

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

ADOPTION OF THE SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members of the review of the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2) which sets the management policy of the Wirral coastline for the next 100 years. Members are asked to adopt the policies set out in the North West England and North Wales Shoreline Management Plan for the Wirral coastline.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The first generation of Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) were developed in the late 1990s. These SMPs provide a large-scale assessment of the risks associated with coastal processes and present a long term policy framework to reduce these risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment in a sustainable manner. SMPs form part of the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management planning framework. The SMP sets out the long term policy for the management of the coast. Delivery of SMP Policy recommendations is taken forward through coastal strategies and ultimately coastal defence works.

2.2 The Wirral coast is currently covered by the Liverpool Bay SMP which runs from Great Orme's Head, Llandudno to Formby Point. This plan was formally adopted by Wirral Council in 2000. All the SMPs in North West England and North Wales are currently being reviewed by consultants Halcrow Group Ltd, on behalf of the North West and North Wales Coastal Group – a partnership between the maritime local authorities in NW England and N Wales and the Environment Agency. All 5 of the SMPs in this area are being reviewed concurrently. Blackpool Council is the lead authority responsible for managing the contract and Wirral lead the Steering Group for the SMP2 for the frontage from Great Orme to Southport Pier, known as sub-cell 11a. The SMP2 frontage is wider than the previous SMP in that it now includes all of the Clwyd, Dee and Mersey Estuaries. The review process is 100% capital grant aided from the Environment Agency with Blackpool Council managing the funding on behalf of the other maritime local authorities. As a lead authority Wirral participate on the Project Management Board for the delivery of the SMP2s.

3.0 SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

3.1. The SMP2 has been undertaken in stages in accordance with Defra 2006 guidance. The guidance states that all lengths of coast should be assigned a policy option over 3 time periods:

- 0 to 20 years short term
- 20 to 50 years medium term
- 50 to 100 years long term

3.2 For each of these time-spans 1 of 4 policy options has been fully considered and consulted upon for each length of coast:

- **ADVANCE THE LINE.** Advance the line of existing defences by building new defences on the seaward side of existing coastal defences.
- **HOLD THE LINE.** Hold the line of existing defences through maintenance and / or by increasing the standard of protection.
- **NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION.** No investment in coastal defences or operations.
- **MANAGED REALIGNMENT.** Allowing the shoreline to move backwards or forwards with management to control or limit defences.

- 3.3 The draft SMP2 was published for public consultation from October 2009 to February 2010. The draft SMP2 was made available at Wallasey Town Hall and Cheshire Lines Building as well as all libraries in coastal wards, and online at the Coastal Group website (www.mycoastline.org). The consultation was advertised through Local Area Forums, press releases and mailshots to coastal stakeholders. The consultation process included well attended public meetings and stakeholder meetings to discuss the draft plan and its policies. The Wirral consultation meeting in Hoylake in December was attended by more than 100 members of the public.
- 3.4 All consultation responses were reviewed by the Project Management Board to assess whether changes to the draft plan were required. The consultant has now amended the draft plan and also produced a consultation report detailing how the draft SMP2 has been altered as a result of the consultation. This report has also been made publicly available on the Coastal Group website (www.mycoastline.org) and all consultees have been informed of its publication.
- 3.5 From the borough boundaries at Heswall and Eastham the Wirral coastline has been broken down into 14 policy units, based primarily upon land use and coastal processes. Drawing CSMP\03\01 shows the location of the policy units. Of these 14 policy units 10 have a policy identified for the first epoch of Hold The Line, which will allow coastal defences to be maintained and upgraded as necessary to manage flood and coastal erosion risk. The remaining 4 Policy Units have the following policies and policy details for the first epoch:
- 3.6 11aPU5.5 Burton Point to Thurstaston Cliffs – No Active Intervention
- Allow natural erosion or accretion where undefended, however, allow for continued limited intervention to maintain existing defences where economically justified and environmentally acceptable. Reassess justification for intervention if erosion becomes re-established.
- This policy allows existing defences to be defended whilst allowing undefended lengths of coastline to respond to coastal processes.
- 3.7 11aPU5.6 Thurstaston Cliffs – No Active Intervention
- Allow natural erosion of cliffs, however, permit maintenance of existing localised private defences as long as no adverse affects on sediment movement, coastal processes, the SSSI.
- This policy is similar to that adopted in the previous SMP, however it now allows for the maintenance of private defences at Shore Cottages in Thurstaston.
- 3.8 11aPU5.9 Royal Liverpool Golf Club to Hilbre Point – No Active Intervention
- Area is presently accreting and defences are covered with dunes. Allow natural processes to continue with monitoring and maintenance work to encourage dune growth.. Reassess justification for intervention if erosion becomes re-established.
- The previous policy for this area was one of Natural Defence Management. The detail allows for continued management of the dune system and calls for reassessment if erosion becomes established.
- 3.9 11aPU7.2 Riverwood Road / Eastham Park to Eastham Ferry
- Allow natural erosion / evolution of low cliffs.
- The natural rock cliffs at this short length of coast are currently undefended. This policy maintains the current management practise.

