

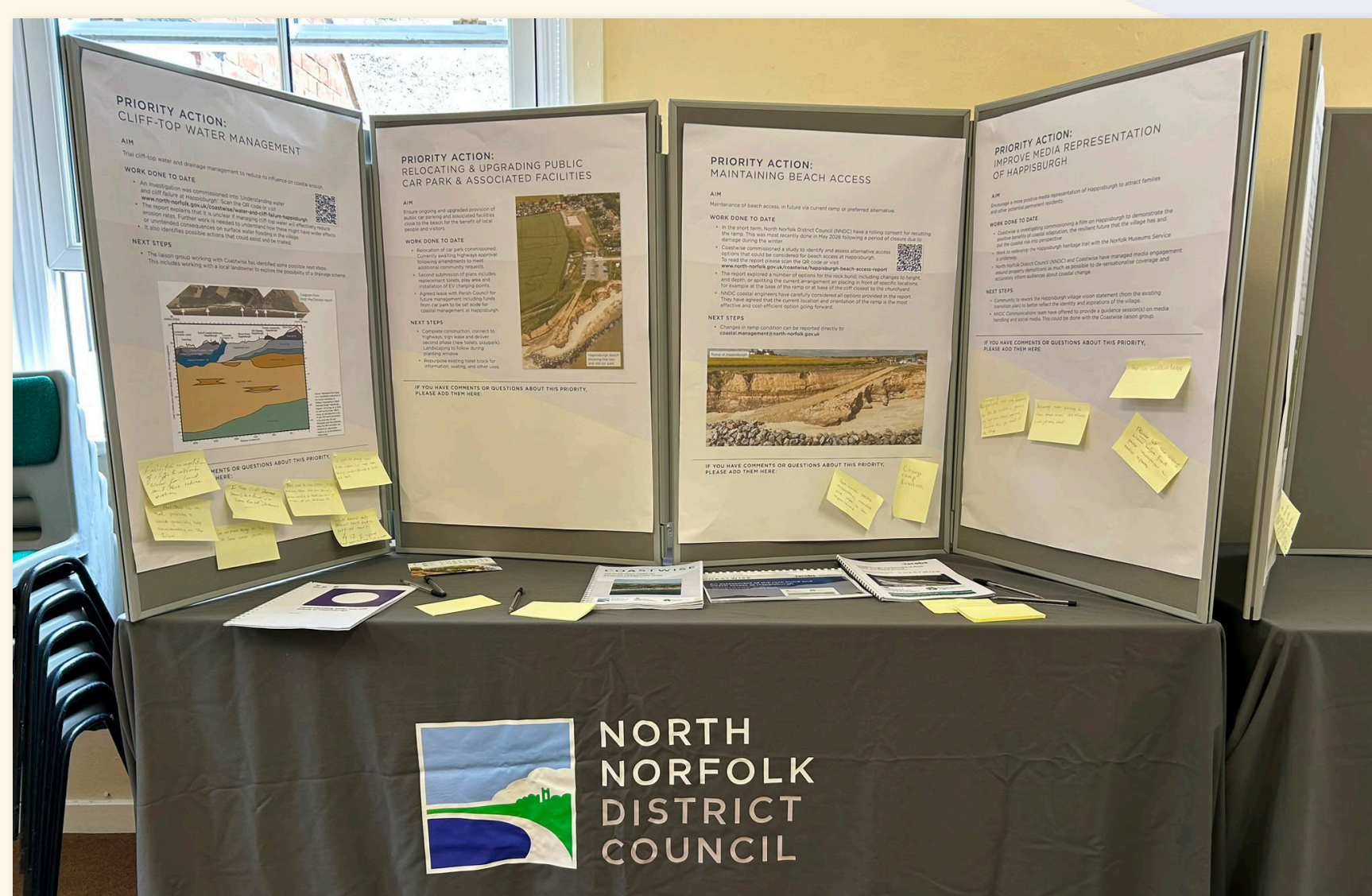
COASTWISE

HAPPISBURGH COASTAL TRANSITION PLAN DROP-IN SUMMARY REPORT JULY 2026

In July 2026 on Wednesday 15th July, Coastwise held a sixth community drop-in event in Happisburgh from 3-7pm in the Church Rooms. The purpose of this event was to present the priority actions that have emerged from the transition process so far. These plans reflect what Coastwise has heard through events, its work with local community groups, and engagement with stakeholders and contractors.

The Coastal Transition Plans, created by local communities and Coastwise, are some of the first of their kind anywhere in England. They will benefit local coastal communities while also sharing learning from North Norfolk with the Government. The gaps identified will help develop future national policy and funding structures, supporting other coastal communities in England affected by coastal erosion.

This report is a summary of the Happisburgh drop in event, which 33 people attended in person.



