

Chapter 4:

Shep's Hollow to South Haven Point

England Coast Path: Kimmeridge to Highcliffe - Natural England's Proposals

Part 4.1: Introduction

Start Point:	Shep's Hollow (grid reference: SZ 0340 8042)
End Point:	South Haven Point (grid reference: SZ 0361 8663)
Relevant Maps:	4a to 4e

Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

The Trail:

- 4.1.1 Follows the existing walked line of the South West Coast Path throughout, including public rights of way, apart from at:
- Middle Beach, Studland (see Map 4c) where the proposed trail is further inland a short distance due to coastal erosion issues; and
 - Shell Bay, Studland (see Map 4e), where the trail is aligned across a footbridge to avoid fording a stream.
- 4.1.2 Follows the coastline closely and maintains views of the sea, except for short sections:
- north of Shep's Hollow where the view is obscured by scrub/woodland (see Map 4a);
 - where it passes through Studland Wood and alongside The Warren Wood (see Map 4b); and
 - behind houses and gardens alongside Manor Road, Studland (see Map 4c).
- 4.1.3 The trail is aligned on the beach or foreshore between Middle Beach – Studland and South Haven Point – Studland (see Maps 4c to 4e).
- 4.1.4 There are places where the existing walked route of the South West Coast Path over this length differs slightly from the route originally approved by the Secretary of State, as the path has adapted over time to cope with coastal erosion and other processes. We propose to incorporate these changes into the England Coast Path and make additional improvements as described in

paragraph 4.1.1. Assuming these proposals are approved, we intend both routes to follow the same line. As explained at part 5a of the Overview, we use a separate variation report to the Secretary of State to change the existing approved route of the national trail line to reflect the approved line of the England Coast Path wherever appropriate.

4.1.5 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation or heritage preservation (See Map C of the Overview):

- Isle of Portland and Studland Cliffs Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Studland to Portland Marine SAC
- Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes SAC
- Dorset Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Solent and Dorset Coast proposed SPA
- Purbeck Ridge (East) Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - for its geological and wildlife interest
- Studland Cliffs SSSI - for its geological and wildlife interest
- Studland & Godlingston Heaths SSSI - for its geological and 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.

4.1.6 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 - 'Protection of sensitive features' - for more information.

Accessibility:

4.1.7 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 or bare soil path, that is wet and steep in places, along the cliff top.
- There are places on Ballard Down where it would be necessary to ascend/descend steep steps (see Map 4a).

- There are drainage issues between Shep’s Hollow and Ballard Down (route sections LCH-4-S001 to LCH-4-S003 on map 4a), making the surface difficult to walk on in wet weather.
- At Studland the trail would follow the sand beach between Middle Beach (section LCH-4-S025) and South Haven Point (section LCH-4-S028) (see maps 4c to 4e).

See part 5a 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 3 of the Overview.

- 4.1.8 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 4.2.1 below.
- 4.1.9 In some places, we have used our discretion to propose the inclusion of additional, more extensive landward areas within the coastal margin, to achieve greater clarity and cohesion. This land is already access land. The owner of this land is content for us to propose this.

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’.

- 4.1.10 Restrictions and/or exclusions: Access rights to the spreading room would be subject to the national restrictions on coastal access listed in Annex D of the Overview. These restrictions would not apply to public rights of way.

See part 11 of the Overview - ‘Restrictions and exclusions’ - for details.

