## Policy Unit 5C20 Sowley to Elmer's Court

**Summary description of Policy Unit**

This majority of this frontage is undeveloped and undefended except for a few individual residential privately owned properties. The foreshore and surrounding hinterland, including agricultural grade 2 and 3 land, are within New Forest National Park. The tidal floodplain is restricted due to rising land and topography, although extends inland in the area of the Sowley inlet, south of Sowley Pond, and affects a few properties located immediately behind privately owned and maintained defences. There are inter-tidal habitats of International, European and national nature conservation importance. The intertidal saltmarshes and mudflats are within a Local Nature Reserve and Wildlife Trust Reserve. These and inland areas provide high tide roost sites and support the adjacent and nearby SPA/Ramsar sites, Heritage assets include registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Area, listed buildings, and maritime features.

| **Final policy options** | | SMP1 Ref LYM5 Managed Realignment |
|---|---|---|
| **Epoch 1 From Present Day (up to 2025)** | **Epoch 2 Medium Term (2025 to 2055)** | **Epoch 3 Long Term (2055 to 2105)** |
| **No Active Intervention** | **No Active Intervention** | **No Active Intervention** |

**Summary of rationale behind final policy options**

The policy intention is to allow the largely undefended and unmanaged shoreline, to continue to be undefended and naturally evolve, which will continue to provide landscape benefits within the New Forest National Park area.

The natural topography of the river valley largely confines the extent of the tidal floodplain, but it may be necessary for further property-level defences to be implemented at the small numbers of individual properties and heritage sites as the flood risk increases over the longer-term.

Whilst relatively low, the rates of erosion and sediment transport within the West Solent are likely to increase under rising sea levels, particularly as the saltmarshes within Lymington River estuary continue to erode and provide a decreasing level of natural protection to the shoreline. The tidal flood risk to properties along this privately owned shoreline is constrained due to the naturally rising hinterland, both now and over the next 100 years.

Increased rates of shoreline erosion of the privately owned shoreline will provide a source of mixed sand and shingle to the foreshore and increase rates and volumes of sediment transport to the low-lying barrier beaches to the east, which will improve protection to the environmentally important areas vulnerable to coastal flooding in adjacent frontages, such as Sowley Spit. Maintenance of existing defences is unlikely to prevent further loss or damage to woodland adjacent or close to the shoreline due to rising ground and sea water levels.

Opportunities for habitat mitigation and compensation have been detailed within the Appropriate Assessment of the final policies.

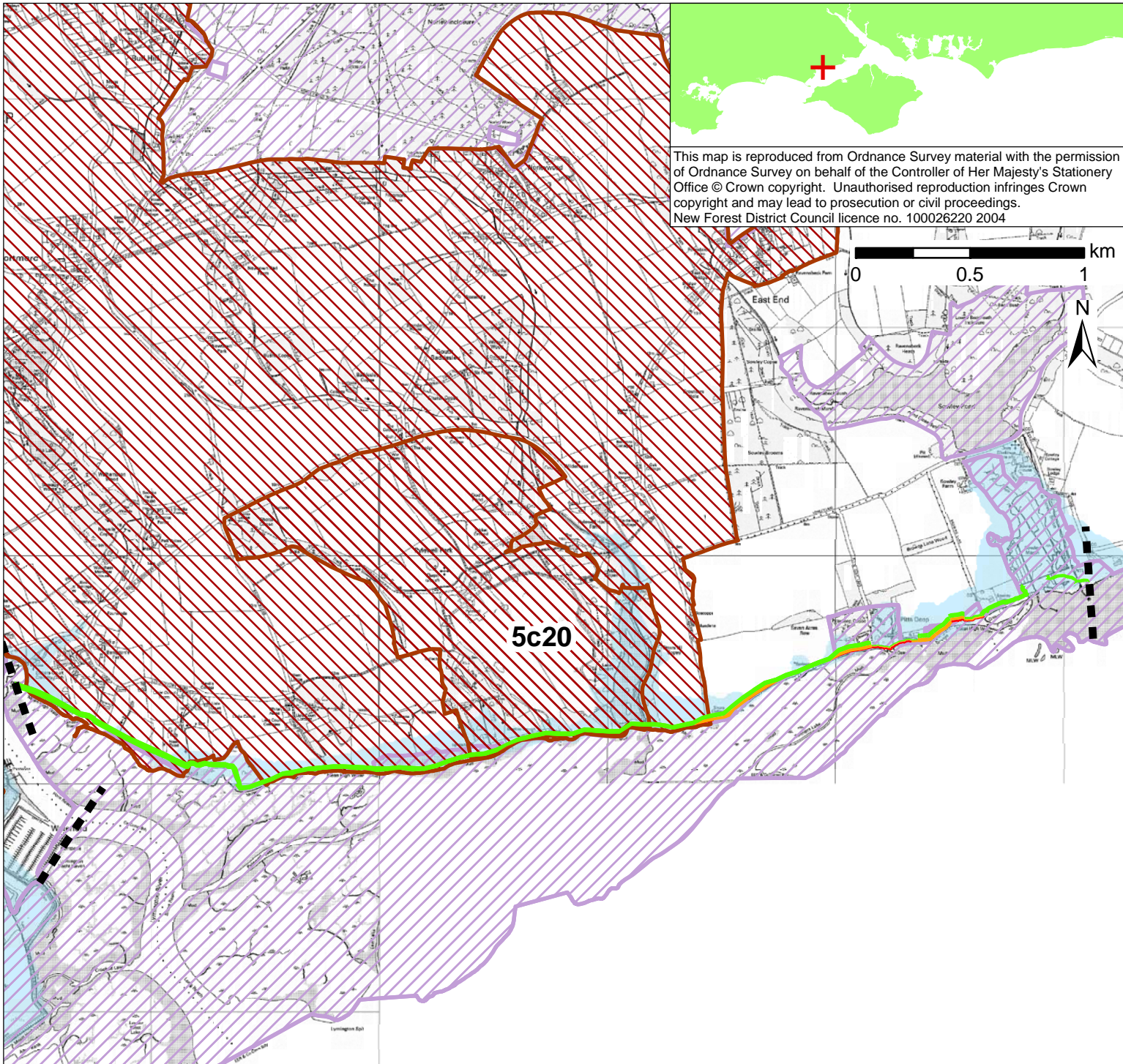**Policy changes through Public Consultation**

None. Private landowners were concerned that an SMP policy of No Active Intervention would preclude them from continuing or obtaining planning permission to maintain their defences, which is not the intention of the policy. An Information Note for landowners, planners and developers on privately owned coastal defences and coastal planning issues has been produced.

**Funding**

No defence works identified. As is currently the case, no public funding would be available for continued maintenance of defences by private owners.

**Further Studies (identified in Action Plan)**

Conclusion of the Western Solent Coastal Defence Strategy
Solent-wide network of high tide roost site study

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**5c20**

## POLICY

| From Present Day (up to 2025): | Medium-Term (2025 to 2055): | Long-Term (2055 to 2105): |
|---|---|---|
| No Active Intervention | No Active Intervention | No Active Intervention |

| | |
|---|---|
| <span style="color:red">▬</span> Indicative erosion zone up to 2025 | International / National Designations |
| <span style="color:orange">▬</span> Indicative erosion zone up to 2055 | Important Heritage Sites |
| <span style="color:green">▬</span> Indicative erosion zone up to 2105 | 2115 Indicative Floodplain (1 in 200 year) provided from PUSH |
| ▬ ▬ ▬ Policy Unit Boundary | |

Policy Unit 5c20: Sowley to Elmers Court