

Chapter 1:

Lyme Regis to Charmouth Beach

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

Part 1.1: Introduction

Start Point:	The Cobb, Lyme Regis (grid reference: SY 3391 9147)
End Point:	Charmouth Beach (grid reference: SY 3663 9312)
Relevant Maps:	1a to 1c

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 1.1.1 Follows the South West Coast Path in part, but includes significant differences as detailed below.
- 1.1.2 We propose the trail follows the promenade at Front Beach (LRR-1-S002) to avoid the constricted narrow road currently used by the South West Coast Path at Marine Parade.
- 1.1.3 Along Lyme Regis sea front (see map 1a) between Cobb Gate Jetty (LRR-1-S003) and Charmouth Road Car Park (LRR-1-S014) the proposed route avoids a long section of pavement along narrow streets by utilising the new promenade along the sea wall and a newly constructed path up the cliff (see table 1.2.1 below for details of the proposed route and table 1.2.2 for a more detailed explanation of the other route option we considered).
- 1.1.4 At Rhodehorn Plantation, between LRR-1-S018 to LRR-1-S020 we are proposing establishing some new sections of path to create a clearer route through the woodland using gentler gradients.
- 1.1.5 Between Fern Hill Coppice (LRR-1-S024) and Charmouth Beach Footbridge (LRR-1-S050), the South West Coast Path diverts inland and follows the road from Lyme Regis into Charmouth town centre. Our proposal is to establish a new path around the perimeter of the golf course and much closer to the sea whilst avoiding landslips at Black Ven (see table 1.2.1 below for details of the proposed route and table 1.2.2 for a more detailed explanation of the other route option we considered).
- 1.1.6 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation, geological or heritage preservation (see map C of the Overview):
 - Sidmouth to West Bay Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - West Dorset Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- 1.1.7 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. Our assessment is that there is unlikely to be a significant change in the overall number of visits along this length of coast

as a result of our proposals and that those changes to the patterns of access that are likely to take place would not affect the features for which the sites are designated. 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

- 1.1.8 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 through woodland; or
 - there are steps in places where it would be necessary to ascend/descend steep slopes.
- 1.1.9 At Timber Hill (route section LRR-1-S018, shown on map 1b), new steps will be installed, so as to make the steep slope through the woodland 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.

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

Where we have proposed exercising our discretion

- 1.1.10 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. In one place, we have used our discretion to propose the inclusion of an additional, more extensive landward area within the coastal margin, to secure public enjoyment of this part of the coast. The owner of this land is content for us to propose this. (see table 1.2.1 below).
- 1.1.11 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 public rights of way. We have not used our discretion to propose any additional restrictions or exclusions on this part of the coast.
- 1.1.12 Restrictions and/or exclusions: Along the newly constructed promenade at Lyme Regis (LRR-1-S005) it may be necessary for West Dorset District Council to close the path at times when maintenance or repairs need to be carried out. A signed diversion will be provided by the council when this happens. This arrangement would happen without any statutory restriction on the new access rights to give effect to it formally.

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

- 1.1.13 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.
- 1.1.14 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

- 1.1.15 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.
- 1.1.16 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 1.2: Commentary on the maps

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

1.2.1 Section details – Maps 1a to 1c, The Cobb, Lyme Regis to Charmouth Beach

Notes on table:

Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 1.2.2: 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.

