Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Notice by the Secretary of State under section 52 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949: Sea Palling to Weybourne

April 2014

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Introduction

On 22 July 2013 Natural England submitted a coastal access report relating to Sea Palling to Weybourne ("the coastal access report") to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under section 51 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 ("the 1949 Act") pursuant to its duty under section 296(1) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 ("the 2009 Act").

A person was appointed under paragraph 4(2) of Schedule 1A to the 1949 Act, inserted by Schedule 19 to the 2009 Act ("the Schedule"), for the purpose of considering whether the proposals in the coastal access report failed, in the respects specified in the objections received by Natural England under paragraph 3 of that Schedule in relation to that report, to strike a "fair balance" as a result of the matter or matters specified in those objections¹.

In reaching his determination under section 52 of the 1949 Act the Secretary of State has considered:

- a. Coastal Access Sea Palling to Weybourne Natural England's coastal access report submitted to the Secretary of State on 22 July 2013;
- b. in accordance with paragraph 16(1)(a) of the Schedule, the objections which the appointed person determined to be admissible objections;
- c. in accordance with paragraph 16(1)(b) of the Schedule, Natural England's comments on the admissible objections which it sent to the Secretary of State;
- d. in accordance with paragraph 16(1)(c) of the Schedule, the reports given to the Secretary of State by the appointed person in respect of the objections which the appointed person determined to be admissible objections; and
- e. in accordance with paragraph 16(1)(d) of the Schedule, representations made by a person within paragraph 2(2)(b) to (f) of the Schedule, and the summary of other representations made, and Natural England's comments on those representations which it sent to the Secretary of State on 30 November 2013.

In this notice -

(a) "objection" means an objection about the coastal access report which is made under paragraph 3 of the Schedule; and

¹ A "fair balance" means a fair balance between the interests of the public in having rights of access over land, and the interests of any person with a relevant interest in the land, as set out in section 297(3) of the 2009 Act and paragraph 1(b) of the Schedule. A person has "a relevant interest in the land" if he is the owner of the land, holds a term of years absolute in the land, or is in lawful occupation of the land: see section 55J(2) of the 1949 Act.

(b) "representation" means a representation about the coastal access report which is made under paragraph 7 of the Schedule.

The Secretary of State has determined to approve the proposals set out in the coastal access report so far as they relate to those parts of the route (and associated coastal margin) in relation to which no objections or representations were made.

In the respects specified in the objections set out at **Annex A** to this notice, the Secretary of State determines that the proposals set out in the coastal access report **do not fail** to strike a "fair balance" as a result of the matters specified in the objections. He therefore approves the proposals set out in the coastal access report, so far as they relate to that part of the route (and associated coastal margin) to which those objections relate.

The conclusions and observations of the Secretary of State in relation to the representations listed in **Annex B** to this notice are set out in the fourth column of that Annex.

The Secretary of State has made a copy of this notice available at www.gov.uk/defra.

Natural England has made available at <u>http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/access/coastalaccess/default.aspx</u> a copy of:

- a. Coastal Access Sea Palling to Weybourne the coastal access report;
- Representations made by a person within paragraph 2(2)(b) to (f) of the Schedule, and Natural England's comments on those representations which it sent to the Secretary of State on 30 November 2013; and
- c. Summary of other representations, and Natural England's comments on those representations which it sent to the Secretary of State on 30 November 2013.

The Planning Inspectorate has made available at http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/countryside/coastal the reports given to the Secretary of State by the appointed person in respect of objections MCA/SeaPallingtoWeybourne/O/2 to MCA\Sea PallingtoWeybourne\O\5.

Annex A

In the respects specified in the objections set out below, the Secretary of State has determined that Natural England's proposal in the coastal access report <u>did not fail</u> to strike a "fair balance" as a result of the matters specified in those objections²:

Objections Ref: MCA/Sea Palling to Weybourne/O/2 and 5

Field seaward of route section WSP-S101 FW

Mr D Akehurst and Mrs S Akehurst

The land in the report to which the objections relate is the spreading room seaward of section WSP-S101 FW.

Objection Ref: MCA/Sea Palling to Weybourne/O/3

Beeston Regis Holiday Park

Mr Ian Allen

The land in the report to which the objection relates is route section WSP-S135.

Objection Ref: MCA/Sea Palling to Weybourne/0/4

Laburnum Caravan Park, West Runton

Mr Michael Randell

The land in the report to which the objection relates is route section WSP-S133.

