



**Assessment of Coastal Access proposals under  
regulation 63 of the  
Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended)  
(‘Habitats Regulations Assessment’)**

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**Assessment of England Coast Path proposals between  
Newquay and Penzance**

**On Penhale Dunes Special Area of Conservation  
Godrevy Head to St Agnes Special Area of Conservation  
Land’s End and Cape Bank Special Area of Conservation  
Bristol Channel Approaches Special Area of Conservation**

**20 June 2019**



# Assessment of Coastal Access proposals under regulation 63 of the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) ('Habitats Regulations Assessment')

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# Assessment of Coastal Access proposals under regulation 63 of the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) ('Habitats Regulations Assessment')

## Summary

### I) Introduction

This is a record of the Habitats Regulations Assessment ('HRA') undertaken by Natural England (in its role of competent authority) in accordance with the assessment and review provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('the Habitats Regulations').

Natural England has a statutory duty under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to improve access to the English coast. This assessment considers the potential impacts of our detailed proposals for coastal access from Newquay to Penzance on the following sites of international importance for wildlife:

- Godrevy Head to St Agnes Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Lands End and Cape Bank SAC
- Penhale Dunes SAC
- Bristol Channel Approaches SAC

This assessment should be read alongside Natural England's related Coastal Access Reports which between them fully describe and explain its access proposals for the stretch as a whole. This summary explains common principles, background and reports which explain how we propose to implement coastal access along each of the constituent lengths within the stretch.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-coast-path-from-newquay-to-penzance-comment-on-proposals>

### II) Background

The main wildlife interests for this stretch of coast are summarised in Table 1 (see section B1 for a full list of qualifying features).

**Table 1: Summary of the main wildlife interest**

Interest	Description
<b>Sand Dunes</b>	This stretch includes a number of significant sand dune sites. The key feature found in Penhale Dunes is the extensive and exposed calcareous dune system, forming the largest dune system in Cornwall with the majority of the dunes being fixed grey dunes. It also includes rare dune slacks (wet hollows within the dune system) as well as important invertebrates
<b>Plant Species</b>	Vascular plant species and lower plant species are qualifying features along this stretch in particular along Penhale Dunes. The majority of plants are associated with the coastal heath and maritime grassland found on the coastal slopes. Early gentian is found both along Penhale Dunes and Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC.



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<b>Heath</b>	Atlantic wet heath, maritime European dry heath, Dorset heath and gorse are found along the section that runs through Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC.
<b>Reefs</b>	Annex 1 rocky reef features, infralittoral rock and circalittoral rock are along the section that runs through Lands End and Cape Bank stretch. Both features are designated in two distinct parts, one area fringing the coast and one area further from the coast.
<b>Harbour Porpoise</b>	The sole qualifying feature of the Bristol Channel Approaches SAC

### III) Our approach

Natural England's approach to ensuring the protection of sensitive nature conservation features under the Coastal Access Programme is set out in section 4.9 Coastal Access: Natural England's Approved Scheme 2013 [Ref 1].

Our final published proposal for a stretch of England Coast Path is preceded by detailed local consideration of options for route alignment, the extent of the coastal margin and any requirement for restrictions, exclusions or seasonal alternative routes. The proposal is thoroughly considered before being finalised and initial ideas may be modified or rejected during the iterative design process, drawing on the range of relevant expertise available within Natural England.

Evidence is also gathered as appropriate from a range of other sources which can include information and data held locally by external partners or from the experience of local land owners, environmental consultants and occupiers. The approach includes looking at any current visitor management practices, either informal or formal. It also involves discussing our emerging conclusions as appropriate with key local interests such as land owners or occupiers, conservation organisations or the local access authority. In these ways, any nature conservation concerns are discussed early and constructive solutions identified as necessary.

The conclusions of our assessment are certified by both the member of staff responsible for developing the access proposal and the person responsible for considering any environmental impacts. This ensures appropriate separation of duties within Natural England.



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### IV) Aim and objectives for the design of our proposals

The new national arrangements for coastal access will establish a continuous well-maintained safe walking route around the coast between Newquay and Penzance with sea views where possible, while ensuring that designated sites are not adversely impacted by the proposed route and associated margin and clarify where people can access the foreshore and other parts of the coastal margin. Our proposals largely follow the line of the existing South West Coast Path, however occasional realignments of the path have been proposed in a number of locations where it was considered that the route could be improved by moving the trail closer to the sea and/or to a location which provides enhanced coastal views. These changes will influence how people use the coast for recreation and our aim in designing our detailed proposals has been to secure and enhance opportunities for people to enjoy their visit whilst ensuring appropriate protection for affected European sites.

Objectives for design of our detailed local proposals have been to:

- Avoid exacerbating disturbance at sensitive locations by making use of established paths
- Where there is no suitable established and regularly used coastal route, develop proposals that take account of risks to sensitive nature conservation features and incorporate mitigation as necessary in our proposals
- Clarify where people may access the foreshore and other parts of the coastal margin on foot for recreational purposes
- Work with local partners to design detailed proposals that take account of and complement efforts to manage access in sensitive locations
- Where practical, incorporate opportunities to raise people's awareness of this stretch of coast for wildlife and how people can help efforts to protect it, for example information boards/signage highlighting key wildlife and outlining what responsible visitor behaviour looks like.

