

www.gov.uk/englandcoastpath



**Assessment of Coastal Access Proposals
from Sizewell to Dunwich and Dunwich to Southwold
on sites and features of nature conservation concern
29th January 2020**





Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

About this document

This document should be read in conjunction with the published Reports for the Aldeburgh to Hopton-on-Sea 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/collections/england-coast-path-aldeburgh-to-hopton-on-sea>

An 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. Figures 1 – 15 show a maps of the designated sites along this stretch of coast.

The tables on pages 6 to 10 give details in relation 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 Sizewell to Southwold

Contents

<i>About this document</i>	2
<i>Contents</i>	3
<i>Introduction</i>	5
<i>Details of designated sites and features</i>	5
<i>Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SSSI</i>	12
<i>Risk analysis</i>	13
<i>Analysis of SSSI features assessed in NCA (not covered in HRA)</i>	18
<i>Summary and conclusion of risk to notified features and species of conservation concern</i>	27
<i>Establishment works</i>	28
<i>Conclusion</i>	30
<i>Figure 1 - Overview map of designated sites</i>	31
<i>Figure 2 - Map of Suffolk Coast NNR</i>	32
<i>Figure 3 - Map of Minsmere to Walberswick Ramsar - Southwold to Dunwich</i>	33
<i>Figure 4 - Map of Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SAC – Southwold to Dunwich</i>	34
<i>Figure 5 - Map of Minsmere to Walberswick SPA – Southwold to Dunwich</i>	35
<i>Figure 6 - Map of Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SSSI – Southwold to Dunwich</i> ...	36
<i>Figure 7 - Map of Suffolk Coast NNR – Dunwich Heath</i>	37
<i>Figure 8 - Map of Minsmere to Walberswick Ramsar – Dunwich Heath</i>	38
<i>Figure 9 - Map of Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SAC – Dunwich Heath</i>	39
<i>Figure 10 - Map of Minsmere to Walberswick SPA – Dunwich Heath</i>	40
<i>Figure 11 - Map of Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SSSI – Dunwich Heath</i>	41
<i>Figure 12 - Map of Minsmere to Walberswick Ramsar – Sizewell to Dunwich</i>	42



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

<i>Figure 13 - Map of Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SAC - Sizewell to Dunwich ..</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Figure 14 - Map of Minsmere to Walberswick SPA - Sizewell to Dunwich.....</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>Figure 15 - Map of Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SSSI - Sizewell to Dunwich.....</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>References</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Glossary of terms</i>	<i>51</i>



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Introduction

A summary of designated sites and features found on this stretch of coast is given in the tables below. Features highlighted in blue are covered in this NCA. Other EU features and some non-EU site features are assessed in the HRA.

Details of designated sites and features

Some features are notified in both the SSSI designation and a European designation whether as Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protected Area (SPA) or Ramsar. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been conducted on the EU designated sites which addresses concerns that would otherwise have been part of this document. The HRA can be found online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/england-coast-path-aldeburgh-to-hopton-on-sea>



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

EU features and some non-EU (SSSI only) features are assessed within the HRA as shown below.

Designated site and features	SPA	SAC	Ramsar	SSSI	HRA or
					NCA
These features are associated with water (rivers, ditches, ponds) and marsh:					
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - greater white-fronted goose <i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i> ;	✓				HRA
Aggregations of non-breeding birds – dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>				✓	NCA
Aggregations of breeding birds - marsh harrier , <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	✓		✓	✓	HRA
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - avocet , <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	✓				HRA
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - bittern , <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	✓				HRA
Aggregations of breeding birds - avocet , <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> (see also Features associated with shingle or beach)	✓		✓	✓	HRA
Aggregations of breeding birds – gadwall , <i>Mareca strepera</i>	✓		✓	✓	HRA
Aggregations of breeding birds – shoveler , <i>Spatula clypeata</i>	✓		✓	✓	HRA
Aggregations of breeding birds – teal , <i>Anas crecca</i>	✓		✓	✓	HRA
Aggregations of non-breeding birds – shoveler , <i>Spatula clypeata</i> ;	✓				HRA
Aggregations of non-breeding birds – gadwall , <i>Mareca strepera</i> ;	✓				HRA
Aggregations of non-breeding birds - hen harrier , <i>Circus cyaneus</i> ; (see also “Heathland features”)	✓				HRA
Aggregations of breeding birds - little tern , <i>Sterna albifrons</i> (see also Features associated with shingle or beach)	✓				HRA
Aggregations of breeding birds - bittern , <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	✓		✓	✓	HRA



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Designated site and features	SPA	SAC	Ramsar	SSSI	HRA or
					NCA
<p>Assemblages of breeding birds - Lowland damp grasslands</p> <p>Includes lapwing, sedge warbler, reed bunting, mute swan, redshank, snipe, grasshopper warbler, yellow wagtail, cuckoo, grey heron, black-tailed godwit)</p> <p>Note - shelduck, teal, shoveler, gadwall, garganey, marsh harrier fall into this assemblage but these are assessed within the HRA</p>				✓	HRA and NCA
<p>Aggregations of non-breeding birds - variety of passage species</p>				✓	NCA
<p>Assemblages of breeding birds – Lowland fen without water bodies (including sedge warbler, reed bunting, reed warbler, snipe, grasshopper warbler, cuckoo, grey heron, Savi’s warbler.</p>				Not a SSSI feature but included as feature of concern	NCA
<p>The following species within this assemblage are considered in the HRA: water rail, bearded tit, Cetti’s warbler, bittern, , marsh harrier)</p>					HRA
<p>Assemblages of breeding birds – Lowland open water and margins assemblages (including reed bunting, little grebe, common tern, reed warbler, willow tit, shelduck, mute swan, redshank, snipe, grasshopper warbler, yellow wagtail, cuckoo, grey heron, tufted duck, great crested grebe, ringed plover, kingfisher, Savi’s warbler.</p>				✓	NCA
<p>The following species within the assemblage are considered within the HRA: water rail, , teal, shoveler, avocet, bearded tit, Cetti’s warbler, gadwall, bittern, , garganey, marsh harrier)</p>					HRA



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Designated site and features	SPA	SAC	Ramsar	SSSI	HRA or
					NCA
These features are associated with water (rivers, ditches, ponds) and marsh:					
Aggregations of breeding birds – water rail , <i>Rallus aquaticus</i>				✓	HRA
Saltmarsh <i>Atriplex portulcoides</i>				✓	HRA
<i>Elytrigia atherica</i> saltmarsh				✓	HRA
Aggregations of breeding birds - bearded tit , <i>Panurus biarmicus</i>			✓	✓	HRA
Aggregations of breeding birds - garganey , <i>Spatula querquedula</i>			✓	✓	HRA
Aggregations of non-breeding birds – redshank , <i>Tringa tetanus</i>				✓	NCA
<i>Phragmites australis</i> swamp and reed-beds			✓	✓	HRA
<i>Carex acutiformis</i> swamp			✓	✓	HRA
Invertebrate Assemblage			✓	✓	HRA
Lowland ditch systems			✓	✓	HRA
<i>Juncus subnodulosus</i> - <i>Cirsium palustre</i> fen meadow			✓	✓	HRA
<i>Juncus effusus</i> / <i>acutiflorus</i> - <i>Galium palustre</i> rush pasture			✓	✓	HRA
<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> - <i>Angelica sylvestris</i> mire			✓	✓	HRA
Population of Schedule 8 plant - <i>Filago lutescens</i> , red-tipped cudweed			✓	✓	HRA
<i>Cladium mariscus</i> swamp and sedge-beds			✓	✓	HRA
<i>Phragmites australis</i> - <i>Urtica dioica</i> tall-herb fen			✓	✓	HRA
Sheltered muddy shores (including estuarine muds)			✓	✓	HRA
<i>Festuca ovina</i> - <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> - <i>Rumex acetosella</i> grassland				✓	NCA
Lowland calcareous grassland (CG7)				✓	NCA
Ramsar criterion 1 The site contains a mosaic of marine, freshwater, marshland and associated habitats, complete with transition areas in between.			✓		HRA



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Designated site and features	SPA	SAC	Ramsar	SSSI	HRA or
					NCA
<p>Contains the largest continuous stand of reedbeds in England and Wales and rare transition in grazing marsh ditch plants from brackish to fresh water.</p> <p><i>Ramsar criterion 2</i> This site supports nine nationally scarce plants and at least 26 red data book invertebrates. Supports a population of the mollusc <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Habitats Directive Annex II; British Red Data Book Endangered), recently discovered on the Blyth estuary river walls. An important assemblage of rare breeding birds associated with marshland and reedbeds including: Bittern, gadwall, Eurasian teal, northern shoveler, Eurasian marsh harrier, pied avocet, bearded tit</p>					
These features are associated with heathland:					
Aggregations of breeding birds - woodlark <i>Lullula arborea</i> ;	✓			✓	HRA
Aggregations of breeding birds - Cetti's warbler , <i>Cettia cetti</i>			✓	✓	HRA
Aggregations of breeding birds - nightjar , <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	✓			✓	HRA
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i> - <i>Festuca ovina</i> heath		✓		✓	HRA
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i> - <i>Ulex gallii</i> heath		✓		✓	HRA
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i> - <i>Urtica dioica</i> woodland			✓	✓	HRA
<p>European dry heaths Lowland European dry heaths occupy an extensive area of this site on the east coast of England, which is at the extreme easterly range of heath development in the UK. The heathland is predominantly <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> – <i>Ulex gallii</i> heath, usually more characteristic of western parts of the UK. This type is dominated by heather <i>Calluna vulgaris</i>, western gorse <i>Ulex gallii</i> and bell heather <i>Erica cinerea</i>.</p>		✓			HRA



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Designated site and features	SPA	SAC	Ramsar	SSSI	HRA or
					NCA
These features are associated with shingle or beach:					
Annual vegetation of drift line (<i>Cakile maritima</i> - <i>Honkenya peploides</i> strandline community)		✓			HRA
Perennial vegetation of stony banks (<i>Rumex crispus</i> - <i>Glaucium flavum</i> shingle community)		✓		✓	HRA
<i>Carex arenaria</i> - <i>Cornicularia aculeata</i> dune community			✓	✓	HRA
<i>Carex arenaria</i> - <i>Festuca ovina</i> - <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> dune grassland			✓	✓	HRA
<i>Ammophila arenaria</i> mobile dune community			✓	✓	HRA
Saline coastal lagoons		✓	✓	✓	HRA
Vascular Plant Assemblage			✓	✓	HRA and NCA
Other features of conservation concern					
Breeding Sedge Warbler					
Breeding Reed Warbler					
Breeding Snipe					
Breeding Grasshopper Warbler					
Breeding Ringed Plover					
Breeding Cuckoo					
Breeding Savi's Warbler					

Outer Thames Estuary SPA
See notes below and refer to HRA for details of this site and features
Southern North Sea SAC
See notes below
Sizewell Marshes SSSI
See separate NCA



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Outer Thames Estuary SPA

The qualifying feature for the Outer Thames Estuary SPA is the largest aggregation of wintering red-throated diver (*Gavia stellata*) in the UK, an estimated population of 6,466 individuals which is 38% of the wintering population of Great Britain. The SPA has Additional Qualifying Features: foraging areas for breeding common tern (*Sterna hirundo*) and breeding little tern (*Sterna albifrons*).

