

Funding Secured for Scheme

The Waveney, Lower Yare & Lothingland Internal Drainage Board is pleased to announce the securing of £25 million from Sizewell C, a pivotal development that moves the Benacre and Kessingland Managed Realignment Scheme closer to delivery. This project, located south of Kessingland in Suffolk, is designed to reduce tidal, fluvial, and surface water flooding risks for both Kessingland village and the Lothingland Valley. The Sizewell C funding completes the financial package, with additional contributions from the Environment Agency, the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, and Suffolk County Council.



Above: Aerial image of planned Benacre & Kessingland flood risk management scheme layout from early 2028

Flood Management with Sustainable Infrastructure

The scheme's design involves a robust set of new defences, including an embankment spanning the Lothingland Valley to manage tidal flooding and a pumping station to handle river levels. Around Kessingland's Parkdean Resorts, additional embankments will provide targeted protection from tidal flooding, while a pumping station will address surface water risks. By using advanced Archimedes screw pumps, the new stations will provide efficient, fish-friendly water management and greater capacity to handle increased water volumes, accounting for the added flood risk brought by climate change.

CONTACT US

Water Management Alliance, Pierpoint House, 28 Horsley's Fields, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 5DD | t: 01553 819600 | e: info@wlma.org.uk | www.wlma.org.uk

FOLLOW US

  @WaterManagementAlliance

   @the_WMA

Addressing Aging Infrastructure and Flood Risks

Originally built in 1955, the Environment Agency's 70-year-old pumping station near Kessingland has outlasted its intended lifespan and now faces structural collapse. Adding to these concerns, the Benacre Ness sand and shingle ridge that has historically protected the station from coastal erosion is steadily moving north, leaving it exposed. If left unaddressed, coastal flooding threatens 35 homes, 46 businesses, the A12 roadway, and 600 hectares of valuable farmland. To tackle this urgent issue, the realignment scheme will construct inland flood defences to ensure long-term protection, securing infrastructure, businesses, and residential areas from flooding impacts.



Above/right: The movement of Benacre Ness, leaving the Kessingland Pumping Station precariously exposed



2024
Photo credit: Mike Page

Enhancing Biodiversity and Rewilding Coastal Areas



A critical part of the project's approach is the creation of 82 hectares of intertidal habitat through inundation by tidal waters. This "rewilded" intertidal habitat will foster biodiversity, providing essential support for migratory birds, fish, and various invertebrates.

Saltmarshes serve as natural carbon sinks, absorbing carbon dioxide and helping mitigate climate change. These habitats will not only benefit local wildlife, but also contribute to carbon sequestration, enhancing the region's resilience to environmental changes.

Community Impact and Project Timeline

This ambitious project, in development for over three years with consultants from Stantec, will begin construction in Spring 2025, with completion projected for Autumn 2029. The first year will involve site set up, haul road installation and import of clay material to build the embankment.



During construction both public footpaths and public access to the beach will be maintained. From early 2028 when the demolition of the existing pumping station and creation of the breach is planned, it is then anticipated that the King Charles III England coast path will be established along the newly created Lothingland embankment diverting the coastal path inland for this section.



The construction, managed by delivery partner Balfour Beatty, will bring local employment opportunities and support the community through a lasting social impact. We will share a more detailed programme of works in upcoming Newsletters.

