

Interactive comment on “Estimating the long-term historic evolution of exposure to flooding of coastal populations” by A. J. Stevens et al.

Anonymous Referee #1

Received and published: 27 April 2015

This paper might be considered satisfactory in that its analysis is relatively coherent and systematic. However, there is one major flaw, and that is that it ignores any flood defences and the way that they reduce risk and indeed reduce exposure. This means the analysis is almost certainly nonsense, in that interventions in the case study area must have been quite extensive following the floods that are reported in the paper. I know that technically flood risk remains, in that there is residual risk after any intervention to reduce the probability of flooding, but this risk is not the same as existed before the intervention, and indeed the exposure is probably not the same. I am afraid that the paper as it stands is not publishable, owing to this decision to ignore the implementation of flood defences, because it gives a completely misleading impression that exposure has increased substantially over the historical period analysed, whereas

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in fact exposure and risk might have been reduced quite markedly owing to interventions that are not recorded on the analysis. Therefore, in my view, the paper must be rejected.

Interactive comment on Nat. Hazards Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 3, 1681, 2015.