



Committee Report

Planning Committee South - 26 October 2021

Application no DC/21/2444/FUL

Location

Trim Train And Volley Ball Area
Sea Road
Felixstowe
Suffolk

Expiry date 22 July 2021
Application type Full Application
Applicant East Suffolk Council

Parish Felixstowe

Proposal Development of a 'beach village' area with 27 traditional wooden huts, accessible pods to hire and new public conveniences- plus movement of trim trail to new activity park area, comprising of three petanque rinks, table tennis tables and exercise space.

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1. Summary

- 1.1 Full planning permission is sought for the construction of a 'Beach Village' area, including 27 traditional wooden beach huts, five accessible beach pods and new public conveniences on the site of existing 'Trim Trail' and 'Volleyball' areas off Sea Road, Felixstowe. The application also proposes the relocation and enhancement of the existing trim trail equipment to land further south, including the siting of three boules rinks, table tennis tables and exercise spaces.
- 1.2 Considered against all relevant material planning matters, the application is deemed sustainable and therefore recommended for approval in accordance with the NPPF the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the relevant policies of the adopted development plan.

- 1.3 Reviewed against the Council's adopted scheme of delegation, the application must proceed to planning committee because East Suffolk Council is the applicant and landowner.

2. Site description

- 2.1 The application site comprises two linear lawned areas positioned between the promenade (east) and Sea Road (west).
- 2.2 The northern parcel (Site 1) is the site of the proposed beach village and currently comprises the existing 'Trim Trail' outdoor gym equipment. It is bound on all sides by public footways. The Council's leisure centre car park is positioned to the north while an amusement park and ice cream kiosks lie to the south.
- 2.3 The southern parcel (Site 2) is separated from the northern parcel by the amusement park. It has previously been used for leisure/sport purposes (Volleyball) and is bound on all sides by public footways. A further lawned area dissected by public footways is positioned to the south.
- 2.4 Both parcels lie within the Felixstowe South Conservation Area. With reference to the application site(s), Page 51 of the Conservation Area Appraisal (2009) states:
- 2.5 'The open space between Sea Road and the Promenade provides the setting and long uninterrupted views of the sea and back to the Sea Road frontage'.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the construction of a 'Beach Village' area, including 27 traditional wooden beach huts, accessible beach pods for hire and new public conveniences on the site of an existing 'Trim Trail' and 'Volleyball Area' off Sea Road, Felixstowe.
- 3.2 The application also proposes the relocation and enhancement of the existing trim trail equipment to land further south, including the siting of three boules rinks, table tennis tables and exercise spaces.
- 3.3 The traditional beach huts would occupy the west and south of the northern parcel (Site 1). Huts would be arranged around a central shared green area with surfacing and landscaping.
- 3.4 A separate single-storey block of five accessible beach huts would be positioned towards the north-east of Site 1. It would appear in a contemporary style with pentagonal mono-pitch roof sections and composite timber-effect cladding. It would have a maximum ridge height of approx. 5 metres.
- 3.5 A separate single-storey convenience block, including public W/Cs, changing and cleaning facilities, would be positioned to the north of Site 1. It too would comprise mono-pitch roof sections and composite timber-effect cladding. It would have a maximum ridge height of approx. 4.1 metres.

3.6 The southern parcel (Site 2) would comprise the relocated trim trail and recreational facilities. It would be finished in permeable surfacing and landscaped with gabion walls and raised beds. New street furniture and cycle storage are also proposed.

4. Consultations/comments

4.1 Five third-party representations of objection have been received which raise the following considerations:

- The proposed development's height and potential impact on residents existing sea view;
- Insufficient parking for residents and visitors;
- Overdevelopment of site;
- The design of beach huts not in-keeping with surrounding context.

4.2 Two third-party representations of support have been received which raise the following considerations:

- The provision of public facilities included in the scheme;
- The design quality of the proposal.

