

Chapter 4:

The Foreland to Lynton

England Coast Path: Minehead to Combe Martin - Natural England's Proposals

Part 4.1: Introduction

Start Point:	The Foreland (grid reference: SS 7593 5033)
End Point:	Lynton (grid reference: SS 7280 4955)
Relevant Maps:	4a to 4c

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 4.1.1 Follows the existing South West Coast Path as currently walked and managed between the Foreland and North Walk on the western side of Lynton (sections MCM-4-S001 to MCM-4-S020). The existing South West Coast Path mainly follows public rights of way or public highways along this length. See maps 4a to 4c and associated table 4.2.1 below for more details.
- 4.1.2 Mainly follows the coastline quite closely (apart from at the Foreland where the trail goes slightly inland rather than out towards Foreland Point) and maintains good views of the sea.
- 4.1.3 We propose to adopt the walked line of the South West Coast Path along this section of coast. There are places where the walked line differs slightly from the route originally approved by the Secretary of State, as the path has evolved over time to cope with coastal erosion and other processes. As explained at part 5a of the Overview, assuming these proposals are approved we intend to use a separate variation report to the Secretary of State to change the route of the existing national trail to reflect the approved line of the England Coast Path insofar as the two are different.
- 4.1.4 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation or heritage preservation (See map C of the Overview):
 - Exmoor Heaths Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - Exmoor Coastal Heaths Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - Countisbury Castle promontory fort earthwork defences Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).

4.1.5 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.

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 'Natural environment' for more information.

Accessibility:

4.1.6 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 suitable for people with reduced mobility because:

- The trail would follow an uneven grass or bare soil path along the cliff top between the Foreland and Lynmouth (MCM-4-S001 to MCM-4-S014);
- There are steep gradients in places for example at Foreland Point and Countisbury Hill or steps where it would be necessary to ascend or descend steep slopes.

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

Where we have proposed exercising our discretion:

4.1.7 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.

4.1.8 At Butter Hill and Barna Barrow, south of the Foreland and adjacent to the A39 at Wind Hill east of Lynmouth (sections MCM-4-S001 to MCM-4-S007 and MCM-4-S009 to MCM-4-S011), we have used our discretion to propose the inclusion of additional, more extensive landward areas of Open Access land within the coastal margin. This will secure or enhance public enjoyment of this part of the coast. The owners of these areas of land are content for us to propose this. See maps 4a to 4c and the associated table 4.2.1 below for more detail.

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'.

4.1.9 Restrictions and/or exclusions: 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. We have not used our discretion to propose any additional restrictions or exclusions on this part of the coast.

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

Establishment and ongoing management of the trail:

- 4.1.10 Where the trail follows the existing South West Coast Path as currently walked and managed, there are no additional measures that we consider necessary to improve the safety or convenience of the trail on this length of coast.

- 4.1.11 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:

- 4.1.12 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 4.2.1 below for details of the sections that may be affected in the foreseeable future.

- 4.1.13 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 4.2: Commentary on the maps

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

Table 4.2.1 includes sections of the trail that follow the existing South West Coast Path as currently walked and managed. There are no sections of the trail in this chapter that differ from the existing South West Coast Path.

4.2.1 Details for sections that follow the existing South West Coast Path: Maps 4a to 4c, The Foreland to North Walk, Lynton

Notes on table:

Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 4.2.2: Other options considered.

Column 3 – ‘Yes – normal’ means roll-back approach is likely to follow the current feature (e.g. cliff edge/beach) for the foreseeable future.

Column 3 – ‘Yes – see table 4.2.3’ means refer to that table below about our likely approach to roll-back on this part of the route.

1	2	3	4a	4b	5
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	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)
4a	MCM-4-S001* to MCM-4-S004*	Yes - Normal	Various	Additional landward area	None
4b	MCM-4-S005*	Yes - Normal	Various	Additional landward area	None
	MCM-4-S006* and MCM-4-S007*	Yes - Normal	Fence line	Additional landward area	None
	MCM-4-S008*	Yes - Normal	Fence line	Clarity and Cohesion	None
	MCM-4-S009*	Yes - Normal	Wall	Additional landward area	None
	MCM-4-S010*	Yes - Normal	Various	Additional landward area	None
4c	MCM-4-S011*	Yes - Normal	Various	Additional landward area	None
	MCM-4-S012	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	MCM-4-S013 and MCM-4-S014	Yes - Normal	Path	Clarity and Cohesion	None
	MCM-4-S015	No	Road	Clarity and Cohesion	None
	MCM-4-S016 to MCM-4-S019	No	Path	Clarity and Cohesion	None
	MCM-4-S020	No	Road	Clarity and Cohesion	None

4.2.2 Other options considered: Maps 4a to 4c, The Foreland to Lynton

Map(s)	Section numbers	Options considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
4a	MCM-4-S001 to MCM-4-S004	We considered aligning the trail seaward along the existing public footpath around the Foreland out towards Foreland Point.	We opted for the proposed route because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the steep gradient and terrain out towards Foreland Point is not suitable to form part of the designated trail. Part of the path is narrow and difficult to negotiate especially in poor weather conditions; The Foreland is already existing access land. In addition and under our proposals, the Foreland area and the public footpath would remain available for people to use as part of the spreading room.
4a to 4c	MCM-4-S001 to MCM-4-S011	We considered various options in relation to landward extent of margin over existing CROW access land in consultation with the relevant owners and occupiers.	We opted for the proposed extent of landward margin because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we concluded that this would strike the best balance in terms of the criteria described in section 4.8 of the Coastal Access Scheme – to make the extent of people’s access rights clearer or more cohesive on the ground. Our decision was made to best suit the local circumstances and after having taken into consideration the views of the relevant owners and occupiers to either include or exclude additional CROW access land as part of the coastal margin.

4.2.3 Roll-back implementation – more complex situations

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Feature or site potentially affected	How we will manage roll-back in relation to this feature or site
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

In relation to all other sections where roll-back has been proposed, the trail is likely to be adjusted to follow the current feature (e.g. cliff edge/beach) for the foreseeable future.

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 4c
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

Formal Proposals – The Foreland to Lynton

Proposed route of the trail

- 4.3.1 In relation to route sections MCM-4-S001 to MCM-4-S014, the route, as initially determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 4a to 4c as the proposed route of the trail.
- 4.3.2 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 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 8 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.
- 4.3.3 In relation to route sections MCM-4-S015 to MCM-4-S020, the route is to be at the centre of the line shown on map 4c as the proposed route of the trail.

Landward boundary of coastal margin

- 4.3.4 Adjacent to route sections MCM-4-S001 to MCM-4-S005, MCM-4-S010 and MCM-4-S011, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with various boundary features, as indicated by the coastal margin landward of the trail on maps 4a to 4c.
- 4.3.5 Adjacent to route sections MCM-4-S006 and MCM-4-S007, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing fence line, as indicated by the coastal margin landward of the trail on map 4b.
- 4.3.6 Adjacent to route section MCM-4-S008, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the fence line shown as the trail on map 4b.
- 4.3.7 Adjacent to route section MCM-4-S009, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing wall, as indicated by the coastal margin landward of the trail on map 4b.
- 4.3.8 Adjacent to route sections MCM-4-S013 to MCM-4-S014 and MCM-4-S016 to MCM-4-S019, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the path shown as the trail on map 4c.
- 4.3.9 Adjacent to route sections MCM-4-S015 and MCM-4-S020, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the road shown as the trail on map 4c.

Local restrictions and exclusions

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

Alternative routes

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





