Folkestone & Hythe District Heritage Strategy

Appendix 2: Case Study 4 Dungeness

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Appendix 2, Case Study 4: Dungeness

Introduction

Some of district's key features are its historic landscapes and wildlife, and this is especially true at Dungeness. The Dungeness Estate and wider Dungeness National Nature Reserve (NNR) is a particularly unique part of the District and indeed of the entire country. Its diverse range of biological and geological features, specifically the coastal geomorphology, extensive shingle ridges, important habitats and supported wildlife, warrant national as well as international significance and are protected by a number of designations in order to preserve these special assets. As well as this, the wild and sparsely populated area of Dungeness is uniquely attractive for its peacefulness, tranquillity and relatively undisturbed landscapes. Niche activities such as bird watching, dog walking, sea fishing and walking can be enjoyed at Dungeness and have continued to attract large numbers of visitors each year. The few buildings and dwellings that do exist here further illustrate a distinctive and often quirky local character as well as a rich heritage offering and strong sense of communal identity. Overall it is a uniquely special place that is highly valued by it local residents whilst also acting as a major visitor attraction within the district.

One of the biggest challenges that now face Dungeness is the continued conservation of its unique historic landscape and important flora and fauna whilst visitor numbers to the area continue to be substantial and it is promoted as an important tourist attraction within the District. There are a number of rare species of plants and animals that are found at Dungeness which are exceptionally fragile and vulnerable to adverse effects that result from large visitor numbers such as littering, uncontrolled dogs and deviating from marked footpaths. The unique vegetated shingle landscape acts as an important habitat for the nationally as well as internationally significant wildlife species found here and is itself a significantly valuable and rare natural asset that is also very sensitive to visitor pressures. Whilst the uniqueness of Dungeness means that it continues to play an important role in the District's tourism offering, a delicate balance must be achieved in order to ensure the continued preservation of the areas special character and assets in light of continued or increasing tourism.

The purpose of this study will therefore be to demonstrate how a positive balance can be achieved between continued tourism and leisure at Dungeness whilst also preserving and protecting its sensitive landscapes, biodiversity, local character and heritage. The importance of the area to the local tourism and leisure offering is inevitable and so effective and strategic management of Dungeness is necessary in order to achieve a delicate balance between tourism and natural conservation. The historic landscape and natural assets at Dungeness are of significant importance to the scientific and archaeological community but ways must also be established to allow for their continued enjoyment by visitors and residents. The various designations assigned to Dungeness work towards the ongoing protection and conservation of its natural and historic assets, and a number of strategies are also being developed by various bodies responsible for the management of Dungeness that will be important in achieving this delicate but positive balance.

Study Area Description

The Dungeness Estate and wider Dungeness NNR are located in the southern part of the Romney Marsh between New Romney, Lydd and Camber. It is an especially unique landscape within the district and constitutes the largest and most diverse area of shingle landscape in Britain as well as worldwide. Dungeness and Rye Harbour further comprise the largest cuspate foreland (a low-lying triangular foreland) in the country and form part of a system of barrier beaches that stretches for 40 km from Fairlight to Hythe. Significantly, the foreland represents around 5000 years of coastal evolution and environmental change that has been well documented through geological study and historical records. Some of its most important features include the exposed and buried shingle ridges, morphological and sedimentological zones representing the development of the cuspate foreland (ness) in addition to the eroding and accreting coastline. The shingle landscape is also dominated by flint which provides a unique environment for a number of rare species of plants and birds as well as critical evidence for coastal evolution.

Today Dungeness is a private estate that is protected by a number of designations in order to maintain and preserve the uniquely rare and sensitive environments and wildlife that are found here. The Dungeness Estate that is currently owned by EDF Energy is located within the wider Dungeness NNR that is jointly managed by Natural England and the RSPB with the Romney Marsh Countryside Project also undertaking some management on behalf of Natural England. The Dungeness Estate covers 468 acres and currently includes the ownership of around 22 freeholds for properties that are predominantly converted railway carriages. It does not include the RSPB Nature Reserve located on the Denge Marsh but primarily covers an area that follows the Dungeness Road and Power Station Access Road. The Dungeness NNR and Estate further form part of the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Maps to be inserted to illustrate the area covered by the Dungeness Estate, NNR and wider SSSI. Copies available from RMCP, Natural England and EDF consultants.

