

**R6**

The County Council and Coastal District Councils will seek to encourage the management of water space by voluntary co-operation and agreements with the individual user groups.

**R7**

The Coastal District Councils in partnership with local organisations will promote understanding and education of recreational uses on the coast, and raise awareness about recreational opportunities on the coast by preparation of interpretative material in the form, for example, of leaflets and notice boards.

**R8**

The County Council and coastal District Councils will support recreational interests acquiring and managing land for the purposes of sport and nature conservation.

**R9**

Where any conflicts of interest between recreational groups and conservationists cannot be resolved by good planning and management the Sandford Principle should apply, that is natural beauty should prevail.



Authority, the County Council is also required to maintain footpaths, bridleways and byways. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 strengthened the law relating to Public Rights of Way. The Countryside Act 1968 gives local authorities powers to provide, by purchase or agreement as well as to equip and manage countryside recreation facilities such as Country Parks and picnic sites. The Local Government Act 1972 enables District Councils to develop a wide range of recreational facilities related to leisure functions.

In relation to the control of water recreation, local authorities under the Public Health Act 1961 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 may make byelaws covering the use of sea up to 1km offshore to regulate the speed of leisure craft, to regulate use of leisure craft to prevent danger to other users and require the use of effective silencers, and under the Public Health Act 1936, local authorities may make byelaws to regulate areas in which bathing is permitted and control the passage of leisure craft.

The Department of Environment is the principle Government department responsible for outdoor recreation and open space, providing the overall policy context, in 1991 it published Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 "Sport and Recreation". The detailed implementation of policy is carried out by both the Countryside Commission and the Sports Council. In Essex the County Council and District Councils share responsibility for the provision of recreational facilities.



## Aggregates/ Waste Disposal

### The Issues

Waste disposal is an important issue in Essex, which in the past has received much of London's waste. The Thames estuary is a natural highway for transporting waste from London, and this has led to the disposal of waste at sites along its banks. Because of the increasing importance of the coast as a landscape resource and wildlife habitat this historical pattern of waste disposal cannot continue. There is concern over the possibility of leachate pollution from landfill sites, and also in respect of untreated effluents being discharged into coastal waters as a result of storm water runoff/ drain surcharging. The capacity of some coastal waste disposal sites has been reached such that proposals have been made to tip waste ever higher by landraising. Proposals of this type are particularly alien to the lowland coastal landscape and are in general contrary to the County's policies and to the enhancement of the coast.

Marine dredging of sand and gravel can have an impact upon coastal protection and marine life, although there is a need to balance that with the environmental impacts of extraction from land and the environmental damage that can be caused. Presently there is increased emphasis on aggregates produced from coastal quarries in Scotland. It is likely that these aggregates will be carried by ship, some destined for the south east of England and requiring importation facilities possibly on the Thames Estuary. It is important that these importation facilities and their impact and effect on the coast are fully considered in an Environmental Assessment. Current aggregate importation facilities need to be safeguarded and new depots encouraged, provided there are no adverse implications for the coastal environment.



### Legislation and Responsibilities

The County Council is required by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 to prepare a Minerals Local Plan and Waste Local Plan. The former provides more detail than is possible in the Structure Plan on the provision of mineral workings and the disposal of mineral wastes, while the latter sets out the authority's detailed land use policies for the treatment and disposal of waste.

With regards to Marine aggregates, there is no specific legislation but the industry is subject to control under the Coast Protection Act 1949. The Crown Estate Commissioners is responsible for issuing prospecting licences to operators in order to determine whether suitable material exists in commercial quantities

## Aggregates/Waste Disposal - Policies/ Objectives

**W1**

Existing aggregate importation facilities will be safeguarded and suitable sites and locations for new facilities encouraged, provided that there is adequate access to the site and their impact and effect on the coast is fully considered in an Environmental Assessment.

**W2**

Whilst the advantages of the River Thames for bulk transport are recognised, the disposal of waste along the banks of the River Thames or elsewhere along the coastline will normally be in conflict with policies for coast protection.

**W3**

Proposals for landraising along the coastline for the purpose of disposing of waste will be refused, as it is considered incompatible and alien to the predominately open and rural character of the coast.

**W4**

The dredging of marine aggregates will be considered, subject to full consideration being given to the impact on coastal processes, fisheries and the marine environment. Dredging should be subject to long term planning and management.



## Energy - Policies/ Objectives

### E1

Proposals for alternative energy generation sources, including wind energy will be considered on their individual merits, and with due consideration to environmental protection policies. Any proposal would require a comprehensive environmental assessment.

### E2

Proposals for barrages that would result in an adverse impact upon the environment will not be acceptable. Any proposals would require a detailed environmental assessment statement.

## Energy

### The Issues

The coast and large estuaries have traditionally provided sites for energy generation, and the Essex coast is no exception. SERPLAN expresses a preference for new forms of energy generation from renewable resources. Barrage construction could become an issue along the Essex coast, although there are no current proposals. They can have a number of environmental implications that need to be considered, for example the area of mudflats may be reduced and patterns of sediment deposition could be altered. The possibility of windfarms for power generation also needs to be considered although there are no firm proposals at the present time. These would have an impact upon the landscape and may effect wildlife in coastal areas.



### Legislation & Responsibilities

The DoE provides guidance on power generation sources and the development of newer forms of energy, while the DTI may provide guidance on the future generation of power and the possible locations of facilities in coastal areas. As planning authorities the County Council and coastal District Councils have a role to play in providing guidance on the installation of new forms of energy.



## Recreation and Access

### The Issues

The Essex coast with its numerous estuaries and creeks attracts a wide range of water sports including motor boats, yachting, water ski-ing and jet ski-ing. There is concern that the proximity of sensitive habitats to coastal water recreation has the potential for causing ecological damage particularly along shorelines and adjoining land. Conservation factors can therefore, place a constraint upon further growth of water recreation along much of the coastline, although it must be recognised that there is a need to balance the two interests. The ECSR consider that while there is general agreement about the need to take protective measures on the coast, it should not be at the expense of existing recreational users, except in exceptional circumstances.

It is important also to distinguish between the different types of watersports and their possible impact on the environment, as it could be argued that power boats, water ski-ing, and jet ski-ing have a greater potential to cause ecological damage or disturbance than non or low powered sailing craft, windsurfing or seabathing. Very often though it is the action of a few individuals not observing codes of practice or applying common sense that can result in disturbance to birds for example. It is, therefore, essential that users are educated and encouraged to join clubs. When conflicts of interest arise the aim should be to reconcile them through good planning and management, and voluntary agreements or codes of practice. On the open and undeveloped coastline it is more appropriate to improve existing access points and facilities rather than create new ones, so that this character is retained. Development of new facilities or expansion of existing facilities will normally be resisted.



Sea Angling and Wildfowling are also popular sports along the coast, with the latter being one of the few forms of recreation which may provide positive benefits for protecting and enhancing the nature conservation interest of coastal areas. Light aircraft also make extensive use of the coast which may cause noise and disturbance problems.

In addition to all these active sports the coastline is also popular for informal activities such as rambling, walking and bird watching. Much of the coastline has Rights of Way along it, but there is a lack of a continuous coastal footpath.

### Legislation & Responsibilities

The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, was the first UK Act to establish and protect access rights for the purposes of rural recreation. It introduced comprehensive legislation covering provision of footpaths and bridleways in the countryside. It requires the County Council to record all rights of way on a Definitive Map, and as Highway

## Recreation and Access - Policies/ Objectives

### R1

Access to the undeveloped coast for informal recreation will be encouraged subject to environmental considerations.

### R2

Existing Rights of Way will be maintained along the coast and the County Council will improve and extend footpaths and aim for a continuous coastal footpath, provided there will be no conflict with nature conservation interests.

### R3

The re-routing of sea wall footpaths will be considered in cases where managed retreat is considered appropriate.

### R4

Opportunities for water sports on the undeveloped coast will be resisted where there is an irreconcilable conflict with nature conservation interests. The development or expansion of facilities will not normally be permitted on the rural coastline, but will be encouraged in coastal towns subject to environmental considerations. The improvement of existing access points and facilities will be supported.

### R5

The County Council and coastal District Councils will work closely together to manage water space between competing uses and will encourage the Harbour Authorities to do the same, through the introduction of byelaws where necessary and by managing activities by time, and by zoning of activities where appropriate. The Councils will aim to work closely with other organisations to achieve better control.



## Coastal Resorts - Policies/ Objectives

C1

Appropriate new tourist and recreation facilities, and diversification of attractions that make a contribution toward the economic regeneration and improvement of the local environment of the coastal resorts of Clacton, Walton and Frinton, and Southend will be encouraged and supported, and existing facilities should be safeguarded, provided there is no impact on the surrounding undeveloped coastline.

C2

The quality of the urban environment of the developed coast should be maintained and enhanced wherever possible.

## Coastal Resorts

### The Issues

The Strategy is not intended to examine in detail the problems facing coastal resorts, although these are recognised and any future economic regeneration which will help to revitalise these towns is supported, but concentrates mainly on any impact that they may have on the open undeveloped and rural coastline, and its nature conservation value.

Within the resorts of Southend, Clacton, Walton and Frinton there is a growing awareness of the advantages of a thriving tourist trade for the local economy and the need for policies of promotion. The importance of these resorts has, like many other towns of this type declined in recent years, mostly as a result of continental competition, and changing trends in domestic holiday requirements.

Southend Borough Council have produced a Tourism and Resort Strategy (1989) which acknowledges both the potential benefits of leisure developments and the need for the Council to become actively involved in promoting the resort potential of the town, recognising that the development of the towns leisure function probably offers one of the greatest opportunities to improve the local economy. The entire foreshore of Southend is designated as an SSSI, a Ramsar site and SPA. This can be used as an asset. It will benefit wildlife as well as providing an educational resource for locals and tourists. There is no reason why tourism and conservation cannot be compatible through, for example, introducing green tourism initiatives. In the north of the County, Clacton has gained Intermediate Area Status under the Assisted Areas Programme. Frinton and Walton, along with Clacton continue to be marketed as holiday and short break destinations and the District Council are involved in a number of initiatives designed to diversify the areas attractions.

## Pollution

### The Issues

Pollution along the Essex coast particularly along the Thames estuary could be a threat to the coastal habitats and it is essential that pollution risks are minimised. There is concern over the effluents being discharged from sewage works, as well as marine leisure craft, and the effect this has on marine life, for example, enrichment from sewage may promote algae growth which can result in the depletion of oxygen levels in coastal waters. The UK Government is committed to the cessation of all sewage dumping at sea by the end of 1998.

It has to be recognised, however, that significant improvements to water quality has occurred in many areas, for example, along the River Thames. Coastal beaches are highly popular, and it is, therefore, important to ensure that the EC designated bathing waters maintain their compliance with the quality limits imposed by the EC.

### Legislation & Responsibilities

The disposal of waste at sea is carried out by licence from MAFF under the powers in the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985, Part II. The bodies responsible for the control of land based pollution are the NRA and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution (HMIP). HMIP and local authorities are responsible for implementing integrated pollution control procedures under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which control certain releases to air, water and land; while the NRA is responsible for water quality in controlled waters under the Water Resources Act 1991. The NRAs' responsibilities include the determination and issuing of consents for discharges of waste into these waters, monitoring of the extent of pollution, specification and achievement of statutory water quality objectives. Under the 1991 Act the NRA is responsible for achieving the requirements of EC objectives with regard to bathing water quality. It is the Bathing Waters (classification) Regulations 1991 which implement these EC quality limits.

Under the 1990 Environment Protection Act local authorities and landowners are required to keep public access land free of litter. This duty is seen to require a daily sweep of all coastal parks and public beaches.

## Pollution - Policies/Objectives

P1

The cessation of sewage sludge dumping at sea is supported.

P2

The NRA will be supported in their efforts to raise and maintain water quality in coastal and estuarine waters.

P3

The County Council and coastal District Councils will seek to ensure that the coastal environment is maintained in a litter and pollution free condition, including noise and visual pollution.



## Fisheries - Policies/ Objectives

**F1**  
The Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries Committee will be supported in their efforts to conserve fish stocks.

