



England Coast Path Stretch: Iwade to Grain

Report IGR 4: Funton Brickworks to Lower Halstow

Part 4.1: Introduction

Start Point:	Funton Brickworks (Grid reference 587918 167990)
End Point:	Lower Halstow (Grid reference 585950 167424)
Relevant Maps:	IGR 4a to IGR 4b

4.1.1 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 Iwade in Kent, and Grain in Medway.

4.1.2 This report covers length IGR 4 of the stretch, which is the coast between Funton Brickworks and Lower Halstow. 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.

4.1.3 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.

4.1.4 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 4.2: Proposals Narrative

The trail:

4.2.1 Follows existing walked routes, including public rights of way, along part of this length.

4.2.2 Includes 10 sections of new path at IGR-4-S006 and between sections IGR-4-S008 and IGR-4-S016, at Great Barksore Farm. See map IGR 4b and associated tables below for details.

4.2.3 From section IGR-4-S001 to IGR-4-S013 (maps IGR 4a and IGR 4b) a significant inland diversion is necessary to avoid important and sensitive wildlife sites on Barksore Marshes.

4.2.4 Provides mostly long distance views of Medway Estuary between sections IGR-4-S004 to IGR-4-S012 (maps IGR 4a and IGR 4b).

4.2.5 Follows the coastline closely between sections IGR-4-S014 to IGR-4-S024 with views of Halstow Creek (map IGR 4b).

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.

4.2.6 The following designated sites affect this length of coast (see Overview Map C):

- Medway Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Medway Estuary and Marshes Ramsar site
- Medway Estuary and Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Medway Estuary Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)

The following table brings together design features included in our access proposals to help to protect the environment along this length of the coast.

4.2.7 Measures to protect the environment

Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Design features of the access proposals	Reason included
IGR 4a and IGR 4b	IGR-4-S001 to IGR-4-S013	<p>The following design features are described elsewhere in this report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The trail is aligned inland of Barksore Marshes and the coastline near Great Barksore Farm.■ Coastal access rights would be excluded all year across Barksore Marshes and along the coastline near Great Barksore Farm (see para 4.2.18 to 4.2.21)	<p>To prevent disturbance, by recreational users, of breeding, wintering and on passage birds which are found using the shoreline, grazing marsh and seawall at Barksore Marshes.</p> <p>To prevent disturbance, by recreational users, of feeding, wintering and on passage birds found using the coastline near Great Barksore Farm.</p>

Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Design features of the access proposals	Reason included
		and Directions Map IGR 4A and IGR 4B).	
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S006 and IGR-4-S007	Prior to removal of 2m of bramble hedge, a visual inspection will be carried out to inform any methodology necessary to safeguard wildlife. Vegetation clearance will be undertaken during winter months.	To avoid impact on important hedgerow species, including dormice, that may be present within the area.
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S019	Minor scrub clearance near the path will be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season.	To avoid impact on breeding nightingales present within the area.

4.2.8 Natural England is satisfied that the proposals for coastal access in this report are made in accordance with relevant environmental protection legislation. 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:

4.2.9 There are few artificial barriers to accessibility on the proposed route. However, the natural coastal terrain is often challenging for some people with reduced mobility and this is the case on sections of our proposed route because:

- The trail would follow uneven grass or bare soil paths. At some locations, the clay path can be subject to cracking during prolonged dry weather, and in other parts the path can become muddy during wet weather.
- The kissing gates that are already present in this location may not provide enough space for those with larger mobility scooters or pushchairs, however there are constraints to replacing these kissing gates with larger alternatives.

4.2.10 New infrastructure is required along this stretch of the trail and we will seek to install the most accessible items and reduce unnecessary barriers, where practical. At Raspberry Hill Lane (map IGR 4b), we have included the provision of new accessible chicane barriers and a new pedestrian gate to enable those with large mobility scooters and pushchairs to pass. The existing field gate on the seawall

(map IGR 4b) will be left open and unlocked to make it easier to traverse the seawall in this area. There will also be a new gap created next to an existing field gate (map IGR 4b) and the path near Lower Halstow will be widened to avoid the area becoming overly muddy. We envisage this happening as part of the physical establishment works described below.