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
1a	LRR-1-S001	Other existing walked route	Stone: flags	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S002*	Other existing walked route	Concrete	No	Landward edge of pavement/promenade	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S003*	Other existing walked route	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S004*	Other existing walked route	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of pavement/promenade	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S005* and LRR-1-S006*	Other existing walked route	Block paving	No	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S007*	Other existing walked route	Gravel	Yes: normal	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S008*	Other existing walked route	Steps: timber	Yes: normal	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S009*	Other existing walked route	Gravel	Yes: normal	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S010*	Other existing walked route	Steps: Timber	Yes: normal	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S011*	Other existing walked route	Gravel	Yes: normal	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S012*	Other existing walked route	Steps: Timber	Yes: normal	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S013*	Other existing walked route	Gravel	No	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S014*	Other existing walked route	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	1b	LRR-1-S015	Public footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of pavement	Clarity and cohesion
LRR-1-S016		Public footpath	Grass	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
LRR-1-S017		Public footpath	Grass	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
LRR-1-S018 *		Other existing walked route	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
LRR-1-S019*		Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
LRR-1-S020*		Other existing walked route	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
LRR-1-S021*		Public highway	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of the road	Clarity and cohesion	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
1b	LRR-1-S022*	Public footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of pavement	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S023*	Public footpath	Grass	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S024*	Not an existing walked route	Bare soil (compacted)	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S025* to LRR-1-S027*	Not an existing walked route	Grass	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S028*	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
1c	LRR-1-S029*	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S030*	Public highway	Stone: Aggregate	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S031 to LRR-1-S033	Public highway	Tarmac	No	Road	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S034	Not an existing walked route	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S035	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	Road	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S036	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S037	Public highway	Tarmac	No	Road	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S038	Public highway	Tarmac	Yes: normal	Road	Clarity and cohesion	No
	LRR-1-S039	Public footpath	Grass	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S040 and LRR-1-S041	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S042 and LRR-1-S043	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes: normal	Fence line	Additional landward area	No
	LRR-1-S044	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S045 and LRR-1-S046	Public footpath	Tarmac	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S046	Public highway	Tarmac	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S047	Other existing walked route	Tarmac	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S048	Other existing walked route	Stone: aggregate	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	No
	LRR-1-S049	Public footpath	Stone: aggregate	Yes: normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	No
LRR-1-S050	Public footpath	Footbridge	Yes: normal	Landward edge of bridge	Not used	No	

1.2.2 Other options considered: Maps 1a to 1c, The Cobb, Lyme Regis to Charmouth Beach

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
1a	LRR-1-S002	We considered following the existing route of the South West Coast Path which runs along the public highway at Marine Parade.	We opted for the proposed route along the lower promenade because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it is closer to the sea with sea views, as opposed to the sometimes narrow and constrained route through Marine Parade; ■ it is wider and free from vehicular traffic.
	LRR-1-S003 to LRR-1-S014	We considered following the existing route of the South West Coast Path which runs along the public footway through the town at Bridge Street, Church Street and Charmouth Road (A3052).	We opted for the proposed route along the new promenade because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it is closer to the sea with sea views; ■ it is wider and free from vehicular traffic.
	LRR-1-S005 to LRR-1-S006	We considered following the currently closed footpath along the beach.	We opted for the proposed route along the new promenade because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the promenade offers a better walking surface which is more accessible to all; ■ it is dry at all points of tide.
1b	LRR-1-S018 to LRR-1-S020	We considered following the existing route of the South West Coast Path through the woodland at Rhodehorn Plantation.	We opted for the proposed route including new sections of path because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the South West Coast Path route is not well signed or established here on the ground; and ■ the proposed route ascends through the woodland at an easier gradient, improving accessibility and convenience for the public.
1b	LRR-1-S021 to LRR-1-S030	We considered reinstating a route along the currently closed public footpath above Black Ven along the cliff edge in front of the Golf Course.	We opted for the proposed route because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it is not viable to reinstate the closed footpath due to the unstable ground and risk of further landslips. ■ there is not enough room between the sheer cliff edge and the fairway of the golf course to safely accommodate a path. ■ this proposal is made with the support of the landowner.
1b & 1c	LRR-1-S024 to LRR-1-S046	We considered following the existing route of the South West Coast Path between Fern Hill Coppice and Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre, using public footways alongside the A3052, Axminster Road and Higher Sea Lane	We opted for the proposed route because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the proposed route is more direct and closer to the coast (the existing South West Coast Path is much further from the coast: almost 1.5km at the furthest point); ■ the proposed route offers better views of the sea; ■ it is more pleasant to walk along, avoiding a long (2km) section of roadside walking.
1c	LRR-1-S032 to LRR-1-S040	We considered reinstating a route along the currently closed public footpath between Charberry Rise/Old Lyme Road in Charmouth and Higher Sea Lane	We opted for the proposed route because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it is not viable to reinstate the closed footpath due to the unstable ground and risk of further landslips; ■ there is no room for the reinstated path between the slumped cliff and the adjacent private gardens).