Further details are available in a separate HRA which fully considers these features and can be found on line at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/england-coast-path-aldeburgh-to-hopton-on-sea>

Southern North Sea SAC

The Southern North Sea Special Area of Conservation has been considered alongside our proposals and we have concluded that there could not be an impact on the special interest (marine) features due to the spatial separation between them and walkers using the proposed route of the England Coast Path.

Further details are available in a separate HRA which fully considers these features and can be found on line at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/england-coast-path-aldeburgh-to-hopton-on-sea>

This assessment will focus on Minsmere-Walberswick SSSI.



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SSSI

Is this site also part of a European site? Yes

In this document, the site is divided into 3 geographically distinct sections (A-C) to reflect the differing habitat types and uses of the land by people, proximity to facilities, etc. (see Figure 1).

Section A

Extends from the River Blyth estuary to Beach Road car park in Dunwich. Habitats types are largely water based and include areas of saltmarsh, ditches and vegetated shingle. Impacts on features associated with water and features associated with shingle or beach are covered in this section.

Section B

Covers the area from Beach Road car park in Dunwich to Coastguard Cottages at Dunwich Heath. Impacts on features associated with Heathland are considered in this section.

Section C

Covers the area from Sizewell power plant to Coastguard Cottages at Dunwich Heath. Impacts on features associated with water, and features associated with beach and shingle are considered in this section which largely comprises foreshore, including areas of vegetated shingle and sand dune but also areas close to water bodies and reedbeds such as at RSPB Minsmere.



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Risk analysis

This section explores which attributes of the site might be affected as a consequence of introducing coastal access, and which will not be affected.

Current access provisions and use of site for recreation

Section A

The current level of access on the northern part of section A is **very high all year round**, especially in summer months. There are parking facilities at the Lifeboat Museum car park and along Ferry Road, cafes and a pub on Ferry Road and in Walberswick. There are rights of way on the north bank and on the recently re-surfaced south bank of the River Blyth. The Bailey Bridge is also a public footpath and connects the two banks. Access levels are **high around the Walberswick** section which also has good visitor facilities. Levels of use drop to **medium levels landward of the Dingle Marshes** saltmarsh, on the bridleway track at the eastern edge of Dunwich Forest. The track links the two centres of Walberswick and Dunwich, a distance of about 6km. Usage increases back up to **high levels on the approach to Dunwich**.

The rest of the route southwards is well-used and largely follows existing rights of way and/or the line of the current Suffolk Coast Path. It follows a track also suitable for vehicular access from Sandymount Covert south to Westleton Road and supports **medium levels of use**.

There will be a newly-created in-field option over the River Dunwich connecting St James's Street to the bridleway landward of Dingle Marshes. The rest of the route follows St James's Street, largely on footway. There is a pub, tea room, café, toilets and a free car park in Dunwich. **Levels of use are high around Dunwich**.

The car park is well-used as a base for walks: both on the bridleway behind Dingle Marshes but mainly heading northwards using the intertidal area. In particular, walkers also frequently start heading northwards for a few hundred metres landward of the shingle ridge, which is vegetated and is easy to walk on. Beyond this, the terrain becomes less vegetated leaving exposed shingle which is difficult to walk on. At this point many walkers retrace their steps or return via the intertidal area if it is exposed.

The proposed trail runs south along verges, tracks, PRoW, existing walked routes and a permissive bridleway until it enters unit 109 on heathland which is in Favourable Condition. The units leading up to and on top of Dunwich Cliffs are in Favourable Condition. Unit 110 lies on the beach. It has



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

supported recreational use for many years especially between the Dunwich Heath car park which belongs to the National Trust, and access points from the caravan parks.

Predicted change in access with ECP - Section A

The England Coast Path (ECP) is likely to result in a **small increase** in the levels of access to this area as it does not represent a significant increase relative to the current levels of use in this busy visitor destination. Two anomalies in the Definitive Map and Statement will address the legal status of access at those points. There will be signage and some surface improvements across the Marshes. An in-field option will deliver a safe off-road route for walkers between the bridleway past Dingle Tea Rooms (the current Suffolk Coast Path), over the River Dunwich to St James's Street. Much of the rest of the trail is of a high quality and easy to walk. Further improvements may be needed on boggier sections around the Marshes and consideration should be given to other works on the trail where appropriate.

Although the walking routes at this location are already well-publicised, designation as a National Trail will raise the profile of the route. Good visitor facilities are available at either end of section A. The area already attracts large numbers of walkers from further afield. There will be little or no change in the number of people living locally. The number of tourism visits to this part of the coast generally has been increasing over the last 10 years.

There are four small sections of route which will need to be created to ensure a continuous trail:-

1. A small section on the north bank of River Blyth just south of Blackshore Quay giving legal status to de facto use. A Definitive Map and Statement (DMS) anomaly shows a break in public rights; coastal access provides a missing link between the restricted byway and the footpath;
2. From the footbridge in the car park on Ferry Road at Walberswick to The Flats (the dunes);
3. Creation of an in-field route over the River Dunwich from St James' Street to the bridleway;
4. Between Dingle Little Hill and Great Dingle Farm is a small section of path walked on a bank; the DMS shows the path to be in the ditch.

Although the route will be promoted, there are already a number of promoted routes in and around the Marshes both on-line and via interpretation boards. The area attracts regular local users as well as large numbers of visitors, attracted by the walking, scenery and wildlife. The Suffolk Coasts & Heaths AONB have plans to promote further routes around the Marshes, in



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

addition to their circular walk taking in the proposed trail and shingle ridge. Good visitor facilities exist in Walberswick and Beach Road, Dunwich: car parking, cafes and toilets.

There is a high proportion of second home ownership in Walberswick reducing the potential for large local population changes and impacts.

Section B

Dunwich Heath is currently designated as Open Access land under CROW, with a national restriction requiring visitors to keep dogs on short leads from 1st March to 31st July each year to avoid disturbance to ground nesting birds.

The southern section and much of the foreshore has been lost through coastal processes. Vegetation is constrained by coastal squeeze. The unit has been assessed as being impacted upon by sustained recreational use. The section from Dunwich is busy, especially during summer months. The section near the caravan and camping parks on the cliff top, both of which have direct access to the proposed trail experience **medium to high levels** of use. Up to ¼ km north from the Dunwich Heath car park, access levels are **high**. Further north, use drops to **medium levels** just south of the entrance to Greyfriars Wood.

Predicted change in access with ECP – Section B

There will be legalisation of currently walked routes:

1. on the cliff top along Dunwich Cliffs;
2. through Greyfriars Wood and Pales Dyke;
3. permissive path through National Trust land; and
4. around Coastguard Cottages

The status of the route will be raised with a National Trail designation, but the area including the route already attracts walkers from further afield. We anticipate a **medium increase** in the number of trail users with the advent of Coastal Access, although relative to the high numbers currently using the site, this is not significant.

Coastal access rights replace other access rights provided under Part 1 of CROW, which means that the national restriction to keep dogs on leads between 1st March and 31st July will no longer apply. Other than the change on existing CROW access land, there are no legal prohibitions on the margin which will be lifted as a result of Coastal Access rights. Some parts of the margin constitute excepted land and are inaccessible. Other areas, such as the heathland at Dunwich, will be



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

theoretically accessible but we anticipate current patterns of use to continue, that is, walkers will stick to the walked and marked paths.

Parts of Greyfriars Wood may attract walkers exploring the margin, but the expectation is that walkers will stick to existing paths through the woods. For these reasons we anticipate a **possible increase** in numbers accessing the margin.

Section C

Close to the National Trust's **Dunwich Heath car park, access levels are high**. This **reduces to medium levels once on the beach and on the approach to The Sluice** and for about 1.5km further south. The National Trust reports that at weekends or Bank Holidays when the forecast is for fine weather, their car parks have been full. National Trust estimate their annual number of visitors to be between about 180,000 and 200,000 per year.

The RSPB state that visitors to their site tend to use a well-walked path close to the fence line between Minsmere reserve and the beach as part of a circular walk around the reserve. It is fairly easy to walk but some sections become boggy and are prone to flooding. A more exposed line is also walked on the top of the dune ridge, slightly seaward of this route. It has been well-established through the dunes, is fairly easy to walk and gives good sea views and views across Minsmere Reserve. There are a number of routes between these two paths, which continue to the inter-tidal area.

The section opposite Goose Hill marks a well-used turning point for walkers starting at Sizewell car park where there are also toilets open all year round and a café which is closed in winter. The area **around Sizewell experiences medium to high levels of use** and is less prone to seasonal fluctuations as it is popular with local dog walkers.

There are also **significant numbers of visitors to RSPB's Minsmere Reserve**, visitor centre and café and National Trust's visitor centre and café. Visitors are likely to continue their current pattern of use and explore the two sites, linking both as some visitors do via the beach path. Minsmere attracts high numbers of visits a year and during filming of BBC's "Springwatch" programme, the number of visits increased to 1,000 visits a day. VisitEngland recorded over 123,000 visits to RSPB Minsmere in 2015 and 2016.

In addition, an assessment under the Habitats Regulations 2017 of a planned weekly 5 km "Park Run" by the landowner, RSPB which will use the Minsmere frontage, concluded that there will be no likely significant effect on the overall integrity of the site. Under SSSI legislation, this is subject



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

to a one-year consent from Natural England subject to monitoring by RSPB and subsequent review of the consent.

There are plans to develop land at and around Sizewell B nuclear power plant; there are measures in place to mitigate for loss of protected site area and to act as displacement sites for public access. There will be an increase in the number of people living locally if the plans to develop the nuclear power plant site go ahead. There is also a housing development planned for Leiston. Both development plans have included mitigation for increased access.

There will be improvements in the route surface on the clay bank south of Coastguard Cottages and the profile of the path will be raised by its designation as a National Trail. Some work may be required on the surface of the route at Minsmere frontage as it is boggy and prone to forming puddles in low-lying areas.

