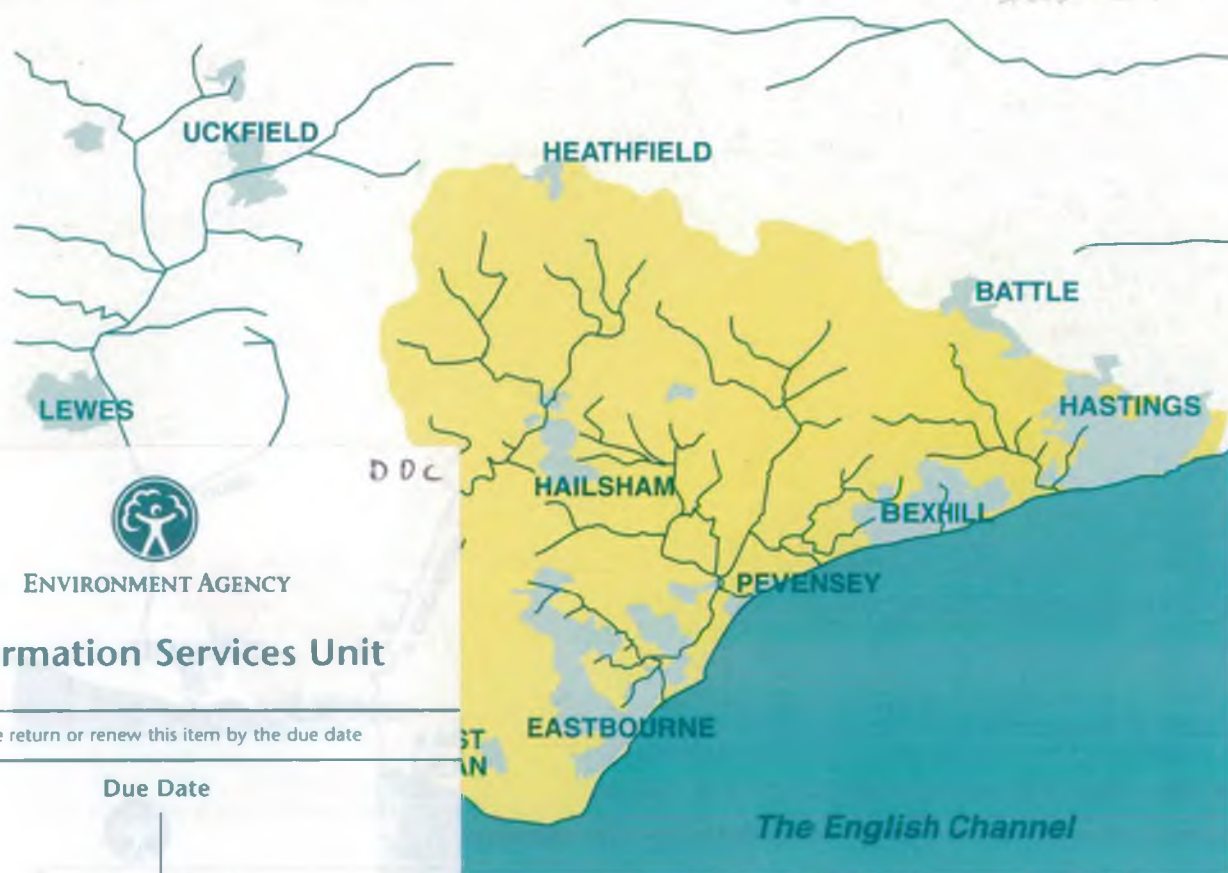


local environment agency plan

CUCKMERE AND PEVENSEY LEVELS CONSULTATION DRAFT NOVEMBER 1998



Information Services Unit

Please return or renew this item by the due date

Due Date



ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY

YOUR VIEWS

The Environment Agency welcomes your views on the future management of the area.

What do you think?

- Have all the important environmental issues been identified?
- Have all the potential options and solutions to issues been identified?
- Is the vision for the area your vision?
- Do you have any other information or ideas you would like to share?
- In what way can you or your organisation work in partnership with the Agency to improve the Cuckmere and Pevensey Levels?

This Consultation Draft is about the Cuckmere and Pevensey Levels Area. It is the Agency's first appraisal of the status of the environment in this area and we hope that this report will be read by everyone who has an interest in the quality of the environment. Your views will help us finalise our Action Plan.

COMMENTS ARE REQUIRED BY 28 FEBRUARY 1999

Please send your written comments to:

The Customer Services Manager,
Environment Agency Sussex Area,
Saxon House
Little High Street
Worthing
West Sussex BN11 1DH
Tel: 01903 215835
Fax: 01903 215884

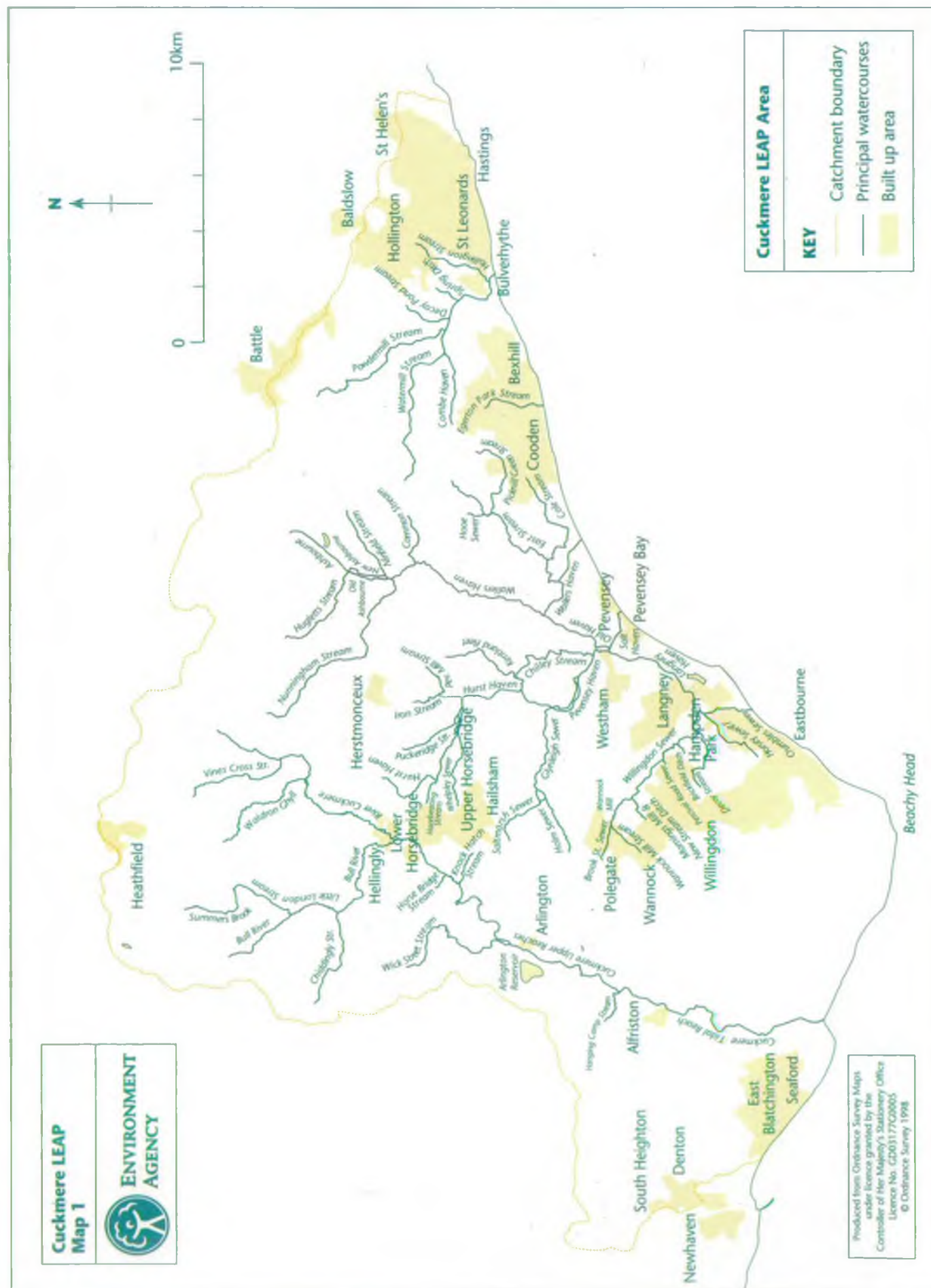
All comments received on the Consultation Draft will be considered in preparing the final plan. This will focus on updating the Consultation Draft by turning the options for action into actions that will make a difference.

Note: Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information in this report there may be errors or omissions which we will be pleased to note. All comments will be treated as public information and will be released on request unless you explicitly state otherwise.

Published November 1998



Catchment Overview



Cuckmere and Pevensy Levels Key Details

General

Area	527.49km2
Coastline	51.6 km

Administrative Details

Local Authorities: % of Area
East Sussex County Council
100%

Population

Year	Population
1991	259,000

Water Resources

Average Annual Rainfall 637-808mm/yr

Number of licensed abstractions

Surface Water	22
Groundwater	60

Water Companies

SEW
SWS Sussex (East)

Conservation

Sites of Special Scientific Interest	25
Water Dependant SSSIs	20
Special Areas of Conservation	0
Special Protection Areas	0
Ramsar Sites	01
National Nature Reserves	02
Local Nature Reserves	5
Areas of outstanding Natural Beauty	2

Fisheries

Length of EC Designated Fisheries (km):	
Cyprinid	40.56
Salmonid	10.8

Water Quality

Freshwater River in NWC Class (km)

Class	Objective	Achieved 1990 survey	GQA (kms)
1A Good	0	7.6 A	5.3
1B Good	53.4	50.2 B	43.7
2 Fair	62.5	47.0 C	28.4
3 Poor	0	11.1 D	24.2
4 Bad	0	0 E	14.3
		F	0
Total	115.9	115.9	115.9

Number of EC Designated Bathing Waters 7

Pollution Prevention & Control

Landfill Sites (Inert)	2
Landfill Sites (Biodegradable)	1
Waste Treatment/Processing Plants	2
Metal Recycling Stations	10
Incinerators	0
Transfer Stations	5

Integrated Pollution Control Authorisations

Discharge to Air	2
Effluent Discharges	2

Flood Defence

	Length (km)
Coastline <i>including main tidal waters</i>	51.6
Main River <i>including tidal lengths</i>	209.72
Sea Defences Agency responsibility	12.95

memo



ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY

To

Our ref AHB/L/G

From Ann Binks

Your ref

Ext. Number 4460

Date 8 March 1999

CUCKMERE AND PEVENSEY LEVELS - CONSULTATION DRAFT AND ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW

Attached for information and perusal.

Although the consultation document does not strictly follow V3a Guidance, there are a few nice touches. Particularly like the way it explains the Planning system with our involvement pp 52-55.

Do you think the costing is a cop out? - see para 6.4 and the issues tables? Or perhaps a novel 'cop-out'.

Environmental Overview also attached. Please circulate them together, and return to me on completion.

Regards and Happy reading!

ANN BINKS
Assistant Technical Planner

EA AREA OFFICE	
BRAMPTON (CS)	
10 MAR 1999	
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Distribution List ~~John Macrae and LEAPs Team, Ipswich, Rona Chelley & LEAPs Team, Brampton, Richard Kisby & LEAPs Team, Lincoln, Paul Dykes, Public Relations, Michelle Doyle, Technical Planning Manager~~

Comment:- I think the costing is an excellent idea and not a 'cop-out' at all. A rough estimate for Draft LEAPs is a good idea +

FOREWORD

The Environment Agency is one of the most powerful environmental regulators in the world. By combining the regulation of air, land and water, we have an unique opportunity to look at our environment in an integrated way.

Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs) aim to provide a means for the Agency to set priorities, solve problems and protect and improve the environment in a co-ordinated way.

