

## **1.0 Introduction and Terms of Engagement**

- 1.1 The Planning Cooperative were commissioned by Great Yarmouth Borough Council, via the Scratby Coastal Pathfinder Project, to work with the communities of Scratby and California to explore the range of opportunities that exist for adaptation in response to predicted rates of coastal erosion in the area.
- 1.2 The principal aim of the project was to empower the local community, supporting them in the development of both medium and long-term sustainable options that would meet the needs of the community and the wider area. In so doing, the project brief advocated the development of an innovative and consensual approach to adaptation that could be applied elsewhere in communities affected by predicted coastal erosion.
- 1.3 The project brief required that a “Coastal Change Management Area” (CCMA) be identified and that a set of policies be drafted relating to the “rolling-back” of development from the areas affected by predicted coastal erosion, following the guidelines set out in PPS 25 and its associated “Development and Coastal Change Practice Guide” (DCCPG).
- 1.4 Throughout the project, the “areas at risk from predicted coastal erosion” over the next 100 years were taken as being those identified by the current Shoreline Management Plan (SMP 2), there being no requirement to review or challenge these areas - or the coastal defence policies advocated within them - as part of the project brief.
- 1.5 In light of this, local support for a northwards extension of existing coastal defences at California to cover the community of Scratby, was not allowed to unduly influence the findings and recommendations of the project (although these concerns are noted elsewhere in this report).
- 1.6 In our tender submission, we stated clearly that “Managing expectations and educating residents and businesses about coastal change and the realistic outcomes ... will.... be a key aspect of the project” whilst also noting that “a sense of realism has to be retained” in any successful community empowerment exercise, with honesty and clarity being cited as being “the two most important issues.”
- 1.7 Having now completed the project, we see no reason to change these views, and hope that the final report is considered to be both honest and clear as well as being useful, representative of local opinion, and realistic.
- 1.8 The remaining sections of this report include a (brief) resume of the Main Issues raised and dealt with during the project (Section 2); a

description and explanation of the Methodology employed (s.3); a brief summary (with full details appended) of other Coastal Pathfinders dealing with similar issues (s.4); a description and analysis of the Stakeholder Workshop held to gather community views (s.5); a report on Outcomes (s.6); and, finally, a series of Recommendations (s.7) - all of which is supported by further information in four Annexes.

## 2.0 **Main Issues and Options**

- 2.1 We have identified a number of issues raised both through our own research work and by the local community. Whilst some of these are not directly relevant to our brief, they are reported for completeness, and because they are of relevance to the wider Coastal Pathfinder project.
- 2.2 The principal issue arising from our work is, undoubtedly, the local community's aspiration for as little change as possible whilst acknowledging that some change is inevitable if properties are to be allowed to relocate within the village. As a result of this, managing the balance between allowing (limited) new development and maintaining the status quo became a central theme of the Community Statement
- 2.3 This approach reflected an apparent division within the local community, between those residents affected by predicted coastal erosion, and those whose properties are not threatened - although we did not perceive any significant conflicts arising from these differences of opinion.
- 2.4 The main issue arising from our recommendations to the local planning authority was how to incorporate the local community's clearly expressed preference for new development to be properly planned and delivered, within the guidelines set out in the Development and Coastal Change Practice Guide to PPS 25.
- 2.5 Initially, our inclination was to include the whole of the settlements of Scratby and California within the proposed Coastal Change Management Area, but this was quickly seen to be: impractical from a drafting point of view; unnecessary; and potentially, unpopular within the local community, possibly creating the impression that all properties are affected by predicted coastal erosion.
- 2.6 With the use of an 'exceptions' policy ruled out by the local community's fear of unplanned development, (and the inherent uncertainty in such an approach), the Community Statement advocates a combination of a tightly defined CCMA plus four discrete roll-back areas, subject to separate policy guidance.