### V) Conclusion

We have considered whether our detailed proposals for coastal access between Newquay and Penzance might have an impact on any of the features associated with the four designated European sites that occur along this stretch of coast, Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC, Land's End and Cape Bank SAC, Penhale Dunes SAC and Bristol Channel Approaches SAC. In Part C of this assessment we identify some possible risks to the relevant qualifying features and conclude that proposals for coastal access will not have a significant effect on these sites.

### VI) Implementation

Once a route for the trail has been confirmed by the Secretary of State, we will work with Cornwall Council to ensure any works on the ground are carried out with due regard to the conclusions of this appraisal and relevant statutory requirements.

### VII) Thanks

The development of our proposals has been informed by input from people with relevant expertise within Natural England and other key organisations. The proposals have been thoroughly considered before being finalised and our initial ideas were modified during an iterative design process. We are grateful to the Cornwall Wildlife Trust whose contributions have helped to inform development of our proposals.



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### **PART A: Introduction and information about the England Coast Path**

#### **A1. Introduction**

Natural England has a statutory duty under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to improve access to the English coast. The duty is in two parts: one relating to securing a long-distance walking route around the whole coast: we call this the England Coast Path; the other relating to a margin of coastal land associated with the route where in appropriate places people will be able to spread out and explore, rest or picnic.

To secure these objectives, we must submit reports to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs recommending where the route should be and identifying the associated coastal margin. The reports must follow the approach set out in our methodology (the Coastal Access Scheme), which – as the legislation requires – has been approved by the Secretary of State for this purpose.

Where implementation of a Coastal Access Report would be likely to have a significant effect on a site designated for its international importance for wildlife, called a 'European site'<sup>1</sup>, the report must be subject to special procedures designed to assess its likely significant effects.

The conclusions of this screening are certified by both the member of staff responsible for developing the access proposal and the person responsible for considering any environmental impacts. This ensures appropriate separation of duties within Natural England.

#### **A2. Details of the plan or project**

This assessment considers Natural England's proposals for coastal access along the stretch of coast between Newquay and Penzance. Our proposals to the Secretary of State for this stretch of coast are presented in a series of reports that explain how we propose to implement coastal access along each of the constituent lengths within the stretch. Within this assessment we consider each of the relevant reports, both separately and as an overall access proposal for the stretch in question.

Our proposals for coastal access have two main components:

- alignment of the England Coast Path; and,
- designation of coastal margin.

##### England Coast Path

A continuous walking route around the coast – the England Coast Path National Trail - will be established by joining up existing coastal paths and creating new sections of path where necessary. The route will be established and maintained to National Trail quality standards. The coastal path will be able to 'roll back' as the occasional cliffs on this stretch erode or slip, solving long-standing difficulties with maintaining a continuous route on this stretch of coast.

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<sup>1</sup> Ramsar sites are treated in the same way by UK government policy



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Where the coastline may be subject to erosion by the sea, we are able to propose that the trail is subject to 'roll back' so that it can keep pace with erosion/slippage, without further confirmation by the Secretary of State.

### Coastal Margin

An area of land associated with the proposed trail will become coastal margin, including all land seawards of the trail down to mean low water.

Coastal margin is typically subject to new coastal access rights, though there are some obvious exceptions to this. The nature and limitations of the new rights, and the key types of land excepted from them, are explained in more detail in Chapter 2 of our Coastal Access Scheme [Ref 1]. Where there are already public or local rights to do other things, these are normally unaffected and will continue to exist in parallel to the new coastal access rights. The exception to this principle is any pre-existing open access rights under Part 1 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) over land falling within the coastal margin: the new coastal access rights will apply in place of these.

Where public access on foot already takes place on land within the margin without any legal right for people to use the land in this way, the new coastal access rights will secure this existing use legally. Access secured in this way is subject to various national restrictions. It remains open to the owner of the land, should they wish, to continue tolerating other types of established public use not provided for by coastal access rights.

### Maintenance of the England Coast Path

The access proposals provide for the permanent establishment of a path and associated infrastructure. The England Coast Path will be part of the National Trails family of routes, for which there are national quality standards. Delivery is by local partnerships and there is regular reporting and scrutiny of key performance indicators, including the condition of the trail.

### Responding to future change

The legal framework that underpins coastal access allows for adaptation in light of future change. In such circumstances Natural England has powers to change the route of the trail and limit access rights over the coastal margin in ways that were not originally envisaged. These new powers can be used, as necessary, alongside informal management techniques and other measures to ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained in light of unforeseen future change.

### Establishment of the trail

Establishment works to make the trail fit for use and prepare for opening will be carried out before the new public rights come into force on this stretch. Details of the works to be carried out and the estimated cost are provided in the access proposals. The cost of establishment works will be met by Natural England.