This is the first LEAP Consultation Draft to be produced in Sussex. In producing this document, our primary aim has been to identify the environmental issues and concerns in the Plan area, through consultation with interested external parties and advice from the Area Environment Group (AEG). This committee comprises local external representatives who advise on the operation of the area.

The opportunity has also been taken to use the Plan to inform and influence. We hope such information will help the general public and external organisations to comment on the issues and actions put forward. It should also identify any additional concerns and potential actions to address these.

With the resources available to the Agency and others, the opportunities to achieve mutual objectives through partnerships have also been promoted throughout the Plan. This is particularly relevant to the actions put forward to address the issues identified.

On completion of the Consultation period, the issues and actions identified together with the comments received will enable the Agency to assess the relative priorities for future actions in the Plan area. Such actions will be identified in the final plan and these will be forwarded into the Sussex Area's Business Plan. Hence, in responding to the Consultation Draft, the public and external organisations can influence the priorities and hence expenditure of the Agency.

It is hoped that this LEAP provides a focus for all parties to undertake and achieve environmental improvements in a sustainable manner. It will, together with other plans for the Sussex Area, represent a shared vision for the future and play an important role in the protection of our environment, whilst recognising the ever competing pressures on the environment and the need to balance cost and benefit.

THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY'S VISION AND AIMS

Our Vision:

A better environment in England and Wales for present and future generations.

Our Aims are:

- to achieve major and continuous improvements in the quality of air, land and water
- to encourage the conservation of natural resource, animals and plants
- to make the most of pollution control and river-basin management
- to provide effective defence and warning systems to protect people and property against flooding from rivers and the sea
- to reduce the amount of waste by encouraging people to re-use and recycle their waste
- to improve standards of waste disposal
- to manage water resources to achieve the proper balance between the country's needs and the environment
- to work with other organisations to reclaim contaminated land
- to improve and develop salmon and freshwater fisheries
- to conserve and improve river navigation
- to tell people about environmental issues by educating and informing
- to set priorities and work out solutions that society can afford

We will do this by:

- being open and consulting others about our work;
- basing our decisions around sound science and research;
- valuing and developing our employees; and
- being efficient and businesslike in all we do

VISION FOR THE CUCKMERE AND PEVENSEY LEVELS AREA

We all want a better environment for ourselves and our children. Yet we also need homes to live in, places to work in, food to eat and water to drink, all of which place increasing pressures on the environment. The challenge of managing the environment is to respond to such pressures, by balancing the many social, economic and environmental demands.

The Environment Agency's vision is to create a better environment in England and Wales for present and future generations. In Sussex we aim to meet this vision through the protection and improvement of the health and safety of people, property and the natural environment. We aim to manage our activities and duties to address local concerns and promote environment enhancement in a manner which is sustainable for the future.

In this area priority must go to maintaining and improving sea defences, particularly along the Pevensey Bay and Normans Bay frontages, so as to provide effective protection to people and property. We will also continue to improve our flood warning service for people in flood risk areas.

We will strive to protect and enhance the important biodiversity in the area, in particular the Pevensey Levels. We will also improve and develop the salmon and freshwater fisheries and forward other recreation where possible.

Water abstraction must be undertaken in a balanced way which allows best use of resources whilst protecting the environment. In the light of recent droughts and predicted climate change, precaution must be used when assessing future water abstraction regimes from surface waters and groundwaters. In addition the quality of such waters must be protected through our own regulatory powers and our input to be local authority planning process. Improvements to bathing water quality will be forwarded in the area where tourism is so important to the economy.

We also want waste minimisation targets to be achieved to reduce the amount of waste and the impact of waste disposal on the environment. Working with industry, hospitals and schools will ensure a proactive approach to forwarding such initiatives.

Education initiatives will be forwarded as the key to changing the actions of individuals and industry. Individuals must be made aware of the significant role each one has to play in protecting the environment. By our own actions we can, either at home or work, make a difference by preserving natural resources, saving energy and recycling waste.

The Agency alone cannot achieve this vision and hence we will initiate and forward opportunities for partnerships with others. Working with local authorities in the assessment of implications of development on the environment is particularly important in this respect. Together we can make the difference.

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1.0 MANAGING THE ENVIRONMENT: THE ROLE OF THE AGENCY

Who We Are

- 1.1 The Environment Agency of England and Wales was established by the 1995 Environment Act and became operational on 1 April 1996. The Agency's principal sponsor in Government is the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR). The Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF) is responsible for policy and statutory casework for flood defence and fisheries in England. The Welsh Office (WO) is responsible for policy and statutory casework on all functions in Wales. The Secretary of State for the Environment, in liaison with MAFF and WO Ministers, determines the policy framework within which the Agency operates.
- 1.2 The Agency's vision is a better environment in England and Wales for present and future generations and we have a wide range of duties and powers relating to different aspects of environmental management. The creation of the Agency was, in part, a recognition of the need to take a more integrated and longer-term view for management of the environment. Our primary aim is to protect and improve the environment and make a contribution towards the delivery of sustainable development through the integrated management of air, land and water. We have specific responsibilities for water resources, pollution prevention and control, flood defence, fisheries, conservation, recreation and navigation across England and Wales.

Our Principal Aim

- 1.3 The Principal Aim of the Environment Agency

"... is to protect and enhance the environment, taken as a whole, so as to make a positive contribution towards achieving sustainable development ..."

Environment Act 1995

- 1.4 This aim developed from the Government's overall environmental strategy set out in its 1994 Report on the 1990 White Paper *This Common Inheritance* and in the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development (1994). The UK Strategy acknowledges the definition of Sustainable Development in the Brundtland Report (1987)

"... development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"

Sustainable Development and our Working Principles

- 1.5 Government provided statutory guidance to the Agency on promoting sustainable development and in order to comply with this we have adopted the following:

The Agency and Sustainable Development Working Principles

- because the environment is shared, collective action is necessary.
- decisions should be based on the best possible scientific information and analysis of risks
- where there is uncertainty and potentially serious risks exist, precautionary action may be necessary
- ecological impacts must be considered, particularly where resources are non-renewable or effects may be irreversible
- cost implications should be brought home directly to the people responsible - the polluter pays principle
- a holistic approach should be taken to environmental objectives
- a long term perspective should be taken
- biodiversity should be conserved and enhanced and natural heritage protected
- a contribution should be made to protecting the global atmosphere
- the scope for reconciling the needs of the environment and those of development with regard to regulated organisations should be investigated
- close and responsive relationships should be developed
- high quality information and advice should be used by the Agency and provided to others
- judgements will have to be made about the weight to be put on these factors in particular cases

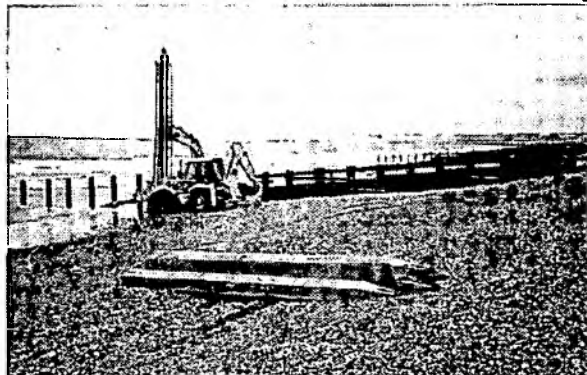
1.6 Sustainable development is a broad concept and contains many features which the Agency cannot by itself deliver. We will however promote and encourage:

- the attainment of all air quality standards;
- energy conservation and efficiency;
- the economic consumption of raw materials;
- the development and use of clean, efficient, and environmentally friendly transport.

We will promote partnerships to achieve the principles of sustainable development. We have prepared a series of twelve publications on Sustainable Development and further information is available on these from our Head Office in Bristol.

What We Do: Water Management


- 1.7 **Flood Defence:** The threat from flooding is always with us. Flood defence seeks to reduce the risk from flooding in order to safeguard lives, sustain economic activity and protect and enhance the environment. While flood risks can never be eliminated completely, they can be reduced. The Flood Defence function is delivered through the area and the Sussex Flood Defence Committee and delivers a 24-hour service for managing flood risk. A major part of this service involves carrying out works ourselves, such as maintaining and improving the rivers, sea defences and associated structures. Other important roles are to ensure flood risk is not exacerbated or created by development; delivering a flood forecasting and warning service; and undertaking a regulatory role with respect to sea, tidal or fluvial defences. Flood defence aims to protect and enhance the natural environment by promoting works that are sustainable and work with the environment.



- 1.8 **Water Resources:** We have responsibilities for the management, conservation, distribution and augmentation of surface and groundwater resources. In order to ensure water resources are developed in a sustainable matter, we must balance the needs of abstractors with those of the environment. This is mainly achieved by regulating the abstraction of water and the development of new sources such as reservoirs.
- 1.9 **Fisheries:** We are responsible for maintaining, improving and developing fisheries. This is carried out by licensing, regulation and enforcement schemes which cover salmon, sea trout, non-migratory trout, coarse and eel fisheries. The Agency also carries out improvements to fisheries by improving the habitat, fish stocks and providing advice to fishery owners.
- 1.10 **Recreation:** We must take account of recreation and access and part of our general duty is to protect and promote the recreational use of the water environment. We own and manage over 1000 recreation and amenity sites in England and Wales.
- 1.11 **Navigation:** The Agency is the navigation authority for more than 800 km of inland waterways. Our navigation responsibilities are managed as an integral part of river basin management and we aim to improve these resources to make them accessible for appropriate recreational and commercial use.
- 1.12 **Conservation:** In fulfilling all its functions the Agency is required to contribute to the conservation of natural resources, landscape and the built heritage. We must have a regard to conserving and enhancing flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features when carrying out our pollution

prevention and control functions, and we have a duty to **further** conservation when carrying out our other functions. We also have a duty generally to promote the conservation of flora and fauna dependent on the aquatic environment. As such, we are a key player in working with others to deliver the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

What We Do: Pollution Prevention and Control

- 1.13 **Process Industries Regulation (PIR):** We regulate the most polluting, or technically complex, industrial and other processes and this requires an assessment of the impacts of a process on the whole environment (air, land and water). In carrying out this duty, we apply the principles of Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) and Best Available Techniques Not Entailing Excessive Cost (BATNEEC). This approach is to be extended soon when the EU Directive on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) is implemented.
- 1.14 **Radioactive Substances Regulation (RSR):** We regulate the keeping and use of radioactive materials, the accumulation of radioactive waste (except on nuclear licensed sites) and the disposal of radioactive wastes from all sites. Our principal aim is to protect the public and the environment from the potentially harmful effects of radioactive substances.
- 1.15 **Water Quality:** Our role is to ensure that both surface water and groundwaters are of suitable quality to support their many and varied uses and to maintain aquatic biodiversity. We monitor the quality of all controlled waters including rivers, groundwaters, lakes and canals, estuaries and coastal waters (up to the 3 mile limit) and regulate discharges of any effluent to such waters, for example sewage treatment works effluent, to ensure their protection. We undertake pollution prevention initiatives and emergency works to control the impacts of any spillages, accidents etc.
- 
- 1.16 **Waste Management and Regulation:** We regulate the treatment, storage, movement and disposal of controlled waste by setting consistent standards, and encouraging best practices, for waste management. We also register packaging waste producers and monitor performance in reuse and recovery of packaging waste. The Agency has a particular role to play in encouraging waste minimisation and reuse so as to achieve the targets and objectives set out in the National Waste Strategy.
- 1.17 **Contaminated Land:** Under forthcoming legislation we will be required to report on the extent of contaminated land and to regulate that land designated as *Special Sites*. Our principal aim is to secure, with others, the remediation of contaminated land.

