Chapter 3:
Aldwick Bay to Elmer

England Coast Path: East Head to Shoreham by Sea - Natural England’s Proposals

Part 3.1: Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start Point:</th>
<th>Aldwick Bay shingle beach (grid reference: 489553 97573)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>End Point:</td>
<td>Elmer (grid reference: 499448 100300)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant Maps:</td>
<td>3a to 3f</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

3.1.1 Follows existing walked routes, including public rights of way, along most of this length.

3.1.2 Mainly follows the coastline quite closely and maintains good views of the sea.

3.1.3 Includes three sections of new path upon the shingle beach at Aldwick, Middleton on Sea and at Elmer. See maps 3.a, 3.e and 3.f with associated tables below for details.

3.1.4 In some areas an inland diversion is necessary to take the trail past sea defence structures between Aldwick and Bognor Regis (sections EHS-3-S042 to EHS-3-S052 map 3.b) and at Middleton Point (sections EHS-3-S075 to EHS-3-S078 map 3.e) which are currently inaccessible at high tides (See Future Change, below and Part 8 of the Overview).

Protection of sensitive features:

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):

- Bognor Reef Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its geological/ wildlife interest

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 With input from specialists we considered the sites involved and the relevant design options and concluded that for this section of the coast our proposals will not have a detrimental effect. In reaching this conclusion we have identified that it would be necessary to align the route at Bognor Reef SSSI on the landward side of the shingle beach in order to avoid increased trampling of the vegetated shingle. This proposal is explained further in parts 6 & 10 of the Overview.

3.1.7 In addition to this measure, we have also identified a requirement to provide appropriate signage at key locations. These signs will explain the importance of these habitats, promote responsible dog behaviour and advise walkers where the best underfoot conditions can be found.

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

See part 6b of the Overview - Protection of sensitive features - for a description of our overall approach and a summary of our conclusions.

Accessibility

3.1.8 Generally, 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.

3.1.9 However, there are places where it may not be entirely suitable for people with reduced mobility because:

- The trail will follow an uneven surface on sections of shingle beach in places.
- The trail follows a sea defence with a raised concrete step at the entrance to the alleyway leading to Elmer Road.

See part 6a 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 introduction of the Overview.

3.1.10 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, promenade, pavement or track edge to make the extent of the new access rights clearer. See Table 3.2.1.

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’.

3.1.11 Restrictions and exclusions: No directions to restrict or exclude access are proposed on this length of coast. However, 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.

See part 10 of the Overview - ‘Restrictions and exclusions’ - for details.
Establishment and ongoing management of the trail:

3.1.12 Some physical establishment of the trail would be necessary, in accordance with the general approach described in part 7 of the Overview. In the main this will be signage and waymarking.

3.1.13 Ongoing management: Ongoing management and maintenance would be necessary in accordance with the general approach described in part 8 of the Overview.

See parts 7 - ‘Physical establishment of the trail’ and 8 - ‘Maintenance of the trail’ of the Overview for more information.

Future Change:

3.1.14 At the time of preparing the report, we do not foresee any need for future changes to the access provisions proposed for the length of coast described in this chapter.

See parts 6e - ‘Coastal processes’ and 9 - ‘Future changes’ of the Overview for more information.
### Part 3.2: Commentary on Maps

