

## Shoreline Management Plan- Slaughden (Sudbourne Beach) Policy Review consultation

### Response from the Alde and Ore Association

1. *Please can you share with us what you most value about the coast here?*

The Alde and Ore Association exists to preserve and protect for the public benefit the Alde, Ore and Butley rivers and their banks from Shingle Street to their tidal limits and such of the land adjoining them or upstream as may be considered to affect them, together with the features of beauty and or historic or public interest in that area.

The estuary is a historic landscape, a mix of natural forces to the east and man-made clay but grass covered walls built over the centuries, some 600-800 years old to the west. It is this conformation that has led to a vibrant and interesting local economy, a place for many leisure pursuits, and an area of many special habitats, so special that the estuary is largely covered by national and international environmental protection rules.

2. *About the proposed change in policy. Please can you share with us whether you support a change in management policy from No Active Intervention to Managed Realignment? Please chose one:*

- **Yes**                    **v**
- **No**                        **X**
- **Don't know**        **X**

3. *Your comments*

Overall, a revised policy is crucial to the life of the estuary. Were a breach to be allowed there would be serious consequences for the shape, flow, and flood risks from the river with impacts on housing, and businesses as well as the numbers of people enjoying the features in and around the estuary. The Association commissioned a scientific report from Professor Ken Pye to examine the possible impact of a breach and this was used extensively in the policy review.

The proposed policy change is a vital part of support to the Alde Ore Estuary Partnership Plan, a community partnership based plan to ensure that the estuary stays largely and is able to withstand huge sea surges of a 1:200 year frequency in the year 2050 even taking account of sea level rise.

The proposed managed realignment in the form of managed resilience seeks to work with the dynamic forces of the coastal evolution and should not lead to consequential changes along other parts of the coast. It is consistent with the Suffolk Coast being a Heritage Coast.

The MR policy is more consistent with the HTL policy for the Aldeburgh town unit immediately to the north.

The proposed policy should, despite the changing natural environment, help sustain the valuable saltings running behind the shingle shore.

A policy of MR would allow the continuation of a very valuable safe sailing environment which, on this Suffolk coast, is largely confined to the estuaries.

The estuary is highly valued for its tranquillity. Were the policy not to change and the shingle shore left to breach in time, the loss of a special and unique area would be strongly felt.

The estuary is very important to the economy of the area and a policy which allowed a breach would damage it significantly. An economic study of the whole area assessed the local economy as being worth at least £100 million a year. If the shingle wall was breached there could be not only greater risks of flooding of houses, flooding of agricultural land, salination of bore holes which are used for irrigating field vegetable crops of huge value to the nation as a whole and loss of tourism businesses.

4. *Have you any outstanding concerns about what has been presented as part of this consultation or is there anything we have missed?*

- i. The current policy is Hold the Line until 2025. The Association would not want to see no action between now and 2025 should the coast need attention before then. Continuing the policy of placing large rocks on the eroding section of Unit 15.1 could still be a useful preparation for the years post 2025.
- ii. When the time comes to examine the best option for introducing managed realignment, the possibility of using a shingle engine should not be overlooked. Currently it is an untried technology in the UK but in a few years' time when experience has been had of the sand engine at Bacton in Norfolk, a re-assessment could be very worthwhile.
- iii. Some members have commented that they feel that the policy should be HTL. It is noted that this was the status before the SMP revision in 2009. The integrity of the river is so bound up with it being a place to live, work and play (and the latter includes the fact that tourism is a key earning industry in this area).

*About you: Coastal Partnership East would like to stay in touch with people who have taken the time to respond to the consultation and keep them up to date with progress. If you would like to be kept in touch, please provide the details below*

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*What is your interest in this area of the coast?*

- Please see remit of the Association at the head of this response. The Association has about 2000 members.

Response emailed to [coastalmanagement@eastssuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:coastalmanagement@eastssuffolk.gov.uk)