

**Assessment of Coastal Access Proposals between
Cremyll and Kingswear
on sites and features of nature conservation concern**

15th January 2020



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

About this document

This document should be read in conjunction with the published Reports for the Cremyll to Kingswear 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-cremyll-to-kingswear-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. Maps 1-9 on pages 46-54 show designated sites along this stretch of coast.

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.



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Contents

<i>About this document</i>	2
<i>Contents</i>	3
<i>Western King SSSI</i>	4
<i>Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI</i>	6
<i>Wembury Point SSSI</i>	8
<i>Yealm Estuary SSSI</i>	11
<i>Blackstone Point SSSI</i>	13
<i>Erme Estuary SSSI</i>	14
<i>South Milton Ley SSSI</i>	18
<i>Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI</i>	20
<i>Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI</i>	23
<i>Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI</i>	26
<i>Hallsands-Beesands SSSI</i>	30
<i>Slapton Ley SSSI</i>	31
<i>Erme Estuary MCZ</i>	37
<i>Devon Avon Estuary MCZ</i>	39
<i>Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ</i>	41
<i>Cirl Bunting <i>Emberiza cirulus</i></i>	44
<i>Conclusion</i>	46
<i>Maps 1-9. Designated sites</i>	47
<i>Annex 1. Index to designated sites and features</i>	56

Assessment of coastal access proposals on:

Western King SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? No

Current situation

The route of the proposed trail broadly follows the existing South West Coast Path around the SSSI. This is a small 1.833ha SSSI in Plymouth at Western King Point that consists of an area of well used amenity grassland and scrub at the top of a cliff-face overlooking Plymouth Sound. The cliffs expose a complex series of Devonian limestones containing an important fossil fauna. The grassland at the top of the cliff supports strong colonies of the Field Eryngo, a nationally rare plant that is also found in flower beds within the SSSI, where it is managed by Plymouth City Council.

<p>1. Geological Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC - Marine Devonian 	<p>This section of cliff exposes a complex series of Devonian limestones, of late Frasnian to early Famennian age, which comprise the youngest limestones of the Plymouth Limestone Group. They also contain an important fauna of microfossils, known as conodonts, which are used to subdivide the rock sequence and relate it to comparable sequences elsewhere. This was last assessed in 2010 and found to be in 'unfavourable recovering' condition.</p>
<p>2. Plant Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of Schedule 8 plant - <i>Eryngium campestre</i>, Field Eryngo 	<p>The site also includes an area of amenity grassland and scrub within which colonies of the nationally rare sea-holly plant Field eryngo <i>Eryngium campestre</i> occur. This plant is afforded special protection by its inclusion on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, which stipulates that it is an offence if the plant is picked, uprooted or destroyed. This feature was in 'favourable' condition when last assessed in 2010.</p>

Risk analysis

<p>1. Geological Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC - Marine Devonian 	<p>None identified as they are rock exposures, landforms or deposits not susceptible to existing or increased access. The fossil features can be damaged by unmanaged geological specimen collection, however, we do not think this is an issue at present, or is likely to become a problem as a result of our proposal since the foreshore is already accessible and well used.</p> <p>This feature is therefore not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
<p>2. Plant Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of Schedule 8 plant - <i>Eryngium campestre</i>, Field Eryngo 	<p>This feature could be vulnerable to being picked or uprooted but these actions are not rights given to the public under our proposals. As we are proposing to follow the walked line of the South West Coast Path and the SSSI is already a well-used publically accessible amenity area, it is not thought our proposals will cause any change to access levels and patterns at this site, so this feature is not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>

Establishment works

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

Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? Yes

Note that notified features of the SSSI that are also qualifying features of the European site are omitted from this assessment as they are included with the accompanying Habitats Regulation Assessment. The following SSSI features are also features or sub features of the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC:

- H1170 Reefs

Current situation

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path around the SSSI. Plymouth Sound is an open bay into which run several estuaries forming a complex ria system. The coastline of the Sound is steeply sloping and rocky, especially to either side of the mouth. Several major ecological zones have been identified for the Sound and its tributaries. This SSSI encompasses examples from the open coast and sheltered bay parts of the system (sections of the inner zones are represented in other SSSIs), and includes shore communities with a southwestern influence.

<p>1. Geological Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC - Variscan Structures 	<p>Coastal rock exposures or landforms important for sedimentology, mineralogy fossils or coastal geomorphology.</p>
<p>2. Intertidal Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposed rocky shores (predominantly extremely exposed to wave action) • Moderately exposed rocky shores • Shores of mixed substrata (stones AND sediment) 	<p>The rocky coastline from Mount Batten to Bovisand Bay supports diverse communities of intertidal plants and animals. At low tide, sandy areas are exposed between the rocks and these support a characteristic fauna. The last condition assessment was 'favourable'.</p>

Risk analysis

<p>1. Geological Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC - Variscan Structures 	<p>None identified as they are rock exposures, landforms or deposits not susceptible to existing or increased access. The fossil features can be damaged by unmanaged geological specimen collection, however, we do not think this is an issue at present, or is likely to become a problem as a result of our proposal since the foreshore is already accessible and</p>
---	--



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

	well used. This feature is therefore not considered sensitive to our proposals.
2. Intertidal Features <ul style="list-style-type: none">Exposed rocky shores (predominantly extremely exposed to wave action)Moderately exposed rocky shoresShores of mixed substrata (stones AND sediment)	Intertidal plants and animals of rocky coastlines are not usually sensitive to use of the foreshore for informal recreation on foot as the places they inhabit provide natural protection. Therefore they are not considered to be vulnerable to our proposals.

Establishment works

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

Wembury Point SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? Yes

Note that notified features of the SSSI that are also qualifying features of the European site are omitted from this assessment as they are included with the accompanying Habitats Regulation Assessment. The following SSSI features are also features or sub features of the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC:

- H1170 Reefs
- S1441 Shore dock, *Rumex rupestris*

Current situation

Wembury Point SSSI comprises extensive reefs of interest for their intertidal plant and animal communities together with coastal sand, shingle and steep slopes of sea-cliff grassland and mixed scrub. It is also of interest for the diversity of passage and wintering birds it supports and for nesting species associated with the scrub. The extensive weed-covered rocks exposed at low water with patches of sand and shingle support at least 80 species of resident and migrant waders. Much of the shoreline is backed by low cliffs and slopes of scrub with associated breeding birds.

The South West Coast Path (SWCP) runs along the landward edge of the SSSI on its eastern section as far as Wembury Point and then on the northern section it runs more often in the middle of the SSSI up to Andum Point. This is a popular well used section of the SWCP. There are a number of well-known beaches along this section of coast such as at Wembury and some smaller coves, for example around the old boathouse and lido at Wembury Point itself. There is a large National Trust car park at Wembury Beach that facilitates much of the access in this area.

Much of the eastern section from the River Yealm to Wembury Beach is designated as Open Access land.

<p>1. Woodland Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W21 - <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> - <i>Hedra helix</i> scrub • W22 - <i>Prunus spinosa</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub • W23 - <i>Ulex europaeus</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub 	<p>The woodlands support Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>) and are currently in 'favourable' condition. At Wembury Point the woodland is well inland of the SWCP and the additional landward coastal margin.</p>
---	---

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

<p>2. Open Coastal Vegetation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MC8 - <i>Festuca rubra</i> - <i>Armeria maritima</i> maritime grassland • Soft Maritime cliff and slope 	<p>Much of the shoreline is backed by low cliffs and slopes of scrub. Soft Maritime Cliff and Slope in unit 6, is now in 'favourable' condition after a Conservation Enhancement Scheme (CES) agreement. It is a private garden and is not managed through farming.</p>
<p>3. Intertidal Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littoral Sediment 	<p>The rocky coastline at Wembury Point supports diverse communities of intertidal plants and animals. At low tide, sandy areas are exposed between the rocks and these support a characteristic fauna. The last condition assessment was 'favourable'.</p>
<p>4. Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl Bunting, <i>Emberiza cirrus</i> 	<p>Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirrus</i>) breeds in shrubby habitat fairly low to the ground. Yellowhammer <i>E. citrinella</i>, Linnet <i>Acanthis cannabina</i>, Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquata</i> and White Throat <i>Sylvia communis</i> can also use the site and it is used as a staging post for migrant birds, especially warblers. A RSPB Survey in 2016 found this feature to be in 'favourable' condition.</p>

Risk analysis

<p>1. Woodland Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W21 - <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> - <i>Hedra helix</i> scrub • W22 - <i>Prunus spinosa</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub • W23 - <i>Ulex europaeus</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub 	<p>Due to the inland location the woodlands will not be affected by our access proposals.</p>
<p>2. Open Coastal Vegetation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MC8 - <i>Festuca rubra</i> - <i>Armeria maritima</i> maritime grassland • Soft Maritime cliff and slope 	<p>Short grassland communities are fairly resilient to trampling so are not thought to be sensitive to current access levels. As we are proposing to follow the walked line of the South West Coast Path, and the coastal margin is already well used, it is not thought our proposals will cause any change to access levels and patterns at this site so this feature is not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

<p>3. Intertidal Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Littoral Sediment 	<p>The foreshore along this part of the coast is already readily accessible to the public. No new facilities for visitors or ways for people to get to the shore are proposed and we do not expect the established patterns or levels of recreational activities will change significantly. We believe the proposals are compatible with the conservation of this feature.</p>
<p>4. Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl Bunting, <i>Emberiza cirlus</i> 	<p>Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>) breeds in shrubby habitat fairly low to the ground and could be susceptible to increased levels of disturbance by people and their dogs, with dogs running off leads through vegetation. As we are proposing to follow the walked line of the South West Coast Path, and the coastal margin is already well used it is not thought our proposals will cause any change to access levels and patterns at this site so this feature is not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>

Establishment works

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

Yealm Estuary SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? Yes

Note that notified features of the SSSI that are also qualifying features of the European site are omitted from this assessment as they are included with the accompanying Habitats Regulation Assessment. The following SSSI features are also features or sub features of the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC:

- H1130 Estuaries
- H1170 Reefs

Current situation

The ordinary route of the proposed trail follows the existing South West Coast Path via a small ferry which takes walkers across the mouth of the Yealm. This is a seasonal ferry service running a few hours a day. Outside of these times an alternative route is proposed that makes use of existing public highways, rights of way and a permissive route. This includes parts of the Plym to Erme Trail, and would extend to Wapplewell, Brixton and Yealmpton which are the first public foot crossings over the River Yealm and its tributaries. The alternative route does not have any associated coastal margin.

<p>1. Intertidal Habitat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littoral rock and inshore sublittoral rock • Littoral sediment • Exposed rocky shores (predominantly extremely exposed to wave action) • Moderately exposed rocky shores • Shores of mixed substrata (stones and sediment) • Moderately exposed sandy shores (with polychaetes and bivalves) • Muddy gravel shores • Sheltered muddy shores (including estuarine muds) • Sheltered rocky shores (predominately sheltered to very sheltered from wave action) 	<p>The River Yealm flows through southern Devon and enters the sea at Wembury Bay. It is an example of a 'ria' (drowned river valley) that shows a transition to estuarine conditions in its upper reaches.</p> <p>The littoral sediment (mudflat) and saltmarsh is assessed as in 'favourable' condition.</p>
--	--

Risk analysis

<p>1. Intertidal Habitat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littoral rock and inshore sublittoral rock • Littoral sediment • Exposed rocky shores (predominantly extremely exposed to wave action) • Moderately exposed rocky shores • Shores of mixed substrata (stones AND sediment) • Moderately exposed sandy shores (with polychaetes and bivalves) • Muddy gravel shores • Sheltered muddy shores (including estuarine muds) • Sheltered rocky shores (predominately sheltered to very sheltered from wave action) 	<p>Although Mudflats (littoral sediment) and the other intertidal habitats are not sensitive to being walked on occasionally, an increase in access onto the foreshore could lead to an increase in physical pressures such as abrasion, surface substrate disturbance, penetration below the surface of the seabed, removal of target and non-target species. However the foreshore along this part of the coast is already readily accessible to the public. No new facilities for visitors or ways for people to get to the shore are proposed and we do not expect the established patterns or levels of recreational activities will change significantly. We believe the proposals are compatible with the conservation of this feature.</p>
--	--

Establishment works

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



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Blackstone Point SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? Yes

This SSSI site is notified because of the occurrence of the internationally rare flowering plant *Rumex rupestris* (Shore dock). This is also a qualifying feature of the European site, Blackstone Point SAC.

