



From mountain to sea

Coast Protection Policy

August 2024



Policy Status	Approved and Finalised
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Authorised by	Infrastructure Services Committee
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Introduction

- 1.1 Aberdeenshire has around 200 kilometres of coastline. This coastline is of varying forms including hard rock cliffs, softer more erodible cliffs and slopes (composed of glacial or relic beach material), wide sandy beaches and narrow shingle/cobble beaches.
- 1.2 The legal framework guiding coastal protection works, particularly those aimed at preventing erosion and sea encroachment, is outlined in the [Coast Protection Act 1949](#). The powers granted to Local Coast Protection Authorities are permissive and do not impose a statutory obligation on the Council to take immediate action.
- 1.3 The Coast Protection Act 1949 defines the Council as the Coast Protection Authority for Aberdeenshire and sets out its powers in relation to the protection of the coast against erosion and encroachment by the sea.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 Aberdeenshire Council recognises the importance of protecting public and private infrastructure from adverse impacts from the sea and will cooperate with affected communities to minimise those impacts.
 - 2.2 We will:
 - Maintain existing coast protection works constructed by, or for, the Council, or the previous coast protection authority
 - When made aware of maintenance issues associated with private coast protection works contact the private owner(s) and inform them of their maintenance obligations
 - Subject to a positive Cost Benefit Analysis, consider the provision of new coast protection works where necessary to protect:
 - Public roads
 - Amenity land, infrastructure and buildings owned by Aberdeenshire Council
 - Subject to a positive Cost Benefit Analysis, and appropriate contributions from beneficiaries, consider the provision of new coast protection works where necessary to protect:
 - Established communities from erosion
 - Individual houses and small groups of houses
 - Provide advice and guidance to communities impacted by coastal erosion
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3 Scope

3.1 Definitions:

- “Coast protection work” means any construction work or alteration, improvement, repair, maintenance, demolition or removal for the purpose of the protection of any land and includes the sowing or planting of vegetation for the said purpose;
- “Protection” means protection against erosion or encroachment by the sea;
- “Sea” includes the waters of any channel, creek, bay or estuary and of any river so far up that river as the tide flows;
- “Seashore” means the bed and shore of the sea, and of every channel, creek, bay or estuary, and of every river as far up that river as the tide flows, and any cliff, bank, barrier, dune, beach, flat or other land adjacent to the shore.

4 Implementation and compliance

- 4.1 The Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services is responsible for implementing the Council’s Coast Protection Policy.
 - 4.2 The Head of Roads and Infrastructure has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Council’s Coast Protection activities are carried out in line with the policy.
 - 4.3 The Flood Risk and Coast Protection unit is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Council’s Coast Protection policy. The unit is responsible to the Head of Roads and Infrastructure for the inspection and recording of the condition of the coast protection assets, the design, procurement and undertaking of any works required in accordance with the policy and allocated budget.
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