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Works on the ground to implement the proposals will be carried out by Cornwall Council, subject to any further necessary consents being obtained, including to undertake operations on a SSSI. Natural England will provide further advice to the local authority carrying out the work as necessary.

Of particular relevance to this assessment is that the proposed route between Newquay and Penzance almost entirely follows the established South West Coast Path (SWCP) with only minor route deviations. It is not anticipated there will be any significant changes to current levels or patterns of usage of either the path or land that falls within the proposed margin (much of which is already designated as Open Access). The SWCP is a National Trail and is a high quality, well maintained walking route with a strong, internationally recognised identity, and its inclusion as part of the England Coast Path is not expected to significantly change how this stretch of coast is used for recreation.





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### PART B: Information about the European Site(s) which could be affected

#### B1. Brief description of the European Sites(s) and their Qualifying Features

##### **Bristol Channel Approaches SAC**

The Bristol Channel Approaches SAC lies along the southwest coasts of Wales and England. This site straddles the Bristol Channel from Carmarthen Bay in the north to the northern coasts of Devon and Cornwall in the south. Designated for the protection of the harbour porpoise *Phocoena phocoena*, this site supports an estimated 4.7% of the UK Celtic and Irish Sea (CIS) Management Unit population. This site is recognised as important for porpoises particularly during the winter when high densities persistently occur throughout the site.

##### **Penhale Dunes SAC**

Penhale Dunes is a complex of sand dunes and a protected area for its wildlife, on the north Cornwall coast. It is the most extensive system of sand dunes in Cornwall, containing the highest dunes in Britain at a maximum height of 90 m above sea level. The total area of this SAC is approximately 621 ha and this includes land currently fenced off by the MOD. Penhale Dunes is an important sand dune site for shore dock, early gentian and petalwort.

##### **Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC**

This section of coastline supports a range of maritime vegetation communities including heathland, grassland and dune grassland. The SAC qualifies for its matrix of dry and wet heathland (including stands of Dorset heath) and supports an important population of the vascular plant early gentian.

##### **Lands End and Cape Bank SAC**

Lands End & Cape Bank SAC is designated for its Annex I rocky reef features (sub-features infralittoral rock, and circalittoral rock). The site is designated in two distinct parts: one area fringing the coast, and one area further from the coast. Due to its south-westerly position on the British coast, the site is fully exposed to strong tidal currents and Atlantic swells. The coastal portion of the site is characterised by tide-swept kelp forests and sparse kelp parks with a lower layer of dense foliose red, green and brown algae. In deeper waters throughout the site, there are bryozoans and hydroid turf communities. Water movement by currents and wave action also encourages dense growths of sponges, sea squirts, anemones and soft corals. The species composition of the reef biotopes, including species such as sea fans and cup corals, is also influenced by the warming of the Gulf Stream, and to a lesser extent the Lusitanian current from the south.

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**Table 2- Qualifying features**

Qualifying feature	Bristol Channel SAC	Penhale Sands SAC	Godrevy Head to St. Agnes SAC	Lands End to Cape Bank SAC
H2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i>		√		
H2130 Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation		√		
H2170 Dunes with <i>Salix repens ssp. argentea (Salicion arenariae)</i>		√		
H2190 Humid dune slacks		√		
S1395 Petalwort <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>		√		
S1441 Shore dock <i>Rumex rupestris</i>		√		
S1654 Early gentian <i>Gentianella anglica</i>		√	√	
H4020 Temperate Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica ciliaris</i> and <i>E. tetralix</i>			√	
H4030 European dry heaths			√	
H1170 Reefs (Coastal and offshore upstanding reef)				√
S1351 Harbour porpoise <i>Phocoena</i>	√			



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### B2. European Site Conservation Objectives (including supplementary advice)

Natural England provides advice about the Conservation Objectives for European Sites in England in its role as the statutory nature conservation body. These Objectives (including any Supplementary Advice which may be available) are the necessary context for all HRAs.

The overarching Conservation Objectives for every European Site in England are to ensure that the integrity of each site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and that each site contributes to achieving the aims of the Habitats Regulations, by either maintaining or restoring (as appropriate):

- The extent and distribution of their qualifying natural habitats,
- The structure and function (including typical species) of their qualifying natural habitats,
- The supporting processes on which their qualifying natural habitats rely,
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of their qualifying features rely,
- The population of each of their qualifying features, and
- The distribution of their qualifying features within the site.

Where Conservation Objectives Supplementary Advice is available, which provides further detail about the features' structure, function and supporting processes mentioned above, the implications of the plan or project on the specific attributes and targets listed in the advice will be taken into account in this assessment.

In light of the European Sites which could be affected by the plan or project, this assessment will be informed by the following site specific Conservation Objectives including any available supplementary advice available at Natural England's *Dedicated Sites Viewer*, available via these links.

