

Chapter 3:

Bowness-on-Solway to Whitrigg Bridge

England Coast Path: Gretna to Allonby - Natural England's Proposals

Part 3.1: Introduction

Start Point:	Bowness-on-Solway (grid reference: 322429, 562765)
End Point:	Whitrigg Bridge (grid reference: 322832, 557579)
Relevant Maps:	3a to 3i

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 3.1.1 Generally follows existing walked routes, including public rights of way and minor roads, along much of this length where they exist and are suitable.
- 3.1.2 Mainly follows the coastline quite closely and maintains good views of the sea.
- 3.1.3 Lies slightly further inland between Campfield Marsh and Anthorn, to avoid impacts on internationally important populations of over-wintering, feeding and breeding birds. See maps 3c, 3d & 3e and tables 3.2.1 & 3.2.2 for more details.
- 3.1.4 Includes several sections of new path, between Bowness-on-Solway and Anthorn, and between Anthorn and Beckbrow. See maps 3a, 3b, 3f to 3h, and the associated tables below for details.
- 3.1.5 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation or heritage preservation (see map C of the Overview):
 - Solway Firth Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA)
 - Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar site
 - Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its geological and wildlife interest
 - All Scheduled Monuments associated with the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site

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.

- 3.1.6 After advice from specialists we have concluded that our proposals would not be likely to have any significant impact on these features. In reaching this conclusion, we took a number of factors

into consideration; these are discussed below (see 3.1.7 to 3.1.9, 3.1.15 and 3.1.16).

3.1.7 The route from Bowness-on-Solway to Longcroft Marsh, and between Beckbrow Cottage and the River Wampool crossing at Whitrigg, will follow a combination of existing walked routes, public rights of way and minor roads. We believe that levels and patterns of public access on these sections are likely to increase to some extent, as a result of our proposals, however we have concluded that our proposals would not be likely to have any significant impact on designated features.

3.1.8 The route across Longcroft Marsh and Whitrigg Marsh does not follow any obvious existing walked route, although Whitrigg Marsh does benefit from access rights under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act (CROW). The proposed route would therefore entail the creation of a new path.

Whilst we would expect to see some change in levels and patterns of access arising from our proposals, we are confident that the alignment proposed will not lead to significant impact on designated features.

3.1.9 In addition, we have also identified that it would be beneficial to provide information signs at various key locations: to explain the importance of these habitats; to encourage people to stay on or close to the trail; and to help prevent dogs from disturbing wildlife.

In relation to those nature conservation sites listed above, please refer to our published Access and Sensitive Features Appraisal for more detailed information.

See part 5b of the Overview - 'Natural environment' - for more information.

Accessibility

3.1.10 Generally, there are few artificial barriers to accessibility on the proposed sections of the trail that make use of existing surfaced paths or minor roads wherever these meet the criteria in the Coastal Access Scheme.

3.1.11 The sections of the trail from Bowness-on-Solway to Anthorn and between Beckbrow Cottage and the River Wampool crossing at Whitrigg are accessible, being on relatively quiet minor roads.

3.1.12 Much of the ground across Longcroft and Whitrigg Marshes is not entirely suitable for people with reduced mobility, because the trail will often follow an uneven surface on softer ground.

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

Where we have proposed exercising our discretion

The discretions referred to below are explained in more detail in the Overview.

3.1.13 Estuaries: This report proposes that the trail should include a route around the English side of the Solway Firth estuary extending as far the Scottish border near to Gretna. Included, in this chapter, is the northern bank of the River Wampool. For the River Wampool the trail will extend upstream as far as the road bridge at Whitrigg which is the first public foot crossing point over the river (see part 10 of the Overview). The trail covered by this chapter includes parts of these estuary routes.

3.1.14 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 3.2.1 below.

See also 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'.

3.1.15 Restrictions and/or exclusions: Access rights to the spreading room would be subject to the national restrictions on coastal access rights listed in Annex D of the Overview. These restrictions

would not apply to public rights of way.

3.1.16 Natural England proposes to restrict or exclude access relevant to this length of coast, as follows:

- A long-term access exclusion to parts of the saltmarsh and all of the tidal flat in the seaward coastal margin on the coast covered by this chapter. This exclusion is proposed under s25A of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) as we do not believe that the land is suitable for public access. This exclusion will not affect the route itself. See map G in the Overview for details.
- A long-term access exclusion to the landward edge of Cardurnock and Anthorn Marshes, between their boundary with Campfield Marsh and Anthorn, together with a long-term access exclusion to parts of Longcroft and Whitrigg Marshes. These exclusions are proposed under s26(3)(a) of the Act in order to avoid disturbance to birds. See map N in the Overview for details.
- An access exclusion to the fields in the seaward coastal margin adjacent to section GAL-3-S005, (see map 3c) between the 1st September and the 30th April each year. This exclusion is proposed under s26(3)(a) of the Act in order to avoid disturbance to birds. See map M in the Overview for details.
- A long-term access restriction, requiring dogs to be kept on leads between Anthorn and Beckbrow Cottage. This exclusion is proposed under s26(3)(a) of the Act in order to avoid disturbance to birds. See map N in the Overview for details.

See part 9 of the Overview - 'Restrictions and exclusions' - for details.

Establishment and ongoing management of the trail

3.1.17 Some physical establishment of the trail would be necessary, in accordance with the general approach described in part 6 the Overview.

3.1.18 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

3.1.19 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 3.2.1 below for details of the sections likely to be affected in the foreseeable future.

3.1.20 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 5f - 'Coastal processes' and 8 - 'Future changes' of the Overview for more information.