Part 1.3: Chapter 1 - Formal Proposals

- Below are our formal proposals to the Secretary of State for the length of coast shown on maps 1a to 1c.
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

Formal Proposals – The Cobb, Lyme Regis to Charmouth Beach

Proposed route of the trail

- 1.3.1 In relation to route sections LRR-1-S007 to LRR-1-S012, the initial proposed route, as determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on map 1a as the proposed route of the trail.
- 1.3.2 In relation to route sections LRR-1-S016 to LRR-1-S020, the initial proposed route, as determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on map 1b as the proposed route of the trail.
- 1.3.3 In relation to route sections LRR-1-S028 to LRR-1-S030, 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 1b and 1c as the proposed route of the trail.
- 1.3.4 In relation to route sections LRR-1-S038 to LRR-1-S050, the initial proposed route, as determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on map 1c as the proposed route of the trail.
- 1.3.5 If at any time any part of the route described in the previous paragraphs 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.
- 1.3.6 In relation to all other sections shown on Maps 1a to 1c, the route is to be at the centre of the line shown as the proposed route of the trail.

Landward boundary of coastal margin

- 1.3.7 Adjacent to route section LRR-1-S002, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the pavement/promenade shown as the trail on map 1a.
- 1.3.8 Adjacent to route section LRR-1-S004, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the pavement/promenade shown as the trail on map 1a.
- 1.3.9 Adjacent to route sections LRR-1-S005 to LRR-1-S013, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the newly engineered promenade and path shown as the trail on map 1a.
- 1.3.10 Adjacent to route section LRR-1-S015, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the pavement shown as the trail on map 1b.
- 1.3.11 Adjacent to route section LRR-1-S021, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the road shown as the trail on map 1b.
- 1.3.12 Adjacent to route section LRR-1-S022, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the pavement shown as the trail on map 1b.

- 1.3.13 Adjacent to route sections LRR-1-S031 to LRR-1-S033, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the road shown as the trail on map 1c.
- 1.3.14 Adjacent to route section LRR-1-S035, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the road which coincides with the public footpath shown as the trail on map 1c.
- 1.3.15 Adjacent to route sections LRR-1-S037 and LRR-1-S038, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the road shown as the trail on map 1c.
- 1.3.16 Adjacent to route sections LRR-1-S042 and LRR-1-S043, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing boundary fence, as indicated by the coastal margin landward of the trail shown on map 1c.
- 1.3.17 Adjacent to route section LRR-1-S049 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 1c