5. Consultees

Parish/Town Council

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Felixstowe Town Council	1 June 2021, 4 August 2021 & 11 October 2021	10 June 2021 & 19 August 2021
<p>19 August 2021 ‘Committee recommended APPROVAL and welcome the amendments to mitigate the effects of wave wash at the Beach Village site. We would wish it to be confirmed that similar appropriate mitigation will be retained at the entrances to the promenade at the Trim Trail site.’</p> <p>10 June 2021 ‘Felixstowe Town Council greatly welcomes this application and recommends APPROVAL.</p> <p>It should be noted that previous experience of wave splash, and wash - including sand and shingle - will affect this area and ESC should consider increasing the ground level of this site and give further attention to the flood board entrances as mitigation measures.</p> <p>The inclusion of a beach shower should also be considered.’</p>		

Statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
SCC Flooding Authority	1 June 2021, 4 August 2021 & 11 October 2021	21 July 2021 & 17 August 2021
Summary of comments: Holding objection due to lack of information concerning surface water drainage.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
SCC Highways Department	1 June 2021, 4 August 2021 & 11 October 2021	12 July 2021
Summary of comments: No objection - parking consideration required.		

Non statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
East Suffolk Economic Development	1 June 2021, 4 August 2021 & 11 October 2021	23 August 2021
Summary of comments: Support		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Felixstowe Society	1 June 2021, 4 August 2021 & 11 October 2021	29 June 2021
Summary of comments: Parking strategy is required to support the proposal.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
East Suffolk Head Of Coastal Management	1 June 2021, 4 August 2021 & 11 October 2021	10 June 2021, 17 June 2021 & 17 August 2021
Summary of comments: Confirm that Coastal Environmental Vulnerability Assessment (CEVA) is acceptable.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
East Suffolk Environmental Protection	1 June 2021, 4 August 2021 & 11 October 2021	7 June 2021 & 9 August 2021

Summary of comments: Recommend conditions.

Environment Agency - Drainage	1 June 2021, 4 August 2021 & 11 October 2021	No response
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Summary of comments:

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
WDC - Drainage And Coast Protection	1 June 2021, 4 August 2021 & 11 October 2021	No response

Summary of comments:

Publicity

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area			East Anglian Daily Times

Site notices

General Site Notice
Reason for site notice: Conservation Area
Date posted: 3 June 2021
Expiry date: 24 June 2021

6. Planning policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

SCLP3.3 - Settlement Boundaries (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP3.2 - Settlement Hierarchy (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP12.2 - Strategy for Felixstowe (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP12.14 - Spa Pavilion to Manor End (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP6.1 - Tourism (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP6.2 - Tourism Destinations (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP8.2 - Open Space (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP8.1 - Community Facilities and Assets (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP11.1 - Design Quality (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP11.3 - Historic Environment (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP11.5 - Conservation Areas (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP7.1 - Sustainable Transport (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP7.2 - Parking Proposals and Standards (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP9.3 - Coastal Change Management Area (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP9.5 - Flood Risk (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP11.2 - Residential Amenity (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

7. Planning considerations

Planning history:

Northern parcel

*C/12/1118: Siting of container for equipment storage; re-siting of existing donkey shelter and grassing over existing pond at the Donkey Ride Site, Sea Road, Felixstowe - application withdrawn;

Southern parcel

No planning history available.

Planning principle:

