

Chapter 4:

Poole Place to Littlehampton Harbour

England Coast Path: East Head to Shoreham by Sea - Natural England's Proposals

Part 4.1: Introduction

Start Point:	Poole Place (grid reference: 499448 100300)
End Point:	Littlehampton Harbour (grid reference: 502187 102132)
Relevant Maps:	4a to 4b

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 4.1.1 Follows existing walked routes, including public rights of way, along most of this length.
- 4.1.2 Mainly follows the coastline quite closely and maintains good views of the sea.
- 4.1.3 Is aligned along the edge of an arable field to the east of Poole Place at section EHS-4-S004, as due to erosion the existing public right of way is now upon the beach and is inaccessible during high tides and stormy conditions. This section of the trail will have roll back. See map 4.a.
- 4.1.4 Is aligned on the beach or foreshore along an existing public right of way between Poole Place and the beach south of The Mill. See maps 4.a and 4.b for details.
- 4.1.5 Heads inland at the mouth of the River Arun to the first pedestrian bridge crossing point at Littlehampton. See map 4.b.

Protection of sensitive features:

- 4.1.6 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation or heritage preservation (See map C of the Overview):
 - Climping Beach Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its geological/ wildlife interest
 - The West Beach Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
 - Littlehampton Fort Scheduled Ancient Monument (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.

- 4.1.7 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. We will include information panels at each end of the designated site at Climping Beach, which will explain the conservation interest of the area and install guide posts to direct walkers along the trail, improving the existing access management of the site.

In relation to the 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:

- 4.1.8 Generally, there are few artificial barriers to accessibility on the proposed route, which makes use of existing surface paths or minor roads 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 trail would follow:

- An uneven and unconsolidated surface on sections of shingle beach.
- An uneven and eroding cliff.

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.

- 4.1.9 Estuary: This report proposes that the trail should include a route around the estuary of the river Arun, extending upstream from the open coast as far as Littlehampton Harbour footbridge, which is the first public foot crossing point over the river. See part 5 of the Overview. The trail covered by this chapter includes part of this estuary route.
- 4.1.10 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 4.2.1.

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'.

- 4.1.11 Restrictions and exclusions: No directions to restrict or exclude access are proposed on this length of coast. However, 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.

Establishment and ongoing management of the trail:

- 4.1.12 Some physical establishment of the trail would be necessary, in accordance with the general approach described in part 7 the Overview.
- 4.1.13 These works will include the installation of new interpretation panels and guide posts for Climping Beach SSSI as well as signs and waymarkers, particularly on the new sections of the trail between route sections EHS-4-S013 and EHS-4-S015. In addition an access point through an existing boundary fence will need to be created near Atherington.
- 4.1.14 Ongoing management and maintenance would be necessary in accordance with the general approach described in part 8 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 7 - 'Physical establishment of the trail' and 8 - 'Maintenance of the trail' of the Overview for more information.

Future Change:

- 4.1.15 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 9 of the Overview. See table 4.2.1 below for details of the sections likely to be affected in the foreseeable future.
- 4.1.16 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 6e - 'Coastal processes' and 9 - 'Future changes' of the Overview for more information.

Part 4.2: Commentary on Maps

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

4.2.1 Section Details – Maps 4.a to 4.b: Poole Place to Littlehampton Harbour

Notes on table:

Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 4.2.2: 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 6a - certain specific coastal land types are included automatically in the coastal margin where they fall landward of the trail, or connect indirectly with it by touching another part of the coastal margin that itself touches the foreshore at some point.