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

Where we have proposed exercising statutory discretions:

4.2.11 **Estuary:** This report proposes that the trail should contain sections aligned around the estuary of the River Medway. Natural England proposes to exercise its functions as if the sea included the estuarial waters of that river as far as Rochester Bridge, as indicated by the extent of the trail shown on Overview Map A2.

4.2.12 The Medway Estuary empties into both The Swale and the Thames estuaries. Alignment along these estuaries also formed part of our proposals made for Whitstable to Iwade and Grain to Woolwich stretches, submitted to the Secretary of State on 27 June 2017 and 5 June 2019, respectively.

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

4.2.13 **Landward boundary of the coastal margin:** We have used our discretion on some sections of the route to map the landward extent of the coastal margin to an adjacent physical boundary such as a fence line, pavement or track to make the extent of the new access rights clearer. See Table 4.3.1 below.

4.2.14 The Proposals Tables show where we are proposing to alter the default landward boundary of the coastal margin. These proposals are set out in columns 5b and 5c of table 4.3.1. Where these columns are left blank, we are making no such proposals, so the default landward boundary applies. See the note relating to Columns 5b & 5c (above Table 4.3.1) explaining what this means in practice.

See also part 3 of the Overview - 'Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps', for a more detailed explanation of the default extent of the coastal margin and how we may use our discretion to adjust the margin, either to add land or to provide clarity.

4.2.15 **Restrictions and/or exclusions:** We have proposed to exclude access by direction under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) in certain places along this section of coast.

Exclusion of access to the saltmarsh/flat Barksore and Lower Halstow (Medway Estuary)

4.2.16 Access to the mudflat and saltmarsh in the coastal margin seaward of route sections IGR-4-S001 to IGR-4-S024 is to be excluded all year round by direction under Section 25A of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) as it is unsuitable for public access. The exclusion does not affect the route itself and will have no legal effect on land where coastal access rights do not apply. See Directions Maps IGR 4A and IGR 4B.

4.2.17 The mudflat in this location is soft and sinking. It does not provide a safe walking surface and is subject to frequent tidal inundation. RNLI and Coastguard data indicates incidents of people being rescued from the mud in the Medway Estuary. Areas of saltmarsh have deep channels and creeks, some of which would not be readily apparent to walkers and can pose a significant risk.

Exclusion of access to the grazing marshes, channels and seawall at Barksore Marshes

4.2.18 Access is to be excluded at grazing marshes, channels and seawall at Barksore Marshes seaward of route sections IGR-4-S003 and IGR-4-S008 by direction under Section 26 (3) (a) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000), all year to avoid disturbance to internationally important

numbers of breeding, on passage and wintering birds. The exclusion does not affect the route itself and will have no legal effect on land where coastal access rights do not apply. See Directions Maps IGR 4A and IGR 4B.

4.2.19 Protected bird species use the grazing marsh, channels and seawalls of Barksore Marshes year round. Barksore Marshes is favoured by avocet, golden plover, turnstone, greenshank, wigeon, teal, shoveler, curlew, black-tailed godwit, shelduck, redshank, and dunlin in the winter months. In addition, there are breeding oystercatcher, lapwing, ringed plover, redshank, curlew, teal, marsh harrier and pochard. The Habitats Regulation Assessment for the site concluded that allowing access would cause a significant effect by disturbing the internationally-protected bird species using the site. The Assessment will be published alongside this report.

