

Chapter 6:

Maylandsea to Promenade Park, Maldon

England Coast Path: Burnham-on-Crouch to Maldon - Natural England's Proposals

Part 6.1: Introduction

Start Point: Maylandsea (grid reference: TL 893 022)

End Point: Promenade Park, Maldon (grid reference: TL 862 065)

Relevant Maps: 6a to 6f

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 6.1.1 Generally follows existing walked routes, including public rights of way, along most of this length.
- 6.1.2 Mainly follows the coastline quite closely and maintains good views of the sea.
- 6.1.3 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation or heritage preservation (See map C and C2 of the Overview):
 - Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - Blackwater Estuary (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 4) Special Protection Area (SPA)
 - Blackwater Estuary (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 4) Ramsar site
 - Blackwater Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its wildlife and habitat interests
 - Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)

We have assessed the potential impacts of access along the proposed route (and over the associated spreading room described below) on the features for which the affected land is designated and on any which are protected in their own right.

- 6.1.4 With input from specialists we have considered each of the sites involved and the relevant designations and concluded that for this section of the coast our proposals will not have a detrimental effect.

In reaching this conclusion we have identified that it would be necessary to provide appropriate signage at key locations to explain the importance of these habitats, to encourage people to stay on the trail and to keep dogs under effective control in preventing disturbance to wildlife.

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

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

Accessibility:

6.1.5 Generally, there are few artificial barriers to accessibility on the proposed route, which makes use of existing surface paths wherever these meet the criteria in the Coastal Access Scheme.

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

- There are a number of kissing gates necessary for livestock management (at junction of BCM-6-So05 with BCM-6-So06, either end of BCM-6-So08 and on BCM-6-So10).

See part 6a of the Overview - 'Recreational issues' - for more information.

Where we have proposed exercising our discretion:

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

6.1.6 Estuary: This report proposes that the trail should contain sections aligned on the estuary of the Rivers Crouch and Blackwater, extending upstream from the open coast. See part 5 of the Overview. The trail covered by this chapter includes part of this estuary route on the River Blackwater.

6.1.7 Landward boundary of the coastal margin: We have used our discretion on some sections of the route to map the landward extent of the coastal margin to an adjacent physical boundary such as a fence line, pavement or track to make the extent of the new access rights clearer. See Table 6.2.1 below.

6.1.8 At sections BCM-6-So01 to BCM-6-So06, BCM-6-So09 and BCM-6-So10 we have used this discretion to limit the landward extent of the coastal margin to the landward top edge of the seawall. This has had the effect of reducing the amount of coastal margin that would have otherwise been available by default. This option provides the most clarity because:

- The break in slope provides an easily identifiable boundary for access users.
- There is no clear boundary feature at the bottom of the seawall that could mark the boundary of the coastal margin.

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

6.1.9 Restrictions and/or exclusions: We have proposed to exclude access by direction under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) in places along this section of coast. For details of these directions, see the Formal Proposals Section of this report and Part 10 of the Overview.

6.1.10 Access rights to the spreading room would be subject to the national restrictions on coastal access rights listed in Annex D of the Overview. These restrictions would not apply to public rights of way.

See part 10 of the Overview - 'Restrictions and exclusions' - for details.

6.1.11 Other factors affecting access: At route sections BCM-6-So08 [Northey Island causeway], BCM-6-So12 [Maldon Yacht Club] and BCM-6-So14 [Promenade Park, Maldon] public access may be interrupted from time to time for short periods to allow vehicles to pass. This arrangement would continue without any local restriction on the new access rights to give effect to it formally.

Establishment and ongoing management of the trail

6.1.12 Some physical establishment of the trail would be necessary, in accordance with the general approach described in part 7 the Overview:

- Surface improvement is needed on a portion of BCM-6-So10
- A new interpretation panel will be added at section BCM-6-So08

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

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

Future Change:

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

See parts 6f - 'Coastal processes' and 9 - 'Future changes' of the Overview for more information.

