

Chapter 3:

Freiston Shore to Gibraltar Point

England Coast Path: Sutton Bridge to Skegness - Natural England's Proposals

Part 3.1: Introduction

Start Point:	Freiston Shore north car park (grid reference: TF4079 4364)
End Point:	Gibraltar Point, sluice on west bank of river Steeping (grid reference: TF5533 5812)
Relevant Maps:	3a to 3m

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 3.1.1 Although following some existing walked routes, including public rights of way, most of this section follows lengths of the seabank that have had no previous public access rights.
- 3.1.2 Follows the coastline closely along seabanks and maintains good views of the sea across the adjacent broad saltmarshes and mudflats.
- 3.1.3 Includes 2 sections of new path, either side of a length near Wrangle where an existing footpath follows the line of the seabank. See maps 3a to 3c & 3f to 3m and associated tables below for details.

Protection of sensitive features:

- 3.1.4 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation or heritage preservation (See maps C of the Overview):
 - The Wash Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - The Wash Special Protection Area (SPA)
 - The Wash Ramsar site
 - The Wash Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its geological /wildlife interest

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.

3.1.5 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.

In reaching this conclusion we have identified that it would be necessary to align the route on the landward side and at the base of the seabank for the extent of section SBS-3-S038 specifically to avoid disturbance to overwintering and breeding birds on the adjacent saltmarsh and mudflats. Our assessment of the levels and pattern of public access suggested there would be a significant increase in use on this section as a result of making a new crossing point available over the River Steeping (see Chapter 4 for details). Although use is anticipated at relatively low levels compared to the coast as a whole it would make this mitigation measure necessary, as the increase is from an absence of access to creating the England Coast Path National Trail.

3.1.6 In combination with the measure detailed in 3.1.5 above, a nature conservation 26(3)(a) restriction is proposed over the same section that will require users to keep dogs on leads and exclude access to the remainder of the seabank in the coastal margin. We have also identified a need at either end of section SBS-3-S038 for installation of an information panel that will explain the special interest of the adjacent designated site and the reason for the aforementioned mitigation measures. Further interpretation panels to raise awareness of the special interest of the site are proposed to be installed at the following points as mitigation measures: SBS-3-S016 and SBS-3-S027.

In relation to those 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:

3.1.7 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 trail would follow an uneven grass path along the top, and in one place at the base (section SBS-3-S038 – see map 3m), of the seabank on sections that have mostly not been available for public access previously.

3.1.8 At a small number of points, the existing gate or stile will be replaced/improved, so as to make them easier to use. We envisage this happening before the new access rights come into force as part of the physical establishment work described in part 7 of the Overview.

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 part 5 of the Overview.

3.1.9 Estuary: This report proposes that the trail should include a route around the estuary of the River Steeping, extending upstream from the open coast as far as the footbridge at Burgh Sluice, which is the first foot crossing point over the river and which would be subject to a new public right of access across it under our proposals.

See part 5f of the Overview. The trail covered by this chapter includes this estuary route.

3.1.10 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 3.2.1 below.

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'.

3.1.11 Restrictions and/or exclusions: We have proposed to restrict access by direction under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) in certain places along this section of coast. For details of these directions, see 3.3.6 in the Formal Proposals Section of this chapter and Part 10 of the Overview. The Formal Proposals Section of this chapter and Part 10 of the Overview.3.1.

3.1.12 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

3.1.13 Some physical establishment of the trail would be necessary, in accordance with the general approach described in part 6 the Overview. Only small scale works are required on this section

- Replacement of stiles and some pedestrian gates in poor condition with new gates to improve accessibility
- Signs at the principal access points to raise awareness of safety hazards:
 - Saltmarsh (SBS-3-S001,SBS-3-S003,SBS-3-S010,SBS-3-S013,SBS-3-S016,SBS-3-S026,SBS-3-S034 and SBS-3-S037)
 - sections where cattle are grazed (SBS-3-S001,SBS-3-S003 and SBS-3-0010)
- Information panels to explain the special interest of the designated site and to encourage compliance through raising awareness of the need for users to adopt appropriate behaviours (SBS-3-S016, SBS-3-S027, SBS-3-S038)

3.1.14 Ongoing management and maintenance would be necessary in accordance with the general approach described in part 8 of the Overview.

See parts 7 - 'Physical establishment of the trail' and 8 - 'Maintenance of the trail' of the Overview for more information.

Future Change:

- 3.1.15 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 3.2.1 below for details of the sections likely to be affected in the foreseeable future.
- 3.1.16 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 3.2: Commentary on Maps

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

3.2.1 Section Details – Maps 3a to 3m: Freiston Shore to Gibraltar Point

Notes on table:

Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 3.2.2: 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.

Column 6b – an asterisk (*) means that the full extent of the mapped default landward coastal margin coincides exactly with the existing boundary feature described in this column.

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)
3a/3b	SBS-3-S001	Other existing walked route	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
3c	SBS-3-S002	Other existing walked route	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
	SBS-3-S003 FP	Public footpath	Bare soil: Compacted	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
	SBS-3-S004 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
	SBS-3-S005 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
3c/3d	SBS-3-S006 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
3d	SBS-3-S007 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
	SBS-3-S008 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
	SBS-3-S009 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
3e	SBS-3-S010 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
3f	SBS-3-S011 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
	SBS-3-S012 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
	SBS-3-S013 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
	SBS-3-S014 FP	Public footpath	Bare soil: Compacted	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
	SBS-3-S015 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
	SBS-3-S016 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
	SBS-3-S017 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin

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)
3f	SBS-3-S018 FP	Not an existing walked route	Bare soil: Compacted	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
3f/3g	SBS-3-S019 FP	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	Margin
3g	SBS-3-S020	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
	SBS-3-S021	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
3h	SBS-3-S022	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
	SBS-3-S023	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
3i	SBS-3-S024	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
	SBS-3-S025	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
	SBS-3-S026	Other existing walked route	Tarmac	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
	SBS-3-S027	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
3j	SBS-3-S028	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
	SBS-3-S029	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
	SBS-3-S030	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
	SBS-3-S031	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
	SBS-3-S032	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
	SBS-3-S033	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
3k	SBS-3-S034	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
3l	SBS-3-S035	Not an existing walked route	Grass	Yes - normal	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
	SBS-3-S036	Not an existing walked route	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
3l/3m	SBS-3-S037	Not an existing walked route	Grass	No	Yes - bank	Landward base of sea bank	Not used	None
3m	SBS-3-S038	Not an existing walked route	Grass	No	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Margin