- 7.1 With relevance to the proposal, The NPPF (para. 81-82) makes clear that planning decisions should help to create the conditions that allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. Para's.92-93 encourage the provision of social, recreational and cultural facilities, while providing shared spaces, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of areas and communities. Importantly, para.92 c) emphasises the need for planning decisions to enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs - for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.
- 7.2 Considered within the context of the adopted Local Plan, the site falls within the 'Settlement Boundary' (SCLP3.3) of Felixstowe, which is categorised as a 'Major Centre' within the 'Settlement Hierarchy' (SCLP3.2).
- 7.3 Policy SCLP12.2 (Strategy for Felixstowe) seeks to secure a town which, amongst others things, retains its role as a thriving coastal resort - including a comprehensive range of services and facilities that support the community - by maintaining successful retail and leisure opportunities and enhancing links between the Town Centre and seaside. Moreover Para. g) identifies the strategic goal of ensuring the resort continues to flourish and opportunities for regeneration and additional tourist attractions are brought forward.
- 7.4 The site is also affected by Policy SCLP12.14 (Spa Pavilion to Manor End) which aims to support, amongst other things, high intensity tourist uses within the area 'with a high proportion of these to be located along the Sea Road frontage'. It goes on to say that 'Proposals which actively encourage new resort experiences will be welcomed. Resort related uses will be supported on the Sea Road frontage. Proposals should consider the whole site for resort related uses to provide a vibrant mix of activities'.
- 7.5 With specific regard to beach huts, SCLP12.14 states:
'Additional beach huts in this area will be limited to locations which complement the existing resort uses and do not fill the important gaps between huts'.
- 7.6 Policy SCLP6.1 (Tourism) states that proposals which improve the visitor experience and support opportunities for year-round tourism will be supported where increased tourism uses can be accommodated, in a way that protects the features that make the area attractive to visitors.
- 7.7 Policy SCLP6.2 (Tourism Destinations) also welcomes facilities that broaden the tourist opportunities within the district subject to accordance all other respective polices within the Local Plan. In this regard, development should be of the highest standard of design and seek to protect and enhance the special character and interest of the destinations and the distinctiveness of the area.
- 7.8 Policy SCLP8.2 (Open Space) states that:
'The council supports the provision of open space and recreational facilities and their continued management across the plan area. Primarily to encourage active lifestyles and to increase participation in formal and informal recreation for all sectors of the

community, and also to support the biodiversity, promote effective water management and to enhance the public realm'.

- 7.9 While SCLP12.2 and SCLP8.2 (Open Space) principally resist the loss of open space, both note that replacement by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity, quality and in a suitable location will be looked upon favourably. This approach is reflected within Policy SCLP8.1 (Community Facilities and Assets) which states that:

'Proposals for new community facilities and assets will be supported if the proposal meets the needs of the local community, is of a proportionate scale, well related to the settlement which it serves and would not adversely affect existing facilities that are easily accessible and available to the local community.'

Proposals to change the use, or redevelop for a different use, a community facility which is not registered as an asset of community value, will only be permitted if [with relevance to this proposal]:

c) Development would involve the provision of an equivalent or better replacement community facility either on site or in an alternative location in the vicinity that is well integrated into the community and has equal or better accessibility than the existing facility which meets the needs of the local population'.

- 7.10 With due regard to the above, it is clear that both national and local planning policy provide significant support for the proposal. Indeed, the application scheme would conform with the wider socio-economic objectives of national policy, while also meeting the strategic aims set for Felixstowe's beach-side resort area, as set out within local policy.
- 7.11 The proposal would build on the strengths of the area and the relocated recreational facilities would provide a significant enhancement over the existing provision, while supporting the vibrancy of the resort and its contribution to public health and wellbeing. Importantly, the scheme would enhance Felixstowe's tourism offer with attractive and high-quality facilities that build on the area's distinctiveness.
- 7.12 The proposal is otherwise sustainably located and well-related to existing tourism and leisure uses. Proposed uses would be of a scale and character synonymous with the surrounding area and would be unlikely to result in any meaningful detriment to the natural or historic environment.
- 7.13 Further, the application represents benefits for local businesses and the vitality of the seaside resort more generally.
- 7.14 In consultation with the Council's Economic Development Team, it is noted that the application represents a significant investment in the resort and will transform the seafront through creating complimentary destinations and features. This will greatly enhance the area's offer for both residents and visitors alike and consequently support the wider economic growth objectives.
- 7.15 In-line with the above assessment, it is therefore judged that the planning principle could be considered acceptable, subject to a satisfactory assessment of other material planning matters, as set out below.

