

Hunstanton Coastal Defence Capital Works Project

Window (Core) Sampling – Frequently Asked Questions

A series of frequently asked questions (FAQs) have been produced by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk regarding upcoming surveying work which is scheduled to take place to the Hunstanton Coastal Defences to support the wider Capital Works Project.

These FAQs are being distributed to local stakeholders, businesses and traders located on and directly behind the coastal defences to provide information regarding what works are being undertaken.

What are capital works? What is the difference between capital works and routine maintenance?

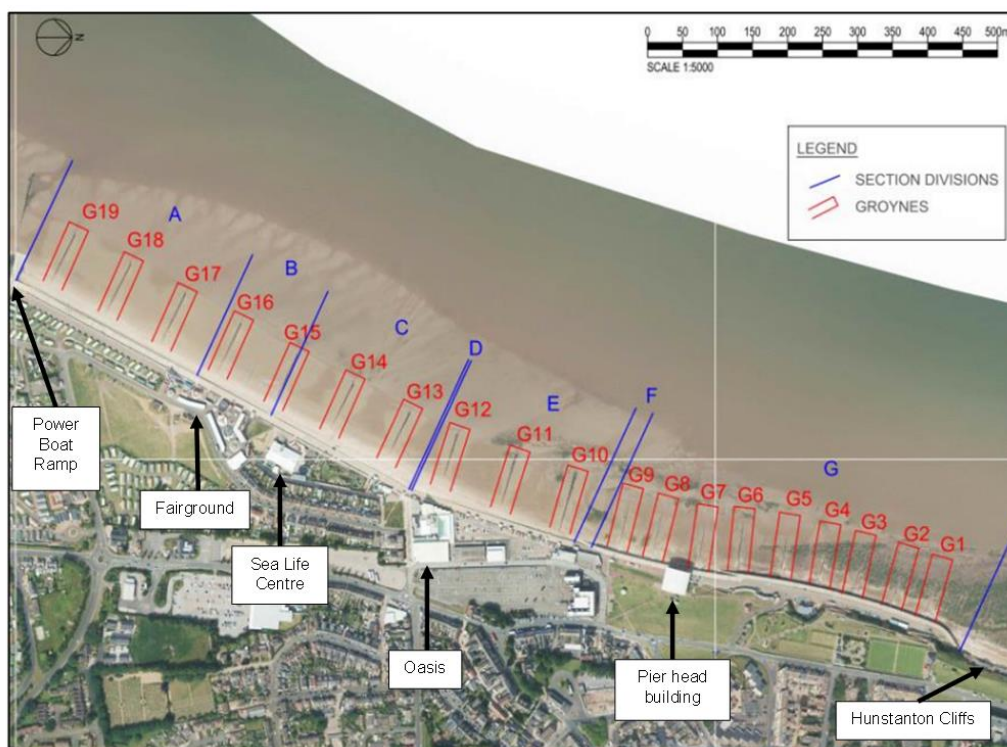
Capital works refers to major construction, refurbishment, or repair projects undertaken on a building or infrastructure. These projects often involve significant investment and focus on improving the structure. Routine maintenance is a proactive approach that includes regular surveys and scheduled works that includes minor repairs to address problems before they escalate.

Why are capital works required?

A Geotechnical Report has recently been completed. This report states that the current patch and mend repair approach is now not the most suitable approach to maintain the Hunstanton Coastal Defences.

The reports stated that: -

- Several sections of prom deck need to be replaced rather than patch repaired
- Some sections of sea wall need to be refaced (Sections E, F and G)
- Some sections of sea wall now require new or additional sheet piling to be installed at the base (Sections E, F and G)



The report notes that there are two main reasons why capital works are now required further to the Hunstanton Coastal Management Plan being adopted in 2019. These are: -

- Change in coastal processes leading to erosion of beach material in front of the coastal defences
- The concrete structure has reached end of its design life after being installed between 70 to 100 years ago

What is Window (Core) Sampling?

Window (core) sampling is a site investigation methodology that will assess the subsurface conditions of the coastal defences. A rig will be used to core through the concrete decks of the promenade surface and collect a sample to assess the ground conditions and type of fill material below.

The picture below shows the type of plant that will be used on site.



Who will be carrying out the Window Sampling?

These investigations will be completed by Central Alliance Pre-Construction Services on behalf of the Council. They are a specialist ground engineering services company and have previously completed similar work for the Blackpool coastal defence project.

