



England Coast Path Stretch: Cremyll to Kingswear

Report CKW 6: Avon Estuary

Part 6.1: Introduction

Start Point:	Cockleridge Ham (Grid reference SX 6661 4407)
End Point:	Bantham (Grid reference SX 6682 4372)
Relevant Maps:	CKW 6a to CKW 6e

6.1.1 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.

6.1.2 This report covers length CKW 6 of the stretch, which is the Avon Estuary between Cockleridge Ham and Bantham Village. 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.

6.1.3 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.

6.1.4 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 6.2: Proposals Narrative

The trail:

6.2.1 Follows the existing South West Coast Path as the 'ordinary' route via a small ferry which takes walkers across the mouth of the Avon between Cockleridge Ham and the Bantham slipway. See maps CKW 6a and CKW 6e for more details.

6.2.2 The ferry currently operates a seasonal service from 19th April until 21st September and runs six days a week between 10 am to 11 am and 3 pm to 4 pm. The ferry is due to increase by the time the coastal access rights commence, to run all day throughout the year, except on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and during adverse weather conditions.

6.2.3 An 'alternative' route that makes use of existing public rights of way along the promoted Avon Estuary Trail would be available at times when the ferry service is not running and would extend to the bridge at Aveton Gifford which is the first public foot crossing over the River Avon. The 'alternative' route follows the closest public rights of way (PRoWs) to the estuary. It has good views of the estuary on the western side at St Milburga's Oratory and along the tidal road as far as the bridge at Aveton Gifford. On the eastern side it has good views from Stiddicombe Woods to the sea. It departs from the coastline significantly at Bigbury Golf Course and Lincombe on the western side and at Efford and Stadbury on the eastern side. The trail covered by this report includes this estuary route. See maps CKW 6a to CKW 6e and table 6.3.1 below for more details.

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.

6.2.4 The following designated sites affect this length of coast:

- Devon Avon Estuary Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)

Maps C and D in the Overview show the extent of designated areas along this stretch of coast, including MCZs.

6.2.5 We consider that the coastal environment along this length of coast is unlikely to be sensitive to the improvements to coastal access envisaged and that no special measures are needed in respect of our proposals.

6.2.6 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:

6.2.7 There are few artificial barriers to accessibility on the proposed route. However, the natural terrain is often challenging for people with reduced mobility and this is the case on sections of our proposed route for example on the steep slope to the north of Stiddicombe Creek.

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

Where we have proposed exercising statutory discretions:

6.2.8 **Estuary:** This report proposes that the alternative route to the trail should contain sections aligned on the estuary of the River Avon, 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 Aveton Gifford Bridge, as indicated by the extent of the trail shown on map CKW 6c. See part 5 of the Overview for a detailed analysis of the options considered for this estuary and our resulting proposal.

6.2.9 **Alternative route:** An alternative route is to operate as a diversion from the ordinary route from the landing stages at Cockleridge Ham and Bantham. This alternative route makes use of an existing promoted trail along existing rights of way and a short section of permissive route. It will be available at all times when the ferry service is not running. See maps CKW 6a and CKW 6e for more details.

6.2.10 The alternative route is to be at the centre of the line shown as CKW-6-A001 to CKW-6-A048 on maps CKW 6a to CKW 6e. It would not have the effect of creating any additional coastal margin on either the seaward or the landward side.

6.2.11 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 6.3.1 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.

6.2.12 The alternative route will follow the tidal road from St Milburga's Oratory to the A379. Although the tidal road will not be available at all stages of the tide there is an existing signed diversion in place that uses PRoWs which will be available. This arrangement would continue without proposals having to be made to give effect to it formally.

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

6.2.13 **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.

6.2.14 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 6a to CKW 6e as the proposed route of the trail.

Other future change:

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

6.2.16 The route of the trail in this report incorporates the use of a ferry across the River Avon. 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.

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

Establishment of the trail:

6.2.17 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.

6.2.18 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.

6.2.19 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 generally 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)

6.2.20 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:

6.2.21 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).

