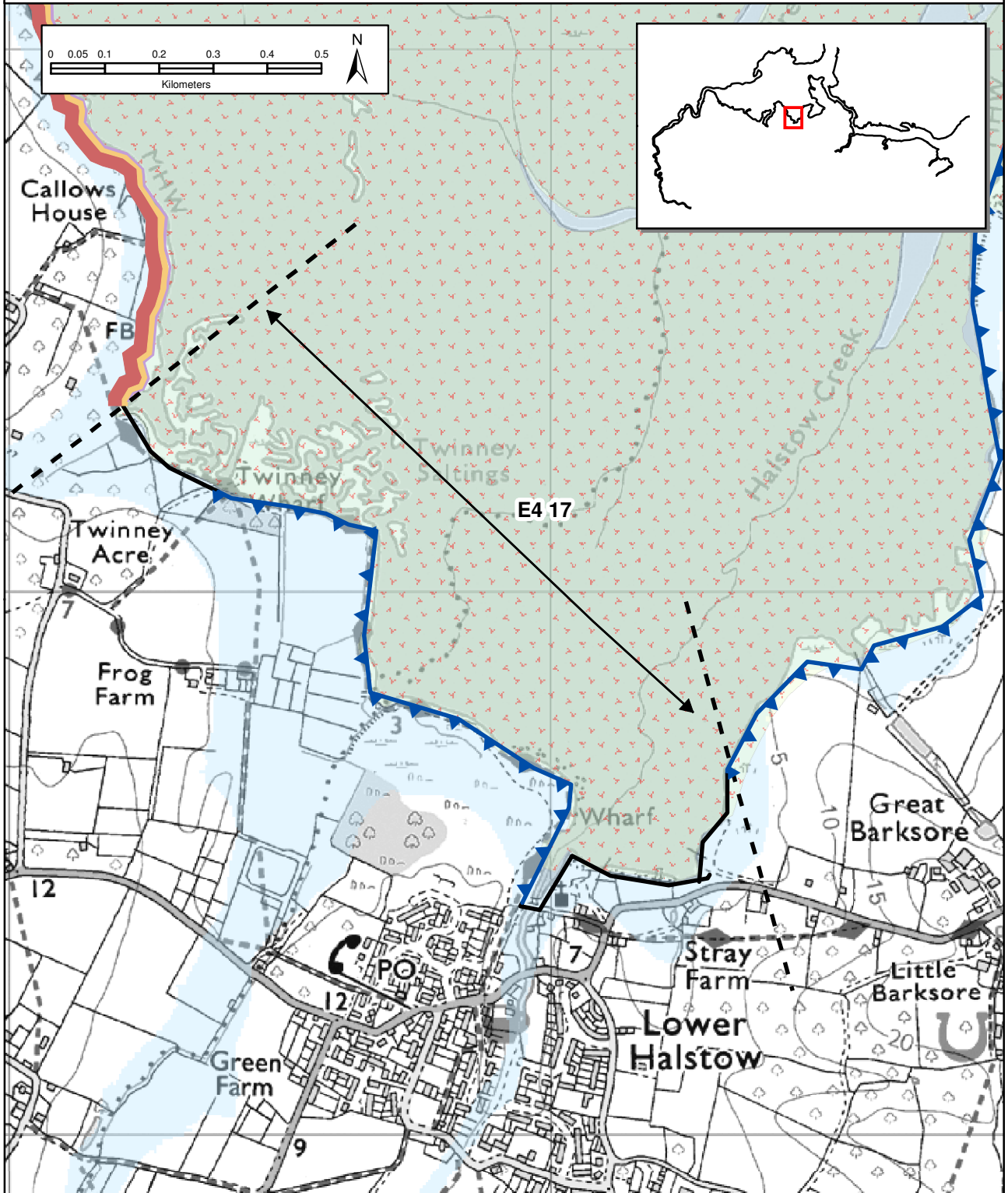





Medway Estuary and Swale Shoreline Management Plan


Policy Unit E4 17: East of Upchurch to East Lower Halstow







Policy

From Present Day:	Medium-Term:	Long-Term:
Managed Realignment with localised Hold the Line	Managed Realignment with localised Hold the Line	Managed Realignment with localised Hold the Line

-  Indicative erosion zone up to 2025
-  Indicative erosion zone up to 2055
-  Indicative erosion zone up to 2105

-  Indicative realignment location*
- * Actual realignment extent and location will be the subject of further studies.

-  Policy Unit Boundary
-  Policy Unit Extent
-  Current shoreline
-  Hold the Line

Environmental/Cultural Heritage

-  National Nature Conservation Designation
-  International Nature Conservation Designation
-  Important Heritage Sites (Scheduled Monuments)
-  2005 Indicative floodplain © Environment Agency

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Location reference:	East of Upchurch to East Lower Halstow
Policy Unit reference:	E4 17

SUMMARY OF THE PLAN AND JUSTIFICATION

Plan:

The frontage between east Upchurch and east of Lower Halstow constitutes a relatively narrow floodplain and comprises agricultural land, locally important nature conservation sites at Upchurch and Lower Halstow Brickworks and the historically important area of Lower Halstow. Intertidal habitats along the whole frontage are nationally and internationally designated for their ecological importance.

The recommended long-term plan is to allow the coastline to realign to a more naturally functioning system in a controlled way, creating brackish and saline habitat in some locations, whilst continuing to provide flood and erosion defence to assets and backing low-lying land. It is recognised that this section of shoreline provides an opportunity for localised environmental enhancement and habitat creation through localised managed realignment.

