

Overstrand to Walcott

Environmental Value

Part II: Technical Support Information

**Report EX 4692
March 2003**

Overstrand to Walcott

Environmental Value

Part II: Technical Support Information

March 2003



Address and Registered Office: HR Wallingford Ltd. Howbery Park, Wallingford, OXON OX10 8BA
Tel: +44 (0) 1491 835381 Fax: +44 (0) 1491 832233

Registered in England No. 2562099. HR Wallingford is a wholly owned subsidiary of HR Wallingford Group Ltd.

Contract - Consultancy

This report describes work commissioned by North Norfolk District Council whose representative was Mr Peter Frew. The HR Wallingford job numbers were CDR3212 and CDR3214. The work was carried out by Dr Cliff Ohl of HR Wallingford and Mr Peter Lawton of St La Haye Ltd. The HR Wallingford project manager was Mr Paul Sayers.

Prepared by

(name)

.....

(Title)

Approved by

(name)

.....

(Title)

Authorised by

(name)

.....

(Title)

Date.....

© HR Wallingford Limited 2003

HR Wallingford accepts no liability for the use by third parties of results or methods presented in this report.

The Company also stresses that various sections of this report rely on data supplied by or drawn from third party sources. HR Wallingford accepts no liability for loss or damage suffered by the client or third parties as a result of errors or inaccuracies in such third party data.

Summary

Overstrand to Walcott

Environmental Value

Part II: Technical Support Information

March 2003

The coastal dynamics along the study frontage are of particular interest in terms of maintaining the exposure of the cliffs and providing a sediment supply along the coast. However, the threat that these dynamics pose to the environment through continuing and sometimes rapid erosion is crucial.

Three sections of cliff within the frontage have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and one of these is now a Special Area of Conservation. Furthermore, there are three County Wildlife Sites within the frontage. Any works carried out along the seafront at Overstrand or the frontage at Mundesley would potentially affect these sites.

The geology of the coastal cliffs in North Norfolk has an intrinsic value in contributing to the understanding of 'Earth heritage.' The dynamic nature of the soft cliffs results in the creation of a varied flora and fauna, including specialised species that depend on disturbance of the ground to survive. Many of the cliffs along the coastline form important habitats for wildlife, including rare invertebrates and plant communities.

In terms of tourism, the area from Overstrand to Mundesley grew in importance in the late 18th century, and the villages of Overstrand, Trimingham, and Mundesley still depend on tourism for a substantial part of their income. As the character of the towns depends upon their seafront, any coastal defence schemes need to reflect this interrelationship. In addition, the safety of the large number of people that visit the beach and seafront in this region must be taken into consideration when designing any coastal defences.

Contents

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| <i>Title page</i> | <i>i</i> |
| <i>Contract</i> | <i>iii</i> |
| <i>Summary</i> | <i>v</i> |
| <i>Contents</i> | <i>vii</i> |

| | | |
|-------|---|----|
| 1. | Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.1 | Background..... | 1 |
| 1.2 | Outline of the report..... | 1 |
| 2. | Environmental designations..... | 2 |
| 2.1 | Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and Coastal Habitat Management Plan (CHaMP)..... | 2 |
| 2.1.1 | Overstrand Cliffs SSSI and SAC..... | 2 |
| 2.1.2 | Sidestrand to Trimingham Cliffs SSSI..... | 2 |
| 2.1.3 | Mundesley Cliffs SSSI..... | 3 |
| 2.1.4 | Paston Great Barn SAC..... | 3 |
| 2.1.5 | North Norfolk Coast SAC and CHaMP..... | 3 |
| 2.1.6 | SSSI action points..... | 3 |
| 2.1.7 | Operations likely to damage SSSIs..... | 4 |
| 2.2 | County Wildlife Sites..... | 8 |
| 2.2.1 | Cromer Sea Front Wildlife Site..... | 8 |
| 2.2.2 | Overstrand Wildlife Site..... | 8 |
| 2.2.3 | Mundesley Wildlife Site..... | 8 |
| 2.3 | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)..... | 8 |
| 3. | Geology, flora, and fauna..... | 14 |
| 3.1 | Cliff stabilisation, sediment yield, and conservation..... | 14 |
| 3.2 | Flora and fauna..... | 15 |
| 4. | History, tourism, and coastal fisheries..... | 16 |
| 4.1 | Historical environment..... | 16 |
| 4.1.1 | Overstrand..... | 16 |
| 4.1.2 | Trimingham..... | 16 |
| 4.1.3 | Mundesley..... | 17 |
| 4.2 | Tourism and recreation..... | 17 |
| 4.3 | Coastal fisheries..... | 17 |
| 5. | References..... | 19 |

Tables

| | | |
|-----------|--|---|
| Table 2.1 | Potentially Damaging Operations for North Norfolk SSSIs and SAC (English Nature 2002)..... | 5 |
| Table 2.2 | Description of SSSIs and SAC..... | 6 |

Contents continued

Figures

| | | |
|------------|--|----|
| Figure 2.1 | Environmental designations along the North Norfolk coast | 9 |
| Figure 2.2 | Environmental designations near Overstrand | 10 |
| Figure 2.3 | Environmental designations near Trimingham | 11 |
| Figure 2.4 | Environmental designations near Mundesley | 12 |
| Figure 2.5 | Environmental designations near Bacton | 13 |

Appendices

| | |
|------------|---|
| Appendix A | Overstrand Cliffs SAC designation |
| Appendix B | SSSI and GCR designations |
| Appendix C | County Wildlife Site designations |
| Appendix D | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: Maps and Management Strategy Document |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This report provides an overview of the environmental value of the study area, to include various national and international designations. This includes a brief review of tourism and recreational activities in the area as well as its geology, flora, and fauna.

1.2 Outline of the report

The structure of the report is as follows:

Main text

- **Section 2** presents the environmental designations, with discussion of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), County Wildlife Sites, and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- **Section 3** discusses the geology of the region and details the flora and fauna typical in the study area.
- **Section 4** provides discussion of the historical environment and issues related to tourism and recreation.

Appendices

- **Appendix A** contains the SAC designation for Overstrand Cliffs.
- **Appendix B** contains the SSSI and Geological Conservation Review (GCR) designations.
- **Appendix C** provides details of the County Wildlife Site designations.
- **Appendix D** presents the extent of the AONB designation.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS

Various environmental designations have been assigned to land within the limits of the strategy study. Figure 2.1 at the end of this section provides a regional plot of the boundaries of the assigned designations. Furthermore, Figures 2.2 to 2.5 present closer detail near to the towns of Overstrand, Trimingham, Mundesley, and Bacton, respectively. Information pertinent to the individual designations is given below and in the appendices where appropriate.

2.1 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and Coastal Habitat Management Plan (CHaMP)

Under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, sections of cliff at Overstrand, Trimingham, and Mundesley have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Furthermore, in accordance with the European Community's Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora), Overstrand Cliffs have been designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (EU code UK0030232). These designations reflect the interesting geology of the cliffs, which are largely of glacial till. The citation for Overstrand Cliffs SAC is provided here in Appendix A, while the SSSI citations (accompanied by the relevant Geological Conservation Review (GCR)) are supplied in Appendix B.

All the sites lie within the frontage covered in this report. Any works carried out along the seafront at Overstrand will almost certainly affect the SAC at Overstrand and would be likely to influence the Sidestrand to Trimingham site. Works along the frontage at Mundesley would potentially affect the Mundesley Cliffs SSSI; however, they are less likely to have any significant impact on the sites to the west.

The reasons for designation of the SSSIs and SAC, as provided by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and English Nature, are briefly summarised below. Further description of these three sites, with more details on their biological and geological attributes, is provided in Appendices 1 and 2 to this report. In addition to the coastal SAC at Overstrand, one inland SAC lies within the bounds of the study area and an internationally important SAC is located along the coast to the west of the site. These are described in brief below.

2.1.1 Overstrand Cliffs SSSI and SAC

This stretch of coast provides the best example of soft cliff habitat in East Anglia. The cliffs are up to 70m high and exhibit a wide range of mobility, which is reflected in a diverse range of sub-maritime habitats of considerable botanical, entomological, and ecological importance. Exposures at the eastern end provide information concerning the glacial history of the area and the Geological Conservation Review site falls within the boundary of the biological site.

The cliffs consist of unconsolidated Pleistocene sediments that are subject to cliff falls and slumping. This instability has led to the development of a successional sequence of habitats from bare sand and ruderal communities to semi-stabilised grassland and scrub. Freshwater seepage lines emerging from the cliff-face and stable cliff-top grassland are important elements in the overall diversity of the site, which also supports an outstanding assemblage of invertebrates.

2.1.2 Sidestrand to Trimingham Cliffs SSSI

The cliffs between Overstrand and Mundesley contain a fine series of geological exposures, and they are recognised to expose one of the best pre-glacial stratigraphic sequences in England. This site is also designated as a Geological Conservation Review (GCR) site by virtue of these features of geological interest, including the Pleistocene deposits of East Anglia, the vertebrate Palaeontology, and mass movement processes. The chalk exposed in the foreshore and cliffs are the youngest Mesozoic rocks in the British Isles and are the only significant outcrops of chalk of this age in Britain.

The cliffs extend for a distance of 6.5km, are 60m high, and are subject to frequent cliff falls and slumping. This creates a mosaic of habitats from bare clay and sand to ruderal communities and semi-stabilised grassland with occasional seepage lines that support an outstanding assemblage of invertebrates. With an impressive history of rotational slumping, the cliffs are known as the finest site of slumping unconsolidated sediments in Britain.

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (1991) describes the principles of conservation for this site as follows:

‘The scientific interest of the Trimmingham site is the fact that the cliffs exhibit slumping and landslipping. Any constructions that stop or limit this movement therefore detract from the science. However, it would appear that as previous defences have been destroyed, a complex and expensive series of defences would be required to slow down the rate of erosion. This may not be feasible, especially as slippage would still occur as it is seepage induced.’

2.1.3 Mundesley Cliffs SSSI

To the west of Mundesley, the cliffs are comprised of 1.9km of unconsolidated sediments. They provide some of the best sections in the Pleistocene Cromer Forest-bed Formation, especially in Cromerian marine and freshwater deposits, and freshwater sediments of the early Anglian Cold Stage. The site is nationally important by virtue of the exposed and very extensive Pleistocene sequence.

The geological site documentation / management brief (English Nature 1998) states that Mundesley cliffs are of low/medium sensitivity. The document states that any coastal defence works or slope stability measures ‘could have very serious and irreversible effect of the geological interest of the site over large areas.’

2.1.4 Paston Great Barn SAC

Located well inland from the coast, this SAC (EU code UK0030235) is close to the major Bacton Gas Site. The site of a 16th century thatched barn, it is the only known example of a maternity roost of barbastelle bats (*Barbastella barbastellus*) in a building.

2.1.5 North Norfolk Coast SAC and CHaMP

The North Norfolk Coast SAC (EU code UK0030232) embraces the coastal habitat to the west of Kelling Quag, which is well to the west of the study area. The general site character is made up of tidal rivers, estuaries, mud flats, sand flats, lagoons, sand dunes, beaches, machair, shingle, sea cliffs, islets, bogs, marshes, water fringed vegetation, fens, and improved grassland.

This SAC is a complex site incorporating Special Protection Area, SSSI, and RAMSAR designations. It is of international environmental importance and is, correspondingly, of value to the local economy. The area is also the subject of a Coastal Habitat Management Plan (CHaMP) that extends from Snettisham to Sheringham. However, the CHaMP deals only with Natura 2000 and RAMSAR designated features and does not consider all of the nature conservation interests within the area of the plan.

2.1.6 SSSI action points

English Nature (1994a and 1994b) provides the following summarised action points for the SSSI along the frontage:

- ‘The site should be monitored once every four years to observe the levels of vegetation on the cliff face and any evidence of damage to the site including construction or sea defences.
- Any proposals for coastal defence works should be carefully analysed for their impact on the geological interest of the site. Encourage soft engineering options where possible.

- Oppose all proposals which will damage, obscure, or reduce access to the geological interest of the site.
- Ensure that the natural erosive processes continue at the site (reduced rate is acceptable).
- Regular contact should be maintained between English Nature and the landowners concerning conservation of the site.
- Access to the site for researchers and educational parties should be maintained.
- Encourage further research into the geological interest at the site.’

2.1.7 Operations likely to damage SSSIs

As shown in Table 2.1, multiple operations have been highlighted by English Nature (2002) as potentially damaging to the above SSSIs (i.e. Potential Damaging Operations, or PDOs) and SAC. In addition to providing summary material concerning the above sites, Table 2.2 lists the specific PDOs relevant to each site.

Table 2.1 Potentially Damaging Operations for North Norfolk SSSIs and SAC (English Nature 2002)

| Standard Ref. No. | Type of Operation |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1 | Cultivation, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing, and re-seeding. |
| 4 | Changes in the mowing or cutting regime (including hay making to silage and cessation). |
| 5 | Application of manure, fertilisers and lime. |
| 6 | Application of pesticides, including herbicides (weedkillers). |
| 7 | Dumping, spreading, or discharge of any materials. |
| 8 | Burning. |
| 9 | The release into the site of any wild, feral, or domestic animal*, plant, or seed. |
| 10 | The killing or removal of any wild animal*, including pest control. |
| 11 | The destruction, displacement, removal, or cutting of any plant or plant remains, including tree, shrub, herb, dead or decaying wood, moss, lichen, fungus, or turf. |
| 12 | The introduction of tree and/or woodland management (including planting, clear and selective felling, thinning, coppicing, changes in species composition). |
| 13a | Drainage (including gripping and the use of mole, tile, tunnel, or artificial drains). |
| 13b | Modification of the structure of springs, as by realignment. |
| 15 | Infilling of pools, marshes, or pits. |
| 17 | Reclamation of land from sea, estuary, or marsh. |
| 19 | Erection of sea defences or coast protection works, including cliff or landslip drainage or stabilisation measures. |
| 20 | Extraction of minerals, including sand and gravel, topsoil, subsoil, chalk, shells, and spoil. |
| 21 | Construction, removal, or destruction of roads, tracks, walls, fences, hardstands, bank, ditches, or other earthworks, or the laying, maintenance, or removal of pipelines and cables, above or below ground. |
| 22 | Storage of materials. |
| 23 | Erection of permanent or temporary structures, or the undertaking of engineering works, including drilling. |
| 24 | Modification of natural or man-made features including battering, buttressing, or grading faces and infilling of pits. |
| 26 | Use of vehicles or craft likely to damage or disturb features of interest. |
| 27 | Recreational or other activities likely to damage features of interest. |

* The term ‘animal’ includes any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish, or invertebrate.

Table 2.2 Description of SSSIs and SAC

| Area | Description of feature / attribute | Scale of importance | Substitutable | Nature conservation value | Potentially damaging operations |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---------------|---------------------------|--|
| Overstrand Cliffs SSSI and SAC | <p>Biological features: The vegetation exhibits cycles of succession with ruderal communities developing on the newly exposed sands and mud followed by partially stabilised grasslands and scrub. Seepage areas support wet fen communities and, in places, perched reed beds occur. The diverse range of habitats supports an outstanding range of invertebrates.</p> <p>Geological features: The cliffs are up to 70 m high and are composed of Pleistocene sands and clays with freshwater seepage in places and are subject to moderately frequent cliff-falls and landslips.</p> | Overstrand cliffs are one of the best examples of unprotected vegetated soft cliffs on the North Sea coast in the most easterly part of the UK. | No | Very high | 1, 4 - 12, 13a, 13b, 15, 19 - 24, 26, 27 |
| Sidestrand to Trimmingham SSSI | <p>Biological features: This is probably the best soft rock cliff site for invertebrates in East Anglia. There are modern records for a number of rare coleoptera including <i>Nebria livida</i> and isopoda associated with the crevices and fallen debris at the bases of the cliffs.</p> <p>Geological features: Four aspects of the geology of the site are of special interest; the chalk, the Pleistocene sediments, fossil vertebrates and mass movement. The chalk is exposed on the foreshore and cliffs in a series of blocks which have been thrust upwards by glacial action. It has a rich fossil invertebrate fauna, which has enabled much of the chalk to be assigned to the Lower Maastrichtian stage i.e. very late Cretaceous age.</p> | The cliffs at Sidestrand expose one of the best pre-glacial stratigraphic sequences in England | No | Very high | 1, 5 - 12, 13a, 13b, 15, 19 - 24, 26, 27 |

Table 2.2 Description of SSSIs and SAC (continued)

| Area | Description of feature / attribute | Scale of importance | Substitutable | Nature conservation value | Potentially damaging operations |
|-----------------------|--|--|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Mundesley Cliffs SSSI | <p>Biological features: None</p> <p>Geological features: The cliffs along this stretch of coast provide some of the very best sections in the Pleistocene Cromer Forest-bed Formation, especially in Cromerian marine and freshwater deposits, and freshwater sediments of the early Anglian Cold Stage. At both Mundesley, and Paston the type locality, marine and rarer freshwater deposits of Pastonian age are particularly well developed.</p> | <p>A nationally important site for its extensive Pleistocene sequence.</p> | <p>No</p> | <p>Very high</p> | <p>7, 17, 19, 21 - 24</p> |

2.2 County Wildlife Sites

The area studied in this strategy encompasses three County Wildlife Sites. These designations reflect the interesting flora and fauna living on foreshore, cliff, and cliff-top land.

2.2.1 Cromer Sea Front Wildlife Site

The cliffs at Overstrand form part of the eastern end of the Cromer Sea Front County Wildlife Site (number 1201). The site comprises the coastal cliffs, beach, and intertidal zone between West Runton SSSI to the west and Overstrand SSSI / SAC to the east. The cliffs rise from 10m at Cromer Pier to 30m at either end of the site. This change is accompanied by decreasing influence of development as well as lower visitor pressure, although the entire sea front and beach are well used by the public. Semi-natural vegetation is confined to the cliff faces.

2.2.2 Overstrand Wildlife Site

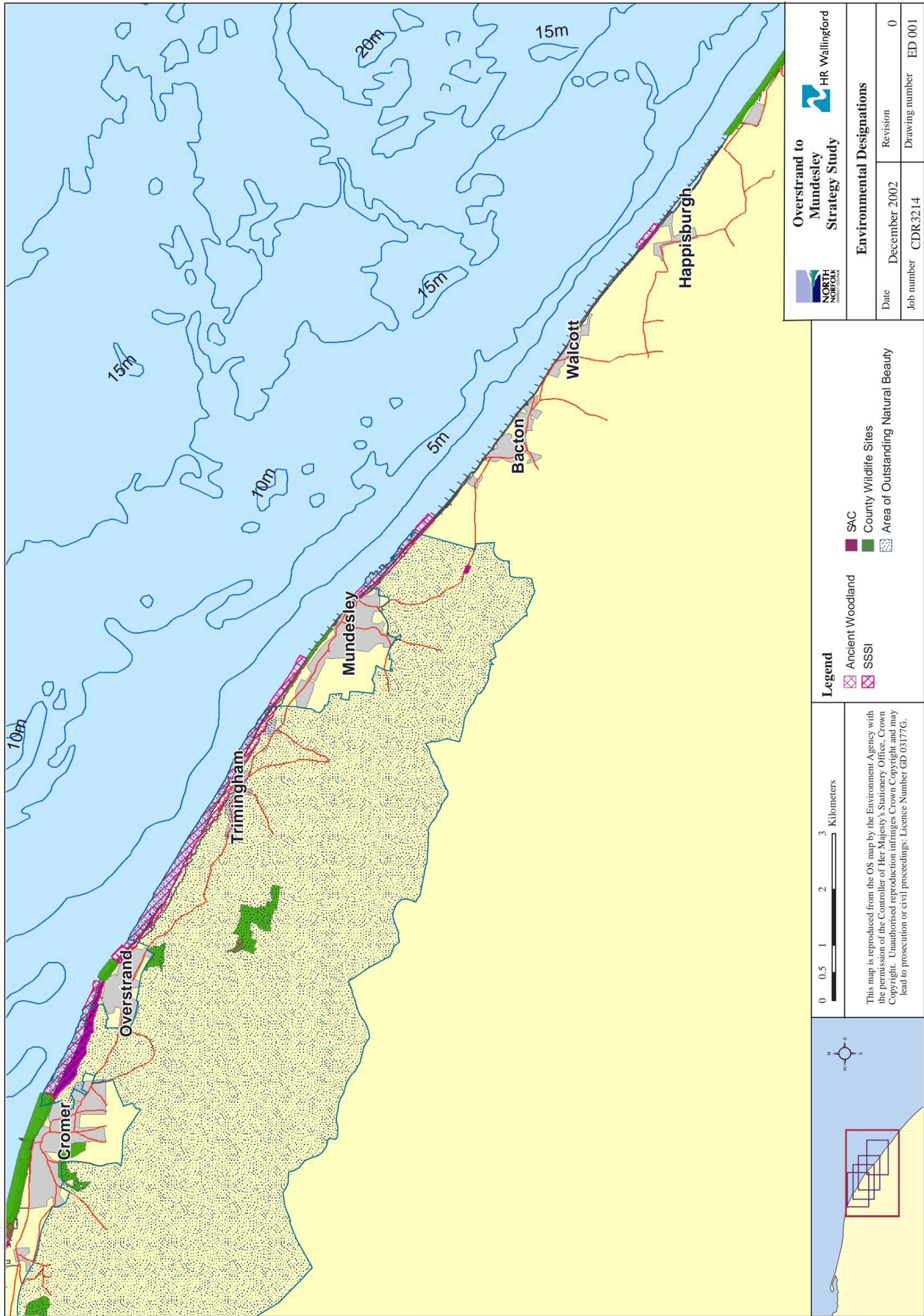
The Overstrand County Wildlife Site (number 1202) comprises the maritime cliffs and foreshore at Overstrand, much of which is influenced by coastal defence works. Refer to Appendix C for more detailed information about this site.

