

Application Number: 25/10215 Full Planning Permission
Site: BEACH HUT 315, HORDLE CLIFF, MILFORD-ON-SEA
Development: Replacement decking with balustrade and steps
Applicant: Mrs Jarman
Agent:
Target Date: 13/08/2025
Case Officer: Kate Cattermole
Officer Recommendation: Grant Subject to Conditions
Reason for Referral to Committee: Parish Council contrary view

1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ISSUES

The key issues are:

- 1) Impact on the character and appearance of the Green Belt
- 2) Impact on the character and appearance of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- 3) Impact on the character and appearance of the area

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site consists of a gable fronted beach hut with timber decking to the front of the hut enclosed with solid sides, and steps at the front. The decking area replaced a smaller area of decking and steps. The beach hut sits within the front row of huts facing the sea at Hordle Cliff, and is sited on the shingle beach at the base of the cliff. The beach huts are an established feature of this part of the coastline and there are a variety of styles, some with decking to the front.

The application site falls within the Highcliffe to Milford Cliffs Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Green Belt.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Removal of the existing decking and replacement with a smaller area of decking with the sides to be enclosed by part solid and part timber balustrading to the sides of the deck, and steps to the front.

The initial application was to retain a new timber deck enclosed with solid panels with steps to the front of the deck stepping down to the beach, to the front of the existing hut. It replaced a previous smaller timber deck that had been enclosed with slatted balustrading and top rail on the sides of the decking and steps to the front. Amended plans were accepted to reduce the extent of the decking back to the size it was previously and the sides of the decking to be part solid enclosure closest to the hut, and the front section of the side enclosure to be balustrading and top rail.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal	Decision Date	Decision Description	Status
02/74789 Replacement beach hut	05/06/2002	Granted Subject to Conditions	Decided

5 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy

Policy ENV2: The South West Hampshire Green Belt

Policy ENV3: Design quality and local distinctiveness

Policy ENV4: Landscape character and quality

Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management 2014

DM2: Nature conservation, biodiversity and geodiversity

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Guidance

Plan Policy Designations

Green Belt

Countryside

SSSI

6 PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

Milford On Sea Parish Council, 8 July 2025

The replacement decking boards, balustrades and installation of steps was deemed invasive, too large and not in keeping with the surrounding beach huts.

The Milford-on-Sea Parish Council wish to submit Par 4.

PAR 4: We recommend REFUSAL

Milford On Sea Parish Council, 3 February 2026

The decking boards, enclosure and installation of steps is deemed invasive, too large and not in keeping with the surrounding beach huts.

Milford-on-Sea Parish Council wish to submit Par 4.

Par 4: We recommend REFUSAL

7 COUNCILLOR COMMENTS

No comments received

8 CONSULTEE COMMENTS

Comments have been received from the following consultees:

Natural England

No objection - would not have significant adverse impact on statutory designated sites

Coastal Protection

Approve - The applicant should be aware that any structure within this location will always be at risk of erosion, flooding or inundation by the sea. The site at this location is at particular risk. The Council will not undertake any coast protection works to protect the beach hut or the site from erosion, flooding or inundation by the sea, and there is no requirement for existing defences to be maintained. There will always be a risk of having a beach hut in this location.

9 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

The following is a summary of the representations received.

For: 0

Against: 10

objections on original proposal to retain existing decking:

- solid sides out of character with surrounding huts and loss of visibility
- loss of view and overshadowing to neighbouring beach hut decking
- size and design of decking out of character with neighbouring huts
- Spoils views along the beach
- would set a precedent
- the solid sides to the decking detracts from attractive and open character of the beach resulting in an invasive structure
- no other examples of solid sides to decking on the beach
- previous balustrade was not rotten
- could be subject to vandalism

1 objection received to amended plan:

- solid balustrade out of keeping with surrounding beach huts and obtrusive, previous balustrade was slatted
- loss of view

10 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

10.1 Principle of Development

10.1.1 Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1 requires new development to achieve high quality design that contributes positively to local distinctiveness and the character and identity of the locality.

