

TRIMINGHAM - PF/19/0812 - 'Deep History Coast' discovery point including picnic table, seating/benches and three interpretation monoliths on land adjacent to The Pilgrim Shelter; The Pilgrim Shelter, Loop Road, Trimingham, Norwich, NR11 8EQ for NNDC Local Housing Enablers

Minor Development

- Target Date: 09 August 2019

Case Officer: Mr C Reuben

Full Planning Permission

RELEVANT CONSTRAINTS

LDF Tourism Asset Zone

SFRA - Areas Susceptible to Groundwater Flooding

Unclassified Road

Landscape Character Area

LDF - Countryside

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Conservation Area

LDF - Coastal Erosion Constraint Area

Coastal Erosion Risk Area - 20 years

Undeveloped Coast

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

THE APPLICATION

The application is for the installation of a Deep History Coast Discovery Point adjacent to The Pilgrim Shelter in Trimingham, which is one of 11 points along a themed Discovery Trail to be installed along the North Norfolk Coast between Weybourne and Cart Gap. The site is a triangular gravelled parcel of land which is at present relatively unused and accommodates a small timber shed, situated off the main Coast Road in a relatively secluded position. Privately owned scrubland lies to the north with the Norfolk Coast Path adjacent to The Pilgrim Shelter to the north-west. The proposed discovery point would include the provision of a picnic table, seating/benches and three monoliths (ranging between 2.1-2.4 metres high) displaying information regarding the Deep History Coast. The proposal also involves landscaping within the site comprising of hedge/shrub planting and crown lifting of existing trees to allow more light into the site and to improve access within the site, along with repairing or replacing the existing fence along the northern site boundary.

REASONS FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

Because the application is submitted by North Norfolk District Council and a representation has been received.

PARISH COUNCIL

Trimingham Parish Council - No response supplied.

REPRESENTATIONS

One objection received raising the following concerns:

- The land is an important area for wildlife and fauna. The introduction of picnic table/seating/benches and other additions will have a detrimental effect on residents and migratory birds, many species of which are struggling.
- The area is important for insects and the Common Spotted Orchid which is of great importance.
- Concerns regarding the use of the site by youths during unsociable hours with the prospect of litter/mess being left - who will clean this up? Prospect of noise/disturbance to residents.
- Risk to public safety as the site is close to cliff top edges. Will the site be fenced in? Cannot be considered safe to allow the public use of the site.

CONSULTATIONS

Coastal Management - No objection. The proposal is small-scale, non-residential and beneficial to the community.

Landscape Officer - Following agreement to revise the proposed planting and omit lighting from the proposal, no objection.

Norfolk Coast Partnership - No objection.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that the proposed development may raise issues relevant to Article 8: The Right to respect for private and family life.

Article 1 of the First Protocol: The right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions.

Having considered the likely impact on an individual's Human Rights, and the general interest of the public, approval of this application as recommended is considered to be justified, proportionate and in accordance with planning law.

CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 - SECTION 17

The application raises no significant crime and disorder issues.

POLICIES

North Norfolk Core Strategy (Adopted September 2008):

SS 2 - Development in the Countryside

EC 7 - The location of new tourism development

EN 1 - Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and The Broads

EN 2 - Protection and enhancement of landscape and settlement character

EN 3 - Undeveloped Coast

EN 4 - Design

EN 8 - Protecting and enhancing the historic environment

EN 9 - Biodiversity and geology

EN 11 - Coastal erosion

CT 5 - The transport impact of new development

CT 6 - Parking provision

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

MAIN ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- Principle
- Design
- Neighbouring amenity
- Landscape impact
- Heritage impact
- Biodiversity
- Coastal erosion
- Access/parking

APPRAISAL

Principle (Policies SS 2 and EC 7)

The site is within the Countryside policy area as defined under policy SS 2 of the adopted North Norfolk Core Strategy. Policy SS2 allows for new tourist development, although a sequential approach is required under associated policy EC 7. However in this case, it is considered unreasonable to apply this approach given that the intention of the proposal is to appeal to tourists/visitors and local residents and provide information about the specific area. The facility is strategically positioned near to the Norfolk Coast Path and is part of a trail of 11 such information points to be installed along the North Norfolk coast as part of a wider initiative by the Council to promote the ongoing Deep History Coast project. As such, given the low-key proposal which involves very little in terms of development, but offers significant educational, cultural and in turn, potential economic benefits to the District, visitors and the local community, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle and in compliance with policies SS 2 and EC 7.

