

Chapter 1:

# Weybourne to Blakeney Chapel

England Coast Path: Weybourne to Hunstanton - Natural England's Proposals

## Part 1.1: Introduction

<b>Start Point:</b>	<b>Weybourne</b> (grid reference: TG1108 4364)
<b>End Point:</b>	<b>Blakeney Chapel</b> (grid reference: TG0444 4492)
<b>Relevant Maps:</b>	<b>1a to 1e</b>

### Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

#### The Trail:

- 1.1.1 Follows existing walked routes, including public rights of way, along this length of coast.
- 1.1.2 Mainly follows the coastline quite closely and maintains good views of the sea and River Galven estuary.
- 1.1.3 Follows a route similar to the existing Norfolk Coast Path National Trail.
- 1.1.4 We propose to adopt the walked line of the Norfolk Coast Path National Trail 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, particularly in the village of Cley next the Sea.

As explained at part 6a of the Overview, assuming these proposals are approved, we intend to submit a separate variation report to the Secretary of State to change the route of the existing national trail to coincide with the approved line of the England Coast Path insofar as the two are different.

#### Protection of sensitive features

- 1.1.5 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation, landscape or heritage preservation (See map C of the Overview):
  - The Wash & North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
  - North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

- North Norfolk Coast Special Protection Area (SPA)
- North Norfolk Coast Ramsar site
- North Norfolk Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (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 describe below) on the features for which the affected land is designated and on any which are protected in their own right.

1.1.6 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 propose the exclusion and/or restriction of access to some of the seaward margin using formal directions, as outlined in the formal proposals at paragraph 1.3.9.

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

1.1.7 There are few artificial barriers to accessibility on the proposed route which makes use of existing surfaced 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 a shingle ridge between Weybourne and Cley Eye
- there are four sets of steps to ascend/descend along the proposed trail at Cley next the Sea

**See part 6a of the Overview - 'Recreational issues' - for more information.**

### Where we have proposed exercising our discretion

1.1.8 Estuary: This report proposes that the trail should include a route around the Stiffkey and Glaven Estuaries as well as the Burnham, Mow, Overy and Norton Estuaries extending upstream from the open coast as far as the first crossing points for the rivers. The trail covered by this chapter includes part of the estuary route extending upstream from the open coast as far as Cley Sluices (map 1e) which is the first public foot crossing point over the River Glaven.

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

1.1.9 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.

1.1.10 We have used our discretion on some sections of the route to limit the landward extent of the coastal margin in some areas of shingle beach and mapped to an adjacent physical boundary such as a fence line. This has been 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 physical features identified provide an easily identifiable boundary for access users.

**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'.**

1.1.11 Restrictions and/or exclusions: We have proposed to exclude and/or 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 1.3.9 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 the Overview.

1.1.14 Ongoing management and maintenance would be necessary in accordance with the general approach described in part 8 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 part 7 - 'Physical establishment of the trail' and part 8 - 'Maintenance of the trail' of the Overview for more information.**

### **Future Change**

1.1.15 All 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 1.2.1 below for details of the sections likely to be affected in the foreseeable future.

1.1.16 There are places on the length of coast described in this chapter where, at the time of preparing the report, we foresee the need for changes to the access provisions for other reasons. These are summarised at part 9 of the Overview.

**See part 6e - 'Coastal processes' and part 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 – Maps 1a to 1e: Weybourne to Blakeney Chapel

Notes on table:

Column 2 – an asterisk (\*) against the route section number means see also table 1.2.2: 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	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)	Landward boundary of margin (See maps)	Reason for landward boundary discretion	Proposed exclusions or restrictions (see Part 10 of Overview)
1a	WBH-1-S001	Public footpath	Shingle	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-1-S002	Public footpath	Grass	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-1-S003 to WBH-1-S005	Public footpath	Bare Soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
1b	WBH-1-S006*	Other existing walked route	Shingle	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
1c	WBH-1-S007* to WBH-1-S008*	Other existing walked route	Shingle	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
1d	WBH-1-S009*	Public footpath	Shingle	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-1-S010*	Other existing walked route	Shingle	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
1e	WBH-1-S011*	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	Margin
	WBH-1-S012	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the path	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-1-S013	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the path	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-1-S014 to WBH-1-S015	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes - normal	Boundary wall	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-1-S016 to WBH-1-S017	Public footpath	Concrete	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the path	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-1-S018	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the path	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-1-S019	Public highway	Tarmac	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the trail	Not used	None
	WBH-1-S020	Public footway (pavement)	Tarmac	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the pavement	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-1-S021	Other existing walked route	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the steps	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-1-S022 to WBH-1-S-23	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the path	Clarity and cohesion	None

