

Coastal Change Transition Plan for the Community of Weybourne

Enabling Weybourne to thrive with coastal change

COASTWISE



NORTH
NORFOLK
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Haskoning
Enhancing Society Together

The Weybourne Community Coastal Change Transition Plan was developed as part of North Norfolk District Council's Coastwise project. Coastwise is funded by Defra as part of the £200 million Flood and Coastal Innovation Programmes which is managed by the Environment Agency. The programmes will drive innovation in flood and coastal resilience and adaptation to a changing climate.

This Community Coastal Change Transition Plan has been developed on behalf of the community of Weybourne by Haskoning, in collaboration with Coastwise, and a team of partners:



The use of terminology: The complex and technical nature of coastal change and adaptation does require the use of terminology within this document. These terms have been highlighted in *italics* within the text, and their definitions can be found in the Explanation of Terminology table in section 6.

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Preface

Coastal change has long shaped the shores of the UK. It is happening now and will continue, with climate change and sea-level rise increasing the pace and severity of coastal change. Along the North Norfolk coast, including at Weybourne where there are extensive areas of soft coastline and low-lying land, these impacts are already visible.

In the recent past, response to coastal change has generally been reactive: building defences following major storms or moving away from the coastline when properties were at imminent risk of falling into the sea. While understandable, these actions were rarely part of a long-term plan and sometimes added further pressure on coastal communities and the environment. Today, our understanding has improved. *Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs)* now provide a strategic, long-term view of how our coast is likely to evolve and starts to set out the challenges ahead. *SMPs* can identify the need to help communities prepare for that future, but as high-level plans, rather than strategies or local action plans, they cannot deliver the practical steps needed to do this locally. At Weybourne, the *SMP* long-term plan is to promote a naturally-functioning coastline, with minimal human interference, although local flood defence works could be implemented.

Adapting to coastal change will bring disruption, affecting individuals and the community. But *adaptation* may also provide the opportunity to shape a new future. Some factors - such as national policy, climate change, or external funding - are outside local control. However, many meaningful choices can still be made at the community level. This *Community Coastal Change Transition Plan* is designed to support those choices. In Weybourne, the community's concern focuses on the future of the shingle ridge and the associated vulnerability of the adjacent car park, and risk from the lower reaches of the Spring Beck. Management of these issues does require *adaptation* to a new future, so the *Coastwise* project included Weybourne in the Transition Planning programme at the request of the Parish Council.

The *Plan* explains why coastal *adaptation* is needed and outlines the types of measures that may form part of Weybourne's response to coastal change, informed by community consultation. It introduces an *Action Plan* to guide the community from today's position toward an agreed future vision, one shaped through collaboration. Uncertainty remains but opportunities also exist. Many solutions can emerge from within the community itself, helping to build *resilience* and support one another through change. Some will involve or need to be delivered by other parties but can be influenced. It is the intention that Weybourne's *Community Coastal Change Transition Plan* will become owned by the community of Weybourne and adopted by *North Norfolk District Council (NNDC)*.

The *Coastal Change Transition Plan* has two central aims: to increase awareness and readiness for change, and to give the community a stronger voice in decisions about the future of their village and coastal environment. It moves beyond simply managing risk, identifying how Weybourne can continue to thrive socially, economically, and culturally despite the realities of a changing coast. The Transition Plan identifies:

- Specific options for management of the shingle ridge and the associated area;
- A range of short-term community initiatives, with *NNDC*'s support, such as improving community awareness, reviewing emergency response arrangements and making homes flood resilient.

Many people already recognise that without *adaptation* the coastal character of Weybourne faces growing risks. With support from *NNDC* and other partners, and through a planned approach, Weybourne can adapt and thrive alongside coastal change.

What happens if Weybourne does not adapt to coastal change

The majority of Weybourne village is not at direct physical risk of coastal change, but its access to the coast, and therefore its nature as a coastal village, will be disrupted if the shingle ridge at the seaward end of Beach Lane, and its surrounding area, are not managed appropriately.

With the current approach, the ridge naturally seeks to roll back during storms. Over time, with sea level rise, this will lead to a situation where the flood risk to some of the lower-lying houses along Beach Lane may increase. In addition, the shingle is likely to disrupt coastal access by covering the car park, and there is a risk that storm water outflow from Spring Beck through the ridge is obstructed.

Vision – the future we choose for Weybourne

In every future scenario, sea level will rise; over time the shingle ridge will come under increasing pressure to roll back landwards. If this *Coastal Change Transition Plan* and its *Action Plan* are implemented, the ridge and its surrounding area will have been made more resilient to this coastal change. It will continue to provide Weybourne's connection to the coast, supporting North Norfolk's landscape and natural values.



An illustration of a possible future Weybourne envisaged by the community, with natural roll back of the shingle ridge and relocation of the car park.

1 Introduction

1.1 Why a Coastal Change Transition Plan for the Community of Weybourne?

Most of Weybourne is not at direct physical risk of coastal change in the foreseeable future, but for the low-lying area on the coast, with its shingle ridge, car park, the lower reach of Spring Beck and some low-lying houses, flooding and erosion already pose complex local challenges, and these will increase over time with climate change. This connection to the coast is very important for the community of Weybourne (explored further in section 2).

It is clear from the Shoreline Management Plan¹ that a naturally-functioning coastline is preferred, but local intervention to manage flood risk is acceptable, as long as it does not affect the coastal processes and if funding can be found.

Box 1: What is this document for?

This Coastal Change Transition Plan for the community of Weybourne explores what a resilient and thriving Weybourne can look like, despite sea-level rise and the predicted increase in flooding and risk to coastal change. The Plan identifies what is needed to create that resilient future, and contains an Action Plan that sets out what needs to be done, by national and local government, by the community of Weybourne, individuals, and by other stakeholders.

This Community *Coastal Change Transition Plan* was developed as part of NNDC's *Coastwise* project. *Coastwise* is funded by the *Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme*, established by UK Government in recognition of the challenges faced by communities experiencing *coastal erosion*. For Weybourne, those challenges largely are the result of risks from flooding, rather than erosion,, but they still require local transition, so the *Coastwise* project included Weybourne in the Transition Planning programme at the request of the Parish Council.

It should be noted that this Plan does not cover the terrace houses, 'Coastguard Cottages', near the edge of the cliff east of Weybourne. So far there has been limited discussion with owners of these properties, and their coastal change challenge is largely independent from Weybourne community's focus on the low-lying area at the shingle ridge. However, this may be explored if there is local interest, or these properties form part of wider investigations with regards to options for residential properties.

1.2 Approach to developing the plan

This first version of Weybourne's *Community Coastal Change Transition Plan* is based on the knowledge and views of those Weybourne community members who took part, combined with

¹ You can find out more about the Shoreline Management Plan for this area by visiting <https://environment.data.gov.uk/shoreline-planning/unit/SMP6/6.01>

the expertise and local knowledge of a team of professionals from consultancy Haskoning and partners, and from NNDC's *Coastwise* team.

Weybourne is part of a group of six communities that are the first to develop a *Coastal Change Transition Plan*. There is no existing template for these, and an important aim of *Coastwise* is to develop approaches that can be used locally and elsewhere in England, and to learn from the experience.

For Weybourne, the chosen approach was to invest in reaching as many community members as possible in a short time, by having a Project Coordinator immersed within the community between September and December 2025 (sharing their time with Bacton and Walcott). During that period, the Haskoning and *Coastwise* teams had many conversations with community members: informal meetings and scheduled appointments. The Haskoning and *Coastwise* teams directly engaged with approximately 80 people in Weybourne (about 15% of Weybourne's population) and developed a thorough understanding of the knowledge, concerns, views and ideas of a significant cross-section of Weybourne's community. The findings from these conversations were all recorded (respecting privacy in line with GDPR regulations) and were combined with the knowledge and evidence from coastal management practitioners to form the basis for this Plan. The main topics raised by the community of Weybourne are summarised in Box 2, below. Throughout the report, where relevant, the text refers back to the insights and views from the community that have shaped this Plan.