3.2.2 Other options considered: Maps 3a to 3m: Freiston Shore to Gibraltar Point

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
3a to 3m	SBS-3-S001 to SBS-3-S038	We considered the possibility of aligning the trail for various parts of this section along the older sea defences (in part carrying an existing public footpath) that run parallel to the outer seabank but at some distance inland.	<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 providing a better experience of a coastal path for users ■ in our discussions with landowners all who expressed a preference found a route along the outer seabank to be the more favoured option ■ 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
3m	SBS-3-S038	We considered aligning the trail along the top of the seabank as we are proposing for all other sections in this chapter	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Our assessment for the sensitive features of the adjacent designated site concluded that increased levels of access on this section, which has previously been very inaccessible, would be likely to cause significant disturbance to the wetland birds using this intertidal area. The alignment to the rear of the seabank provides some screening to avoid this and is incorporated as a mitigation measure. See the Access and Sensitive Features assessment for further details

3.2.3 Roll-back implementation – more complex situations: Maps 3a to 3m: Freiston Shore to Gibraltar Point

There are no complex rollback issues on this length of coast

Part 3.3: Chapter 3 - Formal Proposals

- Below are our formal proposals to the Secretary of State for the length of coast shown on maps 3a to 3m.
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

Formal Proposals – Freiston Shore to Gibraltar Point

Proposed route of the trail

- 3.3.1 In relation to route sections SBS-3-S001 to SBS-3-S017 and SBS-3-S036 to SBS-3-S038, the route is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 3a to 3f and 3l to 3m as the proposed route of the trail.
- 3.3.2 In relation to route sections SBS-3-S018 to SBS-3-S035, the route, as initially determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 3f to 3l as the proposed route of the trail.
- 3.3.3 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.

Local restrictions and exclusions

- 3.3.4 Natural England proposes to restrict access relevant to this length of coast, as follows:

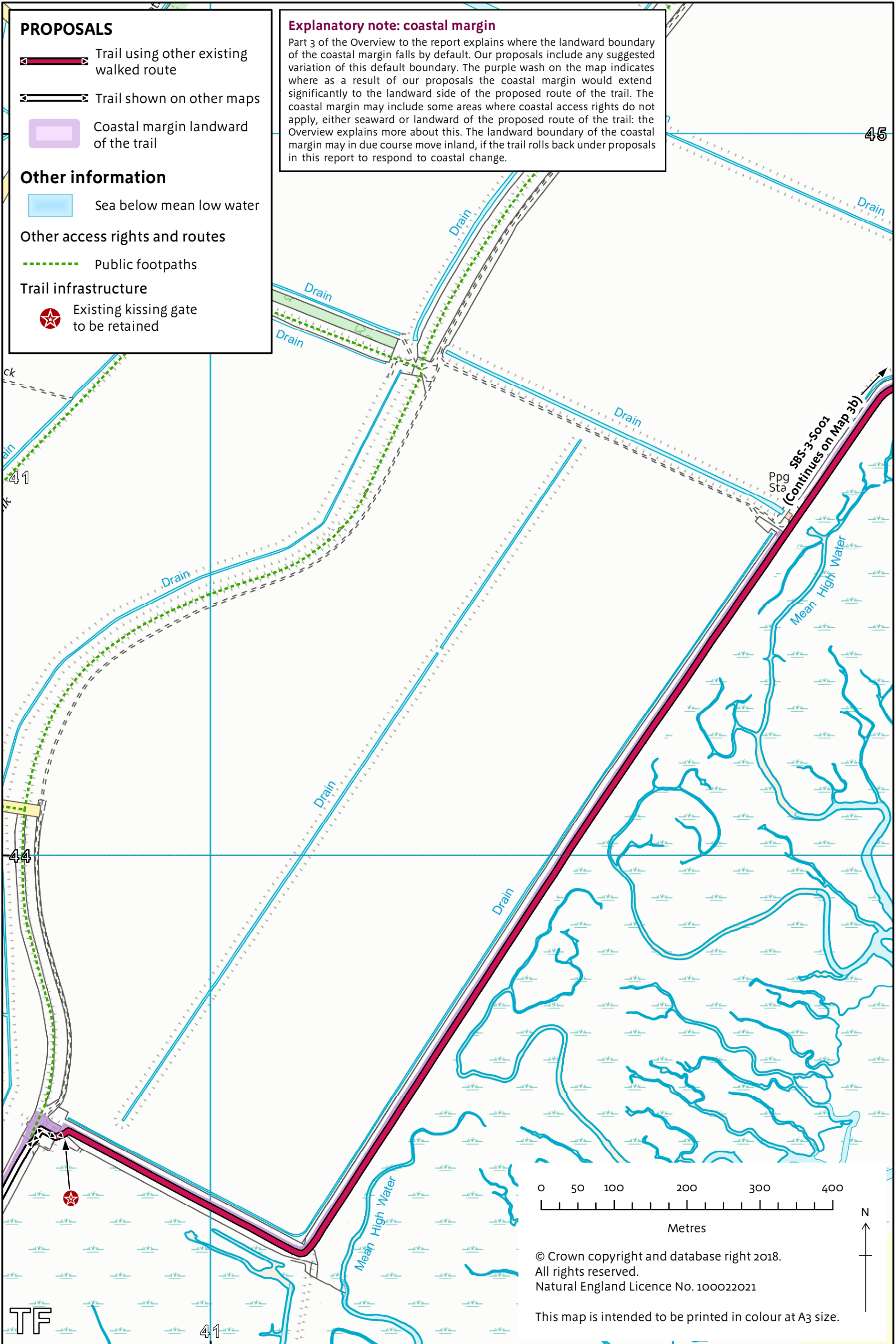
Access to the saltmarsh and flats in the margin will be excluded year round, seaward of route sections SBS-3-S001 to SBS-3-S019, because we are satisfied that the land is unsuitable for public access.