The species is a European coastal endemic that is threatened throughout its range with its world status recorded as vulnerable. An assessment of the possible impacts of the access proposals on this feature are included in the accompanying Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Erme Estuary SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? Yes

Note that there are no notified features of the SSSI that are also qualifying features of the European site Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC. The two designated areas overlap at the mouth of the estuary and the proposed coastal margin does not overlap with the SAC as it does not come higher than mean low water.

Current situation

This small, secluded estuary contains fine examples of estuarine saltmarsh, freshwater and Oak/Oak-Hazel woodland habitats. In total it is about 5km in length. It supports an important breeding bird community and provides feeding and roosting grounds for passage and wintering waterfowl.

The route of the proposed trail follows the existing South West Coast Path through the SSSI. The trail crosses the Erme Estuary about 1km up the estuary – see Report CKW 5: Mothecombe Beach to the Avon Estuary for details. The estuary can only be crossed on foot by fording at low tide and there is no alternative route around this estuary. Therefore only the southern part of the SSSI falls within the coastal margin and these proposals.

<p>1. Intertidal Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littoral sediment • Moderately exposed sandy shores (with polychaetes and bivalves) 	<p>The mouth of the estuary is characterised by extensive sandflats locally colonised by seaweeds, then upstream, mudflats predominate. The littoral sediment (mudflat) is assessed as in 'favourable' condition.</p>
<p>2. Saltmarsh Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SM6 - <i>Spartina anglica</i> saltmarsh • SM8 - Annual <i>Salicornia</i> saltmarsh • SM10 - Transitional low marsh vegetation with <i>Puccinellia maritima</i>, annual <i>Salicornia</i> species and <i>Suaeda maritima</i> • SM14 - <i>Atriplex portulacoides</i> saltmarsh • SM15 - <i>Juncus maritimus</i> - <i>Triglochin maritima</i> saltmarsh • SM16a - <i>Festuca rubra</i> saltmarsh <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> sub-community • SM24 - <i>Elytrigia atherica</i> saltmarsh 	<p>The upstream mudflats support areas of saltmarsh and at the head of the estuary the saltmarsh grades into a succession of wet meadows lying to the side of the River Erme. The saltmarsh is assessed as in 'favourable' condition.</p>

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

<p>3. Woodland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W10 - <i>Quercus robur</i> - <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> woodland • W16 - <i>Quercus</i> spp.-<i>Betula</i> spp.-<i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i> woodland 	<p>The oak and hazel woodlands on the slopes on either side of the estuary support a breeding bird assemblage and are currently in 'favourable' condition.</p>
<p>4. Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemblages of breeding birds - Mixed 	<p>The breeding bird assemblage is found in the woodland upstream of our proposed route across the fording point. A breeding bird survey was carried out in spring 2016 by the Natural England Field Unit in order to assess bird species present in the SSSI, and to identify confirmed or probable breeders. The survey assessed the assemblage as in favourable condition. The Erme Estuary is just over 5km in length, and 430ha in area, with a variety of habitats including woodland, parkland, ponds, reedbed, tidal estuary and rocky coast with coastal scrub. The site was designated in 1976, and re-notified in 1986. One of the notified features of the SSSI is the breeding bird assemblage. The citation states: 'The site as a whole supports a diverse breeding bird community which includes Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>, Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i> and Cirl bunting <i>Emberiza cirlus</i>. It also provides feeding and roosting grounds for wildfowl and waders on passage and during winter.</p> <p>The survey found that the habitats in the Erme Estuary SSSI appear generally to be in 'Favourable' condition, for example the woodland contains many old trees with holes and other veteran features which provide excellent nesting sites for hole-nesting species, and there has been a major programme of clearance of the non-indigenous invasive <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> with the woodland in Unit 13 being the only unit in 'Unfavourable No change' condition due to <i>Rhododendron</i> still to be cleared. The river and sea water appears clean visually. The reedbed north of Clyng Mill does not appear to be scrubbing up and supports a number of reed warblers, and the grassland</p>

	<p>in the north of the site in the open parkland supports a moderate range of plant species. While a number of species which nested in the site in 1986 (the time of the last survey) no longer do so, this would appear to be due to factors off site (such is deterioration in habitats in migratory birds' wintering quarters), rather than to factors in the site itself (such as deterioration in habitat).</p> <p>The broadleaved woodland on either side of the river appeared to support similar species of birds in similar densities. The coniferous stands in the SSSI supported reduced numbers both in species and totals. Species associated with the conifers included blackcap, blackbird, robin, goldcrest, wren, woodpigeon, and possibly siskin near Clyng Mill.</p> <p>The SSSI still supports a number of species which have dramatically declined in the UK over the past decades, notably marsh tit and spotted flycatcher. A number of species have become less common in the UK than they were in 1986 yet still occur in the Erme Estuary, including spotted flycatcher (UK population trend -49% 1995-2014), linnets (-25%), kestrel (-36%), marsh tit (-44%), garden warbler (-31%), mistle thrush (-34%), tawny owl (-21%), oystercatcher (-19%), linnets (-25%) (figures from Harris <i>et al.</i> 2016).</p>
--	---

Risk analysis

<p>1. Intertidal Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littoral sediment • Moderately exposed sandy shores (with polychaetes and bivalves) 	<p>Increase in access onto the foreshore could lead to an increase in physical pressures such as abrasion, surface substrate disturbance, penetration below the surface of the seabed, removal of target and non-target species, however it is not thought access levels will increase significantly in the coastal margin, therefore these features are not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
---	---

<p>2. Saltmarsh Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SM6 - <i>Spartina anglica</i> saltmarsh • SM8 - Annual <i>Salicornia</i> saltmarsh • SM10 - Transitional low marsh vegetation with <i>Puccinellia maritima</i>, annual <i>Salicornia</i> species and <i>Suaeda maritima</i> • SM14 - <i>Atriplex portulacoides</i> saltmarsh • SM15 - <i>Juncus maritimus</i> - <i>Triglochin maritima</i> saltmarsh • SM16a - <i>Festuca rubra</i> saltmarsh <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> sub-community • SM24 - <i>Elytrigia atherica</i> saltmarsh 	<p>Intertidal plants and animals of rocky coastlines are not usually sensitive to use of the foreshore for informal recreation on foot as the places they inhabit provide natural protection. Therefore they are not considered to be vulnerable to our proposals.</p>
<p>3. Woodland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W10 - <i>Quercus robur</i> - <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> woodland • W16 - <i>Quercus</i> spp.-<i>Betula</i> spp.-<i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i> woodland 	<p>At the Erme Estuary the woodland is the major terrestrial habitat and supports >95% of the breeding bird assemblage. There is currently no formal public access to these woodlands and the citation describes them as secluded. They are not in close proximity to the proposed route of the England Coast Path, or its associated coastal margin as they are to the north and upstream of the estuary fording, therefore the woodland is not sensitive to our proposals.</p>
<p>4. Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemblages of breeding birds - Mixed 	<p>All sites important for this assemblage are not in close proximity to the proposed route of the England Coast Path, or its associated coastal margin as they are to the north and upstream of the estuary fording point. Therefore this group is not sensitive to our proposals.</p>

Establishment works

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

South Milton Ley SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? No

Current situation

The route of the proposed trail follows the existing South West Coast Path past the southern end of this SSSI. For about 70m it will run along the southern boundary of the SSSI. South Milton Ley is one of the best examples of freshwater reedbed in Devon and is of particular importance for its breeding bird community and for the variety of birds using the site on passage. All but the southern boundary of this SSSI is landward of the trail and therefore not affected by our proposals.

<p>1. Wetland Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowland wetland including basin fen, valley fen, floodplain fen, waterfringe fen, spring/flush fen and raised bog lag. 	<p>The Ley lies in a shallow coastal river valley separated from the sea by a sand bar. The reed swamp of the lower Ley is dominated by common reed <i>Phragmites australis</i>, while further upstream the vegetation contains a mixture of other tall fen species. The site was found to be in unfavourable recovering condition in 2013.</p>
<p>2. Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemblages of breeding birds - Lowland fen without open water 	<p>South Milton Ley supports a diverse community of breeding birds characteristic of freshwater reedbed including Reed warbler <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>, Sedge warbler <i>A. schoenobaenus</i> and Cettis warbler <i>Cettia cetti</i>.</p>

Risk analysis

<p>1. Wetland Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowland wetland including basin fen, valley fen, floodplain fen, waterfringe fen, spring/flush fen and raised bog lag. 	<p>The proposed trail or margin are seawards of this site and are not near this habitat so there is no effect from our proposals.</p>
--	---



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

<p>2. Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assemblages of breeding birds - Lowland fen without open water	<p>The proposed trail or margin are seawards of this sites and are not near this habitat so there is no effect from our proposals.</p>
--	--

Establishment works

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

Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? Yes

Note that notified features of the SSSI that are also qualifying features of the European site are omitted from this assessment as they are included with the accompanying Habitats Regulation Assessment. The following SSSI features are also features or sub features of the South Devon Shore Dock SAC:

- H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts
- S1441 Shore dock, *Rumex rupestris*

Note, this SSSI also overlaps with the Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC but there are no qualifying features that are the same as the SSSI features.

Current situation

The route of the proposed trail follows the existing South West Coast Path through the SSSI along its over 7km length. It mostly runs along the upper landward edge of the SSSI and there are a few areas of landward margin proposed. Parts of the SSSI in the coastal margin were previously designated as Open Access land.

This site is characterized by extensive rocky outcrops of schist that support extensive areas of coastal heath, maritime cliff grassland, coastal scrub and semi-natural woodland. Further diversity is provided by small streams and wet flushes. A wide range of nationally rare and scarce plants, animals and lichens occur. Breeding Cirl buntings are an additional feature of interest.

<p>1. Open Coastal Vegetation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H7 - <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> - <i>Scilla verna</i> heath • Hard Maritime cliff and slope 	<p>All units are assessed as ‘favourable’ or ‘unfavourable recovering’. The whole SSSI is owned by the National Trust and is either managed by them or their tenants through grazing and scrub management. For most of the site grazing is the main management tool and is currently used to great effect to encourage the maritime grassland and scrub mosaic. Changes to the grazing regime could be detrimental to the condition of the site.</p>
<p>2. Plant Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combinations of species – Lichens • Vascular Plant Assemblage 	<p>The Lichen Assemblage and Vascular Plant Assemblage are both assessed as in ‘favourable’ condition.</p>

<p>3. Invertebrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invert. assemblage F111 bare sand & chalk 	<p>The invertebrate fauna contains many species limited mainly to southerly coastal sites and the invertebrate habitats were found to be in 'favourable' condition during the last survey.</p>
<p>4. Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>) 	<p>The scrub provides nesting cover for Cirl bunting <i>Emberiza cirlus</i> and other birds, while Fulmar <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> and Shag <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i> breed on the cliffs and rocks. A RSPB survey in 2016 assessed the assemblage to be in 'favourable' condition.</p>

Risk analysis

<p>1. Open Coastal Vegetation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H7 - <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> - <i>Scilla verna</i> heath <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard Maritime cliff and slope 	<p>This feature is found on steep cliffs that are difficult to access other than via the established coastal path. We do not expect the established pattern of recreational activities along this section of coast will change significantly as a result of the access proposals. We believe the proposals are compatible with the conservation of this feature.</p>
<p>2. Plant Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combinations of species – Lichens Vascular Plant Assemblage 	<p>Rarities in flowering plant favour open habitats that can tolerate a degree of trampling. It is not thought levels or patterns of access will change significantly as a result of our proposals on the trail or in the proposed coastal margin, therefore these plants are not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p> <p>Lichen species favour trees or exposed rock surfaces where they are unlikely to be trampled, therefore they are not considered to be vulnerable to our proposals.</p>
<p>3. Invertebrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invert. assemblage F111 bare sand & chalk 	<p>The invertebrate assemblage is unlikely to be affected as their habitat is on the bare areas of rocky slopes and cliff which is hard to get to for the public. Therefore they are not considered to be vulnerable to our proposals.</p>
<p>4. Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>) 	<p>Fulmer and Shag are breeding on the cliffs and rocks, the majority of which are already classified as Open Access Land and not readily accessed by the public. Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>) breeds in shrubby habitat fairly low to the ground and could be susceptible to increased levels of disturbance by people and their dogs, with dogs running off</p>



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

	leads through vegetation. As we are proposing to follow the walked line of the South West Coast Path and the majority of the reserve is already designated as Open Access land, it is not thought our proposals will cause any change to access levels and patterns at this site so this feature is not considered sensitive to our proposals.
--	--

Establishment works

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

Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? Yes

This SSSI very slightly overlaps with the Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC at the mouth of the estuary but there are no qualifying features that are the same as the SSSI features.