Exclusion of access to the coastline near Great Barksore Farm

4.2.20 Access is to be excluded to land along the coastline near Great Barksore Farm, seaward of route sections IGR-4-S009 and IGR-4-S012 by direction under Section 26 (3) (a) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000), all year to avoid disturbance to internationally important numbers of feeding, passage and wintering birds. The exclusion does not affect the route itself and will have no legal effect on land where coastal access rights do not apply. See Directions Maps IGR 4A and IGR 4B.

4.2.21 Protected bird species use the coastline near Great Barksore Farm, during the winter. Records show the presence of wintering redshank, whimbrel, curlew, golden plover, black-tailed godwit, and greenshank. The Habitats Regulation Assessment for the site concluded that allowing access would cause a significant effect by disturbing the internationally-protected bird species using the site. The Assessments will be published alongside this report.

Exclusion of access to the Lower Halstow Yacht Club

4.2.22 Access is to be excluded to the Lower Halstow Yacht Club seaward of route section IGR-4-S013 by direction under Sections 24 and 25 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000), all year round, for land management and public safety reasons. This will prevent disturbance to ongoing commercial activity and yacht club operations. The exclusion does not affect the route itself and will have no legal effect on land where coastal access rights do not apply. See Directions Maps IGR 4A and IGR 4B.

4.2.23 Lower Halstow Yacht Club has activities not compatible with access on or through the site, such as tractors towing boats to and from the slipway and across the club grounds. This exclusion will prevent disruption to commercial activities and yacht club operations. The exclusion does not apply to excepted land.

4.2.24 These directions will not prevent or affect:

- any existing local use of the land by right: such use is not covered by coastal access rights;
- any other use people already make of the land locally by formal agreement with the landowner, or by informal permission or traditional toleration; or
- use of any registered rights of common or any rights at common law or by Royal Charter etc.

Any such use is not prohibited or limited by these arrangements.

4.2.25 The directions we give under section 25A are intended to avoid any new public rights being created over the area in question in view of the hidden dangers of mudflats and saltmarsh.

See part 8 of the Overview - 'Restrictions and exclusions' - for a summary for the entire stretch.

4.2.26 **Other factors affecting access:** Shooting activity occasionally takes place at Great Barksore Farm. During these times (usually dawn and dusk) public access may be temporarily diverted away from the main trail alignment between sections IGR-4-S009 and IGR-4-S010 into adjacent fields. This arrangement would continue without any local restriction on new access rights to give effect to it formally.

4.2.27 **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.

4.2.28 Column 4 of tables 4.3.1 indicates where roll-back has been proposed in relation to a route section. Where this is the case, the route, as initially determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on map IGR 4a as the proposed route of the trail.

4.2.29 If at any time in the future any part of a route section upon which roll-back has been specified needs, in Natural England's view, to change in order for the overall route to remain viable, the new route for the part in question will be determined by Natural England without further reference to the Secretary of State. This will be done in accordance with the criteria and procedures described under the title 'Roll-back' in part 7 of the Overview and section 4.10 of the Coastal Access Scheme. If this happens, the new route will become the approved route for that section for the purposes of the Order which determines where coastal access rights apply.

On sections for which roll-back is not proposed in tables 4.3.1, the route is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps IGR 4a and IGR 4b as the proposed route of the trail.

Other future change:

4.2.30 There are places described in this report where we foresee the need for future changes to the proposed access provisions in response to development. North of Great Barksore Farm, a change of use/ development of farm buildings near the route may impact upon the route of the trail. Should this happen, Natural England may need to submit a variation report to the Secretary of State recommending that the trail is moved. We do not foresee any further need for future changes to the access provisions that we have proposed within this report.

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

Establishment of the trail:

4.2.31 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.

4.2.32 Our estimate of the capital costs for physical establishment of the trail on the proposed route is £9,699 and is informed by:

- information already held by the access authority, Kent County Council, in relation to the management of existing public rights of way and highway safety;
- 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.