**NORTH
NORFOLK
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



**Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs**



**Environment
Agency**

THE AIMS OF THE CAFÉS WERE:

- 1. To share the Coastal Transition Plans (CTP’s) and the priorities identified as well as inviting feedback, comments and suggestions from the wider community;
- 2. To share Coastwise updates;
- 3. To review the vision for Happisburgh;
- 4. To reach a wider audience and attract new group members.
- 5. To build coastal erosion literacy.

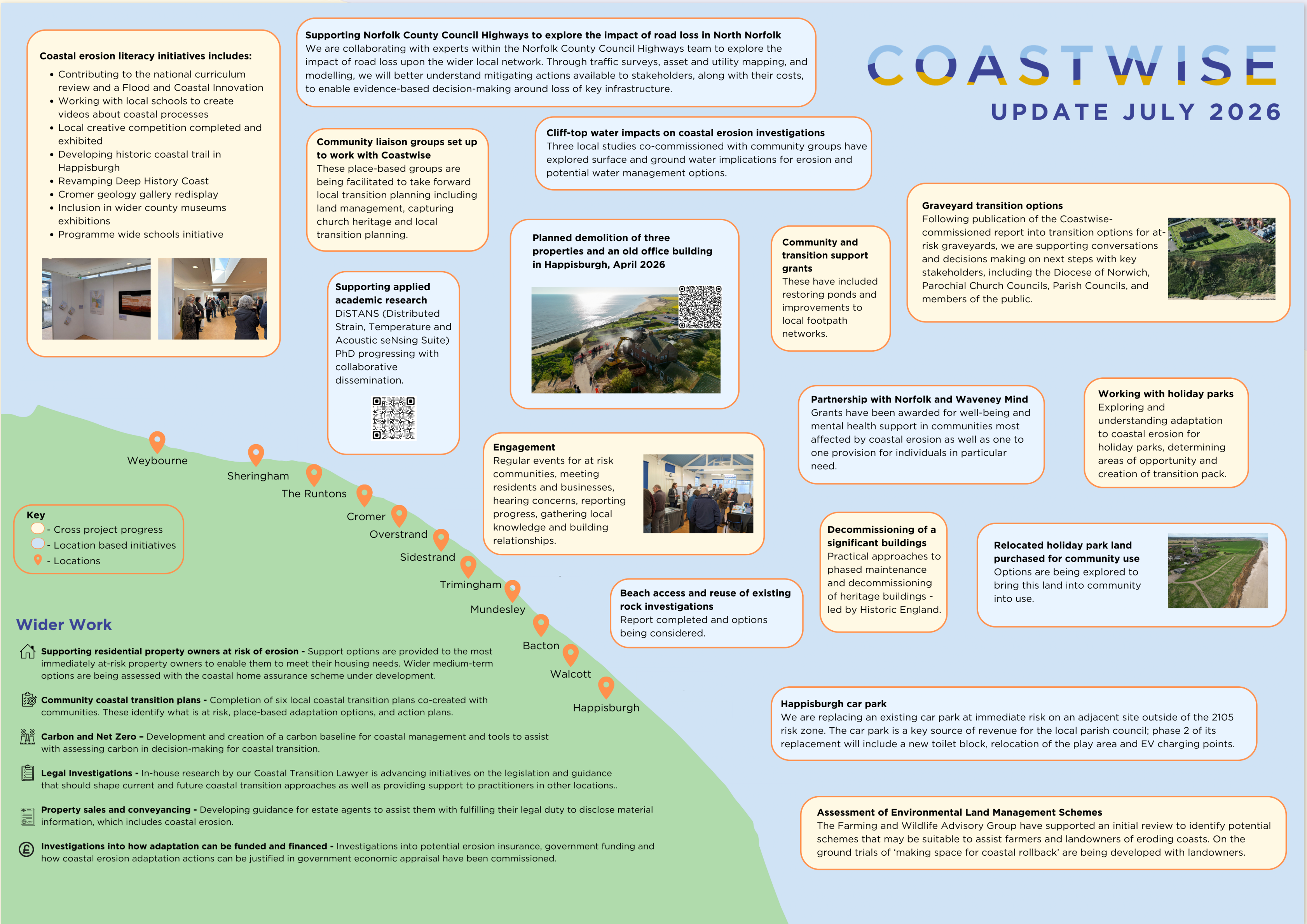
Please refer to previous café reports for details of the methodology and the rationale of the approach.