Visual amenity and heritage:

- 7.16 The proposal is successful in supporting the existing localised aesthetic through the provision of a creative and high-quality scheme that will integrate seamlessly with its sea-side surroundings, such as the amusement park situated between the development sites.
- 7.17 The use of contrasting materials, contemporary forms and bold design principles enable both sites to achieve distinctively individual identities that will complement and fortify the resort's offering for the benefit of locals and tourists.
- 7.18 Ingress and egress from/to the sites are provided via existing links between the promenade and Sea Road, while permeability is encouraged through spaces via a coherent network of footways that provide convenient circulation options for those using the facilities and others passing through.
- 7.19 Changes in surfacing materials and boundary treatments provide clear legibility between existing and proposed uses, while new cycle parking and seating provision spread across the development will encourage active lifestyles.
- 7.20 The siting of traditional beach huts close to the promenade and Sea Road boundaries provides an appropriate response to local historical context, while the contemporary design of the convenience block and accessible beach pods provide visually striking and innovative solutions in-line with the design aspirations of a present day.
- 7.21 The overall height and scale of development responds appropriately to local context by ensuring that new built-forms would not appear overly domineering within the prevailing street-scene or within wider views towards the sea. Indeed, the proposal would have a positive relationship with its surroundings and hard landscaping would enhance the public realm, as would the provision of new street furniture and planting.
- 7.22 The application otherwise represents an efficient use of available land and the sites are both judged to hold the capacity to accommodate the proposal without resulting in their overdevelopment.
- 7.23 In conclusion, the application will preserve and enhance the locality, while also providing an overall enhancement to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 7.24 The relevant tests of the NPPF at paragraphs 195 and 196 are not here engaged and the statutory tests of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act are met.
- 7.25 The proposal is otherwise consistent with guidance contained within the Council's Historic Environment SPD (June 2021). The requirements of SCLP11.1 (Design Quality), SCLP11.3 (Historic Environment), and SCLP11.5 (Conservation Areas) of the adopted development plan are also fulfilled.

Highway safety and parking:

- 7.26 While no additional vehicular parking provision is proposed as part of this application, the site is sustainably located close to number of dedicated public car parks within the vicinity (including the adjacent Leisure Centre car park) and sustainable transport links within walking distance. On-street parking is also available on the roads surrounding the development.
- 7.27 No objection has been received from Suffolk County Council Highway Authority and the nature of the proposal is otherwise unlikely to present the potential to impact negatively upon existing highway safety or restrict parking provision unduly, when judged against the provisions of the NPPF, or policies SCLP7.1 (Sustainable Transport) and SCLP7.2 (Parking proposals and Standards) of the adopted development plan.

Flood risk and coastal management:

- 7.28 As required by national and local planning policy, a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted in support of this application. It demonstrates that both parcels lie within Flood Zone 2 (medium risk) and that the principal flood risk is from tidal impacts and the overtopping of the sea wall.
- 7.29 The information concludes that, based on the available tidal information, the proposed development would be located above the normal tidal range. The site is also in an area that is covered by flood alerts and flood warnings. Risks from other sources of flooding are considered to be low.
- 7.30 In consultation with the Council's Coastal Management Team, it is also found that the submitted Coastal Erosion and Vulnerability Assessment (CEVA) - as required for developments within 30 metres landward of the Coastal Change Management Area (where the strategy for Felixstowe is 'hold the line' and maintain existing defences) - is acceptable. No objections have otherwise been raised by the Environment Agency or the LLFA regarding the risks of flooding.
- 7.31 While it is therefore accepted that the proposal site(s) is susceptible to the risks of tidal flooding, given the presence of established recreational uses and the existence of protective flood defences, this application is not considered to hold the potential to undermine the provisions the NPPF or policies SCLP9.3 (Coastal Change Management Plan) and SCLP9.5 (Flood Risk) of the adopted development plan.

Residential amenity:

- 7.32 Given the current recreational use of both land parcels that make up the application site, it is considered unlikely that its use as a Beach Village would hold the potential to generate a level of disturbance that would diminish existing neighbouring amenity unduly. Indeed, a noise report submitted in support of the proposal demonstrates that noise generated from the activities on site would be lower than the predicted ambient noise level (daytime). The degree of separation afforded by Sea Road and the background noise of passing traffic and the sea are also likely to help mitigate these impacts.

