

Chapter 4:

West Bay to Hive Beach

Coastal Access: Lyme Regis to Rufus Castle - Natural England's Proposals

Part 4.1: Introduction

Start Point:	West Bay (grid reference: SY 4642 9024)
End Point:	Hive Beach (grid reference: SY 4909 8880)
Relevant Maps:	4a and 4b

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 4.1.1 Follows the South West Coast Path, using public rights of way and existing walked routes.
- 4.1.2 Follows the coastline and maintains good views of the sea except:
 - between route sections LRR-4-S015 to LRR-4-S020, where an inland diversion is necessary to cross the River Bride at the first available footbridge. Alternatives were considered (see table 4.2.2 below); and
 - between route sections LRR-4-S025 to LRR-4-S031, where an inland diversion is necessary to take the trail past areas of Burton Cliff which have collapsed (see Future Change, below and part 8 of the Overview).
- 4.1.3 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation, geological or heritage preservation (see map C of the Overview):
 - Chesil & The Fleet Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - West Dorset Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- 4.1.4 We have assessed the potential impacts of access along the proposed route (and over the associated spreading room described below) on the features for which the affected land is designated and on any which are protected in their own right. The levels and patterns of public access along this length of coast would be unlikely to change significantly as a result of our proposals and we have therefore concluded that our proposals would not be likely to have any significant impact on these features.

See part 5 of the Overview for more details about the assessment process described above, and refer to our published Access and Sensitive Features Appraisal for more information about the conclusions of the assessment process.

Accessibility:

- 4.1.5 There are few artificial barriers to accessibility on the proposed route, which makes use of existing surface paths wherever these meet the criteria in the Coastal Access Scheme. However, there are places where it may not be entirely suitable for people with reduced mobility because:

- the trail would follow an uneven grass or bare soil path along the cliff top; or
 - there are steps in places where it would be necessary to ascend/descend steep slopes.
- 4.1.6 At West Bay (route sections LRR-4-S001 and LRR-4-S002), new steps will be installed, so as to make the steep slope up the bank more accessible and less hazardous in wet conditions. We envisage this happening as part of the physical establishment work described in part 6 of the Overview.
- 4.1.7 The surfacing of route sections LRR-4-S005 , S008, S010, S011 and S022 will also be upgraded with additional backfilled steps installed.
- 4.1.8 At Cliff Road, Burton Bradstock (LRR-4-S025), the existing gates will be replaced with a gap (western side of the road) and a wider pedestrian gate suitable for users with reduced mobility (eastern side of the road). We envisage this happening as part of the physical establishment work described in part 6 of the Overview.

See part 5a of the Overview ‘Recreational issues’ for more information.

Where we have proposed exercising our discretion:

- 4.1.9 Landward boundary of the coastal margin: We have used our discretion on some sections of the route to map the landward extent of the coastal margin to an adjacent physical boundary such as a fence line, pavement or track to make the extent of the new access rights clearer (see table 4.2.1 below).
- 4.1.10 Restrictions and/or exclusions: The new access rights would also be subject to the excepted land types summarised in Annex C of the Overview, and the national restrictions on activities listed in Annex D. This would be so throughout the coastal margin, but these restrictions would not apply to the existing public rights of way. We have not used our discretion to propose any additional restrictions or exclusions on this part of the coast.

See part 3 of the Overview ‘Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps’, for an explanation of the default extent of the coastal margin and how we may use our discretion to adjust the margin, either to add land or to provide clarity. See also Annex C of the Overview ‘Excepted land categories’.

Establishment and ongoing management of the trail

- 4.1.11 Some physical establishment of the trail would be necessary, in accordance with the general approach described in part 6 the Overview. This includes the measures to improve accessibility described above.
- 4.1.12 Ongoing management: Ongoing management and maintenance would be necessary in accordance with the general approach described in part 7 of the Overview. The overall need for this is likely to be greater than on some other parts of the stretch, recognising that it will be necessary for the route to roll back from time to time in response to coastal processes, as described below.

See parts 6 ‘Physical establishment of the trail’ and 7 ‘Maintenance of the trail’ of the Overview for more information.

Future Change:

- 4.1.13 Part of the route of the trail on this length of coast would be able to change without further approval from the Secretary of State in response to coastal erosion or other geomorphological processes, or encroachment by the sea. This would happen in accordance with the criteria and procedures for ‘roll back’ set out in part 8 of the Overview. See table 4.2.1 below for details of the sections likely to be affected in the foreseeable future.
- 4.1.14 At the time of preparing the report, we do not foresee any other need for future changes to the access provisions proposed for the length of coast described in this chapter.

See parts 5e ‘Coastal processes’ and 8 ‘Future changes’ of the Overview for more information.