Part 3.2: Commentary on Maps

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

3.2.1. Section Details – Maps 3a to 3i: Bowness-on-Solway to Whitrigg Bridge.

Notes on table:

Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 3.2.2: 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 3.2.3’ 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 (see Part 9 of Overview)
3a	GAL-3-S001	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3a	GAL-3-S002	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes – see table 3.2.3	Road	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3a	GAL-3-S003	Public Highway	Tarmac	Yes – see table 3.2.3	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3b	GAL-3-S004	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes – see table 3.2.3	Road	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3c & 3d	GAL-3-S005*	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3d	GAL-3-S006*	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3e	GAL-3-S007 to GAL-3-S009 *	Not an existing walked route	Grass	No	Fence line	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3f	GAL-3-S010* & GAL-3-S011*	Not an existing walked route	Grass	No	Fence line	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3f	GAL-3-S012	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3f	GAL-3-S013*	Not an existing walked route	Grass	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3f	GAL-3-S014	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S015	Public Footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Various	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S016	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Various	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S017	Public Footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Various	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S018	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Various	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S019	Public Footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Various	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S020	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S021 & GAL-3-S022	Public Footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Various	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S023	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S024	Public Footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Various	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S025	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Various	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S026	Public Footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Various	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin

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 (see Part 9 of Overview)
3g	GAL-3-S027	Public Highway	Tarmac	Yes – see table 3.2.3	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3g	GAL-3-S028	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes – see table 3.2.3	Hedgerow	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin and Trail
3g	GAL-3-S029	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes – see table 3.2.3	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin and Trail
3g & 3h	GAL-3-S030	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes – see table 3.2.3	Fence line	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin and Trail
3h	GAL-3-S031	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes – see table 3.2.3	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin and Trail
3h	GAL-3-S032 & GAL-3-S033*	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes – see table 3.2.3	Hedgerow	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin and Trail
3h	GAL-3-S034* & GAL-3-S035	Not an existing walked route	Grass	No	Hedgerow	Clarity and Cohesion	Margin and Trail
3h	GAL-3-S036	Not an existing walked route	Grass	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3i	GAL-3-S037 GAL-3-S038 GAL-3-S039	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
3g	GAL-3-A001	Public Footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Various	Clarity and Cohesion	None
3g & 3h	GAL-3-A002 & GAL-3-A003	Public Highway	Tarmac	No	Landward and seaward edge of trail	Not used	None

3.2.2 Other options considered: Map(s) 3a to 3i: Bowness-on-Solway to Whitrigg Bridge

Map(s)	Section numbers	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
3c, 3d, 3e & 3f	GAL-3-S005 to GAL-3-S013	We considered aligning the trail along the landward edge of Cardurnock and Anthon marshes, from Campfield drain (map 3c) to the western end of Anthon village (map 3f).	We opted for the proposed route because it is more direct and avoids areas of nature conservation interest, thereby reducing the risk of increased disturbance to birds. In addition, this proposal avoids land that we consider is unsuitable for public access on Cardurnock Marsh and the western end of Anthon Marsh.
3h	GAL-3-S033 & GAL-3-S034	We considered aligning the trail along the riverside edge of Longcroft and Whitrigg marshes.	We opted for the proposed route because it is more direct and avoids areas of nature conservation interest, thereby reducing the risk of increased disturbance to birds.

3.2.3 Roll-back implementation – more complex situations: Bowness-on-Solway to Whitrigg Bridge

Maps	Section numbers	Feature or site potentially affected	How we will manage roll-back in relation to this feature or site
3a, 3g & 3h	GAL-3-S002 to GAL-3-S004 & GAL-3-S027 to GAL-3-S033	Solway Firth SPA/ SAC and associated SSSIs.	If it is no longer possible to find a viable route seaward of the designated sites, or where the existing route already passing through such a site must be altered, we will choose a new route after detailed discussions with the relevant experts and with any potentially affected owners or occupiers, which will either (a) pass through the site, if appropriate or (b) if necessary, be routed landward 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. Our published Access and Sensitive Features Appraisal will also be reviewed as part of this process.

Part 3.3: Chapter 3 - Formal Proposals

- Below are our formal proposals to the Secretary of State for the length of coast shown on maps 3a to 3i.
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

Formal Proposals – Bowness-on-Solway to Whitrigg Bridge

Discretion to include an estuary

- 3.3.1 Natural England proposes to exercise its functions as if the sea included the estuarial waters of the Solway Firth, as indicated by the extent of the trail shown on maps 3a to 3i, and the River Wampool as far as Whitrigg Bridge, as indicated by the extent of the trail shown on map 3i.

Proposed route of the trail

- 3.3.2 In relation to route sections GAL-3-S001, GAL-3-S005 to GAL-3-S026, and GAL-3-S034 to GAL-3-S039 the route is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 3a, 3c to 3g, 3h & 3i as the proposed route of the trail.
- 3.3.3 In relation to route sections GAL-3-S002 to GAL-3-S004 and GAL-3-S027 to GAL-3-S033 the route, as initially determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 3a, 3b, 3g & 3h as the proposed route of the trail.
- 3.3.4 If at any time any part of a route section listed in the previous paragraph needs, in Natural England's view, to change as a result of coastal erosion or other geomorphological processes or encroachment by the sea, in order for the overall route to remain viable, the new route for the part in question will be determined by Natural England without further reference to the Secretary of State. This will be done 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 Coastal Access 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

- 3.3.5 Adjacent to route sections GAL-3-S007 to GAL-3-S011, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing boundary fence line which is landward of the trail as shown on maps 3e & 3f.
- 3.3.6 Adjacent to route sections GAL-3-S032 to GAL-3-S035, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing boundary hedge which is landward of the trail as shown on map 3h.
- 3.3.7 Adjacent to route sections GAL-3-S002 and GAL-3-S004, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the edge of the road which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the trail as shown on map 3a.
- 3.3.8 Adjacent to route sections GAL-3-S015 to GAL-3-S019, GAL-3-S021 and GAL-3-S022, and GAL-3-S024 to GAL-3-S026 the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the edge of various features, which, at the time of writing this report, are landward of the trail as shown on map 3g.
- 3.3.9 Adjacent to route section GAL-3-S028, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing boundary hedgerow which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the trail as shown on map 3g.
- 3.3.10 Adjacent to route section GAL-3-S030, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing boundary fence line which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the trail as shown on maps 3g & 3h.

