



THORPENESS – COASTAL MANAGEMENT OPTIONS CONSULTATION

We were delighted to receive a good response for the public consultation above which ran from 31st July to 30th September 2019. We have now analysed the responses received and illustrated the outcome of the consultation in Appendix 1 for your perusal.

One of the most popular topics raised during the consultation was the potential effect the Scottish Power wind farm and Sizewell C (SZC) could have on Thorpeness. We have therefore provided a response to the concerns raised in Appendix 2.

NEXT STEPS

We are currently preparing a report which will make a recommendation on how to manage the defences into the future under different funding scenarios. The report will include approaches that take account of community feedback, preferences and concerns.

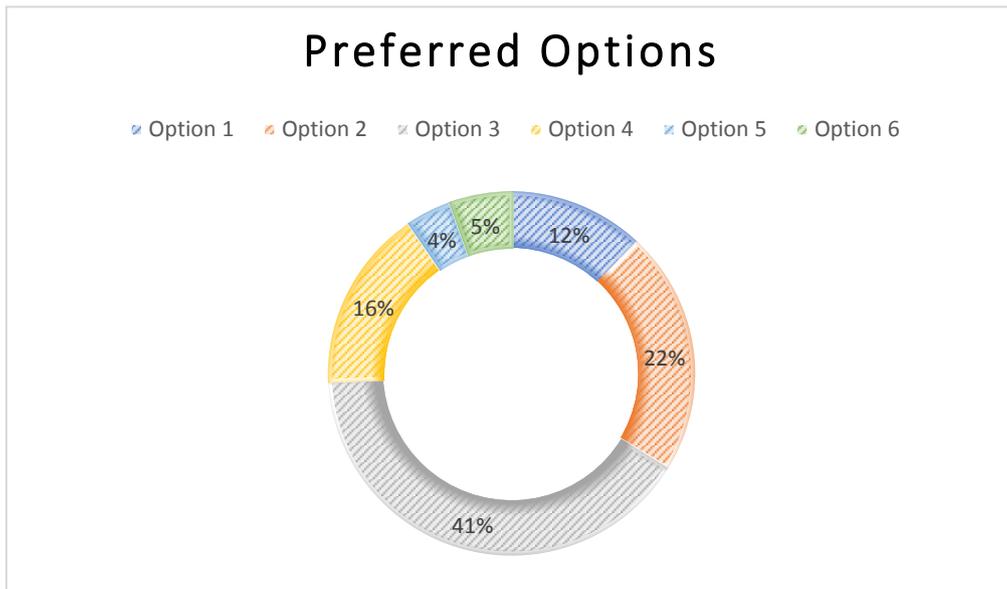
The report recommendations will be shared with other coastal management partners including Natural England, Environment Agency and Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty at a Shoreline Management Plan 7 sub-group meeting and then be presented to the Suffolk Coast Forum hopefully at the late February 2020 meeting.

ESC officers will meet with the Thorpeness Community Steering group prior to the SCF meeting to discuss the report findings and any significant feedback received from consultation with partners.

Discussions with the Thorpeness community on potential funding options will continue in parallel with the above.

APPENDIX 1

Consultation Results



Option 1: Beach recycle/recharge, monitoring & emergency planning

Possible

Creation and maintenance of a beach wide enough to absorb losses from erosion events would avoid excessive degradation of existing defences. This option works with inherent coastal processes, but sediment availability from local donor sites would be a long-term challenge.

Option 2: Small, low level rock revetment with end transitions

Possible

Strategic placement of ~30 tonnes of rock armour would provide a tried, trusted & robust cliff-toe defence. A rock slope could present an increasing challenge to safe public access over that of existing or alternative options.

Option 3: Medium, low level rock revetment with end transitions

Possible

The medium rock revetment option is larger in scale, potentially offering a higher level of coastal protection, but also instigating higher environmental impact and cost. The rock slope could be built in the space occupied by the geobags.

Option 4: Large rock revetment with end transitions

Not possible – ruled out

Rock revetment on this scale has been ruled out; based on grounds of expense and significant unfavourable environmental impact- due to risk of impeding alongshore sediment movement.

Option 5: Steel sheet pile wall with end transitions

Not possible – ruled out

Driving a line of steel sheet piles (SSP) deep into the beach could constitute an erosional backstop, but is deemed unviable due to the dangerous, and unsightly increase in exposed SSP as the beach lowers.

Option 6: Artificial reef

Not possible – ruled out

A ~250m long artificial reef constructed using suitable materials could significantly reduce wave energy focus on the frontage, with limited impact on the adjacent areas. This option is unviable due to sheer expense of marine based installation.

APPENDIX 2

The SZC development has the potential to alter how the Suffolk coast may evolve in the future.

Any change from the without SZC baseline, may have implications for adjacent coastal frontages including Thorpeness.

For several years the developer EDF Energy has involved ESC staff in a group of organisations, with an interest in the marine environment, who have been given information on the design and potential environmental impact of all marine aspects of the development as they have evolved. The group has been invited to comment on the information and the feedback ESC has given has, in parts, influenced the design of the works. ESC has employed a consultant with coastal expertise to assist with that process.

ESC's objective is to ensure that any impact of the proposed marine works that changes how the coastline is expected to evolve in a without SZC scenario, and causes a significant negative affect, is identified and either removed or reduced to an acceptable level.

Throughout this process ESC staff have been mindful of concerns raised by coastal and other communities, including Thorpeness.

This is a complex process owing to the predicted life of the development running into the 22nd century and uncertainty with the prediction of future shoreline change. This risk and uncertainty will require a comprehensive monitoring and mitigation plan that will continue through the development life.

ESC has also given feedback to EDF Energy at each of the four public consultation rounds, including comments on coastal processes, that include matters of difference.

At Development Consent Order stage, the developer will be required to make available all the information that has been used to make assessments of potential impacts.

At this point it will become clear to the community where there is agreement between EDF Energy and ESC and where residual differences remain.

ESC will then make a case to the Inspector in an effort to bring about an outcome that is of greatest benefit to the interests of ESC.

Windfarm Cable Landings

ESC has followed a similar process to that described above in consultation with Scottish Power Renewables (SPR) and their consultants regarding the selection and design of the cable landing site for windfarm EA1N and 2.

ESC has attempted to inform and influence the developer in respect of the following aspects.

Location

The ESC aim has been to avoid significant damage to the Coralline Crag outcrop that runs to north of Thorpeness which is thought to form a southern anchor point for the Dunwich to Sizewell sandbanks, which in turn bring relative stability to the Dunwich to Thorpeness coastline.

Resilience

ESC has encouraged the developer to undertake a coastal erosion risk assessment for the potential cable landing frontage to ensure that the cable landing works are not affected by foreseeable erosion over the planned operational life.

Foreshore damage avoidance

ESC has encouraged SPR to install the cable ducts by use of directional drilling which causes much less damage to cliff and shoreline than open trenching. This has been agreed.

Decommissioning

ESC is seeking to require SPR to remove all cable landing structures (except ducts) at the end of the operational life.

ESC is aware of concerns within the community regarding assumed potential negative impacts from the cable landing location, notably risk of cliff damage from vibration and interference with coastal processes caused by the cable buried in the seabed.

The ESC view is that the current SPR proposal is a good fit when measured against the overarching policy objectives for coastal management for the wider frontage and that the scale and significance of the potential negative impacts is low to negligible when put into context of the potential for variability in natural environmental change.