

**NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

**AUTHORITY MEETING – 25 JUNE 2009**

**DRAFT SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE NORTH SOLENT**

**Report by:** Stephen Trotter, Director of Conservation, Recreation and Sustainable Development and Andrew Colenutt, New Forest District Council.

**Summary:**

The draft North Solent Shoreline Management Plan is an important document that will potentially shape the strategy for future management of the National Park's coastline for the next century. The Authority and those of its partner authorities with coastal boundaries around the North Solent are all being asked to approve the document in principle before the Plan is opened for public consultation in September.

**Recommendations: To**

- 1 note and approve in principle the draft North Solent Shoreline Management Plan - comprising the emerging policies and Annexes - for public consultation between September and November 2009, subject to approving any changes to the draft in early September.**

**Papers:**

<b>NFNPA 310/09:</b>	Cover paper
<b>NFNPA 310/09 Annex 1:</b>	Policy unit boundaries
<b>NFNPA 310/09 Annex 2:</b>	Flood risk mapping
<b>NFNPA 310/09 Annex 3:</b>	Erosion risk mapping

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**Report by:** Stephen Trotter, Director of Conservation, Recreation and Sustainable Development and Andrew Colenutt, Project Manager for the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan

**Introduction**

The draft North Solent Shoreline Management Plan is an important document that will potentially shape the strategy for future management of the National Park's coastline for the next century. The Authority and those of its partner authorities with coastal boundaries around the North Solent are all being asked to approve the document in principle before the Plan is opened for public consultation in September.

The Authority is being asked to approve the main components of the Plan in principle at this stage because although certain assessments have yet to be completed, there is unlikely to be a further opportunity for the Authority to consider the document before it is published for consultation. If there are any changes arising from the further assessments members' views will be sought.

**1 Shoreline Management Plans**

- 1.1 The shoreline management plan is an important component of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra) strategic framework for the future management of coastal erosion and tidal flood risk. The entire coast of England and Wales will eventually have a Shoreline Management Plan. Each plan must evaluate the known risks to people, property and the built and natural environment from the sea and coastal processes – and develop policies for each section of coast based on the findings. The Plans are required to undertake economic, environmental and technical assessments to demonstrate the viability of each proposed policy.
- 1.2 Shoreline management plans must take account of existing planning initiatives and legislative requirements, make use of the best available data and science, and inform, and be supported by, the statutory planning process.

- 1.3 More specifically a shoreline management plan is a *non-statutory document* that aims to:
- balance the management of coastal flooding and erosion risks, with natural processes, and the consequences of climate change
  - determine technically, economically and environmentally sustainable policies for management of the shoreline over three epochs:
    - present day (0-20 years)
    - medium-term (20-50 years)
    - long-term (50-100 years).
- 1.4 Due to the current legislative and funding arrangements, climate change and environmental considerations, it may not be possible to protect, or continue to defend some land or property from flooding or erosion. However, unless a flood protection or coastal defence policy is identified within the relevant shoreline management plan, it will not be eligible for consideration for funding by central government (albeit inclusion in a plan does not guarantee funding due to limited resources at the national level and strong competition for investment).
- 1.5 Discrete lengths of coastline, known as Policy Units, have been defined based on natural sediment movements and coastal processes and the assets, and features potentially at risk of flooding and/or erosion within the coastal zone of each Policy Unit have been identified. Each Policy Unit will eventually have its own policy for each of the three epochs.
- 1.6 Four potential policies are available for decision-makers to assign to each Policy Unit within the shoreline management plan (see Table 1). The policies have been defined by Defra and there is no scope to vary them locally.

**Table 1: Available policy options**

Policy	Comment
1 'Hold the Line'	Maintain or upgrade level of protection provided by existing defences
<i>With a sub policy of 1b: 'Hold the Line (no public funding available)'</i>	Maintain or upgrade level of protection provided by existing defences but with no public funding available
2 'Advance the Line'	Build new defences seaward of existing defences
3 'Managed Realignment'	Allowing retreat of shoreline with management to control or limit movement
4 'No Active Intervention'	Not to invest in providing or maintaining defences