- 2.7 Reassuringly, there was a very high level of agreement amongst the local community with regard to the location and extent of the proposed roll-back areas, so this did not emerge as an issue to be managed.
- 2.8 Having settled upon the approach, the drafting of policies for the CCMA and the separate roll-back areas became the next issue to be addressed, given the local community's desire for planned, high-quality development.
- 2.9 Although the draft policies set out in s.7 have not been circulated widely for comment in the local community, we are confident that they do reflect the opinions and aspirations expressed at the stakeholder workshop and from the community exhibition / questionnaire survey and, as such, have local community backing.
- 2.10 The various criteria in Policy 3 (see s.7, below) reflect concerns expressed by the local community that the replacement of properties threatened by coastal erosion should operate in a fair and open manner, avoiding discrimination and inappropriate spin-offs. Certain details, such as the 30-year period referred to in Policy 3 and the precise manner in which the roll-back sites are developed, are open for discussion, but others, such as the need to prevent multiple replacements addressed in 3(vi) are essential, in the eyes of the local community.
- 2.11 Clearly, any policies adopted by GYBC will need to comply with the law and with current Government advice, as well as knitting in with the wider policy context of the emerging Local Development Framework.
- 2.12 The local community did not express any desire to control future development within the CCMA beyond that already operated by GYBC through the Planning and Building Control systems. Neither did they see any reason to prevent owners / occupiers improving properties under "permitted development" rules, as long as they are fully aware of the threats posed by predicted coastal erosion rates.
- 2.13 There was some discussion amongst members of the local community with regard to the uses to which vacated dwellings could be put. Once again the need for a balance between economic and equity considerations became apparent. It was generally recognised that such uses had to be economically viable in order to attract buyers in order to help facilitate the building of a replacement property on the roll-back areas. Although this issue did not feature strongly in discussions it clearly has implications for the funding of replacement properties and forms the subject of further discussions in the RPA report.

- 2.14 Some members of the local community were willing to engage in more detailed discussions with regard to funding mechanisms in respect of replacement properties. These discussions raised a number of important issues, and identified some possible solutions which we discuss elsewhere in this report and which are comprehensively dealt with in the RPA report.
- 2.15 Two issues that frequently arose, but which are not central to this project, were the high level of support for a northwards extension of the existing coastal flood defence berm, and the almost universal belief that central government should assist owners when they come to vacate properties affected by predicted coastal erosion.
- 2.16 A further issue raised by many members of the local community, but which also falls outside the remit of the current project, was a widely held belief that the predicted erosion rates set out in the Shoreline Management Plan are not backed up by evidence over recent years. The blighting effect caused by the current SMP on property values - and indeed on peoples' lives - is a source of local resentment and many people questioned its accuracy.
- 2.17 One issue that was not raised by the local community, but which is identified in the project brief, is the question of infrastructure replacement in areas affected by coastal erosion. To the extent that the local community does not appear concerned about this issue, we feel justified in not including it in the Community Statement. However, at some point in the future, existing roads and drainage facilities will be affected, and the issue will have to be addressed.
- 2.18 For now, it appears that drainage undertakers - usually the local utility company - are responsible for the maintenance and repair of adopted sewers under the terms of the Water Industry Act, 1991. In the event of existing adopted sewage facilities in the area being affected by coastal erosion, it would seem that it is up to the utility companies to provide suitable alternative services either by replacement or diversion of existing facilities.
- 2.19 Responsibility for the maintenance and repair of (non-adopted) drains and sewers located within private properties lies with landowners, but, where dwellings are being lost, there will be no significant financial liability on owners other than to ensure such facilities are satisfactorily removed.
- 2.20 Providing adequate sewers and drainage to the proposed roll-back areas does not appear to be an issue, existing services being readily available and accessible. If, as we recommend, the roll-back areas are identified for future development, a sewer requisition is possible under s.98 of the Water Industry Act.

**2.21** The situation with regard to highways appears to be different, with no apparent obligation upon the highway authority to replace public roads or footpaths lost to coastal erosion. However, it is acknowledged that continued access will be required to any properties cut off from existing roads and footpaths by coastal erosion, and the Highway Authority, together with local landowners, may need to agree upon temporary arrangements on a case by case basis.

