Assessment of Coastal Access Proposals between South Hayling and East Head on sites and features of nature conservation concern 3rd October 2019



About this document

This document should be read in conjunction with the published Reports for the South Hayling to East Head Stretch and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

The Coastal Access Reports contain a full description of the access proposals, including any additional mitigation measures that have been included. These Reports can be viewed here https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-coast-path-from-south-hayling-to-east-head-comment-on-proposals

A HRA is required for European sites (SPA, SAC and Ramsar sites). The HRA is published alongside the Coastal Access Reports.

This document, the Nature Conservation Assessment (NCA), covers all other aspects (including SSSIs, MCZs and undesignated but locally important sites and features) in so far as any HRA does not already address the issue for the sites and feature(s) in question.

The NCA is arranged site by site. Map A shows designated sites along this stretch of coast.

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. We have also drawn on breeding bird information from local bird experts, including Peter Hughes and Wez Smith. 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.

See Annex 1 for an index to designated sites and features for this stretch of coast, including features that have been considered within any HRA.



Contents

About this document	2
Contents	
Introduction	4
Chichester Harbour SSSI	
Warblington Meadow SSSI	20
Harbour and Grey Seals	23
Conclusion	25
Map A. Designated sites	26
Annex 1. Index to designated sites and features	27
Annex 2. Pilsey Island RSPB Byelaws map	30
References	30



Introduction

The Nature Conservation Assessment covers the area of coast between South Hayling seafront (Hampshire) and East Head spit (West Sussex). The South Hayling to East Head stretch has been divided into five reports as follows:

Report SHE 1: South Hayling Beach to Langstone Bridge

Report SHE 2: Langstone Bridge to Prinsted

Report SHE 3: Prinsted to Bosham

Report SHE 4: Bosham to West Itchenor

Report SHE 5: West Itchenor to West Wittering Beach

Sites ruled out from further assessment:

Oldpark Wood

Oldpark Wood is an area of lowland broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland. It provides habitat for breeding birds including grey heron, little egret and shelduck. Little egret and shelduck are particularly vulnerable to disturbance caused by the presence of humans and dogs. Due to the sensitivities associated with Oldpark Wood, we have aligned the alternative route away from this location as indicated on Figure 1 below. Please, note that coastal margin is not associated with alternative and temporary routes. Due to this, we have ruled out Oldpark Wood from further assessment.



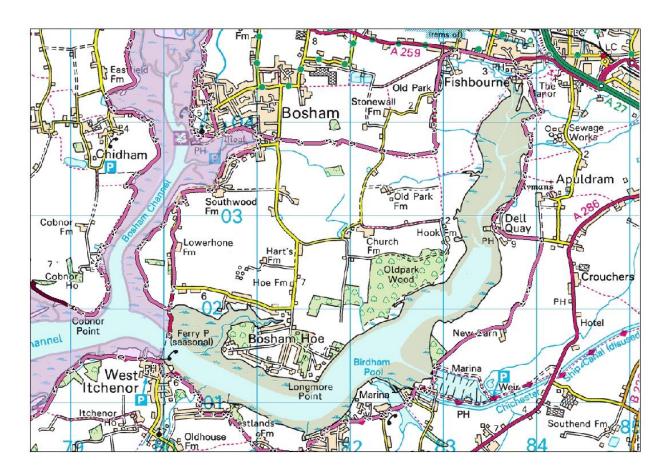


Figure 1: Image to show the distance between the proposed alternative route and Oldpark Wood



Assessment of coastal access proposals on:

Chichester Harbour SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site?

Yes:

- Solent Maritime SAC
- Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA
- Chichester and Langstone harbours Ramsar
- Dorset and Solent Coasts pSPA

The following SSSI features have been omitted from this assessment as they are also qualifying features of the European sites listed above and are therefore assessed within the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA):

Notified features of Chichester Harbour SSSI assessed in the HRA
H1110 Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time
H1130 Estuaries
H1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide
H1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines
H1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks
H1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand
H1320 Spartina swards (Spartinion maritimae)
H1330 Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae)
H2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria ('White dunes')
S1016 Desmoulin's whorl snail, Vertigo moulinsiana
Aggregations of breeding birds - Common tern, Sterna hirundo
Aggregations of breeding birds - Little tern, Sterna albifrons
Aggregations of breeding birds - Sandwich tern, <i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Bar-tailed godwit, <i>Limosa lapponica</i>
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Black-tailed godwit, Limosa limosa islandica
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Brent goose (dark-bellied), Branta bernicla
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Curlew, Numenius arquata
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Dunlin, Calidris alpina
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Greenshank, Tringa nebularia
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Grey plover, Pluvialis squatarola
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Redshank, <i>Tringa totanus</i>
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Ringed plover, Charadrius hiaticula



Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Sanderling, Calidris alba

Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Shelduck, Tadorna tadorna

Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Teal, Anas crecca

Sand dune; strandline, embryo and mobile dunes (SD1-6)

Current situation

Chichester Harbour is an estuary basin that is joined to the Langstone Harbour estuary basin. At low tide, large mudflats and sandflats are exposed, which forms valuable feeding grounds for wading bird species. The large expanse of mudflats provides suitable substrate for saltmarsh, which supports an array of protected features including overwintering birds. Chichester Harbour is created and affected by coastal processes, forming a dynamic dune system at the estuary mouth in addition to shingle spits and ridges in the main body of the harbour. This forms valuable habitat for breeding birds including tern and gull species. The majority of the land surrounding the harbour is agricultural and therefore one of the most pressing environmental pressures on the site is poor water quality and excessive algal growth caused by run off of fertilisers. Coastal squeeze, the shrinking of habitat such as saltmarsh between increasing sea levels and hard sea defences, also greatly impacts the site and this will worsen over time due to climate change.

Chichester Harbour is popular site for watersports activities and recreational boaters. Currently more than 12,000 vessels are permanently stationed within the harbour and there are 14 sailing clubs across the harbour. The overall condition of Chichester Harbour SSSI is considered 'Unfavourable- No Change', which means that the health of the site will not improve unless the site is managed more effectively and environmental pressures are reduced.

There are 5 local nature reserves within the Chichester Harbour SSSI boundary. These are:

- Nutborne Marshes
- Pilsey Island
- Sandy Point
- Gutner Point
- Eames Farm

Public access

The majority of Chichester Harbour is accessible by existing public rights of ways, including the Solent Way and the New Lipchis Way. Please see Overview Map B to see the extent of existing public access. The eastern side of Hayling Island has very limited existing coastal access. We have not deemed the coastline around North Hayling, Middle Marsh, Gutner Point and Verner Common suitable for public access as these locations are important for species of non-breeding and breeding bird species protected by European and National laws. Please see the South Hayling to East Head Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for further information.



Risk analysis

	Risk				
Feature or Feature Group	Key areas affected	Predicted changes in level of use	Possible impact(s)	Consideration and mitigation methods	Conclusion
Assemblage of breeding birds – Mixed Assemblage of breeding birds – Mixed: Lowland damp grassland, Scrub, Woodland	Main breeding sites: Oldpark Wood (location ruled out) and Unit 45 near fishbourne Tournebury Woods	Possible increase in access at Thorney Island, Ella Nore	During the breeding season (typically April to September) species including Little Egret and Grey Heron are vulnerable to disturbance particularly from humans and dogs. Repeated Increased disturbance may result in: • prevention of feeding behaviour	The route has been aligned away from breeding sites at Oldpark Wood, Unit 45, Tournebury Woods, Ella Nore and Pilsey island. We are proposing Section 26(3)(a) nature conservation access restrictions on the eastern side of Ella Nore Spit, which is the area where terns breed. Section 25A access restrictions (unsuitability for access) will be in place on the intertidal habitat surrounding Pilsey Island and Ella Nore. There are existing RSPB byelaws restricting access to Pilsey Island; Annex 2 shows a map of the extent of the byelaw boundaries. We are proposing to add an interpretation panel to reinforce these	The access proposals, with the additional special measures discussed, will not have a significant impact on this feature



Eastern side of Ella Nore spit Pilsey island Sandy Poi and Black Point Supportin habitat at Thorney Island (Un 16) and area of lowland neutral grassland to the eas of Chidhal Point (Uni 19)	t le n e c c l e tr g l b r i	pirds temporarily eaving their nests, leaving their nests, leaving eggs and/or chicks vulnerable rampling of ground nesting pird eggs e.g. inged plover	byelaws, encouraging coast path users to remain on the waymarked route and therefore away from the birds that breed here. Replace the existing fence, maintained by the Chichester Harbour Conservancy, separating the west and east sides of Ella Nore spit to prevent access. The existing fencing on the eastern side of the spit, which sections off specific breeding areas within this zone, will remain in place. Whilst Tournebury woods is within the coastal margin, we are 300m from the nearest access point and there is no access route from the route to the coast. The route follows existing access along the edge of Thorney island and the Chidham peninsula, which borders supporting habitat for breeding birds. These locations were not specifically raised as areas of concern by ecologists as they are not considered to be key sites	
•			, -	