² An objection MCA/Sea Palling to Weybourne/0/1 was made to Natural England but subsequently withdrawn

Annex B

The Secretary of State has considered, in relation to the coastal access report, the following representations made under paragraph 7 of the Schedule.

Representation No.	Name of representation	Report Chapter and route section(s)	Secretary of State's conclusion and observation
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\1\W SP0716	Private Individual	Chapter 3 WSP-S101FW	Secretary of State notes representation and approves Natural England's proposals for spreading room seaward of section WSP-S101 FW. Should significant new public use of the field start to occur, he asks Natural England to further discuss the situation with the owners and consider whether a formal exclusion or restriction of access is necessary.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\3\W SP0717	Private Individual	Chapter 3 WSP-S101FW	As for representation MCA/SeaPallingtoWeybourne\R\1\ WSP0716
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\4\W SP0718	Private Individual	General	Secretary of State notes that Natural England's maps are compiled as part of its reports and are not intended to be used as walking maps. In due course walkers will be able to see the necessary information on Ordnance Survey maps. He further notes that tidal conditions vary across the year, with changes in beach levels, erosion episodes and weather conditions and it is therefore important that walkers assess conditions on the day to establish the risks associated with use of the proposed trail. Where Natural

			England is proposing a beach route the Secretary of State notes that Natural England propose erecting safety signs advising members of the public of any dangers and to read tide timetables before using the route. He also notes that where possible Natural England has offered an alternative route for when the beach route is unavailable due to tides and bad weather such as at Sea Palling.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\5\W SP0720	Private Individual	Chapter 3 WSP-S104 to WSP-S108	Secretary of State notes that the proposed beach route between Overstrand and Cromer will not be easy for the elderly and disabled to use but recognises that the opportunities to achieve an easy access route in this location were constrained by limitations of the alignment options open to Natural England He approves route sections WSP- S104 to WSP-S108 as he considers that they will better meet the requirements of the Coastal Access Scheme, because they are much more direct, pleasant and closer to the sea.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\6\W SP0721	Bush Drive Road Group	Chapter 1 WSP-A037BW	Secretary of State notes that Natural England agrees that alignment along Crowden Road would give a more direct alternative route but he approves route section WSP-A037BWsince a route along Crowden Road would affect more properties than the proposed route.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\7\W	Private Individual	Chapter 3	As for representation MCA/SeaPallingtoWeybourne\R\1\

SP0061		WSP-S101FW	WSP0716.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\8\W SP0095	North Norfolk District Council	Chapter 3 WSP-S106	Secretary of State appreciates North Norfolk District Council's offer to include land at Happy Valley within the coastal margin. One parcel offered is also tenanted to the Royal Cromer Golf Club. He notes Natural England's decision not to include this area because it could not define a clear boundary on the ground for the affected area. He also notes that North Norfolk District Council and the Royal Cromer Golf Course may in the future wish to dedicate this land within the coastal margin.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\9\W SP0095	North Norfolk District Council	General	Secretary of State notes the representation and is satisfied that coastal access rights will not interfere in a significant way with the operational needs of North Norfolk District Council. He further notes that small-scale operations can and do normally take place alongside public access. And that where there is potential for visitors to disrupt work the problems can often be avoided through informal techniques, such as putting up a sign or asking for their co- operation face-to-face. The Secretary of State asks Natural England to hold discussions with North Norfolk District Council about the need for any access restrictions or exclusions in the future if these appear necessary.

MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\10\ WSP0579	The Kennel Club	General	Secretary of State notes the Kennel Club's representation on dogs. He further notes that Natural England propose to give directions which require dogs to be kept on leads on parts of the trail which pass through caravan sites to mirror existing site rules where and when they apply. Holiday park owners and managers will be consulted on this as will the Kennel Club.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\11\ WSP0701	Sidestrand Parish Council	Chapter 3 WSP-S101FW	As for representation MCA/SeaPallingtoWeybourne\R\1\ WSP0716
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\12\ WSP0722	Private Individuals	Chapter 3 WSP-S101FW	As for representation MCA/SeaPallingtoWeybourne\R\1\ WSP0716
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\13/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 1 WSP-A044 and WSP-A045	Secretary of State notes representation supporting Natural England's proposals and approves alternative route sections WSP- A044 and WSP- A045.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\14// WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 3 WSP-SO78 FP	Secretary of State notes representation and recognises that the public right of way is shown above the parish boundary rather than on it as described by the definitive statement. He approves route section WSP- SO78 FP which utilises the currently walked route.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\15// WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 2 WSP-SO43 and WSP-SO44	Secretary of State notes that Natural England re-examined the scope for a cliff top route along this part of the stretch, either as the ordinary route, or as an alternative