Part 4.2: Commentary on the maps

See part 3 of Overview for guidance on reading and understanding the tables below

4.2.1 Section details – Maps 4a to 4b, West Bay to Hive Beach

Notes on table:

Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 4.2.2: Other options considered.

Column 5 – ‘Yes – normal’ means roll-back approach is likely to follow the current feature (e.g. cliff edge/beach) for the foreseeable future.

Column 5 – ‘Yes – see table 4.2.3’ means refer to that table below about our likely approach to roll-back on this part of the route.

1	2	3	4	5	6a	6b	7
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Current status of this section	Current surface of this section	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 8 of Overview)	Landward boundary of margin (See maps)	Reason for landward boundary discretion	Proposed exclusions or restrictions
4a	LRR-4-S001 and LRR-4-S002	Public footpath	Grass	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity & cohesion	No
	LRR-4-S003	Public footpath	Grass	Yes – see table 4.2.3	Fence line	Clarity & cohesion	No
	LRR-4-S004	Public footpath	Steps: long backfilled	Yes – see table 4.2.3	Fence line	Clarity & cohesion	No
	LRR-4-S005 and LRR-4-S006	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes – see table 4.2.3	Fence line	Clarity & cohesion	No
	LRR-4-S007	Public footpath	Steps: long backfilled	Yes – see table 4.2.3	Fence line	Clarity & cohesion	No
	LRR-4-S008	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes – see table 4.2.3	Fence line	Clarity & cohesion	No
	LRR-4-S009	Public footpath	Grass	Yes – see table 4.2.3	Fence line	Clarity & cohesion	No
	LRR-4-S010 to LRR-4-S012	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes – normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S013	Public footpath	Steps: long backfilled	Yes – normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S014	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)/Shingle	Yes – see table 4.2.3	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
4b	LRR-4-S015*	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes – see table 4.2.3	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S016*	Public footpath	Grass	Yes – see table 4.2.3	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S017*	Public footpath	Tarmac	Yes – see table 4.2.3	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S018*	Public footpath	Stone: aggregate	Yes – normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S019*	Public footpath	Footbridge: timber	Yes – normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S020*	Public footpath	Grass	Yes – normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S021 and LRR-4-S022	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes – normal	Fence line	Clarity & cohesion	No
	LRR-4-S023 and LRR-4-S024	Public footpath	Grass	Yes – normal	Fence line	Clarity & Cohesion	No
	LRR-4-S025	Public footpath	Stone: aggregate / Tarmac	Yes – normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S026	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes – normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No

1	2	3	4	5	6a	6b	7
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Current status of this section	Current surface of this section	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 8 of Overview)	Landward boundary of margin (See maps)	Reason for landward boundary discretion	Proposed exclusions or restrictions
4b	LRR-4-S027	Public footpath	Grass	Yes – normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S028 and LRR-4-S029	Public footpath	Grass	Yes – normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S030	Public footpath	Steps: timber	Yes – normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-4-S031	Public footpath	Shingle	Yes – normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No

4.2.2 Other options considered: Map 4b, Freshwater Beach Holiday Park to Hive Beach

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
	LRR-4-S015 to LRR-4-S020	We considered crossing the mouth of the River Bride by means of a new footbridge at SY478895. No other options were identified for the trail in relation to this map.	We opted for the proposed route because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an investigation by Dorset County Council into installing a bridge here concluded that it would not be feasible without considerable stabilisation works due to the highly mobile river bank, which is constantly being reshaped and undercut; the cost for stabilising the river bank here to install a new bridge would be prohibitively expensive, whilst a suitable alternative footbridge already exists 400m inland; we concluded that overall the proposed route struck the best balance in terms of the criteria described in chapter 4 of the Coastal Access Scheme

4.2.3 Roll-back implementation – more complex situations: Maps 4a and 4b, West Bay to Hive Beach

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
	LRR-4-S003 to LRR-4-S009	Bridport & West Dorset Golf Club	If it is no longer possible to find a viable route seaward of the golf course, we will choose a new route after detailed discussions with all relevant interests, either (a) to pass through the site / course, or (b) if this is not practicable, to pass somewhere on the landward side of it. In reaching this judgement we will have full regard to the need to seek a fair balance between the interests of potentially affected owners and occupiers and those of the public.
	LRR-4-S014 to LRR-4-S017	Freshwater Beach Holiday Park	If it is no longer possible to find a viable route seaward of the licenced area of the Holiday Park, we will choose a new route after detailed discussions with all relevant interests, either (a) to pass through the site, or (b) if this is not practicable, to pass somewhere on the landward side of it. In reaching this judgement we will have full regard to the need to seek a fair balance between the interests of potentially affected owners and occupiers and those of the public.

