

P/14/0887/FP

HILL HEAD

MR & MRS PALMER

AGENT: PLUM ARCHITECTS LTD

ERECTION OF BOAT SHED ON EXISTING CONCRETE BOAT COMPOUND

CROFTON CLIFF - LAND ON SALTERNS ROAD ADJACENT TO - CROFTON AVENUE
LEE-ON-THE-SOLENT HAMPSHIRE PO13 9NJ

Report By

Richard Wright Direct dial 01329 824758

Site Description

The application site comprises an area of coastal grassland located between the seafront promenade along Hill Head/Lee-on-Solent beach and Salterns Road. An area of concrete hardstanding lies in the centre of the site with a path linking it to the adjacent promenade.

The surrounding land edged in blue on submitted location plan is shown to be within the control of the applicant and includes grassland to the west and east of the application site, the promenade to the south and the beach as well as the residential curtilage of Crofton Cliff to the north on the opposite side of Salterns Road.

The red edged site is located within the countryside, outside of the urban area. The site also forms part of a designated area of open space.

With the exception of the concrete hardstanding and path the application site also lies within a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) - Salterns Park East SINC - as does the rest of the adjacent grassland area to the east and west and the nearby recreation ground.

Description of Proposal

Permission is sought for the erection of a boat shed on an existing concrete hardstanding.

The boat shed would measure 8 metres x 8 metres and would be enclosed within a larger grass mound except for its north east elevation (which would be constructed of stone with a set of green steel doors for access). The mound would measure around 27 metres in width.

At its tallest the top of the mound would be 2.5 metres above the height of the surrounding land at its present level. At the rear of the boat shed the structure would appear approximately 3.0 metres above the level of the hoggin footpath to be created leading to Salterns Road.

The submitted drawings show a new cycle path on the inside of the promenade wall however this is not being considered as part of this proposal.

Policies

The following policies apply to this application:

Approved Fareham Borough Core Strategy

CS4 - Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

CS14 - Development Outside Settlements

CS17 - High Quality Design

DSP13 - Nature Conservation

Development Sites and Policies

DSP13 - Nature Conservation

Relevant Planning History

The following planning history is relevant:

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| <u>P/13/0535/FP</u> | ERECTION OF BOAT SHED ON EXISTING CONCRETE BOAT COMPOUND (REVISED APPLICATION) |
| | REFUSE 19/08/2013 |
| <u>P/13/0148/FP</u> | ERECTION OF BOAT SHED ON EXISTING CONCRETE PLINTH |
| | REFUSE 17/04/2013 |

Representations

Two letters have been received making the following comments:

- This looks a very good, well thought out plan and I support it.
- The design is sympathetic and as low profile as is possible.
- The current situation with the concrete pads breaking up is an eyesore.

Consultations

Director of Planning & Development (Ecology) - To follow once revised and updated ecological information has been provided by the applicant.

Natural England - No objection, comments as per previous advice given for P/13/0148/FP

Planning Considerations - Key Issues

i) Planning history and recent appeal decision

Two previous planning applications were submitted in 2013 with both being almost identical to the current submission (references P/13/0148/FP and P/13/0535/FP).

The previous application (P/13/0535/FP) was refused planning permission under Officer delegated powers for the following reasons:

The development would be contrary to Policies CS14 & CS17 of the Fareham Borough Core Strategy in that, by virtue of its scale, siting and design the proposed boat shed would be harmful to the landscape character and appearance of this countryside and coastline location.

The applicant lodged an appeal against the Council's decision. The appeal was subsequently dismissed in January 2014 with the inspector making the following comments:

"The proposed boat shed has been designed to have the appearance of a grass mound. Its form and scale would, however, look out of place in this sunken area of grassland. It would clearly read as a man made structure particularly due to its stone end walls and steel doors which would face onto the promenade and Salterns Road. Consequently it would appear as an inappropriate addition to the landscape which would erode the open nature of this area."