**F2**  
The local fishing industry, including oyster fisheries, will be encouraged and protected where appropriate.

**F3**  
Any adverse impacts on the rural and undeveloped coastline as a result of the fishing industry, in terms of related shoreline developments, will be resisted.

**F4**  
Fisheries must be managed wisely and sustainably.

## Fisheries

### The Issues

Essex coastal fisheries are important both commercially and biologically. Sensible and sustainable levels of cockle fishing and bait digging pose little threat to the wildlife of the Greater Thames, but modern methods of commercial harvesting may rapidly deplete stocks and mechanical suction can damage invertebrates and mudflats, in some cases. The management of stocks in a sustainable way is, therefore, extremely important not only for cockle fishing and bait digging, but for all sea fishing including oysters. Fishing activities may have an impact on the rural and undeveloped coast as well as the historic urban locations, in terms of shoreline and on-shore related developments.

### Legislation & Responsibilities

The EC has ultimate control over fisheries through the EC Common Fisheries Policy which controls operations in all waters under the jurisdiction of member states. The industry is controlled through a wide variety of UK legislation administered by MAFF covering aspects such as conservation of fish stocks to the regulation of fish stocks. Under the Sea Fisheries (Regulation) Act 1966, Sea Fisheries Committees were established which have powers to make byelaws controlling fisheries. The 12 Committees are established by MAFF and their membership includes representatives from local authorities and the NRA. The Sea Fisheries (Wildlife Conservation) Act 1992 requires the Committees and MAFF to have regard to marine conservation and to try to achieve a reasonable balance between environmental considerations and other factors that are to be taken into account for the purposes of sea fisheries measures.



## Development Pressures

### The Issues

The main problems associated with development pressures along the Essex coast are the impacts of large scale developments, and the effect of cumulative development. Major schemes that are likely to have some impact on the coastal environment are proposals which may arise from the East Thames Corridor initiative and the Channel Tunnel High Speed Rail Link, mainly along parts of the River Thames. Coastal caravan and chalet sites development has been considerable along parts of the Essex coast, especially in Tendring. There is also concern about plans to build a road from Canvey Island through Hadleigh Castle Country Park or Leigh Marsh, and the possibility of a Lower Thames Crossing.

Essex has two major international ports at Harwich and Tilbury, and a number of smaller ports. Major port expansion on the Thames has the potential to threaten wildlife conservation and could also have major impacts on "down drift" coastal erosion and estuary stability.

The transport of both passengers and freight by water can have both economic and environmental advantages, and this needs to be maintained and where appropriate encouraged along the coast.

### Legislation & Responsibilities

The Town and Country Planning System is designed to regulate development and the use of land in the public interest. The principle legislation is the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compensation Act 1991; although these do not specifically address development in the coastal zone, the provisions are applicable in coastal areas. The powers within the Acts are exercised by local planning authorities who have two important functions, the preparation of development plans and the control of development through the determination of planning applications. The planning system is therefore able to protect the undeveloped coastline from development; and policies within development plans may seek to address a number of coastal issues such as conservation, tourism and recreation, development in areas at risk from flooding and port development. "The protection of the undeveloped coast is considered to be one of the major achievements of the planning system". (DoE, 1993).

Harbour authorities have a significant degree of autonomy to operate under statutory powers set out in local Acts of Parliament or by means of orders made under the Harbours Act 1964. The powers may extend below the low water mark and may involve the control of navigation or fishing within harbour waters. Statutory environmental duties are also bestowed upon harbour and port authorities under the Transport and Works Act 1992.



## Development Pressures - Policies/ Objectives

The main policy relating to development pressures is included within the general strategy (Policy G2).

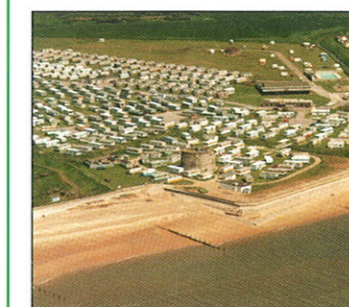
**D1**  
Development requiring a coastal location should normally be located within the developed areas of the coast, as defined in Local Plans. New development will be strongly resisted outside these areas.

**D2**  
Port expansion will be considered where it is compatible with the environmental objectives of the Strategy and other planning policies; and should be subject to an Environmental Assessment.

**D3**  
All Proposals for large scale developments on the coastline will require an Environmental Assessment.

**D4**  
Facilities for the transport of passengers and freight by water will be encouraged where appropriate, and where they do not conflict with the environmental objectives of the strategy.

**D5**  
Owners of static or touring caravan or chalet sites will be encouraged to sensitively upgrade the sites, to raise environmental standards and improve facilities for tourists, provided the improvements are compatible with other planning and environmental constraints and do not involve an extension of the site, any new built development or increased traffic generation.



## Agriculture - Policies/ Objectives

### AG1

The designation of the Essex Coast ESA is supported and the County Council and coastal District Councils will fully co-operate with and assist MAFF and ADAS as required. Farmers and landowners will be encouraged to enter into the ESA scheme and similar grant incentives thereby enhancing and conserving the wildlife and landscape importance of land holdings, and protect areas of archaeological importance.

### AG2

Landowners will be encouraged to consider various methods of coastal defence as well as the benefits of soft engineering options in appropriate areas.

### AG3

Landowners will be encouraged to improve public access over coastal agricultural land, provided that this would not conflict with the objectives of AG1, in environmental and ecological terms.

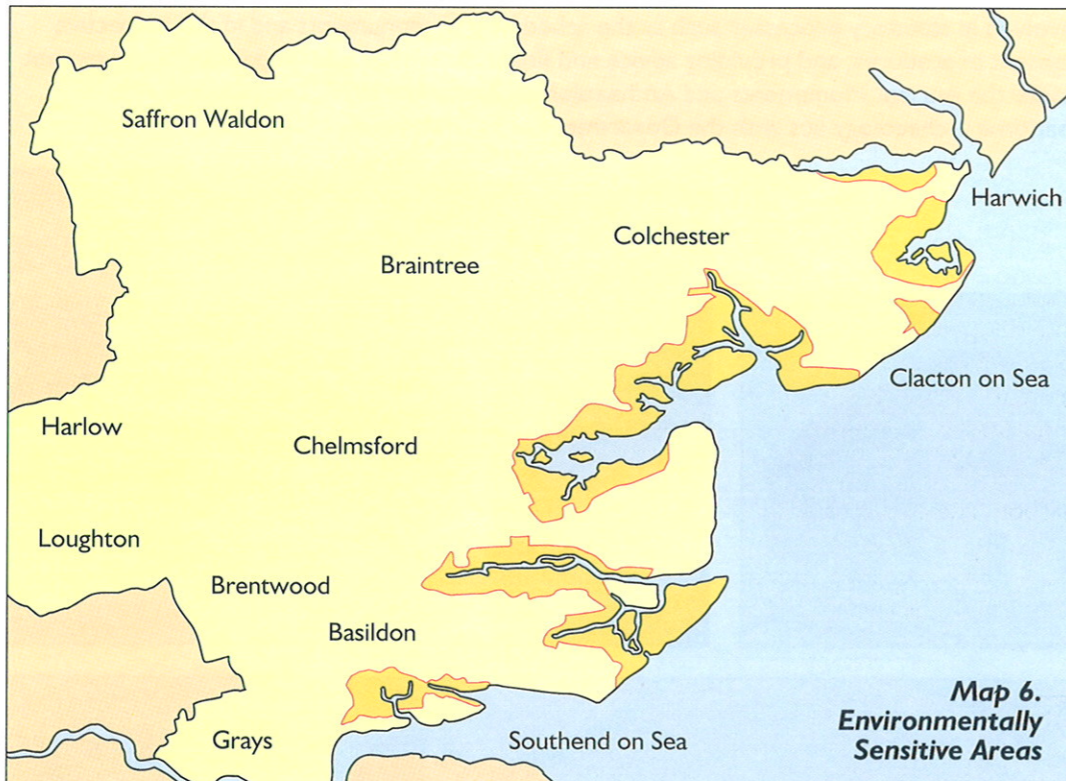
## 3.3.4 Development Issues

### Agriculture

#### The Issues

Essex has an extensive area of agricultural land much of it high quality, and a proportion of which falls within the coastal zone. The saltmarshes have been used mainly for agriculture, predominately for grazing marsh but also for arable land. Many of these areas of grazing marsh have developed a substantial conservation interest. However, grazing marsh has been subject to loss due to agricultural intensification as well as development, with 73% lost between 1935 and 1989 in the Greater Thames Estuary.

A number of agricultural schemes make finance available to farmers to manage their land in an environmentally sensitive manner, through the Countryside Commissions' Countryside Stewardship Scheme, the recent designation of much of the coast as an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) and the Habitats Scheme (long term set aside). However, the Countryside Stewardship Scheme will not target areas covered by the ESA. The ESA is illustrated on Map 6.



### Legislation & Responsibilities

Environmentally Sensitive Areas are designated by MAFF with advice from English Nature and the Countryside Commission, in England. The approach was established by Article 19 of EC Council Regulation 797/85 and the Agricultural Act 1986.



## 4. Implementation

Implementation of the strategy will depend upon the co-operation of a wide number of organisations. Some parts of the strategy will be implemented by local authorities through the statutory planning system, management plans and local bylaws, while other elements will require the co-operation of other organisations. A checklist of those responsible for implementing policies can be found in Appendix 2. In implementing the strategy it is also important that there is cross estuary co-operation through the production of Management Plans, to ensure the effective planning and management of the coast. Co-operation and communication with the authorities of Suffolk and Kent has already taken place through the preparation of Estuary Management Plans for the Stour and Orwell, and River Thames, and this will continue in the future.

### 4.1. The Role of the Planning System

Some activities on the coast are outside the remit of the planning system, but the planning system through development plans and the control of development is an important tool in determining the way in which the coastline is developed and conserved. This strategy will therefore, in part be implemented through the development plan system, by the inclusion of policies relating to relevant issues, and by the development control process. Some policies which can not be implemented through the planning system, may be implemented through Management Plans, or the introduction of bylaws

The Essex Structure Plan is currently the subject of an overall Review, and the Local Plans of District Councils within the coastal areas are at different stages. As the jurisdiction of planning authorities' ends at the low water mark it prevents the inclusion in statutory development plans of policies for the regulation of development in sub tidal areas. However, development plans can consider the offshore impact of developments above the mean low water mark.

Development Plans may take account of coastal hazards. PPG14 advises that coastal authorities may wish to consider the introduction of a presumption against development in areas of coastal landslides or rapid coastal erosion, while DoE Circular 30/92 states that local authorities should take account of flood defence considerations as they arise in preparing development plans and in determining planning applications. Also planning permission is required for new flood defence works. The planning system also has a role to play in minimising the risks associated with sea level rise by developing policies to control development in vulnerable locations. The Review of the Essex Structure Plan will consider these issues. Local Plans will provide the opportunity to define in detail the areas to which specific policies apply and district councils will be able to refuse planning applications in vulnerable areas. It is essential that the risks to public safety and property are reduced through the implementation of effective planning policies.

The planning system may also take account of coastal water pollution. The Structure Plan and Local Plans will therefore include some reference to policies directed towards the control of development which may affect the quality of coastal waters. Thus water quality implications will therefore be considered when determining planning applications.

The current Structure Plan and the Local Plans covering coastal areas, contain policies relating to the conservation of the Essex coast, and protection of the landscape. The review of the County Structure Plan will continue to maintain these policies. The Development Plans also contain policies relating to recreation on the coast; and PPG 17 advises that authorities may use development plans to encourage the use of redundant land or disused sites for recreation facilities that will not affect local or conservation interests.

The County Council is also the Minerals and Waste authority, and so some of the policies in this strategy may be implemented through the Minerals Local Plan and Waste Local Plan. Minerals Plans "should carry forward policies which provide for the supply of minerals and for ensuring the required degree of environmental protection associated with development." (PPG12). They should provide more detail than is possible in the Structure Plan on those areas where provision is made for mineral workings and the disposal of mineral wastes. Waste Local Plans are to set out authorities detailed land use policies for the treatment and disposal of waste within the broad strategic framework of the Structure Plan. Decisions on planning applications for minerals and waste are the responsibility of the County Council.