Penhale Dunes SAC

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteGeneralDetail.aspx?SiteCode=UK0012559&SiteName=Penhale&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>

Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteGeneralDetail.aspx?SiteCode=UK0012549&SiteName=Godrevy&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>

Lands End and Cape Bank SAC

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteGeneralDetail.aspx?SiteCode=UK0030375&SiteName=LandsEnd&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>

Bristol Channel Approaches SAC

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteGeneralDetail.aspx?SiteCode=UK0030396&SiteName=Bristol&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>



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### PART C: Screening of the plan or project for appropriate assessment

#### C1. Is the plan or project either directly connected with or necessary to the conservation management of the European Site's qualifying features?

The Coastal Access Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the European sites for nature conservation listed in B1 above.

**Conclusion:**

As the plan or project is not either directly connected or necessary to the management of all of the European site(s)'s qualifying features, and/or contains non-conservation elements, further Habitats Regulations assessment is required.

#### C2. Is there a likelihood [or risk] of significant [adverse] effects ('LSE')?

This section details whether those constituent elements of the plan or project which are (a) not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the European Site(s) features and (b) could conceivably adversely affect a European site, would have a **likely significant effect**, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, upon the European sites and which could undermine the achievement of the site's conservation objectives referred to in section B2.

In accordance with European case law, this HRA has considered an effect to be 'likely' if it '*cannot be excluded on the basis of objective information*' and is 'significant' if it '*undermines the conservation objectives*'. In accordance with Defra guidance on the approach to be taken to this decision, in plain English, the test asks whether the plan or project '*may*' have a significant effect (i.e. there is a risk or a possibility of such an effect).

This assessment of risk therefore takes into account the precautionary principle (where there is scientific doubt) and **excludes**, at this stage, any measures proposed in the submitted details of the plan/project that are specifically intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on the European site(s).

Each of the project elements has been tested in view of the European Site Conservation Objectives and against each of the relevant European site qualifying features. An assessment of potential effects using best available evidence and information has been made.

##### C2.1 Risk of Significant Effects Alone

The first step is to consider whether any elements of the project are likely to have a significant effect upon a European site 'alone' (that is when considered in the context of the prevailing environmental conditions



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at the site but in isolation of the combined effects of any other 'plans and projects'). Such effects do not include those deemed to be so insignificant as to be trivial or inconsequential.

In this section, we assess risks to qualifying features, taking account of their sensitivity to coastal walking and other recreational activities associated with coastal access proposals, and in view of each site's Conservation Objectives.

For the purposes of this assessment, the qualifying features of the European Sites listed in B1 have been grouped as follows to streamline the process and avoid unnecessary repetition:

**Table 3. Feature Groups**

Feature Group	Qualifying feature (s)
Sand Dune Habitats	Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> ( <i>Salicion arenariae</i> ) Humid dune slacks
Heaths	Temperate Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica ciliaris</i> and <i>E. tetralix</i> European dry heaths
Reefs	<i>Reefs (Coastal and offshore upstanding reef)</i>
Lower Plant Species	Petalwort <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>
Vascular Plant species	Shore dock <i>Rumex rupestris</i> Early gentian <i>Gentianella anglica</i>
Porpoise	Harbour porpoise <i>Phocoena</i>

**Table 5. Assessment of likely significant effects alone**

Feature	Relevant pressure	Sensitivity to coastal access proposals	Assessment of risk to site conservation objectives	LSE alone?
Sand dune habitats	Physical damage	Dunes are somewhat resilient to trampling, especially larger dune systems Walking can be a contributing agent to management of the dunes, helping to maintain eg mobility / areas of bare sand or low vegetation	No appreciable risk Penhale Sands will become part of the coastal margin. Prohibition of access to the northern dunes will continue, as land subject to military bylaws is excepted from coastal access rights. The southern dunes are already open to the public via multiple access points and a dense network of informal paths is already present on the ground. Public access will be secured by the proposals, but the	No



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Feature	Relevant pressure	Sensitivity to coastal access proposals	Assessment of risk to site conservation objectives	LSE alone?
		Care needed over siting of infrastructure or if significant change to access patterns is proposed such as re-routing established paths	<p>pattern of use on the ground is unlikely to be affected.</p> <p>Note the Northern section of the dune system that is owned by the MOD is 350 ha, whereas the Southern section of the dunes system that is already subject to informal public access is 110 ha.</p> <p>The Supplementary Advice package for the site details recreational trampling as an issue with the Humid Dunes feature. However, Coastal Access will not increase public access to the dune slacks, particularly as the northern section of the site will remain closed off to the public. However, set in context, the main reason the site is in poor condition is due to vegetation succession. There are projects in the pipeline to tackle this – light trampling can be a contributing factor to keeping an open habitat</p>	
Sand dune habitats	Nutrient enrichment	Maintaining a nutrient poor substrate is an important factor for many dune plants Dog Fouling part of the concern	<p>No appreciable risk</p> <p>The Site Improvement Plan and Supplementary Guidance for the site details dog fouling as an issue that is causing nutrient enrichment to areas of the site where dog use is high.</p> <p>Existing management actions to tackle the issue include signage and dog waste bins being located at site entry points.</p> <p>Coastal Access proposals will not interfere with such measures and will not exacerbate the issue further due to the existing level of public access that already occurs on the southern section of the site. Funding linked to new development in the area will help this issue through an integrated strategy and will guard against displacing the problem to a more sensitive part of the site.</p>	No
Heaths	Physical damage	Heathland vegetation is somewhat resilient to trampling, however, this	<p>No appreciable risk</p> <p>No changes to the alignment of the South West Coast Path are proposed through or</p>	No

