

Chapter 5:

Hive Beach to Abbotsbury Beach

Coastal Access: Lyme Regis to Rufus Castle - Natural England's Proposals

Part 5.1: Introduction

Start Point:	Hive Beach (grid reference: SY 4909 8880)
End Point:	Abbotsbury Beach (grid reference: SY 5596 8459)
Relevant Maps:	5a to 5e

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 5.1.1 Follows the South West Coast Path except as described in paragraph 5.1.2 below.
- 5.1.2 Between Cogdon Beach (LRR-5-S008) and the eastern extent of Burton Mere (LRR-5-S011) we propose the England Coast Path should be along the beach, rather than the existing route of the South West Coast Path which passes landwards of Burton Mere. There is a good path along the beach and this would bring the trail closer to the sea and avoid an inland diversion that can be very wet in the winter months and is occasionally flooded. The route of the South West Coast Path would need to be re-signed accordingly but our proposals would not otherwise affect the status of the existing public rights of way. See map 5b and table 5.2.1 below for details of the proposed route and table 5.2.2 for a more detailed explanation of the other route option we considered.
- 5.1.3 At West Bexington (see map 5c) the South Dorset Ridgeway – an inland branch of the South West Coast Path – leaves the main route and rejoins it at Osmington Mills on Weymouth Bay (to the east of the stretch of coast described in this report). The South Dorset Ridgeway will not be affected by our proposals. See part 5a of the Overview for more details of how our proposals would affect the existing route.
- 5.1.4 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation, geological or heritage preservation (see map C of the Overview):
- Chesil & The Fleet Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - Chesil Beach & The Fleet Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - West Dorset Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- 5.1.5 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. The levels and patterns of public access along this length of coast would be unlikely to change significantly as a result of our proposals and we have therefore concluded that our proposals would not be likely to have any

significant impact on these features.

See part 5 of the Overview for more details about the assessment process described above, and refer to our published Access and Sensitive Features Appraisal for more information about the conclusions of the assessment process.

Accessibility

- 5.1.6 There are few artificial barriers to accessibility on the proposed route, which makes use of existing paths wherever these meet the criteria in the Coastal Access Scheme. However, there are places where it may not be suitable for people with reduced mobility because:
- It would follow an uneven aggregate or shingle path along the beach or unclassified county road; or
 - it would be wet in the winter months.

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

Where we have proposed exercising our discretion

- 5.1.7 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 5.2.1 below).
- 5.1.8 Restrictions and/or exclusions: The new access rights would also be subject to the excepted land types summarised in Annex C of the Overview, and the national restrictions on activities listed in Annex D. This would be so throughout the coastal margin, but these restrictions would not apply to public rights of way. We have not used our discretion to propose any additional restrictions or exclusions on this part of the coast.

See 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'.

Establishment and ongoing management of the trail

- 5.1.9 Some physical establishment of the trail would be necessary, in accordance with the general approach described in part 6 the Overview.
- 5.1.10 Ongoing management and maintenance would be necessary in accordance with the general approach described in part 7 of the Overview. The overall need for this is likely to be greater than on some other parts of the stretch, recognising that it will be necessary for the route to roll back from time to time in response to coastal processes, as described below.

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

Future Change

- 5.1.11 Part of the route of the trail on this length of coast would be able to change without further approval from the Secretary of State in response to coastal erosion or other geomorphological processes, or encroachment by the sea. This would happen in accordance with the criteria and procedures for 'roll back' set out in part 8 of the Overview. See table 5.2.1 below for details of the sections likely to be affected in the foreseeable future.
- 5.1.12 At the time of preparing the report, we do not foresee any other need for future changes to the access provisions proposed for the length of coast described in this chapter.

See parts 5e 'Coastal processes' and 8 'Future changes' of the Overview for more information.

Part 5.2: Commentary on the maps

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

5.2.1 Section details – Maps 5a to 5e, Hive Beach to Abbotsbury Beach

Notes on table:

Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 5.2.2: Other options considered.

Column 5 – ‘Yes – normal’ means roll-back approach is likely to follow the current feature (e.g. cliff edge/beach) for the foreseeable future.