## Implementation - Policy / Objectives

### IMP1

In reviewing the Structure Plan and Local Plans, policies will seek to consider the following issues:-

Changes in sea level ,  
Coastal erosion and land instability,  
Sea defences and risk of flooding,  
Coastal pollution,  
Conservation and protection of wildlife, landscape and archaeology,  
Tourism, recreation and access,  
Development pressures,  
Agriculture,  
Movement of passengers and freight by water.

### IMP2

Support will be given to the production and integration of Management Plans for the Thames Estuary, Blackwater Estuary, Colne Estuary, and Stour and Orwell Estuaries and to a Shoreline Management Plan; and consideration will be given to the production of a Management Plan for the Crouch Estuary.

### IMP3

The County Council and coastal District Councils will endeavour to work closely with other bodies with an interest in coastal management, to implement the Strategy and achieve better management of the coastal zone.

### IMP4

The formation of a Coastal Forum to provide for co-operation and co-ordination of the numerous interests in coastal zone management will be encouraged.



## 4.2. Non - Statutory Plans

Because a number of the issues addressed in the Strategy lie outside the control of the planning system, it will not be possible to implement the whole plan through the statutory development plan system and the development control process.

Management Plans may, therefore, be produced to address the broader issues that fall outside the remit of the planning system. These should compliment and be consistent with this strategy and statutory development plans. As part of their "Campaign for a Living Coast", English Nature has produced a co-ordinators guide to Estuary Management Plans which provides a suggested framework for their preparation and guidance on their scope, content, format, conflict resolution and decision taking.

In Essex, a number of Management Plans are being prepared; for the Thames Estuary, the Blackwater Estuary and the Stour and Orwell Estuaries. These are non-statutory plans and will provide more detailed policies than those within this Strategy, and will also be able to address non land use issues. There is also the benefit that the preparation of these plans for particular estuaries e.g. Thames, provides the opportunity for the integration and cross-estuary co-operation between authorities, to ensure a strategic approach to coastal zone planning and management is maintained.

Tendring District Council is preparing a Shoreline Management Plan, which deals with coast defence works, for submission to MAFF.

## 4.3. Other Powers and Responsibilities of Local Authorities

Local authorities have a wide range of associated responsibilities and powers including those for traffic management, car parks, footpaths, recreational and visitor attractions, coastal defences and litter. It will, therefore, be possible to implement some parts of the strategy through these functions.

District Councils are the Coast Protection Authorities responsible for coast protection under the Coast Protection Act 1949. This enables them to carry out such coast protection works whether within or outside their area, as may be needed for the protection of any land in their area. They may be viewed as having two functions - promoting their own schemes and regulating protection works by landowners or bodies with statutory powers. They have wide ranging powers to regulate or control activities which might affect the protection of their areas, for example, they may make orders (subject to confirmation by Central government) to prohibit removal of material from the seashore within their area or lying seaward. Additionally, both the County Council and District Councils make significant financial contributions to coastal defence works undertaken by the NRA.

The County Council maintains the Definitive Rights of Way Map under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. In addition as a separate process the County Council as Highway Authority is required to maintain footpaths, bridleways and byways under the Highways Act 1980. The "Ways through Essex" project led by the County Planning Department promotes existing and new routes where appropriate and establishes new bridleways by agreement. Through this project it is possible to promote routes along the coastline.

In relation to coastal water recreation, local authorities are able to make byelaws to control certain activities. Under the Public Health Act 1961, district councils may make byelaws regulating the speed of pleasure boats, preventing their dangerous navigation and requiring the use of silencers, but they can only be used to prevent danger, obstruction or annoyance to bathers and seashore users; and under the Public Health Act 1936, local authorities may make byelaws to regulate areas in which bathing is permitted. However, these powers are widely considered to be inadequate, with problems arising from the cost and difficulty of enforcement, and in defining separate zones. Despite this, the use of these powers has led to the development of zoning policies in some areas of the Country, and it may therefore, be possible to use some of the powers in Essex; Southend are already enforcing byelaws on the use of jet ski's.

Local Authorities are also responsible for setting up and managing Local Nature Reserves, a number of which have already been designated on the coast; and for the management of



## Archaeology

### The Issues

The archaeological heritage of Essex is rich and varied and extends into coastal areas above high water, within the intertidal zones and offshore. A ground level survey of much of the coast has been undertaken by the County Council, and the most important results have been integrated into the Sites and Monuments record. It is important that the results of surveys are also made available to the NRA for inclusion on their GIS system. Parts of the archaeological heritage are often well preserved under the mud due to water logging and the anaerobic conditions. These deposits are normally fragile and vulnerable to damage from both natural and man made causes, such as development, rises in sea level and the construction of sea defences. Because of the loss of fronting mudflats there is concern over the future protection of archaeological remains within these intertidal and offshore zones.

### Legislation & Responsibilities.

Under the Heritage Act 1983, English Heritage has responsibilities, including achieving the long term conservation and widespread understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment for the benefit of present and future generations. (DoE, 1993). English Heritage is involved in statutory processes such as the scheduling of monuments and in the respective consent procedures, and providing advice and financial assistance for repair and management under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The responsibility for maritime archaeology lies with the Department of Environment.



## Archaeology - Policies/ Objectives

A1

The County Council will continue a ground level survey of archaeology on the coast, particularly in the intertidal and offshore zones, to be integrated into the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and grants will be sought from relevant organisations such as English Heritage and the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME). Information on archaeological sites should be made available to the NRA for their sea defence management strategy.

A2

The County Council will continue an aerial survey of archaeology on the coast looking for new sites and monitoring changes to known sites as the result of coastal processes. Results will be integrated into the SMR, and grants will be sought from the RCHME.

A3

The County Council will make information available so that knowledge of the location and significance of archaeological sites can be fed into Coastal Zone Management Plans

A4

Further study of archaeological features along the Essex coast which make a significant contribution towards understanding the evolution of the Essex landscape will be encouraged and supported; and assistance will be sought from relevant organisations such as Harbour Authorities to ensure that important sites are protected.

A5

The County and District Councils will seek to protect important archaeological sites from development where sites of interest cannot be preserved 'in situ'. Developers will be required to demonstrate that adequate provision will be made for archaeological recording, and the onus will be on them to help finance the evaluation of archaeological sites.

A6

Archaeological issues will be taken fully into account in environmental assessments of coastal protection and flood defence works, for example.

A7

The County Council and Coastal District Councils will encourage the use of the ESA and similar schemes for the protection of archaeological sites on agricultural land.

A8

The County Council and Coastal District Councils will seek to provide information to increase awareness of the need to protect archaeological features.

## Marine Conservation - Policies/ Objectives

### M1

English Nature's plan to consider designating Marine Nature Reserves in Essex is supported.

### M2

Further research of the marine environment will be supported and encouraged.

### M3

The designation of SACs along the Essex coastline which cover both land and sea will be encouraged.



## Landscape Protection - Policies and Objectives

### L1

The County Council will continue to give high priority to maintaining and enhancing the landscape of coastal areas through its Landscape Conservation Programme.

### L2

The County Council and Tendring District Council will continue to press the Countryside Commission to undertake a boundary review of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB to include the south side of the Stour Estuary.

### L3

The County Council and coastal District Councils will press for Heritage Coast status on the most important areas of the Essex coast.



## Marine Conservation

### The Issues

Although there are obvious differences between marine and terrestrial environments they are both linked by the coastal zone and can have impacts upon one another. English Nature in "A Campaign for the Living Coast" believes that one of the greatest challenges for conservation in the 1990's and beyond is the conservation of the rich marine heritage. It is therefore important to recognise this in drawing up policies for a coastal strategy.

### Legislation & Responsibilities

The 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act provided the opportunity for Marine Nature Reserves to be designated. Reserves may be designated on intertidal land below High Water Mark and within territorial waters for the purpose of :-

1. Conserving marine flora and fauna or geological or physiographical feature of special interest.
2. Providing special opportunities for marine research.

The sites are proposed by English Nature, who have to undertake detailed consultations prior to recommending the site for designation. Once the sites have been designated, English Nature is responsible for management, mainly with promoting a better understanding of the marine environment, as well as controlling potentially harmful or conflicting activities.



## Landscape Protection

### The Issues

The Essex coast which is over 300 miles in length is important not only in nature conservation terms but also in terms of its landscape character which is open and rural. It is important to protect this resource as it makes a contribution to the overall landscape quality of the County, and in the main cannot be replaced once destroyed. Intertidal habitats can, however, be re-created, through Managed Retreat schemes.

### Legislation & Responsibilities

The Countryside Commission is the main organisation with responsibility for landscape issues. The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 was the first piece of legislation to provide for landscape conservation. Stretches of the coast were included in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Both these designations are proposed by the Countryside Commission and confirmed by the relevant Secretary of State. The Countryside Commission also introduced the concept of Heritage Coasts with the recommendation that certain stretches of the undeveloped coastline that are of high scenic quality should be given a special designation to protect their use for informal recreation.



Country Parks, of which there are five within the coastal area. The County Council also offers a range of countryside and archaeological services which will aid the implementation of the strategy, for example, there is the Landscape Conservation Programme which offers advice to farmers and landowners willing to co-operate in conservation and gives grant aid. The County Council also records and surveys archaeological sites and is responsible for the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

## 4.4. The Role of other Statutory Organisations

In addition to the County Council and coastal District Councils implementation of the Strategy will require the co-operation of other organisations who have responsibility for different aspects of coastal management, such as the NRA, English Nature, MAFF and the Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries Committee. These organisations will include both statutory ones and also voluntary bodies such as the National Trust, RSPB, Royal Yachting Association and the Essex Wildlife Trust. The role of these organisations in implementing the strategy is set out in Appendix 3.

It is felt that to develop interest in coastal issues and to assess the implementation of the Strategy that the setting up of a Coastal Forum should be considered. It is likely that this would involve inviting the main interest groups along to a annual or biannual meeting to discuss coastal policy, implementation, other coastal initiatives and good practice.



# Appendix I - County Council and District Council Planning Policies for the Coast

## (a) County Structure Plan policies relating to the coast.

Approved First Alteration (July 1991)

### Sea Ports

**POLICY T19** SUPPORT WILL BE GIVEN TO THE EXPANSION OF PORT FACILITIES AT HARWICH AND PARKESTON AND TO THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF BATHSIDE BAY, AND IMPROVED ACCESS FACILITIES BY ROAD AND RAIL WILL BE PROVIDED AND ENCOURAGED.

**POLICY T20** DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCKS AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES AT THE PORT OF TILBURY WILL BE SUPPORTED, INCLUDING THE PRINCIPLE OF EXTENDING THE DOCKS AND RELATED FACILITIES IMMEDIATELY TO THE EAST AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS WILL BE PROVIDED AND ENCOURAGED.

**POLICY T22** THE CONTROL OF SMALL SCALE PORT FACILITIES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IN THOSE LOCATIONS WHERE THEY ARE NOT DETRIMENTAL TO LOCAL AMENITIES AND HAVE GOOD ACCESSIBILITY.

### Coastal Protection

**POLICY NR18** THERE SHALL BE THE MOST STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON DEVELOPMENT ON THE RURAL AND UNDEVELOPED COASTLINE OUTSIDE BUILT UP AREAS AND ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS EXCEPTIONALLY PERMITTED SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OPEN AND RURAL CHARACTER OR WILDLIFE.

### Coastal Water Recreation

**POLICY L9** THE DEVELOPMENT OR EXPANSION OF MAJOR WATER RECREATION FACILITIES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED ON THE RURAL COASTLINE BUT WILL BE ENCOURAGED IN THOSE COASTAL TOWNS WHERE THERE WOULD BE NO DETRIMENT TO TOWNSCAPE AND NATURE CONSERVATION AND WHERE TRAFFIC GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT COULD BE SATISFACTORILY HANDLED. NEW MARINAS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AT HARWICH AND SOUTHEND.