### 1.2.2 Other options considered: Maps 1a to 1e: Weybourne to Blakeney Chapel

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
1b	WBH-1-S006	We considered aligning the trail along Meadow Lane then along field edges seaward of the Coast Road to Salthouse.	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The field edge option corresponded to land designated in its own right for nature conservation interests. The outcome of the Access and Sensitive Features Appraisal identified a likely significant impact on the features for which the land is designated and on species present there which are protected in their own right.</li> <li>■ There is an existing walked route closer to the sea.</li> </ul>
1b to 1e	WBH-1-S006 to WBH-1-S011	We considered aligning the trail along Meadow Lane, then utilising a grass verge adjacent to the coast road to Salthouse. From Salthouse to use public rights of way south of the coast road, and to continue west along the public right of way at Sarbury Hill. The route would then have linked to public rights of way at Walsey Hills and Snipes Marsh and onwards along The Skirts to Cley next the Sea (locations which are not visible in the maps).	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Sections of the grass verge are narrow with no passing places available with the coast road and a ditch on either side.</li> <li>■ The proposal would result in a change in the patterns and levels of visitor access at Cley Marshes Nature Reserve impacting on the landowner's ability to manage the site.</li> <li>■ There is an existing walked route closer to the sea.</li> </ul>

## 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 – Weybourne to Blakeney Chapel

#### 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 Glaven as far as Cley Sluices as indicated by the extent of the trail shown on map 1e.

#### Proposed route of the trail

- 1.3.2 In relation to route sections WBH-1-S001 to WBH-1-S023, the route, as initially determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 1a to 1e as the proposed route of the trail.
- 1.3.3 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.