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

#### 3.2.1 Section Details – Maps 3.a to 3.f: Aldwick Bay to Elmer

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 6a - certain specific coastal land types are included automatically in the coastal margin where they fall landward of the trail, or connect indirectly with it by touching another part of the coastal margin that itself touches the foreshore at some point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map(s)</th>
<th>Route section number(s)</th>
<th>Current status of this section</th>
<th>Current surface of this section</th>
<th>Roll-back proposed? (See Part 9 of Overview)</th>
<th>Default landward coastal margin? (See maps)</th>
<th>Landward boundary of margin</th>
<th>Reason for landward boundary discretion</th>
<th>Proposed exclusions or restrictions (see Part 10 of Overview)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>EHS-3-S001</td>
<td>Public footpath</td>
<td>Gravel</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Hedgerow</td>
<td>Clarity and cohesion</td>
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<td>EHS-3-S002</td>
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<td>Yes - beach</td>
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<td>EHS-3-S003</td>
<td>Other existing walked route</td>
<td>Block paving</td>
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<td>Current surface of this section</td>
<td>Roll-back proposed? (See Part 9 of Overview)</td>
<td>Default landward coastal margin?</td>
<td>Landward boundary of margin (See maps)</td>
<td>Reason for landward boundary discretion</td>
<td>Proposed exclusions or restrictions (see Part 10 of Overview)</td>
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<td>3b</td>
<td>EHS-3-S053</td>
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<td>Yes - barrier</td>
<td>Promenade edge</td>
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<td>Yes - barrier</td>
<td>Promenade edge</td>
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<td>Public footpath</td>
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<td>Yes - barrier</td>
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<td>Yes - barrier</td>
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<td>Shingle</td>
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<td>Yes - beach</td>
<td>Landward edge of beach</td>
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<td>EHS-3-S072 to EHS-3-S073</td>
<td>Public footpath</td>
<td>Grass</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Landward edge of trail (2m)</td>
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<td>EHS-3-S074 to EHS-3-S075</td>
<td>Public footpath</td>
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<td>EHS-3-S076</td>
<td>Public footway (pavement)</td>
<td>Tarmac</td>
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<td>Landward edge of beach</td>
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<td>EHS-3-S086 to EHS-3-S088</td>
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<td>Gravel</td>
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<td>Yes - beach</td>
<td>Landward edge of beach</td>
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<td>EHS-3-S096 to EHS-3-S103</td>
<td>Other existing walked route</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>Clarity and cohesion</td>
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### Other options considered: Maps 3a to 3f: Aldwick Bay to Elmer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map(s)</th>
<th>Section number(s)</th>
<th>Option(s) considered</th>
<th>Reasons for not proposing this option as the route</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3a     | EHS-3-S006 to EHS-3-S041 | At Aldwick Beach (part of Bognor Reef SSSI), we considered aligning the trail seaward of the proposed route, as requested by local residents due to privacy concerns. | We opted for the proposed route because:  
- It avoids the vegetated shingle habitat that is sensitive to trampling.  
- The existing informal path is along the landward boundary of the beach, adjacent to the properties. There is no clear, existing path seaward of the proposed route.  
- It avoids sections of unconsolidated shingle beach which is difficult to walk on for long distances.  
- Walkers are already using the proposed route and we believe that introducing another trail onto the beach would not change this established pattern of use. |
| 3b     | EHS-3-S042 to EHS-3-S052 | We considered aligning the trail along the shingle beach at Aldwick. | We opted for the proposed route because:  
- The coastal defence structures prevent continuous access along the beach. |
| 3f     | EHS-3-S089 to EHS-3-S095 | We considered aligning the trail along the shingle beach at Elmer. | We opted for the proposed route because:  
- The shingle beach is currently eroding at the two wave cusps along this section at Elmer, thereby limiting access at high tides, so the inland route has been chosen via Elmer Road and Manor Way using public footpaths. |
| 3f     | EHS-3-S094 to EHS-3-S103 | We considered aligning the trail along the existing public footpath at Elmer, just inland of the coast, as shown on the map. | We opted for the proposed route because:  
- There are no seaward views from the public footpath.  
- The coastal defence structure is already used by the public, provides a good walking surface and offers seaward views. |
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 3.a to 3.f.
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

Formal Proposals – Aldwick Bay to Elmer

Proposed route of the trail

3.3.1 The route is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 3.a to 3.f as the proposed route of the trail.

Landward boundary of coastal margin

3.3.2 Adjacent to route section EHS-3-S001, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the hedgerow, which is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 3a.

3.3.3 Adjacent to route section EHS-3-S043, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the various boundary features, which are landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 3b.

3.3.4 Adjacent to route sections EHS-3-S044 to EHS-3-S045 and EHS-3-S047 to EHS-3-S051 the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with landward edge of the pavement shown as the trail on map 3b.

3.3.5 Adjacent to route section EHS-3-S046, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the road, which is landward of the pavement shown as the trail on map 3b.

3.3.6 Adjacent to route section EHS-3-S052, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the fence line, which is landward of the pavement shown as the trail on map 3b.

3.3.7 Adjacent to route section EHS-3-S074 and S075, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the fence line which is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 3e.

3.3.8 Adjacent to route section EHS-3-S076, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the pavement shown as the trail on map 3e.

3.3.9 Adjacent to route section EHS-3-S077, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the road shown as the trail on map 3e.

3.3.10 Adjacent to route section EHS-3-S089, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with various boundary features which are landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 3f.

3.3.11 Adjacent to route sections EHS-3-S090 to EHS-3-S094, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the pavement shown as the trail on map 3f.
3.3.12 Adjacent to route section EHS-3-S095, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the fence line which is landward of the existing walked route shown as the trail on map 3f.

3.3.13 Adjacent to route sections EHS-3-S096 to EHS-3-S103, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with various boundary features which are landward of the existing walked route shown as the trail on map 3f.

**Local restrictions and exclusions**

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

Refer to Part 10 of the Overview for further details.

**Alternative routes**

3.3.15 There are no proposals for alternative routes in relation to this length of coast.
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.

Explanatory note: coastal margin

Trail using existing public right of way or highway
Trail using other existing walked route
Trail shown on other maps
Coastal margin landward of the trail
Sea below mean low water
Public footpath
New interpretation panel required
Existing boardwalk to be retained
Existing steps to be retained
Trail sections which follow existing public rights of way or highways are indicated by a suffix:
FP - Public footpath
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.
Continued from map 3b

PROPOSALS
Trail using other existing walked route
Trail shown on other maps
Coastal margin landward of the trail

Other information
Other access rights and routes
Public footpath
Sea below mean low water

Trail infrastructure
Existing field gate to be retained
Existing interpretation panel to be retained
Existing pedestrian gate to be retained

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.
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.
Coastal Access - East Head to Shoreham - Natural England’s Proposals
Chapter 3: Pagham, East Beach Road to Middleton-on-Sea

Map 3e: Hannah’s Groyne to Elmer

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.

Explanatory note: coastal margin

Trails sections which follow existing public rights of way or highways are indicated by a suffix:
- **FP** - Public footpath
- **RD** - Public road
Coastal Access - East Head to Shoreham - Natural England’s Proposals
Chapter 3: Pagham, East Beach Road to Middleton-on-Sea

Map 3f: Elmer to Poole Place

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.

PROPOSALS
- Trail using existing public right of way or highway
- Trail using other existing walked route
- Trail shown on other maps
- Coastal margin landward of the trail

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

Other information
Other access rights and routes
- Public footpath
- Sea below mean low water

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