Their details can be found here <https://www.central-alliance.co.uk/>

Why are these works required as part of the capital works project?

These investigations, recommended by the geotechnical investigations are required to establish both the ground conditions below the coastal defences alongside undertaking detailed lab analysis of the concrete used to construct the coastal defences. This will allow us: -

- To help shortlist the preferred options for the final design
- To ensure the final design is suitable for the underlying conditions
- To help determine the underlying condition of the current coastal defences

How long will these survey works take?

The work is expected to start w/c 20th April 2026 and last around 4 weeks on site. Subsequent lab testing and analysis will then commence once on-site works have completed.

When will the work be completed?

Work will be carried out Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm, with no work at weekends or on the Bank Holiday Monday. These works have been scheduled to take place after the Easter Half Term and to complete on-site before May Half Term to minimise disruption to the resort.

Where will the sampling take place?

Around 90 window cores samples will be taken along the whole 1.5km of promenade at regular intervals between Section A to Section G (see map on previous page). 5 smaller 'pencil' cores will also be taken from the wave-return wall, and 5 groundwater monitoring locations will be installed.

5 geological borehole samples will also be taken directly in front of the seawall on the beach to confirm the ground conditions and geology under the beach and coastal defences.

Will the Promenade remain open while works take place?

Yes, but some small areas will need to be temporarily fenced off whilst the drilling rig completes each core and will then move to the next location. Pedestrian access around these locations will be established, alongside appropriate signage. No works are to be completed at weekends or on Bank Holiday Monday or during weekends.

Will access to businesses on the promenade and behind the wave-return wall be impacted?

Access to all businesses located on the promenade and behind the wave-return wall will be maintained throughout the duration of the works.

Are these works part of the Emergency Repairs recently completed?

No, these investigations have been previously planned to be completed as part of the capital works project and do not relate to the emergency repair works to fill the void beneath the promenade which were completed in March 2026.

Will a work compound be established?

Yes – for the duration of the works, a fenced off compound (including welfare cabin and equipment) will be established on the North Promenade Car Park. Appropriate signage will be placed on the fencing around the compound to notify members of the public of the works taking place.

Will the works be noisy?

At times, core rigs will be used for coring each of the sample locations. When this takes place, appropriate warning signage will be displayed around the working area, and works will take place for short durations to ensure the safety of both operatives and members of the public.

Have the Emergency Repairs been completed?

Yes, the void fill was completed on 16th March, and the promenade was reopened to pedestrians on Friday 17th March.

Why are you implementing a 10-tonne weight limit on the promenade?

A 10-tonne weight limit and 5 mph speed limit has been implemented on the promenade to mitigate against further deterioration of the promenade deck. Vehicle speed and weight will cause increased wear and tear to the prom deck, reducing speed and weight will reduce this impact.

Following the Emergency Repairs, the section of promenade between the Rock Shop Ramp and Oasis will remain closed to vehicles & kiosks until a Structural Engineer has completed a review and it is safe to reopen to vehicles & kiosks.

What other works / measures are you undertaking while the project planning phase for the capital works project is completed?

Routine asset condition surveys will continue, and any essential repairs will be carried out.

Beach level monitoring will continue to be completed to measure how much beach material remains at the base of the sea wall. A digital laser survey of the promenade will be completed every 3 months to check for any signs of subsidence.

A follow up ground penetrating radar survey has been programmed in to be completed and will take around 5 days on site to measure the whole length of the coastal defences

How does this project link with the review of the Wash East Coastal Management Strategy (WECMS) and recent Unit C Initial Assessment of the shingle ridge?

The Capital Works project will maintain the existing coastal defences and their standard of coastal flooding and coastal erosion protection. The strategy review will consider both Hunstanton Coastal Defences (referred to as Unit B) managed by the Borough Council and the flood defences from South Hunstanton to Snettisham (referred to as Unit C) managed by the Environment Agency.

Outcomes of the Strategy review will ultimately lead to updating the current Hunstanton Coastal Management Strategy which was adopted in 2019, and will inform how we manage the coast at Hunstanton in the medium to long-term.

Are you engaging with relevant stakeholders on this project?

We will continue to provide regular updates on the capital works project and our ongoing routine repair work through the WECMS Stakeholder Group, Local Sea Defence Newsletter and website updates which can be found here west-norfolk.gov.uk/hunstantonprom

If you have any queries relating to this project, you can contact us at floodandwatermanagement@west-norfolk.gov.uk at any time.