6.2.22 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 6.3: Proposals Tables

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

6.3.1 Alternative routes route details – Maps CKW 6a to CKW 6e: Avon Estuary

Key notes on table:

1. Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 6.3.2: 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 6a	CKW-6-A001*	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-6-A002* to CKW-6-A005*	Public footpath	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
	CKW-6-A006*	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-6-A007*	Public footpath	No	Path	Path	
	CKW-6-A008*	Public footpath	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
CKW 6b	CKW-6-A009*	Public highway	No	Road	Road	
	CKW-6-A010*	Other existing walked route	No			
	CKW-6-A011*	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-6-A012*	Other existing walked route	No			
	CKW-6-A013*	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 6b	CKW-6-A014* & CKW-6-A015*	Other existing walked route	No			
	CKW-6-A016*	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-6-A017*	Public highway	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
CKW 6c	CKW-6-A018* to CKW-6-A027*	Public highway	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
	CKW-6-A028*	Other existing walked route	No	Edge of path	Edge of path	
	CKW-6-A029* to CKW-6-A033*	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
	CKW-6-A034*	Public footway (pavement)	No	Edge of path	Edge of path	
	CKW-6-A035*	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
	CKW-6-A036*	Public footway (pavement)	No	Edge of path	Edge of path	
	CKW-6-A037*	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	
	CKW-6-A038*	Public highway	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
CKW 6d	CKW-6-A039* & CKW-6-A040*	Public footpath	No	Edge of track	Edge of track	
	CKW-6-A041* & CKW-6-A042*	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-6-A043*	Other existing walked route	No			
	CKW-6-A044*	Public footpath	No			
CKW 6e	CKW-6-A045*	Other existing walked route	No			
	CKW-6-A046*	Public footpath	No			
	CKW-6-A047*	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 6e	CKW-6-A048*	Public highway	No	Edge of road	Edge of road	

6.3.2 Other options considered: Maps CKW 6a to CKW 6e – Avon Estuary

Map(s)	Route section numbers(s)	Other option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option
CKW 6a to CKW 6e	CKW-6-A001 to CKW-6-A048	We considered aligning the ordinary route of the England Coast Path along the line of this alternative route	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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 ■ the planned increase in ferry operations enables the proposed route to follow the existing South West Coast Path alignment, providing a continuous route around the coast in a simple and cost effective way. ■ Aligning the ordinary route to the promoted Avon Estuary Walk would have resulted in a route that would have been far from the estuary in a number of places and included a disproportionate amount of coastal margin. It would not have struck the best balance in terms of the criteria set out in the scheme.
CKW 6a to CKW 6e	CKW-6-A001 to CKW-6-A048	We considered aligning the Ordinary route closer in places to the estuary bank	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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 ■ the planned increase in ferry operations enables the proposed route to follow the existing South West Coast Path alignment, providing a continuous route around the coast in a simple and cost effective way. ■ a route closer to the estuary bank would involve creating a considerable length of new public access and be difficult and expensive in terms of topography and land use.

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 6.4: Proposals maps

6.4.1 Map Index

Map reference	Map title
CKW 6a	Cockleridge Ham to Bigbury
CKW 6b	Bigbury to Tidal Road
CKW 6c	Tidal Road to Little Efford Farm
CKW 6d	Little Efford Farm to Stiddicombe Wood
CKW 6e	Stiddicombe Wood to Bantham

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:

- Clapper bridge
- Footbridge
- Quad bike bridge
- Sleeper bridge
- Vehicle bridge

Stiles:

- Ladder stile
- Lift-up stile
- Squeeze stile
- Step stile
- Stone stile

Gates:

- Bristol gate
- Field gate
- Gateway with no gate
- Kissing gate
- Pedestrian gate
- Wheelchair gate

