

Kelling to Lowestoft Ness Shoreline Management Plan

Extended Steering Group 2: Policy Appraisal workshop

1 March 2004, NNDC Offices, Cromer

Summary Note



Halcrow Group Limited

Halcrow

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1 Introduction

This document summarises the key comments and conclusions from the Kelling to Lowestoft Ness Shoreline Management Plan Extended Steering Group (ESG) workshop held on 1 March 2004 at NNDC Offices, Cromer.

This was the second ESG meeting for policy development; the first was held on 5 November 2003. Since the last meeting, policies have been developed, based upon the feedback at that meeting. The potential impacts of these policies were also investigated and a Policy Appraisal Table was distributed to the ESG prior to this meeting. The purpose of this second meeting was to allow stakeholders to steer policy and influence the preferred policy to be presented to the public.

2 Meeting attendees

Name	Affiliation	Breakout Session
Mr Kevin Burgess	Halcrow	1
Dr Helen Jay	Halcrow	2
Mr Terry Oakes	Terry Oakes Associates Ltd	4, 3
Mr Peter Frew	North Norfolk District Council	1
Mr Brian Farrow	North Norfolk District Council	1
Mr Gary Watson	North Norfolk District Council	1
Cllr. D Corbett	North Norfolk District Councillor – Bacton Division	1
Mr Michael Sayer	CLA	1
Mr Robin Buxton	Norfolk & Suffolk Flood Defence Committee Member (and local landowner: Horsey)	2
Mr Phil Bennett-Lloyd	Norfolk County Council	2
Ms Jessica Milligan	School of Environmental Sciences, UEA	1
Mr Peter Lambley	English Nature	2
Mr Ian Dodson	Environment Agency	2
Ms Patricia Rowe	Sea Palling – Waxham Parish Council	-
Mr Malcolm Weston	Sea Palling – Waxham Parish Council	-
Mr Mike Dowling	Great Yarmouth Borough Council	4, 3
Ms Susana Dias	Risk and Policy Analysts Ltd	1
Mr John Ash	Risk and Policy Analysts Ltd	1
Mr Tony Goodwin	Environment Agency Broadland Flood Alleviation Project	2
Mr Roger Bell	Waveney District Council	-
Mr Tim Venes	Norfolk Coast Partnership (AONB)	1
Mr Gary Alexander	North Norfolk District Council	1
Mr Guy Cooper	Environment Agency	2
Mr David Wilson	Defra	2

Name	Affiliation	Breakout Session
Mr Bernard Harris	Gt. Yarmouth Borough Council	4, 3
Mr Ian Boon	Gt. Yarmouth Borough Council	2, 3
Mrs Shirley Weymouth	Winterton and Somerton	2, 3
Cllr Tony Overill	Caister-on-Sea Parish Council	2, 3
Cllr. B J Hannah	County Councillor – Sheringham Division	-
Ms Julia Masson	Broads Authority	2
Mr John Hiskett	Norfolk Wildlife Trust	2
Mr Peter Murphy	English Heritage	1
Mr Julian Walker	Waveney District Council	4, 3
Cllr Terry Morris	Corton Parish Council	4, 3
Ms H Deavin	RSPB	2
Apologies received:		
Ms Heidi Mahon	Norfolk County Council	
Prof. Tim O'Riordan	School of Environmental Sciences, UEA	
Mr John Sizer	National Trust	
Mr Adam Nicholls	Suffolk County Council	
Mrs Buxton	Horsey Parish Council	
Ms Dorothy Casey	Suffolk Wildlife Trust	
Ms Karen Thomas	Environment Agency	
Mr Paul Hammett	National Farmer's Union	
Mr Paul Long	CLA	
Cllr Steven Chilvers	WDC Councillor for the Gunton and Corton Ward	
Breakout Sessions:		
1 Norfolk Villages		
2 Happisburgh to Winterton		
3 Winterton to Caister		
4 Hopton to Corton		

3 Outline of day's activities

Presentation by Halcrow

This outlined the role of the SMP and summarized activities to date and the stages in policy appraisal. There was also an overview of the extent of potential risk and illustration of how the coast would look under the two baseline cases: 'no active intervention', i.e. letting defences fail, and 'maintain present management', i.e. retaining all existing defences.

Session 1

Halcrow presented policy scenarios development and the subsequent impacts along the coast. Stakeholders were asked to identify any areas where they disagreed with the proposed policy and wished to discuss further.