Box 2: Weybourne community priorities to be able to adapt to coastal change

1. Easy access to the beach and coastline is essential for Weybourne. The car park, Beach Lane, and coastal path play a vital role in both village life and tourism. Maintaining this connection to the coast is of utmost importance to the community.
2. The residents of Weybourne value the village's natural environment and seascape. They wish to preserve the coastal character of Weybourne and ensure its surroundings are cared for sensitively and sustainably.
3. Residents want the flooding risks, from both the sea and the stream, to be better understood and managed. Alongside this, residents want more accurate flood maps so the community can prepare and respond effectively.
4. Many residents worry about the village losing its community feel, especially with rising numbers of holiday homes and the risks of flooding. They want affordable housing, local jobs and support for volunteers to ensure Weybourne keeps its identity with people at its heart.

Box 3: What are low-regret initiatives?

Low-regret initiatives, or measures, are simple actions that improve *resilience* now and, in the future, regardless of the future decisions or *scenarios*. These are positive actions, for which individuals and the community will have little regret, most likely improving resilience and wellbeing. This could include raising awareness of coastal flooding, reviewing emergency planning arrangements and exploring the potential for Property Flood Resilience.

Another key feature of the chosen approach is a strong focus on what it means physically for Weybourne (in particular, its access to the coast and its low-lying area around the shingle ridge) to become resilient to coastal change. The local knowledge and expertise from the community and coastal management practitioners formed the basis for the development and appraisal of options for management of this area. Section 3 introduces these options, as part of the *Transition Plan*, and sets out what is needed to confirm the preferred approach and how to move on toward implementation. Alongside these options for the shingle ridge, the Plan also includes *low-regret* initiatives (see Box 3) that can improve *resilience* in the shorter term that can be taken forward by the community and others.

1.3 A living plan

It is the intention that Weybourne's *Community Coastal Change Transition Plan* will become owned by the community of Weybourne and adopted by *NNDC*. This first version was produced by the consultant team, based on the community's and Coastwise's input, with strong involvement from the Parish Council. It is essential that the Plan is taken to the community of Weybourne for their review and steer, enabling them to make any changes needed, so that this becomes their own Plan. In parallel, the Plan needs to be reviewed by *Coastwise* and *NNDC*, and a process toward Council adoption should be established, alongside the *Strategic Coastal Change Transition Plan* that *Coastwise* is developing for North Norfolk District as a whole.

The Plan is intended as a living document, with regular reviews planned to ensure it remains useful and meaningful. The *Action Plan* in Section 5 is intended as an operational plan, and is provided in a separate Excel version to facilitate its use.

2 Weybourne: coastal risks and the community

The challenges of coastal change in Weybourne require consideration of the risks posed by flooding and coastal erosion, for which recent storm surges provide an illustration, as well as the unique character of the village and coastal environment.

2.1 Storm surges at Weybourne

In early December 2013 a combination of low pressure and strong winds led to a significant storm surge which propagated southwards along the coast of eastern Scotland into England, which, combined with the high spring tide, resulted in significant coastal flooding. Water level measurements at Wells-next-the-Sea and Lowestoft recorded maximum water levels of 5.22 m and 3.26 m respectively, over 2 m higher than that predicted for the normal high tide on that day.

There is limited recorded evidence of the impact of the 2013 storm surge at Weybourne, however, the Environment Agency's Recorded Flood Outlines dataset provides an indication of the flooded area, which was caused by overtopping of the shingle bank fronting the car park. Witness accounts from community engagement events indicate that sea water extended along Beach Road. By comparison, mapping of flooding during the 1953 storm surge (known as the Great North Sea Flood) shows flood water extended further inland than in 2013 (Figure 2-1). The Village Hall at the southern end of Beach Road is a designated emergency rest centre, but the experience of the 1953 and 2013 storm surges shows access may be impacted by flooding.

2.2 Risk of erosion and flooding

The risk of *coastal erosion* at Weybourne is relatively limited. This is shown in Figure 2-2 based on the Environment Agency's National Coastal Erosion Risk Map (NCERM, part of the [SMP Explorer²](#)), which provides an assessment of *coastal erosion* risk for England, including the coastline at Weybourne. NCERM's predictions are based on historical erosion rates, adjusted to account for existing coastal defences, climate change and other relevant factors. The map shows predicted risk zones for *coastal erosion* in 2055 and 2105, but in practice it is impossible to predict precisely when the erosion will start and how quickly it will develop.

- It is expected that the **car park** would be directly affected sometime in the next 80 years.
- The Norfolk **Coast Path** is expected to be at risk in the next 20 years.
- Erosion would, however, also affect the **shingle bank** that at present acts as a flood defence. Without adequate space to roll back, this bank is likely to disappear over time, making Beach Lane more vulnerable to flooding.
- Along the cliff, east of the car park, the **Coastguard Cottages** (a terrace built in 1904 which sits near the cliff edge) are expected to be at risk of erosion within the next 30 years. As indicated in Section 1.1, the Coastguard Cottages east of Weybourne village are currently not addressed in this Plan.

² Visit <https://environment.data.gov.uk/shoreline-planning/unit/SMP6/6.01> to view this map in the SMP Explorer

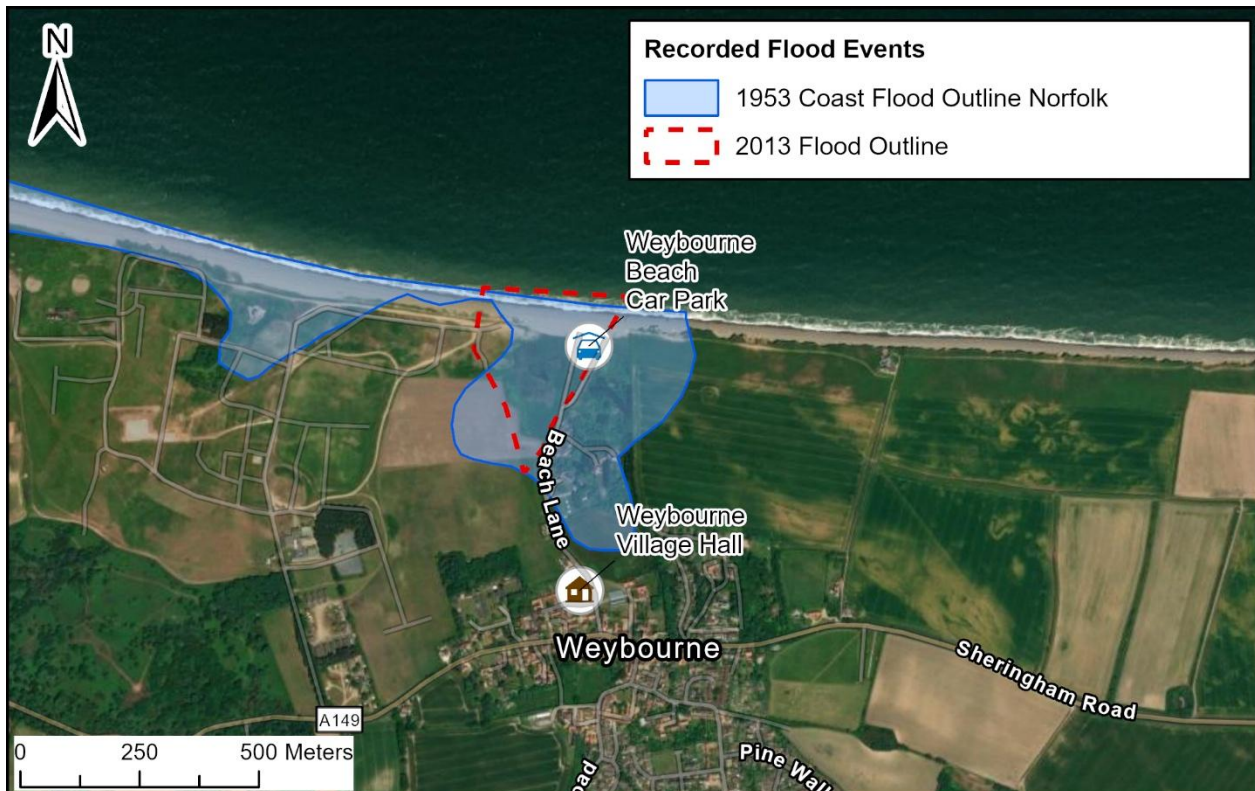


Figure 2-1: Environment Agency historical coastal flood map³ showing flooding in the 1953 storm surge (blue), and: 2013 storm surge (red dashed line)

Weybourne is at risk of flooding from a combination of coastal and fluvial sources. The flood risk maps in Figure 2-3 are based on the Environment Agency's '[Check your long-term flood risk](#)' website⁴. The shingle bank at the northern end of Beach Lane acts as a flood defence for the lower-lying land between the surrounding, higher, cliffs. During storm surge events this bank can be overtopped or breached (as occurred in 1953 and 2013), leading to flooding of the car park and further down Beach Lane and surrounding land, with flooding posing a risk to the properties along Beach Lane, and potentially the Anglian Water Beach Lane pumping station.