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Feature	Relevant pressure	Sensitivity to coastal access proposals	Assessment of risk to site conservation objectives	LSE alone?
		feature could be impacted if it were proposed establish new sections of path, or the coast path was not properly maintained, leading to erosion. This risk of erosion is greatest on steep coastal slopes where scars may develop if the path is not properly maintained with drainage and surfacing appropriate to the situation.	in the vicinity of the Coastal Heathland habitat. The South West Coast Path will continue to be proactively managed to National Trail quality standards under our proposals. In places where the coast path traverses coastal slopes with heathland vegetation, people tend to stick to well-defined paths because they provide the most suitable surface for walking. For these reasons we have concluded that our proposals will not adversely affect this feature.	
Reefs	None	Our access proposals (including the associated coastal margin) extend to Mean Low Water (MLW) and therefore this feature lies outside the scope of this assessment.	No risk The entirety of the rocky reef habitat lies below MLW and so there is no possible pathway of impact from our coastal access proposals and hence no risk to the site conservation objectives.	No
Lower plant species - petalwort	Trampling of vegetation	Petalwort occurs mainly in stable dune slacks with very low vegetation, firm or compacted substrata and that are wet or flooded at least some winters. Lack of nutrients and heavy grazing by rabbits are usually important factors to maintain these conditions. Light trampling is tolerated and can help to play a role in maintaining suitable habitat.	No appreciable risk Along this stretch of coast, petalwort occurs in dune slacks at Penhale Sands. Light trampling is considered to be beneficial to helping to maintain habitat favoured by petalwort. No changes to the alignment of the SWCP are proposed that could impact on slacks known to contain petalwort populations. There is de facto open access to the southern part of the site. A right of access on foot will be secured by the proposals but this technical change is unlikely to make a practical difference to the current pattern of use on the ground.	No
Vascular plant species – shore dock and early gentian	Trampling of vegetation	Shore dock is somewhat resilient to trampling while early gentian grows on bare ground or in thin turf that is kept open by grazing or trampling.	No appreciable risk No changes to the alignment of the SWCP are proposed that could impact on known shore dock or early gentian populations.	No



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Feature	Relevant pressure	Sensitivity to coastal access proposals	Assessment of risk to site conservation objectives	LSE alone?
		However, repeated, focused trampling could have a long term effect due to physical damage to plants or possibly erosion of the substrate in which they grow.	Both shore dock and early gentian occur in dune slacks at Penhale that will become part of the coastal margin. Prohibition of access to the northern dunes will continue, as land subject to military bylaws is exempted from coastal access rights. Penhale Sands is a popular visitor destination and the southern dunes are already open to the public via multiple access points and a dense network of informal paths. A right of access on foot will be secured by the proposals but this technical change is unlikely to make a practical difference to the current pattern of use on the ground. Early gentian also occurs on open coastal slopes at Godrevy Head that will form part of the coastal margin. Here, the steep terrain means that walkers tend to stick to the defined path and there is no appreciable risk to gentian populations from excessive trampling.	
Harbour Porpoise	None	Our access proposals (including the associated coastal margin) extend to Mean Low Water (MLW) and therefore this feature lies outside the scope of this assessment.	No risk The boundaries of this site and the associated feature are below MLW and therefore will not be affected by our proposals for coastal access	No

**Conclusion:**

The plan or project alone is unlikely to have a significant effect on the following qualifying feature groups:

- Sand dune habitats (Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria*, fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation, dunes with *Salix repens* ssp. *argentea* (*Salicion arenariae*) and humid dune slacks)
- Heaths (temperate Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica ciliaris* and *E. tetralix* and European dry heaths)
- Reefs
- Lower plants (petalwort)
- Vascular plants (shore dock and early gentian)
- Harbour porpoise





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### C2.2 Risk of Significant Effects in-combination with the effects from other plans and projects

The need for further assessment of the risk of in-combination effects is considered here.

Natural England considers that it is the appreciable risks of effects (from a proposed plan or project) that are not themselves considered to be significant alone which must be further assessed to determine whether they could have a combined effect significant enough to require an appropriate assessment.

No risks have been identified as being significant alone and it is considered that there are no other residual and appreciable risks likely to arise from this project which have the potential to act in-combination with similar risks from other proposed plans or projects to also become significant. It has therefore been excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the project is likely to have a significant effect in-combination with other proposed plans or projects.