Local restrictions and exclusions

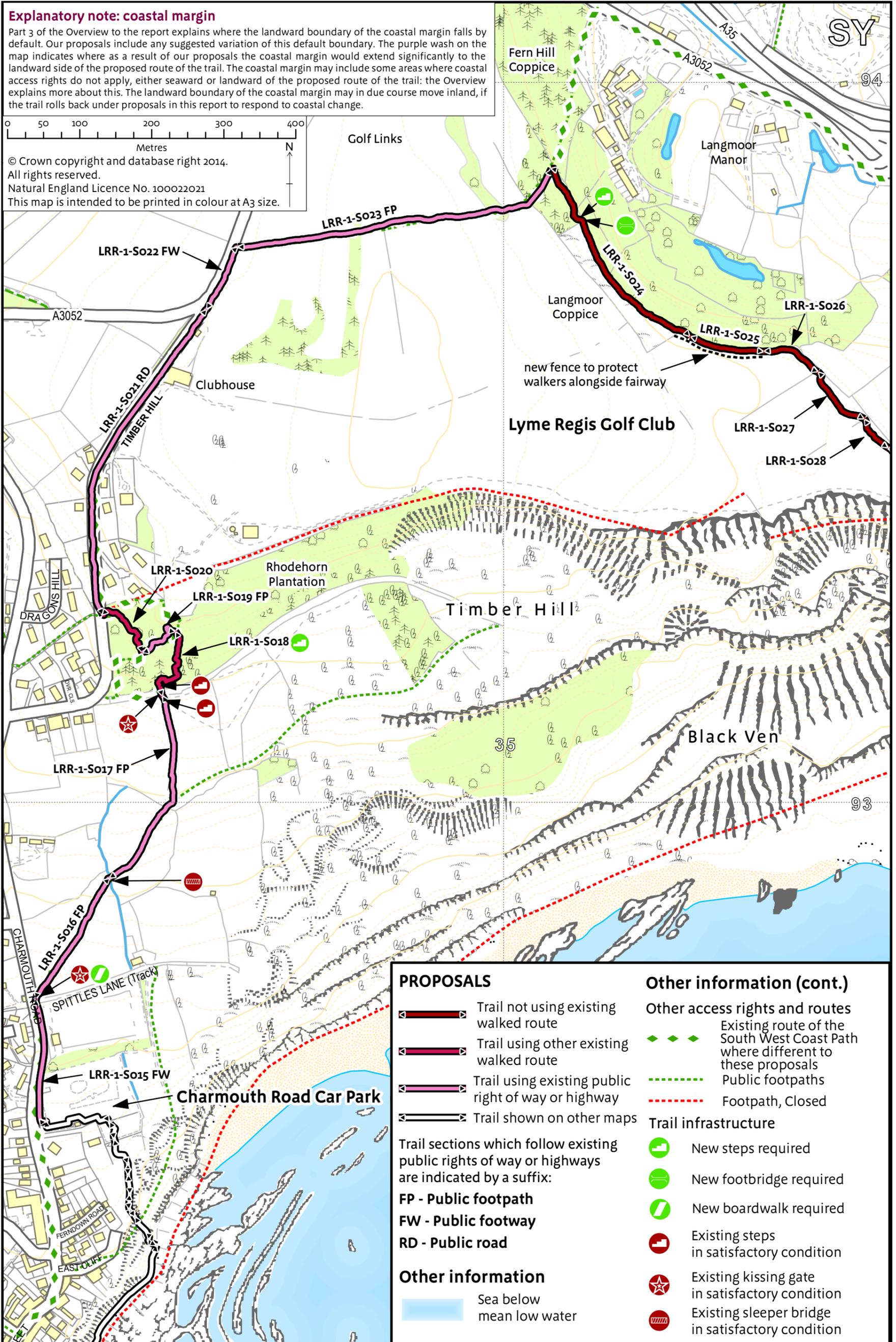
- 1.3.18 At the time of writing this report, there are no proposals for local restrictions or exclusions in relation to this length of coast.

Explanatory note: coastal margin

Part 3 of the Overview to the report explains where the landward boundary of the coastal margin falls by default. Our proposals include any suggested variation of this default boundary. The purple wash on the map indicates where as a result of our proposals the coastal margin would extend significantly to the landward side of the proposed route of the trail. The coastal margin may include some areas where coastal access rights do not apply, either seaward or landward of the proposed route of the trail: the Overview explains more about this. The landward boundary of the coastal margin may in due course move inland, if the trail rolls back under proposals in this report to respond to coastal change.

0 50 100 200 300 400
Metres

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This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.



PROPOSALS

- Trail not using existing walked route
- Trail using other existing walked route
- Trail using existing public right of way or highway
- Trail shown on other maps

Trail sections which follow existing public rights of way or highways are indicated by a suffix:
FP - Public footpath
FW - Public footway
RD - Public road

Other information

Sea below mean low water

Other information (cont.)

- Other access rights and routes
- Existing route of the South West Coast Path where different to these proposals
- Public footpaths
- Footpath, Closed

Trail infrastructure

- New steps required
- New footbridge required
- New boardwalk required
- Existing steps in satisfactory condition
- Existing kissing gate in satisfactory condition
- Existing sleeper bridge in satisfactory condition

Map 1b Charmouth Road Car Park to Lyme Regis Golf Club

