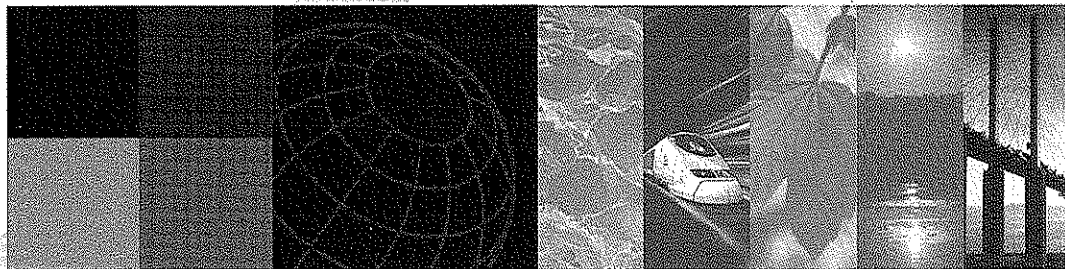


Halcrow Maritime
Poole and Christchurch Bays
Shoreline Management Plan
Volume 1 Strategy Document
Consultation Draft
March 1999



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PREFACE

This is the Consultation Draft of the Poole and Christchurch Bays Shoreline Management Plan. It sets out the strategy for management of coastal defences between Durlston Head in Dorset and Hurst Spit in Hampshire, including Poole and Christchurch Harbours (Subcell 5F). The SMP has been prepared by Halcrow Maritime on behalf of the Poole and Christchurch Bays Coastal Group.

The SMP is divided into the following 4 volumes:

VOLUME 1 – STRATEGY DOCUMENT

PART A : INTRODUCTION

Sets out the background to, and role of, the SMP, along with its aims and objectives.

PART B : HOW TO USE THE PLAN

Describes the key elements of strategy presentation, in the Process and Management Unit sections.

PART C : PROCESS UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

Present a synopsis of the main characteristics of each Process Unit, summarised from Volumes 2 and 3.

PART D : MANAGEMENT UNIT STATEMENTS

Divided into two sections, Part D1 presents the 'Management Unit Characteristics' and Part D2 the 'Appraisal of Strategic Options' which identifies the preferred option along with implementation and monitoring guidance.

PART E : FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Describes where/how current understanding needs to be improved and gives a suggested time frame for both the review of the strategies and, further into the future, for a more comprehensive reappraisal of the Plan as a whole.

VOLUME 2 – PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

PART A : GEOLOGY AND GEOMORPHOLOGY

Presents the physical characteristics of the shoreline along with its the formative geomorphological history, and describes the subdivision of the coast into Process Units.

PART B : COASTAL CONDITIONS

Describes the wind, wave, tide and current regimes driving contemporary coastal processes.

PART C : SHORELINE EVOLUTION

Identifies and reviews historical evolution of the shoreline, both 'natural' and due to Mans intervention.

PART D : CONCEPTUAL SEDIMENT PROCESS MODELS

Provides qualitative and quantitative information about sediment processes within Poole and Christchurch Bays, in addition to setting longer term assessments of how the coast is likely to be impacted upon.

ANNEX A : ISSUES ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Presents shoreline management issues and associated objectives, relevant to the Physical Environment of the coast, identified during public consultation on the SMP.

VOLUME 3 – DEVELOPED AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

PART A : COASTAL DEFENCES

Examines the current state of knowledge of coastal defences, and where possible reviews the nature and standard of defence provided, and their suitability to provide the standards required in the future.

PART B : DEVELOPED ENVIRONMENT

Human use of the shoreline is assessed through descriptions of land use, coastal activities, offshore use and archaeological interest, and requirements for coastal defence planning.

PART C : NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Reviews landscape, habitat and earth science conservation value of the shoreline, and the key issues relating to coastal defence provision.

PART D : PLANNING

Detail present planning procedures and sets out existing policies and objectives, of both statutory and non-statutory plans, of relevance to coastal defence.

PART E : LIST OF RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

A bibliographical listing of those documents/sources used during the production of the SMP.

ANNEX A : ISSUES ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Presents shoreline management issues and associated objectives, relevant to the Developed and Natural Environment of the coast, identified during public consultation on the SMP.

VOLUME 4 – MAPS AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Maps presented in Parts A to D are at 1:25,000 scale.

PART A : DEVELOPED ENVIRONMENT MAPS

These base maps illustrate the land use of the area, categorised into ten classifications.

PART B : CONSERVATION MAPS

Includes details of all international, national and local conservation designations, whether statutory or non-statutory. Archaeological and historical features of a terrestrial and maritime nature are also depicted.