No specific realignment positions have been identified for the SMP. Further studies will be required to investigate and define the extent, location and implementation of the realignment i.e. the best technical, environmental and economic option that best manages flood risk. These studies will also need to investigate the exact standard and alignment of any defences for this frontage and any compensation measures required for loss of designated habitat.

The aim of these policies is to work towards achieving a more naturally functioning estuary and the creation of important brackish and saline habitats whilst at the same time creating a shoreline with a reduced requirement for defence maintenance.

The effect of these policies on designated conservation sites has been assessed in partnership with Natural England.

Preferred policies to implement Plan:

From present day: The present day policy is managed **realignment with localised hold the line** for East of Upchurch to East Lower Halstow. The detailed alignment, will be subject to further study to address uncertainties and confirm the best technical, environmental and economic option to manage the estuary. The current defence line would be maintained along some sections of the frontage and new realigned secondary defences constructed in localised areas at a set-back position, ensuring continued protection to assets and heritage features. Shoreline footpaths may need to be re-routed in localised areas.

Evolution of intertidal areas will be dependant on sediment supply. However, it is predicted that intertidal areas will continue to remain stable throughout this epoch as sediment supply is expected to meet demand throughout this epoch

Location reference: East of Upchurch to East Lower Halstow

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in the Medway.

Medium-term: The medium term policy is to continue allowing the shoreline to realign in sections, whilst continuing to provide protection to assets and low lying areas, under a policy of **managed realignment with localised hold the line**. Defences may require further maintenance throughout this period as sea levels rise. However, the increased saltmarsh and intertidal area, in sections where defences are set-back, will afford added protection to the hinterland.

Environmental transitions will be prominent during this epoch as brackish and intertidal habitats replace some of the freshwater interests. This may require specific management to maximise the environmental benefits and limit potential habitat impacts.

It is predicted that intertidal areas will continue to be stable in this sheltered section of the estuary.

Long-term: The long-term policy is a continuation of **managed realignment with localised hold the line**, to enable more flexible and sustainable flood and erosion risk management within the estuary. All defences will require periodic maintenance and potential upgrading with sea level rise.

It is expected that created habitat in realigned areas will become well-established during this epoch and provide added protection to the hinterland. However, elsewhere erosion of intertidal habitats may become more prevalent due to coastal squeeze driven by rising sea levels and a predicted decrease in sediment supply.

Location reference: *East of Upchurch to East Lower Halstow*

Policy Unit reference: *E4 17*

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PLAN FOR THIS LOCATION

Time Period	Management Activities	Material Assets, Infrastructure & Land Use	Landscape	Nature Conservation	Historic Environment	Population (Amenity & Recreational Use and Human Health)
0-20 years	Undertake engineering works to defences to Hold the Line of sections of defences that protect key assets and construct secondary defences in suitable locations.	Defences will continue to provide the appropriate standard of protection to built assets and infrastructure. Areas of land affected by managed realignment will become intertidal.	Designated estuary landscape will be maintained. However, some features will change through realignment.	No net loss of internationally designated intertidal habitats and nationally important (BAP) habitat. However, due to coastal squeeze, loss will occur in some areas as will accretion elsewhere. Creation of internationally and nationally important saltmarsh habitat in realigned areas. Effect on small area of freshwater habitat dependant on realignment extent. Compensatory habitat will need to be secured before any designated habitat is lost.	Continued protection to Lower Halstow Conservation Area. Potential loss of buried unknown heritage.	No loss of residential properties. Re-routing of pathway - Saxon Shore Way, where MR implemented.
20-50 years	Undertake engineering works to defences to Hold the Line of sections of defences protecting key assets. Maintain secondary defences.	Defences will continue to provide the appropriate standard of protection to built assets and infrastructure. Areas of land affected by managed realignment will	Designated estuary landscape will be maintained, potential for visual enhancement with a more natural coastline as MR is established.	No net loss of internationally designated intertidal habitats and nationally important (BAP) habitat. However, due to coastal squeeze, loss will occur in some areas as will accretion elsewhere. Establishment of realigned saline habitat. Potential further effect on freshwater	Continued protection to Lower Halstow Conservation Area. Potential loss of buried unknown heritage.	No loss of residential properties. No loss of recreation features.

The above provides the local details in respect of the SMP-wide Plan; therefore the above must be read in the context of the wider-scale issues and policy implications, as presented in the preceding sections and Appendices to this Plan document.

Location reference: *East of Upchurch to East Lower Halstow*

Policy Unit reference: *E4 17*

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PLAN FOR THIS LOCATION

Time Period	Management Activities	Material Assets, Infrastructure & Land Use	Landscape	Nature Conservation	Historic Environment	Population (Amenity & Recreational Use and Human Health)
		become intertidal.		habitat if defences realigned further.		
50-100 years	Undertake engineering works to defences to Hold the Line of sections of defences protecting key assets. Maintain secondary defences. locations.	Defences will continue to provide the appropriate standard of protection to built assets and infrastructure. Areas of land affected by managed realignment will become intertidal.	Designated estuary landscape will be maintained, potential for visual enhancement with a more natural coastline as MR is established.	Potential net effect on internationally designated intertidal habitats and nationally important (BAP) habitat with coastal squeeze, as sediment supply decreases in the estuary. Establishment of habitat in realigned areas. Potential further effect on freshwater habitat if defences realigned further.	Continued protection to Lower Halstow Conservation Area. Potential loss of buried unknown heritage.	No loss of residential properties. No loss of recreation features.

The above provides the local details in respect of the SMP-wide Plan; therefore the above must be read in the context of the wider-scale issues and policy implications, as presented in the preceding sections and Appendices to this Plan document.