## 2 The development of the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan

### *Background*

- 2.1 The North Solent Shoreline Management Plan is the first revision to the Western Solent and Southampton Water Shoreline Management Plan and the East Solent and Harbours Shoreline Management Plan, which were completed in 1998 and 1997, respectively. The coastline covered by the revised Plan extends from Selsey Bill, in the east, to Hurst Spit, in the west.
- 2.2 **Annex 1** illustrates the draft Policy Unit boundaries. These Units have been determined after careful consideration of the coastal processes, environmental designations and requirements, and any other pertinent features and issues along that coastal frontage within the tidal flood risk and coastal erosion risk zones. The Units represent sections of coast that can be managed in a practical and coherent way.
- 2.3 **Annex 2** presents the results of the tidal flood risk mapping exercise for the New Forest District Council and New Forest National Park frontage. This modelling provides details of the number and type of properties potentially at risk from flooding assuming existing defences will not be maintained, and fail.
- 2.4 **Annex 3** provides maps of the expected erosion risk for the New Forest District Council and New Forest National Park frontage, and details the number of properties potentially at risk from erosion, under two scenarios:
- if existing defences are not maintained and fail, and
  - if existing defences and management practices are continued.

### *Local conditions*

- 2.5 The North Solent shoreline is atypical of much of the UK in that:
- around 80% is defended or has active beach management
  - approximately 60% of the shoreline is privately owned
  - 80% is covered by one or more International and/or European nature conservation designations.
- 2.6 The extent of designated sites generates a significant requirement for compensatory habitats to be created to off set losses or damage. (Compensatory habitat is required when European Designated Sites (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas and Ramsar Sites) are damaged or experience loss due to flood risk management works or coastal squeeze. Coastal squeeze occurs when coastal habitats are prevented by fixed defences from migrating landwards as sea levels rise). The North Solent Shoreline Management Plan has been a key contributor to the development and

continued evolution of the Environment Agency Regional Habitat Creation Programme (see Section 5).

### *Stakeholders' roles and responsibilities*

2.7 A Client Steering Group was established early on to lead the development of the technical aspects of the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan. The Group is a partnership of officers from local, regional and national authorities and agencies that have various responsibilities and / or powers for managing the coast. Membership of the Group is shown below.

#### **Members of the Client Steering Group**

New Forest District Council (Lead Authority)	Environment Agency (Southern Region; Solent and South Downs Area)
Test Valley Borough Council	Hampshire County Council
Southampton City Council	West Sussex County Council
Eastleigh Borough Council	New Forest National Park Authority
Winchester City Council	Chichester Harbour Conservancy
Fareham Borough Council	Natural England
Gosport Borough Council	neighbouring SMP Groups
Portsmouth City Council	Isle of Wight SMP; Hurst Spit to Durlston Head SMP; and Beachy Head to Selsey Bill SMP
Havant Borough Council	
Chichester District Council	

2.8 The *Environment Agency* has permissive powers to undertake works to protect low-lying land from flooding (flood defence) and to manage flood risk.

2.9 *Maritime local authorities*, often referred to as 'operating authorities', have certain permissive powers to undertake works to defend the coastline from erosion by the sea (coastal protection). A number of the local authorities within the Solent are unusual in that they are also responsible for many sea defences to protect low lying land against flooding by the sea.

2.10 The *New Forest National Park Authority* has no direct responsibility for flood protection or coastal defence and is not an 'operating authority' in the sense of having a responsibility and / or powers to undertake practical works on the coast. However, as local planning authority for

the national park coastline, it is important that future strategic planning and development control decisions are consistent with the Shoreline Management Plan. For this reason, the final North Solent Shoreline Management Plan will be brought to the Authority for final approval and adoption.

- 2.11 *Elected member / member representatives* from each of the authorities have also been involved throughout the development of the Plan and have been consulted at various stages to comment on and approve specific outputs, such as tidal flood risk and erosion risk maps and analysis. The Chairman represents the Authority on the Group.
- 2.12 *Stakeholder* involvement in the preparation of the second round of shoreline management plans has been of key importance. Workshops with planners and development control officers, archaeologists and heritage officers, key stakeholders, landowners, environmental and ecological officers have been held and various issues and concerns have been raised and discussed.

#### *Policy development*

- 2.13 Each proposed policy has been determined through a thorough analysis and scoring of the importance of the features of that particular unit against each of the four potential policies. The policy option with the highest score against the criteria has been applied. In the case of the National Park frontage this has included full consideration of the relevant National Park special qualities and purposes such as landscape, wildlife, historic landscape and cultural heritage. The full (lengthy) tables which record the evaluation are not included but are available for inspection on the North Solent website.
- 2.14 Further work is being undertaken by the Project Team to appraise the proposed policies including completion of the economic appraisals, environmental assessments and Appropriate Assessment. A methodology for the Appropriate Assessment has recently been amended and approved by Natural England following comments at the Members Group.

### **3 First draft proposed North Solent Shoreline Management Plan policies**

- 3.1 **The content of Table 2 - first draft proposed policies - and the Annexes to this paper comprise the main substance of the draft Plan which will go to public consultation in September.** Table 2 shows the draft policies for the New Forest coast. The policies may be subject to change following further economic appraisal and environmental assessments, and the Appropriate Assessment.