PART C : COASTAL DEFENCES

The extent and nature of all forms of coastal defence have been mapped.

PART D : PHOTOGRAPHS

A series of photographs representative of each Process Unit.

A consistent **page numbering** style has been used throughout Volumes 1 to 3, as follows:

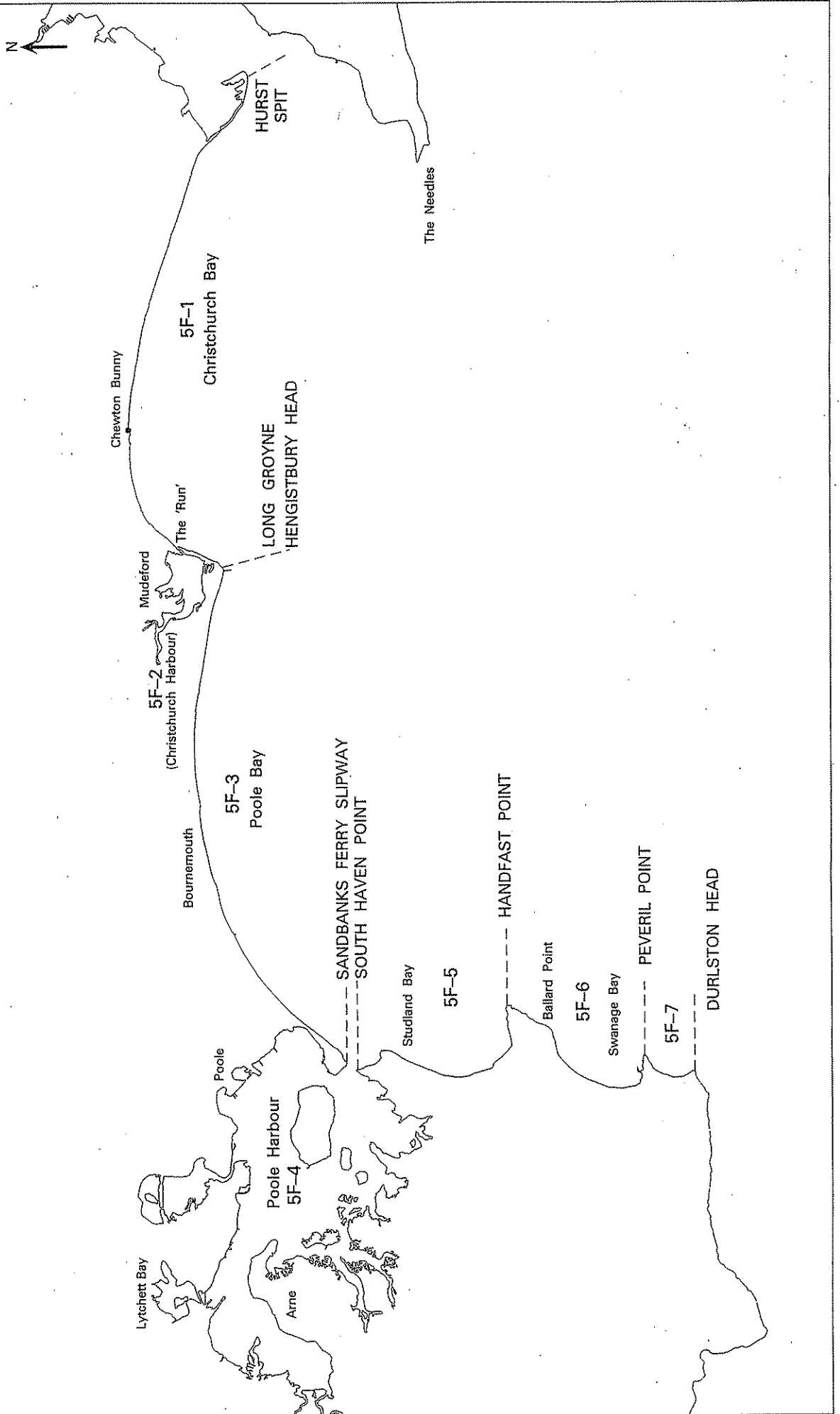
Volume – Part Page

For example, 1-A4 is Volume 1 Part A Page 4.

Poole and Christchurch Bays Coastal Group

SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN
POOLE AND CHRISTCHURCH BAYS
DURLSTON HEAD TO HURST SPIT (Subcell 5F)
Process Units

Halcrow
1999



Part A

PART A : INTRODUCTION

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1 BACKGROUND

A Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is a document which sets out a general strategy for coastal defence taking account of natural coastal processes and human and other environmental influences and needs. This is intended to provide a strategic framework for the management of coastal defences along this coastline in the future and a basis upon which future informed decision making and policy setting can be made.