2.2.3 Mundesley Wildlife Site

The Mundesley County Wildlife Site (number 1228) comprises the cliffs north-west of Mundesley, part of which runs adjacent to Mundesley Cliffs SSSI. For more detailed information about this site, refer to Appendix C.

2.3 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Much of the coastline and immediate hinterland of north Norfolk, stretching from Mundesley to Heacham, forms the major part of the Norfolk Coast AONB. However, the settlements of Cromer, Overstrand, and Mundesley are not included in this designation and the objectives and policies of the AONB need not be applied to the management of these sections of coastline and its defences. While the towns are not included in the designation, the preservation and enhancement of the coastline and coastal land between the towns is of importance. Plots of the limits of the AONB are provided in Appendix D as well as the current AONB Management Strategy document (published October 1998). This strategy is currently undergoing a review process to produce the first AONB Management Plan for the Norfolk Coast under Part IV of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 by March 2004.



Overstrand to Mundesley Strategy Study

Environmental Designations

Date: December 2002
Revision: 0

Job number: CDR3214
Drawing number: ED 001

NORTH NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

HR Wallingford

This map is reproduced from the OS map by the Environment Agency with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings: Licence Number GD 03177G.

Figure 2.1 Environmental designations along the North Norfolk coast

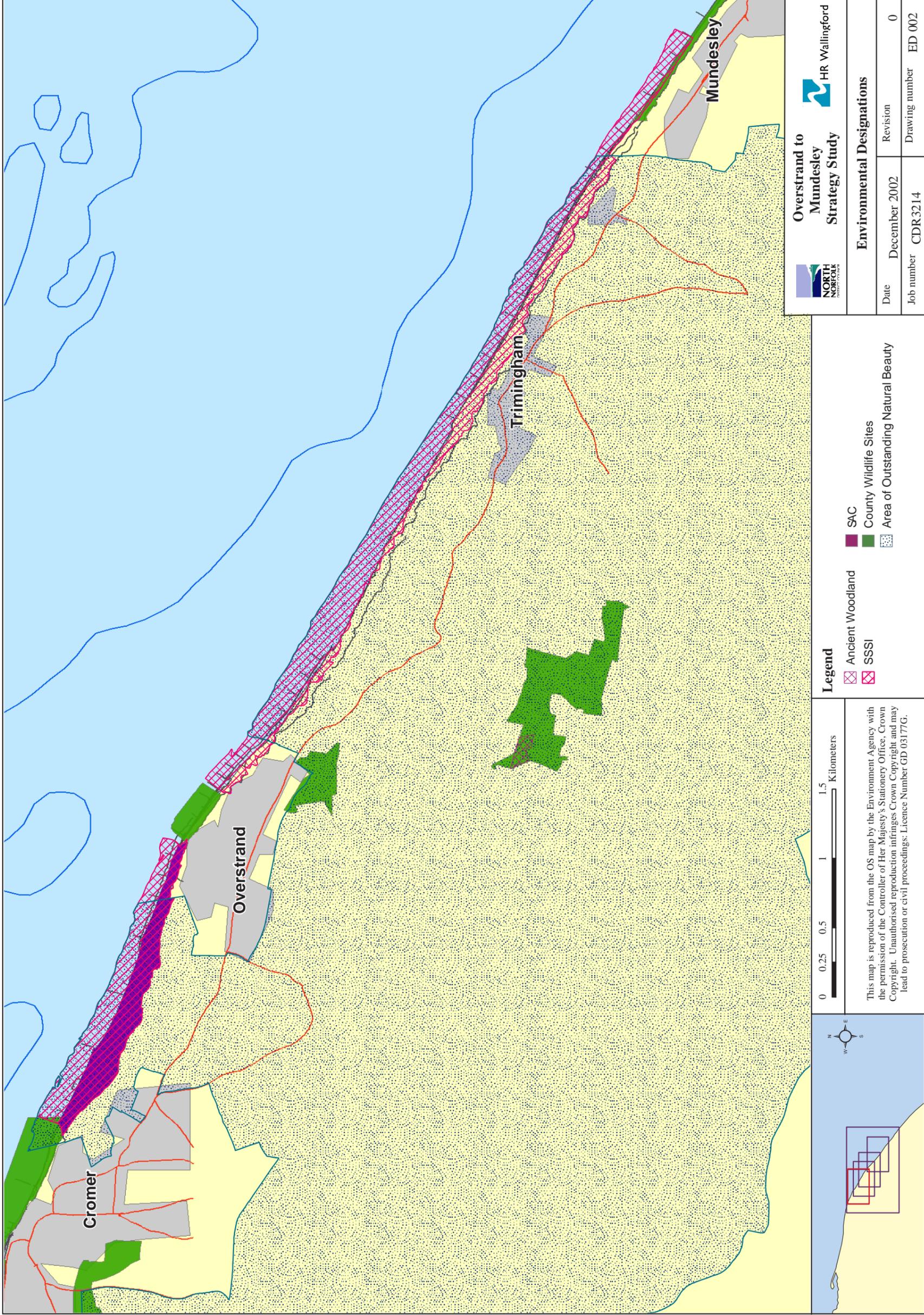


Figure 2.2 Environmental designations near Overstrand

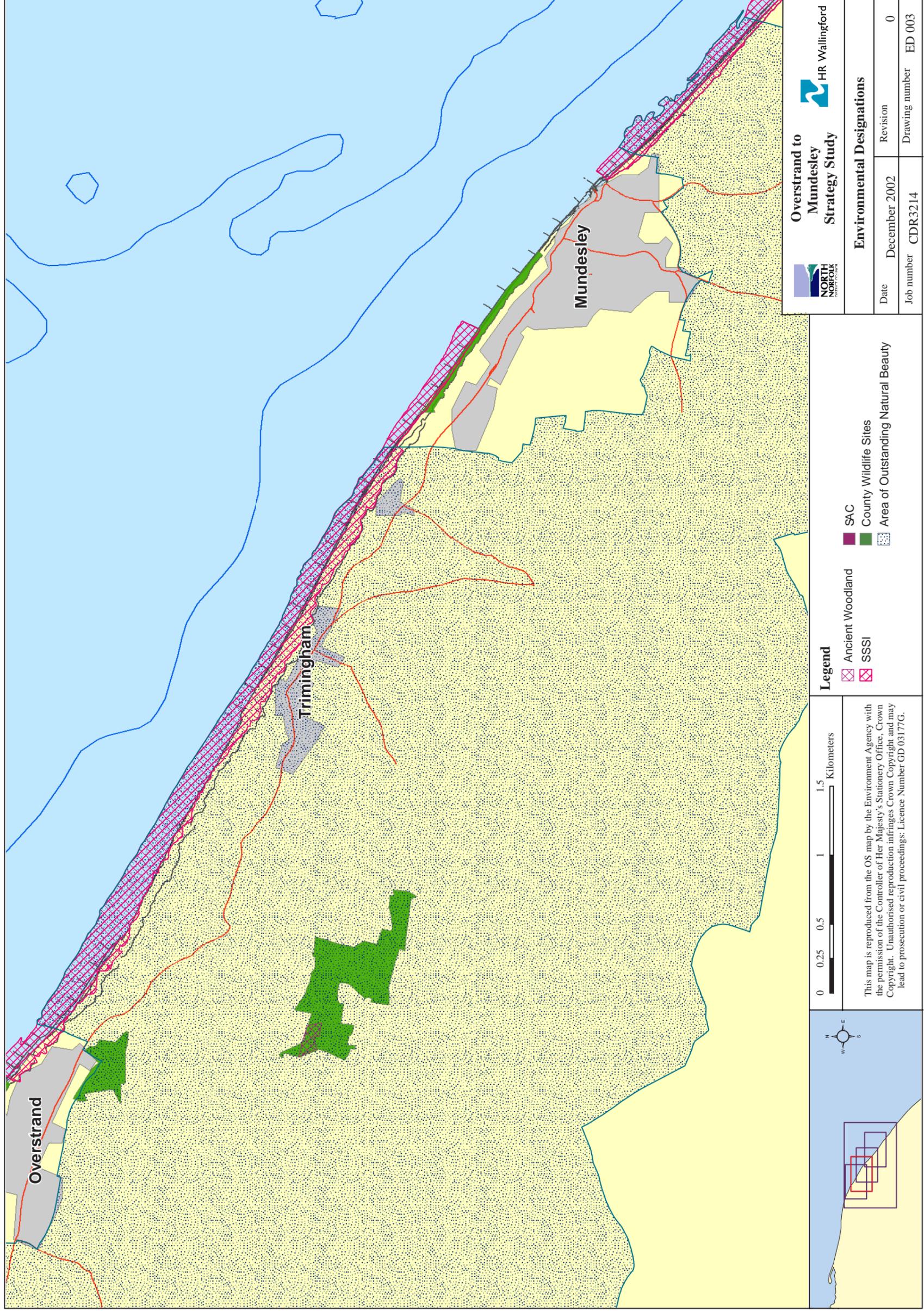


Figure 2.3 Environmental designations near Trimmingham

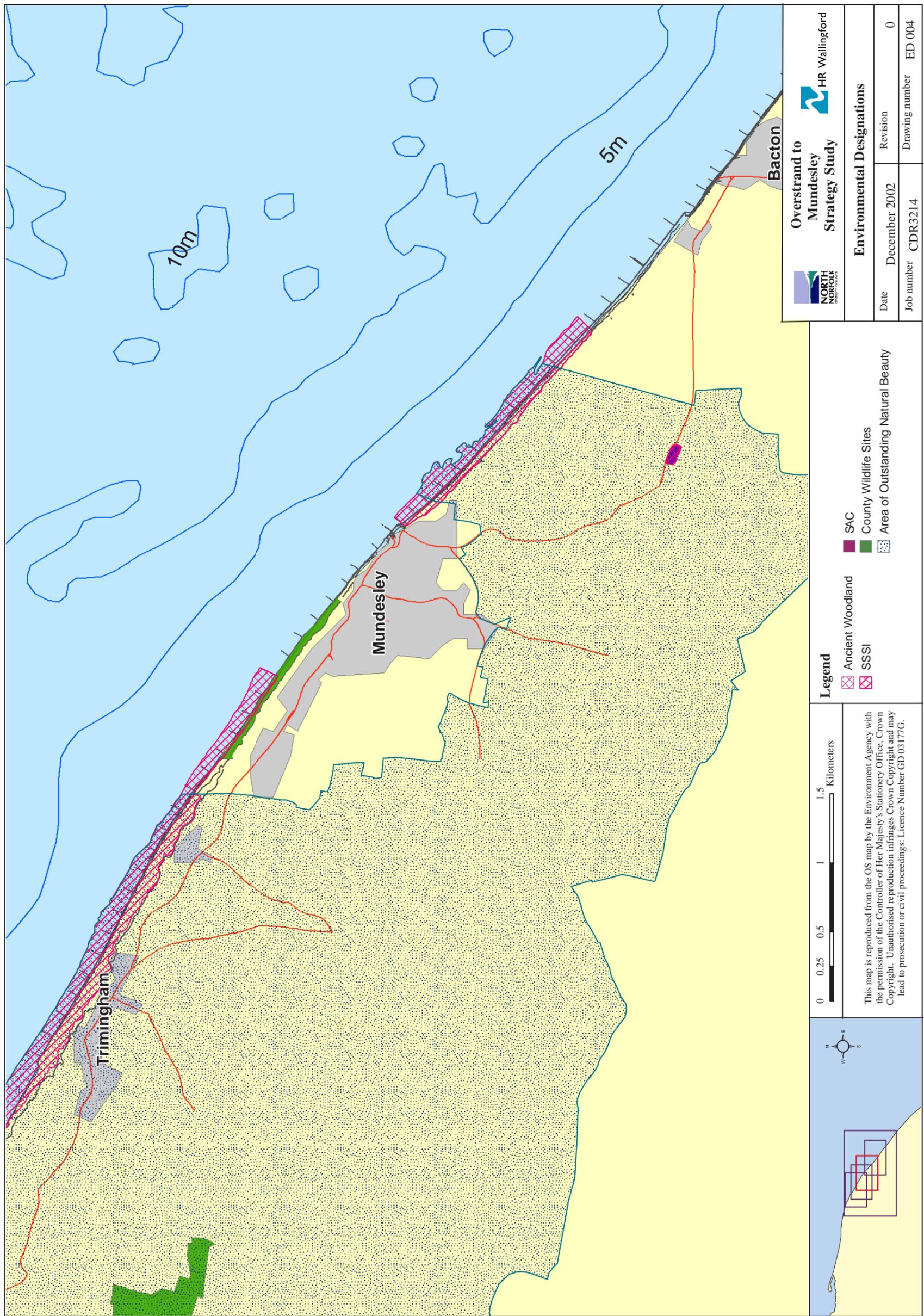


Figure 2.4 Environmental designations near Mundesley

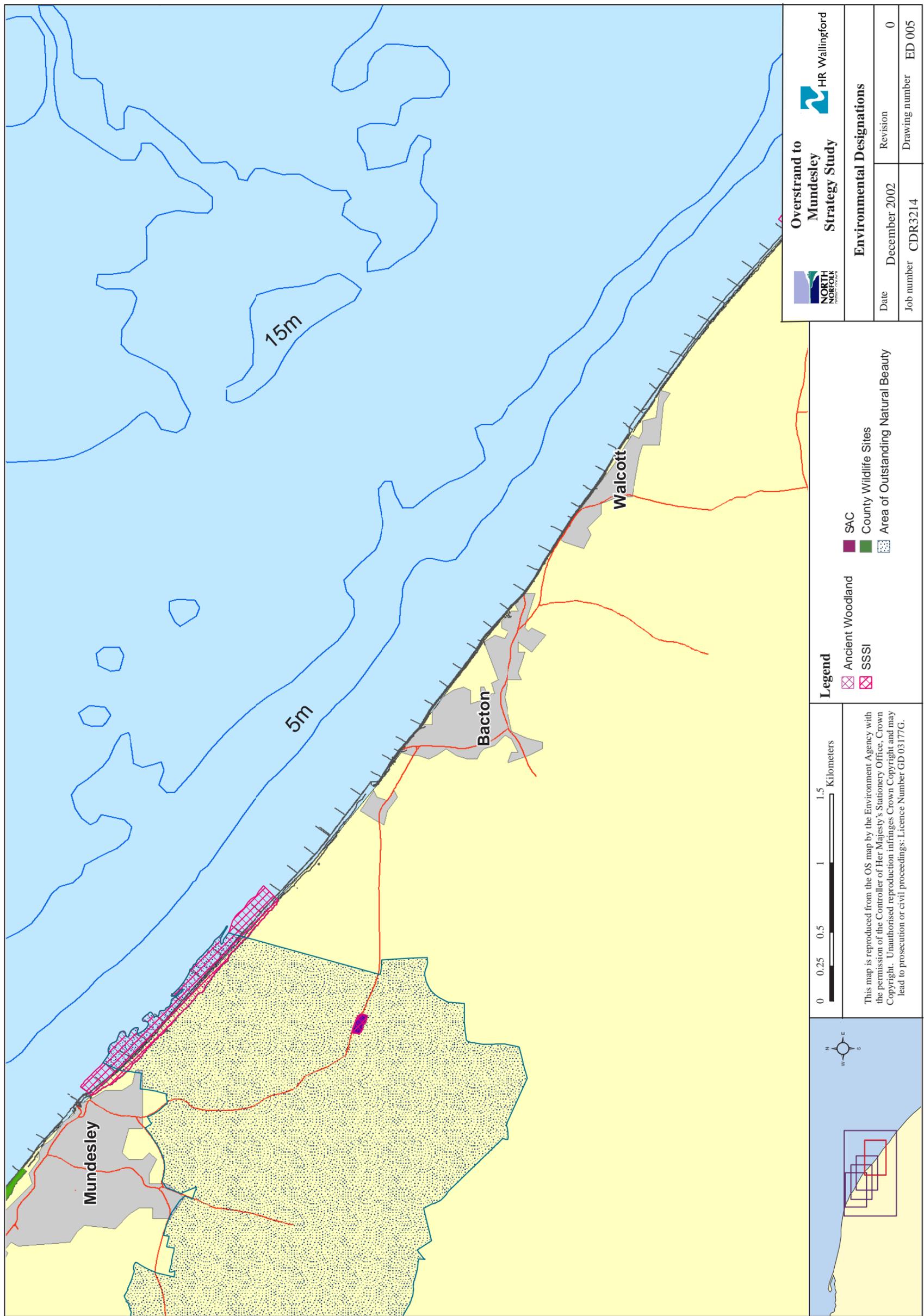


Figure 2.5 Environmental designations near Bacton

3. GEOLOGY, FLORA, AND FAUNA

The geology of the coastline (above and below the high tide level) is important in this study because it:

- Influences past and future shoreline changes both locally and along adjacent stretches of coastline;
- Affects the character of the seabed, beaches, and the cliff top land and their use; and
- Influences the choice, performance, and longevity of coastal defence structures.

In addition, the geology of the coastal cliffs in North Norfolk has an intrinsic value in contributing to the understanding of ‘earth science’ (i.e. geological processes and evolution not just locally but on a broader scale, both nationally and internationally). This aspect is referred to by DEFRA (2001) as ‘Earth heritage.’ Finally, the dynamic nature of the soft cliffs, which if unprotected are subject to occasional large-scale slumping or landslides, results in the creation of a varied flora and fauna. This includes specialised species that depend on disturbance of the ground to survive.

Various previous reports have described the geological character and evolution of the cliffs. In this study, the University of Newcastle was commissioned to undertake a site-specific study of the cliffs along this frontage, the results of which are presented in the accompanying Cliff Processes report. However, some discussion of the particular flora and fauna present on the cliffs is given here.

3.1 Cliff stabilisation, sediment yield, and conservation

Considerable efforts have been made over the last 200 years to stabilise the cliffs, allowing the building of commercial and residential properties on the cliff top and reducing the threat to existing structures. In urban areas, there is a natural desire to maintain these assets, and this is reflected in the coastal defence policy for as set out in the Shoreline Management Plan (Halcrow 1996). This plan envisages ‘holding the line’ of the present coastal defences at Overstrand, Trimmingham, Mundesley, Bacton, and Walcott. (‘Hold the line’ equates to keeping the defences approximately at about their present location and hence, in combination with drainage and other slope stabilisation measures, maintaining the position of the cliff top.)

These ‘Hold the line’ policies have reduced the amount of sediment supplied to the beaches by the cliffs along the frontage. Estimate of sediment yield from the North Norfolk cliffs are presented and discussed in the accompanying reports on Cliff Processes and Littoral Sediment Processes.

Recognising that the geological (and biological) attributes of the cliffs along the seafront have been greatly degraded by the development of the coastal towns, English Nature is not opposed to the adopted coastal defence policy. However, this strategy of preserving the cliffs in their present position does conflict with the nature conservation objectives in the study area, which are defined in the North Norfolk Natural Area Profile (English Nature 1997) as:

‘...to allow the natural processes of erosion, sediment transport and cliff mobility to operate. This would enable the following to be achieved:

- To maintain or restore good exposures of the geological deposits
- To allow the movement of sediment along the coast to take place without interference
- To allow those cliffs which are unstable to continue to remain mobile
- Retain habitat and species diversity

To attain these objectives it would be necessary to:

- Resist the addition of new coastal defences, particularly in relation to SSSIs
- Resist attempts to stabilise cliffs
- Encourage the removal of existing defences’

These objectives must be considered when evaluating any changes to the extent and type of coastal defences. Particular care will need to be taken to minimise any adverse effects of new defences on the Overstrand Cliffs SSSI / SAC, Sidestrand to Trimingham Cliffs SSSI, and Mundesley Cliffs SSSI.

Consideration should also be given to the geomorphological consequences of coastal defence schemes. The present policy at Overstrand, Trimingham, Mundesley, Bacton, and Walcott is 'Hold the Line,' but the coastline on either side is allowed to retreat. (Specific policies are 'Managed Retreat' along the management unit between Trimingham and Mundesley and 'Do Nothing' along the units between Cromer and Overstrand, Overstrand and Trimingham, and Mundesley and Bacton.) Over a long period, this will result in the Overstrand, Trimingham, and Mundesley seafronts forming a promontory. This may disrupt the natural longshore transport of beach sediment, either retaining it on the updrift side of the defences (presently to the west) or causing it to be lost offshore. A disruption to the drift regime in this area may eventually adversely affect the beaches in front of low-lying areas between Eccles and Great Yarmouth.

3.2 Flora and fauna

Many of the cliffs along the coastline of Norfolk form important habitats for wildlife, particularly between Cromer and Mundesley. Several areas have been notified as Sites of Special Scientific Interest partly or predominantly because of their flora and fauna, and Overstrand Cliffs is now a SAC. Thus, the Overstrand Cliffs contain habitat types and/or species that are rare or threatened within a European context. The Sidestrand to Trimingham Cliffs SSSI, although notified for its geological interest, also has considerable biological interests as well (rare invertebrates and plant communities).

The sea cliffs along the study frontage are partly vegetated, the nature of which depends on the cliff geology, erosion, geographical location and the degree of exposure to wind and salt spray. Plant species include rock sea-spurrey *Spergularia rupicola*, thrift *America maritima*, rock samphire *Crithmum maritimum* and Scots lovage *Ligusticum scoticum*. Many cliff sites support a number of rare or uncommon plant species. In some exposed areas the vegetation on the cliff-tops grades into maritime heathland, grassland, and scrub that form an integral part of the cliff habitat.

The Sidestrand to Trimingham Cliffs have yielded interesting mammalian fauna, and is known to be the best soft rock cliff site for invertebrates in East Anglia with modern records of rare Coleoptera including *Nebria livida*. Cliff top flora includes a large colony of species purple broomrape (*Orobanch purpurea*) a Red Data Book species, which grows inland close to the cliff.

