

Coastal Access – Harwich to Shotley Gate lengths HSG1 and HSG4



Representations with Natural England’s comments

August 2021

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1. Introduction

This document records the representations Natural England has received on the proposals in length reports HSG1 and HSG4 from persons or bodies. It also sets out any Natural England comments on these representations.

Where representations were made that relate to the entire stretch for Harwich to Shotley Gate they are included here in so far as they are relevant to lengths HSG1 and HSG4 only.

2. Background

Natural England’s compendium of reports setting out its proposals for improved access to the coast from Harwich to Shotley Gate, comprising an overview and six separate length reports, was submitted to the Secretary of State on 22 January 2020. This began an eight-week period during which representations and objections about each constituent report could be made.

In total, Natural England received 13 representations pertaining to length reports HSG1 and HSG4, of which eight were made by organisations or individuals whose representations must be sent in full to the Secretary of State in accordance with paragraph 8(1)(a) of Schedule 1A to the National Parks

and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. These 'full' representations are reproduced in Section 4 in their entirety, together with Natural England's comments. Also included in Section 4 is a summary of the five representations made by other individuals or organisations, referred to as 'other' representations. Section 5 contains the supporting documents referenced against the representations.

3. Layout

The representations and Natural England's comments on them are separated below into the lengths against which they were submitted. Each length below contains the 'full' and 'other' representations submitted against it, together with Natural England's comments. Where representations refer to two or more lengths, they and Natural England's comments will appear in duplicate under each relevant length. Note that although a representation may appear within multiple lengths, Natural England's responses may include length-specific comments which are not duplicated across all lengths in which the representation appears. Where Natural England's comments and/or the text of the representation are the same for each length in which the representation appears, they will be produced in full only at the first occurrence. Thereafter, to save repetition Natural England's comments and/or the representation text will refer to the first occurrence.

4. Representations and Natural England's comments on them

Length Report HSG1

Full representations

Representation number:

MCA/HSGstretch/R/3/HSG0739

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Colchester Borough Council, on behalf of Essex Coast RAMS Steering Group

Route section(s) specific to this representation:

All

Reports within the stretch to which this representation relates:

This representation is regarding the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Harwich to Shotley Gate proposals, and is therefore relevant to the whole stretch.

Representation in full

Some comments and amendments are suggested to Table 9, section D4 of the Habitats Regulations Assessment in relation to Colchester Borough Council Tendring District Council Braintree District Council to reflect the most up to date information:

No. Adherence to the ~~local~~ **Essex Coast** RAMS should mean that there are no likely significant or appreciable residual effects to be taken into account. The emerging local plans of the three North

Essex Authorities (NEAs) are considered together because: These authorities are collaborating to produce a shared Strategic ~~Part~~ **Section 1** plan for their combined areas. This covers 10 strategic policies, including one for each of three proposed 'Garden Communities'. The closest of these to the Stour estuary - **'Tendring/ Colchester Borders Garden Community East Colchester'** - is proposed to include 2,500 ~~—3,000 homes~~ within the plan period, rising to **7,500—9,000** homes at a later date. The other two, **'Colchester/ Braintree Borders Garden Community West Tey'** and **'West of Braintree Garden Community'**, are proposed to start at similar levels but to ultimately increase to 15 – 20,000, and 10 – 13,000 homes respectively. A Zone of Influence (Zoi) of 13km has been adopted by the NEAs when assessing the impacts of their plans on the Stour and Orwell SPA/ Ramsar site. This Zoi includes half the conurbation of Colchester, and brings many Colchester and Tendring housing allocations, including the **Tendring/East Colchester Borders Garden Community**, into scope for assessment under Habitat Regulations. The three authorities, together with Essex County Council and nine other district councils and unitary authorities, have agreed to work jointly to adopt the RAMS approach successfully applied in Suffolk (see above). The 'Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy' (Essex Coast RAMS) covers ten Natura 2000 sites, together covering the whole of the Essex coast and estuaries, including the Essex side of the Stour estuary. Essex County Council's Place Services team was commissioned to develop the Essex Coast RAMS. **All 12 LPAs have adopted the Essex Coast RAMS Strategy Document and consultation on the draft Essex Coast RAMS SPD took place in January/ February 2020. As of April**

~~2019, Colchester BC and three other councils had secured approval from planning committees to undertake public consultations on associated supplementary planning documents; the remaining eight (including Tendring and Braintree) intended to follow the same procedure after the May 2019 local elections.~~