Our Principal Statutory Powers

- 1.18 The Agency's principal legislation and requirements for licences and consents are as follows:

Enactment	Consent/Licence Required from the Agency
Environment Act 1995:	Drought Permits.
Water Resources Act 1991:	Impoundment of any water on line of a watercourse. Abstraction of water from underground or surface waters. Discharge of effluent into underground, surface, estuarial and coastal waters. Any works in, over or under a "main river". Use of an instrument other than a rod and line to remove fish.
Land Drainage Act 1991:	Culverting, obstructing, diverting or infilling any watercourse.
Land Drainage and Sea Defence Bylaws:	Works in or adjacent to (distance on relevant Bylaw) any classified watercourse or sea defence.
Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1995:	Movement or introduction of fish or fish spawn to an inland watercourse, lake, etc. Rod and line fishing.
Environmental Protection Act 1990:	Treating, keeping, depositing or disposing of any controlled waste on land. Movement of (hazardous) waste. Use of more than 50 tonnes of packing material in any one year. Control of any process prescribed under Schedule 1 of Statutory Instrument (SI) 1991 No 472. Environmental Protection (Prescribed Processes and Substances) Regulations - as amended.
Radioactive Substances Act 1993:	Storage, use and disposal of radioactive material.
Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989:	Transport of waste during the course of a business.
Control of Pollution (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) Regulation 1991	Silage making, slurry storage systems including yard washings, and storage of fuel oil in excess of 1500 litres.
<i>Note: Conservation and recreation will be taken into account when assessing any application</i>	

Classified watercourses including "main rivers" are identified on Agency maps.

What We Do Not Do.

- 1.19 The Agency does not cover all aspects of environmental legislation and service to the general public. There are other statutory and non-statutory organisations who have responsibilities and interests within the LEAP area. The Local Authority deals with noise problems; litter; and air quality, including air pollution arising from vehicles, household areas, and small businesses and industries. Local authorities clear up flytipped waste where it has been tipped on land which is public owned. Land use planning and development control is the responsibility of the Local Authority, however, there is close liaison with the Agency to ensure effective consultation with regard to environmental matters on development plans and relevant planning applications. Local Authorities also deal with contaminated land issues, in liaison with the Environment Agency, and environmental health issues. The Local Authorities also have powers with respect to problems associated with ordinary watercourses, and maritime authorities have duties relating to coastal protection.

Our Statutory Committees and Other Groups

- 1.20 Each Region is advised by three statutory Regional Committees covering Environmental Protection, Flood Defence and Fisheries as well as a Regional Advisory Panel, comprising a Board member and the Chairman of each statutory committee. Regional Committee meetings are open to the public and the media. Committee members are representatives from our customers and include: Local Authorities, English Nature, Country Landowners Association, National Farmers Union, Internal Drainage Boards, Angling Associations, Industry, Waste Management Companies, Wildlife Trusts and representative from recreation and tourism.
- 1.21 Each Area has an Area Environment Group (AEG) similarly with some 20 members representing local authorities, business, industry and conservation groups. AEGs are particularly important to the preparation of LEAPs providing extensive local knowledge and advice from a broad spectrum of representatives. They are also important in helping to prioritise key issues in LEAPs to provide a link with local communities.

Our Environmental Strategy for the Millennium and Beyond

- 1.22 Our Strategy is based on the need to take an integrated approach to the management of the environment; to form an overview of the state of the environment; to identify the pressures which affect that state, and then to identify the appropriate responses which need to be made. This Strategy sets out our principal and immediate environmental concerns together with our intended approach for dealing with each of these issues. These concerns may be summarised:

- addressing the causes and effects of climate change;
- helping to improve air quality;
- managing our water resources;
- enhancing biodiversity;
- managing our freshwater fisheries;
- delivering integrated river-basin management;
- conserving the land;
- managing waste;
- regulating major industries effectively.

When to Contact Us

- 1.23 The Agency has a duty to protect and improve the environment as a whole, not only through its operational and regulatory roles, but also in the general advice the organisation gives to the public. The following table describes proposals for development, works and usage where prior consultation with us is advised:

Proposal	Reason
1 Works within or adjacent to any watercourse including outfalls, weirs, piping, ponds, diversions, infilling, bridges and planting.	Ensure flooding is not exacerbated, access to and along watercourses is retained, and water quality, conservation, recreation and fisheries are protected.
2 Works in areas at risk to flooding from rivers and the sea , including development and land raising/infilling.	Ensure flooding is not exacerbated, access to and along watercourses is retained, and water quality, conservation, recreation and fisheries are protected.
3 Works on, under or adjacent to any floodbank, sea defence or other flood control structure.	Ensure integrity of flood defences is retained and flood risk is not exacerbated.
4 Works on aquatic/wetland sites.	Ensure flooding is not exacerbated, protection of water quality and conservation.
5 Works on contaminated or potentially contaminated land , e.g. former landfill, gas works, industrial use, fuel/chemical storage or production or close to a landfill site or major industrial process.	Address pollution, waste disposal and gas permeation concerns.

-
- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| 6 | Development involving the disposal of foul sewage other than to public foul sewer including the use of septic tanks, cesspits, private sewers and private sewage treatment plants. | Protect environment from pollution. |
| 7 | Development greater than half a hectare in area. | Ensure increased surface water run-off from development does not exacerbate flooding. |
| 8 | Use, storage, transfer or disposal of radioactive material. | Control and monitoring of radioactive material to ensure the protection of public health. |
| 9 | Waste Management operations , including movement of waste, landfill, waste transfer stations, incinerators, scrapyards, recycling plants. | Ensure effective disposal of waste with no unacceptable risk of pollution and harm to public health. |
| 10 | Commercial and industrial development. | Ensure no unacceptable risk of pollution and increased flood risk, and effective waste disposal. |
| 11 | Agricultural operations including livestock and poultry units, chemical and fertiliser storage, silage manufacture/storage and disposal of manure. | Promote effective disposal of waste and farming practices and ensure no unacceptable risk of pollution. |
| 12 | Works involving fisheries including fishing licences, fish stocking, fish farming and fish transport. | Protect health of fish within the natural environment and ensure no increased risk of pollution to water. |
| 13 | Ponds, lakes and reservoirs. | Protect stream flows, ensure flooding is not exacerbated and fish movement is not obstructed. Protect and enhance conservation and ensure waste disposal and pollution implications are addressed. |
| 14 | Works within areas of environmental and archaeological designation. | Protection of species and habitats. |
| 15 | Abstraction of water from surface water or groundwater sources. | Protection of water resources, natural environment and existing water users. |
| 16 | Works incorporating any infill or excavation operation. | Ensure the protection of environment from pollution and address waste disposal and flooding |
-

2.0 LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AGENCY PLANS (LEAPs)

The Purpose of LEAPs

- 2.1 We are committed to delivering environmental improvement at the local level, and our policy and Environmental Strategy will be translated into delivery on the ground through LEAPs. First and foremost LEAPs identify work the Agency needs to do in a local area in order to address local concerns and meet our statutory obligations in line with national targets. LEAPs are public documents subject to a wide consultation in their preparation and we believe that this process will build trust in the community by being open and frank when dealing with all issues.
- 2.2 In addition, we know that the Agency alone cannot bring about the achievement of national environmental goals and targets. Through LEAPs, therefore, we hope to identify and develop partnerships with Local Authorities, representatives of local communities, regulated organisations and other bodies with similar environmental objectives and responsibilities so as to make the most effective use of limited resources. In this context LEAPs will examine and promote the ways in which we in the Agency can co-ordinate our aims, objectives and actions in a locality, with those of others to best effect. Finally LEAPs will also be a practical source of data and guidance for all those who wish to become involved in local environmental management and improvement, notably Local Authorities and environment and community groups.

The LEAP Process

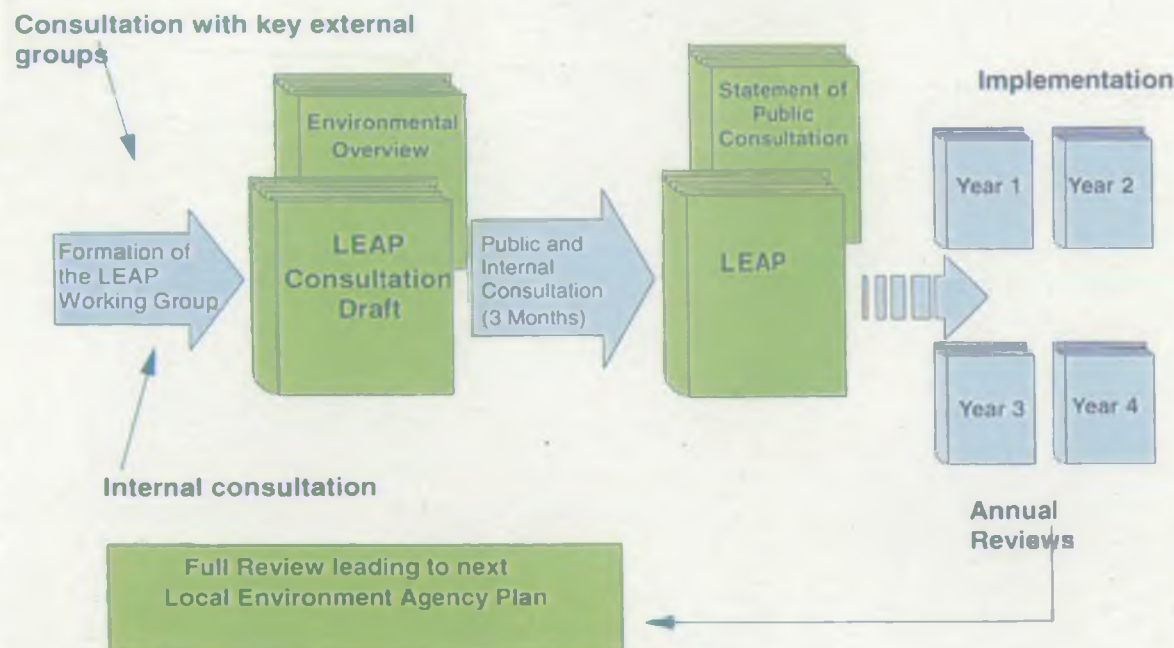
- 2.3 We aim to establish a common vision for environmental objectives and a consensus on future tactics, actions and priorities. Participation and preliminary consultation has already taken place with our Sussex AEG and key local organisations (Appendix 1) to produce this draft Management Plan with supporting information. This Report is intended to be the means by which consultation can be extended as widely as possible.

The Consultation Draft

- 2.4 This LEAP Consultation Draft is the first output of the process for the Cuckmere and Pevensey Levels catchment. **It is not the final Plan.** It is an opportunity for you to comment on environmental issues and to contribute towards a 5 Year Action Plan. There is a three month consultation period for comment on issues and potential options for action after the Plan is launched at a formal presentation. These issues are brought forward from the Environmental Overview.

Figure 1

THE LEAP PROCESS

**The Environmental Overview**

2.5 This is basically a descriptive report which aims to:

- describe the key environmental characteristics and quality of the area;
- explain how the environment is affected by human uses, activities and pressures;
- identify issues where action is needed;

2.6 The Environmental Overview would not generally be utilised for consultation as this is primarily a background document for the identification of issues in the Consultation Draft.

The Final Plan

2.7 The Plan will review the consultation process and will identify, cost and prioritise the issues/actions. These will then be incorporated into a 5 year and 10 year programme for action, which ultimately would feed into the Area's Business Plan. Partners will be identified to help address issues.

The Statement of Consultation

2.8 This should be produced within 6 weeks of the end of the consultation period and will summarise basis of responses made to the Consultation Draft.

Annual Review

2.9 Each year the actions within the final Plan will be reviewed and amended in the light of actions undertaken and new pressures/concerns identified.