Along the main Overstrand, Trimingham, and Mundesley frontages, however, the long-established seawalls and drains have very largely stabilised the cliff faces, with the result that these are almost completely covered with vegetation. This ranges from close-cut grass sward through to shrubs and small trees. The flora is partly natural and partly introduced species, presumably originating from parks and gardens along the cliff tops. While providing habitats for small mammals and numerous species of bird, both resident and migratory, no particularly important flora, fauna, or associated conservation issues have been identified.

Similarly, much of the cliff-top land around Overstrand, Trimingham, and Mundesley has been developed and covered with residential or commercial properties. There is unlikely to be any significant biological conservation interest in these areas. On the remainder of the cliff-tops, the land is predominantly used for arable farming, and there is generally only a narrow strip of grassland between the tilled land and the cliff edge. It is likely that this habitat, and its species, has developed despite the erosion of the cliff and will continue to survive as the cliff top retreats. English Nature is not aware of any particular biological interest other than that previously mentioned in this report (the designated SAC, SSSIs, and Wildlife Trust Sites).

4. HISTORY, TOURISM, AND COASTAL FISHERIES

General discussion of the historical environment is given below, in addition to relevant considerations with respect to tourism and recreation on the study frontage.

4.1 Historical environment

In assessing the coastal defence strategy for a coastline, it is appropriate to consider the ‘historic environment’ of the areas at risk from erosion or flooding. DEFRA (2001) defines the historic environment as comprising all traces of past human activity and includes:

- Archaeological remains (on land and the seabed);
- Historic buildings, parks and gardens; and
- Historic landscapes.

Coastal management techniques, and particularly coastal defences, may affect these assets in a number of ways, either directly, i.e. changing the risk to them from the action of the sea, or indirectly by affecting their visual aspects or setting.

In this study, enquiries were made regarding such assets that exist, and might be at risk, between Overstrand and Mundesley. English Heritage and the Archaeological Unit of Norfolk County Council (Gressenhall) were asked to provide information on any buildings or archaeological features of interest within a reasonable distance from the cliff edge. However, no direct response about any such assets was received from either organisation. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that preservation of older buildings in the centre of Overstrand, Trimingham, and Mundesley (including the parish church) would be an important consideration in the sensitive management of the frontage.

4.1.1 Overstrand

Originally known as Ox Strand in Anglo-Saxon times, Overstrand was originally founded as a fishing village; and fishing continues today (but on a much smaller scale). The village was originally made popular by the Victorian journalist Clement Scott, of the Daily Telegraph and Morning Post. Scott immortalised Overstrand and the surrounding villages as ‘Poppyland,’ because of the many wild red poppies that grew in the grass and wheat fields along the hedgerows and on the cliffs. Scott was so taken with the area that he wrote a number of articles in the newspapers expounding the virtues of Norfolk that resulted in the area becoming a fashionable place for holidays for the rich and famous.

Today Overstrand has a population of approximately 1000 and is essentially a rural, predominantly residential settlement (Halcrow 1996). In the summer months, the fishing village of Overstrand is a quiet holiday resort with a few shops, two hotels, a pub, cafe, and caravan site.

It is believed that the name of Sidestrand originates from the Old English Sid (broad, spacious) and the Danish Stronde (shore). In 1836, Quaker Samuel Hoare and Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton began a fund to move the church of Sidestrand further inland due to the increasing threat of the advancing cliff line. The locals dismantled the church stone by stone and re-built it on its current site, however they left the old church tower on the cliff top, which eventually fell into the sea in 1916. This tower inspired the famous poem by Clement Scott, ‘The Garden of Sleep’.

4.1.2 Trimingham

The settlement of Trimingham has been seriously threatened by erosion over recent years. The integrity of the village and the coastal road is vulnerable and as such the protection of the village and its infrastructure is a main objective for the study. Trimingham has two large cliff top caravan / chalet parks, which are backed and interspersed by residential properties. All of these are at risk from cliff top erosion. In particular, the caravan parks are recognised as very important for the economic sustenance of the area.

Access to the beach is provided at Vale Road, which is the only access point for approximately 6km south of Overstrand. Due to the isolated nature of this access point, maintaining this for both public use and maintenance of coastal defences is a prime objective.

Trimingham's parish church is believed to be the only one in England dedicated to the head of St John the Baptist. Legend dictates that Trimingham was said to be the destination of the head of the Baptist, brought from the fortress of Machaerus (near Judea) where he met his fate. Many pilgrims once made their way to Trimingham, and the village hall is still called the Pilgrim Shelter.

4.1.3 Mundesley

While the resident population of Mundesley is small, the summer influx of transient holidaymakers significantly increases the population temporarily. Mundesley has a promenade, a number of small shops, tea-rooms, restaurants, public houses, car parking areas, and beach access points. Mundesley beach has won the Blue Flag award for its waters and high standards. Maintenance and enhancement of the tourist trade is an essential objective, as Mundesley is the main coastal centre between Cromer and Hemsby.

4.2 Tourism and recreation

As discussed briefly above, the area from Overstrand to Mundesley grew in importance in the late 18th century, when the principle town of Cromer developed as a resort for sea bathing and promenading. Cromer's popularity stemmed in part from its north-facing aspect, unusual in the UK. In the summer, this results in both sunrise and sunset taking place over the sea.

The villages of Overstrand, Trimingham, and Mundesley still depend on tourism for a substantial part of their income; and the character of the towns, like Cromer, depends upon their seafront. Thus, any coastal defence schemes need to reflect this interrelationship.

The safety of the large number of people that visit the beach and seafront in this region must be taken into consideration when designing coastal defences. Both waves and tidal currents can be dangerous, and the formation of seaward flowing rip currents must be avoided. If beach volumes are increased, this will reduce the present dangers posed by the vertical drop between the edge of the promenade and beach level. Care would also be taken to ensure that any rock structures, e.g. groynes, breakwaters or revetments, do not have large voids that could result in beach users, particularly children, becoming trapped.

4.3 Coastal fisheries

While no harbours or marinas are located on the frontage, the coastal waters in the study area are commercially fished for various species. The following extracts from a MAFF (1995) report discuss species targeted, fishing methods deployed, and fishing restrictions inshore:

5.3.15 Cromer, Overstrand and Trimingham

A fleet of around 20 boats between 5-10m set pots principally for brown crab from March to November, and for lobsters during the summer. Much of the catch is processed by the fishermen themselves. A few boats set whelk pots, use lines and nets for cod in winter and drift nets for herring in autumn. The brown crab fishery peaks between April and June, each boat setting between 150 and 300 pots out to 5miles from the coast. Pot bait includes cod and place frames acquired from the Lowestoft market or dab, flounder, gurnard, herring, or sprat. Despite lobsters being targeted for a short period during the summer it provides an essential resource at a time when brown crab moult.

5.3.16 Mundesley, Bacton, Happisburgh, and Sea Palling

Up to a dozen beach boats fish along this section of coast using mainly nets and pots, though a couple trawl for shrimp and flatfish. Various nets are set for an array of species including cod, whiting, dogfish, rays, sea trout, bass, mullet, herring, mackerel, and sole in season. Large mesh sized tangle nets are set for rays, catching the occasional turbot or brill, whereas tangle and

trammel nets with a smaller mesh size are used to catch sole, plaice, and dabs. The coastal waters off Sea Palling form the southerly limit of the north Norfolk potting grounds. A prosperous whelk fishery existed off Sea Palling in the past and up until the late 1980s it supported 10 full-time Cromer boats during the winter. The fishery began to decline during 1988 and by 1992 only two boats were involved in the whelk fishery.

5. REFERENCES

DEFRA 2001 Shoreline Management Plans: A guide for coastal defence authorities. June.

English Nature 1994a Geological Site Documentation/Management Brief: Mundesley Cliffs SSSI, (EC), Norfolk. S Graham, Earth Science Branch, March.

English Nature 1994b Geological Site Documentation/Management Brief: Overstrand Cliffs SSSI, (EC), Norfolk. S Graham, Earth Science Branch, March.

English Nature 1997 The North Norfolk Natural Area Profile.

English Nature 1998 A Vision for Nature Conservation in the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) 1997-2022, April.

English Nature 2002 PDO lists for North Norfolk SSSIs. Fax from Sarah Beckett (Norfolk Team) to Dr Cliff Ohl (HR Wallingford), 5 December.

Halcrow 1996 Sheringham to Lowestoft Shoreline Management Plan Sediment Sub-cell 3B: Phase 2, Shoreline Management Plan Strategy Document. North Norfolk District Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Waveney District Council, & the National Rivers Authority.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee 1991 Sidestrand and Trimingham Cliffs, North Norfolk, (N 11, 3 SILS). GBNCRS Site Report No. 23E. Prepared for English Nature by R Cottle, Date of issue 16/8/91.

MAFF 1995 The coastal fisheries of England and Wales, Part III: A review of their status 1992-1994. Fisheries research technical report number 100. M J Gray, Lowestoft.

Appendices

Appendix A

Overstrand Cliffs SAC designation

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------|
| date site proposed as eligible as SCI | 200101 |
| date confirmed as SCI | |
| date site classified as SPA | |
| date site designated as SAC | |

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

| | |
|------------|------------|
| longitude | latitude |
| 01 19 30 E | 52 55 23 N |

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

| NUTS code | Region name | % cover |
|-----------|-------------|---------|
| UK402 | Norfolk | 1.4% |

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine
 Atlantic
 Boreal
 Continental
 Macaronesia
 Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

| Annex I habitat | % cover | Representativity | Relative surface | Conservation status | Global assessment |
|--|---------|------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts | 93.3 | B | C | A | B |

3.2 Annex II species

| Species name | Population | | | | Site assessment | | | |
|--------------|------------|-----------|--------|-------|-----------------|--------------|-----------|--------|
| | Resident | Migratory | | | Population | Conservation | Isolation | Global |
| | | Breed | Winter | Stage | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

4. Site description

4.1 General site character

| Habitat classes | % cover |
|--|-------------|
| Marine areas, Sea inlets | |
| Tidal rivers, Estuaries, Mud flats, Sand flats, Lagoons (including saltwork basins) | |
| Salt marshes, Salt pastures, Salt steppes | |
| Coastal sand dunes, Sand beaches, Machair | |
| Shingle, Sea cliffs, Islets | 100.0 |
| Inland water bodies (standing water, running water) | |
| Bogs, Marshes, Water fringed vegetation, Fens | |
| Heath, Scrub, Maquis and garrigue, Phygrana | |
| Dry grassland, Steppes | |
| Humid grassland, Mesophile grassland | |
| Alpine and sub-alpine grassland | |
| Improved grassland | |
| Other arable land | |
| Broad-leaved deciduous woodland | |
| Coniferous woodland | |
| Mixed woodland | |
| Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas) | |
| Inland rocks, Screes, Sands, Permanent snow and ice | |
| Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites) | |
| Total habitat cover | 100% |

4.1 Other site characteristics

| |
|--|
| <p>Soil & geology: Clay, Sand</p> <p>Geomorphology & landscape: Coastal, Slope</p> |
|--|

4.2 Quality and importance

| |
|---|
| <p>Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom. |
|---|

4.3 Vulnerability

| |
|--|
| <p>Overstrand Cliffs are composed of Pleistocene sands and clays with seepages which result in moderately frequent landslips. Sea defences are limited to a few groynes except at the extreme eastern and western ends. The land-use on the landward side is mostly golf course, with some houses towards the eastern and woods and open ground at the western end. The site is most vulnerable to coastal protection measures and possible artificial drainage of seepages to reduce slippages. However, the current Shoreline Management Plan allows for 'do nothing', i.e. retreat along all but the extreme eastern end of this section. Therefore, the site is probably of low vulnerability.</p> |
|--|

UK SAC data form

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

| Code | % cover |
|------------------|----------------|
| UK04 (SSSI/ASSI) | 99.9 |

Appendix B

SSSI and GCR designations

Date Notified: 17th January 1992

COUNTY: Norfolk

SITE NAME: OVERSTRAND CLIFFS

DISTRICT: North Norfolk

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Local Planning Authority: North Norfolk District Council

National Grid Reference: TG 227 419–TG 248 411 Area: 57.43 (ha) 141.91 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 133 1:10,000: TG 24 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1954 Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): – Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Boundary extensions to 1949 site. Boundary includes GCR SIL.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Overstrand Cliffs

This stretch of coast between Cromer and Overstrand on the north-east coast of Norfolk provides the best example of soft cliff habitat in East Anglia. The cliffs are up to 70 metres high and exhibit a wide range of mobility which is reflected in a diverse range of sub-maritime habitats of considerable botanical, entomological and ecological importance.

Exposures at the eastern end provide information concerning the glacial history of the area, and the Geological Conservation Review site falls within the boundary of the biological site.

The cliffs consist of unconsolidated Pleistocene sediments which are subject to cliff falls and slumping. This instability has led to the development of a successional series of habitats from bare sand and ruderal communities to semi-stabilised grassland and scrub. Freshwater seepage lines emerging from the cliff-face and stable cliff-top grassland are important elements in the overall diversity of the site, which also supports an outstanding assemblage of invertebrates.

The cliff face which is exposed following falls consists of bare calcareous sand. This is initially colonised by species which are commonly associated with disturbance by man and forms an important example of a natural ruderal community where typically Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara* is dominant. These slopes are of particular interest for their associated specialised coleopteran fauna with a number of rare species represented including the rove beetle *Bledius filipes* and the ground beetles *Harpalus vernalis* and *Nebria livida*. Fulmars nest on ledges and Sand Martins breed in holes in the cliff face.

On more stable slopes dry grasslands have developed. Those on the rather calcareous sands with some clay are dominated by Kidney Vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria* and Creeping Fescue *Festuca rubra* with a variety of associates including the grasses Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus* and Yellow Oat-grass *Trisetum flavescens*; the herbs Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Sand Sedge *Carex arenaria*, Autumn Hawkbit *Leontodon autumnalis*, Black Medick *Medicago lupulina* and Yarrow *Achillea millefolium*. On the sandier soils a community with Cat's Ear *Hypochoeris radicata*, Sand Sedge *Carex arenaria*, Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Creeping Fescue *Festuca rubra*, Early Hair-grass *Aira praecox*, Bird's-foot Trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and the moss *Polytrichum piliferum* is developed.

On the stable cliff-top grassland the notable Bulbous Meadow-grass *Poa bulbosa* and the nationally rare parasitic Purple Broomrape *Orobanche purpurea* are present.

The freshwater seepages emerging from the cliff face deposit a heavier clay soil along their flush lines so that base rich flushes have developed. These are dominated in places by Marsh Horsetail *Equisetum palustre*, Jointed Rush *Juncus articulatus* and Sea Club-rush *Scirpus maritimus* with a carpet of bryophytes including *Aneura pinguis* and *Riccardia sinuata*. In two small areas tall fen with Reed *Phragmites australis* and Reedmace *Typha angustifolia* is developed. In the better drained parts of the flushes the red form of Early Marsh Orchid *Dactylorhiza incarnata* var *coccinea* is frequent at its only East Norfolk locality together with Bee Orchids *Ophrys apifera*, Southern Marsh Orchids *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* and Common Spotted Orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*. The flushes are of considerable importance for breeding Diptera and in particular several rare or notable species of soldier-flies have been recorded, most notably *Oxycera morrisii*, *Vanoyia tenuicornis* and *Stratiomys potamida*.

On the cliff slopes towards the western end scrub and stunted woodland has developed. This is dominated by Sea Buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides* and Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, often overgrown with Clematis *Clematis vitalba*. At the base of the cliffs a small dune and narrow strandline add further to the diversity of the site.

The cliff section at Overstrand is one of several between Weybourne and Happisburgh which show a succession of glacial sequences, changing laterally from the three Cromer Tills, through the Contorted Drift to the Marly Drift; and a variety of deformation structures, some probably due direct glacial interference and some due to the weight of the overlying deposits. Important changes in the deposits and their deformation structures occur along the coast. At Overstrand, all three Cromer Tills and intervening beds are present, showing a variety of deformation structures due to both glacially-induced and loading disturbance. The special value of the site lies in the completeness of the succession and the variety and style of the deformations which are not seen elsewhere along the coast.

Overstrand Cliffs SSSI

Conservation objective for the European Interest on the SSSI

The conservation *objective* for the European *interest* on the SSSI is:

(subject to natural change), to maintain, in favourable condition, the *vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts Annex*

1 feature

* maintenance implies restoration if the feature is not currently in favourable condition.

The Conservation Objectives for Overstrand Cliffs SAC are, in accordance with para C 10 of PPG 9, the reasons for which the SPA/SAC was classified/designated.

Annex:

Favourable Condition Table.

FAVOURABLE CONDITION TABLE

The Favourable Condition Table will be used by English Nature and other relevant authorities to determine if a site is in favourable condition. Favourable condition is achieved when the targets given below are met.

The favourable condition table should inform the scope and nature of any ‘appropriate assessment’ under the Habitats Regulations, but an appropriate assessment will also require consideration of issues specific to the individual plan or project. The favourable condition table does not by itself provide a comprehensive basis on which to assess plans and projects as required under Regulations 20-21, 24, 48-50 and 54-85. The scope and content of an appropriate assessment will depend upon the location, size and significance of the proposed project. English Nature will advise on a case by case basis.

Following an appropriate assessment, competent authorities are required to ascertain the effect on the integrity of the site. The integrity of the site is defined in para C10 of PPG9 as the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, that enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified. The determination of favourable condition is separate from the judgement of effect upon integrity. For example, there may be a time-lag between a plan or project being initiated and a consequent adverse effect upon integrity becoming manifest in the condition assessment. In such cases, a plan or project may have an adverse effect upon integrity even though the site remains in favourable condition.

1. Conservation objectives for Overstrand Cliffs SAC

| Operational Feature | Criteria Feature | Attribute | Measure | Target | Comments |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|---|--|
| Maritime Cliff | Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts | Extent of cliff | Length (km) and/or area (ha) of sea cliff capable of supporting vegetated sea cliff communities. Measured at least once per reporting cycle. | The overall length and/or area of the cliff habitat of the site is maintained taking into account natural variation. The length is the existing length of the site from eastern to western boundary. | This attribute will be important for all cliff types. On near-vertical cliffs it may be difficult to assess area, and a length measurement may be more appropriate. On less steep cliffs area may be measurable. This should be measurable by aerial photography at Overstrand. The area of suitable habitat behind a receding cliff line is also important, though outside the SAC. |
| | | Mobility | Percentage of linear extent and area of cliff structure and geomorphological processes not immediately constrained by introduced structures or landforms. Measure once per reporting cycle. | No increase in linear extent or area constrained by introduced structures or landforms. | An important aspect of this habitat is the modification of vegetation patterns in response to natural and geomorphological coastal processes without constraints. Introduction of or increase in physical constraints would reduce the mobility of the cliff and reduce the range of communities which represent this interest feature. Information on existing coast protections is available from the SMP. |
| | | Physical feature supporting vegetation patterns / zonation | Assessment of distribution of main zones in relation to cliff behavioural units and distance from maritime influence. Measured once per reporting cycle. | Maintain the range of physical conditions arising from variation in geology and geomorphology, profile, stability, degree of maritime exposure, drainage, aspect, geographical locations and history of management. Presence of flushes and no increase in sea defences are | Changes in pattern are reflected in changes to the profiles and stability of the supporting cliff face which will vary from site to site and will vary over time. Some cliffs exhibit long-term stability, with episodic landslide movement, others erode more continually. Overstrand is perhaps prone to episodic landslips |

| Operational Feature | Criteria Feature | Attribute | Measure | Target | Comments |
|---------------------|------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | key indicators. | though some erosion at the foot of the cliffs is continuous at least in Winter. Changes to patterns are to be expected, especially in dynamic systems. Can be assessed from air photographs and site-based surveys. See Site Management Brief for Overstrand & also Sidestrand Trimmingham for information on geomorphological aspects of cliffs. |
| | | Vegetation composition in maritime grassland communities characterised by site | Presence of vegetation communities characteristic of maritime grassland. These are difficult to characterise but include vegetation with similarities to SD8 and perhaps MC8 reflecting the sandy sometimes calcareous nature of some of the till which forms the cliffs. NVC communities characterised by <i>Holcus lanatus</i> , <i>Festuca rubra</i> , <i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i> , <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> , <i>Hupochoeris radicata</i> , <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> and <i>Carex arenaria</i> . Assess at least once per reporting cycle. | Maintain range of maritime grassland communities, taking account of natural variation. Maintain unimproved cliff top grassland along the whole stretch of cliffs. | Individual sites will exhibit different patterns and range of vegetation types depending on site characteristic and management history. See 1986, 1991 surveys (in file) for only detailed information. Some of these communities can be difficult to assess because of their inaccessibility and because the soft cliff habitat is not adequately covered in the NVC. |
| | | Vegetation of soft cliffs and other communities characterised by | Vegetation composition of other communities forming a complex pattern reflecting different degrees and stages of instability, drainage and other physical characteristics. The components of this pattern may include wet | Maintain range of transitions and other communities previously recorded on the site, taking account of natural variation. Not possible to set targets for area but would expect presence of flush communities, ruderal communities and scrub as it | Vegetated sea cliff sites on soft geology in more sheltered locations (as at Overstrand) are likely to support variants of wet flush/seepage/mire communities, scrub/woodland communities, ruderal and bracken communities, |

| Operational Feature | Criteria Feature | Attribute | Measure | Target | Comments |
|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | ic of the site | flush/seepage communities dominated by <i>Equisetum palustre</i> (also presence of <i>Dactylorhiza incarnata</i> var <i>coccinea</i>) and variants with <i>Scirpus maritimus</i> and <i>Phragmites</i> . Bryophytes notably <i>Riccardia sinuata</i> , <i>Aneura pinguis</i> & <i>Pellia epiphylla</i> locally important. Scrub with <i>Hippophae</i> and scrub woodland communities, ruderal and bracken communities. Flush communities are particularly important. Assess at least once per reporting cycle. | is the range of vegetation types determined by the unstable nature of the cliffs which is important on this site. | which may be subject to maritime influence. The diversity of habitats on sea cliff sites is promoted by the inherent instability of the substrate which maintains a range of successional stages. Surveys in 1986 (Thomas) and 1991 (Radley et al) provide useful baseline data. |
| | | Vegetation negative indicators | Presence of negative indicator species including non-native species not characteristic of typical communities. Most likely if permanent grassland was lost on the cliff top. Assess at least once per reporting cycle. | No further increase in species not typically associated with communities that define the feature. Extensive spread of <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> and <i>Hippophae</i> would be detrimental. | Changes in the extent and cover of invasive species usually indicate a change in conditions on a site, often as a result of anthropogenic activities which may promote rapid expansion or increase in cover. Such species may include those identified as negative indicators for grasslands e.g. <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , <i>Senecio jacobaea</i> , <i>Urtica dioica</i> , together with non-native species e.g. <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> . However this requires care in interpretation as some ruderal communities may be present naturally on a cliff site e.g. <i>Tussilago</i> dominated communities at Overstrand. |

Reasons for recommendation as a possible Special Area of Conservation

Area name: **Overstrand Cliffs**

Administrative area: **Norfolk**

Components SSSI: **Overstrand Cliffs**

This area has been recommended as a possible Special Area of Conservation (SAC) because it contains habitat types and/or species which are rare or threatened within a European context. The SSSI citation describes the special interests for which the site was notified in the British context. [NB: not for marine interests below mean low water mark] The interests for which the site was selected as SSSI may differ from the interests selected in a European context.