Column 5 – ‘Yes – see table 5.2.3’ means refer to that table below about our likely approach to roll-back on this part of the route

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
5a	LRR-5-S001	Public footpath	Stone: aggregate	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	LRR-5-S002	Public footpath	Stone: aggregate	Yes: normal	Wall	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S003	Other existing walked route	Stone: bedrock	Yes: normal	Wall	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S004	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes - see table 5.2.3	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	LRR-5-S005	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	LRR-5-S006	Public footpath	Grass	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	LRR-5-S007	Public footpath	Concrete	Yes: normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
5b	LRR-5-S008*	Other existing walked route	Concrete	Yes: normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S009*	Other existing walked route	Shingle	Yes: normal	Ditch	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S010*	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes: normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S011	Public footpath	Grass	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	LRR-5-S012	Public footpath	Grass	Yes: normal	Hedge bank	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S013	Public footpath	Bare Soil (compacted)	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	LRR-5-S014 to LRR-5-S016	Public footpath	Grass	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
5c	LRR-5-S017*	Other existing walked route	Shingle	Yes - see table 5.2.3	Ditch	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S018*	Other existing walked route	Grass / shingle	Yes - see table 5.2.3	Ditch	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S019*	Public footpath	Shingle	Yes - see table 5.2.3	Ditch	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S020	Public footpath	Shingle	Yes - see table 5.2.3	Ditch	Clarity and cohesion	None
5d	LRR-5-S021	Public footpath	Tarmac	Yes - see table 5.2.3	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	LRR-5-S022	Public highway	Shingle	Yes - see table 5.2.3	Ditch	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S023	Public highway	Shingle	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	LRR-5-S024	Public highway	Stone: aggregate	Yes: normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	LRR-5-S025	Public highway	Stone: aggregate	Yes: normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S026	Public highway	Stone: aggregate	Yes: normal	Road	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LRR-5-S027	Public highway	Stone: aggregate	Yes - see table 5.2.3	Road	Clarity and cohesion	None
5e	LRR-5-S028	Public highway	Tarmac	Yes - see table 5.2.3	Road	Clarity and cohesion	None

5.2.2 Other options considered: Maps 5a to 5e, Hive Beach to Abbotsbury Beach

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
5b	LRR-5-S008 to LRR-5-S011	We considered following the existing route of the South West Coast Path behind Burton Mere between points A and B as shown on map 5b.	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the current route of the South West Coast Path is very wet in the winter months and not passable during flood events; ■ the proposed route is an existing walked route that is shorter, more direct, closer to the sea and maintains views of the sea throughout; ■ the proposed route alleviates some current nature conservation concerns at the Mere; ■ the footpath landwards of Burton Mere would remain as an option for those wanting a circular walk; ■ this proposal is made with the support of the landowner.
5c	LRR-5-S017 to LRR-5-S019	To improve the convenience of the route by reducing the amount of shingle walking, we considered a new inland route between Point A and B on map 5c, joining the existing public footpaths either side of the reedbed with a new path in the field directly landward of West Bexington Nature Reserve.	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the inland route would require a considerable amount of hard surfacing or boardwalk to cross places which are wet or flooded in winter; ■ a substantial bridge and tree clearance would be required to cross a gully on the inland route; and ■ the proposed route is shorter, more direct, closer to the sea and maintains views of the sea throughout. <p>The inland alternative remains a potential future route in the event that the route needs to roll back – see table 5.2.3 below.</p>