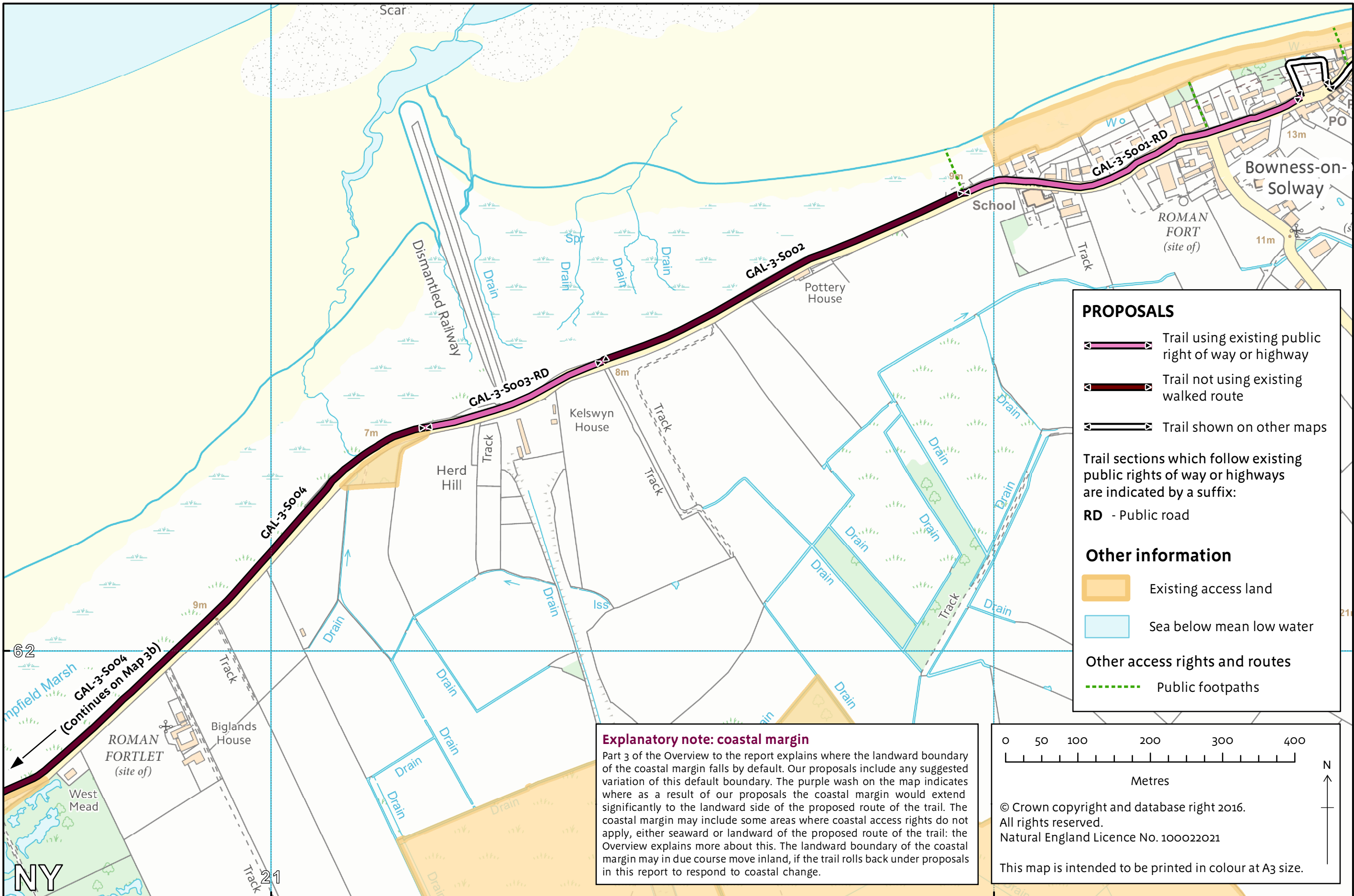
Local restrictions and exclusions

- 3.3.11 We propose a long-term access exclusion to parts of the saltmarsh and all of the intertidal flat in the seaward coastal margin on this length of coast, as indicated by map G in the Overview. This exclusion is proposed under s25A of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) as we do not believe that the land is suitable for public access. This exclusion will not affect the route itself.
- 3.3.12 We propose a long-term access exclusion to the landward edge of Cardurnock and Anthorn marshes, between their boundary with Campfield Marsh and Anthorn, adjacent to sections GAL-3-S005 through to section GAL-3-S013. We also propose to permanently exclude or restrict access to parts of Longcroft and Whitrigg marshes, from section GAL-3-S034 to the end of section GAL-3-S038 as indicated by map N in the Overview. These exclusions are proposed under s26(3)(a) of the Act in order to avoid disturbance to birds.
- 3.3.13 We propose a long-term access exclusion to the fields in the seaward coastal margin adjacent to section GAL-3-S005, between the 1st September and the 30th April, as indicated by map M in the Overview. This exclusion is proposed under s26(3)(a) of the Act in order to avoid disturbance to birds.
- 3.3.14 We propose a long-term restriction requiring dogs to be kept on leads between Anthorn and Beckbrow Cottage, on trail sections GAL-3-S028 to GAL-3-S036, as indicated by map N in the Overview. This exclusion is proposed under s26(3)(a) of the Act in order to avoid disturbance to birds. This exclusion will be in operation all year round.