4.2.33 There are three main elements to the overall cost:

- A significant number of new signs would be needed, including road safety signs and carriageway markings at Raspberry Hill Lane and Sheerness Road to alert motorists to pedestrians crossing.
- The surfaces of the existing paths on the proposed route are generally of a suitable standard for the trail, but there are some locations where we will need to clear vegetation or carry out minor surfacing works where the path is unsatisfactory at the moment.
- New chicane access barriers will be installed on either side of Raspberry Hill Lane as the route enters Great Barksore Farm and a new pedestrian gate will need to be installed in the field where there are grazing animals.

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 road safety carriageway markings	£4,324
Minor surfacing work and vegetation clearance	£2,910
Chicane access barriers and pedestrian gates	£1,200
Project management	£1,265
Total	£9,699 (Exclusive of any VAT payable)

4.2.34 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, Kent 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:

4.2.35 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).

4.2.36 We estimate that the annual cost to maintain the trail will be £1,496 (exclusive of any VAT payable). In developing this estimate we have taken account of the formula used to calculate Natural England’s contribution to the maintenance of other National Trails.

Part 4.3: Proposals Tables

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

4.3.1 Section Details: Maps IGR 4a and IGR 4b: Funton Brickworks to Lower Halstow

Key notes on table:

- Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 4.3.2: Other options considered.
- 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.
- Column 4 – ‘Yes – see table 4.3.3’ means roll-back is proposed, but refer to that table below about our likely approach to implementing it for this route section. This is because a more complex situation exists in this case and consideration must be given to how roll-back may happen in relation to excepted land, a protected site etc.
- Column 5a - Certain coastal land types are included automatically in the coastal margin where they fall landward of the trail if they touch it at some point. The relevant land type (foreshore, cliff, bank, barrier, dune, beach, flat or section 15 land – see Glossary) is shown in this column where appropriate. “No” means none present on this route section.
- Columns 5b and 5c – Any entry in these columns means we are proposing to align the landward boundary of the coastal margin on this route section with the physical feature(s) shown in 5b, for the reason in 5c. No text here means that for this route section the landward edge of the margin would be that of the trail itself - or if any default coastal land type is shown in 5a, that would be its landward boundary instead.

1	2	3	4	5a	5b	5c	6
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Current status of route section(s)	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 7 of Overview)	Landward margin contains coastal land type?	Proposal to specify landward boundary of margin (See maps)	Reason for landward boundary proposal	Explanatory notes
IGR 4a	IGR-4-S001*	Byway open to all traffic	Yes – normal	No	Edge of track	Clarity and cohesion	
IGR 4a	IGR-4-S002* to IGR-4-S005*	Public footpath	No	No			
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S006*	Not an existing walked route	No	No			

1	2	3	4	5a	5b	5c	6
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Current status of route section(s)	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 7 of Overview)	Landward margin contains coastal land type?	Proposal to specify landward boundary of margin (See maps)	Reason for landward boundary proposal	Explanatory notes
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S007*	Public highway	No	No			
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S008* to IGR-4-S009*	Not an existing walked route	No	No			
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S010*	Not an existing walked route	No	No			
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S011*	Not an existing walked route	No	No			
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S012* to IGR-4-S016*	Not an existing walked route	No	Yes - bank			
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S017* to IGR-4-S019*	Other existing walked route	No	Yes - bank			
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S020*	Other existing walked route	No	No	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S021*	Other existing walked route	No	No	Landward edge of path	Clarity and cohesion	
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S022 to	Other existing	No	No			

1	2	3	4	5a	5b	5c	6
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Current status of route section(s)	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 7 of Overview)	Landward margin contains coastal land type?	Proposal to specify landward boundary of margin (See maps)	Reason for landward boundary proposal	Explanatory notes
	IGR-4-S024	walked route					

