

Parish:	Heacham	
Proposal:	Raised caravan base and balcony terrace	
Location:	56 North Beach Heacham King's Lynn Norfolk	
Applicant:	Mr Ivor Brand	
Case No:	17/00635/F (Full Application)	
Case Officer:	Mr M Broughton	Date for Determination: 30 May 2017

Reason for Referral to Planning Committee – The views of the Parish Council are contrary to the Officer recommendation

Case Summary

The land is situated on the western side of North Beach, Heacham, approximately 270m south of its junction with South Beach Road, Hunstanton, on the coastal frontage area of Heacham, but outside the settlement boundary for the village (SADMP 2016).

The application seeks to construct of a raised caravan base with balcony terrace on the site to replace the existing ground level base.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012, the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy 2011 and the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (SADMP) 2016 are relevant to this application

Key Issues

Principle of development and flood risk
Form and character and impact on the locality
Other considerations

Recommendation

APPROVE

THE APPLICATION

The land is situated on the western side of North Beach, Heacham, approximately 270m south of its junction with South Beach Road, Hunstanton, on the coastal frontage area of Heacham, but outside the settlement boundary for the village (SADMP 2016).

The site (No.56) comprises an elongated plot of land 14m wide and 57m deep, with an access gate into the site from the unmade track 'North Beach' road. The land is bound by

1.2m wire fencing and rises (east to west) from the access road to the sea defence wall and promenade. Within the site is an authorised caravan, with year round occupancy, on a concrete base with a patio area on its south side.

The application relates to the construction of a raised caravan base with balcony terrace on the site. Albeit not part of this application, the proposal and plan identify a replacement caravan would feature on the raised base.

This locality is within the designation of the Coastal Flood Risk Hazard Zone (DM18 SADMP 2016) and is a popular area for holiday accommodation and tourism.

Historically, an unrestricted former pre-1974 bungalow (No.56) on this site was demolished following floods in 1978. The site caravan was, however, retained continuously on the site thereafter, with a concrete base being laid in 1980. The caravan was subsequently replaced with an updated model in 1988 and more recently in 2007 when a Lawful Development Certificate was issued relative to the standing of a caravan on the site in excess of 10 years.

SUPPORTING CASE

The proposal relates to a raised base to support a caravan.

The site already has an approved caravan unit thereon with a concrete base. It is intended to replace that existing with a modern style unit, being a unit on a scale within the definition of 'caravan'.

There are other similar examples of raised bases supporting caravan units close-by. There are also examples of replacement dwellings on raised plinths on the coastal frontage – with accommodation generally over storage areas

PLANNING HISTORY

07/02543/LDE: Was_Would be Lawful 03/04/08: Application for Lawful Development Certificate: holiday caravan - 56 North Beach Heacham

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Parish Council: OBJECT: Comment: Out of keeping with the visual amenity.

Environment Agency: NO OBJECTION: Subject to the existing caravan itself being permitted.

Comments: EA Tidal Hazard Map shows that this site could flood over 2m if the defences were to be breached. The LPA will need to be satisfied with the structural integrity of this proposed raised base and the caravan.

(The EA subsequently acknowledged that, in this case, the latter comment 'structural integrity' is not a matter for conclusion by the Planning Authority and that a 'common sense' approach by the applicant is apparent taking into account structural integrity and liability)

Building Control Officer: NO OBJECTION: Comment: An authorised caravan exists on this site. There is no requirement for a Building Control inspection of the proposed development of a raised base.

Emergency Planning Officer: NO OBJECTION: Comment: This location in an area at risk of flooding and the occupiers:

- Should sign up to the Environment Agency 'flood warning system' and
- Should prepare a flood evacuation plan to include actions to take on receipt of the different warning levels, evacuation procedures and evacuation routes

REPRESENTATIONS One letter - comment:

Due to the overall condition of the North Beach Road, new planning applications should contain a caveat regarding the maintenance of the roadway by the owner (the section of road being part of the property concerned). The road is in a dire state in many places. If each owner 'did their bit' as regards filling potholes then the road would be more accessible to emergency and service vehicles and other residents.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework – sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

National Planning Practice Guidance - Provides National Planning Practice Guidance, in support of and in addition to the NPPF

LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

CS06 - Development in Rural Areas

CS07 - Development in Coastal Areas

CS08 - Sustainable Development

CS10 - The Economy

CS12 - Environmental Assets

SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016

DM15 – Environment, Design and Amenity

DM18 – Coastal Flood Risk Hazard Zone (Hunstanton to Dersingham)

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Key issues:

- Principle of development and flood risk
- Form and character and impact on the locality
- Other considerations

Principle of development and flood risk:

The proposal seeks to construct a raised base with decking on the site as a replacement for the existing ground level concrete base.

This locality is within the designation of the Coastal Flood Risk Hazard Zone to which Policy DM18 SADMP 2016 applies. The policy seeks to prevent any inappropriate development by adopting a precautionary approach in this area due to flood risk. This proposal is somewhat unusual when considering the Policy approach. Notwithstanding the proposal is considered to be 'new development', Policy DM18 does not cater for this proposal in these circumstances as the proposal does not apply to new or replacement dwellings, extensions to dwellings, change of use or seasonal occupancy.