10.1.2 This application is sited within the Highcliffe to Milford on Sea (SSSI) and Green Belt. National and local planning policies cite that development within a SSSI that would adversely affect the site will not be permitted unless the benefits of the development outweigh the adverse impacts upon the site. Development within the Green Belt is considered inappropriate, unless it meets one of the exception tests stated in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 154. These will be considered within the following planning assessment and the relevant local plan policies are ENV2, ENV3 and ENV4 of the Local Plan Part 1: Planning Strategy and Policy DM2 of the Local Plan Part 2 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

10.2 Green Belt

10.2.1 The application site falls within the South West Hampshire Green Belt. Local Plan policy ENV2 confirms that proposals will be considered in accordance with the policies of the NPPF. Chapter 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) regards the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. However there are exceptions to this as identified in para 154, including :

154 c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

154 d): the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.

10.2.2 The proposal would reduce the size of the existing decking and result in changes to the side enclosures. As there has previously been similar development of the proposed footprint, it would meet the exceptions test as set out in paragraph 154c and d, as it would not be increasing the size of the original development in this location. Also the beach huts either side have decked areas, the decking would not be projecting any further forward than these so therefore would not be maintaining the openness of the green belt.

10.2.3 As such the proposal would be in accordance with the NPPF and local planning policy, as it would meet the exceptions test and not interfere with the openness of the green belt.

10.3 Impact on the SSSI

10.3.1 The NPPF states in respect of Habitats and biodiversity that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

10.3.2 Policy DM2 of the Local Plan Part 2 states Development proposals within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which would be likely to adversely affect the site will not be permitted unless the benefits of the development outweigh both the adverse impacts on the site and any adverse impacts on the wider network of SSSIs.

10.3.3 The presence of beach huts in the SSSI at Hordle Cliff adversely impact upon the SSSI, as they prevent the natural erosion of the cliffs to expose a diverse fossil mammal fauna. Notwithstanding this, the existing beach huts are established and traditional built form in this location, and like for like replacements are accepted by Natural England as they would not increase the existing harm to this sensitive area. As the existing decking is to be reduced in size, and would be no greater than originally established in this area, Natural England have raised no objection to the amended proposal.

On balance, the proposal would not be creating any additional harm to the SSSI and though contrary to national and local policy is acceptable in this sensitive location.

10.4 Character and appearance of the area

10.4.1 Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1 requires new development to achieve high quality design that contributes positively to local distinctiveness and the character and identity of the locality.

10.4.2 Policy ENV4 of the Local Plan Part 1 emphasises landscape character and quality and that proposed development retain and/or enhance landscape features including the transition between the settlement fringe and the coast.

10.4.3 Hordle Cliff is characterised by the presence of beach huts which are arranged in rows on the slope of the cliff with the front row of huts being sited on the shingle beach fronting the sea. The majority of huts have decking to the front and are varied in design and size. The hut on the application site originally had open balustrading to the side, but the proposal would amend this to part solid/part timber balustrading. Even though the proposed changes to the enclosure of the decking would change its original appearance, there are other examples of solid sides to decking on other beach huts to the west of the application site. As the proposed decking would replicate the size of the original decking (reducing the depth of the existing decking) and there are similar examples of solid sides and balustrading to the sides of decking on other huts, the proposed development would retain the distinctive character of this part of the beach in accordance with Policies ENV3 and ENV4.

10.5 Amenity

10.5.1 Objections have been raised to the application on the grounds of loss of a view. The huts are in private ownership but they have to the benefit of a licence from NFDC. This licence does not allow for overnight stays, and are only for day use. These huts, by their location have views and the only limitation would be when sitting on the neighbouring areas of decking, however right of a view is not a planning consideration.

11 OTHER MATTERS

As the proposal would rectify the current unauthorised development, it is considered appropriate to reduce the time period for this to be undertaken. A time period of 9 months has been verbally agreed with the applicant which would allow sufficient time to allow for the works to be completed.

12 CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed development would comply with policies ENV2, ENV3 and ENV4 of the Local Plan Part 1 as it would respect the Local Distinctiveness of the area, and would not interfere with the openness of the Green Belt. The existing beach huts, by their very presence in the SSSI are considered harmful, however the replacement of the decking to the size it originally was prior to the current structure being installed would not increase the overall footprint of the hut and decking from its original size and therefore would not create any additional harm to the SSSI.

To conclude the proposed development is considered acceptable and is recommended for approval.

13 RECOMMENDATION

Grant Subject to Conditions

Proposed Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 9 calendar months from the date of this permission.