			for people to use when the beach is flooded, in discussion with the terminal operators, security services and the Coastguard. He further notes that Natural England concluded that it was not able to find a viable ordinary route for the reasons set out in paragraphs 2.5.8 to 2.5.10 of its report. The Secretary of State notes that an alternative route could not be achieved which avoided fast moving vehicles at Mundesley. Natural England will install signs at each end of the beach route advising walkers of the risks, and advising them to check the tide timetables before using the route. These will be designed in consultation with HM Coastguard. He approves route sections WSP- SO43 and WSP-SO44.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\16\ WSP0227	Beeston Parish Council	Chapter 4 WSP-S119 FW and WSP- S120FW WSP-S132 to WSP-S135	Secretary of State notes that Natural England was aware of the Shoreline Management Plan proposal for this area at the 'walking the course' stage and took this into account when considering the best line for the trail. He approves route sections WSP- S119 FW and WSP-S120 FW and WSP-S132 to WSP-S135as they meet the aims of the Coastal Access Scheme and can respond to coastal change through roll back without impacting on the Holiday Parks. The Secretary of State also asks Natural England to ensure that, if it should need to use its roll-back

			affected interests a suitable location for the trail.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\17/ WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 3 WSP-S104 to WSP-S106	Secretary of State notes the representation and that Natural England considered the possibility of a cliff edge route and a more inland route behind Royal Cromer golf course. He notes that Natural England concluded that the proposed beach route better met the requirements of the Coastal Access Scheme, because it was much more direct and closer to the sea.
			He further notes that to address safety concerns, Natural England propose to install signs at each end of this beach route advising walkers of the risks and advising them to check the tide timetables before using the route. These will be designed in consultation with HM Coastguard.
			Secretary of State notes that Natural England gave further consideration to the provision of an alternative route inland of Royal Cromer Golf Course but that it concluded that the use of the public right of way crossing the playing area of the golf course would interfere significantly with its operational needs. He notes that an alternative route which utilised Pauls Lane, a public right of way to Cromer Road, the footway along Cromer Road then re-joining the cliff via a public right of way on the west side of Royal Cromer Golf Course would be costly. He therefore agrees with Natural England that the costs would have

			outweighed its public benefit.
			He approves route sections WSP- S104 to WSP-S106.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\18/ WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 3 WSP- SO76; WSP-SO77FP; WSP-S078FP; WSP-SO79; WSP-SO82; WSP-SO83; WSP-SO84	Secretary of State notes that Natural England considered a more coastal, and where possible, cliff edge route between Mundesley and Trimingham but concluded not to make any changes to the proposed route for the trail along this length of coast for the reasons set out in in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 of its report. He approves route sections WSP- SO76 to WSP-SO79 and WSP- SO82 to WSP-SO84.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\19/ WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 3 WSP-SO91 to WSP-SO98	Secretary of State notes the representation and approves route sections WSP-SO91 to WSP-SO98.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\20/ WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 3 WSP-S100 RD and WSP-S101 FW	Secretary of State notes the representation and approves route sections WSP-S100 RD and WSP- S101 FW because it was an existing walked route and did not impact on the privacy of residents. He further notes that walkers will be able to enjoy the cliff top land seaward of this route where it forms part of the coastal margin.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\21\ WSP0724	Private Individual	Chapter 3 WSP-S101FW	As for representation MCA/SeaPallingtoWeybourne\R\1\ WSP0716
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\22/ WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 3 WSP-S066 FW	Secretary of State notes that Natural England investigated options for aligning the trail on an access strip through Kiln Cliffs

			Caravan Park. He further notes that Natural England concluded that it lacked a suitable margin of land seaward of the site to accommodate the trail, and that there was insufficient space between caravans to propose a route without impacting on the privacy of holiday-makers and the day-to-day operation of the site. He approves route section WSP- S066 FW.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\23/ WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 2 Land south of WSP-S040: Seagulls Field	Secretary of State notes the representation and agrees with Natural England that landward spreading room at Seagulls Field did not meet the requirements of the Coastal Access Scheme because it sat immediately adjacent to a large industrial site - Bacton Gas Terminals. He also notes that Natural England concluded that the landward spreading room proposed to the east of this gave walkers better provision close-by. Secretary of State approves route section WSP-S040.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\24/ WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 2 WSP-S037 RD; WSP-S038; WSP-S039 FW; WSP-S040	Secretary of State notes that Natural England considered a route through the 3 holiday parks adjacent to each other on the cliff top seaward of WSP-S039 (Red House Chalet and Caravan park, Eastward Ho Caravan Park and Castaways Caravan Park) but was not able to find a route that in its view would strike a "fair balance" between public interests and the management of the sites.

