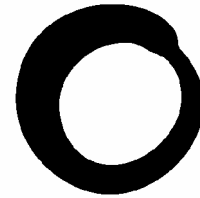




Marine Information Network
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**Friends of
the Earth**

Mr. Phill Woolas MP – Minister for the Environment
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
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Your ref: PO79405/JD

79 California Avenue
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NR29 3NS

Our Ref. MJK/M/PW/2

27th. May 2008

Government Policy for Provision of Sea Defences

Dear Sir

Thank you for your above referenced reply letter dated 23 April 2008.

You mention climate change and rising sea levels but, when we consider that the current rate of sea rise for the UK due to global warming is 3.2mm a year and then add the current 2.0mm a year of land sink (due to geological conditions) for the East coast of England this gives us a total equivalent sea level rise of only 5.2mm a year for the Norfolk coastline due to global forces beyond our control.

The UK is one of the most technically advanced nations in the world and our engineers would be more that capable of designing and constructing economic and viable sea defences for the Norfolk coastline to combat these sea level rises for the next 100 years to save lives and Norfolk's irreplaceable land.

Figures released under the Freedom of Information Act reveal that at least 14,434 new homes are planned for construction on flood plains and areas at risk from sea flooding in eastern England.

With this amount of development already planned in flood risk areas and continuing pressure for more development in these areas surely it would be common sense to have Hold the Line sea defence policies for all these areas.

It is appreciated that some studies into possible climate change effects have to be carried out but what local people object to is the fact that studies that propose destruction of their homes, land and livelihoods are being discussed and options decided behind closed doors by so called experts who do not reside in the areas affected, with out any input from local people who have lived on and worked this land for generations.

These people and their predecessors are familiar with breaches of the soft sand and marram grass dunes which are still the only sea defences for some sections of the Norfolk coastline and in the past have been responsible for executing repairs to these breaches using horse and carts – very low tech. compared to today's mechanised capabilities.

The productive farm land and Norfolk Broads in the low-lying section of Norfolk adjacent to the coastline from Eccles-on-sea to Winterton-on-sea has been hard won from the sea in various stages since the 17th Century and it would be irresponsible to now surrender it to the sea in the 21st Century.

If some of the money spent on preparing the many “Expert” study reports was spent on coastal sea defences this would also be better value for the tax payers money.

Thank you for confirming that the policy for the 6,500 hectares of Norfolk from Eccles-on-sea to Winterton-on-sea has a current policy to Hold the Line and maintain sea defences for the Broads for the next 50 years, but it would be very much appreciated and show leadership and good faith if you could instruct Natural England to remove the option to allow this area to be flooded by the sea from their study report.

Yours truly

Mike King - MARINET (Marine Environmental Information Network) Great Yarmouth Norfolk

cc:

Tony Wright – MP for Great Yarmouth Norfolk