Then habitats and/or species for which this area has been recommended as a possible SAC are listed below. The reasons for their selection are listed, together with a brief description of the habitats and species as they typically occur across the UK. This area contains the interests described although it may not contain all the typical features.

European interest(s):

1. Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts

- **for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom**

Vegetated sea cliffs. These are sea cliffs that are at least partially covered by vegetation, the nature of which varies considerably depending on cliff geology, erosion, geographical location, and the degree of exposure to wind and salt spray. Plant species may include rock sea-spurrey *Spergularia rupicola*, thrift *Armeria maritime*, and rock samphire *Crithmum maritimum* (in the south and west), or Scots lovage *Ligusticum scoticum* (in the north). Many cliff sites support a number of rare or uncommon plant species. In some exposed areas the vegetation on the cliff-tops grades into maritime heathland, grassland and scrub which form an integral part of the cliff habitat.

Geological Conservation Review Site

Overstrand Cliff Section

GCR Number: 2534 **Agency:** EN
GCR Name: Overstrand Cliff Section
GCR File Number: N 33
GCR Block Code: PN/QA E-AG **Block Name:** Quaternary of East Anglia
Grid Ref: TG247411
Size (hectares): 0
Issue Date: 01/05/1988
P5P Date: 23/05/1988 **GCR Status:** Notified
SMB:

GCR Statement: The cliff section at Overstrand is one of several sections between Weybourne and Happisburgh showing (a) a succession of glaciogenic sequences, changing laterally from the three Cromer Tillis, through the Contorted Drift to the Marly Drift, and (b) a variety of deformation structures, some probably due to direct glacier interference and some due to the weight of the overlying deposits. Important changes in the deposits and their deformation structures occur along the coast. At Overstrand, all three Cromer Tillis and the intervening beds are considered to be present, showing a variety of deformation structures due to both glacially-induced and loading disturbance. The particular value of the site lies in the completeness of the succession and the variety and style of the deformation, which are not seen elsewhere along the coast. The site therefore provides important information concerning the glacial history of the area.

| Sssi Number | Sssi Name | Notification Status | Notification Date |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 5604 | OVERSTRAND CLIFFS | | 01/01/1900 |

| Administrative Area |
|--------------------------|
| Norfolk (1974) |
| England |
| East Anglia Region (NCC) |

| Map No. | Map Scale |
|---------|-----------|
| 133 | 1:50000 |
| TG24SW | 1:10000 |

Geological Conservation Review Site

Overstrand to Trimmingham Cliffs

GCR Number: 3009 **Agency:** EN
GCR Name: Overstrand to Trimmingham Cliffs
GCR File Number:
GCR Block Code: CEN MAA **Block Name:** Cenomanian, Turonian, Senonian, Maastrichtian
Grid Ref: TG228420
Size (hectares): 0
Issue Date: 01/01/1996
P5P Date: 01/01/1900 **GCR Status:** Confirmed
SMB:

GCR Statement: The presence of several masses of Upper Chalk Surrounded by Pleistocene deposits has long been known on the Norfolk coast around Overstrand, Sidestrand and Trimmingham.

Rich invertebrate faunas are present and indicate that much of the chalk is of Lower Maastrichtian (ie very late Cretaceous) age. The cliff and foreshore exposures at the site comprise the only significant out crops of Maastrichtian age known in Britain, they also represent the youngest Mesozoic rocks in the country.

The common occurrence of the belemnite, *Belemnella lanceolata* (Schlotheim) indicates the lowest four zones of the continental Maastrichtian stage and detailed studies of the micromorphic brachiopod faunas have now facilitated detailed correlations with Lower Maastrichtian successions in Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Poland. In particular, the *acutirostris-spinosa*, *spinosa-pulchellus* and *pulchellus-pulchellus* brachiopod zones have been recognised. Evidence of slightly earlier, upper Campanian deposits is also present.

A composite Lower Maastrichtian succession has been reconstructed by correlating the several chalk masses known as Sidestrand and Trimmingham. The succession includes the type localities and reference sections of four lithostratigraphical units, namely the Sidestrand Chalk Member, the Trimmingham Sponge Beds Member, the Little Marl Point Chalk Member and the Beacon Hill Grey Chalk Member. Only the Sidestrand Chalk Member is known at any other locality in Britain.

The Maastrichtian succession of the Sidestrand-trimmingham district is of fundamental importance to British Cretaceous geology and also has much wider significance to studies of the latest Cretaceous elsewhere in north west Europe.

SITE NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON THE 8TH JANUARY
1993

COUNTY: NORFOLK SITE NAME: SIDESTRAND AND TRIMINGHAM
CLIFFS

DISTRICT: NORTH NORFOLK

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended.

Local Planning Authority: North Norfolk District Council

National Grid Reference: TG 252408 Area: (ha.) (ac.) c.168
to TG 305375

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 133 1:10,000: TG 23 NE and TG 33 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1954 Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1993 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Boundary includes 4 GCR SILS.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This stretch of cliffs between Overstrand and Mundesley on the north-east coast of Norfolk provides a fine series of geological exposures in unconsolidated Pleistocene sediments and in the underlying chalk. These cliffs, which extend for a distance of 6.5 kilometres and are up to 60 metres high, are subject to frequent cliff falls and slumping. This mobility creates a mosaic of habitats from bare clay and sand to ruderal communities and semi-stabilised grassland with occasional seepage lines which support an outstanding assemblage of invertebrates.

Four aspects of the geology of the site are of special interest; the chalk, the Pleistocene sediments, fossil vertebrates and mass movement.

The chalk is exposed on the foreshore and cliffs in a series of blocks which have been thrust upwards by glacial action. It has a rich fossil invertebrate fauna which has enabled much of the chalk to be assigned to the Lower Maastrichtian stage i.e. very late Cretaceous age. These exposures comprise the only significant outcrops of chalk of this age in Britain and are therefore also the youngest Mesozoic rocks in the British Isles.

The common occurrence of the belemnite, *Belemnella lanceolata* (Schlotheim) indicates the lowest of four zones of the continental Maastrichtian stage and detailed studies of the brachiopod faunas have now facilitated detailed correlations with Lower Maastrichtian successions in Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Poland. A composite Lower Maastrichtian succession has been reconstructed by correlating the several

chalk masses at Sidestrand and Trimingham. The succession includes the type localities and reference sections of four lithographic units namely the Sidestrand Chalk, the Trimingham Sponge Beds, the Little Marl Point and the Beacon Hill Grey Chalk members. Only the Sidestrand Chalk Member is known at any other locality in Britain.

The Maastrichtian succession of the Sidestrand -- Trimingham district is of fundamental importance to British Cretaceous geology and also has a wider significance to studies of the latest Cretaceous elsewhere in north-west Europe.

The cliffs at Sidestrand expose one of the best pre-glacial stratigraphic sequences in England. Analysis of their faunal and floral elements has led to the development of a detailed picture of the early Pleistocene environments in north Norfolk. At this locality unique domes of chalk thrust upwards by diapiric or glacio-tectonic processes are exposed in cliff sections and on the foreshore. Overlying sediments of the Cromer Forest Bed formation, displaced from their usual position at and below beach level, are consequently well exposed. The sequence includes fossiliferous Pre-Pastonian and Pastonian marine sediments, unconformably overlain by deposits of Cromerian age. This unconformity, of great importance for the interpretation of the Cromer Forest Bed Formation, is particularly well shown.

Sampling of the pre-pastonian and Pastonian beds has yielded an interesting mammalian fauna. The assemblage collected from the different sites are essentially the same and is dominated by the vole, *Mimomys pliocaenicus*. Other species recorded include other vole species eg. *Mimomys blanci*, a lemming *Lemmus* sp., and two species of desman *Galemys kormosi* and *Desmana thermalis*. At present it is thought that the composition of the Sidestrand vertebrate fauna suggests an age of 1.7 million years and is equivalent to the continental Villanyian.

The entire length of these cliffs has a substantial history of impressive rotational slumping affecting the Pleistocene deposits. The Sidestrand to Trimingham stretch in particular is the finest site of slumping unconsolidated sediments in Britain. Huge collapses of the cliffs continue to occur, in places breaking through an elaborate set of coastal defence works which stretch along part of this coast.

This is probably the best soft rock cliff site for invertebrates in East Anglia. There are modern records for a number of rare coleoptera including *Nebria livida* and isopoda associated with the crevices and fallen debris at the bases of the cliffs. In addition there are old records for two Red Data Book beetles *Dyschirius obscurus* and *Bledius filipes*. Suitable conditions for these elusive and mobile species exist on this stretch of the coast and overlooked colonies may still be present.

The cliff top flora includes a large colony of species purple broomrape *Orobanche purpurea*, a Red Data Book species, which grows in grassland close to the cliff edge.

Geological Conservation Review Site

Sidestrand

GCR Number: 611 Agency: EN
 GCR Name: Sidestrand
 GCR File Number: N 11
 GCR Block Code: PN/QA E-AG Block Name: Quaternary of East Anglia
 Grid Ref: TG255405
 Size (hectares): 0
 Issue Date: 01/05/1981
 P5P Date: 26/08/1986 GCR Status: Notified
 SMB:

GCR Statement: At this locality, unique domes of Chalk thrust upwards by diapiric or glaciotectionic processes are exposed in cliff section and on the foreshore. Overlying sediments of the Cromer Forest-bed Formation, displaced from their usual position at and below beach level, are consequently beautifully exposed. The sequence includes fossiliferous Pre-Pastonian and Pastonian marine sediments, unconformably overlain by deposits of Cromerian age. This unconformity, of great importance for the interpretation of the stratigraphy of the Cromer Forest-bed Formation, is particularly well- shown.

| Sssi Number | Sssi Name | Notification Status | Notification Date |
|-------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 6981 | SIDESTRAND AND TRIMINGHAM CLIFFS | | 01/01/1900 |

| Administrative Area |
|--------------------------|
| Norfolk (1974) |
| England |
| East Anglia Region (NCC) |

| Map No. | Map Scale |
|---------|-----------|
| 133 | 1:50000 |
| TG24SE | 1:10000 |

Geological Conservation Review Site

Sidestrand

GCR Number: 1197 Agency: EN
 GCR Name: Sidestrand
 GCR File Number: N 11
 GCR Block Code: PCN VTB Block Name: Pleistocene Vertebrata
 Grid Ref: TG255405
 Size (hectares): 0
 Issue Date: 01/09/1982
 P5P Date: 26/08/1986 GCR Status: Notified
 SMB:

GCR Statement: The pollen-dated Pre-Pastonian sediments contain a mammalian fauna of vole teeth, including *Mimomys blanci*, important for correlating the Lower Pleistocene sequences in Britain.

| Sssi Number | Sssi Name | Notification Status | Notification Date |
|-------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 6981 | SIDESTRAND AND TRIMINGHAM CLIFFS | | 01/01/1900 |

| Administrative Area |
|--------------------------|
| Norfolk (1974) |
| England |
| East Anglia Region (NCC) |

| Map No. | Map Scale |
|---------|-----------|
| 133 | 1:50000 |
| TG24SE | 1:10000 |

COUNTY: Norfolk

SITE NAME: MUNDESLEY CLIFFS

DISTRICT: North Norfolk

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Local Planning Authority: North Norfolk District Council

National Grid Reference: TG 317365 TG 331352 Area: 28.7 (ha) 70.9 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 133

1:10,000: TG 33 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1954

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Reasons for Notification:

The cliffs along this stretch of coast provide some of the very best sections in the Pleistocene Cromer Forest-bed Formation, especially in Cromerian marine and freshwater deposits, and freshwater sediments of the early Anglian Cold Stage. At both Mundesley, and Paston – the type locality, marine and rarer freshwater deposits of Pastonian age are particularly well-developed. A nationally important site for its extensive Pleistocene sequence.

Appendix C

County Wildlife Site designations

OVERSTRAND

CSITE/00/1202

Csite

COUNTY WILDLIFE SITE 1202;

Further Information : -

This site consists of maritime cliffs and foreshore much of which is strongly influenced by coastal defence work. The cliffs are shallow sloped as a result of slumping and the vegetation is a diverse mixture of communities, many influenced by seepage.

The slopes of the cliff are extensively slumped to form a highly diverse topography of ledges and drops, all of which except the most recent are well vegetated by a variety of grassland and tall herbs. The top of the cliffs have small patches of scrub, a mixture of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and sea-buckthorn often covered by scrambling traveller's joy (*Clematis vitalba*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.). Introduced species and garden escapes are particularly common here and frequent throughout the cliffs. In the middle of the cliff the vegetation is a variable size but includes much false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), ground-elder (*Aegopodium podagraria*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*) and Alexanders (*Smyrniololium olustrum*). Kidney vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria*) and wild carrot (*Daucus carota*) are locally frequent mixed with oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*). Steep slopes have a covering of ivy (*Hedera helix*) in places with male-fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*). Where there is seepage small stands of common reed (*Phragmites australis*) and bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) occur with jointed rush (*Juncus articulatus*) and field horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*). The lowest areas of the cliff have some small patches of sand couch (*Elymus farctus*) and marrem (*Ammophila arenaria*) and tiny areas of these exist along the sea defence wall and promenade.

The beach has groins and consists of sand with some areas of gravel. It is extensively used and very disturbed.

MUNDESLEY

CSITE/00/1228

C Site

COUNTY WILDLIFE SITE 1228;

Further Information : -

This site is the cliffs north-west of Mundesley, part of which runs adjacent to Mundesley Cliffs SSSI.

In the north, adjacent to the caravan park, is a dense sward with scattered scrub. Grasses include cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), and bents (*Agrotis* spp.), with few herb such as hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) and colt's-foot (*Tussilago farfara*) Scrub is dominated by brambles (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and some gorse (*Ulex europaeus*). There is frequent slipping of the cliffs exposing bare areas of sand and chalk.

Further south-east the cliffs become steeper with caravans and gardens right up to the cliff edge. The flora is similar to the northern part of the site.

*Based on the 1985 habitat survey (NWT).

Appendix D

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: Maps and Management Strategy Document

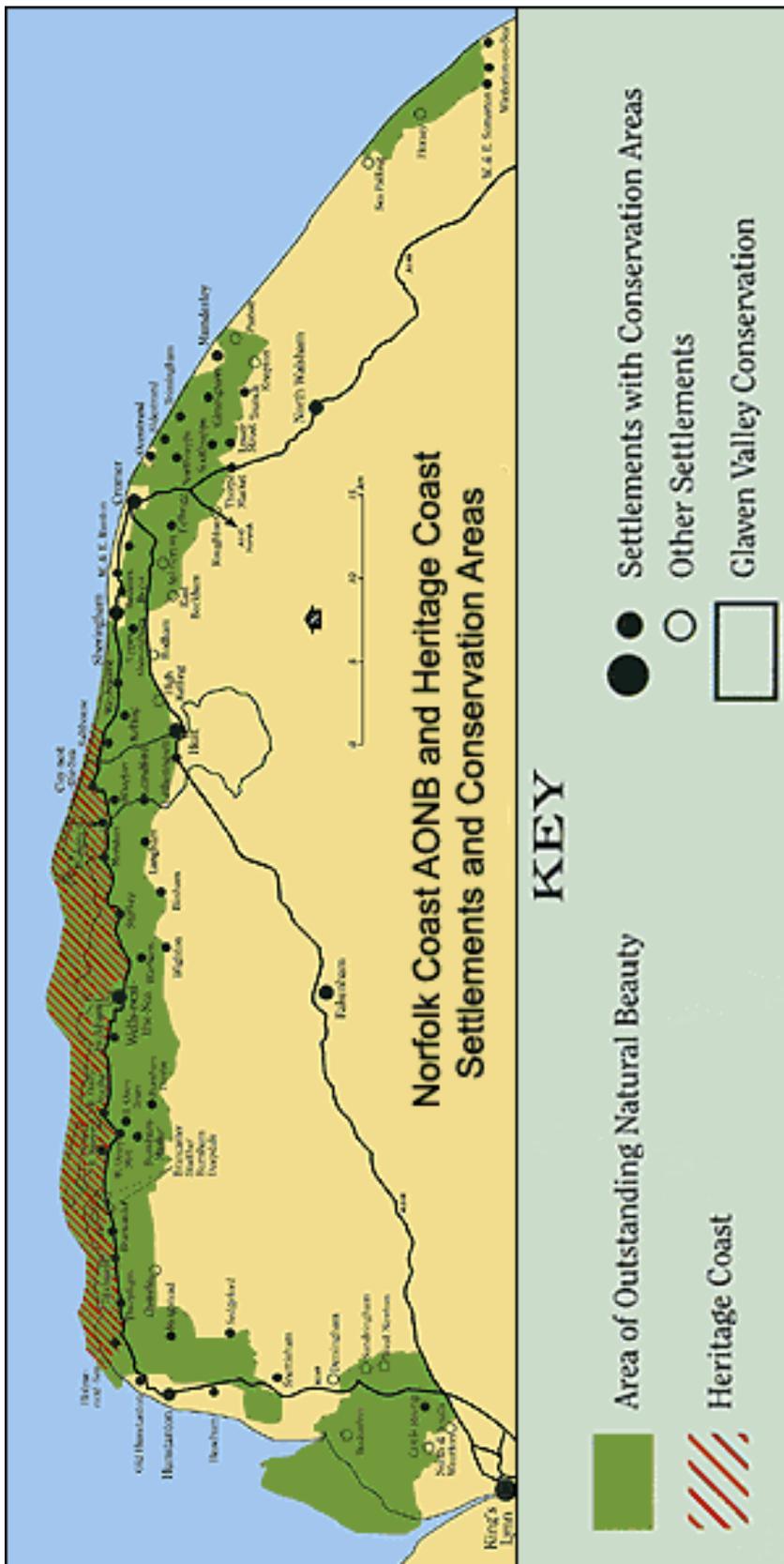


Figure A4.1 Large scale map of the Norfolk Coast AONB and Heritage Coast, 1968 (NNDC website)

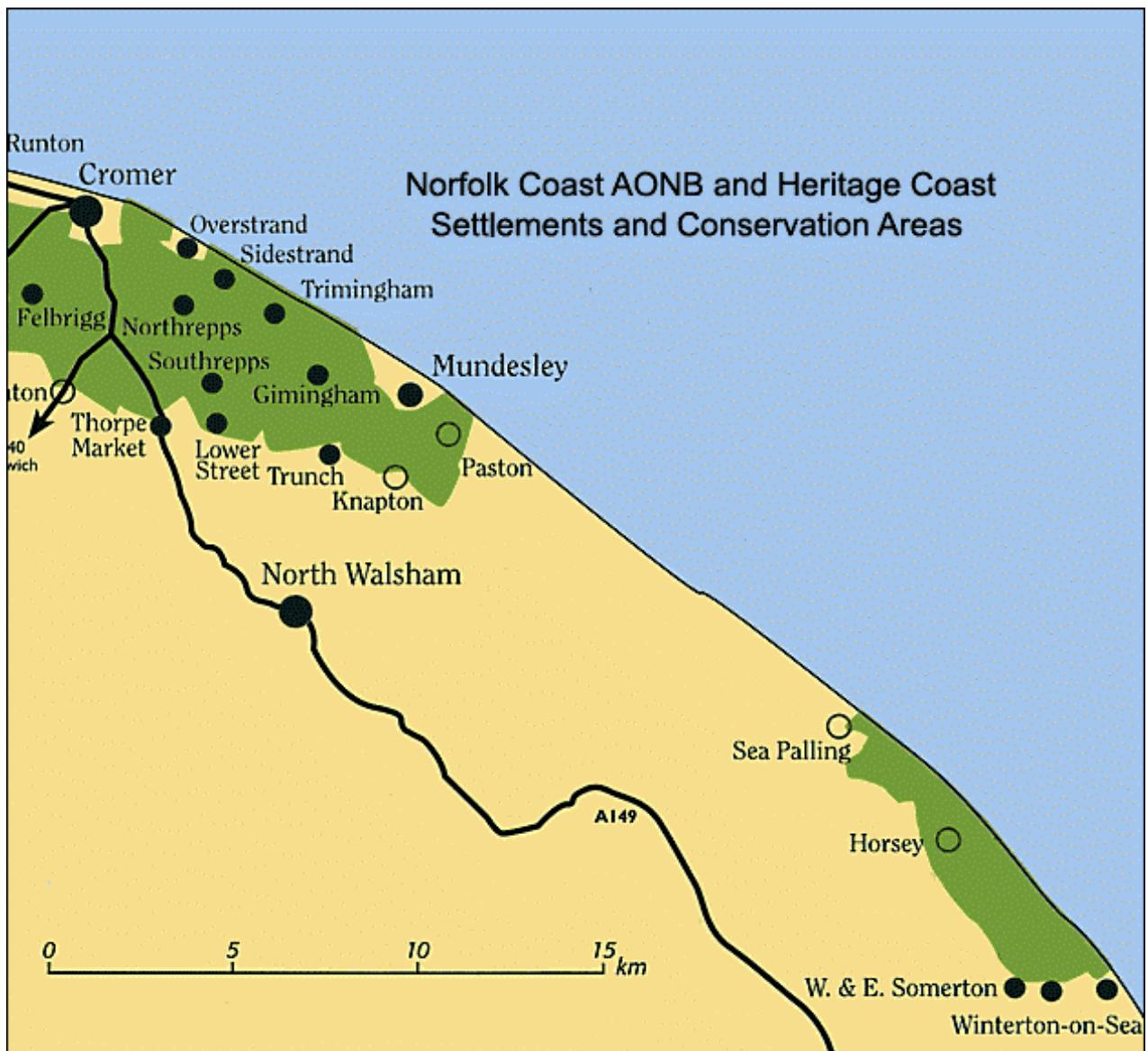


Figure A4.2 Local map of the North Norfolk Coast AONB in the vicinity of the study area (NNDC website)