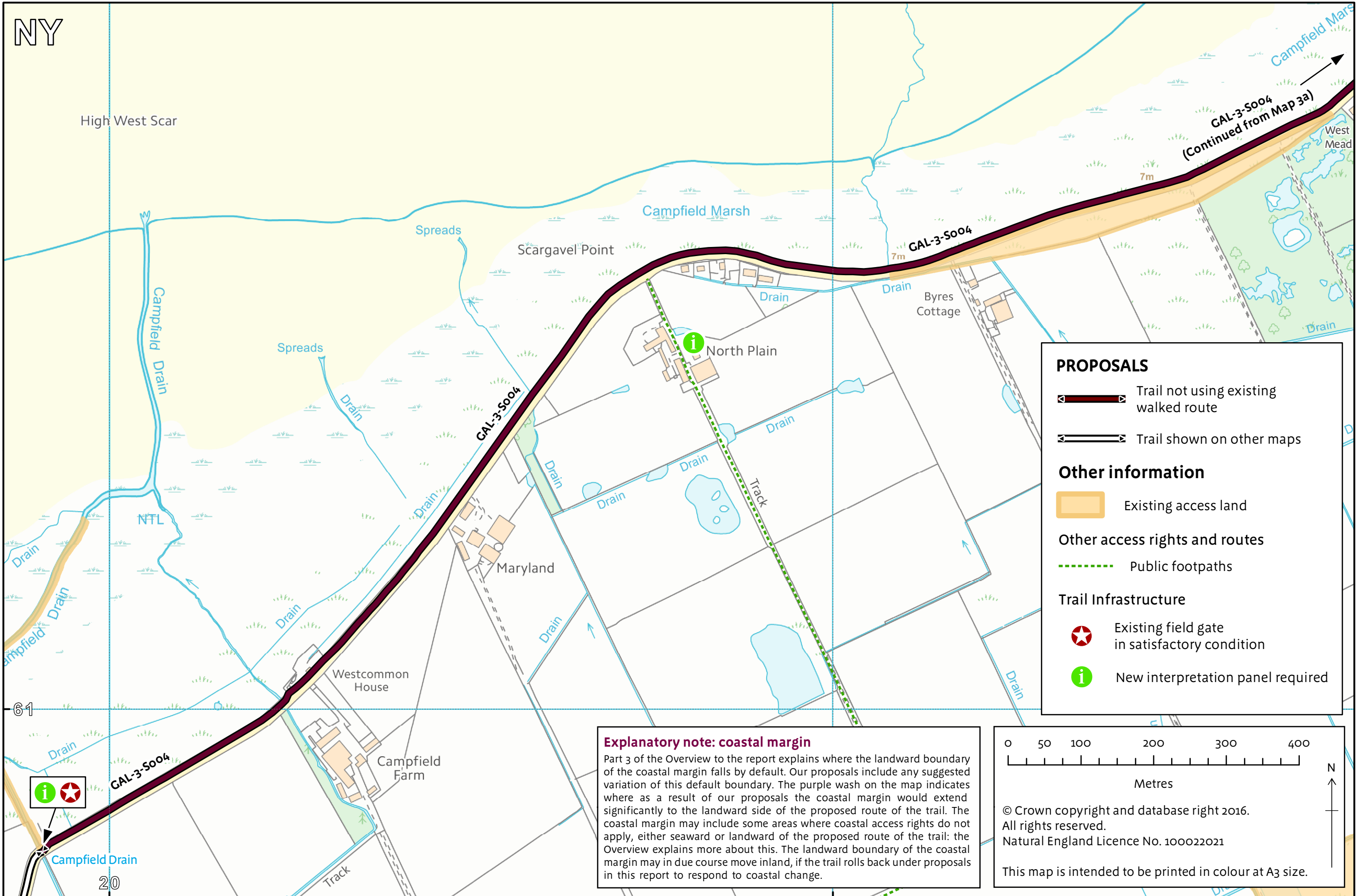
Refer to Part 9 of the Overview for further details.

Alternative routes

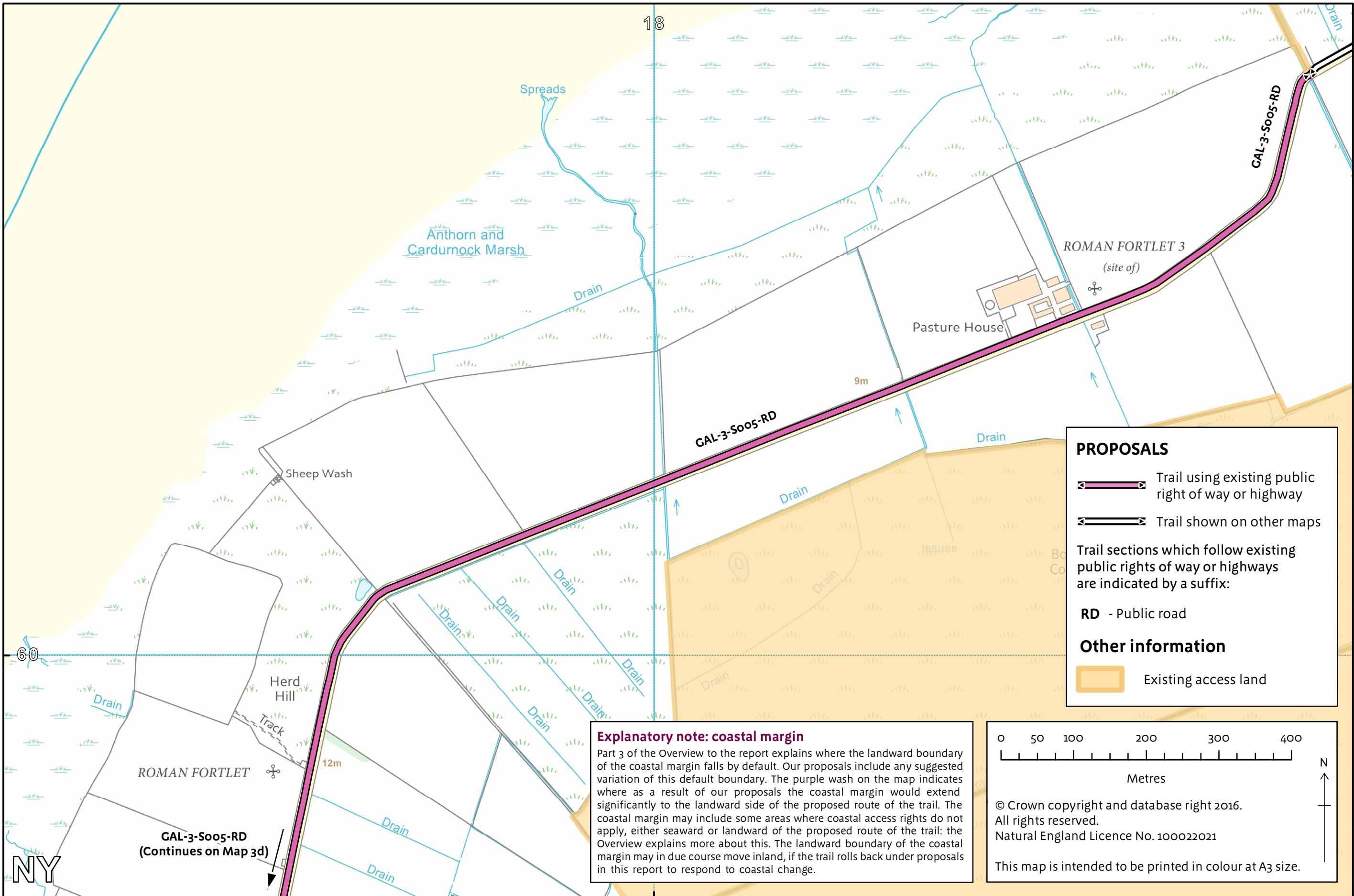
- 3.3.15 An optional alternative route is to be available at times when parts of the main route through Longcroft and Whitrigg marshes, between sections GAL-3-S028 and GAL-3-S036, are affected by high tides. The optional alternative route is to be at the centre of the line shown as route sections GAL-3-A001 to GAL-3-A003 on maps 3g and 3h.
- 3.3.16 Adjacent to route section GAL-3-A001, the landward and seaward boundaries of the coastal margin are to coincide with various features on the landward side and with the edge of the pavement on the seaward side, as shown on map 3g.