The Dungeness Estate was originally owned by the Tufton family who subsequently sold the land to South Eastern Railway (SER), later part of British Railways (BR). During the latter half of the nineteenth century plans had been proposed to develop Dungeness as a major ferry port that would offer faster cross channel crossings than was then possible from its neighbours at Folkestone and Dover. These plans were never realised, however a railway line between Appledore and Lydd with later branch lines to Dungeness and New Romney was opened from December in 1881 and operated as a passenger and goods line until sections of the line began to close during the first half of the twentieth century. Parts of the line remained open for freight traffic to Dungeness Power Station and still regularly see nuclear waste traffic today. The defunct parts of the decommissioned line have since been removed and the popular Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch light railway now lies in its place and runs between Dungeness and Hythe. The heritage of the railway in this area is still represented today in a number of dwellings throughout the estate that are decommissioned railway carriages which were purchased by the local redundant railway workers as residences. British Railway eventually sold the Dungeness Estate

to Mr G T Paine and it then remained in the Paine family until 2015 when EDF Energy subsequently purchased it.

Mr G T Paine had placed the estate under a Family Trust in 1964, and before he died in 1982 requested that the trustees make the position of the Dungeness tenants more permanent by granting a 99 year leases to replace the 3 month leases that had previously existed. The majority of the dwellings within the Dungeness Estate were built at the beginning of the twentieth century to accommodate fishermen and their families. Later the railway workers then purchased a number of old railway coaches as homes that have since been converted and extended into permanent residences. Some buildings, originally for non-residential purposes, have also been built across Dungeness that include a number of lighthouses, an electricity link station and Coastguard buildings that can now be considered as heritage assets that are important to the local character. Today the shingle landscapes at Dungeness are still sparsely occupied and all properties are subject to a number of covenants and restrictions in order to maintain the unique local character. Over the years various properties have also been sold off from the estate which includes the lighthouses, railway station and The Britannia public house. Dungeness today is dominated by the nuclear power station, lighthouses, light railway and a small collection of quirky and unique dwellings that constitute a very strong local identity.

The wider Dungeness NNR is one of the largest shingle landscapes in the world and is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It covers an area that encompasses the RSPB Nature Reserve and stretches eastwards from Dungeness to include the Greatstone Lakes and Sound Mirrors as well as forming part of the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SSSI. The shingle landscapes support a diverse and rare range of plants and wildlife that merit international importance as well as being exceptionally fragile. 600 species of plants, which is a third of all plants found in the United Kingdom, are found at Dungeness which represents the most diverse and extensive example of stable vegetated shingle landscape in the country. A number of rare and important species are also found at Dungeness that includes the Great Crested Newt, Sussex Emerald Moth and a number of migratory birds. Dungeness has also attracted the gravel extraction industry for a number of years and now has around 90 flooded gravel pits across the reserve that offer important habitats for species such as wintering wildfowl including the Black-Necked Grebe, Goosander and Smew.

The RSPB Nature Reserve at Dungeness covers around 4 square miles and is located on the Denge Marsh to the south east of Lydd. It is the society's oldest nature reserve and is a popular tourist attraction particularly for bird watchers and families, though the RSPB are careful not to exceed 40,000 visitors per year since more may inhibit conservation work. The RSPB at the Dungeness Nature Reserve manage large areas of gravel pits, reed beds and shingle habitats that are havens for breeding and wintering water birds as well as being important stopovers for migratory birds. They are also the custodians for the Denge or Greatstone Sound Mirrors that are designated as Scheduled Monuments and act as important heritage assets within the area. The habitats here further support a number of unusual plants and invertebrates such as the rare Nottingham Catchfly that is the food plant for the Sussex Emerald Moth which can only be found at Dungeness within Britain. Dungeness also has wet and dry grassland that are being managed by the RSPB to

provide suitable breeding conditions for various birds and two uncommon species of bumblebee, *Bombus humilis* and *Bombus ruderarius*. Various trails and bird hides are located around the reserve to allow visitors to observe and enjoy the wildlife that is supported here.

Map of the RSPB Nature Reserve to be included.