Current situation

The route of the proposed trail follows the existing South West Coast Path through the SSSI. The proposed trail uses the ferry service between Salcombe and East Portlemouth. Much of the reserve is upstream of the ferry service, with only part of unit 1, and units 2 and 3 being downstream of the ferry service in the proposed coastal margin. Below the ferry service the trail is routed landward of the SSSI. In fact as the estuary is notified for its rich and diverse intertidal and sub-tidal flora and invertebrate fauna, the coastal margin only really overlaps with the SSSI at beaches (units 2 and 3) and rocky areas in-between mean high water and mean low water. Much of the coastal margin on the eastern side of the estuary downstream of the ferry service is already mapped as Open Access land (down to mean high water).

<p>1. Geological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC - Variscan Structures 	<p>Originally an unglaciated river valley, the Estuary has been partly drowned following the post-glacial rise in sea level, and is now a sheltered marine inlet or ria. The lower estuary is partially separated from the open sea by a submerged sandbar and is characterised by rocks and sandy bays, while the upper estuary comprises mainly intertidal mudflats.</p> <p>All of these features are coastal rock exposures or landforms important for sedimentology, mineralogy fossils or coastal geomorphology.</p>
<p>2. Saltmarsh Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SM1 - <i>Zostera</i> communities • SM10 - Transitional low marsh vegetation with <i>Puccinellia maritima</i>, annual <i>Salicornia</i> species and <i>Suaeda maritima</i> • SM13a - <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> saltmarsh, <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> 	<p>The saltmarsh occurs at the heads of the tributary creeks so is further up the estuary than our proposal. The saltmarsh is assessed as 'favourable' apart from unit 8 which is 'unfavourable'. The saltmarsh habitat is used by a number of bird species but again this is geographically outside the remit of our proposals.</p>

dominant sub-community	
<p>3. Intertidal Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littoral rock and inshore sublittoral rock • Littoral sediment • Sheltered muddy shores (including estuarine muds) • Sheltered rocky shores (predominately sheltered to very sheltered from wave action) 	<p>The littoral sediment (mudflat) is assessed as 'favourable' apart from unit 8 which is 'unfavourable'. In this unit the littoral sediment is mostly muddy gravels. The main reason for unfavourability of this unit is the seasonal algal blooms which cover large parts of this unit.</p>

Risk analysis

<p>1. Geological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC - Variscan Structures 	<p>No risks identified as these features are rock exposures, landforms or deposits not susceptible to existing or increased access.</p> <p>This feature group is therefore not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
<p>2. Saltmarsh Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SM1 - <i>Zostera</i> communities • SM10 - Transitional low marsh vegetation with <i>Puccinellia maritima</i>, annual <i>Salicornia</i> species and <i>Suaeda maritima</i> • SM13a - <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> saltmarsh, <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> dominant sub-community 	<p>The saltmarsh areas are geographically outside our proposals being upstream of the ferry service.</p>

<p>3. Intertidal Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littoral rock and inshore sublittoral rock • Littoral sediment • Sheltered muddy shores (including estuarine muds) • Sheltered rocky shores (predominately sheltered to very sheltered from wave action) 	<p>Intertidal plants and animals of rocky coastlines are not usually sensitive to use of the foreshore for informal recreation on foot as the places they inhabit provide natural protection.</p> <p>Mudflats (littoral sediment) are not sensitive to being walked on occasionally, however an increase in access onto the foreshore could lead to an increase in physical pressures such as abrasion, surface substrate disturbance, penetration below the surface of the seabed, removal of target and non-target species. The mudflats are located upstream of our proposals.</p> <p>It is not thought access levels will increase significantly as a result of our proposals in the proposed coastal margin, with the trail following the existing route of the South West Coast path and the beaches and rocky shores already being well accessed, therefore these features are not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
--	--

Establishment works

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

Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? Yes

Note that notified features of the SSSI that are also qualifying features of the European site are omitted from this assessment as they are included with the accompanying Habitats Regulation Assessment. The following SSSI features are also features or sub features of the South Devon Shore Dock SAC:

- H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts
- S1441 Shore dock, *Rumex rupestris*

Note, this SSSI also overlaps with the Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC but there are no qualifying features that are the same as the SSSI features.

Current situation

The route of the proposed trail follows the existing South West Coast Path through the SSSI. It generally runs above the cliffs and maintains good views of the sea. Much of the western part of the site as far as Prawle Point is already mapped as Open Access land, as well as a section in the middle of the site around Woodcombe Point.

The stretch of coastline which includes Prawle Point and Start Point is of national importance for its geology, lichens and invertebrates, and supports a good variety of rare flowering plants and breeding birds. The intertidal area is of major biological importance.

<p>1. Geological Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC - Quaternary of South-West England • EC - South-West England Igneous • IS - Quaternary of South-West England 	<p>This site occupies a 12km stretch of coastline. Cliffs formed by Devonian schists occur throughout the length of the site. There are many rock outcrops, and the cliff height reaches 90m. Along much of the coast however these cliffs do not extend down to the present sea level resulting in raised beaches. All of these features are coastal rock exposures or landforms important for sedimentology, mineralogy fossils or coastal geomorphology.</p>
<p>2. Intertidal Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littoral rock and inshore sublittoral rock • Littoral sediment 	<p>The intertidal area is a wave-cut platform, the base of which is composed of the same schists which form the high cliffs. The rocky coastline at Gara Rock supports diverse communities of intertidal plants and animals. At low tide, sandy areas are exposed between the rocks and</p>

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

	these support a characteristic fauna. The last assessment found these features to be in 'favourable' condition.
3. Plant Species <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combinations of species – Lichens • Vascular Plant Assemblage 	The hard rock outcrops support one of the richest saxicolous lichen floras to be found anywhere on the coast of Britain. In general the Lichen Assemblage is assessed as 'favourable', as is the Vascular Plant Assemblage.
4. Invertebrates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invert. assemblage F1 unshaded early successional mosaic • Invert. assemblage F111 bare sand & chalk • Invert. assemblage F112 open short sward 	<p>This site is nationally important for mining bees and digger wasps, and butterflies and moths are also well represented. In fact this section of coast supports the only UK population of the nationally rare Six-banded nomad bee (<i>Nomada sexfasciata</i>) where it is restricted to one known area at Prawle Point.</p> <p>The invertebrate habitats were found to be in favourable condition during the last survey.</p>
5. Breeding Birds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>) • Assemblages of breeding birds – Mixed 	Many birds, notably Cirl bunting <i>Emberiza cirlus</i> , breed in the dense scrub, as do Kittiwake <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> and Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> on cliff ledges. A RSPB survey in 2016 assessed this feature as favourable.

Risk analysis

1. Geological Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC - Quaternary of South-West England • EC - South-West England Igneous IS - Quaternary of South-West England 	<p>No risks identified as these features are rock exposures, landforms or deposits not susceptible to existing or increased access.</p> <p>This feature group is therefore not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
2. Intertidal Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littoral rock and inshore sublittoral rock • Littoral sediment 	Intertidal plants and animals of rocky coastlines are not usually sensitive to use of the foreshore for informal recreation on foot as the places they inhabit provide natural protection.

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

	<p>Mudflats (littoral sediment) are not sensitive to being walked on occasionally, however an increase in access onto the foreshore could lead to an increase in physical pressures such as abrasion, surface substrate disturbance, penetration below the surface of the seabed, removal of target and non-target species. However it is not thought access levels will increase significantly as a result of our proposals in the coastal margin, therefore these features are not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
<p>3. Plant Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combinations of species – Lichens • Vascular Plant Assemblage 	<p>Lichen species on trees or exposed rock surfaces are unlikely to be susceptible to access, therefore they are not considered to be vulnerable to our proposals. Rarities in flowering plant favour open habitats that can tolerate a degree of trampling. It is not thought access levels will increase significantly as a result of our proposals on the trail or in the proposed coastal margin, therefore these plants are not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
<p>4. Invertebrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invert. assemblage F1 unshaded early successional mosaic • Invert. assemblage F111 bare sand & chalk • Invert. assemblage F112 open short sward 	<p>The invertebrate assemblage is unlikely to be affected as their habitat is on the bare areas of rocky slopes and cliff which is hard for the public to get to, with the exception of the nomad bee. As it is restricted to the one known area it could be under risk of extinction if its small areas of habitat were lost, due to any works to improve the trail. It is not thought to be vulnerable to access as it is already using areas close to the well-used South West Coast Path, and our proposals are to follow the walked line of the SWCP here. Therefore the assemblage is not considered to be vulnerable to our proposals unless incorrect establishment works were undertaken.</p>
<p>5. Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirulus</i>) 	<p>Kittiwake and Cormorant are breeding on the cliffs and rocks, and these areas are not readily accessed by the public.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemblages of breeding birds – Mixed 	<p>Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirrus</i>) breeds in shrubby habitat fairly low to the ground and could be susceptible to increased levels of disturbance by people and their dogs, with dogs running off leads through vegetation. As we are proposing to follow the walked line of the South West Coast Path, it is not thought our proposals will cause any change to access levels and patterns at this site so this feature is not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
---	--

Establishment works

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

Improvements to existing route sections east of Prawle Point to make the trail more accessible in wet conditions (route sections CKW-8-S038 and CKW-8-S039) have been considered. The original proposal was to implement drainage to reduce severe pooling along the SWCP at the edge of an arable field. However these proposals could affect the Nomad bee population and are not being considered in their original format. Surveying and monitoring of the area is ongoing by Buglife, and any future proposals to reduce pooling would require SSSI assent and would need to be planned, designed and executed extremely carefully with advice from Buglife.

Hallsands-Beesands SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? No

Current situation

The route of the proposed trail follows the existing South West Coast Path past the SSSI and mostly runs landward of the SSSI, except for a short section just north of Hallsands.

<p>1. Geological Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC - Variscan Structures • IA - Coastal Geomorphology 	<p>Hallsands is an important site for coastal geomorphology. Its importance arises first from its location at a point where wave energy is focussed at the shoreline by offshore banks, and secondly from the buried cliff forms which were excavated from beneath a gravel and shingle beach during storms in 1917. All of the features are coastal rock exposures or landforms important for sedimentology, mineralogy fossils or coastal geomorphology.</p>
---	--

Risk analysis

<p>1. Geological Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC - Variscan Structures • IA - Coastal Geomorphology 	<p>No risks identified as these features are rock exposures, landforms or deposits not susceptible to existing or increased access.</p> <p>This feature group is therefore not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
---	---

Establishment works

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

Slapton Ley SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? No

Current situation

A large part of the Slapton Ley SSSI is also a National Nature Reserve. The route of the proposed trail follows the existing South West Coast Path through the SSSI. There was a recent realignment of the road and South West Coast Path following Storm Emma. The route runs for the most part on the landward side of the road running along Slapton Sands, on the seaward side of the coastal lagoon, Slapton Ley. At the northern end of the site the proposed new route follows the landward boundary of the SSSI until it turns inland into Strete. The majority area of this SSSI is landward of the proposed route of the England Coast path including Slapton Ley itself.