- 7.33 A small number of residents along Sea Road currently experience an outlook over the site towards the promenades' boundary hedging and the sea beyond. During a site visit undertaken by the Case Officer, the rear elevations of existing Beach Huts positioned on the promenade were also evident in views across the northern site parcel (Site 1). While views currently experienced by residents are not protected by any statutory requirement, the proposal's impact on residential outlook is a material planning consideration in the determination of this planning application.
- 7.34 Given the single-storey height and overall proximity of the proposed traditional style beach huts (Site 1) and exercise apparatus (Site 2), impacts from the siting of these structures are unlikely to result in any meaningful degradation of neighbouring outlook.
- 7.35 With consideration of the larger structures, as represented by the proposed accessible beach huts and facilities block, it is accepted that some residents occupying ground floor properties towards the northern end of Felix Court would experience a greater obstruction to their existing view. However, the facility block's position close to the site's north-eastern corner is only likely to impact on views of patrons from the Felsto Arms Public House.
- 7.36 The 30-metre degree of separation that would otherwise result between the nearest affected residents and the accessible beach hut block would also serve to provide some level of mitigation against the sense of enclosure experienced by residents at ground floor level positioned to the south of the Felsto Arms. The single-storey nature of the proposal would also mean that views from upper storey windows would remain unobstructed.
- 7.37 No loss of privacy to any existing properties is envisaged.
- 7.38 With the above in mind, it is found that, while the proposal's construction would undoubtedly result in some small impacts to existing resident's eastern outlook, such impacts would be unlikely to result in a level of detriment that could be considered unacceptable, when judged against the relevant provisions of the NPPF or SCLP11.2 (Residential amenity).

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 In-line with the above assessment, the proposed Beach Village would build on the strengths of the area and the relocated recreational facilities would provide a significant enhancement over existing provision, while supporting the vibrancy of the resort and its contribution to public health and wellbeing. Importantly, the scheme would enhance Felixstowe's tourism offer with attractive and high-quality facilities that build on the area's distinctiveness. The design would complement the existing aesthetic and the development could be completed with little impact on neighbouring amenity and highway safety.
- 8.2 As per the above assessment, this application accords with the NPPF, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the relevant policies of the adopted development plan.

9. Recommendation

9.1 The application is recommended for approval

10. 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):
 - Volleyball Area site location plan (received 18 May 2021);
 - Trim Trail site location plan (received 18 May 2021);
 - 21105 100 rev. D (Proposed site layout plan);
 - 21105 51 (Proposed site plan);
 - 21105 50 (Proposed site plan);
 - 21105 300 (Accessible Beach Huts Proposed Plan and Elevations);
 - 21105 200 (Toilet Block Proposed Plan and Elevations);
 - 203022-SWE-ZZ-XX-DR-C-0120 (Proposed Drainage Details);
 - 203022-SWE-ZZ-XX-DR-C-0100 (Proposed Drainage Layout).

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. The hereby approved beach huts will only be used for recreational purposes during daylight hours and will otherwise remain unoccupied and not used for any overnight stays.

Reason: To ensure that the development is occupied only for recreational purposes having regard to the tourism and residential policies of the adopted Local Plan.

5. The hereby approved development shall at all times be maintained in a clean and tidy condition free from litter and waste.

Reason: In the interest of protecting public amenity and to safeguard the local environment.

6. The hereby approved use shall not commence until the bins, lighting and cycle hoops shown on drawing no's. '21105 51' and '21105 50' (Proposed site plan) have been installed and made available for use.

Reason: In the interest of protecting public amenity and to safeguard the local environment.

7. In the event that contamination which has not already been identified to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is found or suspected on the site it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. No further development (including any construction, demolition, site clearance, removal of underground tanks and relic structures) shall take place until this condition has been complied with in its entirety.