Part 6.2: Commentary on Maps

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

6.2.1 Section Details – Map 6a to 6f: Maylandsea to Promenade Park, Maldon

Notes on table:

Column 7 – all sections are subject to a s25A CROW direction (year round) in the coastal margin for the purpose of excluding access to saltmarsh and mudflat on grounds of unsuitability for public access.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6a | 6b | 7 |
|-------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Map(s) | Route section number(s) | Current status of this section | Current surface of this section | Roll-back proposed? (See Part 8 of Overview) | Landward boundary of margin (See maps) | Reason for landward boundary discretion | Proposed exclusions or restrictions (see Part 9 of Overview) |
| 6a, 6b & 6c | BCM-6-So01 | Public footpath | Grass | No | Landward edge of top of sea wall | Clarity and cohesion | Margin |
| 6c | BCM-6-So02 | Public footpath | Grass | No | Landward edge of top of sea wall | Clarity and cohesion | Margin |
| 6d | BCM-6-So03 & BCM-6-So04 | Public footpath | Grass | No | Landward edge of top of sea wall | Clarity and cohesion | Margin |
| 6d | BCM-6-So05 & BCM-6-So06 | Other existing walked route | Grass | No | Landward edge of top of sea wall | Clarity and cohesion | Margin |
| 6d | BCM-6-So07 | Public footpath | Grass | No | Fence line | Clarity and cohesion | Margin |
| 6d | BCM-6-So08 | Public footpath | Tarmac | No | Landward edge of trail | Not used | Margin |
| 6e | BCM-6-So09 | Public footpath | Bare soil: Compacted | No | Landward edge of top of sea wall | Clarity and cohesion | Margin |
| 6e | BCM-6-So10 | Public footpath | Bare soil: Compacted | No | Various | Clarity and cohesion | Margin |
| 6e | BCM-6-So11 | Public footpath | Bare soil: Compacted | No | Landward edge of trail | Not used | Margin |
| 6e | BCM-6-So12 | Multi-use route | Gravel | No | Landward edge of trail | Not used | Margin |
| 6e | BCM-6-So13 | Other existing walked route | Bare soil: Compacted | No | Landward edge of trail | Not used | Margin |
| 6e | BCM-6-So14 | Multi-use route | Tarmac | No | Landward edge of trail | Not used | Margin |
| 6e | BCM-6-So15 | Public footpath | Tarmac | No | Landward edge of trail | Not used | Margin |

Part 6.3: Chapter 6 - Formal Proposals

- Below are our formal proposals to the Secretary of State for the length of coast shown on maps 6a to 6f.
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

Formal Proposals – Maylandsea to Promenade Park, Maldon

Discretion to include an estuary

6.3.1 Natural England proposes to exercise its functions as if the sea included the estuarial waters of the River Blackwater as far as Promenade Park in Maldon as indicated by the extent of the trail shown on map 6e.

Proposed route of the trail

6.3.2 The route is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 6a to 6f as the proposed route of the trail.

Landward boundary of coastal margin

6.3.3 Adjacent to route sections BCM-6-S007 the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing boundary fence which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 6d.

6.3.4 Adjacent to route section BCM-6-S010 the landward boundary of the coastal margin varies to coincide with the existing boundary fence which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public footpath as well as with the landward edge of the top of the sea wall shown as the trail on map 6e.

6.3.5 Adjacent to route sections BCM-6-S001 to BCM-6-S006 and BCM-6-S009 the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the top of the sea wall shown as the trail on maps 6a to 6e.