HOW WE SOUGHT TO DELIVER THE AIMS OF THE CAFÉ EVENT:

- 1. To share the Coastal Transition Plans (CTP’s) and the priorities identifiedas well as to inviting feedback, comments and suggestions from the wider community:
 - For each priority, Coastwise created a poster outlining what the priority is, why it is important, progress made to date and possible next steps.
 - Coastwise presented the CTPs at the drops in to enable attendees to develop an understanding of what the plans are for, as well as how they can be used by the community to prepare for and adapt to future coastal change.
 - Coastwise spoke to attendees, responded to their questions, and encouraged them to share feedback using sticky notes on the relevant posters.
 - Multiple copies of the full CTP’s and action plans were provided. These are also available on the Coastwise website - www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise/transition-plans
 - Copies of reports and investigations that were relevant to each priority action were provided. These are also available on the Coastwise website.
www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise/graveyards-report
www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise/water-and-cliff-failure-happisburgh
www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise/happisburgh-beach-access-report

The ten priority posters for Happisburgh are shown in this booklet with comments and suggestions provided on the day. If you were not able to attend the event and wish to share your comments please email: coastwise@north-norfolk.gov.uk

- 2. To share Coastwise updates:
 - A poster was created and displayed sharing key Coastwise updates.



3. To review the vision for Happisburgh:

- Handouts of the Happisburgh vision were provided for attendees to read, take notes on and to talk to the Coastwise team about.
- Attendees were invited to a workshop in the Autumn where Coastwise can facilitate the updating of the Community Vision for Happisburgh.
- A poster with questions to capture thoughts and comments on the existing vision was included on the table.

