

Application Name: Beach Huts and Colonnade**Number:** 1460038**Type:** New**Heritage Category:** Listing**Address:**

Promenade, Sutton on Sea, Lincolnshire, LN12 2EU

County	District	District Type	Parish
Lincolnshire	East Lindsey	District Authority	Mablethorpe and Sutton

Recommendation: Reject**Assessment**

CONTEXT

We have been asked to assess the beach huts and colonnade at Sutton on Sea for listing. East Lindsay District Council has issued notice to the owners that the huts, and potentially the colonnade, are to be urgently demolished as the colonnade is structurally unsound and presents a public safety issue.

HISTORY AND DETAILS

The colonnade was constructed after the area flooded in 1953 causing the death of 41 people. The Pleasure Gardens along the promenade south of the Beach Hotel were laid out by Dame Sylvia Crowe in 1953-1954 (Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire*, 2002, p. 733). Given their date, it is understood that the gardens were part of the same development as the beach huts and colonnade but there is no evidence to suggest that Crowe was involved in their design.

The colonnade is a long structure, the central bays of which are supported by circular columns, with an arcaded section to the north end. Upon the colonnade, 51 detached beach huts are arranged in a line. Access to the upper level is via concrete stairs. The upper level railings appear to have been renewed and are modern. The huts are constructed of wood with hipped roofs, covered with roofing felt, that extend beyond the frontage to form loggias. It is not known if the huts retain their original doors and fenestration but it might be expected that these have been successively renewed and/or repaired.

DISCUSSION

The Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings (March 2010) stipulate that, 'particularly careful selection is required for buildings from the period after 1945'. Guidance for the listing of buildings such as beach huts is set out in our Listing Selection Guide for Sport and Recreational Buildings (December 2017). Many sports and recreation buildings are modest and unadorned, but some were designed as architectural statements that projected a private institution's prestige or a public authority's commitment to health and welfare. Normal architectural considerations are thus important in assessing this category, but there may be specialist considerations as well which can endow a plain-seeming structure with extra significance. Historic England's Listing Selection Guide for Garden and Park Structures is also relevant (December 2017). Some structures associated with designed landscapes are important in their own right. Others are quite minor, utilitarian or unobtrusive but nonetheless make a contribution to the aesthetic quality or the

functioning of the whole and help us interpret the landscape. While such minor elements may not always warrant individual listing, they may assume greater significance when they lie within the best parks, gardens, and other designed landscapes.

Public gardens and associated structures – often linear, backing a promenade – were a feature of seaside resorts from early in Victoria's reign, as the places where sea bathing had become fashionable a generation before were developed with hotels and ever-more infrastructure for the visitor. The first beach chalets, or huts, came about in 1908 in Bournemouth, where bathing machines were adapted with glazed doors, verandahs and canvas awnings to disguise their wheeled ends. The idea of more permanent chalets was pioneered in Scarborough in 1911, when a number of terraces were built at the North Bay and at South Cliff; the best preserved of which were listed in 2008.

Few other beach chalets are listed. Apart from the terraces at Scarborough, there are only three other examples: the huts along the Western Promenade in Cromer built in 1912, and those at Saltburn and Weymouth which are both terraces dating from the 1920s.

On the basis of the evidence to hand the beach huts and colonnade at Sutton on Sea are not recommended for listing for the following principal reasons:

Lack of architectural interest:

- * listed beach huts all date to the early decades of the C20 whereas the examples in Sutton on Sea are considerably later;
- * considering the late date of their construction, the beach huts need to demonstrate a higher level of architectural quality to be eligible for listing whereas their design is standard and fairly modest;
- * the colonnade while of some elegance, is modest in design overall and would need to be of significantly greater architectural interest for a structure of post 1945 in date, to merit listing.

CONCLUSION

Whilst the beach huts and colonnade may be considered to have some local interest they do not have special architectural and historic interest from a national perspective and should not be added to the statutory List.

Given the context for this application, the Sylvia Crowe pleasure gardens have not been assessed here against the criteria for registration as a historic park and garden, as this was not the focus of the application, and it is not clear from evidence to hand the extent of their survival or interest.