

**Duty to Cooperate: Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Authorities Statement of
Common Ground**
Report by Planning Policy Officer

Summary:	The Statement sets out shared aims and an agreed approach to coastal management. It forms part of the continued, ongoing engagement that is required through the Duty to Cooperate.
Recommendation:	That Members endorse the Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Authorities' Statement of Common Ground.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 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. This report introduces the Statement of Common Ground for Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Authorities.
- 1.2 There is a small stretch of coast that lies within the Broads Authority Executive Area from Horsey Gap to Winterton Ness.

2. About the Statement of Common Ground

- 2.1. 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.
- 2.2. This Statement of Common Ground applies to all Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Authorities:
 - 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

- 2.3. The Statement (at Appendix A) sets out shared aims and an agreed approach to coastal management. It forms part of the continued, ongoing engagement that is required through the Duty to Cooperate.
- 2.4. The contents of the Statement are more relevant to other coastal authorities than to the Broads Authority because they have buildings and properties at risk from erosion and flooding within the coastal part of their Districts, whereas the part of the coast in the Broads is open and the policy approach here is to protect the open character with few if any buildings. It is nevertheless prudent to be part of this Statement of Common Ground to show that all coastal Authorities work together and sign up to a common approach.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1. There are no financial implications.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1. That Members endorse the Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Authorities' Statement of Common Ground.

Background papers: None

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Appendices: Appendix A: Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Authorities' Statement of Common Ground.

Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Authorities

Statement of Common Ground

Coastal Zone Planning

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 develop 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 or coastal accretion.

Shared Aims

- **A holistic and “whole coast” approach** will be taken, recognising **coastal change** is an inevitable part 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 to facilitate 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:

- Implement the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management;
- Develop shared **understanding** of coastal processes and the development planning implications of these;
- Share experience, **best practice** (including planning policies) and ideas for innovation;
- 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;
- Acknowledge the importance of **coastal communities and their economies**, and foster their resilience, innovation and vitality;
- 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.

This Statement of Common Ground has been endorsed by the following:

Cllr. Ian Devereux

Cabinet member for Environment

Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk

Cllr. Richard Blunt

Cabinet member for Development

Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk

Cllr. Hilary Cox

Cabinet member for Coastal Management

North Norfolk District Council

Cllr. Susan Arnold

Cabinet member for Planning

North Norfolk District Council

Cllr. Carl Smith

Chairman, Environment Committee

Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Ronald Hanton

Chairman, Development Control Committee

Great Yarmouth Borough Council



Cllr. Andy Smith
Cabinet member for Coastal Management
Suffolk Coastal District Council

Cllr. Tony Fryatt
Cabinet member for Planning
Suffolk Coastal District Council

Cllr. David Ritchie
Cabinet member for Planning and Coastal Management
Waveney District Council

Mr Haydn Thirtle
Chairman, Broads Authority
Broads Authority

To be advised
Chairman, Planning Committee
Broads Authority