A previous study of the coastline of England and Wales for the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF) established that coastal sediment movements occur within distinct boundaries, or cells, which are rarely coincident with administrative boundaries. Piecemeal coast protection schemes may not always be compatible with coastline needs elsewhere within the same sediment cell. Recognising this fact, the Poole and Christchurch Bays Coastal Group have decided to produce a SMP wherein all conflicting needs and constraints are to be identified and considered. The Plan provides a strategic framework for the management of coastal defences along this coastline in the future, taking account of natural shoreline movements, human and other environmental influences and needs.

The shoreline between Hurst Spit and Durlston Head lying within Poole and Christchurch Bays is covered by the administrative areas of New Forest District Council (NFDC), Christchurch Borough Council (CBC), Bournemouth Borough Council (BBC), Borough of Poole (BoP) and Purbeck District Council (PDC). As Maritime District Councils under the Coast Protection Act 1949 these operating authorities hold powers regarding coast protection issues within their respective boundaries. In general the responsibility for sea defences, which protect against flooding, is administered by the Environment Agency (EA) using powers under the Water Resources Act, 1991, and the Land Drainage Act, 1991.

The Poole and Christchurch Bays Coastal Group has been formed, comprising the aforementioned operating authorities including EA South West and EA Southern, along with several other bodies with coastal responsibilities or interests, namely Dorset County Council (DCC), Hampshire County Council (HCC), English Nature (EN), Poole Harbour Commissioners (PHC) and MAFF.

Following an initial Scoping Study completed in 1997, the Coastal Group appointed Sir William Halcrow & Partners Ltd (Halcrow) in February 1998, to produce this Shoreline Management Plan (SMP). The Brief prepared by the Coastal Group was based on the draft guidelines published by MAFF in June 1995.

This SMP overlaps the Western Solent and Southampton Water SMP, completed in 1998, in Christchurch Bay, between Chewton Bunny and Hurst Spit. Consequently, any information produced within this SMP should be regarded as the definitive version, replacing any previous text produced.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF A SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Brief states that the aim of this Plan is to set objectives for the future management of the shoreline and provide the basis for the development of sustainable coastal defence policies for Poole and Christchurch Bays. In accordance with SMP guidelines issued by MAFF (June 1995), the main objectives to be fulfilled through development of the Plan are:

- develop an understanding of how the shorelines within Poole and Christchurch Bays are behaving and how they may evolve in the future, identifying these assets which are likely to be placed at risk;
- produce coastal defence strategies which protect and enhance the natural environment, the existing landscape, heritage and developed environment;
- take account of the objectives and aspirations of all parties;
- maintain the natural coastline as far as possible with minimal intervention preferred;
- provide co-ordination of efforts between the various authorities in the undertaking and maintaining of coastal defence works;
- identify the scope for co-ordinated research, study and monitoring as necessary, between the authorities;
- facilitate the production of works programmes in subsequent stages of coastal defence planning;
- develop a heightened public awareness of the overall behaviour and issues relating to the coast and the impacts that they and others have on it;
- provide a Shoreline Management Plan which, both in its physical form and the ideas it presents, is capable of amendment and improvements as changing circumstances and awareness dictates.

Whilst the main objectives of a completed Plan are to:

- assess a range of strategic coastal defence options and agree a preferred approach;
- outline future requirements for monitoring, management of data and research related to the shoreline;
- inform the statutory planning process and related coastal zone planning;
- identify opportunities for maintaining and enhancing the natural coastal environment, taking account of any specific targets set by legislation or any locally set targets;
- set out arrangements for continued consultation with interested parties.

3 THE SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN

3.1 General

Shoreline Management Plans are >non-statutory= as they are not required by law. The need to develop strategic management planning for the coastlines of England and Wales is, however, well recognised and in assessing proposed coastal defence works for grant aid, MAFF will require the existence of a SMP. For the purpose of any non-statutory document, such as this SMP, suggestions and strategies for the future must consider the existing statutory planning system. It is also vital that the SMP focuses on all of the issues relative to the shoreline within the geographical area concerned. It can then operate as a stand alone document.

3.2 Development of the Shoreline Management Plan

Development of the SMP initially required the collation of existing information and the undertaking of studies to produce an assessment of the present situation, identifying the various needs and conflicts of interests. This has enabled Process Units and Management Units to be defined against which the wide-ranging and disparate issues have been presented.