### C3. Overall Screening Decision for the Plan/Project

On the basis of the details submitted, Natural England has considered the plan or project under Regulation 63(1) (a) of the Habitats Regulations and made an assessment of whether it will have a likely significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

**In light of sections C1 and C2 of this assessment above, Natural England has concluded:**

As the plan or project is unlikely to have significant effects (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on any Qualifying Features of the European Site(s), no further appropriate assessment is required.



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### PART E: Permission decision with respect to European Sites

Natural England has a statutory duty under section 296 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to improve access to the English coast. To fulfil this duty, Natural England is required to make proposals to the Secretary of State under section 51 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. In making proposals, Natural England, as the relevant competent authority, is required to carry out a HRA under Regulation 63 of the Habitats Regulations.

We, Natural England, are satisfied that our proposals to improve access to the English coast between Newquay and Penzance are fully compatible with the relevant European site conservation objectives.

It is open to the Secretary of State to consider these proposals and make a decision about whether to approve them, with or without modifications. If the Secretary of State is minded to modify our proposals, further assessment under the Habitats Regulations may be needed before approval is given.

### Certification

<b>Assessment prepared and completed by:</b>	Angela Hennell, Lead Adviser	<i>On behalf of the Coastal Access Programme Team</i>
<b>Date</b>	6 June 2019	
<b>HRA approved:</b>	David Marshall	<i>Senior officer with responsibility for protected sites</i>
<b>Date</b>	12 June 2019	



## Assessment of Coastal Access proposals under regulation 63 of the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) ('Habitats Regulations Assessment')

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### References to evidence

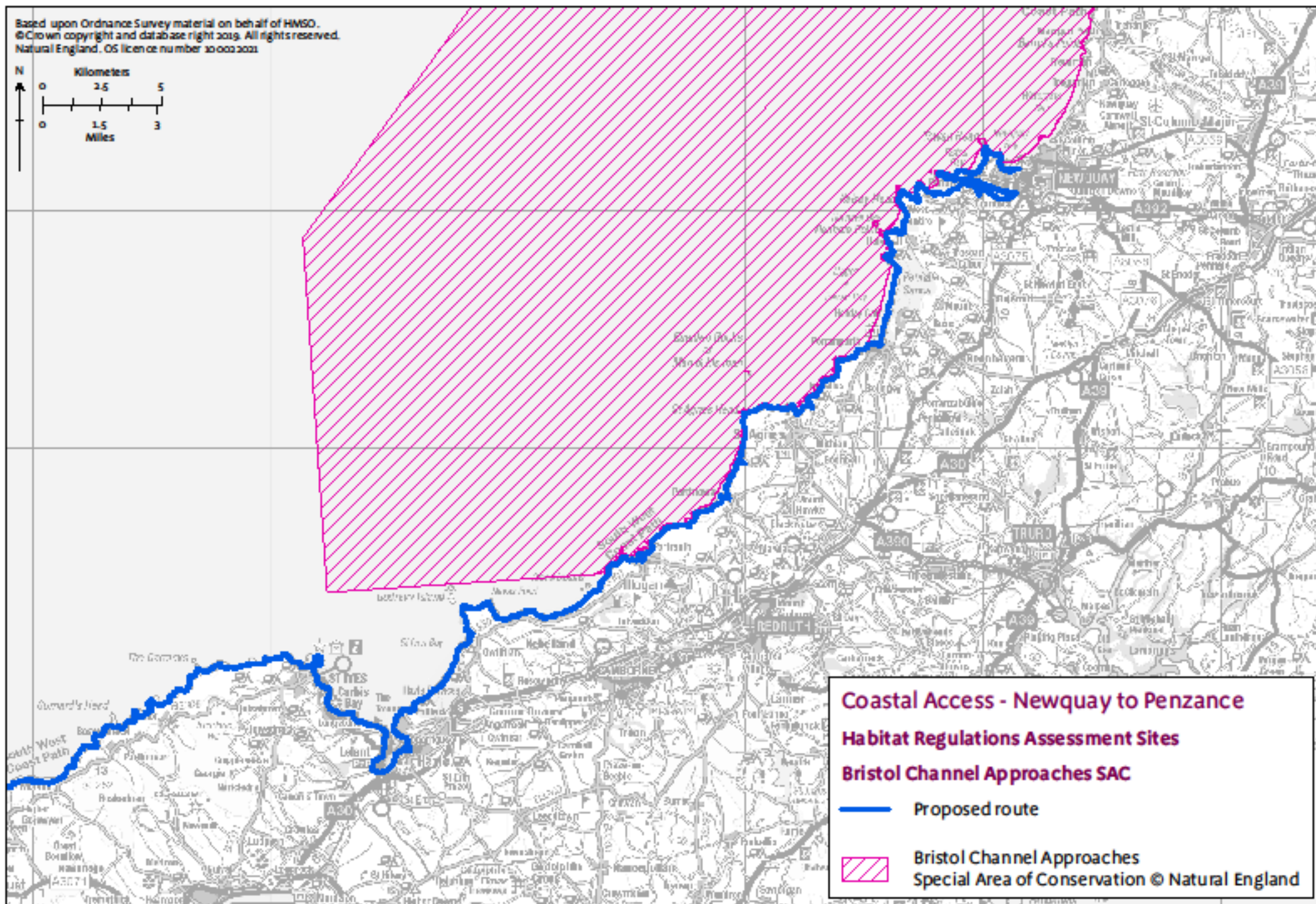
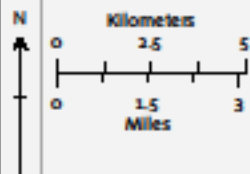
1. NATURAL ENGLAND. 2013. Coastal Access Natural England's Approved Scheme 2013. Published by Natural England Catalogue Code: NE446

