

North East Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment: Phase 2

End of Project Report

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Completion of Aims and Objectives

The project has completed its stated aims through completion of the project outputs (see below) as well as delivering additional outcomes. Through a full synthesis of the existing data from Phase 1 of the NERCZA project within the GIS environment, alongside the significant new data resulting from the field survey of threatened sites and resulting HER enhancement, the project has improved knowledge of the archaeological resource of the North East Coast and identified a priority list of sites where further recording/investigation could be targeted. The project reports and leaflet, disseminated through events, continuing publicity, and online availability, provide tools to facilitate more informed decision-making regarding strategic planning, management, preservation and recording of archaeological sites and historic assets identified during the assessment. This dissemination, particularly through events such as guided walks for local groups and the Tees Archaeology Day school, will increase the public's and other stakeholders' awareness of the archaeology and historic assets under threat from marine transgression and erosion.

Project Outputs		
No.	Output	Comments
NES1	Update Phase 1 report in light of SMP2	This has been completed and subsequently circulated to project partners and to HERs.
NES2	Rapid survey of identified sites under threat	This data has been circulated to the relevant regional HERs as ESRI shape files with attribute data as excel spreadsheets. A fully referenced photo archive of 2733 digital JPEG images has also been circulated.
NES3	Rapid survey of inter-tidal peat deposits under threat	Data circulated to the HERs as ESRI shape files as with the field survey data.
NES4	Phase 2 Project report, including short Executive Summary	Final report and standalone Executive Summary complete to draft stage and has been submitted to EH for comment with final edits to be made.
NES5	A4 fold out project leaflet	A print run of 3000 has been completed and these are due to be circulated to local authorities, EH and at local events and tourist information centres along the North East coast.
NES6	Talks to local societies and groups	Presentations and talks have been made to the

Project Outputs		
No.	Output	Comments
		Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland, and the North East Maritime Forum. Further talks are planned in future including one at the Tees Archaeology Day School in November 2010.
NES7	Recommendations to EH for consideration for designation	Initial ideas have been put forward in Chapter 7 of the Project Report but provision for producing associated documentation was excluded from this phase of the project until it was known if, and how many, sites might be put forward.
NES8	Articles for archaeological magazines and short academic article	Articles have been published in the popular magazines 'Archaeology County Durham' and 'Archaeology in Northumberland'. A short academic article is in preparation for submission to the new IfA journal 'Historic Environment'.
NES9	Executive summary document	Completed and submitted to EH for comment with any final edits to then be made.
NES10	Inset day for local teachers	This has not been completed as it was found that inset days are not considered effective at the moment, as teachers don't attend them in sufficient numbers. Further talks to local groups have been undertaken as an alternative, with more lined up over the coming year. More has therefore been completed on the outreach side given that the inset day was not considered viable.

Issues Arising

A number of issues have been noted through the course of the project:

- The fieldwork initially planned in two segments throughout the summer months was abandoned in favour of one continuous programme of investigations through winter 2009/2010. This allowed much more investigation of the coastal margin within the allotted time frame due to better reception with the GPS and better visibility of more subtle features (no leaves on trees/less foliage/less seaweed or sand cover *etc.*).
- The fieldwork undertaken in the winter also meant a number of erosion events were observed and recorded which may not have been possible during the summer. In addition to this some features, such as the prehistoric footprints at Low Hauxley, would not have been visible at all during summer.
- It was found to be essential to revisit the survey locations at different times of the year and in different conditions in order to monitor the ongoing effects of erosion and ascertain the level of threat.

- Aerial photographic transcription data was also found to be very useful in the field, and especially as it was able to be loaded on to the GPS survey instrument. This was used not only in aiding interpretation but to provide a template from which features could be digitally traced, allowing recording of some features that were fully visible during the survey but inaccessible for safety reasons.
- The process of assessing heritage assets in order to prioritise which need attention has been a very useful exercise for suggesting recording strategies and possible future management options. It has also involved the creation of a method for scoring sites that could be used on other projects.
- By using this strategy as a basis further monitoring, more surveys and monitoring could be undertaken at a local scale in future using the NERCZA Phase 2 survey as baseline data from 2009/10.
- The success of the project has been greatly aided by the knowledge and experience of a wide team of stakeholders, including archaeologists, landowners, landscape managers and various English Heritage staff.

Project Outcomes

Overall we believe that the project has been extremely successful both in terms of delivering useful outcomes, and also in being delivered ahead of time. This has been a complex project involving widespread consultation and working with many team members, stakeholders, landowners and large and complex data sets. The data collected in the field has highlighted many new discoveries and this has significantly enhanced the regional HERs. This enhanced data set has been instrumental in allowing the project team to prioritise threatened sites by assessing the risk they face and the level of significance and intrinsic value of the site itself. Feedback, both about the project in general, but also when the project has been presented at events and talks, has been entirely positive, including from the archaeological curatorial sector. The project featured in the national press in January 2010.

In addition to the project deliverables detailed above the project has delivered several other beneficial outputs. The rescue excavation undertaken at Low Hauxley by Archaeological Research Services Ltd in 2009 has provided significant additional information about the Bronze Age cemetery, and this is detailed in a full excavation report (Waddington and Cockburn 2009) produced in addition to the main project report. As a result of the excavation, the field survey and the sampling of inter-tidal peat deposits, Low Hauxley was identified as one of the most significant sites recorded by NERCZA. This has led to the proposal of future projects at this location and production of an additional separate document reviewing previous archaeological interventions and future options at Low Hauxley (Waddington 2010). The incorporation into the NERCZA GIS of data from a separate ARS Ltd project run in tandem, namely the survey of military remains within the Northumberland Coast AONB, has also added value to the final output of the NERCZA project.

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