Slapton Ley is nationally important for its coastal geomorphology (shingle barrier beach enclosing a freshwater coastal lagoon), open water, vegetated shingle, reed-bed, tall-herb fen and fen woodland plant communities, an assemblage of breeding birds of lowland open waters and their margins, a breeding population of the rare Cetti’s warbler *Cettia cetti*, non-breeding passage birds, wintering bittern *Botaurus stellaris*, a vascular plant assemblage, and a lichen assemblage.

<p>1. Geological Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FB - Coastal Geomorphology • IA - Coastal Geomorphology 	<p>Slapton is an important site for coastal geomorphology, with its classic shingle barrier beach enclosing a lagoon, Slapton Ley. To the north, the bar is backed by an in-filled former arm of the lagoon and by cliffs of Lower Devonian slates and grits. The bar is continuing to ‘roll’ landward in response to sea-level rise, and washover ‘fans’ of shingle in the lagoon show how this happens. All of the features are coastal rock exposures or landforms important for sedimentology, mineralogy fossils or coastal geomorphology.</p>
<p>2. Woodland and Scrub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W1 - <i>Salix cinerea</i> - <i>Galium palustre</i> woodland • W5 - <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> - <i>Carex paniculata</i> woodland • W6 - <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> - <i>Urtica dioica</i> woodland 	<p>There are areas of fen woodland associated with the Lower Ley and wet woodland associated with the Upper and Lower Ley wetland areas but these are all inland of the proposed route and coastal margin.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W22 - <i>Prunus spinosa</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub • W23 - <i>Ulex europaeus</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub 	
<p>3. Wetland Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowland wetland including basin fen, valley fen, floodplain fen, waterfringe fen, spring/flush fen and raised bog lag • S4 - <i>Phragmites australis</i> swamp and reed-beds • S14 - <i>Sparganium erectum</i> swamp • S22 - <i>Glyceria fluitans</i> water-margin vegetation • S26 - <i>Phragmites australis</i> - <i>Urtica dioica</i> tall-herb fen • Standing Waters 	<p>The freshwater coastal lagoon is the largest natural eutrophic lake in south-west England and supports an aquatic plant flora characteristic of this habitat type. Large areas of open freshwater are uncommon in Devon and the aquatic plants of these habitats are consequently rare. The Lower Ley is predominantly shallow open water with associated areas of reed-bed, tall-herb fen and fen woodland. These areas are all inland of the proposed route and coastal margin.</p>
<p>4. Intertidal Features and Open Coastal Vegetation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal vegetated shingle (SD1-3) • SD4 - <i>Elymus farctus</i> ssp. <i>Boreali-atlanticus</i> foredune community • MC11 - <i>Festuca rubra</i> - <i>Daucus carota</i> ssp. <i>gummifer</i> maritime grassland • Hard Maritime cliff and slope 	<p>The individual pebbles that make up the shingle bar are of relatively small size compared to other shingle beaches. This creates better conditions for colonization by plants and has resulted in a large proportion of the shingle bar supporting stabilized vegetation of grassland and scrub. These pioneer species can survive in very dry salty constantly shifting shingle. Good examples of this habitat are uncommon which makes Slapton Ley an important site for this feature.</p>
<p>5. Plant Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combinations of species – Lichens • Population of Schedule 8 plant - <i>Corrigiola litoralis</i>, Strapwort • Vascular Plant Assemblage 	<p>The lichen flora at Slapton Ley has been well studied and supports a large number of species within a relatively small area, with the best examples found along the margins of the Upper and Lower Ley. These are therefore found inland of the proposed route and coastal margin.</p> <p>During summer, lower water levels expose areas of mud along the shore of Slapton Ley, which support the small annual plant strapwort <i>Corrigiola litoralis</i>, the only site of this species occurrence in the United</p>

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

	Kingdom, which is therefore critically endangered. This is found together with other mud colonisers, including shoreweed <i>Littorella uniflora</i> . These are therefore also found inland of the proposed route and coastal margin.
6. Breeding Birds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregations of breeding birds - Cetti's warbler (<i>Cettia cetti</i>) • Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>) • Assemblages of breeding birds - Lowland open waters and their margins 	The mosaic of freshwater habitats supports a nationally important assemblage of breeding birds but these habitats are all inland of the proposed route and coastal margin.
7. Non Breeding Birds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Bittern (<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>) • Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Reed warbler (<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>) • Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Sand martin (<i>Riparia riparia</i>) • Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>) 	The reed-beds fringing the Ley are important for migrant and wintering birds, particularly in autumn and then winter when they are regularly used by bittern. However these habitats are all inland of the proposed route and coastal margin.

Risk analysis

The proposed alignment for the Coast Path along this section of coast follows that of the existing South West Coast Path National Trail. This is the proposal that is assessed in the following table. Further assessment will be made in the event of future coastal change, including should roll-back of the trail be invoked.

1. Geological Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FB - Coastal Geomorphology • IA - Coastal Geomorphology 	<p>No risks identified as these features are rock exposures, landforms or deposits not susceptible to existing or increased access.</p> <p>This feature group is therefore not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
--	---

<p>2. Woodland and Scrub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W1 - <i>Salix cinerea</i> - <i>Galium palustre</i> woodland • W5 - <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> - <i>Carex paniculata</i> woodland • W6 - <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> - <i>Urtica dioica</i> woodland • W22 - <i>Prunus spinosa</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub • W23 - <i>Ulex europaeus</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub 	<p>As these areas are landward of the coastal margin there will be no effect from our proposals.</p>
<p>3. Wetland Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowland wetland including basin fen, valley fen, floodplain fen, waterfringe fen, spring/flush fen and raised bog lag • S4 - <i>Phragmites australis</i> swamp and reed-beds • S14 - <i>Sparganium erectum</i> swamp • S22 - <i>Glyceria fluitans</i> water-margin vegetation • S26 - <i>Phragmites australis</i> - <i>Urtica dioica</i> tall-herb fen • Standing Waters 	<p>As these areas are landward of the coastal margin there will no effect from our proposals.</p>
<p>4. Intertidal Features and Open Coastal Vegetation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal vegetated shingle (SD1-3) • SD4 - <i>Elymus farctus</i> ssp. <i>Boreali-atlanticus</i> foredune community • MC11 - <i>Festuca rubra</i> - <i>Daucus carota</i> ssp. <i>gummifer</i> maritime grassland • Hard Maritime cliff and slope 	<p>Vegetated shingle is particularly sensitive to trampling so there is a concern that the important shingle vegetation could suffer a detrimental effect from trampling if access levels were to increase significantly.</p> <p>Currently the SWCP follows a well-defined and well surfaced path on the ground that people stick too. Our proposals are to follow this well-defined path and we do not expect access levels to increase on this path or in the proposed coastal margin as a result of our proposals.</p> <p>However this section of road and path could be susceptible to a further breach in the future possibly resulting in the temporary or permanent closure of</p>

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

	<p>the road and trail. As noted above a future assessment would be made at that point. Intertidal plants and animals of rocky coastlines are not usually sensitive to use of the foreshore for informal recreation on foot as the places they inhabit provide natural protection.</p>
<p>5. Plant Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combinations of species – Lichens • Population of Schedule 8 plant - <i>Corrigiola litoralis</i>, Strapwort • Vascular Plant Assemblage 	<p>The lichen communities are found landward of the coastal margin therefore there will be no effect from our proposals. Strapwort has been in decline since the 1960's and is now only found at this site, the reason for the decline is thought to be the loss of suitable open shoreline habitat due to successional changes in vegetation. It is not thought access levels will increase significantly as a result of our proposals on the trail or in the proposed coastal margin, therefore these plants are not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
<p>6. Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregations of breeding birds - Cetti's warbler (<i>Cettia cetti</i>) • Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirrus</i>) • Assemblages of breeding birds - Lowland open waters and their margins 	<p>As these features are found landward of the coastal margin there will no effect from our proposals.</p>
<p>7. Non Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Bittern (<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>) • Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Reed warbler (<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>) • Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Sand martin (<i>Riparia riparia</i>) • Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>) 	<p>As these features are found landward of the coastal margin there will no effect from our proposals.</p>



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Establishment works

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

Assessment of coastal access proposals on:

Erme Estuary MCZ

Current situation

The MCZ sits wholly within the SSSI boundary and encompasses the estuary up to the mean high water mark, as far as the weir just south of Sequer’s Bridge (where the A379 crosses the river). The seaward boundary of the MCZ has been drawn at the estuary mouth, from a point at Battisborough Island to Fernycombe Point.

The route of the proposed trail follows the existing South West Coast Path along this stretch, and the trail crosses the Erme Estuary about 1km upstream between route sections CKW-5-S005 and CKW-5-S006. Therefore only the southern part of the MCZ falls within the proposed coastal margin.

<p>1. Broadscale Marine Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low energy intertidal rock (A1.3) • Moderate energy intertidal rock (A1.2) • High energy intertidal rock (A1.1) • Intertidal coarse sediment (A2.1) • Intertidal mixed sediments (A2.4) • Sheltered muddy gravels • Estuarine rocky habitats 	<p>Intertidal rock can be found at the mouth of the estuary where large expanses of intertidal sediments are revealed at low tide at Mothecombe and Wonwell beach. Further up the estuary the sediment is predominantly muddy with areas of gravel.</p> <p>The General Management Approach (GMA) for the intertidal rock features is to maintain the features in favourable condition.</p> <p>The GMA for the intertidal coarse sediment in the Erme Estuary MCZ is to recover the feature to favourable condition with agricultural and chemical related pollution needing to be addressed. The GMA for all the other intertidal sediment features is to maintain the features in favourable condition.</p>
<p>2. Marine Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tentacled lagoon-worm (<i>Alkmaria romijni</i>) 	<p>The tentacled lagoon-worm (<i>Alkmaria romijni</i>) is a scarce tiny bristle worm that is less than 5mm long. It lives in a muddy tube and can be found in sheltered estuaries and lagoons where there are muddy sediments and brackish water along the sublittoral fringe. It is protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 and is also listed as a scarce marine animal. The GMA is to Maintain the feature in favourable condition.</p>

	The tentacled lagoon-worm has also been recorded in the Devon Avon Estuary MCZ above Hexdown, and the Yealm Estuary in Cofflete Creek.
--	--

Risk analysis

<p>1. Broadscale Marine Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low energy intertidal rock (A1.3) • Moderate energy intertidal rock (A1.2) • High energy intertidal rock (A1.1) • Intertidal coarse sediment (A2.1) • Intertidal mixed sediments (A2.4) • Sheltered muddy gravels • Estuarine rocky habitats 	<p>Increase in access onto the foreshore may lead to the following pressures ‘abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed’, ‘penetration and/or disturbance of the substrate below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion’, ‘introduction or spread of non-indigenous species, the ‘removal of target species’ and the ‘removal of non-target species’.</p> <p>All intertidal features are sensitive to the above pressures except for the following: Intertidal coarse sediment is not sensitive to any of the above pressures and intertidal mixed sediment is not sensitive to ‘abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed’.</p> <p>As we are following the walked line of the South West Coast Path and the foreshore is already well accessed in this area, it is not thought access levels will increase significantly as a result of our proposals on the trail or in the proposed coastal margin, therefore these features are not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
<p>2. Marine Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tentacled lagoon-worm (<i>Alkmaria romijni</i>) 	<p>Whilst mainly a subtidal feature it can be found intertidally so there could be an impact pathway, however they are generally found on mudflats with little public access. It is not thought access levels will increase significantly as a result of our proposals in the proposed coastal margin, therefore this feature is not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>

Devon Avon Estuary MCZ

Current situation

The Devon Avon Estuary is a small ria-type (drowned valley) estuary in South Devon which is predominantly sandy in its lower reaches. The estuary is a narrow sheltered inlet with steep-sided margins cut into relatively weak Devonian slates and grits, and the channels are narrow and shallow at low water as the estuary has been in-filled by an accumulation of sediment. The main river channel meanders for seven kilometres from Aveton Gifford to the sands at the mouth of the estuary at Bigbury-on-Sea and Bantham.