The Structure Plan also contains more general policies relating to nature conservation, landscape conservation and enhancement, tourist and recreational development, waste disposal and minerals.

## (b) District Council Local Plan policies relating to the coast.

Basildon District Local Plan - Deposit Copy (August 1993)

### The Marshes Area

**POLICY BAS C7** THE COUNCIL WILL IMPOSE THE MOST STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON THE RURAL AND UNDEVELOPED COASTLINE OUTSIDE BUILT UP AREAS WITHIN BASILDON DISTRICT. ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS EXCEPTIONALLY PERMITTED SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OPEN AND RURAL CHARACTER OF THE AREA OR HAVE AN ADVERSE AFFECT ON WILDLIFE.

VANGE, BOWERS AND PITSEA MARSHES SHOULD BE MAINTAINED IN THEIR PRESENT FORM, WITH THE EMPHASIS ON GRAZING. IN ADDITION:-

(i) ANY DEVELOPMENT SUCH AS TIPPING (OUTSIDE THE AREA OF THE 1985 PLANNING PERMISSION ON THE CLEANAWAY SITE), WHICH WOULD ALTER OR BE HARMFUL TO THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE MARSHES WILL BE STRONGLY RESISTED.

(ii) RECREATIONAL PROPOSALS NORMALLY ALLOWABLE IN THE GREEN BELT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE IF THEY HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE LANDSCAPE OR ENVIRONMENT OF THE MARSHES.

(iii) PARTICULAR CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN TO PRESERVE THOSE AREAS ESPECIALLY VALUABLE TO WILDLIFE;

(iv) PUBLIC ACCESS WILL BE MAINTAINED THROUGH A SYSTEM OF PUBLIC FOOTPATHS.

Additionally the Local Plan contains policies relating to nature conservation (C1 & C2), protected habitats and species, (C3) trees and woodland (C4 & C5) landscape value (C6), recreation and tourism (R16, R20,).

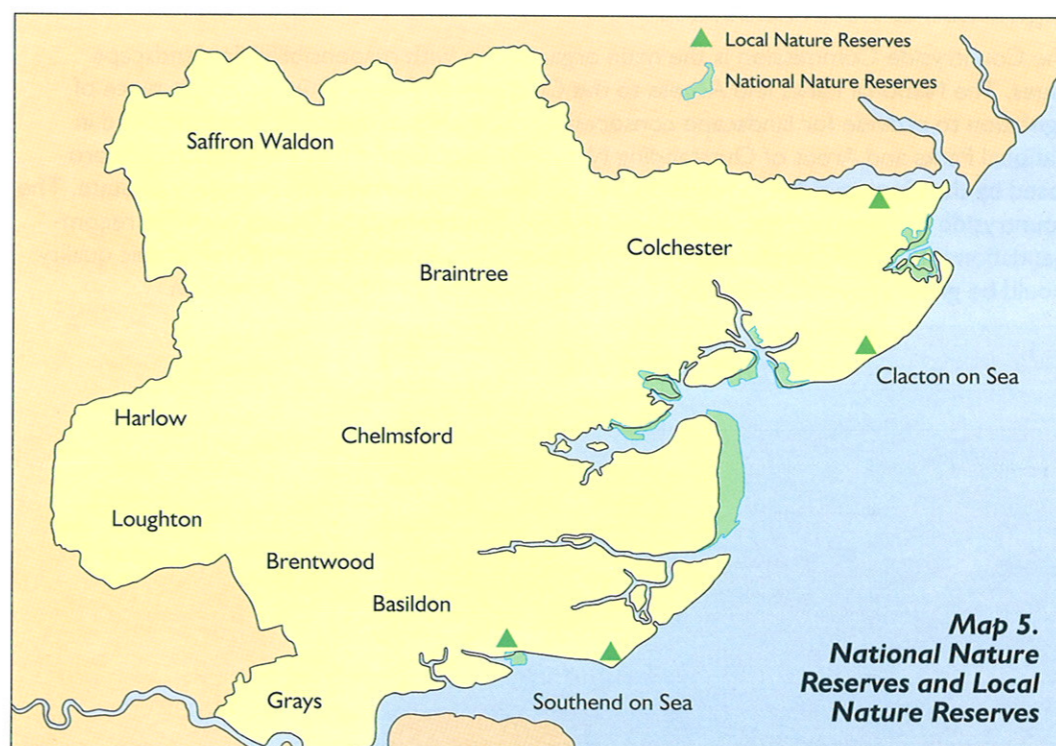
Under the General Development Order 1988 planning authorities must consult English Nature before granting planning permission for the development of land in an SSSI; it also requires a local planning authority to consult about planning applications in any consultation area around an SSSI. The planning system is an important source of protection for many of the designations through the inclusion of policies in development plans, while the DoE provides guidance on the importance of conservation sites.

The Water Resources Act 1991, imposes a general duty on the NRA to promote "the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and amenity of inland and coastal waters, and of land associated with such waters", and section 16 of the Act imposes a specific duty "to exercise any power so as to further the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty in respect of proposals relating to the NRA's functions".

Protective land ownership is a way of achieving conservation objectives along the coastline. A number of organisations have active policies for the acquisition, leasing or management of land of nature conservation value, including the National Trust, RSPB, Essex Wildlife Trust, the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and Wildfowling clubs.



Map 4. Sites of Special Scientific Interest



Map 5. National Nature Reserves and Local Nature Reserves





## Nature Conservation - Policies/ Objectives.

### NC1

There will be a presumption against all development which may destroy or adversely affect any statutory sites, designated or proposed for designation, for their nature conservation value, or any non-statutory sites of local importance. In considering proposals for development appropriate weight will be given to the relative significance of these designations in terms of nature conservation interest.

### NC2

The designation of sites as SACs along the Essex coast will be encouraged and supported.

### NC3

The acquisition and management of land in coastal areas for nature conservation purposes, by voluntary organisations such as the Essex Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Wildfowling groups and the National Trust will normally be supported.

### NC4

The County Council and coastal District Councils will seek to manage their own coastal landholdings to benefit wildlife conservation.

### NC5

Nature conservation issues will be taken fully into account in environmental assessments of coastal protection and flood defence works.



## 3.3.3 Conservation of the Essex Coast

### Nature Conservation

#### Issues

The Essex coast is extremely important in terms of its nature conservation value. Extensive areas are covered by statutory designations - Ramsar sites, which is a world wide designation of wetlands, and Special Protection Areas, which is a European designation which protects the habitats of migratory birds and certain threatened birds are illustrated on Map 3; Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), (Map 4) National Nature Reserves and Local Nature Reserves (Map 5), which are all designated under British legislation, the former two are national designations while the latter is a borough or district designation. Areas may be designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the Habitats Directive as well. Definitions of all these designations can be found in Appendix 4. Additionally there are non-statutory nature reserves managed by voluntary groups such as the Essex Wildlife Trust, RSPB and National Trust. In considering proposals for development, local planning authorities will, as required under PPG9 "Nature Conservation", have regard to the relative significance of international, national and local designations when considering the weight to be attached to nature conservation interests.

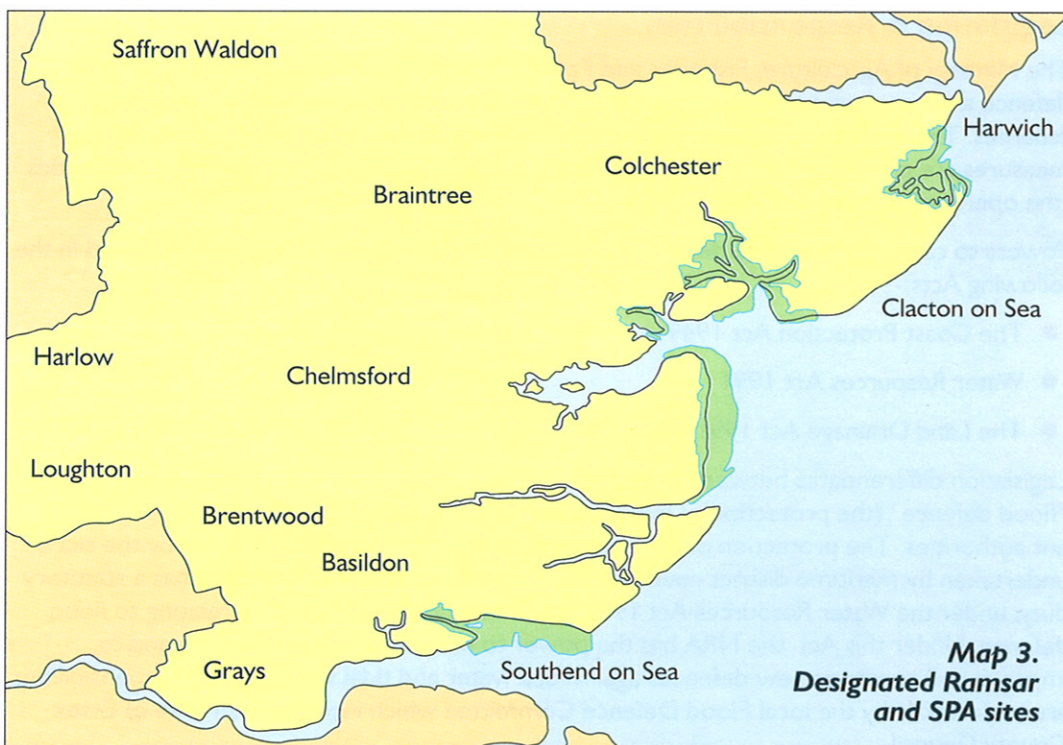
There is also the issue of whether stretches of the Essex coastline should be designated as Heritage Coast since the objectives have been widened, recognising the need to preserve and enhance important habitats for flora and fauna, and to protect architectural, historical and archaeological features.

#### Legislation & Responsibilities

The main legislation dealing with nature conservation is the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended 1985), while the organisation with primary responsibility for nature conservation issues is English Nature.

Under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, English Nature has the power to establish National Nature Reserves, which are managed by the introduction of byelaws to restrict the use of land by the public. Statutory backing to the reserves was provided by the 1981 Act. Under the 1949 Act local authorities may establish Local Nature Reserves.

The 1981 Act provides for the designation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, to be identified by English Nature. Under this Act and its 1985 amendments, English Nature is required to notify the Secretary of State, the Local Planning Authority, the landowner and occupier of the site, that a site is of special interest.



Map 3.  
Designated Ramsar  
and SPA sites

### Castle Point Local Plan - Pre Deposit Draft, May 1994. Coast Protection

**POLICY EC20** THERE SHALL BE THE MOST STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON DEVELOPMENT ON THE RURAL AND UNDEVELOPED COASTLINE OUTSIDE BUILT UP AREAS AND ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS EXCEPTIONALLY PERMITTED SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OPEN OR RURAL CHARACTER OR WILDLIFE OF THE AREA.

**POLICY RE10** THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WITHIN THE ESTUARY AND CREEK AREAS PROVIDED THAT:

- (i) SUCH USES WOULD NOT SIGNIFICANTLY/ADVERSELY AFFECT WILDLIFE OR THEIR HABITATS;
- (ii) USE OF WATER BY ONE GROUP DOES NOT UNDUPLY PREJUDICE ITS USE BY ANOTHER;
- (iii) THAT ADEQUATE CAR PARKING PROVISION IS MADE TO CATER FOR THE NEEDS OF USERS;
- (iv) THE PROPOSAL COMPLIES WITH ANY OTHER POLICY CONTAINED WITHIN THE LOCAL PLAN.

The plan also contains policies relating to environmental assessment (EC1), nature conservation (EC11 to EC13), landscape (EC14 to EC17), trees and woodlands (EC21 and EC22), recreation (RE8 and RE9, RE12), tourism and leisure (RE13 and RE14) and entertainments (EC38).

### Colchester Borough Local Plan - Review of Adopted Colchester Borough Local Plan - Deposit June 1992

The Colchester Local Plan does not contain a specific policy on the coast, instead the coast and Mersea Island are included as a Countryside Conservation Area. The Plan gives these special protection from adverse development (B/ENV52, & 53).