### **3.0 Methodology**

- 3.1 The core of the project was a Community Statement, a single page document setting out all the most important points produced after a one day workshop with invited Stakeholders.<sup>1</sup> This rapid and simple approach had been used successfully in a number of previous projects under the title Concept Statement and had proved very effective in securing community engagement.
- 3.2 The approach emerged from research that began with the (then) Countryside Agency and is currently on-gong with Natural England. The focus of the research was a concern over the quality of new development in terms of its relationship with the wider environment and why it was that the planning process appeared unable to get development right for individual places despite the acknowledgement of local distinctiveness.
- 3.3 From a number of workshops and case studies we undertook, three fundamental causes were identified.
- (i) Planning processes to raise quality were universally too slow, allowing land prices to be agreed before quality considerations were able to be taken into account.
  - (ii) The thinking process comprised technical expertise aimed at addressing individual issues from a limited specialist view point and lacking as a result an overall perspective or understanding.
  - (iii) It was dominated by problem solving to the exclusion of considering how to achieve something of value or worth.
- 3.4 These three things taken together prevented the planning process from delivering high quality sustainable development – despite the strictures of national policy - in the vast majority of cases other than for some high profile urban regeneration schemes. All three issues had to be addressed in one process. Concept Statements were the result. The research was short-listed for an RTP award in 2008.
- 3.5 Concept Statements are very different to conventional planning exercises being short, quick, relentlessly positive and drawing on

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix X for those taking part, invitation letter etc.

local people rather than technical expertise to identify shared aspirations and agreed solutions to deliver them. As single page illustrated documents they are also easy to read, understand and comment upon which makes them an ideal vehicle for consultation with the wider community. The simple, clear style and lack of technical jargon encourages local people to take part in a constructive manner.

- 3.6 Concept Statements have been produced for a wide range of sites and circumstances, the two most recent prior to this project being Easington Colliery, County Durham, to set the scope and objectives for regeneration of the former pit village, and Hindhead in Surrey, to coordinate redevelopment of the village centre once relieved of through traffic on the A3 which is being tunnelled under the Surrey Hills AONB. There are a number of other case studies as part of the research project . The report is available on the Natural England web site and the home page of The Planning Cooperative [www.plancoop.co.uk](http://www.plancoop.co.uk)
- 3.7 In all cases the local community contributed essential perspectives that would not otherwise have formed part of the analysis. Chief among them was an holistic understanding of the attributes of the place and how they are viewed by the community which formed the starting point for identifying and agreeing community aspirations.
- 3.8 The approach appears to have a significant role in delivering the emerging Localism Agenda. It was particularly relevant in this project due to the circumstances facing the community. The issue of coastal change is highly technical and widely misunderstood, engendering a sense of mistrust and injustice. It is also sharply divisive with the predicted destruction of some properties and the creation of sea views for others.
- 3.9 There had been substantial consultation already with the community that had identified the depth of this divide. It was felt that there would be little appetite for further involvement since those un-affected had no reason to get involved and those facing the loss of their properties wanted decisive and effective action rather than further talk. Engaging the wider community was seen as a major challenge.
- 3.10 The Concept Statement approach is rooted in active, managed debate that is the catalyst to thinking creatively and positively. Sharing views and ideas with others around a table in a structured discussion is a simple activity but with profound consequences. It encourages individuals to moderate their position in a way that non-participatory consultation on-line or through answering questions on a form cannot do. This change in position is essential if consensus is to be approached as better understanding is usually the precursor to seeing how to agree.

- 3.11 The stakeholder workshop produced a draft Community Statement which was agreed with minor amendments by the Management Group. It was then distributed through the village with an invitation to attend the Community Exhibition held over Friday and Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> and 27 November 2010 at which the ideas and proposals were presented for further discussion and endorsement.
- 3.12 The results of the exhibition were used to revise the Community Statement and add clarity to the proposed roll-back areas. A summary of the exhibition response is given in Annex 4. The final version of the statement forms Annex 1. This has been presented to the Council as representing community aspirations as to how coastal change and the development stemming from it should be handled.

#### **4.0 Findings from Other Coastal Pathfinder Projects**

- 4.1 This part of the Report summarises emerging ideas and initiatives across other English Coastal Pathfinder projects with similar aims as the Scratby Project in terms of adaptation planning. This summary is based on a trawl of the websites of other projects and contact with the project officers/teams concerned. The full findings are contained in Annex 2.
- 4.2 Six of the other 14 English Coastal Pathfinder projects involve similar themes and objectives to the Scratby project. These are Dorset, East Riding, Lincolnshire, North Norfolk, Scarborough, and Waveney.
- 4.3 Practice in each recognises the need for roll-back and relocation/replacement of dwellings and other properties away from areas threatened by coastal erosion if coastal communities are to continue to function and prosper in the long term. Developments approved under such policies are on an 'exceptional' basis, similar to the well-established exceptions approach to affordable housing schemes outside village envelopes that has evolved as part of English rural planning since the late 1980s. There are some small differences in terms of established and emerging policies e.g. on the objectives for relinquished properties – demolition/site clearing being favoured by some authorities whilst others also being open to the possibility of beneficial interim/temporary uses, including affordable housing.
- 4.4 The projects that seem to be most advanced in terms of spatial planning and initiatives that relate these to financial assistance programmes, appear to be in North Norfolk and the East Riding of Yorkshire, where the local planning authorities already had a considerable track record in tackling these issues prior to the Coastal Pathfinder projects being set up.

