

Slaughden

(Sudbourne Beach)

Policy Review

Developing a resilience
approach at Slaughden



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Review Area



KEY

- Anticipated 100 Year Shoreline with Present Management
- Policy Development Zones
- Management Areas
- Policy Units
- NNR
- SSSI
- Existing Indicative EA Flood Risk Zone
- SPA
- RAMSAR
- SAC
- Scheduled Monuments

Introduction

East Suffolk Council (ESC), who are the local authority with erosion risk management responsibility over this frontage, are considering a change to the Shoreline Management Plan policy along Sudbourne Beach, Slaughden.

Sudbourne Beach is the stretch of shoreline that extends between the Martello Tower at Slaughden, south to Lantern Marshes. Here a narrow shingle ridge separates the river from the open sea.

Without works to help maintain this feature, this ridge is at potential risk from breaching, which could substantially alter not only the river, but also the wider Alde and Ore Estuary.

We are now seeking your views on a proposed Shoreline Management Plan policy change, which will be an important step in how we continue to manage this shoreline.

This consultation will run from 1st October to 30th November 2019.
Study reports are available on our website **www.coasteast.org.uk**

Proposed SMP Policy Change

This naturally dynamic coastline, together with the Alde-Ore estuary system it helps protect, supports a wide range of internationally designated habitats and sits within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Suffolk Heritage Coast.

The wider area is a popular tourist destination with thriving communities in places such as Orford and Aldeburgh. A wide range of businesses rely on the estuary and the activities it supports, such as sailing clubs, boat related businesses, fisheries, leisure and holiday rentals. The land is also an important agricultural area, which relies on freshwater being available for irrigation.

Management of our coastline is set out in the Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (known as the SMP). The stretch of coast being considered here is SMP Policy Unit ORF15.1. The current SMP policy is to Hold the Line in the short term (up to the year 2025), but no

formal policy was defined for the medium and long term. Instead the SMP has an 'interim policy' of No Active Intervention for the medium to long term, which was pending the development of the Alde and Ore Estuary Management Plan.

We now have a Management Plan for the Alde and Ore Estuary, which sets out the overall vision for long term management of the estuary. Since the SMP was adopted in 2011 we have also seen some significant natural changes along this coastline, which suggest that the ridge is more vulnerable than it used to be.

We have therefore been working closely with the Environment Agency, Natural England, the Alde and Ore Estuary Partnership, Suffolk County Council, National Trust and the Water Management Alliance (WMA), representing East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board, to consider a new policy for this coastal frontage.

Where can I find out more?

Shoreline Management Plan (SMP7) Thorpeness to Orford Ness
(Royal Haskoning, 2010) www.suffolksmp2.org.uk/index.php

What work has been done?

In considering a change in SMP policy, we have to follow a formal process. This is to make sure that any changes to the SMP are consistent with the national framework guidelines, reflect the complex and different pressures on the coast and are legal.

In support of this process, Jacobs were commissioned to look at viable management approaches under the four SMP policy options and assess the possible environmental, social and economic impacts of such approaches, taking account of environmental legislation (Phase 1 and 2 reports).

From these studies, we have recommended that a policy change from No Active Intervention to Managed Realignment is appropriate. The government (Defra) definition of Managed Realignment is 'allowing the shoreline to move backwards or forwards, with management to control or limit movement'. We think that this policy will enable us to provide resilience against erosion whilst working with a dynamic coast, through maintaining the ridge to prevent a permanent breach.

We do not need to define a preferred approach to delivering a policy of Managed Realignment at this stage but we have undertaken an additional study (Phase 3 report) to look at which approaches would be more environmentally acceptable. This report is available to view on our website.

We are now at the consultation phase of the project. Your involvement is an important part of the SMP review process to ensure that the views of people who live, work on and visit the coast are taken into account in decisions about future management of our coastline.

Slaughden Shingle Ridge



Looking north towards Slaughden Martello Tower

Other SMP policy options considered

No change from the current SMP policy (No Active Intervention)

This policy would mean there would no further management of this frontage in the future.

As the shingle ridge is already narrow, there is a risk that this would result in a permanent opening forming, linking the open sea and the estuary. There could be a significant and uncertain effect on the wider estuary and the natural and human environment it supports.

This would also not align with the vision of the Alde and Ore Estuary Plan.

Hold the Line policy

This was considered but it was discounted due to:

- o technical challenges to delivering this option and long term sustainability issues,
- o the potential impact on coastal processes,
- o significant negative impacts on the natural environment,
- o substantial costs both now and continuing in the future.

What happens next?

Following this consultation, provided that there are no major objections, we will proceed to an approval process involving the Environment Agency and local authority cabinets.

Should the policy change be approved, this will be followed by formal adoption.



Who do I contact ?

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If you would like a printed copy of the consultation documents or need information in an alternative format please email

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