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5327964912746496?category=50007>

2. NATURAL ENGLAND. 2018. Supplementary Advice package and Site Improvement plan for Penhale Dunes SAC -

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteGeneralDetail.aspx?SiteCode=UK0012559&SiteName=Penhale&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>

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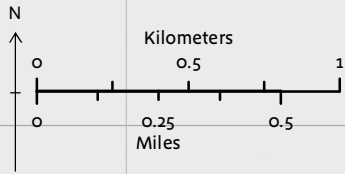
# Coastal Access - Newquay to Penzance

## Habitat Regulations Assessment Sites

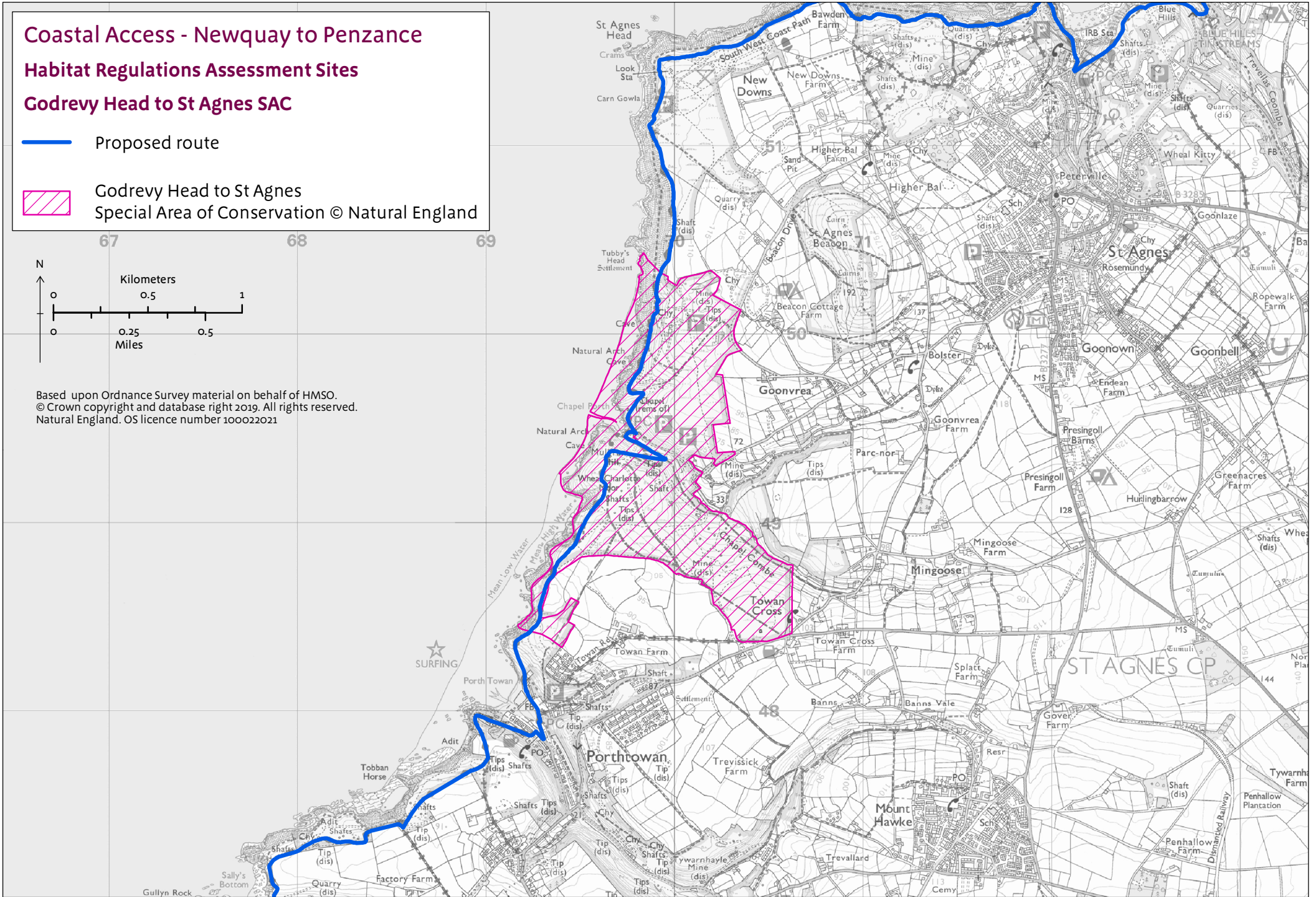
### Godrevy Head to St Agnes SAC

 Proposed route