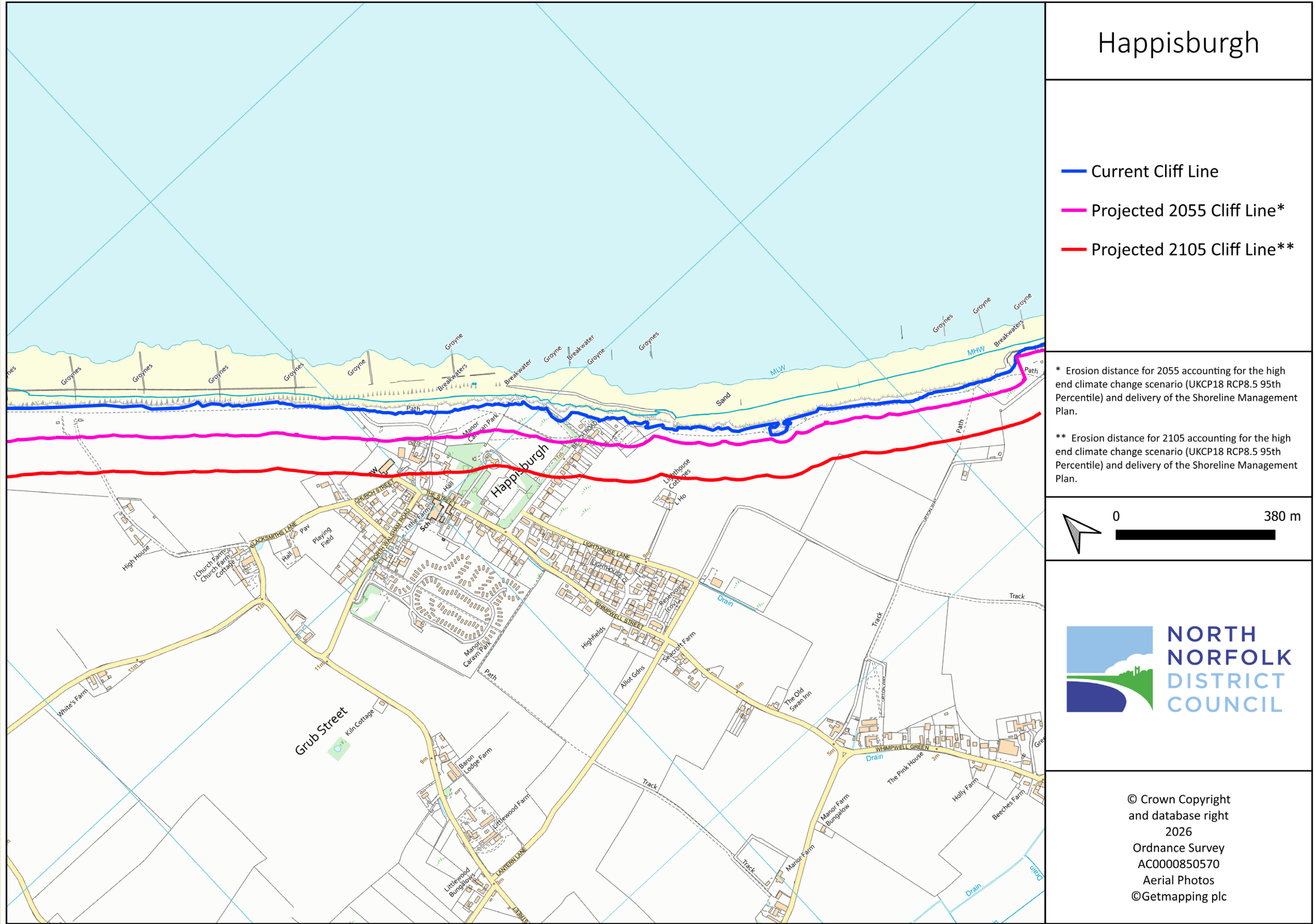


4. To reach a wider audience and attract new group members:

- The event was advertised widely through:
 - o North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) social media
 - o posters in the village
 - o an article in the Parish magazine
 - o via electronic communications to parents at the local primary school
 - o Coastwise mailing list email.
- The event ran from 3-7pm to broaden the opportunity for working people to attend.
- The presentation emphasised the need for community involvement- individuals voices are important and joining the group to work together with Coastwise was encouraged.
- Sign-up sheets for the Coastwise mailing list and Happisburgh Liaison group were provided.

5. To build coastal erosion literacy:

- A map of the village showing the higher percentile risk zones were displayed on a table.
- The Coastwise team and attendees discussed what was at risk and the impacts on the wider community.
- Small business cards were handed out with a link to the Coastwise risking mapping blog covering how to access and interpret the maps.



All of the Café resources including a link to the presentation for Happisburgh on our YouTube channel are available on our website.

www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise-blog/ctp-drop-in-events

HAPPISBURGH COMMUNITY VISION NOTES

Is there anything missing that you would like to add?

- Celebrating the community
- Community hub
- High efficiency housing with solar
- Housing for families
- Local facilities and services: shops, eateries, garage
- Also Whimpwell green used to have a lovely chippy and post office. – there existed in happisburgh in the past.
- Create a vision that captures the essence and magic of Happisburgh valuing nature mindfulness, health and wellbeing

Do you have any ideas about how the vision could be presented?

- A poster?

EVENT CAPTURE

Attendance, weather and venue info:

- 33 visitors, male/female mix
- Weather was dry, fair, not too hot
- Visitors were mostly retired age group but some of working age
- Around two thirds of visitors were ‘new to Coastwise’
- 5 Coastwise staff attended including Environment Agency (EA) team member. With a steady stream of visitors and the team alternating making refreshments, this was an appropriate number of staff.
- Communications representative took photographs and video.
- EA funding and finance national team member
- The Church Rooms are a different venue to past Coastwise drop in events. The venue is central to the village, which may have increased ease of visiting. Coastwise will look to use the Church Rooms again. Feedback from one visitor: it felt less intimidating as the material on display was less spread out.

Summary of discussions :

- Lots of long, in-depth and well-considered conversations were had.
- The 4pm scheduled presentation to approx. 15 people was a good addition to the Café structure. Feedback was favourable: “the presentation was something to turn up for”.
- Topics of interest from discussions: groundwater management, car park, rock armour placement, Beacon House garden, and wind turbine cabling and related infrastructure (impacts on cliffs from drilling of cables).

Learning from resources:

- Good to have a number of different elements of progress to present.
- Printed copies of the display materials were requested for reference at future events. The team were able to take this on board and prep in time for the Trimmingham event. These have later been shared with the Parish and at the Mind pop up café. The posters worked well, particularly the inclusion of relevant pictures (images needed date stamps).
- The posters gave an easy way for hosts to walk visitors through the range of key activities for Happisburgh.
- One visitor explained the difficulty in understanding what NNDC/EA/Natural England/Norfolk County Council, etc. are differentially responsible for. Information on this could be developed by the team.

PRIORITY ACTION: CLIFF-TOP WATER MANAGEMENT

AIM

Trial cliff-top water and drainage management to reduce its influence on coastal erosion.