NY



Map 3b West Mead to Road Gate, Campfield Drain



PROPOSALS

- 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:

RD - Public road

Other information

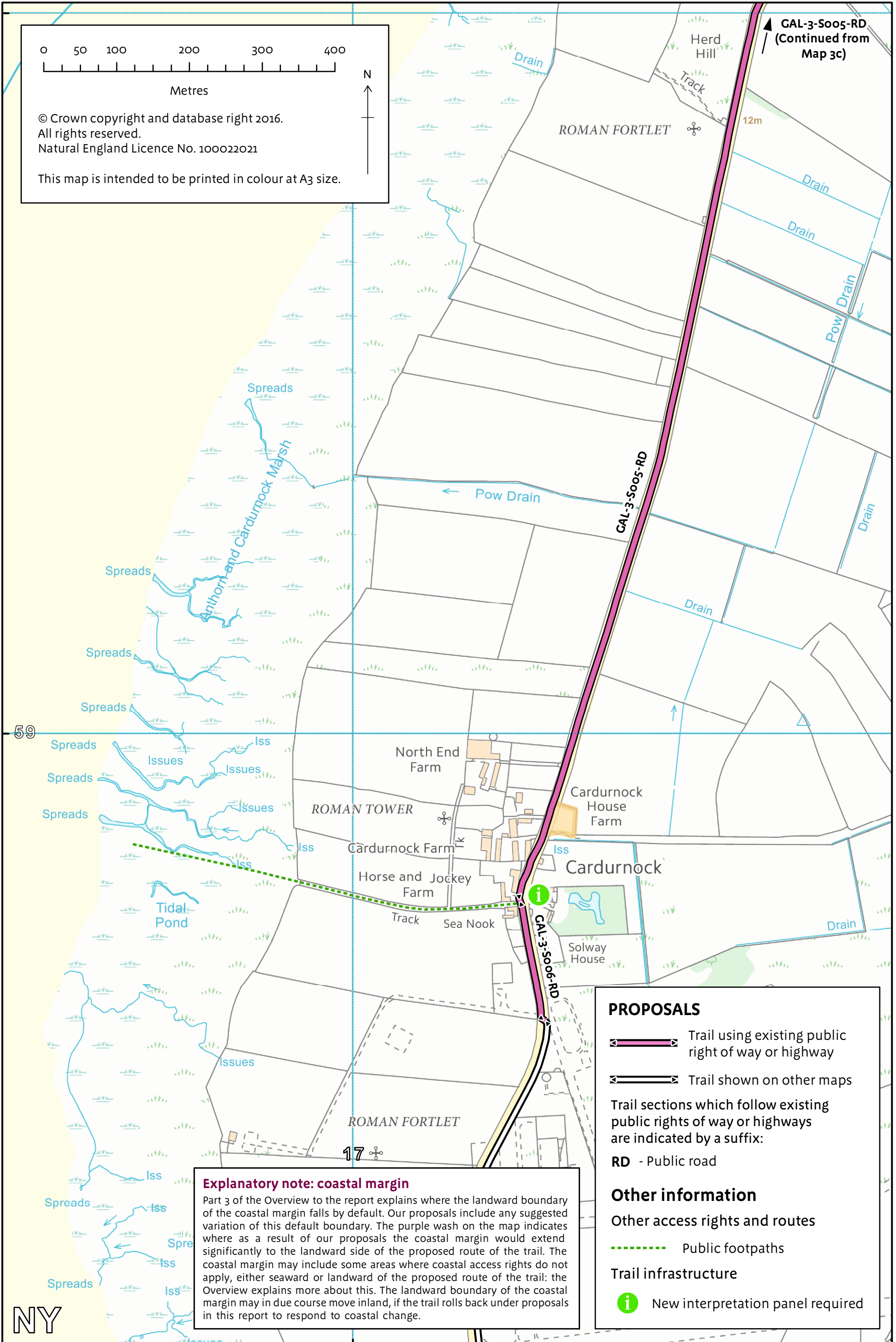
- Existing access land

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.