- 4.5 There is recognition in these projects that a strong and clear planning policy lead provides the best framework for action and can also help to influence/affect land values to the benefit of allied programmes of financial programmes as well as the operation of the local property market.
- 4.6 Whilst the examples of planning policy approaches to adaptation in the East Riding and North Norfolk have definite merit, they stop short of site identification for roll-back development opportunities. Indeed none of the planning policy approaches examined come anywhere close to providing definition as to where exactly new replacement development ought to take place – instead they rely on ‘passive’ criteria-based policy providing a net through which privately-sponsored proposals must pass.
- 4.7 However, as part of their contextual and detailed project work, some of the Coastal Pathfinders reviewed have considered the issues of possible relocation site identification (Dorset, Waveney) and acquisition (Scarborough). The latter example will involve site purchase and the facility for eligible residents to acquire plots. The Dorset project has raised the question of the possible use of compulsory purchase of suitable relocation sites whilst Waveney is looking to explore a possible ‘development cluster outside village confines’.
- 4.8 The Dorset work is also very interesting as it is seeking to explore how roll-back/relocation/replacement policies and initiatives might link to Parish Plans and community-based planning. With the Localism and Decentralism Bill imminent, this is a very important consideration. It is quite possible that certain coastal communities might wish to take advantage of the Government’s expected ‘Right To Plan’ proposal that will allow local people to formulate Neighbourhood Plans using local planning authority help. Proposals in Neighbourhood Plans might also be implemented by the proposed ‘Community Right to Build’ together with the expected Neighbourhood Development Orders and general planning powers to grant outline planning permission at local Parish/Neighbourhood Forum level. Locally-based Delivery Vehicles such as Community Land Trusts<sup>2</sup> and Development Trusts could also be instrumental in driving forward proposals.

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<sup>2</sup> Under Section 79 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2009, a Community land Trust is a body is established for the express purpose of furthering the social, economic and environmental interests of a local community by acquiring and managing land and other assets in order—

(a) to provide a benefit to the local community, and

(b) to ensure that the assets are not sold or developed except in a manner which the trust’s members think benefits the local community.

And is established under arrangements which are expressly designed to ensure that—

(a) any profits from its activities will be used to benefit the local community (otherwise than by being paid directly to members),

(b) individuals who live or work in the specified area have the opportunity to become members of the trust (whether or not others can also become members), and c) the members of the trust control it.

4.9 Our review of practice across the other Coastal Pathfinder Projects with similar aims/characteristics has led us to conclude that they all provide valuable lessons and inspiration for further innovation in and development of planning approaches. We believe that the Scratby Project should seek to innovate by providing a planning policy approach that will:

- identify possible locations for future roll-back development;
- generally guide how development will take place in these suggested locations, and;
- provide a basis for future more detailed consultation/implementation by the community of these ideas through e.g. the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, Site Briefs, Neighbourhood Development Orders and the formation of any locally-based Delivery Vehicle. (It is possible for example, that the community decide that they wish to encourage some general market housing on an roll-back exceptions site to help cross-subsidise the relocation of households at risk onto the site. This detail could be explored as part of future community-based planning work.)

## **5.0 The Stakeholder Workshop**

5.1 This event commences the process of effective community participation under the Concept Statement model and is key to its success. It is vitally important to ensure that a representative cross-section of local views and opinions are invited to attend and that all those attending are given the opportunity to have a say.

5.2 In the present case, a list of names was compiled with the assistance and agreement of the Scratby Coastal Pathfinder Management Group, and a total of 22 people representing a range of community interests and organisations were invited to attend.

5.3 The workshop was held at “Moments” restaurant, Beach Road, Scratby, on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

5.4 At the Stakeholder Workshop, four short presentations set out the background to the project and the aims of the day. Following the presentations, invitees, working in two separate groups, were asked to identify and prioritise positive aspects about living in Scratby or California.

