

Application for Determination

Parish	Woodbastwick		
Reference	BA/2015/0132/FUL	Target date	7 July 2015
Location	Cockshoot Boardwalk, Adjacent River Bure, Woodbastwick		
Proposal	Replacement of existing boardwalk with recycled plastic sleeper supports and piles, topped by pressure treated timber boards.		
Applicant	Broads Authority		
Recommendation	Approve subject to conditions		
Reason for referral to Committee	Broads Authority application		

1 Description of Site and Proposals

- 1.1 The application site is within the Bure Marshes National Nature Reserve at Woodbastwick and is accessed by Ferry Road from the village of Woodbastwick. Ferry Road terminates at a car park adjacent to the River Bure where there are also Broads Authority 24 hour moorings. This is directly opposite The Ferry Inn in Horning and where a foot ferry has operated historically. This site is also within Ramsar, SSSI, SAC and SPA habitat designations.
- 1.2 The application concerns a strip of land along the riverbank running a distance of approximately 500 metres from the car park following the river downstream to a second area of Broads Authority 24 hour moorings at the entrance to Cockshoot Dyke. There is an existing timber boardwalk along this route which is a permissive path. This boardwalk runs at ground level and includes three small footbridges which cross dykes. It is set back two to three metres from the water's edge and wet woodland of varying densities lines each side.
- 1.3 It is proposed to replace the existing boardwalk on a like-for-like basis. There would be no change to the route and the current timber structure would be removed and replaced with a new timber surfaced boardwalk supported by recycled plastic piles and supporting sleepers. The recycled plastic horizontal sleepers and the timber boardwalk slats would all sit above ground level and the boardwalk would be 1 metre wide. Each timber slat would be inset with a non-slip material, performing the same function as chicken wire across the

existing boardwalk. The three footbridge structures would also be replaced like for like with the same materials as the boardwalk.

2 Site History

No previous applications.

3 Consultation

Woodbastwick Parish Council – No response.

District Member – No response.

Broads Society – Support the proposal.

Natural England – No objection. Advise the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on any European site and would not damage or destroy and notified features of the SSSI.

4 Representations

4.1 None received.

5 Policies

5.1 The following Policies have been assessed for consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and have been found to be consistent and can therefore be afforded full weight in the consideration and determination of this application. [NPPF](#).

Core Strategy (2007)

[Core Strategy Adopted September 2007 pdf](#)

CS1 – Landscape Protection and Enhancement

CS17 – Access and Transportation

Development Management (2011)

[DEVELOPMENTPLANDOCUMENT](#)

DP1 – Natural Environment

DP2 – Landscape and Trees

DP4 – Design

DP11 – Access on Land

5.2 Site Specific Policies Local Plan (2014)

[SitespecificpoliciesLocal](#)

No relevant policies.

6 Assessment

6.1 This application proposes the replacement of an existing boardwalk. This would retain an existing facility which provides an informal and low impact

recreational attraction for visitors and from the boardwalk typical fen, open water and wet woodland features can be appreciated, promoting understanding of Broads wildlife and habitats. The proposal is considered acceptable in principle in accordance with Policies CS1, CS17 and DP11.

- 6.2 As the proposal is acceptable in principle, the key considerations in determining this application are the design and materials and the impact on landscape, ecology and trees.
- 6.3 With regard to design, the proposal would replicate the scale and appearance of the existing boardwalk and bridges. The surface would be constructed in timber, however the supporting structure is proposed to use recycled plastic due to the longer lifespan this offers, particularly when driven into wet, marshy ground. This is a material that has been resisted for the visible parts of structures elsewhere as it is not considered to be of a suitably high quality visually or to assimilate well into the Broads landscape. The ends of horizontal supporting sleepers at 1.5 metre intervals would be seen above ground level, however in the longer term these would be covered by vegetation and it is considered the use of recycled material for the largely unseen supporting structure beneath the timber surface is not inappropriate here. The proposal is therefore considered appropriate in terms of design and landscape impact in accordance with Policies DP2 and DP4.
- 6.4 The site is within an ecologically sensitive area, designated at national, European and international levels and although the boardwalk is not necessary for the management of the designated sites, it contributes to the understanding and enjoyment of the area. As a like-for-like replacement of the existing structure, the proposal is not considered likely to result in any significant adverse impacts on the designated features and other biodiversity, subject to conditions requiring the work to be completed outside the bird breeding season and during daylight hours and the submission of a scheme of water vole and reptile mitigation measures. Subject to these conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable in accordance with Policy DP1 and an appropriate assessment in accordance with the Habitat Regulations is not required.
- 6.5 The wet woodland either side of the boardwalk varies in density, with some stretches having an enclosed feel and others enjoying more open views to the river and across the adjacent fen. The trees within this woodland abut the boardwalk in places and it is considered necessary to require the submission of a method statement by condition to ensure all trees are satisfactorily protected. Subject to an appropriate condition, the proposal is considered acceptable in accordance with Policy DP2.
- 6.6 As a like-for-like replacement, it is not considered the proposal would result in any additional adverse amenity or other impacts.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 This proposal to replace an existing boardwalk on a like-for-like basis is considered acceptable. A more durable material is proposed for the supporting structure to ensure its longevity, but the visible surface would be timber to match the existing and assimilate with the woodland setting. It is not considered the proposal would result in any significant adverse effects on the landscape, ecology or trees, subject to appropriate conditions. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in accordance with Policies CS1, CS17, DP1, DP2, DP4 and DP11 and is recommended for approval.

8 Recommendation

- 8.1 Approve subject to conditions:

- (i) Standard time limit
- (ii) In accordance with submitted plans
- (iii) Prior to commencement, agree method statement to protect trees
- (iv) Prior to commencement, agree scheme of mitigation measures for water voles and reptiles
- (v) All work to be undertaken outside the bird breeding season
- (vi) All work to be undertaken during daylight hours

9 Reason for Recommendation

- 9.1 The proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies CS1 and CS17 of the adopted Core Strategy (2007), Policies DP1, DP2, DP4 and DP11 of the adopted Development Management Policies (2011) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) which is a material consideration in the determination of this application.

Background papers: Application File BA/2015/0132/FUL

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List of Appendices: Location Plan

APPENDIX 1

BA/2015/0132/FUL - Cockshoot Boadwalk, Adjacent River Bure, Woodbastwick

Replacement of existing boardwalk with recycled plastic sleeper supports and piles, topped by pressure treated timber boards.

