

NEWQUAY TOWN CENTRE

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

TOPIC PAPER

SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

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**PRIOR
+ PTNRS**

HATCH

flow
urban

Hydrock

Sustainability

In conversations with local leaders, community members, and stakeholders, sustainability always re-occurs as a key priority. Our vision clearly states an ambition of establishing a reputation as climate leaders, and environment sustainability is one of the vision's core pillars.

The natural environment is what makes Newquay a special place to live and visit, and this environment—both in its local and global sense—must be safeguarded in order to ensure the long term sustainability and success of the town for generations to come.

As change comes forward in the town centre, it is imperative that this delivers the highest possible quality and sustainability outcomes, for the benefit of local people and the local environment, as well as in order to address the threat of climate change.

The Town Centre Development Framework offers an opportunity to make early, holistic decisions which will help deliver long term positive impacts for the environment and the local community, and put the town at the forefront of best practice.

Priorities

The below are the core objectives that Newquay can champion in the evolution of its town centre:

Ensure Newquay is resilient to known and predicted impacts of climate change

Adaptation planning is essential to ensure the built environment continues to be fit for purpose in a changing climate.

Be a net zero Newquay by 2050

The UK Net Zero 2050 target requires significant actions to be taken in new and retrofit developments to reduce energy use, incorporate low carbon and renewable technologies, and embodied carbon impacts.

Upfront, this means acting in favour of adaptive reuse of existing buildings and structures. Where the Spatial Framework identifies strategic opportunity sites, this does not mean that all buildings on these sites will be demolished; rather, they are large areas which pose opportunities to think holistically about improvement and change.

Improve the health and wellbeing of Newquay's residents

The physical built environment has a crucial role in contributing to the health and wellbeing of the people who live, work and spend time in Newquay.

Prioritise life cycle costs, circular economy principles and sustainable waste management

A circular approach seeks to maximise the value of existing materials and minimise material consumption and waste.

Encourage sustainable travel behaviour and modal shift in Newquay

Reducing the reliance on cars, through a mixture of methods to promote walking and cycling, and public transport will bring significant health, sustainability and placemaking benefits to the town centre.

Integrate nature and biodiversity enhancements within the urban environment

Biodiverse development enhances the urban environment for people and wildlife, provides ecosystem services, helps to regulate the climate, control flooding and absorb CO2.

Deliver high quality of neighbourhoods which support a sustainable economy

Newquay has an incredibly strong community which provides critical services and continually empowers people to have a voice in the town's future. Sustainable neighbourhoods are places people want to live now and into the future, that are inclusive, cohesive and diverse.

Net zero Newquay



Sustainable travel



Health and well-being



Nature and biodiversity



Circularity



Strong communities



Shoreline Management

The steep rock cliffs at Newquay are prone to instability triggered by weather and coastal erosion. Sea defences experience storm damage and require periodic repair and maintenance.

Climate change is causing an acceleration in the rate of sea level rise which, alongside more frequent, high-energy storms, is leading to an increase in coastal cliff instability and regression.

Policy

SMP2 (2011, 2016)

The Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2) sets a long-term policy framework to manage the risks associated with coastal change against the socio-economic benefits of defending the shoreline. For each area, SMP2 defines a policy approach. These include:

- No active intervention (NAI): A decision not to invest in providing or maintaining defences or natural coastline
- Hold the line (HTL): Maintain the protection provided by defences or natural coastline

The SMP 2016 Review states that *"the intent is to facilitate the continued popularity of Newquay as a tourist destination, but simultaneously to protect and enhance the wild and rugged 'Cornishness' of the beaches and cliffs. Allowing natural evolution of the coast where possible and protecting and enhancing the coastal environment are critical to the continued prosperity of Newquay."*

Newquay Neighbourhood Plan 2019 - 2030

The Newquay Neighbourhood Plan (NNP) defines an **Exclusion Zone (EZ)**, within which permanent redevelopment is not permitted.

Implications

There are three town centre areas affected by these policies. As proposals come forward, each will need to be assessed in isolation by relevant structural, coastal, or geotechnical engineering surveys.

- **Harbour - HTL:** HTL refers to maintaining the harbour walls. The walls are subject to flood risk, which must be considered within future studies.
- **Towan Beach - HTL, moving to HTL/NIA in 2055:** HTL is defined in the medium term to provide time to consider how to manage coastal change in a way which best suits the aspirations of the community and tourist industry, while moving towards a more sustainable solution of NIA. Towan Promenade and the Aquarium lie with in the EZ as described in the NNP, which preclude new permanent development.
- **Great Western Beach - NIA in 2025:** The intent of NIA in 2025 is to allow *"monitoring of cliff recession to inform discussions of how to manage this frontage. If rates of recession are found to be slow, NAI may be the most sustainable approach. If rates are greater and cliff top properties are at increasing risk, discussion*

will be needed around what may be technically and economically viable." The cliff top properties lie within the EZ as described in the NNP. This precludes new permanent development. Due to these policies, existing cliff top properties may not be able to obtain consent for preventative maintenance and/or repairs.

Potential Conflicts

SMP2 policy does not explicitly consider the issue of public safety for beach users and this is an important consideration for Newquay, for which the local beaches are a key asset. For example, the SMP2 policy to change from 'HTL' to 'NIA' at Great Western Beach in 2025 may be in conflict with the implementation of rockfall protection measures.



Great Western Beach, where recent active rockfall directly onto beach and extensive cliff stabilisation works are evident.

Recommended Next Step

A **Shoreline Management Strategy** should be developed so that SMP2 policy, local planning constraints and consultees are able to contribute to a considered approach.

This should aim to develop the SMP2 policy and include the following:

- Desk-based searches of publicly available information sources, including historic plans and photographs
- Establishment of baseline surveys of the cliffs
- Preparation of a constraints plan
- Condition appraisal of rock faces, slopes, and coastal defences
- Register of 'at risk' properties and infrastructure
- Establishment of a formal asset register against which future condition assessments may be compared
- Qualitative assessment of future cliff regression lines i.e., a detailed development of SMP2 regression lines
- Appraisal of spatial and temporal risk of cliff regression (including rockfall) to asset owners, the public and other stakeholders
- Zoning of cliffs and beach areas in respect of their risk status



A clifftop, coastal town centre

