



## Committee Report

**Planning Committee South - 21 July 2020**

**Application no DC/20/1603/FUL**

**Location**

Seaton Recreation Ground  
Seaton Road  
Felixstowe  
Suffolk  
IP11 9BS

**Expiry date** 22 June 2020

**Application type** Full Application

**Applicant** East Suffolk Council

**Parish** Felixstowe

**Proposal** New welfare hub to include 3No cabins positioned on paving slab base to accommodate storage, wc's and coffee hut. Incl 3m high anti climb security fencing to perimeter plus security lighting.

**Case Officer** Grant Heal  
01394 444779  
[grant.heal@eastsoffolk.gov.uk](mailto:grant.heal@eastsoffolk.gov.uk)

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. Full planning permission is sought for a new welfare hub (including three units positioned on paving slabs to accommodate storage, W/C's and coffee hut), security fencing and security lighting at Seaton Recreation Ground, Seaton Road, Felixstowe.
- 1.2. Considered against all relevant material considerations and planning policies, the application is deemed sustainable and in accordance with planning policy is recommended for approval.
- 1.3. There are no objections from statutory consultees, however, the applicant is made by East Suffolk Council and the land is owned by East Suffolk Council. In accordance with the Council's adopted scheme of delegation, this application must therefore be referred to planning committee.

## 2. Site description

- 2.1. The site comprises a small parcel of land (approximately 130 square metres) positioned towards the south-east corner of Seaton Park Recreation Ground, Felixstowe. It is bound by an area of existing vegetation to the east, which separates the site from a dedicated parking area of approximately ten vehicular spaces, accessible via Cornwall Road. The flank elevations of residential properties are located within 12 metres to the south, while the recreation ground lies to the north and west.
- 2.2. The wider park comprises an extensive square-shaped parcel of land (approximately 2.1 hectares) that benefits from multiple entry points, with vehicular access available from Seaton Road, Margate Street and Cornwall Road. Save for a fenced-off play area situated towards its south-western corner and a small number of peripheral trees, the park is laid to grass and otherwise featureless. The rear/side boundaries of dwellings fronting Cornwall Road (south), Margate Street (west), Seaton Road (north) and Chepstow Road (east) enclose the site on all sides.

## 3. Proposal

- 3.1. This application seeks full planning permission for the siting of a welfare hub to facilitate users of the Seaton Park Recreation Ground. Proposed facilities would be housed within three separate painted metal units and includes a refreshments kiosk, a two-stall WC block and a large storage container for sports equipment.
- 3.2. The individual units would be arranged close to one another and would be secured by a 2.4-metre-high anti-climb security fence enclosing an L-shaped area of approximately 43 square metres. This area would be paved and includes two new lighting columns positioned towards the north-eastern corner. Vehicular access would be gained from the south and west via two pairs of gates and one single gate would provide pedestrian access to the north. The existing pedestrian entrance from Cornwall Road would also be widened and improved with new paving and a dropped kerb from the existing car park.
- 3.3. The proposal site would remain in an ancillary Class D2 (Assembly and leisure) Use.

## 4. Consultations/comments

- 4.1. No third-party representations have been received.

### Consultees

#### Parish/Town Council

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Felixstowe Town Council	1 May 2020	27 May 2020
Summary of comments: Committee welcomes this proposal and recommends APPROVAL. However, we would like ESC Officers to explore the possibility of making at least one of the toilets suitable for disabled users.		

## Statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Suffolk County - Highways Department	1 May 2020	21 May 2020
Summary of comments: Recommend appropriate conditions.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Sport England	18 June 2020	19 June 2020
Summary of comments: The proposals will improve the attractiveness of the site and also improve security as the site has suffered from vandalism. The Football Foundation and Suffolk FA support the proposals.  In this instance, Sport England is satisfied that the proposal meets exception 'E2' of the Sport England policy, in that the development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field and does not affect the quantity or quality of existing pitches, or adversely affect their use.  This being the case, Sport England does not wish to raise an objection to this application.		