5.2.3 Roll-back implementation – more complex situations: Maps 5a to 5e, Hive Beach to Abbotsbury Beach

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Feature or site potentially affected	How we will manage roll-back in relation to this feature or site
5a	LRR-5-S004	The Old Coastguards Holiday Park	<p>Here the proposed route is situated in a narrow strip of land between and eroding cliff edge and The Old Coastguards Holiday Park.</p> <p>If it is no longer possible to find a viable route seaward of the licenced area of the Holiday Park, we will choose a new route after detailed discussions with all relevant interests, either (a) to pass through the site, or (b) if this is not practicable, to pass somewhere on the landward side of it. In reaching this judgement we will have full regard to the need to seek a fair balance between the interests of potentially affected owners and occupiers and those of the public.</p>
5c	LRR-5-S017 to LRR-5-S020	West Bexington Nature Reserve	<p>If it is no longer possible to find a viable route along Chesil Beach in front of the reedbed, we will choose a new route after detailed discussions with all relevant interests. In reaching this judgement we will have full regard to the need to seek a fair balance between the interests of potentially affected owners and occupiers and those of the public.</p> <p>Preliminary surveys and discussions with affected landowners suggest that a route landward of the nature reserve, as described in table 5.2.2, may be a viable option.</p>
5d	LRR-5-S022	West Bexington chalets	<p>If it is no longer possible to find a viable route seaward of the buildings, curtilage and gardens, we will choose a route landward of them. In reaching this judgement we will have full regard to the need to seek a fair balance between the interests of potentially affected owners and occupiers and those of the public.</p>
5d and 5e	LRR-5-S027 and LRR-5-S028	Properties landward of Burton Road	<p>If it is no longer possible to find a viable route seaward of the buildings, curtilage and gardens, we will choose a route landward of them. In reaching this judgement we will have full regard to the need to seek a fair balance between the interests of potentially affected owners and occupiers and those of the public.</p>

Part 5.3: Chapter 5 - Formal Proposals

- Below are our formal proposals to the Secretary of State for the length of coast shown on maps 5a to 5e.
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

Formal Proposals – Hive Beach to Abbotsbury Beach

Proposed route of the trail

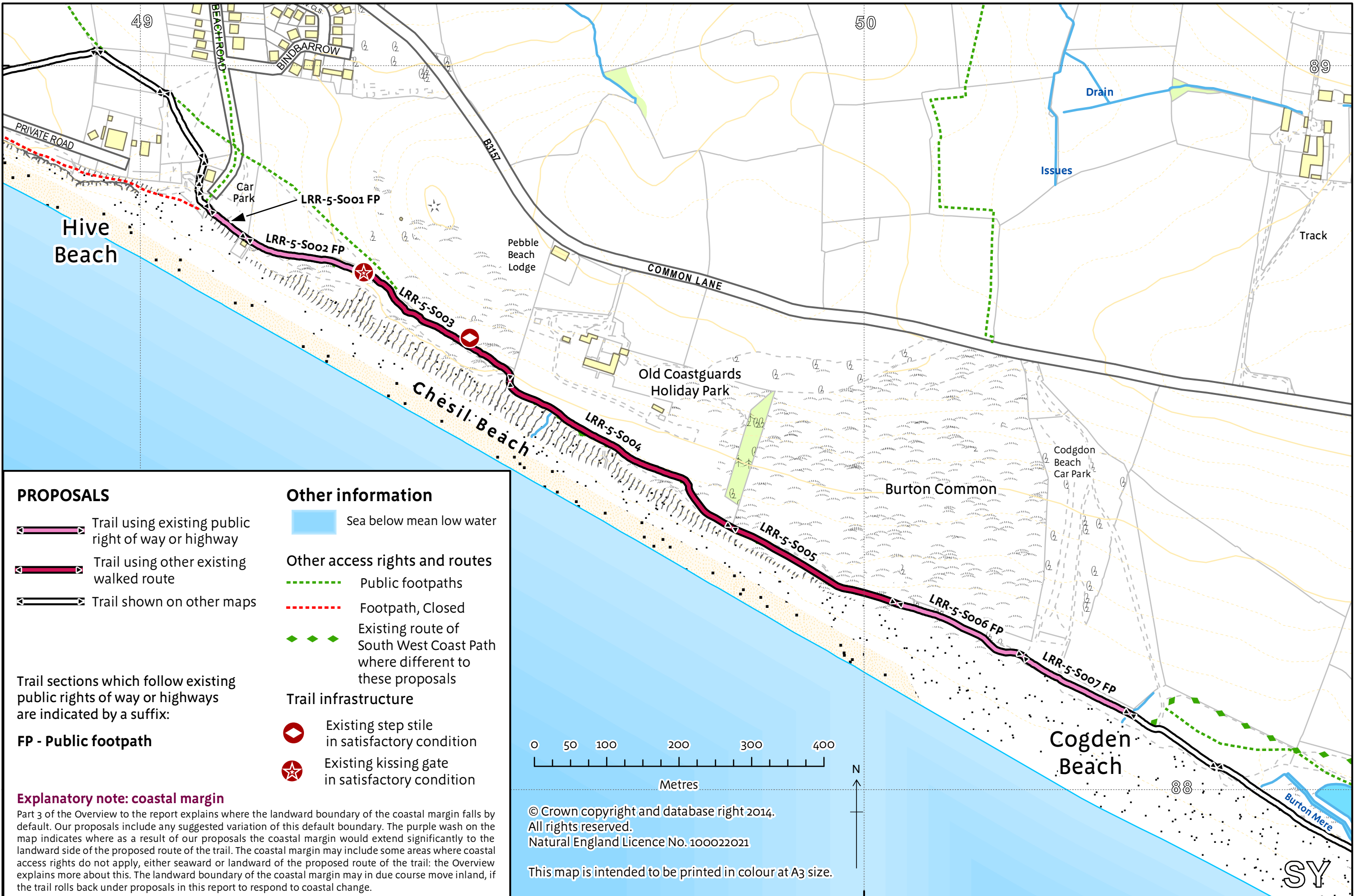
- 5.3.1 In relation to route sections LRR-5-S001 to LRR-5-S028, the initial proposed route, as determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on map 1b as the proposed route of the trail.
- 5.3.2 If at any time any part of the route described in 5.3.1 needs to change in order to remain viable, as a result of coastal erosion or other geomorphological processes or encroachment by the sea, the new route will be determined by Natural England in accordance with the criteria and procedures described under the title 'Roll-back' in part 8 of the Overview and section 4.10 of the Scheme. If this happens, the new route will become the approved route for that section for the purposes of the Order which determines where coastal access rights apply.

