

Chapter 3:

Goldhanger to Tollesbury Wick Marshes

England Coast Path: Maldon to Salcott - Natural England's Proposals

Part 3.1: Introduction

Start Point:	Goldhanger (grid reference: TL9067 0848)
End Point:	Tollesbury Wick Marshes (grid reference: TL9679 0932)
Relevant Maps:	3a to 3e

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 3.1.1 Generally follows existing walked routes, including public rights of way, along most of this length.
- 3.1.2 Mainly follows the coastline closely and maintains good views of the sea.
- 3.1.3 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation or heritage preservation (See map C 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 Estuary National Nature Reserve (NNR)
 - Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)
 - Gore decoy 760m south east of Lauriston Farm (Scheduled Monument 1019149) (SAM)

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

3.1.4 After advice from specialists we have concluded that our proposals would not be likely to have any significant impact on these features. We have identified a requirement 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. This is explained further in Parts 5 & 9 of the Overview.

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

See Part 5b of the Overview - 'Protection of sensitive features'- for more information.

Accessibility:

3.1.5 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:

- The surface of the trail is uneven, muddy or narrow on parts of the sea wall footpath;
- There are steps at Highams Farm EA Floodgate, at the junction of sections MSC-3-S002 to MSC-3-S004, where it would be necessary to descend and ascend two flights of stairs (with handrails);
- There are a number of step stiles on this section - for example, in sections MSC-3-S007, MSC-3-S008, MSC-3-S012 and MSC-3-S013; and
- An access ramp to the rear of the sea wall at Goldhanger (at the start of section MSC-3-S001) allows access for people with reduced mobility (adjacent to a short flight of steps). There have been reports that this ramp causes traction problems with some mobility scooters.

3.1.6 Any existing step stiles will be replaced with kissing gates or pedestrian gates, so as to make them easier to use. We envisage this happening as part of the physical establishment work described in Part 6 of the Overview.

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

Where we have proposed exercising our discretion:

The discretion referred to below is explained in more detail in the Overview.

3.1.7 Landward boundary of the coastal margin: We have used our discretion on this section of the route to map the landward extent of the coastal margin to an adjacent physical boundary such as a fence line, pavement or track to make the extent of the new access rights clearer. See Table 3.2.1 below.

3.1.8 We have used our discretion not to include land to the landward side of sections MSC-3-S001, MSC-3-S002, MSC-3-S004, MSC-3-S005 and MSC-3-S007 to MSC-3-S013 in the coastal margin. These sections are sea walls, the landward edge of which would normally form part of the landward coastal margin by default. However, in this location we have proposed aligning the landward

extent of the margin to the landward edge of the top of the sea wall in order to make the extent of people's rights clearer and more cohesive on the ground. In particular:

- The landward edge of the aligned path on the top of the sea wall presents an easily identifiable line for users to follow, while;
- The landward face of the sea wall varies in profile and in places merges directly into the folding field with the effect of making the landward extent of the default coastal margin unclear.

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

3.1.9 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 3.3.4 in the Formal Proposals Section of this report and Part 9 of the Overview.

3.1.10 This direction will not prevent or affect:

- Any other use people already make of the land locally by formal agreement with the landowner, or by informal permission or traditional toleration.

3.1.11 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 9 of the Overview - 'Restrictions and exclusions' - for details.

Establishment and ongoing management of the trail

3.1.12 Some physical establishment of the trail would be necessary, in accordance with the general approach described in Part 6 the Overview

- New pedestrian gates will be added to the intersections of sections MSC-3-S006 and MSC-3-S007, MSC-3-S007 and MSC-3-S008, MSC-3-S011 and MSC-3-012 and MSC-3-S012 and MSC-3-S013. Also within sections MSC-3-S007 and MSC-3-S013.

3.1.13 Ongoing management and maintenance would be necessary in accordance with the general approach described in Part 7 of the Overview.

See Parts 6 - 'Physical establishment of the trail' and 7 - 'Maintenance of the trail' of the Overview for more information.

Future Change:

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

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

Part 3.2: Commentary on Maps

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

3.2.1 Section Details – Maps 3a to 3e: Goldhanger to Tollesbury Wick Marshes

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 salt marsh and mudflat on grounds of unsuitability for public access.