#### Landward boundary of coastal margin

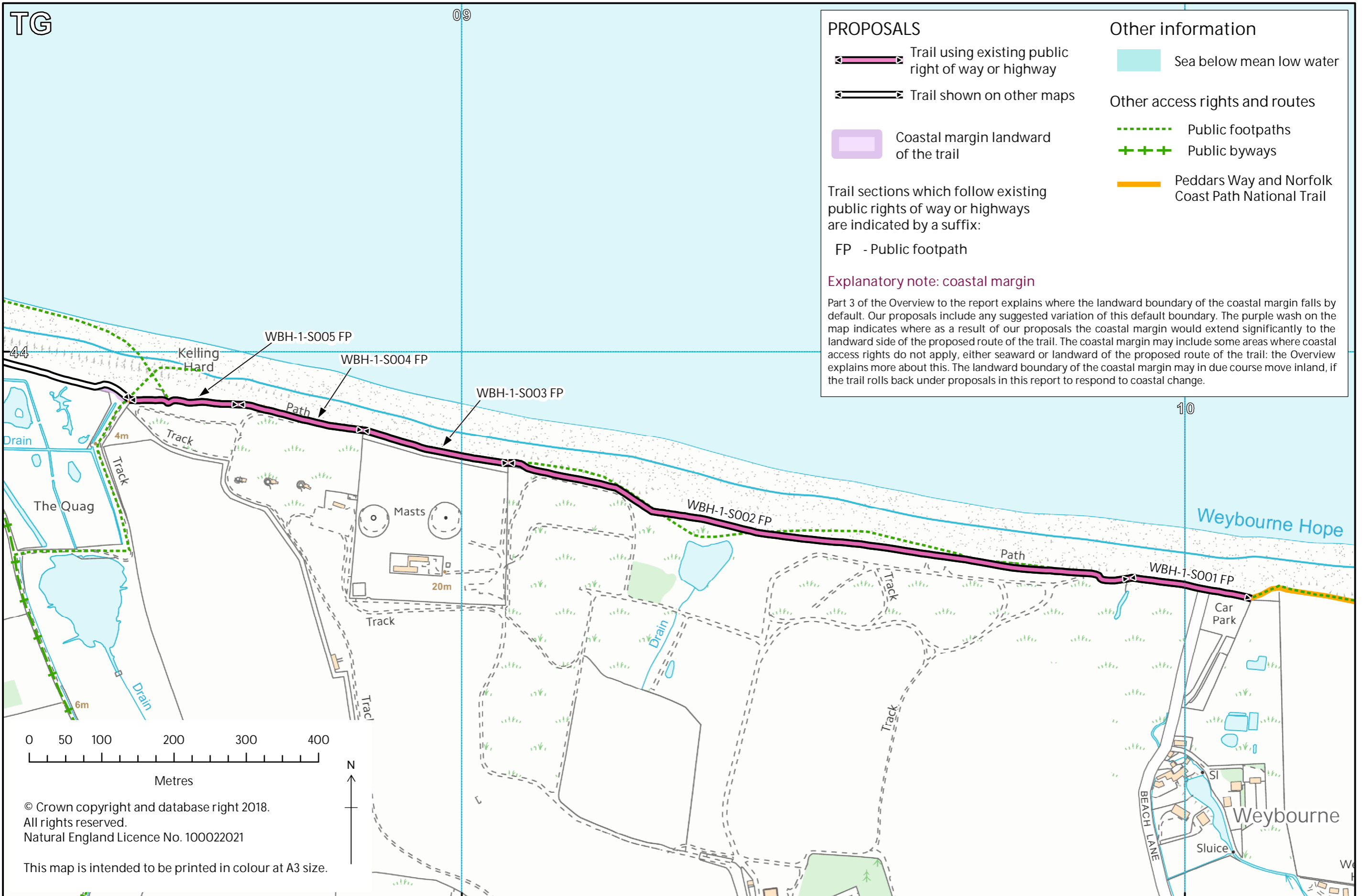
- 1.3.4 Adjacent to route sections WBH-1-S001 to WBH-1-S005 and WBH-1-S006 to WBH-1-S011, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the fence line which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public footpath and other existing walked routes, shown as the trail on maps 1a to 1e.
- 1.3.5 Adjacent to route sections WBH-1-S012 to WBH-1-S013, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the path shown as the trail on map 1e.
- 1.3.6 Adjacent to route sections WBH-1-S014 to WBH-1-S015, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the boundary wall which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 1e.

- 1.3.7 Adjacent to route sections WBH-1-S016 to WBH-1-S018 and WBH-1-S021 to WBH-1-S023, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the steps and path shown as the trail on map 1e.
- 1.3.8 Adjacent to route section WBH-1-S020, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the pavement shown as the trail on map 1e.