The main part of Weybourne village is not at risk from tidal flooding but is at risk from flooding from Spring Beck. During periods of high rainfall across its catchment, there is more water in the stream which can lead to it breaking its banks. This mainly affects the areas directly around the stream, but also areas around Holt Road (which connects to Spring Beck through Springfield Close) through to the Priory. If high rainfall coincides with high sea levels, which can often occur during a low-pressure winter storm, these two flood sources are at risk of combining, enhancing flood risk at the lower end of Spring Beck. Alternatively, the community has identified the potential for flood risk from Spring Beck through *tide-locking*, which may occur when the coastal water level is higher than the water level in the stream preventing outflow to the sea, backing water up along the beck.

³ This data is available for download from <https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/16e32c53-35a6-4d54-a111-ca09031eaaaf/recorded-flood-outlines1>

⁴ You can check your long-term flood risk at <https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk>

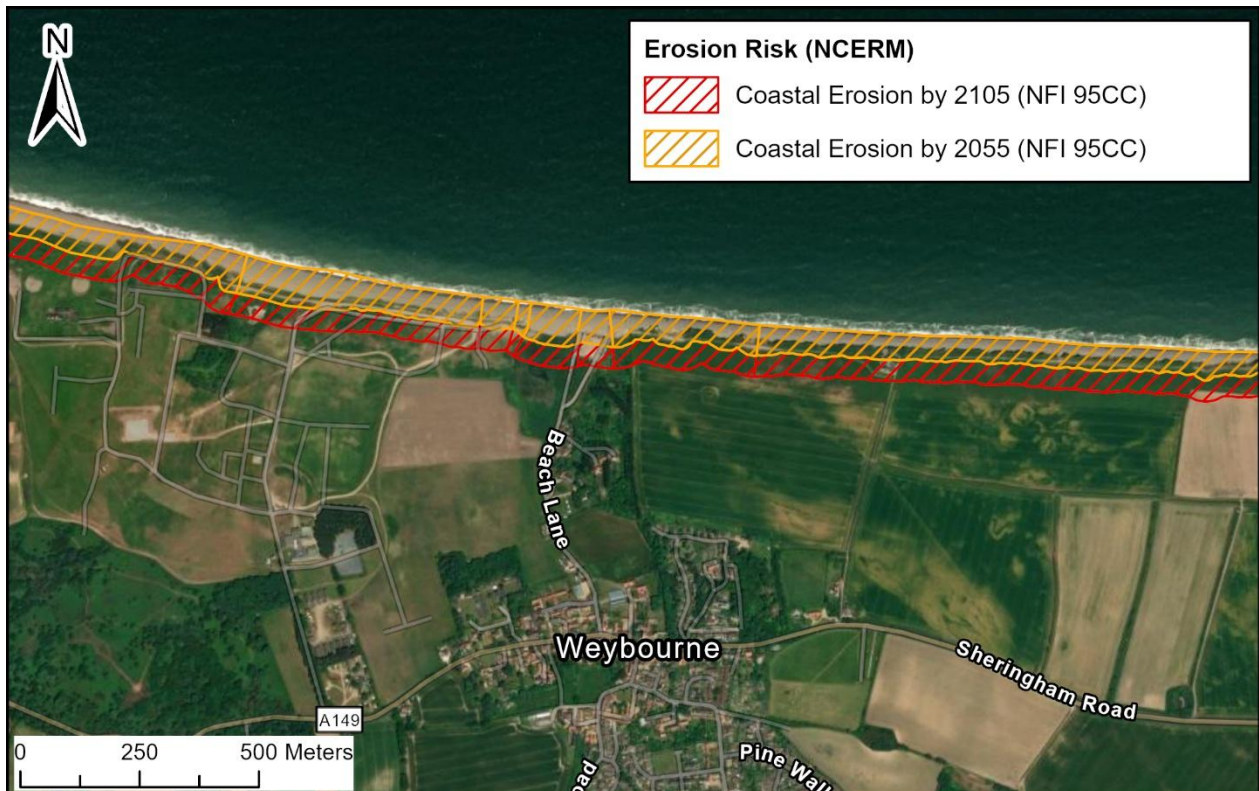


Figure 2-2: Indication of coastal erosion by 2055 and 2105, assuming beach loss, defence failure and high levels of climate warming⁵

The risk of flooding will further increase over time due to rising sea levels, increased winter storm intensity, and increased rainfall expected to be caused by climate change. Over time, these factors will mean that overtopping and / or breach of the shingle bank, as happened in 2013, will become far more likely during storm surges. Additionally, the extent of flooding is likely to be larger due to rising sea levels. Flooding from the stream is also expected to become far more likely in future.

⁵ You can check your coastal erosion risk at: <https://www.gov.uk/check-coastal-erosion-management-in-your-area>