Local restrictions and exclusions

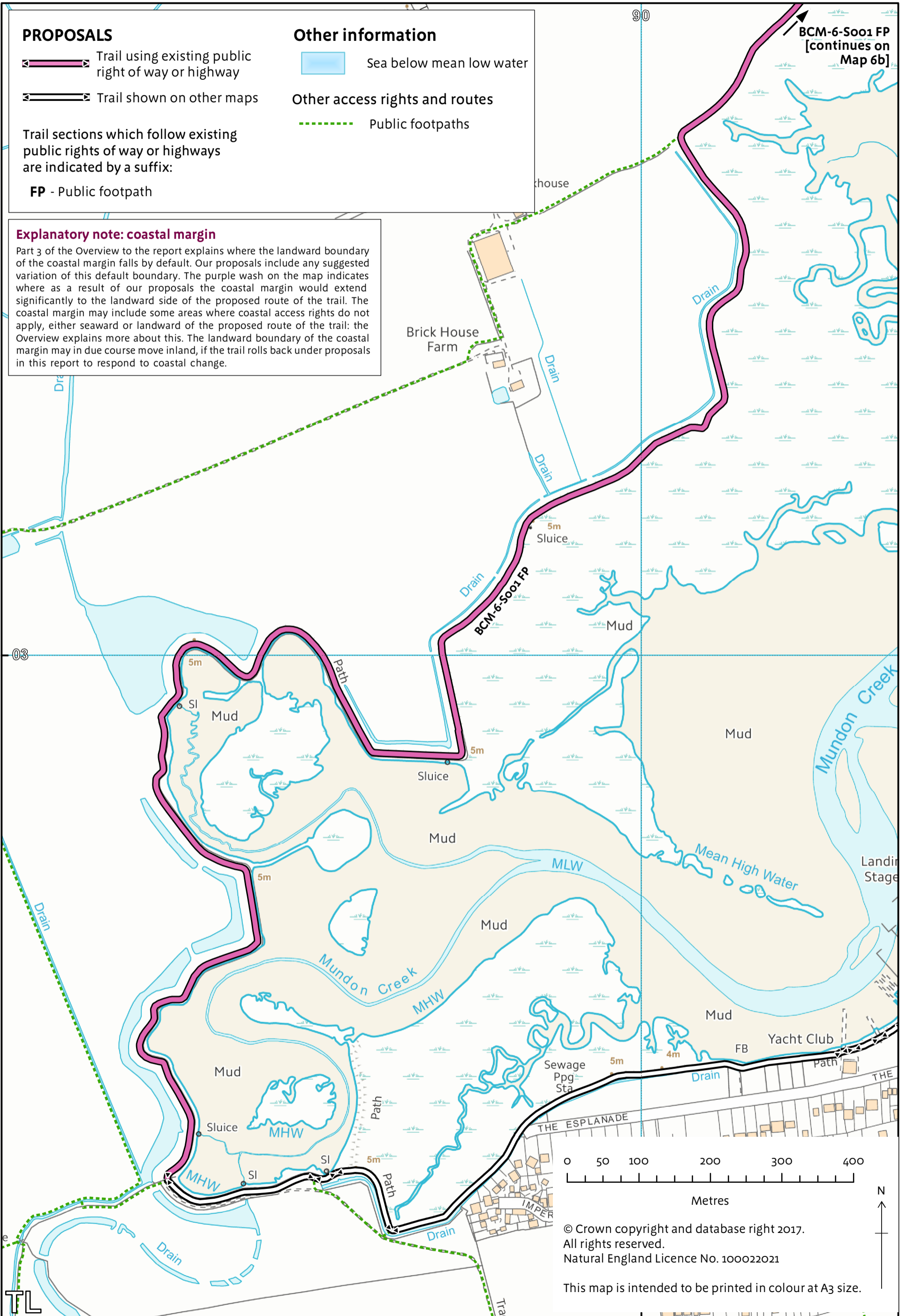
6.3.6 Natural England proposes to exclude access relevant to this length of coast, as follows:

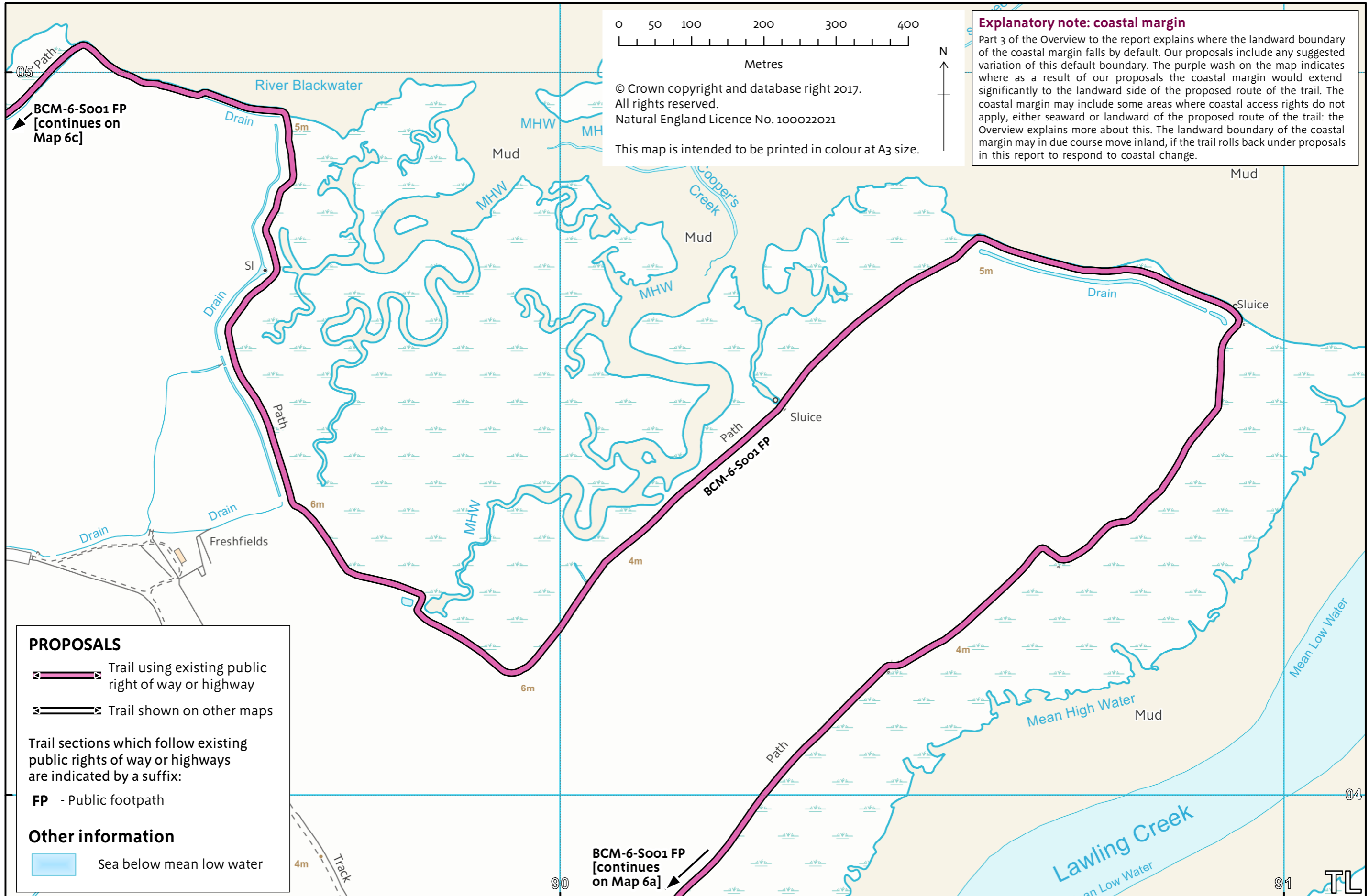
- Access is to be excluded all year-round to all areas of intertidal mudflats and salt marsh on this length of coast, adjacent to route sections BCM-6-S001 to BCM-6-S015. This exclusion is proposed under s25A of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) as the land is unsuitable for public access. This exclusion will not affect the route itself and does not apply to any land that could be considered to be excepted. See maps R to T in the Overview for details.
- Access is to be excluded between October and April inclusive in the coastal margin on the grazing marsh and meadows on Northey Island and the causeway, route section BCM-6-S008. This is proposed under s26 of the Act as it will prevent impact through disturbance of dark-bellied brent goose roosting and feeding sites. This exclusion will not affect the route itself and does not apply to any land that could be considered to be excepted. See map H in the Overview for details.