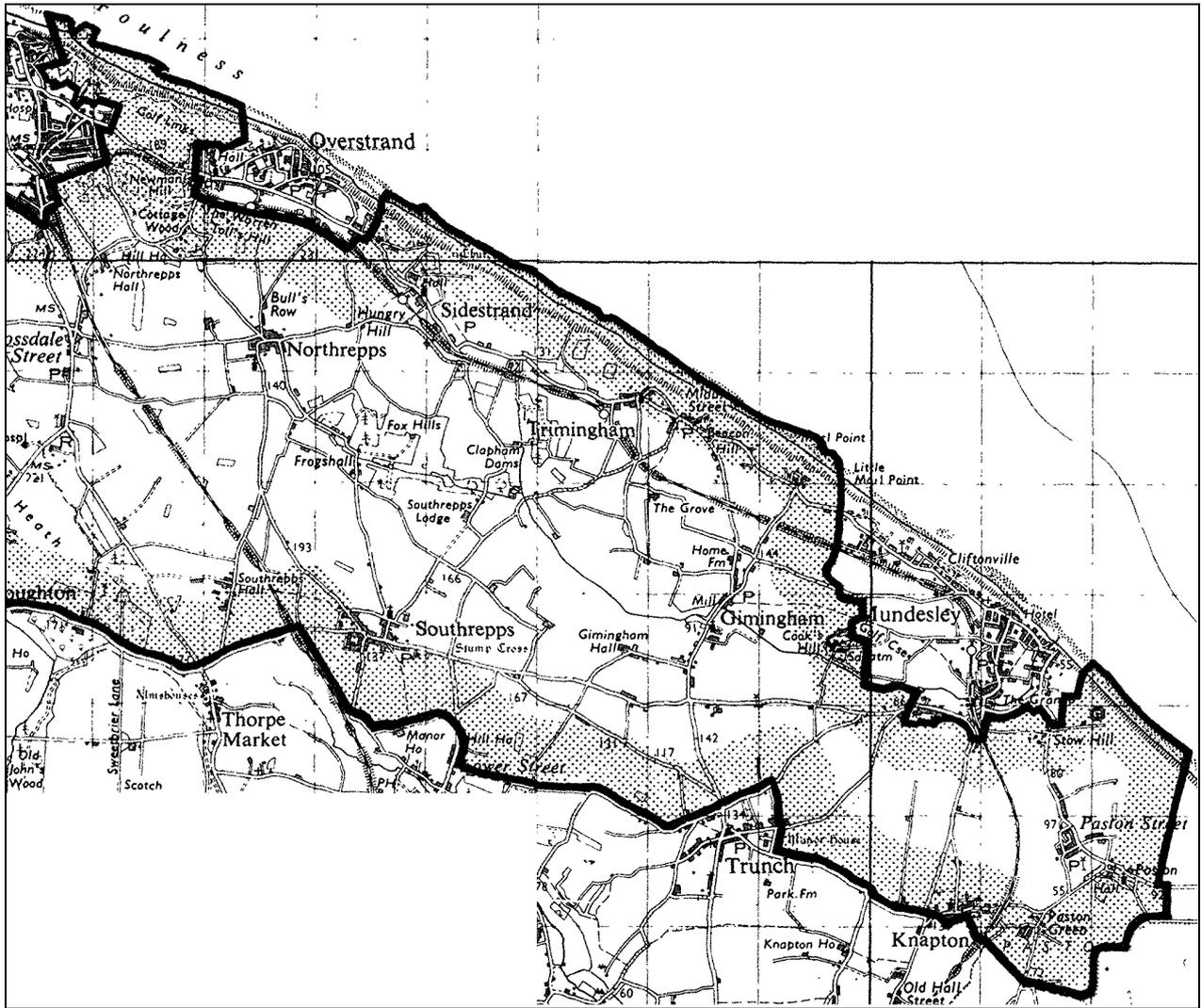


Figure A4.3 Definitive map of the Norfolk Coast AONB, 1968 (NNDC website)

Norfolk Coast AONB Strategy Summary

Purpose of the Strategy

The Norfolk Coast AONB Management Strategy is a non-statutory document which has been produced to provide a framework for use and management of the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The aim is to maintain the special character of the AONB while recognising the need for a thriving future for the area and its people.



The Strategy aims to:

1. set out significant issues and policies for everyone working in, living in and visiting the area
2. provide a framework for co-ordination of sustainable use and management of the Norfolk Coast AONB, including social and economic development
3. set out how organisations and local people can play their part in this process

Consultation

The Management Strategy has been produced through a process of extensive consultation, both with organisations with a part to play in management of the AONB and with its local communities. Wide consultation was undertaken during 1997 before a draft Strategy was produced and circulated widely early in 1998. Comments received during the public consultation period were taken into account in revising the draft, with further refinement taking place through the Norfolk Coast Projects Officer Working Group to produce this final version of the Strategy.

A Statement of Consultation, showing how amendments were made in response to comments received on the public consultation draft, is available on request.

The Strategy

Part 1 contains outline background information on the AONB, although more details are to be found in other documents referred to later in the Strategy. It includes an analysis of what constitutes natural beauty in the Norfolk Coast, sets out guiding principles for the Strategy, and puts the AONB Management Strategy in context with the many other plans and strategies operating in the area.

Part 2 contains an outline of issues which are relevant to the character of the Norfolk Coast AONB, together with objectives and policies grouped together under six broad headings. Each of these aspects is important in protecting and enhancing the natural beauty of the Norfolk Coast, now and for the future. More information on the organisations and documents referred to in Part 2 can be found in a separate appendix to the Strategy, which is updated annually. The objectives and policies in each section of Part 2 have been agreed by a wide range of bodies who have important management and planning functions within the AONB.

Issues relating to visitors and recreation have already been addressed in the Visitor Management Strategy for the Norfolk Coast, which was produced by the Norfolk Coast Partnership in 1995 and which is embraced by this wider Strategy. Transport issues are addressed through the Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy (1998) produced by Norfolk County Council in partnership with the Norfolk Coast Partnership.

Action Plan

The objectives and policies are broad and do not generally advocate specific actions. The existing mechanisms and initiatives through which the Strategy can be implemented, together with new mechanisms and initiatives which need to be developed, are contained in a separate Action Plan which is reviewed and updated annually.

Progress on the Action Plan is also recorded and published annually.

ENDORSEMENT OF THE STRATEGY BY PROJECT PARTNERS

We endorse the Norfolk Coast AONB Management Strategy as a guiding framework for maintaining the special character of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty while recognising the need for a thriving future for the area and its people.
We will work in partnership with others in the AONB, seeking to reflect and implement the objectives and policies of the Strategy in all our activities affecting the area.

Regional Officer
Countryside Commission

Development Manager
East of England Tourist Board

Acting Director
National Trust Eastern Region

Leader of the Council
Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

Team Manager
English Nature Norfolk Team

Director
Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Leader of the Labour Group
Norfolk County Council

Acting Area Manager
Environment Agency

East of England Regional Director
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Chairman of the Council
North Norfolk District Council

Chairman of Planning Committee
Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Regional Manager
Rural Development Commission

Chairman of the Norfolk Branch
Country Landowners Association

Norfolk County Chairman
National Farmers Union

October 1998

NORFOLK COAST AONB MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| Summary of the Management Strategy | 1 |
| Endorsement of the Strategy by Project Partners | 2 |
| PART 1: SETTING THE SCENE | 5 |
| 1.1 The Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty | 5 |
| 1.2 The Qualities of Natural Beauty | 7 |
| 1.3 Guiding Principles for the Strategy | 8 |
| 1.4 Purpose of the AONB Management Strategy | 123 |
| 1.5 Visitors, Recreation and Transport | 146 |
| 7.1 | 18 |
| PART 2: THE STRATEGY | 19 |
| 2.1 Co-ordination and Partnership | 20 |
| 2.2 Living and Working on the Norfolk Coast | 22 |
| 2.3 Planning and Design | 24 |
| 2.4 The Changing Coast | 26 |
| 2.5 The Open Countryside and Coast | 28 |
| 2.6 Natural Resources and Environmental Quality | 30 |
| Appendix 1 Visitor Management Strategy Policies | 36 |
| Appendix 2 Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy Summary | 38 |
| Appendix 3 Consultation List for the Draft Strategy | 39 |
| Appendix 4 Nature Conservation Designations | 40 |

PART 1: SETTING THE SCENE

1.1 The Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

1.1.1 The Norfolk Coast contains a diversity of exceptional landscapes from the coastal sand dunes, saltmarshes and grazing marshes of the Heritage Coast to open chalk downland, quiet, secluded river valleys and the woodlands and heath of the Cromer Ridge. The Norfolk Coast is an important place for the people living and working there and as a resource for the county of Norfolk as a whole. It is also an important area for tourism, which is a key part of the local economy. The combination of landscape diversity with the villages, farm buildings and quiet country lanes gives the area the special character for which it was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1968 under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

1.1.2 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a statutory national landscape designation. AONBs have equal status with our National Parks in terms of the quality of their landscape.

1.1.3 The main part of the AONB stretches from Heacham to Bacton, with outlying areas in the west between Dersingham and Kings Lynn, and in the east between Sea Palling and Winterton, with a total area of around 450 square kilometres. Although based on the coastal landscape, the area extends up to about 6 kilometres inland in places. The settlements of Sheringham, Cromer, Overstrand and Mundesley are excluded from, but surrounded by, the AONB.

1.1.4 The boundary of the Norfolk Coast AONB was decided at the time of designation to include the main areas of undeveloped coastal landscapes. Although there have been changes in the 30 years since designation which may appear to give rise to inconsistencies in its position, the Countryside Commission have no plans to review the

boundary. There would be apparent inconsistencies wherever a boundary was drawn and it would be wrong to regard the boundary as a clear dividing line beyond which things are irrelevant to the AONB. It should be seen as a broader guideline to assist in protecting the character of one of our most important areas of landscape.

1.1.5 A section of the AONB coast, from Holme-next the-Sea to Weybourne, is also defined as a Heritage Coast, another national landscape designation recognising this section of coastline as one of the finest stretches of undeveloped coast in England and Wales. Unlike AONB, Heritage Coast is a non-statutory designation, although it is recognised within the statutory planning system. Objectives and policies for the Heritage Coast Strategy and Management Plan (1989) are embraced by the wider objectives, issues and policies in this AONB Management Strategy.

Links With The Past

1.1.6 How the Norfolk Coast appears today is the result of a complex interaction between many factors. The basic shape and contours of the land and the coast are the product of natural processes, a result of the underlying geology, the action of ice sheets and water. The action of the sea, both eroding and building, produces an ever-changing coastline.

1.1.7 Although geology and landforms influence land use, many of the smaller scale features which give the area its unique character are the result of the actions of people, who have lived in and used the area for thousands of years. So perhaps the term “natural beauty” is something of a misnomer, since it includes settlements, distinctive buildings, the network of quiet lanes and the man-made habitats and features such as freshwater marshes, hedgerows and plantations, which are often rich in wildlife. Even the present “wild” coastline is a product of a combination of natural processes and human activities, in that coastal modification in one place also has an effect on coastal processes for a much wider area.

1.1.8 Human impact started with forest clearances and the development of farming in Neolithic times (from about 6500 years before present), and fishing would also have taken place at this time. As in many rural areas, some of the roads and tracks are likely to have a very ancient history, originating from before Roman times. The rich archaeology of the area, covering the period from the earliest evidence of man, through the Bronze and Iron Ages, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Norman and medieval times, testifies to the constant use of the area.

1.1.9 The large religious establishments of Norman and medieval times, are a distinctive feature of many of the villages in the AONB. In some cases they are now represented only by ruins and by the contribution made by them to humbler buildings in which materials recycled from them can sometimes be found.

1.1.10 Industry, in the form of ports, wool, corn and paper mills, and local small scale works such as brick making also developed in medieval times, but the rise of the railways and coastline changes (possibly at least partly because of human activities) contributed to their decline. The railways also supported the expansion of the tourism industry from its Georgian beginnings.

1.1.11 Agricultural enclosure, from about the seventeenth century, brought about a major but gradual change in the landscape, including the coastal landscape by the enclosure of saltmarsh by banks to create grazing land. The development of large country estates also contributed to the landscape we see today.

1.1.12 So the character of the area as we know it today has come about as a result of a process of change, producing a rich and unique mixture from the interaction of people with their environment. Links with the past, sometimes the ancient past, can be seen everywhere in the landscape and settlements, and in local traditions. These links contribute enormously to our sense of a special place.

1.2 The Qualities of Natural Beauty

1.2.1 What is natural beauty? Consensus over many years in public perception of the Norfolk Coast as somewhere special is an important aspect of its natural beauty. Although people can often identify in general terms what they value about the area and what they dislike, there is a danger that natural beauty is taken for granted, and that the many qualities which make up natural beauty are gradually eroded. Although Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is primarily a landscape designation, perception of the area's qualities through all the senses is important. The **key qualities** summarised below are proposed as those which combine to give it a unique character, which distinguish it from anywhere else and constitute its natural beauty:

General atmosphere

1.2.2 A high quality environment generally, with clean air and water. A general atmosphere of relative remoteness and tranquillity, with a slower pace of life than many places.

Undeveloped, dynamic coast

1.2.3 Unique coastal landscapes offering wide and distant views. The Heritage Coast in particular is largely uncluttered by the works of man, and is one of the wildest, most remote areas of lowland England. The coast is of outstanding interest and scientific importance for its coastal processes and evolving features.

Outstanding, distinctive, often internationally important habitats and wildlife

1.2.4 Coastal habitats (cliffs, shingle banks, sand dunes, lagoons, saltmarsh and freshwater marsh) and the birds and other wildlife they support are particularly important. Inland, many habitats such as heaths and woodland, as well as the farmed countryside, can contribute to supporting locally characteristic as well as rare wildlife.

Landscapes with distinctive variations and local features within the area

1.2.5 Particularly away from the coast, landscapes have a subtle beauty rather than being grand and dramatic. The landscapes within the area reflect many factors such as soil types, local practice, management, use and planning. The interaction of these factors has led to a great variety of landscape types.

Traditional buildings in locally distinctive materials and styles

1.2.6 The appearance of traditional buildings and structures varies through the area, based on locally available materials such as carstone, brick, chalk, flint, cobbles and pantiles, and on local styles. Traditional farm buildings are in harmony with the surrounding landscape.

Quiet, narrow country lanes

1.2.7 The lanes are characteristically without hard edging. Wide grass verges which may be rich in wildlife, or sunken lanes between high banks, are characteristic features in some areas. Intrusion from highway infrastructure such as road signs, white lines and islands is still lower than in many areas, but the negative visual impact on the rural landscape is very noticeable in places.

Locally distinctive settlements and communities

1.2.8 Settlement layouts and character are often very noticeably different, even in neighbouring villages, reflecting their different development. The local communities are also varied in character, often reflecting different traditional activities and priorities. In general, the appearance of settlements is not greatly affected by modern influences.

1.3 Guiding Principles for the Strategy

Managing change

1.3.1 If the beautiful and fascinating place we see has come about through a benign process of largely unplanned change and development, why should we be concerned for the future of the natural beauty of the area?

1.3.2 No matter how much we may express a wish to keep things “just as they are”, our actions inevitably lead to change and we have to embrace and adapt to change. The Norfolk Coast AONB has always been subject to change and this will inevitably continue. In the past it has often been quite gradual but the nature, speed and extent of changes we are facing now are more threatening.

1.3.3 In the case of some environmental changes such as predicted climate change, it will not be possible to manage such changes locally. It will be more appropriate to support initiatives to tackle issues in a national or global context.

1.3.4 The overall pressure for standardisation in many aspects of life can destroy the distinctive character of an area. The speed and scale of change in agriculture in the last forty years are unprecedented, and threaten to destroy distinctive landscape features and wildlife habitats; indeed, it has done so already. As farms have become larger, the buildings which form an important part of the rural landscape have fallen into disuse and landscapes and wildlife habitats have been radically changed.

1.3.5 The shoreline has always been a changing feature. Sea level rise, possibly accelerated by global warming, means changes may be faster than expected. Shoreline change must be planned for and

managed as far as possible. Climate change itself could have a severe impact on agricultural viability and water resources.

1.3.6 Visitors support an important part of the local economy. The investment generated by tourism helps to sustain aspects of the local environment but also brings pressures. Linked to this the growth in road traffic, which is likely to continue on present forecasts, also has an effect on the tranquillity and undeveloped nature of the area. Development pressures are predicted to continue as more people require more houses in which to live, and many wish to live in the countryside. Expansion of the coastal towns close to the AONB (see section 1.1) towards its boundary and traffic associated with visitors to these towns have significant implications for the area.

1.3.7 It is neither possible nor desirable to “fossilise” an area, and we must aim to keep a living and working countryside and coast. We need to manage change in a way which conserves the qualities which are of most value to us, which make the area unique and distinct from other places. Many of the pressures we face now will erode the character of the area unless we make positive choices about what we want to see happen, and make sometimes difficult decisions to achieve this.

Sustainability

1.3.8 The concept of ‘sustainability’ or ‘sustainable development’ recognises that change (that is, development) will occur in many aspects of life and the environment but that where change does occur it must happen in a manner which contributes to a better quality of life for current and future generations, without undermining the quality of the natural environment.

‘Sustainability’ for the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty must encompass:

- **Social progress which meets the needs of everyone**
- **Effective protection of the environment to maintain the qualities of natural beauty which make the area special (see section 1.2)**
- **Prudent use of natural resources**
- **Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment**

1.3.9 None of these objectives of sustainability can be pursued in isolation. They are inter-dependent and must be pursued through partnership and co-operation between many different interests and organisations. **Sustainability means a future Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which continues to justify its designation as a nationally important area of high landscape quality and distinctive character and which is also a living, working area for people.**

1.3.10 While ensuring that future change of all kinds is managed in ways that respect the landscape, wildlife and the heritage of the people living in the AONB, we must also be careful that we do not follow policies or undertake actions which may cause problems elsewhere, and so be unsustainable in a wider regional, national or global context.

Partnership and Consultation

1.3.11 Pressures for change, and the issues arising from them, are varied and complex. Agreement on common interest and aims, and partnership working to achieve these aims between all these different interests must be the way forward. The Norfolk Coast Project and the Project Partners are committed to working in an effective partnership which can not only sustain the area’s natural beauty and enable people to continue to enjoy it, but can also improve the quality of life for people who live and work in the AONB.

1.3.12 The Norfolk Coast Project recognises that careful balancing of interests is needed to safeguard the AONB for the future and that local people are an important part of the Project Partnership. Even where statutory control is available, it is always preferable to proceed through building understanding, trust, commitment and co-operation since these are more likely to lead to real conservation of the area’s character in the long term.

1.3.13 This Strategy has not been prepared in isolation, but rather has been developed in partnership, through a unique consultation process before the draft Strategy was drawn up during 1997. Local residents had the opportunity to make known their views, together with representatives from organisations who have an interest in, or influence on, the AONB (see Appendix 3). These views were used in drawing up the draft Strategy.

1.3.14 The public consultation draft of the Strategy was then widely circulated for comment between mid January and the end of March 1998. Two public meetings were also organised at Cromer and Hunstanton to facilitate response from local residents. The comments received have been taken into account in amending the consultation draft to produce this AONB Management Strategy. A Statement of Consultation is available to indicate how this was done.

Land and Life

The Land and Life initiative was undertaken by the Project during 1997, with specialist assistance from University College London. The aim was to find out about the views of local people before consultation documents were produced to help develop this Strategy and the Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy. It consisted of a simple questionnaire, delivered to as many households as possible within the AONB (largely by Parish newsletter distributors), followed by five structured meetings based on the response to the questionnaire.

All respondents who expressed an interest in attending a meeting through their questionnaire response were invited to one of five meetings to cover the whole of the AONB. The meetings were organised as workshops broken down into small groups with facilitators, with groups selected on the basis of views expressed in the questionnaire returns. Issues for both this Strategy and the draft Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy were included.