The NPPF 2012 paragraphs 100-108 identify inappropriate development should be avoided in areas at the highest risk of flooding, but state that where development is necessary, it should be safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. As per Policy DM18, the NPPF does not specifically cater for this proposal, but elements of the NPPF are relevant as it is considered that the proposal is a replacement and will not increase flood risk to the site or its surroundings and the character of this coastal area will not be compromised.

Policy CS07 of the Core Strategy 2011 deals with development in coastal areas and seeks to limit detrimental impact on coastal change and ensure new development is sustainable and enhances the area, with the latter supported in Policy CS08.

On balance, taking into account the location, and specifically the nature of the development is a replacement for the existing concrete base, albeit it will be elevated as a raised platform, the principle is considered acceptable.

It is evident that a replacement living unit is intended for the raised base, but that is not an element inclusive to, nor required of, this application. The existing caravan on the site is an authorised unit, without seasonal occupancy restrictions.

Form and character and impact on the locality:

North Beach Road, Heacham, is effectively an unmade road providing a link between the surfaced South Beach Road Hunstanton (270m north) and Jubilee Road (1.8kms south) at North Beach Heacham, where there are holiday parks and typical seaside facilities which extend south into South Beach Heacham, with the whole area popular for holiday accommodation and tourism.

In this location, on the western side of The Wash, a sea wall and promenade extend from Hunstanton (north) to Heacham (south). Plots, comprising generally holiday homes, on North Beach Road are elongated and extend on the downward slope of the land, eastwards from the sea wall to the aforementioned access road, that itself is bordered (east) by a raised sea bank providing a public right of way aligned to the unmade road. To the east of that sea bank lies partially unkempt land and a golf range.

No 56 North Beach comprises a caravan on a concrete base with patio, set back from the sea wall and the frontage of adjacent properties, in a format of plots comprising dwellings and caravans generally fronting the sea wall, vastly mixed in age, scale, materials and design. The mixed format includes aged bungalow styles which pre-date 1970 without occupancy restrictions, replacement dwellings (since 1978) in brick and tile with seasonal occupancy restrictions, traditional caravans and caravans in the 'mobile unit' style (some with and some without applied seasonal occupancy conditions).

Many of the replacement holiday homes in this locality are sited on raised platforms or piers, utilising the non-habitable 'ground floor' areas as garages, storage, utility areas or simply open space, whilst providing the residential accommodation over, with sea views.

It is proposed to construct the raised platform and decking such that the frontage of the decking / unit to stand thereon would be similar to units adjacent in the street scene, including the bungalow No 57 north (which stands on a raised platform) and specifically to the caravan style unit south 55A which stands on a raised platform with a side extension. These raised platforms are typical of other examples, specifically in the street scene south, towards the Jubilee Road sea front, when viewed from the promenade.

The assessment of the Parish Council does not appear to take into account the many raised platforms for the mixed holiday homes along this stretch of coastline. Thus, the proposal effectively is considered in keeping with the existing street /promenade scene, in that by re-siting the development, a similar forward building line and height level would be attained with neighbouring sites, whilst improving the frontal aspect of the site in its position in the street scene.

It is of note, given its past, the replacement of a caravan on the site would not require permission and this application relates solely to the raised platform and associated decking. There being a revised siting, the existing concrete base / patio would become vacant following the proposed construction and it would be appropriate therefore, in terms of the replacement proposed, to apply a condition to demolish the existing concrete pad/ patio and return that area of the site to its former natural state of 'garden land'.

Other considerations:

The application does not relate to the access road and the upkeep of the access road is not an issue for consideration in this application

Public Rights of Way on the promenade (west) and sea defence earth bank (east) are not affected by this proposal

There are no known issues affecting this site in relation to Crime and Disorder

CONCLUSION:

The site is effectively in the countryside, on the coastal fringe and relatively isolated, in terms of access, between the holiday resort of Hunstanton and Heacham. The locality is characterised by a variety of holiday style accommodation fronting the promenade.

The existing residential unit is set back into the site and is authorised without seasonal restriction, but in need of upgrading to a modern standard, including the installation of flood resilient measures.

The proposal is somewhat unusual in terms of specific Policy reference. However, it does generally accord with elements of Policy in the NPPF 2012 and Policies CS07 / CS08 of the Core Strategy 2011 as it is considered there is no increase in flood risk, the proposal is not environmentally damaging and the overall design is considered in keeping with the other developments close-by

In the light of National Guidance, Development Plan Policies and other material considerations, it is recommended that this application be approved

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

- 1 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 1 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.
- 2 Condition: The development hereby permitted relates solely to the construction of a raised caravan base and balcony terrace at 56 North Beach Heacham and shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan:

Block plan, elevations and section through – drawing D:1893:1A – receipt dated 4/04/17
- 2 Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
- 3 Condition: The existing concrete pad and associated patio area shall be demolished and all materials removed from the site within three months of the date of the commencement of the works hereby approved. The land thereafter shall be returned to its natural state.
- 3 Reason: The land is within the coastal zone. The proposed development is a replacement for the existing development, the latter of which should be removed to lessen issues with flood risk, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.