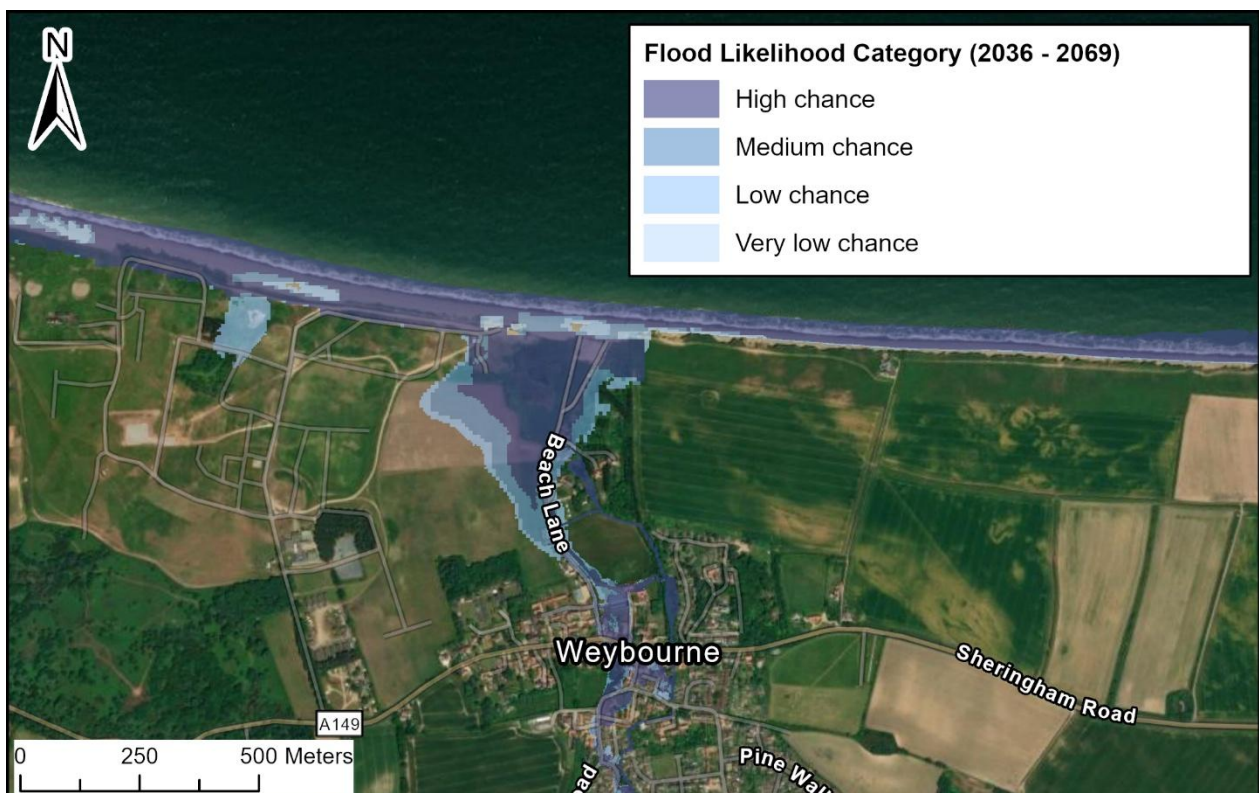
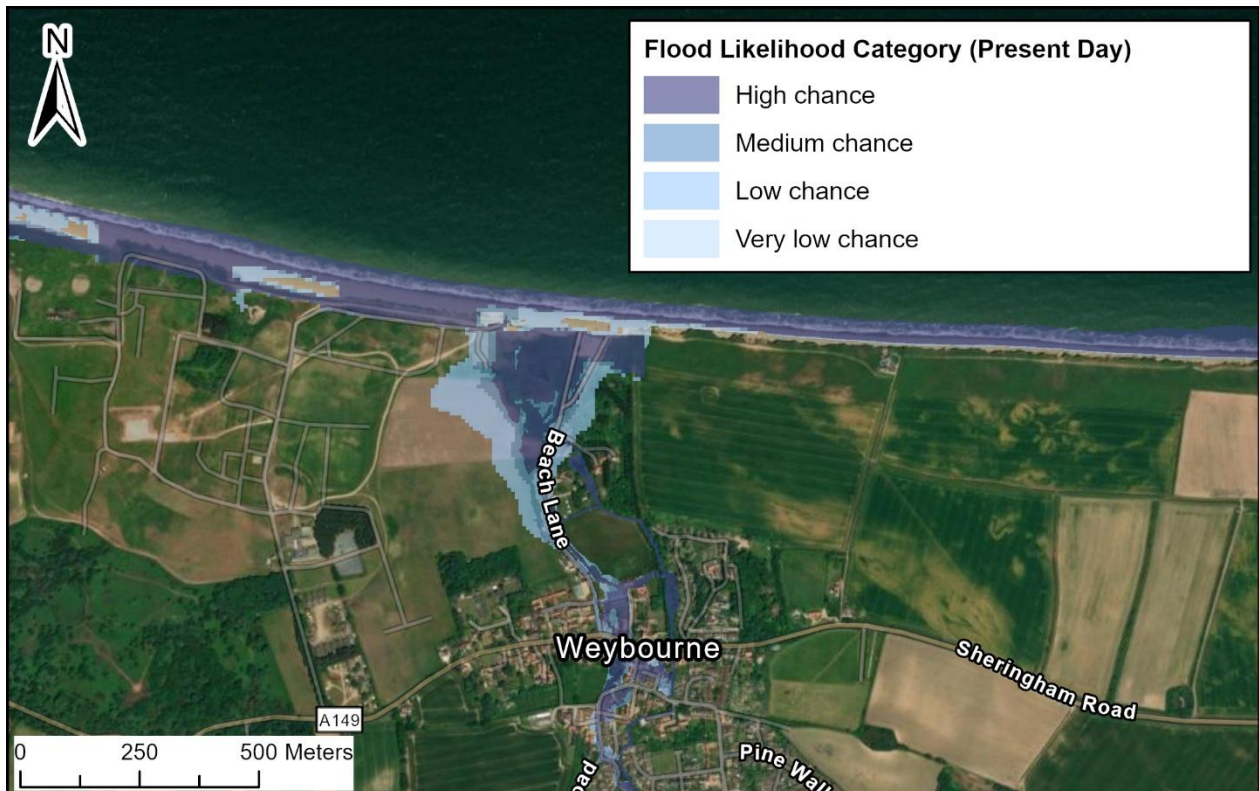


Figure 2-3: Indication of present chance of flooding (top panel) and predicted chance of future flooding with climate change (bottom panel) at Weybourne

2.3 Weybourne – The Community

Any plan for adapting to changes along the coast should consider the needs and identity of local people, helping communities adjust to the challenges brought about by climate change.

This section summarises the current community of Weybourne, supported by official datasets. A key dataset is the 2021 UK Census, which details the community of Weybourne parish on 21 March 2021. The Weybourne parish census area includes the village of Weybourne, to the west up to Weybourne Airfield, and to the south to Breck Farm.

Demographic data summary, based upon the 2021 Census:

- There are 259 households within Weybourne parish.
- There are were 515 residents at the time of the Census.
- 92.4% of residents are over 16.
- 42.1% of those over 16 in Weybourne Parish were economically active or in full time education at the time of the 2021 Census (which did occur during the covid-19 pandemic), which is lower than the average for England and Wales (Figure 2-4). The greatest employment sectors for people in Weybourne parish are distribution, hotels and restaurants (31.3%), followed by public administration, education and health (20.3%).
- According to the 2021 Census, overall self-reported health in Weybourne parish was reported to be below the average for England and Wales (Figure 2-4).
- 89.2% of households in Weybourne parish reported having access to one or more vehicles during the 2021 Census.

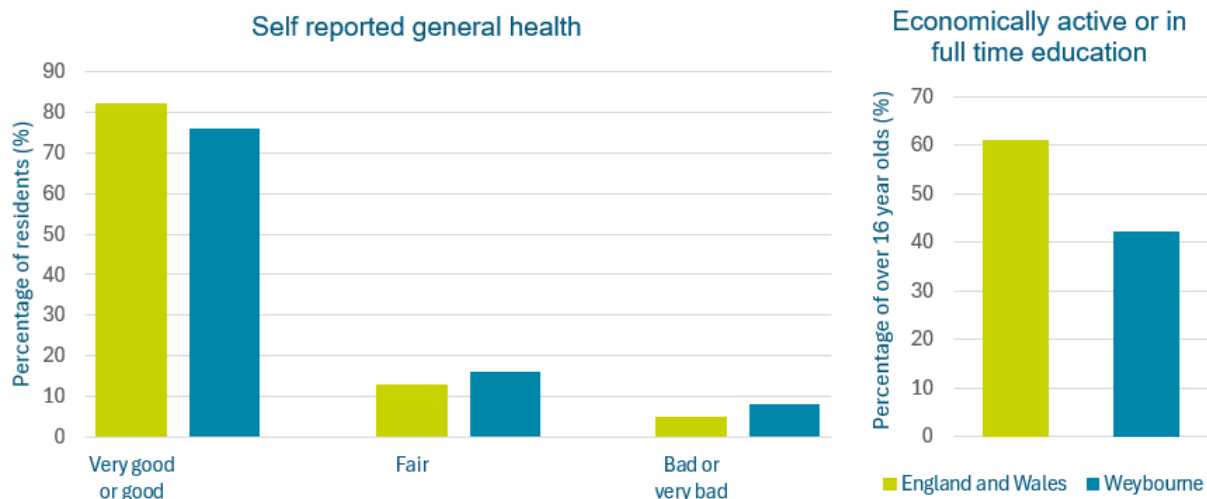


Figure 2-4. 2021 Census data comparing self-reported general health in Weybourne parish to the England and Wales census average (left), and the percentage of over 16-year-olds either economically active or in full time education (right).

Village information

- Weybourne parish has no school but is in the catchment of Kelling CE Primary School and Sheringham High School, which are both within a 10-minute driving distance.

- Weybourne village hosts community and visitor facilities including Weybourne Village Hall, Weybourne Beach Car Park, public toilets near the beach, allotments, and the All Saints Church at the heart of the village.
- Other noteworthy locations include the ruins of Weybourne Priory, the restored Weybourne Station (part of the heritage railway line), and the Muckleburgh Military Collection (situated on the site of the former Weybourne Camp).
- Weybourne has relatively high house prices (the average house price in September 2021 was £495,000; £215,000 more than the average house price in England for the same period)⁶.
- There are a high percentage of holiday and second homes (32.5%).
- In April 2021, 26 homes in Weybourne (6% of the total) were deemed affordable housing
- There are a large number of businesses offering holiday accommodation within the village and at the Coastguard Cottages, predominantly holiday lettings and a number of campsites.
- Other small businesses within Weybourne village include a pub and a village store.