4.3.2 Other options considered: Maps IGR 4a and IGR 4b – Funton Brickworks to Lower Halstow

Map(s)	Route section numbers(s)	Other option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option
IGR 4a and IGR 4b	IGR-4-S001 to IGR-4-S009	<p>We considered continuing west along the verge of Raspberry Hill Lane and then aligning the trail along the seawall and/or tracks at Barksore Marshes and Great Barksore Farm. The options included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ following the periphery of the coast along Barksore Marshes seawalls and the open fields north of Great Barksore Farm ■ following a more inland track west of Barksore Marshes and the seaward edge of open fields north of Great Barksore Farm 	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it avoids disturbance to areas of national and international importance for the overwintering, feeding and breeding of resident and migratory birds found both seaward and landward of the seawall and birds found on the edge of the open fields ■ it provides some long reaching views of the coast ■ 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.

Map(s)	Route section numbers(s)	Other option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S006 to IGR-4-S008	<p>We considered aligning the trail over the junction between Basser Hill and Sheerness Road, to access Great Barksore Farm. This would have required the removal/thinning of c100m of roadside trees and the construction of a footway, to provide the necessary visibility for a new, safe road crossing.</p>	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it provides a safe road crossing point – as advised by Kent Highways ■ it avoids substantial tree and shrub removal, which would affect the character of this section of Sheerness Road ■ it avoids potential impacts on associated wildlife, such as bats, accompanying such tree and shrub removal ■ it keeps mainly to the edge of the fields to minimise disruption to farming operations ■ it avoids costly work including tree and shrub removal and installation of a new footway on Raspberry Hill Lane ■ 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.
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S009	<p>We considered aligning the trail alongside the north-eastern boundary of the pond at Great Barksore Farm. Then, to continue west we considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ using an existing field entrance, north of the pond, and ■ creating a new bridge over the drain/ditch, close to the coastline 	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it avoids disturbance to areas of national and international importance for the migratory birds found on the coastal edge of the fields north of Great Barksore Farm and Barksore Marshes ■ it keeps mainly to the edge of the field (permanent grassland) to minimise disruption to farming operations ■ it provides some long reaching views of the coast ■ it avoids the cost of installing and maintaining a new bridge at the northern end of the drain ■ 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.

Map(s)	Route section numbers(s)	Other option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S010 to IGR-4-S012	<p>We considered aligning the trail around the coastline, to the north of the proposed route. The options here included following the shoreline and then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ passing south through Lower Halstow Yacht Club ■ using an existing track landward of the Lower Halstow Yacht Club, which requires the construction of a walkway in an area that is prone to significant localised flooding. Kent County Council estimate the cost of this walkway to be £30-50,000. 	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it avoids disturbance to areas of national and international importance for the overwintering migratory birds found on the coastal edge of the fields north of Great Barksore Farm ■ it avoids aligning through the active boat yard of the yacht club ■ it provides long reaching views of the coast ■ it keeps to a fenced grass corridor around the edge of an arable field, which minimises disruption to farming operations ■ it provides, on balance, a better value solution for a continuous route in the area ■ 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.
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S006 to IGR-4-S024	<p>We considered aligning the trail west along Sheerness Road (the existing Saxon Shore Way route), south of Great Barksore Farm, before turning onto the public footpath (the Saxon Shore Way) that runs westwards directly to Lower Halstow and on to Halstow Creek.</p> <p>Kent Highways advised that the Sheerness Road section of this route, while currently a promoted route, is unsuitable for a National Trail due to the increasing volume/speeds of traffic here and other road safety issues.</p>	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it provides some good, long reaching views of the coast ■ it is closer to the sea ■ it provides a safe route and avoids the safety concerns associated with using the existing Saxon Shore Way along Sheerness Road, as advised by Kent Highways ■ 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.