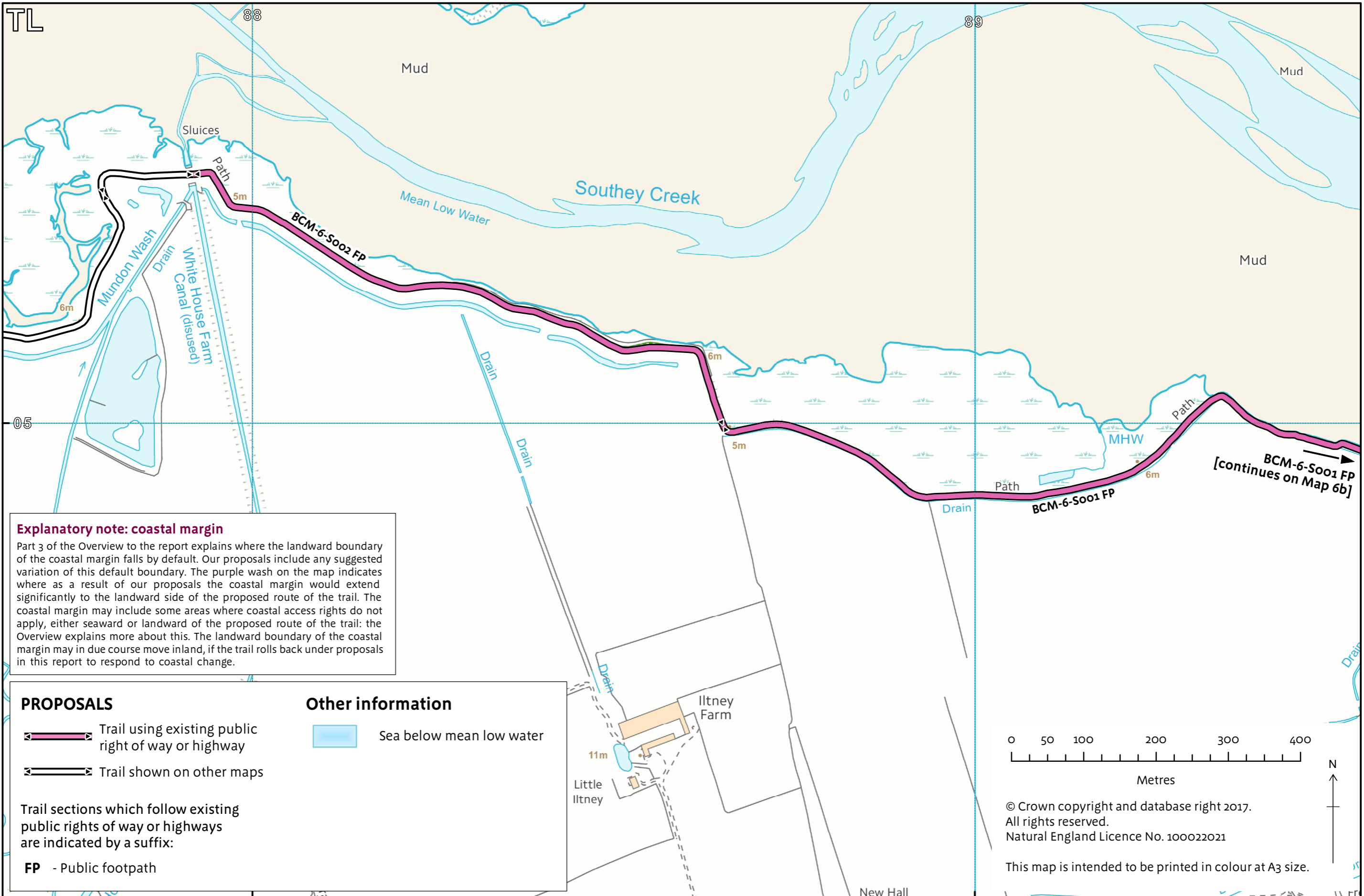
Please refer to Part 10 of the Overview for further details.