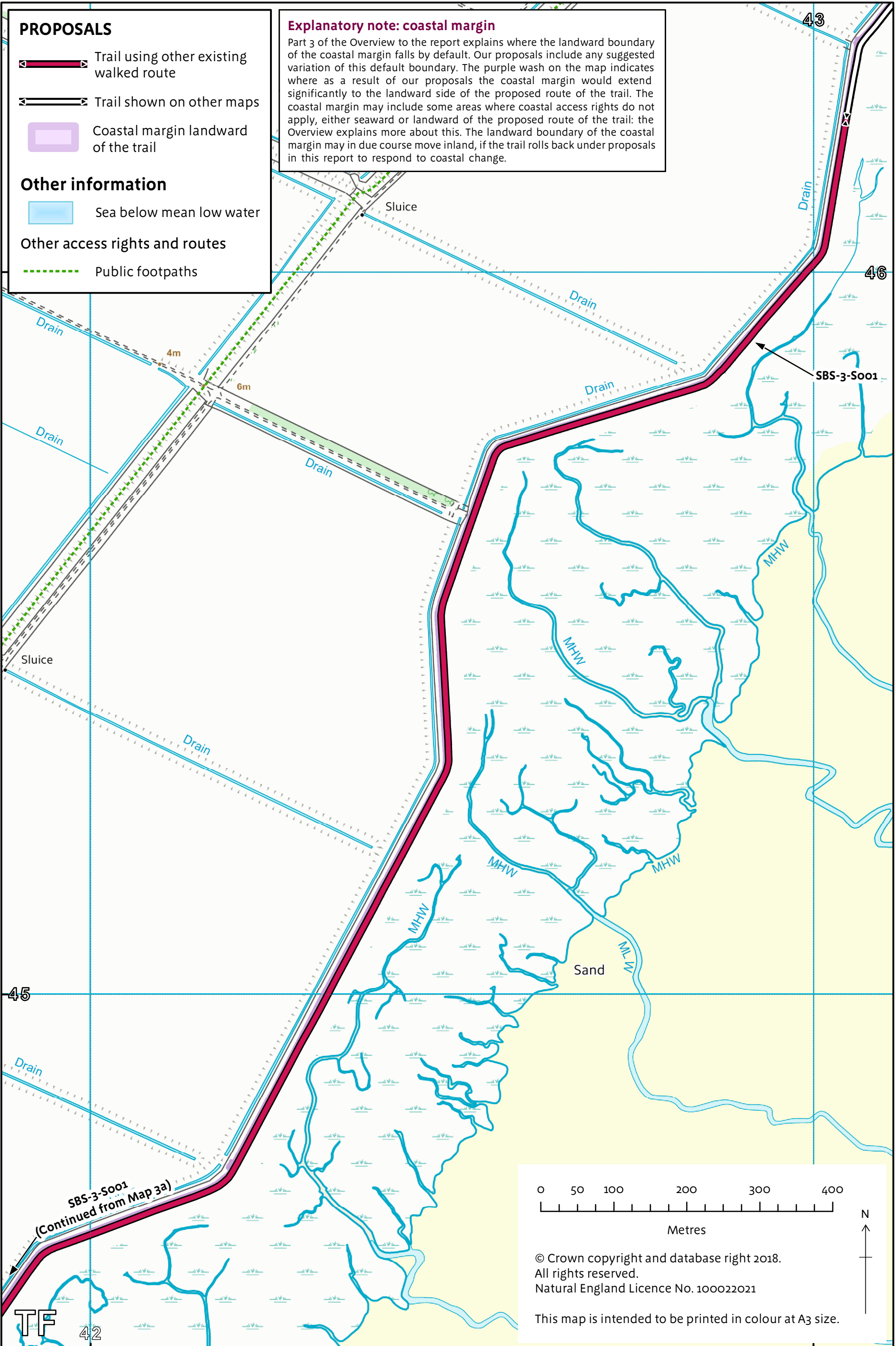
(Note - some of the land seaward of the trail is excepted from the coastal access rights because it is subject to military byelaws)

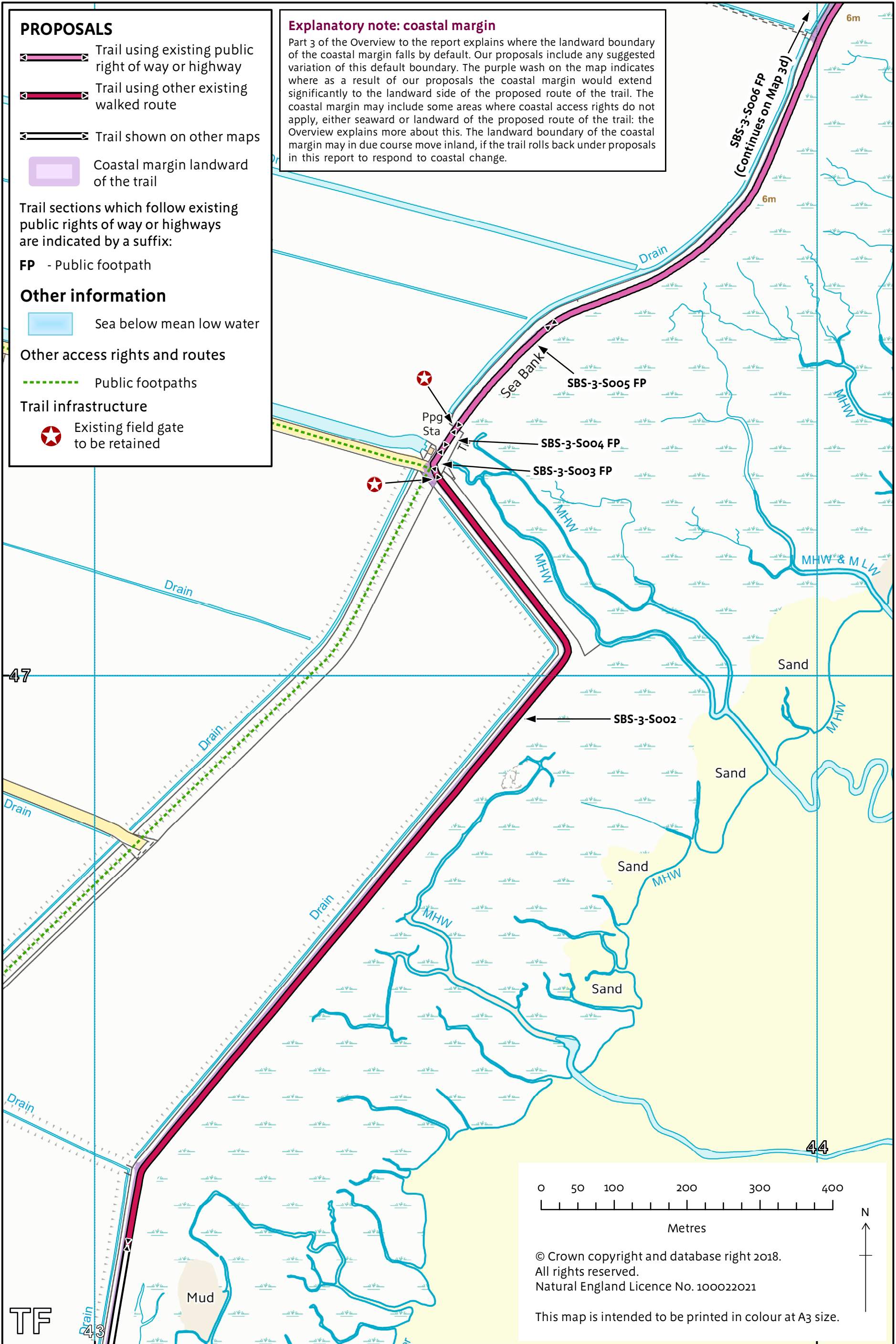
Access to the trail and seaward margin on the sea bank west of the River Steeping will be restricted on route section SBS-3-S038 only to protect feeding and roosting waders, particularly redshank, as follows:

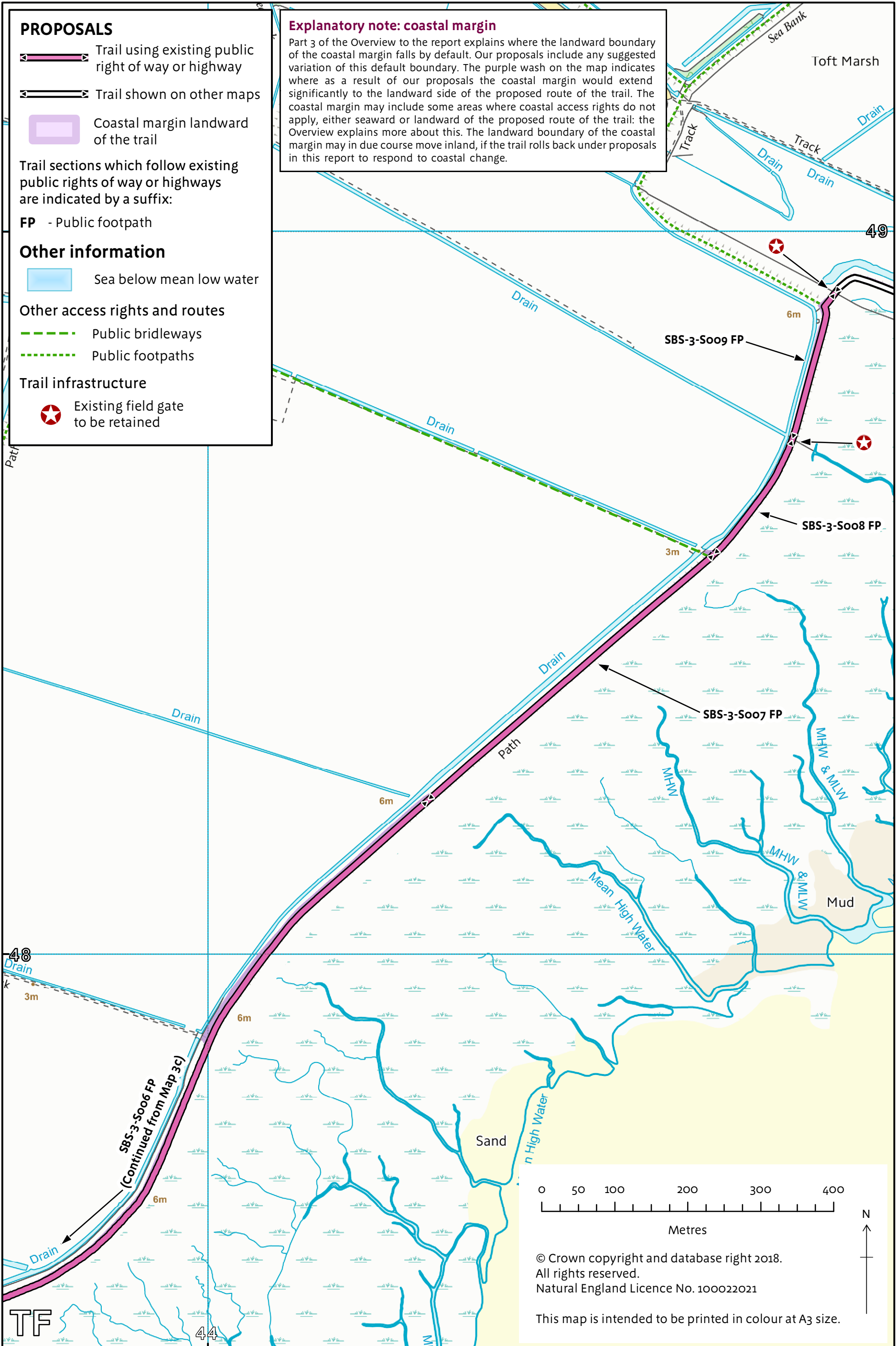
- Access will be excluded from the margin year round on the land shaded in brown on Map K.
- Accompanied dogs must be kept on short leads year round on the trail along the red dotted line on Map K.

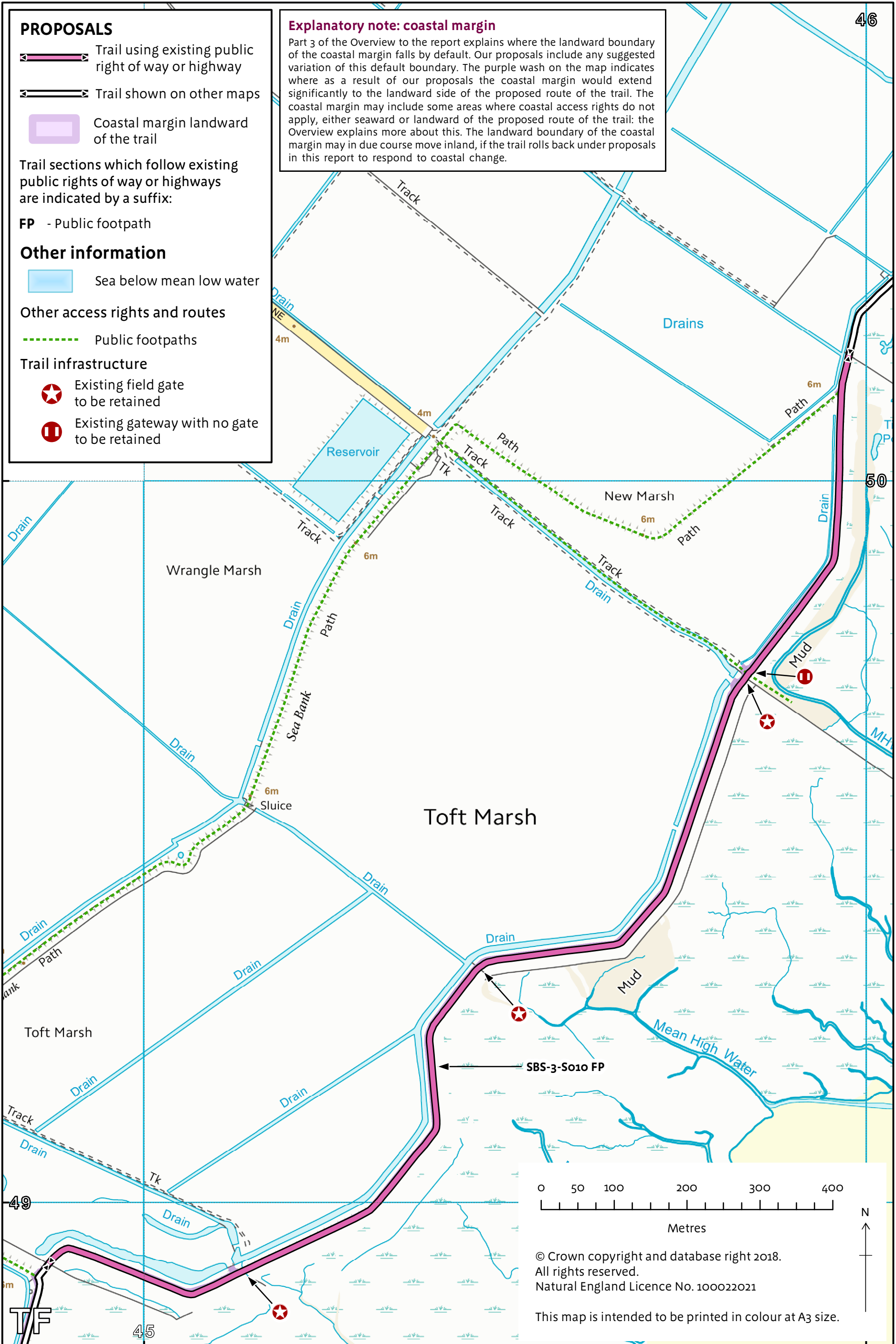
Please refer to Part 10 of the Overview and see maps D, G, H and K for further details.