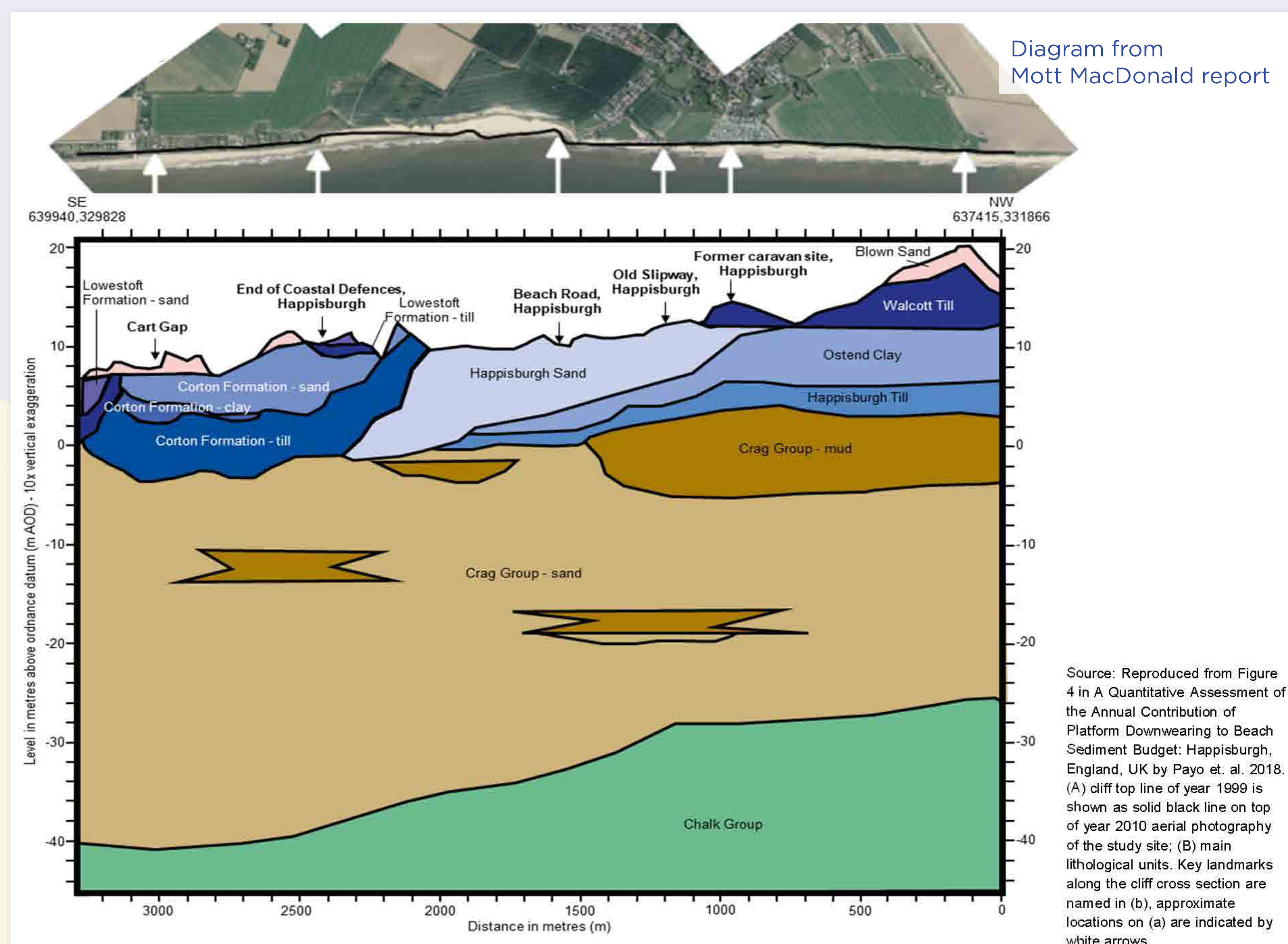
WORK DONE TO DATE

- An investigation was commissioned into '*Understanding water and cliff failure at Happisburgh*'. Scan the QR code or visit www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise/water-and-cliff-failure-happisburgh
- The report explains that it is unclear if managing cliff-top water will effectively reduce erosion rates. Further work is needed to understand how these might have wider effects or unintended consequences on surface water flooding in the village.
- It also identifies possible actions that could assist and be trialled.



NEXT STEPS

- The liaison group working with Coastwise has identified some possible next steps. This includes working with a local landowner to explore the possibility of a drainage scheme.



COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS ADDED FROM THE DROP-IN EVENT:

- Facilitate re-vegetation of the cliffs to absorb water from land and reduce erosion.
- I feel this is a real priority and could possibly help considerably in the future.
- I think cliff drainage should be a priority and some for defence.
- Can we plant things on the cliff to slow water down?
- Trees used to line smaller fields (particularly before Dutch Elm disease) Farmer subsidies for trees whilst drainage an issues, not just wildflowers.
- Look at drainage impact of new windfarm link – much hard standing at entrances to fields and here.

PRIORITY ACTION: LOCAL HOUSING

AIM

Support homeowners at risk of coastal erosion and share learning.

WORK DONE TO DATE

- Support has been provided to property owners most immediately at risk via grants for professional services, property purchase options and demolition management.
- Learning from this has helped longer-term options to be investigated, assessed and developed with national input for wider application ('Coastal Home Assurance Scheme')
- Coastwise commissioned a national investigation with partners and industry representatives on the possibility of coastal erosion insurance. It has found that currently there is nowhere in the world that insures for coastal erosion. It is not deemed to be viable for England either, as a very significant Government policy change would be required which is highly unlikely. The report will be made available soon on the Coastwise webpage, please scan the QR code or visit www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise-blog



NEXT STEPS

- Coastwise is preparing to fund a trial of the Coastal Home Assurance Scheme to support further homeowners at coastal erosion risk. More information will be shared with communities and eligible households over the coming year.