				the route along existing public rights of way and do not anticipate a large increase in access here as both locations form part of locally promoted walking routes. Whilst we are not planning on excluding access to areas where birds breed at Sandy Point, an interpretation board will promote the dogs on leads policy and inform people of birds breeding in the area to encourage responsible behaviour around them. It is considered that walkers will continue to use the existing walked route, which the coast path follows in this area. Should walkers choose to use the margin or the existing walked route within the margin here, the interpretation board will make them aware of the possibility of birds nesting on the beach, which will aid in reducing the risk of nests being tramped.	
SD1 Rumex crispus- Glaucium flavum shingle community	Pilsey Island (unit 15), East Head,	Potential small increase	Vegetated shingle is vulnerable to trampling and loss of vegetation could	Sandy Point The route of the trail follows an existing walked route. This route and other	The access proposals, with the additional special measures discussed, will not have a



SD2 Honkenya	Sandy	result from increased	existing walked routes in the margin are	significant impact on this
peploides-Cakile	Point, Ella	repeated access.	already bare ground, rather than shingle	feature
maritima	Nore,	repeated access.	or dune vegetation. The existing walked	leature
strandline	Horsepond,	Risk of nutrient	routes, particularly the route of the trail	
community	32, 36, 37	enrichment caused	itself, offer an area of compact substrate,	
SD3 Matricaria	32, 30, 37	by increased	which is a more desirable route	
maritima-Galium		amounts of dog	compared to walking over lose uneven	
		faeces could also	shingle or dunes. It is therefore	
<i>aparine</i> strandline community		negatively impact	considered that walkers will continue to	
community		this feature	use the existing walked routes in this	
			area.	
			area.	
			Pilsey Island	
			,	
			The proposed route is aligned along	
			existing public rights of way along the	
			southern edge of Thorney Island and	
			does not extend onto Pilsey Island itself	
			to avoid the environmental sensitivities	
			there. The majority of vegetated shingle	
			is encompassed within existing RSPB	
			byelaws restricting public access, see	
			Annex 2, in addition to the proposed	
			section 26 nature conservation access	
			restriction. We have also taken into	
			consideration that Thorney Island is a	
			military base and we do not expect any	
			substantial increases in public access to	



	Pilsey Island, which is 4.5km away from
	the nearest public carpark.
	We will install a new interpretation panel
	and roundel signs to encourage walkers
	to remain on the proposed route.
	East Head
	The area of vegetated shingle here is
	located at the Northern end of the spit.
	The proposed route does not extend onto
	the spit itself, drawing walkers away from
	this area. We will input a multi-finger
	post here to encourage walkers to remain
	on the proposed route.
	File Name
	Ella Nore
	We have aligned the route along the New
	Lipchis Way in order to divert walkers
	away from the shingle spit here. Where
	desire lines occur, we are proposing to
	infill these with hedgerow to discourage
	access onto the spit. There is the
	potential for short term, small scale loss
	of vegetated shingle when replacing the
	existing fence to protect the breeding
	CAISTING TO PROTECT THE BLEEDING



	1	т			
				birds here. However, the new fence will provide a more substantial barrier and therefore more effectively protect the vegetation from trampling within this area. See the SHE HRA for further details.	
IA - Coastal Geomorphology	East Head (Unit 41) and Chichester Harbour mouth (Unit 42)	N/A	Coastal geomorphology refers to the progressive change in the extent of the site, which occurs naturally resulting from factors including current and wind direction. The main factors that impact this feature are restrictions in sediment availability and transport, for example the input of development or hard sea defences	The route does not extend onto East Head spit, which is the main area formed and altered by coastal processes. As we are not implementing any physical structures that would alter sediment transport, it is unlikely that the formalisation of the walking route here would negatively impact this feature.	No likely impact on this feature



Littoral sediment	Sandflats: Mouth of Chichester Harbour and Pilsey sand Mudflats: Throughout the harbour channels	Negligible increase in access to Pilsey Sands	Mudflats and sandflats are resilient to occasional trampling	No mitigation deemed necessary due to the unsuitability of mudflats for public access and distance of Pilsey Sands from public access points. The route does not extend onto Pilsey Sands or onto areas of mudflat. Access to mudflats is restricted under Section 25A of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act as they are unsuitable to walk on. There is an area of existing Open Access land, see Overview Map B, where additional access rights cannot be implemented and therefore this area cannot be restricted. However, mudflats are difficult and unsafe for people to walk on, so it is unlikely that people would choose to walk on this substrate.	No likely impact on this feature
Lowland fens, including basin, flood-plain, open water transition and valley fens Invertebrate assemblage W211	Nature reserve at the head of Fishbourne Channel	No increase in access	No adverse impacts caused by regular public access	None deemed necessary. The alternative route here does not extend through the area where this feature is found	No likely impact on this feature



Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	Oldpark Wood (screened out previously), Tournebury Woods, area of Woodland close to Cobnor Point		Ground flora potentially impacted by overuse	No mitigation deemed necessary. Tournebury Woods is surrounded by excepted land and has limited public access points. We are proposing new access that borders woodland area at Cobnor Point. These woods are considered excepted land so access is prohibited.	No likely impact on this feature
Lowland neutral grassland (MG5) MG5 Cynosurus cristatus-Centaurea nigra lowland meadows	Sandy Point Tournebury Marsh Verner Common Northney Marsh	No or limited change	Resistant to occasional use, but repeated localised trampling could result in habitat loss.	The proposed route is not aligned through areas of this feature and it will not be easily accessed via coastal margin due to the presence of excepted land and proposed 25A and 26(3)(a) access restrictions.	No likely impact on this feature



	North of Thorney Island			
	Nutbourne (Unit 18)			
	Bosham (Unit 25)			
	South of Horsepond (35)			
 Saltmarsh: Pioneer species: SM4 Spartina maritima salt-marsh community SM5 Spartina alterniflora salt-marsh community SM6 Spartina anglica salt-marsh community SM7 Arthrocnemum perenne stands 	Found in several locations on supralittora I sediment throughout the harbour	Repeated localised trampling could result in habitat loss Saltmarsh is also vulnerable to sediment smothering associated with construction work	Saltmarsh is considered unsuitable terrain for public access and the majority of saltmarsh habitat across Chichester Harbour has been restricted under Section 25A of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act. The intertidal habitat to the west of Thorney Island, within Bosham Channel and within Fishbourne Channel is not able to be covered by this restriction	The access proposals, with the additional special measures discussed, will not have a significant impact on this feature



