



England Coast Path Stretch: Cremyll to Kingswear

Report CKW 3: Yealm Estuary

Part 3.1: Introduction

Start Point:	Warren Point (Grid reference SX 5386 4783)
End Point:	Noss Mayo (Grid reference SX 5408 4782)
Relevant Maps:	CKW 3a to CKW 3j

3.1.1 This is one of a series of linked but legally separate reports published by Natural England under section 51 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, which make proposals to the Secretary of State for improved public access along and to this stretch of coast between Cremyll and Kingswear.

3.1.2 This report covers length CKW 3 of the stretch, which is the Yealm Estuary between the ferry landing at Warren Point and the ferry steps at Ferry Wood near Noss Mayo. It makes free-standing statutory proposals for this part of the stretch, and seeks approval for them by the Secretary of State in their own right under section 52 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

3.1.3 The report explains how we propose to implement the England Coast Path (“the trail”) on this part of the stretch, and details the likely consequences in terms of the wider ‘Coastal Margin’ that will be created if our proposals are approved by the Secretary of State. Our report also sets out:

- any proposals we think are necessary for restricting or excluding coastal access rights to address particular issues, in line with the powers in the legislation; and
- any proposed powers for the trail to be capable of being relocated on particular sections (“roll-back”), if this proves necessary in the future because of coastal change.

3.1.4 There is also a single Overview document for the whole of this stretch of coast, explaining common principles and background. **This and the other individual reports relating to the stretch should be read in conjunction with the Overview. The Overview explains, among other things, how we have considered any potential environmental impacts of improving public access to this part of the coast, and this report, and other separately published assessments we refer to, then provides more detail on these aspects where appropriate.**

Part 3.2: Proposals Narrative

The trail:

3.2.1 Follows the existing South West Coast Path as the 'ordinary route' via a small ferry which takes walkers across the mouth of the Yealm between the landing stage at Warren Point and the steps at Ferry Wood near Noss Mayo. See maps CKW 3a and CKW 3j for more details.

3.2.2 Follows an 'alternative route' that makes use of existing public highways and rights of way including parts of the Plym to Erme Trail which would be available at times when the ferry service is not running and would extend to Wapplewell, Brixton and Yealmpton which are the first public foot crossings over the River Yealm and its tributaries. The trail covered by this report includes this estuary route. See maps CKW 3a to CKW 3j and table 3.3.1 below for more details.

3.2.3 Follows an 'alternative route' that uses, in the main, the public rights of way (PRoWs) closest to the estuary, but due to their location they provide a significant inland diversion taking this route away from the banks of the estuary. In places there was the opportunity to use roads closer to the estuary, but there were safety concerns about their narrowness, the visibility and the speed of vehicles.

The South West Coast Path

3.2.4 The South West Coast Path (SWCP) 'crosses' the mouth of the Yealm Estuary via the ferry and we propose adopting the line of this route as the 'ordinary' line of the England Coast Path.

Protection of the environment:

In this part of the report, we explain how we have taken account of environmental protection objectives in developing our proposals for improved coastal access.

3.2.5 The following designated sites affect this length of coast:

- Plymouth Sound & Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Yealm Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Maps C and D in the Overview show the extent of designated areas along this stretch of coast, including SACs, SSSIs and Scheduled Monuments.

3.2.6 We consider that the coastal environment along this length of coast, including features of the sites listed above, is unlikely to be sensitive to the improvements to coastal access envisaged and that no special measures are needed in respect of our proposals.

3.2.7 Natural England is satisfied that the proposals for coastal access in this report are made in accordance with relevant environmental protection legislation. In respect of cultural heritage, we have taken advice from Historic England and others before confirming this conclusion. For more information about how we came to this conclusion see the following assessments of the access proposals that we have published separately:

- A Habitats Regulations Assessment relating to any potential impact on the conservation objectives of European sites.
- Our Nature Conservation Assessment, in which we document our conclusions in relation to other potential impacts on nature conservation.

Part 6b of the Overview includes some contextual information about protecting the environment along this length of coast.

Accessibility:

3.2.8 There are few artificial barriers to accessibility on the proposed route. However, the terrain may be challenging for people with reduced mobility and this is the case on sections of our proposed route because there are steeper gradients in places, for example near Warren Point (section CKW-3-A001).

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

Where we have proposed exercising statutory discretions:

3.2.9 **Estuary:** This report proposes that the trail should contain sections aligned on the estuary of the River Yealm, extending upstream from the open coast. Natural England proposes to exercise its functions as if the sea included the estuarial waters of that river as far as the first pedestrian crossing points at Wapplewell, Brixton and Yealmpton, as indicated by the extent of the alternative route shown on maps CKW 3a to CKW 3j.

3.2.10 **Alternative route:** An alternative route is to operate as a diversion from the ordinary route between the landing stage at Warren Point and the steps at Ferry Wood near Noss Mayo. This 'alternative' route will make use of existing public highways, an existing walked permissive route and rights of way including parts of the Plym to Erme Trail and would be available at times when the ferry service is not running. It would extend to Wapplewell, Brixton and Yealmpton which are the first public foot crossings over the River Yealm and its tributaries. See maps CKW 3a to CKW 3j and table 3.3.1 below for more details.

3.2.11 The ferry operates a seasonal service from 1st April until 30th September and runs every day between 10 am – 4 pm daily. The service may be restricted to the core hours of 10 am to 12 noon and 3 pm to 4pm each day, during bad weather or quieter times. Direct contact (a mobile number) with the ferry is available and well publicised.

3.2.12 The optional alternative route is to be at the centre of the line shown as CKW-3-A001 to CKW-3-A052 on maps CKW 3a to CKW 3j. It would not have the effect of creating any additional coastal margin on either the seaward or the landward side.

3.2.13 By default, an alternative route covers the land two metres either side of the approved line. However, by virtue of s55D(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, where the alternative route follows an existing path corridor, we may propose that the trail should adopt a variable width as dictated by the existing physical features on either side. Columns 5a and 5b of table 3.3.1 describe the boundaries of the alternative route strips on any route sections where we have proposed use of this discretion in order to clarify the extent of the access strip.

See part 5 of the Overview for a detailed analysis of the options considered for this estuary and our resulting proposals.

3.2.14 **Coastal erosion:** Natural England is able to propose that the route of the trail would be able to change in the future, without further approval from the Secretary of State, in response to coastal change. This would happen in accordance with the criteria and procedures for 'roll-back' set out in part 7 of the Overview.

Natural England may only propose the use of this roll-back power:

- as a result of coastal erosion or other geomorphological processes or encroachment by the sea, or

- in order to link with other parts of the route that need to roll back in direct response to such changes.

