

Chapter 2:

Heybridge Basin to Goldhanger

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

Part 2.1: Introduction

Start Point:	Heybridge Basin (grid reference: TL8717 0682)
End Point:	Goldhanger (grid reference: TL9067 0848)
Relevant Maps:	2a to 2c

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 2.1.1 Generally follows existing walked routes, including public rights of way, along most of this length.
- 2.1.2 Mainly follows the coastline closely and maintains good views of the sea.
- 2.1.3 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, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ); and
 - Mound E of Basin Road (Scheduled Monument 1002172) (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.

- 2.1.4 After advice from specialists we have concluded that our proposals would not be likely to

have any significant impact on these features. In reaching this conclusion 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 help prevent dogs from disturbing 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:

2.1.5 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 (e.g. route sections MSC-2-S008 and MSC-2-S-022 to MSC-2-S026);
- At Heybridge Basin the crossing of the sea lock involves steps up/down across the lock gate at the junction of sections MSC-1-S042, MSC-2-S001 and MSC-2-S002;
- At Bounds Farm EA Floodgate, on route section MSC-2-S031, it would be necessary to descend/ascend shallow ramps; and
- An access ramp to the rear of the sea wall at Goldhanger (at the junction of route sections MSC-2-S032 and 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.

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.

2.1.6 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 pavement, fence line or hedgerow to make the extent of the new access clearer. See Table 2.2.1 below.

2.1.7 We have used our discretion not to include land to the landward side of route sections MSC-2-S009, MSC-2-S023 to MSC-2-S026 and MSC-2-S028 to MSC-2-S032 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 land without coastal access rights 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'.

2.1.8 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 2.3.9 in the Formal Proposals Section of this report and Part 9 of the Overview.

2.1.9 These directions 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.

2.1.10 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

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

- New interpretation panels will be added at sections MSC-2-S023, MSC-2-S030 and MSC-2-S032;
- Surface improvement is likely to be needed on some sections of the trail to enhance its durability and convenience, for example on route sections MSC-2-S008 to MSC-2-S010 and MSC-2-S024 to MSC-2-S027; and

2.1.12 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:

2.1.13 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 2.2: Commentary on Maps

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

2.2.1 Section Details – Maps 2a to 2c: Heybridge Basin to Goldhanger

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)	
2a	MSC-2-S001	Public footpath	Top of timber lock gate	No	Landward edge of the top of the lock gate	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S002	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin	
	MSC-2-S003 & MSC-2-004	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	Pavement edge	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S005	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S006	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S007	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S008	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S009	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S010 & MSC-2-S011	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S012 & MSC-2-S013	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Hedgerow	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S014	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin	
	MSC-2-S015	Public footpath	Concrete access road	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin	
	MSC-2-S016	Public footpath	Concrete	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin	
	MSC-2-S017	Public footpath	Concrete bridge deck	No	Wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S018	Public footpath	Concrete	No	Wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S019	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	MSC-2-S020 to MSC-2-S022	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	
	2b	MSC-2-S023 to MSC-2-S026	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
		MSC-2-S027	Public highway	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin
		MSC-2-S028 to MSC-2-S030	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
2c	MSC-2-S031 & MSC-2-S032	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin	

Part 2.3: Chapter 2 - Formal Proposals

- Below are our formal proposals to the Secretary of State for the length of coast shown on maps 2a to 2c.
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

Formal Proposals – Heybridge Basin to Goldhanger

Proposed route of the trail

2.3.1 The route is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 2a to 2c as the proposed route of the trail.

Landward boundary of coastal margin

2.3.2 Adjacent to route section MSC-2-S001, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the top of the lock gate shown as the trail on map 2a.

2.3.3 Adjacent to route sections MSC-2-S003 and MSC-2-S004, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the pavement shown as the trail on map 2a.

2.3.4 Adjacent to route sections MSC-2-S005, MSC-2-S007 and MSC-2-S019, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the path shown as the trail on map 2a.

2.3.5 Adjacent to route sections MSC-2-S006, MSC-2-S008, MSC-2-S010, MSC-2-S011, MSC-2-S020 to MSC-2-S022, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing fence line which is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 2a.

2.3.6 Adjacent to route sections MSC-2-S009, MSC-2-S023 to MSC-2-S026, MSC-2-S028 to MSC-2-S032, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the top of sea wall shown as the trail on maps 2a to 2c.

2.3.7 Adjacent to route sections MSC-2-S012 and MSC-2-S013, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the hedgerow landward of the trail on map 2a.

2.3.8 Adjacent to route sections MSC-2-S017 and MSC-2-S018, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the wall which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 2a.