Note: The Part 1 Strategic Plan went through examination hearings in January and May 2018. In December 2018 the Inspector announced a pause in the examination while the NEAs carry out further work on the evidence base and Sustainability Appraisal (SA). ~~The eExamination hearing sessions took place in January 2020 is expected to remain paused until the NEAs' further work on the evidence base and SA is complete. At the time of writing this assessment the three authorities are aiming to consult on the updated evidence base and any proposed modifications from mid-August 2019. There is still therefore some uncertainty as to whether the garden communities will continue in their current form and location.~~ The text above and below reflects the situation prior to any potential changes being made to proposals or assessments. Taken together, the shared Strategic Part 1 Plan and the three Part 2 plans aim to deliver about 43,765 new homes over the plan period, including 18,400 in Colchester Borough and 11,000 in Tendring District (the two local authority areas closest to the Stour estuary).

The consultation on the Preferred Options for the Colchester Part 2 Local Plan (September 2016) includes housing allocations in several villages within the 13km Zoi of the Stour estuary, including 125 houses at Langham and 250 at Wivenhoe, although the allocations for the closer villages tend to be much smaller (e.g. 17 at Dedham). Preferred Options for the Tendring District Part 2 Local Plan (July 2016) include more extensive housing allocations in close proximity to the Stour estuary, notably 819 houses at Harwich and Dovercourt, and 520 at Manningtree, Lawford and Mistley. A large proportion of the latter allocations are situated directly adjacent to our proposed trail alignment at Mistley (at Harwich Road and the EDME malting site). **– this section should be updated to refer to the Submission Section 2 Local Plan rather than the Preferred Options.**

Conclusions of the HRA screening reports

The HRA screening reports for the NEA's Strategic Part 1 for Local Plans and for Tendring's Part 2 Local Plan conclude that the housing allocations proposed are likely to cause significant recreational disturbance impacts to the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA/ Ramsar site, with no mitigation taken into account. The HRA screening report for Braintree's Part 2 Local Plan concluded that it would not give rise to likely significant impacts on the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA/ Ramsar site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, because of the small number of visitors likely to travel from the district. Colchester Borough Council's HRA Part 2 screening report followed a different process and is discussed below. The consultants acting for the NEAs advise that the most pragmatic way to deliver the required avoidance/mitigation measures is to develop and implement an integrated RAMS. They recommend that the RAMS is developed jointly by the three NEAs in close collaboration with Natural England and other regulatory bodies. However, as noted above, it was subsequently decided that the Essex half of the Stour estuary will be included within a single Essex Coast RAMS, to be funded by housing across 12 Essex planning authorities within reach of the coast. All 12 authorities are now signed up to the Essex Coast RAMS through a Memorandum of Understanding. To address recreational impacts, the report recommends the RAMS includes: provision of alternative open space and green infrastructure, ongoing visitor monitoring, and a variety of site management measures. The latter may include fencing, screening, hides, wardening, interpretation boards, route signage, seasonal changes to routes, the promotion of codes of conduct for user groups, and habitat management and enhancement. The report recognises the particular need to work closely with Natural England as the England Coast Path project is implemented locally. Final conclusions of the HRA reports.

The HRA report for the NEA's Part 1 Local Plans concludes that (with regard to recreational impacts): '...the Shared Strategic Part 1 for Local Plans will not result in adverse effects on the integrity ofStour and Orwell Estuaries SPA/ Ramsar....either alone or in combination, due to the adequacy, appropriateness and effectiveness of the mitigation proposed.' The draft HRA report for Tendring's draft Part 2 Local Plan reaches the same conclusion. The draft HRA report for Colchester's draft Part 2 Local Plan (drafted by Colchester BC's Spatial Policy Team, rather than the consultants employed by the NEAs to produce the Part 1 HRA and Tendring and Braintree's Part 2 HRAs) follows a different methodology to the other HRAs. It is at odds within them in that it screens out any Likely Significant Effect on the Stour and Orwell estuaries. Its conclusion (for all local European sites) stated 'Having considered likely significant effects and the inclusion of these measures enables the LPA as competent authority under the Habitats Regulations to conclude that Section 2 of the Local Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of European sites either alone or in combination'. Note: The methodology used, and conclusion reached by Colchester BC's report were disputed by Natural England. A Statement of Common Ground was subsequently produced and Colchester BC has since signed up to the Essex RAMS approach. This will ensure that the required mitigation measures to mitigate recreational disturbance issues will be addressed from both their Part 1 and part 2 local plans. Note: Some sites within the above housing allocations will already have planning permission and not be subject to RAMS, e.g. the site south of Harwich Road, Mistley (which is on the proposed trail alignment), where off-site mitigation provision was not a condition of the planning permission (see below).