3.0 LAND USE PLANNING: THE ROLE OF THE AGENCY

Introduction

- 3.1 It is widely acknowledged that the Town and Country Planning system has a key role in protecting the environment. The Agency supports Local Authorities and others, such as Regional Planning Conferences and Government offices, in developing land use planning policies to promote sustainable development and help secure the protection and enhancement of the environment. A high quality environment is crucial to achieving economic growth and regeneration and a better quality of life for local people. We comment on the appropriateness and scale of development in particular locations. Sustainable development does not mean, however, environmental protection at all costs. We believe achieving sustainable development involves finding ways to encourage environmentally compatible economic activity and discouraging or controlling environmentally damaging activities.
- 3.2 The Agency takes a proactive approach towards its involvement in the planning system and we consider this to be an integral part of our work to protect and enhance the environment. We are involved at all levels of the planning system. At a national level we liaise with DETR and other national organisations, and consult on new and revised legislation, Planning Policy Guidance and Circulars. At a regional level we liaise with Regional Government offices, and provide information and responses to Regional Planning Guidance. At the area level, the Agency promotes local liaison with county and district/borough councils with regard to development planning and development control.
- 3.3 The location, extent and design of development can influence the degree to which new development is sustainable. Whilst the Agency has powers to regulate some processes and substances which can impact on the environment, its powers to control development are limited. In considering impacts of new development, the Agency is therefore largely dependent on the planning system for the protection of the environment.

The Environment Agency and Development Planning

Forward Planning

- 3.4 The Environment Agency provides an integrated approach to the protection and enhancement of the environment. While we can influence some of the factors that have an impact on the well being of the environment, through our regulatory and operational activities, many are beyond our direct control. Land use change can have a significant impact on the environment.
- 3.5 The Town and Country planning system has a key role to play in protecting and enhancing the environment. Development plans set out the main considerations on which planning applications are decided. Policies and

proposals contained within them are of primary importance for shaping land use change, and provide an opportunity to safeguard and enhance the environment and prevent future problems arising as a result of development.

3.6 The development plan process provides an important opportunity to progress towards sustainable development and growth. As a statutory consultee in the development plan preparation process the Agency recognises the importance of working with Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to further the objective of contributing towards sustainable development.

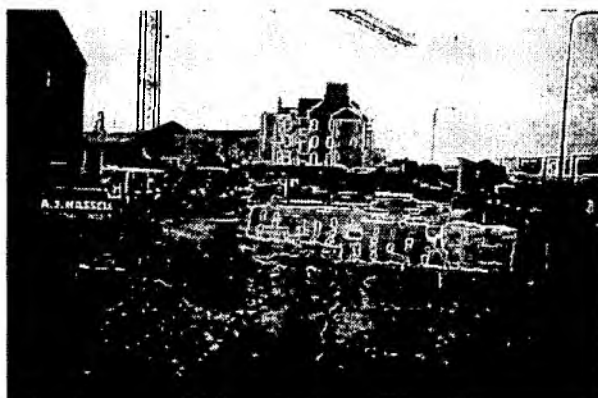
3.7 The basic objectives of the Agency in advising on Development Plan Policies and Guidance are to:

- promote policies which contribute towards sustainable development
- balance the demands of development with the need to protect and enhance the environment.
- prevent (or control) the pollution of air, land and water
- reduce the demand for water, making the best use of current resources
- reduce the risk to people, the developed and natural environment from flooding
- conserve and enhance biodiversity
- promote the use of water and associated land for recreational purposes
- achieve reductions in waste through minimisation, reuse and recycling and improved standards of disposal

3.8 When required, the Agency will appear at Examinations in Public and Local Plan Inquiries to support Local Planning Authority (LPA) policies which promote sustainable development and support our aims and objectives.

Development Control

3.9 LPAs are required under Town and Country Planning legislation to consult the Agency on certain planning applications and have discretionary powers regarding the referral of others. The Agency would assess the implications of development on its interests and, where concerns are identified, advise the LPA to refuse the application or recommend conditions are imposed on any planning permission, to ensure that such concerns are addressed. Any objection would be supported at an Inquiry.



- 3.10 In assessing any planning application a detailed appraisal of the proposal is made by the Agency to identify any potential impacts upon the environment. The following in particular would be considered:

- impact on flooding due to obstruction to watercourses, infilling of floodplains and impedance to groundwater flow
- implications for the integrity of watercourse channels and flood defences
- impact on groundwater quality particularly where the site lies in an sensitive area with respect to groundwater protection
- impact on surface water quality, including the washing of silt into a watercourse
- possible derogation to spring fed watercourses, wetlands and water abstraction
- impact on the conservation of the natural water environment including wetlands and river corridors
- flood risk to the new development from rivers and the sea
- impact of increased surface water runoff from new development on flooding elsewhere
- waste management implications including location to former landfill sites
- implications of development on possible contaminated land
- impact on sewage treatment facilities and sewerage systems

The Environment Agency and Sustainable Development

- 3.11 With increasing and often conflicting demands being placed on the environment, it is now widely accepted that a sustainable approach to growth and development is required if these demands are to be balanced with the need to protect and enhance the environment for now and the future.
- 3.12 Sustainability is sometimes seen as being opposed to development. However, the Agency considers that development can be achieved in ways that are compatible with environmental protection and enhancement. In



particular it must be recognised that a high environmental quality is crucial to achieving economic growth and regeneration and a better quality of life for the Area's population. There are also opportunities to maximise environmental benefits from development schemes.

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- 3.13 Sustainable development, is a key area of shared responsibility between the LPAs and the Agency. The Agency can assist by providing technical information and advice relating to the environment. This is particularly applicable to any environmental capital or capacity studies undertaken in producing Development Plans.
- 3.14 We also support the following measures as important elements of a sustainable approach to land use planning:
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): Appropriate levels and locations of development can only satisfactorily be identified after the environmental characteristics of the region have been assessed. SEA which seeks to evaluate alternative locations for development, as well as SEA of plans, policies and strategies, can make an important contribution to the pursuit of sustainable development.
 - Environmental Assessment (EA): This process is an important mechanism for ensuring that the environmental impacts of projects are identified prior to a decision being taken. The Agency welcomes the opportunity to provide advice particularly at the scoping and evaluation stages.
 - Precautionary Principle: The Agency adopts and promotes the precautionary principle. If there are potentially significant risks of damage to the environment but scientific knowledge is not conclusive then the precautionary principle dictates that development should not go ahead.
 - Polluter Pays Principle: A significant amount of environmental pollution and resource depletion occurs because those who are responsible do not have to bear the costs. Where environmental damage is threatened or caused then the costs of any necessary environmental protection measures should be borne by those responsible and not by society at large, giving incentives to reduce potential environmental threats.
 - Environmental Capital: The concept of environmental capital should be applied in decision making, in order to minimise development which has an irreversible impact on the quality of the natural environment. The Agency has recently helped produce guidance on how environmental capital can be taken into account in the preparation of development plans.

National Planning Liaison Guidance

- 3.15 In March 1997 we produced a Manual to assist Local Authority planners in their day to day contact with the Agency. The Manual identifies the background for the effective liaison between ourselves and LPAs. It lists the types of development plans and other strategies requiring Agency consultation for the following reasons:
- in order to influence policies and proposals which seek to protect and enhance the environment;
 - to provide us with an awareness of wider issues which may affect or influence our own plans or actions.
- 3.16 The Guidance also details the types of planning applications we wish to be consulted upon, the relevance to the Agency of each type of application, and explains the requirement for each consultation - statutory or advisory. Appendices 2 and 3 provide summary information from this Manual.
- 3.17 Specific requirements for the water environment are explained in '*Guidance Notes for Local Planning Authorities on Methods of Protecting the Water Environment through Development Plans*' (NRA) 1994. The Agency will shortly be updating this document and publishing other policy statements to cover the full range of our interests.

4.0 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIPS

Introduction

- 4.1 Government recognises that it will require the active co-operation of all sections of society to achieve sustainable development.

"Because the environment is shared, collective action is necessary"

UK Strategy for Sustainable Development 1994

Many of us have common goals and the Agency seeks to develop close and responsive relationships with the public, local authorities, business, industry, environmental and community groups. Partnerships may be achieved through various arrangements such as funding, education, shared resources and information exchange. LEAPs offer opportunities for identifying and developing partnerships and monitoring achievements in the local environment.

Strategic Links with other Statutory Organisations

- 4.2 At strategic and local levels, the Agency has already established collaborative arrangements with English Nature, local authority associations, National Park Authorities and a number of organisations in respect of environmental research and development.

Local Links with Local Authorities and the Local Community

- 4.3 **Development:** County Structure Plans and Local Development Plans are particularly important as they set the framework for development into the future and are a key matter in determining Planning Applications. As a statutory consultee we advise on the impact of proposed development and our requirements for environmental protection. We also work with LPAs to ensure that suitable policies to protect and enhance the environment are incorporated within development plans, including Wastes and Minerals Local Plans.
- 4.4 **Air Quality:** The Agency and local authorities are both responsible for aspects of air quality monitoring and management. Whilst local authorities are responsible for producing and implementing Local Air Quality Management Plans, we intend to support them in these respects in partnership.
- 4.5 **Biodiversity:** The Agency is working with English Nature, East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council, the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, RSPB and Sussex Wildlife Trust to maintain and enhance the natural resource in the area through the Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership.
- 4.6 **Amenity and Recreation:** Local authorities often own the riverside land in towns and we work with them on schemes to enhance the town centre river corridor with, for example, landscaping, walkways and riverside seating. As part of such schemes nature conservation can be furthered by incorporating areas suitable for wildlife habitats.

- 4.7 **Fisheries and Ecology:** Collaborative projects are ongoing at Milton Gate Marsh, and Combe Haven; and with English Nature and others at Pevensey Levels with regard to developing Water Level Management Plans.
- 4.8 **Flood Defence:** We work with both local authorities and developers to ensure new urban runoff meets with sustainable principles of water management and ensure sea defence works comply with recommendations in Shoreline Management Plans.
- 4.9 **Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) and Coastal Zone Management (CZM):** SMPs have been produced by a range of groups, including local councils and the Agency, with statutory interests working together. In this LEAP area, there is the Beachy Head to South Foreland SMP and the South Downs SMP. These were based on partnerships which can be extended to encompass CZM and a wider integration of coastal uses.
- 4.10 **Litter:** We need to work with local authorities and other groups, particularly where litter adversely affects flood defence integrity.
- 4.11 **Waste Minimisation and Pollution Prevention:** We are particularly interested to encourage partnership opportunities with local authorities, businesses and other groups to effect waste minimisation. We provide information for local initiatives such as the Hastings Sustainable Business Partnership. We are working with the public to identify pollution incidents through our Pollution Hotline 0800 80 70 60.
- 4.12 **Local Agenda 21:** At the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, 1992, it was agreed by Governments that action at a local level is crucial to help achieve sustainable development. Local Agenda 21 is about local environmental issues being identified and resolved by local people, and is designed to promote the empowerment of individuals in the conservation and enhancement of the environment. Responsibility for the Local Agenda 21 (LA21) process lies principally with District Councils, who are required to create and co-ordinate partnerships between all sectors of the community, and a framework within which local communities can discuss and reach consensus on the identification and resolution of local environmental problems. The process involves formulating a LA21 Strategy for each area through consultation and participation, in order to promote action on identified priorities. The Government's aim is for all Local Authorities to have prepared a LA21 Strategy by the end of 1999.



4.13 Issues raised by the LA21 process can include concerns where the Agency is the lead body responsible or otherwise involved, such as water quality, waterside recreation, river and wetland conservation, air quality, contaminated land, and waste management. The level of and format for public involvement in LA21 groups can vary considerably between different areas, and may comprise the formation of local LA21, round tables, and working groups. Some local authorities have an Officer dedicated at least part-time to the process. The Agency is committed to the promotion and support of LA21 groups in the Sussex Area. At present we provide information services, detailed responses on relevant topics such as waste minimisation and litter clearance from streams, and support to LA21 groups through the existing Agency information service and through attendance at LA21 group meetings and events by Agency officers.

4.14 **Water Management:** We are working with all the Water Companies in the south-east to prepare a sustainable strategy for water management over the next 30 years.

Education

4.15 We recognise that broad-based education covering the community, educational and industrial sectors will result in a more informed society that is better able to understand the environment, its needs, and the impact of society's activities upon it. The Agency's *Education Strategy Green Shoots* includes the following objectives:

- help educate young people through teaching aids and other initiatives;
- educate industry and business through consultation, collaborative activities and targeted campaigns to promote pollution prevention rather than its remediation;
- raise public awareness of environmental issues to encourage responsibility for the environment and its challenges.