Landward boundary of coastal margin

- 5.3.3 Adjacent to route sections LRR-5-S002 and LRR-5-S003, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing wall which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the route shown as the trail on map 5a.
- 5.3.4 Adjacent to route sections LRR-5-S007 and LRR-5-S008, 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 maps 5a and 5b.
- 5.3.5 Adjacent to route section LRR-5-S009, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing ditch which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the new route shown as the trail on map 5b.
- 5.3.6 Adjacent to route section LRR-5-S010, 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 new route shown as the trail on map 5b.
- 5.3.7 Adjacent to route section LRR-5-S012, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing hedge bank which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 5b.
- 5.3.8 Adjacent to route sections LRR-5-S017 and LRR-5-S020, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the ditch which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the route shown as the trail on map 5c.
- 5.3.9 Adjacent to route sections LRR-5-S022 and LRR-5-S025, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing ditch which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the track shown as the trail on map 5d.
- 5.3.10 Adjacent to route sections LRR-5-S026 to LRR-5-S028, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the road which is shown as the trail on maps 5d and 5e.

Local restrictions and exclusions

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



PROPOSALS

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

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

FP - Public footpath

Explanatory note: coastal margin

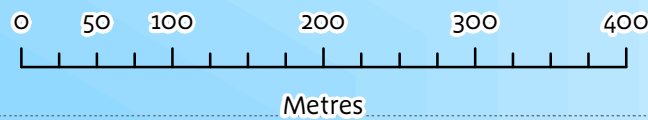
Part 3 of the Overview to the report explains where the landward boundary of the coastal margin falls by default. Our proposals include any suggested variation of this default boundary. The purple wash on the map indicates where as a result of our proposals the coastal margin would extend significantly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

Other information

- Sea below mean low water
- Other access rights and routes**
- Public footpaths
- Footpath, Closed
- Existing route of South West Coast Path where different to these proposals