#### Water Recreation

**B/R15** The plan gives priority to the protection of the Borough's undeveloped coastline and the development or expansion of major water recreation facilities will not normally be permitted along the coast.

**B/R16** At West Mersea, Wivenhoe and Rowhedge, favourable consideration will be given to the limited expansion of, and/or improvements to, water recreation facilities where these can be shown to be:

- (a) beneficial to improved public access to the water
- (b) compatible with the overall aim of preserving traditional character
- (c) unlikely to result in an unacceptable increase in traffic generation and congestion in the area.

In all other areas there will be a presumption against the expansion of such facilities.

#### Countryside Recreation

**B/R20** The provision of increased informal recreational facilities in the countryside and along the coast will be supported by the Borough Council subject to:-

- (a) no adverse effect on agriculture
- (b) no adverse impact on the landscape, on sites of nature conservation and archaeological importance
- (c) convenient relationship to centres of population and adequate road access.
- (d) the provision of adequate and well located parking.

In addition to these policies the Plan contains policies relating to noisy and spectator sports including water ski-ing and power boats (B/R25), nature conservation (B/ENV37 & 38), Rural Areas (B/H20), West Mersea waterside where the council will aim to protect and enhance its character, waste disposal, B/ENV26), waste disposal (B/ENV57).

The Coastline

POLICY M/NE/10 THERE SHALL BE THE MOST STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON DEVELOPMENT ON THE RURAL AND UNDEVELOPED COASTLINE OUTSIDE BUILT UP AREAS AND ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS EXCEPTIONALLY PERMITTED SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OPEN AND RURAL CHARACTER OR WILDLIFE.

Waterside Uses

POLICY M/REC/7 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW WATER RECREATION FACILITIES WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED AROUND THE COASTLINE. THE EXPANSION OF FACILITIES FOR WATER RECREATION SUCH AS MOORINGS, BERTHS, DINGHY PARKS ETC IN EXISTING CENTRES WILL BE LIMITED ACCORDING TO THE CAPACITY OF ADJACENT WATER SPACE AND OTHER RESTRAINTS INCLUDING THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND LANDSCAPE QUALITY OF THE AREA.

WITHIN THE AREA DESIGNATED IN MALDON AND HEYBRIDGE AS 10 (W/U) THERE WILL BE A GENERAL PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF WATERSIDE USE ONLY.

In addition the plan has a strong policy on nature conservation covering all designations and those sites proposed as one of the designations, as well as protection to the landscape and special landscape areas, and seeks to improve the landscape(M/NE/11, M/NE/12, M/NE/13); and it also contains a policy on caravan sites, and tourism (M/REC/10).

The Coast

POLICY RC7 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL GIVE PRIORITY TO THE PROTECTION OF THE RURAL AND UNDEVELOPED AREAS OF COASTLINE AND INLETS AND ALL FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT OR EXPANSION WILL BE STRONGLY RESISTED.

Water Recreation

POLICY LT12 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR PONTON AND MOORING FACILITIES ON THE RIVER CROUCH AND THE RIVER ROACH AND ITS ASSOCIATED TRIBUTARIES WILL NORMALLY BE REFUSED.

WHERE INCREASES IN PROVISION CAN BE JUSTIFIED THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY CONSIDERS THAT THE ESSEX YACHT MARINA AT WALLASEA ISLAND IS THE MOST APPROPRIATE LOCATION.

POLICY LT14 APPLICATIONS FOR PRIVATE SLIPWAYS AT EXISTING RIVERSIDE CARAVAN SITES, YACHT CLUBS AND BOATYARDS ON THE RIVER CROUCH AND ROACH AND ASSOCIATED WATERS WILL BE CONSIDERED ON THEIR INDIVIDUAL MERITS, HAVING REGARD TO THE VIEWS OF THE COLCHESTER DIVISION OF THE NRA AND THE CROUCH HARBOUR AUTHORITY.

APPLICATIONS FOR SLIPWAYS OUTSIDE DEFINED RIVERSIDE CARAVAN SITES, YACHT CLUBS AND BOATYARDS WILL BE REFUSED UNLESS REQUIRED IN CONJUNCTION WITH DEVELOPMENT PERMITTED UNDER POLICY LT11.

The Plan also contains a general policy on water recreation (Policy LT11), tourism (Policy LT15), nature conservation (Policy RC2), nature conservation zones (Policy RC3), special landscapes (Policy RC5 and RC6), and land drainage (Policy PU2), this requires the LPA when considering applications for development to have regard to the model policies of the NRA.

A number of factors can have a negative impact upon coastal processes and erosion including sea level rise, the weather and certain pollutants. Sea level rise is very much a current issue, particularly relevant to Essex where the coast is predominately low lying, which puts it at greater risk from flooding. The 1953 floods illustrate this, and it was after these devastating floods that most of Essex's sea walls were constructed. The Waverley Committee which was set up after the floods recommended in its 1954 report that local planning authorities should allow no development below the 5 metre contour. A recent study by Sir William Halcrow and Partners (Halcrow) of the east coast of England found around 200km where the low water mark was advancing inland by a metre or more each year, and this included significant stretches of the Essex coast. The demise of shellfish, with the use of TBT may also cause a significant change in the processes at work on the Essex coast, while boat wash can cause changes in the wave and tidal conditions in an estuary and creek, and result in some erosion. Eroded material often becomes deposited into deeper channels used for navigation which may be removed by dredging and dumped at sea or on land. This removes sediment for the estuarine environment. The effects of erosion can be countered to a certain extent by keeping the sediment within the system.

Local planning authorities are now expected to take into account any risk of flooding inland or from the sea in making planning decisions, and the Government recommend that coastal defence authorities should plan ahead on the basis of designing structures for a sea level rise of 6mm per year. A related issue is sea defence where soft engineering options are to be favoured when planning defence works. These solutions which could include managed retreat where appropriate can enable the more natural processes to take over all or part of the present role of man made structures. It is estimated that over the next 50 years £380 million will be needed to maintain the rural coastline of Essex in its present position.

Sea walls made from refuse is a current issue of concern and a report undertaken for the NRA concludes that further refuse sea walls should only be undertaken when leachate problems and revetment protection have been assessed over a minimum 20 year period i.e. it is an option only if all the problems can be resolved. The District Councils and County Council support this view particularly as sea level rise and erosion could result in problems, including leachate, and the possibility of refuse from sea walls being swept out to sea. Recent monitoring of refuse fill sites at, for example, Two Tree Island, Deal Hall, Fambridge and Hadleigh Marshes, has shown high levels of polluting leachates to the seaward side of the sites, including PCB's and heavy metals. The cost of maintaining the fronting revetments to refuse sea walls will, as a consequence, be extremely high. In the light of this information and the need to maintain a more flexible approach to the tidal defence line, the NRA is now firmly opposed to the technique of utilising refuse fill for sea wall construction, owing to economic considerations and the responsibilities for the sites in the long term, and it will not be extended to any new sites.

Legislation & Responsibilities.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food has overall policy responsibility for flood defence and coast protection in England and administers grant-aid for capital defence schemes. The planning, design, construction, maintenance and operation of defence measures are carried out by the NRA, Internal Drainage Boards (IDB's) and local authorities (the operating authorities).

Powers to carry out works to defend the coastline of England and Wales are contained in the following Acts:-

- The Coast Protection Act 1949
- Water Resources Act 1991
- The Land Drainage Act 1991

Legislation differentiates between "coast protection" (prevention of coastal erosion) and "flood defence" (the protection of low lying land from flooding) and allocates them to different authorities. The protection of the coast against erosion and encroachment by the sea is undertaken by maritime district councils, while the National Rivers Authority has a statutory duty, under the Water Resources Act 1991, to be responsible for matters relating to flood defence. Under this Act the NRA has the power to maintain existing defences and to improve and construct new defences against sea water and tidal water. These responsibilities are undertaken by the local Flood Defence Committee which includes members of Essex County Council.

PP4 The County Council and coastal District Councils will support the NRA's production of a strategy for Essex sea defences.

PP5 The tipping of waste to strengthen sea walls will not be supported by the NRA due to economic considerations and until the necessary safeguards from pollution risks and after care responsibilities are established. The County Council and coastal District Councils support the NRA policy, but in determining individual planning applications, will need to be satisfied that the necessary safeguards include all environmental risks.

PP6 The County Council and Coastal District Councils support the preparation of a Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) (in accordance with MAFF guidelines) by the NRA and Maritime District Councils for the Essex coast, which will be a revision of the existing SMP which covers all the East Anglian Coast.



## General Strategy - Policies/ Objectives

### G1

The sustainable use of the coastal zone will be encouraged, and the County Council and coastal District Councils will seek to work towards a reconciliation of conflicts of use along the coastline.

### G2

There shall be the most stringent restrictions on development on the rural and undeveloped coastline outside built up areas.

Development which is exceptionally permitted shall not adversely affect the open and rural character of the coast or its habitats and the wildlife they support.

### G3

The County Council and coastal District Councils will work with other organisations/ agencies to achieve better management of the coast. There is a particular need for cross border liaison to ensure a strategic approach to coastal zone planning and management.

### G4

Estuary Management Plans, Shoreline Management Plans and wider coastal strategies will be supported.

## Physical Processes - Policies/ Objectives

### PP1

Development will not normally be permitted in areas at risk from tidal flooding or coastal erosion where existing defences, properly maintained would not provide an acceptable standards of safety over the lifetime of the development or where new coastal defences would be required. On matters of this type, the local planning authority should consult the NRA for advice.

### PP2

Coastal defences should be maintained where they protect human life and properties, commercial and industrial assets, port facilities, and agricultural land, where it can be shown to be economically viable, as well as irreplaceable coastal habitats.

### PP3

Soft Engineering methods of coastal defence will be supported where practicable and appropriate, and appropriate areas for soft engineering should be identified in conjunction with the NRA and MAFF in coastal management plans. Managed Retreat pilot schemes such as those undertaken by MAFF and English Nature will be supported.

## 3.3 Policies for the Essex Coast

### 3.3.1 General Strategy

Due to the importance of the coast for nature conservation, its open and rural landscape, archaeological and historical features and marine life, there is a need to resist and restrain development on the undeveloped coastline, and to guide it to the existing built up areas. The Essex coast must be considered not only as a local resource, but also in an international and national context, for many of the wildlife designations originate at these two levels.

Effective management is also needed in order to balance competing interests and to protect the coast from growing pressures and conflicts. This requires effective liaison between not only organisations with a mutual interest, but also co-ordination and co-operation between organisations with different, and often conflicting interests. The County Council and coastal District Councils will work closely with Government Agencies such as English Nature, and other organisations, such as the NRA, to achieve better management of the coast. It is also important to ensure that effective cross-estuary liaison takes place between authorities to ensure a strategic approach to coastal zone planning and management. The Strategy will aim to promote this by the following:

Photo by Colloryan ©



### 3.3.2 Physical Processes

#### Issues.

In order to plan and manage the Essex coastline it is necessary to understand the coastal processes at work, which are important for both environmental and economic reasons. Humans have altered the coastal processes at work through, for example, the building of defences, reclamation of land, dredging, agricultural processes and pollution. This means that the natural processes are not working without hindrance.

Estuaries form a significant part of the coastal zone in Essex. The dominant control on the estuarine processes is tidal range which is an important determinant of sediment movement and deposition and the consequent development of mudflats and saltmarshes. The mudflats and marshes are an essential part of the natural coastal defence system as they protect low lying estuarine lands from erosion and flooding.

Coastal processes effect the stability and form of saltmarshes. In an accreting environment the net tidal and wave energy is sufficiently low to allow fine sediment to be deposited and stabilise. In an eroding system saltmarsh will not be able to establish itself as forces prevent the stabilising factors of an accreting environment. In Essex 2% of the total salting area is being lost per year. The saltmarsh becomes pinned between the erosion from the sea and a fixed line of defence which is known as coastal squeeze. This results in the saltmarsh becoming increasingly stressed and eventually disappearing. This exposes defences to forces greater than those for which it was designed leading to increased maintenance requirements or failure of the wall. Coastal squeeze can also exacerbate conflicts between different activities and between people and nature conservation due to competition for areas of intertidal land. Erosion is a dominant process on over 90% of the Essex coast. In addition to erosion of the saltmarshes, it is also apparent at Walton-on-the-Naze where the cliffs are eroding at a significant rate.