Local restrictions and exclusions

2.3.9 Natural England proposes to exclude access relevant to this length of coast, as follows:

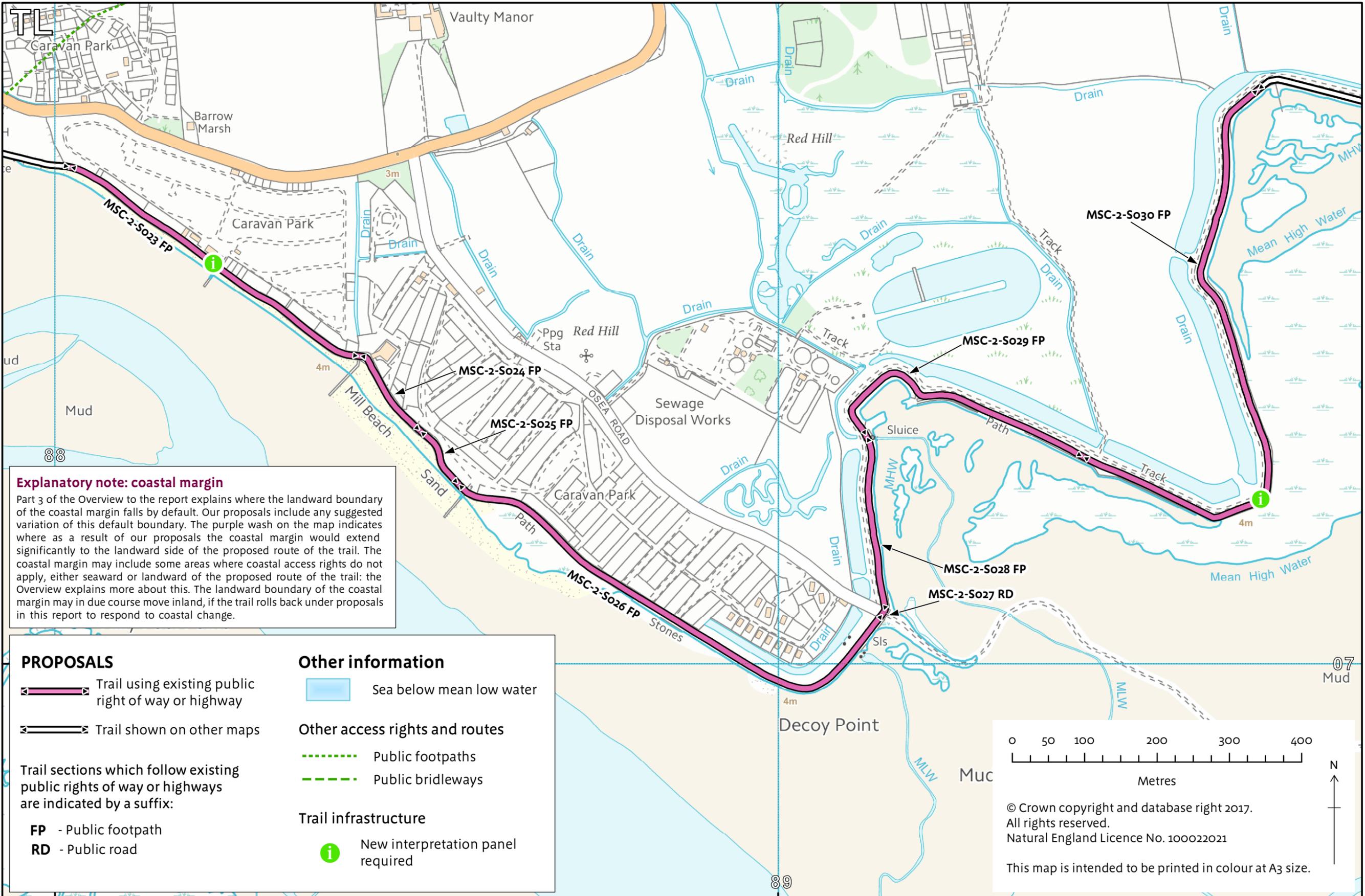
- Access is to be excluded all year-round on Osea Island and the causeway leading to the island, adjacent to route section MSC-2-S027 under s24 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) for the purpose of land management in order to prevent disruption to ongoing commercial activity. This exclusion will not affect the route itself. See map E in the Overview for details.

- 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-2-S001 to MSC-2-S032. 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 G and H in the Overview for details.

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

Alternative routes

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



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.

PROPOSALS

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

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

- FP** - Public footpath
- RD** - Public road

Other information

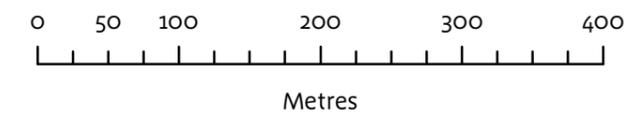
- Sea below mean low water

Other access rights and routes

- Public footpaths
- Public bridleways

Trail infrastructure

- New interpretation panel required



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This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.