## Non statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Environmental Protection (Internal)	1 May 2020	5 May 2020
Summary of comments: Internal consultation - no comment received.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Suffolk Fire And Rescue Service	18 June 2020	2 June 2020
Summary of comments: Standard comments noting the need for compliance with relevant Building Regulations and the recommended loading capacity of concrete hard-standing.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Active Communities (Sarah Shinnie)	18 June 2020	No response
Summary of comments: no comment received.		

### Publicity

None

### Site notices

General Site Notice

Reason for site notice: General Site Notice

Date posted:

Expiry date:

## 5. Planning policy

- 5.1. On 1 April 2019, East Suffolk Council was created by parliamentary order, covering the former districts of Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council. The Local Government (Boundary Changes) Regulations 2018 (part 7) state that any plans, schemes, statements or strategies prepared by the predecessor council should be treated as if it had been prepared and, if so required, published by the successor council - therefore any policy documents listed below referring to "Suffolk Coastal District Council" continue to apply to East Suffolk Council until such time that a new document is published.
- 5.2. In addition to considering applications in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Local Planning Authority's 'Development Plan', unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.3. East Suffolk Council's Development Plan, as relevant to this proposal, consists of:
- East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (Adopted July 2013);
  - East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan (Adopted January 2017) and;
  - The 'Saved' Policies of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan incorporating the first and second alterations.
- 5.4. The relevant policies of the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (Adopted July 2013) and the East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan (Adopted January 2017) are:

- SP1a - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
  - FPP2 - Physical Limits Boundaries (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Development Plan Document (January 2017))
  - SP21 - Felixstowe with Walton and the Trimley Villages (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
  - SP19 - Settlement Hierarchy (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
  - SP16 - Sport and Play (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
  - DM32 - Sport and Play (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
  - SP17 - Green Space (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
  - DM21 - Design: Aesthetics (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
  - SP15 - Landscape and Townscape (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
  - DM19 - Parking Standards (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
  - DM22 - Design: Function (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
  - DM23 - Residential Amenity (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- 5.5. The new Local Plan (covering the former Suffolk Coastal area) was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for examination on Friday 29 March 2019, the examination took place between 20th August and the 20th September 2019. Full details of the submission to PINS can be found through this link: [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplanexamination](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplanexamination).
- 5.6. Presently, only those emerging policies which have received little objection (or no representations) can be given more weight in decision making if required, as outlined under Paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

## 6. Planning considerations

### Planning principle:

- 6.1. The site falls within the physical limits boundary (FPP2) of Felixstowe (SP21); which is defined as a 'Major Centre' within the context of the Suffolk Coastal District Core Strategy and Development management document's settlement policy (SP19).
- 6.2. The proposal broadly accords with the strategy set out in SP21 which, amongst other things, advocates the improvement, expansion and retention of sport and leisure facilities. Policies SP16 (Sport and Play), DM32 (Sport and play) and SP17 (Green space); which collectively seek to promote the provision, protection and enhancement of formal and informal sport and recreation facilities towards ensuring that communities have well-managed access to green space within settlements, are also met.
- 6.3. Considered within the context of the new local plan, this application meets the provisions of emerging policy SCLP8.2:Open Space; which advocates the Council's support for the provision of open space and recreational facilities and their continued management across the district. Indeed, the proposed welfare hub would encourage active lifestyles with a view to increasing participation in formal and informal recreation for all sectors of the community.
- 6.4. In this way, the proposal upholds the requirements of the NPPF (para.91-92) which sets out that key facilities and services should be allowed to modernise for the benefit of the community. Moreover, Para.96 recognises the importance of access to high quality open spaces for sport and physical activity opportunities and states that planning decisions should, amongst other things, support healthy lifestyles, for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure and sports facilities.
- 6.5. In-line with the above assessment, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle, subject to a satisfactory assessment of other material planning matters, as set out below.