1	2	3	4	5	6a	6b	6c	7
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Current status of this section	Current surface of this section	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 9 of Overview)	Default landward coastal margin?	Landward boundary of margin (See maps)	Reason for landward boundary discretion	Proposed exclusions or restrictions (see Part 10 of Overview)
4a	EHS-4-S001	Other existing walked route	Gravel	No	Yes - bank	Hedgerow	Additional margin	None
	EHS-4-S002 to EHS-4-S003	Public footpath	Gravel	No	No	Hedgerow	Clarity and cohesion	None
	EHS-4-S004	Other existing walked route	Bare soil: Compacted	Yes - normal	No	Landward edge of trail (2m)	Not used	None
	EHS-4-S005	Public footpath	Shingle	Yes - normal	Yes - beach	Landward edge of beach	Not used	None
	EHS-4-S006 to EHS-4-S008	Public footpath	Shingle	No	Yes - beach	Landward edge of beach	Not used	None
4b	EHS-4-S009 to EHS-4-S010	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - beach	Landward edge of beach	Not used	None
	EHS-4-S011 to EHS-4-S012	Public footpath	Sand	No	Yes - beach	Landward edge of beach	Not used	None
	EHS-4-S013	Other existing walked route	Shingle	No	Yes - dunes	Landward edge of dunes	Not used	None
	EHS-4-S014	Other existing walked route	Sand	No	Yes - dunes	Landward edge of dunes	Not used	None
	EHS-4-S015	Other existing walked route	Shingle	No	Yes - dunes	Landward edge of dunes	Not used	None
	EHS-4-S016 to EHS-4-S018	Public footpath	Gravel	No	No	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	None
	EHS-4-S019 to EHS-4-S024	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	No	Road	Clarity and cohesion	None
	EHS-4-S025 to EHS-4-S026	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	No	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	No
	EHS-4-S027 to EHS-4-S029	Public highway	Tarmac	No	No	Pavement edge	Clarity and cohesion	None

4.2.2 Other options considered: Maps 4.a to 4.b: Poole Place to Littlehampton Harbour

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
4b	EHS-4-S012 to EHS-4-S026	We considered aligning the trail inland along the existing public footpath that runs between The Mill and the Littlehampton Golf Course from Climping to Rope Walk as shown on the map.	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It is closer to the sea and maintains views of the sea. ■ We concluded that overall the proposed route struck the best balance in terms of the criteria described in chapter 4 of the Coastal Access Scheme. ■ The proposed route provides better underfoot conditions year round.

Part 4.3: Chapter 4 - Formal Proposals

- Below are our formal proposals to the Secretary of State for the length of coast shown on maps 4a to 4b.
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

Formal Proposals – Poole Place to Littlehampton Harbour

Discretion to include an estuary

- 4.3.1 Natural England proposes to exercise its functions as if the sea included the estuarial waters of the River Arun as far as Littlehampton Harbour Footbridge as indicated by the extent of the trail shown on map 4.b.

Proposed route of the trail

- 4.3.2 In relation to route sections EHS-4-S001 to EHS-4-S003 and EHS-4-S006 to EHS-4-S029, the route is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 4.a to 4.b as the proposed route of the trail.
- 4.3.3 In relation to route sections EHS-4-S004 to EHS-4-S005, the route, as initially determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on map 4.a as the proposed route of the trail.
- 4.3.4 If at any time any part of a route section listed in the previous paragraph needs, in Natural England's view, to change:
- as a result of coastal erosion or other geomorphological processes or encroachment by the sea
 - in order to link with other parts of the route that need to roll back in direct response to such changes

In order for the overall route to remain viable, the new route for the part in question will be determined by Natural England without further reference to the Secretary of State. This will be done in accordance with the criteria and procedures described under the title 'Roll-back' in part 9 of the Overview and section 4.10 of the Coastal Access 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

- 4.3.5 Adjacent to route sections EHS-4-S002 to EHS-4-S003, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the hedgerow which is landward of the trail on map 4.a.
- 4.3.6 Adjacent to route sections EHS-4-S016 to EHS-4-S024, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the seaward edge of the road, as indicated by the coastal margin landward of the trail on map 4.b.

- 4.3.7 Adjacent to route sections EHS-4-S025 and EHS-4-S026, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the path shown as the trail on map 4.b.
- 4.3.8 Adjacent to route sections EHS-4-S027 to EHS-4-S029, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the pavement shown as the trail on map 4.b.

Local restrictions and exclusions

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

Refer to Part 10 of the Overview for further details.

Alternative routes

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