2.4 Weybourne – Landscape and History

2.4.1 Landscape

The local landscape around Weybourne is made up of farmland, heathland, wetlands, and woodlands, with buildings and settlements interspersed throughout. Many of these reflect the long history of human management and settlement in the area, and themselves contribute to a special and culturally important landscape. The character of the local landscape is defined by dramatic and distinctive topography, an eroding coastline, open farmland and semi-natural habitats providing important biodiversity and visual separation between settlements.

The Norfolk Coastal Path runs along the beach to the northern edge of the car park, much of which forms part of the new King Charles III England Coast Path. Weybourne is within the North Norfolk National Landscape (designated for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area), an area covering 453 km² of the North Norfolk coast.

Weybourne cliffs, east of the car park, are designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for their exposure of the Cromer Forest Bed, a prehistoric peat rich in animal and plant fossils from 2 - 0.5 million years ago. The cliffs also support sand martins and fulmars.

Inland, on the eastern side of the village, Weybourne Town Pit is another SSSI recognised for its significant geological record. The shingle ridge (and associated car park) provides access to the beach for locals, tourists and fishing, and is notable because access to the east is restricted by high unstable coastal cliffs.

⁶ Housing data from NNDC report 'The Possible Impacts of Second and Holiday Homes in North Norfolk' (Examination Library Document Reference E4)

2.4.2 Historic sites and features

Weybourne and its surroundings contain a wealth of historic sites and features including designated and non-designated historic assets above ground, within the archaeological record and etched into the landscape are boundary features and routes. There is evidence of human occupation or at least activity in this area to the earliest phases of human occupation, with archaeological finds covering the Palaeolithic era through to the Iron Age, including large coin hoards. Activity clearly continued into the Roman period and finds include coins, pottery fragments, jewellery and building materials (brick and tile). Excavations to the east of Weybourne village in the late 1800s revealed the remains of a Roman pottery kiln.

The Late Saxon period has left the remains of the earliest surviving structures, All Saints' Church and the ruins of Weybourne Priory of the Blessed Virgin and All Saints. The present church grew out of a 13th century Priory of Augustinian Canons, which itself took over the site and building of a pre-Conquest church. The impressive ruins of the Saxon tower remain to the north of the present chancel and much of the outline of the Priory can still be seen. There are a number of post Medieval Grade II-listed buildings in Weybourne, among which cottages and several farms and barns, as well as a number of mills and the railway station.

In the 20th century, this stretch of the coast was perceived in both World Wars as a potential invasion point and various defensive structures were constructed. This included a series of pillboxes in WWI, one of which survives. In WWII, Weybourne was seen as particularly vulnerable, and defensive structures were constructed throughout the village, some of which still survive (including pillboxes and anti-tank mortar bases). The largest installation was Weybourne Camp, an Anti-Aircraft Training Camp. This was closed in 1959 and now hosts the Muckleburgh Military Collection.

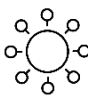
3 The things that matter for Weybourne's transition

This section sets out the things that matter to the community of Weybourne and to *NNDC*, and that will determine their decisions and choices when planning for Weybourne's transition.

3.1 Weybourne Community Priorities

From the engagement with the community of Weybourne when developing the Plan, the aspects in the table below were identified as mattering most when thinking about the future, building on the context of risk and place in Section 2.

Risk		Weybourne is at risk of coastal flooding due to overtopping or breaching of the shingle bank. If high rainfall coincides with high sea levels, fluvial flooding from Spring Back and coastal flooding could combine, enhancing flood risk at the lower end of Spring Beck.
Nature		Weybourne's coastal character is priority for the community – ensuring the shingle ridge has a natural form, and the back-beach lagoon provides a haven for wildlife and biodiversity. Local bird species include sand martins, fulmar and overwintering Pinkfoot geese.
Fisheries		Fishing is a popular activity at Weybourne beach as it is known to be a consistent fish location, including for bass and night fishing for cod and whiting. The beach also provides access for small boats for sea fishing.
Landscape		The coastal character of Weybourne includes the shingle ridge, shingle beach, cliffs to the east and flatter coastal plain to the west. Weybourne village centre is approx. 0.8 km south, inland from the coast. Two SSSI's contain records of geological importance.
Historic Environment		Weybourne and its surroundings contain a wealth of historic sites, with archaeological finds from the Palaeolithic, Iron Age and Roman periods. Earliest surviving structures, including All Saints' Church and the ruins of Weybourne Priory, date to the Saxon period. Defensive structures from both World Wars are preserved along the coastline.
Recreation, Health and Wellbeing		Access to the beach, the natural environment and the Coastal Path are key recreational assets for Weybourne, and are important for both the community and tourism.

Infrastructure		The coastal car park, toilets and Beach Road are the key access points to the beach and a priority for the community, but are at the highest risk of coastal flooding. In extreme events, access to Weybourne Village Hall, which is the designated emergency rest centre, may be impacted by flooding. Anglian Water's Beach Lane pumping station could also be at risk in extreme events.
Community Cohesion		From the engagement, there currently appears to be a good level of community cohesion in Weybourne (despite the high number of holiday homes), supported by an active Parish Council. Villagers and businesses support each other during times of stress.
Economic Spin-off		Weybourne economy strongly relies on its coastal aesthetic and access to the beach, for both day visitors and tourists, and the related potential for people visiting the businesses in the village.
Potential for Private Funding		Private funding may be available if solutions meet wider objectives, e.g. from the adjacent landowners, Anglian Water, the National Landscape or the windfarm developers who have cable landfalls in the area.
Costs		The full range of costs should be considered: not only the implementation costs of measures, but also the damages (direct and indirect) from flooding and erosion and the wider costs of transition. Any solution has to be affordable, otherwise it will not be implemented or maintained properly.

3.2 North Norfolk District Council and coastal transition

NNDC also has to make decisions in planning for the transition, not only at District level but also at Community level, including for Weybourne. In this, NNDC is driven by its overall vision of putting the communities of North Norfolk first, and its priorities of securing a sustainable future for them, through *transition* and *adaptation* responses, as outlined in NNDC's Corporate Plan⁷.

The *Coastwise* project's overall objective is as follows: by 2027 to have worked with communities in North Norfolk at imminent risk of coastal change to explore, develop and facilitate a transition planning process, trial practical actions and capture evidence to demonstrate learning. *Coastwise* aims to achieve this objective through an ethos of co-creation, learning and innovation.

⁷ To read NNDC's Corporate Plan, visit <https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/media/9394/corporate-plan-2023-to-2027.pdf>

Another important piece of context for NNDC is the *SMP* for the area. This is the document and process that first identified and confirmed the need for Weybourne to adapt to coastal change over time. This is shown in the extracts from the *SMP*, in Box 4, which promotes a naturally functioning coastline and sediment movement along the coast, whilst also allowing the development of local flood reduction activities. This *Community Coastal Change Transition Plan* can be seen as a mechanism for implementing that change in management approach.

Box 4: Important extracts from the Shoreline Management Plan, of relevance to the future of Weybourne

Plan for Policy Unit 6.01 (Kelling Hard to Sheringham)

The long-term Plan [for all three epochs] is to promote a naturally-functioning coastline, with minimal human interference. This will allow beach material to be replenished through cliff erosion and sediment to move freely along the coast, feeding the shingle ridge to the west. There are no existing open coast defences and few socio-economic assets along the frontage that would generate justification for defence construction; therefore this long-term Plan to retreat can be implemented immediately.

From ‘Policies to implement Plan’:

The policy option from the present day is to allow natural processes to take place, i.e. allow coastal retreat through a policy of no active intervention on the open coast. There is a short length of palisade at Weybourne to prevent breach of the shingle ridge.

As the shingle ridge rolls back this will become exposed and local flood defence works could be implemented in a set back position to maintain facilities and reduce flood risk at this location. The flood defences would not impact upon coastal processes, however any works would need to be economically justified. This policy option will enable a naturally-functioning coastline to operate. There will however be a loss of some cliff top land, which includes agricultural land and part of the golf course [west of Sheringham].

4 The Plan

This section describes the first version of the Plan for supporting the community of Weybourne in its transition to adapt to coastal change. This initial version of the Plan is based on intensive engagement with the community of Weybourne during the Autumn of 2025. A key next step is to engage again with the community to ensure it matches their views and needs.