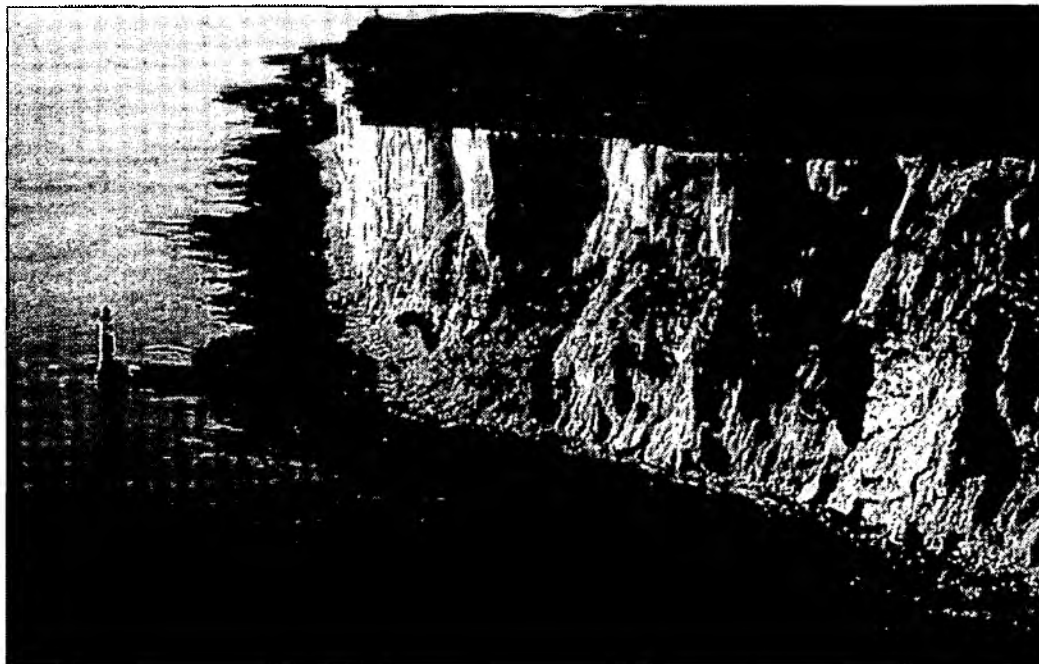
4.16 We provide a wide range of information to all sectors of society, and in addition give many talks and presentations. This LEAP is a practical example of the material we publish which can assist in raising public awareness and understanding of environmental issues. However, we all have a role to play in raising awareness of the importance of issues facing our local environment.

Greenlink Awards Ceremony



5.0 CATCHMENT OVERVIEW

- 5.1 This LEAP area is recognised as one of the most attractive in southern England. Much of the western part of the catchment is dominated by the chalk of the Sussex Downs, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) managed by the Sussex Downs Conservation Board. The dramatic cliffs between Seaford and Eastbourne have been defined as a Heritage Coast. Here there is considerable informal recreation, including the Seven Sisters Country Park, which embraces Beachy Head. The character of this western area has developed as a result of centuries of open grazing, principally by sheep.



- 5.2 The north-eastern part of the area lies within a second AONB, the High Weald, which extends into Kent and is an ancient landscape of copses, hedgerows and small fields. The historic heritage of this part of East Sussex remains an important attraction for tourists. Fundamental to the marketing of the area is *1066 Country*, around Hastings and Battle, and a number of historic properties and gardens, including Pevensey Castle.
- 5.3 The central part of the area is on the lower land of the Low Weald. To the south lies Pevensey Levels, a low-lying area much of which was reclaimed from the sea in the Middle Ages. Its mosaic of fields and drainage dykes evokes a feeling of wilderness, and its character is special and worthy of preservation. The Levels, known locally as the Marshes, are recognised both nationally and internationally for their high nature conservation value. This value has to be balanced with the needs of the local farming community. The retention of the unique value of Pevensey Levels is dependent upon the maintenance of the sea defences at Pevensey Bay.

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- 5.4 The popular image of the area remains dominated by the coastal resorts. Eastbourne is one of the country's premier resorts, but Hastings, Bexhill, Seaford and Pevensey Bay have smaller and locally important tourism industries.
- 5.5 This part of East Sussex is not under great pressure for development and relatively little land is allocated for growth in the County Structure Plan period. However it is recognised that inward investment will be required to sustain the area. Traditional agriculture is suffering, as the rest of the UK, from the Common Agricultural Policy and there is pressure from farming diversification.
- 5.6 The rivers in the area are generally of good quality and support diverse, both coarse and game, fisheries. The chalk aquifer is the major water resource for the area and has been fully exploited to the limit of its capacity. The local water supplies are also reliant upon two river abstractions from the River Cuckmere and the Wallers Haven in the Pevensey Levels. Water abstracted from the River Cuckmere is stored in Arlington Reservoir. Stored river water from the River Ouse is also imported into the catchment. Sewage from the coastal towns has been traditionally disposed to sea and there is an ongoing programme of improvements being carried out by Southern Water.
- 5.7 The area does not have a significant industrial legacy, although extraction for brickworks has remained significant locally. Generally, air quality is good except for ozone, which in common with the rest of south-east England, can exceed the UK AQ Standard. Waste from the area is primarily taken to landfill and a few limited recycling facilities.

6.0 ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Introduction

- 6.1 This section of the LEAP details environmental issues which may need to be addressed within the Final Plan for the area. We have identified this initial list of issues from our own review of the environment, together with our Area Environment Group (AEG) whose members represent a wide range of interests in the Sussex Area. We have also, through consultation, considered the concerns and aspirations of organisations with particular interests and responsibilities in the area.
- 6.2 We held discussion meetings with our AEG and visited various departments of East Sussex County Council and the five District Councils in the area, as well as English Nature. We invited comment by correspondence with other organisations interested in the area and Appendix A lists organisations contacted during this preliminary consultation. We have incorporated comments and ideas wherever possible and we are grateful for the contribution of the time and effort of respondents and consultees.
- 6.3 The initial list of issues presented in this Consultation Draft is intended to encourage debate and to seek your views on the environmental issues which face the Cuckmere and Pevensey Levels area. Many of the issues are inter-related and this reflects the need for integrated environmental management. The issues are presented in a summary matrix and grouped under our 9 principal concerns for action as detailed in our Strategy for the Millennium. The following section then gives a background to each issue and suggests potential options for action. The issues were initially identified from an assessment of the existing environment and pressures upon it, as identified in the Environmental Overview.
- 6.4 The issues are classified into A, which are considered to be more of a priority, and B, which are less significant for the Agency. Within these two categories the issues are not arranged in any particular order of relative importance. Detailed costings of options for actions have not been made but estimations are given: High (H - above £250,000), Medium (M - £50,000 - £250,000) and Low (L - below £50,000). It should be noted that such estimated costs are a total for any action and, therefore, could often be shared between a number of organisations.

Summary Matrix

Issue No.	Description	Environmental Strategy Concerns*								
		Climate Change	Air Quality	Water Resources	Biodiversity	Freshwater Fisheries	Integrated river-basin Management	The Land	Waste	Major Industries
	CLIMATE CHANGE									
A01	Impact of Climate Change on Sea Defences	√					√	√		
	AIR QUALITY									
	WATER RESOURCES									
A02	Sustainable Water Resources Management			√	√					√
B01	Deterioration of Tidal Gates on Wallers Haven and Pevensey Haven			√	√	√	√			
	BIODIVERSITY									
A03	Decline in Nature Conservation Value of Pevensey Levels				√	√	√			
A04	Protection of Biodiversity				√	√	√			
A05	Loss and Degradation of Wetland and Riverine Habitats			√	√	√	√			
A06	The Sustainable Management of the Cuckmere Estuary				√		√	√		
	FRESHWATER FISHERIES									
A07	Obstacles to Free Passage of Sea Trout and Coarse Fish					√	√			

* From: *Environmental Strategy for the Millennium and Beyond*, Environment Agency, 1997

		Environmental Strategy Concerns*									
Issue No.	Description	Climate Change	Air Quality	Water Resources	Biodiversity	Freshwater Fisheries	Integrated river-basin Management	The Land	Waste	Major Industries	Page References
A08	Sustainable Fisheries Management					√	√				
	INTEGRATED RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT										
A09	Deterioration of Land Drainage Structures and Equipment on Pevensey Levels			√	√		√	√			
A10	Increased Managed Access to the Water Environment for Recreation					√	√	√			
A11	Compliance with EU Standards and Agency Objectives for Water Quality						√	√		√	
B02	Need to Protect Archaeological Heritage in Wetland, Riverine and Coastal areas						√				
B03	Intermittent Pollution of Watercourses				√	√	√		√		
B04	Marine Pollution - Oil and Litter				√		√		√		
	THE LAND										
A12	Standards and Maintenance of Sea Defences in Pevensey Bay	√					√	√			

		Environmental Strategy Concerns*									
		Climate Change	Air Quality	Water Resources	Biodiversity	Freshwater Fisheries	Integrated river-basin Management	The Land	Waste	Major Industries	Page References
Issue No.	Description										
A13	Development Pressures, Sustainable Surface Water Management and the Need to Protect Floodplains			√	√		√	√			
	WASTE										
A14	Promote and Forward the Sustainable Management of Wastes							√	√	√	
A15	The Capacity of Landfill Sites for the Disposal of Waste runs out in 2003							√	√		
A16	The Increase in Land Application of Wastes							√	√		
A17	Fly Tipping and Rubbish in Watercourses							√	√		
B05	Potential Risk of Water Pollution from Closed Landfills				√			√	√		
	MAJOR INDUSTRIES										

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR ACTION

CLIMATE CHANGE

Issue A01: Impact of Climate Change on Sea Defences

Background: There is a need to review standards of protection afforded by sea defences, in particular to consider the predicted impacts of climate change as shingle beaches will be susceptible to sea level rise and increased storm severity. This is particularly relevant in areas of recent and continuing intensive development along the coast.

Issue No. A01	Impact of Climate Change on Sea Defences			
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	Cost	Reduced standard of defence in long-term		
Review standards of Sea Defence	Accurate baseline information to assess risk and evaluate options	Resources Cost	L	Agency Local Authorities
Monitor climate change impacts	Enable better management of defences	Resources Cost	L	Agency Local Authorities

WATER RESOURCES

Issue A02: Sustainable Water Resources Management

Background: The greatest pressure on water resources is from public water supplies and this is a particular issue for the south-east due to rising per capita household consumptions, development pressures, and the predicted effects of climate change. Reliable yields are being reassessed throughout England and Wales to consider climate change predictions and sustainability of our environmental resources. Water is a regional resource and we believe that in the south-east it can be shared and managed according to sustainable principles. In 1997, the South-East Water Forum was created with all the water companies in the south-east, the Agency, Ofwat and DETR. Together, we are working to develop a sustainable water resource strategy for the next 30 years. Within this LEAP area although South East Water augment flows in the Wallers Haven from groundwater abstraction, there is concern that there may be

over abstraction for public water supply and a bid to investigate this issue is being submitted to Ofwat as part of the current AMP 3 negotiations.

The Agency will continue to promote the implementation of demand management options, water conservation and reuse measures, where appropriate, into local development plans. Demand management promotes policies and measures to control the consumption and waste of water. These can include leakage control, metering, use of water-efficient devices and equipment (e.g. low volume washing machines and reduced-flush WCs).

Waste water recycling and reuse creates opportunities for retaining water resources in the catchment. Studies are needed to assess benefits and costs but there may be opportunities in this area, particularly for the larger coastal discharges which need additional treatment to ensure compliance with the EU urban waste water treatment directive. The costs of pumping adequately treated waste water back into the catchment need to be assessed within the context of sustainable environmental management.

The need to protect existing groundwater resources from pollution is vital and new regulations, which come into force later in 1998, will require further pollution prevention measures for certain activities to ensure protection of groundwater.

