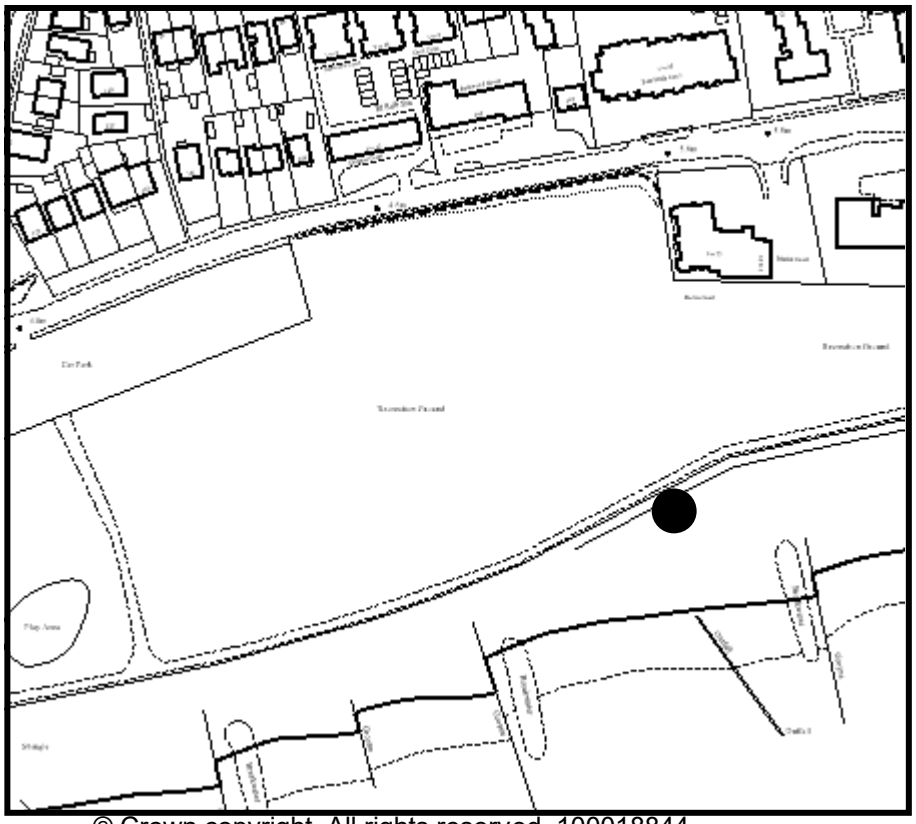
Application Number: ADC/0117/10 Recommendation - APPROVE

Site: **Foreshore (west of Merlin Court), Beach Green Brighton Road, Lancing**

Proposal: **10 beach huts (each 3.05m by 2.5m max) on concrete bases, including one hut (3.05m by 3.6m) to accommodate kite surfing/beach patrol personnel (to east of existing beach huts at Beach Green)**



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The Application

This application is one of 2 applications submitted by Lancing Parish Council for a total of 41 additional beach huts. This particular application, the smaller one of the two, relates to the beach to the south of the eastern part of Beach Green. There is an existing line of about 40 beach huts over a length of about 180m (100m east of the seafront cafe/kiosk) and it is proposed to extend it 35m eastwards with up to a further 10 huts. The nearest development is Marlin Court which is situated 75m to the north east.

The plans show 9 beach huts each a maximum of 2.5m wide, by 3.05m long and 2.44m high to the ridge of the roof. The tenth hut is a larger one (3.05m wide, by 3.6m long and 2.44m high) to accommodate kite surfing/beach patrol personnel The walls are shown as pastel-coloured painted rebated timber shiplap and the roof with heavy duty roofing felt with wooden battens. They would be mounted on wooden beams which are easily removable; not concrete slabs.

The second application (ADC/0116/10), for 31 beach huts to the south of Golden Sands Caravan Park, is the subject of possible revision regarding the siting of the huts and will be referred to a subsequent Committee meeting.

A Design and Access Statement has been received from the applicant. It states, amongst other things, that the Parish Council provide the sites for the huts; the huts themselves are erected by private individuals under license from the Parish Council and to the design/size limitations laid down by the Council.

Consultations and Representations

West Sussex County Council: No objection subject to a condition to control delivery of materials, plant and equipment and requiring a Method Statement to ensure segregation of construction areas from public path/cycleway users.

Environment Agency: No objection, subject to the conditions of the Flood Defence consent they have recently granted being met. These include a requirement to carry out compensatory measures for loss of any vegetated shingle, as this is a nationally rare type of habitat.