Archaeological and Historical Background

Formation of the Dungeness Cuspate Foreland (ness)

A cuspate foreland, also known as a ness or cuspate barrier in Britain, is a geological feature that is found on coastlines and lakeshores. It is primarily formed as a result of longshore drift; a geological process which transports sediment along a coast by waves that approach at an angle but recede directly away from it. The accretion and progradation of sand and shingle results in an extension to the shoreline that extends outwards in a triangular shape giving it a distinctive appearance as is seen at Dungeness. Some cuspate forelands are then stabilised by vegetation and are subsequently able to provide unique habitats for many important flora and faunal species that then require effective management. The cuspate foreland at Dungeness is an important example of this type of coastal geological feature and is recognised worldwide as a primary example of its type. Others that are equally recognised include those at Cape Hatteras (North Carolina, United States), Cape Kennedy (Florida, United States) and Point Pelee (Ontario, Canada).

The Dungeness cuspate foreland is the largest in Britain and represents around 5000 years of coastal evolution and environmental change. Whilst it is not the largest cuspate foreland in the world, the Dungeness peninsula contains an enormous amount of almost entirely flint shingle and is a relatively advanced form of cuspate foreland due to much of the shingle having been redistributed from barrier beaches to form a ness that has a particularly acute angle. The fact that it is made up of almost entirely flint shingle makes it unusual and has resulted in extensive shingle ridges that record the development of the barrier beach system here as well as climate change over extensive lengths of time. Exposed shingle ridges cover around 2150 ha at Dungeness with a system of buried shingle ridges covering a further 1150 ha.

The surface ridges that are exposed today provide an insight into the ongoing development of the foreland at Dungeness, which in recent years has slowed due to factors such as coastal defence works, sediment supply, recycling for beach management and climate change. However, buried shingle ridges are important as they allow for the mapping of the foreland's evolution over time and the presence of palaeo-environmental information from deposits further builds a detailed picture of earlier environmental conditions. Detailed study of the shingle ridges at Dungeness has been undertaken and allowed for a chronology of coastal development to have been developed. The protection of Dungeness and its shingle ridges through a number of designations is essential in preserving this valuable source of environmental information as well as the important habitats that it provides. It will also be important to record the continued evolution of the site and compare historical

changes to the influences by human activity that may become more pronounced in the future.

Historical Development of Dungeness

The environmental evolution of the Dungeness peninsula has occurred over thousands of years, but development of a settlement here was only established fairly recently. Prior to the First World War, the only dwellings at Dungeness were largely the lighthouses, old Coastguard cottages and Lifeboat Stations. Since then, Dungeness has remained sparsely populated and the landscape is largely dominated by the power station, surviving lighthouses and light railway. It is likely that Dungeness Road off which most dwellings lie started as a trackway and is now the main thoroughfare through Dungeness. Main services such as telephone, electricity and water were also slow to arrive and were only gradually introduced during the first half of the twentieth century. The residences and dwellings that have been established here now reflect the local fishing and railway heritage and continue to constitute a strong local identity. The surrounding landscape remains largely untouched and is now a haven for wildlife as well as being uniquely attractive for its tranquillity and wildness.

Since the early seventeenth century there have been seven lighthouses at Dungeness, five high and two low. The fifth high lighthouse is still operational today and the fourth high lighthouse remains open to the public during summer months. The first high lighthouse was built around 1615 as the growing shingle foreland was becoming a hazard for shipping and had caused a number of shipwrecks with loss of life and cargo. This early lighthouse was a wooden tower around 35 feet high and had a coal brazier at the top. However it quickly became redundant as the shingle foreland grew and the sea receded, and so this first lighthouse was demolished and a more substantial brick tower was erected in 1635 that was 110 feet taller. This second high lighthouse lasted over 100 years but would soon fall victim to the same problems as its predecessor with the added issues of poor illumination provided by coal fires. In 1792 a third high lighthouse was constructed that was 115 feet high and used oil lamps rather then coal.

In 1862 the Dungeness lighthouse became one of the first to use electric lighting; however this was soon superseded by more efficient means of using large oil lamps surrounded by glass prisms which provided a much stronger illumination. Quarters for the lighthouse keepers were built in a circular form at the base of this lighthouse and although the tower no longer exists (demolished in 1904) these quarters are still present today. The first low lighthouse was built in 1884 and was a metal structure on a wooden base. It was decided that a low lighthouse was necessary to support the high lighthouse due to the continued growth of the shingle foreland and the high lighthouses finding themselves too far away from the sea. It was later replaced by a second low lighthouse in 1932 which lasted until 1959 when it was demolished to make way for the present high lighthouse.