Establishment and ongoing management of the trail

- 4.1.11 Some physical establishment of the trail would be necessary, in accordance with the general approach described in part 6 the Overview. Most of this length of trail is in good condition. We envisage that some minor repairs and upgrades will be carried out to the path surface (drainage work and scrub control) and trail furniture prior to opening.
- 4.1.12 We envisage making the following path improvements to improve accessibility:
- Resurface the track to the south of Harry Warren House (currently broken tarmac) to make it easier for those using mobility scooters to access the bridleway to Old Harry Rocks (route section LCH-4-S012).
- 4.1.13 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:

- 4.1.14 The Poole and Christchurch Bays Shoreline Management Plan SMP15 (covering the area from Durlston Head to Hurst Spit) identifies (in the short or medium term to 2055) a policy of 'no active intervention' for the stretch of coast from Shep's Hollow to The Warren Wood (Studland), and 'managed realignment' from The Warren Wood to the spit at the south east end of Shell Bay. The spit itself has a policy of 'hold the existing defence line'. From Shell Bay to South Haven Point the policy is of 'no active intervention'.
- 4.1.15 In keeping with these policies, 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 likely to be affected in the foreseeable future.
- 4.1.16 We note that the National Trust has applied for planning permission to relocate a number of beach huts at Middle Beach, Studland. The proposed route of the England Coast Path does not appear to be affected by this proposal. There may be temporary access issues resulting from the works. If necessary we will agree a temporary route with the operators when the works take place. A variation report will not be necessary under these circumstances (see part 8 of the Overview).
- 4.1.17 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 5f - 'Coastal processes' and 8 - '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 4a to 4e: Shep’s Hollow to South Haven Point

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.

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)
4a	LCH-4-S001	Public footpath	Bare soil: compacted	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S002	Other existing walked route	Bare soil: compacted	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S003	Public footpath	Bare soil: compacted	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S004	Public footpath	Steps: stone	Yes - normal	Steps	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S005	Other existing walked route	Bare soil: compacted	Yes - normal	Landward edge of trail (2m)	Not used	None
	LCH-4-S006	Other existing walked route	Bare soil: compacted	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S007	Public bridleway	Bare soil: compacted	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
4b	LCH-4-S008	Public bridleway	Grass	Yes - normal	Landward edge of trail (2m)	Not used	None
	LCH-4-S009	Public bridleway	Stone: aggregate	Yes - normal	Track	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S010	Public bridleway	Stone aggregate	Yes - normal	Hedgerow	Clarity and cohesion	None
4c	LCH-4-S011*	Public bridleway	Stone: aggregate	Yes - normal	Hedgerow	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S012*	Public bridleway	Tarmac	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S013*	Public footway (pavement)	Tarmac	Yes - normal	Pavement edge	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S014*	Public highway	Tarmac	Yes - normal	Landward edge of trail (2m)	Not used	None
	LCH-4-S015*	Public footpath	Stone: aggregate	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S016*	Other existing walked route	Bare soil: compacted	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S017*	Other existing walked route	Gravel	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S018*	Other existing walked route	Bare soil: compacted	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S019*	Other existing walked route	Tarmac	Yes - normal	Landward edge of trail (2m)	Not used	None

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)
4c	LCH-4-S020*	Other existing walked route	Gravel	Yes - normal	Landward edge of trail (2m)	Not used	None
	LCH-4-S021*	Other existing walked route	Gravel	Yes - normal	Hedge	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S022*	Other existing walked route	Bare soil: compacted	Yes - normal	Path (zigzag)	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S023*	Other existing walked route	Sand	Yes - normal	Landward edge of trail (2m)	Not used	None
	LCH-4-S024*	Other existing walked route	Steps: timber	Yes - normal	Steps	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S025	Other existing walked route	Sand	Yes - normal	Landward edge of trail (2m)	Not used	None
4c-e	LCH-4-S026	Other existing walked route	Sand	Yes - normal	Path (Heather Trail)	Clarity and cohesion	None
4e	LCH-4-S027*	Other existing walked route	Sand	Yes - normal	Track	Clarity and cohesion	None
	LCH-4-S028*	Other existing walked route	Sand	Yes - normal	Landward edge of trail (2m)	Not used	None

4.2.2 Other options considered: Maps 4a Shep’s Hollow to Ballard Point; 4c The Warren Wood to Knoll Beach; 4d Knoll Beach to Studland Heath; 4e Studland Heath to South Haven Point