The Plan describes a range of initiatives, at different timescales and to be led by different parties, and introduces the actions that the community of Weybourne and NNDC (and others) need to take. Figure 4-1 gives a simplified overview of the *Community Coastal Change Transition Plan* for Weybourne, and introduces the sub-sections that describe each element.

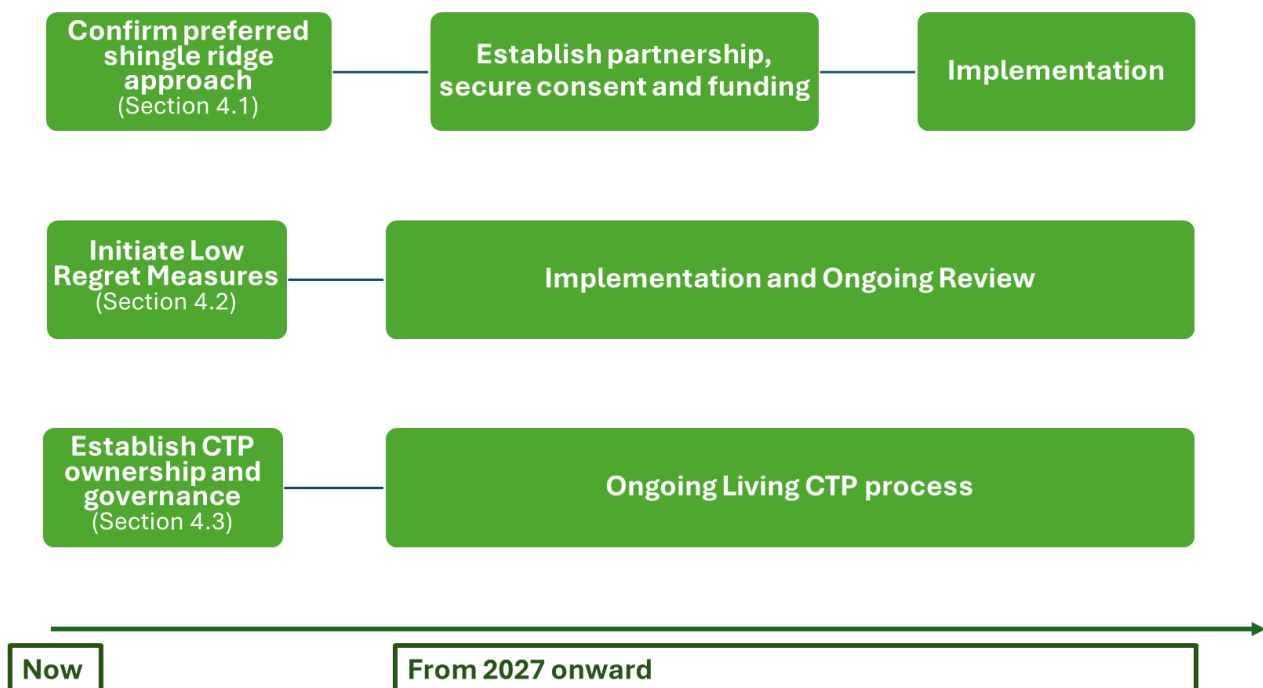


Figure 4-1: Visualisation of the Community Coastal Change Transition Plan for Weybourne

The description of the Plan in this section has the following structure:

- Section 4.1 explains the complex issues related to the shingle ridge and low-lying area, concerning flooding but also other important aspects. This section also introduces options for management of this area, based on intensive engagement with the community in 2025.
- Section 4.2 introduces the *low-regret resilience* measures that can be taken in the short term.
- Finally, Section 4.3 sets out what is needed to continue Weybourne's coastal change transition process in the short term but also into the longer-term future.

4.1 How best to manage the shingle ridge

4.1.1 Current situation and challenges

The main coastal change issue for Weybourne that this *Transition Plan* aims to address concerns the management of the shingle ridge and the neighbouring low-lying area, which is very important to the community of Weybourne. The shingle ridge acts as a flood defence for a low-lying area that includes the coastal car park, the seaward end of Beach Lane and the lower end of the Spring Beck water course. Flooding can be, and has been, caused by seawater coming over, and through, the ridge (see Section 2). Some of Weybourne's community members suggest flooding can also be caused by *tide-locking*, when high coastal water levels prevent the discharge of Spring Beck's flow through the outflow pipe that runs through the shingle ridge. During the December 2013 storm surge flooding reportedly affected two of the low-lying properties along Beach Lane according to local eyewitnesses.

However, the management of the ridge and the low-lying area is not only about flooding: it is also about other important aspects such as access, public toilets, wildlife and landscape. Storm waves do not only cause flooding, but also overwash of shingle onto parts of the car park. The Norfolk Coast Path runs along the crest of the shingle ridge. There are existing plans for *nature development* around the Spring Beck, which may create storage that could help address any fluvial and *tide-locking* induced flooding. Anglian Water's pumping station along Beach Lane may be at risk of flooding.

NNDC *reprofile* the landward side of the ridge following storms if shingle encroaches into the car park. It is clear from the *Shoreline Management Plan* that a naturally-functioning coastline is preferred, but local intervention to manage flood risk is acceptable, as long as it does not affect the wider coastal processes and if funding can be found.

4.1.2 Options for improvement

During the Autumn of 2025, the community of Weybourne provided invaluable local knowledge, insights, views and ideas related to the shingle ridge and Beach Lane area. This led to the identification of two options, which were presented back to the community, with an appraisal of their pros and cons in November 2025. Feedback was incorporated, and the options were further developed, and a next set is presented in this section. The next step is that these options are discussed and developed further with the community to ensure they match their views and needs.

The two options are as follows (see Figure 4-3):

- **'Natural roll-back'**: allow the shingle ridge to roll back naturally, combined with landward *relocation* of the car park (and toilets). With this option, flood risk to the low-lying houses would increase, which could be addressed by local *embankments* or *Property Flood Resilience* measures (discussed separately in Section 4.2 as a *low-regret resilience measure*).
- **'Embankment'**: construct an *Embankment* directly landward of the existing shingle ridge, designed to hold back the shingle and reduce flood risk.

Both options could be combined with an increase of Spring Beck's storage capacity to reduce the risk of flooding (whether directly from the Beck or storm *overwash*).

Coastal *lagoons* are important locations for biodiversity, and maintaining a natural coastal landscape is a key priority for Weybourne, and the SMP. Regardless of the preferred option for the shingle ridge, the *lagoon* near to the beach car park potentially offers additional storage capacity for flood water, from both the stream and/or *overwash*, reducing flood risk. The Parish Council could work with *NNDC*, the landowners and the Environment Agency to explore if and how the lagoon may be utilised to increase flood water storage capacity (for example, regular dredging of excess sediment may be required). Plans to increase storage capacity should also consider increasing biodiversity and the natural environment at the *lagoon*, with the Parish Council and *NNDC* working with organisations including Natural England, Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership, Norfolk Coast National Landscape and Norfolk Rivers Trust.

In discussing these two options with the community of Weybourne in Autumn 2025, the natural roll-back option appeared to be preferred, including flood risk reduction to the low-lying houses, and water storage increase with *naturalisation* of Spring Beck and the downstream *lagoon*. This would result in an acceptable level of flood risk for the area, whilst also being preferable for nature, fisheries, landscape and economic spin-off (see section 3.1), although potential negative impacts would have to be confirmed and addressed. Though this option is preferred by those who attended the community events, there are some aspects that need confirmation, and it still requires formal agreement that this is the preferred way forward for the wider community.

The following next steps, to be actioned jointly by the community of Weybourne and *NNDC*, will help confirm the viability of the roll-back option: confirm availability of land for the car park to roll back to (Action 1.1); review what consents and permissions are needed to allow the lagoon to be dredged (Action 1.2); explore the potential for *Property Flood Resilience* for the two houses at risk of flooding on Beach Lane (see section 4.2.3 and Action 1.3); engage with Anglian Water to understand future plans for their Beach Lane Pumping Station (Action 1.4); and review how flood risk would change if the ridge rolls back naturally (Action 1.5).

