

Severn Estuary Shoreline Management Plan

What does it mean for planning in North Somerset?

Coastal planning

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England. National Policy Statements set out the policies for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.



Section 10 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides guidance on coastal change, flooding and climate change. Paragraph 168 in the section on Plan Making, states that **Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) should inform the evidence base for planning in coastal areas**, taking account of climate change and the uncertainty of coastal change.

Defra and the Environment Agency's National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England recognises that it is not possible to completely prevent flooding or stop coastal erosion. **Local Authority land use planning and development control have important roles to play in delivering the strategy.**

Your local Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)

What is an SMP for?

SMPs provide important information for **planners** and **regulators** to **plan for and manage** the way that the shoreline changes over time, including:

- An assessment of the way that the coast will change over time – taking account of sea level rise and climate change
- Identifying the risks to people, property, the natural and historic environment as the coast changes
- Policies for each stretch of coastline (Policy Unit) to manage the risks in a sustainable way
- Looking ahead at the short term (0 – 20 year), medium term (20 – 50 years) and long term (50 – 100 years)

SMP's have been developed by Local Authorities, Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales with other coastal stakeholders and through public consultation. They have been developed for the whole of the Welsh and English coastline.

The **North Somerset** coast is covered by the **Severn Estuary SMP** (www.severnestuary.net/seccg). North Somerset falls within **11 SMP Policy Units** (including Steep Holm island). This is a large area containing linked flood plains, including the Somerset Levels, separated by hard headlands. The SMP predicts limited coastal erosion in North Somerset, due to existing defences and underlying hard geology. The SMP recommends a mixture of NAI and HTL policies, with MR in some areas. **A HTL policy does not guarantee the defences will be maintained or raised in line with climate change.**

Hold the Line (HTL):
keeping the line of defence in approximately the same location as it is now

No Active Intervention (NAI):
no maintenance, repair or replacement of existing defence structures, or building of new structures

Managed Realignment (MR):
landward moving of defences, giving up some land to the sea to create a more sustainable defence in the long term

Advance the Line (ATL):
reclaim land from the sea by building new defences further seaward

How does the SMP work with Local Plans?

The SMP supports and influences a whole range of regional, national and international policies, frameworks and strategies, not just those connected with managing the shoreline.

SMP to Local Plans: SMPs are non-statutory plans. They rely on the statutory planning process to help their implementation.

The policies in the SMP do not contain specific details for schemes – what they will be made of or the standard of protection. This will come from EA and Local Authority flood risk management plans, Local Plans, and other local development aspirations.

Local Plans are a key statutory function of local planning authorities and set the context for decision making in line with the National Planning Policy Framework. Development plans set out objectives for the development and use of land, with policies to implement them. They should be effective in delivering local aspirations and guide growth within the context of sustainable development while protecting and enhancing local character and sensitive environments.

By using SMPs, local planning authorities can help ensure that:

- Adequate **provisions for flood and coastal erosion risk are included in Local Plans** and development consents
- Current and future **communities are not at an increased risk** of coastal flooding and erosion
- Future generations are not burdened with **unsustainable defence costs**.

Although SMP2 policies are set out in specific Policy Units and timeframes ('epochs'), these should be seen as **guide to aid in planning for long term change**. The transition from one policy to the next should be a process that takes account of the physical characteristics of the coast and responds to the gradual changes at the coast over time. Change may take place earlier or later than set out in the SMP2 if it is appropriate to do so and is in accordance with the overall intent of the policies.

Coastal protection and planning are inextricably linked. The SMP can help Local Authority planning departments to **understand the risks in coastal areas** and take those risks into consideration when **developing Local Plans** and making **development control decisions**.

SMP's are developed through an understanding of coastal processes and defence needs, environmental considerations, planning issues and current and future land use.

Local Plan to SMP: The SMP process is designed to inform Local Plans and to be informed by them.

In order to manage risks at the coast, North Somerset Council should use the SMP in conjunction with its Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework to help it to provide advice to others on how they may undertake works affecting the coastline, without conflicting with Local Plans or the SMP.

The SMP will help North Somerset Council look beyond the LDP time horizon to plan up to 2105.

Where can I find the SMP?

The Severn Estuary Coastal Group (SECG) has produced the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2) for the Severn Estuary. The SMP and information on the coastal group can be found on the SECG website at: <http://www.severnestuary.net/secg/>

For more information on how North Somerset Council has been involved with the development of the SMP please contact John Inman john.inman@n-somerset.gov.uk



North Somerset – the nature of the coast and associated risk

North Somerset crosses 11 policy units in 4 different theme areas - 'Bristol to Severnside', 'Portishead and Clevedon', 'Kingston Seymour to Sand Bay' and 'The Holms'.



Coastal Flooding - High ground and hard geology limits flood risk in some areas. Defences manage the risk in other areas and will need to be replaced as they reach the end of their servicable life. Large flood plains mean that linkages between policy units must be considered (BRIS5, KIN1, KIN3, KIN4).

Coastal erosion - NAI will allow the shoreline to evolve naturally and there will be some erosion in some areas, however hard geology limits this (PORT1, PORT2, PORT3, KIN2, KIN4, HOL2).

Ecological Habitats - Coastal squeeze will result in the loss of some intertidal habitats. Other similar habitat should be created elsewhere as part of the Regional Habitat Creation Project. There are opportunities for MR in this area.