In relation to all other sections where roll-back has been proposed, the trail is likely to be adjusted to follow the current feature (e.g. cliff edge/beach) for the foreseeable future.

Part 4.3: Chapter 4 - Formal Proposals

- Below are our formal proposals to the Secretary of State for the length of coast shown on maps 4a to 4b.
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

Formal Proposals – West Bay to Hive Beach

Proposed route of the trail

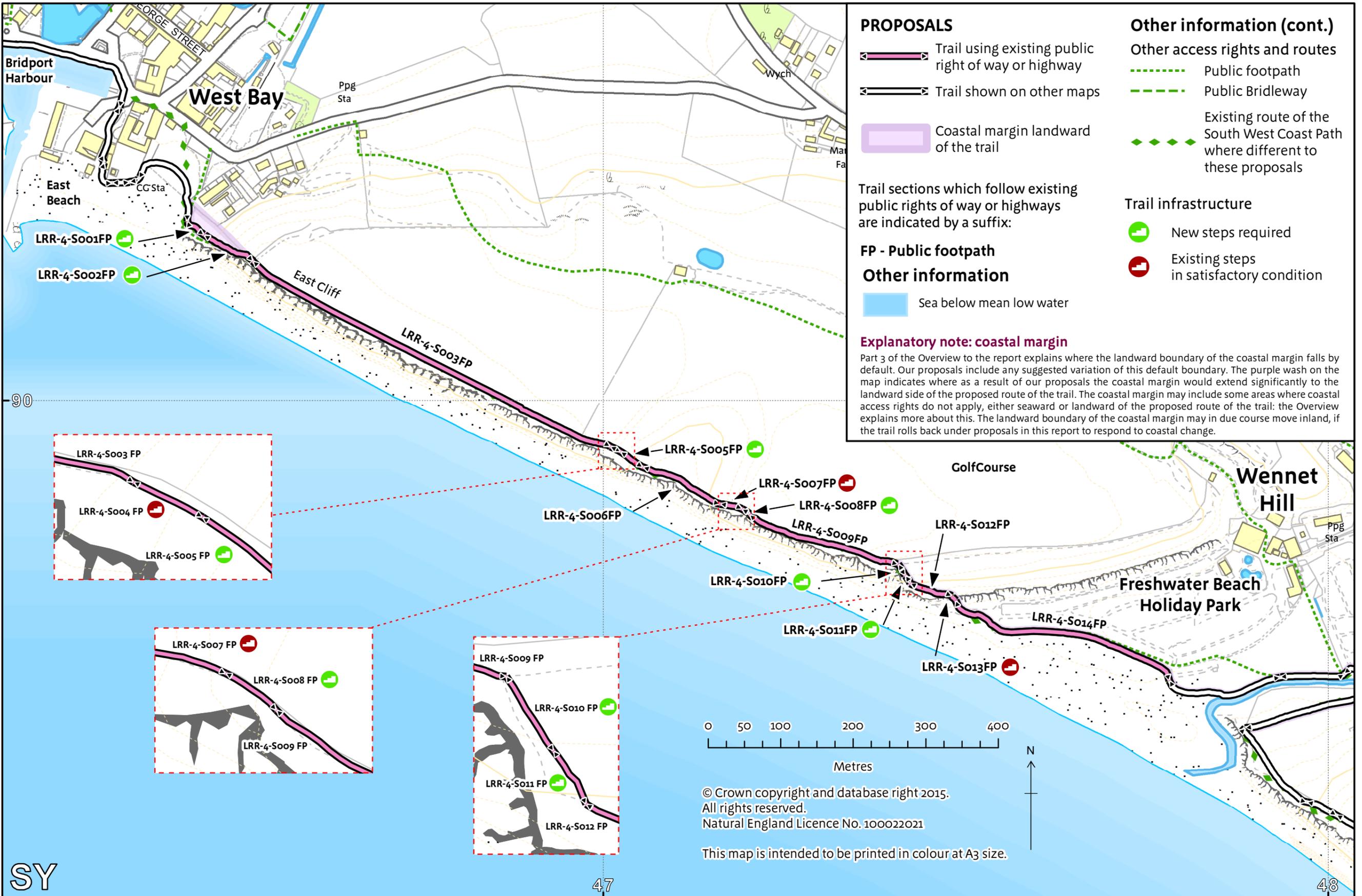
- 4.3.1 In relation to route sections LRR-4-S001 to LRR-4-S031, the initial proposed route, as determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 4a and 4b as the proposed route of the trail.
- 4.3.2 If at any time any part of the route described in 4.3.1 needs to change in order to remain viable, as a result of coastal erosion or other geomorphological processes or encroachment by the sea, the new route will be determined by Natural England in accordance with the criteria and procedures described under the title 'Roll-back' in part 8 of the Overview and section 4.10 of the Scheme. If this happens, the new route will become the approved route for that section for the purposes of the Order which determines where coastal access rights apply.