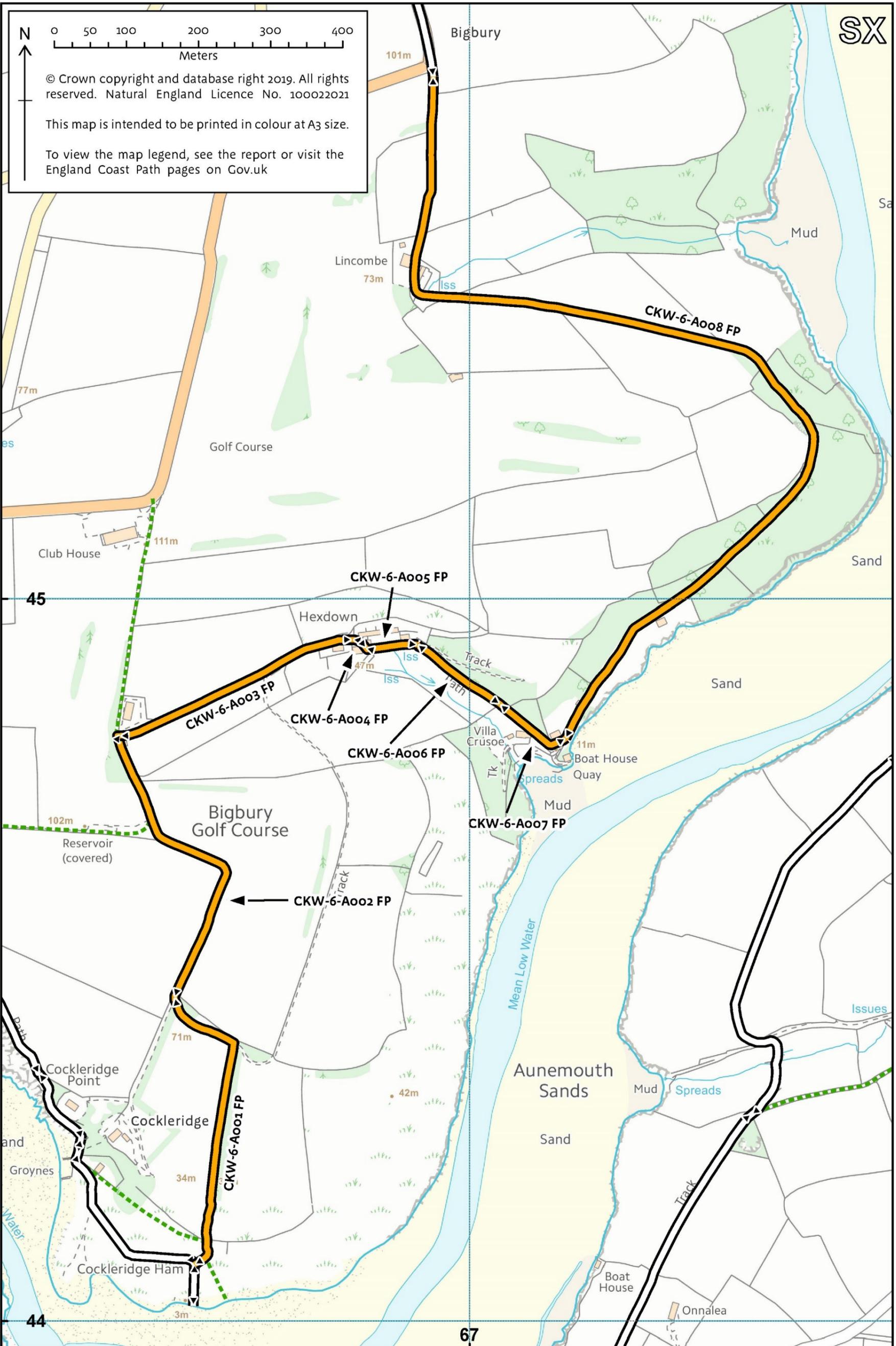
Miscellaneous:

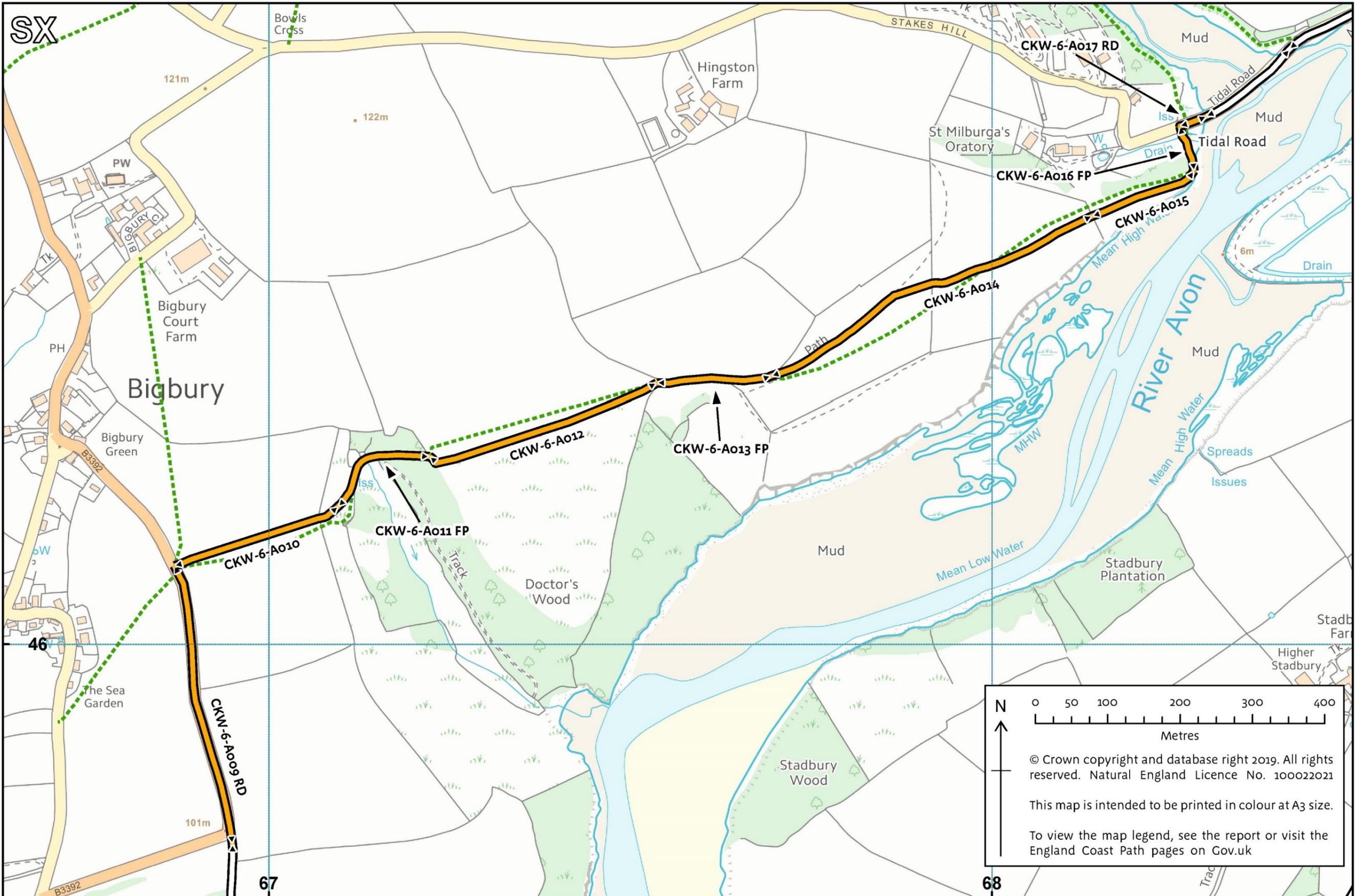
- Barrier
- Boardwalk
- Bollard
- Cattle grid
- Culvert
- Cycle chicane
- Drainage
- Drop-kerb
- Gap in fence
- Hurdle
- Interpretation panel
- Ramp
- Revetment
- Stepping stones
- Steps