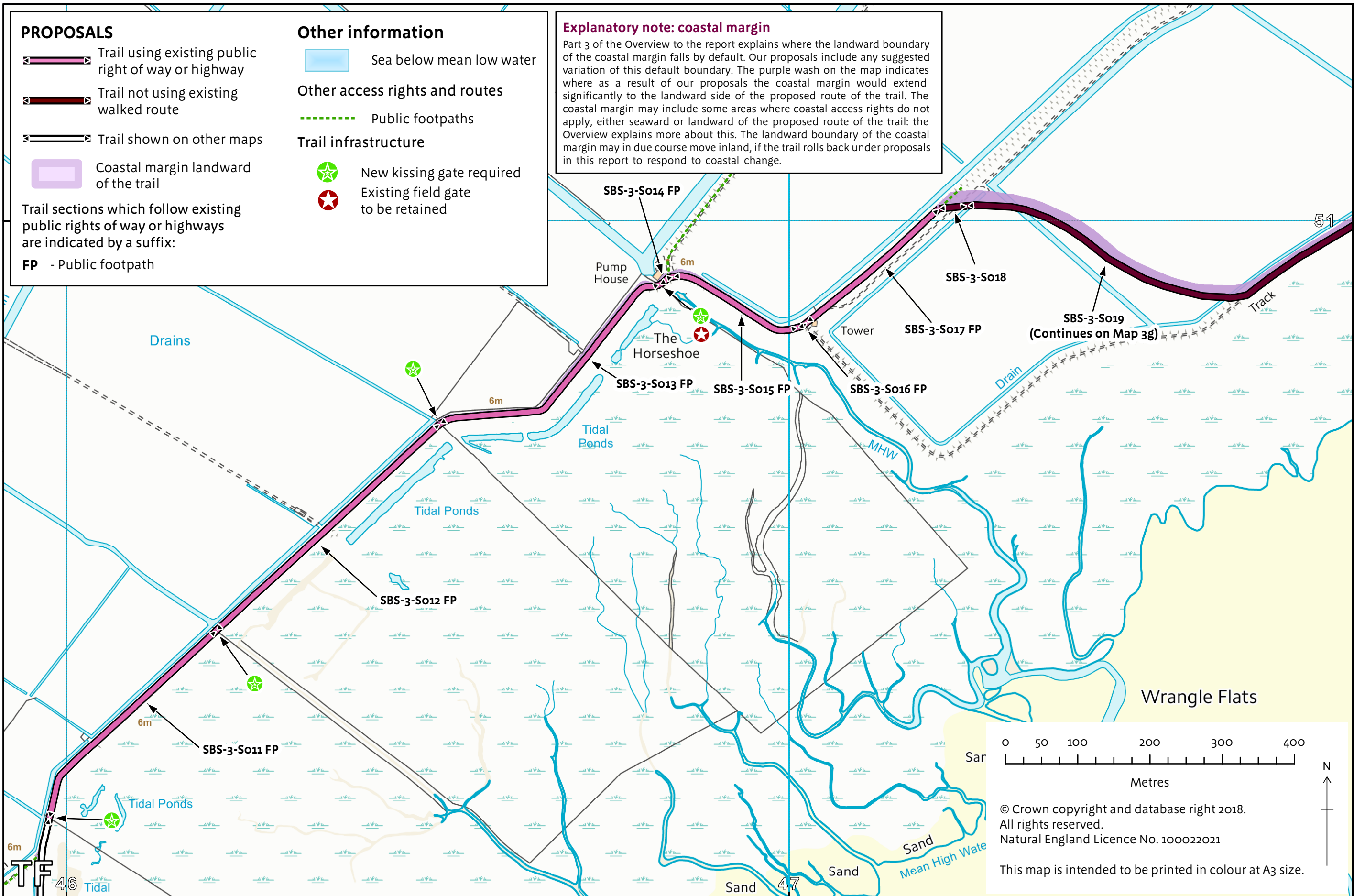


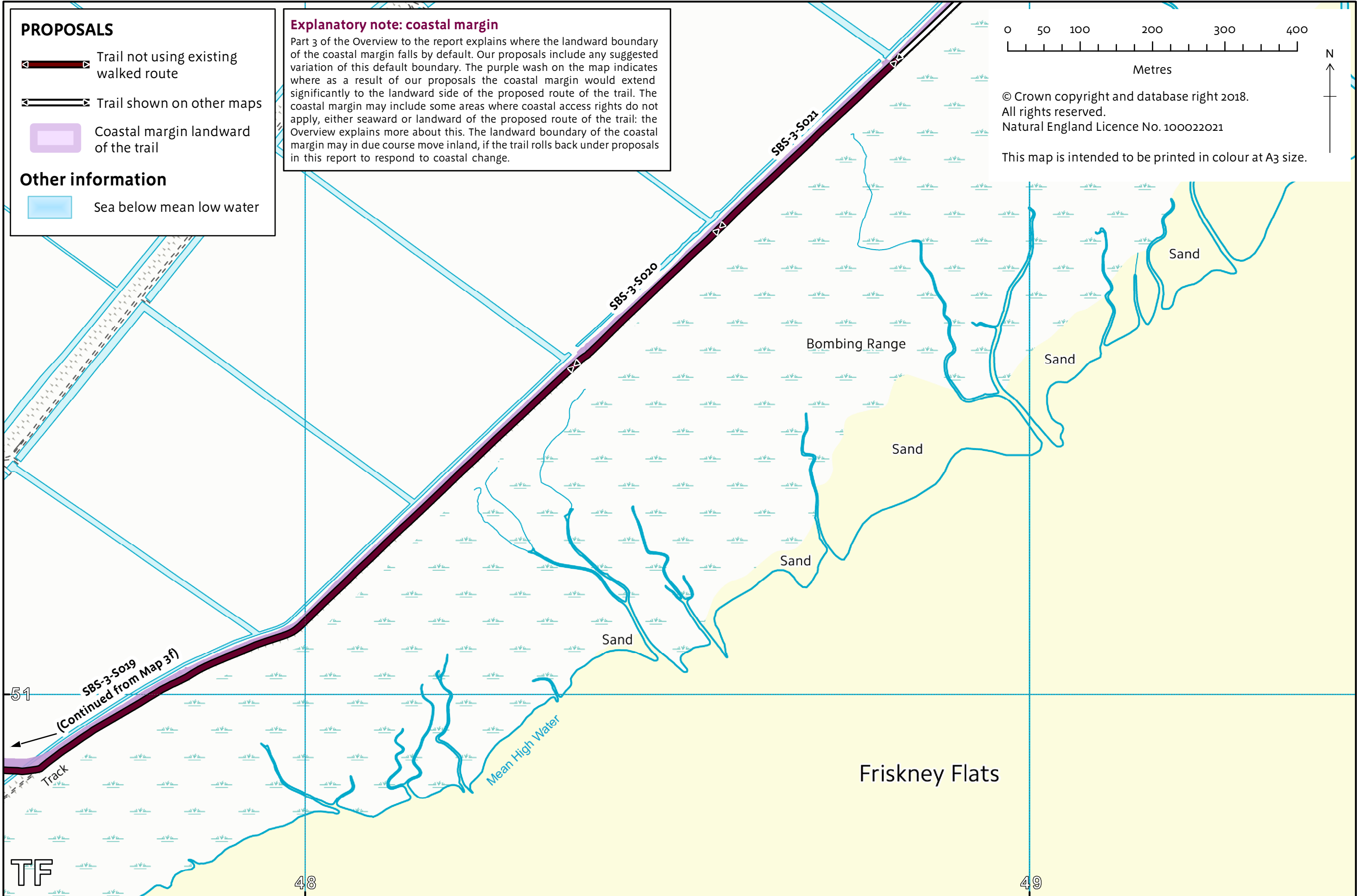