The fourth high lighthouse was completed in 1904 50 yards away from its predecessor. It is a circular brick structure that is 150 feet high and was originally known as the *High Light Tower* although is now known as *The Old Lighthouse* which is open to the public. Whilst in use it was painted externally in black and white bands

so as to act as a recognisable beacon, but it is now completely black to avoid confusion with the current lighthouse. The navigational light became obscured by the newly constructed power station and so in 1961 the fifth high lighthouse was completed and remains operational today. In 1991 the lighthouse was converted to automatic operation and is monitored and controlled remotely.

There is a long history of fishing at Dungeness and some of the first beach house residences to have been built on the estate allegedly belonged to the Tart and Oiler fishing families. Prior to this some homes had been erected, most notably the "Watering House" that was built in the late nineteenth century to provide accommodation for the family who provided fresh water to passing ships. The house survives today and is a strong reminder of the local fishing heritage of Dungeness. Some Coastguard cottages may also have been among the earliest dwellings at Dungeness.

Leading up to the 1960s, fishing was a prominent activity in the area and boats could be seen spaced out along the beach opposite the dwellings along what is now the Dungeness Road. Bait digging, shrimping and fishing with nets for herring, mackerel and sprats were all practiced. For some time pre-war miniature gauge rail tracks were installed on the beach to meet each boat and joined a common track that ran along the present day Dungeness Road. These were later removed with the completion of the road in 1938 but some remains of the old tracks on the beaches can still be seen. A number of *Tanning Coppers* also still survive along the Denge beach that in the past were used by fishermen to help preserve and dye fishing nets and clothing. One, which is larger than most at Dungeness, was built with brick in 1910 and is still owned by the Tart family as well as being a Grade II Listed Building. Other remains relating to the fishing heritage at Dungeness include some wooden winches that would have been used to haul fishing boats over the shingle beaches.

Fishing continues at Dungeness today and is also a popular activity for local Angling Associations as well as visitors. The area has been nationally recognised as an excellent venue for cod fishing during the winter and beach fishing is popular. There are a number of professional and leisure fishing agreements for the estate which provide individuals with the right to fish from a designated plot along the shores of the Denge beach. Houses near the Lifeboat Station are mainly inhabited by local fisherman and the fishing heritage at Dungeness continues to play an important role in the local character.

Other early buildings at Dungeness included Lifeboat Stations and Coastguard cottages. The first Lifeboat Station on the Romney Marsh was at Martello Tower 27 at St Mary's Bay in 1826. Dungeness however continued without an official Lifeboat Station until in 1852 when two shipwrecks occurred in which there was loss of life. The first Lifeboat Station at Dungeness was then established in 1854 and was located by Dungeness No. 1 Battery. This was not a particularly good location and so the station was moved in 1861 northwards towards Littlestone although it was still officially known as the Dungeness Lifeboat Station for some time. Following the Northfleet Disaster in 1873 in which 293 people died off the Dungeness coast, a Dungeness Lifeboat Station was reopened in 1874. The station is now located off the Dungeness Road and guards the Channel from Folkestone to Rye Bay. The *Old*

Lifeboat Station located less than a mile south of the present station was probably the first Lifeboat Station at Dungeness and survives as a private residential property.

The local railway heritage is also evident in some of the earlier dwellings across Dungeness. A line that ran between Appledore and Lydd via Brookland was opened in 1881 with a branch line to Dungeness opening in 1883. This line to Dungeness continued to provide passenger and goods traffic for around 50 years but was closed to passengers in 1937 and later to goods traffic in1953. There are around 30 properties at Dungeness that were originally railway carriages which were purchased during the 1920s by redundant railway workers. Many were lived in as they were and had later fallen into poor states of disrepair and neglect. However, a revival in interest in the area was encouraged by the arrival of Derek Jarman, a famous English director, artist and author, and his renowned Prospect Cottage and so many of the old railway carriages were renovated and restored as permanent residential properties or holiday homes. The shape of the original carriages is still clear in these dwellings and they make an important contribution to the local character and heritage offering.

