

# Overstand Urgent Works SSSI Impact Assessment

**Final**

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**Prepared for: North Norfolk District Council**



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# Contract

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This report describes work commissioned by Norfolk District Council, by an instruction dated 29th October 2025. The Client's representative for the contract was Tamzen Pope of Norfolk District Council. Steven Heathcote and Fiona Parkinson of JBA Consulting carried out this work.

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## Abbreviations

INNS	Invasive Non-Native Species
GR	Grid Reference
SAC	Special Area of Conversation
SPA	Special Protection Area for birds
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

The report has been produced by JBA Consulting on behalf of North Norfolk District Council ('the Applicant') to support the design and build of a new steel sheet piled concrete apron to encase the lower portion of the existing seawall at Overstrand located near to Cromer on North Norfolk Coast approximately 35km north-east of Norwich. The aim is that this will strengthen the existing foundations.

An assessment is required to understand the impact of the proposed works on the adjacent Overstrand Cliffs Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Sidestrand and Trimingham Cliffs SSSI. This report provides an assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed works on this SSSI.

## 1.2 Background

The seafront at Overstrand is a c. 700m section of concrete sea defences between stretches of natural soft cliff. The concrete sea defences are at the base of areas of soft cliff with intertidal beach present immediately below the concrete. The proposed works is to repair undermining of the seawall causing at least two major (reflective) fractures from top to bottom due to drops in beach levels. The steel sheet piles which form the base of the seawall have become severely degraded, and in places the sea has penetrated through the corroded sheets undermining the structure above. The encasement will cover the full extent of the undermined seawall in two locations at approximately 170 metres long towards the east and 120 metres towards the west. The design life should be between 10-20 years.

The western end of the works are <30m east of Overstrand Cliffs SSSI and the eastern end of the works are within Sidestrand and Trimingham Cliffs SSSI.

## 1.3 Site location

The site is located on the coastline within the tidal environment approximately 3km south east of Cromer on the North Norfolk Coast. The approximate central Ordnance Survey grid reference (OSGR) is TG2497240970. Figure 1-1 below shows the location of the site in relation to the surrounding area.



**Overstrand Urgent Works - SSSI Sites**

- ★ Overstrand Assets
- 250m buffer
- Red line boundary

Contains © OpenStreetMap contributors (2025)

Figure 1-1 Site location

## 1.4 Proposed Works

Works consist of remedial works to the existing steel sheet piled coastal wall and will involve constructing a new steel sheet piled concrete apron to encase the lower portion of the existing seawall. Steel sheet piles will be installed no more than 1m seaward of the existing steel sheet piles and to a depth of no more than 5m below ground level. The gap between the new wall and the existing will be filled with concrete.

The assessment is based on the following key principals:

- Works will take place during June to October 2026.
- Access will take place via the existing hardstanding track at the eastern extent of the site (off Clifton Way) and will use the existing site compound on hard standing at the base of the cliffs in this location.
- Vehicle movements to access the western site (Fisherman's Slope) will be along the existing concrete promenade.
- The number of active machines on site is likely to be small, not more than 5 at any one time.
- The works will require only modest delivery of material (e.g. cement, metal piles) and very limited long-term storage of hazardous liquids. Where used, these substances will be stored in site compounds in a way that spills would be easily contained.
- The works will be outside Overstrand Cliffs SAC all times, although some works will be within the Greater Wash SPA boundary.

The works will follow the following methodology:

- Mobilise to site with temporary welfare unit.
- Establish site compound including offices, welfare and storage.
- Fence off East promenade section.
- String out piles along lower level, ready for installation.
- Mobilise Excavator with Movax Piling Attachment.
- Drive piles. Machine to be positioned on high level promenade.
- Once piling complete use combination of mini digger and Vac-ex unit to remove sand from behind piles
- Tip sand in compound then redistribute on beach with excavator and dumper
- Place concrete using pump. Form stopends with expamet or similar
- Prior to completion of piling fence off West promenade section and string out piles.
- Drive piles.
- Once piling complete use combination of mini digger and Vac-ex unit to remove sand from behind piles
- Tip sand in compound then redistribute on beach with excavator and dumper
- Remove fencing and clear site