3.2.15 We have chosen not to make any such proposal in this report. Accordingly the route is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps CKW 3a to CKW 3j as the proposed route of the trail.

Other future change:

3.2.16 At this point we do not foresee any other need for future changes to the access provisions that we have proposed within this report.

3.2.17 The ordinary route incorporates the use of a ferry across the River Yealm (see reports CKW 2 and CKW 4). Should the service cease altogether in the future or become less suitable for the purpose, Natural England will review its trail alignment and, if appropriate, will prepare a separate variation report to the Secretary of State to ensure an uninterrupted journey for this part of the coast. A review in such circumstances may include consideration of the appropriateness of the alternative route.

See parts 7 - 'Future changes' of the Overview for more information.

Establishment of the trail:

3.2.18 Below we summarise how our proposed route for the trail would be physically established to make it ready for public use before any new rights come into force.

Establishment works will only start on this length of coast once these proposals have been approved by the Secretary of State. The works may therefore either precede or follow the start of establishment works on other lengths of coast within the stretch, and detailed in their separate reports.

3.2.19 Our estimate of the capital costs for physical establishment of the trail on the proposed route is £1,150 and is informed by:

- information already held by the access authority, Devon County Council, in relation to the management of the existing South West Coast Path;
- the conclusions of our deliberations in relation to potential impacts on the environment; and
- information gathered while visiting affected land and talking to the people who own and manage it about the options for the route.

3.2.20 There is one main element to the overall cost:

- A number of new signs and information boards would be needed on the trail particularly at the start and end points of the alternative route

The surfaces and access furniture of the existing paths and footways on the proposed route are of a suitable standard for the trail.

Table 1 shows our estimate of the capital cost for each of the main elements of physical establishment described above.

Table 1: Estimate of capital costs

Item	Cost
Signs and interpretation	£1,150
Total	£1,150 (Exclusive of any VAT payable)

3.2.21 Once the Secretary of State's decision on our report has been notified, and further to our conversations with land managers during the route planning stage, Devon County Council will liaise with

affected land owners and occupiers about relevant aspects of the design, installation and maintenance of the new signs and infrastructure that are needed on their land. Prior to works being carried out on the ground, all necessary permissions, authorisations and consents will be obtained. All such works would conform to the published standards for National Trails and the other criteria described in our Coastal Access Scheme.

Maintenance of the trail:

3.2.22 Because the trail on this length of coast will form part of the National Trail being created around the whole coast of England called the England Coast Path, we envisage that it will be maintained to the same high quality standards as other National Trails in England (see The New Deal; Management of National Trails in England from April 2013: details at Annex A of the Overview).

3.2.23 In developing an estimate for the annual cost to maintain the trail we have taken account of the formula used to calculate Natural England's contribution to the maintenance of other National Trails. Under this funding formula the estimated annual cost to maintain the trail will be £0 (exclusive of any VAT payable).

Part 3.3: Proposals Tables

See Part 3 of Overview for guidance on reading and understanding the tables below

3.3.1 Alternative routes and optional alternative route details – Maps CKW 3a to CKW 3j: Yealm Estuary

Key notes on table:

1. Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 3.3.2: Other options considered.
2. Column 4 – ‘No’ means no roll-back is proposed for this route section. ‘Yes – normal’ means roll-back is proposed and is likely to follow the current feature (e.g. cliff edge/beach) for the foreseeable future as any coastal change occurs.
3. Columns 5a and 5b – An entry in either or both of these columns denotes a proposal to align the seaward or landward boundary (as the case may be) of this section of the alternative route strip with the physical feature(s) shown. No text in the column means no such proposal, meaning that the edge of the alternative route strip would be at the default width of 2 metres on the relevant side of the route’s centre line.

1	2	3	4	5a	5b	6
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Current status of route section(s)	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 7 of Overview)	Proposal to specify seaward boundary of alternative route strip	Proposal to specify landward boundary of alternative route strip	Explanatory notes
CKW 3a	CKW-3-A001	Other existing walked route	No			
	CKW-3-A002	Public footpath	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
CKW 3b	CKW-3-A003*	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
	CKW-3-A004* & CKW-3-A005*	Public footpath	No	Wall	Edge of path	
	CKW-3-A006* & CKW-3-A007*	Public footpath	No	Edge of path	Edge of path	
	CKW-3-A008*	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
CKW 3c	CKW-3-A009	Public footway (pavement)	No	Pavement edge	Pavement edge	
	CKW-3-A010	Public footpath	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
	CKW-3-A011 & CKW-3-A012	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-3-A013	Public footpath	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	

1	2	3	4	5a	5b	6
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Current status of route section(s)	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 7 of Overview)	Proposal to specify seaward boundary of alternative route strip	Proposal to specify landward boundary of alternative route strip	Explanatory notes
CKW 3c	CKW-3-A014	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
CKW 3d	CKW-3-A015	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-3-A016	Public highway	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
	CKW-3-A017	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-3-A018	Public highway	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
CKW 3e	CKW-3-A019	Public footway (pavement)	No	Pavement edge	Pavement edge	
	CKW-3-A020	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
	CKW-3-A021	Public footway (pavement)	No	Pavement edge	Pavement edge	
	CKW-3-A022	Other existing walked route	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
CKW 3f	CKW-3-A023	Other existing walked route	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
	CKW-3-A024	Public footway (pavement)	No	Pavement edge	Pavement edge	
CKW 3g	CKW-3-A025*	Public footpath	No	Edge of path	Edge of path	
	CKW-3-A026* & CKW-3-A027*	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
	CKW-3-A028* to CKW-3-A031*	Public footpath	No	Edge of path	Edge of path	
	CKW-3-A032* to CKW-3-A036*	Public footpath	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
	CKW-3-A037*	Public footpath	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
	CKW-3-A038*	Public footpath	No	Edge of path	Edge of path	
	CKW-3-A039*	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-3-A040*	Public highway	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
CKW 3h	CKW-3-A041*	Public footpath	No			

1	2	3	4	5a	5b	6
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Current status of route section(s)	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 7 of Overview)	Proposal to specify seaward boundary of alternative route strip	Proposal to specify landward boundary of alternative route strip	Explanatory notes
CKW 3h	CKW-3-A042*	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
	CKW-3-A043*	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-3-A044*	Public footpath	No	Fence line		
	CKW-3-A045*	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-3-A046*	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
CKW 3i	CKW-3-A046* (cont)	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
	CKW-3-A047*	Public footpath	No			
CKW 3j	CKW-3-A048*	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
	CKW-3-A049 to CKW-3-A051	Public footpath	No	Edge of path	Edge of path	
	CKW-3-A052	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	