			He approves route section WSP- S037 to WSP- S040 including the alternative route sections WSP- A039 and WSP-A040 as a temporary measure which will operate at times when access is excluded from sections WSP-S040 to WSP-S042 to enable Shell's rejuvenation Project to be undertaken safely and without interruption.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\25/ WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 2 Coastal margin landward of WSP-S032	Secretary of State notes representation supporting Natural England's proposals.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\26/ WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 4 Land south of the trail WSP- S155 to WSP- S163 FP inclusive	Secretary of State notes that Natural England considered using its discretionary power under section 55D(2) of the 1949 Act to propose the inclusion of land south of the trail between WSP-S155 to WSP-S163 within the coastal margin.
			He further notes that Natural England did not propose the inclusion of the land as spreading room in accordance with the Coastal Access Scheme which sets a clear presumption that its landward discretion should be not be exercised without the consent of the affected landowners and tenants.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\27/ WSP0142	Open Spaces Society	Chapter 4 WSP-S119 to WSP-S122	Secretary of State notes that Natural England considered a route through the 2 holiday parks adjacent to each other on the cliff top seaward of WSP-S119 (Seaview Caravan Park and the Gap Caravan Park) but was not

			able to find a route that would strike a "fair balance" between public interests and the management of the sites. He approves route sections WSP- S119 to WSP-S122.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\28/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 2 WSP-S020 to WSP-S025	Secretary of State notes the representation supporting Natural England's proposals. He approves route sections WSP-S020 to WSP-S025.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\29/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 3 WSP-S048 to WSP-S049	Secretary of State notes that Natural England took specialist advice from North Norfolk District Council which advised that it was not possible to install steps without affecting the closing mechanism of the floodgates at the bottom of the eastern slipway. He also notes that Natural England did not propose an alternative route for times when the proposed route is affected by the tide as the only safe alternative route option involved a significant inland detour and that using it would take as long as waiting for the tide to turn. He approves route sections WSP- S048 to WSP-S049.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\30/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 3 WSP-S052 to WSP-S055	Secretary of State notes that Natural England reconsidered the possibility of securing a more direct coastal route but decided not to make any changes to the proposed route for the trail along this length of coast. The reasons for this are set out in paragraphs 3.1.16 to 3.1.18 of its report. He approves route sections WSP-

			S052 to WSP-S055.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\31/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 3 WSP-S075 to WSP-S087	Secretary of State notes that Natural England reconsidered the possibility of securing a more coastal and where possible, cliff edge route at Trimingham but decided not to make any changes to the proposed route for the trail along this length of coast. The reasons for this are set out in paragraphs 3.3.14 to 3.3.15 of its report. Secretary of State notes that the Ministry of Defence land at Beacon Hill is excepted land in accordance with Schedule 1 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. He approves route sections WSP- S075 to WSP-S082.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\32/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 3 WSP-S104 to WSP-S106	Secretary of State notes the representation and that Natural England considered the possibility of a cliff edge route and a more inland route behind Royal Cromer golf course. He notes that Natural England concluded that the proposed beach route better met the requirements of the Coastal Access Scheme, because it was much more direct and closer to the sea. He further notes that Natural England decided not to modify the proposed route of the trail along this length of coast but, to address safety concerns, it proposes to install signs at each end of this beach route advising walkers of the risks and advising them to check the tide timetables before using the route. These will be

			designed in consultation with HM Coastguard. Secretary of State notes that Natural England gave further consideration to the provision of an alternative route inland of Royal Cromer Golf Course but that it concluded that the use of the public right of way crossing the playing area of the golf course would interfere significantly with its operational needs. He notes that an alternative route which utilised Pauls Lane, a public right of way to Cromer Road, the footway along Cromer Road then re-joining the cliff via a public right of way on the west side of Royal Cromer Golf Course would be costly. He therefore agrees with Natural England that the costs would have outweighed its public benefit. He approves route sections WSP- S104 to WSP-S106.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\33/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 4 WSP-S115 to WSP-S117	Secretary of State notes that Natural England re-examined the scope to access Wyndham Holiday Park half way along route section WSP-S115 but concluded that its proposed route struck a better balance between the public having a pleasant walk and sea views and the desire of residents at Wyndham Park to be afforded reasonable levels of privacy. He approves route sections WSP- S115 to WSP-S117.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\34/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 4 WSP-S131 to	Secretary of State notes representation which supports Natural England's proposal.