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path along this stretch, and the intertidal parts of the MCZ fall within the coastal margin.

<p>1. Broadscale Marine Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate energy intertidal rock (A1.2) • Intertidal mud (A2.3) • Intertidal sand and muddy sand (A2.2) 	<p>Five main depositional environments are found in the estuary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) beach and dune deposits at Bantham Ham and Cockleridge, 2) an extensive ebb-tidal delta forming part of the tombolo (a deposition land form in which an island is attached to the mainland by a narrow piece of connecting land) behind Burgh Island, 3) a flood tidal delta with several intertidal shoals in the outer estuary, 4) a main tidal channel that meanders along the entire estuary with a tidal weir at Aveton Gifford and salt marshes in the upper estuary. 5) Semi-exposed rock platforms with rich rockpool, underboulder and overhang communities are found on the lower shore at the mouth of the estuary. <p>The General Management Approach (GMA) for all the intertidal rock features is to maintain the features in favourable condition.</p> <p>The GMA for the intertidal sediment features is to maintain the features in favourable condition.</p>
<p>2. Marine Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tentacled lagoon-worm (<i>Alkmaria romijni</i>) 	<p>The tentacled lagoon-worm (<i>Alkmaria romijni</i>) is a scarce tiny bristle worm that is less than 5mm long. It lives in a muddy tube and can be found in sheltered estuaries and lagoons where there are muddy sediments and brackish</p>

	<p>water along the sublittoral fringe. It is protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 and is also listed as a scarce marine animal. The GMA is to 'Maintain the feature in favourable condition'. This worm can be found in the brackish waters of the estuary living in sediment along the fringes of the channels.</p> <p>It has been recorded in the Devon Avon Estuary MCZ above Hexdown, the Erme Estuary (see above) and the Yealm Estuary in Cofflete Creek.</p>
--	---

Risk analysis

<p>1. Broadscale Marine Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate energy intertidal rock (A1.2) • Intertidal mud (A2.3) • Intertidal sand and muddy sand (A2.2) 	<p>Increase in access onto the foreshore may lead to the following pressures 'abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed', 'penetration and/or disturbance of the substrate below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion', 'introduction or spread of non-indigenous species, the 'removal of target species' and the 'removal of non-target species'.</p> <p>All intertidal features are sensitive to the above pressures except for the following: Intertidal coarse sediment is not sensitive to any of the above pressures and intertidal mixed sediment is not sensitive to 'abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed'.</p> <p>As we are following the walked line of the South West Coast Path and the foreshore is already well accessed in this area, it is not thought access levels will increase significantly as a result of our proposals on the trail or in the proposed coastal margin, therefore these features are not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
<p>2. Marine Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tentacled lagoon-worm (<i>Alkmaria romijni</i>) 	<p>Whilst mainly a subtidal feature it can be found intertidally so there could be an impact pathway, however they are generally found on mudflats with little public access. It is not thought access levels will increase significantly as a result of our proposals in the coastal margin, therefore this feature is not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>

Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ

Current situation

The Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ is an inshore site located on the South Devon coast. It runs along the coast from Leek Cove at Limebury Point to Torcross, and extends from the coastline out to depths of approximately 70 metres. It is an area that supports a highly diverse range of species that live on the seabed or in the water column and is also known to be an important breeding area for flat fish.

The route of the proposed trail predominately follows the existing South West Coast Path along this stretch, and the intertidal parts of the MCZ fall within the coastal margin.

<p>1. Broadscale Marine Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate energy infralittoral rock (A3.2) • Moderate energy circalittoral rock (A4.2) • Moderate energy intertidal rock (A1.2) • High energy infralittoral rock (A3.1) • High energy intertidal rock (A1.1) • Intertidal coarse sediment (A2.1) • Intertidal mixed sediments (A2.4) • Intertidal sand and muddy sand (A2.2) • Subtidal coarse sediment (A5.1) • Subtidal sand (A5.2) • Subtidal mud (A5.3) 	<p>The low energy intertidal rock can be found within the estuaries along this section of coast. Moderate energy intertidal, infralittoral and circalittoral rock and high energy intertidal and infralittoral rock tend to be found at the mouths of the estuaries and on the open coast in areas of wave action and strong currents, and form reefs which extend offshore. The intertidal sediments can be found within the estuaries as well as in coves and bays along the open coast. The subtidal coarse sediment and subtidal sand are features of the Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ and are primarily found within Start Bay and the southern section of the site. Skerries Bank, a large permanently submerged sandbank, is located within Start Bay.</p> <p>The General Management Approach (GMA) for all the intertidal rock features within Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ is to maintain the features in favourable condition. The GMA for the intertidal sediment features is to maintain the features in favourable condition.</p> <p>The GMA for the moderate energy circalittoral rock is to recover the feature to favourable condition.</p> <p>The GMA for all the other subtidal rock and sediment features is to maintain the features in favourable condition.</p>
<p>2. Marine Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pink sea-fan (<i>Eunicella verrucosa</i>) 	<p>Pink sea-fans (<i>Eunicella verrucosa</i>) are slow-growing soft corals found on rocky reefs in subtidal areas of strong currents. The Pink sea-fan is a 'Species of Principal</p>

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

	<p>Importance/ Priority Species’ as listed under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006. It is also protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Pink sea-fans have been recorded on the rocky reefs all along this section of coast. Pink sea-fans are a designated feature of Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ where the GMA is to ‘Maintain the feature in favourable condition’. The pink sea-fan is also found in the Lyme Bay to Torbay SAC, Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone SAC, and the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC, where it forms part of the reef features that these sites are designated for. An assessment of the reef features in these sites have not yet been made as they are below Mean Low Water.</p>
<p>3. Marine Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>) 	<p>Spiny lobsters are found near the coast and offshore up to 70m deep. The number of spiny lobsters caught has been falling (in some cases dramatically), the animals that are caught tend to be smaller, and they seem to have disappeared entirely from areas of south-west England in which they were common during the 1970s. The Spiny lobster is a UK BAP Priority Species and is a species of principal importance under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006. Spiny lobsters have been recorded from just north of Start Point and westwards along this stretch of coast. Spiny lobsters are a feature of the Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ where the GMA is to ‘Recover them to favourable condition’. They are generally found below Mean Low Water.</p>

Risk analysis

<p>1. Broadscale Marine Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate energy infralittoral rock (A3.2) • Moderate energy circalittoral rock (A4.2) • Moderate energy intertidal rock (A1.2) 	<p>Increase in access onto the foreshore may lead to the following pressures ‘abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed’, ‘penetration and/or disturbance of the substrate below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion’, ‘introduction or spread of</p>
--	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High energy infralittoral rock (A3.1) • High energy intertidal rock (A1.1) • Intertidal coarse sediment (A2.1) • Intertidal mixed sediments (A2.4) • Intertidal sand and muddy sand (A2.2) • Subtidal coarse sediment (A5.1) • Subtidal sand (A5.2) • Subtidal mud (A5.3) 	<p>non-indigenous species, the ‘removal of target species’ and the ‘removal of non-target species’.</p> <p>All intertidal features are sensitive to the above pressures except for the following: Intertidal coarse sediment is not sensitive to any of the above pressures and intertidal mixed sediment is not sensitive to ‘abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed’.</p> <p>As we are following the walked line of the South West Coast Path and the foreshore is already well accessed or inaccessible in this area, it is not thought access levels will increase significantly as a result of our proposals on the trail or in the proposed coastal margin, therefore these features are not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p> <p>Marine features that are underwater at all states of the tide will not be affected by our proposals for coastal access as coastal access rights only go as far as Mean Low Water. High energy and moderate energy infralittoral rock are not sensitive to any access activities so are also not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
<p>2. Marine Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pink sea-fan (<i>Eunicella verrucosa</i>) 	<p>No ecological sensitivities have been identified as they are subtidal features and marine features that are underwater at all states of the tide and will not be affected by our proposals for coastal access.</p>
<p>3. Marine Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>) 	<p>No ecological sensitivities have been identified as they are subtidal features and marine features that are underwater at all states of the tide and will not be affected by our proposals for coastal access.</p>

Assessment of coastal access proposals on:

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus*

Is this site or feature also part of a European site? Yes

Note that this species is found on SSSIs that overlap with European Sites but it is not a European Site qualifying feature for any of those European Sites so it is further considered in this assessment.

Current situation

Cirl buntings are discussed here in more detail due to the Cirl Bunting Project in South Devon that has been working to restore populations in the area covered by this report over the last 30 years.

<p>1. Breeding Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>) 	<p>Cirl buntings are a small finch-like bird closely related to the yellowhammer. They were once widespread across much of Southern England, but they are now only really found in South Devon inbetween Plymouth and Exeter. It is thought that changes in agricultural practices have been the major factor in their decline. The RSPB started the Cirl Bunting Project in South Devon in 1988 and a 1989 survey found there were only 118 pairs left in the UK, mostly in Devon. In 2016 there were found to be over a 1000 UK pairs although the species is still considered vulnerable.</p> <p>Cirl bunting are found now across this stretch of South Devon with the core population in the Salcombe area. They are found both on and outside of SSSIs and are notified features of four of the SSSIs where they have been discussed above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wembury Point SSSI • Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI • Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI • Slapton Ley SSSI
--	--

Risk analysis

<p>1. Breeding Birds</p> <p>Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>)</p>	<p>The coast path passes through or near a number of coastal sites where the population of Cirl bunting has increased and it has been found that the successful recovery of Cirl bunting is down to habitat management and that they are not particularly sensitive to disturbance, i.e. disturbance is not thought to be a key limiting factor.</p> <p>It is known that Cirl bunting are not ground nesting but nest in hedgerows and scrub. Their nests tend to be in vegetation around 40cm to 1m from the ground which will offer them some protection from free roaming dogs. Cirl bunting are known to nest a bit later than other species starting in early May.</p> <p>Where Cirl buntings are present we found that generally we are proposing to follow the walked line of the long established South West Coast Path, and the proposed coastal margin is either already well used, with large sections already being designated as open access land, or not particularly accessible, so it is not thought our proposals will cause any change to access levels and patterns at these sites. Furthermore dogs must be kept under 'effective control' on coastal access land. Therefore combined with disturbance not considered to be a limiting factor this feature is not considered sensitive to our proposals.</p>
---	--



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Conclusion

We, Natural England, are satisfied that our proposals to improve access to the English coast between Cremyll to Kingswear are fully compatible with our duty to further the conservation and enhancement of the notified features of Western King, Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs, Wembury Point, Yealm Estuary, Blackstone Point, Erme Estuary, South Milton Ley, Bolt Head to Bolt Tail, Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary, Prawle Point and Start Point, Hallsands-Beesands, Slapton Ley Sites of Special Scientific Interest, consistent with the proper exercise of our functions¹.

