

**Assessment of Coastal Access Proposals between  
Newquay and Penzance  
on sites and features of nature conservation concern**

**20<sup>th</sup> June 2019**



## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

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### About this document

This document should be read in conjunction with the published Reports for the Newquay to Penzance Stretch and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

The Coastal Access Reports contain a full description of the access proposals, including any additional mitigation measures that have been included. These Reports can be viewed here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-coast-path-from-newquay-to-penzance-comment-on-proposals>

A HRA is required for European sites (SPA, SAC and Ramsar sites). The HRA is published alongside the Coastal Access Reports.

This document, the Nature Conservation Assessment (NCA), covers all other aspects (including SSSIs, MCZs and undesignated but locally important sites and features) **in so far as any HRA does not already address the issue for the sites and feature(s) in question.**

The NCA is arranged site by site. Maps 1-8 shows designated sites along this stretch of coast.

See Annex 1 for an index to designated sites and features for this stretch of coast, including features that have been considered within any HRA.



# Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

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**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Trevaunance Cove SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p>1. <b>Geological Features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FM – Mineralogy</li> <li>• ED – Mineralogy</li> </ul>	<p>The SSSI provides important examples of the principal ore-bearing mineral veins associated with the Hercynian St. Agnes-Cligga granite. The site was last assessed in 2012 and considered to be in favourable condition.</p>
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**Risk analysis**

<p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FM – Mineralogy</li> <li>• ED – Mineralogy</li> </ul>	<p>The SSSI could be impacted if works were proposed that could obscure the geological feature. However, no such works are proposed, therefore it is concluded that there will be no impacts on the site from the Coastal Access proposals.</p>
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**Establishment works**

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? No

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Treen Cliff SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Vascular Plant Species</b> Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>The Vascular Plant Assemblage on this site is made up of the following species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birdsfoot Clover, <i>Trifolium ornithopodioides</i></li> <li>• Haresfoot Clover, <i>Trifolium arvense</i></li> <li>• Hairy Birdsfoot Trefoil, <i>Lotus subbiflorus</i></li> <li>• Atlantic Clover, <i>Trifolium occidentale</i></li> </ul> <p>Birdsfoot Clover, <i>Trifolium ornithopodioides</i> and Hairy Birdsfoot Trefoil, <i>Lotus subbiflorus</i> in particular are found on areas of bare open ground alongside paths, with the other species also preferring short turf or rocky outcrops. The site is in unfavourable recovering condition due to the threat of encroaching scrub and bracken within the site that requires active management.</p>
<p><b>2. Open Coastal Habitats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowland Dry Heath</li> <li>• Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</li> </ul>	<p>The open coastal habitat features were last assessed in 2010 and considered to be in unfavourable recovering condition due to the need to remove invasive species from the site and introduce grazing. No threat is recorded associated with public access.</p>

**Risk analysis**

<p>1. Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>As mentioned above, the plant species within this assemblage favour short turf and margins of the path, therefore public access may prove a positive aspect for the plants habitat, by helping to keep areas of coastal margin more open.</p> <p>It is proposed to realign the path to a more coastal route within the SSSI. However, the new route is an existing walked line on the ground with multiple paths running through the site in this location and the coastal margin already designated as Open Access. The condition assessment in 2009 detailed plenty of available habitat that was suitable for the species, including areas of shallow soil over rocky outcrops. Therefore, the realignment within this site is not anticipated to impact on the vascular plant species.</p>
<p>2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowland Dry Heath</li> <li>• Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</li> </ul>	<p>Considering the multiple paths that run through this site and the fact that the proposed realignment is on an existing walked route, it is not considered that the coastal access proposals within this site will impact on the Heath or Maritime Cliff and Slope habitat.</p>



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### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? Yes

If yes, describe any special conditions that have been identified concerning how or when the works are to be carried out:

No special conditions identified at this stage.

Where necessary, Cornwall Council will instigate the SSSI assent process by writing to us to confirm the timing of works and how operations to be undertaken in line with these conditions. Natural England will provide further advice as necessary.

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Tater-du SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Geological Features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC - South-West England Igneous</li> <li>• ED – South-West England Igneous</li> </ul>	<p>The site provides important examples of the following geological types and formations:</p> <p>A partially faulted roof pendant of metabasic rocks within the aureole of the Land’s End Granite.</p> <p>The site was last assessed in 2010 and considered to be in favourable condition.</p>
<p><b>2. Vascular Plant Species</b></p> <p>Shoredock, <i>rumex rupestris</i></p>	<p>Although not a designated feature of the Tater-Du SSSI, this area of coastal margin has been flagged for the presence of Shoredock, <i>Rumex rupestris</i>. This is following a study of records by the County Recorder in 2013 which identified a significant population of <i>Rumex rupestris</i> established at Tregiffian. It is thought that this population provides a seed source for other plants to establish in the locality taking advantage of suitable damp flushes or fresh water seepages between rocks.</p>

**Risk analysis**

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path apart from the proposed realignment to a more seaward route, passing by the Tater Du lighthouse which provides enhanced sea views and access to the foreshore.

<p><b>1.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC - South-West England Igneous</li> <li>• ED – South-West England Igneous</li> </ul>	<p>The SSSI could be impacted if works were proposed that could obscure the geological feature. We have considered the proposed realignment around Tater Du lighthouse and are satisfied that improvement works associated with this realignment will not obscure the geological feature of this site.</p>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p>Shoredock, <i>rumex rupestris</i></p>	<p>Shoredock records are found on a particularly rocky section of coast. Apart from Lamorna cove, the foreshore here is relatively inaccessible, with the coastal margin to the east of Lamorna already designated as open access. Therefore, the above sites and species are not considered sensitive to changes in access in this context, due to the current level of public access that is already present and the habitat requirements of the plants involved.</p>





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### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? Yes

If yes, describe any special conditions that have been identified concerning how or when the works are to be carried out:

Care should be taken to avoid placing revetments required for the realigned path adjacent to geological exposures found on the site.

Where necessary, Cornwall Council will instigate the SSSI assent process by writing to us to confirm the timing of works and how operations to be undertaken in line with these conditions. Natural England will provide further advice as necessary.



## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

### Assessment of coastal access proposals on:

#### St Agnes Beacon Pits SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? No

#### Current situation

1. <b>Geological features</b> EA – Quaternary of South-West England	This SSSI provides examples of a sequence of exposures of pre-Pleistocene sands and clays. These deposits have been dated to the Miocene and represent the only known Miocene deposits on the British mainland. The site was last assessed in 2012 and considered to be in favourable condition.
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#### Risk analysis

1. EA – Quaternary of South-West England	The SSSI is located landward of the trail and coastal margin and so would not be sensitive to impacts from the coastal access proposals for this area.
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#### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? No

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Porthgwarra to Pordenack Point SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Vascular Plant Species</b> Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>The Vascular Plant Assemblage on this site is made up of the following species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Meadow-grass, <i>Poa infirma</i></li> <li>• Perennial Centuary, <i>Centaureum scilloides</i></li> <li>• Hairy Birdsfoot Trefoil, <i>Lotus subbiflorus</i></li> <li>• Yellow Bartsia, <i>Parentucellia viscosa</i></li> </ul> <p>These species are all found in unit 1 of the site. The unit was considered to be in favourable condition when last assessed in 2012, with the only threat to the site's condition being the increase of European Gorse, <i>Ulex europaeus</i> within the unit. The majority of the species within this assemblage are associated with short turf on thin soils.</p>
<p><b>2. Open Coastal Habitats</b> Lowland Dry Heath</p>	<p>The heathland feature was last assessed in 2012, with the whole site considered to be in favourable condition. The only threat to condition is concerning the management of European gorse, <i>Ulex europaeus</i> and other scrub species, as well as the need for grazing in some units. No threat is recorded associated with public access on the site.</p>
<p><b>3. Sea and Coastal Birds</b> Breeding bird assemblage</p>	<p>The particular species included in the assemblage are not detailed specifically within the draft conservation objectives for the site. However, the SSSI Citation states....' <i>The 45 breeding species include Stonechat Saxicola torquata, Whitethroat Sylvia communis, and Teal Anas crecca, which is a rare breeder in Cornwall' ....</i>The latest condition assessment carried out in September 2012 details the assemblage as being in favourable condition and mentions nine out of ten species having been observed as present during the reporting period.</p>

## Risk analysis

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path through the SSSI, apart from a small realignment on Pordenack point where the proposed trail will follow a more seaward route around the headland. The character of this coastal stretch is often wild and rugged with steep cliffs. The coastal margin is broken up by steep coastal valleys, with remnants of historic market gardening present, as well as mining remains.

1. Vascular plant assemblage	In addition to the current South West Coast Path, the coastal margin is already designated as Open Access land. The only realignment of the trail proposed is at Pordenack Point which follows an existing walked line on the headland. None of the vascular plant species were recorded within the vicinity of the new or existing route on Pordenack Point. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposals will not have an impact on the assemblage.
2. Lowland Dry Heath	In these coastal locations there is often dense vegetation within the heathland, with frequent Western gorse, <i>Ulex gallii</i> . Realignment of the path could have a localised impact on the habitat by causing trampling of the vegetation and erosion of the substrate. However, the proposed realignment at Pordenack Point uses an existing walked route on the ground. There is a clear trail which follows the headland, with the existing South West Coast Path cutting across the headland at present. It is not considered that there will be a significant increase in the number of users using the proposed route, due to its current use at present and the existing coast path offering a more direct line. Therefore, it is not considered that there will be an impact from our proposals on the heathland feature.
3. Breeding bird assemblage	Despite a decline in bird numbers since designation, the site is considered to be in favourable condition even though, the majority of coast in within this site is already designated as Open Access, with the South West Coast Path currently running through it. The bird features might be sensitive to access in the vicinity of the nesting sites, if the proposals moved from the current line of the South West Coast Path and associated coastal margin. The only proposed trail realignment within this SSSI is the movement of the trail to a more seaward route at Pordenack Point. However, the proposed trail uses a current walked route on the ground, with multiple walked routes present on the point which is also designated as Open Access. According to the British Mountaineering Council website, this section of coast already has a number of recognised climbing routes with no threat to the bird interest recorded. Therefore, there is not considered to be any interaction between our proposals and the breeding bird assemblage.



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### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? Yes

If yes, describe any special conditions that have been identified concerning how or when the works are to be carried out:

No special conditions identified at this stage.

Where necessary, Cornwall Council will instigate the SSSI assent process by writing to us to confirm the timing of works and how operations to be undertaken in line with these conditions. Natural England will provide further advice as necessary.

## Assessment of coastal access proposals on:

### Penlee Quarry SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? No

#### Current situation

<p>1. <b>Geological Features</b> FM – Mineralogy</p>	<p>This SSSI provides important examples of the following geological types and formations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Early pegmatite mineralisation, pyrometasomatic mineralisation in metabasic igneous rocks, (consisting of pyrrhotite, pyrite, marcasite, arsenopyrite - lollingite and copper sulphides in a tin-copper lode and a late mineralised cross-course.</li> </ul> <p>The site was last assessed in 2009 and considered to be in favourable condition.</p>
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#### Risk analysis

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path seaward of the SSSI. The route mainly follows the coastline quite closely and maintains good views of the sea. The coastal margin is limited in this location being backed by the road.

<p>1. FM – Mineralogy</p>	<p>This site is located landward of the proposed trail and associated margin and so will not be impacted by our proposals in this location.</p>
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#### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? No

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Penlee Point SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Geological Features</b> FM – Mineralogy</p>	<p>The above provide important examples of the following geological types and formations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Upper and lower contacts of a typical, small sill-like intrusive greenstone body, sandwiched between apparently concordant metasediment horizons.</li> </ul> <p>Only units 1 and 2 fall within the coastal margin which were last assessed in 2009 and considered to be in favourable condition.</p>
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**Risk analysis**

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path through units 1 and 2 of the SSSI. The route mainly follows the coastline quite closely and maintains good views of the sea. The coastal margin in this location is backed by roads and residential properties on the outskirts of Mousehole. The foreshore is rocky with boulders and shingle within the intertidal area.

<p>1. FM – Mineralogy</p>	<p>The SSSI could be impacted if works were proposed that could obscure the geological feature. However, no improvements to the trail are proposed within the vicinity of the geological features.</p>
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**Establishment works**

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? No

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Penhale Dunes SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? Yes

Note that notified features of the SSSI that are also qualifying features of the European site are omitted from this assessment as they are included with the accompanying Habitats Regulation Assessment. The following SSSI features are also features or sub features of the Penhale Dunes SAC:

- Early Gentian, *gentianella anglica*
- Shore dock, *Rumex rupestris*
- Fixed dune grassland (SD7 – SD10b)
- Sand dune; strandline, embryo and mobile dunes (SD1-6)
- Humid dune slacks

Both the Penhale Dunes SAC and SSSI designations cover the same geographical area.

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Vascular Plant Species</b> Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>The assemblage at Penhale includes the following species:</p> <p>Babington’s leek, <i>Allium ampeloprasum var. babingtonii</i> was found at SW789568 in 2009 with 30 flowering spikes recorded and at SW780568 with approximately 50 flowering spikes recorded. The species exploits rank, ruderal, scrub edge and hedge bank niches within and on edges of the dune system.</p> <p>Variiegated horsetail, <i>Equisetum variegatum</i> was recorded in 2009 growing in a dune slack with creeping willow around at location SW772579. This location is within the MoD owned area of the dunes, which at present excludes public access with the exception of the South West Coast Path. Penhale is the only known site in the county for this species.</p> <p>Dyer’s greenweed, <i>Genista tinctoria subsp. Littoralis</i> was historically recorded at a single location within this SSSI at SW76255905.</p> <p>Dune fescue, <i>Vulpia fasciculatais</i> species - historical records suggest that this species is widespread throughout the sand dune habitat.</p>
<p><b>2. Terrestrial Invertebrate Species</b> • Invertebrate Assemblage F112 open short sward • Invertebrate assemblage F1</p>	<p>The invertebrate feature on Penhale Dunes is associated with bare sand and open short sward habitat. The assemblage is considered to be in unfavourable condition according to the Invertebrate Assessment Report Scrub Edge 2016, which details rare invertebrates of the site as including 27 butterfly species, 107 moth species, 6 species of odonata, 8 species of beetle, 1 species of ant and 2 calcicolous mollusc species. The reason for the report’s conclusion is the lack of species found during the survey associated with scrub edge communities.</p>



unshaded early successional mosaic	
<b>3. Open Coastal Habitats</b> Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope - Maritime grassland / coastal heathland mosaic (NVC: MC8, MC9, MC11, H7)	According to the NVC survey of the site carried out in 2001, the maritime grassland and coastal heathland habitat covers an area of 36.74 ha, with the majority of the habitat found at Penhale and Ligger Point. This habitat is located on the harder cliffs of the site within 10 metres of the cliff top.