AIM

Identify sites for affordable housing in the long run to attract families to the village.

WORK DONE TO DATE

- Sites are being investigated in Happisburgh as locations for affordable housing to replace that lost to coastal erosion.
- Housing Association has developed a scheme in Happisburgh for affordable housing - awaiting further information from developer.

NEXT STEPS

- Community to input ideas for potential affordable housing sites in the new Local Plan - via drop-in events, Parish Council, Coastwise liason group or other means.
- Coastwise can facilitate community representatives to engage with NNDC housing team to discuss land for affordable housing.

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS ADDED FROM THE DROP-IN EVENT:

- Next to new potential extension to caravan park
- Please priorities social council houses to bring young families into the village before the school closes due to lack of pupils.

PRIORITY ACTION: MAINTAINING BEACH ACCESS

AIM

Maintenance of beach access, in future via current ramp or preferred alternative.

WORK DONE TO DATE

- In the short term, North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) have a rolling consent for recutting the ramp. This was most recently done in May 2026 following a period of closure due to damage during the winter.
- Coastwise commissioned a study to identify and assess alternative access options that could be considered for beach access at Happisburgh. To read the report please scan the QR code or visit www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise/happisburgh-beach-access-report
- The report explored a number of options for the rock bund, including changes to height, and depth, or splitting the current arrangement an placing in front of specific locations, for example at the base of the ramp or at base of the cliff closest to the churchyard.
- NNDC coastal engineers have carefully considered all options provided in the report. They have agreed that the current location and orientation of the ramp is the most effective and cost-efficient option going forward.



NEXT STEPS

- Changes in ramp condition can be reported directly to: coastal.management@north-norfolk.gov.uk



COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS ADDED FROM THE DROP-IN EVENT:

- Ramp needs to be available and accessible all year round and cater for all abilities.
- Additional rocks desperately needed and where to be repositioned?
- Change ramp direction.

PRIORITY ACTION: IMPROVE MEDIA REPRESENTATION OF HAPPISBURGH

AIM

Encourage a more positive media representation of Happisburgh to attract families and other potential permanent residents.

WORK DONE TO DATE

- Coastwise is investigating commissioning a film on Happisburgh to demonstrate the positive benefits of coastal adaptation, the resilient future that the village has and put the coastal risk into perspective.
- Work to redevelop the Happisburgh heritage trail with the Norfolk Museums Service is underway.
- North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) and Coastwise have managed media engagement around property demolitions as much as possible to de-sensationalise coverage and accurately inform audiences about coastal change.

NEXT STEPS

- Community to rework the Happisburgh village vision statement (from the existing transition plan) to better reflect the identity and aspirations of the village.
- NNDC Communications team have offered to provide a guidance session(s) on media handling and social media. This could be done with the Coastwise liaison group.

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS ADDED FROM THE DROP-IN EVENT:

- Encourage media publicity of when beach access is reopening and not just when it is closed.
- Tap into windfarm money.
- Please let the village know before front page newspaper and radio reports.
- Images of the lighthouse used frequently for PR for Norfolk in general (e.g. Anglia news and property programmes!) Can we monetise this for the benefit of the village?

PRIORITY ACTION: MAXIMISE USE OF EXISTING ROCK ARMOUR

AIM

Re-use existing rock in the most effective way possible.

WORK DONE TO DATE

- Rock armour has been in place for a number of years and repositioned, when possible, as required.
- Coastwise commissioned a study to investigate the effectiveness of the current rock placement at Happisburgh and explore alternative options to reuse the existing rock to maximise its effectiveness in slowing erosion. To read the report please scan the QR code or visit www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise/happisburgh-beach-access-report
- Other than leaving in current location, options identified include continuing to roll the rock back as it is, to shorten but bolster the height around the end of Beach Road and the beach access, or to split the rock and place in different locations, etc.
- The possibility of fundraising for additional rocks has recently been proposed by some local people.



NEXT STEPS

- Community to liaise with NNDC Coastal Management team regarding preferred options. This can be supported by Coastwise via the Parish Council or the Coastwise liaison group.
- Fundraising for additional rocks is outside the remit of Coastwise, however NNDC can facilitate advice if a local group forms to investigate and pursue this option. A community lead would need to take forward this idea and explore feasibility and options with NNDC Coastal Management team.



Rock bund at Happisburgh

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS ADDED FROM THE DROP-IN EVENT:

- Why is only a small amount of coast in Happisburgh defended?
- Campaign for more rocks – public to donate – buy one rock, but half a rock, buy quarter a rock etc..

PRIORITY ACTION: RE-USE OF BEACON HOUSE SITE

AIM

Establish a community garden and potential alternative route for the coastal path.