 SM8 Annual Salicornia salt-marsh community SM9 Suaeda maritima salt-marsh community SM10 Transitional lowmarsh vegetation with Puccinellia maritima, annual Salicornia species and Suaeda maritima sepecies and Suaeda maritima SM11 Aster tripolium var. discoideus saltmarsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands Low mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Hallmione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM14 Hallmione maritima salt-marsh community SM15 Juncus maritimus-Triglochin 			· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
 SM9 Suaeda maritima salt-marsh community SM10 Transitional low-marsh vegetation with Puccinellia maritima, annual Salicornia species and Suaeda maritima SM11 Aster tripolium var. discoideus saltmarsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands SM13 Puccinellia marsh community SM13 Puccinellia marsh community SM14 Halimione portulaccides saltmarsh community SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus Close to areas of saltmarsh at these locations, we do not anticipate large increase of saltmarsh at these locations, we do not anticipate large increase of saltmarsh at these locations, we do not anticipate large increase of saltmarsh at these locations, we do not anticipate large increase of saltmarsh at these locations, we do not anticipate large increase of saltmarsh at these locations, we do not anticipate large increase of saltmarsh at these locations, we do not anticipate large increases in access here as the route increases in access here as the route provides amore suitable area to walk. We are also proposing signage to encourage walkers to follow the trail route. SM11 Aster tripolium var. discoideus saltmarsh to fill walked 'desire lines' at Ella Nore to discourage the public from accessing the saltmarsh Our access proposals border areas of saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to reduce the likelihood of people walking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by 		including	as it is Open Access Section 15 land.
salt-marsh community SM10 Transitional lowmarsh vegetation with Puccinellia maritima, annual Salicornia species and Suaeda maritima SM11 Aster tripolium var. discoideus saltmarsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands Low mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Ralimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM14 Ralimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM16 SM16 Alamarsh community SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM16 SM16 Alamarsh community SM15 Juncus SM16 SM16 Juncus SM16 SM16 Juncus SM16 Juncus SM17 Juncus SM17 Juncus SM18 Juncus	·	East Head,	Whilst the England Coast Path is aligned
 SM10 Transitional lowmarsh vegetation with Puccinellia maritima, annual Salicornia species and Suaeda maritima SM11 Aster tripolium var. discoideus saltmarsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands SM13 Puccinellia maritima saltmarsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM14 Halimione sollmansh community SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus Juncus Juncus Juncus into the thick antive and the route provides a more suitable area to walk. We are also proposing signage to encourage walkers to follow the trail route. We are planning to infill walked 'desire lines' at Ella Nore to discourage the public from accessing the saltmarsh Our access proposals border areas of saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to reduce the likelihood of people walking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by 		Ella Nore,	close to areas of saltmarsh at these
 SM10 Transitional lowmarsh vegetation with Puccinellia maritima, annual Salicornia species and Suaeda moritima var. discoideus saltmarsh community SM11 Aster tripolium var. discoideus saltmarsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands SM13 Puccinellia maritima saltmarsh community SM14 Puccinellia maritima saltmarsh community SM15 Puccinellia maritima saltmarsh community SM16 Puccinellia maritima saltmarsh community SM17 Puccinellia maritima saltmarsh community SM18 Puccinellia maritima saltmarsh community SM19 Puccinellia maritima saltmarsh community	·	Horsepond,	locations, we do not anticipate large
marsh vegetation with Puccinellia maritima, annual Salicornia species and Suaeda maritima SM11 Aster tripolium var. discoideus saltmarsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands Clow mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM15 Juncus provides a more suitable area to walk. We are also proposing signage to encourage walkers to follow the trail route. We are planning to infill walked 'desire lines' at Ella Nore to discourage the public from accessing the saltmarsh Our access proposals border areas of saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to reduce the likelihood of people walking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by			
we are also proposing signage to encourage walkers to follow the trail route. SM11 Aster tripolium var. discoideus saltmarsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands Low mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima saltmarsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM15 Juncus We are planning to infill walked 'desire lines' at Ella Nore to discourage the public from accessing the saltmarsh We are also proposing signage to encourage walkers to follow the trail route. We are also proposing signage to encourage walkers to follow the trail route. We are also proposing signage to encourage walkers to follow the trail route. We are also proposing signage to encourage walkers to follow the trail route. We are also proposing signage to encourage walkers to follow the trail route. We are also proposing signage to encourage walkers to follow the trail route. SM12 Puccinellia route. SM13 Puccinellia route. SM13 Puccinellia route. SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by	_	'	provides a more suitable area to walk.
species and Suaeda maritima SM11 Aster tripolium var. discoideus salt- marsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands Low mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides salt- marsh community SM15 Juncus encourage walkers to follow the trail route. We are planning to infill walked 'desire lines' at Ella Nore to discourage the public from accessing the saltmarsh Our access proposals border areas of saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to reduce the likelihood of people walking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by	•		
 SM11 Aster tripolium var. discoideus salt- marsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands Low mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides salt- marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides salt- marsh community SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus route.			
 SM11 Aster tripolium var. discoideus salt- marsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands Low mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides salt- marsh community SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus We are planning to infill walked 'desire lines' at Ella Nore to discourage the public from accessing the saltmarsh our access proposals border areas of saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to reduce the likelihood of people walking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by 	·		
var. discoideus saltmarsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands Low mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM15 Juncus We are planning to infill walked 'desire lines' at Ella Nore to discourage the public from accessing the saltmarsh Our access proposals border areas of saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to reduce the likelihood of people walking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by			route.
marsh community SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands Low mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM15 Juncus Marsh community Iines' at Ella Nore to discourage the public from accessing the saltmarsh Our access proposals border areas of saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to reduce the likelihood of people walking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by	,		M/a and planting to infill well and (decine
 SM12 Rayed Aster tripolium stands Low mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus 			
tripolium stands Low mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus Our access proposals border areas of saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to reduce the likelihood of people walking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by	•		
Low mid marsh SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM15 Juncus Our access proposals border areas of saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to reduce the likelihood of people walking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by	•		public from accessing the saltmarsh
 SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides salt- marsh community SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to reduce the likelihood of people walking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by 	tripolium stanus		
 SM13 Puccinellia maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides salt- marsh community SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to reduce the likelihood of people walking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by 	Low mid marsh		Our access proposals border areas of
 maritima salt-marsh community SM14 Halimione portulacoides saltmarsh community SM15 Juncus SM15 Juncus Teduce the likelihood of people waiking onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by 			saltmarsh at North Hayling. In order to
 SM14 Halimione portulacoides salt- marsh community SM15 Juncus onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by 			reduce the likelihood of people walking
 SM14 Halimione portulacoides salt- marsh community SM15 Juncus propose to level and improve the surface in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by 			onto the saltmarsh or the busy road, we
portulacoides salt- marsh community SM15 Juncus in keeping with the existing footprint of the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by	•		propose to level and improve the surface
marsh community • SM15 Juncus the walked path; which is itself not part of the feature, but is bordered by			in keeping with the existing footprint of
SM15 Juncus of the feature, but is bordered by	•		
	·		
Saithfaish on either side.			
	aritimas migrociim		Salullaish on either side.