### Risk analysis

The route of the proposed trail through this site predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path. The route follows the coastline closely maintaining good views of the sea. As a sand dune site, Penhale Dunes would become default landward coastal margin under the Coastal Access proposals. However, the larger section of the site owned by the MoD, (350ha), is covered by a military byelaw. This means that this section of the site falls within the following excepted land category as defined by the Coastal Access Scheme; *land the use of which is regulated by byelaws under section 14 of the Military Lands Act 1892 or section 2 of the Military Lands Act 1900*. Therefore, public access will remain excluded from the MoD owned section of the site once coastal access rights come into effect.

1. Vascular plant assemblage	The species within this assemblage may be sensitive to access if the coast path was realigned close to the recorded locations of the vascular plant species, or if the section of the dune system where public access is currently excluded was opened up to the public through the coastal access rights. However, within this site, the coast path is to follow the existing line of the South West Coast Path and the section of the dune system owned by the MoD will be excepted from new access rights. Therefore, it is concluded that there will be no impacts to the vascular plant assemblage.
2. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invertebrate Assemblage F112 open short sward</li> <li>• Invertebrate assemblage F1 unshaded early successional mosaic</li> </ul>	The invertebrates referred to in this section are those that prefer either short turf, or a mix of grassland and scrub. Public access on the southern section of the dune system has helped in creating areas of shorter turf favoured by this assemblage. It is not anticipated that the implementation of coastal access rights will change the existing pattern of use on this site.

### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? No

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Kelsey Head SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Vascular Plant Species</b> Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>The vascular plant assemblage on this site is made up of the following species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Galingale, <i>Cyperus longus</i></li> <li>• Rock sea lavender, <i>Limonium britannicum subsp. Britannicum var. kelseyenum</i></li> <li>• Autumn squill, <i>Scilla autumnalis</i></li> <li>• Babington’s leek, <i>Allium ampeloprasum var. babingtonii</i></li> </ul> <p>Galingale, <i>Cyperus longus</i> – This species is located on the edge of a current footpath and open access land at the back of Porth Joke beach</p> <p>Rock sea lavender, <i>Limonium britannicum subsp. Britannicum var. kelseyenum</i> - within the last assessment in 2009, hundreds of plants were found throughout the site due to plenty of suitable habitat being present on the site.</p> <p>Autumn squill, <i>Scilla autumnalis</i> - This species occurs on rocky outcrops requiring short grass, very shallow soils and a warm aspect. It was identified at the back of Porth Joke beach and on the cliff adjacent to Holywell Bay. It is also recorded on Cubert Common, although this area was not surveyed during the 2009 assessment.</p> <p>Babington’s leek, <i>Allium ampeloprasum var. babingtonii</i> - is described as growing in ‘relative abundance’ in unit 1 during the 2009 assessment, with habitat conditions considered to be well suited to the species.</p> <p>The assemblage at Kelsey Head was last assessed in 2009 and considered to be in favourable condition. The area is a popular location with walkers and beachgoers at present, with the site including Porth Joke and Holywell beaches, and the adjacent headlands.</p>
<p><b>2. Sand Dune Habitats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fixed dune grassland (SD7 – SD10b)</li> <li>• Sand dune; strandline, embryo and mobile dunes (SD1-6)</li> </ul>	<p>The SSSI includes both fixed and mobile dunes as well as strandline habitats. The site was considered to be in favourable condition at the last assessment in 2010. High visitor pressure on the southern half of the dune system has created multiple pathways and some blowouts. The site is stock grazed with some areas of dense Privet and Blackthorn scrub occurring on the site.</p>

<p><b>3. Open Coastal Habitats</b> Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</p>	<p>Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope is a feature of the SSSI, with an area of 60.32ha of such habitat recorded. This feature is made up of MC1 <i>Crithmum maritimum</i> - <i>Spergularia rupicola maritime</i> rock-crevice community, MC8 <i>Festuca rubra</i> - <i>Armeria maritima</i> maritime grassland and CG1f <i>Festuca ovina</i> - <i>Carlina vulgaris</i> grassland: <i>Festuca rubra-Scilla verna</i> subcommunity. These habitats are considered to be in favourable condition having been assessed in 2010 with no threats to condition associated with public access.</p>
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### Risk analysis

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path through this site apart from a small realignment at Holywell. The route mainly follows the coastline closely and maintains good views of the sea. The landscape character of this stretch of coast is dominated by the popular tourist beaches of Crantock, Porth Joke and Holywell, with the headlands of Pentire Point West and Kelsey Head jutting out between the beaches.

<p>1. Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>In addition to the current South West Coast Path, the site is subject to regular public access across the whole site, considering its location both close to Crantock, Holywell and Newquay, as well as the popular sandy beaches either side of the headland. A number of the vascular plant species favour areas of short turf, or colonise the margins of existing paths and so may benefit from the existing access that occurs on the site. The introduction of coastal access rights is therefore not anticipated to increase the public use of the site or have a detrimental impact on the designated vascular plant species.</p>
<p>2. • Fixed dune grassland (SD7 – SD10b) • Sand dune; strandline, embryo and mobile dunes (SD1-6)</p>	<p>Due to the site’s location on the southern side of Newquay, and inclusion of both Porth Joke beach and Holywell Bay, the site already experiences a high level of public access. Sand dune habitat can be considered susceptible to excessive trampling, however, the implementation of coastal access rights in this location is not considered likely to change the volume or pattern of people using the site. A realignment of the existing South West Coast Path is proposed adjacent to the village of Holywell. However, as this is already a walked route on the ground it is not expected to have a detrimental effect on the dune habitat present in this location.</p>
<p>3. Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</p>	<p>This Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope feature includes a number of sub habitats, including maritime grassland dominated by Red Fescue, <i>festuca rubra</i>, and rock crevice communities. Maritime grassland is made up of dense fescue grasses that provide some resistant to trampling. The rock crevice habitat is often found on steep cliff gradients that are inaccessible to the public. Due to the level of existing public access on this site, the implementation of coastal access rights is not considered to have an impact on these coastal habitats.</p>



## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

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### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? Yes

If yes, describe any special conditions that have been identified concerning how or when the works are to be carried out:

No special conditions identified at this stage.

Where necessary, Cornwall Council will instigate the SSSI assent process by writing to us to confirm the timing of works and how operations to be undertaken in line with these conditions. Natural England will provide further advice as necessary.

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Hayle Estuary and Carrack Gladden SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Vascular Plant Species</b> Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>The Vascular Plant Assemblage on this site is made up of the following species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maidenhair fern, <i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i></li> <li>• Soft leaved sedge, <i>Carex Montana</i></li> <li>• Bulbous Meadow grass, <i>Poa bulbosa</i></li> <li>• Western Ramping Fumitory, <i>Fumaria occidentalis</i></li> <li>• Balm Leaved Figwort, <i>Scrophularia scorodonia</i></li> </ul> <p>These species are found either on disturbed ground, on the spit alongside Carnsew Pool, or at the back of the sand dune habitat between Carrack Gladden and Lelant Towans. The main threat to these plants is the encroachment of vegetation and scrub onto habitat that at present is suitable for the species. This is particularly an issue for <i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i> and <i>Poa bulbosa</i>, which are recorded between Carrack Gladden and Lelant Towans. These areas are already subject to formal or informal public access.</p>
<p><b>2. Sand Dune Habitats</b> • Fixed dune grassland (SD7 – SD10b) • Sand dune; strandline, embryo and mobile dunes (SD1-6)</p>	<p>The dune habitat is located at the back of Porthkidney Sands. The site was last assessed in 2010 and was considered to be in unfavourable recovering condition, due to an encroachment of scrub and invasive species resulting in a loss of mobile and fixed dune habitat. No condition threats are attributed to public access on the habitat, despite regular public access already occurring in this location.</p>
<p><b>3. Open Coastal Habitats</b> Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</p>	<p>The Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope habitat is located at the back of Porthkidney Beach. The feature was assessed in 2010 as in unfavourable recovering condition due to the encroachment of scrub and presence of invasive species. This area is already subject to regular public access.</p>
<p><b>4. Intertidal Habitats</b> Saltmarsh – SM4 – SM27, MG11 – MG13, MG28</p>	<p>The saltmarsh feature was considered to be in favourable condition at the last assessment in 2010. However, the site and features are considered at risk of coastal squeeze, due to the surrounding urban development preventing the saltmarsh habitat from naturally migrating inland as sea levels rise. Saltmarsh on this site is located at the southern end of the main RSPB reserve, south east of Lelant. The saltmarsh is dominated by pioneer species with a lack of transition to terrestrial</p>

	habitats due to the proximity of the site to the road network and urban environment. At present public access is excluded from this area due to its vulnerability as a pioneer habitat and importance as a feeding habitat for birds, (see below).
<b>5. Intertidal Sediments</b> Estuaries – sand and mudflats	The notified features for the site include sand and mudflats located within the main estuary and are considered to be in favourable condition. Algae mats are recorded as a threat to the habitat which occur on the mudflats around Lelant Water. The extent of pure mudflat is found at the most southerly end of the estuary. The ingress of sand from the mouth of the estuary means the sand flats extend up the estuary as far as Carnsew pool, with an area of grading between the two habitats south of Carnsew.
<b>6. Sea and Coastal Birds</b> Aggregations of non-breeding birds	The SSSI designated feature on this site is an Aggregation of non-breeding birds. This term refers to around ninety species of overwintering or passage birds which use the upper estuary to forage and rest. Although the SSSI is only designated for overwintering and migratory species, having discussed the site’s importance with the RSPB as the land managers and having considered Wetland Bird Survey data for the area, it is recognised that the southern end of the estuary, (from Carnsew Pool to Griggs Quay), is important year round for bird species as a feeding and loafing area. For this reason the assessment of impacts arising from our coastal access proposals will be considered year round, taking into account the importance of the site as a habitat for birds outside of the winter months.

## Risk analysis

The route follows the existing South West Coast Path around the Hayle Estuary. Sea views are obscured where the route follows the road landward of Lelant Saltings station and the football ground. The coastal margin in this location is dominated by the estuary backed by the towns of Hayle and Lelant.

1. Vascular plant assemblage	As it detailed in Part A, the vascular plant species that form the assemblage are located in areas of the site already subject to public access, with the various species preferring either areas of short vegetation or disturbed ground. It is not considered that the coastal access proposals will change the access pressure in these locations and so it is concluded that there will be no impact on the plant designated plant species.
2. • Fixed dune grassland (SD7 – SD10b) • Sand dune; strandline, embryo and mobile dunes (SD1-6)	The area is already well used by the public for access to the beach at Porth Kidney Sands. It is also currently a popular area for dog walking. The dunes are criss-crossed by many paths created by people, with the dunes being designated as Open Access land. Therefore, the inclusion of this area within the proposed coastal margin is not expected to increase or change access patterns over the dune system.

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<p>3. Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</p>	<p>This Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope feature includes a number of sub habitats, including maritime grassland dominated by Red Fescue, <i>Festuca rubra</i>, and rock crevice communities. Maritime grassland is made up of dense fescue grasses that provide some resistant to trampling. The rock crevice habitat is often found on steep cliff gradients. As these features occur on the cliff slopes at Carrack Gladden which are already subject to extensive public access, it is not felt that the coastal access proposals for this area will increase the access usage in this location.</p>
<p>4. Saltmarsh – SM4 – SM27, MG11 – MG13, MG28</p>	<p>The pioneer saltmarsh habitat found at the most southerly end of the estuary could be sensitive to public access due to the soft nature of the substrate and sparse distribution and fragility of the pioneer saltmarsh plants, (see point 6 below for proposed mitigation).</p>
<p>5. Estuaries – sand and mudflats</p>	<p>Areas of sandflats between the mouth of the estuary and Carnsew Pool are firm to walk on. Due to the mobile nature of the habitat, sandflats closer to the mouth of the estuary are not considered sensitive to public access, with the public using these areas at present during times of low tide. Further up the estuary, despite the grading of sand to mud, the majority of this upper estuary area remains firm underfoot and so possible to walk over without having a detrimental impact on the habitat itself. The pure mudflat found at the most southerly end of the estuary and within Carnsew Pool however is soft in nature and could be adversely affected by frequent repeated trampling, (see point 6 below for proposed mitigation).</p>
<p>6. Aggregations of non-breeding birds</p>	<p>Hayle estuary is managed by the RSPB as a refuge area for feeding and resting waterbirds. The site is close to several built up areas and visitors are encouraged to stick to paths and asked not to walk over, or exercise their dogs on, the intertidal area. A dog control order was put in place in 2009 to support conservation management, formally banning dogs from the foreshore. As a result signage around the estuary document the importance of the site for birds and detail the SSSI designation that is in place.</p> <p>In order to clarify the continuation of the existing management of access to the area, the coastal access proposals include excluding access year round to the foreshore on nature conservation grounds. The area affected is shown in Map XX.</p> <p>As well as preventing disturbance to birds, this measure will help to prevent trampling of sensitive pioneer saltmarsh vegetation and soft mud.</p>

### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? No

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Gwithian to Mexico Towans SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Geological features</b> IA – Coastal Geomorphology</p>	<p>This site provides an important example of successive erosional and depositional phases in coastal development, including remnants of former dunes preserved as stacks. At the last condition assessment in 2010, the site was considered to be in unfavourable recovering condition due to successional scrub and invasive species impacting the dune habitat. No condition threats are recorded associated with the geological feature.</p>
<p><b>2. Vascular Plant Species</b> Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>The Vascular Plant Assemblage on this site is made up of the following species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variegated horsetail, <i>Equisetum variegatum</i></li> <li>• Sharp rush, <i>Juncus acutus</i></li> <li>• Balm-leaved Figwort, <i>Scrophularia scorodonia</i></li> <li>• Western Clover, <i>Trifolium occidentale</i></li> <li>• Dune Fescue, <i>Vulpia fasciculata</i></li> </ul> <p>A condition assessment in 2009 confirmed the presence of the above species in units 21 - 24, which are the larger units to the north of the site. The main active threat to Variegated horsetail, <i>Equisetum variegatum</i>, is the increase in Grey Willow on the site. Western Clover, <i>Trifolium occidentale</i> grows along the South West Coast Path at Phillack Towans. The site is considered to be in unfavourable recovering condition, in the main, down to the issue of scrub and the need for more active management.</p>
<p><b>3. Sand Dune Habitats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fixed dune grassland (SD7 – SD10b)</li> <li>• Sand dune; strandline, embryo and mobile dunes (SD1-6)</li> </ul>	<p>The site is currently considered to be in unfavourable recovering condition following assessments in 2010, 2012 and 2014. The site is grazed by ponies, with scrub and invasive species being controlled as a condition of a number of environmental grant schemes that are in place on the site.</p>
<p><b>4. Terrestrial Invertebrate Species</b> Silver-studded blue butterfly, <i>Plebejus argus</i></p>	<p>Gwithian to Mexico Towans contains the largest <i>Plebejus argus</i> population in Cornwall with the species recorded within units 18 and 21 – 24 of the site, with Upton Towans forming the core area for this species within the SSSI. The mean count for the period from 2010 to 2016 was 2,315 individuals. The species requires areas of short dune turf for egg laying and larval development, with adults roosting on areas of sheltered scrub and taller grass tussocks.</p>



## Risk analysis

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path within this site. The route mainly follows the coastline closely and maintains good views of the sea. The coastal margin in this stretch is dominated by the Towans sand dune system which is interspersed with holiday parks.

1. IA – Coastal Geomorphology	The SSSI could be impacted if works were proposed that could obscure the geological feature. However, no improvements to the trail are proposed within the vicinity of the geological features.
2. Vascular plant assemblage	A number of the vascular plant species favour areas of short turf, or colonise the margins of existing paths. The main documented threat to a number of these species is natural successional with the need to manage rank grassland and scrub on the site to maintain areas of short turf preferred by the species in this assemblage. Bearing in mind the above information, in some areas, public access may prove a positive aspect for the plants habitat by helping to keep areas of habitat within the coastal margin more open.
3. • Fixed dune grassland (SD7 – SD10b) • Sand dune; strandline, embryo and mobile dunes (SD1-6)	A combination of Open access and informal access is in place across the sand dune site presently, with only those areas covered by caravan sites excluding public access. The main issue recorded for the sand dune habitat to date is the encroachment of scrub and invasives species, or the lack of bare sand habitat. Active management is taking place across the site with grazing by ponies and scrub clearance being carried out. The implementation of coastal access rights in this location is not considered likely to change the volume or pattern of people using the site.
Silver-studded blue butterfly, <i>Plebejus argus</i>	Due to the existing use of the site by the public, it is not considered that coastal access rights will change the volume or pattern of people using the site. Public access, in conjunction with active conservation management, may help to maintain areas of short turf habitat which is required as part of this species life cycle.

## Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? No

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Godrevy Head to St Agnes SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? Yes

Note that one of the notified features of the SSSI –European dry heathland - is also a qualifying feature of the European site. Assessment of possible impacts on the European site are made in the accompanying Habitats Regulation Assessment.

However, the Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC designation only extends across a short section of the length of coast covered by the SSSI designation. The SSSI extends along approximately ten miles of coast, whereas the SAC, in comparison includes just one and a half miles of coast between St Agnes and Porthtowan. Therefore, the Dry Heathland habitat that occurs outside of the SAC habitat will continue to be assessed below.

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Geological Features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC – Quaternary of South-West England</li> <li>• EC – Variscan Structures</li> </ul>	<p>The SSSI provides important examples of the quaternary stratigraphy and geomorphology of South West England. It was last assessed in 2010 and considered to be in favourable condition with no condition threats associated with public access.</p>
<p><b>2. Vascular Plant Species</b></p> <p>Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>The Vascular Plant Assemblage of the SSSI includes the following species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spotted Cats-ear, <i>Maculata</i></li> <li>• Eyebright, <i>Euphrasia vigursii</i></li> <li>• Hairy Greenweed, <i>Genista pilosa</i></li> <li>• Wild Asparagus, <i>Asparagus prostratus</i></li> <li>• Dorset heath, <i>Erica ciliaris</i></li> <li>• Autumn squill, <i>Scilla autumnalis</i></li> <li>• Pale Dog Violet, <i>Viola lactea</i></li> <li>• Golden Samphire, <i>Inula crithmoides</i></li> <li>• Soft leaved sedge, <i>Carex montana</i></li> <li>• Western Clover, <i>Trifolium occidentale</i></li> <li>• Sea Carrot, <i>Daucus carota subsp gummifer</i></li> </ul> <p>The assemblage is considered to be in favourable condition, with the majority of the species found in abundance throughout the SSSI coastal margin. One of the exceptions to this is the Spotted Cats-ear, <i>Maculata</i> which is being impacted by</p>

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	development at Porthtowan. However, this is due to an alteration of the site soil chemistry rather than a change in public access pressure.
<b>3. Sand Dune Habitats</b> Fixed dune grassland (SD7 – SD10b)	The main areas of dune within this site are located at Porthtowan and on Godrevy headland. The habitat is considered to be in favourable condition having been assessed in 2010, although there was a lack of zonation with no strandline, or mobile dune habitat present.
<b>4. Open Coastal Habitats</b> • Lowland Dry Heath	The heathland feature is currently considered to be in favourable condition. The habitat is largely maintained by its exposed position on the coast, with only specific areas south of Portreath being actively managed through scrub clearance. The only recorded threats to condition include changes to the alkalinity of the soil south of Porthtowan and the potential increase in European Gorse, <i>Ulex europaeus</i> .
<b>5. Breeding Sea and Coastal Birds</b> • Isolated bird colony – Kittiwake, <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> • Breeding bird assemblage, (rocky islets and coasts)	<p>The latest condition assessment of the bird feature undertaken in 2017 includes confirmation of the breeding bird assemblage that is a notified feature of the SSSI. The assemblage includes the following seabird and passerine bird species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fulmar, (<i>Fulmarus</i>)</li> <li>• Great cormorant, (<i>Phalacrocoracidae</i>)</li> <li>• Shag, (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>)</li> <li>• Peregrine, (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)</li> <li>• Oystercatcher, (<i>Haematopodidae</i>)</li> <li>• Great black-backed gull, (<i>Larus marinus</i>)</li> <li>• Lesser black-backed gull, (<i>Larus fuscus</i>)</li> <li>• Herring gull, (<i>Larus argentatus</i>)</li> <li>• Razorbill, (<i>Alca torda</i>)</li> <li>• Common guillemot, (<i>Uria aalge</i>)</li> <li>• House martin, (<i>Delichon urbicum</i>)</li> <li>• Rock pipit, (<i>Anthus petrosus</i>)</li> <li>• Stonechat, (<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>)</li> <li>• Jackdaw, (<i>Corvus monedula</i>)</li> <li>• Raven, (<i>Corvus corax</i>)</li> </ul> <p>Seven of the above species are confirmed breeding by their presence within the breeding season recorded by the Seabird Monitoring project. Rockpipit, <i>Anthus petrosus</i> and Stonechat, <i>Saxicola rubicola</i> are assumed breeding due to presence during the breeding season as recorded on the BTO's Birdtrack database. The conclusion of the data is that the breeding bird assemblage is in favourable condition.</p> <p>The latest assessment did not formally reach a conclusion on the condition of the isolated colony – Kittiwake, <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> feature. The existing draft Conservation Objectives for the site includes detail of a decline in Kittiwake numbers since the start of the Seabird Monitoring Project 2000... 'The Kittiwake colony was considered the largest breeding colony in Cornwall, however numbers have significantly declined since the start of the Seabird Monitoring Project, (SMP) 2000, from 1075 recorded at</p>

	<p><i>three sites within the SSSI boundary between 1985-1988, down to 14 in 2007'.....However, detail from the latest assessment includes numbers from the latest SMP count in June 2016 which included 270 individuals found in one site. Although a significant improvement in numbers, they are still below the threshold detailed in the Conservation Objectives of the site which is 806 to be considered in favourable condition.</i></p>
<p>6. Grey seal, <i>Halichoerus grypus</i></p>	<p>Grey seals are a notified feature of the Godrevy Head to St Agnes SSSI. In addition they are a protected species under Annex II and Annex V of the Habitats Directive. Grey seals are recorded using eleven separate sites within the SSSI. Of these sites, seven are based on the mainland and are sites used for pupping. The majority of the seal sites are difficult to access, however, the most significant pupping site at Godrevy is accessible, being located in a cove with the existing South West Coast Path running around the cliff edge. The coastal slope around the cove is currently designated as Open Access land. Due to recorded incidences of disturbance, the Open Access area on the coastal slope has public access restricted under Section 26(3)(a) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act to protect the seals using the site. Under Coastal Access legislation, the coastal margin will extend to mean low water including the cove itself, which at present is not open to public access.</p>

## Risk analysis

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path between St Agnes Head and Godrevy Point. The route mainly follows the coastline closely and maintains good views of the sea, apart from at Portreath where sea views are obscured by houses for part of the route. The coastal margin in this section is dominated by maritime heathland interspersed with small coves, as well as the larger beaches of Chapelport, Porthtowan and Portreath. A small realignment is proposed to the south of Godrevy Towans to avoid low lying areas subject to tidal inundation. In addition, improvements to the line of the existing South West Coast Path are proposed as follows:

1. North of St Agnes at Newdowns Head - levelling and widening of the existing path with installation of drainage measures on a section of path currently effected by erosion and runoff.
2. Sally's Bottom, (west of Porthtowan) – installation of ten steps on a section of existing path located on a steep slope with steps currently eroded.
3. Hayle Ulla, (NE of Portreath) – installation of twenty steps on a section of existing path located on a steep slope with steps currently eroded.
4. The Knavocks, (east of Godrevy headland) – levelling of eroded sections of path, (900m, including hard surfacing on approximately 300m), to make this section of coast path more accessible for mobility scooters and pushchairs.

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<p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC – Quaternary of South-West England</li> <li>• EC – Variscan Structures</li> </ul>	<p>The SSSI could be impacted if works were proposed that could obscure the geological feature. Four areas of improvement and one realignment are proposed within this SSSI. However, having fully considered the proposals, we have concluded that none of the proposed changes will obscure or otherwise impact the geological feature.</p>
<p>2. Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>The species that make up the assemblage on this site colonise areas of short turf within the coastal margin. This can include the margins of the existing South West Coast Path. Therefore, additional public use of the coastal slopes, in general, would benefit the vascular plant species by increasing the diversity of the habitat, with more informal paths creating suitable niche habitats. We have checked that the proposed realignment at Godrevy and the proposed improvement works are not in the vicinity of where the designated species have previously been recorded. When considering the improvement works proposed at Sally’s Bottom, the last assessment of Pale Dog Violet, <i>Viola lactea</i>, identified the species close to the location of the proposed improvement works. Therefore we have identified a potential impact between the proposal and this particular species, (see proposed mitigation under Establishment Works below).</p>
<p>3. Fixed dune grassland (SD7 – SD10b)</p>	<p>The dunes at Porthtowan and Godrevy are popular with locals and tourists alike, although they are relatively small compared to other sand dune sites located on this stretch of coast. The dunes at Porthtowan have been subject to active management techniques to stabilise the fore dunes, due to regular movement of sand during winter storms. The fixed dune grassland at Godrevy is subject to 400,000 visitors a year currently with the South West Coast Path and a network of informal paths criss crossing the site. Some areas however, are still subject to scrub encroachment. The implementation of coastal access rights in these locations are not considered likely to change the volume or pattern of people using the site. Therefore it is not felt that the coastal access proposals will impact the sand dune habitats.</p>
<p>4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowland Dry Heath</li> <li>• Temperate Atlantic wet heath - H4c</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lowland Dry Heathland</u></p> <p>In these coastal locations there is often dense vegetation with frequent western gorse present. The majority of these coastal sites are either already designated Open Access areas or subject to <i>de facto</i> access. The South West Coast Path is often located through these heathland habitats. Due to the dense vegetation and regular western gorse element of the habitat, it is considered to have a level of resilience to tramping. We have considered the proposed improvements mentioned above and have concluded that in the main the works are proposed on sections of coast path that are currently eroded due to footfall, the gradient of the path and/or surface water. Therefore, the improvements proposed will manage the public use of the path and ensure adjacent habitats are not impacted by these factors. In particular, it is noted that the existing coast path at the Knavocks receives around 400,000 walkers per year. Therefore, the coast path is particularly eroded, causing walkers to move to the side of the existing path and so extending the eroded area. The proposed leveling works will repair existing rutting caused by the high level of use. Hard surfacing will</p>

## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

	<p>only be used on approximately 300 metres of the path where it is either particularly eroded or wet at times. This equates to approximately 0.045ha of what is currently destroyed heathland habitat being surfaced. The habitat survey undertaken in 2016 by Natural England noted a total area of heathland habitat within the site of around 2,568ha. Therefore, considering the extent of heathland habitat within the site, the current damage to the maritime habitat in this area from walkers and the fact that the works will help protect the wider margin from erosion, it is considered that the resulting habitat loss from this proposal is insignificant.</p> <p><u>Temperate Atlantic Wet Heathland</u> Although classed as NVC type H4c, the heathland is only considered as wet heath due to the high rainfall in this location, and so is drier underfoot than similar NVC classed habitat found in more easterly locations. As above, this habitat within this site is either already designated as Open Access or informal access is tolerated. Realignment of the existing coast path could have a localised impact on the habitat, however there are no proposed realignments or improvement works within vicinity of the wet heathland habitat.</p>
<p>5.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isolated bird colony – Kittiwake, <i>Rissa tridactyla</i></li> <li>• Breeding bird assemblage</li> </ul>	<p>Despite a decline in bird numbers since designation, the bird features for this site are considered to be in favourable condition. Although Kittiwake numbers were below the threshold score, for the condition assessment this was concluded not to be due to a change in habitat. It should be noted that the majority of the coast in this location is already designated as Open Access, with the South West Coast Path also present. The bird features might be sensitive to access in the vicinity of the nesting sites if proposals moved the current line of the Coast Path and associated coastal margin. However, with the proposed line of the trail following the existing line of the South West Coast Path and the coastal margin along this stretch of the coast already designated as Open Access, within the vicinity of the bird features, there is not considered to be an impact.</p>
<p>6. Grey seal, <i>Halichoerus grypus</i></p>	<p>Grey seals can be disturbed by both noise and visual presence of people and dogs. This can be through public access to the beaches/coves that the seals are using or through public use of the surrounding cliffs and coastal margin. Seals are loyal to particular sites, often returning to the same site each year and if disturbed, they may abandon the site permanently. The current restriction at the Godrevy site compliments signage that is in place on the cliff top informing the public of the sensitive nature of the site and to remain quiet to avoid causing disturbance. Coastal access rights will extend onto the foreshore of the cove in question and so could facilitate disturbance to the seal colony if the public were to try to access the foreshore when seals are present. For this reason, the current restriction in place on the coastal slope at Godrevy will be extended to include the foreshore of the main Grey Seal haul out and pupping site, once coastal access rights come into effect on this stretch of coast.</p>



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### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? Yes

If yes, describe any special conditions that have been identified concerning how or when the works are to be carried out:

The exact location of the Pale Dog Violet, *Viola lactea* at Sally's Bottom should be identified and marked before improvements works commence to avoid any damage to the species.

Where necessary, Cornwall Council will instigate the SSSI assent process by writing to us to confirm the timing of works and how operations to be undertaken in line with these conditions. Natural England will provide further advice as necessary.

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Cligga Head SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Geological Features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC - South-West England Igneous</li> <li>• FD – Mineralogy</li> <li>• FM – Mineralogy</li> <li>• FU – Mineralogy</li> </ul>	<p>This SSSI provides important examples of the following geological types and formations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site shows an extremely fine example of a vein swarm resulting from the fracturing of a granite cusp. The quarry above the mine exposes granite, greisenized along joints in bands up to 0.5 m in width.</li> <li>• Extensive alteration of a granite of Permo-Carboniferous age by a range of secondary processes.</li> </ul> <p>The feature was last assessed in 2010 being considered in favourable condition with no condition threats associated with public access.</p>
<p><b>2. Vascular Plant Species</b></p> <p>Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>The assemblage is made up from the following species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hairy Greenweed, <i>Genista pilosa</i></li> <li>• Eyebright sp., <i>Euphrasia vigursii</i></li> <li>• Soft leaved sedge, <i>Carex Montana</i></li> <li>• Dog Violet, <i>Viola lactea Pale</i></li> <li>• Golden Samphire, <i>Inula crithmoides</i></li> </ul> <p>The site contains one unit following the coastal margin seaward of Perranporth airfield. The vascular plant assemblage was last assessed in 2010 and considered to be in favourable condition with the only threat being from an increase in European Gorse, <i>Ulex europaeus</i> on the site.</p>
<p><b>3. Open Coastal Habitats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowland Dry Heath</li> <li>• Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</li> </ul>	<p>The maritime heathland and grassland features extend for the length of this coastal site. They are considered to be in favourable condition having last been assessed in 2010, with the only threat to the feature being the encroachment of European gorse, <i>Ulex europaeus</i> at the southern half of the SSSI.</p>
<p><b>4. Terrestrial Invertebrate Species</b></p> <p>Invertebrate Assemblage F111 bare sand and chalk</p>	<p>The invertebrate assemblage relates to those species reliant on open bare ground. The SSSI Citation details 88 moth species, as well as butterfly species Grayling, <i>Hipparchia semele</i> and Silver Studded Blue, <i>Plebejus argus</i>. The site is considered to be in favourable condition with a site check in 2012 detailing the exposed nature of the site which ensures any encroachment of European gorse is very gradual, if at all. There is extensive mining spoil near the former Perran St George mine which assists in providing open bare ground for the invertebrate feature on this site.</p>



## Risk analysis

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path through the site. The route mainly follows the coastline closely and maintains good views of the sea. The coastal margin rising to the east of St Agnes is dominated by maritime heath with mining remains found regularly along the coastal margin.

<p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC - South-West England Igneous</li> <li>• FD – Mineralogy</li> <li>• FM – Mineralogy</li> <li>• FU – Mineralogy</li> </ul>	<p>The SSSI could be impacted if works were proposed that could obscure the geological feature. However, no improvement works to the trail are proposed within the vicinity of the geological features.</p>
<p>2. Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>In addition to the current South West Coast Path, the coastal margin in this location already experiences public access through Countryside and Rights of Way, (CRoW) Open Access rights. A number of the vascular plant species favour areas of short turf, or colonise the margins of existing paths due to the short vegetation or disturbed ground. The main documented threat to a number of these species is the encroachment of European Gorse, <i>Ulex europaeus</i>, Bracken, <i>Pteridium</i> and other invasive species. Bearing in mind the above, in some locations, public access may prove a positive aspect for the plants habitat, by helping to keep areas of coastal margin more open. Due to the existing public access on this site, the requirements of the plant species and the lack of any proposed changes to the existing coast path route, it is not considered that the Coastal Access proposals will impact on the vascular plant assemblage.</p>
<p>3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowland Dry Heath</li> <li>• Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lowland Dry Heathland</u> In these coastal locations there is often dense vegetation with frequent western gorse, with the habitat being found on steep gradients as well as more level coastal margin. Due to the dense vegetation and regular western gorse element of the habitat it is considered to have a level of resilience to tramping, although if the trail was realigned, it may have a local impact on the habitat in that location.</p> <p><u>Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</u> This feature includes a number of sub habitats, including maritime grassland dominated by Red Fescue, <i>festuca rubra</i>, and rock crevice communities. Due to the presence of dense <i>festuca rubra</i> within the maritime grassland habitat, it is considered to have a level of resilience to trampling. However, if the trail was realigned, localised impacts may occur if erosion of the substrate became a factor. The rock crevice habitat is found in inaccessible places, often on steep cliff gradients, and so it is not felt that this habitat is vulnerable to public access.</p>



## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

	As no realignments or improvements to the line of the existing coast path are proposed under the coastal access proposals, there is not considered to be an impact on the above coastal habitats.
4. Invertebrate Assemblage F111 bare sand and chalk	The invertebrates referred to in this section are those that prefer either short turf, bare areas or a mix of grassland and scrub. Any increase or change in public access on these sites is unlikely due to the presence of the South West Coast Path, CRoW Open Access and car park provision already present along this stretch of coast. However, any change in public access would only be likely to increase the areas of short turf and the balance between scrub and grassland areas, providing additional suitable habitat for these species. Therefore, there is not considered to be an impact on the invertebrate species from the coastal access proposals.

### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? Yes

If yes, describe any special conditions that have been identified concerning how or when the works are to be carried out:

No special conditions identified at this stage.

Where necessary, Cornwall Council will instigate the SSSI assent process by writing to us to confirm the timing of works and how operations to be undertaken in line with these conditions. Natural England will provide further advice as necessary.

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Boscawen SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Geological Features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC – Quaternary of South-West England</li> <li>• IS – Quaternary of South-West England</li> </ul>	<p>The citation for the Boscawen SSSI details the following geological features for this site:</p> <p><i>Coastal exposures at the site show a sequence of granitic shore platform overlain in turn by raised beach deposits and head deposits. The site demonstrates the facies variations within both the raised beach and head deposits and the stratigraphic relationships which exist between the two. The incised and fragmented granitic shore platform is immediately overlain by a raised beach comprised of boulders derived from the granite bedrock. In places, this shore platform is backed against fossil cliff notches and the upper raised beach deposits contain a higher percentage of erratic pebbles such as greenstones and cherts.</i></p> <p>Following the condition assessment carried out in 2010 the site was considered to be in favourable condition.</p>
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**Risk analysis**

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path through the SSSI. The character of this coastal stretch is often wild and rugged with steep cliffs. The coastal margin is broken up by steep coastal valleys, with remnants of historic market gardening present, as well as mining remains

<p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC – Quaternary of South-West England</li> <li>• IS – Quaternary of South-West England</li> </ul>	<p>The SSSI could be impacted if works were proposed that could obscure the geological feature. However, no improvements to the trail are proposed within the vicinity of the geological features.</p>
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## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

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### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? No

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Aire Point to Carrick Du SSSI**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Geological Features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ED – South-West England Igneous</li> <li>• EC – Mineralogy</li> <li>• EC - South-West England Igneous</li> <li>• FD – Mineralogy</li> <li>• FM – Mineralogy</li> <li>• EC – Quaternary of South-West England</li> <li>• IS – Quaternary of South-West England</li> <li>• ED – South-West England Igneous</li> </ul>	<p>This site provides the following geological features as detailed by the site citation...<i>The rocks exposed at the coast between Aire Point and Carrick Du show an unparalleled range of geological features associated with the igneous activity affecting Britain in the Variscan Orogeny.</i></p> <p>The site was last assessed in 2010 and considered to be in favourable condition.</p>
<p><b>2. Lower Plant Species</b> Bryophyte assemblage</p>	<p>The SSSI citation states that <i>‘the site supports a typical Cornish cliff bryophyte flora and includes a number of rarities, most notably the RDB moss Tortula solmsii’</i>.</p> <p>Following the preparation of a site dossier in 2010, the following species are considered to be included in the assemblage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Cephaloziella nicholsonii</i></li> <li>• <i>Fossombronia caespitiformis</i></li> <li>• <i>Cephaloziella stellulifera</i></li> <li>• <i>Fossombronia maritima</i></li> <li>• <i>Ephemerum sessile</i></li> <li>• <i>Philonotis rigida</i></li> <li>• <i>Fissidens crispus</i></li> <li>• <i>Platyhypnidium alopecuroides</i></li> <li>• <i>Fossombronia angulosa</i></li> <li>• <i>Riccia crozalsii</i></li> <li>• <i>Scopelophila cataractae</i></li> <li>• <i>Tortula atrovirens</i></li> </ul>

## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tortula solmsii</i></li> </ul> <p>A further survey and report was produced in February 2017. The majority of site units included bryophytes which were all considered to be in favourable condition. The location of the species found within the site included on stone banks, under rocks, on rocky steep cliffs and steep grass banks, or on the banks of streams. <i>Cephaloziella nicholsonii</i> was found at Crowns Mine, (SW3631233619) in a more accessible area at the top of the cliff. These species prefer open conditions with the introduction of grazing in areas particularly noted in the 2017 report as a positive step for the bryophyte species.</p>
<p><b>3. Vascular Plant Species</b> Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>The Vascular Plant Assemblage on this site is made up of the following species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cornish Eyebright, <i>Euphrasia vigursii</i></li> <li>• Lanceolate spleenwort, <i>Asplenium obovatum</i></li> <li>• Pale dog-violet, <i>Viola lacteal</i></li> <li>• Coral-necklace, <i>Illecebrum verticillatum</i></li> <li>• Early meadow-grass, <i>Poa infirma</i></li> <li>• Hairy bird's-foot-trefoil, <i>Lotus subbiflorus</i></li> <li>• Cornish moneywort, <i>Sibthorpia europea</i></li> <li>• Autumn squill, <i>Scilla autumnalis</i></li> </ul> <p>The majority of the above plants grow in short turf, alongside well trodden paths, or on rocky outcrops. All species were considered to be in favourable condition when they were last assessed in 2010. This is due to their current presence on site or the availability of suitable habitat.</p>
<p><b>4. Open Coastal Habitats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowland Dry Heath</li> <li>• Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</li> <li>• Lowland mire grassland and rush pasture</li> </ul>	<p>Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope, Lowland Dry Heathland and Lowland mire grassland and rush pasture are notified features found throughout this coastal site. The SSSI is 598 ha in area and spans around 25 km of coastal habitat. These features were last assessed in 2017 and were considered to be in favourable condition with 120ha of Maritime Cliff and Slope habitat and 111ha of Dry Heathland calculated as present over the site during the previous Phase 1 Habitat assessment in 2016. The SSSI citation states, '<i>Between Boscaswell Cliffs and Clodgy Point the site is characterised by a number of wet flushes and an extensive area of mire at Boswednack</i>'. The mire habitat occurs in pockets within the numerous coastal valleys that are present within this site. However, the habitat is largely absent from the western end of the SSSI.</p>
<p><b>5. Terrestrial Invertebrate Species</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invertebrate Assemblage F111 bare sand and chalk</li> </ul>	<p>The invertebrate assemblages are associated with early successional habitats on exposed cliffs, with coastal heaths and transitions to scrub. The invertebrate features are found throughout this coastal site. All SSSI units are in favourable condition with any threat to condition recorded as the need to secure a new agreement with the landowners to continue active management of the coastal margin.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invertebrate Assemblage F112 open short sward</li> <li>• Invertebrate assemblage F003 scrub-heath and moorland</li> <li>• Invertebrate assemblage F1 unshaded early successional mosaic</li> </ul>	
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### Risk analysis

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path through the SSSI. However, a number of small realignments of the existing coast path are proposed as follows:

- Hor Point – realignment of the coast path onto a more seaward route around Hor Point.
- Pendeen Old Cliff – realignment off the coastal road for approximately 300m
- Cape Cornwall – realignment of the path passing the coast guard station.
- Porth Nanven – realignment down an existing set of steps and along the edge of the road.

