

App.No: 150276 (PPP)	Decision Due Date: 25 May 2015	Ward: Devonshire
Officer: Jane Sabin	Site visit date: 7 April 2015	Type: Planning Permission
Site Notice(s) Expiry date: 24 April 2015		
Neighbour Con Expiry: 24 April 2015		
Weekly list Expiry: 7 April 2015		
Press Notice(s): 10 April 2015		
Over 8/13 week reason: N/A		
Location: Beach adjacent 3 and 4 Lower Parade, Grand Parade, Eastbourne		
Proposal: Extension of timber decked area on the beach to be used in conjunction with existing Cafe Express and Belissimo Express cafes.		
Applicant: Mr P. Lewin		
Recommendation: Approve, conditionally		

Executive summary:

The proposed development is appropriate in terms of its siting, scale and design, and would provide an improved facility on the seafront for tourists. It would comply with the relevant adopted policies and government guidance.

Planning Status:

Public seafront promenade
Town Centre and Seafront Conservation Area

Relevant Planning Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework

Eastbourne Core Strategy Local Plan Policies 2013

B1: Spatial Development Strategy and Distribution

B2: Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods

C1: Town Centre Neighbourhood Policy

D3: Tourism and Culture

D10: Historic Environment

D10A: Design

Eastbourne Borough Plan Saved Policies 2007

UHT1: Design of New Development

UHT4: Visual Amenity

UHT15: Protection of Conservation Areas

TO9: Commercial Uses on the Seafront

Site Description:

The application site comprises the two existing decks on the shingle beach immediately adjacent to the lower promenade and to the south west of the pier.

Relevant Planning History:

050831

Change of use of public shelter, part of promenade and shingle beach to A3 use, including provision of sliding doors, windows, electric and other shutters, canopy and floodlights to front of shelter and wooden decking on beach.

Approved conditionally 9 January 2006

060123

Change of use of public shelter, part of promenade and shingle beach to restaurant use (A3 Use Class), including provision of doors, windows and shutters to front of shelter and wooden decking on beach.

Approved conditionally 12 June 2006

Proposed development:

Permission is sought to extend both decks to form larger areas for customers of the two cafes. The scheme proposes to extend each deck to form two separate decks measuring 29.5m by 6m and 38.5m by 6m, separated by a gap of 6m where an existing groyne transects the beach. Each deck would have LED floor lighting around the perimeter of the two outer edges, and handrails which match those existing.

Consultations:Internal:

Estate Manager – no comments received

Tourism Manager – no comments received

Specialist Advisor (Environmental Health) – no comments received

Specialist Advisor (Conservation) - The site is located on the lower promenade to the west of the Pier, a Grade II* heritage asset within the Town Centre and Seafront Conservation Area. It includes the juxtaposition of natural and built environment, with the promenade following the contours of the bay, providing a visual link between the two. The character of this part of the promenade is a concentration of mixed use units, both on and at the foot of the Pier, including cafes, public conveniences and retail units, with kiosks on the upper promenade.

The activity associated with the commercial and retail units, in conjunction with the use of the promenade and beach for sport and recreation, results in an active and vibrant environment. Additionally, uninterrupted views of the sea and beach, including the promenade edge which is defined by the natural curve of the bay, and the rhythm and harmony provided by the groynes make a positive contribution to the appearance of the area.

In assessing the proposal against the identified character of the area, the following comments area made:

As identified, the west promenade is level with the beach and, as such, the value of the relationship between the promenade, to the west and beach includes its permeability. This value has been clearly identified and retained as part of the proposal, in the form of a distinct gap between the decking to allow for easy access to the beach, whilst taking account of the existing groyne and its future maintenance.

In addition the proposal has been designed to reflect the existing timber decking and balustrades. Whilst this is an acceptable approach, it may be worth exploring an alternate design for the balustrading, as this detail would allow for a more contemporary approach within this historic environment, adding design value to the existing character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area.

In summary the proposed extension of timber decking to the beach area to be used in conjunction with the associated cafes, is considered to result in little or no harm to the character of the surrounding conservation area.

Specialist Advisor (Engineering) – the groyne clearance of 3m on either side is acceptable for the next 15-30 years, as this is the anticipated remaining life of the groynes. Details are required of the foundations, to ensure there are no piles within the clearance area. It should be noted that EBC will not be liable for any damage to the decks either from tide/coast/storm conditions, or from coast protection maintenance works. Furthermore, the profile of the shingle may change over time/seasonally, and whilst this sort of infrastructure will be considered, it would not be possible to maintain the existing profile consistently just for the decks.

Conservation Area Advisory Group - At its meeting on 31 March 2015, no objections were raised in principle to the extension of the decked areas, however concerns were expressed in respect of the continuous nature of the decking and the impact it would have on the relationship between the beach and the promenade. The Group were firmly of the opinion that the deck should be separated into sections with wide gaps between them so that the shingle would still be visible right up to the edge of the promenade. It was also considered essential that good quality materials should be used, particularly for the balustrading; the design of the balustrading should be carefully considered to reflect either the ornate traditional features found along the promenade, or a very modern interpretation.

External:

Neighbour Representations:

No representations had been received at the time of writing this report.

Appraisal:

Principle of development:

The existing cafes and decks are popular and well used. Extending the decks would improve the offer of the cafes and encourage more customers to use them, to the benefit of the vitality of the seafront.

Impact on character and setting of a listed building or conservation area:

The siting, scale and form of the extended decks is considered to be appropriate for this location, and preserves access to the shingle beach for members of the public as well as access for essential repairs/maintenance to the groyne and beach. The separation of the

decks also preserves the visual relationship between the promenade and the shingle beach.

The lighting is subtle, both in terms of design and illumination. The balustrade, as proposed, matches that on both existing decks. The views of the Conservation Area Advisory Group on the balustrading are noted, however it is considered that the provision of traditional ornate features would not be sufficiently understated on the lower promenade (the ornate lighting columns and railings are generally featured on the middle promenade). Certainly the shingle beach is not the place for glass or polycarbonate. It is therefore considered that simple timber balustrading is the correct approach.

Other Matters: Hours of use of these extended decked areas is controlled under other regimes (licensing and lease via Estates dept)

Human Rights Implications:

The impacts of the proposal have been assessed as part of the application process. Consultation with the community has been undertaken and the impact on local people is set out above. The human rights considerations have been taken into account fully in balancing the planning issues; and furthermore the proposals will not result in any breach of the Equalities Act 2010.

Conclusion:

The proposed development is considered to be appropriate in terms of its siting, scale and design, and would provide an improved facility on the seafront for tourists. It would comply with the relevant adopted policies and government guidance.

Recommendation: Approve, conditionally

Conditions:

1. Commencement within three years
2. Development in accordance with the approved plans
3. Submission of details of foundations
4. Submission of details lighting
5. Submission of details of balustrading

Appeal:

Should the applicant appeal the decision the appropriate course of action to be followed, taking into account the criteria set by the Planning Inspectorate, is considered to be **written representations**.