- 3.10 The policies identified in the SMP2 for Wirral for all 3 epochs following consultation are identified in Appendix 1 to this report. Policies for the privately owned coastal defences between Thurstaston Cliffs and West Kirby were subject to significant consultation. A satisfactory resolution was achieved with frontagers in this area with the continuation of a Hold The Line policy.
- 3.11 SMP2 also sets out how coastal defence policy can be delivered through the inclusion of an Action Plan, which sets out actions to be undertaken before the next review, so that the decision making process can be reinforced by a better understanding of the coast. Delivery of the Action Plan forms part of the National Indicator 189 return for Wirral. A theme of the Action Plan for Wirral is the requirement for a Coastal Strategy which will help provide the technical, environmental and economic platform to justify investment, through the Environment Agency's Grant Aid, in Wirral's coastal defences in order to deliver the SMP2 policy. A scoping exercise has recently been undertaken to confirm the requirement for a Wirral Coastal Strategy. As a result of this exercise an application has recently been made to the Environment Agency for Grant Aid to undertake the strategy. This application is currently under review by the Environment Agency.
- 3.12 Adoption of the SMP2 will allow Wirral to continue to apply for Grant Aid from the Environment Agency for Flood and Coast Protection Schemes and will also provide a tool to deliver sustainable flood and coastal erosion risk management in the short, medium and long term. Furthermore adoption of the SMP2 will meet Defra's Outcome Measure 9 target.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Failure to adopt the Shoreline Management Plan 2 will jeopardise Wirral's ability to apply for Grant Aid funding from the Environment Agency for future Coast Protection Works and Studies.

5.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken in 2008 for the delivery of the coastal defence service. The assessment found that coastal defence policy provides positive benefits to all by ensuring access to the coast by reducing the risk of erosion and flooding.

7.0 HEALTH IMPLICATIONS/IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 There are no implications under this heading.

8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no implications under this heading.

9.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The SMP2 has had to undergo a Habitats Regulations assessment to assess the impacts on European designated habitats. If there is likely to be an adverse impact on a European site then the SMP will need to go to the Secretary of State to be approved. This will have no impact on the policies for the Wirral coastline.

10.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Planning Policy Statement 25 Supplement “Development and Coastal Change” identifies Shoreline Management Plans as forming an important element of the evidence base for Local Development Frameworks. The Policy recommendations from the SMP will therefore need to be taken into account in formulating the policies in Wirral’s Core Strategy. The PPS 25 supplement also indicates that Planning applications in areas subject to coastal change should be subject to an assessment of the vulnerability of the proposed development to coastal change and any impact on coastal change

11.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no implications under this heading.

12.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Shoreline Management Plan is a non-statutory document.

13.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no implications under this heading.

14.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS.