WORK DONE TO DATE

- The site of the former Beacon House on Beach Road has been purchased by NNDC.
- Due to coastal erosion risk, the property and outbuildings have been safely demolished.
- The mature garden has been preserved, and contains established trees, shrubs and wildlife. No maintenance or clearance has been carried out.
- There has been some interest expressed in making the garden accessible to the community, as a garden for public enjoyment and benefit. The site could also provide a potential alternative route for the coastal path.

NEXT STEPS

- These ideas can be progressed via a local working group. A group will need to be formed to advance the management and maintenance of the site.
- Coastwise can provide some support through a grant, other support and required legal advice.
- A community led ecological survey of the site would also be a beneficial starting point. Coastwise can provide some contacts for this.



COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS ADDED FROM THE DROP-IN EVENT:

- Site for coffee bar?
- Parish council to oversee?
- Move 1: Hire a skip for all non horticultural matter, 2: Clear paved area and paths to reveal form of a garden, 3: Tree / Shrub / Plant survey (ecological surveys flora and fauna), 4: Restore not alter, 5: Seats for visitors
- A really great idea to meander the coastal path through the garden – wide enough for prams, wheelchairs etc..

PRIORITY ACTION: RECORDING & PREPARING ST MARY'S CHURCH FOR THE FUTURE

AIM

Start the process of capturing living records of St Mary's church well in advance of it being at immediate risk of erosion.

WORK DONE TO DATE

- A digital heritage capture and scan of the church was commissioned by Coastwise and completed by Wessex Archaeology in 2026 to digitally 'preserve' and be able to share the experience of this significant building. To learn more about this project, please scan the QR code or visit www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise/digital-heritage-project



Wessex Archaeology working with Happisburgh Primary School pupils

- Local people were invited to be involved in the project and many people visited during the open days to join in with recording aspects of the church using lidar scanners and record their memories.
- A digital model is being created. When it is finished, it will be possible to explore the church, hear stories from the community, watch and listen to the ringing of the bells, see a church service and hear the organ being played. You can also view the local children's 3D scans of features from around the church.

NEXT STEPS

- The heritage capture and scan outputs from the work led by Wessex Archaeology will be shared online soon, including some short film reports about the work.
- St Mary's Church in Happisburgh will also be part of an upcoming study by Historic England looking at long term management and decommissioning of historic buildings; Happisburgh one of the many case studies being looked at – timing to be confirmed. Coastwise will work closely with Historic England and support them to maximise local engagement with this when the project starts (tbc).

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS ADDED FROM THE DROP-IN EVENT:

- It will cost more to exhume all the graves than a bit of drainage and defence in front of the church.

PRIORITY ACTION: PREPARING THE GRAVEYARD FOR FUTURE CHANGE

AIM

Prepare for the future loss of site to coastal erosion decades in advance to enable theological, pastoral and practical aspects to be thoroughly considered in time for necessary decisions and actions to be taken.

WORK DONE TO DATE

- The '*Graveyards Transition Options*' investigation was commissioned, and the report published to support Parochial Church Council (PCC) and Diocese, as well as other places outside north Norfolk with similar sites at risk in their planning and decision-making. To read the report, please scan the QR code or visit www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise/graveyards-report
- Coastwise is supporting the PCC and Diocese to explore future options of the graveyard, in discussion with the Parish Council.



NEXT STEPS

- Creation of public information materials and a public event/s.
- Ground Penetrating Radar survey to be completed in the autumn to better understand the layout of the graveyard.



Happisburgh church and graveyard

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS ADDED FROM THE DROP-IN EVENT:

No comments or questions noted.