Over 1600 questionnaires were received and analysed by University College London, who also provided specialist staff to act as facilitators in the meetings which involved about 120 people. (See Appendix 3)

UCL produced a report on the Land and Life questionnaire and meetings, summaries of which were circulated to parish councils in the AONB for their comments.

The views from Land and Life are summarised overleaf, and have been used in developing this Strategy and the Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy.

LAND AND LIFE - THE VIEWS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS

1.3.15 A wide ranging public consultation exercise using questionnaires and discussion groups was undertaken in June and July 1997 under the title of Land and Life, with the assistance of University College London. The title of the exercise recognises the close link between people and the landscape, both in its past development and today. Traffic and transport were incorporated, as well as quality of life issues such as natural beauty, local prosperity and coastal defence. The aim was to find out about the views, attitudes and knowledge of local people, so that these could be taken into account when drawing up the draft AONB Management Strategy and the Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy.

1.3.16 The following summary of issues comes from both the questionnaires and the meetings. The quotes in italics are taken from Land and Life meetings, and are chosen as representative of widely held views.

1.3.17 Land and Life revealed a very widespread and deep-seated love of the area. Typical comments were *“the nearest thing to heaven”*, *“a place of riches and treasure, not only in terms of its natural beauty but also in terms of its communities”*. That *“shopkeepers had time to chat”*, or *“to mardle”* in a phrase used in one meeting, was noted and valued.

1.3.18 People enjoyed the *“big skies”*, the *“primitive wildness of the marshes”* and their emptiness - the fact that they could *“walk the dog for miles without meeting anyone”*. The area’s relative remoteness was appreciated, the idea that it is *“on the road to nowhere”* and that *“people have to make an effort to get here”*.

1.3.19 Many residents may wish to *“pull up the drawbridge and keep the area as it is”*, but there is also recognition of the need to strike a balance, and that it is not possible to *“draw a line around the area and say the twentieth century stops here”*.

1.3.20 The landscape, with *“its little humps and hollows which make all the difference”* and wildlife, for example *“the heron feeding just outside my window”* are highly valued, and the villages, buildings and narrow lanes give *“a feeling of continuity”*. Although caravans parks were often cited as intrusive, *“a veritable rash”*, people found it more difficult to pinpoint the landscape features they viewed positively.

1.3.21 In Land and Life meetings, people often found it difficult to understand *“who had overall responsibility for the coast”*. People can feel that they are being *“sent from one organisation and authority to another”* when they try to find out who is responsible for what. *“Gaining the co-operation of all the different people involved”* is felt to be difficult. Decision-making is not seen as transparent, and communication between the many authorities and local people is regarded as less than satisfactory.

1.3.22 Many of the responses received in the Land and Life survey, and views expressed at the meetings, focused on social and economic issues within and around the AONB. Many of these issues are shared with other rural areas.

1.3.23 Traditional forms of employment, such as agriculture and fishing, now provide jobs for few people. Although the large numbers of visitors is perceived as a problem by some, with detrimental effects on the area’s special qualities, there is also a general recognition of the place of tourism in the local economy. Many people gain at least some

LAND AND LIFE - THE VIEWS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS

of their income through tourism-related activities. People are unwilling to see “*promoting tourism for the sake of it*”, but recognise its economic contribution to the area, and that, for example, visitors help to “*keep local shops going*”.

1.3.24 This is a complex issue, however, and it is difficult to assess how much of the wealth generated by tourism goes into the local economy. As one resident put it “*the money in this area comes from incomers, . . . and that can hide the fact that locals are poor*”. Although tourism does provide jobs, these may be part-time and not well-paid.

1.3.25 Tourism is by no means the only basis of employment for those in work. The survey suggests that employment is actually quite varied, with the service sector, teaching, environment-related jobs, and local government also being important.

1.3.26 Many people expressed a concern about “*the need to attract and retain young people*”. This is seen as important in retaining the vitality of local communities, which could otherwise be “*in danger of petering out*”. It is seen as being linked to employment opportunities, and availability of affordable housing and transport. However, a typical view was “*that in order to attract big business employers to the area, the environment would be mucked up in the process, and none of us want that.*” There could be ways of developing employment opportunities which do not involve large scale business, however.

1.3.27 Even allowing for the fact that the proportion of retired people in the Norfolk Coast is higher than the national average, the Land and Life survey received a greater proportional response from retired people, and under 25’s were poorly represented. The report recommended that further work should be done to find out about the views of younger people.

1.3.28 Through living with the sea, local people recognise that “*the power of nature is too great*” for us to expect to be able to maintain the coastline as it is, and that “*solving a problem at one place just pushes it somewhere else*”.

1.3.29 Transport issues and ideas were prominent in the response to the Land and Life questionnaire: they are dealt with in more detail in the draft Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy. Vehicle speed through villages, congestion of roads and car parks, safety for road users other than in cars, and heavy goods traffic are commonly perceived problems. In many cases individual consideration of a village’s problems is needed rather than general solutions.

1.3.30 Some people felt that congestion was not a real problem compared to other areas, and was only noticeable for a short season. Most recognise that ignoring the problems now will lead to greater problems in future, and there was wide support for measures to enable the area to “*gain a name for itself as an area which took the provision of environmentally-friendly transport for visitors seriously*”.

1.3.31 Most people are not well aware of existing public transport services, but the general feeling is that services are not good enough to persuade people to use them rather than their cars. Integration of different forms of transport is seen as an important issue; at present they are too often seen “*to compete rather than complement one another*”. Although the need to reduce use of cars is recognised, it is felt that cars are likely to remain important, at least for residents, in a rural area.

1.4 Purpose of the AONB Management Strategy

The purpose of the Strategy is:

- to set out significant issues and policies for everyone working in, living in and visiting the area
- to provide a framework for co-ordination of sustainable use and management of the Norfolk Coast AONB, including social and economic development
- to set out how organisations and local people can play their part in this process

1.4.1 Between AONB designation in 1968 and the setting up of the Norfolk Coast Project in 1991, conservation of the AONB was largely through policies within the Town and Country Planning system. This remains an important means of protecting the special character of the AONB, but a comprehensive, inclusive strategy is now needed. This must include the promotion of positive management and enhancement, as well as reinforcing where better protection is needed.

1.4.2 This Management Strategy is not a statutory plan in the way that Local and Structure Plans are, although the Strategy or parts of it will ideally be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to Local Plans.

1.4.3 The Strategy does not contain detailed background information on the AONB. This already exists in other documents which are referred to elsewhere in this document. The Strategy should be seen as a summary of background information and context, issues, objectives and policies, aimed at guiding future action in the area.

Other Plans, Strategies and Designations

1.4.4 Perhaps not surprisingly for an area so rich in interest, many plans, designations and documents which include the AONB or parts of it already exist or are in preparation. Some of these specifically refer to and recognise the AONB. Some are statutory (i.e. involving legal powers) while others are not. All have relevance in that they influence some aspect of life and management in part or all of the AONB. The Management Strategy has been drawn up within this existing framework. More details of these other plans, strategies and designations, their purpose, the organisations who produce and implement them and where they can be found are contained in a separate appendix which is updated annually.

1.4.5 The most significant of them are identified in the relevant later sections of this Strategy, and in the Action Plan. See sections: 2.2 for those relating to economic and social matters, 2.3 for those relating to planning and design (including highways), 2.4 for those relating to coastal defence and management, 2.5 for those relating to nature conservation and landscape, 2.6 for those relating to management of natural resources and pollution.

1.4.6 **The AONB Management Strategy does not override or supersede these other plans, strategies and designations, or confer any additional powers on any organisations. All of the organisations involved continue to have their own objectives and powers, and limitations imposed by these.**

The Norfolk Coast Project

The overall aim for the Norfolk Coast Project is to seek to ensure that use and management of the AONB, including social and economic development, are sustainable so that future generations have the same opportunity to enjoy and benefit from it.

1.4.7 The Project's approach has been one of building agreement and partnership for conservation of the area's natural beauty and its relationship with wider issues such as the local economy. It has also assisted in funding projects "on the ground" which fulfil its objectives, such as public access improvements, public information and interpretation projects.

1.4.8 The Project has concentrated in particular on visitor management, which was seen as the initial priority, producing a **Visitor Management Strategy for the Norfolk Coast** in 1995 after wide public consultation. This remains the basis for the Project's work in this area and is an integral part of the AONB Management Strategy presented in this document. Work arising from the Visitor Management Strategy has included measures for the management of visitors on sensitive sites, environmental interpretation and development of the **Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy**, in conjunction with Norfolk County Council.

1.4.9 There is overlap between some policies of the Visitor Management Strategy (VMS) and those of this AONB Management Strategy. Relevant VMS policies have been quoted or identified in appropriate sections of Part 2 of this Strategy (see especially sections 2.0, 2.2 and Appendix 1).

The Norfolk Coast Project Partnership

1.4.10 There are a number of organisations with a major part to play in conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area, who are partners in the Norfolk Coast Project. Its funding partners are the Countryside Commission, Norfolk County Council, North Norfolk District Council and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

1.4.11 The Norfolk Coast Project is guided by a **Joint Advisory Panel** of local councillors and Parishes Representatives. The **Officer Working Group** is made up from a wide range of organisations involved as non-funding partners, including statutory agencies, conservation, tourism and land management organisations, together with Parishes Representatives. Details of the Project Partnership are given in a separate appendix.

1.4.12 Apart from the organisations formally represented in the Project Partnership, all of the people who live and work in the area, and who visit it, and other organisations who have an interest in the area, are also an important part of the Partnership.

1.4.13 Sustainable use and management of the AONB, including sustainable social and economic development, can only be achieved by partnership, where the many interests within the area act together. This is a Strategy for the Norfolk Coast Project Partnership, not just for the Norfolk Coast Project staff, and implementation of the policies and actions set out will need to be undertaken by all interests within the Project Partnership. Everyone needs to play their part to secure the future of the AONB.

Roles within the Management Strategy

1.4.14 Roles which will need to be undertaken for the Strategy to be effective, by both Norfolk Coast Project staff and Project Partners, are:

Roles for the Project Partners

- ❖ Endorse the Management Strategy as a framework for co-ordinated action
- ❖ Use agreed objectives and policies as guidance for actions
- ❖ Recognise the AONB and its special qualities in their own plans and strategies
- ❖ Lead and undertake actions identified in the Action Plan in partnership with others
- ❖ Support actions even if they are not specifically identified as a lead partner in the Action Plan
- ❖ Play a full part in the Project Partnership, including the development and review of the Action Plan and Strategy

Roles for Norfolk Coast Project staff

As well as undertaking some aspects of the Action Plan, there are also important co-ordinating roles for the Norfolk Coast Project staff to play, which are vital in maintaining the Project Partnership. These roles would not be undertaken by other organisations because of financial and staffing limitations, or limitations of their own remit. These additional roles are:

- ❖ Co-ordination and monitoring of the Management Strategy, including the Visitor Management and Transport Strategies
- ❖ Enabling strong partnerships to develop between different interests, and co-ordinating policies and actions between the many different interests within the area
- ❖ Acting as a central contact for information for local communities, and promoting the involvement of local communities in the management of the AONB
- ❖ Co-ordinating bids for new resources, for initiatives which fulfil the objectives of the Project Partnership

Action, Progress and Monitoring of the Strategy

1.4.15 The issues, objectives and policies in Sections 2.1 to 2.6 represent the agreement of a wide range of organisations and interests, based on consultation before, and during the draft stage of the Strategy. It is vital to translate these into action and to check that such action is achieving the desired results.

1.4.16 This will be done by preparing an **Action Plan**, which is based on the objectives and policies in the Strategy, to be reviewed yearly. This and relevant appendices will be separate, loose-leaf documents. This format will allow the Action Plan and Appendices to be updated

periodically, while the broad objectives and policies agreed through consultation will remain unchanged.

1.4.17 Progress will be recorded on a year by year basis, with achievements transferred from the Action Plan to a progress record, so that the Action Plan remains a current guide to action by Project Partners, with new items added where appropriate. Although the Action Plan will allow some flexibility in development of the Strategy, it is proposed that a major review of the Management Strategy, to include the Visitor Management Strategy, should be undertaken after five years. This will enable a more formal assessment of changes which have occurred during the period, and a re-assessment of issues, objectives and policies if necessary.

1.5 Visitors, Recreation and Transport

Visitor Management Strategy for the Norfolk Coast

1.5.1 The effect of visitor and recreational pressure on the AONB, including the high levels of traffic and resulting congestion at peak periods, were concerns which were clearly articulated through the Land and Life survey and meetings. The Norfolk Coast Project was aware that these were amongst the most pressing concerns in the AONB, particularly in some coastal areas. The Project produced a Visitor Management Strategy in 1995 after extensive public consultation, to address these issues.

1.5.2 The Visitor Management Strategy (VMS) recognises the importance of tourism and recreational use to the local economy. It seeks to identify and promote ways in which the use of the AONB for recreational purposes (by holiday visitors, day visitors and local people) can be sustainable. One aspect of this strategy is the zoning of the AONB according to the sensitivity of different areas to visitor and recreational pressure (see opposite page), and basing recreational use and promotion on this zoning.

1.5.3 It is not intended to review the Visitor Management Strategy at present, but it should be seen as an important, integral and continuing part of the AONB Management Strategy.

1.5.4 The policies from the Visitor Management Strategy are given in Appendix 1. (Copies of the Visitor Management Strategy are available from the Norfolk Coast Project). Some policies in the VMS are closely linked with issues and policies in the AONB Management Strategy, and these VMS policies are indicated in the relevant sections in Part 2 of the AONB Management Strategy. Actions to take forward VMS policies will be included in the AONB Management Strategy Action Plan.

1.5.6 The Visitor Management Strategy identified the need for a specialist study of traffic and transport for the AONB (see Policy T1, Appendix 1). The effects of traffic on natural beauty and quality of life were also identified through Land and Life as one of the main concerns of local residents. The Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy and Action Plan have been produced by Norfolk County Council in partnership with the Norfolk Coast Project.

1.5.7 The Transport Strategy aims to identify ways in which road traffic and its effects, especially that related to visitors, can be reduced within the AONB. The Transport Strategy is linked to the AONB Management Strategy. Inevitably, there is some overlap between the AONB Management Strategy, the Visitor Management Strategy and the Transport Strategy, for example in the landscape effects of road signs and structures, and car parking.

1.5.8 A summary of the aim and policies of the Transport Strategy is given in Appendix 2. Copies of the Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy are available from Norfolk County Council, Department of Planning and Transportation, Martineau Lane, Norwich. NRI 2SG.

Visitor Management Zoning Guidance Table

| | RED | DARK ORANGE | DARK ORANGE WITH HATCHING | LIGHT ORANGE | LIGHT GREEN | DARK GREEN |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| <i>Landscape & habitat sensitivity in relation to existing visitor use</i> | Areas of fragile wildlife habitat (almost wholly of International importance) under considerable visitor pressure. | Areas of fragile wildlife habitat (of International or National importance) with fewer visitor pressures than the Red Zone. | Selected nature reserves and rural beaches which, although sensitive to visitor use, are better able to absorb larger numbers of visitors than nearby reserves or beaches. | Intermediate areas with visually sensitive open landscapes, all lying immediately adjacent to fragile wildlife habitats. | More robust area, but sensitive to visitor use given proximity to Heritage Coast and unsuitability of A149 to carry increased traffic. | More robust areas, with few visitor pressures at present. |
| <i>Visitor management priorities</i> | To overcome existing damage and disturbance problems associated with visitor activities and level of use (to bring these areas up to Dark Orange Zone status). | To ensure that visitor use does not increase pressure on these areas (to prevent these areas becoming classified as Red Zone). | To transfer use away from more sensitive nature reserves and rural beaches nearby (particularly those in the Red Zone), where this can be accommodated without harm. | To ensure that visitor use does not increase pressure on adjacent fragile areas and maintains its landscape character. | To increase visitor enjoyment where this keeps car use to a minimum and, ideally shifts use away from the Heritage Coast. | To develop opportunities for quiet enjoyment, especially where these take pressure off the other Zones. |
| <i>Zone promotion</i> | Do not promote, as under pressure from current levels of use. | Avoid promotion, but recognise that visitors wanting to go to rural beaches or nature reserves are best directed to certain sites. | Provide information in the locality where this draws visitors away from more sensitive reserves and rural beaches, and encourages visitor enjoyment not reliant on the car. | Careful promotion given proximity to sensitive areas, and traffic pressures in this Zone. | Local promotion where this draws visitors away from the Heritage Coast and encourages visitor enjoyment not reliant on the car. | Preferential to highlight this Zone rather than remainder of AONB but promotion should still draw upon its special qualities and encourage quiet enjoyment. |
| <i>Car parking and traffic</i> | Investigate opportunities to reduce visitors on foot by reducing car parking and associated signing at or adjacent to these sensitive sites. | Prevent any increase in car parking capacity (with the possible exception of some areas), and seek to reduce capacity and directional signing of car parks used by visitors to the Red Zone. | It may be desirable to increase parking capacity at or near some of these sites in the future, if there was evidence that these areas were being used in preference to others of greater sensitivity and could accommodate further use without harm. | Prevent any increase in car parking capacity (with the possible exception of parking for some areas), and seek to reduce capacity and directional signing of car parks used by visitors to the Red Zone. | Reduce car traffic along the A149 within this Zone. Any new parking immediately south of the A149 should be accompanied by a reduction in capacity in nearby Orange and Red Zones. Further inland, any new parking should be small-scale and seek to encourage a shift in use away from the Heritage Coast and A149. | Promote mechanisms which encourage visitors to leave their cars in this Zone before entering other Zones. Any increase in car parking should be linked to public transport and provision for cycling. |
| <i>Priority for interpretation</i> | To raise awareness of this Zone's importance | To raise awareness of the importance and | To raise awareness of the importance of these | To raise awareness of the sensitivity of nearby | To increase understanding and enjoyment of the Area involving wider interpretation themes, highlighting the | |

| RED | DARK ORANGE | DARK ORANGE WITH HATCHING | LIGHT ORANGE | LIGHT GREEN | DARK GREEN |
|---|---|--|--|--|-------------------|
| and sensitivity , to overcome problems of damage and disturbance. | sensitivity of this Zone and nearby Red Zone areas, to prevent problems and increase enjoyment. | areas, and of nearby more sensitive areas. | fragile Red and Orange Zones. | benefits of exploring the Green Zones without the car. | |
| <i>Other visitor facilities</i> | Ensure that any new provision helps overcome visitor pressures and increases visitor enjoyment and understanding. The role of facilities in influencing visitor numbers and distribution must be carefully considered, as well as their landscape impact. New provision should not increase traffic pressures in these Zones. | | Investigate use and development of facilities that encourage use of this Zone in preference to other Zones, aiming to avoid any overall increase in the number of visitors to the AONB. Any new facilities should increase visitor enjoyment and understanding, building upon its special qualities. | | |

7.1 Summary of Landscape Character Areas of the Norfolk Coast AONB

The variations in landscape character are reflected in the eight main landscape types that can be distinguished within the AONB. The coastal landscape types are perhaps the most typical of the area and conjure up the most vivid images associated with the Norfolk Coast. The **North Norfolk Coast** is the area of open, remote, and untamed coastal landscape with long views to the sea and big skies. Characteristic features include the remote coastal marshes, sand dunes and shingle ridges, with coastal maritime settlements, red brick and flint buildings, prominent churches and windmills. The **open farmed marshes** landscape type, found both in the east and west of the AONB, is open, remote and fen-like. In the east, there are pollarded willows alongside roadsides and long views to the sand dunes. In the west, rectilinear fields are defined by ditches and, inland, by sparse hedges and occasional stunted trees. Finally, the **Wash mudflats** are characterised by a large-scale, exposed, remote, and natural landscape where the sea and land merge and the fluid and dynamic interaction of sea and mud is all pervading.

Inland, the **western warrens** offer a varied, undulating, well-wooded landscape with steep slopes, good and sometimes dramatic views, and quite large stretches of heathland. The self-contained estate villages in this area are characterised by attractive, carstone buildings. Similarly heathy in character, the **Cromer**

Ridge is the highest part of the area and is characterised by its irregular, undulating, intimate and well-wooded topography and by substantial areas of heather in the west. Small, enclosed arable fields, hedgebanks, sunken lanes and sparse settlement are also characteristic features of the ridge. The crumbling cliffs at the coast are of glacial sands and gravels with some chalk exposures.

In contrast, the area of **open chalklands** in the west of the AONB is a remote, open farmed plateau with a downland character often offering long views to the horizon, and with only sparse settlement including large imposing homesteads built of brick or carstone and flint. The other predominantly agricultural landscapes consist of the area of **eastern farmlands**, with its settled agricultural landscape of narrow lanes, prominent churches, hedgebanks and windblown hedgerow trees, with spectacular, unstable cliffs up to 60 metres in height at the coast, and the **river valleys**, a tranquil, rural landscape type with small meandering rivers, grazing meadows on the valley floor, well-defined arable slopes, prominent flint churches and a few distinctive watermills.

More detailed descriptions of the landscape types and character, influences on the landscape of the AONB and its importance are given in **The Norfolk Coast Landscape** (Countryside Commission, 1995. CCP 486)

PART 2: THE STRATEGY

2.0.1 The qualities of natural beauty (1.2), the guiding principles, including views from Land and Life (1.3) and the Norfolk Coast Project's overall aim and stated purpose of the Strategy (1.4) provide the framework for the consideration of issues and the agreement of objectives and policies in Part 2. The issues, and the setting of objectives and policies, fall under the following headings:

2.1 Co-ordination and Partnership

2.2 Living and Working on the Norfolk Coast

2.3 Planning and Design

2.4 The Changing Coast

2.5 The Open Countryside and Coast

2.6 Natural Resources and Environmental Quality

2.0.2 There is, of course, overlap and cross reference within these broad headings, reflecting the complex interactions which exist. Each section consists of:

Objective(s)

What should the Project Partnership be trying to achieve, in broad terms, which will be consistent with the overall aim and guiding principles?