Comment [from Colchester Borough Council]: As written this section implies that Colchester Borough Council did not initially sign up to the Essex Coast RAMS. Colchester Borough

Council has been a supportive and active partner of the Essex Coast RAMS since its inception, which was after the publication of the Habitats Regulations Assessment for both the Section 1 and

Section 2 Local Plan. The HRA of the Section 2 Local Plan refers to a RAMS for the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries SPA/ Ramsar sites, which was agreed by Natural England at the time, and the opportunity to continue dialogue with the Suffolk Coast RAMS regarding the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA/Ramsar.

Natural England's comments

We thank Colchester Borough Council for their comments and updates, made on behalf of the Essex Coast RAMS Steering Group.

For reasons largely outside our control there was a relatively long period between the HRA being drafted and our proposals being published. It is inevitable, therefore, that some initiatives will have developed in the intervening period. We remain unaware, though, of any developments that would cause us to revisit or revise any of the proposals we made.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5):

The Essex Coast RAMS Strategy Document and draft SPD is available on the Bird Aware Essex Coast website:

<https://essexcoast.birdaware.org/article/31618/Our-Strategy--SPD>

Representation number:

MCA/HSGstretch/R/4/HSG0739

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Colchester Borough Council, on behalf of Essex Coast RAMS Steering Group

Route section(s) specific to this representation:

All

Reports within the stretch to which this representation relates:

This representation is regarding the Harwich to Shotley Gate Overview document, and is therefore relevant to the whole stretch.

Representation in full

Harwich to Shotley Gate Overview Section 6 (b) states:

“Separate RAMS are being established for Suffolk and Essex. Although neither initiative is finalised at the time of writing, housing proposals are already being subject to RAMS. Natural England has been closely involved in the development of both initiatives, which should be overwhelmingly positive in their effects.”

This text is now out of date and the following update is provided:

All 12 LPA partners in the Essex Coast RAMS have adopted the Essex Coast RAMS Strategy Document. In January/ February 2020 consultation took place on the Essex Coast RAMS draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). It is expected that this SPD will be finalised and adopted by each LPA partner later this year. All LPAs are collecting contributions from developers for residential development within the Zone of Influence of the Essex Coast RAMS. Contributions will be spent on the measures set out in the Essex Coast RAMS.

Natural England's comments

We thank Colchester Borough Council for their update, made on behalf of the Essex Coast RAMS Steering Group.

For reasons largely outside our control there was a relatively long period between the Harwich to Shotley Gate Overview being drafted and our proposals being published. It is inevitable, therefore, that some initiatives will have developed in the intervening period. We remain unaware, though, of any developments that would cause us to revisit or revise any of the proposals we made.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5):

The Essex Coast RAMS Strategy Document and draft SPD is available on the Bird Aware Essex Coast website: <https://essexcoast.birdaware.org/article/31618/Our-Strategy--SPD>

Representation number:

MCA/HSGstretch/R/6/HSG0038

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Essex County Council

Route section(s) specific to this representation:

All those in Essex

Reports within the stretch to which this representation relates:

HSG 1, HSG 2, HSG 3 and HSG 4

Representation in full

Note: The ECC representation is in two parts; only the first part is reproduced below. It relates to all of the stretch that falls within Essex. The second part relates specifically to report HSG1, and we comment on it alongside our comments on other representations for that length.

Essex County Council are wholly supportive of Natural England and the England Coast Path scheme, working closely, with dedicated officers, to ensure that the right route is created and the correct balance is struck between the rights of landowners and the public and our internationally important wildlife sites. The Scheme will bring great benefits to the Essex Coast through economy and tourism and will support our coastal communities, businesses and transport infrastructure. We remain supportive and welcome the scheme however the accuracy within this report is a concern

and we wish to see the errors addressed to ensure that the public and the County Council are served with correct information.