1	2	3	4	5	6a	6b	7
Maps	Route section number(s)	Current status of this section	Current surface of this section	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 8 of Overview)	Landward boundary of margin (See maps)	Reason for landward boundary discretion	Proposed exclusions or restrictions (see Part 9 of Overview)
3a	MSC-3-S001 & MSC-3-S002	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
	MSC-3-S003	Public footpath	Concrete	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
	MSC-3-S004 & MSC-3-S005	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
	MSC-3-S006	Public footpath	Grass	No	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
3b	MSC-3-S007 & MSC-3-S008	Public footpath	Grass	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
3b & 3c	MSC-3-S009	Public footpath	Grass	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
3c	MSC-3-S010	Public footpath	Grass	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
3d	MSC-3-S011 & MSC-3-S012	Public footpath	Grass	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
3e	MSC-3-S013	Public footpath	Grass	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin

Part 3.3: Chapter 3 - Formal Proposals

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

Formal Proposals – Goldhanger to Tollesbury Wick Marshes

Proposed route of the trail

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

Landward boundary of coastal margin

- 3.3.2 Adjacent to route sections MSC-3-S0001, MSC-3-S002, MSC-3-S004, MSC-3-S005 and MSC-3-S007 to MSC-3-S013, 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 3a to 3e.
- 3.3.3 Adjacent to route section MSC-3-S006, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing fence line which, at the time of writing the report, is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 3a.