Once these aspects have been addressed, the community of Weybourne should reconvene to confirm their preferred approach, and then engage with other stakeholders such as Natural England, Anglian Water and the Norfolk Coast Partnership that manages the Norfolk Coast National Landscape (formerly the ANOB) designation. A partnership between the community, *NNDC*, Environment Agency and these organisations is needed to then develop the preferred approach, secure consent and funding, and work toward implementation (Action 1.6).

Once this partnership is established and the preferred option is confirmed, the community can take several implementation actions, supported by *Coastwise* / *NNDC* (Action 1.7):

- Apply for grant funding to support clearing of the *lagoon*;
- Approach the Environment Agency for a Flood Risk Activity Permit and check to see if other consents are required to enable improvements to the *lagoon*;
- Apply for grant funding to explore land options with *NNDC*;
- Confirm and progress approach for the relocation of the car park.

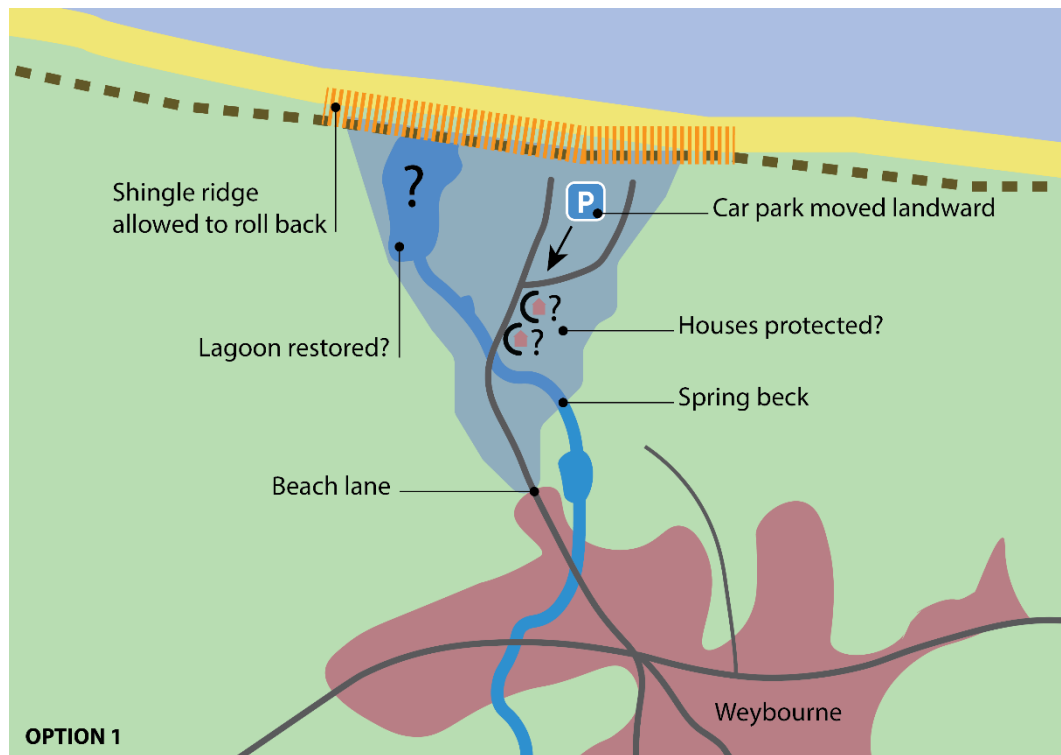


Figure 4-2: •Illustration of the option for natural roll-back allowing the shingle ridge to roll back naturally, combined with landward relocation of the car park.

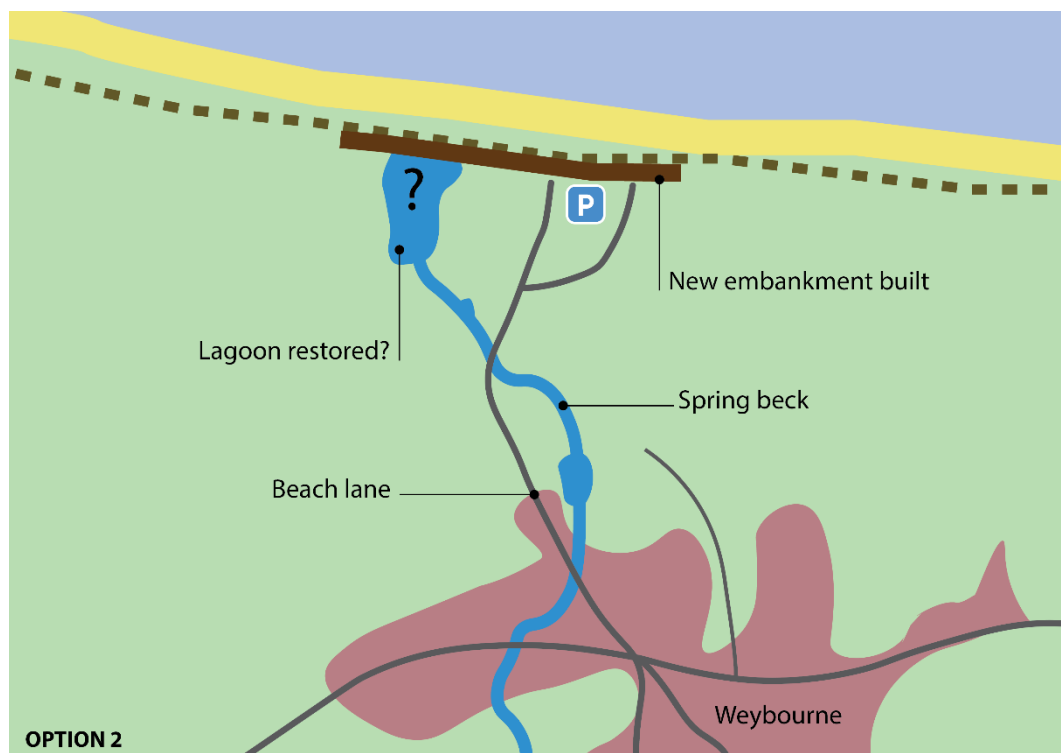


Figure 4-3: Illustration of the option to construct an Embankment directly landward of the existing shingle ridge

4.2 Low-regret resilience measures

Irrespective of the choice of management approach for the shingle ridge discussed above, there is a need for various *low-regret* measures to reduce risk and improve *resilience*. These will be effective now but will also buy time for planning and implementation of the larger measures, as discussed before in Section 4.1.2. For all these measures, there is a need to confirm how effective they will be, how any negative impacts would be addressed and how they would be funded; followed by a planned implementation by *NNDC*, Weybourne Community and other relevant parties.

4.2.1 Community awareness

When it comes to flood risk and coastal change, a more aware community is more resilient. *Coastwise* events and engagement in Weybourne, including those in Autumn 2025, reached approximately 15% of the inhabitants. For those community members who took part in these conversations, it is clear that there is very good awareness. However, there is still more that can be done, particularly considering the large number of non-permanent residents and the fact that the coastal change challenges are quite complex: there is a combination of flooding and erosion; the shingle ridge has multiple functions and there is uncertainty about the precise timing of its future development, as with all natural processes.

The first step is to work with the Parish Council and the main landowners (who are already actively involved) and other community members to determine how the community of Weybourne can take ownership of this *Coastal Change Transition Plan* as it develops. Establishing this broader community group and working with *NNDC* on the *Community Coastal Change Transition Plan* can be an important vehicle for raising and sustaining awareness (Action 3.2).

Potential engagement activities could consist of further *Coastwise Cafes*; taking part in wider community events, and mobilising people for the implementation of *low-regret* measures, such as *Property Flood Resilience* and flood warning (Action 2.1). An important element of community awareness is understanding of the risks posed by flooding, and a priority for the community of Weybourne is provision of better flood risk mapping, for both the flooding over the shingle ridge, as well as water flowing down Spring Beck, and how these risks could combine (Action 2.2). Once this information is produced, the Parish Council should work with the Environment Agency and *NNDC* to make this available to the community, for example by posting it on notice boards at key locations (e.g., the coastal car park and the Village Hall).

This *Community Coastal Change Transition Plan* does not include the terrace row of Coastguard Cottages near the edge of the cliff east of Weybourne, that are at risk of coastal erosion. *NNDC* and the Parish Council could work to increase awareness and engagement with the owners of these properties, so they can be represented in future planning should they choose (Action 3.1).

