



Economic Appraisal of Management Options for the Cuckmere Estuary, East Sussex: Post-project supplementary note

For East Sussex County Council

4 April, 2011

eftec
73-75 Mortimer Street
London W1W 7SQ
tel: 44(0)2075805383
fax: 44(0)2075805385

eftec@eftec.co.uk
www.eftec.co.uk



Supplementary note on more detailed modelling

Since preparing our report on the economic impacts of the management options for the Cuckmere estuary, we have seen the results of more detailed hydrological modelling of the possible evolution of the area under the different management options.

By and large these simulations correspond closely to the assumptions used in deriving the approximate estimates of visitor numbers for the economics calculations. However, in the case of option D, "maintain the existing defences", the more detailed modelling suggests that the landscape would change rather less than previously thought. Although the defences will be inadequate to protect the area from flood events, it will not be regularly inundated. However, in contrast to the defence-raising options, the meanders may be preserved under this scenario. Therefore the long-run scenario for option D could resemble View 2 more than View 4.

These considerations would lead to different assumptions regarding visitor numbers. Although the access under this scenario is reduced, with the central access paths becoming dangerous, nevertheless the prospective landscape is considered (by survey respondents) more attractive than View 4.

The original calculations, for the scenario in which option D became like view 4 in the long term, assumed visitor numbers gradually declining to 50% of current levels. With the preservation of the meanders and visual appeal of the area, but some loss of access, the decline would be less marked, and may be nearer to that assumed for option A, namely a gradual decline to 80% of present.

Under these assumptions, the net present value of option D would be assessed at £6.8 million (NPV over 100 years).

Option D would then become the highest NPV option. However it would remain the case that options A and D perform very similarly and we would still conclude that it is not possible, on the basis of the economic assessment, to distinguish between these options with any confidence.