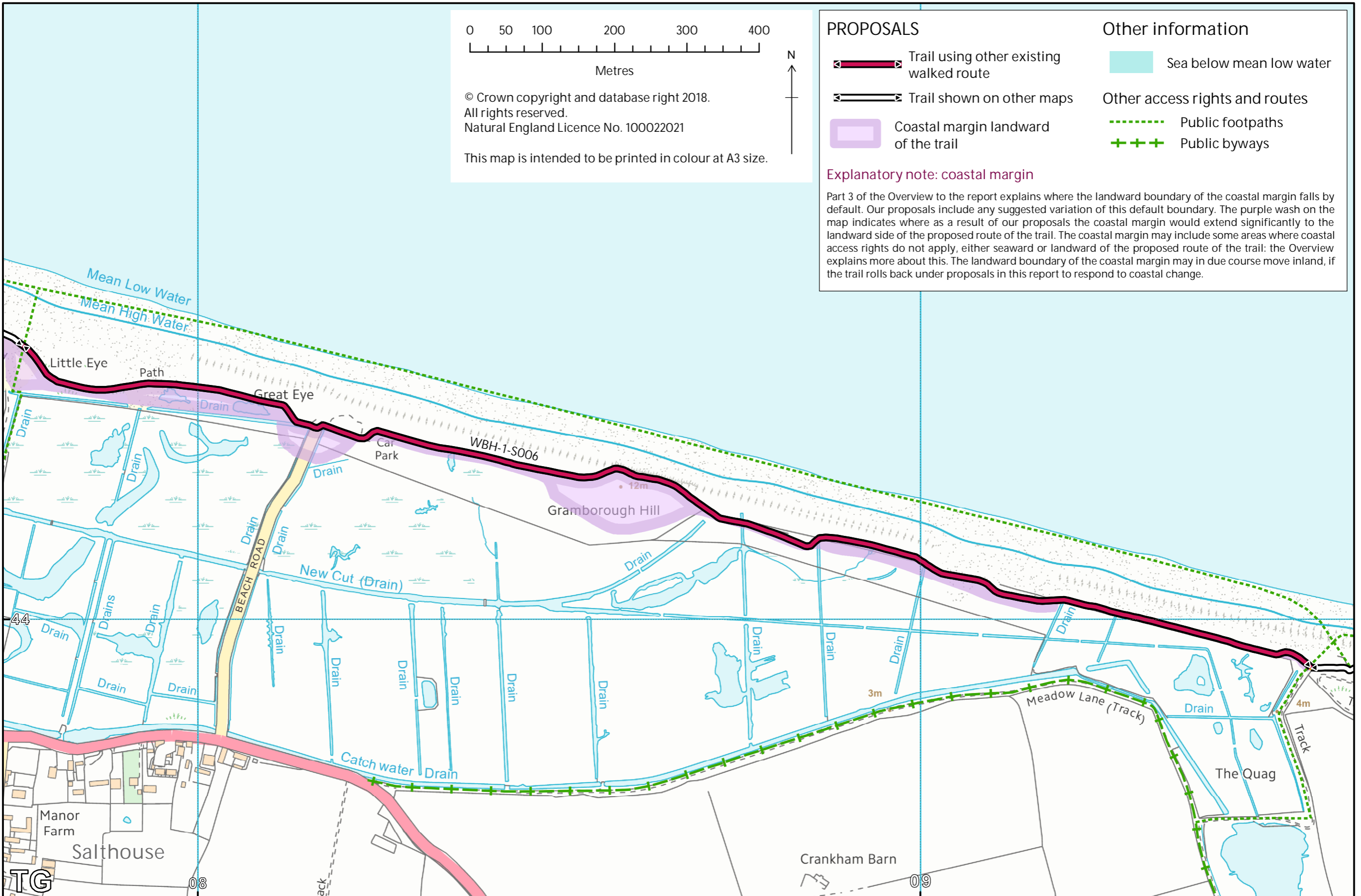
### **Local restrictions and exclusions**