3.3.2 Other options considered – Maps CKW 3a to CKW 3j: Yealm Estuary

Map(s)	Route section numbers(s)	Other option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option
CKW 3a to CKW 3j	CKW-3-A001 to CKW-3-A052	Aligning the ordinary route around the estuary to the crossing points of the River Yealm and its tributaries at Wapplewell, Brixton and Yealmpton.	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ detours would be necessary in places where gardens and historic parkland extend to the river bank and there would be limited views of the estuary due to the dense vegetation/scrub along the shoreline; ■ the convoluted crow's foot nature of the shoreline and difficult steep wooded terrain in places would make the establishment of a waterside trail challenging and costly in terms of the amount of infrastructure and works that would be required (this aligned trail around the estuary would measure some 22.5km).
CKW 3b and CKW 3c	CKW-3-A003 to CKW-3-A008	Aligning the alternative route through Wembury Wood and a permissive path through Hollacombe Woods	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It follows existing public rights of way, an existing walked path and public highway and avoids using a permissive path through Hollacombe Wood. This permissive path was not felt to be suitable for use as an alternative route due to land management concerns of the owners.
CKW 3g to CKW 3j	CKW-3-A025 to CKW-3-A048	Using the network of lanes nearest the Yealm between the A379, Puslinch Bridge, past Wrescombe and Newton Downs and then down Parsonage Road and Bridgend Hill	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ due to the narrowness of the lanes and the lack of visibility it was felt that the route was less safe for walkers than the proposed route; ■ we concluded that overall the proposed route struck the best balance in terms of the criteria described in chapter 4 of the Coastal Access Scheme

Note: Any public rights of way not forming part of the proposed trail would remain available for people to use under their pre-existing rights.

Part 3.4: Proposals maps

3.4.1 Map Index

Map reference	Map title
CKW 3a	Warren Point to Wembury
CKW 3b	Wembury to Hollacombe Hill
CKW 3c	Hollacombe Hill to Spriddlestone
CKW 3d	Spriddlestone to Brixton
CKW 3e	Brixton to Pondfield Plantation
CKW 3f	Pondfield Plantation to Yealmpton
CKW 3g	Yealmpton to Gala Cross
CKW 3h	Gala Cross to Woodpark Plantation
CKW 3i	Woodpark Plantation to Bridgend
CKW 3j	Bridgend to Ferry Wood, Noss Mayo

PROPOSALS

Trail Sections

- Trail using existing public right of way or highway
- Trail using other existing walked route
- Trail not using existing walked route
- Alternative route
- Trail shown on other maps
- Approved or open England Coast Path

Maps that show sections of the trail that follow the existing South West Coast Path as currently walked and managed use the following trail categories. Information on the existing status and infrastructure is not shown.

- Trail using existing South West Coast Path
- Alternative or optional alternative route using existing South West Coast Path

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

- BW** - Public bridleway
- BY** - Public byway
- CP** - Cycletrack (pedestrian)
- CT** - Cycletrack (cycles only)
- FP** - Public footpath
- FW** - Public footway (Pavement)
- RB** - Restricted byway
- RD** - Public road

Coastal Margin

Explanatory note

Part 3 of the Overview to the report explains where the landward boundary of the coastal margin falls by default. Our proposals include any suggested variation of this default boundary. The purple wash on the map indicates where as a result of our proposals the coastal margin would extend significantly to the landward side of the proposed route of the trail. The coastal margin may include some areas where coastal access rights do not apply, either seaward or landward of the proposed route of the trail: the Overview explains more about this. The landward boundary of the coastal margin may in due course move inland, if the trail rolls back under proposals in this report to respond to coastal change.

- Coastal margin landward of the trail
- Coastal margin landward of the trail which is existing access land

Other Information

Other access rights and routes

- Public bridleways
- Public byways
- Public footpaths
- Restricted byways
- South West Coast Path
- Sustrans national routes
- Existing access land

Infrastructure types

For status of each, where shown on map, see colour codes below

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Bridges: | Stiles: | Gates: |
| Clapper bridge | Ladder stile | Bristol gate |
| Footbridge | Lift-up stile | Field gate |
| Quad bike bridge | Squeeze stile | Gateway with no gate |
| Sleeper bridge | Step stile | Kissing gate |
| Vehicle bridge | Stone stile | Pedestrian gate |
| | | Wheelchair gate |
| Miscellaneous: | | |
| Barrier | Cycle chicane | Interpretation panel |
| Boardwalk | Drainage | Ramp |
| Bollard | Drop-kerb | Revetment |
| Cattle grid | Gap in fence | Stepping stones |
| Culvert | Hurdle | Steps |

Infrastructure status

Each symbol shown on the map is colour coded as appropriate, as in this example for a set of steps:

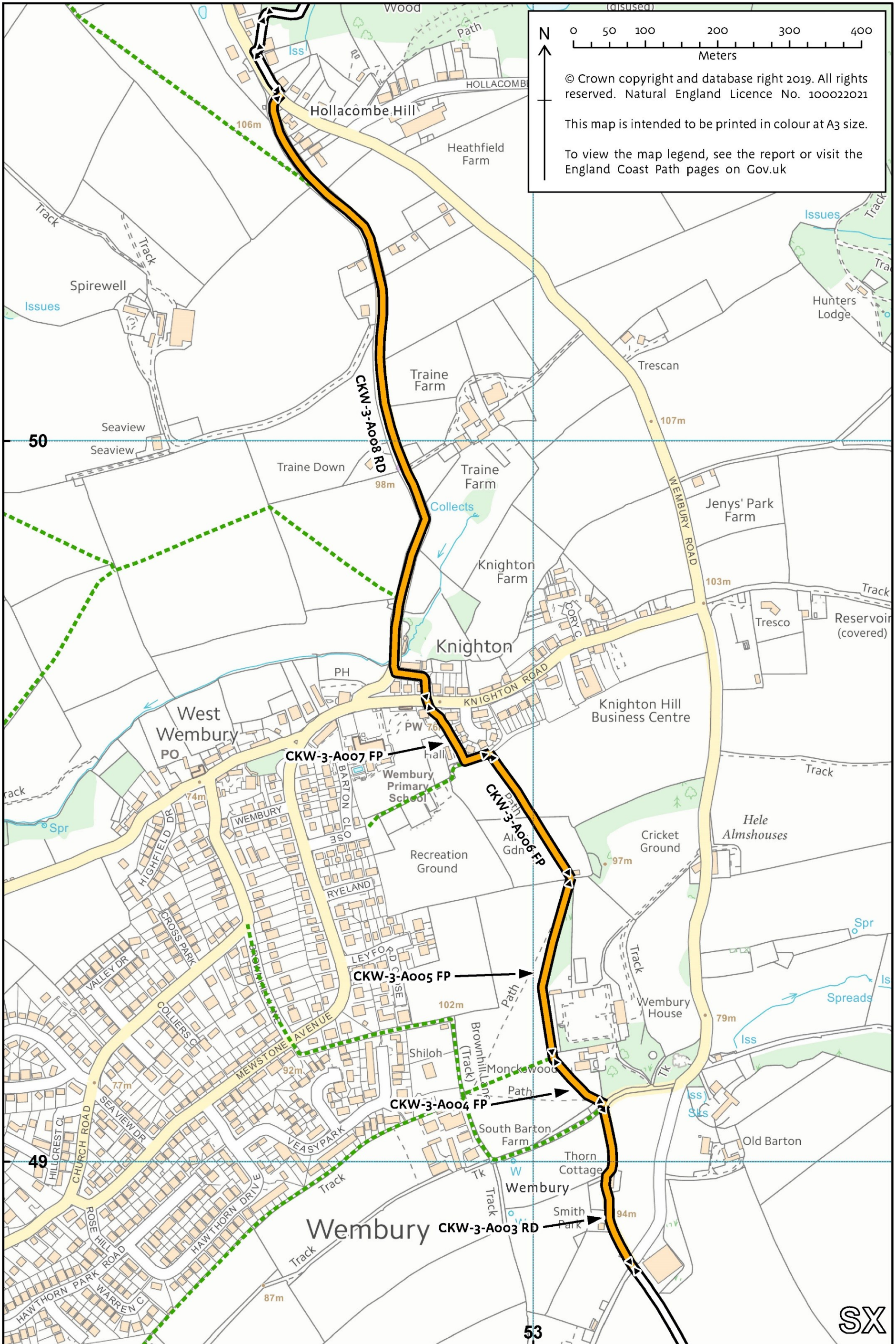
- Existing steps to be retained
- New steps required
- Existing steps to be removed

