



PLANNING COMMITTEE SOUTH - UPDATE SHEET

19 December 2023

Item 7 – DC/23/2089/FUL – The reinstatement of 14 beach huts, previously sited on the promenade, and the erection of associated wooden platforms located on the beach between the shelter and Spa Pavilion - 14 Beach Huts, Undercliff Road West, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 7ES

Agreement of pre-commencement conditions

A list of pre-commencement conditions was sent to the agent/applicant for review on 7 December 2023 and were subsequently agreed.

Extension of time

An extension of time for determination has been agreed between the agent/applicant and the Council. The revised determination date is 20 December 2023.

Site context/beach hut history

3.3 A number of beach huts were previously sited along the promenade, where huts were moved between the beach and the promenade at the start and end of the season (where beach levels allowed). When huts were previously on the beach, they sat level on the sand. These huts are still in private ownership with an annual licence fee payable to the Council to site them in an agreed location.

3.4 For context, the East Suffolk Council Asset Management team has advised the following:

“8 [beach] huts were removed from their beach location following concerns from the [Felixstowe Beach Hut and Chalet] Association about flooding in July 2017 adjacent to the Spa Pavilion. The subsequent ‘Beast from the East’ and ‘Storm Emma’ (March 2018) seriously eroded the beach at this location, dropping levels by an average of three feet and required the removal of 44 huts in total to be stored temporarily on the Prom. The beach levels slowly improved over summer time periods, but not to previous levels of sand/shingle.

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Between 2017 and 2022, the Council worked with the [Felixstowe Beach Hut and Chalet] Association to find a solution to the displaced huts and two proposals (as well as a number elsewhere) were considered in more depth. This action was required because the beach in this area continues to be subject to tidal erosion.”

3.5 East Suffolk Council Asset Management team advised the local planning authority (in relation to DC/19/4811/FUL) that:

“...while beach levels continue to fluctuate, the sheer uncertainty of providing a long-lasting sustainable sand platform in this area means the Council believes that returning the majority of huts to sand platforms on the beach between the Pier and Cobbold Point each year is unsustainable.”

3.6 The Council’s Asset Management team also advised that it is not economically viable for East Suffolk to provide platforms for hut owners nor would it likely be a liability the Council would want to take on.

3.7 Subsequently, all beach huts [44] that sat along the Spa Pavilion stretch of the promenade were removed and are due to be located to other areas of the coastline. Planning permission has since been granted for a total of 29 beach huts – as summarised below:

- **DC/21/5102/FUL:** Formation of 18 new beach hut sites for the proposed repositioning of existing beach huts from the spa area, to form a row of huts on the shingle material on the foreshore at Clifflands.
- **DC/19/4811/FUL:** Extension of existing row of beach huts to level the beach material and reposition 5 existing huts from the Spa Pavilion end.
- **DC/21/5479/FUL:** Beach platform repairs and extension and the provision of 6 new beach hut sites.

3.8 It is noted that an additional application for the siting of beach huts is still pending consideration. Summary details of this proposal is noted below.

- **DC/22/4418/FUL:** Placement of 14 beach huts seaward side of the tidal barrier southeast of Martello Park playground, with two areas of beach located seaward side of the tidal barrier east of Martello Tower P maintained for biodiversity mitigation. Felixstowe Sea Front Martello Park Felixstowe Suffolk IP11 2DY.

3.9 Overall, this equates to a total of 43 beach huts (subject to DC/22/4418/FUL being permitted). However, it is unclear whether the approved beach hut sites approved were for the purpose of re-siting the displaced huts.