Dungeness, like many places along the southern Kentish coast, had also become home to a number of defensive structures in response to the French threat during the Napoleonic Wars of the early nineteenth century. Given its closeness to the continent, the easily accessible beaches of the Romney Marsh had always been vulnerable to a foreign attack and needed to be fortified to stop any possible invasion. A number of defensive measures were being developed across the Romney Marsh to repel the potential French threat, and these included the construction of the Royal Military Canal, Martello Towers and a number of gun batteries or forts. The Martello Towers covered the Romney Marsh coast as far west as St Mary's Bay which left the Dungeness peninsula exposed. Four batteries were built as a result, two either side of Dungeness Point with a Redoubt at the point itself.

The earthwork Redoubt at Dungeness Point was built in 1798 as an octagonal strongpoint. It was 215 meters in diameter and was originally armed with eight 24-pounder guns that were mounted around the top of the ramparts. Today the raised earthwork is still visible with a row of cottages that are located inside. No. 1 Battery was located 2 miles north of the Redoubt and was also built in 1798 with later modifications in 1860. It was a self-contained triangular fort that accommodated four or five 24-pounders and still partially survives today. No. 2 Battery, also known as Lade Fort, was located 1.5 miles north of No. 1 Battery. Built in 1798, it has a similar layout to No. 1 Battery and was reused during both World Wars as a site for anti-aircraft guns. By the late nineteenth century it had been converted for use as a Coastguard Station and then a block of Coastguard houses and offices were then built in one corner. Today a large amount of the Battery survives and it is designated as a Scheduled Monument that represents a good example of eighteenth century coastal battery. Finally, No. 3 and No. 4 Batteries were located west of Dungeness Point also built in 1798 as self-contained triangular forts. Both were destroyed by the sea between 1818 and 1823 and so do not survive today.

There are also buildings at Dungeness that highlight its continued importance during the First and Second World Wars. Perhaps most notably, Dungeness played an important role during Operation PLUTO (Pipe-Line Under The Ocean or Pipe-Line

Underwater Transport of Oil) which was an operation by British engineers and oil companies during the Second World War to transport fuel under the English Channel into France in support of Operation Overlord, the Allied invasion of Normandy in June 1944. It was a dangerous operation particularly at Dungeness which was in range of the German guns in France but was ultimately a success. By the end of the war an estimated 172 million gallons of fuel had been supplied to the Allied forces in France via the PLUTO lines without being discovered by the German forces. Terminals and pumping stations at Dungeness and neighbouring Greatstone were disguised as bungalows, gravel pits and garages and are referred to today as "PLUTO bungalows". Pluto Cottage in Dungeness was a pumping station that had been built to look like a small house and is now a private residence. Other PLUTO bungalows survive in Greatstone and are also private residences. This collection of wartime structures that survives at Dungeness clearly illustrates the areas key role in the defence of the Kentish coast as well as an important chapter in its development that continues to contribute to its unique local character.

A more recent phase of development at Dungeness was the construction of the nuclear power stations located on the Dungeness headland within the Dungeness Estate during the 1960s. Only one out of the two power stations that were originally constructed is still operational today and continues to be managed by owners EDF Energy. Dungeness A was a legacy Magnox power station that was connected to the National Grid in 1965 and continued to generate power until the end of 2006. Defueling was completed in 2012 and the demolition of the turbine hall later in 2015. It is now expected to enter the "care and maintenance" stage of decommissioning in 2027.

Construction of Dungeness B began in 1965 and it became the first Advanced Gas cooled reactor (AGR) in the United Kingdom. It started generating power in 1983 and is still currently operational. In 2005 the stations closure date was set for 2018 but in 2015 the plant was given an extension of ten years taking the closure date to 2028. It is currently the largest employer in the Romney Marsh and also offers a visitor centre and guided tours of the station. Not only is Dungeness B an important tourist attraction, but it also makes a significant contribution to the local character and is an iconic landmark in the landscape here. In 2009 Dungeness was included on a list of 11 potential sites for a new nuclear power station, Dungeness C. Due to environmental reasons Dungeness C was not included in the Government's draft National Policy Statement and was later ruled out in 2010 by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change.