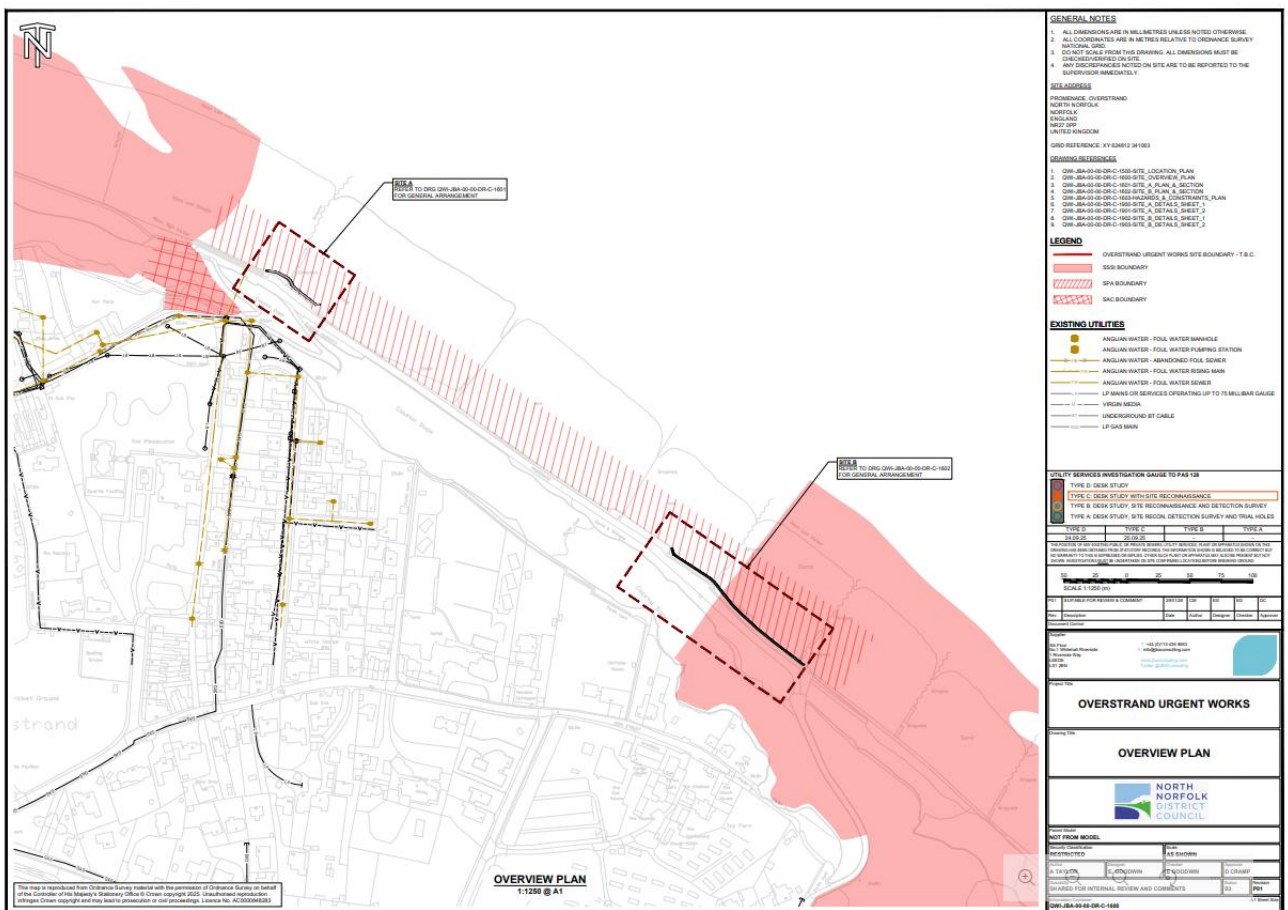


Figure 1-2: Site Plan

## 2 SSSI Assessment

### 2.1 SSSI Overview

The proposed works are located adjacent to Overstrand Cliffs SSSI and within Sidestrand and Trimmingham Cliffs SSSI as shown in Figure 2-1 below. Due to the proximity of the site to these SSSIs, an assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed works is required. No other SSSIs are present within 2km of the proposed works.



Figure 2-1 Location of SSSIs in relation to the proposed works boundary.

It should be noted that impacts to the Greater Wash SPA and Overstrand Cliffs SAC have been assessed in a separate Habitats Regulations Assessment.

## 2.2 SSSI Screening

Overstrand Cliffs SSSI and Sidestrand and Trimingham Cliffs SSSI are designated for their maritime flora and fauna. The key designated features of the SSSIs are listed below in Table 2-1, with an assessment of the features that could potentially be impacted upon by the proposed works. Where features could be impacted, they have been screened in for further assessment.