Improvement works to the line of the South West Coast Path are also proposed at Trevalgan Cliffs, between St Ives and Zennor, where at present the path is boggy and wet. The placing of stepping stones are proposed to assist walkers and to reduce the current impact on the habitat in this location.

The route mainly follows the coastline closely and maintains good views of the sea. The character of this stretch of coast is rugged and wild, with regular headlands jutting out interspersed with small coves. The margin is backed by a network of small field systems which are typical of this part of the county.

<p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ED – South-West England Igneous</li> <li>• EC – Mineralogy</li> <li>• EC - South-West England Igneous</li> <li>• FD – Mineralogy</li> <li>• FM – Mineralogy</li> </ul>	<p>The SSSI could be impacted if works were proposed that could obscure the geological feature. The works to install the above realignments have been considered with respect of the geological features with the conclusion reached that none of the works will obscure the geological features of the site.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC – Quaternary of South-West England</li> <li>• IS – Quaternary of South-West England</li> <li>• ED – South-West England Igneous</li> </ul>	
<p>2. Bryophyte assemblage</p>	<p>The bryophyte assemblage species prefer open conditions. For this reason these species are only considered sensitive to access if the location of the current South West Coast Path was realigned over known locations of the bryophyte species. While considering the proposed realignments of the trail as detailed above it was noted that the assessment of the Bryophyte feature report from 2017 indicates the presence of the species, <i>Fossombronia caespitiformis</i>, being recorded at Hellesveor Cliff on Hor Point. Currently the South West Coast Path runs across the headland with an additional Public Right of Way following a more seaward route closer to the cliff edge. The proposed realignment is to use the more seaward right of way as the coast path.</p> <p>Having considered this proposal, it is felt that there is likely to be very little change in public use in this location. At present both footpaths are well walked paths on the ground. It is likely that a significant number of users will continue to use the more landward path being the more direct route across the headland. The 2010 site dossier for bryophytes undertaken for this SSSI details that the above Bryophyte occurs '<i>In thin turf along well used tracks and on thin soil over rocks</i>' ..... '<i>Suitable habitat patches are often ephemeral, occurring at a particular spot for a brief period, and the species have developed various dispersal mechanisms which allow them to colonise new patches of bare soil as they arise. The plants do not occur in areas of relatively low disturbance, which permits the development of habitats such as rough grassland, tall heathland, bracken and scrub</i>'.</p> <p>Email correspondence in August 2018 with the bryologist who undertook the 2010 and 2017 surveys, confirmed that the proposal to move the coast path was unlikely to have a significant negative impact on the overall population. Being a colonist species, any new trampled turf habitat would create new opportunities for the species to colonise new areas along the path. Therefore, it is concluded that there will be no impact on the bryophyte interest of the site.</p>
<p>3. Vascular plant assemblage</p>	<p>In addition to the current South West Coast Path, the majority of the sites listed above already experience public access across the coastal margin, either formally through the margin being designated as Open Access, or through informal public access. A number of the vascular plant species favour areas of short turf, or colonise the margins of existing paths within the margin. The main documented threat to a</p>



## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

	<p>number of these species is the encroachment of European Gorse, Bracken and other invasive species. Bearing in mind the above information, on some sites, public access may prove a positive aspect for the plants habitat, by helping to keep areas of coastal margin more open.</p>
<p>4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowland Dry Heath</li> <li>• Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</li> <li>• Lowland mire grassland and rush pasture</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lowland Dry Heathland</u> In these coastal locations there is often dense vegetation with frequent western gorse with the habitat being found on steep gradients as well as more level coastal margin. The majority of these coastal sites are either already designated Open Access areas or informal access is tolerated. The South West Coast Path is often located through these heathland habitats. Due to the dense vegetation and regular western gorse element of the habitat it is considered to have a level of resilience to tramping, although if the trail was realigned it may have a local impact on the habitat in that location, (see below).</p> <p><u>Hard Maritime Cliff and Slope</u> This feature includes a number of sub habitats, including maritime grassland dominated by Red Fescue, <i>festuca rubra</i>, and Rock Crevice communities. This habitat often occurs in locations which are already popular public access sites, either through informal or Open Access provision. Due to the presence of dense <i>festuca rubra</i>, the habitat is considered to have a level of resilience to tramping, although if the trail was realigned, localised impacts may occur if erosion of the substrate became a factor. The Rock Crevice habitat is found in inaccessible places, often on steep cliff gradients and so it is not felt that this habitat is vulnerable to public access.</p> <p><u>Lowland Mire Grassland and Rush Pasture</u> The largest expanse of mire at Boswednack is away from the coast path and currently very impenetrable due to dense willow scrub. Elsewhere, there is a scattering of acid flushes along the coastal slopes, some close to or even on the current South West Coast Path. These vary in quality/composition: some species-poor dominated by rank Molinia; others more open and species-rich. Light trampling can be beneficial to these habitats, however heavy trampling could have an adverse impact. Therefore, if the current line of the coast path was altered within the vicinity of these habitats as part of the Coastal Access proposals, then this may have an adverse impact. The proposed realignment at Hor Point detailed above, includes mire habitat located either side of the proposed realignment in this location. However, the risk to the feature is considered to be insignificant bearing in mind that there is already a clear walked line on the ground that the proposed path will follow, with many walkers continuing to follow the more direct route of the existing South West Coast Path. Three further realignments are proposed at Pendeen Old Cliff, Cape Cornwall and Porth Nanven. However, all of the above realignments are located on existing walked routes, or outside of the above coastal habitats. Therefore, there is not considered to be an impact from the coastal access proposals.</p>
<p>5.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invertebrate Assemblage</li> </ul>	<p>The invertebrates referred to in this section are those that prefer either short turf, bare areas or a mix of grassland and scrub. The coastal margin of this site is already designated as Open Access with the South West Coast Path present throughout. Any</p>

<p>F111 bare sand and chalk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invertebrate Assemblage</li> </ul> <p>F112 open short sward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invertebrate assemblage</li> </ul> <p>F003 scrub-heath and moorland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invertebrate assemblage F1</li> </ul> <p>unshaded early successional mosaic</p>	<p>increase or change in public access on these sites is unlikely due to the current access provision already present in this area. However, any change in public access would only be likely to increase the areas of short turf and the balance between scrub and grassland areas, providing additional suitable habitat for these species. Therefore, these features are not considered sensitive to access and will not be considered further within this appraisal.</p>
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### Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? Yes

If yes, describe any special conditions that have been identified concerning how or when the works are to be carried out:

No special conditions identified at this stage.

Where necessary, Cornwall Council will instigate the SSSI assent process by writing to us to confirm the timing of works and how operations to be undertaken in line with these conditions. Natural England will provide further advice as necessary.

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Newquay and the Gannel MCZ**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Intertidal Habitats</b> Coastal saltmarshes and saline reedbeds</p>	<p>The features for this site include coastal saltmarshes and saline reedbeds. At the time of designation in 2016, these features were considered to be in favourable condition. Saltmarsh and saline reedbed habitat is only found within the site at the far upstream end of the Gannel estuary. The saltmarsh contains a number of typical indicator species including a significant area of Glasswort, <i>Salicornia spp</i>, being a pioneer species at the downstream extent of the marsh habitat.</p>
<p><b>2. Intertidal Rock Habitats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estuarine rocky habitats</li> <li>• Low energy intertidal rock</li> <li>• Moderate energy intertidal rock</li> <li>• High energy intertidal rock</li> </ul>	<p>The Estuarine rocky habitats, Low, Moderate and High energy intertidal rock are located around the headlands of Pentire Point East, Towan Head and Trevelgue. All of the intertidal rock features are considered to be in favourable condition.</p>
<p><b>3. Intertidal Sediments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intertidal coarse sediment</li> <li>• Intertidal mixed sediments</li> <li>• Intertidal sand and muddy sand</li> <li>• Intertidal mud</li> </ul>	<p>The majority of the intertidal mud and coarse sediment habitats are located in the Gannel, seaward of the saltmarsh habitat. A small area of pure mudflat is found at the seaward end of the saltmarsh. However, this habitat is quickly replaced with sand flat as you move towards the estuary mouth. These features were considered to be in favourable condition at the time of designation.</p>
<p><b>4. Giant Goby</b> Giant Goby, <i>Gobius cobitis</i></p>	<p>The Giant Goby, <i>Gobius cobitis</i> can be found in rock pools within the intertidal area of Newquay and the Gannel MCZ. Records show that <i>Gobius cobitis</i> is located in the intertidal rock pools at the southern end of Fistral Beach. The feature is considered to be in favourable condition, with the area currently popular and accessible to the public.</p>

### Risk analysis

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path adjacent to the MCZ site. One realignment of the existing coast path is proposed on the south bank of the Gannel estuary where the route will run behind the bank side trees above the estuary before dropping down onto the sand at the edge of the estuary around to Penpol. The route mainly follows the coastline closely and maintains good views of the sea.

The landscape character of this site is dominated by the popular tourist destination of Newquay, as well as the busy beaches of Fistral and Crantock. It is a well populated and urbanised area, with four distinct headlands surrounding the heavily used beach areas.

<p>1.Coastal saltmarshes and saline reedbeds</p>	<p>The saltmarsh habitat could be sensitive to increased public access due to the wet nature of the habitat, the plant species and creek systems present. However, due to the estuary’s location, immediately adjacent to the town of Newquay, the site is currently well used by dog walkers and horse riders. The site is traversed by various walking routes, not only the current South West Coast Path, but the Penpol permissive path on the southern edge of the site, and less formal paths running across the site and upstream from the Trenance footbridge. Various access points to the estuary are noted from the housing estates on the northern side of the estuary, in addition to the established entry points near the Trenance bridge and from the Pentire headland via a public right of way. A riding school is located close by, with regular use of the site by horse riders using the existing path network and the wider site itself. Therefore, considering the existing public use of the site, it is concluded that the proposals under coastal access will not increase the use, or change the pattern of public access on the site. The reedbed habitat is dense and located at the upper tidal limit hence it does not offer opportunities for public access due to its location and the density of the reed stand.</p>
<p>2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estuarine rocky habitats</li> <li>• Low energy intertidal rock</li> <li>• Moderate energy intertidal rock</li> <li>• High energy intertidal rock</li> </ul>	<p>The habitats and species associated with these areas are not considered sensitive to the impacts of public access. The exception to this is the Giant Goby, <i>Gobius cobitis</i> which is found within the intertidal rock to the south of Fistral beach, (see 4 below).</p>
<p>3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intertidal coarse sediment</li> <li>• Intertidal mixed sediments</li> </ul>	<p>Areas of coarse and mixed sediment and sand flats occur in popular ‘beach’ areas within the Newquay to Gannel MCZ. These are located along the coast of Newquay and are well used throughout the year by the public and are not considered sensitive to public access.</p> <p>Although the mudflat within the Gannel estuary is relatively small, being confined geographically by the saltmarsh and sand flats, it could be considered sensitive to</p>

## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intertidal sand and muddy sand</li> <li>• Intertidal mud</li> </ul>	<p>public access. However, in this location the estuary is already well used with no proposed realignment of the trail in the vicinity of the mudflat habitat.</p>
<p>4. Giant Goby, <i>Gobius cobitis</i></p>	<p>Giant Goby, <i>Gobius cobitis</i> could be sensitive to public access if public use was increased within the vicinity of the recorded location for this species. However, Fistral beach is already heavily used by the public throughout the year, with the majority of users being drawn to the sandy beach rather than the intertidal rock to the west. With the <i>Gobius cobitis</i> feature currently being considered in favourable condition, and the proposed trail following the existing South West Coast Path on the cliff to the south of the intertidal rock, it is not considered that our proposals will change the pattern or use of this site by the public and so it is concluded that there will be an impact on this species.</p>

Assessment of coastal access proposals on:

**Runnel Stone (Land's End) MCZ**

Is this site also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p><b>1. Intertidal Rock Habitats</b> High energy intertidal rock</p>	<p>The intertidal rock feature is located at the western end of the intertidal margin and is considered to be in favourable condition.</p>
<p><b>2. Intertidal Sediments</b> Intertidal coarse sediment Intertidal sand and muddy sand</p>	<p>The intertidal coarse sediment and intertidal sand and muddy sand features are considered to be in favourable condition and, in the main, are located around Porthcurno cove and Treen cliff.</p>
<p><b>3. Subtidal Rock Habitats</b> High energy infralittoral rock High energy circalittoral rock Moderate energy circalittoral rock</p>	<p>High energy infralittoral rock and high and moderate energy circalittoral rock is considered to be in favourable condition and recorded south west of Gwennap Head.</p>
<p><b>4. Subtidal Sediments</b> Subtidal coarse sediment Subtidal sand</p>	<p>These habitats are recorded south of Gwennap Head and are considered to be in favourable condition.</p>
<p><b>5. Pink Sea Fan</b> Pink sea-fan, <i>Eunicella verrucosa</i></p>	<p>Pink sea fan, <i>eunicella verrucosa</i>, is found below mean low water to the south of Treen cliff and is recorded as being in favourable condition.</p>