Trail infrastructure

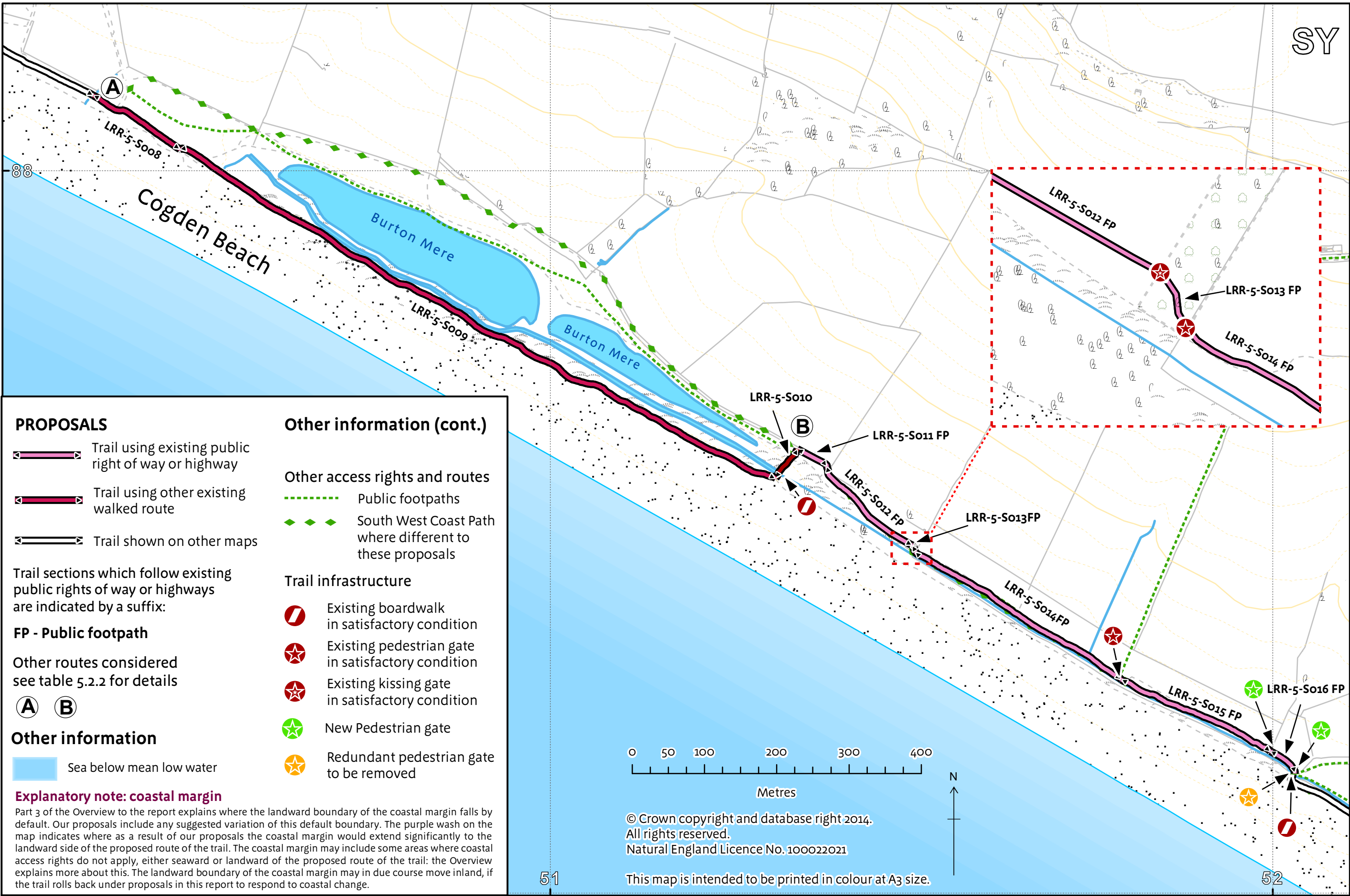
- Existing step stile in satisfactory condition
- Existing kissing gate in satisfactory condition



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SY



PROPOSALS

- Trail using existing public right of way or highway
- Trail using other existing walked route
- 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 routes considered see table 5.2.2 for details

A B

Other information

Sea below mean low water

Explanatory note: coastal margin

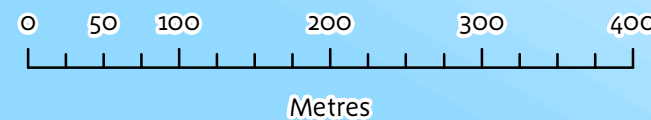
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Other information (cont.)