Overall, there has been no significant development for settlement at Dungeness and today it still remains relatively untouched and sparsely occupied. Its local character is dominated by quirky and distinctive residences which emanate a strong heritage of fishing, wartime and the railway. The individuality of each residence as well as the landscape that surrounds them makes the Dungeness Estate and wider NNR a unique and special place that is highly valued by its local community as well as its visitors. There are examples of contemporary architectural residences at Dungeness as well as holiday homes where visitors have been attracted to the area by its unique setting and character. For example, the Coastguard Lookout Tower which was a former 1950s radar monitoring station built in 1905 has now been converted into a holiday let. However, the development of Dungeness remains small when compared

to other areas within Kent which only adds to the strong local character and uniqueness of its wild and open landscape.

Historic and Natural Environment Issues

Dungeness is a uniquely special place that is protected by a number of designations so as to preserve and maintain its historic landscape and many associated assets. It has international conservation importance for its geomorphology, natural habitats as well as plant and wildlife communities. These are primarily recognised through its conservation designations as a National Nature Reserve (NNR), a Special Protection Area (SPA), a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and also as part of the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Dungeness is also part of the Natura 2000 Networking Programme which is a series of sites across the European Union that have been designated as a SAC under the Habitats Directive and as a SPA under the Birds Directive. SPAs are classified to help to protect and manage areas that are important for rare and vulnerable birds because they are used for breeding, feeding, wintering and migration. SACs are classified to protect and manage rare and vulnerable animals as well as habitats.

The importance of protecting and managing the biodiversity and built features at Dungeness is also highlighted in a number of strategies that are set out by the Local Authority and other bodies responsible for the management of Dungeness. At the time of writing this paper (2017), consultants on behalf of EDF Energy are producing an internal Management Plan for the Dungeness Estate as is the case with all EDF land holdings. The Management Plan will cover the next five years when completed and primarily look at creating a positive strategy for the preservation and maintenance of the estates biodiversity and natural assets. The operational impact of the EDF Power Station on the surrounding landscape at Dungeness will be assessed and management strategies will be put in place to ensure that there is no loss of biodiversity or negative impact on the wider Dungeness Estate. The continued extraction of shingle from Dungeness to protect the Power Station will be closely controlled and EDF Energy will aim to continue enhancing and preserving the unique landscape here with as minimal change to the local character as is possible.

As well as the above, a Habitats Regulations Assessment is currently being carried out alongside the Places and Policies Local Plan for the district that will look at possible adverse impacts to the designated nature conservation sites at Dungeness as well as other areas across the District. The Shepway Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 also highlights the importance of enhancing management and maintenance of the rich natural and historic assets across the District such as the biodiversity at Dungeness and its special coastal ecology, open countryside and significant wildlife sites.

A Sustainable Access Strategy (SAS) that covers Dungeness, Rye and Camber is another ongoing project that will be used to ensure that increased tourism to these areas will not adversely impact on the integrity of the internationally important wildlife sites. An understanding of popular activities in the area has been obtained from visitor surveys and the identification of impacts to the natural environment will now inform management and planning policy. Strategies such as the SAS will ensure the

ongoing preservation and management of the natural and historic assets at Dungeness in light of large visitor numbers.

A number of historic and natural environment issues have been identified that highlight the need and opportunity for a positive balance between continued enjoyment of Dungeness by visitors and the ongoing effective conservation of its sensitive natural and historic assets.

Issue 1 – Problems relating to uncontrolled dogs and dog mess which may damage sensitive environments and wildlife.
Dungeness is uniquely attractive for its relatively untouched and open landscapes. This attracts a wide range of visitors to the area and in particular those that enjoy niche activities such as walking, wildlife watching and sea angling. Dogs are permitted on the Dungeness NNR with the exception of the RSPB Nature Reserve. Information boards and leaflets produced by the RSPB, Romney Marsh Countryside Project, Natural England and White Cliffs Countryside Project state that whilst dogs are allowed at Dungeness, they must be kept under control and all mess must be cleaned up so as to respect the residents of Dungeness and the sensitive environment and wildlife that are also found here. Issues will arise when these covenants are not adhered to and uncontrolled dogs or dog mess causes damage whilst also making the area unattractive for residents and other visitors.