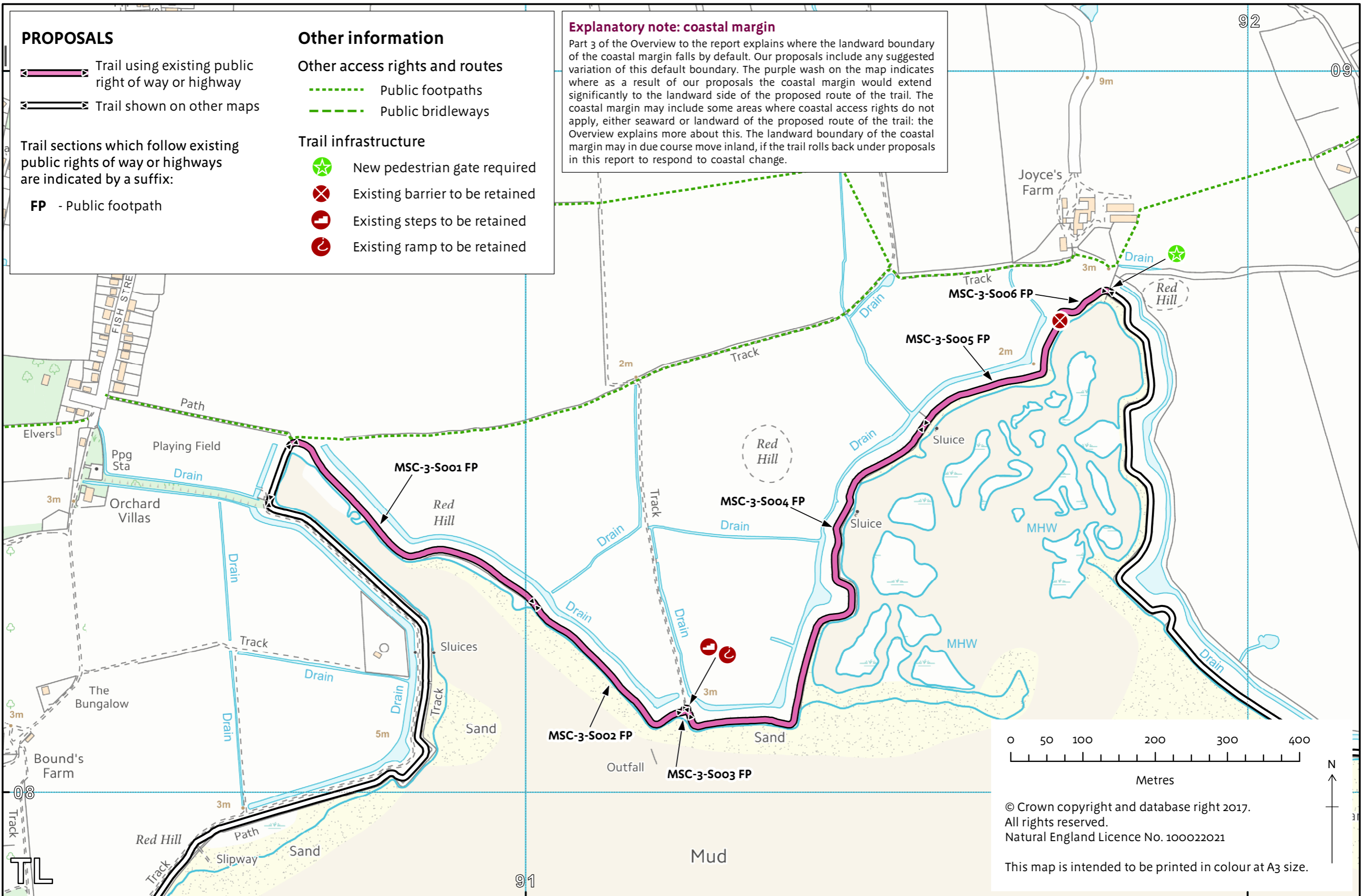
Local restrictions and exclusions

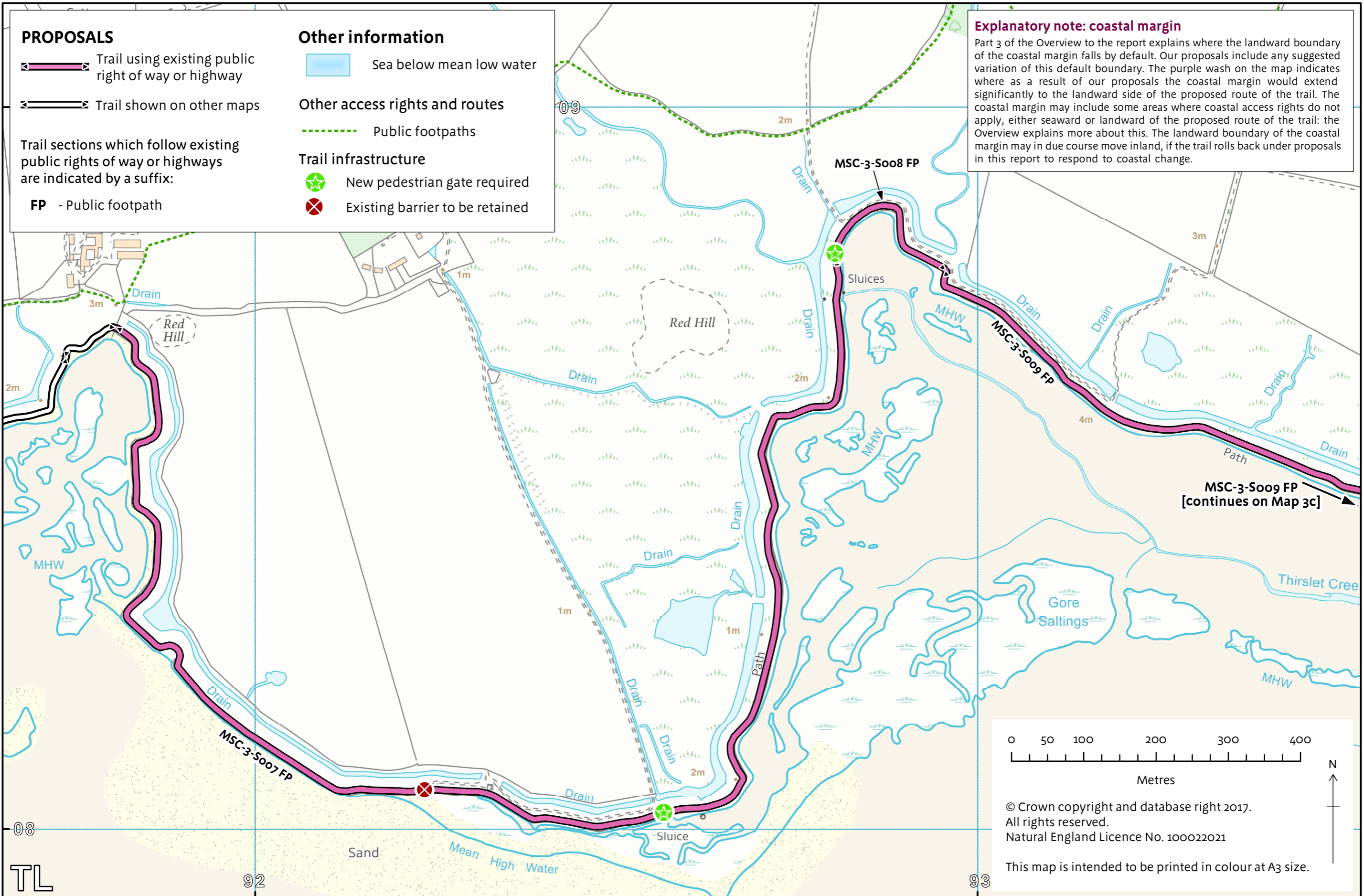
- 3.3.4 Natural England proposes to exclude access relevant to this length of coast, as follows:
- Access is to be excluded all year-round to all areas of intertidal mudflats and salt marsh on this length of coast, adjacent to route sections MSC-3-S001 to MSC-3-S013. This exclusion is proposed under 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. See maps I and J in the Overview for details.