5.5 This exercise focused attention on the positive aspects of the place and helped to engender an aspirational and consensual approach to the core task of drawing up and agreeing a set of development principles to guide future development in the local community.

- 5.6 Finally, invitees were asked to indicate on a base map of the village, how these principles might be used to guide and affect the quality of future development in Scratby and California.
- 5.7 At the end of the workshop the ideas from the two groups were shared and any differences discussed. This led to a shared agreement of community aspirations for adaptation and change resulting from predicted coastal erosion processes.
- 5.8 The outcomes from the Stakeholder Workshop were drawn up into a single A4 sized "Community Statement", a copy of which was circulated to every household in Scratby and California, together with a short questionnaire seeking wider views on its ideas and recommendations.

## **6.0 Outcomes**

- 6.1 From the outset the stakeholder workshop identified a strong consensus about a number of key points to guide the management of coastal change.
- the right of property owners to relocate within the village, subject to the restriction that a property should only be allowed to relocate once
  - a planned approach to this by identifying 'roll-back' areas
  - three locations suitable for roll-back areas for different uses
  - preserving the character of the village despite the new development
- 6.2 These all flowed logically from the aspects of life in Scratby and California that were highly valued by the local community about which there was an equally high level of agreement. The last point was particularly strongly and universally expressed. The quiet, safe and largely un-commercialised nature of the village was one of the most valued attributes and was seen as the major reason for people choosing to live there. The prospect of substantial new residential development was not seen as an opportunity to reshape the village in any beneficial way. Rather the view was that it must not erode the current character.
- 6.3 The Community Exhibition confirmed the relevance of the ideas put forward with near universal endorsement of the things most valued by the community and the principles that should guide the rollback process. Four out of five of those attending the exhibition gave a positive response to the proposals in the draft Community Statement. The negative views came overwhelmingly from people who were committed to campaigning for the provision of sea defences who regarded roll-back as entirely the wrong approach

and did not offer any further comment on the proposed ways in which it might be achieved.

- 6.4 The positive response was very encouraging. It reinforced the experience we had seen before that as long as the stakeholder group is made up of a sufficiently representative mix of people the structured discussion around those things that are valued and how they should be used to guide any future change gives a very good indication of the views of the wider community.

- 6.5 Opposition to proposals is normally the principal spur to people taking part in consultation exercises. It was largely absent in the responses made at the community exhibition. As a response to the issue of roll-back the draft Community Statement was endorsed in all respects.
- 6.6 There were, however a number of people who regarded the exercise as entirely the wrong approach and saw it as potentially threatening their preferred alternative which was to argue for the retention of the rock berm currently defending California and its extension northwards to include the whole of Scratby. Clearly this option was excluded from the work we were appointed to undertake which was to explore with the community how best to respond to the prospect of having no long term measures of protection along this stretch of the coast. We accommodated as best we could those people wishing to put this argument forward while explaining that it was actually a wholly different question to the one we were endeavouring to answer.
- 6.7 The two groups – those commenting on the draft statement and those refusing to entertain it - were not mutually exclusive on the issue of the berm. Most people who helped refine the ideas in the community statement also questioned whether it should be regarded as the best option. Concerns ranging across issues of fairness, natural justice, human rights and the lack of measures for financial assistance were raised in the majority of the discussions we had over the two days, irrespective of the view being taken on the appropriateness of the draft Community Statement.
- 6.8 One of the most satisfying aspects of the exhibition from our standpoint was the number of times that people thanked us for explaining the situation in more depth and clarifying how the various initiatives fitted together. The draft community statement provided a focus for those discussions and helped them be productive in that way.
- 6.9 Our conclusion is that if coastal change is to occur as currently predicted, the approach set out in the Community Statement is endorsed by the community. That is the most important finding of this study. However, this should not be taken to suggest that it represents the preference of the community on the question of rollback verses continued defence, which is a separate issue.
- 6.10 A summary of the results of the community exhibition is given in Annex 4