Session 2

The ESG was divided into different groups of individuals, split by geographical area. Each group were asked to discuss those areas identified in Session 1 in order to steer the policy for that specific coastal stretch.

The conclusions of each group were fed back to the rest of the ESG, highlighting areas where reconsideration of the policy was requested.

4 Summary of comments raised in Session 1

4.1 Map 1

- Will allowing cliffs to erode feed beaches to the east of Sheringham? (*H – yes, but along this stretch drift rates are low and by also holding Cromer to the east there will be further disruption to drift*)
- Should we not be considering allowing retreat by Year 100 at Sheringham if we are trying to achieve a sustainable shoreline? (*H - For full sustainability – yes, but Sheringham is recognised as a key service centre along this coast and its position means that it is having less of an impact on processes than other stretches*)
- General agreement with the proposed scenarios (one objection from Mrs Weymouth relating to property loss).

4.2 Map 2

- There will be an impact on the existing holiday industry if there are no beaches (*H – although it should be considered that this industry could change in 100 years time, or it may relocate*).
- No comment on policies for Overstrand.
- Loss of All Saint's Church at Mundesley would not be acceptable.
- Mundesley is marginal in terms of both economics and impact on processes as it is already a promontory.
- Agreed that Mundesley required further discussion.

4.3 Map 3

- The EA Indicative Flooding Mapping at Bacton is incorrect.
- Possible issue of salt intrusion to low-lying areas at Bacton and Walcott
- At Happisburgh it has proved difficult to justify works in terms of economics.
- Concern over loss of St Mary's Church and Grade 1 building at Happisburgh and economic appraisal doesn't take account of cultural value of historic buildings.
- Need to consider loss of community as well as housing.

4.4 Map 4

- There are a large number of unknowns with respect to the Happisburgh to Winterton area, therefore the next few years need to be used to instigate studies to improve understanding of issues and reduce uncertainties.

- What about the impact of dredging? (*H – the potential impact of dredging does not directly affect SMP policy and therefore is not directly discussed within the SMP*)
- There is a need to link up with Broads Flood Alleviation work.
- Agreed that the area required further discussion.

4.5 Map 5

- Winterton to Scratby require further discussion.
- No debate on proposed policies for Caister and Gt Yarmouth.

4.6 Map 6

- Hopton to Corton, no debate on policies set.

4.7 Map 7

- Further discussion required for Corton – also consider impact of loss of road.
- Need to ensure that the sewerage pipe at Gunton is considered (*H – this has been noted in the Policy Appraisal table as an issue*).

4.8 General

- Are we considering the impact on house prices and will the government compensate for loss? (*H – At present there is no government policy in place for compensation and this is beyond the control of the SMP. The SMP can, however, inform government of the scale of the issue*)
- We need to consider mitigation for loss of heritage sites. (*H – This will primarily be undertaken at the strategy or scheme level*)
- Do we expect offshore loss at the promontories and can we quantify? (*H – offshore loss is expected, but unfortunately it is not possible to actually quantify losses without more detailed studies*)
- Acceptance of the SMP may rely on new legislation/ policy being in place, e.g. compensation measures.
- There will be a potential impact on people being able to obtain insurance.
- Need to think about public safety and risk management when considering a Managed Retreat or No Active Intervention option.
- We need to be careful that people are not misled in terms of the protection that they expect to receive – Happisburgh is a good example case, where the first SMP set an unjustifiable policy.
- Relocation needs to be encouraged.
- Concern that this area is being used as a testing ground as it is one of pilot SMPs.
- Potential loss of housing does not fit with the issue of 'rural renaissance' which the government is promoting.
- Are SMPs being prepared in a 'policy vacuum'? There needs to be greater links with Regional Planning Guidance.

5 Summary of Session 2

5.1 North Norfolk villages

- No change in draft scenarios other than review of policy set for Bacton Gas Terminal; it was questioned why Bacton Gas Terminal should be treated any differently from other built assets (i.e. housing) at Bacton village or Mundesley. The expectations are

that Bacton Gas Terminal will continue operating as a site for at least 50 years, but that the processing plant could be relocated.