The baseline studies on which the SMP is founded were undertaken between February 1998 and October 1998, and was presented in its draft form, at that stage, to the Coastal Group. In the next phase of development, the final strategy has been developed from the earlier studies, formalising the division of the shoreline into Management Units and establishing appropriate management strategies for each. This phase of work was completed in January 1999. A full review was then undertaken by the Coastal Group, with final documents issued in March 1999.

The SMP is a working document, which is designed to be updated over time. This will be achieved through a set review procedure (as detailed in Part E). This concept of having a "living document" ensures that new information, new understanding of coastal processes and response, future changes in planning policy or environmental needs, can be incorporated into the SMP. Such an approach will re-confirm the existing coastal defence policy or advocate a change to a new policy.

This review process is also a recognition that policies may not be sustainable in the long term due to natural changes in the shoreline environment. An issue of particular concern is that of sea level rise. This can make the long term defence of low lying land uneconomic, or may result in the loss of features such as spits and barrier beaches, which will clearly affect strategies. The 'squeeze' of coastal habitats between rising seas and hard defences is also a key issue. Such 'squeeze' could also require increased frequency or volume of regular nourishment programmes. Alternatively, maintaining defences in a situation where a seawall is fronted by eroding saltmarshes will eventually lead to coastal squeeze with the complete loss of saltmarsh habitat if alternative solutions are not considered. It is important to bear in mind that additional work will be required to assess the potential impacts in the medium to long term of different options related to net gain/loss of habitats. The proposed 'saltmarsh management strategy' (Part E) will be important to help determine these potential issues in the future.

It is essential that this first issue of the SMP is recognised for what it is, the foundation for shoreline management planning. It is not the definitive solution. This

SMP is based upon the information that is available now and will need to evolve as future studies, such as those identified in this document, are undertaken to fill the gaps in existing knowledge. An important aspect of this first issue of the SMP is the identification of areas of uncertainty, to enable the prioritisation of future studies and monitoring. In this respect, the aims of an SMP as defined in the MAFF Guidance should be re-iterated, that is "...to provide the basis for sustainable coastal defence policies....".

The format of this SMP document has been created to act as a base document for shoreline management between Hurst Spit and Durlston Head. The intention is that the document is used as a whole, but individual sections (eg any particular Process Unit) can be easily extracted as a stand alone statement. Figure A1 shows the conceptual workflow used in the production of this document, from the aims of the SMP presented in this Part, through the assessment of coastal defence policy options, to the assessment of future monitoring requirements. It is also important that future changes in planning policy, environmental characteristics, or knowledge of coastal processes which may in turn result in changes to the developed strategy can be integrated, with revision to parts of the document rather than complete re-issue.

3.3 Integration with Other Plans

The planning system is important in guiding the way in which the coast is developed and conserved. A range of statutory and non-statutory plans play an important role in achieving this. The statutory plans are prepared against the background of national planning guidance, with non-statutory plans providing further advice and guidance on the development or management of a particular location or "theme". There is great importance in ensuring that plans are integrated and each informs those related to it. The SMPs have been prepared in this environment and have attempted to complement existing plans.

Of the relevant statutory plans the most significant are probably the County Structure Plans and the Local Plans. Their policies inform the planning process of the adoption of coastal defence policies within the SMP and conversely will inform the SMP decision making process.

Based on the EU Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, parts of the coast have been designated as marine Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). There is a requirement to maintain "favourable conservation status" of these areas, which has led to the preparation of SAC Management Plans. All SAC sites and SPA designations form part of the Natura 2000 series and all relevant authorities responsible for the management of marine Natura 2000 sites are required to establish a statutory management scheme in order to avoid further deterioration or disturbance to the site. The preparation of this SMP has taken account of this new requirement.

With regards the non-statutory plans probably the most closely allied to the SMPs are the Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs), the successors to Catchment Management Plans. The LEAPs seek to draw together all of the interests associated with ensuring river catchments are managed in a sustainable way. Flood defence, a responsibility of the Environment Agency, is the aspect of greatest common interest between LEAPs and SMPs.

In addition to LEAPS, Aquatic Management Plans have been prepared within the SMP area (notably for Poole Harbour). These are locally progressed, non-statutory initiatives that aim, through partnership and consensus of all interested

parties to achieve sustainable management of estuarine areas through strategic management frameworks and recommendations.