- Other access rights and routes**
- Public footpaths
 - South West Coast Path where different to these proposals

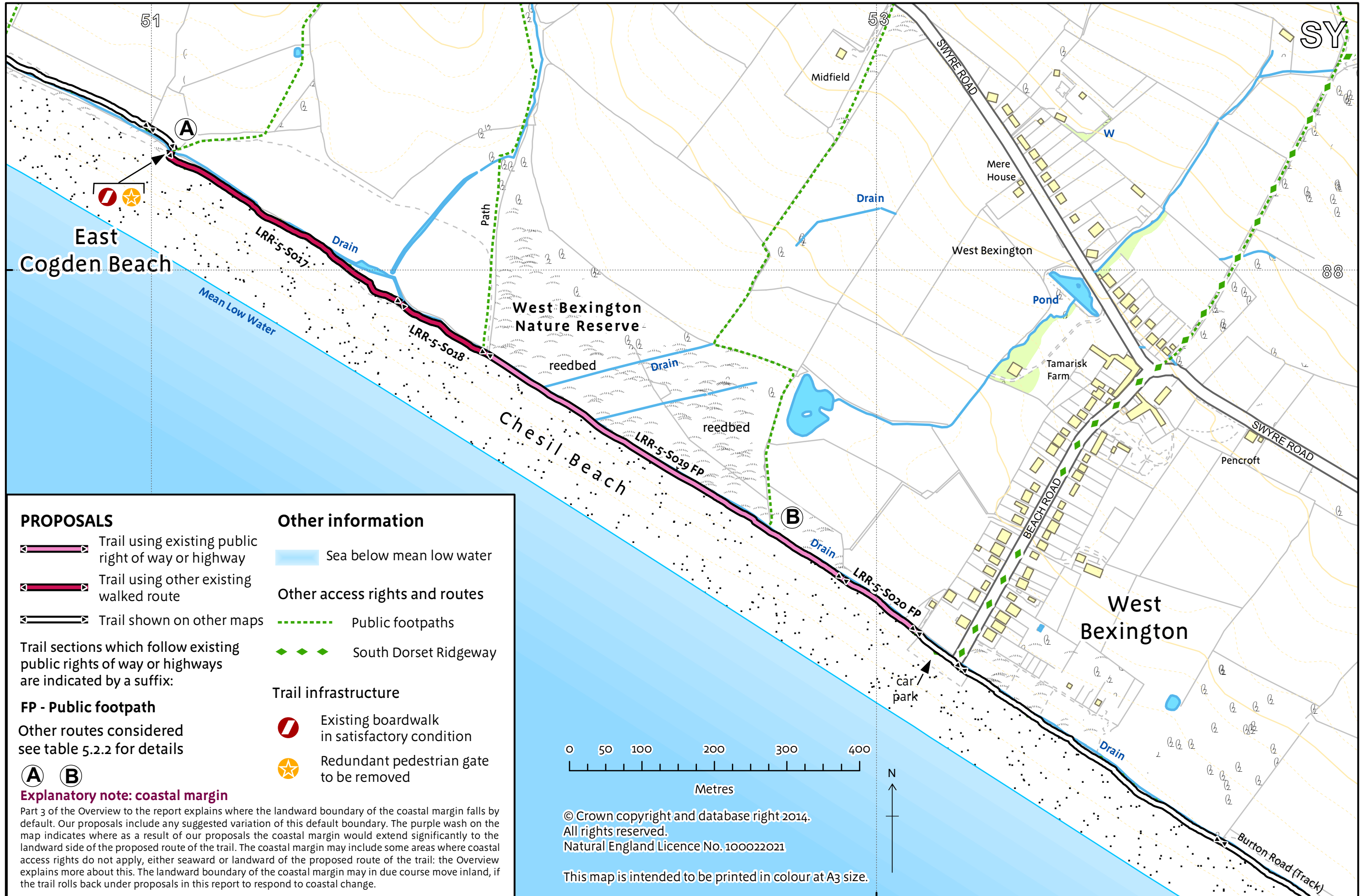
Trail infrastructure

- Existing boardwalk in satisfactory condition
- Existing pedestrian gate in satisfactory condition
- Existing kissing gate in satisfactory condition
- New Pedestrian gate
- Redundant pedestrian gate to be removed



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PROPOSALS

- Trail using existing public right of way or highway
- Trail using other existing walked route
- 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 routes considered see table 5.2.2 for details

A B

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.

Other information

Sea below mean low water

Other access rights and routes

- Public footpaths
- South Dorset Ridgeway

Trail infrastructure

- Existing boardwalk in satisfactory condition
- Redundant pedestrian gate to be removed

0 50 100 200 300 400

Metres

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