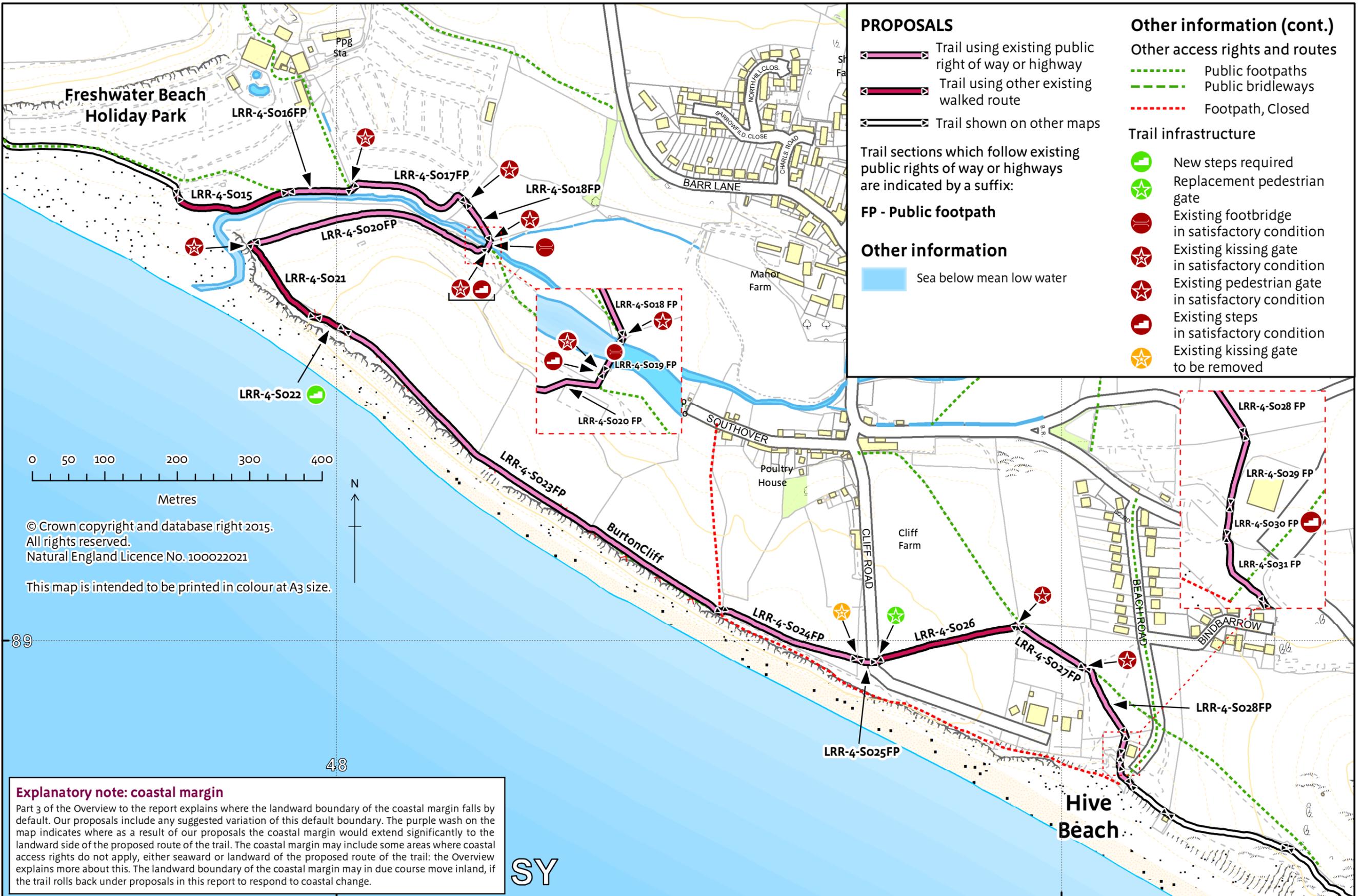
Landward boundary of coastal margin

- 4.3.3 Adjacent to route sections LRR-4-S001 and LRR-4-S002, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing boundary fence, as indicated by the landward boundary of the coastal margin shown on map 4a.
- 4.3.4 Adjacent to route sections LRR-4-S003 to LRR-4-S009, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing boundary fence which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 4a.
- 4.3.5 Adjacent to route sections LRR-4-S021 to LRR-4-S024, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing boundary fence which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 4b.

Local restrictions and exclusions

- 4.3.6 At the time of writing this report, there are no proposals for local restrictions or exclusions in relation to this length of coast.





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