### Risk analysis

<p>1. High energy intertidal rock</p>	<p>As the name suggests, intertidal rock habitats contend with the impacts of wave action. This is particularly the case for the Runnelstone site, located on the most southern tip of the Penwith Peninsula. Therefore the habitats and species associated with these areas are not considered sensitive to the impacts of public access.</p>
<p>2. • Intertidal coarse sediment • Intertidal sand and muddy sand</p>	<p>Areas of coarse and mixed sediment and sand flats occur in popular 'beach' areas such as around Porthcurno cove. These sediment habitats are considered to be resilient to trampling and so not sensitive to public access.</p>
<p>3. High energy infralittoral rock High energy circalittoral rock Moderate energy circalittoral rock</p>	<p>As these rock habitats are found below mean low water, it is concluded that our proposals under the coastal access programme will not have an impact on these features.</p>
<p>4. Subtidal coarse sediment Subtidal sand</p>	<p>As these sediment features are found below mean low water, it is concluded that our proposals under the coastal access programme will not have an impact on these features.</p>
<p>5. Pink sea-fan, <i>Eunicella verrucosa</i></p>	<p>As the Pink sea-fan, <i>Eunicella verrucosa</i> feature is located below mean low water, it is concluded that our proposals under the coastal access programme will not have an impact on this feature.</p>

**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Chough, *Pyrrhocorax***

Is this site or feature also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

Chough, <i>Pyrrhocorax</i>	The Chough has been breeding in small numbers in west Cornwall since 2002. The majority of the Chough population are therefore nesting and foraging within the Newquay to Penzance stretch, with a gradual increase in numbers breeding recorded in the last fifteen years. Nest sites include rock faces and old mine buildings around the far western peninsula of the county, with nine nest sites recorded to date. Due to the sensitivity of the species the exact location of the nest sites are not identified in this assessment.
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**Risk analysis**

Chough, <i>Pyrrhocorax</i>	This species might be sensitive were we to make proposals that could alter the use of the Coast Path or associated coastal margin in the vicinity of nesting sites. In addition, fledglings are also particularly vulnerable to disturbance by walkers and dogs. However, there are no proposals to realign the trail within the vicinity of known nest sites, with the coastal margin already designated as Open Access in this area, or used informally. Therefore, there is not considered to be any interaction between this species and our proposals.
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**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus***

Is this site or feature also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

Peregrine Falcon, <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Peregrines are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. There are approximately seventeen nest sites recorded on this coastal stretch of which six are known to be currently active. Due to the sensitivity of the species the exact location of the nest sites are not identified in this assessment.
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**Risk analysis**

Peregrine Falcon, <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Peregrines are sensitive when breeding and nesting. Therefore, were we to make proposals that could alter the use of the coast path or associated coastal margin in the vicinity of nesting sites this could have an impact on this species while nesting. One of the nest sites on the west Cornwall coast is subject to a voluntary restriction through the British Mountaineering Council during the nesting period, due to the proximity of the climbing route to the nest site. However, it is not considered that our proposals will alter the line of the path or the use of the margin, either by walkers or climbers, in the vicinity of the nest sites. Therefore, there is not considered to be an impact on this species from our proposals.
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**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**Grey Seal, *Halichoerus grypus***

Is this site or feature also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

<p>Grey Seal, <i>Halichoerus grypus</i></p>	<p>In addition to being a notified feature of the Godrevy Head to St Agnes SSSI, Grey seals are a protected species under Annex II and Annex V of the Habitats Directive. There are five haul out or pupping sites known for Grey seals outside of the Godrevy Head to St Agnes SSSI.</p> <p>Due to the sensitivity of the species the exact location of the haul out and pupping sites are not identified in this assessment.</p>
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**Risk analysis**

<p>Grey Seal, <i>Halichoerus grypus</i></p>	<p>Three of the five haul out and pupping sites have previously suffered incidents of disturbance which have been recorded by the Cornwall Seal Group Research Trust, (CSGRT). The landowners for all three sites are working with CSGRT to install signage at these locations to make the public aware that they are sensitive sites for wildlife. Following discussion with CSGRT, we believe these informal management measures, combined with volunteer wardening of sites, will be sufficient to raise awareness and discourage people from disturbing the seals.</p>
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**Assessment of coastal access proposals on:**

**St Gothic Sands Local Nature Reserve**

Is this site or feature also part of a European site? No

**Current situation**

St Gothic Sands LNR	<p>St Gothic Sands Local Nature Reserve is located on the north coast adjacent to Godrevy Head. The old sand extraction site connects both the Godrevy Head to St Agnes and Gwithian to Mexico Towans SSSIs. The site contains a number of pools which are used by a variety of bird species throughout the year.</p> <p>The current South West Coast Path runs between the main fenced pool and the small pools which are seaward of the trail. Although the main pool is fenced off, there is concern expressed by local bird enthusiasts that dogs and people walking close to the fence are continuing to disturb the bird life using the main pool and island. In addition, the smaller pools seaward of the trail are not fenced off, so birds using the pools are regularly disturbed by free running dogs.</p>
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**Risk analysis**

St Gothic Sands LNR	<p>The bird interest at St Gothic Sands LNR is diverse including overwintering waders such as Black and Bar-tailed Godwits, Grey Plover and Whimbrel, with species such as Curlew and Oystercatcher recorded using the site year round. The proposed trail is realigned further west, on the landward side of the sand bund between the old sand pit and the beach, and so reducing the risk of disturbance to birds using the main pool and the shallower wet area to the west. The southern half of the site is already designated as open access, with informal public access allowed over the majority of the rest of the site.</p> <p>Therefore, considering the existing access allowed on the site, and the proposed realignment of the existing trail, it is concluded that our proposals will reduce the risk of bird disturbance on the site.</p>
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## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

### Conclusion

We, Natural England, are satisfied that our proposals to improve access to the English coast between Newquay and Penzance are fully compatible with our duty to further the conservation and enhancement of the notified features of St Agnes Beacon Pits, Kelsey Head, Penhale Dunes, Cligga Head, Trevaunance Cove, Godrevy Head to St Agnes, Gwithian to Mexico Towans, Hayle Estuary and Carrack Gladden, Aire Point to Carrick Du, Porthgwarra to Pordenack Point, Treen Cliff, Boscawen, Tater-Du, Penlee Point and Penlee Quarry SSSIs consistent with the proper exercise of our functions<sup>1</sup>.

In respect of any duties that may arise under section 125 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, Natural England has concluded for Newquay and the Gannel and Runnel Stone (Land's End) Marine Conservation Zones, that the access proposal (including any mitigation measures specified) is the one that, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions under section 296 of the same Act, is least likely to hinder the achievement of the conservation objectives for the Marine Conservation Zone - and accordingly may proceed.

In respect of Chough, *Pyrhocorax*, Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*, Grey Seal, *Halichoerus grypus* and St Gothian Sands Local Nature Reserve, we are satisfied that in developing the new access proposals the appropriate balance has been struck between Natural England's conservation and access objectives, duties and purposes.

See also, where relevant, the conclusions of the separate HRA relating to common features.

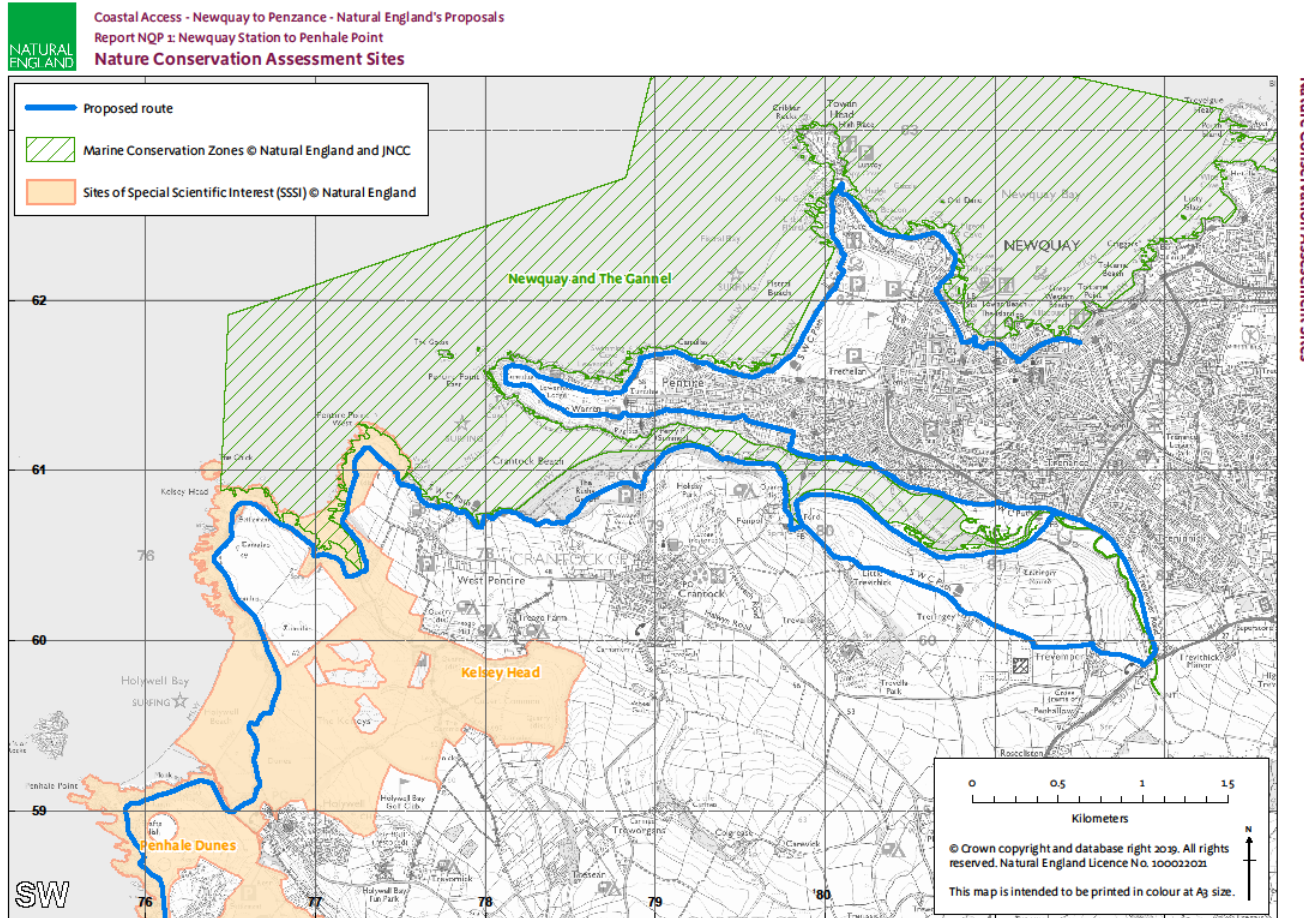
The conclusions of this assessment have been checked by:

David Marshall	Date	Senior Officer with responsibility for protected sites
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<sup>1</sup> Natural England's functions includes its balanced general purposes for access, nature conservation and landscape under the NERC Act 2006, any specific statutory duties it may have to deliver specific improvements to public access, and the access-related policies and priorities it periodically agrees with Defra.

# Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

## Maps 1 to 8

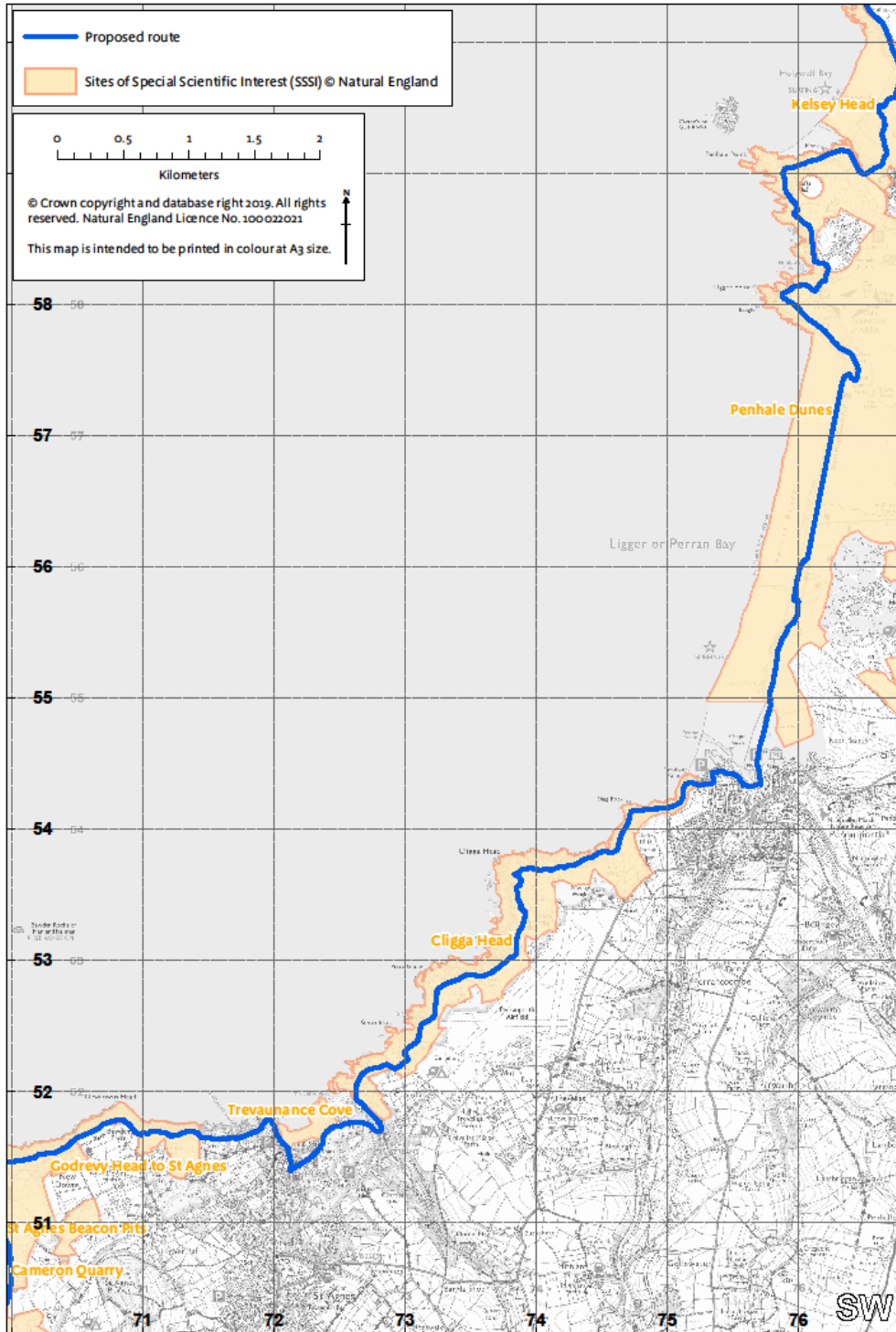


Nature Conservation Assessment Sites

## Map 2



Coastal Access - Newquay to Penzance - Natural England's Proposals  
 Report NQP 2: Penhale Point to St Agnes Head  
**Nature Conservation Assessment Sites**

