

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

2024/25  
Decision No.  
2578

### Record of Decision by Executive

Monday, 7 October 2024

<b>Portfolio</b>	Planning and Development
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Hook Lake Coastal Management Study</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Planning and Regeneration
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Respond to Climate Change and Protect the Environment

#### **Purpose:**

The report summarises the key findings of the Hook Lake Coastal Management study, undertaken by Coastal Partners, Fareham Borough Council's Coastal Team.

As sea level rises, important intertidal habitats along the coast will be lost as they are constrained by hard sea defences and are unable to migrate landwards as they would naturally do. Replacing and recreating the habitat that is lost is a legal requirement that will help to offset these losses both today and in the future from new defence schemes. Without a clear plan for compensatory habitat in place for the future, regulators may be unable to consent any new flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM) works in the Solent.

The Hook Lake Coastal Management Study, the first stage in the potential delivery of a habitat creation scheme at Hook Lake is now complete.

The study has shown that the site has many of the characteristics which are needed for the development of a successful intertidal habitat creation scheme and has the potential to create 45ha of intertidal habitats (saltmarsh and mudflat) in the short term and up to 60ha of intertidal habitat in the longer term (100 years).

In addition to establishing that a technically feasible scheme is possible, the study has also identified some key challenges that significantly impact the financial viability of a scheme at Hook Lake, including compensation for freshwater habitat losses, biodiversity net gain requirement and mitigation for increased flood risk to Hook Park Bridge.

The Hook Lake Project Board has overseen the progression of the project to date and comprises all relevant stakeholders including Hampshire County Council (HCC) and the Environment Agency (EA). Given the findings of the first stage Study, the Project Board has now recommended that the project is not moved on to the next stage of detailed design until and unless it is understood if these challenges can be resolved. On the 09 April 2024, Storm Pierrick caused significant damage to the

embankment wall at Hook Lake. The Environment Agency have identified they are likely to notify of their intent to withdraw their long-standing maintenance of the embankment and to not repair the sluice if damaged because it is unaffordable and technically unviable.

Consequently, the embankment will be increasingly vulnerable to breach over time. To communicate the Study findings, outline responsibilities and explain potential next steps for managing the site, Coastal Partners have developed a position statement in collaboration with HCC and the EA which will be made available on the Coastal Partners website (see Appendix B).

**Options Considered:**

As recommendation.

**Decision:**

RESOLVED that the Executive approves the Hook Lake Project Board recommendation to not move to the next design stage of the project until and unless there is more certainty the project is affordable and can be delivered.

**Reason:**

It is important that the Executive are informed of the outcomes of the study which was led by Coastal Partners and note that there are ongoing challenges at the site in relation to flood and erosion risk which will require oversight and management by HCC and the Environment Agency. No project at this site will move forward until it is understood if these challenges can be resolved.

**Confirmed as a true record:**

Councillor SD Martin (Executive Leader)

Monday, 7 October 2024