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



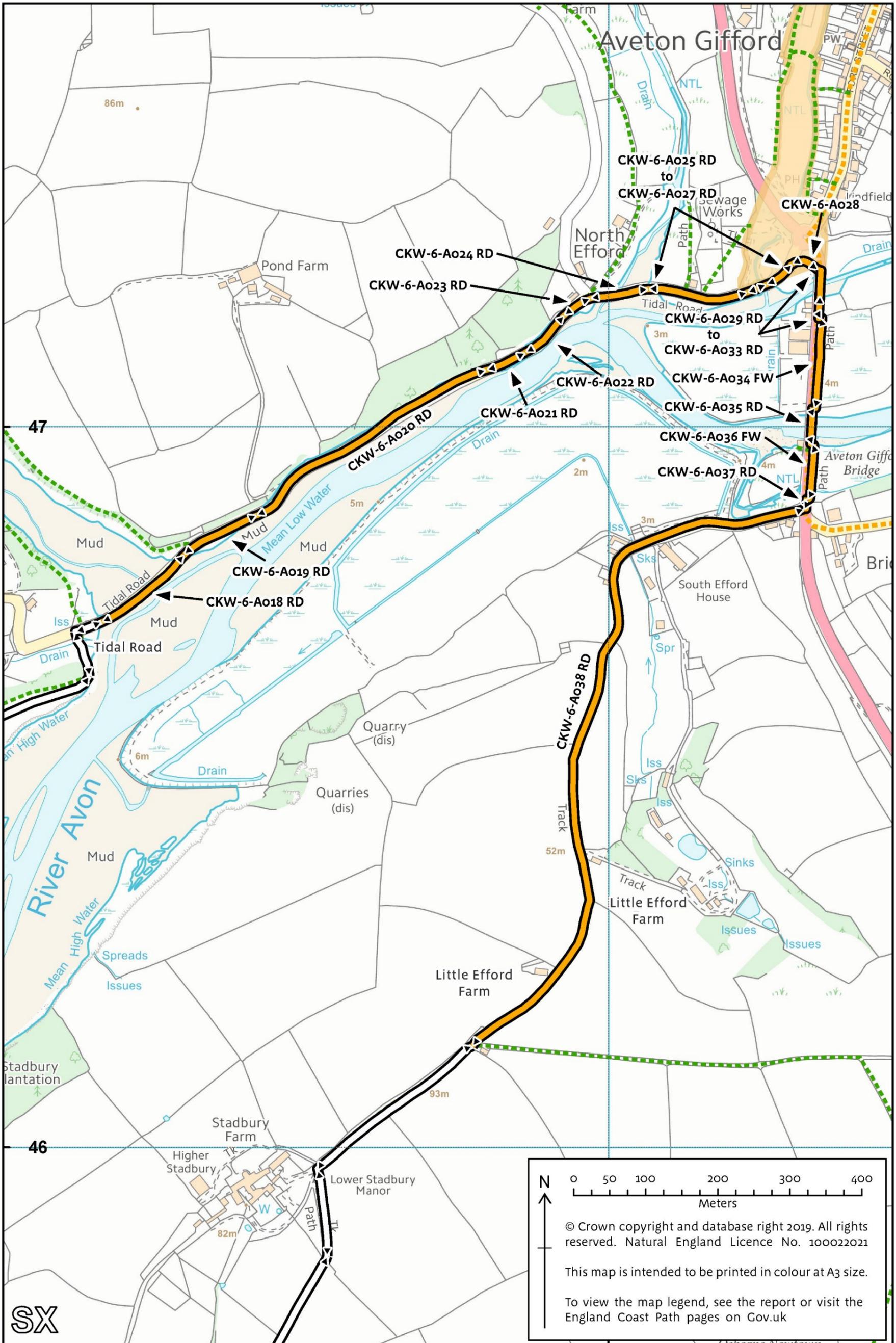


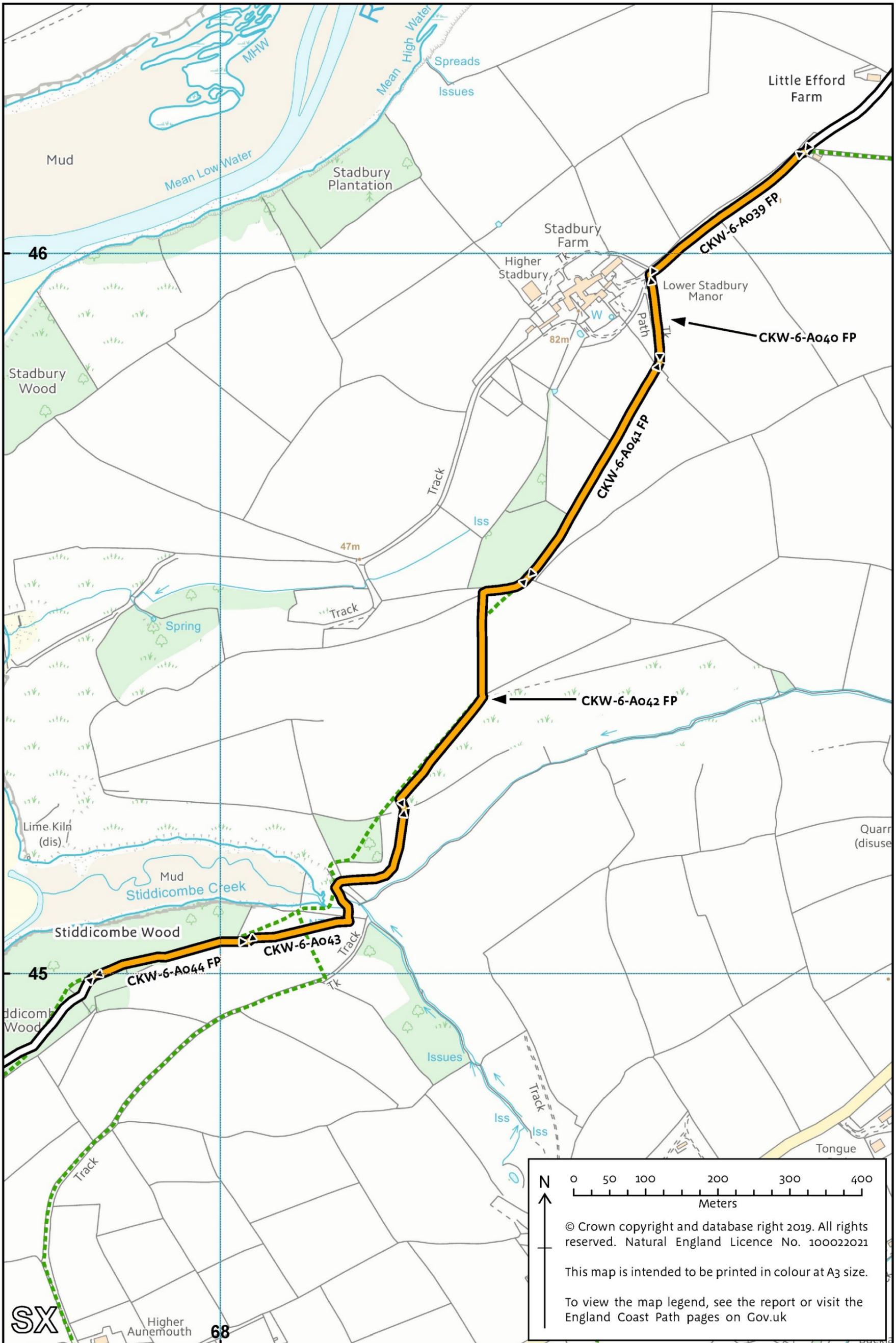
Map CKW 6b: Bigbury to Tidal Road

N
0 50 100 200 300 400
Metres
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To view the map legend, see the report or visit the England Coast Path pages on Gov.uk