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PROPOSALS

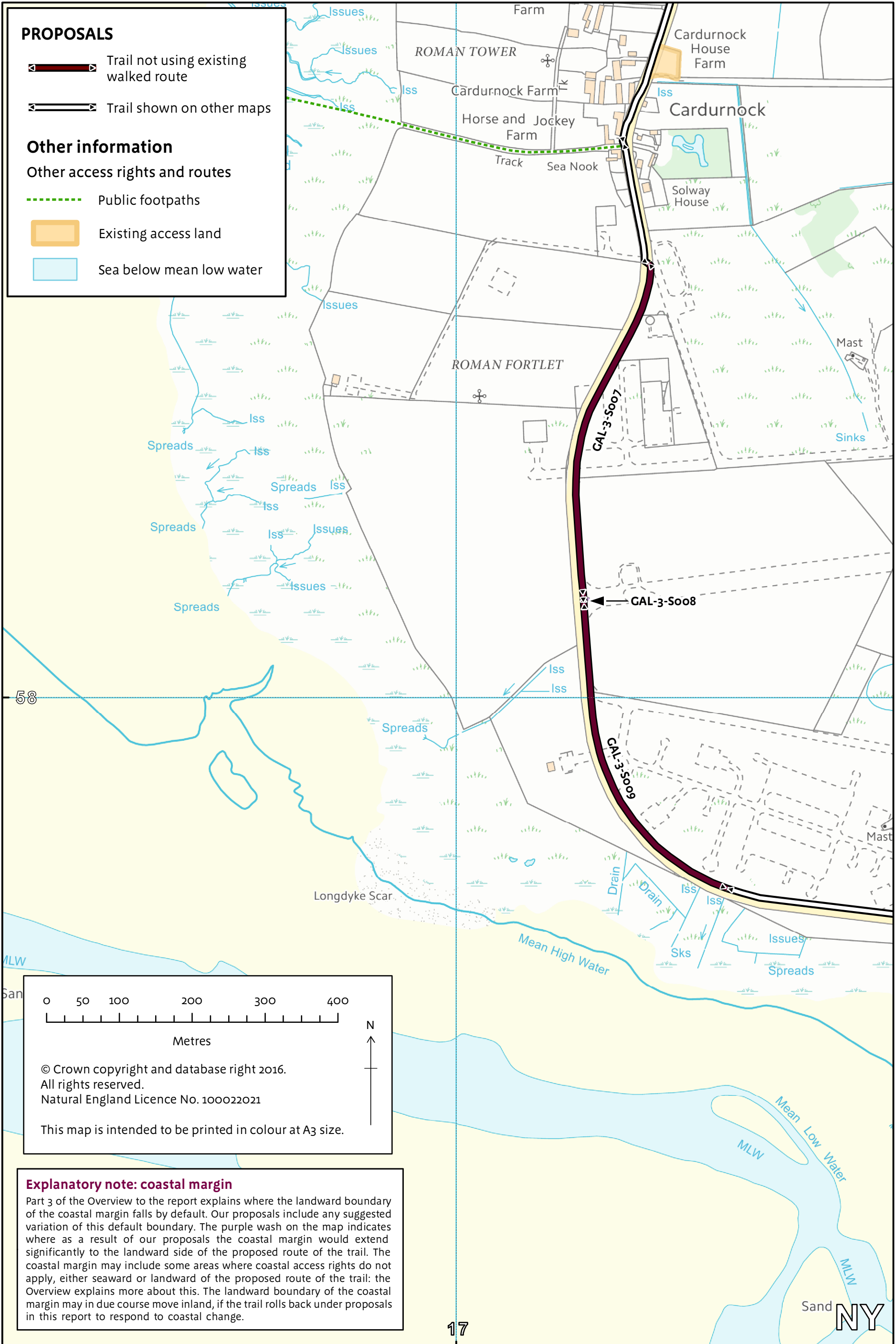
- Trail using existing public right of way or highway
- Trail shown on other maps

Trail sections which follow existing public rights of way or highways are indicated by a suffix:

RD - Public road

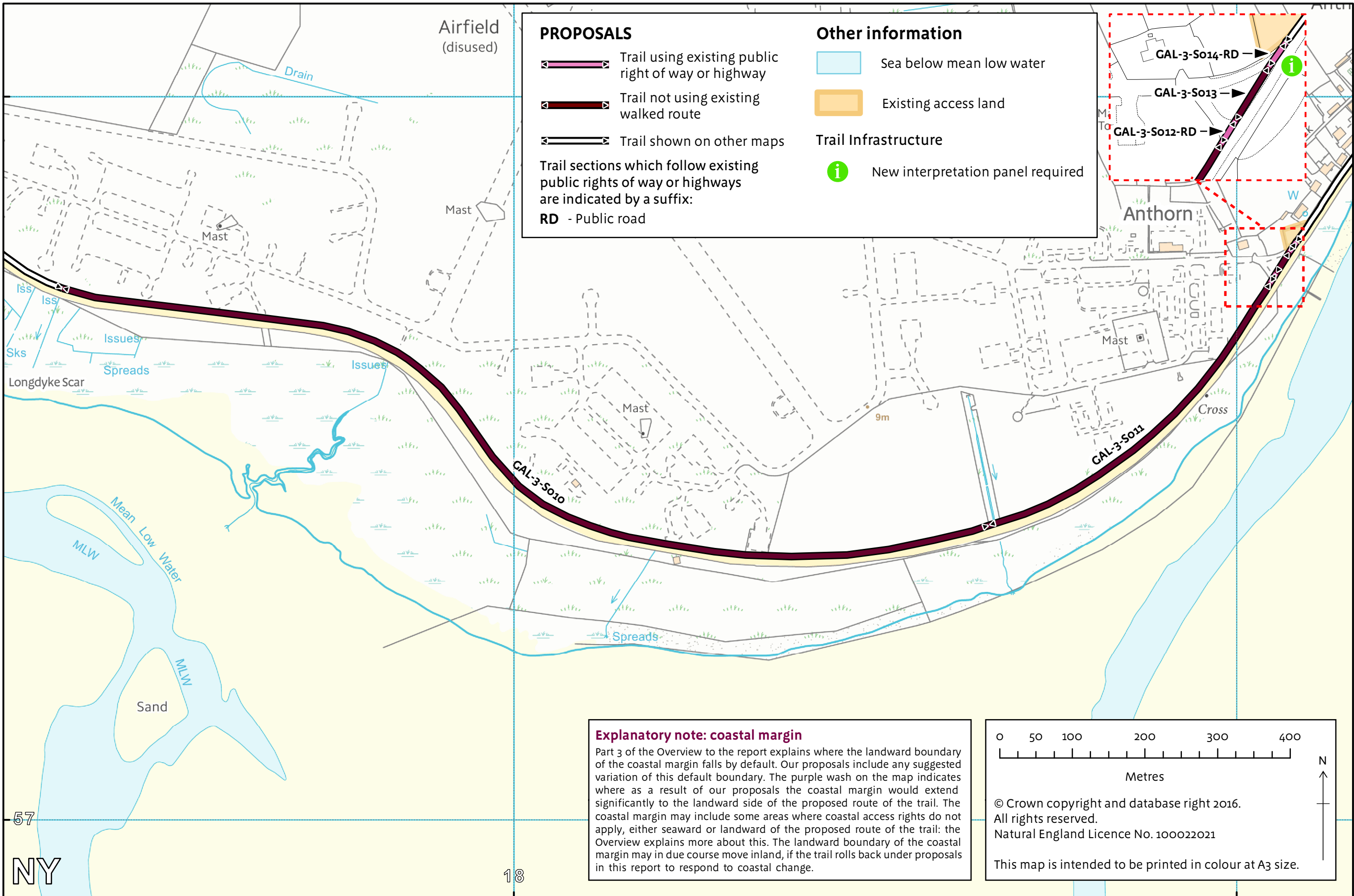
Other information

- Other access rights and routes
- Public footpaths
- Trail infrastructure
- New interpretation panel required



