

England Coast Path Stretch: Eastbourne to Camber

Report EBC 3: Herbrand Walk, Cooden to West Parade, Bexhill-on-Sea

Part 3.1: Introduction

Start Point:	Herbrand Walk, Cooden (Grid reference 569786 106115)
End Point:	West Parade, Bexhill-on-Sea (Grid reference 573251 106911)
Relevant Maps:	Map EBC 3a to Map EBC 3b

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

3.1.2 This report covers length EBC 3 of the stretch, which is the coast between Herbrand Walk, Cooden and West Parade, Bexhill-on-Sea. It makes free-standing statutory proposals for this part of the stretch, and seeks approval for them by the Secretary of State in their own right under section 52 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

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

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

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

Part 3.2: Proposals Narrative

The trail:

- 3.2.1 Follows existing walked routes, including public rights of way, along all of this length.
- 3.2.2 Mainly follows the coastline quite closely and maintains good views of the sea.
- 3.2.3 Is aligned on the beach or seafront promenade for a large proportion of this length. See Part 3.3 for details.
- 3.2.4 Takes a small inland diversion along Cooden Drive (sections EBC-3-S068 to EBC-3-S072) to provide walkers with a walking route off of the shingle.

Protection of the environment:

- 3.2.5 In this part of the report, we explain how we have taken account of environmental protection objectives in developing our proposals for improved coastal access.
- 3.2.6 The following designated sites affect this length of coast:
 - Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SPA
 - Pevensey Levels SAC
 - Pevensey Levels Ramsar
 - Pevensey Levels SSSI
 - Cooden Cliffs Local Wildlife Site
 - Beachy Head East Marine Conservation Zone

Map C in the Overview shows the extent of designated areas listed.

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

3.2.7 Measures to protect the environment

Maps	Route section numbers	Design features of the access proposals	Reason included
EBC 3b	EBC-3-S074 to EBC-3-S076	We will install: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ An interpretive panel on the beach at Beaulieu Road.	To highlight the presence and potential vulnerability of vegetated shingle.

3.2.8 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:

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

- The trail would follow an uneven and unconsolidated shingle beach in places (see Other Options Considered Table below);
- It is necessary to descend steps from Beaulieu Road on to the beach at Cooden. Unfortunately due to the gradient of the cliff it is not possible to install more user friendly infrastructure, such as a ramp, at this location. Walkers unable to use steps may be able to use the alleyway at Veness Gap between the beach and South Cliff Road at EBC-3-S084 before re-joining the England Coast Path.

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

Where we have proposed exercising statutory discretions:

3.2.10 **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 3.3.1 below.

3.2.11 In one place we have used our discretion to propose the inclusion of additional, more extensive landward areas within the coastal margin, to secure or enhance public enjoyment of this part of the coast. The owner of this land is content for us to propose this.

3.2.12 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 3.3.1. 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 3.3.1] 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.

3.2.13 **Other factors affecting access:** At route sections EBC-3-S015 to EBC-3-S068 between Herbrand Walk and Cooden Beach, public access may be interrupted from time to time for short periods by particularly high tides that occur during stormy conditions. Walkers may wait for a short time at the top of the beach until it is safe to pass. It is not possible to install an optional alternative route for use during these periods of tidal inundation. See the first entry in the Other Options Considered Table below for further information.

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

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

- as a result of coastal erosion or other geomorphological processes or encroachment by the sea, or
- in order to link with other parts of the route that need to roll back in direct response to such changes.

3.2.15 Column 4 of table 3.3.1 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 maps EBC 3a to EBC 3b as the proposed route of the trail.

3.2.16 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 table 3.3.1 the route is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps EBC 3a to EBC 3b as the proposed route of the trail.

Other future change:

3.2.17 At this point we do not foresee any 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:

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

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

3.2.19 Our estimate of the capital costs for physical establishment of the trail on the proposed route is £25,645.00 and is informed by:

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

3.1.20 There are three main elements to the overall cost:

- The surfaces and access furniture of the existing paths and footways on the proposed route are generally of a suitable standard for the trail, but there are some places where new dropped kerbs, paving and two bollards would enhance the convenience of the trail (see map EBC 3a).
- A significant number of new waymarkers would be needed on the trail.

- An interpretative panel on the beach at Beaulieu Road (see map EBC 3b), to highlight the presence and potential vulnerability of vegetated shingle.

More significant items of establishment works are shown on the relevant maps accompanying this report.

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
Signage	£6,800.00
Road crossing	£13,000.00
Interpretation	£2500.00
Project management	£3,345.00
Total	£25,645.00 (Exclusive of any VAT payable)

3.2.21 Once the Secretary of State's decision on our report has been notified, and further to our conversations with land managers during the route planning stage, East Sussex County Council will liaise with affected land owners and occupiers about relevant aspects of the design, installation and maintenance of the new signs and infrastructure that are needed on their land. Prior to works being carried out on the ground, all necessary permissions, authorisations and consents will be obtained. All such works would conform to the published standards for National Trails and the other criteria described in our Coastal Access Scheme.