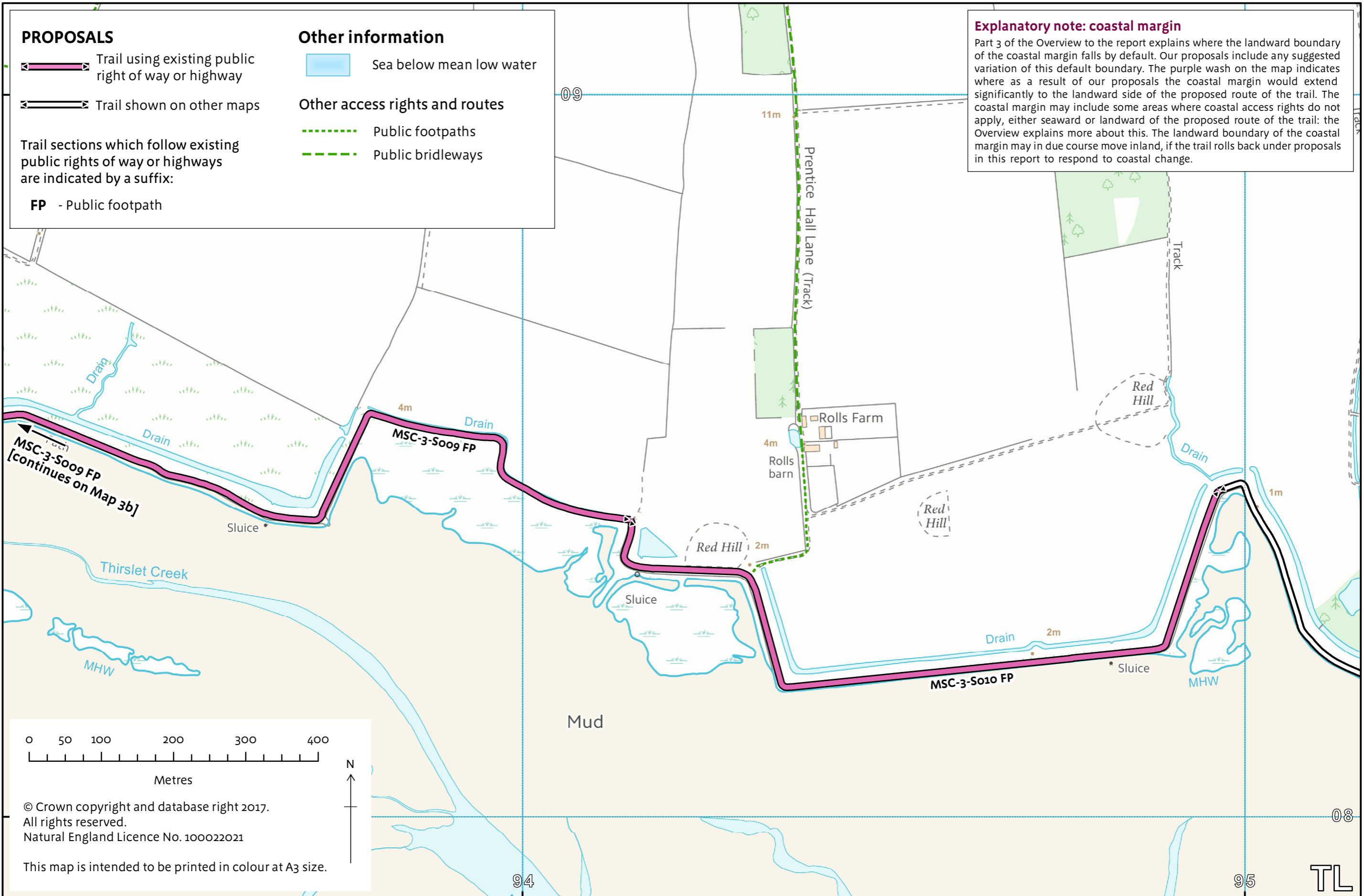
See Part 9 of the Overview – ‘Restrictions and exclusions’ - for further details.