*Southend-on-Sea Borough Local Plan - Towards 2001. Adopted 1st March 1994.*

#### Coastal Protection

**POLICY G7** THERE SHALL BE THE MOST STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON DEVELOPMENT IN THOSE COASTAL AREAS OF BELTON HILLS, LEIGH MARSHES AND TWO TREE ISLAND DELINEATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP. PROPOSALS FOR RECREATION DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THESE AREAS ONLY IF THEY ARE OPEN AND INFORMAL IN NATURE AND DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT ITS RURAL CHARACTER AND WILDLIFE OR IMPORTANT LOCAL VIEWS.

#### Foreshore Views

**POLICY C16** THE OPEN CHARACTER OF THE SEAFRONT AND ADJOINING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OPEN SPACES INCLUDING THE CLIFFS, WILL BE PROTECTED AND WHERE POSSIBLE ENHANCED. DEVELOPMENT SOUTH OF THE SEAFRONT ROAD (OUTSIDE THE CENTRAL SEAFRONT AREA) AND SOUTH OF THE TOWPATH BETWEEN CHALKWELL AND LEIGH OLD TOWN WILL BE STRICTLY LIMITED TO:

(i) THE REPLACEMENT OF OLDER SEAFRONT KIOSKS WITH MODERN ARCHITECTURALLY DESIGNED KIOSKS IN CHARACTER WITH THE SURROUNDINGS. WHERE APPROPRIATE THE COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT THE REPLACEMENT OF TWO EXISTING KIOSKS WITH ONE NEW ONE.

(ii) THE IMPROVEMENT OR REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING BEACH HUTS (SUBJECT TO DESIGN CRITERIA IN APPENDIX 3), BUILDINGS AND OTHER STRUCTURES WHICH CATER FOR RECREATIONAL NEEDS, WITHOUT INCREASING THEIR EXISTING FLOOR AREA OR REDUCING THE AREA OF BEACH AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC;

(iii) THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL WATER RECREATION FACILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY L4.

#### Water Recreation

**POLICY L4** THE PROVISION OF NEW AND IMPROVED FACILITIES FOR WATER RECREATION, INCLUDING SLIPWAYS, WILL BE ENCOURAGED IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS WHERE THEY DO NOT REDUCE SIGNIFICANTLY THE AMOUNT OF BEACH AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC USE OR PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY TO THE FORESHORE, WHERE ADEQUATE MEANS OF ACCESS CAN BE PROVIDED AND, OUTSIDE THE CENTRAL SEAFRONT AREA, WHERE THEY DO NOT RESTRICT VIEWS OF THE FORESHORE FROM THE PROMENADE, BEACH OR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES.

The Plan also contains policies on landscape protection and improvement (G3), special landscape areas (G5), nature conservation (G6), facilities for tourism (L1), central seafront area (L2), Southend Pier (L3), hotels and guest houses (L6 & L7), self catering accommodation (L8), camping and caravan accommodation (L9), and seafront visitor parking (L10), and there is a proposal for an LNR on the Southend Foreshore (PIA).

#### Tendring District Local Plan - Deposit Draft

The Plan includes a number of policies with relevance to the coastal areas which include policies on criteria for considering tourism and leisure proposals (TLT2), caravan and chalet sites (TLT4 & TLT5), touring caravan sites (TLT8), loss of hotels, guesthouses and holiday flat accommodation (TLT9), other tourism related development (TLT11), tourist information sites and amusement centres (TLT13 & TLT14). The Plan also contains policies relating to footpaths (TR5), bridleways (TR6) safeguarding these facilities (TT10), and country parks (TR9); transport of freight by water (TT11); countryside protection (TCR1), landscape conservation (TCR8), special landscape areas (TCR10), landscape improvement areas (TCR12), NNRs and SSSIs (TCR15) and nature conservation of wildlife habitats (TCR16). Additionally there are policies on environmental assessment (TD17) and the design of seafront / riverside buildings.

There are also policies relating to the coastal towns of Clacton, Harwich, Brightlingsea.

#### Water Recreation

**POLICY TRI0** THE DEVELOPMENT OR EXPANSION OF MAJOR WATER RECREATION FACILITIES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED ON THE RURAL AND UNDEVELOPED COASTLINE ESPECIALLY IN AREAS OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE IMPORTANCE. HOWEVER, SUCH DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE CONSIDERED FAVOURABLY IN THE COASTAL TOWNS AND RESORTS WHERE THERE WOULD BE NO DETRIMENT TO TOWNSCAPE AND NATURE CONSERVATION AND WHERE TRAFFIC GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT COULD BE SATISFACTORILY ACCOMMODATED. PROPOSED WATER RECREATION DEVELOPMENT SITES ARE SHOWN ON APPROPRIATE PROPOSALS MAP INSETS.

**POLICY TRI1** NO FURTHER EXTENSION OF AREAS CURRENTLY USED FOR BOAT MOORINGS OR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW MARINA/ BOAT MOORING FACILITIES OR OTHER WATER RECREATION FACILITIES WILL BE ALLOWED IN HAMFORD WATER.

#### Safeguarding of the Stour Estuary

**POLICY TCR10A** THE UNIQUE CHARACTER AND ECOLOGY OF THE STOUR ESTUARY AND THE LANDSCAPE SETTING WILL BE SAFEGUARDED AND CONSERVED THROUGH THE STRICT CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT AND BY ENCOURAGING THE CO-ORDINATION OF AGENCIES INVOLVED, IN IT MANAGEMENT AND USE.

#### Undeveloped Coast

**POLICY TCR17** THERE SHALL BE THE MOST STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON DEVELOPMENT ON THE RURAL AND UNDEVELOPED COASTLINE OUTSIDE BUILT UP AREAS AND ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS EXCEPTIONALLY PERMITTED SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OPEN RURAL CHARACTER OR WILDLIFE.

#### Sea Defences

**POLICY TCF24** PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE INTEGRITY OF TIDAL OR FLUVIAL DEFENCES.

**POLICY TCF25** IN ORDER TO MINIMISE THE EFFECTS OF TIDAL FLOODING, THERE WILL BE PRESUMPTION AGAINST DEVELOPMENT ON LAND TO THE SEAWARD SIDE OF SEA DEFENCES, INCLUDING THE SITING OF TEMPORARY HOLIDAY CHALETS AND CARAVANS. ON LAND BETWEEN A FIRST LINE SEA DEFENCE AND THE MAIN DEFENCE, THE SITING OF HOLIDAY CHALETS, CARAVANS AND CAMPING SITES MAY BE PERMITTED FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH THE NATIONAL RIVERS AUTHORITY. TIME LIMITED OCCUPANCY CONDITIONS WILL BE IMPOSED AND ENFORCED PREVENTING OCCUPATION DURING THE PERIOD FROM NOVEMBER TO MARCH WHEN THE RISK OF TIDAL INUNDATION IS GREATEST.

**POLICY TCF26** ON THE LANDWARD SIDE OF SEA DEFENCES AND BEHIND EMBANKED WATERCOURSES, THERE WILL BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS LIABLE TO FLOOD UNLESS THE STANDARD OF DEFENCE IS APPROPRIATE TO THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED.

**POLICY TCF27** WHERE DEVELOPMENT IS PERMITTED IN AREAS HAVING SUB STANDARD SEA DEFENCE PROTECTION, APPROPRIATE INCREASED PROTECTION MUST BE PROVIDED IN ADVANCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT AS DEFINED BY THE DISTRICT PLANNING AUTHORITY IN CONSULTATION WITH THE NATIONAL RIVERS AUTHORITY AND FUNDED BY THE DEVELOPER.

**POLICY TCF29** WORKS NECESSARY TO PROTECT THAT PART OF THE DISTRICT FROM FLOODING BY THE SEA WILL BE SUPPORTED, IN PRINCIPLE, PROVIDING THAT:-

- i) THERE IS NO ADVERSE VISUAL IMPACT UPON THE LANDSCAPE
- ii) THE CHOICE OF MATERIALS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF SEA DEFENCES IS AESTHETICALLY APPROPRIATE.
- iii) THERE ARE NO UNACCEPTABLE ECOLOGICAL EFFECTS ARISING FROM SUCH PROPOSALS.

### Coast Protection

**POLICY TCF30** COAST PROTECTION WORKS NECESSARY TO PRESERVE THOSE PARTS OF THE COASTLINE UNDER THE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S JURISDICTION, WILL BE FAVOURABLY CONSIDERED BY THE DISTRICT PLANNING AUTHORITY.

**POLICY TCF31** THE DISTRICT COUNCIL, THROUGH LIAISON WITH THE COUNTY COUNCIL, DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENGLISH NATURE WILL SEEK TO PROTECT THE NAZE CLIFFS AND ITS COASTLINE WITHIN THE SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST BY APPROPRIATE CONSERVATION MEASURES. WORKS NECESSARY TO ATTAIN A LONG TERM OBJECTIVE OF HALTING EROSION WHILST ALLOWING THE PRESERVATION OF AN EXPOSED VEGETATION FREE AREA FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH WILL BE SUPPORTED BY THE DISTRICT PLANNING AUTHORITY.

The Plan also contains more general policies on flood protection, which are applicable to coastal areas, (Policies TCF21, TCF22 and TCF23).

## Thurrock Local Plan - Deposit Draft

### Coast Protection

**RIV8** THERE SHALL BE THE MOST STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON DEVELOPMENT ON THE RURAL AND UNDEVELOPED COASTLINE OUTSIDE BUILT UP AREAS AND ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS EXCEPTIONALLY PERMITTED SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OPEN AND RURAL CHARACTER OR WILDLIFE IN THE AREAS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.

### Marshland, Mudflats and Saltings

**RIV9** DEVELOPMENT HARMFUL TO THE NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST AND AMENITY OF THE MARSHLAND AREAS, MUDFLATS AND SALTINGS ALONG THE THAMES WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED. THESE AREAS ARE LISTED BELOW AND IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.

- (a) AVELEY MARSHES
- (b) STONENESS SALTINGS
- (c) STANFORD MARSHES
- (d) FOBBING MARSHES

### Development affecting Floodplains and Floodwater Storage Areas

**RIV10** DEVELOPMENT (INCLUDING THE RAISING OF LAND) WHICH WOULD BE LIKELY TO ADVERSELY AFFECT THE FLOODWATER CAPACITY OF NATURAL FLOODPLAINS, DEFINED WASHLANDS OR TIDAL STORAGE BASINS, OR WOULD INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE OR PROPERTIES AT RISK FROM FLOODING (INCLUDING FLOODING CAUSED ELSEWHERE BY THE DEVELOPMENT), OR WHERE DEVELOPMENT ITSELF WOULD BE AT AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK FROM FLOODING WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

### Development affecting the Thames Tidal Defences

**RIV11** DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE THAMES TIDAL DEFENCES. WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. THE COUNCIL IN CONSULTATION WITH THE NATIONAL RIVERS AUTHORITY WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT ALL WORKS IN, UNDER, OVER AND ADJACENT TO THE THAMES TIDAL DEFENCES AND ADJOINING WATER COURSES ARE APPROPRIATELY DESIGNED AND IMPLEMENTED.

The Plan also contains policies relating to waste disposal on the riverside (RIV3), riverside rights of way (RIV4), the retention of open space on the riverside (RIV6), and the recreational after-use of riverside mineral sites (RIV7). There are also a number of policies on waterways and port facilities (T19, T20, and T21 which is on Tilbury Docks). There are also policies on landscape protection and improvement (LN1 - LN5), nature conservation (LN12 to LN19) and leisure and recreation (LR11, LR17, and LR19).

therefore, it is an extremely important resource that needs to be looked at as a whole and in strategic terms.