<i>maritima</i> salt-marsh		
community		
Mid upper marsh		
SM16 Festuca rubra		
salt-marsh community		
• SM17 Artemisia		
<i>maritima</i> salt-marsh		
community		
• SM18 Juncus		
<i>maritimus</i> salt-marsh		
community		
• SM19 Blysmus rufus		
salt-marsh community		
SM20 Eleocharis		
<i>uniglumis</i> salt-marsh		
community		
SM21 Suaeda vera-		
<i>Limonium</i> binervosum		
salt-marsh community		
SM22 Halimione		
portulacoides-		
Frankenia laevis salt-		
marsh community		
SM23 Spergularia		
marina-Puccinellia		



distans salt-marsh community		
Driftline		
 SM24 Elymus pycnanthus salt-marsh community SM25 Suaeda vera drift-line community SM26 Inula crithmoides stands SM27 Ephemeral salt- marsh vegetation with Sagina maritima SM28 Elymus repens salt-marsh community 		



Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? Yes

If yes, describe any special conditions that have been identified concerning how or when the works are to be carried out:

Work to improve the Emsworth Bridge should not be conducted over winter to avoid disturbance to non-breeding water birds. Appropriate care should be taken and methods used to avoid smothering the intertidal habitat with waste material.

Work to resurface the existing public footpath at Northney, should not be conducted over winter to avoid disturbance to non-breeding water birds. Appropriate care should be taken and methods used to avoid smothering the saltmarsh feature within the ditch on the landward side of the path with waste material.

Where necessary, Hampshire County Council will instigate the SSSI assent process by writing to us to confirm the timing of works and how operations to be undertaken in line with these conditions. Natural England will provide further advice as necessary.

Warblington Meadow SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? No

Current situation

Warblington Meadow SSSI is owned by Havant Borough Council and leased to a local farmer. The size of the site is 3.78 Ha and it is part of a Higher Level Stewardship agreement to maintain the grassland feature until 31st July 2020. This SSSI is also part of an area for planned managed realignment in the near future, where the sea wall will be breached (naturally or artificially) to allow the area of land behind it to flood to form a natural sea defence. On the eastern border of the SSSI, there is a permissive path that extends from the Church Path to the permissive path along the sea wall. These informal walking routes are regularly accessed locally. This SSSI was last assessed on 1st July 2010 and considered Unfavourable- Recovering.



Risk analysis

Risk		Consideration and mitigation methods	Conclusion		
Attribute affected	Key areas affected	Predicted changes in level of use	Possible impact(s)		
 Lowland wetland including basin fen, valley fen, floodplain fen, waterfringe fen, spring/flush fen and raised bog lag SM4-28 - Saltmarsh 	SHE-2- S015 to SHE-2- S018	Negligible or no likely increase in access	These features are resilient to occasional routine access. Habitat loss can occur with frequent, repeated trampling. However, this type of use is not expected to result from our proposals	Despite this SSSI being within the coastal margin, we do not anticipate any substantial increase in access here as these features do not provide suitable terrain to walk on. The path follows the Solent Way and therefore we anticipate the majority of new walkers drawn to this area will be long distance walkers who are likely to stay on the waymarked route.	No likely impact on these features



Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? No



Harbour and Grey Seals

Is this site or feature also part of a European site? No

Current situation

Harbour and Grey seals are protected under EU law and listed under Annex II of the Habitats Directive. The seal haul out site in Chichester Harbour is at Oare Rithe, which is a large tidal creek south west of Thorney Island. Seals are vulnerable to disturbance and the recommended distance to keep away from seals is 100m.

Risk analysis

Risk					
Attribute affected	Key areas affected	Predicted changes in level of use	Possible impact(s)	Consideration and mitigation methods	Conclusion
Harbour Seal Grey Seal	Oare Rithe (coastal margin)	None	Harbour seals are vulnerable to disturbance from humans, which can cause unnecessary energy expenditure, such as avoidance behaviour	Whilst this area is contained within Section 15 Open Access land and therefore is included within the coastal margin, it is not currently easily accessible on foot from the existing public right of way, where the coast path will be aligned. This is due to the substrate being intertidal mud, which does not provide suitable terrain to walk on. The minimum distance between the haul out site and the coast path route is 400m.	No likely impact on these features



Establishment works

Is SSSI assent needed to implement any specific proposals for establishment works? No

Are there any matters relating to this species group that will require further consideration at establishment stage? No



Conclusion

We, Natural England, are satisfied that our proposals to improve access to the English coast between South Hayling and East Head are fully compatible with our duty to further the conservation and enhancement of the notified features of Chichester Harbour SSSI and Warblington Meadow SSSI, consistent with the proper exercise of our functions¹.

