

Cumbria Coastal Strategy

The Shoreline Management Plan

1.0 Introduction

The North-West England and North Wales Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2) (July 2010) provides a large-scale assessment of the risks associated with erosion and flooding along the region's coast, between Great Orme's Head in North Wales and the Scottish Borders. The SMP2 was developed in line with Defra Shoreline Management Plan Guidance (March 2006) and has been adopted as a policy document by the Coast Protection Authorities and approved by the Environment Agency.

Full details of the SMP2 are available on line on the Coastal Group website at the following location:

<http://www.mycoastline.org.uk/mycoastline/> then follow the link to the [SMP Documents on LiveDrive](#).

Alternative link via the .GOV website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shoreline-management-plans-smpps/shoreline-management-plans-smpps>

The Cumbria Coastal Strategy will build upon the shoreline management policies developed by the SMP2, which provide the framework for medium to long term coastal erosion and flood risk planning. The Strategy will set out proposals for works and other management activities required over the next 5 to 10 years, which will also be consistent with the longer term aims.

2.0 What is a Shoreline Management Plan?

The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2) is a non-statutory, high level, policy document for coastal flood and erosion risk management planning. It takes account of other existing planning initiatives and legislative requirements, and is intended to inform wider strategic planning. Local planning authorities should consider SMP2 policies when formulating their statutory land use development plans.

The SMP2 sits at the top of a hierarchy of Strategy and Scheme plans that the Environment Agency and Local Authorities use to plan their work to manage coastal risks, as explained in Table 1 below.

The SMP2 establishes shoreline management policies and provides a strategic framework and action plan for more detailed strategies for managing and improving coastal management.

The SMP2 defines policies for shoreline management for three epochs: short term (0 to 20 years), medium term (20 to 50 years) and long term (50 to 100 years). For each section of coast, and each epoch, the SMP2 uses one of four consistent policies as defined in Table 2.

| Stage | Aim | Delivers | | Output | Outcome |
|---|---|--|---|--|---------|
| Shoreline Management Plan (or Catchment Flood Management Plan) | To identify policies to manage risks | A wide-ranging assessment of risks, opportunities, limits and areas of uncertainty | Policies | Improved long-term, strategic management for the coast. Informs local authority planning decisions | |
| Strategy | To identify appropriate schemes to put the policies into practice | Preferred approach, including economic and environmental decisions | Compares the different options for putting the preferred scheme into practice | Management measures that will provide the best approach to managing flood and the coast for a specified area | |
| Schemes | To identify the type of work that is needed to put the preferred scheme into practice | Type of scheme (e.g seawall) | Design of work | Reduced risks from floods and coastal erosion | |

Table 1: Descriptions of the differing tiers of coastal protection Strategies and Schemes

| SMP Policy Option | Description |
|------------------------|---|
| Hold the line | By maintaining or changing the current standard of protection. This policy includes those situations where work is carried out in front of the existing defences (such as beach recharge, rebuilding the toe of a structure, building offshore breakwaters and so on) to improve or maintain the standard of protection provided by the existing defence line. It also includes work behind existing defences (such as building secondary flood defences) where this work would form an essential part of maintaining the current coastal defence system. |
| Advance the line | By building new defences on the seaward side of the original defences. Use of this policy is limited to those policy units where significant land reclamation is considered. |
| Managed realignment | By allowing the shoreline to move backwards or forwards, with management to control or limit movement (such as reducing erosion or building new defences on the landward side of the original defences). |
| No active intervention | Where there is no investment in coastal defences or operations. |

Table 2: Descriptions of the four shoreline management policies used in SMP2

3.0 The SMP2 and the Cumbrian coast

The Cumbrian coastline extends to some 420km and lies within the following SMP2 Sub-Cells:

- Sub-Cell 11c (part) Rossall Point (north of Blackpool) to Hodbarrow Point (nr. Millom, Cumbria) (including the Kent, Leven and Duddon estuaries);
- Sub-Cell 11d Hodbarrow Point to St Bees Head (including Ravenglass Estuary complex); and
- Sub-Cell 11e St Bees Head to Scottish Border (including Morecambe Bay and the Eden Estuary).

Figure 1: Map showing the shoreline of North West England and North Wales and the SMP2 Sub-Cells



The SMP2 provides a series of tables and maps or Policy Statements that present the SMP2 policies for each area. The Policy Statements are arranged by Sub-Cell and, within each Sub-Cell, the shoreline has been sub-divided into smaller, interacting areas, of open coast or estuaries, known as Policy Areas, which themselves cover a number of smaller and more discreet Policy Units. The locations of the SMP2 Policy Areas for the Cumbrian Coast are shown in Figures 2 to 4 below.

The Policy Units are identified by a number, which is sequential along the shoreline, from south to north. The policy unit boundaries shown should not be taken as definitive, as the SMP2 is based upon high-level assessment and more detailed studies at implementation stage may justify the need to 'go across' boundaries, shown by a small distance, in order to appropriately deliver the intention of the Plan policies.

4.0 Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) - Coastal Protection Authorities

In the UK, there are a number of bodies that are responsible for managing the risks associated with coastal flooding and erosion:

- Defra - responsible for national policy on FCERM and provides funding through grants to the Environment Agency, local authorities and internal drainage boards;
- Environment Agency - directly manages the rivers, sea and reservoirs throughout England (there are corresponding bodies in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland), carrying out

works to manage flooding from these sources as well as advising planning authorities on implications of development proposals on flood risk and designates structures and features of environment that affect flood or coastal erosion risk;

- Lead Local Flood Authority - take on a lead operational role in managing the risk of flooding from surface water and groundwater. These can be either unitary authorities or county councils, in the case of the Cumbria Coastal Strategy, Cumbria County Council. These develop, apply, maintain and monitor strategies for local risk management, including flood risk assessments and flood risk maps; and
- District Councils - these manage flood risk from ordinary watercourses and maintain and operate existing sea defences and carry out other work to manage flood risk from the sea. These also carry out coast protection works around managing coastal erosion risk and prepare long-term shoreline management plans.

For further information on the roles of each of these bodies, please refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-authorities>

5.0 The Cumbria Coastal Strategy

The Cumbria Coastal Strategy falls into the second tier of the coastal assessment, as outlined in Table 1. The overall objective is to have a single strategy, covering the entire Cumbrian coastline, which will take a holistic approach to assess the risk of coastal flooding and erosion and will also allow a comprehensive assessment of the current conditions of land and defences along the coastline. This will allow Cumbrian Authorities to define issues and develop long-term sustainable and practical solution approaches to coastal flood and erosion risk management, by using a robust and objective evidence base.

Despite encompassing the whole of the coastline, there will be a greater focus on areas of coastline with properties and infrastructure present, or where significant interventions or defences might be justified.

The key goals are as follows:

1. To evaluate the risk of flooding and erosion along the Cumbrian coastline to form a robust and objective evidence base;
2. Define the issues associated with flood risk along the Cumbrian coastline and identify properties and infrastructure at risk of coastal flooding and erosion;
3. Identify and thoroughly appraise interventions and recommend long-term sustainable solutions which will provide an integrated response to the key issues;
4. Engage with infrastructure providers and potential developers, to identify where opportunities exist to promote joint projects;
5. Be a strategic document to be used to access opportunities for additional funding; and
6. Identify potential environmental mitigation that could be implemented to comply with current legislation and Defra policy and highlight opportunities for environmental enhancements pertaining to coastal flooding and erosion.

For more information on the strategy itself, please see the Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report found at www.cumbria.gov.uk/ccs