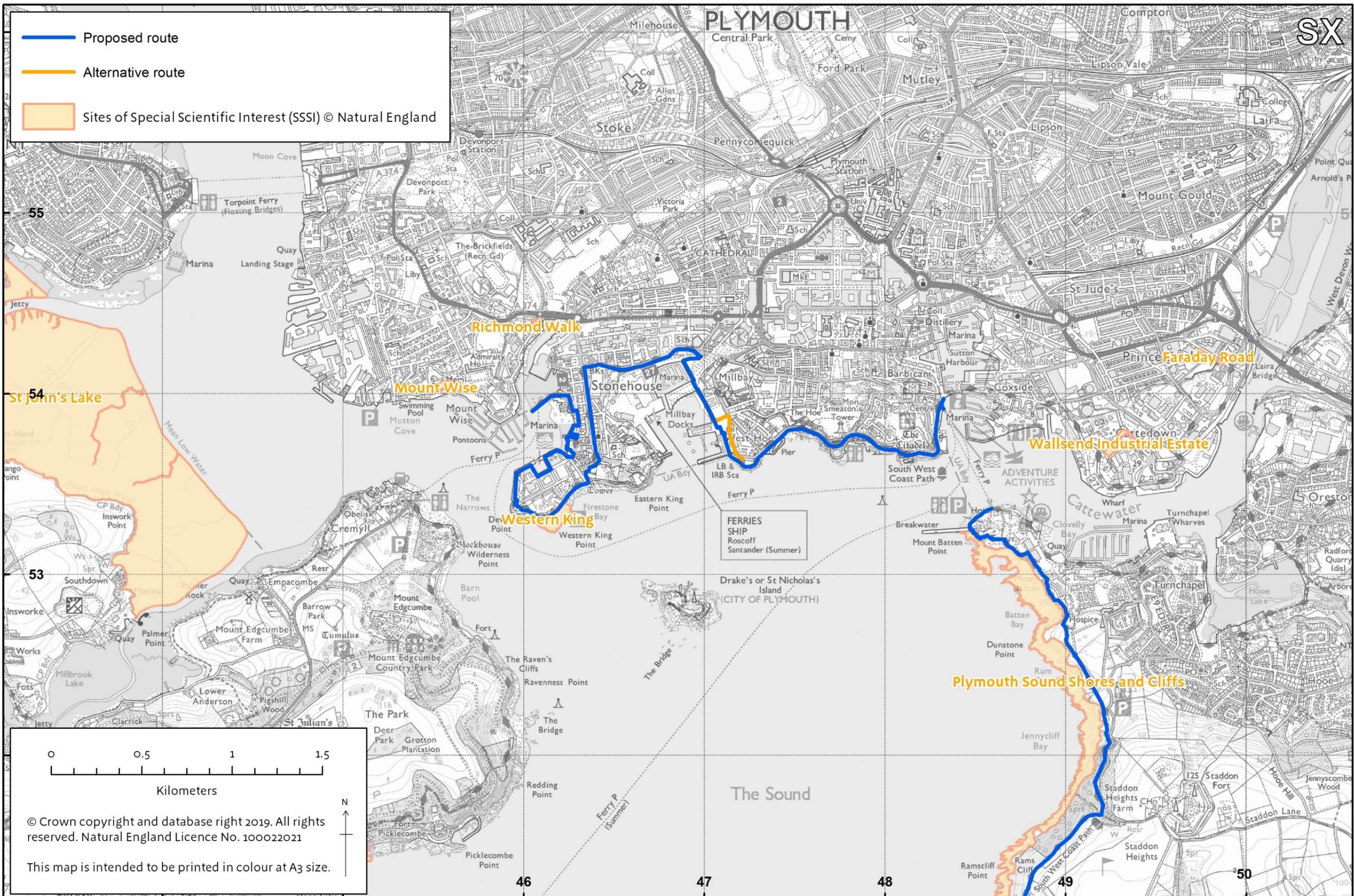
In respect of any duties that may arise under section 125 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, Natural England has concluded for Erme Estuary, Devon Avon Estuary and Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zones, that the access proposal (including any mitigation measures specified) is the one that, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions under section 296 of the same Act, is least likely to hinder the achievement of the conservation objectives for the Marine Conservation Zone - and accordingly may proceed.

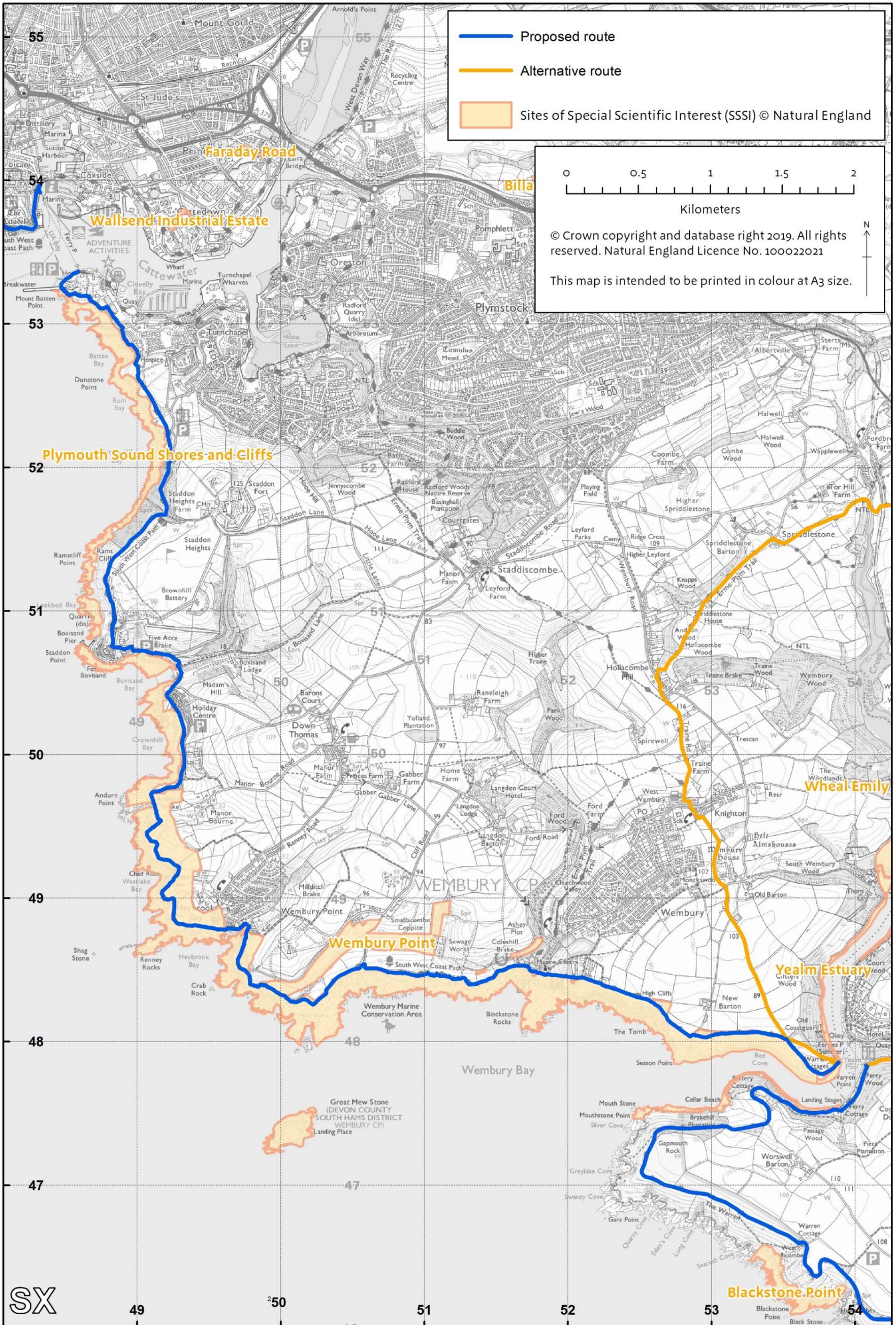
See also, where relevant, the conclusions of the separate HRA relating to common features.

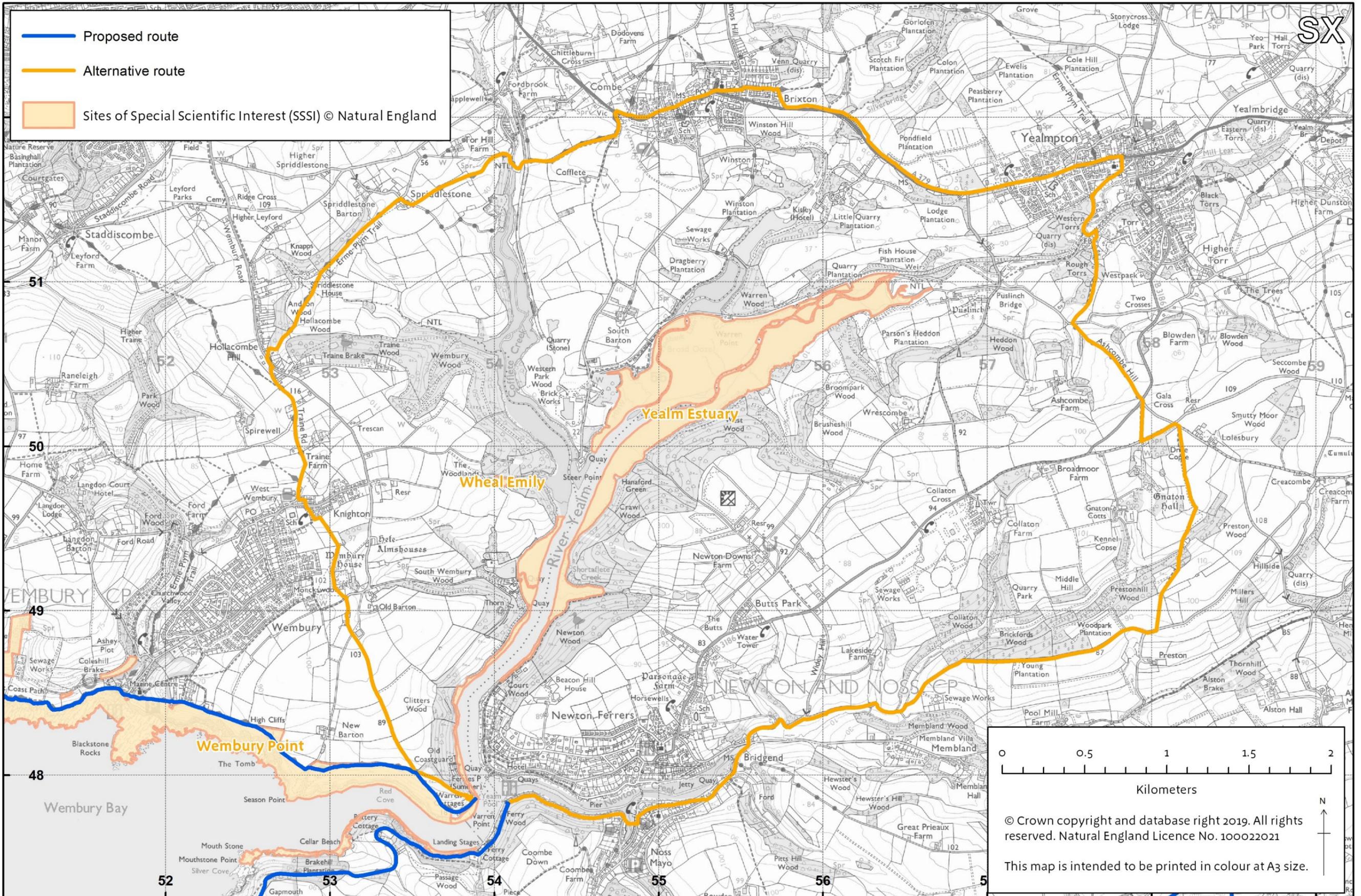
The conclusions of this assessment have been checked by:

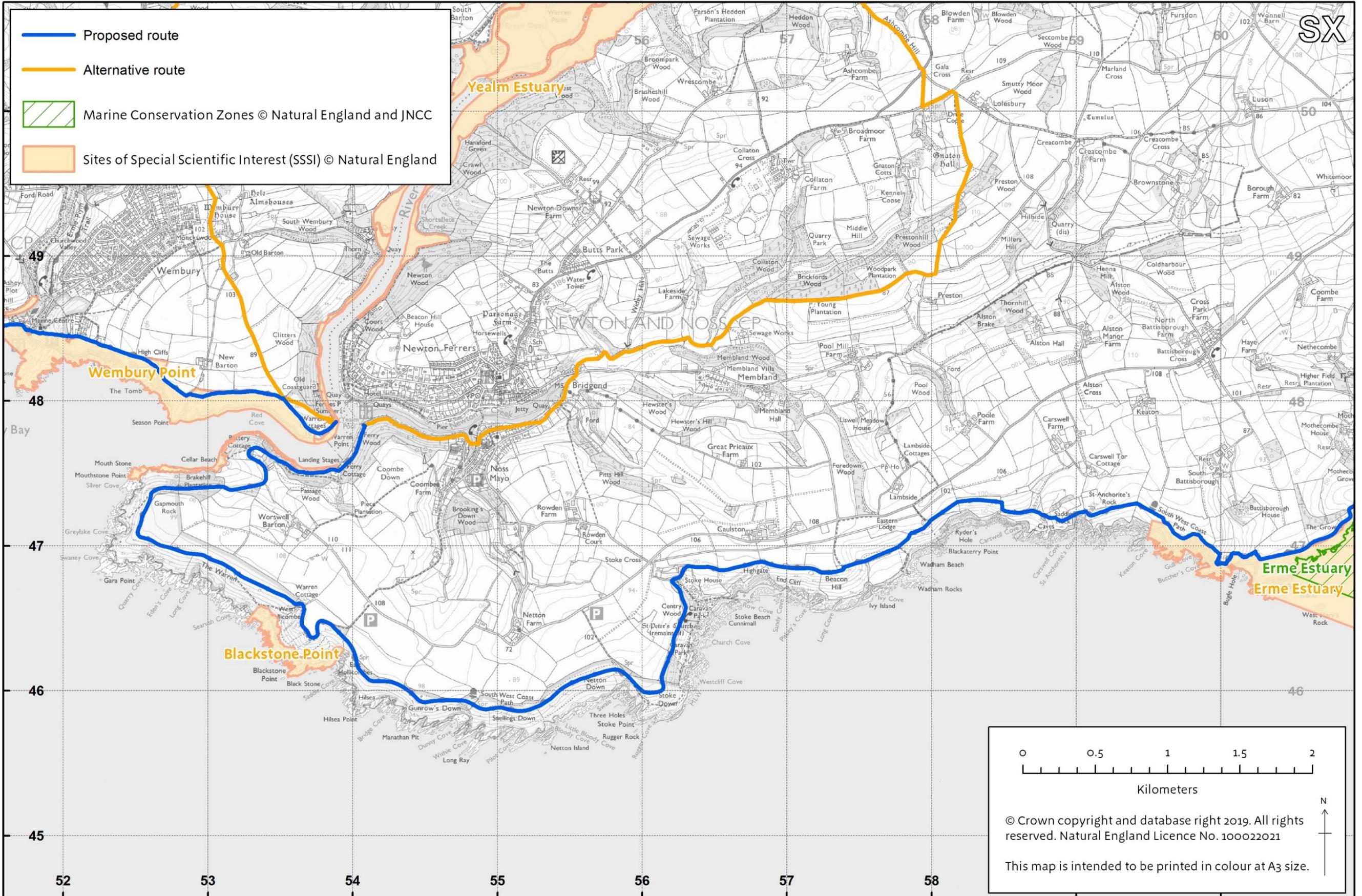
Richard Andrews, Coastal Access Senior Adviser	17/10/2019	On behalf of the Coastal Access Programme Team
Michaela Barwell, Area Team Leader	17/10/2019	Senior Officer with responsibility for protected sites

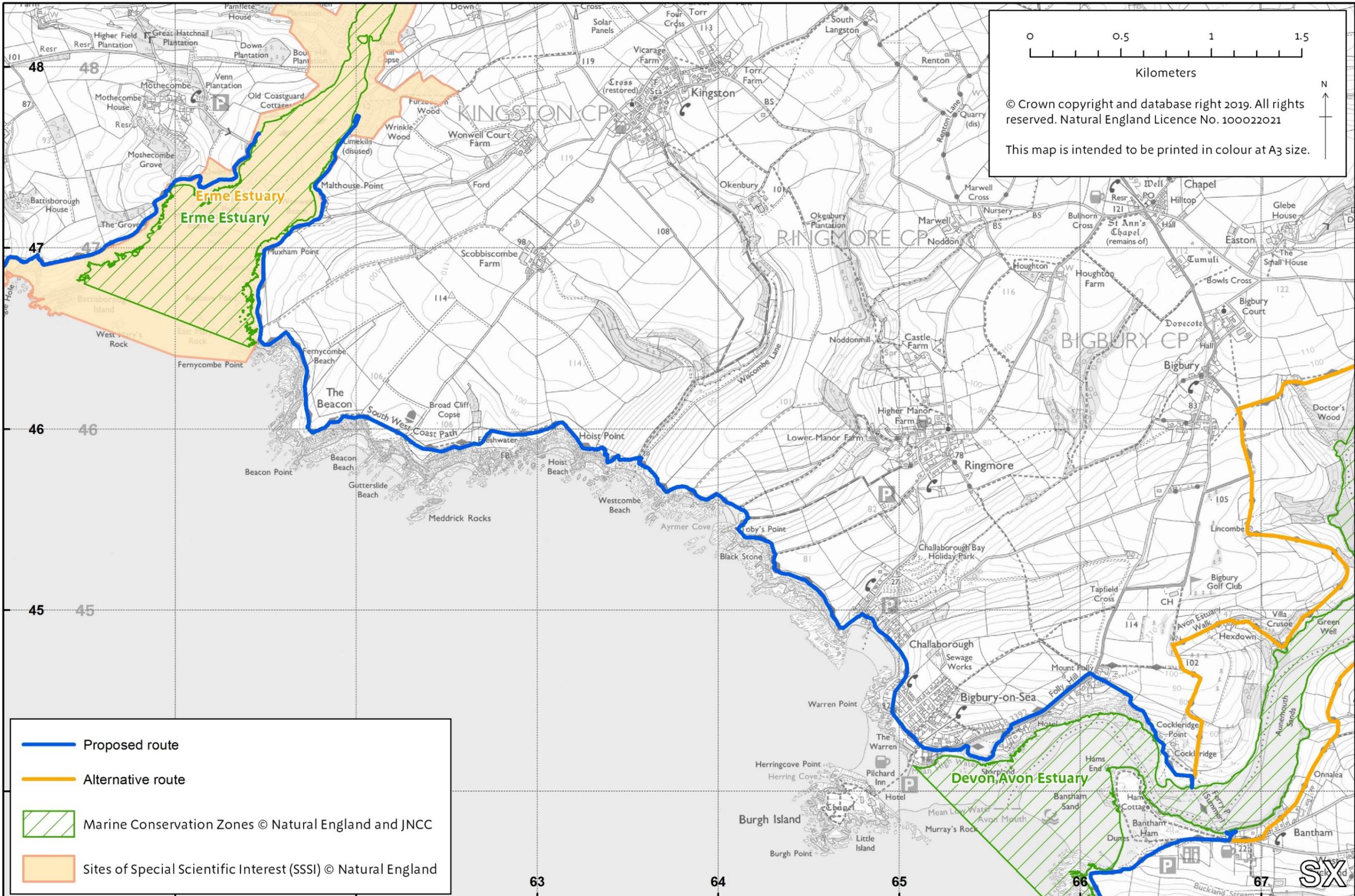
¹ Natural England's functions includes its balanced general purposes for access, nature conservation and landscape under the NERC Act 2006, any specific statutory duties it may have to deliver specific improvements to public access, and the access-related policies and priorities it periodically agrees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