Predicted changes in access with ECP – Section C

Although we believe increased numbers of walkers will be seen on this section as a whole, it will be small compared with the current visitor numbers at the three honeypot locations (Dunwich Heath, Minsmere and Sizewell); and small in comparison with the new users as a result of new development, for which mitigation has been proposed. There is therefore a predicted small increase in the number of people using the trail, as there will be improvements to the surface of the clay bank. Apart from this work, we anticipate negligible increases in use of the trail.

We anticipate walkers will confine themselves to the trail due to the difficult walking conditions on the shingle. For the **small/ negligible increase** in numbers, we predict a **negligible increase** in the number of people accessing the margin.



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Analysis of SSSI features assessed in NCA (not covered in HRA)

Activities causing disturbance any time during the autumn or spring migration periods or over the winter can affect overwintering or passage water birds by reducing their feeding rates and increasing their energy expenditure (Panter & Liley 2016).

Disturbance during the core winter period of November to March is probably more likely to contribute to mortality than at other times of year because day lengths are short, severe weather is more likely and food resources may be depleted. In autumn, newly-arrived long-distance migrants with depleted fat reserves could also be susceptible. Disturbance in spring while migrants are feeding-up before leaving for their arctic breeding grounds, may also be damaging because breeding success is linked to early arrival and the birds' condition on arrival (Owen & Black 1990).

Overwintering and passage water birds would be sensitive to changes in access that led to more frequent interruptions to feeding. Sensitivity will depend on how close people are to feeding areas, how people (and their dogs) behave, and the sightlines and features that act as a buffer between the path and feeding areas. Also, more frequent displacement from places where birds congregate to roost at high tide. Disturbance of the main roost sites is likely to be especially significant because of the large numbers and variety of birds using them. The birds' energy expenditure may be increased both directly (particularly if they are repeatedly flushed) and indirectly (if disturbance forces birds to roost further from their preferred feeding areas).

Aggregations of non-breeding birds – dunlin

Non-breeding dunlin are found at this site. The population has declined nationally, but the dunlin population trend on Minsmere-Walberswick has remained stable. However 95% of the population are found on the Blyth Estuary.¹

Assemblages of breeding birds - Lowland damp grasslands (including lapwing, sedge warbler, reed bunting, mute swan, redshank, snipe, grasshopper warbler, yellow wagtail cuckoo, grey heron, black-tailed godwit);

Lowland damp grassland habitats include coastal grazing marshes, such as Dingle Marshes, Minsmere Levels and Eastbridge Levels. This assemblage feature includes lapwing, sedge warbler, reed bunting, shelduck, mute swan, redshank, snipe, grasshopper warbler, yellow wagtail, cuckoo,

¹ "Ornithological Importance and Status of Minsmere-Walberswick Heath & Marshes SSSI" – February 2017 (Scott Hardy and Patrick Woods)



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

grey heron, teal, shoveler, gadwall, garganey, marsh harrier and black-tailed godwit that use lowland damp grassland to breed.

Lapwing

Mainly found in the Minsmere Valley East of Eastbridge (MVEE), this Red listed feature prefers undisturbed open fields and grazing marsh. Breeding attempts in recent years have been made at Dingle marshes, Southwold Town Marshes and Tinkers Marshes (2014). This feature was present at MVEE in 2016 and therefore contributes to the assemblage meeting the site condition target here. Formerly a common feature they have seen dramatic declines both locally and nationally over the last 30 years and are declining as a breeding species, with 5 pairs at Dingle Marshes, two pairs at Hen Reedbeds raising 6 young, 26 pairs at Minsmere and two pairs at Sizewell Marshes (Suffolk Birds, Vol. 68).

Sedge warbler

Preferring to breed in tall vegetation by rivers and ponds on marshland, 2014 saw highest densities in dense reedbed habitat and a few territories on Tinker's Marshes though fewer than previously, possibly due to increasing salinity. This feature was present at MVEE in 2016, is now a common summer visitor and passage migrant and therefore contributes to the assemblage meeting the site condition target here.

Reed bunting

Breeding low down in vegetation often on ditch and bank edges, this species can be vulnerable to disturbance from people and dogs. It was found in stable numbers in 2014 (compared with 2009) across the wider site. They were present at MVEE in 2016 and therefore contribute to the assemblage meeting the site condition target here. Still a widespread nesting species in areas of suitable habitat and therefore contributes to the assemblage. Although a declining resident and passage migrant large flocks were reported throughout Suffolk (Suffolk Birds, Vol. 68).

Mute swan

Found on wetland sites across Minsmere-Walberswick. This species breeds at the edges of rivers and ponds and its presence contributes to the assemblage meeting the site condition target here.

Redshank

Breed along the southern part of the Blyth Valley (including Tinker's Marshes). Across the wider SSSI there was a decline of around 30% from 2009 to 2014. This feature was also present at MVEE in 2016 and therefore contributes to the assemblage meeting the site condition target here. They breed in wet tussocky grassland and are easily disturbed. The main breeding area is along the



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Blyth Estuary but there are 34 (about 3% of average 5 years WeBs counts). The feature is a common winter visitor and passage migrant, though a declining resident (Suffolk Birds, Vol.68).

Snipe

This feature was present at MVEE in 2016 and therefore contributes to the assemblage meeting the site condition target here. They breed near wet flushes in open, often poorly drained land with a mosaic of short and tall vegetation and are vulnerable to disturbance. Formerly common they have become rare as a breeding species in the East of England, extinct as a breeding species in Suffolk (Suffolk Birds, Vol. 68).

Grasshopper warbler

In 2014 there was a breeding territory between the Dunwich River and the old river course. This feature was present at MVEE in 2016 and elsewhere on Minsmere-Walberswick therefore contributes to the assemblage meeting the site condition target here. Their preferred breeding habitat is rough grassland with fairly dense vegetation away from pathways. They are an uncommon and declining summer visitor and passage migrant (Red listed²) with one singing male recorded at Hen Reedbed and three at Minsmere (Suffolk Birds, Vol.68).

Yellow wagtail

This species prefers to breed in damp, grazed grassland with a fairly short sward. It was not present in MVEE (2016) and has declined as a breeding species across the UK. Its absence at Minsmere means it is not contributing to the condition target for this site.

Cuckoo

This feature was present at MVEE in 2016 and therefore contributes to the assemblage meeting the site condition target here. Their preferred host in the habitats found around MVEE is the Reed Warbler and numbers across the site appear stable.

Grey heron

This feature was present at MVEE in 2016 and therefore contributes to the assemblage meeting the site condition target here. They tend to breed communally in trees close to water, but also occasionally on the ground amongst dense vegetation in wet conditions.

Black-tailed godwit

Not present in MVEE (2016), this feature is not contributing to target condition for this site. They prefer freshwater and require undisturbed wet grassland, fen and water's edge habitat to breed.

² Birds of Conservation Concern 4: the Red List for Birds was published in December 2015.



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

The UK has only a small breeding population of around 60 pairs restricted to the Ouse and Nene Washes.

Garganey

Breeding **garganey** mainly occur at Minsmere preferring quiet marshes with dense fringing vegetation, nesting on the ground. However, pairs have bred at Dingle Marshes recently. This feature is meeting site condition targets across the whole site. They are a relatively rare breeder in the UK.

Sandwich tern

This feature, using the Minsmere scrapes, has increased from 13 pairs in 2017 to 32 pairs in 2018, but only 2 young fledged.

The assemblages are meeting their site condition targets across the whole site.

These breeding birds are sensitive to recreational disturbance (potentially leading to interruption of incubation, abandonment of nests, and failure to breed). Although the path does not present concerns, the coastal margin may increase the interface between walkers and their dogs, and birds foraging in the marshes.

The units these features might be expected to use that also fall within the coastal margin will be excluded from coastal access rights. We anticipate that walkers will continue to use the area in the way they currently do, i.e. there is no evidence of attempts to access the marsh areas nor has a desire to do so been received by the Access Authority.

Assemblage of non-breeding birds – variety of passage species;

This assemblage does not have a score based on the BTO index and presence or absence of specific species (as the assemblage above does), rather selection of this feature for a site depends on the quantity of non-breeding species recorded. If the total is more than 70 it can be selected and in order to fall from 'favourable' to 'unfavourable' the number of non-breeding species must decline by at least 25% (according to the 1989 SSSI selection criteria). The species that contribute to this feature can change, for example if one non-breeding species is lost but a different and new one is gained the overall total does not change and the status of the feature is unaffected.

Data on the list of species used at designation for this feature is not available.



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Activities causing disturbance any time during the autumn or spring migration periods or over the winter can affect overwintering or passage water birds by reducing their feeding rates and increasing their energy expenditure (Panter & Liley 2016).

Assemblage – variety of breeding bird species

See comments for “Assemblage of non-breeding birds – variety of passage species”. This assemblage comprises 90 species. There is no BTO index, however we predict the impact risk to be low due to the location of the path in relation to the location of the assemblage.

Activities causing disturbance any time during the autumn or spring migration periods or over the winter can affect overwintering or passage water birds by reducing their feeding rates and increasing their energy expenditure (Panter & Liley 2016).

Assemblage – variety of wintering bird species;

Please see notes above. This assemblage comprises 70 species.

Activities causing disturbance any time during the autumn or spring migration periods or over the winter can affect overwintering or passage water birds by reducing their feeding rates and increasing their energy expenditure (Panter & Liley 2016).

Assemblage of breeding birds – Lowland fen without water bodies (including sedge warbler, reed bunting, reed warbler, snipe, grasshopper warbler, cuckoo, grey heron, Savi’s warbler)

Lowland Fen without open water habitat, generally relates to Phragmites swamp, reedbed and tall herb and relatively base-rich fen or wetlands (NVC types S4, S24, S25, S26). These habitats are found behind the shingle ridge between Sizewell and Southwold notably at Westwood Marshes, Corporation Marshes and Minsmere.

Sedge warbler, reed bunting, reed warbler, snipe, grasshopper warbler, cuckoo – see comments under “species of conservation concern”.

Grey Heron - in 2014 five pairs bred in the Hen Reedbeds. This feature was present at MVEE in 2016 and therefore contributes to the assemblage meeting the site condition target here. It is a common resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (Suffolk Birds, Vol. 68).

Savi’s warbler – in 2014 one breeding territory was recorded landward of the proposed trail and margin of the England Coast Path. They are a rare summer visitor (Red listed). Singing males were



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

recorded at Westwood Marshes and RSPB Minsmere in 2018 (Suffolk Birds, Vol.68).