Alternative routes

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




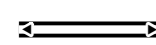




Explanatory note: coastal margin

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


PROPOSALS

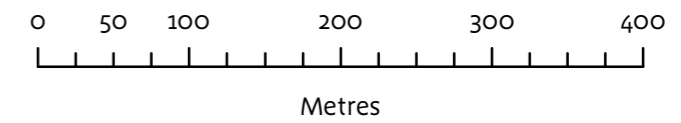
-  Trail using existing public right of way or highway
-  Trail shown on other maps

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

FP - Public footpath

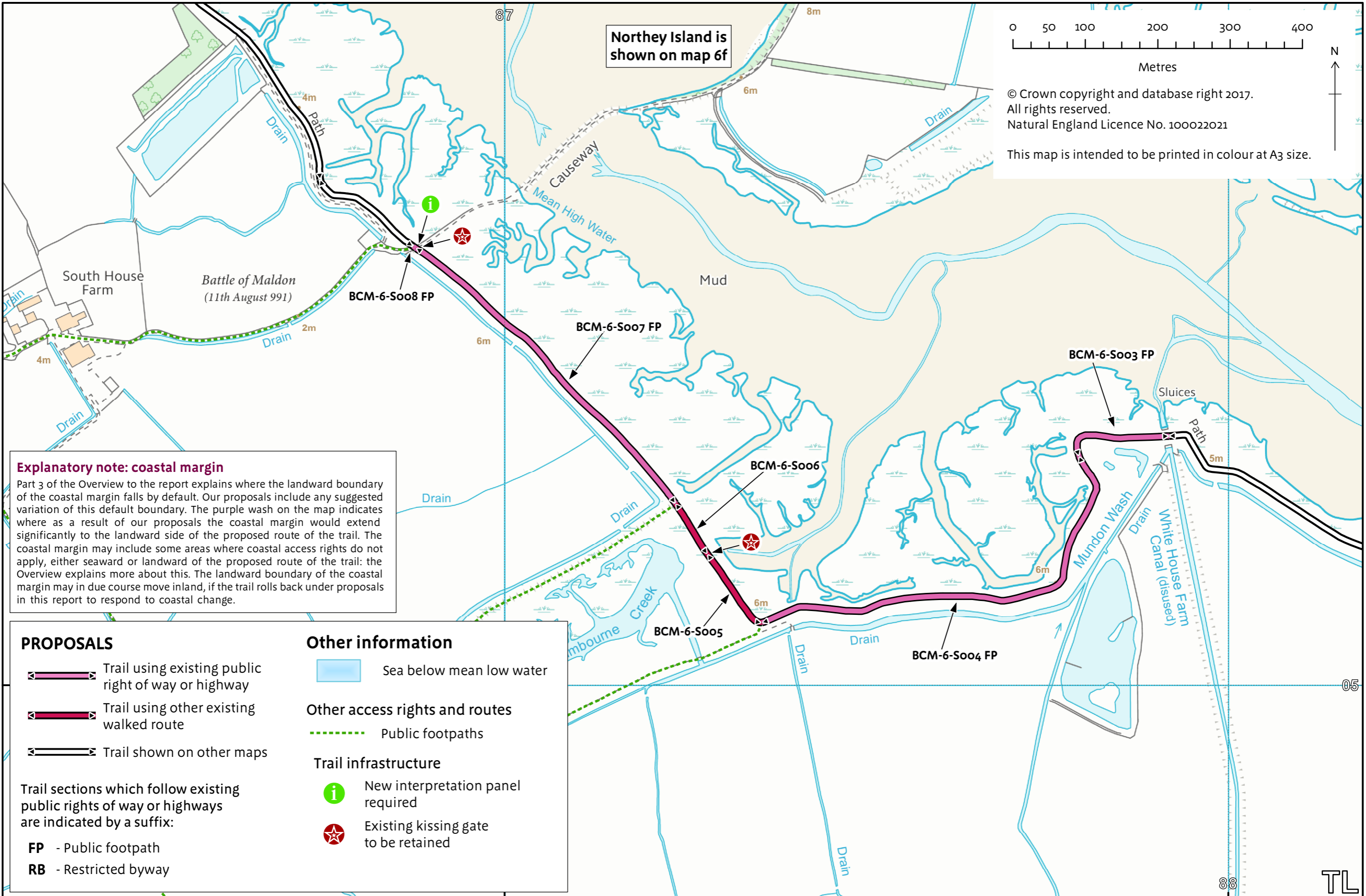
Other information

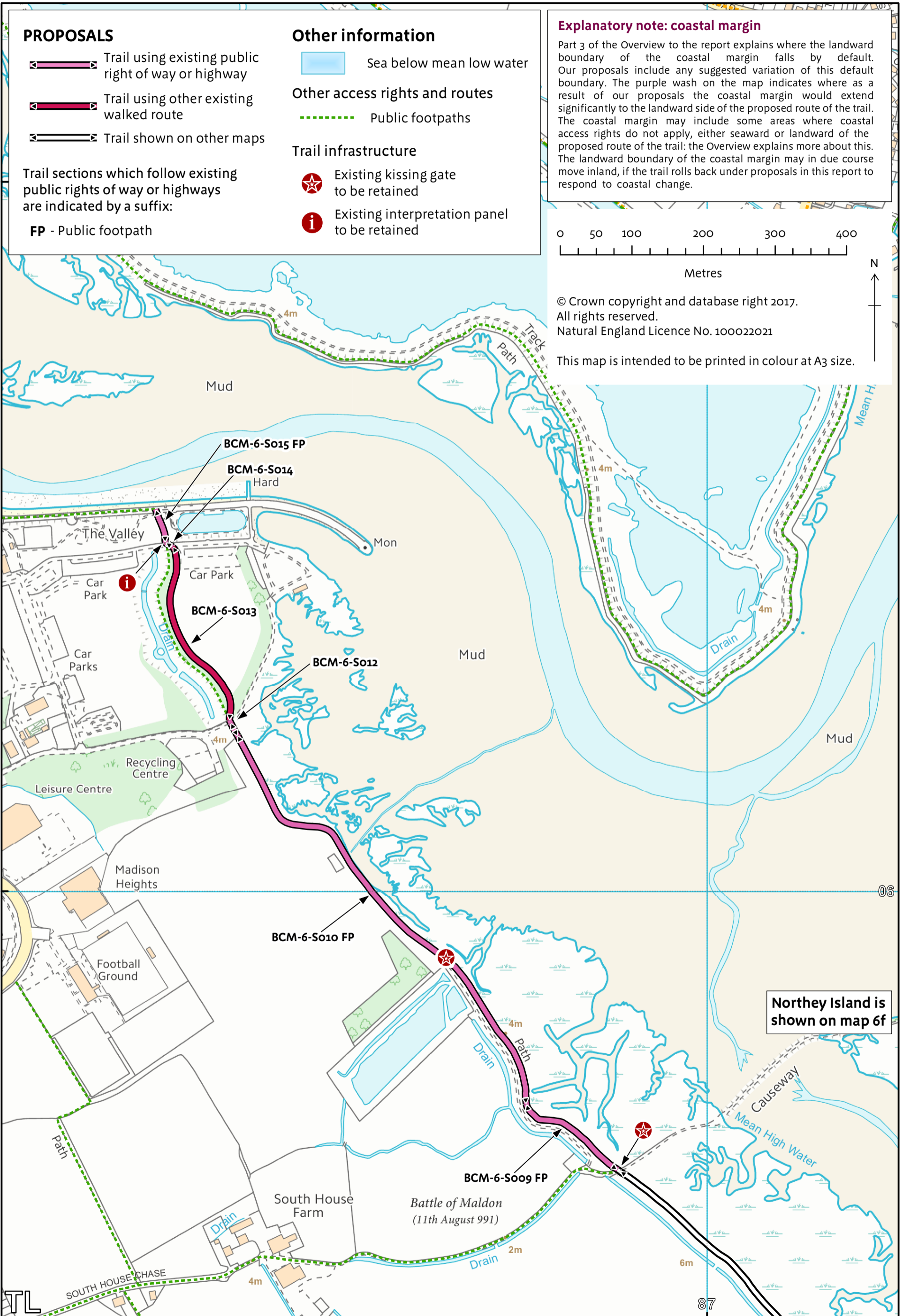