In order to address this and ensure that dog walking is able to continue with the same level of freedom and enjoyment at Dungeness, opportunities may be sought to engage with this target group in order to raise awareness of the sensitivities of the natural environment and supported wildlife here. Programmes could be aimed to engage with dog walkers and provide information and education opportunities on the impacts of dogs on the local flora and fauna which are so important to the local character and often the reason for visiting in the first place. Whilst legal enforcement to extend Dog Control Orders could be a last resort if issues continued to persist, engaging directly with this target group in the first instance may give more positive opportunities for education and understanding about Dungeness and its special natural assets. This would also work towards achieving a positive balance between continued natural conservation and visitors being able to bring and enjoy walking dogs.

Issue 2 – Problems relating to littering and a lack of bins provided around the Dungeness Estate and NNR which may cause damage to sensitive environments and wildlife as well as being unattractive.
The vast majority of visitors to Dungeness will have chosen it for its unique landscapes, environmental assets and wildlife. Issues of littering will detract from the attractive natural assets that are so central to the tourism offering of Dungeness as well as to its importance in natural conservation. Litter around the NNR may also cause harm to wildlife or the range of habitats that are found here. In particular, there are rare species of animals and plants at Dungeness that rely on delicate habitats to survive and prosper, and littering may inhibit this as well as causing further damage to biodiversity. A balance should be found between providing enough litter bins throughout the NNR to address this issue whilst at the same time not adding too many that would detract from the landscape here. Opportunities to educate visitors

about the sensitive environment and wildlife at Dungeness may further deter littering if visitors are more aware of the harm that this can cause.

Issue 3 – A lack of facilities and supporting infrastructure which makes Dungeness a more difficult place to visit and stay for any length of time.
Dungeness remains a sparsely occupied area with few public amenities and limited access by road. Visitor surveys suggest that the vast majority of visitors to Dungeness travel and arrive by car but then have problems with a lack of parking and facilities. Once in Dungeness, there are also only a few public amenities such as the public houses and the RHDR station café that has recently been opened. These issues may lead to a lack of visitors to Dungeness, those who do visit staying for shorter lengths of time or unintentional damage to the landscape and wildlife if the lack of infrastructure and facilities causes people to park or access areas that are undesignated as route ways around the NNR.

However, managing adequate infrastructure and providing enough public amenities is a delicate balance to achieve when the sparseness of Dungeness is a significant part of its charm and the reason that many people are drawn to the area in the first place. If this were to change then it would certainly detract from the unique character of Dungeness and its significant appeal as a peaceful and tranquil location. There are strong feelings from residents and visitors to retain Dungeness as it is, and so to add a number of public amenities such as restaurants and cafes would detract from the strong local character and also contradict strong feelings about Dungeness. Strategies such as improving surrounding areas to the Dungeness NNR so as to displace visitors and provide amenities close by could help to alleviate some of the pressure for more facilities. Access to Dungeness is also possible via the RHDR if visitors were to park outside of the NNR.

Issue 4 – Problems relating to visitors deviating from designated pathways and subsequently causing damage to the sensitive landscape.
As has already been mentioned, the landscape and supported flora and fauna at Dungeness are exceptionally sensitive to external factors such as human activity. Many of the species found at Dungeness are important both nationally and internationally for natural conservation and are closely managed by bodies such as Natural England and the RSPB for their protection and longevity. Whilst visiting Dungeness, wooden boardwalks across the shingle and route ways around parts of the reserve such as at the RSPB Nature Reserve are provided for the protection of the sensitive environments, plants and animals that are found here. They have also been designed to be in keeping with the surrounding landscape and do not therefore detract from the distinctive local character or setting.

People deviating from these route ways and walking or driving across parts of the shingle or other habitats may cause substantial damage to the shingle landscape as well as to the wildlife that this environment supports. A Special Nature Conservation Order allows for the prosecution and fining of individuals who persist in damaging the NNR. Information boards also advise visitors to follow designated walkways where provided and explain about the sensitivity of Dungeness and the wildlife it supports.

In order to achieve a positive balance between natural conservation and continuing visitors to Dungeness, opportunities could be sought to increase visitor awareness

and understanding of the sensitivities at Dungeness which would then reinforce the use of walkways and routes around the NNR. Many visitors may be unaware of the wildlife and delicate landscapes at Dungeness and so enrichment of interpretation materials such as information boards, leaflets and online information may improve this issue. On-site wardens directly engaging with visitors may also be able to effect behavioural change by providing educational resources and advice about Dungeness. Wardens may also be able to deliver important activities such as guided walks or workshops where again there are valuable opportunities to engage with the effective management of Dungeness and education about its natural sensitivities. In this way, natural conservation whilst maintaining large visitor numbers may be achieved.