Local Area	SMP2 Theme Area	SMP2 Policy Unit	SMP Policy		
			0 – 20	20 – 50	50 - 100
Easton-in-Gordano	Bristol to Severnside	BRIS5	HTL	HTL	HTL
Abbots Leigh		BRIS6	HTL	HTL	HTL
Portbury		PORT1	NAI	NAI	NAI
Woodhill Cliffs	Portishead to Clevedon	PORT2	NAI	NAI	NAI
Woodhill Bay		PORT3	NAI	NAI	NAI
Portishead		PORT4	HTL	HTL	HTL
Portishead		KIN1	MR	MR	MR
Redcliff Bay	Kingston Seymour to Sand Bay	KIN2	NAI	NAI	NAI
Walton-in-Gordano		KIN3	HTL	HTL	HTL
Clevedon		KIN4	NAI	NAI	NAI
Kingston Seymour		HOL2	NAI	NAI	NAI
Wick St. Lawrence	The Holms				
Sand Bay					
Kewstoke					
Worlebury					
Steep Holm					

SMP policies for North Somerset

The area	SMP approach	Potential planning issues
<p>BRIS5 Netham Weir (north bank of River Avon) to Avon Road, Easton-in-Gordano (south bank of River Avon)</p>	<p>The short, medium and long term policy is hold the line. The existing defences are expected to come to the end of their serviceable life in 20 - 50 years, although some sections may need to be replaced within 20 years.</p>	<p>Replacement and maintenance of defences. New defences should tie in with defences in linked Policy Units (BRIS1 – BRIS5).</p>
<p>BRIS6 Avon Road, Easton-in-Gordano (south bank of River Avon) to Portishead Pier (east bank of Severn)</p>	<p>The short, medium and long term policy is hold the line. The existing defences are expected to come to the end of their serviceable life within 20 years.</p>	<p>Replacement and maintenance of defences. Coastal squeeze will result in intertidal habitat loss in this area. Other similar habitat should be created elsewhere as part of the Regional Habitat Creation Project.</p>
<p>PORT1 Portishead Pier to swimming pool (Esplanade Road, Portishead)</p>	<p>The short, medium and long term policy is no active intervention. High ground limits flood risk in most areas.</p>	<p>Planning to use appropriate development controls and conditions to help manage the risk of erosion events to businesses and residents. Consider how safe distances from the cliff edge can be maintained. Erosion rates and events are difficult to predict and communication of NAI can be challenging.</p>
<p>PORT2 Swimming pool (Esplanade Road) to the end of Esplanade Road at Lake Road, Portishead</p>	<p>The short, medium and long term policy is no active intervention. High ground limits flood risk in most areas.</p>	<p>Planning to use appropriate development controls and conditions to help manage the risk of erosion events to businesses and residents. Consider how safe distances from the cliff edge can be maintained. Erosion rates and events are difficult to predict and communication of NAI can be challenging.</p>
<p>PORT3 the end of Esplanade Road at Lake Road to Ladye Point, Portishead</p>	<p>The short, medium and long term policy is no active intervention. High ground limits flood risk in most areas.</p>	<p>Planning to use appropriate development controls and conditions to help manage the risk of erosion events to businesses and residents. Consider how safe distances from the cliff edge can be maintained. Erosion rates and events are difficult to predict and communication of NAI can be challenging.</p>

PORT4

Ladye Point, Portishead to Old Church Road, Clevedon

The short, medium and long term policy is **hold the line**. The policy should focus on key areas of risk rather than the whole shoreline – high ground and hard geology limits flood risk in much of this area. HTL is not intended to enable new defences to be built where there are currently no defences.

Communication of a targeted HTL policy can be challenging. Investigation the economic case for management in key areas is needed to support action.

KIN1

Old Church Road, Clevedon to St Thomas' Head

The short, medium and long term policy is **managed realignment**. Short term MR is around Congresbury Yeo. There are opportunities for further MR along the shore either side of Congresbury Yeo in the medium and long term.

Construction of new, realigned defences. Communication of MR can be challenging. Planning to use appropriate development controls and conditions to help manage the risk to businesses and residents and consider long term realignment.

KIN2

St Thomas' Head to Middle Hope car park at Sand Point

The short, medium and long term policy is **no active intervention**. High ground limits flood risk in most areas.

Minimal issues due to limited risk from flooding and erosion.

KIN3

Middle Hope car park at Sand Point to the southern end of Beach Road, Kewstoke

The short, medium and long term policy is **hold the line**. This requires the active management of the sand dunes.

Communication of HTL through management of sand dunes can be challenging. The use of hard defences may affect erosion rates. Planning to use appropriate development controls and conditions to help manage the risk to businesses and residents. Consider awareness raising and resilience.

KIN4

The southern end of Beach Road, Kewstoke to Birnbeck Island

The short, medium and long term policy is **no active intervention**. High ground limits flood risk in most areas.

Planning to use appropriate development controls and conditions to maintain safe distances from the cliff edge. Erosion rates and events are difficult to predict and communication of NAI can be challenging. Consider awareness raising.

HOL2

Steep Holm

The short, medium and long term policy is **no active intervention**. High ground limits flood risk in most areas.

Minimal issues due to limited risk from flooding and erosion.