**Table 2: First draft proposed Shoreline Management Plan Policies for the New Forest coast**

Policy Unit			Epoch 1 0-20yrs	Epoch 2 20-50yrs	Epoch 3 50-100 yrs
Code	From	To			
5C16	Redbridge	Calshot Spit	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line
5C17	Calshot Spit	Calshot Spit	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	No Active Intervention
5C18	Hillhead, Calshot	Gins Farm	Hold the Line (no public funding available)	Hold the Line (no public funding available)	Hold the Line (no public funding available)
5C19	Gins Farm	Sowley	Hold the Line (no public funding available)	Hold the Line (no public funding available)	Hold the Line (no public funding available)
5C20	Sowley	Elmer's Court	No Active Intervention	No Active Intervention	No Active Intervention
5C21	Elmer's Court	Lymington Yacht Haven	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line
5C22	Lymington Yacht Haven	Saltgrass Lane	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line
5F01	Hurst Spit	Hurst Spit	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line

3.2 Members will be given an opportunity to see and comment on the final preferred North Solent Shoreline Management Plan policies, prior to public consultation, programmed for September - November 2009, including a summary of any changes to the preferred policies in the light of further assessment and analysis.

#### **4 Regional Habitat Creation Programme**

4.1 The Regional Habitat Creation Programme, which has been developed in close consultation with Natural England and local authorities, aims to provide a strategic and proactive approach for the provision and delivery of compensatory habitats (see paragraph 2.6). The programme will be regularly updated as new information becomes available given the complexity of creating, funding and assessing new habitat creation.

- 4.2 The benefits of taking a strategic approach through the Habitat Creation Programme are that:
- it provides a framework within which site acquisition can be undertaken
  - it proactively allows opportunities to be realised as they arise
  - habitats will be created before they are lost
  - land can be purchased at a fair price larger
  - more ecologically robust sites can be created to offset a number of small scale losses
  - it provides a delivery mechanism for the habitat requirements of flood risk management plans and projects enabling timely approvals.
- 4.3 Habitat Creation programmes are the Government's (Defra) recommended vehicle for delivering strategic habitat compensation and are funded in advance of engineering works that cause damage. The Habitat Creation Programme compiles the compensatory habitat creation needs for the Region from the Appropriate Assessments carried out for the different Shoreline Management Plans in the Region. Habitat needs are therefore based on the estimated impacts of approved Shoreline Management Plan policies for all frontages, including local authority and third party frontages.
- 4.4 It is not necessary for the anticipated compensatory habitats to be in place at the time that the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan is approved, but only when the damage is likely to occur. The Programme therefore aims to secure sites and develop habitat in a timely manner in advance of damage occurring. The Regional Habitat Creation Programme will be identified within the Appropriate Assessment as the proposed delivery vehicle for compensating for habitat losses, so parties agreeing to the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan are also agreeing to the method for compensating for its impacts.
- 4.5 The Southern Regional Habitat Creation Programme has provisionally included the following habitat needs for the North Solent, based on the findings of the Solent Dynamic Coast Project:
- **Epoch 1** (0-20 years): 153ha intertidal habitat / 463ha grazing marsh
  - **Epoch 2** (20-50 years): 148.5ha intertidal habitat / 70ha grazing marsh
  - **Epoch 3** (50-100 years): 88.5ha intertidal habitat.
- 4.6 These figures will be updated once the policies for the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan have been agreed and the Appropriate Assessment carried out.

- 4.7 Delivery of the Habitat Creation Programme will involve partnership working between the Environment Agency, Natural England, local authorities and private landowners to ensure that habitat creation sites are secured and developed as efficiently as possible to enable timely delivery of flood and coastal erosion risk management projects for the benefit of all parties.
- 4.8 In order for the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan to be implemented, the compensatory habitat requirements identified in the Appropriate Assessment must be secured and delivered by the Environment Agency through the Regional Habitat Creation Programme.

**5 Recommendations: To**

- 1 note and approve in principle the draft North Solent Shoreline Management Plan - comprising the emerging policies and Annexes - for public consultation between September and November 2009, subject to approving any changes to the draft in early September.**

## **DRAFT SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE NORTH SOLENT**

The draft Shoreline Management Plan for the North Solent comprises the maps in the following Annexes together with the draft proposed policies in Section 3

- Annex 1:** Policy unit boundaries
- Annex 2:** Flood risk mapping
- Annex 3:** Erosion risk mapping