Explanatory note: coastal margin

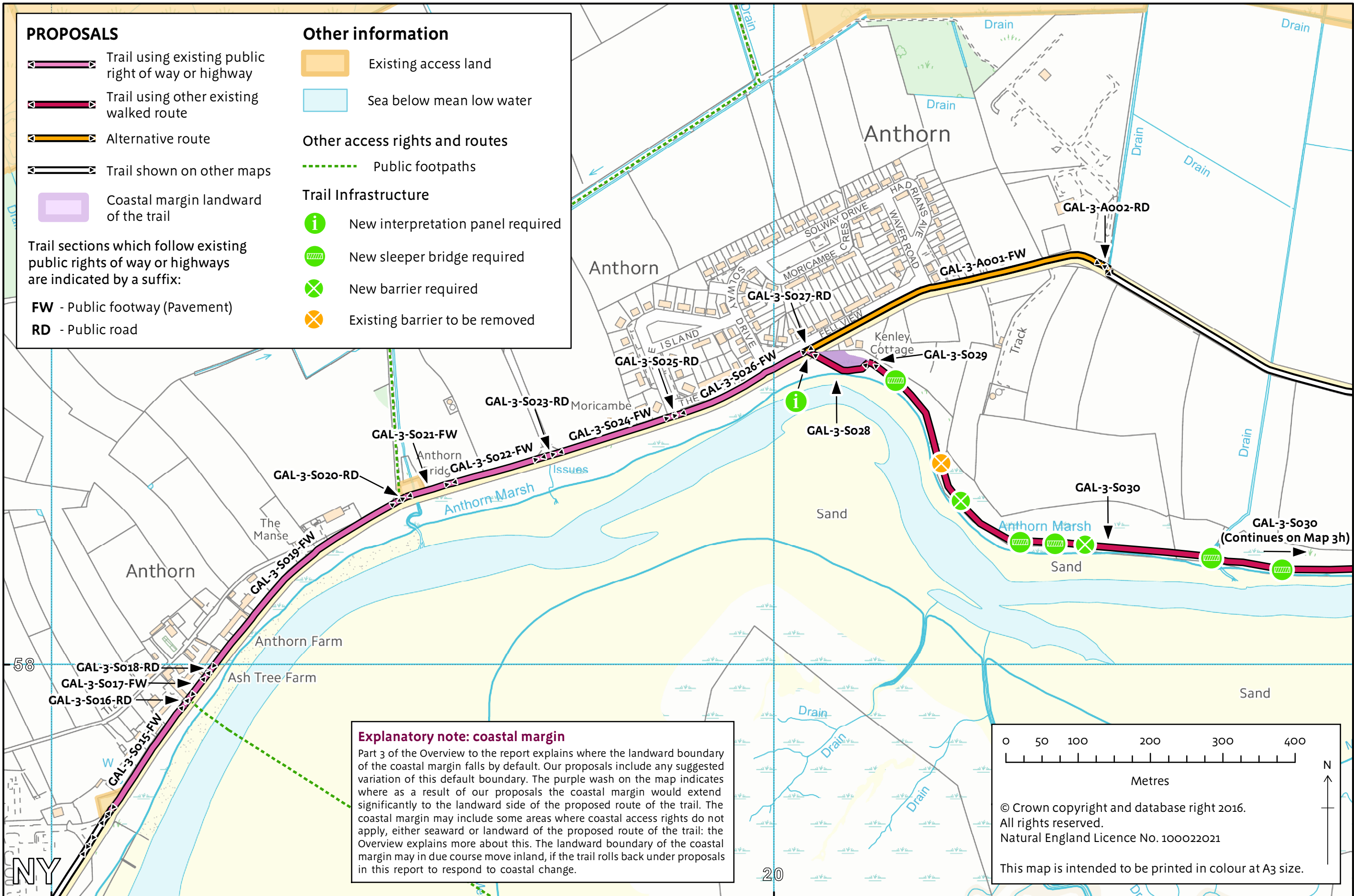
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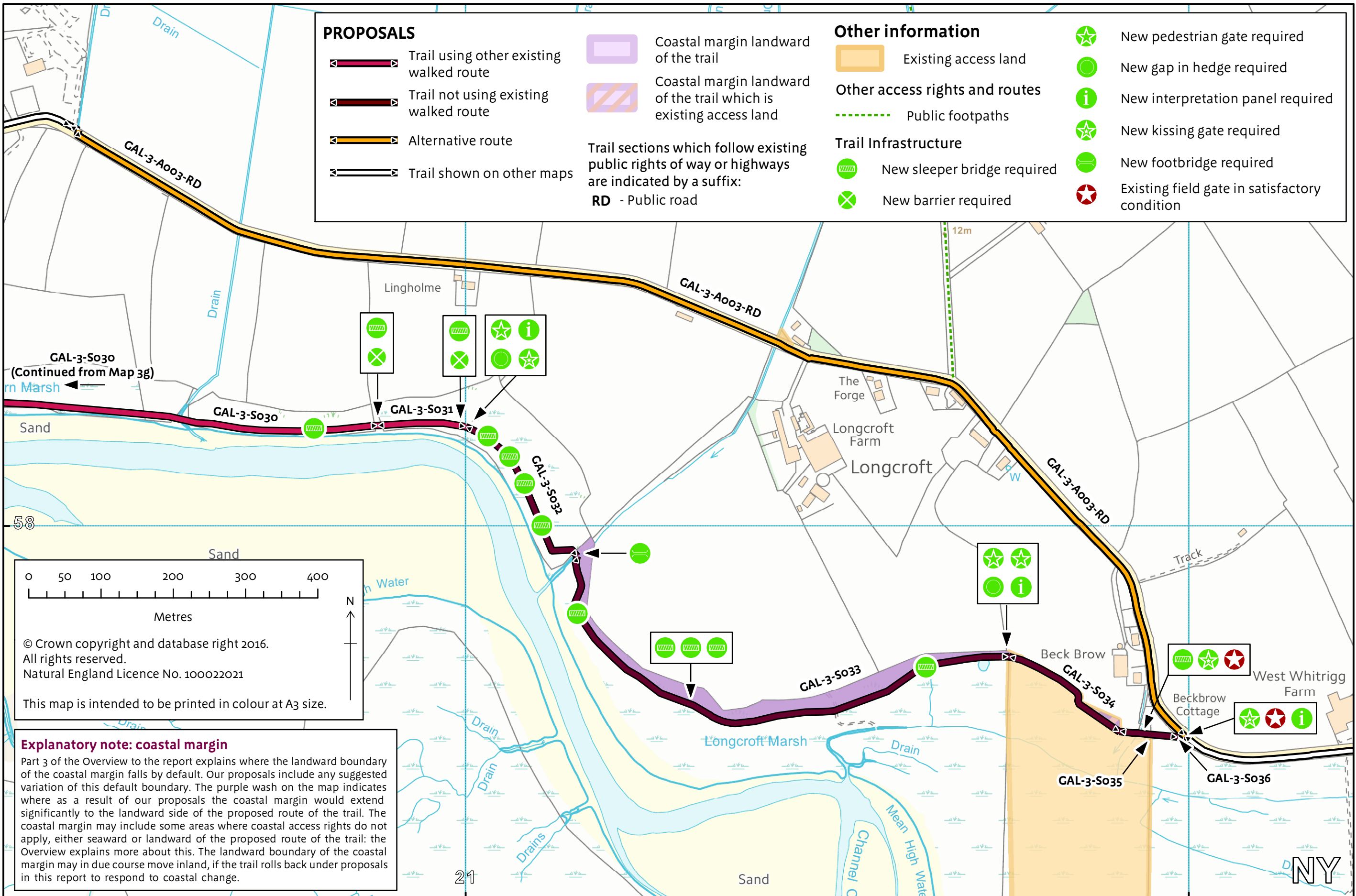