4.2.2 Review and refresh emergency response arrangements

Community members have expressed concerns that access to the Village Hall, which is a designated emergency rest centre, may be restricted due to flooding. The Plan identifies an action to review this arrangement (Action 2.3).

4.2.3 Property Flood Resilience for flood prone buildings

Property Flood Resilience (PFR) is defined as a set of modifications to a building to lower its flood risk (see [Property Flood Resilience - Environment Agency - Citizen Space](#)). *PFR* can reduce flood damage and speed up recovery after a flood. It is used around the UK in areas where improving or building of flood defences is not affordable. It can be installed quickly, and the most vulnerable homes can be targeted directly. Funding for *PFR* often comes from a combination of sources: the property owner, sometimes the insurer, and in some cases, there are grants available, especially following flood events. Government funding rules for *PFR* are currently evolving, which means that in the future there may be more potential for grant support.

As mentioned in Section 4.1.2), the plan identifies an action to explore *PFR* with owners of the low-lying properties along Beach Lane. Specific activities are:

- The identification and confirmation of potentially benefitting properties, along Beach Lane and potentially elsewhere, to be confirmed through local refinement of the flood maps, community knowledge and records of flood events
- Confirming type of measures suitable in which location
- Identify funding sources.

4.3 Continuing the transition planning process for Weybourne

This Community Transition Plan is a first step that aims to initiate a process. This will require close partnering between the community of Weybourne, North Norfolk District Council and other affected parties and stakeholders. It is the intention that this *Coastal Change Transition Plan* is owned by the community (Weybourne Parish Council has expressed an interest in this, noting that they would require project management support), while being adopted by NNDC. It is worth exploring if the Plan could have the status of, or support the development of, a Neighbourhood Plan.

The engagement during Autumn 2025 created many useful insights and ideas from Weybourne's community members. This also included clear indications from Weybourne Parish Council that they are interested in taking the required community-based ownership.

There is an important action for *Coastwise* and *NNDC* and Weybourne Parish Council to work with the community toward clear and agreed ownership (Action 3.2).

5 Action Plan

This section summarises the actions identified and highlighted throughout this document (reference as given to the sections above where further detail is provided). The *Action Plan* is presented here as a table (which for ease of reading is split over 3 pages, by section) but is also available as an Excel document. This is set up to be used by the community of Weybourne and NNDC as they continue the development and implementation of Weybourne's Community *Coastal Change Transition Plan*.

Note on abbreviations used in the following tables:

- **EA:** Environment Agency
- **NNDC:** North Norfolk District Council
- **PC:** Weybourne Parish Council

Table 5-1 Operational Action Plan for Weybourne's Community Coastal Transition Plan

Table 5-1 (a) Operational Action Plan for Weybourne's Community Coastal Transition Plan (Planning for the long term)

Document section reference	Description		Timescale	Urgency [H/M/L]	Owner	Other actors	Status
Section 4.1	1. Planning for the longer term						
Section 4.1.2	1.1	Confirm availability of land for the car park to roll back to	Asap	H	PC / NNDC	Community	Not started
	1.2	Review consents and permissions needed to allow the lagoon to be dredged	Asap	H	NNDC / EA	Community / PC	Not started
	1.3	Explore the potential for <i>PFR</i> along Beach Lane	Asap	H	NNDC / PC	Community	Not started
	1.4	Engage with Anglian Water to understand future plans for their Beach Lane Pumping Station	Asap	H	NNDC / PC	Community	Not started
	1.5	Review how flood risk would change if the ridge rolls back naturally	Asap	H	EA / NNDC	Community	Not started
	1.6	Engage with wider community, stakeholders such as Natural England, Anglian Water, the Norfolk Rivers Trust and the Norfolk Coast Partnership to confirm preferred approach and establish a partnership to work toward implementation	Asap following action 1.1 – 1.5	H	PC / NNDC	Community	Options developed based on community engagement and presented at December event

	1.7	Various actions toward implementation of the preferred option (see main text for specific actions)	Asap following confirmation of preferred option	H	PC / NNDC	Community	Not started
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Table 5-1(b) Operational Action Plan for Weybourne's Community Coastal Transition Plan (Low-regret resilience measures)

Document section reference	Description		Timescale	Urgency [H/M/L]	Owner	Other actors	Status
Section 4.2	2. Low-regret resilience measures						
	2.1	Plan for activities to raise awareness (see main text for potential specific activities)	Asap	H	NNDC / EA	Community / PC	Coastwise Cafes and Walk-in events held
	2.2	Clarify and map flood risk from various sources at a local scale by reviewing the modelling results behind the published flood maps, and make the information available to the community.	Asap	M	EA	Community / PC	Published flood maps
	2.3	Review the role of Village Hall as an emergency rest centre, given potential access restrictions during flooding	Asap	H	NCC	EA	

Table 5-1 (c) Operational Action Plan for Weybourne's Community Coastal Transition Plan (Continuing the transition planning process)

Document section reference	Description	Timescale	Urgency [H/M/L]	Owner	Other actors	Status
	3. Continuing the transition planning process					
Section 1.1	3.1 Coastwise to investigate engagement with the owner of the clifftop cottages	Asap during Coastwise	H	NNDC		
Section 4.3	3.2 Establish local ownership and governance of the <i>Coastal Change Transition Plan</i> and its future iterations, including funding	Asap, during Coastwise (before April 2027)	H	NNDC	Community / PC	Initial engagement through walk-ins and community events

6 Explanation of terminology

The complex and technical nature of coastal change and *adaptation* does require the use of terminology within this document, which is explained in the table below. Where these words appear in the main text, they are highlighted in *italics*. Links to additional information are also provided within the main document.

Term	Explanation
Adaptation	Measures or actions taken to reduce the vulnerability of people, homes and businesses to the impacts of flooding and coastal erosion
Action Plan	A list of practical steps, responsibilities and priorities.
Coastal Change Transition Plan	A roadmap, developed by and with the community, for how a community can stay safe and resilient as the coastline changes.
Coastal Erosion	A natural process of the coastline wearing away, as waves and storms remove land
Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme (CTAP)	A national programme, funded by the UK Government, helping coastal communities plan for long-term change.
Coastwise	NNDC's project (funded by CTAP) that is working with communities to plan for and adapt to coastal change.
Embankment	A small man-made earth bank built inland of the shingle ridge to help reduce flooding.
Flood Warning System	Tools to warn people about potential flooding.
Flood Zone	An area at risk of flooding now or in the future.
Lagoon / Storage Area	A natural or restored water area that can store extra water during high tides or heavy rain, helping to reduce flooding.
Low-Regret Measures / Initiatives	Simple actions that improve resilience now and, in the future, regardless of the future decisions or scenarios.
Nature Development / Naturalisation	Changing parts of the landscape so they work more like natural habitats, supporting wildlife and with the potential to help manage flood water.
North Norfolk District Council (NNDC)	The local council responsible for planning and flood risk management in North Norfolk.
NNDC's Corporate Plan	NNDC's main plan setting out what the council will focus on over the next few years, including protecting the environment, supporting local communities and strengthening the local economy.
NNDC's Local Plan	The statutory planning framework that sets out how North Norfolk will grow, develop and be protected up to 2040

Term	Explanation
Property Flood Resilience (PFR)	Improvements to homes and buildings that make them better able to withstand flooding, such as flood doors, raised electrics or water-resistant materials.
Relocation	Helping people and businesses move from high-risk to lower-risk areas.
Reprofiling	When machinery reshapes the shingle ridge after storms to keep it functioning.
Resilience	The capacity of people and places to plan for, better protect, respond to, and recover from flooding and coastal change.
Scenario	Different possible futures for the coast and/or community.
Shingle Overwash	When storm waves throw shingle over the ridge and into the land behind.
Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)	A regional plan for managing long-term coastal changes.
Strategic Coastal Change Transition Plan	NNDC's plan for managing the coastal change transition for North Norfolk (under development).
Tide / Tidal Locking	A phenomenon that can occur when the downstream water level (i.e., during very high tides) is higher than the water level upstream, causing water to back-up a water course.
Transition / Transition to Coastal Change	The journey that a coastal community takes to adapt to a changing coastline, with short, medium and long-term plans and actions.



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