14.1 This report has relevance for all wards, but with particular relevance to coastal wards.

15.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 The following papers have been used in the preparation of this report:

- Liverpool Bay Shoreline Management Plan, Highways Sub Committee 8th December 1999
- Liverpool Bay Shoreline Management Plan, Great Orme’s Head to Formby Point, December 1999
- Review of Liverpool Bay Shoreline Management Plan, Environment & Transportation Select Committee on 2nd March 2005.
- Shoreline Management Plan Guidance Volume 1: Aims and Requirements & Volume 2: Procedures, Defra, March 2006
- Update on the Review of Liverpool Bay Shoreline Management Plan, Executive Board 12th July 2006
- Shoreline Management Plan Progress Report, Report to Cabinet Member for Streetscene & Transportation Services, 18th September 2009
- North West England and North Wales Shoreline Management Plan SMP2, Main SMP Document – Consultation Draft, 1st October 2009
- Review of North West & North Wales Shoreline Management Plan, Local Area Forums (Coastal) October Cycle 2009

16.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 That

- (1) the policies set out in the North West England and North Wales Shoreline Management Plan for the Wirral coastline are adopted.
- (2) that this report is referred to the Planning Committee for information.

DAVID GREEN, DIRECTOR
TECHNICAL SERVICES

APPENDIX 1 SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN - POLICIES FOR THE WIRRAL COAST

LOCATION	0-20 YEARS SHORT TERM POLICY	20-50 YEARS MEDIUM TERM POLICY	50-100 YEARS LONG TERM POLICY
Burton Point to Thurstaston Cliffs	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION - Allow natural erosion or accretion where undefended, however, allow for continued limited intervention to maintain existing defences where economically justified and environmentally acceptable. Reassess justification for intervention if erosion becomes re-established	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION - Allow natural erosion or accretion where undefended, however, allow for continued limited intervention to maintain existing defences where economically justified and environmentally acceptable. Reassess justification for intervention if erosion becomes re-established	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION - Allow natural erosion or accretion where undefended, however, allow for continued limited intervention to maintain existing defences where economically justified and environmentally acceptable. Reassess justification for intervention if erosion becomes re-established
Thurstaston Cliffs	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION - Allow natural erosion of cliffs, however, permit maintenance of existing localised private defences as long as no adverse affects on sediment movement, coastal processes, the SSSI.	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION - Allow natural erosion of cliffs, however, permit maintenance of existing localised private defences as long as no adverse affects on sediment movement, coastal processes, the SSSI.	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION - Allow natural erosion of cliffs, however, permit maintenance of existing localised private defences as long as no adverse affects on sediment movement, coastal processes, the SSSI.
Thurstaston Slipway to Croft Drive, Caldy	HOLD THE LINE (private funding agreement) – Manage erosion risk by maintaining existing defences to an adequate standard.	HOLD THE LINE (private funding agreement) – Manage erosion risk by maintaining existing defences to an adequate standard.	HOLD THE LINE (private funding agreement) – Manage erosion risk by maintaining existing defences to an adequate standard.
Croft Drive Caldy to West Kirby Marine Lake	HOLD THE LINE – Manage erosion risk by maintaining existing defences to an adequate standard.	HOLD THE LINE – Manage erosion risk by maintaining existing defences to an adequate standard. Work towards private / public funding agreement with frontagers to allow for private maintenance of defences.	HOLD THE LINE (private / public funding agreement) – Manage erosion risk by maintaining existing defences to an adequate standard.

