



## Committee Report

**Planning Committee** - 25 February 2020

**Application no** DC/19/4811/FUL

**Location**

Manor End  
The Promenade  
Felixstowe  
Suffolk

**Expiry date** 9 February 2020

**Application type** Full Application

**Applicant** East Suffolk Council

**Parish** Felixstowe

**Proposal** Extension of existing row of beach huts to level the beach material and reposition five existing huts from the Spa Pavilion end.

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### 1 Summary

- 1.1 The proposal is for the repositioning of five existing huts from the Spa Pavilion area of the promenade along Felixstowe seafront to the end of an existing row of beach huts at Manor End.
- 1.2 The application has been referred directly to planning committee as the landowner and applicant is East Suffolk Council.
- 1.3 Recommended for approval subject to conditions.

### 2 Site description

- 2.1 The site is located at the end of an existing row of beach huts positioned to the south east of the Martello Park Picnic Area, accessed via the Promenade off Manor Terrace. During the period between May and October, the site can be directly accessed via a flood gate, located

at the most southerly extent of the promenade. The site where the beach huts are to be directly sited is currently an area of vegetated shingle.

- 2.2 Located to the south-west of the subject site is Suffolk Sands Holiday Park, which is populated with a number of static caravans. A block of residential units is located to the north-west. The nearest available parking is Martello South Car Park, accessed via Manor Terrace, which is a public car park operated by East Suffolk Council.
- 2.3 At this particular location the existing beach huts are set back from the seaward edge of the promenade by approximately 17 metres. The existing huts and the subject site are located on the seaward side of the seawall and are, therefore, within an area at risk of flooding and coastal change.

### **3 Proposal**

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the relocation of five beach huts that are currently sited near the Spa Pavilion. The huts are constructed from timber with a ridge height of approximately 3 metres, a width of 2.1 metres and depth of 2.4 metres. They are proposed to be sited on beach type material between the promenade and sea wall, to the south of an existing row of beach huts.
- 3.2 This site requires minimal preparation and is an extension of the existing row of seaward facing beach huts, allowing for a 1.2 metre gap from the seawall and a regular spacing of 0.5 metres between the huts – in line with the existing huts. The huts would stay in situ all year round on the landward side of the promenade, placed on their existing wooden supports.

### **4 Consultations/comments**

- 4.1 One third party response was received in support of the application.

### **5 Consultees**

- 5.1 Parish/Town Council

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Felixstowe Town Council	18 December 2019	9 January 2020
Summary of comments: "Committee recommended APPROVAL."		

- 5.2 Statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
SCC Flooding Authority	18 December 2019	24 December 2019
Summary of comments: No objection.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Suffolk County - Highways Department	18 December 2019	3 January 2020
Summary of comments: No objection.		

### 5.3 Non statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Head of Coastal Management	18 December 2019	7 January 2020
Summary of comments: No objection - comments incorporated within planning considerations section below.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Ecology (Internal)	18 December 2019	9 January 2020
Summary of comments: No objection - comments incorporated within planning considerations section below.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Suffolk Wildlife Trust	18 December 2019	No response
Summary of comments: No response received.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Head of Economic Development	N/A	19 December 2019
Summary of comments: Felixstowe Forward are supportive of the proposal and welcome the beach huts currently on the promenade at the Spa site being moved as this will improve access to the promenade.		

## 6 Publicity

None

## **7 Site notices**

General Site Notice

Reason for site notice: General Site Notice

Date posted: 31 December 2019

Expiry date: 22 January 2020

## **8 Planning policy**

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 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.
- 8.3 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 – Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document (Adopted January 2017); and
  - The 'Saved' Policies of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan incorporating the first and second alterations.
- 8.4 The relevant policies of the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (Adopted July 2013) are:
- SP1 - Sustainable Development (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013));
  - 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));
  - SP8 - Tourism (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));

- 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)); and
- DM23 - Residential Amenity (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013)).

8.5 Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Development Plan Document (January 2017) policies:

- FPP2 - Physical Limits Boundaries (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Development Plan Document (January 2017)); and
- FPP20 - Spa Pavilion to Martello Park (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Development Plan Document (January 2017)).

8.6 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) .