Map CKW 3a: Warren Point to Wembury

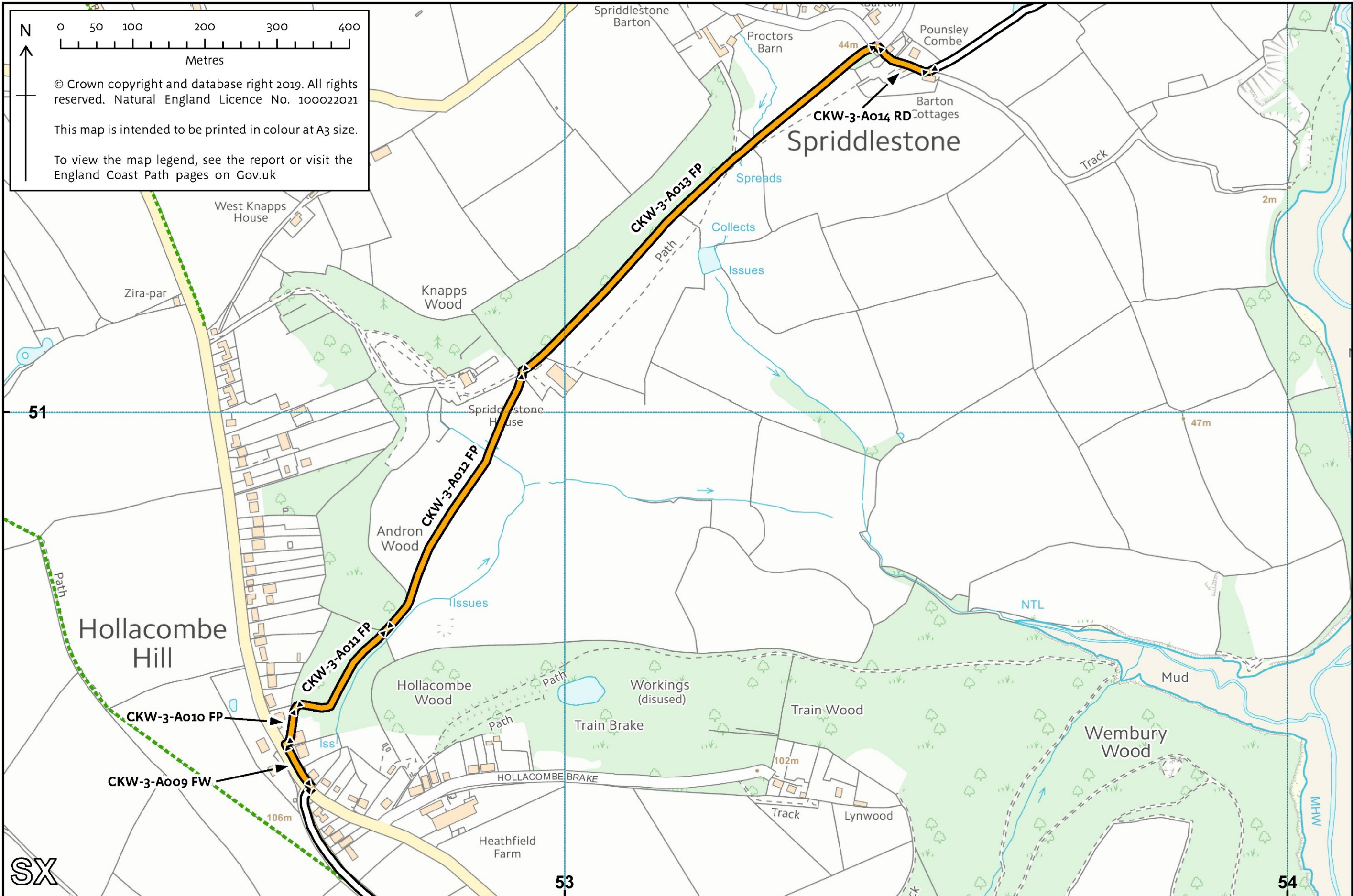


Map CKW 3a: Warren Point to Wembury

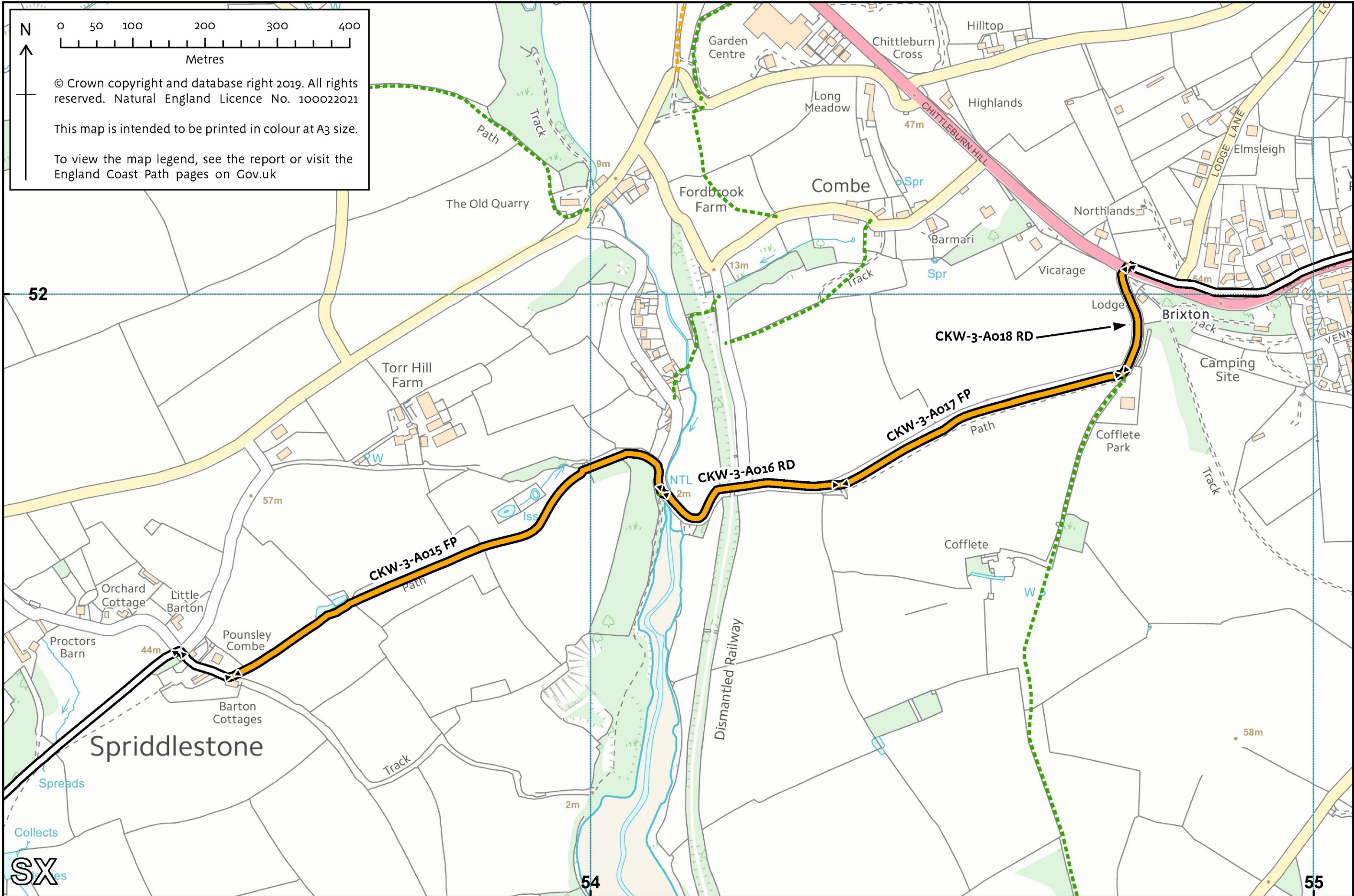
