant issues, including flood risk. A flood risk assessment (FRA) was submitted as part of this application, which the Environment Agency have reviewed and confirmed that they have no objection on flood risk grounds providing that the LPA have taken into account the flood risk considerations. The FRA includes measure to cover finished floor levels and a flood response plans and these represent a satisfactory mitigation of the residual risks. It is concluded that the proposed development at Hedera House has sufficiently considered flood risk and related matters.

Drainage

- 6.43 The application site falls within the Drainage district of the Broads Internal Drainage Board (IDB). The Broads IDB have commented as follows:
- Any change to the impermeable area of the site or the positive discharge to the drainage system, may result in increased flows (by rate and/or volume) entering the district, which will need to be dealt with by the boards infrastructure.
 - Therefore further details will be required from the applicant to confirm how excess surface water from the site will be dealt with and of any change to the drainage characteristics of the site.
 - Land Drainage consent may be required as may a one off surface water discharge contribution.

6.44 The comments of the IDB were passed to the Agent for the application and a response was received with the following:

- Regarding the IDB, I have calculated that the existing impermeable area is 1568 sqm, and the proposed impermeable area is 2590 sqm. Therefore, as soil infiltration is likely to be poor at this location, surface water would need to be discharged into the adjacent ditch system and a financial contribution to the IDB is expected due to the increase in impermeable area.

6.45 The IDB have accepted that increased drainage flows will need to be dealt with by existing infrastructure, there is no suggestion that the development would otherwise compromise the efficient working of the drainage system within the Drainage District, and provisions exist for regularising how this will be achieved as well as required contributions. Should planning permission be granted it will be necessary to include a condition requiring demonstration of agreement with IDB over the proposed drainage discharge. Subject to this requirement the proposed is considered to be acceptable with regards to Criteria (v) of THU 1 of the Site Specific Policies Local Plan.

Sewerage

6.46 Criteria (v) of THU 1 requires demonstration that there is adequate sewerage capacity. There are no specific details submitted as part of this application although on the submitted plans there is a reference to Sewage Treatment System with treated effluence discharged into Thurne Dyke. It is accepted that there are a number of systems which would adequately deal with sewage disposal from the site and which discharge clean water into the dyke, with a treatment plant installed below ground level and minimal provision of apparatus above ground level. The provision of a sewage treatment plant can be secured by planning condition as well as an informative relating to Environmental Permitting Regulations which would adequately address the objectives of Criteria (v) of THU 1.

Highways

6.47 A single access at the same location as the existing access is shown on the submitted plans, this has been reviewed by the County Highway Authority who have raised no objection subject to a planning conditions and an informative. The scheme is therefore considered acceptable on highway grounds with regard to criteria (vii) of Policy THU1.

Planning Contributions

6.48 Planning contributions may be sought from applicants under specific circumstances. According to the NPPG contributions for affordable housing and tariff style planning obligations should not be sought from small scale developments. Small scale developments are defined as developments of 10-units or less. The NPPG goes on to state that in designated rural areas,

local planning authorities may choose to apply a lower threshold of 5-units or less. The Department for Communities and Local Government provided a list of designated rural areas which does not include Thurne. The threshold for planning contributions for the provision of affordable housing contributions is therefore at a base level of more than 10 units. The proposal is for six units of residential accommodation and therefore there is no grounds for requiring a contribution to affordable housing.

SSSI

- 6.49 Criteria (viii) of THU 1 requires that the proposed development must ensure no adverse effects on the nearby SSSI. The SSSI is to the west of the street, beginning generally at the rear of residential boundaries, and to the north of the Staithe with its southern boundary in line with Thurne Mill. The site is towards the edge of the SSSI Impact Risk Zone, this requires consideration where proposals are outside or extending outside existing settlements, or are for residential developments of 10 units or more. Taking into account the proposed development the threshold is not exceeded here. The application site is considered to be of a sufficient distance from the SSSI and is of a scale and density which would not result in any adverse impact on the special interest of the SSSI taking into account the existing development within the village. The scheme is therefore considered acceptable with regard criteria (viii) of Policy THU1.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposed redevelopment of the Hedera House site has been outlined in the adopted Site Specifics Local Plan which allows for a proportionate amount of enabling development subject to a viability assessment. This has been assessed independently and is considered acceptable. The policy goes on to stipulate a number of provisions which the proposed scheme has been assessed against and is considered to meet. The approach to development in terms of division of the site between holiday accommodation and residential housing is considered to be acceptable, the layout, design, and scale of development would result in a form of development which would compare well to existing development in the village and would sit well in relation to surrounding sites. The proposal would improve the appearance of the whole site both in isolation and in relation to its surroundings and would not adversely impact on surrounding landscape character. In terms of impact on surrounding neighbours there would be no undue loss of amenity and privacy. Overall the proposed development would ensure the continued provision of holiday accommodation in this location and the scheme has struck a reasonable and acceptable balance between this provision and the necessity of enabling development. Whilst it is acknowledged that a number of objections have been received from local residents and the Parish Council, taking into account the above assessment the proposed scheme is considered to be policy compliant and any material concerns raised have been adequately addressed.

8 Recommendation

Approve subject to conditions

- i. Reserved matters submission time limit, and time limit on commencement following approval of reserved matters;
- ii. Reserved matters - landscape, design details, materials, boundary treatments, trees, hedge to street boundary, native hedgerow planting/gap filling;
- iii. Timing of works;
- iv. Occupation (holiday accommodation and residential);
- v. Length of stay (holiday accommodation);
- vi. Disabled accommodation up to required standards;
- vii. Details of type and siting of foul sewage treatment plant;
- viii. Surface water drainage;
- ix. Obscure glazing;
- x. Highways - width of access;
- xi. Highways - length of access;
- xii. Highways - visibility splay;
- xiii. Highways - access, parking, and turning;
- xiv. Ecology - timing of works to trees and hedgerows;
- xv. Ecology - external lighting;
- xvi. Ecology - length of grass prior to works commencing;
- xvii. Ecology - Further bat surveys if Trees (T1, T7, T8, T20) are proposed for removal/ tree works;
- xviii. Ecology - provision of two bird boxes;
- xix. Ecology - provision small wildlife pond in one corner of the site;
- xx. Works to be carried out in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Implications and Method Statement;
- xxi. Details of type and siting of foul sewage treatment plant
- xxii. Demonstration of flood resilient construction in accordance with FRA
- xxiii. Flood evacuation plan
- xxiv. Sign up to flood warnings
- xxv. Remove permitted development rights

9 Reason for Recommendation

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy THU1 of the Site Specific Policies Local Plan, Policies CS1, CS9, CS18 and CS20 of the Core Strategy (2007), Policies DP1, DP2, DP3, DP4, DP11, DP28, and DP29 of the Development Plan Document (2011), and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) which is a material consideration in the determination of this application, along with National Planning Practice Guidance.

List of Appendices: Location Plan

Background papers: Application File BA/2017/0103/OUT

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