## **7.0 Recommendations**

### The Coastal Change Management Area

- 7.1. After much discussion and several alternative approaches we have decided to recommend that the CCMA is co-terminus with the area identified at risk in the Shoreline Management Plan as finally adopted. The advice in PPS25 includes the possibility of a wider or smaller area being used which we have rejected. The main reason for this is one of simplicity, as the use of one set of boundaries will be clearer and easier for people to understand. The whole of the area identified in the SMP is associated with some element of risk. The principle of maximum flexibility in dealing with individual development proposals came out of the stakeholder workshop and is reflected in the form of the proposed policies. Applications would be treated on their merits and the restrictions placed on development proposals would be less severe for properties with longer projected life spans.
- 7.2 However, we also recommend that the identification of the CCMA in graphic / map form should always include the roll-back areas so that the two sides of the policy – restriction and promotion of development – are seen as a single cohesive approach. We do not consider that it would be sensible to include roll-back areas in the CCMA as this would involve conflicting policy objectives being applied to different parts of the area, but we think it imperative that the totality of the area of the village to which various policies apply as a response to anticipated coastal change are always presented together and not displayed individually in any document produced by the council.

### Roll Back Areas - Choice of Areas

- 7.3 The stakeholder workshop considered the issues of access, relationship to existing built up area and landscape impact when discussing possible roll-back areas. The area around the shop and post office, for example was an obvious possibility as far as facilities were concerned but was considered to extend the village into the open countryside and be potentially visible from the B1159, the main road past the village. Only one person argued in favour of that location at the Community Exhibition. There was some discussion at the Exhibition about the option of locating roll-back areas much further away from the coast to eliminate any concern about future loss of coast but these were similarly rejected on the grounds of landscape impact and village form.
- 7.4 The roll-back areas in the Community Statement and recommended to the council in this report are small scale incremental extensions to village, well related to the existing built up area and easily knitted into the built form. Any new building here will visually merge with the buildings behind when viewed from the countryside. There are no public footpaths between the main road and the village. Views from the road would be at some distance,

800 m for the area on the north-west side of Scratby, 500m for the area south of California Road and 200-300 m for the holiday park extension area. Views of the village are filtered by roadside hedges and hedgerows in the intervening fields. The small increment of built form is not likely to change the nature of the current view or to appear prominent in the landscape

- 7.5 The planned approach to roll-back recommended in this report will enable the council to secure substantial new planting on designation of the areas, which will be substantial by the time significant building takes place further reducing any visual effect.

#### Roll-back Areas – Designation

- 7.6 There are options for how roll-back areas are defined. The majority of the pathfinder projects reviewed take the least proactive approach based on favourable consideration being given to applications from owners affected by coastal change as long as the plot of land is not unacceptable in terms of established planning issues. We regard this as rather a 'sink or swim' approach in which the onus is placed on the unfortunate household to find a way out of the problem rather than the local authority taking an active role in addressing the issues. It was clear from the outset that the Scratby Pathfinder would seek to go further than this in assisting affected households and businesses to survive the events.
- 7.7 This is particularly important in Scratby because there is a concern identified at the Stakeholder Workshop to maintain the viability and attractiveness of the village both as a place to live and as a holiday destination. The alternative was seen as blight and decline that would eventually erode the quality of life for the entire community not just those facing the loss of their properties.
- 7.8 The problem with wishing to provide a clearer and more helpful framework is the very long timescale over which the changes are predicted and the high degree of uncertainty attached to those predictions. Our proposed solution is to clearly identify areas where roll back could commence while accepting that it is not sensible to try to define its outer boundaries. The various areas proposed are well related to the built up area and free of overriding planning constraints that would preclude their development. They have substantial capacity and are capable of providing for the likely level of demand but as their final boundaries will be a matter for over 50 years hence they are not indicated in any way in the Community Statement.
- 7.9 The advantage of this approach is that the required development can be undertaken in a planned way, to agreed standards and with the necessary infrastructure and landscaping in place. This can be done in a sequential manner without the need for projections of total numbers and types of dwelling, which would be highly

unreliable given the timescale and the wide range of circumstances faced by the individual affected owners.

- 7.10 Flexibility is very important in maximising the chances of a successful relocation. The needs of individuals will be taken into account as far as is possible and we recommend the preparation of a design code that allows for various plot and dwelling sizes while maintaining those elements of design that will retain the character of the village.
- 7.11 There is flexibility in how the areas of roll-back land are formally designated. One way would be to allocate an amount of land adequate for the first phase of development through an appropriate document in the Local Development Framework. An alternative would be to identify the land in more general terms through a policy to that effect, rather than as a formal allocation. This would provide more flexibility in terms of precise boundaries and infrastructure requirements and for this reason is our recommendation. A set of policies for inclusion in the Core Strategy is proposed below.