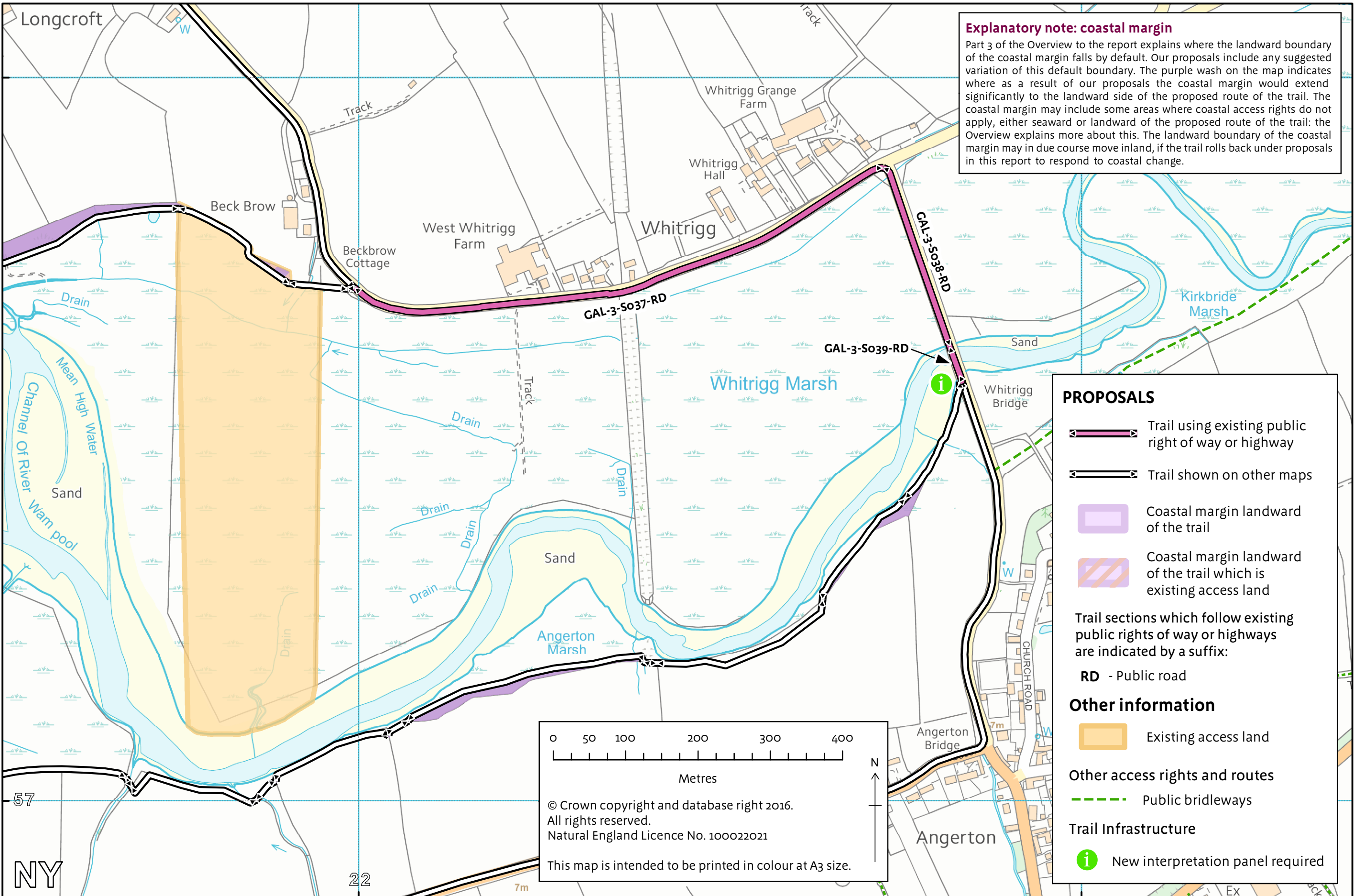
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Explanatory note: coastal margin
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PROPOSALS

- Trail using existing public right of way or highway
- Trail shown on other maps
- Coastal margin landward of the trail
- Coastal margin landward of the trail which is existing access land

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

Other information

- Existing access land
- Public bridleways

Trail Infrastructure

- New interpretation panel required

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Map 3i Beckbrow Cottage to Whitrigg Bridge