In respect of Harbour and Grey Seals we are satisfied that in developing the new access proposals the appropriate balance has been struck between Natural England's conservation and access objectives, duties and purposes.

See also, where relevant, the conclusions of the separate HRA relating to common features.

The conclusions of this assessment have been checked by:

Aimée Riley	19/09/2019	On behalf of the Coastal Access Programme Team
Nikki Hiorns	19/09/2019	Senior Officer with responsibility for protected sites
Kristoffer Hewitt	19/09/2019	Senior Officer with responsibility for protected sites

¹

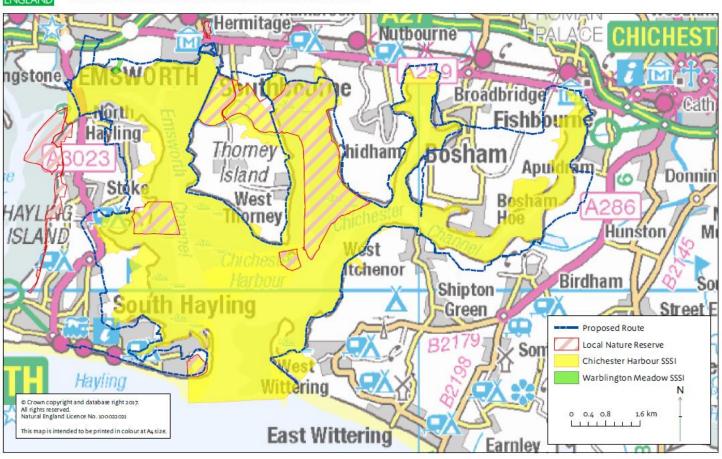
¹ Natural England's functions includes its balanced general purposes for access, nature conservation and landscape under the NERC Act 2006, any specific statutory duties it may have to deliver specific improvements to public access, and the access-related policies and priorities it periodically agrees with Defra.



Map A. Designated sites



Coastal Access - South Hayling to East Head Nature Conservation Assessment Sites





Annex 1. Index to designated sites and features

	Chichester Harbour SSSI	Warblington Meadow SSSI	Solent Maritime SAC	Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA	Dorset and Solent Coasts pSPA	Chichester and Langstone harbours Ramsar
	0	>	S	0		0
H1110 Sandbanks which are	✓		✓			
slightly covered by sea water all						
the time						
H1130 Estuaries	√		√			
H1140 Mudflats and sandflats not	✓		✓			
covered by seawater at low tide						
H1210 Annual vegetation of drift	√		√			
lines						
H1220 Perennial vegetation of	√		√			
stony banks						
H1310 Salicornia and other annuals	~		✓			
colonising mud and sand						
H1320 Spartina swards (Spartinion	✓		✓			
maritimae)						
H1330 Atlantic salt meadows	✓		✓			
(Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae)						
H2120 Shifting dunes along the	~		✓			
shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i>						
('White dunes')						
S1016 Desmoulin's whorl snail,	✓		V			
Vertigo moulinsiana						