#### Policies

- 7.12 The policies below are recommended to the Council as a way of providing robust and flexible assistance to those affected by predicted coastal change in a structured and planned way while safeguarding the village from speculative open market housing pressures. They should be read together.

### **1 CCMA and Coastal Roll-Back Areas** **A Coastal Change Management Area (CCMA) and four Coastal Roll-Back Areas are identified at Scratby / California, the boundaries of which are shown on the Proposals Map.**

- 7.13 Justification / Explanation: The CCMA could either be identified narrowly to include *only* the SMP zones or more extensively, to include the coastal roll-back areas, as suggested respectively in paras.5.2 and 5.7 of the PPS 25 Development and Coastal Change Practice Guide (DCCPG) and both approaches were tested with the local community.
- 7.14 The community preference appears to be for a narrowly defined CCMA (per paragraph 5.2) with additional policy areas (per s.7 of the DCCPG). This allows a clear differentiation between the CCMA, where erosion is the issue, and the roll-back areas, where re-development is the main concern. It also enables clearer drafting on the Proposals Map and greater clarity to users of the LDF.
- 7.15 The CCMA and roll-back areas should be formally designated and identified through the Site Specific Allocations DPD and the Proposals Map with a cross reference back to the relevant Core Policy (CS11) and PPS 25.

## **2 Planning permissions in the CCMA**

**Within the CCMA, planning permission may be granted for essential infrastructure serving the needs of the immediate area or for development that provides significant social and / or economic benefits requiring a sea-front location.**

**Planning applications within the CCMA should be accompanied by an assessment of vulnerability to coastal erosion prepared by a suitably qualified person to an appropriate level of detail.**

**Planning permissions granted within the CCMA, including residential extensions, alterations, and curtilage buildings, are likely to be subject to a time limited condition related to the life expectancy of the site, and the nature of development proposed.**

- 7.16 Justification / Explanation: Although the local community did not express any need - or desirability - for setting out the precise form(s) of development that will or will not be acceptable within the CCMA, Policy DCC3.2 of the DCCPG suggests that such guidance is necessary and consequently we are recommending an appropriately worded policy. With such a tightly drawn are in this case, there is no need to allocate any land for specific purposes within the CCMA.
- 7.17 This policy provides a warning (to developers) and a safeguard (to the LPA) with regard to the issue of coastal erosion where the life expectancy of the scheme is likely to exceed the life expectancy of the site.
- 7.18 The policy should be included within the Development Control Policies DPD, with a cross reference in the Allocations DPD.

## **3 Coastal Roll-Back Areas**

**In Coastal Roll-Back Areas, applications for the replacement of existing dwellings and other properties situated within the CCMA that are likely to be affected by coastal erosion within a 30-year period, will be considered favourably subject to the following criteria:**

**(i) Replacement dwellings should not be significantly larger than those they are replacing (in floor space terms) and should be in keeping with the scale and character of existing development in the area. Other (non-residential) forms of development should be of an appropriate form, size and scale in relation to their function and surrounding development;**

**(ii) Dwellings to be replaced will be subject to restrictions with regard to their future use and / or demolition either by means of planning conditions or legal agreements;**

**(iii) Coastal Roll-Back Areas are to be accessed as indicated on the Proposals Map and will be developed sequentially from the identified points unless circumstances dictate otherwise;**

**(iv) Applications for replacement dwellings will be considered favourably only if submitted by or on behalf of the owners of existing habitable properties at risk of coastal erosion within a 30-year period;**

**(v) The initial occupation of replacement dwellings will be restricted, by means of a planning condition, to the owners (together with their families) of properties to be replaced;**

**(vi) Applications to replace properties that have already been rolled-back under this (or similar) policies will not be approved**

**Calculation of the 30 year period referred to in this policy should form part of the assessment of vulnerability to be submitted by applicants and will need to be agreed by the Council's Coastal Erosion Officer.**