The issues

What are the things which can contribute to or threaten the natural beauty of the area and people's quality of life, both now and in the future?

Policies

What should the Project Partnership do to address the issues and achieve the objectives?

2.0.3 The Strategy, together with its objectives and policies, needs agreement, day-to-day backing and action from all the interests within the AONB - organisations, local people and businesses - if it is to be fully successful. The policies are preceded by "The Project Partners will seek to:" to recognise:

- that policies refer to all the Project Partners, and not just Norfolk Coast Project staff
- that Project Partners are limited individually in their remit, powers and resources, and that policies may vary in their relevance to individual Project Partners

2.0.4 The Action Plan gives further details of how policies are already being or can be implemented, and of the main organisations and/or interests involved in each case.

2.0.5 Everyone has an interest in caring for the qualities which make the area unique. This Strategy offers a blueprint for action to conserve the area's natural beauty for future generations to enjoy, and to maintain thriving local communities.

2.1 Co-ordination and Partnership

AONB Objective 1 is:

The co-ordination of policies and actions of all organisations and individuals to contribute to sustainable use and management, including sustainable social and economic development, of the AONB

2.1.1 Because of its size and the exceptional importance and richness of many aspects of its natural beauty, there is a large and potentially confusing number of plans, designations and policies relating to the AONB, or parts of it. Many different organisations are responsible for these, and they sometimes have a relatively narrow perspective. The plans, policies and actions of all the organisations working in the area need to be co-ordinated and easily accessible.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 1

Recognise the importance of the AONB and the need to conserve its special qualities in all policies and documents that apply to the AONB. Ensure that policies are co-ordinated

Policy 2

Act in partnership to promote the importance and sensitivity of the AONB, highlight issues affecting it and lobby for action on these issues

2.1.3 If organisations and individuals are to be able to play their part, they must have a clear understanding of the perspectives of other interests and the framework within which these operate. Commitment to caring for the area's unique character in all its guises, through a co-ordinated approach, will help to conserve the area for the benefit of all. Access to consistent and up-to-date advice on matters of design, good practice techniques and sources of financial assistance is also required for effective and co-ordinated action in many areas. The Project is well placed to take on this role.

2.1.2 Local people want to be informed and involved and visitors also have a legitimate interest in the management and future of the area. Local knowledge can be an important input to the decision-making process, but in the past this has often not been used effectively. Parish Councils have a key role and responsibility in achieving this. There is potential for greater dialogue and involvement of local people in the design and siting of permitted development structures and in coastline management schemes (see Policies 12 & 16), perhaps through a local contacts network.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 3

Inform and involve all relevant interests, especially local communities, in issues and decisions affecting the AONB

Policy 4

Use and promote the Norfolk Coast Project as a key co-ordinating partnership to share information and co-ordinate action affecting the AONB and as a central contact for information for local communities

2.1.4 Sustainability and the involvement of all sections of the local community are key themes of **Local Agenda 21** programmes being developed through local councils. Local Agenda 21 has been developed from the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development at Rio de Janeiro.

2.1.5 The resources of all Project Partners and other organisations are limited. At present there are insufficient financial and human resources to manage the conservation of many aspects of the AONB's special character as well as the Project Partners would like. There is a need to co-operate to make the most effective use of existing resources, as well as to find additional resources which can assist the conservation of the area's special qualities.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 5

Ensure effective use of existing resources, and seek additional resources, to support initiatives which further sustainable use and management, including sustainable social and economic development, of the AONB

2.1.6 Long term monitoring of many indicators is required to assess changes which are taking place. On the basis of this, informed decisions can be made about how to manage these changes in the future (see section 1.3). Monitoring which is already being undertaken and areas where it needs to be developed, together with relevant organisations, are identified in the Action Plan.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 6

Use and co-ordinate existing mechanisms and develop new ones where needed to monitor changes affecting the AONB

Visitor Management Strategy policies

relevant to this section are: **I4, I5, F10** (see Appendix 1)

2.2 Living and Working on the Norfolk Coast

AONB Objective 2 is:

A high quality of life for local people, with a healthy economy which supports the conservation of natural beauty

2.2.1 Many of the issues raised by local residents through the initial consultation process (see section 1.3) are social or economic. These are highly relevant to the quality of life in the AONB and are linked to many aspects of natural beauty. Many of these issues are shared with rural areas throughout the country. They include:

- the lack of employment opportunities and affordable housing especially for young people, resulting in a continuing drift of young people away from the area
- the decline in local services and facilities such as schools, pubs and shops
- poor public transport provision
- the high number of holiday homes and the effect of this on the age and social structure of villages

2.2.2 The local economy and the structure of communities, formerly based on traditional activities such as low-intensity agriculture and fishing which were linked with the maintenance of the character of the area, have changed significantly in the thirty years since the area was designated as an AONB.

2.2.3 Economic and social aspects will continue to change and the character of the area will continue to be closely linked to them. A healthy and sustainable economy is essential if the fundamental qualities of natural beauty are also to be sustained.

2.2.4 Social and economic issues are recognised and addressed in other strategies which include all or part of the AONB:

Shaping the future: an economic development strategy for Norfolk and Waveney

Economic Development Strategies of local areas

The yearly Operating Plan for the Norfolk Rural Development Area

2.2.5 These strategies do not address the specific issues and needs relating to the area's special status as an AONB. There is a need to consider these in more detail than is possible in the AONB Management Strategy, and to develop ideas for ways in which economic and social development can take place while sustaining the fundamental qualities of natural beauty.

2.2.9 Policies from the Visitor Management Strategy specifically relating to the local economy are:

| | |
|------------|---|
| C1 | Support the local economy by using employees, services and products from the locality and by supporting the livelihoods and traditions which help maintain the character of the AONB |
| A// | |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| C2 | Recognise and enhance the role of visitors in supporting village and community services |
| LB, T/ A// | |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| C3 | Promote action by local communities which benefits both residents and visitors, recognising the useful role of village appraisals and other surveys, in identifying of housing needs, in identifying where such action is needed |
| PCs RCC DCs RDC | |

Other Visitor Management Strategy policies relevant to this section are: **F1 to F8** (see Appendix 1).

2.2.10 Transport issues arising from visitors and also relating to local communities are addressed in the **Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy** (see section 1.5 and Appendix 2).

development, pressure on sensitive habitats and increased traffic unless carefully managed. The tourism industry as a whole has a strong interest in maintaining the AONB's special qualities, as it is these which attract many visitors to the area.

2.2.8 Tourism and recreation issues have been addressed in more detail in the **Visitor Management Strategy for the Norfolk Coast** (1995). (See section 1.5 and Appendix 1). The Project partners have already endorsed the aims and policies of the Visitor Management Strategy and have been working to implement it.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 10
Encourage and promote only sustainable tourism in the AONB through implementation of the Visitor Management Strategy for the Norfolk Coast

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 7
Work in partnership with others to develop agreement and guidance on appropriate socio-economic development in the AONB within the framework of existing strategies

Policy 8
Improve access to training and employment opportunities for local people in the AONB

Policy 9
Improve support for businesses in the AONB and help them to become more environmentally and economically sustainable

2.2.6 Local people need to be involved in assessment and action relating to the local economy. **Village Appraisals**, an initiative promoted and supported by the Norfolk Rural Community Council, can help to identify social and economic needs of communities and identify ways of tackling these, as well as broader issues such as the local environment and service provision. **See Policy C3.**

2.2.7 Tourism is now a major component of the local economy and also provides support for local services such as public transport and village shops. It can also bring less welcome effects such as inappropriate

2.3 Planning and Design

AONB Objective 3 is:

The conservation and enhancement of the character, variety and quality of the natural beauty of the AONB, both within the statutory planning system and in operations not under planning control

Waste Plan and a **Minerals Plan**) and the **Local Plans** of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, North Norfolk District Council and Great Yarmouth Borough Council (see separate appendix for more details). The statutory planning system is the means by which development control in the AONB is operated, and is not overridden by this AONB Management Strategy.

2.3.1 People need homes and jobs. Change is inevitable and vital to maintaining a high quality of life in the area but new development, whether it is housing, agricultural building, industrial, commercial, or for telecommunications or renewable energy can have a profound impact on the character of settlements and the landscape. New development must be sustainable if the AONB is to remain a special place and needs to be considered and undertaken with care, so that the natural beauty of the area is maintained.

2.3.2 As a statutory designation, the landscape quality of the AONB (as well as many other designations mentioned elsewhere in this document) is already recognised and protected through policies in the **Norfolk Structure Plan** (supported by a

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 11

Ensure a co-ordinated approach to addressing planning issues throughout the AONB to improve recognition and protection of natural beauty

2.3.5 Rural settlements, with their open spaces, gardens, buildings and structures are part of the landscape of the AONB and can also make a significant contribution to the area’s wildlife. **Local Plans** provide an important means of controlling development and incorporating good design.

2.3.6 **Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings** are designations operated through the planning system which help to conserve the character of settlements and important local buildings. Local councils may produce design guidelines which complement Local Plans and encourage sensitive design of new development and conversions including their setting in the landscape and the settlement. Some changes have “permitted development rights”, however, and are not under the control of planning authorities.

2.3.7 Development of new roads can obviously have a major effect on the AONB,

2.3.3 Planning authorities are required to consider many factors in deciding on applications for development, including guidance from central government. Decisions on planning applications are made in accordance with the plans, unless there are “clear and convincing planning reasons” to do otherwise. Plans are reviewed regularly. However, subsequent events can mean that other material considerations need to be taken into account when making planning decisions.

2.3.4 An effective, co-ordinated planning system covering the AONB is one of the most powerful tools for its conservation and enhancement. This needs to include careful consideration of the possible effects of proposals outside the AONB boundary

but less obvious impacts are made by road signs, traffic control structures (islands, roundabouts etc.), road verge management, road widening and surfacing, and by street lighting, many of which are subject to Department of Transport regulations, administered by the Highway Authority (Norfolk County Council). These are not subject to planning regulations, but careful consultation, design and implementation is fostered by the County Council's policy document **The Highway Corridor: Environmental Aims and Policies**.

Road signing and traffic management structures are also dealt with in the Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy (see Appendix 2).

2.3.8 Utilities (water, electricity, gas and communication companies) and any agency or person operating within permitted development rights, also have a part to play in careful siting and design of installations and structures in the sensitive surroundings of the AONB. Without careful consideration, the combined effect is one of "creeping urbanisation", where design and standards appropriate to an urban setting are unthinkingly applied in a rural landscape, eroding local character.

2.3.9 Understanding of the sensitivity of the area, commitment to conserving its character, and a consultative approach are needed by those operating with permitted

development rights, as well as within the planning system.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 12

Practice and promote sensitive siting and design of structures and signs in the AONB, especially those with permitted development rights, through local consultation and agreement on common standards

2.3.10 Local people need to be involved in planning for change in their communities. **Village Design Statements**, a Countryside Commission initiative, can help to identify and address design and development issues on a localised village basis and maintain local distinctiveness. The Design Statements are guidelines drawn up by the local community which can be used as supplementary planning guidance by planning authorities and by those with permitted development rights.

2.3.11 Old buildings, which contribute so much to local character, often fall into disuse as their original function becomes redundant. New uses must be found if they are to survive, but care is needed to preserve their character. Many of them are historically places of employment, and represent an opportunity for new employment creation.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 13

Conserve important older buildings, including their economic re-use wherever possible, within the constraints of planning policies

2.3.12 Where development which is detrimental to the natural beauty of the area has already taken place, removal or mitigation measures may be possible. At the same time, care should be taken to conserve features which have historical interest, such as some wartime relics.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 14

Promote the improvement of existing industrial sites, buildings, structures and signs which are below the standard appropriate for the AONB

Visitor Management Strategy policies relevant to this section are: **T5, L1, L3** (see Appendix 1).

2.4 The Changing Coast

AONB Objective 4 is:

To allow evolution of the coastline through natural coastal processes, balanced with the need to protect people and property, maintain important wildlife species and habitats and maintain the landscape character of the coast

operation in one area could have effects over a wider area. We now know that we cannot undertake such schemes in isolation and must look at a wider picture.

2.4.3 We are becoming more aware of the complexity and extent of the processes involved in shoreline change. This includes offshore areas, such as those where dredging for sand and gravel is taking place off the north Norfolk coast, in addition to areas of the coast where coastal defence is undertaken. Our understanding of these processes is not yet good enough to predict the precise effects of any change we instigate but we need to make decisions very quickly in some cases to avoid catastrophic events.

2.4.4 Accepting that we cannot continue to defend some parts of the coast means that we need to consider moving our line of defence back to a new, more viable position in some areas, rather than seeing an uncontrolled breach of defences. Such schemes are known as “managed realignment”. We need to understand as much as possible about coastal processes before making decisions on coastal realignment, using local knowledge and involving all interests in the decision process.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 15

Continue to improve knowledge and understanding of coastal processes and other factors affecting coastal change and use this to promote prudent management of natural resources and design coastal management schemes which work with these dynamic processes

Policy 16

Continue development of a collaborative approach in the development of coastal management proposals, involving all relevant interests, particularly the local community

2.4.5 Changes to the AONB’s shoreline have potentially far-reaching consequences for property, agricultural land, internationally important wildlife interest, archaeological and built heritage, public access, recreation, and the coastal landscape as a whole. **Shoreline Management Plans** have recently been produced which attempt to take account of natural processes, and put forward proposals to manage controlled

2.4.1 The coastline of the AONB is composed of saltmarsh, grazing marsh, reedbeds, mudflats, sand dunes and soft cliffs. Even on coastlines composed of hard rocks, gradual change takes place through the erosive action of the sea. On a “soft” coastline such as Norfolk’s, change is the natural state of affairs. Change means deposition and building as well as erosion, and both are occurring on different parts of the coast of the AONB.

2.4.2 People have tried to modify and control these processes for centuries, or have affected coastal processes unwittingly (for example by enclosing saltmarsh to form grazing land). However, it is recognised that a scheme or

change which take account of all of these interests.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 17

Promote and implement coastal management schemes and operations which:

- **retain landscape character and minimise the visual intrusion of any new structures**
- **retain and improve where appropriate public access and recreation opportunities**
- **conserve archaeological and built heritage features**

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 18

Maintain the full range and quality of existing internationally important coastal habitats within current legal, financial, technical and economic frameworks, and work in partnership to ensure re-creation of these habitats (preferably within the AONB) where they would be lost in necessary coastal realignment schemes

2.4.7 The development of mechanisms for agreeing the location and funding of the creation of replacement habitats is an urgent priority. If replacement habitats need to be created, this should be done before areas are lost to managed realignment wherever possible, which will involve long-term planning. In the case of urgent realignment schemes maintenance of these habitats, including agreement on replacement mechanisms and location if necessary, will need to be an integral part of the schemes.

2.4.6 Because they are on our doorstep, we may not be fully aware of just how special our coastal marshes, dunes, cliffs and beaches are. We have an international obligation to conserve many of these special habitats and the species they support, including species which contribute to the special character of the area such as the bittern. This may include an obligation to re-create habitats elsewhere if they are lost through necessary managed realignment, although partnership and co-operation will be needed to achieve this.

2.5 The Open Countryside and Coast

AONB Objective 5 is:

The management of land in a way which is environmentally sustainable and economically viable and which maintains and enhances biodiversity, landscape quality and local distinctiveness

Monuments. Other sites, which are also important in a local context, are recorded in the **Norfolk Sites and Monuments Record**, and recognised in the planning system (see Section 2.3).

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 19

Promote conservation and understanding of archaeological features

2.5.1 The majority of the AONB is open countryside, much of it arable farmland but with a variety of subtle differences in land use. There are areas of pasture, heathland, blocks of woodland and parkland.

2.5.2 There are more than twenty areas of common land in the AONB. These areas of open land and the common rights associated with them form an important part of the coast's character and history which need to be recognised and respected.

2.5.3 Archaeological sites and features enrich the landscape and contribute to the sense of continuity of human influence on it. The most important archaeological sites have legal protection as **Scheduled Ancient**

2.5.5 The wildlife of the area is also rich and varied, depending as it does on the habitats which contribute so much to the landscape quality. Indeed, the area's wildlife is an integral part of its landscape in its widest sense. There are a number of overlapping international, national and local **Nature Conservation Designations** relating to parts of the AONB. **Schemes of Management** are being prepared for the Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation which are part of the Natura 2000 network of European sites.

2.5.6 Skeins of geese, singing skylarks and corn buntings, hunting barn owls, butterflies and dragonflies, the scent of gorse in flower are all part of the total landscape experience of the AONB. This richness and diversity of natural life, or biodiversity, is a key indicator of sustainability. **Action for Wildlife in East Anglia** is a guide to biodiversity planning which follows on from the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development and Biodiversity: the UK Steering Group report endorsed by the Government in 1996.

2.5.4 The landscape of the AONB is described in detail in **The Norfolk Coast Landscape** (Countryside Commission). The influences on the AONB landscape are considered and the larger area broken down into eight landscape types, including coastal landscapes, each with distinct characteristics. This more detailed assessment is consistent with the broader concepts of **Character Areas** and **Natural Areas** developed by the Countryside Commission and English Nature.

2.5.7 Agriculture has created many of the landscape features and wildlife habitats which we value and continues to play a valuable role in maintaining some of these, for example the coastal grazing marshes. In other cases, agricultural change and intensification has contributed to a decline in landscape features such as hedges and ponds, and in biodiversity.

2.5.8 Nature Conservation issues for the AONB, including those relating to the changing coast, are comprehensively described in **A Vision for Nature Conservation 1997 - 2022** for the Norfolk Coast AONB (English Nature). This discussion document was produced in association with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, the National Trust and the RSPB, with input from the Norfolk Coast Project. The Vision document has been endorsed by the Project's Joint Advisory Panel as the Project's primary source of guidance for nature conservation within the AONB whilst recognising the importance of other interests. It forms the basis for the broad objectives and policies relating to nature conservation in this Strategy.

2.5.9 Much of the most important land for nature conservation is owned and managed by conservation organisations. Most of the AONB, however, particularly away from the coast, is in private ownership. How

farmland and woodland and their associated habitats and features are managed is a major influence on landscape and wildlife. In most cases management depends on economic factors, focused through the agricultural production support system and the European Union Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 20

Maintain and enhance all internationally, nationally and locally designated wildlife sites

Policy 21

Lobby for effective reform of the agricultural production support system to encourage environmentally sustainable and economically viable management which conserves key wildlife, habitats and landscape features of farmland and woodland

Policy 22

Promote existing schemes which conserve key wildlife, habitats and landscape features to landowners and managers

2.5.10 Agriculture is an important part of the local economy and its prime purpose remains the production of food. Farmers and foresters need to run commercially viable businesses. If supported in the right way, agriculture can make a vital contribution to the conservation of the area's landscape quality and wildlife. Without support that incorporates environmental conservation, we will continue to lose richness, diversity and distinctiveness in the area's landscape and wildlife.

2.5.11 Although various schemes exist for encouragement of environmentally sensitive land management, the financial resources and incentives compared with production support are insufficient to persuade many farmers to take up these options.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 23

Develop and lobby for the introduction of a specific agri-environment scheme for the AONB to encourage better management of wildlife, habitats and landscape features

Visitor Management Strategy policies relevant to this section are: **H4** (see Appendix 1)

2.6 Natural Resources and Environmental Quality

AONB Objective 6 is:

A high quality environment in terms of fresh water, coastal water and air quality, and a low level of litter, light and noise pollution

drinking water. Poor coastal water quality also causes serious problems for the coast's important shellfishing industry and affects the quality of bathing water and beaches which are important for the tourism industry.

characteristic landscapes and wildlife of the area.

AONB Objective 7 is:

The sustainable use of natural resources

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 24

Ensure that the highest applicable standards are met for fresh and coastal water quality in the AONB

2.6.1 Unpolluted coastal water is vital for tourism, recreation, commercial fishery and nature conservation interests. The area's wetland landscape types, water features and wildlife habitats depend on a reliable supply of clean water for the maintenance of their biodiversity. Many of these habitats are of international importance and we have a legal obligation to conserve them. Excessive levels of nitrates and phosphates can cause algal blooms and affect the ecology and appearance of water and wetland features, as well as having consequences for

2.6.2 In the generally dry climate of the Norfolk Coast, the management of water resources is of great importance. If the climate is undergoing change as seems to be the case, possibly to drier conditions, management of water resources will assume even greater urgency.

2.6.3 When water supplies from natural sources are limited there is potential conflict between some aspects of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, domestic needs, and industry. Water abstraction can lead to lower flows in rivers and streams, and a lowering of the water table which can affect marshes, bogs and ponds. All of these outcomes have detrimental effects on the

2.6.4 Housing and industrial development leads not only to increased demand on natural water sources, but also to increased sewage output and the need to treat and dilute it effectively.

2.6.5 The freshwater grazing marshes and reedbeds, which are such an important landscape and wildlife feature of the Heritage Coast in particular, have been created by careful management of water levels, and require such management to maintain them. **Water Level Management Plans** aim to do this, through agreement with landowners and other interests.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 25

Practice and promote proper use of water resources, and aim to ensure that these are managed sustainably and in a manner which conserves the AONB's distinctive landscape features, wildlife habitats and species

2.6.6 Air quality affects people's health and enjoyment of the area, the health of crops and wild plants, and the conservation of buildings. Road traffic is a source of localised air pollution, but some air pollution is imported from other areas by prevailing winds, so local measures on their own are not enough.

2.6.7 **Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs)** are the most important means of managing water resources and quality, and air quality. The District and Borough Council's **Local Plans** also cover local air quality issues.

2.6.8 Litter, light and noise pollution can also have an erosive effect on the natural beauty of the area, and on the quality of life of local people as well as the visitor's perception of the area.