Map CKW 3b: Wembury to Hollacombe Hill

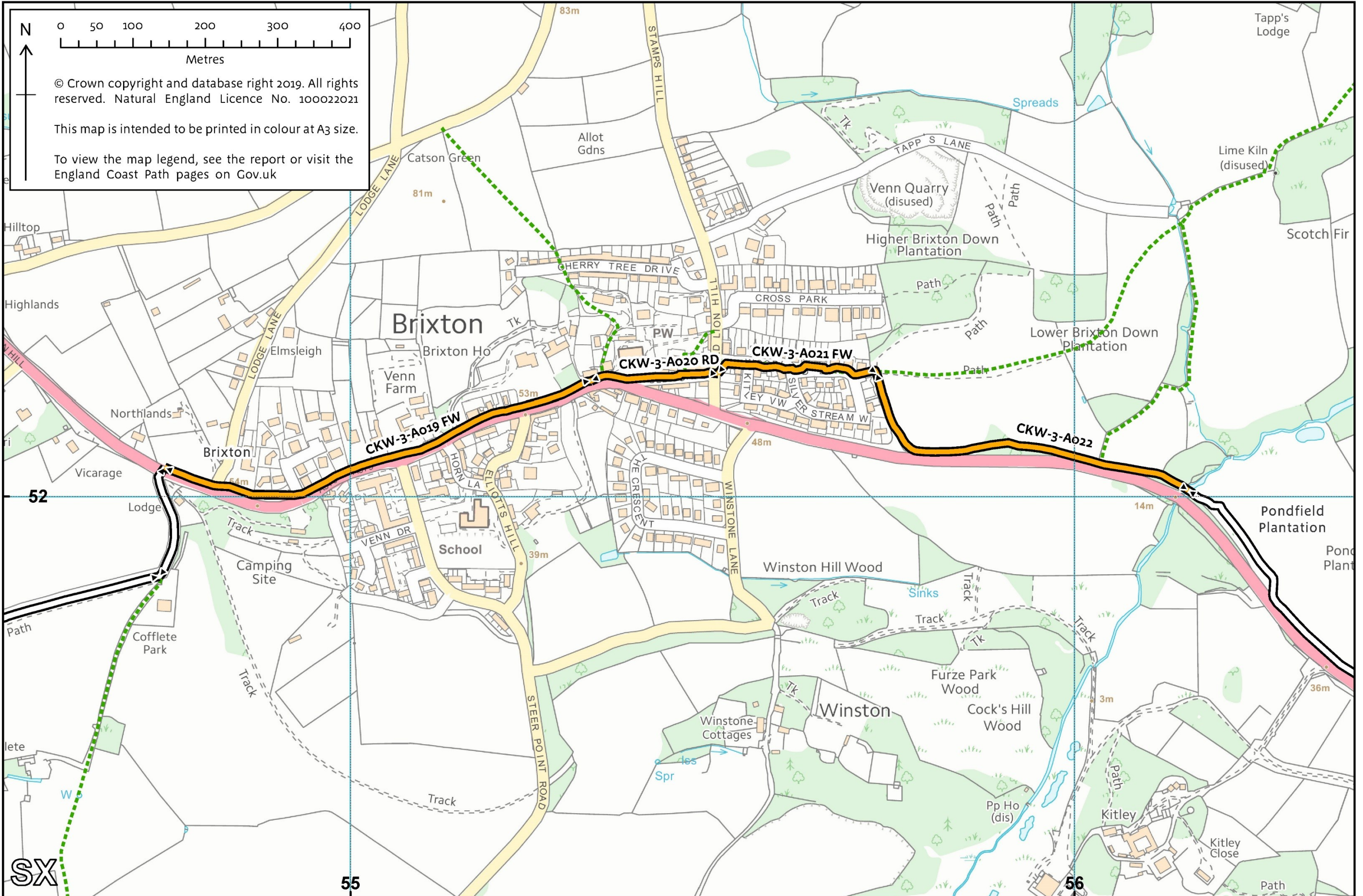


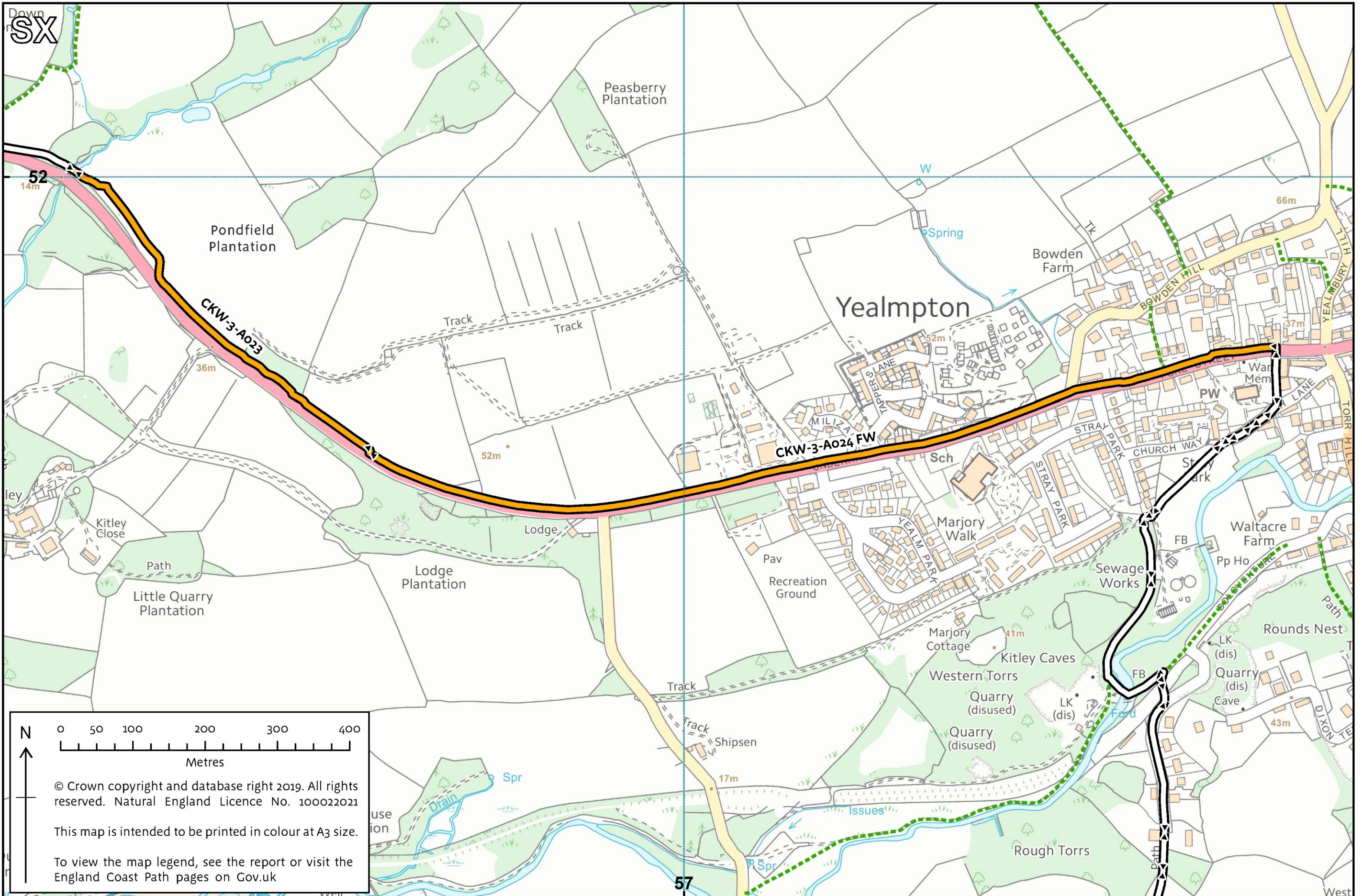
Map CKW 3c: Hollacombe Hill to Spriddlestone