Table 2-1: Overstrand Cliffs SSSI Designated Features Screening Assessment

Designated Feature	Screening Assessment	Screened In? (Y/N)
EC - Quaternary of East Anglia	The works will be carried out on the existing concrete structure and the top of the upper beach, using existing access tracks and a hardstanding compound area, all outside of the SSSI. Therefore, there will be no effect to the geological features of the SSSI.	No
Invertebrate assemblage	The works will be carried out on the existing concrete structure and the top of the upper beach, using existing access tracks and a hardstanding compound area, all outside of the SSSI. The works will implement standard biosecurity and pollution prevention measures, minimising the risk of any impacts.	Yes
Population of RDB plant - <i>Orobanche purpurea</i> , Purple Broomrape	The works will be carried out on the existing concrete structure and the top of the upper beach, using existing access tracks and a hardstanding compound area, all outside of the SSSI. There will be no loss of, or permanent change to, Purple Broomrape habitat.	No
Soft Maritime Cliff and Slope	The works will be carried out on the existing concrete structure and the top of the upper beach, using existing access tracks and a hardstanding compound area, all outside of the SSSI. Therefore, there will be no effect to the geological features of the SSSI	Yes

Table 2-2. Sidestrand and Trimingham Cliffs SSSI Designated Features Screening Assessment

Designated Feature	Screening Assessment	Screened In? (Y/N)
EC - Cenomanian-Maastrichtian	The works will be carried out on the existing concrete structure and the top of the upper beach, using existing access tracks and a hardstanding compound area. Therefore, there will be no effect to the geological features of the SSSI.	No

Designated Feature	Screening Assessment	Screened In? (Y/N)
EC - Pleistocene Vertebrata	The works will be carried out on the existing concrete structure and the top of the upper beach, using existing access tracks and a hardstanding compound area. Therefore, there will be no effect to the geological features of the SSSI.	No
EC - Quaternary of East Anglia	The works will be carried out on the existing concrete structure and the top of the upper beach, using existing access tracks and a hardstanding compound area. Therefore, there will be no effect to the geological features of the SSSI.	No
IA - Mass Movement	The works will be carried out on the existing concrete structure and the top of the upper beach, using existing access tracks and a hardstanding compound area. Therefore, there will be no effect to the geological features of the SSSI.	No
Invertebrate assemblage	The works will be carried out on the existing concrete structure and the top of the upper beach, using existing access tracks and a hardstanding compound area. The works will implement standard biosecurity and pollution prevention measures, minimising the risk of any impacts.	Yes
Population of RDB plant - <i>Orobanche purpurea</i> , Purple Broomrape	The works will be carried out on the existing concrete structure and the top of the upper beach, using existing access tracks and a hardstanding compound area.. There will be no loss of, or permanent change to, Purple Broomrape habitat.	No

## 2.3 Ecological Mitigation

### 2.3.1 Prevention of Accidental Incursion

The works areas are distinctively separate from the SSSI boundaries, and there are natural barriers present in the form of concrete walls and rock armour. The location of the SSSIs should be clearly marked on any hazard maps to make the site team aware of the proximity.

### 2.3.2 Biosecurity Measures

Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) are present on the soft cliffs behind the Overstrand promenade, but outside the SSSIs as well as being outside the works boundary. Both

Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* and Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum* are found on the cliffs close to the site, and a range of other non-native garden escapes are also present. North Norfolk District Council are currently implementing a treatment programme for the Japanese Knotweed and their work should reduce any chance of fragments falling from the cliff and ending up in the work area, although vigilance for this should be maintained at all times. Best practice biosecurity measures (Check, Clean, Dry) will be implemented during construction to ensure that no INNS are accidentally introduced into the site or the SSSI, with the natural disturbance regime of soft cliff making it vulnerable to invasion by these species.

### 2.3.3 Pollution Prevention measures

The works have the potential to cause pollution in the water environment, without appropriate mitigation, which could impact the wider environment including the Overstrand Cliffs and Sidestrand and Trimingham Cliffs SSSIs. However, as is industry standard, appropriate pollution prevention measures will be implemented.

- In-situ (wet) concrete will be transported by wagon and then installed behind sheet piling using either concrete chute or pump directly from the wagon.
- Pours will be carefully monitored for any signs of leakage.
- There will be no storage of chemicals or powders on site unless it is kept inside a storage container or portacabin.
- All plant will be checked daily for fuel leaks.
- All plant will have drip trays.
- The generator in the compound will be checked daily for fuel leaks.
- The generator in the compound will have a drip tray.

With implementation of pollution prevention measures, there is no anticipated impacts to the SSSI during construction.

### 3 Conclusion

With the implementation of the mitigation detailed in Section 2 there are no anticipated significant adverse impacts on Overstrand Cliffs and Sidestrand and Trimmingham Cliffs SSSIs. The key mitigation to protect the SSSI is summarised as:

- Clear separation of the works from the soft cliff SSSI habitat, marked with fences where necessary, and shown on a hazard map
- Best practice biosecurity
- Best practice pollution prevention measures

## References

Natural England. *Designated Sites View*. [Online] Available at:  
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