The inspector continued by comparing the proposed mound to those grass mounds on the recreation ground to the west. He said that "these are set within the context of a more managed area of recreational land and are not comparable with the natural grassland appearance of the appeal site. Notwithstanding this, the general form, size, and man made appearance of the proposal would be inconsistent with the appearance of these other mounds."

ii) Current application

The proposal as submitted in this new application is ostensibly the same as that previously proposed but with the following changes:

- The doors and stone wall previously proposed to be set in the south-west elevation facing the promenade have been removed. The grass mound will instead slope down towards the beach.
- There would be no hoggin path leading from the boat shed to the promenade.

iii) Visual impact on the surrounding area

The supporting statement submitted with the application asserts that there has been an appreciable change in the character of the area since the appeal was determined due to the formation of a rolled hoggin cycle path alongside the existing promenade. The cycle path referred to is adjacent to the recreation ground and is some 50 - 60 metres from the application site. Notwithstanding the applicant's comments, Officers do not believe it changes the appearance of the area and is in no way comparable to the scale or appearance of the proposed boat shed.

The grassland on the site forms part of an open area of coastline separating the promenade and beach to the south and the start of the built development of the Stubbington/Hill Head urban area to the north. Its open and spacious nature is an important characteristic of the landscape of this countryside and coastline location. The site levels undulate with the promenade being higher than the sunken grassland, and to the west of the site towards the recreation ground grass mounds can be found. The area of concrete hardstanding was previously overgrown being gradually reclaimed by the surrounding vegetation and grassland. Clearance of brambles and scrub has taken place thereby eroding the site's natural appearance somewhat, however if the site were left to revegetate then over time its previous visual appearance would be restored.

The proposal involves erecting a boat shed on the concrete hardstanding and the creation of a new footpath to the north leading to the road. In an attempt to reduce its visual impact it is proposed to disguise the boat shed so that it resembled one of the nearby grass mounds. Notwithstanding the proposed landscaping of the area immediately around it and the formation of a green roof to the structure, the boat shed would be at a scale and massing too great to blend in comfortably with the natural landscape in which it would sit. This view was repeated by the Planning Inspector in the previous appeal decision who felt that the appearance of the boat shed would be "inconsistent" with the other mounds nearby.

Having considered the changes to the boat shed since the previous submission and the character of the surrounding area, Officers are of the view that the proposal would represent an odd and intrusive addition to the landscape harmful to the visual appearance and

character of this countryside and coastal location contrary to Policies CS14 and CS17 of the adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy.

iv) Effect on highway safety

Whilst lying outside of the residential curtilage of Crofton Cliff the boat shed is understood to be proposed to be used for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of that dwelling. If the proposal were to be considered acceptable in all other regards a planning condition tying its usage to the residential use of Crofton Cliff may have been appropriate. Subject to the boat shed's incidental usage there would be no expected increase in vehicle movements to and from the site as a consequence.

The submitted site plan shows visibility plays to provide safe pedestrian access from Salterns Lane to the boatshed. If the proposal were considered acceptable in all other respects a condition requiring the provision and retention of these splays free of obstruction and the reinstatement of the boundary hedgerow behind them would have most likely been recommended in the interests of highway safety.

v) Ecology

The current application is accompanied by an Ecological Phase I Scoping Report and Mitigation Strategy which was last updated in May 2013. Officers have requested that a revised and updated ecology report and mitigation strategy be prepared and submitted by the applicant to support the application given the time elapsed and the changes to the proposal since the previous application. At the time of writing no further ecological information had been received. Members will be advised of the latest situation in an update to this report prior to the committee meeting.

vi) Summary

Officers have considered any changes to the immediate surrounding area and the revisions made to the boat shed design since the previous refused application. The dismissal of the subsequent appeal and the comments made by the Planning Inspector have also been taken into account when concluding that the proposed boat shed would erode the open spacious nature of the site and would be an incongruous and inconsistent addition within the landscape harmful to its character and appearance. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies CS14 & CS17 of the adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy.

Highway safety matters have been addressed so that there would be no harmful impact in that regard and ecological mitigation measures are likely to be found acceptable subject to further consideration of a revised strategy once it is received. However those matters in themselves do not carry sufficient weight to overcome the harm to the countryside and coast caused by the proposal.

Recommendation

REFUSE:

The development would be contrary to Policies CS14 & CS17 of the adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy in that, by virtue of its scale, siting and design the proposed boat shed would be harmful to the landscape character and appearance of this countryside and coastline location.

Background Papers

P/14/0887/FP; P/13/0535/FP; P/13/0148/FP

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL



Crofton Cliff - Land on Saltern Road
Scale 1:1,250



This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Licence 100019110, 2014