 Godrevy Head to St Agnes  
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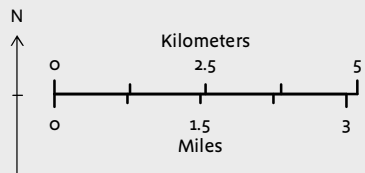
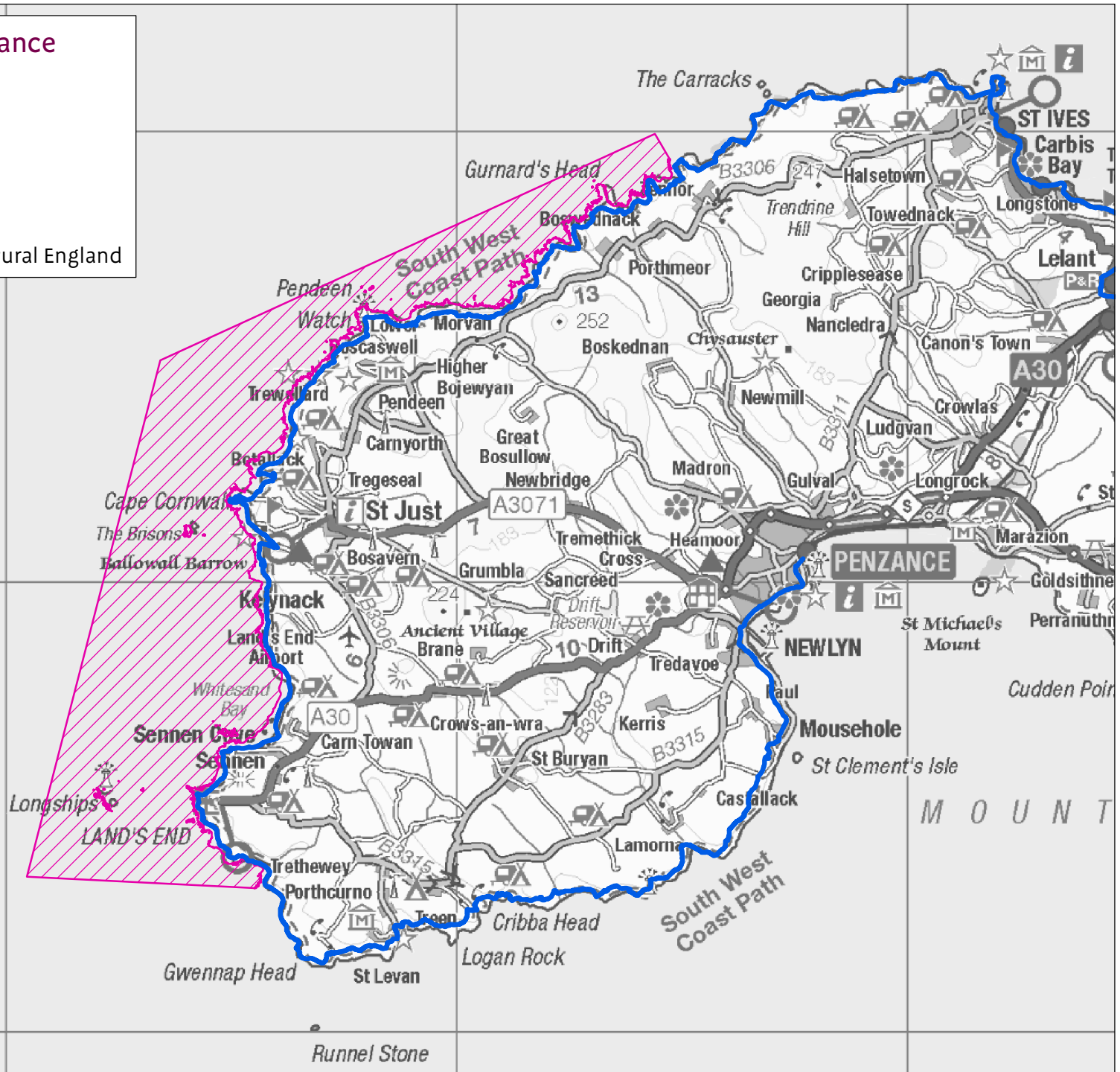
# Coastal Access - Newquay to Penzance

## Habitat Regulations Assessment Sites

### Lands End and Cape Bank SAC

Proposed route

Lands End and Cape Bank  
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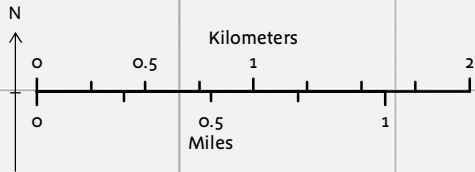
# Coastal Access - Newquay to Penzance

## Habitat Regulations Assessment Sites

### Penhale Dunes SAC

 Proposed route

 Penhale Dunes  
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