- Historic settlements have an intrinsic value and an economic benefit in terms of tourism.
- The justification for not continuing to hold Mundesley (beyond year 50) is largely due to process interactions and implications for the shoreline to the south. This also differs from Overstrand (for which the proposed policy is not to defend after year 20) in that this site is more stable, of a different geology and has a longer residual life of existing defences.
- Sheringham and Cromer are regional service centres, which contribute more in this sense to the 'Quality of Life' in North Norfolk. The boundaries of protection (policy) need to be modified to protect properties.
- The SMP needs to demonstrate reasons why decisions exist, e.g. why one area is protected and another is not. The audit trail is fundamental to set out reasoning behind decisions made (i.e. SMP-wide as well as locally).
- The benefits of the proposed policy scenario should be recognised through comparison with No Active Intervention.
- There are a number of aspects that will help the long-term policies to become more palatable:
 - Review of the compensation issues, e.g. compensatory land for new building/relocation (although it was noted that 'financial compensation' may be easier to implement)
 - Flexibility in planning to enable new development for relocation, e.g. village 'roll-over': it was recognised that assessment would need to be made on a village-by-village basis
 - Mitigation for historical property, road, services etc.
- Need to ensure that the various government departments are talking to each other.

5.2 Happisburgh to Winterton

- Highlighted the possible escalation in costs of continuing current management practice due to retreat of the coastal system. It could also become increasingly difficult technically to hold the line after 50 years.
- Need to consider the Broadland Flood Alleviation Project, which covers the area up to the seawall. This is a 20 year Defra-funded project and finances defences along the River Thurne up to Martham.
- Identified that there may be problems with constructing the second defence line proposed due to poor ground conditions. The costs of maintaining a new line were also highlighted and it was concluded that it would be very useful to have costs for the various options proposed.
- Issue of impact on insurance was raised. It was also questioned whether we need to calculate how much it would cost to compensate people for loss of properties.
- Overlap with an existing strategy was discussed, but the cycle of strategies and SMPs was explained.
- Agreed that if possible the existing defences should be held in the immediate term but that during this period there should be extensive research to investigate fully the possibility and implications of both continuing to hold the line and retiring the line.

However, in the longer term (i.e. beyond 20 years) the SMP needs to identify the requirement to be flexible; the possibility and timing of any realignment should depend upon conclusions of the studies.

- Question regarding the freshwater sites and the fact that these are European designated sites, which could require compensation. This is one aspect which would need to be investigated in the first 20 years.

5.3 Winterton to Caister

- All policy options discussed and supported as basis for consultation.

5.4 Hopton and Corton

5.4.1 Hopton:

- Preparation of the Local Development Framework for Great Yarmouth BC starts in July 2004 with consultation planned for summer 2005. The Plan will not cover a period beyond the next 20 years. As such, it will adopt the proposed policy of maintaining defences along the Hopton to Waveney boundary. In which case, it could encourage new development within an area where the defences are to be allowed to fail in the 20 to 50 years period.
- Future relocation of properties is possible but made more difficult because the surrounding land is mainly Grade 1. This affects Potters Holiday Centre in particular.
- Can designated Set Aside land located inland be transferred to a seaside site to allow redevelopment?
- A simple explanation of the proposal is to say, "The plan shows the future position of the coastline and the impact on communities under current policy/expenditure policy. We do not expect a change in policy which will provide more money for coast protection works."
- Local Authorities can spend their own funds to upgrade or replace defences but it must comply within the prevailing SMP policy. If not, Defra will refuse approval.

5.4.2 Corton:

- Should be regarded as a special case in that its major infrastructure and community facilities are located close to the cliff top. The plan assumes the gradual loss of these assets over the 100 years period; however this is unlikely to be the case. For example, long lengths of High Street, which is the only access from the north and south; the Post Office and the school are likely to be lost within a short period of each other within the 20 to 50 years period, thereby seriously affecting the village. This needs to be emphasised in the draft SMP.
- An alternative policy is proposed:
 - 0 to 20 years – as proposed
 - 20 to 50 years – invest in another short-term scheme on a set-back line, acknowledging the need to retreat, but reducing the rate of erosion thereby preserving properties and infrastructure for the longer term.
 - 50 to 100 years – another managed realignment policy.

- Publishing a policy to maintain only for next 20 years will discourage long-term investment by the leisure and tourism industry. In fact, investment may well fall off significantly after first ten years leading to decay and blight.
- It is understood that the Regional Planning Policy encourages and supports the leisure industry in East Anglia to maintain employment levels. We need to be aware that the draft SMP policies permitting erosion and loss of premises/industry are in conflict with the regional policy.