The coast is subject to a number of human influences, which in some instances have been detrimental to its character. These influences and activities need to be balanced with the need to conserve the coastline. Essex has an extensive area of agricultural land, a proportion of which falls within the coastal zone. Saltmarsh loss, has mostly been due to a change to agricultural use where it has predominately been converted to grazing land, and with agricultural intensification, significant areas of grazing marsh have been lost. Financial incentives are now available to farmers to manage their land in an environmentally sensitive manner, and include the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, the designation of the Essex Coast ESA and the creation of intertidal habitats through the Habitats (long term set aside) Scheme.

Development pressures have to a limited degree threatened the character of the coastline, and the nature conservation sites. The East Thames Corridor Initiative could have some impact upon wildlife sites although the corridor only extends to a part of Thurrock as far down stream as Tilbury. The development of caravan sites, and port expansion could have an adverse impact upon some coastal areas.

Although this Strategy predominately concentrates on the undeveloped coastline, the problems of the coastal resorts are briefly considered. The resorts have suffered a decline mostly as a result of continental competition and changing trends in domestic holiday requirements. They require some consideration in drawing up policies for the coast, to ensure that future economic growth is directed to revitalising the existing resort towns.

The Essex coast and its estuaries attract a wide range of recreational activities, from water sports and wildfowling to walking and bird watching. There is concern over the impact of recreational activities particularly water sports on the ecology of the coast. Due to the wide range of activities some of which are conflicting, and the importance of the coast for nature conservation, the management of recreational activities is a major issue.

Waste disposal is another important issue in Essex with the Thames Estuary forming one of the natural highways for transporting waste from London. However this could lead to pressures for the disposal of waste along its banks. Existing waste disposal allows for the dumping at sea at the Roughts Tower site of approximately 4 million tonnes per annum of heavily polluted sewerage and industrial effluent sludge. As the dump site is only 12 miles off shore from Clacton and Walton it is likely to have impacts within the coastal zone, although cessation of this practice is required by the Government by the end of 1998.

Marine dredging of sand and gravel could have an impact on coastal defences and marine habitat, and proposals for energy generation, barrage construction and wind farms needing a coastal location would need serious consideration.

Pollution from effluent discharges from sewage works and industry can put coastal habitats and marine wildlife at risk, although HMIP applies pollution controls to discharges into the sea, and the Government has agreed a phased reduction of dangerous substances (i.e. PCB's, mercury, and cadmium) by 1999. In addition the UK Government as part of "This Common Inheritance" has set a date of the end of 1998 for the cessation of sewage sludge dumping at sea.

Coastal fisheries are important both commercially and biologically, but modern methods of commercial harvesting has led to a depletion of stocks although new controls are now in force to control this practice.

All of these are issues on which there has been extensive consultation as a basis for preparing a Coastal Strategy which incorporates a variety of objectives and policies.

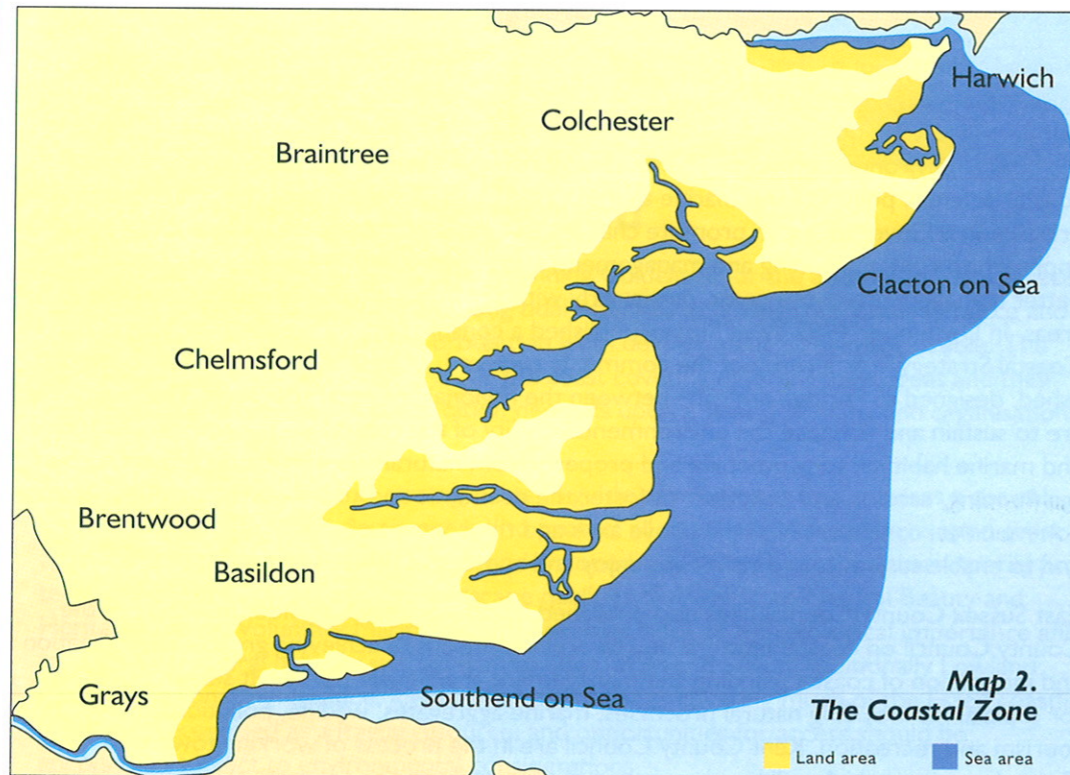


# 3. The Strategy

## 3.1 Definition of the Coastal Zone

The boundary of the coastal zone is shown on Map 2, and includes areas of land and sea. The landward boundary is the same as that identified in the Coast Protection Subject Plan (1984) and aims to protect the rural undeveloped coastline from development. It excludes the urban coast, larger towns and other areas of land committed for development; but it includes small villages where it is not envisaged that much change will occur. Developed land, which remains predominately open in spite of established or permitted uses, such as mineral extraction or landfill operations, has also been included. A detailed definition of the landward boundary will be included in Local Plans and Management Plans.

As the strategy is concerned with both land use planning issues, and with setting a framework for management plans, and, therefore, includes policies which refer to some extent to issues out to sea and within the intertidal areas, it is important for the coastal zone to indicate an area of interest beyond the shoreline. The map, therefore, shows a shaded area which recognises this and although the County Council and Coastal District Councils do not have statutory responsibility for this area, they do have interests and views on the activities that take place there. Additionally activities undertaken within the seaward part of the coastal zone may have an impact upon the shoreline, in terms of related development or in visual terms.



## 3.2 New Issues

Since the adoption of the Coast Protection Subject Plan in 1984, coastal issues have risen in prominence, and new issues have come to light. These have been identified in the Coastal Issues Report produced jointly between Essex County Council and the Essex Coastal Districts in October 1993. Sea level rise is very much an issue of current debate, particularly relevant to Essex due to the predominately low lying nature of the coast, and has a number of implications, including putting areas of low lying land at risk from flooding, and resulting in the loss of saltmarsh and grazing marsh. The maintenance of sea defences has also become a major issue along the coastline, with Managed Retreat and Soft Engineering currently being used as methods of protecting the coastline, e.g. at Jaywick and Norsey Island.

The Essex coast is very important in terms of its wildlife value, with designations reflecting the need to protect the habitats and wildlife it supports. It is also important in terms of its marine life, landscape character and its rich and varied archaeological heritage. As a whole,



# Appendix 2 Implementation Checklist

The following lists the function of different organisations and singles out activities in which particular organisations will have a role. The number in brackets refer to the policies within the strategy. Implementation of the strategy will involve co-operation between different organisations. This list includes the principle organisations and bodies which may have an influence at County level. It is recognised that there are numerous other organisations with an interest in coastal matters at a more local level who will also have an important role to play in coastal management, and therefore the implementation of this strategy. However, their primary role is likely to be at a district level where estuary management plans are being prepared.

### Country Landowners Association, National Farmers Union and Landowners

- To represent, where appropriate, owners of rural land along the Essex coastline
- To be fully involved in the designation of the Essex Coast ESA and to encourage landowners to join the scheme, (AG1)
- To encourage farmers and landowners to allow permissive access on the coastline, (R1)
- To protect farmland from inundation by the sea, (PP2)
- To be involved in proposals for the implementation of the agri-environmental action programme.

### Countryside Commission

- To review, protect and enhance the landscape quality of AONBs and Heritage Coasts, and to consider including Lowland Coast of Regional Significance for Heritage Coast in the forthcoming review, (L2, L3)
- To promote public access to the countryside in the coastal areas, where appropriate, (R1, R2, AG3)
- To advise local authorities and other organisations on countryside conservation and recreation and access to the countryside, along the Essex coast.
- To participate in the preparation of estuary management plans, (IMP2)

### CPRE Essex,

a charity whose work includes:

- Protecting the countryside from unnecessary development, (G1, G2)
- Liaising with other bodies to protect the undeveloped coastline for landscape and wildlife, (PP3 NCI, MI, LI)
- Support for the Essex Coast ESA, (AG1)

### Crown Estate Commissioners

- To assist in the maintenance of coastal defences and in the development of future policies, (PP2)
- To participate in the preparation of estuary management plans, (IMP2)
- To issue licences to operators extracting marine aggre-

gates and ensure full consideration is given to the impact of marine aggregate extraction on the marine environment, (W4)

### East Anglian Tourist Board

- To maintain a balance between the growth of tourism and conservation of the environment and heritage, (C1, C2)
- To increase public understanding of the social, economic, and cultural impact of tourism.
- To provide opportunities for recreation and tourism in coastal areas, where there is no conflict with conservation objectives, (C1, C2)
- To provide positive support for the regeneration of the regions seaside resorts, (C1, C2)

### Eastern Council for Sport and Recreation

- To provide a forum for co-ordination and discussion of sport and recreation needs and issues, on the coastline.
- To promote and protect sport and recreation opportunities in the short term and long term.
- To provide a strategic overview for sport and recreation in the County
- To promote positive management so as to make the most efficient and acceptable use of resources and facilities, (R1 to R4)

