

Chapter 1:

Burnham-on-Crouch to Holliwell Farm

England Coast Path: Burnham-on-Crouch to Maldon - Natural England's Proposals

Part 1.1: Introduction

Start Point: : Burnham-on-Crouch (grid reference: TQ 952 955)

End Point: Holliwell Farm (grid reference: TR 016 957)

Relevant Maps: 1a to 1e

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 1.1.1 Generally follows existing walked routes, including public rights of way, along most of this length.
- 1.1.2 Mainly follows the coastline quite closely and maintains good views of the sea.
- 1.1.3 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation or heritage preservation (See maps C and C2 of the Overview):
 - Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - Crouch and Roach Estuaries (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 3) Special Protection Area (SPA)
 - Crouch and Roach Estuaries (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 3) Ramsar site
 - Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)
 - Crouch and Roach Estuaries Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its wildlife interest, habitat and geomorphological interest
 - Outer Thames Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) – proposed extension area

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.

- 1.1.4 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 provide appropriate signage at the start of the section of trail to explain the importance of these habitats and to encourage people to stay on the trail.

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:

- 1.1.5 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 and muddy on parts of the sea wall footpath (e.g. route section BCM-1-S009)
- In places along BCM-1-S009 and BCM-1-S010 the grass covered surface of the sea wall path is uneven and narrow.

- 1.1.6 At the end of BCM-1-S008 FP Map 1a, the existing stile will be replaced with a new pedestrian gate, so as to make it easier to use. We envisage this happening 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 the Overview.

- 1.1.7 Estuary: This report proposes that the trail should contain sections aligned on the estuary of the rivers Crouch and Blackwater, extending upstream from the open coast. See part 5 of the Overview. The trail covered by this chapter includes part of this estuary route on the river Crouch.
- 1.1.8 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 1.2.1 below.

1.1.9 From BCM-1-S006 to BCM-1-S010 we have used this discretion to limit the landward extent of the coastal margin to the landward top edge of the seawall. This has had the effect of reducing the amount of coastal margin that would have otherwise been available by default. This option provides the most clarity because:

- The break in slope provides an easily identifiable boundary for access users.
- There is no clear boundary feature at the bottom of the seawall that could mark the boundary of the coastal margin.

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'.

1.1.10 Restrictions and/or exclusions: We have proposed to exclude 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 1.3.8 in the Formal Proposals Section of this report and Part 10 of the Overview.

1.1.12 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

1.1.13 Some physical establishment of the trail would be necessary, in accordance with the general approach described in part 7 of the Overview.

- A new interpretation panel will be added at the start of section BCM-1-S001 on completion of the Wallasea Island to Burnham-on-Crouch stretch of the England Coast Path.

1.1.14 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:

1.1.15 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 6f - 'Coastal processes' and 9 - 'Future changes' of the Overview for more information.

Part 1.2: Commentary on Maps

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

1.2.1 Section Details – Map 1a to 1e: Burnham-on-Crouch to Holliwell Farm

Notes on table:

Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 1.2.2: Other options considered.

Column 7 – all sections are subject to a s25A CROW direction (year round) in the coastal margin for the purpose of excluding access to saltmarsh and mudflat on grounds of unsuitability for public access

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 (see Part 9 of Overview)
1a	BCM-1-S001	Public footpath	Block paving	No	Wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
1a	BCM-1-S002	Public footpath	Block paving	No	Wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
1a	BCM-1-S003	Public footpath	Block paving	No	Wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
1a	BCM-1-S004	Public footpath	Block paving	No	Various	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
1a	BCM-1-S005	Public footpath	Block paving	No	Various	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
1a	BCM-1-S006	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	Various	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
1a	BCM-1-S007*	Public footpath	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
1a	BCM-1-S008	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
1b	BCM-1-S009	Public footpath	Bare soil: Compacted	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
1c, 1d & 1e	BCM-1-S010	Public footpath	Grass	No	Landward edge of top of sea wall	Clarity and cohesion	Margin

1.2.2 Other options considered: Map1a to 1e: Burnham-on-Crouch to Holliwell Farm

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
1a	BCM-1-S007	We considered aligning the trail or proposing an alternative route down a set of concrete steps, along the landward edge of an access road and up a second set of concrete steps in order to avoid a boatyard crane positioned on the landward slope of the sea wall	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the public footpath is closer to the sea and would afford sea views; ■ the periods of time the crane is in operation causes minimal disruption to users of the trail; ■ the walking surface is more pleasant to walk along and is accessible to a wider range of people; and ■ 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.

Part 1.3: Chapter 1 - Formal Proposals

- Below are our formal proposals to the Secretary of State for the length of coast shown on maps 1a to 1e.
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

Formal Proposals – Burnham-on-Crouch to Holliwell Farm

Discretion to include an estuary

- 1.3.1 Natural England proposes to exercise its functions as if the sea included the estuarial waters of the River Crouch as far as The Quay, Burnham-on-Crouch as indicated by the extent of the trail shown on map 1a.

Proposed route of the trail

- 1.3.2 The route is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 1a to 1e as the proposed route of the trail.

Landward boundary of coastal margin

- 1.3.3 Adjacent to route sections BCM-1-S001 to BCM-1-S003, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with existing building walls which, at the time of writing this report, are landward of the pavement edge shown as the trail on map 1a.
- 1.3.4 Adjacent to route section BCM-1-S004, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with existing building wall and boundary metal fence which, at the time of writing this report, are landward of the pavement edge shown as the trail on map 1a.
- 1.3.5 Adjacent to route section BCM-1-S005, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with existing boundary metal fence, building wall, pavement edge, and the landward edge of the top of the sea wall which, at the time of writing this report, are landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 1a.

- 1.3.6 Adjacent to route sections BCM-1-S006, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with a short section of existing low wall which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the pavement, and with the landward edge of the top of the sea wall shown as the trail on map1a.
- 1.3.7 Adjacent to route sections BCM-1-S007 to BCM-1-S010, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the top of the sea wall shown as the trail on maps 1a,1b,1c, 1d, and 1e.

Local restrictions and exclusions

- 1.3.8 Natural England proposes to exclude access relevant to this length of coast, as follows:
- 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 BCM-1-S001 to BCM-1-S010. 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 and does not apply to any land that could be considered to be excepted. See maps I and J in the Overview for details.

Please refer to Part 10 of the Overview for further details.

Alternative routes

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