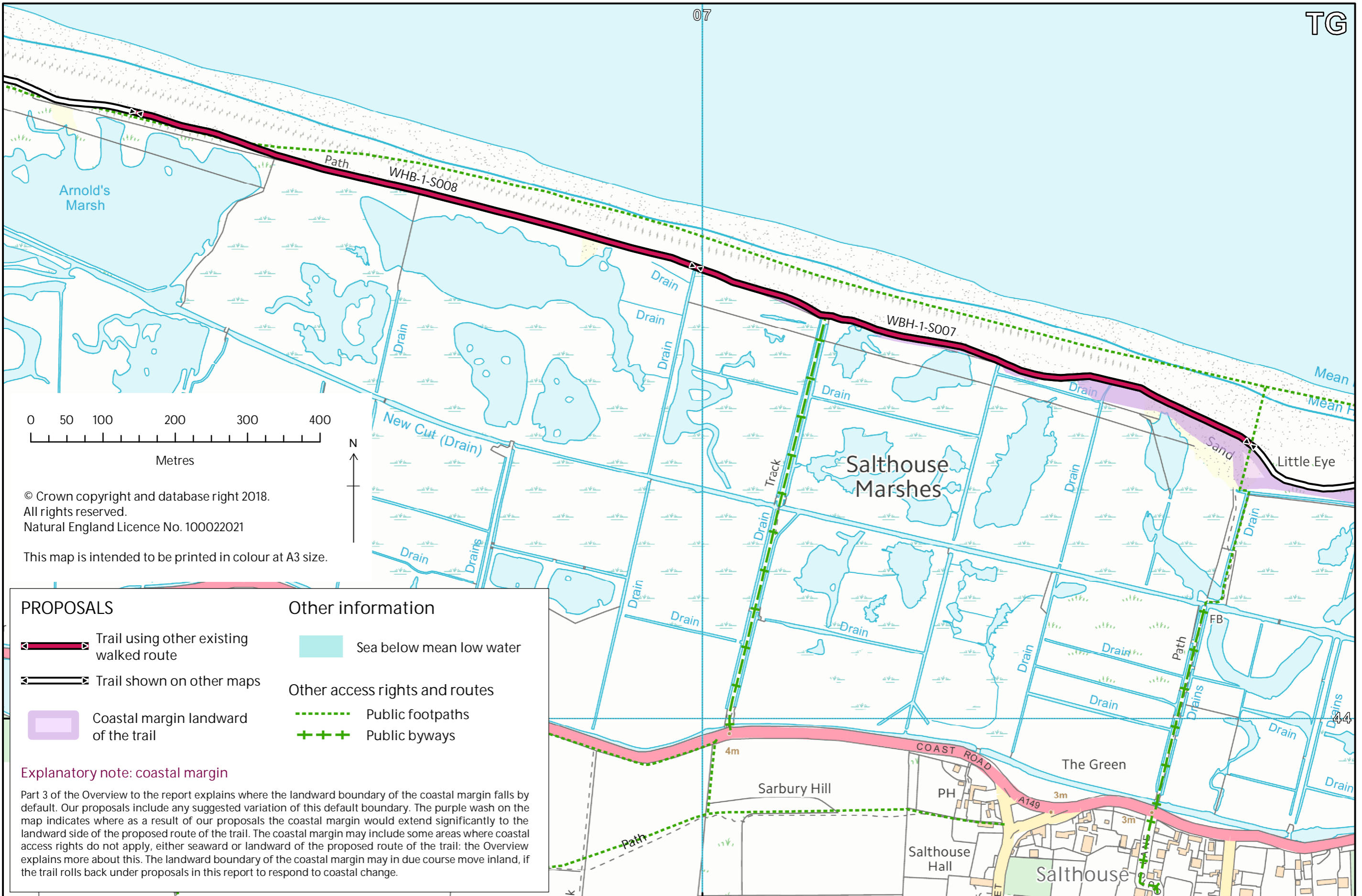
- 1.3.9 Natural England proposes to exclude and/or restrict access relevant to this length of coast as follows:
- i) access to zoned areas within the margin at Blakeney Point, seaward of section WBH-1-S011, will be excluded and restricted to protect breeding birds.
    - access will be excluded between 1 April to 15 August each year on the land shaded in brown shown on Overview map E.
    - people with dogs will be excluded between 1 April to 15 August each year on the land cross hatched in brown shown on Overview map E.
    - accompanied dogs must be kept on short leads between 1 April to 15 August each year, on the land hatched in brown shown on Overview map E.
  - ii) access to zoned areas within the margin at Blakeney Point, seaward of section WBH-1-S011, will be excluded to protect seals
    - access will be excluded all year round on land shaded in brown shown on Overview map F.
    - access will be excluded between 25 October to 25 January each year on land cross hatched in brown shown on Overview map F.

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






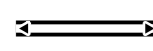





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This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.