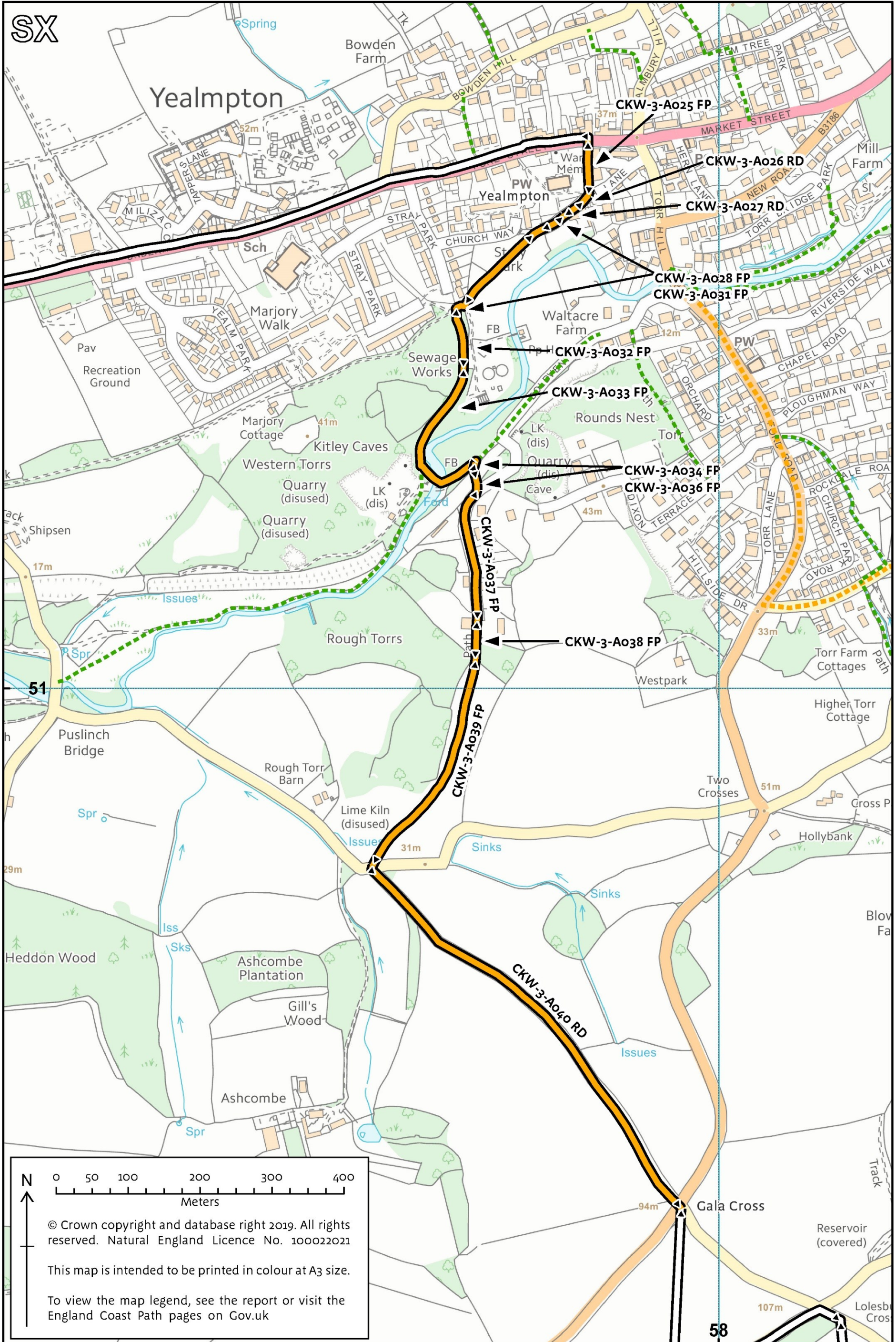


Map CKW 3c: Hollacombe Hill to Spriddlestone

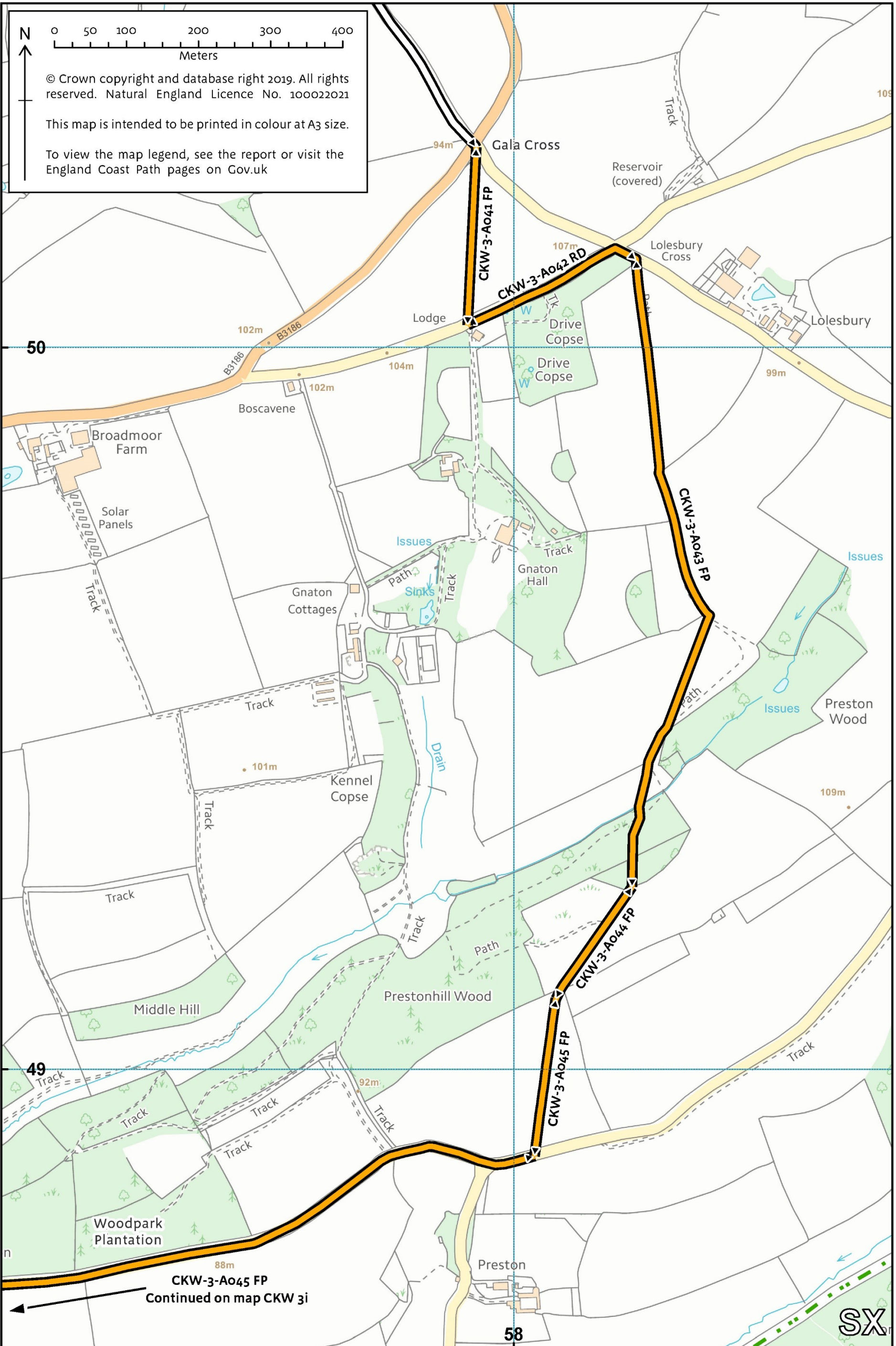


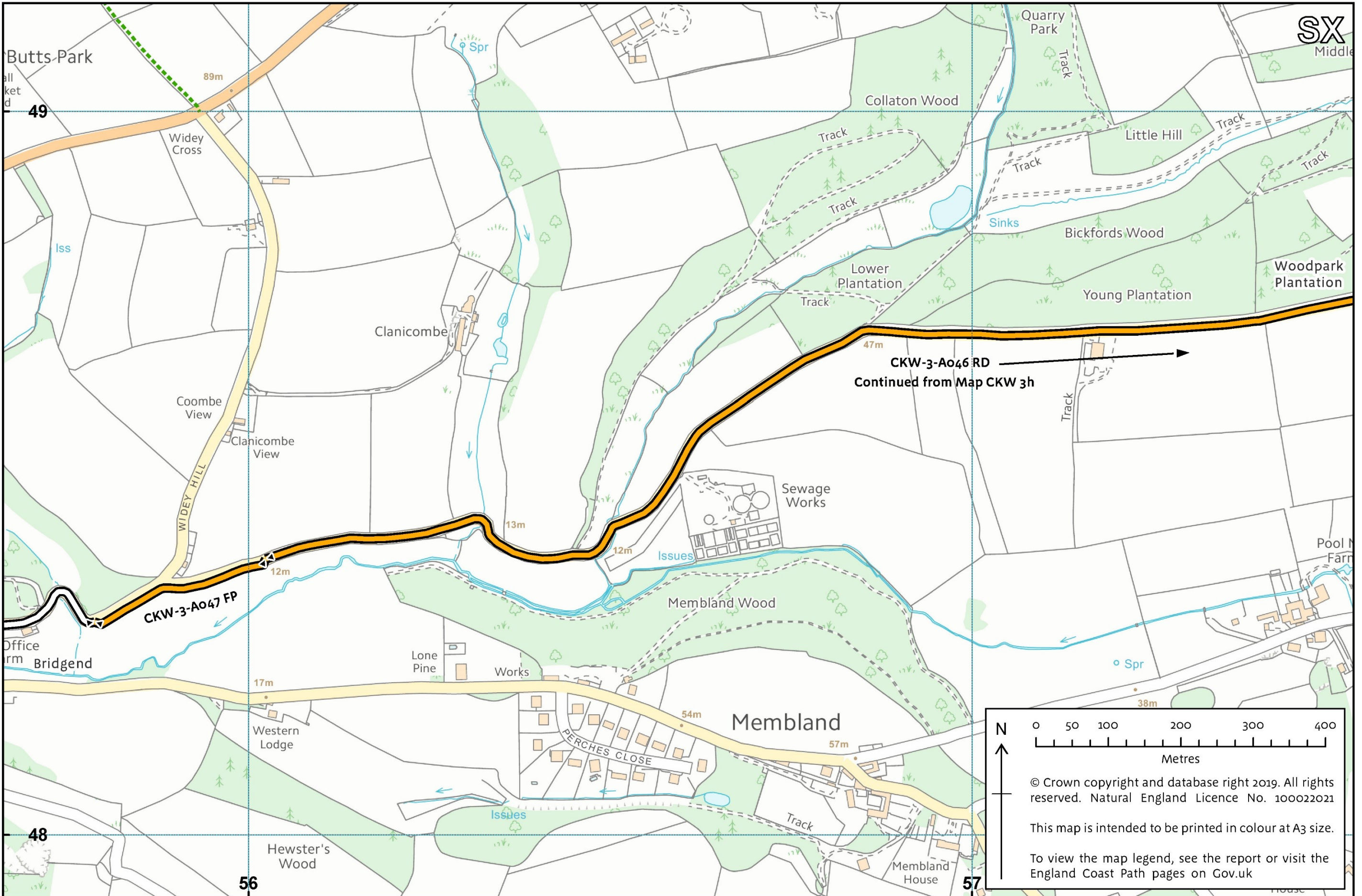