LOCATION	0-20 YEARS SHORT TERM POLICY	20-50 YEARS MEDIUM TERM POLICY	50-100 YEARS LONG TERM POLICY
West Kirby Marine Lake to Royal Liverpool Golf Club	HOLD THE LINE -to manage flood and erosion risk by beach management and maintaining existing defences to an adequate standard	HOLD THE LINE -to manage flood and erosion risk by beach management and maintaining existing defences to an adequate standard	HOLD THE LINE -to manage flood and erosion risk by beach management and maintaining existing defences to an adequate standard
Royal Liverpool Golf Club to Hilbre Point	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION -area is presently accreting and defences covered with dunes. Allow natural processes to continue with monitoring and maintenance work to encourage dune growth. Reassess justification for intervention if erosion becomes re-established.	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION -area is presently accreting and defences covered with dunes. Allow natural processes to continue with monitoring and maintenance work to encourage dune growth. Reassess justification for intervention if erosion becomes re-established.	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION -area is presently accreting and defences covered with dunes. Allow natural processes to continue with monitoring and maintenance work to encourage dune growth. Reassess justification for intervention if erosion becomes re-established.
Hilbre Island	HOLD THE LINE - through limited intervention to maintain the integrity of the island.	HOLD THE LINE - through limited intervention to maintain the integrity of the island.	HOLD THE LINE - through limited intervention to maintain the integrity of the island.
Hilbre Point to Wallasey Embankment (Meols)	HOLD THE LINE - Manage flood and erosion risk by maintaining existing defences and beach management . As part of wider strategy, undertake a more detailed study into risks and the viability of maintaining defences	HOLD THE LINE - Manage flood and erosion risk by maintaining existing defences and beach management, depending on outcome of strategy study	HOLD THE LINE - Manage flood and erosion risk by maintaining existing defences and beach management, depending on outcome of strategy study
Wallasey Embankment (Meols to Leasowe)	HOLD THE LINE -Maintain existing defences. Investigate opportunities to establish secondary or set back defences in the medium term so less substantial defences are required on the front line..	HOLD THE LINE -depending on outcome of investigations, construct additional secondary defences to help manage flood risk.	HOLD THE LINE – maintain defences to manage flood risk.
Wallasey Embankment (Leasowe) to Harrison Groyne (New Brighton)	HOLD THE LINE -Maintain existing defences. Investigate justification and affordability of maintenance of defences including assessing contamination risks from landfill and potential for long term creation of more natural dunes.	HOLD THE LINE - Maintain existing defences. Update studies to confirm justification and affordability of the policy and potential for long term reestablishment of more natural dunes.	MANAGED REALIGNMENT - Depending on previous studies, if practical, after defences reach the end of their effective life allow coast to take a more natural state. Construct set back defences if justified.

LOCATION	0-20 YEARS SHORT TERM POLICY	20-50 YEARS MEDIUM TERM POLICY	50-100 YEARS LONG TERM POLICY
Harrison Groyne to Perch rock	HOLD THE LINE - Maintain existing defences. Undertake studies to confirm approach: re-assess coastal risks; detailed economic appraisal including social and environmental benefits of options; select the most appropriate, economical and affordable long term approach.	HOLD THE LINE - Maintain existing defences. Undertake further studies to investigate the most appropriate form of defence and alignment in the long term and assess the economic viability of the defences.	HOLD THE LINE -Maintain existing defences while economic to do so then, subject to further studies, construct new defence system, taking account of potential outflanking from west.
Perch Rock to Riverwood Road / Eastham Park (South / left bank)	HOLD THE LINE -to manage flood and erosion risk by maintaining existing defences to an adequate standard	HOLD THE LINE – Manage flood and erosion risk by maintaining / upgrade defences	HOLD THE LINE - Manage flood and erosion risk by maintaining / upgrade defences
Riverwood Road / Eastham Park to Eastham Ferry	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION -allow natural erosion / evolution of low cliffs.	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION -allow natural erosion / evolution of low cliffs.	NO ACTIVE INTERVENTION -allow natural erosion / evolution of low cliffs.
Eastham Ferry to Runcorn Bridge (south bank)	HOLD THE LINE -to manage flood and erosion risk by maintaining existing defences to an adequate standard	HOLD THE LINE - Manage flood and erosion risk by maintaining / upgrade defences	HOLD THE LINE - Manage flood and erosion risk by maintaining / upgrade defences