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
4a	LCH-4-S001, LCH-4-S002, LCH-4-S005, LCH-4-S006 and LCH-4-S007	Public footpaths seaward of the trail, as shown on the map.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In all these situations the path is no longer viable due to coastal erosion
4c	LCH-4-S011 to LCH-4-S024	We considered aligning the trail along the permissive path that passes below Harry Warren House, along the beach, around Redend Point and to the new steps down to the beach at Middle Beach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The ‘beach route’ from below Harry Warren House, around the end of Redend Point to the new steps at LCH-4-S024 is often cut off at high tide ■ The current route of the South West Coast Path past the café and other buildings below Middle Beach car park is subject to significant coastal erosion <p>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</p> <p>Under our proposals, the permissive path and beach route would remain available for people to use as part of the spreading room, but would not form part of the designated trail. In addition the public footpath in the valley between Woodend House and Harry Warren House to the beach huts and the beach cafe will still be available for people to use.</p>
4c-d	LCH-4-S026	We considered aligning the trail along the Heather Trail that runs parallel to the beach behind the sand dunes approximately 100-300 metres inland from the trail shown on the map.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Heather Trail route is behind sand dunes for much of its length and views of the sea are limited. <p>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.</p> <p>Under our proposals, the Heather Trail route would remain available for people to use as part of the landward spreading room, but would not form part of the designated trail.</p>
4e	LCH-4-S027 to LCH-4-S028	We considered aligning the trail on the new boardwalk that heads across the wetland area to the east of the main car park and south of the Ferry Offices and then down the road to the ferry slipway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This route takes the trail through a car park and down the side of the busy ferry road with limited sea views. <p>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</p> <p>The boardwalk and road route would remain available for people to use, but would not form part of the designated trail.</p>

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

Formal Proposals – Shep’s Hollow to South Haven Point

Proposed route of the trail

- 4.3.1 In relation to route sections LCH-4-S001 to LCH-4-S028, 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 4e as the proposed route of the trail.
- 4.3.2 If at any time any part of the route described 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.

Landward boundary of coastal margin

- 4.3.3 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S001, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing fence line which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 4a.
- 4.3.4 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S002, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing fence line which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the path shown as the trail on map 4a.
- 4.3.5 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S003, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing fence line which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 4a.
- 4.3.6 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S004, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the steps shown as the trail on map 4a.
- 4.3.7 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S006, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing fence line which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the path shown as the trail on map 4a.
- 4.3.8 Adjacent to route sections LCH-4-S007, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing fence line which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public bridleway shown as the trail on map 4a.

- 4.3.9 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S009, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the track shown as the trail on map 4b.
- 4.3.10 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S010, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing hedgerow which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public bridleway shown as the trail on map 4b.
- 4.3.11 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S011, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing hedgerow which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public bridleway shown as the trail on map 4c.
- 4.3.12 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S012, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with existing fence line which at the time of writing is landward of the public bridleway shown as the trail on map 4c.
- 4.3.13 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S013, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the pavement shown as the trail on map 4c.
- 4.3.14 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S015 to the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing fence line which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 4c.
- 4.3.15 Adjacent to route sections LCH-4-S016 to LCH-4-S018, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing fence line which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the path shown as the trail on map 4c.
- 4.3.16 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S021, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing hedge which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the path shown as the trail on map 4c.
- 4.3.17 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S022, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the zigzag path shown as the trail on map 4c.
- 4.3.18 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S024, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the steps shown as the trail on map 4c.
- 4.3.19 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S026, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the Heather Trail, as indicated by the coastal margin landward of the trail on maps 4c-e.
- 4.3.20 Adjacent to route section LCH-4-S027, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the track, as indicated by the coastal margin landward of the trail on map 4e.

Local restrictions and exclusions

- 4.3.21 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

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