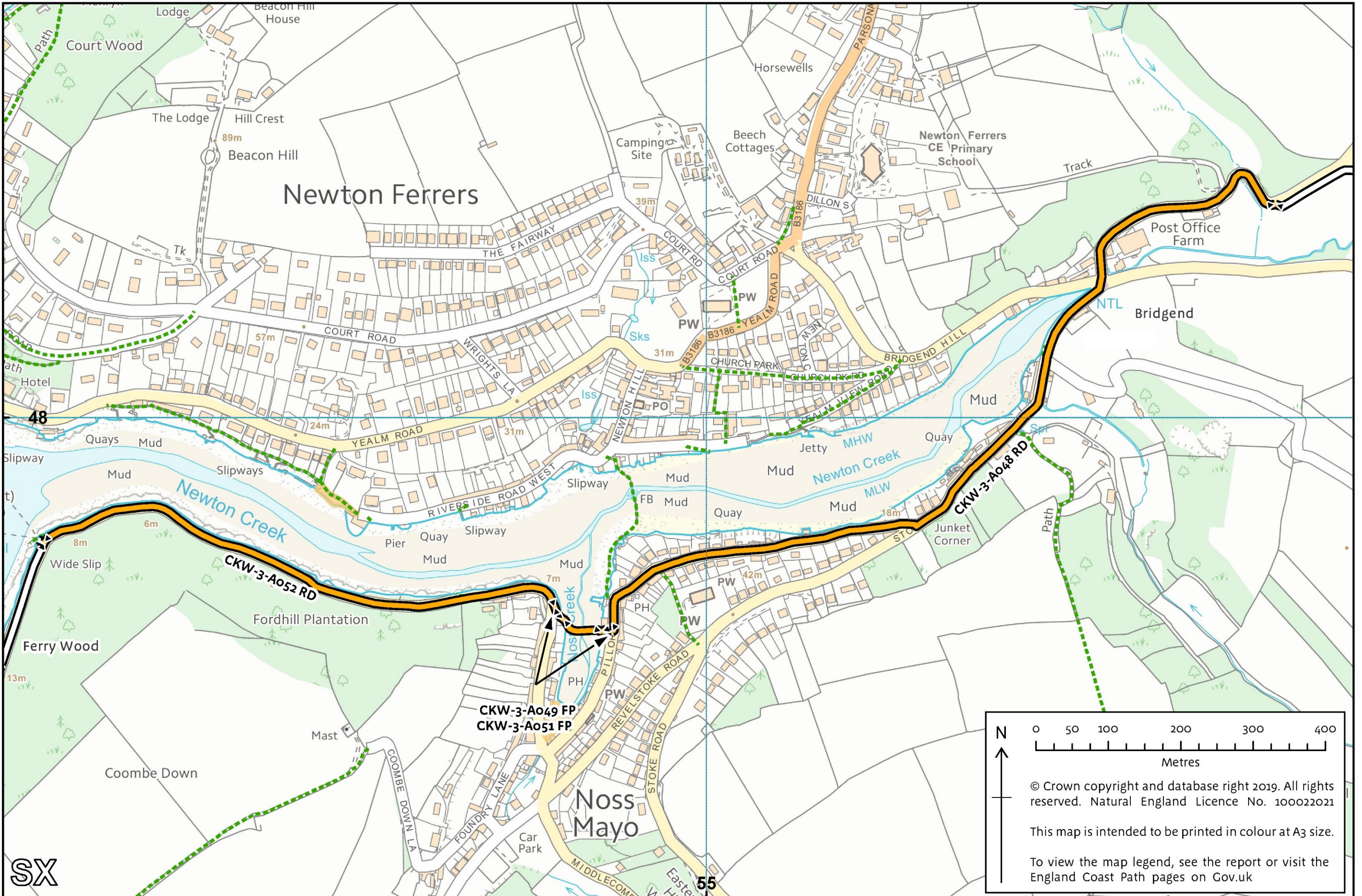


Map CKW 3h: Gala Cross to Woodpark Plantation





Map CKW 3i: Woodpark Plantation to Bridgend



Map CKW 3j: Bridgend to Ferry Wood, Noss Mayo

N
↑
0 50 100 200 300 400
Metres

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

To view the map legend, see the report or visit the England Coast Path pages on Gov.uk