Lancing Parish Council: Not applicable (as they are the applicant).

Third Parties: 3 letters have been received, from residents of flats No's 7 and 22 Marlin Court and from a Shoreham resident.

The residents of No.7 express strong objection because of the number of existing unused beach huts already in situ and they would add to the hideous eyesore of the large unused new cafe and new kiosk.

The resident of Flat No.22 states no objection provided adequate arrangements are made to prevent people from parking their vehicles near to their beach huts either on the seafront path/cycleway or on the green. In the past few years this practice has increased causing danger to walkers and cyclists, and particularly to children going to the beach.

The Shoreham resident says he walks the coastal path regularly and is appalled at the proposal to block off more of the open view of the sea for a considerable distance. The public path and cycleway is one of the finest amenities of the District for public enjoyment, appreciated by the scores of people using it. The existing huts, in various states of repair, are a blot on the seascape and should not be increased in number. He comments that some of the existing huts have been for sale for some time suggesting that demand is not as great as claimed by the Parish Council.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AR2, AR12
PPS 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)
PPS9 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (ODPM 2005) & Circular 06/05
PPS25 'Planning and Flood Risk' (ODPM 2006) and PPS25 Supplement and Practice Guidance 'Development and Coastal Change' (DCLG 2010)

Planning Assessment

Policies

The site of the proposed beach huts is outside the 'built-up' area identified in the Local Plan, the boundary running along the northern edge of the seafront path/cycleway. Policy AG1 resists the erection of buildings outside this area unless there are exceptional circumstances and subject to other relevant policies.

In this case, Lancing beach is specifically subject to policies AR2 and AR12. AR2 protects its use for public recreational purposes and AR12 states that improvements to facilities for the public will normally be permitted subject to sea defence, local access and environmental considerations.

Government advice in PPS25 Supplement and Practice Guidance 'Development and Coastal Change' states that the blanket ban on any development in vulnerable coastal areas can be relaxed by allowing temporary schemes such as beach huts, cafes and car parks that could bring tourism benefits.

Whether the beach huts would improve facilities for the public

A case needs to be demonstrated that the provision of the proposed additional beach huts would improve facilities for the public related to the recreational use of the beach and thereby satisfy the requirements of policy AR12 above and outweigh the general objection under AG1.

As stated by the Parish Council, it has licensed beach huts along the foreshore for many years and they are a popular and long-standing tradition of the Lancing beach scene. The Parish Council state that a waiting list of 47 people exists which is restricted to Lancing & Sompting residents, with some people on the list for a number of years, and that the overall total of 40 plots now proposed (in the two planning applications) are to help meet the need as evidenced by the number on the waiting list. The number on the waiting list is subdivided into 30 for huts at Beach Green and 17 for huts at Widewater. It appears, therefore, that there is a relatively strong case for the proposal contained in this application to extend the line of huts at Beach Green.

Visual impact

As regards visual impact, blocking of significant sea views from the well-used coastal path and cycleway is generally undesirable as it spoils the enjoyment of the seafront for the wider public. This proposal would add to the length of one of the longest existing lines of huts. However, it is only to add a relatively small number of additional huts. There are long remaining stretches of beach front without any huts and it is considered that it would not seriously reduce sea views or appreciation of the seascape. In any case, as a compensation, there is an open and unrestricted view across Beach Green in the opposite direction.

Flood risk and sea defence issues

The Environment Agency state that a Flood Risk Assessment (under PPS25) is not required in this instance and, being satisfied that the sea defences would not be affected, they have recently given the applicant the necessary 'Flood Defence consent'.

Biodiversity and nature conservation

Unlike Shoreham Beach, Lancing beach has not been designated as a Local Nature Reserve or Site of Nature Conservation Importance and the areas of vegetated shingle, which is a rare type of habitat, are much smaller. Nevertheless, the site of

the 10 additional huts now proposed has been specifically selected to avoid vegetated shingle and, as stated above, is acceptable to the Environment Agency.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason that:-

The proposed additional beach huts would meet a need for additional recreational facilities at the beach and, by reason of their small size, number and location, would not be out of character with or detract significantly from the appearance of the seafront. The proposal would not cause unacceptable detriment to the amenities of nearby properties, result in loss of vegetated shingle or affect the flood defences. It would consequently not conflict with the policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AR2, AR12), PPS9 and PPS25.

Subject to:-

1. C1Ci (Standard time limit)
2. Prior to commencement of development, a Method Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA containing details of the provisions for delivery and temporary storage of construction materials and equipment including segregation of the construction area from the public cycleway/footpath. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved Method Statement.

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