

Subject: Coastal Planning – Agreement of Statement of Common Ground

Report to: Environment Committee – 18 July 2018

Report by: John Clements, Principal Strategic Planner (Planning & Growth)

SUBJECT MATTER

Agreement of a Statement of Common Ground on Coastal Planning with the other Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Planning authorities.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Environment Committee agrees the attached Statement of Common Ground on Coastal Planning on behalf of the Council.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Coast East, the joint coastal management service of GYBC, North Norfolk, Waveney and Suffolk Coastal, has been hosting a series of meetings bringing together planners and engineers from the coastal local planning authorities of Norfolk and Suffolk. These have proved to be a useful forum in which to share information, experience and best practice across disciplinary and administrative boundaries.

1.2 This has already been of direct benefit to GYBC's forward planning in refining the Draft Coastal Planning policies for the Local Plan Part 2, and most recently in considering potential longer term responses to the loss of properties due to coastal storms at Hemsby Marrams.

1.3 It is agreed by officers that there is further benefit to be gained from continuing this work, and formalising this through a Statement of Common Ground.

2 THE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

2.1 The Draft Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) attached sets out an agreed understanding of the basis for future work, and the overall aims for this. This has been developed and agreed by officers of GYBC, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, North Norfolk District Council, Broads Authority, Waveney District Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council.

2.2 It is also intended to seek the endorsement or recognition of the SoCG by the Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation.

2.3 As well as guiding future work, the SoCG may be of relevance in supporting bids for funding of coastal planning and management projects. It will be particularly useful in demonstrating, at Local Plan examinations, that the planning 'Duty to Cooperate' has been met in relation to cross-boundary coastal planning. It is envisioned that this SoCG could be incorporated into the next iteration of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF), and this is to be presented for discussion to the NSPF Member Forum meeting on 12th July.

2.4 The Environment Committee's agreement of the SOCG would assist in carrying this work forward.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None at this stage. Ongoing work will principally be officer time, and accommodated within the existing Strategic Planning budget, and Coast East funding.

4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None identified.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The attached Statement of Common Ground provides a formal basis for continuing valuable inter-disciplinary and cross-boundary work of particular relevance to the future planning of the Borough. It will also provide useful supporting evidence at local plan examinations, and may assist in funding bids.

6 RECOMMENDATION

That the Environment Committee agrees the attached Statement of Common Ground on Coastal Planning on behalf of the Council.

7 APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Draft Statement of Common Ground on Coastal Planning

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted 2015)

Shoreline Management Plan (Kelling to Lowestoft Ness) 2012

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated?

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	n/a
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	n/a
Existing Council Policies:	Consistent with the Local Plan Core Strategy and Shoreline Management Plan.
Financial Implications:	Continuing work will be principally officer time, which will be accommodated within the existing Strategic Planning budget.
Legal Implications (including human rights):	n/a
Risk Implications:	None identified.
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	n/a
Crime & Disorder:	n/a
Every Child Matters:	n/a

APPENDIX: DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Authorities

Statement of Common Ground

This statement of common ground is between:

- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
- North Norfolk District Council
- Great Yarmouth Borough Council
- Suffolk Coastal District Council
- Waveney District Council
- The Broads Authority

The purpose of this statement is to set out an agreed approach to coastal planning in relation to:

- Demonstrating compliance with the "Duty to Cooperate";
- Agreeing shared aims for the management of the coast;
- Maintaining and developing a shared evidence base; and
- Recognising the importance of cross-boundary issues in relation to coastal management.

Background

The risk of coastal flooding and vulnerability to erosion along the coast does not respect local planning authority boundaries, and therefore coastal change needs to be considered across a wide geography. There are significant potential benefits to joint working across administrative and professional disciplines in addressing the issues of coastal planning.

A strategic approach to coastal land use and marine planning can benefit from the sharing of both issues and solutions, and inform planning practice. This is particularly the case in light of the similarity and commonality of coastal issues across the signatory planning authorities, the planning duty to cooperate, and the opportunity to build on the benefits of the existing joint Coastal Authority approach such as Coastal Partnership East.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that in coastal areas, local planning authorities should apply Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) across local authority and land/sea boundaries, ensuring integration of the terrestrial and marine planning regimes.

ICZM is a process which requires the adoption of a joined-up and participative approach towards the planning and management of the many different elements in coastal areas (land and marine). The recognised key principles which should guide all partners in implementing an integrated approach to the management of coastal areas are:

- a long term view
- a broad holistic approach

- adaptive management
- working with natural processes
- supporting and involving all relevant administrative bodies
- using a combination of instruments
- participatory planning
- reflecting local characteristics

Within the development planning system, Local Planning Authorities should reduce risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas or adding to the impact of physical changes to the coast, as set out in the NPPF. Any area likely to be affected by physical changes to the coast should be identified as a Coastal Change Management Area.

The Flood and Coastal Change Planning Practice Guidance also identifies that land can be formally allocated through local plans for the relocation of both development and habitat affected by coastal change.

Note: Physical change to the coast can be (but is not limited to) erosion, coastal land slip, permanent inundation and coastal accretion.

Shared Aims

- **A holistic and “whole coast” approach** will be taken, recognising **coastal change** is an inevitable aspect of a dynamic coast. A naturally functioning coastline is desirable in principle, but may not be appropriate in every location.
- The signatory authorities will consider the value of **aligning policy approaches**.
- To have regard to the well-being of **communities** affected by coastal change and minimise blight.
- To **protect** the coastal environment, including nature conservation designations and biodiversity.
- To work with local businesses and the wider economy to maximise productive use of properties and facilities for as long as they can be safely and practicably utilised to promote **investment, viability and vitality** of the area
- Adopt a balanced **risk-based approach** towards new development in Coastal Change Management Areas, in order to not increase risk while, at the same time, facilitating affected communities’ adaption to coastal change.
- To promote **innovative approaches** such as techniques that enable anticipatory coastal adaptation, removal of affected structures and property roll-back or relocation.

Agreed Approach

The signatory authorities agree to work together on coastal planning issues to:

- a) implement the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management;

- b) develop shared **understanding** of coastal processes and the development planning implications of these;
- c) share experience, **best practice** (including planning policies) and ideas for innovation;
- d) use the adopted **Shoreline Management Plans** as a basis for development planning, recognising that defined areas may change in future and giving appropriate regard to emerging replacement Shoreline Management Plans, updated predictions of the impact of climate change or other relevant evidence;
- e) acknowledge the importance of **coastal communities and their economies**, and foster their resilience, innovation and vitality;
- f) recognise the need to **relocate or protect infrastructure** likely to be adversely affected by coastal change;
- g) note the need for strategic policies on coastal change, in order to guide **neighbourhood planning**;
- h) encourage development which is consistent with anticipated coastal change, and facilitates **adaptation** by affected communities and industries;
- i) consider adopting policies to facilitate **rollback and/or relocation**, potentially including local plan site allocations or facilitating 'enabling' development;
- j) consider adopting policies which require the use of **risk assessments** to demonstrate that a development on the coast will be safe for its planned lifetime, without increasing risk to life or property, or requiring new or improved coastal defences; and
- k) consider adopting policies that seek to ensure that new or replacement **coast protection schemes** are consistent with the relevant Shoreline Management Plan and minimise adverse impact on the environment or elsewhere on the coast.