Assemblages of breeding birds – Lowland open water and margins assemblages (including reed bunting, little grebe, reed warbler, willow tit, mute swan, redshank, snipe, grasshopper warbler, yellow wagtail, cuckoo, grey heron, tufted duck, great crested grebe, ringed plover, kingfisher, Savi’s warbler)

Lowland open water and their margins habitat relates to relatively base-rich open water bodies; and include species associated with marginal reedbed and wetland scrub/trees. This habitat can be found at Minsmere and to some extent at Westwood Marshes.

Seven pairs of little grebe, a locally common resident, winter visitor and passage migrant, were recorded in 2014 at Westwood marshes (50% decline since 2009), similar numbers were found at Hen Reedbeds. But there has been an increase in reports of breeding from 13 sites in 2017 to 23 in 2018 elsewhere in the county. For reed warbler, mute swan, redshank, snipe, grasshopper warbler and cuckoo – see comments for assemblages of lowland fen without water bodies.

As mentioned, in 2014 there were 5 pairs of **grey heron** recorded at Hen Reedbeds; **tufted duck** were found to be breeding in small numbers (1-2 pairs) at Westwood Marshes, Dingle Marshes, Tinker’s marshes and Hen Reedbeds; there has been a large decline since 2009. There was one confirmed breeding pair of **great crested grebe** at Hen Reedbeds, present but unconfirmed at Westwood Marshes and there were 7 pairs of **ringed plover** along the shingle wall and fans at Corporation and Dingle Marshes. More recently, two pairs were recorded at Dingle Marshes and 3 at Minsmere. From the 2017 plover survey, further records identified 3 pairs at Minsmere and 5 pairs on Suffolk Coast NNR where 3 young fledged. The Suffolk total in 2017 survey was 39 pairs, compared to 183 in 1987 and 223 in 1979.

Aggregations of non-breeding birds – redshank

Redshank can be found at Dingle Marshes and Corporation Marshes. This is a relatively small proportion of birds across whole site with most on the River Blyth (ca 95%*) and approximately 1.5%* at Dingle (average of 5 years WeBs counts) and about 3% at Minsmere (average of 5 years WeBs counts)³. Site condition targets are being met across the whole site.

³ <https://app.bto.org/websonline/>



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

U1 b,c,d,f - *Festuca ovina* - *Agrostis capillaris* - *Rumex acetosella* grassland; Lowland dry acid grassland (U1b,c,d,f and U4)

These communities occur in units that are geographically separated from the trail or any landward margin, for example marshes, roads and Dunwich Forest.

There are two units on Dunwich Heath where the trail is proposed and this community of grassland occurs.

Lowland calcareous grassland (CG7)

This community occurs on a unit that is geographically separated from ECP walkers who are unlikely to come into contact with the features as a result of the ECP.

Vascular plant assemblage

Vascular plant assemblage species occurring in **water and marsh** situations includes:

- dittander, *Lepidium latifolium* – found on damp, coastal ground, ditches, brackish marshland, sea walls, saltmarsh, bare waste ground;
- Pedunculated sea-purslane, *Halimione pedunculata* – occurs on salty, sandy ground along the sea shore
- Thorow-wax, *Bupleurum rotundifolium* – two records found near Southwold

Distribution of dittander is not well known and thought to be limited, but likely to be found between Dunwich and Walberswick. The condition status is unknown.

These features are sensitive to recreational disturbance, notably trampling. Supporting habitat is proposed for coastal margin and it is possible but highly unlikely that walkers could trample the species as it mostly occupies areas that would not be used by walkers or their dogs. It should be noted that the rising sea levels have led to an increase in the occurrence of saltwater inundations of freshwater ditches reducing the available potential areas of interaction between walkers and dittander further.

Records on or before 2000 locate Pedunculated sea-purslane in the Walberswick area. The ECP trail follows well walked routes and existing public rights of way at this location and we do not



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

anticipate there will be an increased risk as a result of our proposals. There are no records after 2000 of pedunculated sea-purslane.

Two records (1971 and 1987) for Thorow-wax⁴ locate the plant near Buss Creek; it is therefore spatially separated from the proposed ECP trail and is not impacted upon by anticipated use of the trail and margin by walkers and their dogs.

In addition, the majority of coastal margin marsh habitat which includes ditches will have coastal access rights excluded under section 25A (saltmarsh and flats) of the CROW Act meaning there will be no increase in access/disturbance.

Species of conservation concern

The species below have been included because they potentially breed close enough to the proposed route to be disturbed by increased numbers of people and dogs, are rare and/or sharply declining on the site and are not covered under any of the current SSSI features and assemblages where they relate to fen, open water and water margin habitats:

Breeding Sedge Warbler – Lowland fen without waterbodies and lowland open water and margins

See description in assemblages above. This species has also been recorded breeding at Westwood, East Hill and Point Marshes.

Breeding Reed Warbler – Lowland fen without waterbodies and lowland open water and margins

This species breeds in reedbeds, reed dominated fens and ditches with dense reed cover. In 2014 around 100 breeding territories were recorded at Westwood Marshes (West of East Hill bund), around 43 territories between East Hill bund and Walberswick, small numbers at Point Marsh and 60 territories at Hen Reedbeds. The highest density of territories tend to be towards the edges rather than the interior of the marshes. They are a key breeding feature of the site and while numbers are more stable than Sedge Warbler, they have declined in recent years.

Breeding Snipe – Lowland fen without waterbodies and lowland open water and margins.

See description in assemblages above. There are historic records of this species breeding at Westwood Marshes but snipe have nearly disappeared as a breeding species from Suffolk.

⁴ <https://nbnatlas.org/> (accessed October 2019)



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Breeding Grasshopper Warbler – Lowland fen without waterbodies and lowland open water and margins. See description in assemblages above. Fewer than 5/6 pairs are found in the area per year.

Breeding Ringed Plover - Lowland open water and margins

This species nests on the open shingle and feeds at the shoreline all along the coastline, making it particularly vulnerable to disturbance from beach users. Increases in beach users on the quieter sections around the Dingle Marshes reserve will have a detrimental effect on this species, which is already on the UK Red List and is declining on this site (2 pairs at Walberswick in 2016).

Breeding Cuckoo – Lowland fen without waterbodies and lowland open water and margins.

See description above. This species regularly breeds around Westwood Marshes, potentially close to the proposed route.

Breeding Savi's Warbler – Lowland fen without waterbodies and lowland open water and margins.

This species exists at the very northern extent of its range in south-east England and is only a sporadic breeder. It breeds in reedbeds and reed-dominated fens and has been recorded behind the mill at East Hill Marsh, in close proximity to the proposed route. The route here is on an already well-used path therefore moderate increase in use may not pose a serious threat to this species, however its scarcity means it warrants consideration.

Although the majority of these birds generally use freshwater marsh for nesting, they will also use those less brackish waters in Dingle Marshes - an area of fluctuating salinity levels – for foraging. These breeding birds are sensitive to recreational disturbance (potentially leading to interruption of incubation, abandonment of nests, and failure to breed).

Although the path does not present concerns, the coastal margin may increase the interface with walkers and their dogs. This is unlikely to impact on nest sites due to their location compared with the use the birds make of the more brackish areas in the margin of Dingle Marshes.

Evidence of the current patterns of use through Dingle Marshes indicates that people keep to the well walked paths, public rights of way and the publicised Suffolk Coast Path, and this pattern of use is expected to continue. The access authority state that there is no demand for increased access across the marshes beyond that which is currently used. The margin will include an exclusion under s25A (saltmarsh and flats) of the CROW Act 2000.



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Summary and conclusion of risk to notified features and species of conservation concern

The majority of coastal margin marsh habitat will have coastal access rights excluded under section 25A (saltmarsh and flats) of the CROW Act including Dingle and Corporation Marshes so there will be no increase in disturbance to these non-breeding birds.

An s26 CROW seasonal exclusion contiguous with the s25A at Dingle Marshes between 1st April and 31st August will support the existing informal management of access for vegetated shingle and ground nesting birds by requiring.

Further south, a simple post and rope fence will guide walkers towards the intertidal area to protect the shingle ridge ensuring a route is available at high tides.

The existing national restriction on CROW Open Access rights will be replicated for land subject to Coastal Access rights.

Signage will be rationalised and renewed and will include advisory signage specifically requesting no close up photography of ground nesting birds – a source of disturbance identified at Dunwich Heath.

Stone curlew are known to be present in the wider area, but following discussions with key partners that manage sites with stone curlew it has been agreed that no specific action in relation to the England Coast Path is required. However, this may be reviewed if impacts arise.

We anticipate the current patterns of use by walkers and their dogs will continue. Due to the predicted changes in access levels and the location of features in relation to the trail and margin, and the restrictions and exclusions set out above, we do not consider the proposals for the England Coast Path will have an adverse impact on the notified features and features of concern in this assessment.



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Establishment works

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

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

Once approval for a coastal access report is received from the Secretary of State, any necessary works can be carried out on the ground to make the trail fit for use and prepare for opening. Works on the ground will be conducted in accordance with the scheme in operation by Natural England at the time.

An estimate of the total cost of works needed to establish the trail is given in our coastal access report for the stretch. The cost of establishment works will be met by Natural England.

The person or organisation conducting works is/are responsible for ensuring they take appropriate steps to protect sensitive features whilst works on the ground are carried out, in line with any recommendations or conditions agreed in advance.

We have held preliminary discussions with Suffolk County Council about the works required and believe that it is feasible for them to be carried out without adverse effect on the designated sites considered in this appraisal. This is on the basis that the following special conditions are observed:

Legally protected species are an important consideration where works involve the destruction or maintenance of existing features, or the construction of new features. Where these species are known to be present, or are likely to be, any works carried out should include appropriate mitigation in line with legislative guidelines.

The main considerations with regard to protected sites and species, and on-site working methods, are summarised in the bullet points and table below.

- European Protected Species are those species of plant and animal listed in Annex IV to EC Directive 92/43/EEC ('the Habitats Directive). For a complete list of European Protected Species in England & Wales refer to Schedules 2, 4 and 5 of the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010.
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, affords protection to wild birds, their eggs, young and nests (the latter whether complete or under construction). Those listed in



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Schedule 1 of the 1981 Act receive additional protection against intentional or reckless disturbance while they are nest building or at a nest containing eggs or young. Dependant young are also protected from intentional or reckless disturbance. The timing of any works on habitats which may support birds (particularly breeding birds), and the methodologies employed, should take these factors into account.

- Plants and animals included in Schedules 5 & 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are protected from killing or injuring, and protection may also apply to their place of shelter.
- Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under the '92 Act it is an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct a badger sett, or to disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett.
- All bat species, their breeding sites and resting places are fully protected by law and they are European protected species. The presence of bats is often overlooked and it should be remembered that they inhabit crevices in tree trunks and branches as well as built structures (both above and below ground). Where there is uncertainty about their presence, surveys should be carried out beforehand by suitably qualified individuals.
- Activities which may affect any of the above species may require a licence from Natural England's licensing team, from which advice should be sought, as appropriate.