With growing awareness of the pressures on, and value of, the coastal zone there have been numerous plans aimed at >integrated= management. These tend to be localised planning initiatives, particularly on estuaries and areas of the open coast such as Heritage Coast or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These non-statutory plans seek to integrate the many interests of the coast including the natural and man-made, and develop a consensus view as to the way forward.

The Poole and Christchurch Bays SMP, along with the other sectoral planning initiatives raised above, are seen as part of the European Commission Demonstration Programme on the Integrated Management of Coastal Zones. The 'Dorset Coast Strategy', links these non statutory plans (such as the SMP) into a single coherent framework that will prepare an integrated strategy for the coast. This link with the SMP and other initiatives will ensure that duplication of effort is reduced and integration can more easily be achieved.

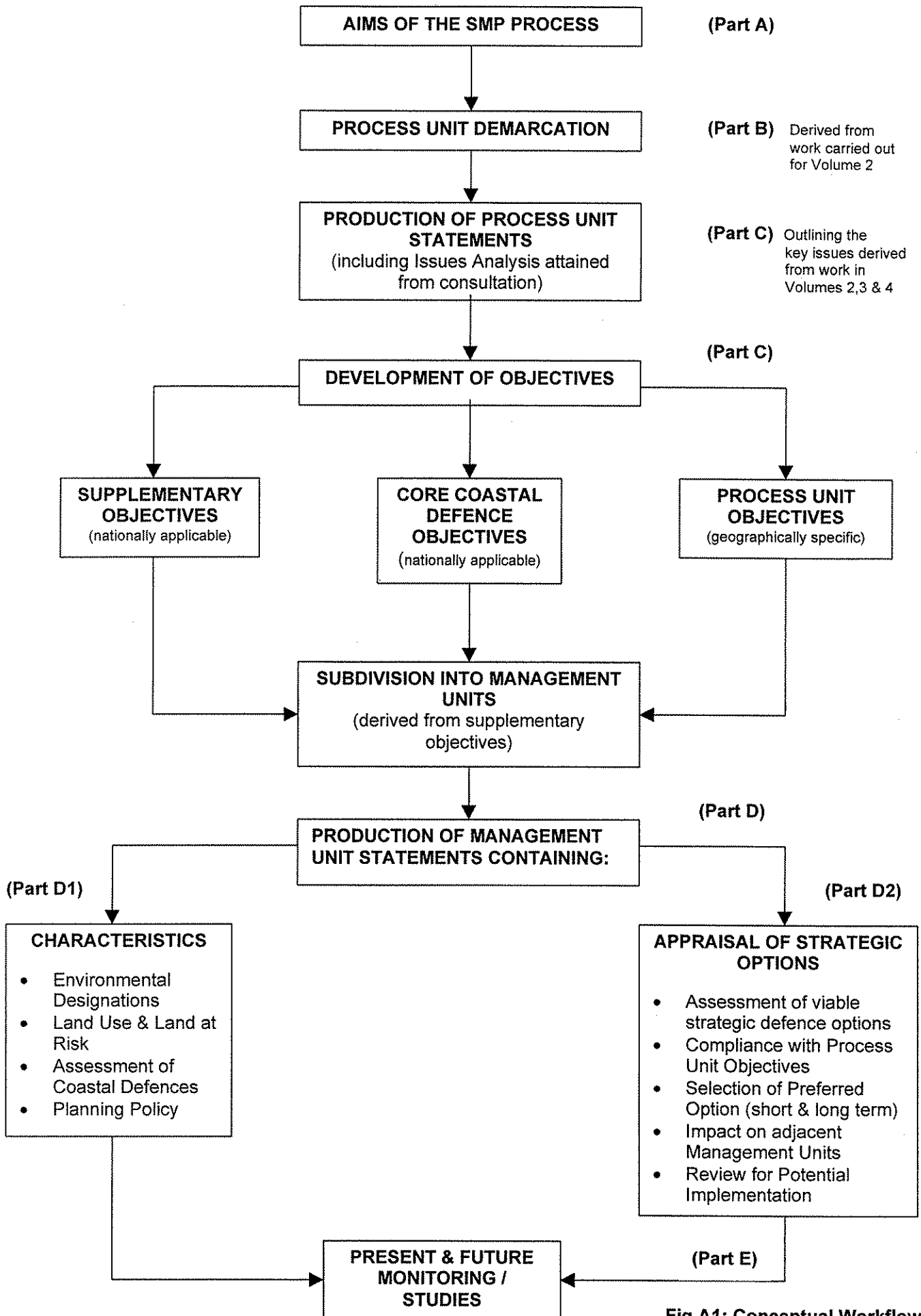


Fig A1: Conceptual Workflow