Issue No. A02		Sustainable Water Resources Management		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing		Continuing uncertainty over sustainability of current management		
Encourage demand management and water conservation	Sustainable use of water resources	Public acceptance Rate of implementation by water companies Rate of waste by industry and agriculture	H	Agency SWS South-East Water Ofwat Local Authorities Developers Public Industry Agriculture

Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Continue long term water resource planning for the south-east	Sustainable use of water resources		H	Water companies Ofwat Agency DETR
Investigate reliable yield and sustainable abstraction from Wallers Haven	Sustainable use of water resources	Resources Cost	H	Agency South-East Water EN Farmers
Promote wastewater recycling and reuse	Retains water in catchment	Studies needed to assess cost and risk	H	Water companies Agency Industry
Promote proactive role in development planning	Reduce pressure on environment and extend water resource balance		H	Local Authorities Agency
Develop and implement strategy for targeting activities which pose particular risk to groundwater	Protect and enhance groundwater quality	Resources Cost	M	Agency Local Authorities Industry Water Companies
Develop waste minimisation initiatives with business	Reduce water usage Reduced costs to Business	Resources	L	Agency Water Companies Local Authorities Industry

Issue B01: Deterioration of Tidal Gates on Wallers Haven and Pevensey Haven

Background: The Wallers Haven and Pevensey Haven are important channels in the Pevensey Levels network. Water levels are kept high to provide water for wetfencing and irrigation, and for the Wallers Haven to maintain security of surface water abstraction for public water supply to Eastbourne and Bexhill. The condition of the tidal gates on both watercourses are deteriorating and opportunities for funding to repair or replace the gates will need to be investigated. The gates do not contribute to the flood defence strategy for the levels. The existing gates are bottom-opening which allows loss of fish; replacement with top-opening gates would also resolve this issue.

Issue No. B01		Deterioration of Tidal Gates on Wallers Haven		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	Potential increase in saltmarsh area	Saline intrusion and loss of high water level limits use of Wallers Haven for water supply abstraction Loss of water for irrigation and wet fencing		
Identify funding to repair gates	Security of water supply abstraction Continued availability of water for irrigation and wet fencing	Cost Resources	H	South-East Water Landowners Farmers Agency
Identify funding to replace gates	As above Top-opening gates would prevent loss of fish	Cost	H	SE Water Landowners Farmers Agency

BIODIVERSITY

Issue A03: Decline in Nature Conservation Value of Pevensey Levels

Background: From the 1950s to the 1980s a number of schemes were implemented to improve the drainage of the marshland of the Pevensey Levels to enable the land to be used for arable production and to help protect against flooding during periods of tidelock. This drainage, together possibly with abstraction for public water supply from the Wallers Haven and changes in land management, have significantly reduced the ecological value of the Levels. The drainage ditches of the Levels provide much of the nature conservation interest by supporting a high diversity of aquatic plants and animals with several rarities. Overwintering birds also feed and roost on the Levels but their numbers have declined in recent years.

Pevensey Levels is a large Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a proposed Ramsar site, which is an international designation. A number of Water Level

Management Plans (WLMPs) have been prepared or are proposed, which seek to promote a sustainable strategy for the area to optimise the water resource. The Plans also aim to balance and integrate conservation, flood defence, agricultural and other interests. The management of the Levels to arrest the decline in the nature conservation value is an important issue and the implementation of the WLMPs will be a key factor.

The range of priorities on the Levels, taking into account the needs and interests of different users, is agreed through the Pevensey Levels Study Group. Land management to prioritise the needs of nature conservation wherever possible is undertaken by a range of Agreements with owners and farmers, including the Wildlife Enhancement Scheme (WES) operated by English Nature.

Issue No. A03 Decline in Nature Conservation Value of Pevensey Levels				
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do nothing	Farming maintains current but unpredictable status	Continued loss of internationally valuable wetland, habitat and nationally important species.		
Continue preparing and implementing WLMPs	Greater understanding of complex system Positive options to satisfy all users	Scheduled for completion in 2005	H	Agency EN MAFF Landowners Farmers Sussex WT RSPB Pevensey Levels Study Group
Accelerate WLMPs programme	Earlier availability of options	Resources Cost	M	As above
Identify spring flooding appropriate for key species to increase bird numbers	Conserve wetland habitat Increase bird numbers Reinstate potential status for SPA under Birds Directive	Limits livestock grazing Reduction in farming viability Cost/compensation	M	As above

Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Further develop pilot areas to study raised water levels	Greater understanding and baseline information	Resources Cost Localised effects on farming	M	As above
Promote extension of the Wildlife Enhancement Scheme	Enhances nature conservation value Maintains farming viability	Cost	H	EN Landowners Agency Farmers
Promote designation of area as an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA)	Maintains farming viability	Needs agreement of DETR, CC, EN	H	MAFF Agency

Issue A04: Protection of Biodiversity

Background: We are the lead partner and, therefore, the responsible organisation for a number of water-related species and habitats. There are various actions which need to be undertaken in order to help achieve the commitments in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and the local Biodiversity Action Plans being compiled for Sussex.

Issue No. A04	Protection of Biodiversity			
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	Cost	Loss of biodiversity Do not achieve Government targets		
Develop targets for protection of the Water Vole, Little Whirlpool Ramshorn Snail, Crayfish, Freshwater Pea Mussel, Shining Ramshorn Snail, in the LEAP area	Protection of sensitive species	Resources	M	Agency EN Sussex WT

Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Identify rare plant species that could be encouraged to re-colonise areas by habitat creation	Protection and enhancement of native species	Resources	L	Agency EN Sussex WT
Prepare an Otter management strategy	Encourage recolonisation of catchment by Otters	Resources	L	Agency EN Sussex WT
Assess distribution of Alder disease on River Cuckmere	Baseline information to assist Forestry Authority in studies to find cause and treatment of disease Maintenance of alders protects ecology and riverbank stability	Resources	L	Agency Forestry Authority

Issue A05: Loss and Degradation of Wetland and Riverine Habitats

Background: Agricultural improvements, previous river engineering practices, and lack of, or poor, maintenance have all contributed to the destruction and degradation of wetlands and riverine habitats. Action is required to prevent further damage to, or loss of, remnant habitats, and to create new and improve existing wetland habitats.

Issue No. A05 Loss and Degradation of Wetland and Riverine Habitats				
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	Cost	Continued loss of habitats		
Greater promotion of Buffer Strips along watercourses	Reduce runoff, sedimentation and nutrient enrichment Development of Wildlife Corridor	Landowner permissions Agricultural subsidies	H	Agency MAFF Local Authorities Landowners

Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Identify and prioritise areas for habitat enhancement using results from River Corridor Surveys (RCSs) and River Habitat Surveys (RHSs), including re-creation of floodplain woodlands and carr (copse in boggy ground)	Improved instream and riparian habitats and biodiversity Provision of refuge areas for juvenile fish and thus increased fish stocks	Land Drainage maintenance Landowner permissions Impedance to flood flows	M	Agency EN Local Authorities Sussex WT
Design and implement tree management programme	Reduce excessive shading where necessary; increase woodland cover where appropriate Enhancement of traditional landscape	Landowner permissions Cost	M	Agency EN SWT Local Authorities Forestry Authority
Control spread of undesirable alien species: Giant Hogweed Japanese Knotweed Himalayan Balsam <i>Crassula helmsii</i>	Protection of native riparian and aquatic flora	Cost	M	Agency EN Local Authorities Landowners
Complete eradication of the alien Floating Pennywort which is shading out native plants and blocking flood defence structures at Pevensey Levels	Protection of flood defence integrity Protection of natural habitats	Chemical treatment may have detrimental effect on water quality	M	Agency EN

Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Investigate extent to which nutrients in sewage discharges are affecting invertebrates, particularly d/s Hailsham STWs	Protection of native species		M	Southern Water Agency
Implement mink control programme	Protection of native species	Resources Cost	M	MAFF Landowners

Issue A06: The Sustainable Management of the Cuckmere Estuary

Background: The lower River Cuckmere is of particular importance for its landscape, ecology, geology and amenity/recreational value, which attracts large numbers of visitors. Whilst for much of its length the river follows a natural meandering course, the estuary has undergone reclamation. Straightening and embankment of the river channel was carried out in the last century, isolating part of the meanders on the lower floodplain. Flood defence work by the Environment Agency at Cuckmere Estuary to maintain the tidal banks and the position of the river mouth currently requires expenditure of at least £40 k per annum.

The South Downs Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) identifies the preferred Strategic Defence option to *Hold the line*, whilst actively exploring realignment. Managed Retreat offers opportunities to create additional areas of saltmarsh habitat, which are scarce and highly valued. Proposals could include breaching parts of the embankments in the lower reaches and eventually re-joining the meanders. Pilot studies have indicated the potential opportunities for ecological, landscape and recreational enhancement associated with a flood defence strategy which allows some natural evolution of the shoreline. Opportunities for reducing long term maintenance costs are also indicated. Feasibility and costs are currently being evaluated for options as follows:

- allow river to discharge naturally to the sea
- strengthen parts of existing flood defence system whilst breaching other parts, to recreate saltmarsh
- eventual reopening of meanders

Issue No. A06		The Sustainable Management of the Cuckmere Estuary		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing		Continuing maintenance costs Possible flood risk		
Hold the line	SMP preferred option (whilst the possibility of managed retreat is actively explored)	Increased costs to recycle shingle Not preferred option for EN		Local Authorities SDCB MAFF Agency CC EN
Phased sequence of realignment of flood defences, encouraging silt deposition on the floodplain and reopening the isolated meanders (feasibility studies continuing)	More natural and sustainable environment Minimising long-term maintenance costs Creation of additional saltmarsh		H	EN SDCB Local Authorities Agency

FRESHWATER FISHERIES

Issue A07: Free Passage of Sea Trout and Coarse Fish

Background: There are a number of obstacles to the free passage of sea trout within the catchment. In addition, coarse fish can be washed downstream of weirs and sluices in high flow conditions; there is frequently no means for them to return upstream to their original reach. The fish passes that have been constructed have been designed for salmon populations and the flow velocities are too great for coarse fish. This results in an impoverished fish stock on the rivers.

Issue No. A07		Obstacles to Free Passage of Sea Trout and Coarse Fish		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	Cost	Reduced fish populations		

Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Assess extent of problem Assess effectiveness of fish passes Modify passes where necessary	Protection of coarse fish stocks and quality of angling Free passage of sea trout to spawning areas	Cost Landowner permissions Resources	M	Agency Angling organisations
Investigate operation of sluices and evaluate option for replacement of bottom gates with top-opening gates Provide fish refuges in impounded areas	Improved quality of angling	Cost Resources	M	Agency Angling organisations
Remove certain weirs and sluices	Free passage for both coarse fish and sea trout Recreation of natural riffle pool sequences	Possible negative effect on bank stability Change in habitat Potentially constrain abstractions and discharges	H	As above
Reduce steepness of bank profiles	As above	As above	H	As above

Issue A08: Sustainable Fisheries Management

Background: Problems have been identified with the unlicensed netting of eels and, concurrently, by-catches of coarse fish not being returned. Some river reaches have fish populations lower than expected and they do not appear to be self-sustaining.

Issue No. A08	Sustainable Fisheries Management			
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	Cost	Unsustainable fisheries		

Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Assess the scale of netting and its impact on stocks of eels in the River Cuckmere and Pevensey Levels	Protect stocks of eels and coarse fish	Resources Costs	M	Agency Eel Fishermen Angling organisations
Consider provision of catch returns for fyke nets	Protect stocks of eels and coarse fish	Resources Costs	M	Agency Eel Fishermen Angling organisations
Maintain or improve current levels of enforcement	Protect stocks of eels and coarse fish	Resources Costs	M	Agency Eel Fishermen Angling organisations
Enhance habitat, particularly in the main havens and channels.	Sustainable fisheries	Resources Costs	M	Agency Angling organisations Landowners

INTEGRATED RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT

Issue A09: Deterioration of Land Drainage Structures and Equipment on Pevensey Levels

Background: The land drainage of the Pevensey Levels is very complex and relies on an extensive system of sluices and pumps which are approaching the end of their design life. Considerable costs are associated with pumping and maintaining the present system. The current funding arrangements of the Internal Drainage Board (i.e. the Agency) may be sufficient for routine maintenance, but are unlikely to be adequate for the significant capital works that will be required to repair and replace the existing system. The successful implementation of the WLMPs is dependent upon the condition and operating capability of the various structures on the Levels to maintain water levels. These structures need to be appraised and repaired, as appropriate, so that the Levels can be managed to achieve the priorities of each area.