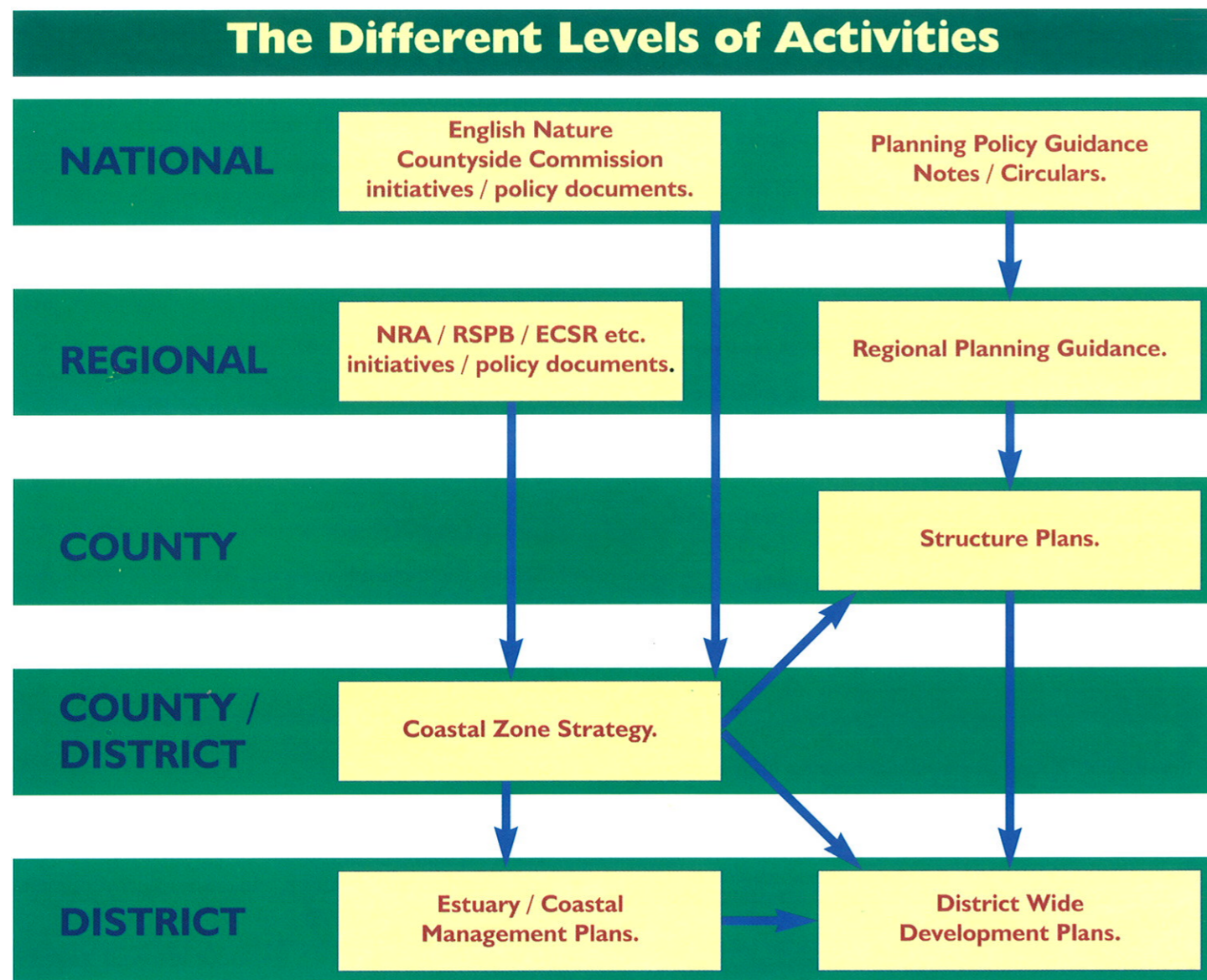
### English Heritage

- To offer advice on the protection of the historic environment, including ancient monuments, historic buildings, historic areas, and archaeological remains. (A3)
- To give grants for the above to encourage their conservation and enhancement (A1, A2)

### English Nature

- To identify, notify and conserve through consultation with landowners and occupiers a network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, (NC1)
- To select, establish and manage National Nature Reserves and Marine Nature Reserves, (NC1, MI)
- To advise and assist with the designation of international wildlife sites, (NC1, NC2, M3)
- To act as formal consultees and provide assistance with the declaration of Local Nature Reserves.
- To guide and participate in the preparation of estuary management plans, (G3, IMP2, IMP3)
- To enhance opportunities for people to exercise and enjoy wildlife, whilst ensuring that the most sensitive wildlife sites remain undisturbed.
- To undertake pilot schemes into managed retreat, (PP3)
- To act as a formal consultee in the preparation of the Shoreline Management Plan.

# Appendix 3. Coastal Zone Planning and Management



## 2. Policy Background

### 2.1 The Current Situation in Essex

The County Council has long recognised the importance of the coastline, adopting the Interim Coastal Protection Policy in October 1966. This was superseded in 1984 by the Coast Protection Subject Plan. The policy concerns itself with the rural coastline only, recognising it as a unique and irreplaceable resource, important for nature conservation and the quality of the landscape.

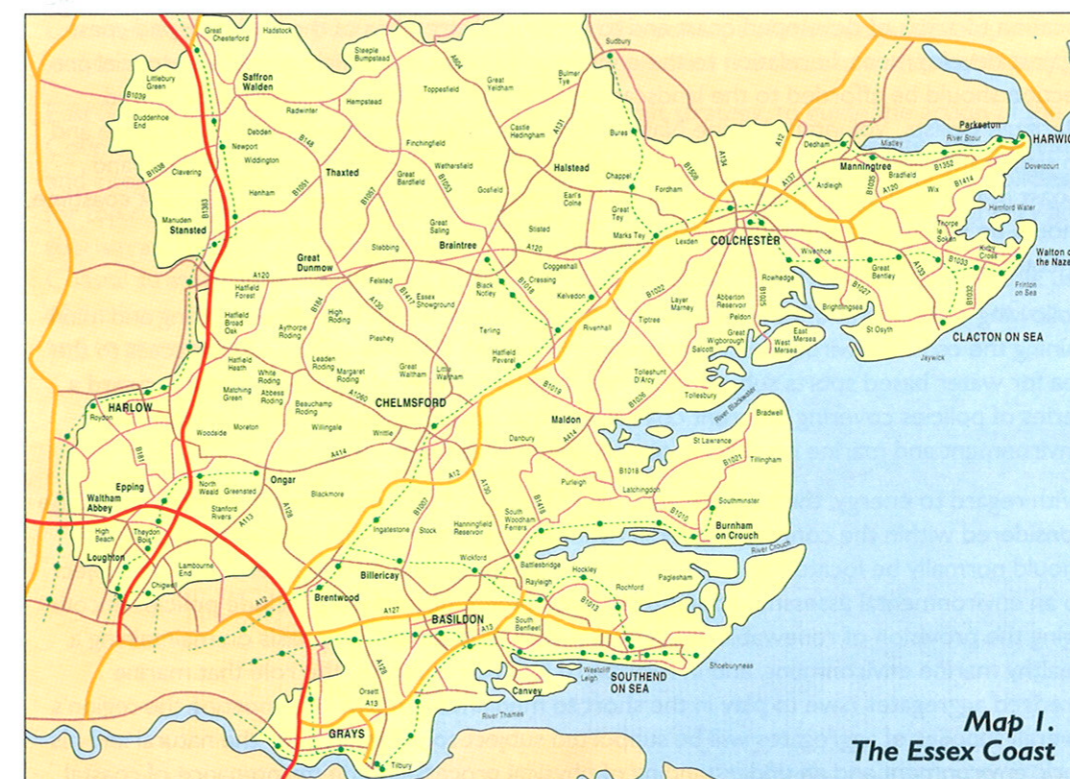
The County Structure Plan - Approved First Alteration (July 1991) includes a Coast protection Policy, Policy NR18 which recognises the importance of the undeveloped coast for nature conservation, landscape, and its rural and undeveloped character.

**“THERE SHALL BE THE MOST STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON DEVELOPMENT ON THE RURAL AND UNDEVELOPED COASTLINE OUTSIDE BUILT UP AREAS AND ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS EXCEPTIONALLY PERMITTED SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OPEN AND RURAL CHARACTER OR WILDLIFE”**

The Structure Plan also contains policies relating to coastal activities namely ports and recreation and tourism. (For reference these are set out in Appendix 1)

Since 1984 when the Coast Protection Belt was adopted, the County Council has monitored planning permissions within the Coast Protection Belt to detect whether the amount and type of development permitted is affecting the open and rural character of the area. As policy NR18 imposes the most stringent restrictions, more severe than in the Green Belt built development is defined as being particularly inappropriate within the Belt. Since 1984, around 165 hectares of land has been given permission, around 78% of this was permitted for uses which are essentially open in character such as golf courses, gardens, recreation grounds etc. The number of dwellings and other uses given permission relates to a very small area of land, less than 0.4% of the total land covered by the Coast Protection Policy since 1984, illustrating that the existing coastal policy has been very effective in maintaining the open and rural character of the coast.

All coastal districts except Colchester Borough Council, have policies within their Local Plans directly relating to the coast. These closely follow the policy within the Structure Plan, by providing a high degree of protection to the rural and undeveloped coast, and all forms of development, particularly built development are to be strongly resisted. The Colchester Local Plan includes the coast and Mersea Island as a Countryside Conservation Area. The



# I. Introduction

Essex contains one of the country's most important coastlines. It stretches for over 300 miles, (Map 1) and supports an abundance of birds and wildlife. It is of international and national importance for nature conservation, with extensive areas covered by statutory designations. However, it is not only important for nature conservation; there is the open and rural landscape, and numerous historical and archaeological features. Additionally it provides an attractive resource for water and land based recreation, green tourism initiatives and other human activities.

As a result of the growing importance of the coastline, and concerns about the issues of sea level rise, coastal defences, the quality of bathing waters, the impact of human activities on the coastal environment, the conservation of the coast, and the recognition of the many and sometimes conflicting activities within the coastal zone, a coastal strategy for Essex has been prepared jointly by the County Council and coastal District Councils, and with the assistance of the organisations who responded to the consultation document.

The principle aims of the strategy are:-

- To encourage the sustainable use of the Essex coastline; that is, it will seek to encourage the management of the human activities along the coastline to the benefit of the present population, whilst maintaining the potential of the coast to meet the needs of future generations, in a way that is compatible with the need to conserve and enhance the natural resources (its wildlife and landscape) of the Essex coastline. Development must be compatible with the environment to be sustainable. In Essex stringent restrictions will be placed on development on the open and rural coastline, in order to protect its landscape character and wildlife. If sustainability is to be maintained it is imperative that protection is afforded to these irreplaceable assets.
- To address the main issues of concern and conflict within the coastal zone, and promote a wider understanding of these issues.
- To promote co-ordination and co-operation between organisations. This is vital if the sustainable use of the Essex coastline is to be achieved.
- To provide a framework within which Structure Plan and Local Plan policies can be developed.

To provide a context within which Estuary Management Plans, Shoreline Management Plans and other non-statutory plans can be developed.

The aim is to work closely with other organisations with an interest in coastal zone management. It is hoped that the policies and objectives put forward in the strategy will be implemented through the development plan system, Shoreline Management plans, Estuary Management Plans and through the introduction or strengthening of bylaws where appropriate.



# Appendix 4 Definition of Designations

## Ramsar Site

### A world wide designation of wetlands

These are sites protected under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, first drafted at Ramsar, Iran 1971, and ratified by the UK Government in 1976. The Ramsar convention aims to conserve wetlands and promote their (sustainable) use.

## Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

### European designation

The EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) requires member states to safeguard the habitats of migratory birds and certain particularly threatened birds. Under the Directive, the UK is committed to taking "the requisite measures to preserve, maintain and re-establish a sufficient diversity and areas of habitat" for "all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state". This includes the designation of SPAs.

## Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

### European designation

The EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) agreed at the Environment Council in December 1991 was adopted in May 1992. This gives rise to the designation of Special Areas of Conservation. These areas are to be protected for the purpose of conserving Europe's rarest flora and fauna species and habitat type; and may be designated both on land and at sea. Most are likely to be drawn from the existing SSSI network.

## National Nature Reserves (NNRs)

### National designation

Sections 16 to 29 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 enabled the Nature Conservancy Council for England (NCCE) English Nature to establish nature reserves. These provisions were strengthened by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. NNRs are areas of national and sometimes international importance for nature conservation which are owned or leased by the NCCE, or a body approved by NCCE, or are managed in accordance with nature reserve agreements with landowners and occupiers.

## Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

### National designation

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended 1985) English Nature has a duty to notify as an SSSI any land which in its opinion is of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features.

## Local Nature Reserve

### Local Borough or District designation

Under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act local authorities may establish LNRs in consultation with English Nature. They must be of a high nature conservation value or have a high natural history value in a district or county context.

## Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA)

### National non - statutory designation

ESAs were introduced under Section 18 of the 1986 Agriculture Act to help safeguard areas where the landscape,

wildlife or historic interest is of national importance; and because it was recognised that agriculture can have a major influence on the conservation and enhancement of the landscape, wildlife and historical features. The Essex Coast ESA is one of six new ESAs which together with the existing areas form part of MAFF's programme of environmental measures under the European "Agri Environment Regulation". It has no planning status and therefore cannot be used as a reason for refusing planning applications.

## Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

### Local, non-statutory designation

These have been identified as part of the Phase I Habitat Survey for Essex. The sites which are not protected by other designations are selected because they make a significant contribution to the diversity of habitats, flora and fauna in the countryside.

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# Essex Coastal Strategy

## Essex County Council and the Essex Coastal Districts of:

- **Basildon District Council**
- **Castle Point District Council**
- **Colchester Borough Council**
- **Maldon District Council**
- **Rochford District Council**
- **Southend Borough Council**
- **Tendring District Council**
- **Thurrock Borough Council**

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