2.6.9 Noise pollution and vibration can occur from traffic, overhead aircraft and some recreational activities. Light pollution is an increasing concern, with sign, street and security lighting contributing to urbanisation of rural character and affecting views of the night sky. Litter, including marine litter on beaches, is not consistent with natural beauty.

2.6.10 Some powers of control of air, litter, light and noise pollution are available to local authorities under environmental health

and planning regulations and policies (see also section 2.3) but further work is needed to assess current levels of these types of pollution and their effects.

The Project Partners will seek to:

Policy 26

Take action where appropriate to control air, litter, light and noise pollution which threaten to damage natural beauty

Visitor Management Strategy policies relevant to this section are: **R4, R6** (see Appendix 1)

Summary of Visitor Management Strategy Policies

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>H3 <i>DCs</i> <i>All</i></p> | <p>Develop a campaign targeted at dog owners to address concerns about dog fouling and the impact of dogs on wildlife, livestock, game and visitor enjoyment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● raising awareness of these concerns ● encouraging good dog control and behaviour ● providing information on the suitability of sites for dogs, especially on beaches ● considering the exclusion of dogs from sensitive areas ● developing facilities and designated sites for dogs |
| <p>H4 <i>LO,CO</i> <i>MAFF</i> <i>CoCo</i> <i>FA,LA</i> <i>s</i></p> | <p>Manage neglected habitats and create new ones to provide attractive opportunities for quiet recreation which help draw people away from more sensitive sites</p> <p>Promote and support grant schemes and other national initiatives which help achieve this</p> |
| <p>Pollution</p> | |
| <p>P1 <i>DCs</i> <i>Truly</i> <i>Britain</i> <i>Group</i> <i>All</i></p> | <p>Improve litter management by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● minimising litter generation ● encouraging visitors to take litter home ● ensuring a high standard of litter collection ● identifying mechanisms to deal with seaborne litter |
| <p>P2 <i>AW</i> <i>EA</i></p> | <p>Ensure that the increased demands created by visitors on water supplies and sewage treatment are met in a way that does not harm the environment and considers the needs of other users. In particular, ensure that sewage effluent does not present a hazard to public health and wildlife</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>L2 <i>LAs</i> <i>AO</i></p> | <p>Ensure that any new attractions in or adjacent to the AONB draw upon its special qualities and do not increase pressure on sensitive areas. Use of locations near to major resorts would be most suitable. They should also seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● increase the quality of the visitor experience ● benefit the local community and economy ● help alleviate problems caused by visitors elsewhere in the AONB ● help support conservation of the AONB |
| <p>L3 <i>LAs</i> <i>LO</i></p> | <p>Discourage the development of large scale leisure facilities in or near to the AONB, including new golf courses, unless they can be shown to contribute to and enhance its special qualities</p> |
| <p>Habitats & Wildlife</p> | |
| <p>H1 <i>All</i></p> | <p>Act to overcome damage and disturbance to wildlife, caused by visitors. In particular promote greater recognition of how the sensitivity of wildlife to visitors varies from place to place and with the seasons</p> |
| <p>H2 <i>CO</i> <i>RG</i> <i>SC</i> <i>LAs</i> <i>Police</i></p> | <p>Develop a positive approach to managing visitors in wildlife-sensitive areas through co-operation with other interests, recognising that most damage and disturbance to wildlife is unintentional. In particular ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● where restrictions are necessary, these are adequately explained ● bylaws are used wisely <p>Where damage and disturbance is deliberate, make effective use of conservation legislation and the role of Police Wildlife Liaison Officers</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>T3 <i>DCs</i> <i>NCP</i></p> | <p>Carry out a review of existing car parking in the light of the guidance of this Strategy to identify where enhancement, reduction, removal or re-siting of parking provision, or other management changes are needed</p> |
| <p>T4 <i>DCs</i> <i>Car park managers</i></p> | <p>Seek to ensure that if any new car parking is provided, it meets the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● helps to overcome existing circulation or parking problems ● is located (preferably in built-up areas) where it does not detract from the character of the surrounding area or result in an unacceptable increase in visitor pressure on adjoining sensitive land ● is of a high quality, reflecting local distinctiveness ● considers the needs of the less mobile and those with disabilities and that a proportion of any income is used to help with the upkeep of the local environment |
| <p>T5 <i>NCC</i></p> | <p>Seek to ensure that management and maintenance of the highway network reflects the rural character of the AONB (without compromising safety)</p> |
| <p>Landscape & Archaeology</p> | |
| <p>L1 <i>LAs</i> <i>AP, A</i> <i>O</i> <i>NCP</i> <i>DCs</i></p> | <p>Consider and support opportunities to minimise the visual impact of visitor buildings and facilities, including caravan sites, car parks, signs and structures.</p> <p>Seek the production of associated guidance notes</p> |

Local Communities and the Local Economy

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>C1 <i>All</i></p> | <p>Support the local economy by using employees, services and products from the locality and by supporting the livelihoods and traditions which help maintain the character of the AONB</p> |
| <p>C2 <i>LB, T1</i> <i>All</i></p> | <p>Recognise and enhance the role of visitors in supporting village and community services</p> |
| <p>C3 <i>PCs</i> <i>RCC</i> <i>DCs</i> <i>RDC</i></p> | <p>Promote action by local communities which benefits both residents and visitors, recognising the useful role of village appraisals and other surveys, including that of housing needs, in identifying where such action is needed</p> |

Traffic & Transportation

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>T1 <i>NCC</i> <i>NCP</i></p> | <p>Produce and seek to implement a Traffic Management and Transportation Study for the AONB to achieve sensitive management of visitor traffic</p> |
| <p>T2 <i>All</i> <i>LA, T</i> <i>O</i> <i>T1</i></p> | <p>Encourage visitors to use public transport to reach and explore the AONB by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● publicising and supporting existing services and new ones as they arise ● developing new recreational opportunities linked to public transport |

Information & Interpretation

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| I1 NCP All | Produce and implement a comprehensive Interpretive Plan as part of the development of an integrated and co-ordinated approach to the provision of information and interpretation |
|-------------------------|--|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| I2 TI LAS EETB All | Promote wide use of a Norfolk Coast Good Visitor Code to give advice to visitors on how they can help to keep the AONB special, in ways which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help protect the landscape, its wildlife and archaeological features • benefit local communities and the local economy |
|---------------------------------------|--|

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| I3 DCs EETB TI | Develop the important role of Tourist Information Centres and tourism literature in getting messages across to visitors and influencing their distribution, helping to implement zoning and policy guidance of this Strategy |
|--------------------------------|--|

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| I4 LC All | Actively involve local people in the interpretation of their locality, to increase the awareness of residents and visitors of the special qualities and sensitivities of the local area |
|------------------------|---|

| | |
|------------------|--|
| I5 NCP | Develop use of AONB newspapers and newsletters as a way of getting messages across to key target audiences |
|------------------|--|

Recreation

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| R1 RG SC | Develop use of the following techniques to improve recreation management, especially for watersports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • codes of practice • measures to recruit casual participants to clubs or governing bodies, possibly involving temporary membership schemes • self regulation of local activity by clubs • increased co-operation amongst same-activity clubs and between all users at high pressure locations • provision of information and education at launch sites and other key points |
|-----------------------|--|

| | |
|------------------|---|
| R2 All | Ensure that new opportunities for quiet recreation serve all users. Work with disabled people to overcome constraints on their appreciation and enjoyment of the AONB |
|------------------|---|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| R3 NCC CoCo LO DCs | Encourage walking in the AONB, in particular through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that all Public Rights of Way are legally defined, available for use and suitably promoted by the end of 1996 • developing new opportunities in accordance with the zoning guidance of this Strategy • a partnership approach to the long term management of the National Trail and Public Rights of Way which reflects variations in sensitivity and use |
|---------------------------------------|--|

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| R4 CO,R G SC NCC | Identify solutions to problems caused by cyclists, horse riders, motorbikes and off-road vehicles at sensitive locations: especially sand dunes, saltmarshes, sea walls and non-authorised access areas |
|-------------------------------------|---|

| | |
|--|---|
| R5 RGs MCC, LO TI AP | Encourage cycling and horseriding in the AONB through the development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suitable routes • opportunities for cycle hire and the provision of cycle racks • Opportunities for horseriding and horse tourism |
|--|---|

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| R6 CO RG,S C | Seek solutions to prevent disturbance to wildlife from recreational flying along the coastal strip by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continued monitoring of low flying incidents • promoting responsible flying • considering "Bird Sanctuary" status for lengths of Norfolk's coastline |
|------------------------------|---|

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| R7 CO,TI | Promote and develop opportunities for visitors to enjoy birdwatching and natural history |
|--------------------|--|

| | |
|--|--|
| R8 CO, N Bird Club, Birdlin es | Seek responsible behaviour by visitors coming to the area to see rare birds and encourage increased revenue generation from them |
|--|--|

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| R9 TI CO DCs | Raise beach users' awareness of the sensitivity of coastal habitats and wildlife, highlighting the need for responsible management of dogs and beach play Encourage preferential use of the beach below the high tide line to minimise damage and disturbance to sensitive habitats |
|------------------------------|--|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| R10 RG, SC LO,NL A | Seek responsible behaviour by sub-aqua divers and metal detector users, including the reporting of all archaeological finds or discoveries of wrecks |
|---------------------------------------|--|

The way forward for Tourism & Recreation

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| F1 TI EETB DCs | Promote action which acknowledges and fulfils the responsibility of the tourism sector to help safeguard the special qualities of the AONB, as an essential part of ensuring the Area's long-term viability for tourism |
|--------------------------------|---|

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| F2 TI LC CO | Develop coastwide and site based co-operation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • between the tourism industry, local communities and conservation organisations; and • within these groups to promote mutual understanding and recognition of shared objectives |
|-----------------------------|---|

| | |
|------------------|---|
| F3 All | Promote the zoning guidance of this Strategy as set out in the Zone Map and accompanying Guidance Table |
|------------------|---|

| | |
|------------------|---|
| F4 All | Explore ways of developing the AONB's potential for tourism activities which allow its natural beauty and history to be fully experienced and enjoyed. In particular, consider opportunities which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build upon recreational opportunities (especially inland) such as: walking, cycling; painting and photography; birdwatching and natural history; appreciating the AONB's history, archaeology and architecture • bring maximum benefits for the AONB and its local communities • do not increase pressure on sensitive areas and preferably, draw visitors away from such areas • reduce dependency on the car |
|------------------|---|

| | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| <p>F5 TI,CO EETB CO</p> | <p>Facilitate quiet recreation outside the school holiday periods which benefits the local economy, providing this can be sustained without adverse impact on wildlife and local communities</p> | <p>F10 NCP All</p> | <p>Ensure that monitoring programmes exist to detect changes relevant to visitor management in the AONB, especially the number of visitors and the impact of visitors on wildlife</p> |
| <p>F6 LAs</p> | <p>Investigate further the link between visitor accommodation and visitor management in the AONB, to help guide decisions on future accommodation provision</p> | <p>F11 NCP All</p> | <p>Monitor the effectiveness of this Strategy and revise it as necessary Ensure that the Zoning Map and Guidance Table is kept up to date</p> |
| <p>F7 LAs, AP LO CoCo DCs</p> | <p>Seek to improve the availability of accommodation which meets the needs of visitors exploring the AONB on foot, horse or cycle: In particular, encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small scale, year round camping facilities for backpackers • conversion of redundant historic buildings of landscape importance to basic accommodation for walkers and others | | |
| <p>F8 All NCP TI EETB DCs</p> | <p>Encourage a greater financial contribution from visitors towards the costs of maintaining the special qualities of the AONB, especially to fund an increase in interpretation and staffing to guide visitors. Seek to help achieve this through the establishment of a Norfolk Coast Tourism Heritage Trust and other means</p> | | |
| <p>F9 All M+P LAs TI</p> | <p>Review promotion of the AONB and its visitor facilities in the light of the zoning and policy guidance of this Strategy Seek to avoid direct promotion of sensitive areas and promotion which may indirectly increase pressure on sensitive areas. Publicity reaching beyond the AONB, such as through beach awards and media coverage, merits particular care</p> | | |

The Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy - A Brief Summary

The Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy is being implemented by Norfolk County Council. The final Transport Strategy was agreed by the Planning and Transportation Committee of NCC in June 1998 after public consultation. The Strategy relates to the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), but includes a wider strategy area extending south to the A148 (between King's Lynn and Holt) and west to the A149 (between North Walsham and Potter Heigham).

The AONB, and particularly the beaches, villages and nature reserves along the coast road (the A149 and B1159) are a major focus of tourism during peak holiday periods. The resultant traffic pressures on narrow roads, and parking pressure at tourist 'honeypots', causes congestion and a progressive erosion of the landscape quality the AONB was set up to protect.

The aim of the Strategy is *"To identify a realistic and sustainable approach to the future management of traffic in the Norfolk Coast AONB which benefits the environment and local residents, and meets the need of tourism and other businesses."*

The Transport Strategy policies cover the following:

- POLICY 1: the principles for completion of the County Route Hierarchy review, including a special status for the coast road
- POLICY 2: investigation of a speed management zone for the core of the AONB between Hunstanton and Sheringham
- POLICY 3: the treatment of minor country lanes as Quiet Lanes giving priority to walkers, cyclists and horseriders
- POLICY 4: village traffic management schemes
- POLICY 5: a speed reduction campaign and information exercise
- POLICY 6: tourist public transport improvements, including the development of the Coastliner bus as a spine route

POLICY 7: commercial park and ride services based on existing tourist attractions

POLICY 8: the transport needs of residents

POLICY 9: seeking a reduction of car parking in the most environmentally sensitive parts of the coastline

POLICY 10: improved parking management in busy villages

POLICY 11: management of vehicular access to unsurfaced roads

POLICY 12: improved accessibility within the AONB for disabled people

POLICY 13: improved access to the countryside close to the adjoining towns

POLICY 14: the environmental improvement of town centres

POLICY 15: new tourism opportunities in walking, cycling and horseriding

POLICY 16: minimisation of the visually intrusive aspects of traffic management

POLICY 17: the potential for locally distinctive signs

Copies of the Transport Strategy are available from Norfolk County Council, Department of Planning and Transportation, Martineau Lane, Norwich. NR1 2SG.

APPENDIX 2

REPRESENTATIVES INVOLVED IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT NORFOLK COAST AONB MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Country Landowners Association | Tony Blount | Norfolk County Council | Steve Harris, Graham King (Countyside); Ian Walters (Economic Development); Gerry Barnes, Graeme Cresswell (Forestry); Chris Mitchell (Highway Maintenance); Judith Cantell (Landscape); Gavin Smith (Transport Planner) Richard MacMullen |
| Countyside Commission | Tim De-Keyzer, Sarah Skinner, David Vose | Norfolk Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group | |
| East of England Tourist Board | Gillian Artis, Neil Warren | Norfolk Landscape Archaeology | David Gurney |
| English Nature | Peter Lambley, Andy Millar | Norfolk Society | Ian Shepherd |
| Environment Agency | Louise Bond | Norfolk Wildlife Trust | Peter Doktor |
| Farming and Rural Conservation Agency | Ed Blane | North Norfolk District Council | Ian Thompson (Planning); Steve Blatch (Economic Development) |
| Forestry Authority | Barry Martin | Parishes Representatives | Roger Garrad, Keith Harrison, Peter Russell, Godfrey Sayers, Mike Seville |
| Great Yarmouth Borough Council | Edward Gilder | Royal Society for the Protection of Birds | Ian Robinson, John Sharpe |
| King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council | Jeff Clarke, Mike Houldsworth, Chris Pearce, Tony Porter (Planning); Mike George (Economic Development); Tess Wright (Tourism) | Rural Development Commission | Peter Gregson |
| National Farmers Union | Philip Edmonds, Rachel Juster, Robert Stevens | West Norfolk Tourism Forum | Alister Borthwick |
| National Trust | Richard Hill | | |
| Norfolk Coast Project | Graeme Hayes, Heidi Mahon, Rachel Penny, Tim Venes | | |

PEOPLE INVOLVED IN NORFOLK COAST PROJECT LAND & LIFE MEETINGS (from information supplied by University College London)

| | | | |
|--------------------|---|--------------------|--|
| Aylmerton | L Brockdorff, Edward Henderson, Tessa Mallett, Mr Redmayne | North Walsham | Heather Webster |
| Binham | D Baxter, Kay Evans | Old Hunstanton | Lt Col J R Hamer, Mr and Mrs Plowright, Mrs S Plummer |
| Blakeney | Morris Arthur, Mr D Brackney, Michael Lee, Kirsty Sanford | Paston | Mr & Mrs Damen, Mr G Thomas |
| Brancaster | G Coleman, Mr Jones | Ringstead | Mrs D Fielder |
| Brancaster Staithe | Mr M Bucher | Roughton | Sarah Crouch |
| Burnham Market | Martin and Rita Cadman, Irene Ducker, Mrs M Harvey, Mr J Streeter, Mr R Tidd | Salthouse | Mrs Hatcher, P H Pringle, Dorothy Thompson |
| Burnham Overy | Mr Lambert | Sea Palling | Mr & Mrs Irons |
| Burnham Thorpe | John Musgrave | Sedgeford | Mr and Mrs Beech, Jean McGinty, Ms S Jackson, Mr J Tee |
| Choseley | Major & Mrs Peter Hutchinson | Sheringham | Miss M L Digby |
| Cley-next-the-Sea | E M Butters, W J High-Caston, Robert Cooke, Mrs G E Davies, Frank Hawes, Richard Kelham, Mr P Kinsella, Miss A B Maw, Mr Millard, Mrs C Young | Sidestrand | Queenie Tune-Thorogood |
| Cromer | P Burnett, Mrs Farmer, Mr R Linsay, Mr and Mrs Martindill, David Stow | Stiffkey | Philip Gerrard |
| East Runton | T Hall | Thornham | Mr and Mrs Bovey, Mr H Greef, T & S Mather, Anna Potts, Mr J Smith |
| Felbrigg | A E Richards, Mr T Styles | Trimingham | Mr Banks, Mr H Fantham, Mr E Slama |
| High Kelling | Mrs Bedford | Trunch | Mr N Burton, Jean Hill |
| Holme next the Sea | Susan Grey, Keir and Patricia Hughes, Ryan Hughes, Mr C Kell, D Swift, Mr and Mrs Walter | Upper Sheringham | Dorothy Buttriss, Mrs J M Garrad |
| Horsey | Mrs J Keel, Robin Lang | Wells-next-the-Sea | Dawn Boddy, John Coleridge, Mr & Mrs Scoles, Mr & Mrs Scott, Eric Swann, David Wickens, Mrs J Wood |
| Hunstanton | Rachel Blazeley, Andrew Smith | West Newton | P Martini |
| King's Lynn | Chris Gillett, Mr P Richardson | West Runton | Margaret Craske, Mary Frew, P Goody, Mr and Mrs Mitchell |
| Knapton | Mr Heath | West Somerton | Thomas Halg |
| Langham | Mrs Harcourt | Weybourne | Mr C Harrison, Mrs P Kennett, Mr and Mrs Rayner |
| Letheringsett | R Chase, M David | Wiveton | Mr F Crossley, Mr and Mrs Hoare |
| Little Thornage | Melody Bealey | | |
| Mundesley | Mrs S A Reed | | |

APPENDIX 3

Nature Conservation Designations

The following table lists the various nature conservation designations which apply to land within the AONB. Some areas of land, most notably the coastal strip, may be included under more than one of these designations. The table is arranged in descending order of importance i.e. sites of global → European → national → local importance. However the strength of protection a site receives does not always increase in proportion with its accredited importance. For example the European sites have stronger protection under UK law than the globally important Ramsar sites.

| Designation | Explanation | No. & names of sites within AONB |
|--|--|---|
| Ramsar Site | The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Wildfowl Habitat was adopted at a meeting of countries held at Ramsar, Iran in 1971. The UK Government signed the convention in 1973 and became a contracting party in 1976 and in so doing accepted a commitment to promote both the conservation of particular sites and the wise use of wetlands within its territory. | 2 The Wash North Norfolk Coast |
| Special Area of Conservation (SAC) | The UK Government has an obligation to designate and protect SACs under the European Commission Habitats Directive 1994. They are protected under the same Regulations as SPAs and are considered internationally important for species and habitats. Before being designated as a SAC any terrestrial site must already be an SSSI. | 4 The Wash & North Norfolk Coast (marine) Norfolk Coast and Gibraltar Point Dunes (terrestrial) Dersingham Bog Winterton & Horsey Dunes |
| Special Protection Area (SPA) | The UK Government has an obligation to designate and protect SPAs under the European Commission Directive on Wild Birds 1979. These sites are considered to be internationally important for birds. All such sites must already be SSSIs, but SPA designation gives them enhanced protection under the planning system through the UK Habitat Regulations. | 3 The Wash North Norfolk Coast Great Yarmouth and North Denes |
| National Nature Reserve (NNR) | Some of the best SSSIs are designated as NNRs by English Nature under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. They are managed with nature conservation as the primary objective, by English Nature or other approved conservation bodies. | 5 Holme Dunes Scollt Head Island Holkham Blakeney Point Winterton Dunes |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | Designated by English Nature under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Sites are protected legally under the Act but positive conservation management relies mainly on the co-operation of landowners. | 27 including the North Norfolk Coast SSSI which covers 7700 hectares |
| Local Nature Reserve (LNR) | Designated by local authorities in consultation with English Nature, under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The local authority agrees to ensure that the site is managed for wildlife. | 1 Wiveton Downs |
| County Wildlife Site (CWS) | A non statutory designation. Local authorities have adopted County Wildlife Sites into the planning process and the Norfolk Structure Plan and District Local Plans contain policies to protect them. | 85 |