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



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Conclusion



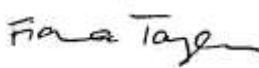
We, Natural England, are satisfied that our proposals to improve access to the English coast between Sizewell to Dunwich (Report AHS 2) and Dunwich to Southwold (Report AHS 3) are fully compatible with our duty to further the conservation and enhancement of the notified features of Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SSSI, consistent with the proper exercise of our functions⁵.

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

If our proposals are agreed by the Secretary of State and after commencement of the coastal access rights, further restrictions, exclusions or temporary routes may be necessary locally, if situations arise that could not be foreseen initially. People with a legal interest in the land will have powers to apply to us later for directions to restrict or exclude access, and can appeal to the Secretary of State against our decision if they disagree with it.

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

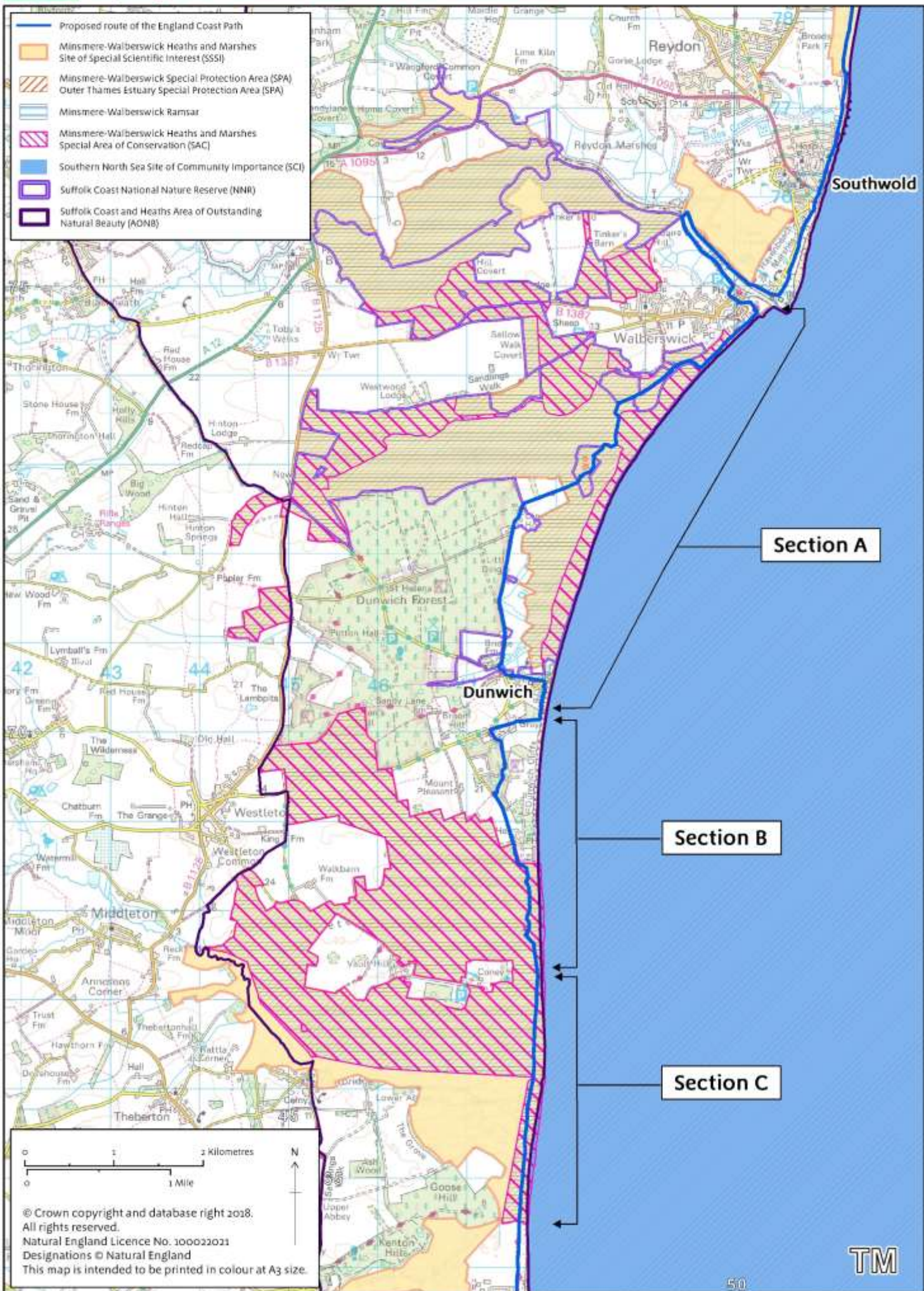
The conclusions of this assessment have been checked by:

	6 Jan 2020	On behalf of the Coastal Access Programme Team
	6 Jan 2020	Senior Officer with responsibility for protected sites
	6 Jan 2020	Stretch lead Aldeburgh to Hopton-on-Sea

⁵ 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.

Coastal Access: Emerging access proposals

Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes



Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes

Section A

Section B

Section C

© Crown copyright and database right 2018.
 All rights reserved.
 Natural England Licence No. 100022021
 Designations © Natural England
 This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.

TM



Key designation - Suffolk Coast National Nature Reserve (NNR): Section A, St James's Street, Dunwich to River Blyth



Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Ramsar: Section A, St James's Street, Dunwich to River Blyth

© Crown copyright and database right 2018.
 All rights reserved.
 Natural England Licence No. 100022021
 Designations © Natural England
 This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.



Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Section A, St James's Street, Dunwich to River Blyth



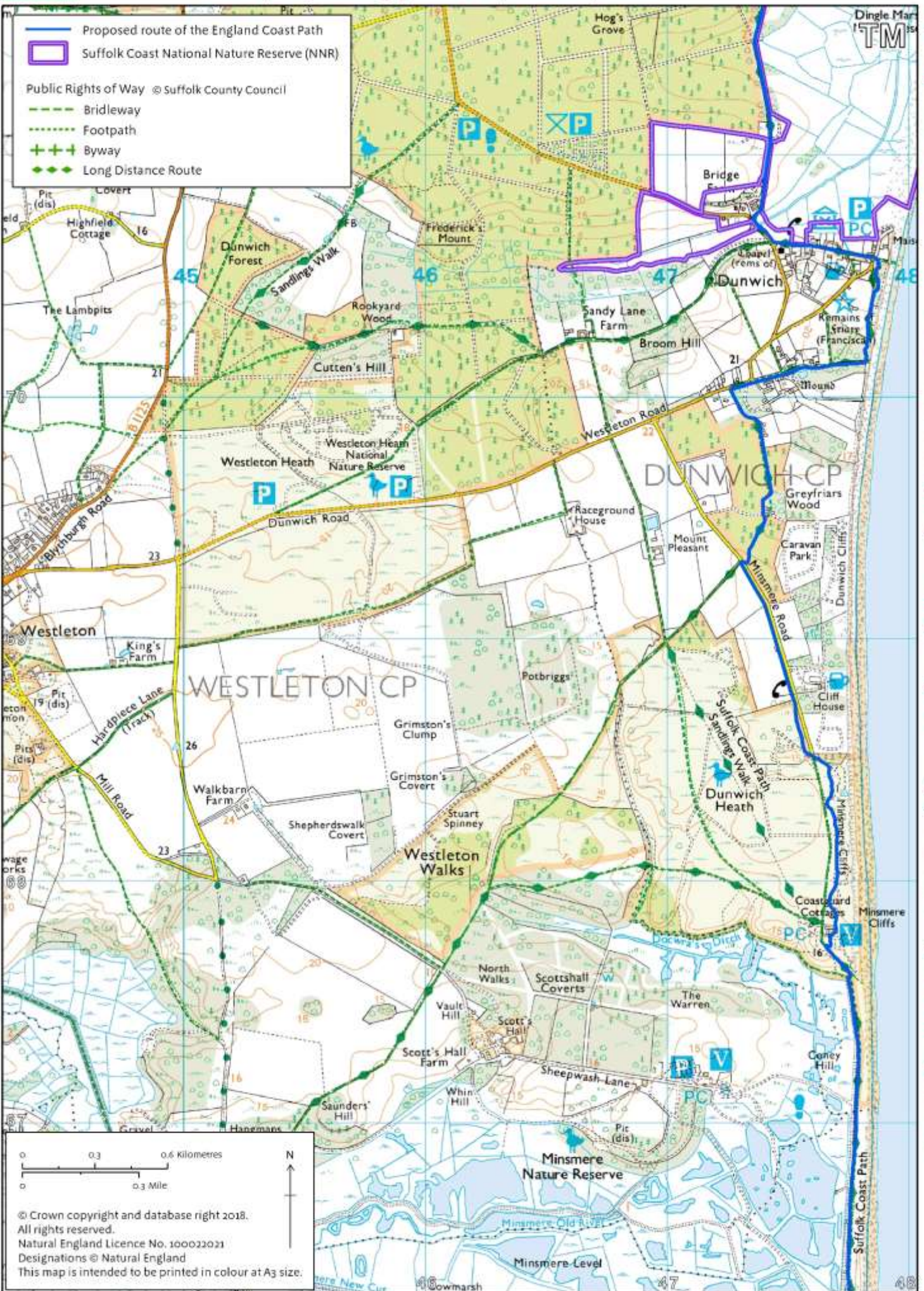
Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Special Protection Area (SPA): Section A, St James's Street, Dunwich to River Blyth

© Crown copyright and database right 2018.
All rights reserved.
Natural England Licence No. 100022021
Designations © Natural England
This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.