Natural England's comments

We warmly welcome Essex County Council's support for the England Coast Path initiative, and very much appreciate the time and effort invested in it by rights of way officers and other County Council staff.

We apologise for the cartographic errors brought to our attention by the Council. We address these as part of our comments on representations regarding report HSG 1, to which they relate.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5):

Notes and maps supporting the representation

Representation number:

MCA/HSG1/R/1/HSG0730

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], The Ramblers, Essex Area

Route section(s) specific to this representation:

All

Other reports within the stretch to which this representation also relates:

N/A

Representation in full

Although it has not been possible to follow the coast around Bathside Bay, we support the proposed route and consider that it makes good use of the existing paths in this urban area.

Natural England's comments

We welcome Essex Ramblers' support for our proposal.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5): N/A

Representation number:

MCA/HSG1/R/3/HSG0038

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Essex County Council

Route section(s) specific to this representation:

HSG-1-S002, HSG-1-S010, HSG-1-S017, HSG1-S024.

Other reports within the stretch to which this representation also relates:

ECC identify errors relevant only to this length, although they include a preamble which relates to all the Essex lengths, i.e. HSG 1 to HSG 4 inclusive.

Representation in full

Note: The ECC representation is in two parts, both reproduced below. The first part relates to all of the stretch that falls within Essex, and we comment on it in the 'Whole Stretch' representations document. The second part relates specifically to Report HSG1, and we comment on it below.

Essex County Council are wholly supportive of Natural England and the England Coast Path scheme, working closely, with dedicated officers, to ensure that the right route is created and the correct balance is struck between the rights of landowners and the public and our internationally important wildlife sites. The Scheme will bring great benefits to the Essex Coast through economy and tourism and will support our coastal communities, businesses and transport infrastructure. We remain supportive and welcome the scheme however the accuracy within this report is a concern and we wish to see the errors addressed to ensure that the public and the County Council are served with correct information.

The report contains errors and inaccurate information relating to the s25a restrictions and to some sections of the route identified as existing highway.

Report HSG 1, Map F1 – Bathside Bay

Land identified as saltmarsh and flat is generally under a S25a restriction as an unsuitable land type, unsuitable for public access, as set out in s7.15 *Coastal Access: Natural England's approved scheme, 2013*. There is one large section excluded from the restriction, we believe this is an omission and should be correctly mapped and included with the rest of the s25a restricted land in this chapter.

See attachment for further detail: Report HSG 1, Map F1 – Bathside Bay

Report HSG1, Route sections: HSG-1-S002, HSG-1-S010, HSG-1-S017, HSG-1-S024

There are sections of the proposed trail route within this report which show as having an incorrect legal status over either part of or the whole section. Our concern is that if this is not corrected then the proposed new Coastal Access Rights will not come into force as intended upon approval by the Secretary of State. Those sections with no existing highway rights need to be correctly mapped for new public access rights to come into being through an order made under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

See attachment for further detail: Report HSG1, Route sections: HSG-1-S002, HSG-1-S010, HSG-1-S017, HSG-1-S024 [SEE SECTION 5]

Natural England's comments

We are grateful to Essex County Council for drawing our attention to important cartographic errors in our published material both in relation to the s25A restriction at Bathside Bay and a number of route sections.

With regard to the s25A restriction at Bathside Bay, we proposed this in section 1.2.15 of the Coastal Access Report for HSG 1: Harwich to Shotley Gate, but did not include it on Directions Map HSG 1. We have corrected both this and the route section errors in our published report. We would like to reassure the Council that these errors will not prevent the restriction or coastal access rights coming into force.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5):

Notes and maps supporting the representation.

Other representations

Representation ID:

MCA/HSGstretch/R/5/HSG0737

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Tendring District Council

Name of site:

All land within Tendring District Council area (equates to all land on Essex bank of stretch).

Report map reference:

HSG 1, HSG 2, HSG 3 and HSG 4

Route sections on or adjacent to the land:

HSG-1-S001 to HSG-4-S019

Reports within stretch to which this representation relates

HSG 1, HSG 2, HSG 3 and HSG 4

Summary of representation:

The representation covers three broad themes. Most of it is copied below, under appropriate headings.

1. Support for the England Coast Path in general terms

“It is... apparent that an unbroken coast path around Tendring District will not only bring benefits in terms of tourism, but also in health and well-being.