-  Sea below mean low water

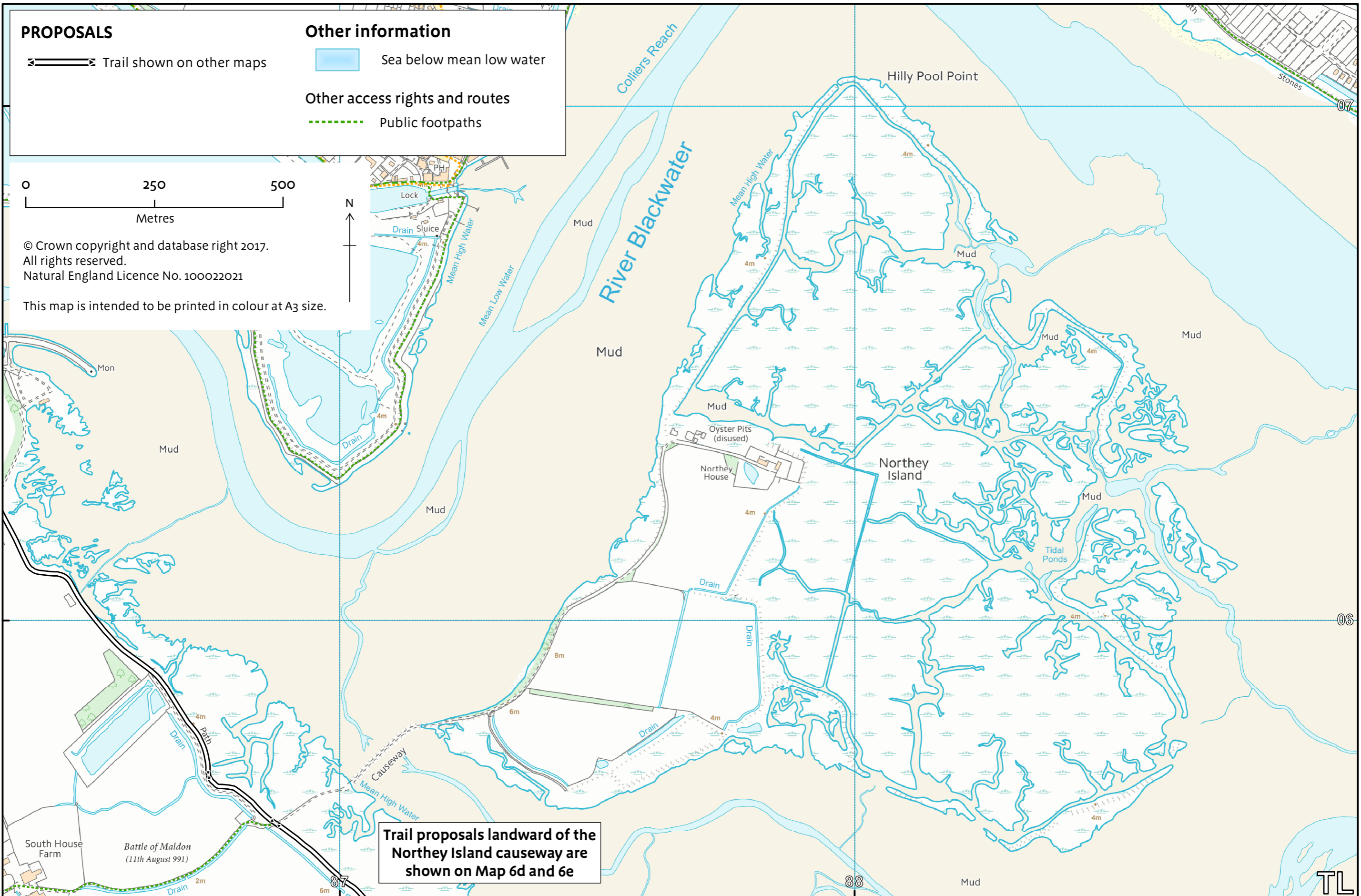


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This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.







Trail proposals landward of the Northey Island causeway are shown on Map 6d and 6e