8.7 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). The policies below are considered to now have some weight in determining applications, and are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- Policy SCLP6.1: Tourism; and
- Policy SCLP12.14: Spa Pavilion to Manor End.

## 9 Planning considerations

### Principle

9.1 The site is located within the physical limits boundary of Felixstowe, classified as a major centre within the district. Proposals for development within the defined physical limits boundary are acceptable in principle, subject to according with respective policies – as outlined below.

### Tourism

9.2 The resort of Felixstowe, located on the coast and adjacent to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), is a priority for new tourist activity, where improving the tourism potential is seen as an important element in achieving the regeneration of the town and providing continued support in principle to the tourist industry remains a priority within the local plan. However, it is recognised that such support needs to be tailored to ensure that any expansion does not materially harm, in particular, the natural, historic and built environment assets that are the main attractions for visitors to the area and which are so important to the quality of life of local residents.

- 9.3 Under current policy (Policy FPP20) beach huts along the area between Spa Pavilion to Martello Park will be carefully monitored and limited to those that currently exist, with any increased provision directed towards other parts of the sea front.
- 9.4 Emerging policy (Policy SCLP12.14) continues to support and promote high intensity tourist uses along the area between Spa Pavilion to Manor End and directs a high proportion of these along the Sea Road frontage. Additional beach huts in this area are to be limited to locations that complement the existing resort uses and do not fill the important gaps between huts.
- 9.5 In this instance, the relocation of five existing beach huts is deemed acceptable in principle as it does not comprise additional provision. The siting of the beach huts will have less than minor adverse effects on visual amenity, considering they are well maintained, and do not compromise or restrict accessible gaps between the existing row of huts. Moreover, the proposal does not restrict access or adversely affect the wider setting or the appearance of the seafront. The beach huts will be of the same scale to those already on the land to the north of the site and would not block the promenade or interfere with the seaside views of others.
- 9.6 Comments received from Felixstowe Town Council and the Head of Economic Development further support this stance, both raising support for the application, with the latter welcoming the beach huts currently on the promenade at the Spa Pavilion site being moved as it will improve access to the promenade for visitors and locals alike.
- 9.7 Overall, it is considered that the application accords with both Policy FPP20: Spa Pavilion to Martello Park of the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Development Plan Document 2017 as well as Policy SCLP12.14: Spa Pavilion to Martello Park of the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Final Draft Plan 2019, which seeks to protect and enhance the tourism facilities within the area.

#### Coastal management and flood risk

- 9.8 Section 8 of the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Development Plan Document January 2017, states that “because the SMP policy is to primarily ‘hold the line’ along the Felixstowe coast line, the Council do not consider it appropriate to introduce a Coastal Change Management Area for the Felixstowe Peninsula. A Coastal Change Management Area is there to ensure that any future development in areas at risk from coastal erosion is carefully considered and criteria are used as the basis for making decisions. Elsewhere in the district, there is a need for Coastal Change Management Areas and these will be covered by the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies document”. As such, it is considered that there is no requirement for a Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment (CEVA) in a Hold the Line frontage.
- 9.9 Consequently, the Head of Coastal Management has raised no objections, advising that the proposed works will have no impact on coastal management policy or implementation action and will be at a very low level of risk from coastal change. It is considered that the flood risk will be similar to the adjacent block of beach huts.
- 9.10 Overall, the scheme meets the requirements of Policy SP12 (Climate Change and Policy) and Policy SP30 (The Coastal Zone) of the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2013.

### Ecology

- 9.11 An East Suffolk Council ecologist has reviewed the application with regard to any potential ecological impacts and has concluded that the proposal appears unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on designated sites, protected species or UK Priority habitats or species (under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006).

### Amenity

- 9.12 The site is easily accessible, located within close proximity to a public car park and benefits from a number of public amenities including a café kiosk, and picnic area at Martello Park. Public conveniences are also accessible, with Manor Terrace Car Park Public Toilet located approximately 200 metres to the south-west along Manor Terrace.

## **10 Conclusion**

- 10.1 Despite the policy primarily directing beach huts to other locations along Felixstowe sea front, the proposal does not result in an increase in beach hut provision. Moreover, there will be no increased harm to visual amenity and would not compromise existing sea defences or adversely affect the coastal environment. Overall, the repositioning of the huts will be located within a sustainable location, lessening the impact on the amenity of the promenade from where they are to be moved whilst retaining the provision of beach huts within close proximity to public facilities, a benefit to the wider tourism of the area.

