

# Minsmere Sea Defences

## Expert review of coastal processes study

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Minsmere, near Southwold, Suffolk, UK



The beach and eroding dunes at Minsmere

**Client:** Black & Veatch Ltd (for the Environment Agency)

**Services provided:**

Expert review of coastal processes study, including:

- coastal modelling
- assessment of wave extremes
- joint probability assessment
- geomorphology and shoreline evolution
- beach profile analysis
- cliff and dune recession

The beach and coastal habitats at Minsmere are internationally designated as a Special Area of Conservation whilst the hinterland behind the sea defences is equally designated as a Special Protection Area and Ramsar wetland. The existing sea defences are under increasing pressure from the sea. With negligible economic assets at risk, there is limited budget to invest in improvements to the sea defences and continuing to maintain the current line of defence will lead to the loss of coastal habitat as this is squeezed between the rising shoreline and the sea defence.

Black & Veatch Ltd (B&V) was appointed to examine the long term future of sea defence provision and general management. This work involved the undertaking of an important coastal processes study to examine the historic and future coastal evolution. Given the sensitive nature of this project, ENBE was appointed to provide an independent external review of the coastal processes study to verify its outcomes.

Through understanding of the coastal processes the project team determined that the most sustainable solution was to allow the existing defence to evolve naturally, providing a new set back sea defence at the most critical location as part of a long term plan.

*“ENBE’s review and input to the final coastal processes report has given confidence to our client on the way forward for the project and in discussions with key stakeholders”*

Black & Veatch Project Manager