Issue No. A09		Deterioration of Land Drainage Structures and Equipment on Pevensey Levels		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	Short-term cost	Loss of management for flood defence, land drainage, farming, conservation, irrigation.	-	
Carry out asset survey and correlate with WLMPs into overall Strategy for levels	Identifies problems and options in a systematic way	Resources Cost	M	Agency (IDB) Landowners Farmers EN MAFF Sussex WT RSPB Pevensey Levels Study Group
Repair leaks on smaller sluices	Some improvement in accuracy of baseline information for WLMPs	Resources Cost Not systematic within overall Strategy	M	Agency (IDB) Landowners Farmers EN

Issue A10: Increased Managed Access to the Water Environment for Recreation

Background: The Agency has a commitment to provide for and promote water recreation having regard to other environmental factors. This is particularly relevant in areas where the Agency owns or has control of land or water. Improvements for access can be achieved in association with the Agency's other activities, such as flood defence schemes. We need to identify the environmentally sensitive areas and those which can absorb increased activity. The needs of conservation and recreation have to be carefully balanced with each other and those of other users, and issues such as public safety must also be taken into account. The Agency needs access to maintain the shingle sea defences and there is concern regarding obstacles to access from launching facilities for recreational, and fishing, boats.

Issue No. A10		Increase Managed Access to the Water Environment for Recreation		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	Cost	Recreational capacity over-reached		
Prepare access strategy for the River Cuckmere	Appropriate access optimised and integrated with other Strategies and Plans	Resources	M	Agency Local Authorities SDCB CC EN Sussex SWT Landowners and all users
Use of coastal defence embankments for footpaths and cycleways	Increased access	Potential risk of erosion and loss of integrity of floodbanks and increased maintenance	M	As above
Recommend access to water in planning conditions for waterside development (where compatible with other uses)	Increased access and enhancement of conservation. Increased value of development	Public safety Security	M	Developers LPAs Landowners Agency
Increase liaison and education with boat launchers	Access secured for maintenance of sea defences	Resources	L	Boat users Agency

Issue A11: Compliance with EU Standards and Agency Objectives for Water Quality

Background: While the majority of the watercourses in the area comply with EU directives and their Rivers Ecosystem (RE) targets and Water Quality objectives, some problem areas do exist which require investigation by the Agency. There are a number of compliance problems for effluents discharged from Sewage Treatment Works and from the sewerage system via Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs). Some of these issues are already being addressed by Southern Water Services Ltd (SWS) within their Asset Management Plan (AMP2) commitment. This strategic business

plan was developed for the period 1995 - 2000. Improvements to sewage treatment works operated by SWS are subject to funding approved by Ofwat, the water industry's regulator. Ofwat have now initiated AMP 3, the next periodic review of water company prices, which will run from 2000 - 2005. The Agency has proposed a number of schemes for investment in this period and these are currently being negotiated with SWS and Ofwat.

Within the EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) provision is made for reduced treatment of wastewater discharging into a marine environment which is identified as a high natural dispersion area (HNDA), for example, because of the particular characteristics of the tidal currents. The 1997 HNDA carried out by the Agency recommends that Eastbourne, Hastings and Seaford Bay retain their HNDA status. This is yet to be confirmed by the DETR. SWS Limited has carried out comprehensive studies at these locations to verify the impact of the discharges on the receiving waters.

Additional treatment of wastewaters is required under UWWTD if the receiving water is designated as a sensitive water ie, suffering from excessive eutrophication and consequential reduction in water quality and ecological value. The Agency has proposed that this is the situation downstream of the Hailsham sewage treatment works in Pevensey Levels, and this is also a current AMP 3 issue.

Many rural sites cause water quality problems with poorly maintained sewage plants and illegal discharges from cess pits and septic tanks. Opportunities now exist for first time sewerage schemes to be developed with the district councils and SWS.

Issue No. A11	Compliance with EU Standards and Agency Objectives for Water Quality			
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	No cost	Continuing non-compliance Degradation in environmental quality	-	
Continue AMP2 commitments to resolve failure of bathing water directive at Hastings	Achieve compliance Improve environmental quality and tourism	Cost	M	SWS Agency
Determine cause of failure of bathing water directive at Pevensey Bay	Achieve compliance Improve environmental quality and tourism	Cost	M	SWS Agency

Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Verify SWS comprehensive studies on HNDA status (under UWWTD) at Hastings, Seaford Bay and Eastbourne	Achieve level of treatment necessary to comply with UWWTD	Failure to comply	H	SWS Agency DETR
Confirm reasons for failure of freshwater fisheries directive and River Quality Objective at Windmill Hill	Identify opportunities for increase in dissolved oxygen (DO) and achieve compliance	AMP3 Issue	M	Agency SWS
Encourage first time sewerage schemes	Improved WQ	Cost	M	District Councils SWS Agency

Issue B02: Need to Protect Archaeological Heritage in Wetland, Riverine and Coastal Areas

Background: The Agency has a duty to protect and conserve our archaeological heritage. In particular wetlands, due to their nature and lack of disturbance, have considerable potential for the presence of organic remains.

Issue No. B02 Need to Protect Archaeological Heritage in Wetland, Riverine and Coastal Areas				
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing		Potential loss of archaeological heritage		
Identify archaeological implications of coastal defence works at Pevensey and Combe Haven	Protection of archaeological resources, including 'The Resolution'	Cost Potential delay to schemes	L	EH ESCC District Councils Agency

Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Increase awareness through education	Protection of archaeological heritage	Resources	L	Agency EH Local Authorities Public

Issue B03: Intermittent Pollution of Watercourses

Background: Leakage and accidental spillage of oils and other polluting liquids, particularly from industrial estates, cause intermittent pollution of watercourses. The Diplocks Way Estate in Hailsham has been identified as a particular area of concern.

Issue No. B03	Intermittent Pollution of Watercourses			
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	Cost	Continued pollution of watercourses		
Seek to ensure that industrial estates are controlled with regard to oil storage to the same standards as agriculture	Improved regulation and guidance will improve environmental quality	Enforcement resources	M	Agency DETR
Studies proposed to investigate Diplocks Way Industrial Estate in Hailsham	Improve WQ	Resources	L	Agency Industry Public
Advise and encourage good practice and waste minimisation through education and seminar groups	Improve WQ Reduce costs to business	Resources	M	Agency Industry Local Authorities
Promote pollution prevention measures in the planning process	Improve WQ	Resources	M	Agency Local Authorities

Issue B04: Marine Pollution - Oil and Litter

Background: The Agency has limited responsibilities but this is considered to be a particular issue by the public.

Issue No. B04	Marine Pollution - Oil and Litter			
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing				
Input to Emergency Plans for oil spills	Protect the marine environment	Resources	L	Agency Local Authorities MAFF Fire Brigade Public Marine Pollution Control Unit (MPCU)

THE LAND

Issue A12: Standards and Maintenance of Sea Defences in Pevensey Bay

Background: Standards of protection are continually reviewed, and where agreed with MAFF to be cost effective, offer value for money and subject to Agency expenditure constraints and priorities, Capital Schemes are undertaken to improve standards to levels appropriate to the areas defended from flooding from the sea. The Agency is promoting a Scheme to improve the standards of the Sea Defence at Pevensey Bay and funding for this is being investigated through a private public partnership (PPP). The Scheme is in our capital programme but there is a delay perceived by local residents in its implementation and concern about funding for long-term maintenance. We are also concerned about obstructions (new development, fencing, moorings etc) to our access for shingle movement to maintain the Sea Defence.

Issue No. A12		Standards and Maintenance of Sea Defences in Pevensy Bay		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do nothing	Cost	Increased risk of breaching of existing shingle embankment and flooding with significant risk to people and property. Saline intrusion and significant damage to farming and nature conservation.	-	
Promote Strategy for improved sea defence	Higher standard of protection	Costs	H	Agency MAFF English Nature
Identify long term maintenance arrangements	Security of maintenance	Cost	L	Agency Local Authorities MAFF
Improve liaison and awareness of maintenance with other beach users, property owners and local authorities	Maintain standard of defence	Resources	L	Agency Property owners Fishermen Boat users and jet skiers Local Authorities

Issue A13: Development Pressures, Sustainable Surface Water Management and the Need to Protect Floodplains

Background: Careful consideration must be given to the implications of increased surface water run-off to watercourses, generated by additional impermeable areas from new development so as to ensure flooding is not created or exacerbated. Development and infilling within fluvial floodplains will be resisted by the Environment Agency.

It has been practice; where problems are identified, to store water run-off during heavy rain in 'balancing' or flood attenuation ponds to be released later. This reduces flood risk by limiting the rate of surface water run-off to watercourses and they can only

work effectively if adequately maintained. The Agency is concerned at the proliferation of small ponds, each designed to reduce the peak flow from individual developments. There is a need to promote the strategic planning of surface water management.

Opportunities also exist for creative design appropriate to urban, suburban and rural environments which will enhance the conservation and recreational value of such features. For example, we will promote the use of wet ponds for surface water attenuation. The Agency will also encourage source control, where appropriate, with consideration of permeable surfaces and water reuse, together with other demand management techniques such as water-efficient equipment and appliances.

Issue No. A13 Development Pressures, Sustainable Surface Water Management and the Need to Protect Floodplains				
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing		Increased flood risk		
Review management of existing flood attenuation ponds	Baseline information for future Strategy Identifies problems and indicates options for resolution	Resources Cost	H	Agency Local Authorities SWS
Develop Strategy for maintenance of ponds and systems	Improvement of flood defence integrity and amenity value	Resources Cost	H	Agency Local Authorities Public Developers SWS
Develop potential Strategies for new development with local authorities	Reduction in pollution and flood risks Increased opportunities for nature conservation and recreation where appropriate	Resources Cost	H	Agency Local Authorities Developers SWS Public South East Water

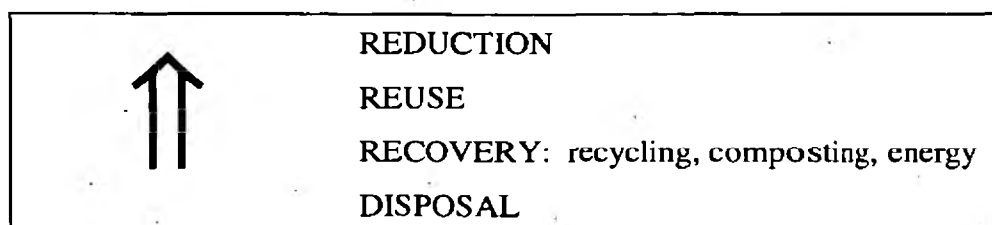
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Promote source control	Early stage solution	Public perception Developers	H	As above
Promote natural functioning of floodplains	Flood risk minimised Enhanced environment	Cost Loss of development land	H	As above Insurance companies
Promote wet ponds for surface water attenuation	Enhancement of conservation and recreation	Maintenance increased Loss of land for development	H	As above
Development of rain water harvesting techniques	Reduced demand on public water supply Reduced flood risk	Public acceptance	H	Local Authorities Developers Industry Agency Water Companies
Educate and encourage best practice through publicity, seminars and workshops	Improved environment through education	Resources Cost	M	Agency Local Authorities Developers Public Water Companies
Increase maintenance on rivers	Reduced flood risk	Conservation disturbance Cost	M	Local Authorities Agency Riparian Owners

WASTE

Issue A14: Promote and Forward the Sustainable Management of Wastes

Background: The Agency has wide-ranging waste management and regulation responsibilities. Our principal aim for waste management is to reduce the impacts of waste on the environment and to encourage the move up the Waste Hierarchy:

The Waste Hierarchy



Landfill capacity in the East Essex area is very limited and greater effort will be required to achieve sustainable waste management. Currently, about 90% of household wastes produced in the LEAP area are landfilled and about 25% of industrial/commercial wastes are reused or recovered in some way within the county of East Sussex. In order to achieve sustainable waste management, and to meet targets set out in the UK National Waste Strategy *Making Waste Work*, levels of minimisation, reuse and recycling need to be increased for industrial, commercial and household wastes.