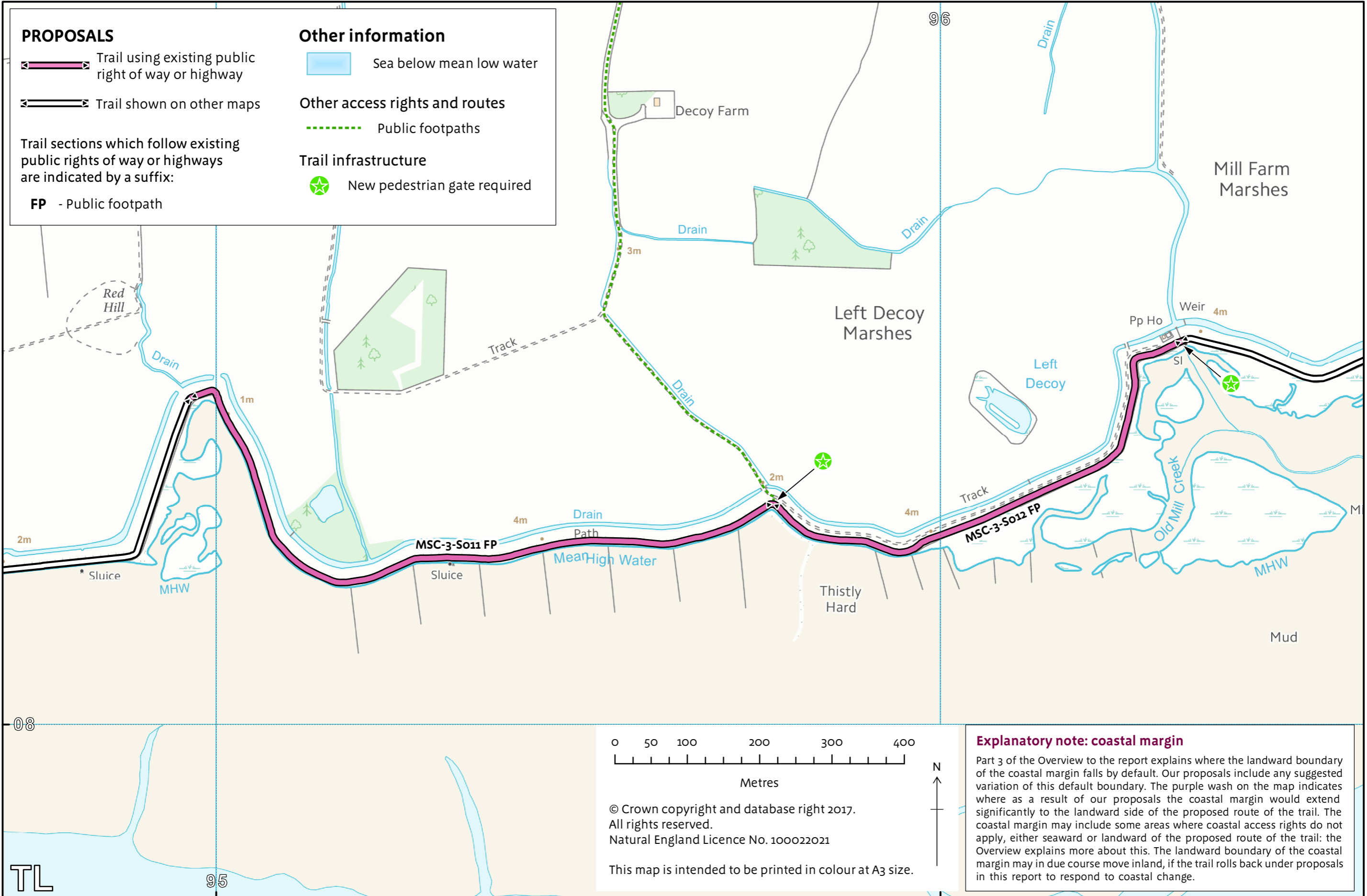
Alternative routes

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



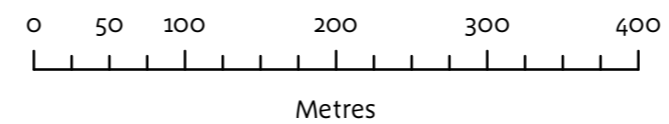






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