Maintenance of the trail:

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

3.2.23 We estimate that the annual cost to maintain the trail will be £1,515.16 (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 3.3: Proposals Tables

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

3.3.1 Section Details: Maps EBC 3a to EBC 3b – Herbrand Walk, Cooden to, West Parade, Bexhill-on-Sea

Key notes on table:

1. Column 2 – an asterisk (*) against the route section number means see also table 3.3.2: Other options considered.
2. Column 4 – ‘No’ means no roll-back is proposed for this route section. ‘Yes – normal’ means roll-back is proposed and is likely to follow the current feature (e.g. cliff edge/beach) for the foreseeable future as any coastal change occurs.
3. Column 4 – ‘Yes – see table 3.3.3’ 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.
4. 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.
5. 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
EBC 3a	EBC-3-S001 to EBC-3-S068*	Other existing walked route	Yes - See table 3.3.3	Yes - beach			
EBC 3a	EBC-3-S069*	Public highway (road)	Yes - See table 3.3.3	No			
EBC 3a	EBC-3-S070 to EBC-3-S072*	Public footway (pavement)	No	No	Pavement edge	Clarity and cohesion	

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
EBC 3b	EBC-3-S073 to EBC-3-S075	Other existing walked route	Yes - See table 3.3.3	No	Road	Additional landward area	
EBC 3b	EBC-3-S076 to EBC-3-S079	Other existing walked route	Yes - See table 3.3.3	Yes - beach			
EBC 3b	EBC-3-S080 to EBC-3-S084	Other existing walked route	Yes - See table 3.3.3	Yes - barrier			
EBC 3b	EBC-3-S085 to EBC-3-S096	Other existing walked route	No	Yes - barrier			
EBC 3b	EBC-3-S097 and EBC-3-S098	Public footway (pavement)	No	No	Pavement edge	Clarity and cohesion	

3.3.2 Other options considered: Maps EBC 3a to EBC 3b - Herbrand Walk, Cooden to West Parade, Bexhill-on-Sea

Map(s)	Route section numbers(s)	Other option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option
SEB 3a	EBC-3-S015 to EBC-3-S069	<p>We considered aligning the trail along the verge and pavement at Herbrand Walk then on to Cooden Drive.</p> <p>We also considered whether this could be an optional alternative route when the ordinary route is cut off by high tides (see paragraph 3.2.13).</p>	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Herbrand Walk is not served by a pavement along parts of this length. ■ the verge is often blocked by parked cars and East Sussex CC Road Safety Team advised that it is not safe to use. ■ it is closer to the sea and maintains views of the sea ■ 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.
EBC 3a	EBC-3-S015 to EBC-3-S069	<p>We considered aligning the trail along a new path to be created between the railway perimeter fence and Herbrand Walk.</p>	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the costs for Network Rail to relocate the perimeter fence to allow for a new path along the north side of Herbrand Walk would be expensive. It would have to relocate bankside equipment causing disruption to railway operations. ■ it is closer to the sea and maintains views of the sea. ■ it avoids walkers having to cross the busy Herbrand Walk 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

Map(s)	Route section numbers(s)	Other option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option
EBC 3a	EBC-3-S015 to EBC-3-S069	We considered aligning the trail along the edge of Cooden Beach Golf Course on the north side of the railway and Herbrand Walk	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ an access strip along the southern edge of the Cooden Beach Golf Club would be adjacent to three golf tees. Walkers would disrupt play and would also be at risk of being struck by golf balls. ■ access points to the golf course would have to be created at both ends of the access strip. ■ the access strip near the golf course is waterlogged for much of the year. ■ it is closer to the sea and maintains views of the sea. ■ avoids having to cross the Herbrand Walk road and the level crossing. ■ 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
EBC 3a	EBC-3-S068 to EBC-3-S072	We considered aligning the trail along the shingle beach in front of the houses.	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ it provides walkers with an opportunity to leave the beach, following a significant stretch of walking on shingle which can be difficult underfoot. ■ under our proposals the beach will form part of the coastal margin and will be available to ECP users who wish to carry on along the beach. ■ 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.

3.3.3 Roll-back implementation – more complex situations: Maps SEB 3a to SEB 3b - Herbrand Walk, Cooden to West Parade, Bexhill-on-Sea

Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Feature(s) or site(s) potentially affected	Our likely approach to roll-back
EBC 3a	EBC-3-S001 to EBC-3-S069	Properties at Herbrand Walk, railway	If it is no longer possible to find a viable route seaward of the specified excepted land (e.g. buildings, curtilage, garden, railway etc), we will choose a route landward of it, following discussions with owners and occupiers.
EBC 3a	EBC-3-S001 to EBC-3-S069	Designated sites	If it is no longer possible to find a viable route seaward of a designated site (e.g. SSSI, SAC, SPA, SAM) whose designated features are sensitive to public access, or where the existing route already passing through such a site must be altered, we will choose a new route after detailed discussions with the relevant experts and with any potentially affected owners and occupiers, which will either (a) pass through the site, if appropriate or (b) if necessary, be routed landward of it.
EBC 3b	EBC-3-S073 to EBC-3-S084	Houses, gardens	If access to the beach from Beaulieu Road is no longer possible or if it is otherwise no longer possible to find a viable route seaward of the specified excepted land (e.g. buildings, curtilage, gardens etc), we will choose a route landward of it, following discussions with owners and occupiers.

In relation to all other sections where roll-back has been proposed, any later adjustment of the trail is likely to follow the current feature (e.g. cliff edge/beach) for the foreseeable future as any coastal change occurs.

Part 3.4: Proposals Maps

3.4.1 Map Index



Map reference	Map title
EBC 3a	Herbrand Walk, Cooden to Beaulieu Road
EBC 3b	Beaulieu Road to West Parade, Bexhill-on-Sea

PROPOSALS

Trail Sections

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

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

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



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

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

Coastal Margin

Explanatory note

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

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



































Other Information

Other access rights and routes

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




Infrastructure types

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

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