We have already had informal input through the project, in particular where the Coastal Path crosses Council owned land. This appears to be acceptable.”

2. Comments on the Harwich to Shotley Gate Overview document

“With regard to the overview document, we have the following comments to make:

On page 31, a paragraph is drafted detailing the progress of the North Essex Authorities Garden Communities. A great deal has changed since this paragraph was drafted. It would be more accurate to replace that paragraph with the following:

Note regarding proposed developments in north-east Essex: Colchester Borough Council, Braintree Borough Council and Tendring District Council are collaborating to produce a joint ‘North Essex Authorities’ Shared Strategic Section 1 Local Plans’ which proposes three new Garden Communities in strategic locations along the A120 corridor with the potential to deliver around 43,000 new homes, associated infrastructure and employment opportunities. This plan went through examination hearings in January and May 2018. In December 2018 the Inspector announced a pause in the examination while the NEAs carry out further work on the evidence base and Sustainability Appraisal. Further documents were produced and consulted upon in 2019 and further examination

hearings were held in January 2020. The Inspector's final conclusions on the soundness of the Section 1 Local Plan and the Garden Community proposals are expected in Spring 2020.

The HSG sub section documents seem to set out a logical rationale for the proposed route of the coast path. From a planning viewpoint it does not appear that there are proposed developments (on the Tendring side of the Stour) that would inhibit or be inhibited by the coast path."

3. Concerns regarding 'key issues'

"...concerns have been expressed locally regarding key issues of the Coastal Path. Examples of the more specific concerns and suggestions raised by local stakeholders with unquestionable knowledge of their area are summarised as follows:

- Concerns over the lack of funding from Natural England for signage have been raised.
- Whilst it may be that some signage is provided, this will only be once the path is finalised leading to uncertainty for landowners.
- Landowners are also being told that they will have to fund fencing and not be provided with maps to prevent trespass.
- The key issue raised is in regard to the path not following the coast.
- Concerns over Spreadage accessible land.
- Concerns over suggested inland paths being allocated under CROW (Coastal Rights of Way), as this allows spreadage rights.
- The Harwich Foot Ferry is being considered as coastal path.
- If CROW is to be used for Foot Ferries and inland paths then spreadage rights should be removed. Much like we do with certain permitted rights in CAs and under Article 4. Same applies to any land between the path and MHWS (Mean High water Springs).
- Concerns of increase in usage of dangerous level crossings as Railway land is excluded.
- Concerns are also raised in regard to trespass and rural crime, which there is a strong belief and evidence that it is on the increase."

Natural England's comment (following the same numbering):

1. We welcome Tendring District Council's support for the England Coast Path initiative.
2. We are also grateful for the updated planning references. For reasons largely outside our control there was a relatively long period between the Harwich to Shotley Gate Overview being drafted and our proposals being published. It is inevitable, therefore, that some initiatives will have developed in the intervening period. We remain unaware, though, of any developments that would cause us to revisit or revise any of the proposals we made.
3. Although it is implied that the 'key issues' were raised by a number of local people, they mirror very closely those raised by [redacted], who submitted his representation via [redacted], who emailed it to us within 20 minutes of submitting Tendring District Council's representation. Both submissions were informal, i.e. not on the correct form. The Council's submission was later revised and resubmitted on the correct form; see final paragraph under Part 2, above.

Signage

Natural England believes that high quality signage is an essential feature of a well-managed trail. As such our proposals have been made in accordance with Natural England's Directional Signage and Waymarking guidance which forms part of the England Coast Path Trails Standards. Coastal Access Reports HSG1, HSG2, HSG3 and HSG4 summarise the establishment work required to implement our proposals on the ground, including signage, and provide an estimate of what this will cost. This is fully funded by Natural England as part of the establishment of the trail, and is implemented prior to the commencement of any new rights of access. After commencement of the new rights ongoing management of the trail and its infrastructure will be undertaken by the local highway authority, and supported by Natural England in accordance with its nationally agreed position on National Trail funding in place at the time.

Fencing

We believe this issue only relates to the point raised by [Redacted] in the representation MCA/HSG2/R/4/HSG0247. We comment on this point in our response to this representation on Coastal Access Report HSG 2 - Ray Lane, Ramsey, to Stone Point, Wrabness.