- 7.19 The local community is concerned about the nature, scale and quality of new development in the coastal roll-back areas and, consequently, we are suggesting a criteria-based policy to govern the replacement of existing properties affected by coastal erosion within a 30-year period. The various criteria reflect policy approaches already adopted in other coastal pathfinder areas, as well as the concerns of the local community, in accord with s.7 of the DCCPG.
- 7.20 This approach differs from that adopted by other coastal pathfinders where coastal roll-back areas are governed by less specific 'exceptions' policies, which do not define the areas where roll-back development is to be allowed. The local community in Scratby and California were clearly concerned about the inherent uncertainty in such an approach, so a more "planned" approach is being advocated. Such variations in approach are clearly anticipated in the DCCPG at paras 7.7 and 7.8 and reflect the requirement for an innovative approach in the tender specification.
- 7.21 A shorter (or longer) period than 30 years could be used in Policy 3. For instance North Norfolk and Waveney District Councils both use a figure of 20 years for replacement dwellings, but 50 years for community and other facilities - See Annex 2. Thirty years seems

to be a reasonable compromise allowing properties to be purchased with prospects of having a viable use and we see no need for a different period relating to non-residential properties in this case.

- 7.22 The policy should be included within the Development Control Policies DPD, with a cross reference in the Allocations DPD.
- 7.23 The only exception to the general policy stance on open market housing would be as part of a package of financial assistance to deliver viability in the relocation process. A limited number of plots could be released on the open market in exchange for a much larger number of plots being made available at no charge. This would provide a substantial subsidy to the cost of the new dwelling - typically between 30% and 40% - and could also provide key elements of infrastructure such as road access, drainage connections and other services further reducing construction costs.
- 7.24 This would bring the replacement dwellings within the reach of a larger number of households and could be highly significant in increasing the proportion of people able to take advantage of the roll back provisions. At a ratio of ten free plots to one open market house the advantage in terms of the success of the relocation scheme in meeting the needs of displaced households would outweigh the few extra houses constructed within the roll back areas. This would be an example of “enabling development” which is routinely used for securing plots for affordable housing.
- 7.25 The policies proposed will be implemented through legal agreements (currently S 106 of the TCPA 1990 as amended) that tie all interested parties into a single standard contract to secure compliance with the requirements of the authority.

#### Other financial measures

- 7.26 A review of mechanisms to assist with viability of relocation has been undertaken by RPA Ltd and is the subject of a separate report. Our final recommendation concerns the bringing together all the workable measures from that report with the planning policy approach above. This is regarded as essential if the roll-back scheme is to work and it needs to be undertaken with the utmost care. The aim should be to produce a package of measures that provides the greatest flexibility to respond to the range of circumstances and preferences individuals face, to minimise the risk of un-intended exclusion from the scheme, along with sufficient clarity and robustness to avoid inappropriate outcomes.
- 7.27 RPA’s work has been very thorough and has established that: -
- (i) there are many possible options in various combinations;
  - (ii) the majority of options currently fail due to lack of finance;

- (iii) the preference of affected households / businesses is not known, and;
- (iv) the universal view of the community is that government, in some guise, should provide the necessary funds.

7.28 Nothing in our work gives rise to any challenge to these important conclusions. In our view they support the recommendation in this report that a limited element of open market housing, in combination with any other contributory mechanisms that can be delivered, holds out the best prospect of making roll back a viable proposition.

7.29 In saying this we are aware of the community's concern over uncontrolled growth. The idea would have to be presented to the community in a very careful, simple and well-argued manner. But the fact remains that in terms of the appearance, character and functioning of the village, the inclusion of a limited number of additional new houses within the rollback areas will have no material impact.

7.30 It can also be argued as beneficial in another way by offsetting part of the decline in population that looks likely to occur. The majority of the affected households we spoke to were not able to see a way of accessing the relocation options currently on offer due to lack of funds. If that remains the case there will be a substantial net loss of properties and resultant reduction in population.

## **8.0 Acknowledgements and thanks**

8.1 We wish to extend grateful thanks to all those individuals and local organisations who have assisted us with this project with particular mention of John Hemsworth, Bernard Harris, Ivy Eyre, Councillor Jim Shrimplin, Sarah Slade, and the Scratby Coastal Erosion Group.

8.2 In addition, grateful thanks are extended to:

\* Residents of the communities of Scratby and California attending the Exhibitions, providing valuable feedback on the draft proposals.

\* The Coastal Pathfinder Project Officers/Teams in Dorset, East Yorkshire, North Norfolk, Scarborough and Lincolnshire, who responded to our requests for information about their projects.

- Annexes:
1. The Community Statement (including a plan of CCMA and suggested roll-back locations);
  2. Detailed report on other coastal pathfinders
  3. Copy of questionnaire and GYBC letter as sent out with draft CS.
  4. Analysis of questionnaire responses plus verbal comments recorded