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. The development permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

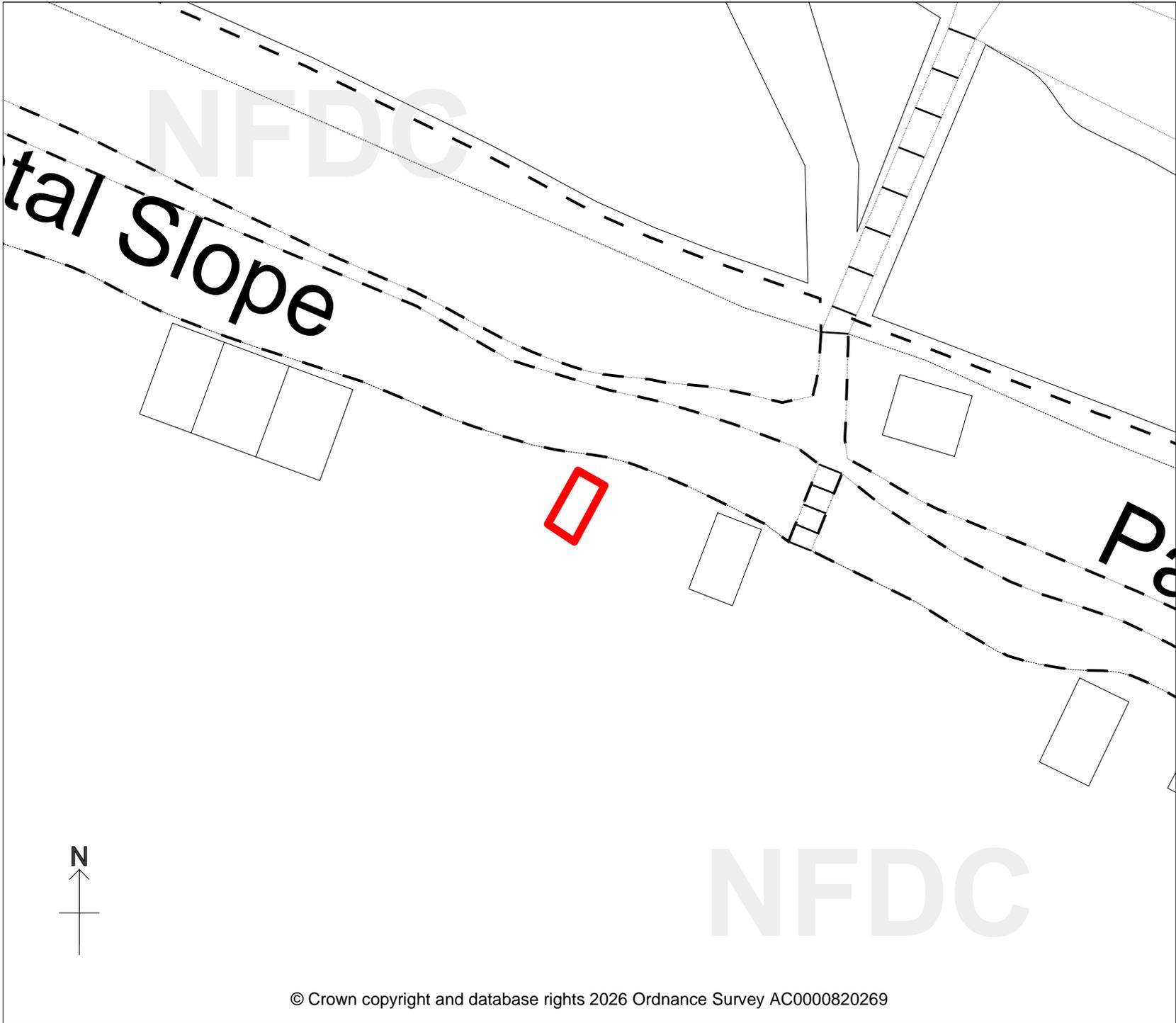
- Site Location and Block Plan as deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 9 January 2026
- Elevations and Floor Plans as deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 9 January 2026

Reason: To ensure satisfactory provision of the development.

Further Information:

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PLANNING COMMITTEE

March 2026

Beech Hut 315
Hordle Cliff
Milford-on-Sea
25/10215

Scale 1:250

N.B. If printing this plan from
the internet, it will not be to
scale.