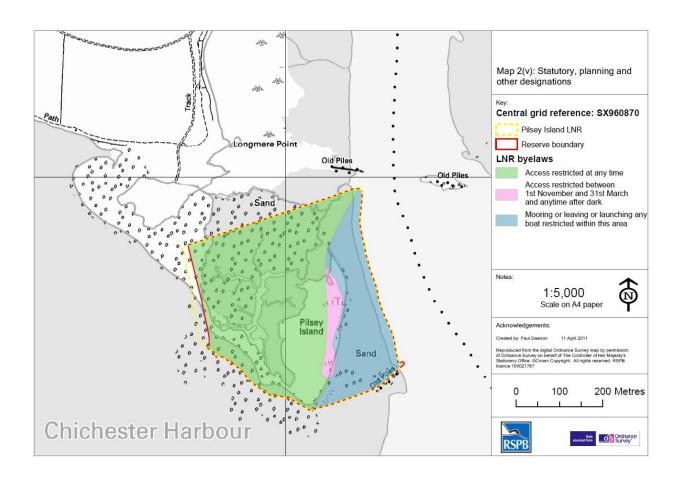
T-				
Aggregations of breeding birds -		✓	✓	
Common tern, Sterna hirundo				
Aggregations of breeding birds -		✓	✓	
Little tern, Sterna albifrons				
Aggregations of breeding birds -		√	✓	
Sandwich tern, Thalasseus				
sandvicensis				
Aggregations of non-breeding birds		√		
- Bar-tailed godwit, <i>Limosa</i>				
lapponica				
Aggregations of non-breeding birds	/	√		
- Black-tailed godwit, <i>Limosa</i>				
limosa islandica				
Aggregations of non-breeding birds		✓		
- Brent goose (dark-bellied), <i>Branta</i>				
bernicla				
Aggregations of non-breeding birds	/	✓		
- Curlew, Numenius arquata				
Aggregations of non-breeding birds	/	√		
- Dunlin, <i>Calidris alpina</i>				
Aggregations of non-breeding birds	/	✓		
- Greenshank, <i>Tringa nebularia</i>				
Aggregations of non-breeding birds	/	✓		
- Grey plover, <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>				
Aggregations of non-breeding birds	/	✓		
- Redshank, <i>Tringa totanus</i>				
Aggregations of non-breeding birds	/	✓		
- Ringed plover, <i>Charadrius</i>				
hiaticula				
Aggregations of non-breeding birds	/	√		
- Sanderling, <i>Calidris alba</i>				
Aggregations of non-breeding birds	/	√		
- Shelduck, <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>				
	/			
Aggregations of non-breeding birds		Ĭ		
- Teal, Anas crecca	/		 	
Sand dune; strandline, embryo and				
mobile dunes (SD1-6)				
Assemblage of breeding birds –	'			
Mixed				
Assemblage of breeding birds –	'			
Mixed: Lowland damp grassland,				
Scrub, Woodland				



Coastal vegetated shingle SD1-3	✓			
IA - Coastal Geomorphology	✓			
Littoral sediment	√			
Lowland fens, including basin,	✓			
flood-plain, open water transition				
and valley fens				
Invertebrate assemblage W211				
Lowland mixed deciduous	√			
woodland				
Lowland neutral grassland (MG5)	√			
MG5 Cynosurus cristatus-				
Centaurea nigra lowland meadows				
Saltmarsh SM4-28	✓	✓		
Lowland wetland including basin		✓		
fen, valley fen, floodplain fen,				
waterfringe fen, spring/flush fen				
and raised bog lag				



Annex 2. Pilsey Island RSPB Byelaws map



RSPB (2011)

References

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

Natural England, "Designated Sites View," 09 July 2019. [Online]. Available: https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/sitedetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1003245&SiteName=&countyCod e=&responsiblePerson=&unitId=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=. [Accessed 30 July 2019].

Natural England, "Designated Sites View: Warblington Meadow SSSI," 21 08 2018. [Online]. Available: https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1000379&SiteName=warblington meadow&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=. [Accessed 09 07 2019].



Natural England - Area 13, "Breeding tern and Mediterranean gulls report for the Solent Estuaries," 2015.

Chichester Harbour Conservancy, "About the Harbour," Chichester Harbour Conservancy, [Online]. Available: https://www.conservancy.co.uk/page/boating-and-leisure. [Accessed 23 July 2019].

Natural England, "Designated Sites View, SSSI Glossary," [Online]. Available: https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SSSIglossary.aspx. [Accessed 30 July 2019].

Chichester Harbour Conservancy, "The Solent Seals," 6 June 2016. [Online]. Available: https://www.conservancy.co.uk/assets/files/cms_item/10/d-Solent_Seal_Code_of_Conduct-LuknguDYsp.pdf. [Accessed 16 August 2019].

Liley, D., Stillman, R. & Fearnley, H. 2010. The Solent Disturbance & Mitigation Project Phase II: Results of the bird disturbance fieldwork 2009/10. Footprint Ecology / Solent Forum. https://www.footprint-ecology.co.uk/reports/Liley%20et%20al.%20-%202010%20-

%20The%20Solent%20Disturbance%20and%20Mitigation%20Project%20Phas.pdf

Chichester Harbour Conservancy. 2019. Annual Wildlife Report by the Ecologist in the minutes of a meeting of Chichester Harbour Conservancy will be held on Monday 15 April 2018 in the Jury Room, Hampshire County Council, The Castle, Winchester, SO23 8UJ.

https://www.conservancy.co.uk/assets/files/cms_item/280/d-15_Apr_19_CHC_Agenda_and_Papers-5UMMFgutlr.pdf

King, M., Lake, S., Day, J. Mcgibbon, R. & White, J. 2013. Solent Vegetation Survey 2013, Final Report. Footprint Ecology/Natural England