### Visual amenity:

- 6.6. The proposed units would have corrugated metal elevations/roofs and would resemble shipping containers in their appearance and dimensions (i.e. 2.6 metres high). Both the security fencing (2.4 metres high) and units would be painted green, thereby ensuring minimal visual impact when viewed against the backdrop of surrounding vegetation. While the proposed scheme's aesthetic would appear largely utilitarian, it would be appropriate within the surrounding context and discreetly located. As such, the proposal is considered to uphold the requirements of DM21 (Design: aesthetics) and SP15 (Landscape and townscape).

### Access and parking:

- 6.7. The proposal would not encroach on or decrease existing vehicular parking provision and would otherwise improve the existing pedestrian access from Cornwall Road through a new widened paved footway with dropped kerb. Thus, the proposal is considered to uphold the requirements of DM19 (Parking standards) and DM22 (Design: function).
- 6.8. It is noted that the Local Highway Authority has recommended conditions relating to the provision of secure cycle storage, and submission of details relating to refuse/recycling presentation areas. However, these conditions are considered unreasonable and therefore

would fail the tests relating to conditions as set out in paragraph 55 of the NPPF. The site is the edge of an existing recreational ground, and whilst secure cycle storage would be desirable it can not be insisted upon. There is also adequate space around the proposals to enable waste bins to be stored and presented for collection, and as land owner East Suffolk Council would retain some control over these aspects.

Residential amenity:

- 6.9. The proposal will serve an ancillary function to the recreation ground and the proposed refreshment kiosk, W/C block and storage facility presents a low potential to impact negatively on existing residential amenity from increased noise, outlook degradation or the resulting physical relationship with other properties.
- 6.10. The proposal would also be in the vicinity of dwellings that could provide natural surveillance of the site towards ensuring a good level of safety and security of the immediate area.
- 6.11. The applicant has also confirmed that the security lights would only be operated when the site is open and in use. However, it would be appropriate to include a condition relating to lighting to ensure that it is appropriately positioned and angled etc in order to safeguard the amenity of adjoining residents from potential light spill.
- 6.12. As such, the proposal does not present the opportunity to erode levels of existing amenity to an unacceptable level. It therefore accords with the provision of DM23 (Residential amenity).

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1. As per the above assessment, the application meets all relevant policies and is therefore considered sustainable in accordance with the NPPF and local planning policy.
- 7.2. Consultation notification was sent to Sport England and East Suffolk Council's Active Communities Team after the initial consultation notifications to other parties (the Town Council, Neighbours etc). Therefore, the consultation period has been extended until 9 July 2020, so the recommendation seeks authority to approve subject to no additional material planning considerations being raised during the remaining consultation period.

## **8. Recommendation**

- 8.1. Authority to approve subject to no additional material planning considerations being raised during the remaining consultation period (expires 9 July 2020) and subject to the conditions set out below.

### **Conditions:**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is imposed in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in complete accordance with the following approved drawing(s):
  - 170 01 Rev F (Proposed site plan) received 18 May 2020;
  - 170 03 Rev F (Proposed plan) received 18 May 2020;
  - 170 00 (Existing site plan) received 28 April 2020;
  - 170 02 Rev A (Proposed elevations) received 28 April 2020;and
  - 170 04 (Proposed location plan) received 28 April 2020.

Reason: For avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. The materials and finishes shall be as indicated within the submitted application and thereafter retained as such, unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of visual amenity.

4. No additional floodlighting or other means of external lighting shall be installed at the site unless submitted to, and approved by the local planning authority. The details submitted shall include position, operating times, details of luminaires, aiming angles and vertical and horizontal illuminance on areas outside the site. Thereafter the lighting scheme shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: In the interests of amenity, and protection of the local environment.

#### **Informatives:**

1. The Local Planning Authority has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including planning policies and any comments that may have been received. The planning application has been approved in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and local plan to promote the delivery of sustainable development and to approach decision taking in a positive way.

#### **Background information**

See application reference DC/20/1603/FUL at <https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=Q9HVPUQXJ7600>