Design (Policy EN 4)

The proposed installations, including the benches and monoliths, are suitably designed, reflecting a coastal character by incorporating rustic wood and with the benches supported on stone gabions on a gravelled surface. The installation would improve the visual appearance of the underused site. There are no design concerns and as such, it is considered that the proposed development complies with Policy EN 4 in this respect.

Neighbouring amenity (Policy EN 4)

The site is barely noticeable from the Coast Road to the south and tucked away adjacent to The Pilgrim Shelter. It is heavily shaded and positioned away from neighbouring residential properties (the nearest of which lies approx. 40m away to the south-west). Given the scale of the proposal, it is considered that it would not result in any detrimental impact in terms of noise on any nearby properties. Currently, the site can be easily accessed and will remain so - although concerns regarding additional use of the site are noted, it is not considered, given the low-key nature of the development and the educational/cultural purpose of the installation, that it would be a significant draw for antisocial behaviour. Any proposal to completely fence off the site would be at odds against the intention to provide an accessible and inviting public facility. It is, therefore, considered that the proposed development complies with policy EN 4 in respect of amenity.

Landscape impact (Policies EN 1, EN 2 and EN 3)

The site is within the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the designated Undeveloped Coast area. Given the intended function of the proposal, it is accepted that it requires a coastal location. This, along with the site's relatively unexposed position which would mean there would be little, if any, impact on the open coastal character, is such that it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of policy EN 3.

The site is relatively well screened in all directions. In particular, views of the site are limited from a northerly direction (from the Norfolk Coast Path) owing to existing tree cover. Although some of the lower visual cover will be removed, the proposed installations would be at a relatively low height and, as mentioned above, reflect a coastal theme. The proposed lighting within the site has now been removed from the application, taking account of the need to preserve 'dark skies' within this area. As such, it is considered that the proposed development would not have a detrimental visual impact on the surrounding landscape or AONB and therefore complies with Policies EN 1 and EN 2.

Heritage impact (Policy EN 8)

The site lies on the eastern edge of the Trimmingham Conservation Area. Given the current appearance of the site, its secluded position and the low-key nature of the proposal and its design, it is considered that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of policy EN 8.

Biodiversity (Policy EN 9)

The site consists of a number of mature trees and shrubs and likely provides a habitat for birds/insects. The works proposed would be unlikely to result in any significantly detrimental impact on biodiversity. Additional planting around and within the site would be provided, and the proposed tree works would increase the level of light into the site which, in turn, may help further plants to thrive. No objection has been raised by the Council's Landscape Officer with regard to the effect on biodiversity. It is considered that the proposed development is compliant with the requirements of Policy EN 9.

Coastal erosion (Policy EN 11)

The proposed development would be over 30 metres away from the cliff edge to the north, and involves small-scale work to the site. As such, the stability of the cliffs should remain unaffected by the proposal. No objection has been raised by the Coastal Management Officer. As such, it is considered that the proposed development is compliant with Policy EN 11.

Access/parking (Policies CT 5 and CT 6)

There is an existing car parking area outside of The Pilgrim Shelter to the south-west of the site and as such, it is not proposed to provide any additional on-site parking. Most of the use is anticipated to be on foot rather than car and as such, it is considered that the proposed use would be unlikely to result in any significant increase in vehicular traffic to/from the site. As such, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of policies CT 5 and CT 6.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve subject to the conditions relating to the matters listed below and any others as deemed necessary by the Head of Planning:

- Time limit for implementation (3 years)
- Development to be carried out in accordance with approved plans
- Use of materials as submitted
- Any external lighting to be agreed prior to installation

Final wording of the conditions to be delegated to the Head of Planning.