

Chapter 4:

# Burnham Overy Staithe to Brancaster

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

## Part 4.1: Introduction

<b>Start Point:</b>	<b>Burnham Overy Staithe</b> (grid reference: TF8445 4435)
<b>End Point:</b>	<b>London Street, Brancaster</b> (grid reference: TF7728 4420)
<b>Relevant Maps:</b>	<b>4a to 4e</b>

### Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

#### The Trail:

- 4.1.1 Follows the route of the existing waymarked Norfolk Coast Path National Trail along this length of coast.
- 4.1.2 Follows the coastline but extensive areas of saltmarsh seaward of the trail mean that the sea is often only seen at a distance.
- 4.1.3 The Norfolk Coast Path National Trail generally follows the coast over this length and for the most part we propose adopting the walked line of this route as the line of the England Coast Path. However, there are places where we have proposed improvements to the existing route line, and furthermore there may be 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. In both situations, 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

- 4.1.4 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation 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
- Roman Fort at Brancaster (Branodunum) Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)

We have assessed the potential impacts of our proposals 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.

- 4.1.5 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 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

- 4.1.6 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, at Burnham Deepdale it may not be entirely suitable for people with reduced mobility because there is a set of steps to ascend/descend along the proposed trail (see map 4c).

- 4.1.7 East of Brancaster, the existing metal barrier across the trail will be replaced with a kissing gate (see map 4e). 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

- 4.1.8 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 Norton Sluice (map 4a) which is the first public foot crossing point over the River Burn.

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

- 4.1.9 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 4.2.1 below.

4.1.10 At Brancaster Staithe (route sections WBH-4-S022 and WBH-4-S023 (map 4d) and Brancaster (route section WBH-4-S025, map 4e), we have used our discretion to propose the inclusion of additional, more extensive landward areas within the coastal margin, to secure or enhance public enjoyment of this part of the coast. The owners of the land are 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'.**

4.1.11 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**

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

- at Brancaster, access will be made easier by replacing an existing metal barrier with a kissing gate

4.1.13 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**

4.1.14 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 4.2.1 below for details of the sections likely to be affected in the foreseeable future.

4.1.15 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 part 6e - 'Coastal processes' and part 9 - '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: Burnham Overy Staithe to Brancaster

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	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)
4a	WBH-4-S001	Public highway (road)	Tarmac	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the trail	Not used	None
	WBH-4-S002 to WBH-4-S005	Public footway (pavement)	Tarmac	Yes - normal	Pavement edge	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-4-S006	Public footpath	Bare soil / grass	Yes - normal	Hedgerow	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-4-S007	Public footpath	Bare soil (ploughed)	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the trail	Not used	None
	WBH-4-S008 and WBH-4-S009	Public footpath	Grass	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the trail	Not used	None
4a, 4b & 4c	WBH-4-S010 to WBH-4-S012	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the path	Clarity and cohesion	None
4c	WBH-4-S013	Restricted byway	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the trail	Not used	None
	WBH-4-S014	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
4d	WBH-4-S015	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Various	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-4-S016	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the trail	Not used	None
	WBH-4-S017	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes - normal	Various	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-4-S018	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the trail	Not used	None
	WBH-4-S019*	Other existing walked route	Gravel	Yes - normal	Various	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-4-S020	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Various	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-4-S021	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Various	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-4-S022	Public footpath	Boardwalk	Yes - normal	Hedgerow	Additional landward area	None
	WBH-4-S023	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Fence line	Additional landward area	None
	WBH-4-S024	Public footpath	Boardwalk	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the boardwalk	Clarity and cohesion	None

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)
4e	WBH-4-S025	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes - normal	Hedgerow	Additional landward area	None
	WBH-4-S026	Public footpath	Boardwalk	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the boardwalk	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-4-S027	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes - normal	Wall	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-4-S028	Public footpath	Boardwalk	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the boardwalk	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-4-S029	Public footpath	Bare soil (compacted)	Yes - normal	Wall	Clarity and cohesion	None
	WBH-4-S030	Public footpath	Boardwalk	Yes - normal	Landward edge of the boardwalk	Clarity and cohesion	None

#### 4.2.2 Other options considered: Maps 4a to 4e: Burnham Overy Staithe to Brancaster

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
4d	WBH-4-S019	We considered aligning the trail along the mapped Norfolk Coast Path National Trail inland of the proposed trail.	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The proposed route is the currently promoted, walked and maintained line of the Norfolk Coast Path National Trail.</li> </ul>

## 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 – Burnham Overy Staithe to Brancaster

#### Discretion to include an estuary

- 4.3.1 Natural England proposes to exercise its functions as if the sea included the estuarial waters of the River Burn near Burnham Overy Staithe as far as Norton Sluice as indicated by the extent of the trail shown on map 4a.

#### Proposed route of the trail

- 4.3.2 In relation to route sections WBH-4-S001 to WBH-4-S030, 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.

- 4.3.3 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

- 4.3.4 Adjacent to route sections WBH-4-S002 to WBH-4-S005, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the pavement shown as the trail on map 4a.
- 4.3.5 Adjacent to route sections WBH-4-S006 and WBH-4-S022, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing hedgerows which, at the time of writing this report, are landward of the public footpaths shown as the trail on maps 4a and 4d.
- 4.3.6 Adjacent to route sections WBH-4-S010 to WBH-4-S012, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the path shown as the trail on maps 4a to 4c.

- 4.3.7 Adjacent to route sections WBH-4-S015, WBH-4-S017 and WBH-4-S019 to WBH-4-S021, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing various boundaries which, at the time of writing this report, are landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 4d.
- 4.3.8 Adjacent to route sections WBH-4-S014 and WBH-4-S023, 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 maps 4c and 4d.
- 4.3.9 Adjacent to route sections WBH-4-S027 and WBH-4-S029 the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing walls which, at the time of writing this report, are landward of the public footpath shown as the trail on map 4e.
- 4.3.10 Adjacent to route sections WBH-4-S024, WBH-4-S026, WBH-4-S028 and WBH-4-S030 the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the boardwalk shown as the trail on map 4e.
- 4.3.11 Adjacent to route section WBH-4-S025, the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing boundary hedges of two fields which make up part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Branodunum, as indicated by the coastal margin landward of the trail on map 4e.