		WSP-S142	
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\35\ WSP0681	Private Individual	Chapter 3 WSP-S101FW	As for representation MCA/SeaPallingtoWeybourne\R\1\ WSP0716
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\36\ WSP0137	Royal Cromer Golf Club	Chapter 3 WSP-S106	Secretary of State notes that the cliff top path at the Royal Cromer Golf Club is permissive.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\37/ WSP0725	English Heritage	General	Secretary of State notes representation supporting Natural England's overall proposals. He asks Natural England to consult the Historic Environment Service (Norfolk County Council) to identify any impact to undesignated heritage assets and the need for, and scope of, any mitigation or further works which may be required.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\38/ WSP0343	RSPB	Chapter 1 WSP-S003 and WSP-S004	Secretary of State notes representation and RSPB's intention to continue supporting management at Eccles to protect the little tern colony. He further notes that Natural England has presented the relevant ecological and visitor information within the Access and Nature Conservation Assessment for this site included in its comments on the RSPB's representation. He asks Natural England to encourage the continuation of current management measures which include wardening, fencing and signage. He also notes that Natural England propose to make an outline direction to restrict access rights along the trail between May and August which is the breeding season, and to

			provide an alternative route for walkers with signage at this time. Should any unintended impacts from increased access use occur in the future, he asks Natural England to consider the need for further restriction or exclusion of access rights, or to consider whether the trail should be realigned in specific ways in consultation with other partners including the RSPB and the access authority. He approves route sections WSP- S003 and WSP-S004.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\39/ WSP0343	RSPB	Chapter 1 WSP-S003 and WSP-S004	As for representation MCA/SeaPallingtoWeybourne\R\3 8/WSP0343.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\40\ WSP0236	Sheringham Town Council	Chapter 4 WSP-S136	Secretary of State notes that the representation was received by Natural England after the closing of the period for representations to be made.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\41/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 2 WSP-S037 to WSP-S042 (WSP-A039 and WSP-A040)	Secretary of State notes that Natural England considered a route through the 3 holiday parks adjacent to each other on the cliff top seaward of WSP-S039 (Red House Chalet and Caravan park, Eastward Ho Caravan Park and Castaways Caravan Park) but was not able to find a route that in its view would strike a "fair balance" between public interests and the management of the sites. He approves route section WSP- S037 to WSP- S040 including the alternative route sections WSP- A039 and WSP-A040 as a

			temporary measure which will operate at times when access is excluded from sections WSP-S040 to WSP-S042 to enable Shell's rejuvenation Project to be undertaken safely and without interruption.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\42/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 2 WSP-S041 to WSP-S045	Secretary of State notes representation and that Natural England did not propose a cliff top route as it was not able to find a viable route. He also notes that Natural England was unable to find a safe onward route into Mundesley which avoided fast moving vehicles on the roads there. He notes that Natural England will install signs at each end of the beach route advising walkers of the risks, and advising them to check the tide timetables before using the route. These will be designed in consultation with HM Coastguard. He further notes that the Paston Way runs along the beach below the gas terminal not on the cliff seaward of it and that it would not give a cliff top route. He approves route sections WSP- S041 to WSP-S045.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\43/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 3 WSP-S090 to WSP-S099	Secretary of State notes representation supporting Natural England's proposals. He approves route sections WSP- S090 to WSP-S099
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\44/	The Ramblers	Chapter 3	Secretary of State notes that Natural England considered but

WSP0113		WSP-S103 and WSP-S104	was unable to find an alternative route. He approves route sections WSP- S103 and WSP-S104.
MCA/SeaPallingto Weybourne\R\45/ WSP0113	The Ramblers	Chapter 4 WSP-S157 to WSP-S162	Secretary of State notes that Natural England considered using its discretionary power under section 55D(2) of the 1949 Act to propose the inclusion of land south of the trail between WSP-S157 to WSP-S162 within the coastal margin. He further notes that Natural England did not propose the inclusion of the land as spreading room in accordance with the Coastal Access Scheme which sets a clear presumption that its landward discretion should be not be exercised without the consent of the affected landowners and tenants. He approves route sections WSP- S157 to WSP-S162.

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Any enquiries regarding this document should be sent to us at:

Defra Commons, access and inland waterways implementation Team Zone 109 Temple Quay House 2 The Square, Temple Quay Bristol BS1 6EB

Tel: 0117 372 3553 Email: <u>coast.consultation@defra.gsi.gov.uk</u>

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