We have a role to play for waste planners, contractors and the public in encouraging sustainable waste management practices. As the major component of household waste is putrescible matter, there is considerable scope for composting. The Councils will be responsible for setting up home composting schemes, as well as developing more recycling facilities. We will promote local initiatives with businesses, such as the Hastings Sustainable Business Partnership, and encourage understanding of waste minimisation, reuse and recycling through seminars and educational leaflets. We will also support local authorities for the inclusion of specific policies and conditions encouraging sustainable waste management in local authority development plans and planning consents. We will promote the Agency's tool for carrying out Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) which enables the identification of sustainable waste management options.

Issue No. A14		Promote and Forward the Sustainable Management of Wastes		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	Low Cost	Increased pressure on existing facilities Need for more sites in potentially sensitive areas Do not achieve Government targets		

Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Promote and increase recycling/treatment facilities	Sustainable development waste reduction/ reuse/recycling	Land use planning Cost	H	Local Authorities Private contractors Public Agency
Educate public and industry	Waste reduction/ reuse/recycling Reduced costs to business	Resources	M	Agency Local Authorities Industry
Promote composting initiatives	Waste recycling Reduced landfill disposal	Cost	H	Local Authorities Public Private contractors Agency
Develop waste minimisation initiatives with business	Reduced production of waste Reduced resource usage Reduced costs to business	Resources	L	Agency Local Authorities Business and Industry

Issue A15: The Capacity of Landfill Sites for the disposal of waste runs out in 2003

Background: As waste minimisation, reuse and recycling initiatives become established (Issue A14), the quantity of waste requiring disposal should reduce. However, no matter how well developed alternative options for managing waste become and Government targets for reuse and recycling are met, some waste will always require landfilling. The East Sussex Waste Strategy (draft, 1997) recognises that landfill capacity in the County is extremely limited and is estimated to be sufficient only until the year 2003.

The extension of the Pebsham landfill site has the potential for significant environmental impact as the site is on the edge of the floodplain of the Combe Haven River and the protected SSSI. Concern has been expressed regarding the pollution risk to the river and local groundwater from leachate contamination. Hydrogeological studies are continuing at Pebsham to evaluate and reduce such pollution risks. The existing Waste Derived Fuel (WDF) treatment plant has a history of odour problems and options are being identified for fitting further abatement equipment. Any extension of the existing facilities is likely to raise local opposition.

Issue No. A15		The Capacity of Landfill Sites for the disposal of waste runs out in 2003		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	No cost	No disposal route		
Consider extension of Pebsham site	Established site Meeting need for additional landfill space	SSSI Floodplain & pollution risks Landfill gas management plan required Local opposition	H	Biffa East Sussex CC Agency
Consider opportunities for new landfill site	Meeting need for additional landfill space	Land use planning	H	Local Authorities Landowners Agency
Consider opportunities for incineration	Capacity available in landfill for non-combustible wastes. Production of energy from waste.	Public perception Cost of incineration	H	Local Authorities Private Sector Agency

Issue A16: The Increase in Land Application of Wastes

Background: The land application of waste, such as sewage sludge, to agricultural land has the potential to cause serious pollution and potential risk to health if not properly managed and controlled. Although this activity is currently not widespread in the area, it is likely to increase over the next few years due to increased landfill costs and the cessation of sea disposal of untreated sewage. The requirements of the EU Urban Waste Water Treatment directive for increased treatment of sewage will result in increased sludge production. The Agency has responsibility for enforcing regulations which allow the application of such wastes to agricultural land where a beneficial fertilising effect can be demonstrated. There is, however, concern regarding the long-term environmental capacity of the land to absorb these wastes. Careful monitoring is required to ensure the procedure does not represent a hazard to health via the food chain and that it is carried out without harming the environment, including the pollution of sensitive underground water resources.

Issue No. A16		The Increase in Land Application of Wastes		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	No Cost	Pollution risks Environmental capacity exceeded		
Develop and implement a coherent strategy for regulation	Nutrients to agricultural land Sustainable waste management route Reduced pollution risk	Complex legislation Environmental capacity of land in long term Public perception	M	Agency Landowners/ Farmers Southern Water

Issue A17: Fly Tipping and Rubbish in Watercourses

Background: It has been identified that there is a particular problem of fly tipping on the Pevensey Levels, adjacent to the A259 between Pevensey and Bexhill, and at Hackhurst Lane Industrial Estate in Lower Dicker. With the introduction of Landfill Tax, fly tipping in general is expected to increase. We are developing a protocol for regulation with local authorities and this will provide clear guidance on those categories of flytipping to be dealt with by the Agency and those to be dealt with by the local authorities.

Rubbish in watercourses is a particular concern associated with degradation of amenity and obstruction to flow which may exacerbate flooding. In Polegate in 1996, major flooding was exacerbated by garden rubbish being washed down river and blocking culverts.

Issue No. A17		Fly Tipping and Rubbish in Watercourses		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	No Cost	Increased risk of flooding and pollution		
Encourage public and landowners to report Take action against offenders	Reduced pollution risk Reduced flood risk	Resources Cost	L	Local Authorities Public Agency

Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Educate and increase public awareness	Reduced flood risk Improved amenity value Reduced operational costs in long term Reduced pollution risk	Resources Additional costs in short term	L	Local Authorities Agency Public, community residents' groups and schools
Increase maintenance work on rivers	Reduced flood risk	Conservation disturbance Cost	M	Local Authorities Agency Riparian owners

Issue B05: Potential Risk of Water Pollution from Closed Landfills

Background: Leachate from old unlined landfills has the potential to cause significant environmental impact. There is a need to investigate potential environmental risk from the closed landfills, particularly at Arlington.

Issue No. B05		Potential Risk of Water Pollution from Closed Landfills		
Options for Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost	Potential Partners
Do Nothing	Cost	Continued risk of water pollution		
Investigate pollution risk	Identification of scale of potential problem and options for action	Resources	L	Agency Local Authorities

APPENDIX 1:**ORGANISATIONS CONTACTED FOR PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION**

Business in the Community
Council for the Protection of Rural England
Country Landowners Association
Countryside Commission
East Sussex County Council
Eastbourne Borough Council
English Heritage
English Nature
Farming and Rural Conservation Agency
Forestry Commission
Hastings Borough Council
Lewes District Council
National Farmers Union
National Society for Clean Air
Rother District Council
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
South East Water
Southern Water Services
Sussex Area Environment Group
Sussex Downs Conservation Board
Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee
Sussex Wildlife Trust
Wealden District Council

APPENDIX 2
TYPES OF PLAN REQUIRING ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
CONSULTATION

PLAN TYPE	REASON
1. Structure Plan	Statutory consultation. Provides an opportunity for the Agency's concerns and priorities to be reflected as policies and guidance at a strategic level.
2. Unitary Development Plan	Statutory consultation. Provides an opportunity for the Agency's concerns and priorities to be reflected at both strategic and local level, and provides the opportunity to influence the type, location and scale of new development.
3. Local Plan	Statutory consultation. Provides an opportunity for the Agency's concerns and priorities to be reflected as policies and guidance at a local level and to influence type, location and scale of new development. Provides an important link to the development control process and the Agency's LEAPs.
4. Minerals Local Plan	Statutory consultation. Opportunity to influence location for new mineral extraction sites, as well as policies relating to the operation and aftercare of the sites.
5. Waste Local Plan	Statutory consultation. Opportunity to influence location for new waste sites, as well as policies relating to the operation and aftercare of the sites.
6. Air Quality Management Plan	Statutory consultation. To assist in identification/regulation of polluting processes.
7. Development Briefs	To identify constraints on new development and requirements to protect and enhance the environment.
8. Waste Recycling Plan	Statutory consultation. Opportunity to influence location and management of sites.

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| 9. Shoreline Management Plan | Produced on behalf of coastal bodies to ensure an agreed and co-ordinated management of coastal protection and sea defences. |
| 10. Coastal Zone Management Plan | Opportunity to address issues relevant to the Agency's interests with other organisations to ensure a co-ordinated and agreed approach to the overall management of the coastal zone. |
| 11. Local Strategies including those for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the coast- the landscape- the countryside- environmental issues- rural areas- conservation- transportation | To influence issues relevant to the Agency |
| 12. National Park Management Plan | Statutory consultation. To consider management issues relevant to the Agency's interests. |
| 13. A.O.N.B Management Plan | Statutory Consultation. To consider management issues relevant to the Agency's interests. |

APPENDIX 3**DEVELOPMENTS REQUIRING ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
CONSULTATION****General**

1. Development within or adjacent to any watercourse or which includes a discharge to a watercourse.
2. Development including landraising, in areas at risk of flooding from rivers including tidal lengths, and the sea.
3. Development on, under or adjacent to any flood bank, sea defence or other flood control structure.
4. Development which may affect an aquatic/wetland site of conservation interest.
5. Development of contaminated land e.g. gas works, historic industrial use, bulk fuel storage, chemical production and landfill.
6. Development involving the disposal of sewage other than to a public sewer, including the use of septic tanks, cesspits, private sewers and private sewage treatment works.
7. Development which could affect groundwater protection zones.
8. Development which could exacerbate existing sewerage or sewage disposal problems.
9. Development within 250 metres of land which is or has, at any time in the 30 years before, been used for the deposit of refuse or waste and has been notified by the Agency.
10. Development on the site of or within 500 metres (measured from site boundary) of a process subject to Integrated Pollution Control, or subject to the Control of Industrial Air Pollution (registration of Works) Regulations 1989.
11. Development involving the raising or reclamation of land.
12. Development which falls within the Environmental Assessment Regulations 1988.

Specific

13. Residential, industrial or commercial developments greater than 0.5 hectares in area or which incorporate an access road.
14. Major infrastructure schemes e.g. highways, railways, power stations, wind farms, airports, tunnels, oil refineries, pipelines and any associated facilities.
15. Waste management operations including landfill, waste transfer stations, incinerators, scrap yards, solvent recovery plants, baling and re-cycling plants.
16. Mineral workings and exploratory works to include oil and gas exploration and land restoration projects.
17. Petrol filling stations or other bulk storage facilities for petroleum products and chemicals including hazardous substances, fertilisers and pesticides (above or below ground).
18. Vehicle parks including plant hire and transport depots.
19. Agricultural developments to include intensive livestock and poultry units, chemical and fertiliser storage, the making and storage of silage and the storage and disposal of manure and effluents.
20. Kennels, catteries, stables, etc.
21. Camping and caravan sites.
22. Timber treatment plants.
23. Cemeteries and crematoriums.
24. Fish farming activities, fish stocking or relocating of fish or works which will restrict the movement of fish.
25. Water-based recreation facilities or developments affecting access to water or waterside areas.
26. Ponds, lakes and reservoirs, including water storage for irrigation.
27. Golf courses.
28. Swimming pools.
29. Forestry activities.

MANAGEMENT AND CONTACTS:

The Environment Agency delivers a service to its customers, with the emphasis on authority and accountability at the most local level possible. It aims to be cost-effective and efficient and to offer the best service and value for money.

Head Office is responsible for overall policy and relationships with national bodies including Government.

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For general enquiries please call your local Environment Agency office. If you are unsure who to contact, or which is your local office, please call our general enquiry line.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY GENERAL ENQUIRY LINE

0645 333 111

The 24-hour emergency hotline number for reporting all environmental incidents relating to air, land and water.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY EMERGENCY HOTLINE

0800 80 70 60



**ENVIRONMENT
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