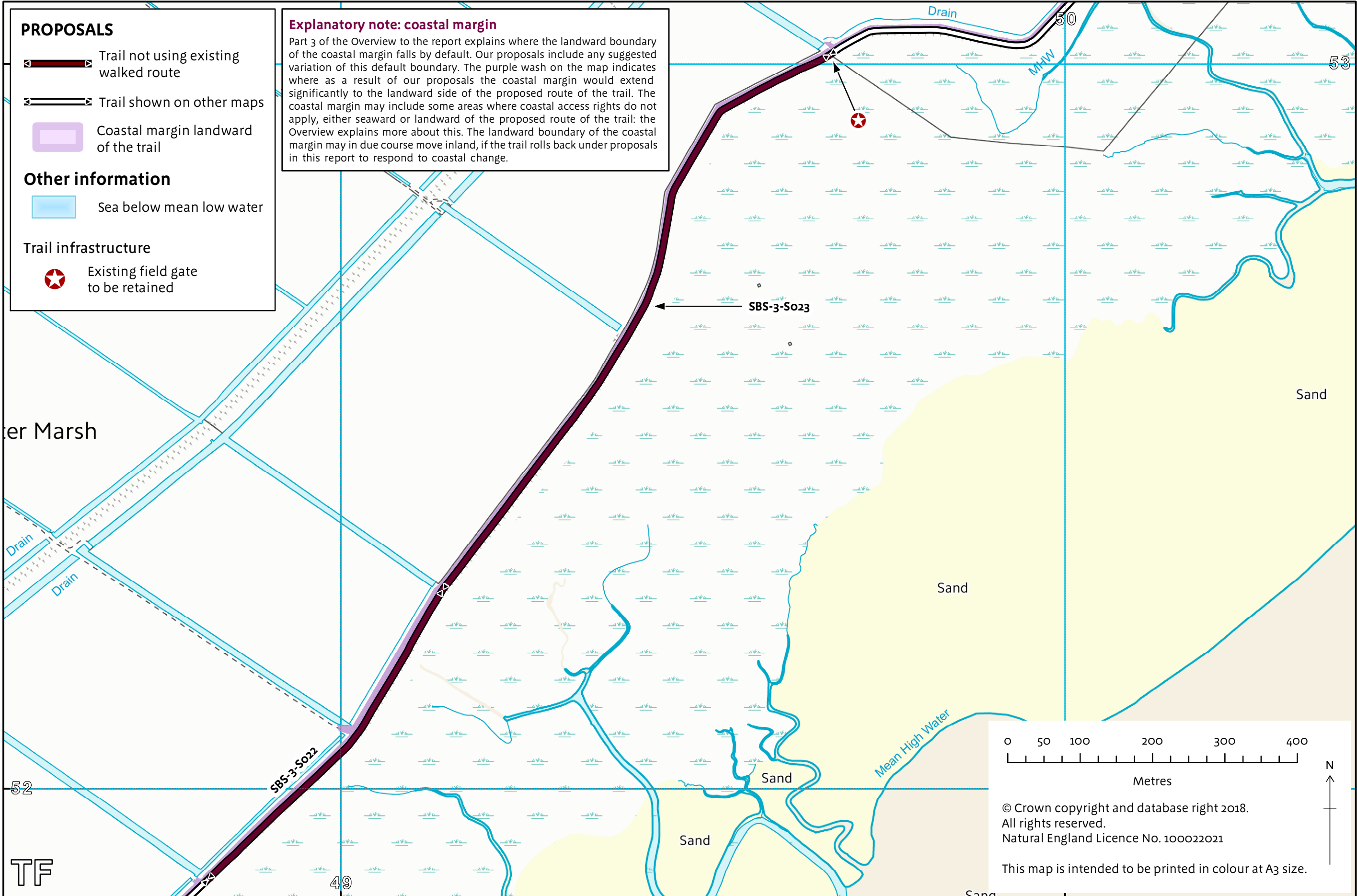




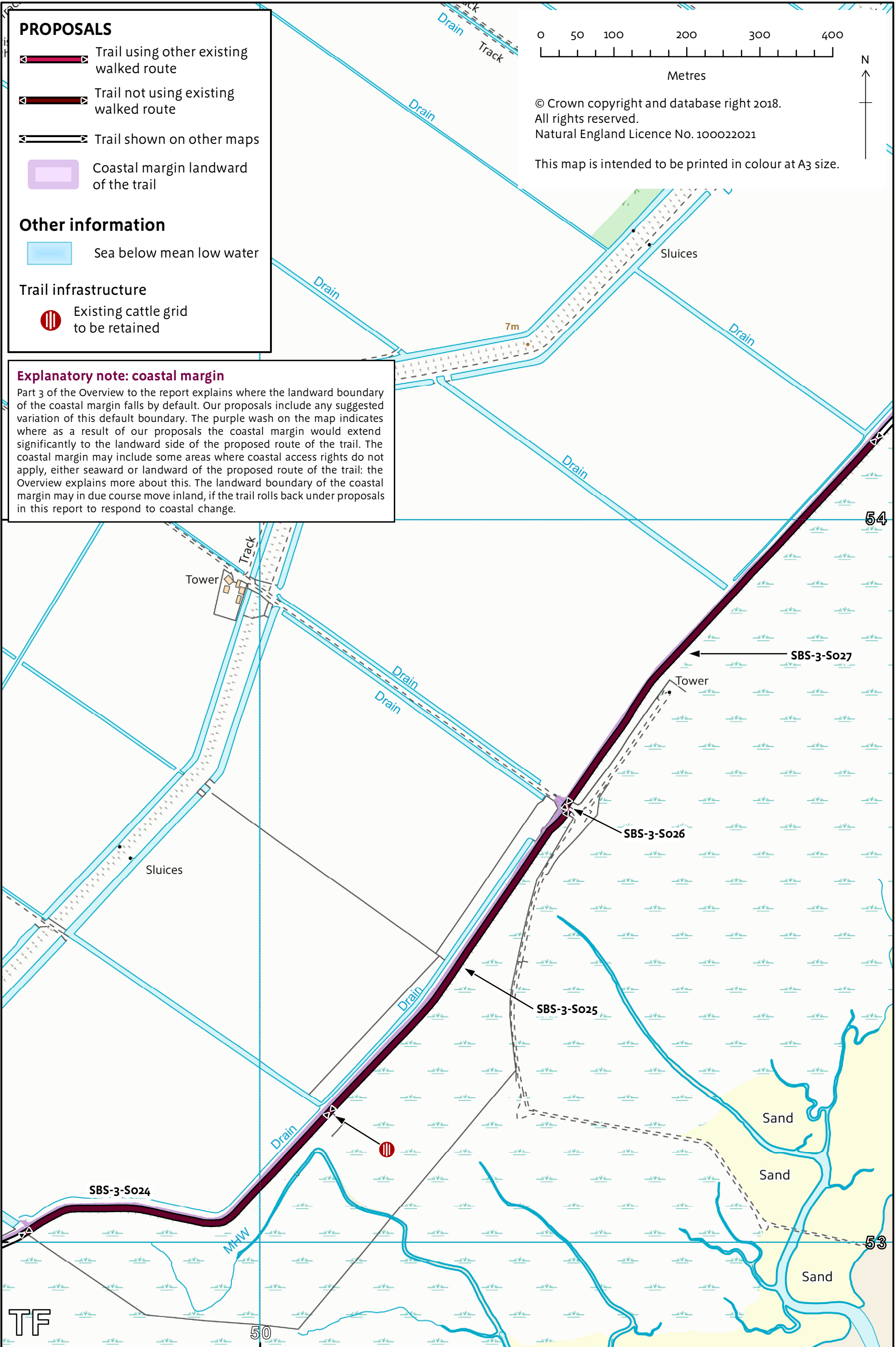


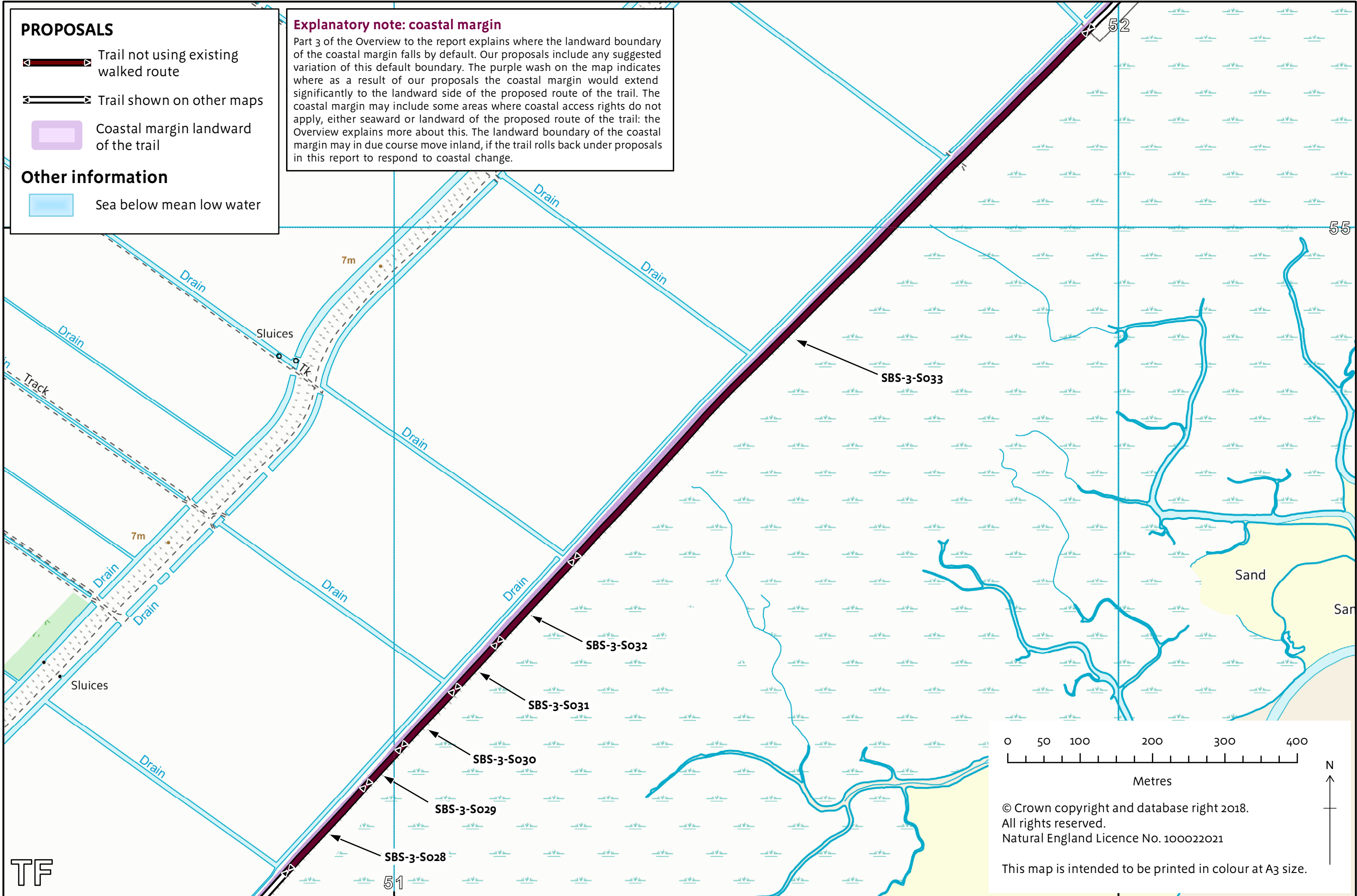