Map CKW 6c: Tidal Road to Little Efford Farm

Map CKW 6c: Tidal Road to Little Efford Farm





N

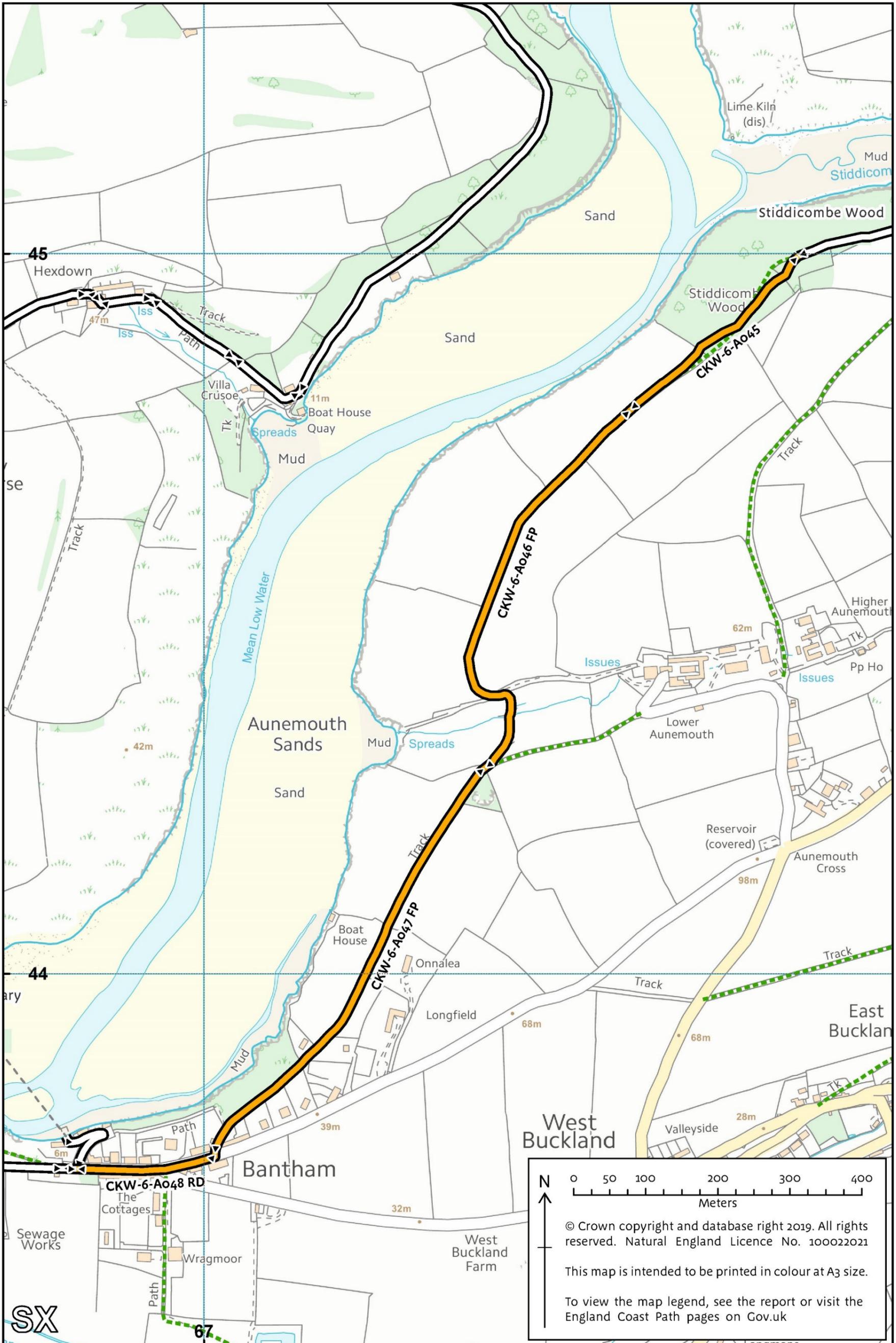
0 50 100 200 300 400
Meters

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Map CKW 6e: Stiddicombe Wood to Bantham



N

0 50 100 200 300 400
Meters

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