PRIORITY ACTION: RELOCATING & UPGRADING PUBLIC CAR PARK & ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

AIM

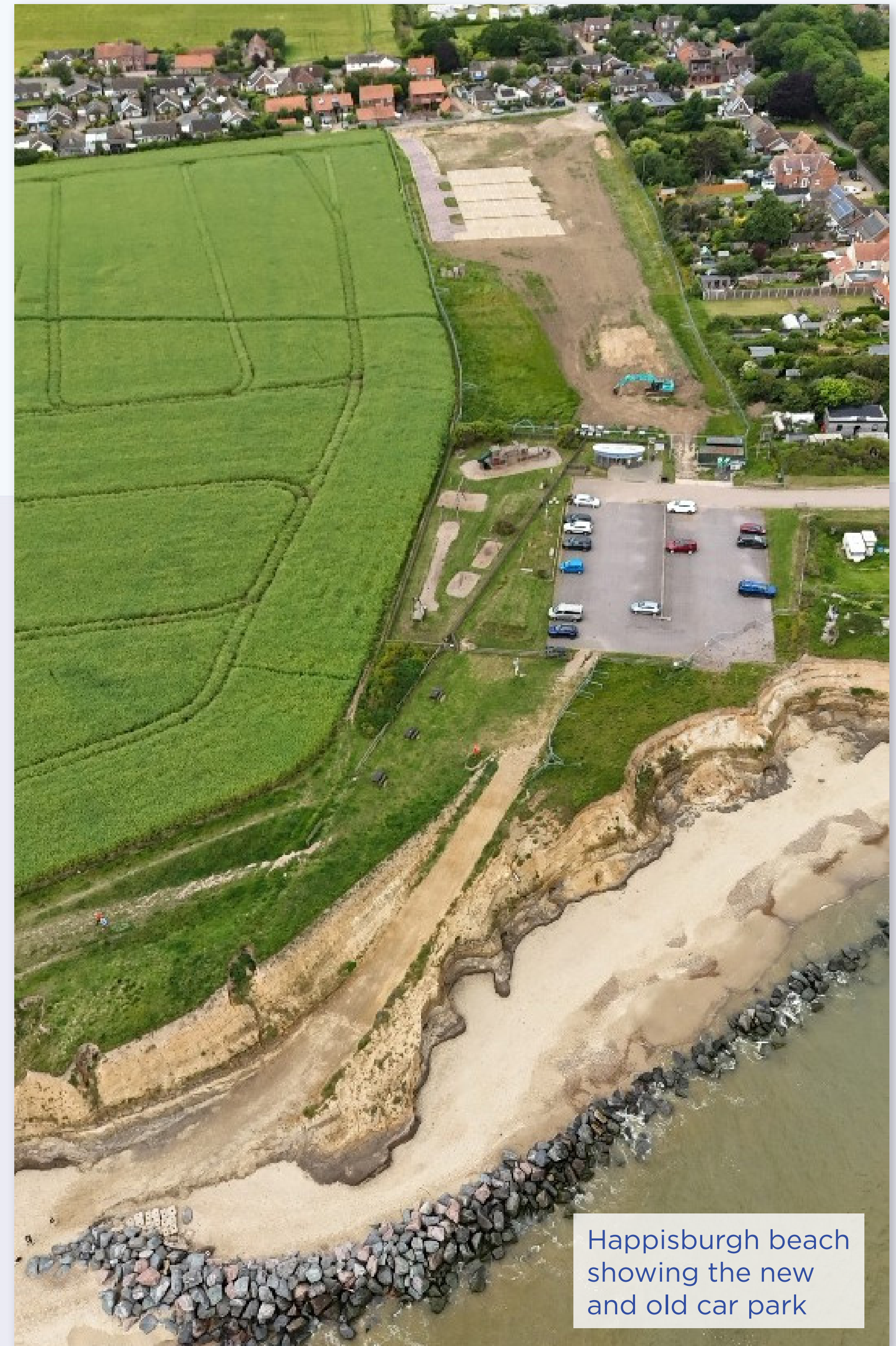
Ensure ongoing and upgraded provision of public car parking and associated facilities close to the beach for the benefit of local people and visitors.

WORK DONE TO DATE

- Relocation of car park commissioned. Currently awaiting highways approval following amendments to meet additional community requests.
- Second submission of plans includes replacement toilets, play area and installation of EV charging points.
- Agreed lease with Parish Council for future management including funds from car park to be set aside for coastal management at Happisburgh.

NEXT STEPS

- Complete construction, connect to highways, sign lease and deliver second phase (new toilets, playpark). Landscaping to follow during planting window.
- Repurpose existing toilet block for information, seating, and other uses.



Happisburgh beach showing the new and old car park

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS ADDED FROM THE DROP-IN EVENT:

- Create a community hub focussed on bringing community together – mindfulness and wellbeing areas, café and yoga hub.

PRIORITY ACTION: IMPROVEMENTS TO MANOR FIELD

AIM

Maximise community benefits arising from access to Manor Field.

WORK DONE TO DATE

- Coastwise has bought land and completed ecological surveys to better understand the flora and fauna on this site and consider how biodiversity can be supported.
- NNDC have completed a site walk over to identify issues and arranged for the safe demolition of derelict buildings.
- Past events have established the value of this site to the community as accessible green space for recreation. Interest has been expressed in the potential for other uses.
- An information board has been acquired and will be installed in the near future, which will include updates about Coastwise activities locally.

NEXT STEPS

- Ideas such as the installation of some benches have been put forward and will be considered with the Coastwise liaison group. Where possible, Coastwise will facilitate taking these ideas forward.
- If you have ideas about improvements for this space, please add them below.
- Please provide information about any issues with the site or subsequent ideas about its use to Coastwise: coastwise@north-norfolk.gov.uk. If possible, please include a photograph and use a What3words reference or pinned location.



COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS ADDED FROM THE DROP-IN EVENT:

- Please remove the varying debris from where the caravans were sited and possibly cut in some wandering paths and possibly benches but please leave as a wild area.