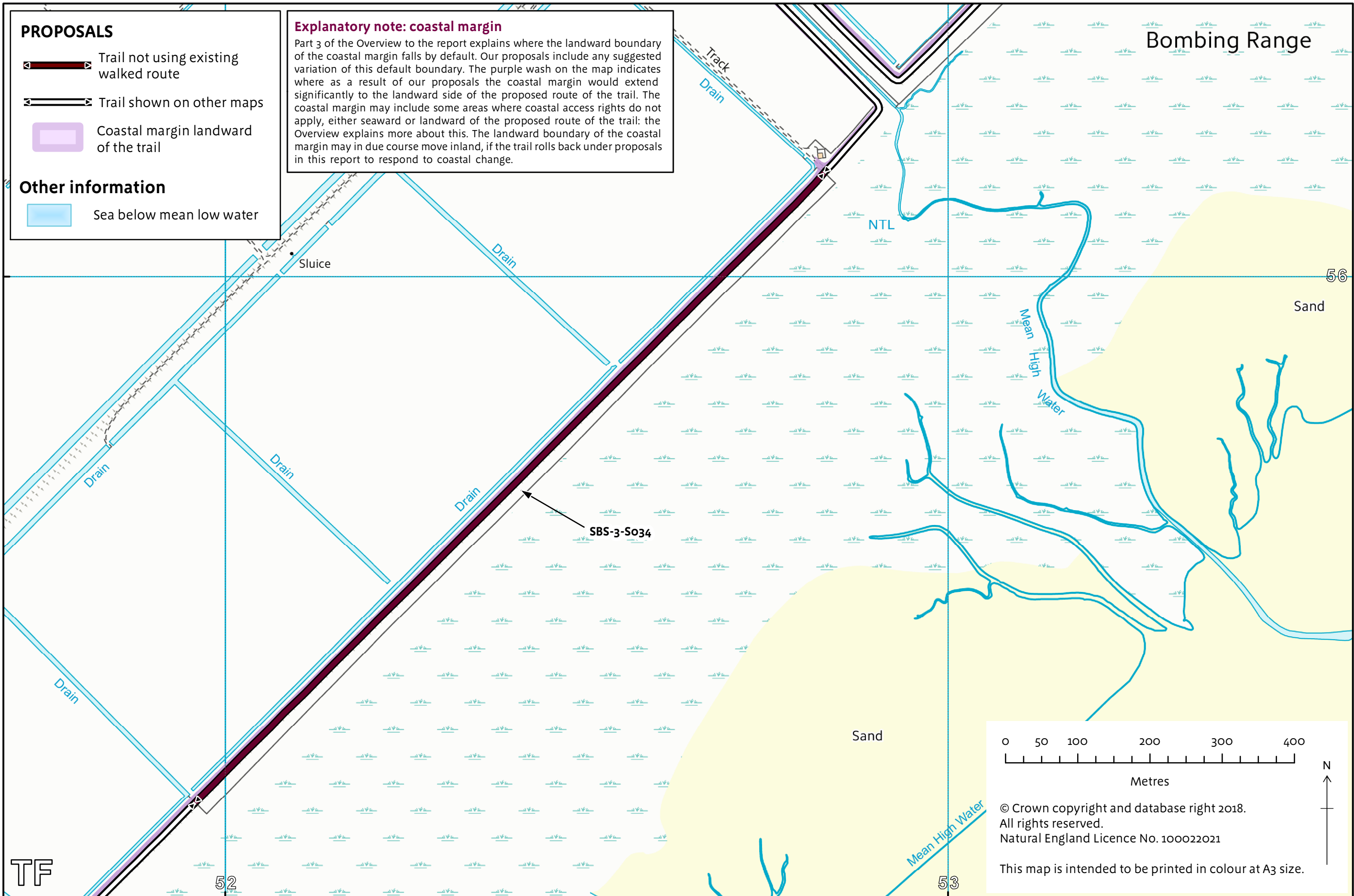


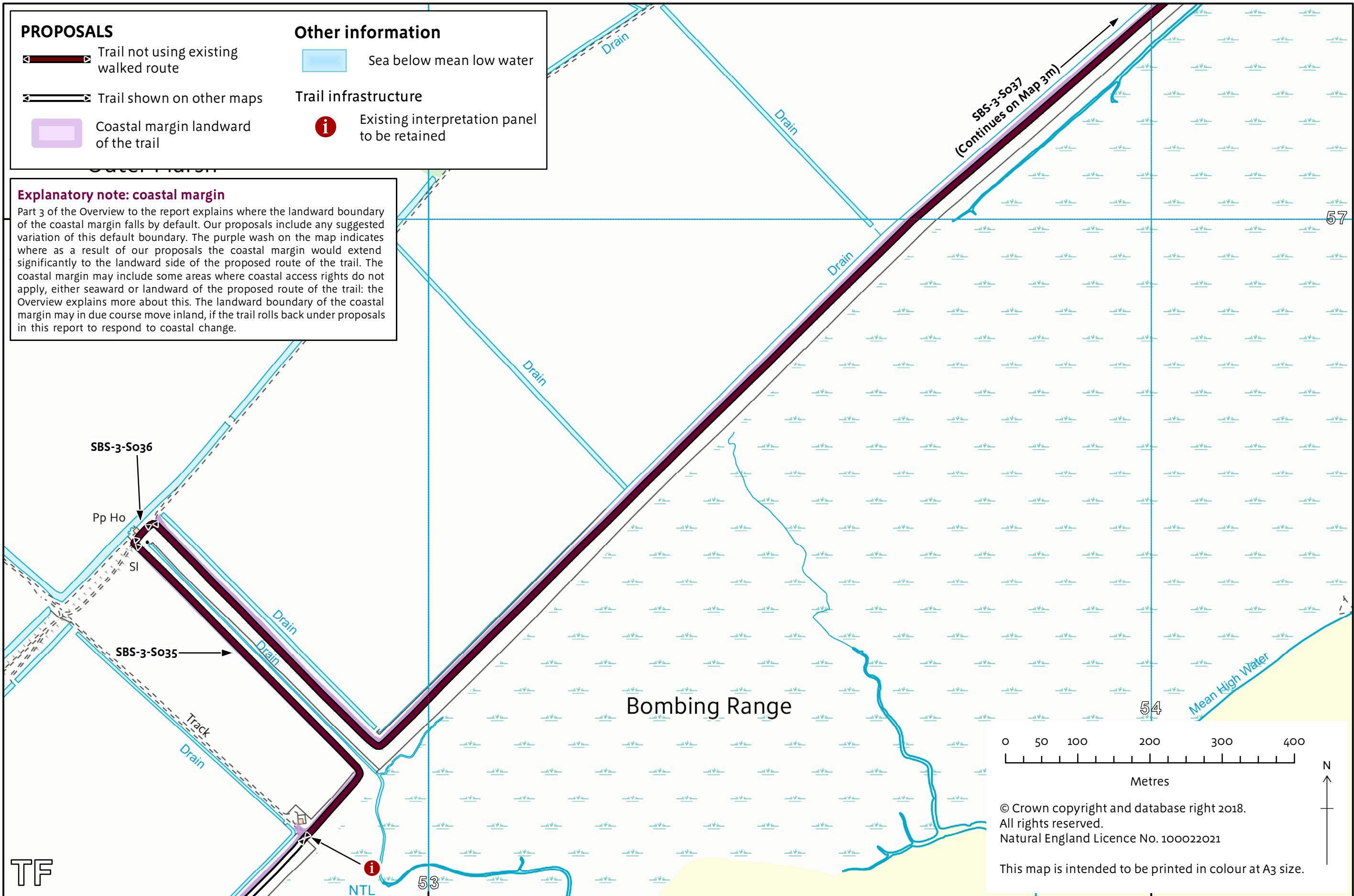


Map 3h South of Sea Lane End, Friskney









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