An investigation and risk assessment must be completed in accordance with a scheme which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons and conform with prevailing guidance (including BS10175:2011+A2:2017 and the Land Contamination Risk Management (LCRM)) and a written report of the findings must be produced. The written report is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Where remediation is necessary a detailed remediation method statement (RMS) must be prepared, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The RMS must include detailed methodologies for all works to be undertaken, site management procedures, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria. The approved RMS must be carried out in its entirety and the Local ORMAS Planning Authority must be given two weeks written notification prior to the commencement of the remedial works.

Following completion of the approved remediation scheme a validation report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation must be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

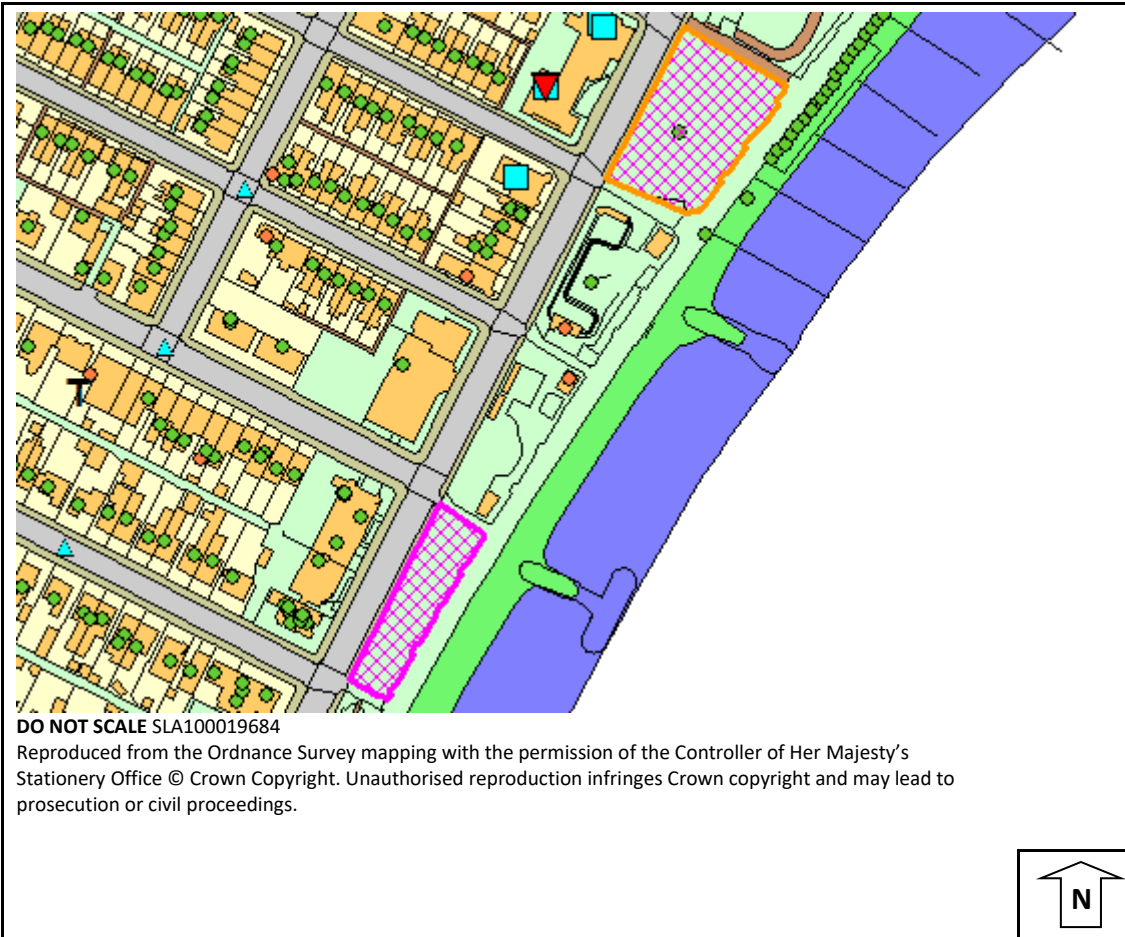
Informatives:

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/21/2444/FUL on [Public Access](#)

Map



Key



Notified, no comments received



Objection



Representation



Support