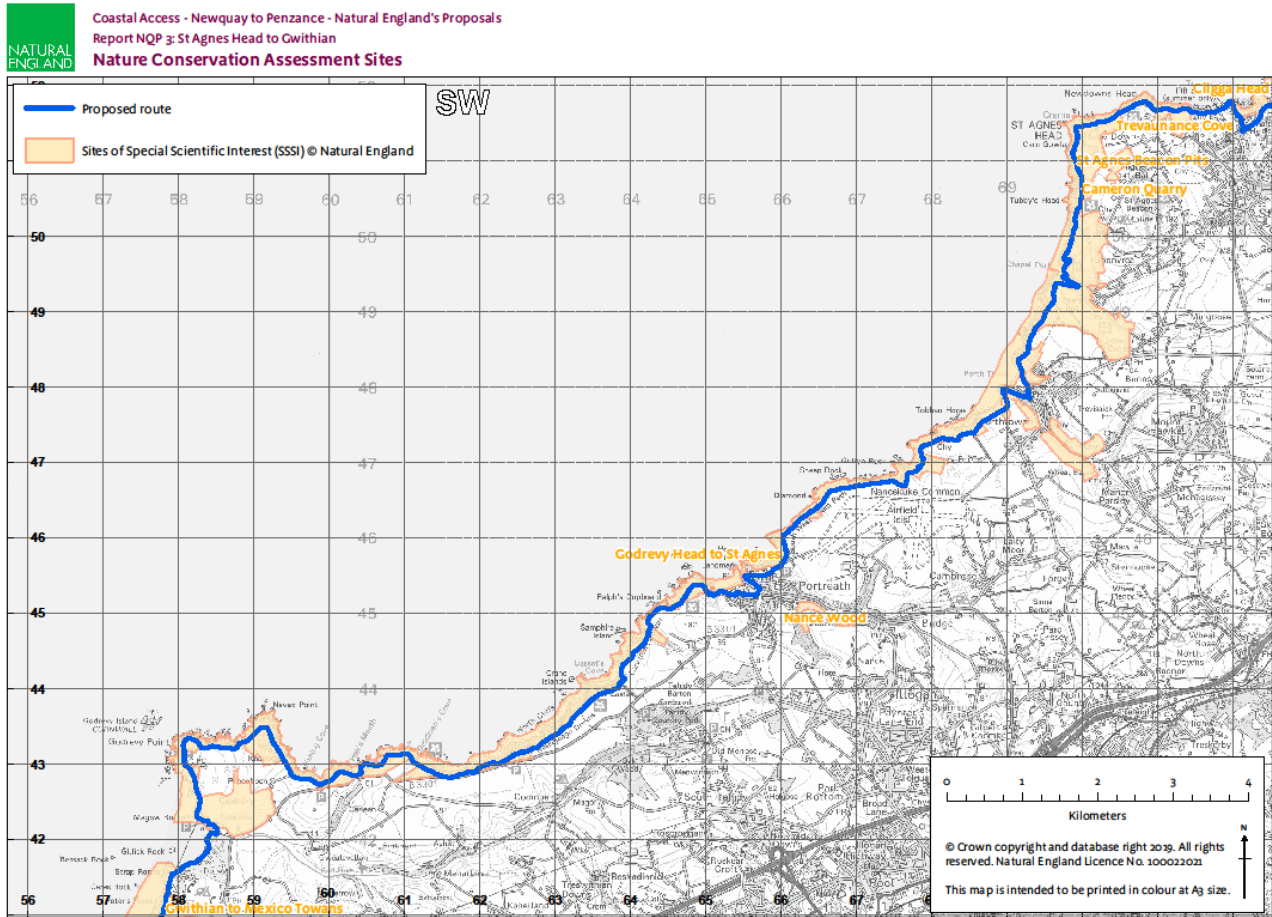


Nature Conservation Assessment Sites



# Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

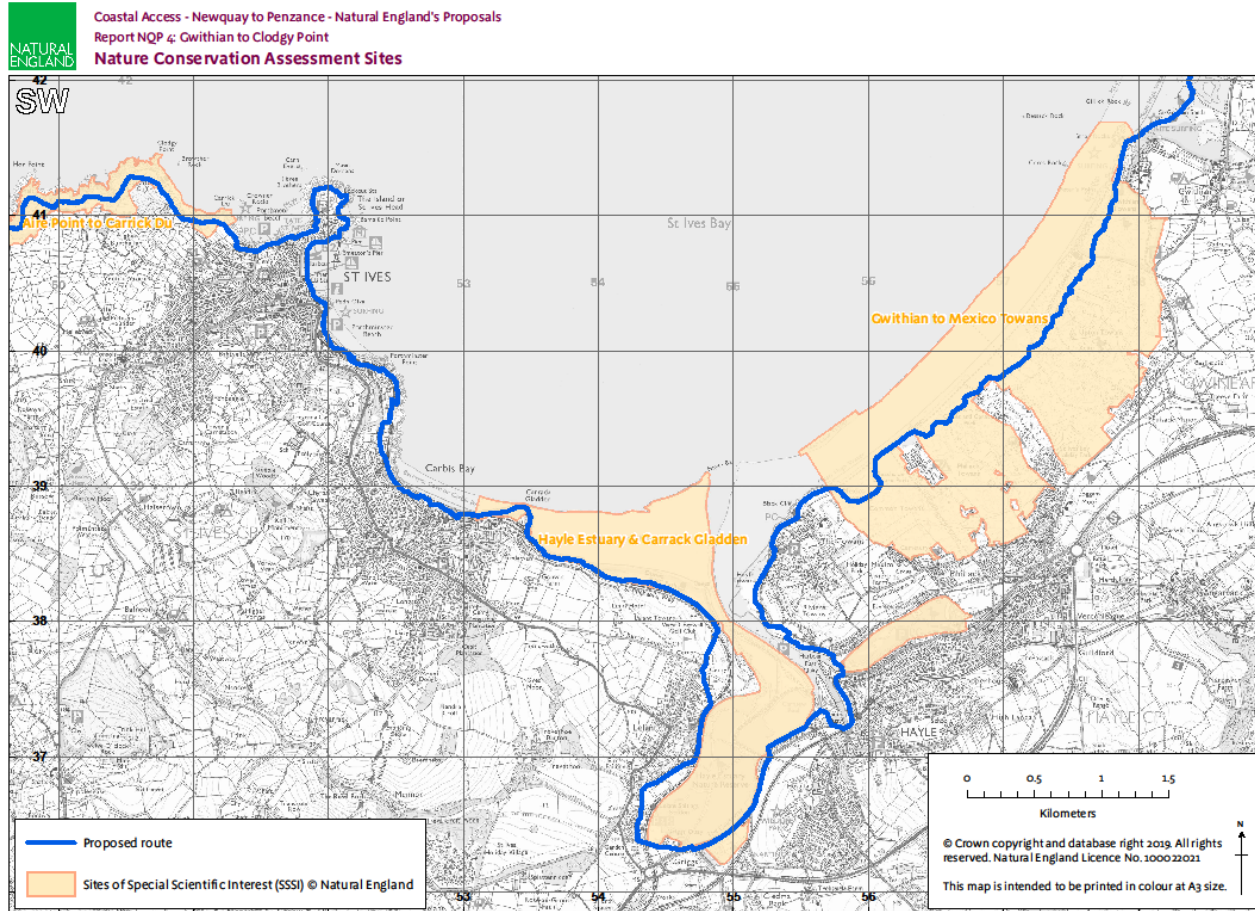
Map 3



Nature Conservation Assessment Sites

# Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

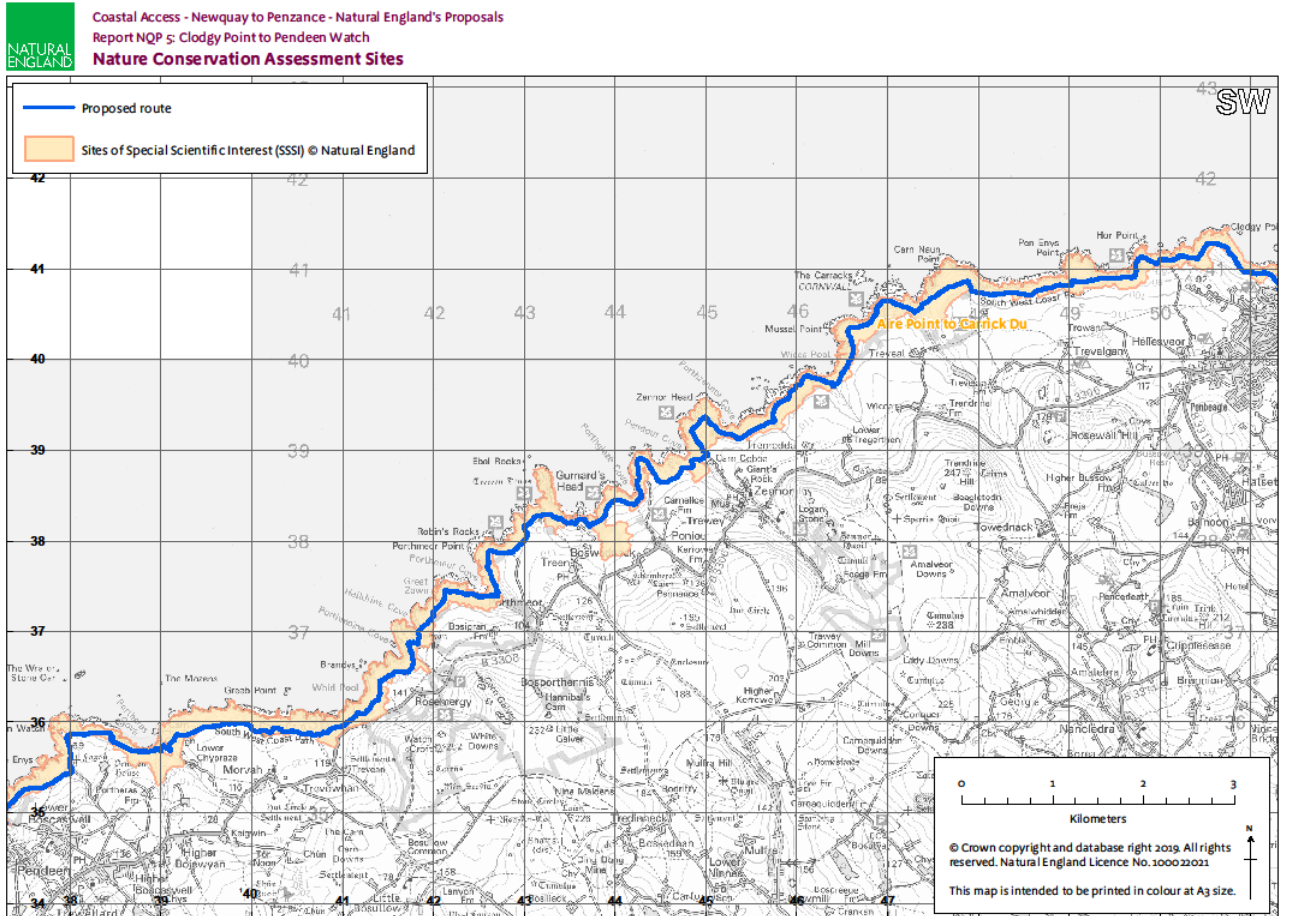
Map 4





# Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

Map 5

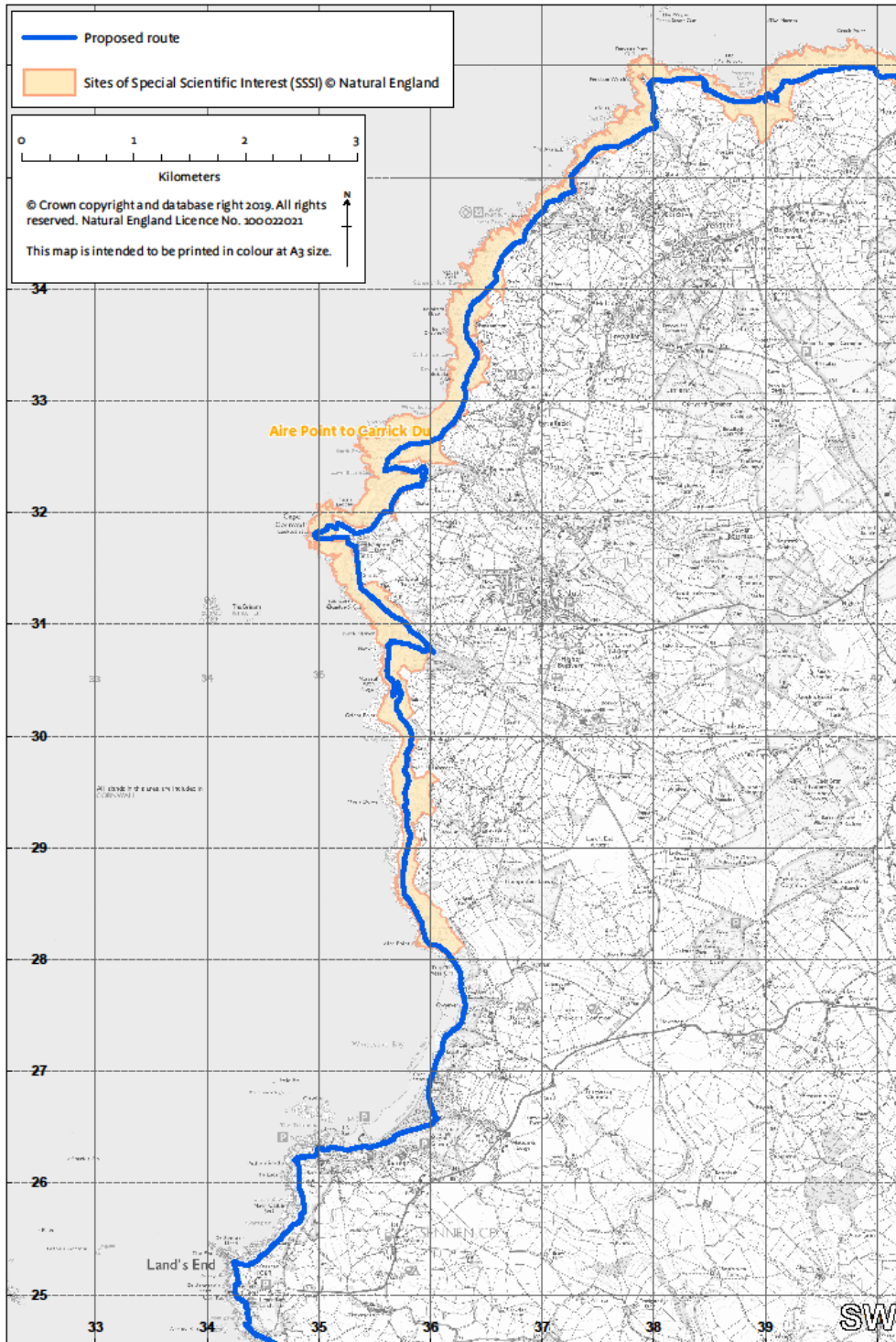


Nature Conservation Assessment Sites

## Map 6



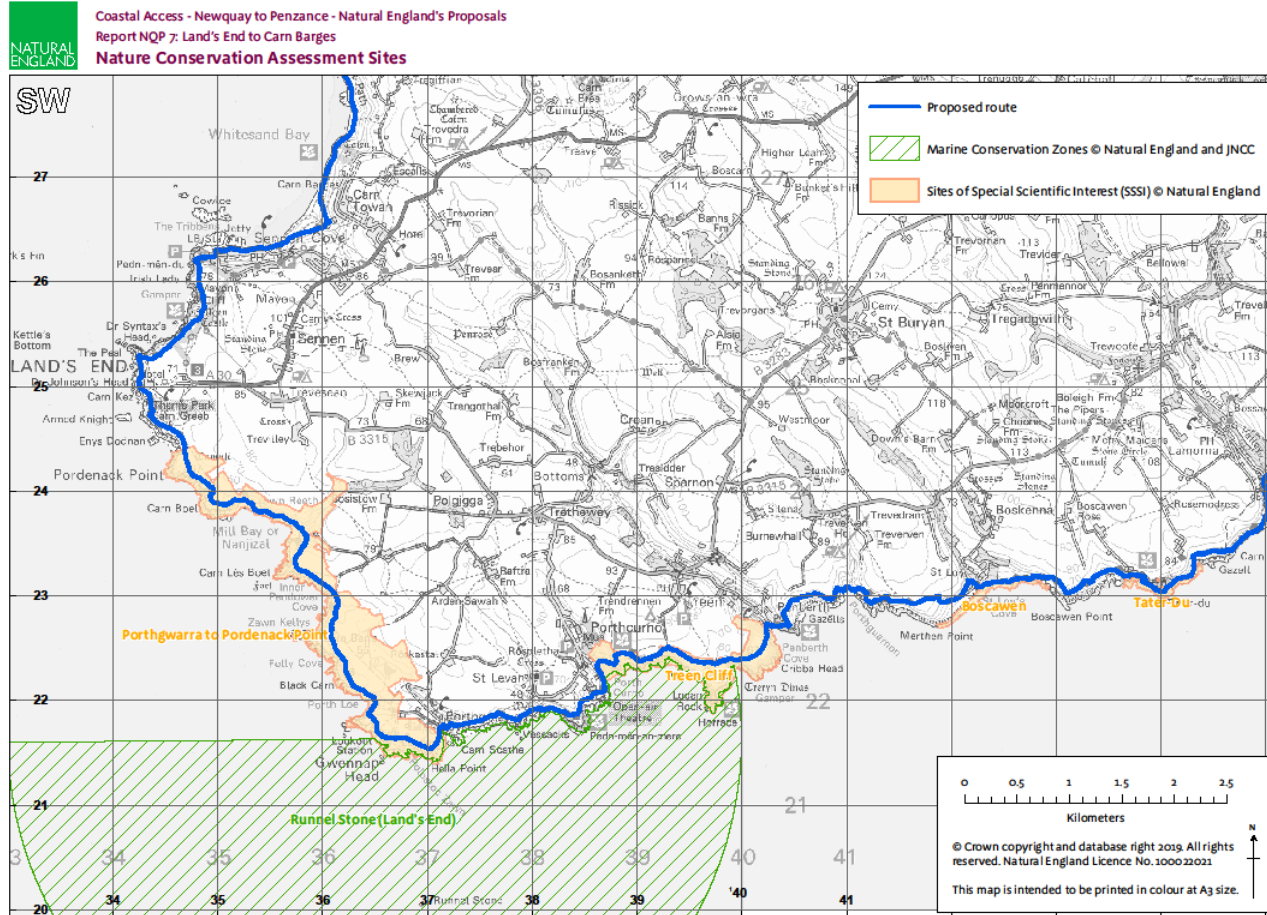
Coastal Access - Newquay to Penzance - Natural England's Proposals  
 Report NQP 6: Pendeen Watch to Land's End  
**Nature Conservation Assessment Sites**



Nature Conservation Assessment Sites

# Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

Map 7



Nature Conservation Assessment Sites



# Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

## Map 8



Coastal Access - Newquay to Penzance - Natural England's Proposals  
 Report NQP8: Carn Barges to Penzance Station  
**Nature Conservation Assessment Sites**



Nature Conservation Assessment Sites

## Annex 1. Index to designated sites and features

Note: columns in grey are European sites for which a separate Habitats Regulations Assessment has been carried out.

	Newquay and the Gannel MCZ	Kelsey Head SSSI	Penhale Sands SAC	Penhale Dunes SSSI	Cligga Head SSSI	Trevaunance Cove SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC	St Agnes Beacon Pits SSSI	Gwithian to Mexico Towans SSSI	Hayle Estuary and Carrack Gladden SSSI	Aire Point to Carrick Du SSSI	Porthgarra to Pordenack Point SSSI	Runnel Stone (Lands End) MCZ	Treen Cliff SSSI	Boscawen SSSI	Tater-du SSSI	Penlee Point SSSI	Penlee Quarry SSSI
<b>Geological features</b>																			
ED – South-West England Igneous												✓							
EC – Mineralogy												✓							
EC - South-West England Igneous					✓							✓					✓	✓	
FD – Mineralogy					✓							✓							
FM – Mineralogy					✓	✓						✓							✓
FU – Mineralogy					✓														
ED – Mineralogy						✓													
EC – Quaternary of South-West England							✓					✓				✓			
EC – Variscan Structures							✓												
EA – Quaternary of South-West England									✓										



## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

	Newquay and the Gannel MCZ	Kelsey Head SSSI	Penhale Sands SAC	Penhale Dunes SSSI	Cligga Head SSSI	Trevaunance Cove SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC	St Agnes Beacon Pits SSSI	Gwithian to Mexico Towans SSSI	Hayle Estuary and Carrack Gladden SSSI	Aire Point to Carrick Du SSSI	Porthgarra to Pordenack Point SSSI	Runnel Stone (Lands End) MCZ	Treen Cliff SSSI	Boscawen SSSI	Tater-du SSSI	Penlee Point SSSI	Penlee Quarry SSSI
IA – Coastal Geomorphology										✓									
IS – Quaternary of South-West England												✓				✓			
ED – South-West England Igneous												✓					✓	✓	
<b>Lower Plant Species</b>																			
Population of RDB liverwort - Petalwort, <i>petalophyllum ralfsii</i>			✓																
Bryophte assemblage			✓									✓							
<b>Vascular Plant Species</b>																			
Vascular plant assemblage		✓		✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
Shoredock, <i>rumex rupestris</i>			✓																
Early Gentian, <i>gentianella angelica</i>			✓					✓											
<b>Sand Dune Habitats</b>																			
Fixed dune grassland (SD7 – SD10b)		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓								



## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

	Newquay and the Gannel MCZ	Kelsey Head SSSI	Penhale Sands SAC	Penhale Dunes SSSI	Cligga Head SSSI	Trevaunance Cove SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC	St Agnes Beacon Pits SSSI	Gwithian to Mexico Towans SSSI	Hayle Estuary and Carrack Gladden SSSI	Aire Point to Carrick Du SSSI	Porthgarra to Pordenack Point SSSI	Runnel Stone (Lands End) MCZ	Treen Cliff SSSI	Boscawen SSSI	Tater-du SSSI	Penlee Point SSSI	Penlee Quarry SSSI