## **11 Recommendation**

- 11.1 Recommended for approval subject to conditions.

## **12 Conditions**

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than 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 drawings received on 13 December 2019:

- Site location plan;
- Site layout - ME/01 Rev. A; and
- Proposed site levels - ME/02 Rev. A.

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 in writing with the local planning authority.

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

4. The hereby approved building shall be used as a beach hut and for no other purpose unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority.

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

### **13 Informatives**

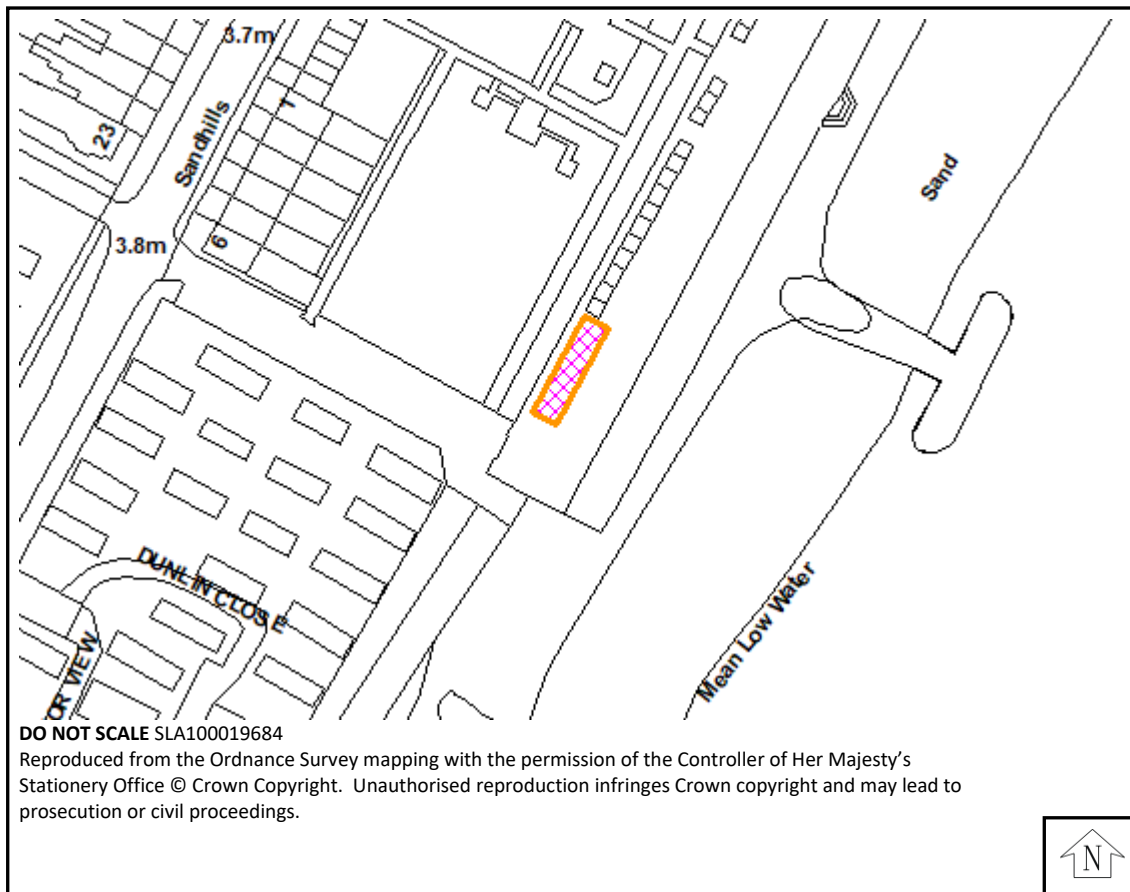
1. The local planning authority has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including planning policies and any comments that may have been received. The planning application has been approved in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and local plan to promote the delivery of sustainable development and to approach decision taking in a positive way.

### **14 Background information**





- 14.1 See application reference DC/19/4811/FUL at <https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=Q2G37VQX06O00>



## Map



## Key

-  Notified, no comments received
-  Objection
-  Representation
-  Support