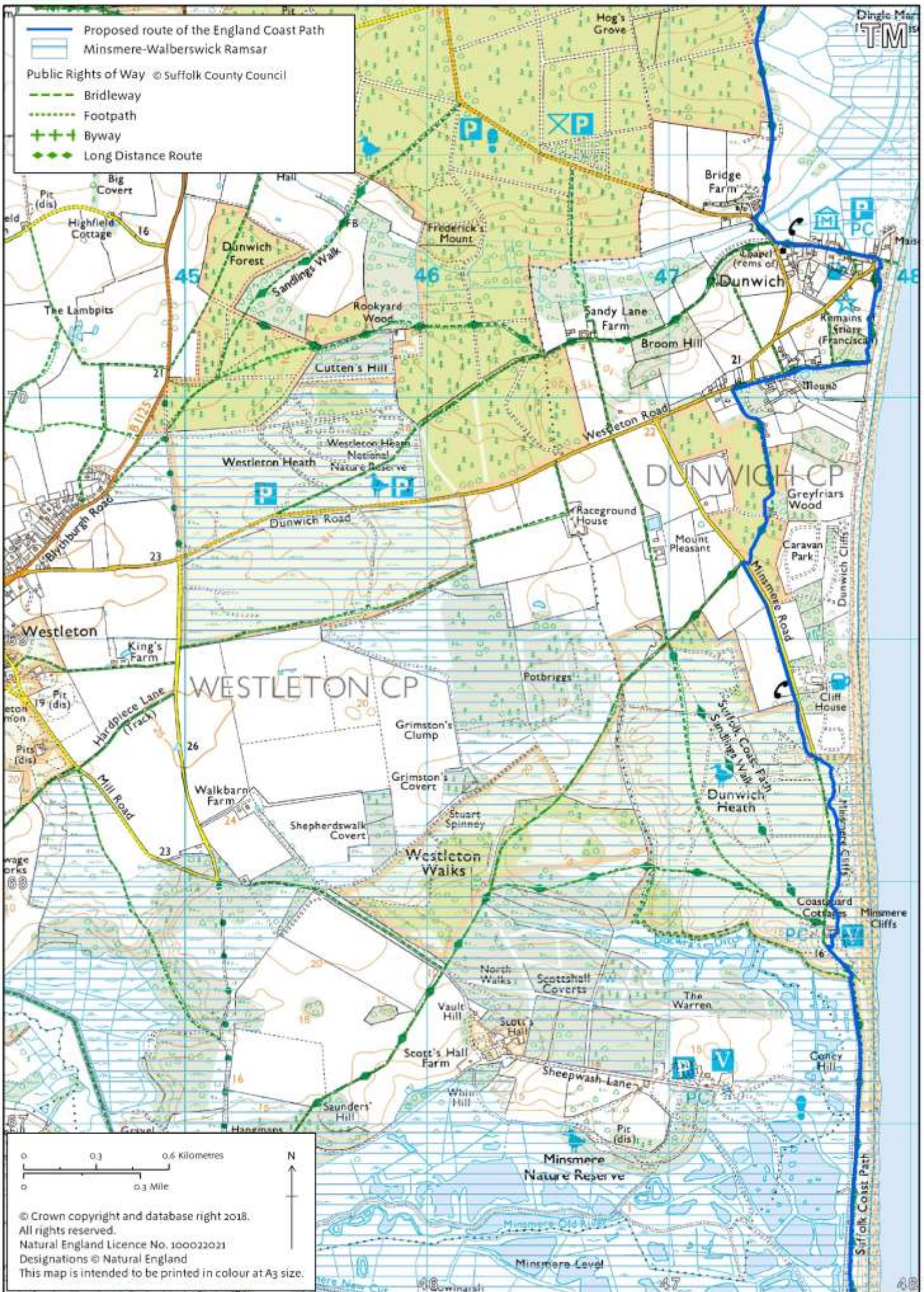


Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): Section A, St James's Street, Dunwich to River Blyth

© Crown copyright and database right 2018.
All rights reserved.
Natural England Licence No. 100022021
Designations © Natural England
This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.



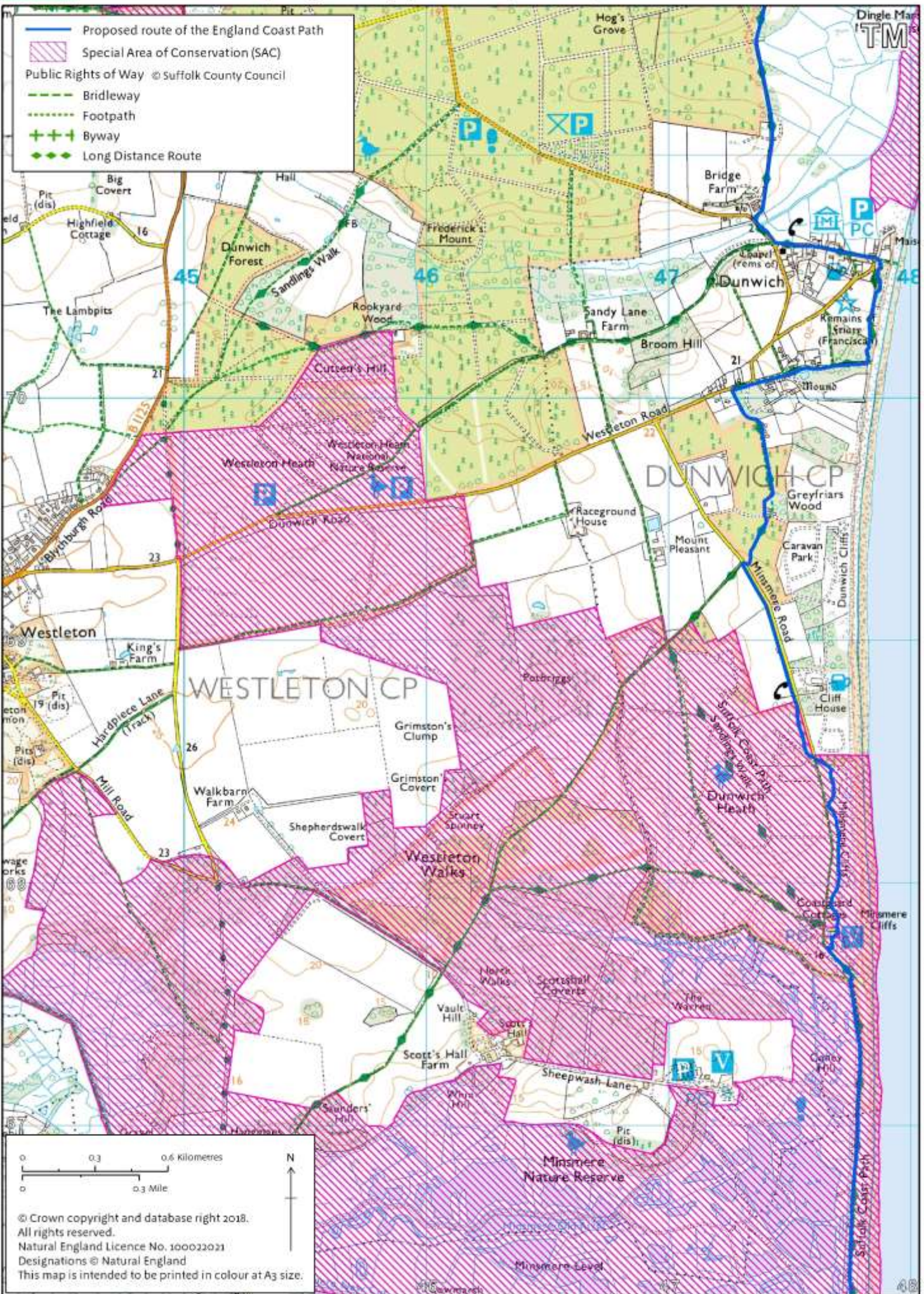
Key designation - Suffolk Coast National Nature Reserve (NNR): Section B, Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich to St James's Street, Dunwich



Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Ramsar: Section B, Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich to St James's Street, Dunwich

© Crown copyright and database right 2018.
 All rights reserved.
 Natural England Licence No. 100022021
 Designations © Natural England
 This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.

Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes Special Area of Conservation (SAC):
Section B, Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich to St James's Street, Dunwich

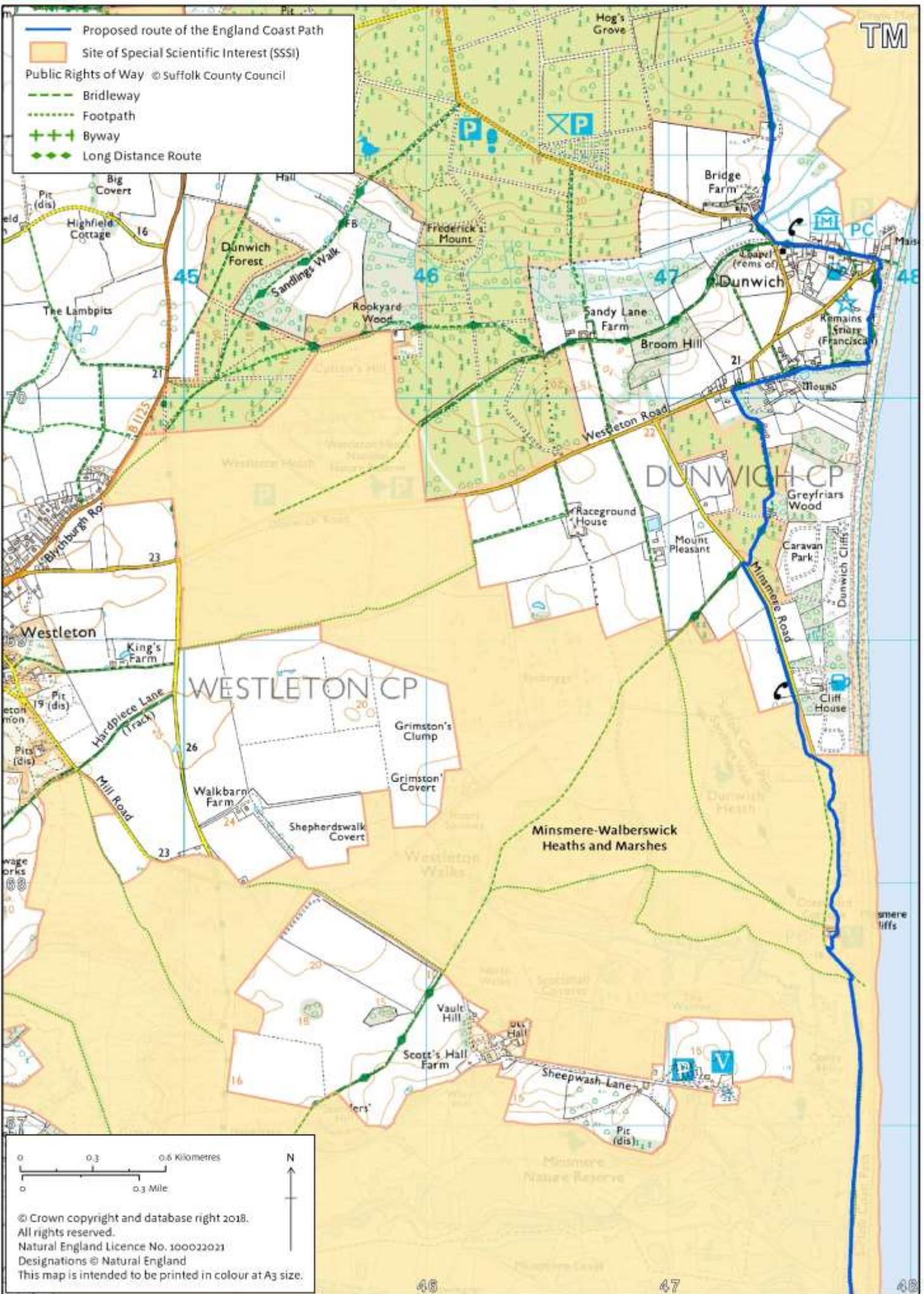


Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Section B, Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich to St James's Street, Dunwich



Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Special Protection Area (SPA): Section B, Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich to St James's Street, Dunwich

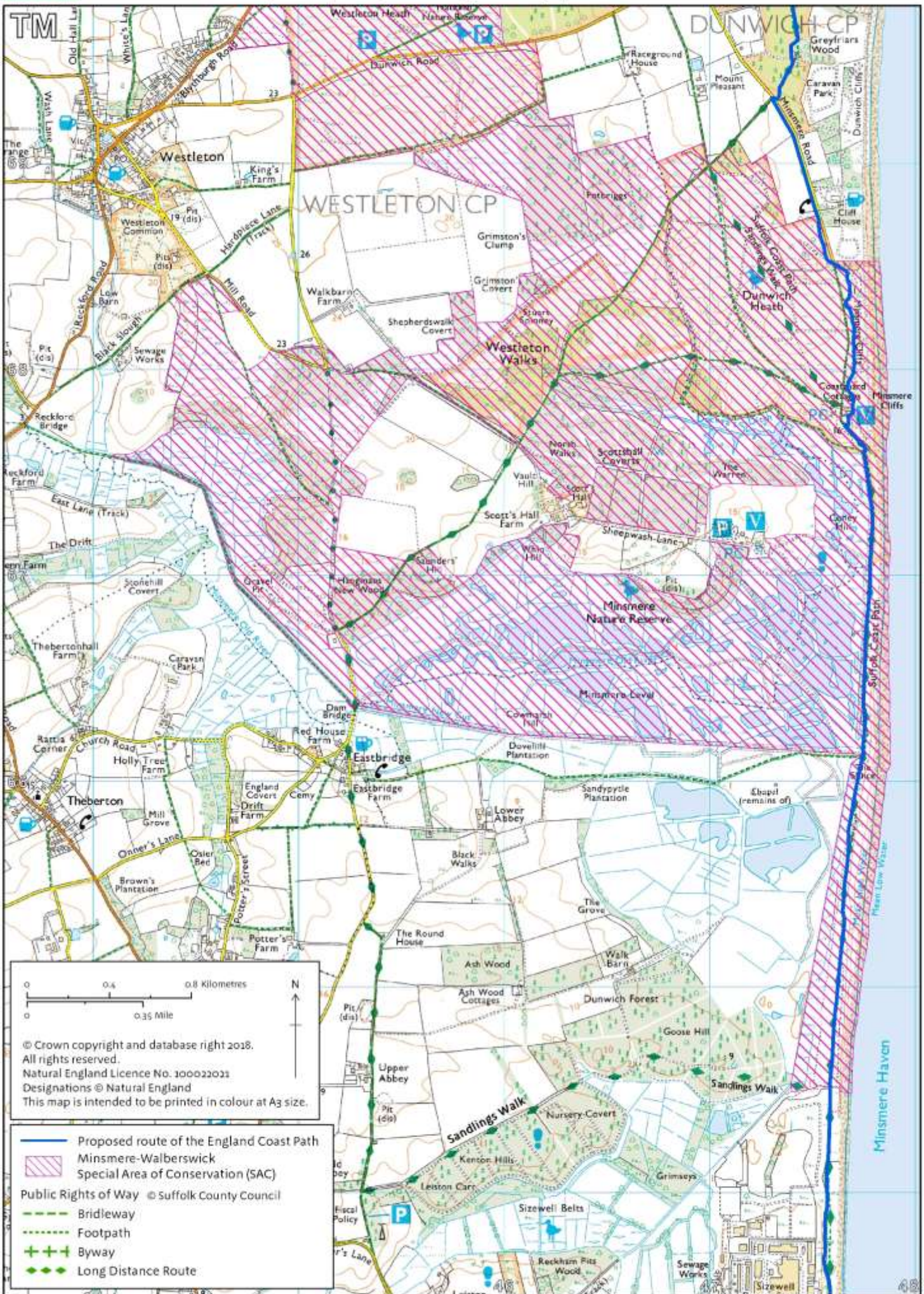
© Crown copyright and database right 2018.
 All rights reserved.
 Natural England Licence No. 100022021
 Designations © Natural England
 This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.



Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): Section B, Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich to St James's Street, Dunwich



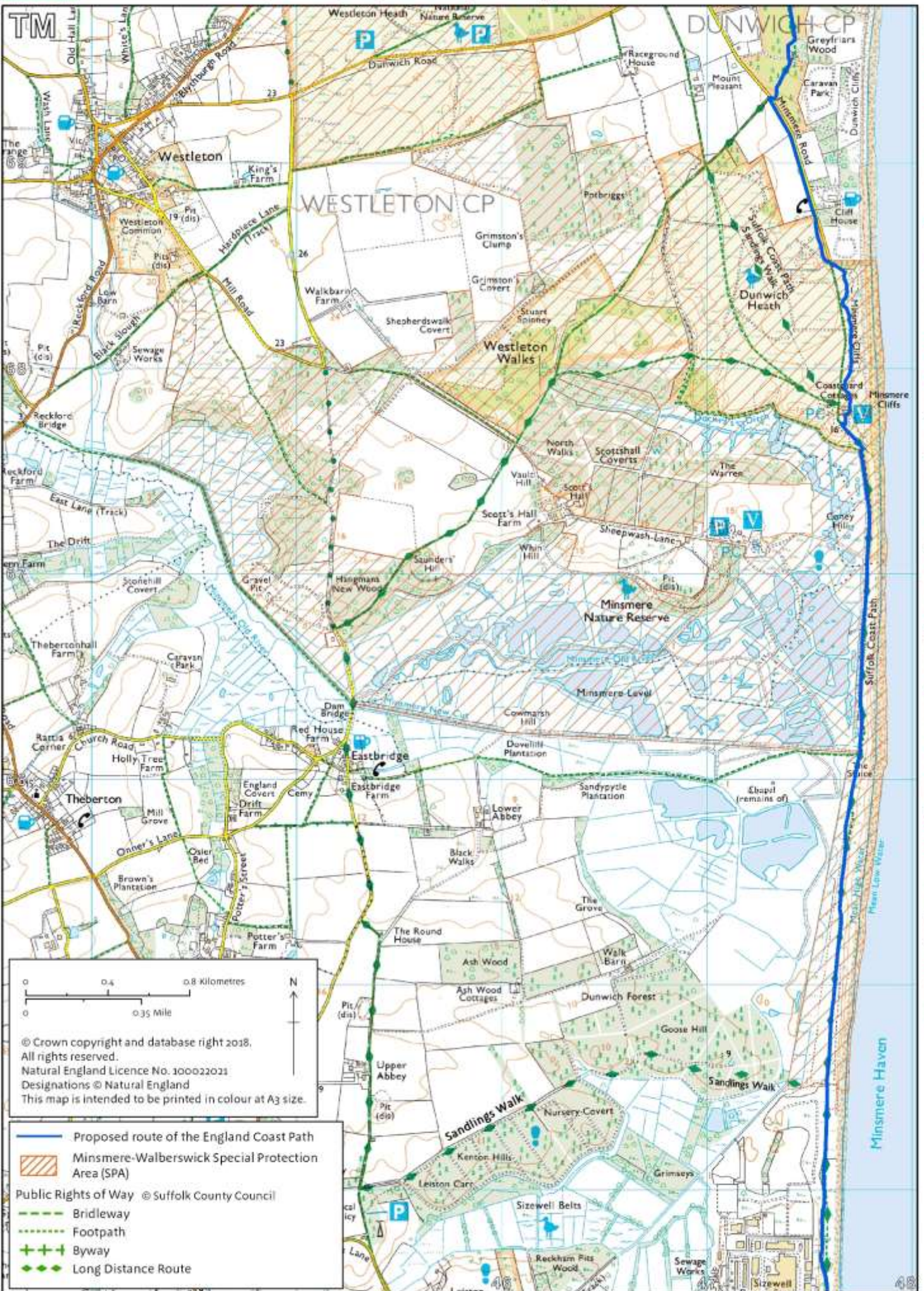
Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Ramsar: Section C, Sizewell power plant to Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich



Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes Special Area of Conservation (SAC): section C, Sizewell power plant to Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich



Key designation - Minsmere-Walberswick Special Protection Area (SPA):
Section C, Sizewell power plant to Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich

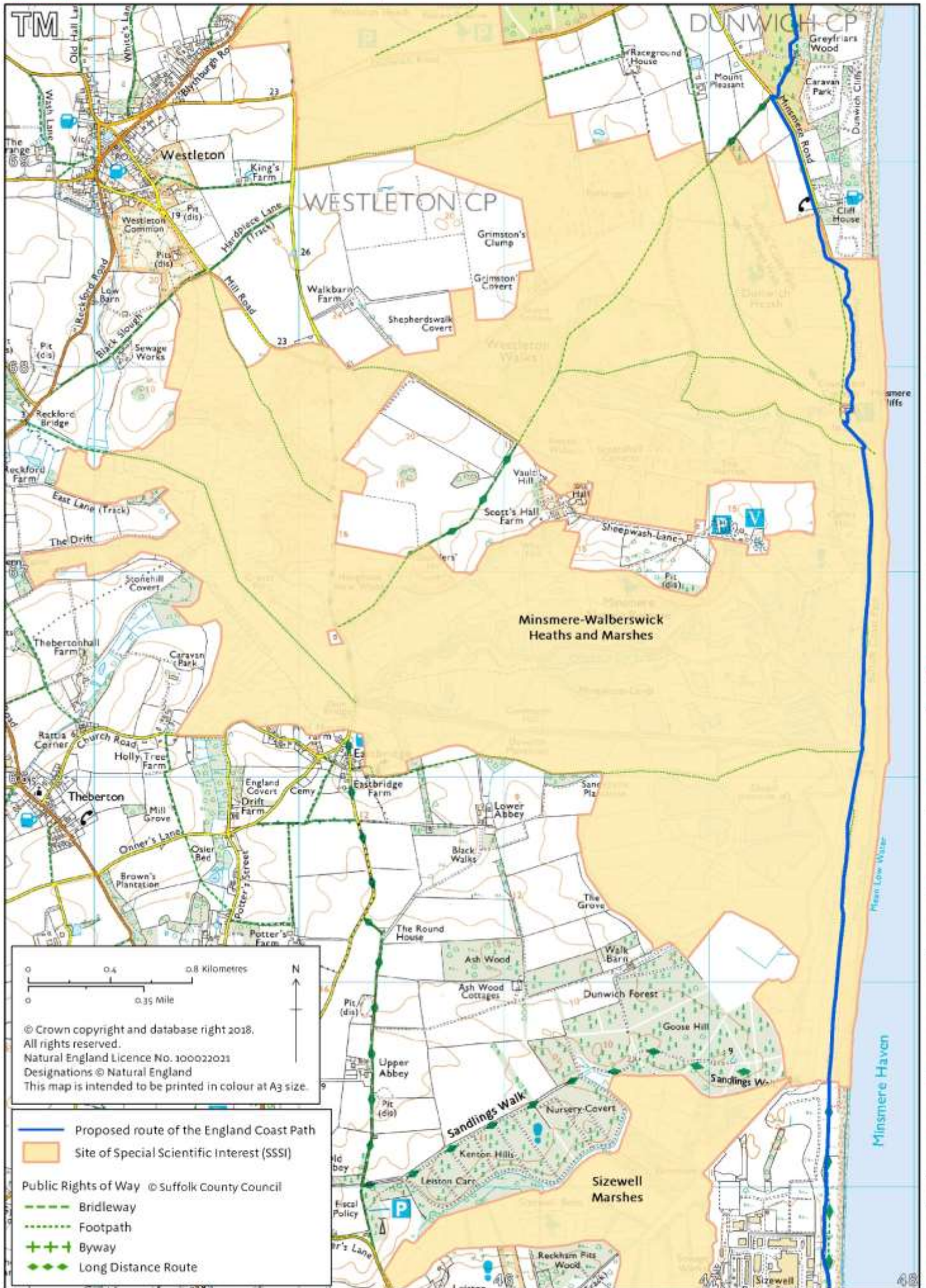


Minsmere-Walberswick Special Protection Area (SPA): Section C, Sizewell power plant to Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich



© Crown copyright and database right 2018.
All rights reserved.
Natural England Licence No. 100022021
Designations © Natural England
This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.

- Proposed route of the England Coast Path
- Minsmere-Walberswick Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Public Rights of Way © Suffolk County Council
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Byway
- Long Distance Route



Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): Section C, Sizewell power plant to Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

References

BTO, *BirdTrack data October 2019*. Records of individual bird species at key sites, 2019.

BURGESS, N.D., EVANS, C.E. and SORENSEN, J., *The management of lowland heathland for nightjars at Minsmere, Suffolk, Great Britain*. Pages 351-359 *Journal of Environmental Management*, 1990.

COUNTRYFILE online article, '*RSPB Minsmere visitor numbers up thanks to Springwatch*', 2014. Available from: <http://www.countryfile.com/news/rspb-minsmere-visitor-numbers-thanks-springwatch>

EAST SUFFOLK COUNCIL *Local Plan - Final Draft, Jan 2019*. Available from: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan/Final-Draft-Local-Plan/Final-Draft-Local-Plan.pdf>

EAST SUFFOLK COUNCIL, *Suffolk Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance Mitigation Strategy Q&A*. Available from: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Section-106/Habitat-mitigation/Suffolk-Coast-Recreational-Disturbance-Avoidance-Mitigation-Strategy-FAQ.pdf>

EAST SUFFOLK COUNCIL, *Waveney Local Plan*. Available from: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/waveney-local-plan/>, 2019.

EAST SUFFOLK COUNCIL, *Habitat Mitigation* webpage. Available from: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/s106/habitat-mitigation/>

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, *Minsmere Flood Risk Management Strategy*, 2009. Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/289667/gean0109bpfi-e-e.pdf

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, *Coastal Morphology Report Southwold to Benacre Denes (Suffolk) RP016/S/2010 March 2010*, 2010. Available from: https://www.channelcoast.org/anglia/analysis_programme/Coastal%20Morphology%20Report%20Southwold%20to%20Benacre%20Denes%20Suffolk%20RP016S2010.pdf



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

HOSKIN, R., LILEY, D. & PANTER, C. *Habitats Regulations Assessment: Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy for Ipswich Borough, Babergh District, Mid Suffolk District and East Suffolk Councils – Technical Report*. Footprint Ecology, 2019

JNCC, *Seabird Monitoring Programme Online Database*. Available from:
<http://archive.jncc.gov.uk/smp/>

JNCC, *Natura 2000 Standard Data form for Minsmere-Walberswick SPA, UK9009101*. JNCC, 2016. Available from: <http://archive.jncc.gov.uk/pdf/SPA/UK9009101.pdf>

JNCC, *Benacre to Easton Bavents Lagoons Designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC)*
<https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0013104>

NATIONAL TRUST, *A WOOF Guide to Dunwich Heath. A precious landscape on the Suffolk coast*, online campaign leaflet. Available from: <https://nt.global.ssl.fastly.net/dunwich-heath-and-beach/documents/dunwich-heath-woof-guide.pdf>

NATIONAL TRUST online article '*Rare birds breed for first time at Dunwich Heath*', 2017. Available from: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dunwich-heath-and-beach/news/rare-birds-breed-for-first-time-at-dunwich-heath>

NATURAL ENGLAND, *Benacre to Easton Bavents SPA Site Improvement Plan (SIP015)*. Natural England, 2015.

NATURAL ENGLAND, *Coastal Access Natural England's Approved Scheme 2013*. Natural England Catalogue Code NE446, 2013.
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5327964912746496?category=50007>

NATURAL ENGLAND COMMISSIONED REPORT NECR012: *Scientific research into the effects of access on nature conservation: Part 1: access on foot*. Natural England, 2009.

NATURAL ENGLAND *Designated Sites View Sizewell Marshes SSSI*
<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1003416>

NATURAL ENGLAND *Designated Sites View Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SSSI*
<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1000721&S>



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

NATURAL ENGLAND *Designated Sites View Pakefield to Easton Bavents SSSI*

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S2000508&SiteName=benacre&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>

NATURAL ENGLAND, *European Site Conservation Objectives for Minsmere-Walberswick SPA (UK9009101)*. Natural England, 1991.

NATURAL ENGLAND, *European Site Conservation Objectives for Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths & Marshes SAC (UK0012809)*. Natural England, 2014.

NATURAL ENGLAND, *European Site Conservation Objectives for Outer Thames Estuary SPA (UK9020309)*. Natural England, 2019.

NATURAL ENGLAND, *Information Note EIN034. Marine recreation evidence briefing: general beach life*. Available from: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/4891006631149568> , 2017.

NATURAL ENGLAND, *Information Note EIN030. Marine recreation evidence briefing: wildlife watching*, 2017. Available from: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/4891006631149568>

NATURAL ENGLAND, *Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths Site Improvement Plan (SIP139)*. Natural England, 2014.

PLANTLIFE Webpage '*Red-tipped cudweed Filago lutescens*' Available from: <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/plant-fungi-species/red-tipped-cudweed>

RARE BIRD ALERT online article *Sandwich Terns breed at Minsmere for first time in four decades*, 2017. Available from: https://www.rarebirdalert.co.uk/v2/Content/RSPB-Sandwich-Terns-breed-at-Minsmere-for-first-time-in-four-decades.aspx?s_id=93583808

ROWLANDS, Adam, "*Great bird reserves: RSPB Minsmere*", *British Birds*, 2017. Available from: <https://britishbirds.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Aug-17-final-1.pdf>

RSPB, *Annual Little Tern Newsletter 2018*, 24th edition. *LIFE Little Tern Recovery Project*, 2018.



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

SUFFOLK BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION SERVICE Newsletter article: '*Lots of Good Terns at RSBP Minsmere*' by Ian Barthorpe, RSPB Minsmere. (SBIS) 2019. Available from:

https://issuu.com/suffolknaturalistsociety/docs/sbis_newsletter_summer_2019_final

THE SUFFOLK COASTS AND HEATHS AONB, *Projects and Partnerships*. Available from:

<http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/projects-and-partnerships/>

THE SUFFOLK COASTS AND HEATHS AONB, "*Balance*" webpage Available from:

<http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/projects-and-partnerships/balance/>

SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL/WAVENEY DISTRICT COUNCIL/ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, 2010. *Shoreline Management Plan 7 Lowestoft Ness to Felixstowe Landguard Point. (Previously Sub-cell 3c)*. Available from <http://www.suffolksmp2.org.uk/index.php>

SUFFOLK ORNITHOLOGIST'S GROUP (NOW "SUFFOLK BIRD GROUP"), *Suffolk Birds Volume 68: A review of birds in Suffolk in 2018*. Suffolk Naturalists Society, 2019.

SUFFOLK ORNITHOLOGIST'S GROUP, *Suffolk Birds Volume 67: A review of birds in Suffolk in 2017*. Suffolk Naturalists Society, 2018.

SUFFOLK ORNITHOLOGIST'S GROUP, *Suffolk Birds, Volume 66: A review of birds in Suffolk in 2016*. Suffolk Naturalists Society, 2017.

SUFFOLK WILDLIFE TRUST, *Dingle Marshes Nature Reserve*, 2019. Available from:

<https://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/dinglemarshes>

TOUCHING THE TIDE Webpage. Available from: <http://www.touchingthetide.org.uk/touching-the-tide/>

UK CEED, *A review of the effects of recreational interactions within UK European marine sites. Countryside Council for Wales (UK Marine SACs Project) Section 'Erosion from land-based recreation'*, 2000. Available from:

http://www.ukmarinesac.org.uk/activities/recreation/r05_02.htm

URS (on behalf of Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Partnership and the Suffolk Coast Destination Management Organisation), *The Suffolk Coast Tourism Strategy 2013 – 2023*. 2013. Available from

<http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/assets/Projects--Partnerships/BALANCE/TourismStrategy.pdf>



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

VISITENGLAND online document. Available from:

https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/Documents-Library/documents/England-documents/most_visited_paid_east_2016.pdf



Nature Conservation Assessment for Coastal Access Proposals between Sizewell to Southwold

Glossary of terms

AONB Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

CROW Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW)

DMS Definitive Map Statement

ECP England Coast Path

GCR Geological Conservation Review

HRA Habitats Regulations Assessment

ISA Integrated Site Assessment

MCZ Marine Conservation Zones

NCA Nature Conservation Assessment

PRoW Public Right of Way

RO Responsible Officer

RSPB Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

SAC Special Area of Conservation

SPA Special Protection Area

SSSI Sites of Special Scientific Interest