Map(s)	Route section numbers(s)	Other option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S006 to IGR-4-S024	<p>We considered aligning the trail west from Basser Hill, along a section of Sheerness Road (the existing Saxon Shore Way route), before turning south onto the public footpath at Little Barksore Farm and then leaving this path to head west across fields towards Lower Halstow and on to Halstow Creek.</p> <p>Kent Highways (as above) advised that this stretch of Sheerness Road is also unsuitable for a National Trail due to road safety issues.</p>	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it provides some good, long reaching views of the coast ■ it is closer to the sea ■ it provides a safe route and avoids using this part of the existing Saxon Shore Way along Sheerness Road, as advised by Kent Highways. ■ it avoids the trail and coastal margin affecting additional businesses and properties, both inland of Sheerness Road and everything seaward of the road ■ 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.
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S006 to IGR-4-S024	<p>We also considered aligning the trail off but adjacent to Sheerness Road, from Basser Hill, before turning onto the public footpath (the Saxon Shore Way) that runs westwards directly to Lower Halstow and on to Halstow Creek.</p> <p>This option would require four new or improved pedestrian crossings over Sheerness Road and Basser Hill. This is due to existing buildings/properties between Basser Hill and the public footpath, which prevent a continuous off-road route on either side of the road.</p> <p>Kent Highways have raised road safety concerns about establishing new road crossings in this area. They have also advised that significant tree clearance would be necessary</p>	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it provides some good, long reaching views of the coast ■ it is closer to the sea ■ it provides a route that affords a safe crossing point and avoids the necessity of multiple crossings of Sheerness Road between Basser Hill and Lower Halstow – in line with road safety advice from Kent Highways ■ it avoids substantial and costly tree removal alongside the carriageway, which would affect the character of this section of Sheerness Road ■ it avoids potential impacts on associated wildlife, such as bats, accompanying such tree and shrub removal ■ it avoids the trail and coastal margin affecting additional businesses and properties, both inland of Sheerness Road and everything seaward of the road ■ we concluded that overall the proposed route struck the best balance in terms of

Map(s)	Route section numbers(s)	Other option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option
		to provide adequate visibility standards at these crossings.	the criteria described in chapter 4 of the Coastal Access Scheme.
IGR 4b	IGR-4-S006 to IGR-4-S024	<p>We considered aligning the trail off but adjacent to Sheerness Road to join the public footpath at Little Barksore Farm and then leaving that path to head west across fields towards Lower Halstow and on to Halstow Creek.</p> <p>Kent Highways advised that the new road crossing at Basser Hill would require significant tree clearance to provide adequate visibility standards for this crossing.</p>	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it provides some good, long reaching views of the coast ■ it is closer to the sea ■ it avoids substantial and costly tree clearance at Basser Hill, which would affect the character of this area ■ it avoids potential impacts on associated wildlife, such as bats, accompanying such tree and shrub removal ■ it avoids the trail and coastal margin affecting additional businesses and properties, both inland of Sheerness Road and everything seaward of the road ■ 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 4.4: Proposals Maps

4.4.1 Map Index

Map reference	Map title
IGR 4a	Funton Brickworks to Great Barksore Farm
IGR 4b	Great Barksore Farm to Lower Halstow
Directions Map IGR 4A	Directions for Report IGR 4: Funton Brickworks to Lower Halstow
Directions Map IGR 4B	Directions for Report IGR 4: Funton Brickworks to Lower Halstow

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:

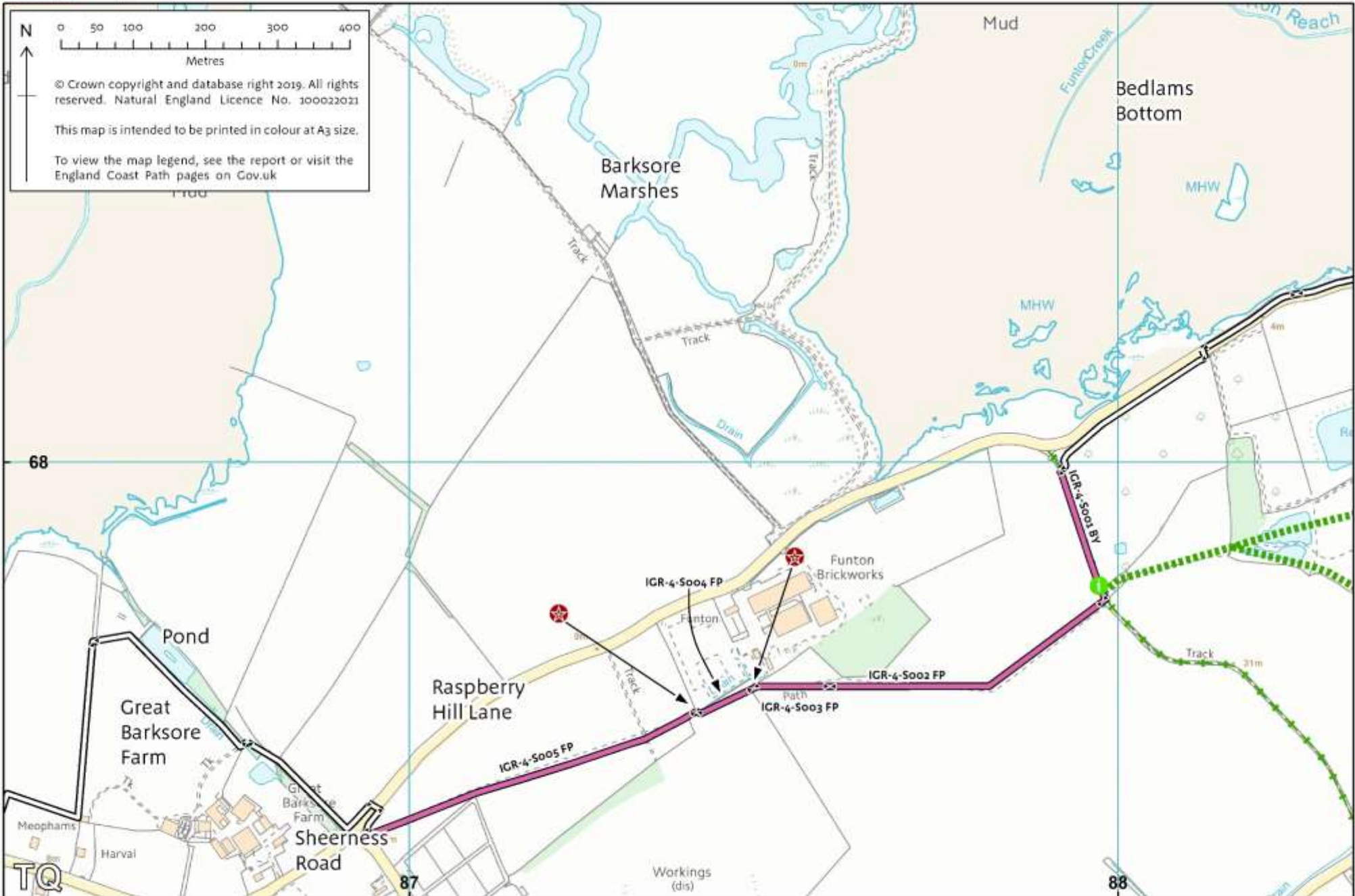
- Barrier
- Boardwalk
- Bollard
- Cattle grid
- Culvert
- Motorbike barrier
- Cycle chicane
- Drainage
- Drop-kerb
- Gap in fence
- Hurdle
- Roadside sign
- Interpretation panel
- Ramp
- Revetment
- Stepping stones
- Steps
- Advisory sign