**PROPOSALS**

-  Trail using other existing walked route
-  Trail shown on other maps
-  Coastal margin landward of the trail

**Other information**

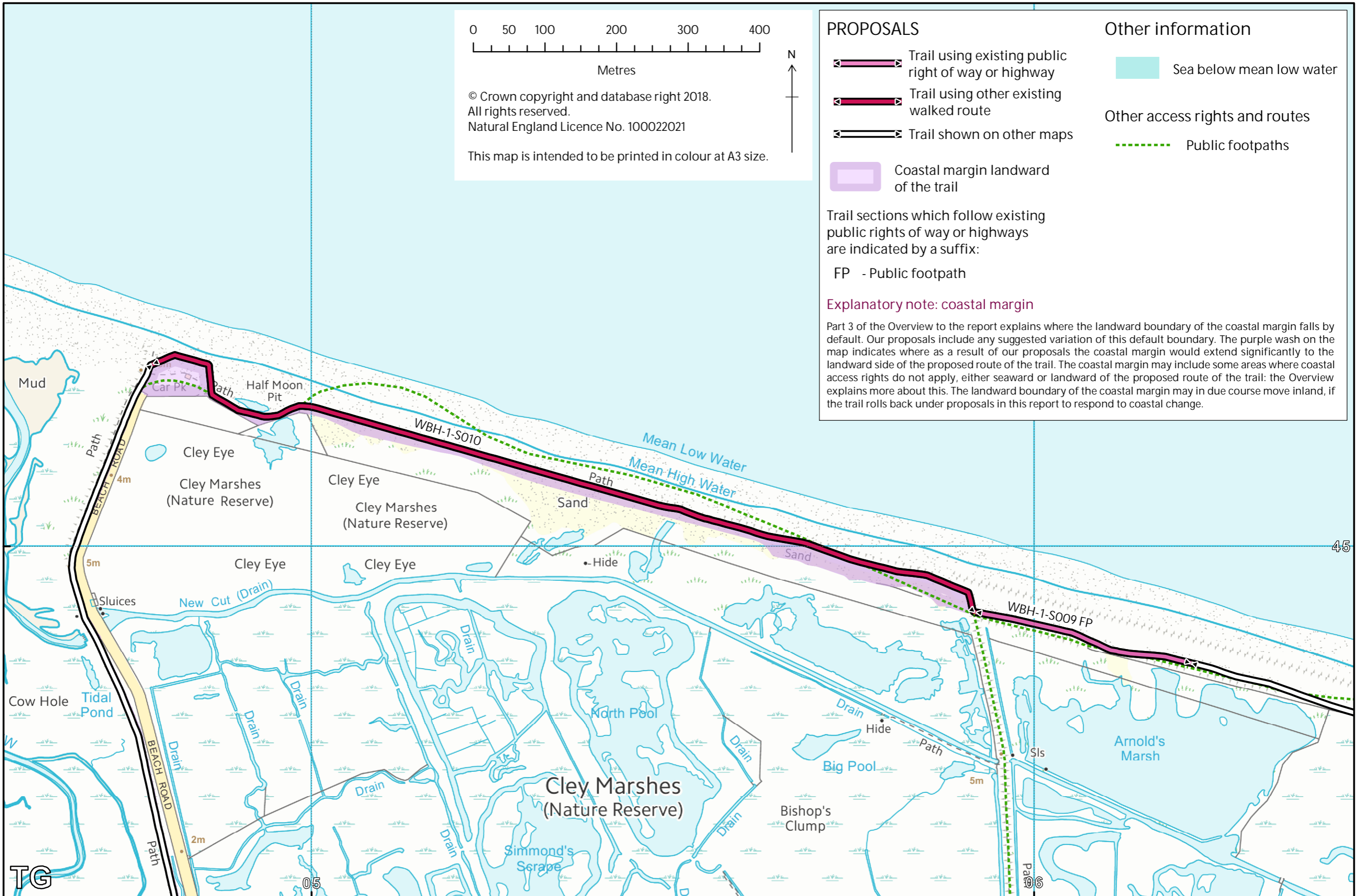
 Sea below mean low water

**Other access rights and routes**

-  Public footpaths
-  Public byways

**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 using other existing walked route
- Trail shown on other maps
- Coastal margin landward of the trail

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

FP - Public footpath

**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.

**Other information**

- Sea below mean low water
- Other access rights and routes**
- Public footpaths