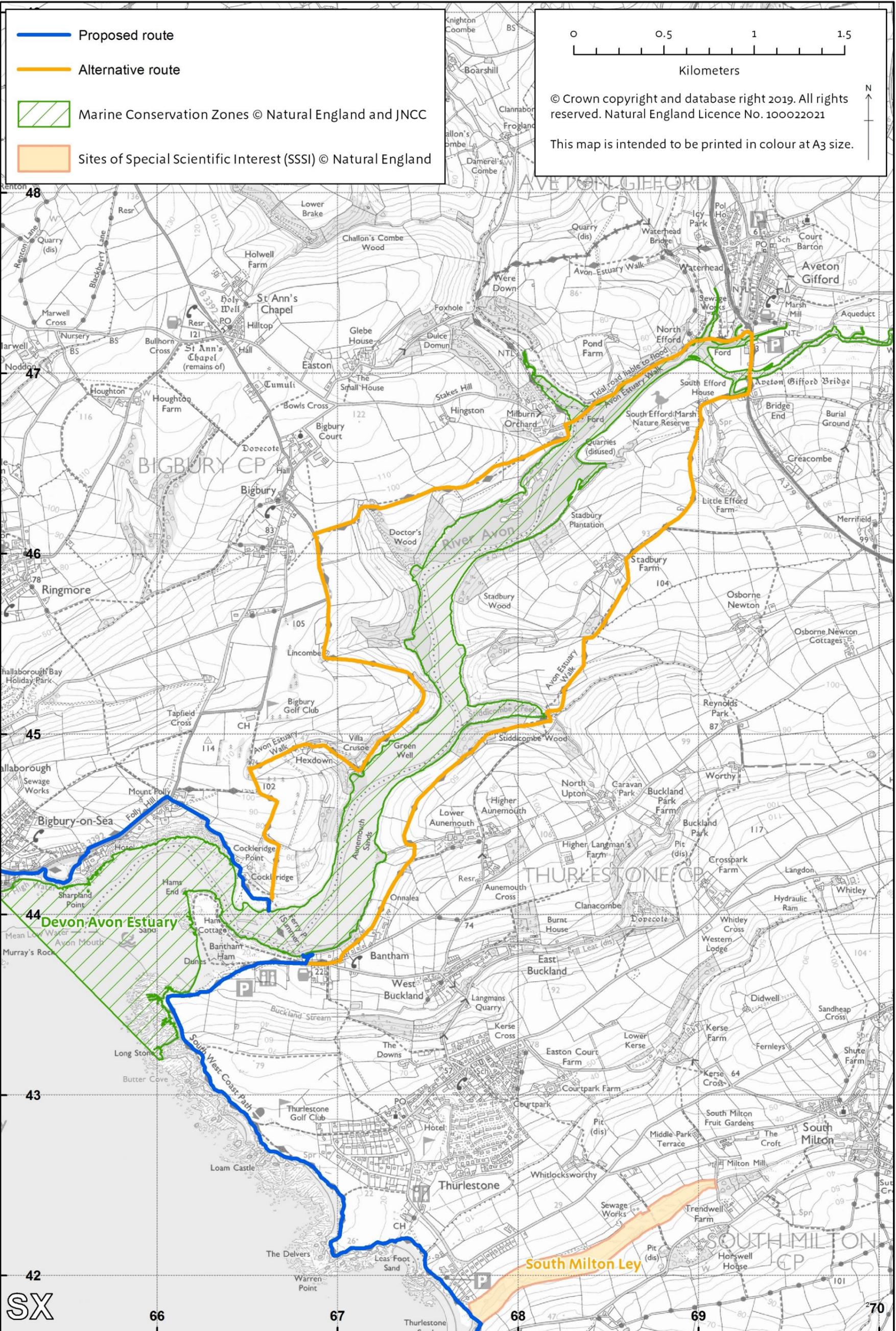




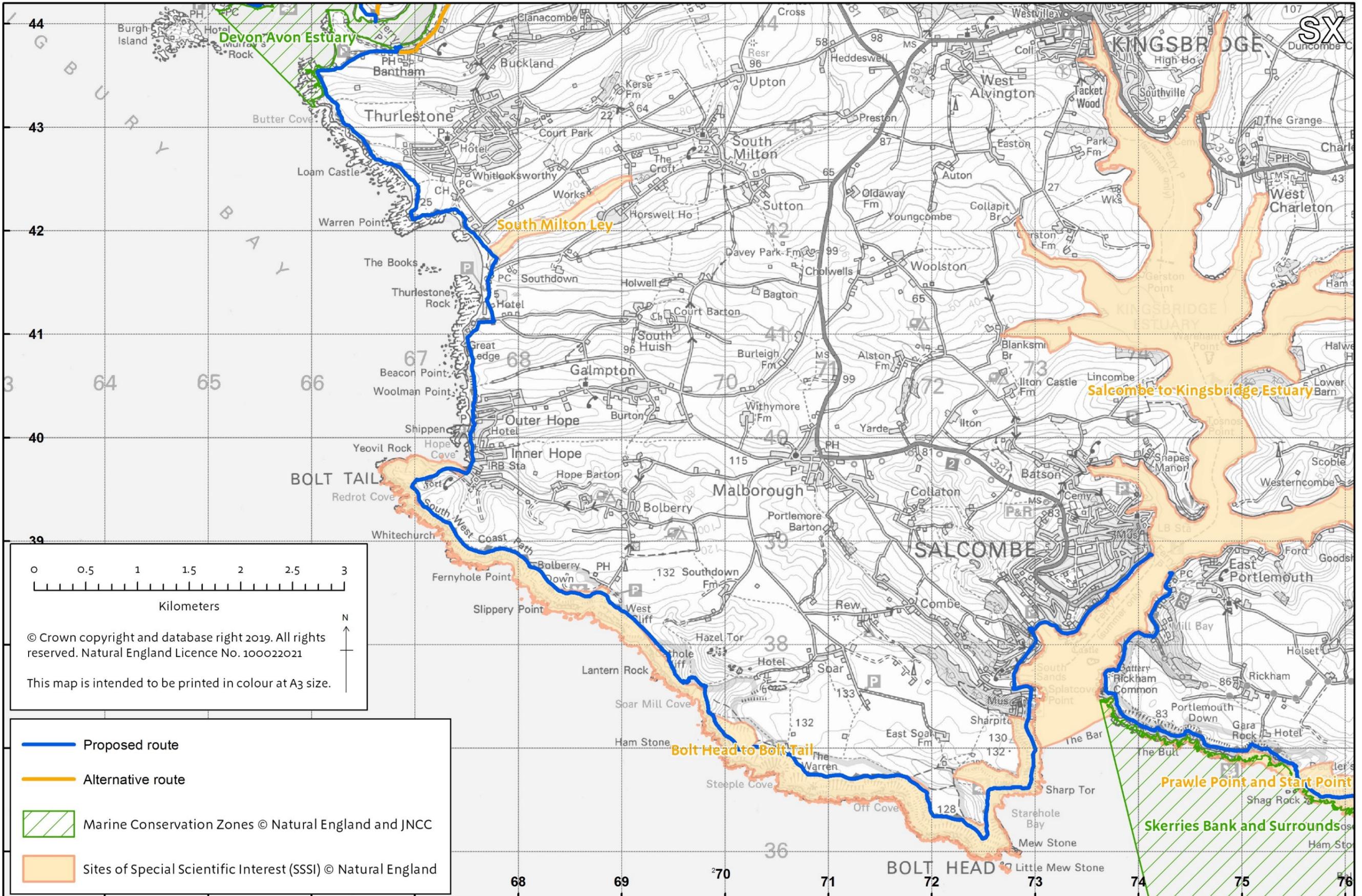








© Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Natural England Licence No. 10002021
 This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Annex 1. Index to designated sites and features

Note: columns in grey are European sites for which a separate Habitats Regulations Assessment has been carried out.

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erne Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erne Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
Geological features																				
EC - Marine Devonian								√												
EC - Variscan Structures										√							√		√	
EC - Quaternary Of South-West England																		√		
EC - South-West England Igneous																		√		
FB - Coastal Geomorphology																				√
IA - Coastal Geomorphology																			√	√
IS - Quaternary Of South-West England																		√		
Woodland and scrub																				
W1 - <i>Salix cinerea</i> - <i>Galium palustre</i> woodland																				√

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erme Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erme Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
W5 - <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> - <i>Carex paniculata</i> woodland																				√
W6 - <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> - <i>Urtica dioica</i> woodland																				√
W10 - <i>Quercus robur</i> - <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> woodland														√						
W16 - <i>Quercus</i> spp.- <i>Betula</i> spp.- <i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i> woodland														√						
W21 - <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> - <i>Hedra helix</i> scrub											√									
W22 - <i>Prunus spinosa</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub											√									√
W23 - <i>Ulex europaeus</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub											√									√
Open Coastal Vegetation																				

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erne Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erne Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
H7 - <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> - <i>Scilla verna</i> heath																√				
H1230. Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts				√														√		
MC8 - <i>Festuca rubra</i> - <i>Armeria maritima</i> maritime grassland											√									
MC11 - <i>Festuca rubra</i> - <i>Daucus carota</i> ssp. <i>gummifer</i> maritime grassland																				√
Soft Maritime cliff and slope											√									
Hard Maritime cliff and slope																√				√

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erne Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erne Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
Sand dune; strandline, embryo and mobile dunes (SD1-6)																				√
Wetland features																				
Lowland wetland including basin fen, valley fen, floodplain fen, waterfringe fen, spring/flush fen and raised bog lagg														√						√
S4 - <i>Phragmites australis</i> swamp and reed-beds																				√
S14 - <i>Sparganium erectum</i> swamp																				√
S22 - <i>Glyceria fluitans</i> water-margin vegetation																				√

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erne Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erne Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
S26 - <i>Phragmites australis</i> - <i>Urtica dioica</i> tall-herb fen																				√
Standing Waters																				√
Coastal Shingle and Saltmarsh Features/ Intertidal																				
H1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>)	√																			
Coastal saltmarshes and saline reedbeds							√													
SM1 - <i>Zostera</i> communities																	√			
SM6 - <i>Spartina anglica</i> saltmarsh														√						
SM8 - Annual <i>Salicornia</i> saltmarsh														√						

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erme Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erme Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
SM10 - Transitional low marsh vegetation with <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> , annual <i>Salicornia</i> species and <i>Suaeda maritima</i>														√			√			
SM13a - <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> saltmarsh, <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> dominant sub-community																	√			
SM14 - <i>Atriplex portulacoides</i> saltmarsh														√						
SM15 - <i>Juncus maritimus</i> - <i>Triglochin maritima</i> saltmarsh														√						

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erme Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erme Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI	
SM16a - <i>Festuca rubra</i> saltmarsh <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> sub-community														√							
SM24 - <i>Elytrigia atherica</i> saltmarsh														√							
SM4-28 - Saltmarsh																	√				
Coastal vegetated shingle (SD1-3)																					√
SD4 - <i>Elymus farctus</i> ssp. <i>Boreali-atlanticus</i> foredune community																					√
Littoral rock and inshore sublittoral rock													√				√	√			
Littoral sediment											√		√	√			√	√			

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erme Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erme Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
Exposed rocky shores (predominantly extremely exposed to wave action)										√										
Moderately exposed rocky shores										√			√							
Shores of mixed substrata (stones AND sediment)										√			√							
Moderately exposed sandy shores (with polychaetes and bivalves)													√	√						
Muddy gravel shores													√							
Sheltered muddy shores (including estuarine muds)													√	√			√			
Sheltered rocky shores (predominately sheltered to very sheltered from wave action)													√				√			

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erne Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erne Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
Reefs											√									
Plant Species																				
S1441 Shore dock, <i>Rumex rupestris</i> (SAC)	√	√		√							√	√				√		√		
Combinations of species - Lichens																√		√		√
Population of Schedule 8 plant - <i>Corrigiola litoralis</i> , Strapwort																				√
Population of Schedule 8 plant - <i>Rumex rupestris</i> , Shore Dock (SSSI)												√						√		
Population of Schedule 8 plant - <i>Eryngium campestre</i> , Field Eryngo									√											
Vascular Plant Assemblage																√		√		√

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erme Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erme Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
Invertebrates																				
Invert. assemblage F1 unshaded early successional mosaic																		√		
Invert. assemblage F111 bare sand & chalk															√			√		
Invert. assemblage F112 open short sward																		√		
Breeding Birds																				
Aggregations of breeding birds - Cetti's warbler (<i>Cettia cetti</i>)																				√
Aggregations of breeding birds - Cirl bunting (<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>)										√					√			√		√

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erme Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erme Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI	
Assemblages of breeding birds - Lowland open waters and their margins																					√
Assemblages of breeding birds – Mixed														√				√			
Assemblages of breeding birds - Lowland fen without open water															√						
Non Breeding Birds																					
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Bittern (<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>)																					√
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Reed warbler (<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>)																					√

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erne Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erne Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Sand martin (<i>Riparia riparia</i>)																				√
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Sedge warbler (<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>)																				√
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - Swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>)																				√
Broadscale Marine Habitats																				
Low energy intertidal rock (A1.3)						√														
Moderate energy infralittoral rock (A3.2)							√													
Moderate energy circalittoral rock (A4.2)							√													

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erme Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erme Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
Moderate energy intertidal rock (A1.2)						√	√	√												
High energy infralittoral rock (A3.1)								√												
High energy intertidal rock (A1.1)						√		√												
Intertidal coarse sediment (A2.1)						√		√												
Intertidal mixed sediments (A2.4)						√		√												
Intertidal mud (A2.3)							√													
Intertidal sand and muddy sand (A2.2)							√	√												
Subtidal coarse sediment (A5.1)								√												
Subtidal sand (A5.2)								√												

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erme Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erme Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
Subtidal mud (A5.3)								√												
Shores of mixed substrata (stones AND sediment)											√									
Sheltered muddy gravels						√														
Estuarine rocky habitats						√														
Marine Habitats of conservation importance																				
H1110 Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time (Subtidal coarse sediment, Subtidal mixed sediments, Subtidal mud, Subtidal sand, Subtidal seagrass beds)	√																			
H1130 Estuaries	√												√							

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erme Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erme Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
H1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide (Intertidal coarse sediment, Intertidal mixed sediments, Intertidal mud, Intertidal sand and muddy sand, Intertidal seagrass beds)	√																			
H1160 Large shallow inlets and bays (Circalittoral rock, Infralittoral rock, Intertidal rock, Subtidal coarse sediment, Subtidal mixed sediments, Subtidal mud, Subtidal sand, Subtidal seagrass beds)	√																			

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erme Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erme Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
H1170 Reefs (Circalittoral rock, Infralittoral rock, intertidal rock)	√		√		√					√	√		√							
H1330 Estuaries (Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>), Circalittoral rock, Infralittoral rock, Intertidal mixed sediments, Intertidal mud, Intertidal rock, Intertidal seagrass beds, Subtidal mixed sediments, Subtidal mud, Subtidal sand, Subtidal seagrass beds)	√																			
H8330 Submerged or partially submerged sea caves					√															

Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Cremyll and Kingswear

Features – of the designated sites listed in 2.2. Note: * indicates Priority feature on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Blackstone Point SAC	Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SAC	South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Erme Estuary MCZ	Devon Avon Estuary MCZ	Skerries Bank and Surrounds Marine Conservation Zone	Western King SSSI	Plymouth Sound Shores and Cliffs SSSI	Wembury Point SSSI	Blackstone Point SSSI	Yealm Estuary SSSI	Erme Estuary SSSI	South Milton Ley SSSI	Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI	Prawle Point and Start Point SSSI	Hallsands Beesands SSSI	Slapton Ley SSSI
Marine Species																				
S1102 Allis shad (<i>Alosa alosa</i>)	√																			
Tentacled lagoon-worm (<i>Alkmaria romijni</i>)						√	√													
Pink sea-fan (<i>Eunicella verrucosa</i>)								√												
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)								√												