Infrastructure status

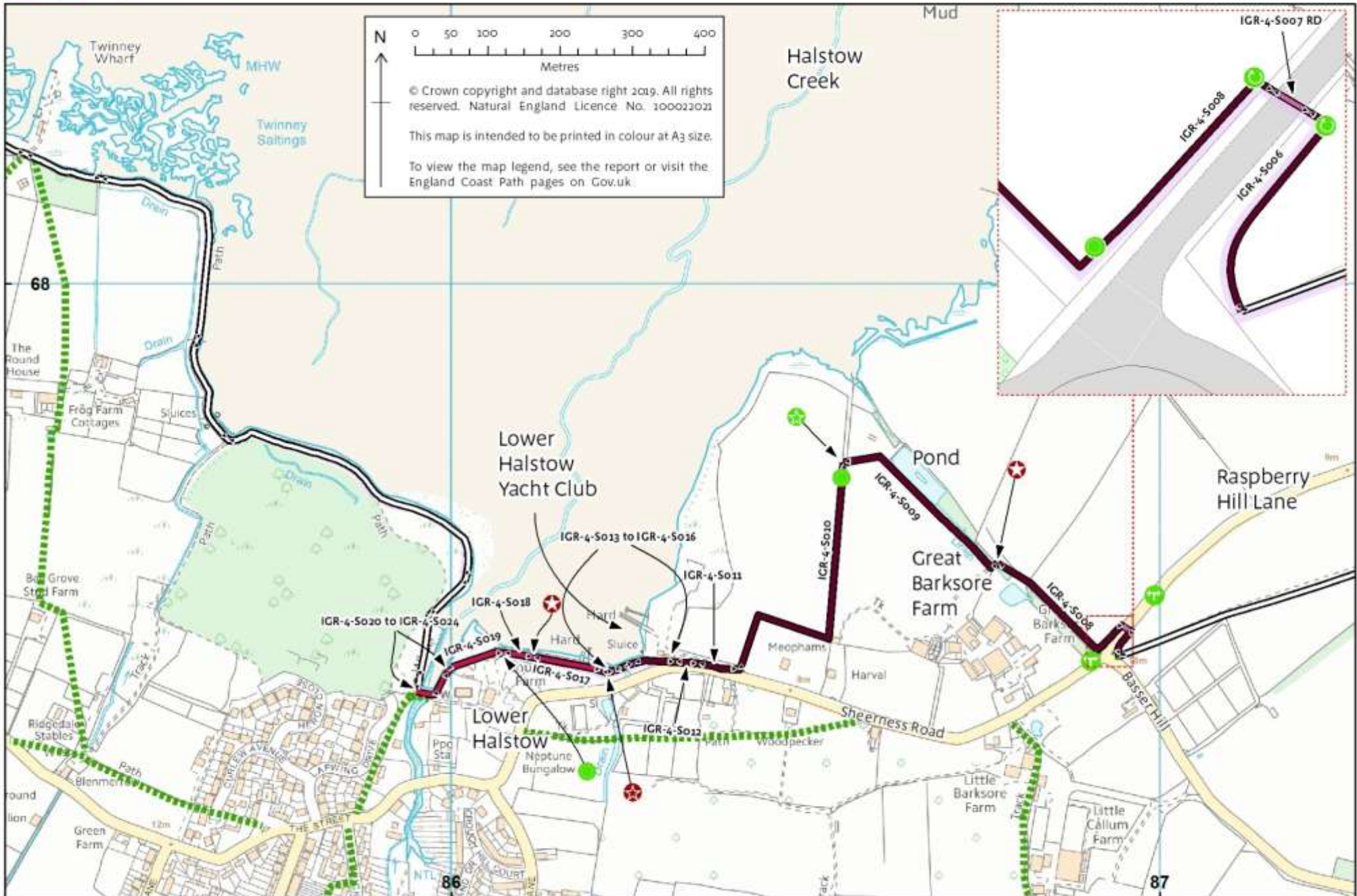
Each symbol shown on the map is colour coded as appropriate, as in this example for a set of steps:

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

* Please note that the items in this legend may not all be present on an individual map or report.



Map IGR 4a: Funton Brickworks to Great Barksore Farm



Directions Map IGR 4B

These directions only affect land where coastal access rights apply and will not affect existing rights of access, such as on public rights of way.