Issue 5 – Notice boards will often remain unread or lose their impact with local people and so a lack of awareness and understanding about the sensitivity of Dungeness may lead to unintentional damage.
Visitors to Dungeness may have a lack of awareness or understanding regarding the sensitivities that apply to the landscape and wildlife here. Information boards are provided around the NNR as well as leaflets and extensive information that are accessible online. However, notice boards are often unread and may also lose their impact with local residents. This may lead to unnecessary damage to the NNR and its natural and historic assets.

As has already been suggested, on-site wardens engaging directly with visitors around the NNR could provide an educational resource to raise awareness and sensitivity towards the importance of nature conservation at Dungeness. This could take many forms such as workshops, guided tours or simply engaging with people as they explore Dungeness. Greater awareness for the issues of conservation at Dungeness may ensure the longevity of its natural and historic assets as well as a deeper appreciation and powerful experience of the assets by visitors and local residents. The production of new interpretation materials may also help to achieve a positive balance between large visitor numbers and effective nature conservation.

Issue 6 – Problems relating to trespassing and illegal activities that cause damage to natural and built assets at Dungeness.
Due to the unique landscapes at Dungeness it is a popular destination for activities such as photoshoots and filming. However, as a private estate and a National Nature Reserve respect must be paid to the sensitive and fragile wildlife here as well as to the local residents and their property. Before undertaking these activities, permission must be obtained from the landowner and once this has been gained then details of the project must be confirmed and approved by the Romney Marsh Countryside Project (RMCP). A Code of Practice is given and must be adhered to including clauses such as keeping noise levels low, no parking on the shingle and following guidelines given by the RMCP. Failure to follow the Code of Practice could result in criminal proceedings and any intentional damage to the flora, fauna or shingle is punishable with a large fine as Dungeness is also designated as a SSSI.

Unfortunately, regular illegal or criminal activity is reported at Dungeness which risks causing damage to the shingle landscape, built features and wildlife. Heritage assets such as wooden boat winches, tanning coppers and fishing huts on Denge beach make important contributions to the local character and heritage offering but are

vulnerable to damage through vandalism. The shingle ridges are also exceptionally fragile as is the wildlife that it supports and this too will be damaged if illegal activity takes place at Dungeness. In order to continue allowing and enabling individuals who do adhere to the protocols put in place to protect Dungeness being able to enjoy and utilise the landscapes here, a positive strategy for policing and reducing criminal activity should be sought so that natural conservation can continue whilst also allowing for the enjoyment of the NNR. On-site wardens could act as a deterrent and also raising the awareness of other visitors and residents may also enable these individuals to contribute to the policing and care for Dungeness.

There are also significant issues with trespassing onto private properties across Dungeness as the boundaries of residential holdings are often unclear and so visitors unknowingly trespass. Some residents have started to mark the boundary of their property which may ultimately detract from the local character but it is felt necessary to stop trespassing. Again, there are opportunities here for the education of visitors to raise awareness of the nature of private property across Dungeness and to encourage respect and privacy. This could be achieved through on-site wardens or through enhanced interpretation materials.

Conclusion

Dungeness is a unique and special place that makes a significant contribution to the tourism offering of the District as well as being nationally and internationally important for nature conservation. One of the biggest challenges that it now faces is the balance between large visitor numbers and effective conservation and protection of its natural and historic assets. As has already been mentioned, a number of designations protect Dungeness and its many assets, though a number of issues that may put aspects as risk have also been identified. A number of strategies may be put in place in order to achieve a positive balance between the two objectives of continued tourism and conservation. The managing bodies of the Dungeness Estate, NNR and RSPB Nature Reserve are developing ways to respond to visitor pressures whilst continuing to promote the unique historic landscape and wildlife that can be found at Dungeness. Local Authorities have also recognised the value of Dungeness and its ongoing preservation in light of continued promotion. Ultimately it is possible for a positive balance to be achieved that will ensure the continued enjoyment of Dungeness and its unique natural and historic assets.