Sand dune; strandline, embryo and mobile dunes (SD1-6)		✓	✓	✓						✓	✓								
Humid dune slacks			✓	✓															
<b>Open Coastal Habitat</b>																			
Lowland Dry Heath					✓		✓	✓				✓	✓		✓				
Temperate Atlantic wet heath - H4c							✓	✓											
Hard maritime cliff and slope		✓			✓			✓			✓	✓			✓				
Lowland mire grassland and rush pasture												✓							
<b>Terrestrial Invertebrate Species</b>																			
Invertebrate Assemblage F111 bare sand and chalk					✓							✓							
Invertebrate Assemblage F112 open short sward				✓								✓							
Invertebrate assemblage F003 scrub-heath and moorland												✓							



## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

	Newquay and the Gannel MCZ	Kelsey Head SSSI	Penhale Sands SAC	Penhale Dunes SSSI	Cligga Head SSSI	Trevaunance Cove SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC	St Agnes Beacon Pits SSSI	Gwithian to Mexico Towans SSSI	Hayle Estuary and Carrack Gladden SSSI	Aire Point to Carrick Du SSSI	Porthgarra to Pordenack Point SSSI	Runnel Stone (Lands End) MCZ	Treen Cliff SSSI	Boscawen SSSI	Tater-du SSSI	Penlee Point SSSI	Penlee Quarry SSSI
Invertebrate assemblage F1 unshaded early successional mosaic				✓								✓							
Silver-studded blue butterfly, <i>Plebejus argus</i>										✓									
<b>Intertidal Habitats</b>																			
Coastal saltmarshes and saline reedbeds	✓																		
Saltmarsh – SM4 – SM27, MG11 – MG13, MG28											✓								
<b>Intertidal Rock Habitats</b>																			
Estuarine rocky habitats	✓																		
Low energy intertidal rock	✓																		
Moderate energy intertidal rock	✓																		
High energy intertidal rock	✓													✓					
<b>Intertidal Sediments</b>																			
Intertidal coarse sediment	✓													✓					





Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access  
Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

	Newquay and the Gannel MCZ	Kelsey Head SSSI	Penhale Sands SAC	Penhale Dunes SSSI	Cligga Head SSSI	Trevaunance Cove SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC	St Agnes Beacon Pits SSSI	Gwithian to Mexico Towans SSSI	Hayle Estuary and Carrack Gladden SSSI	Aire Point to Carrick Du SSSI	Porthgarra to Pordenack Point SSSI	Runnel Stone (Lands End) MCZ	Treen Cliff SSSI	Boscawen SSSI	Tater-du SSSI	Penlee Point SSSI	Penlee Quarry SSSI
Intertidal mixed sediments	✓																		
Intertidal sand and muddy sand	✓													✓					
Intertidal mud	✓																		
Estuaries – sand and mudflats											✓								
<b>Subtidal Rock Habitats</b>																			
High energy infralittoral rock														✓					
High energy circalittoral rock														✓					
Moderate energy circalittoral rock														✓					
<b>Subtidal Sediments</b>																			
Subtidal coarse sediment														✓					
Subtidal sand														✓					
<b>Pink Sea Fan</b>																			
Pink sea-fan, Eunicella verrucosa														✓					
<b>Sea and Coastal Birds</b>																			

## Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Newquay and Penzance

	Newquay and the Gannel MCZ	Kelsey Head SSSI	Penhale Sands SAC	Penhale Dunes SSSI	Cligga Head SSSI	Trevaunance Cove SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SSSI	Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC	St Agnes Beacon Pits SSSI	Gwithian to Mexico Towans SSSI	Hayle Estuary and Carrack Gladden SSSI	Aire Point to Carrick Du SSSI	Porthwarra to Pordenack Point SSSI	Runnel Stone (Lands End) MCZ	Treen Cliff SSSI	Boscawen SSSI	Tater-du SSSI	Penlee Point SSSI	Penlee Quarry SSSI
Isolated bird colony – Kittiwake, <i>Rissa tridactyla</i>							✓												
Breeding bird assemblage							✓						✓						
Aggregations of non-breeding birds											✓								
<b>Giant Goby</b>																			
Giant Goby	✓																		
<b>Grey Seal</b>																			
Grey seal, <i>Halichoerus grypus</i>							✓												