Maps to prevent Trespass

Approved stretches of the England Coast Path and the associated coastal margin are shown on Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 maps. The trail is depicted by a green diamond (lozenge) symbol placed along the route and named England Coast Path with the National Trail acorn symbol placed alongside the name. Alternative routes are shown by a hollow version of the green diamond (lozenge) symbol. The Coastal margin is depicted with a magenta wash and there is a clear, concise explanation of it in the key which says: *"All land within the 'coastal margin' (where it already exists) is associated with the England Coast Path and is by default access land, but in some areas it contains land not subject to access rights - for example cropped land, buildings and their curtilage, gardens and land subject to local restrictions including many areas of saltmarsh and flat that are not suitable for public access. The coastal margin is often steep, unstable and not readily accessible. Please take careful note of conditions and local signage on the ground."*

The key also gives the link to the National Trails website <http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/> which is the official source for information on the England Coast Path as it is developed.

Some landowners have asked Natural England to provide them with maps and signage depicting the accessible and non-accessible coastal margin on their land. However, it is not Natural England's role to definitively identify excepted land, only the courts can do this. In addition to this excepted land deals with land that is subject to change, and such maps would need to be updated with every change. We therefore cannot accurately map and sign accessible and non-accessible areas within the coastal margin on landholdings.

Adherence to the Coast

Part 4.5 of the approved Coastal Access Scheme covers "Proximity of the trail to the sea". It confirms that section 297(2) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 states that it is desirable that the route should adhere to "the periphery of the coast." It also goes on to explain in section

4.5.4 that sometimes detours from the coast are necessary to take account of other land uses or wildlife sensitivities. In our view our proposals meet this alignment criterion as far as they can taking into account all relevant local circumstances.

Spreading Room

Natural England's coastal access duty under the 2009 Act includes both securing a route around the whole English coast and securing an associated margin of land for the public to enjoy in conjunction with the route. The accessible parts of this coastal margin are often referred to as spreading room.

Coastal margin is created by default in two ways under the legislation. This is explained in section 2.3.4 of the Scheme. We believe that in developing our proposals for this stretch we have applied the legislation correctly with respect to the coastal margin and its associated spreading room. As the representation doesn't identify any specific location where there is a concern regarding the proposed spreading room and the access this may enable, we are unable to comment on this further.

Inland Paths

We believe this issue only relates to the point raised by [Redacted] in the representation MCA/HSG2/R/4/HSG0247. We comment on this point in our response to this representation on Coastal Access Report HSG 2- Ray Lane, Ramsey, to Stone Point, Wrabness.

Harwich Foot Ferry

Section 5 of the Overview document published with our Coastal Access Reports for this stretch explains our "Discretion to include part or all of an estuary or estuaries." This outlines the 4 alignment options we considered which include using the Harwich Foot Ferry, under option 2, and explains why we ruled this option out. Option 3 includes utilising the foot ferry and establishing an alternative route for when the ferry service is not available. Under the legislation this alternative route would not create any spreading room. We also explain why this option was ruled out.

Level Crossings

We believe this issue only relates to the point raised by [Redacted] in the representation MCA/HSG2/R/4/HSG0247. We comment on this point in response to this representation on Coastal Access Report HSG 2 - Ray Lane, Ramsey, to Stone Point, Wrabness.

Trespass and rural crime

Natural England propose that the trail will be clearly signed and waymarked to enable walkers to adhere closely to the legal route. If any issues arise with this after the commencement of the new rights, we suggest landowners discuss these with their local highway authority in the first instance, to see if any additional waymarking is needed. Landowners are also free to put up signage on their own land to clarify people's access rights there, taking their own legal advice on this as necessary.

Should the Secretary of State approve our proposals for this stretch of coast, the only new right people would gain is the right to enjoy open air recreation on foot along the proposed trail and associated coastal margin. We believe most National Trail users are well behaved and law abiding, and that the presence of more law abiding people in the area may have the effect of discouraging anti-social behaviour such as petty theft. We are not aware that the creation of new coastal access rights has led to an increase in rural crime on any of the stretches of the ECP that are already open and being enjoyed by the public.

Relevant appended documents (see Section 5): N/A

Representation ID:
MCA/HSG1/R/2/HSG0723

Organisation/ person making representation:
[Redacted], Disabled Ramblers

Name of site:
Whole length, with particular locations highlighted

Report map reference:
HSG 1a -1d

Route sections on or adjacent to the land:
All route sections

Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates
Disabled Ramblers have also submitted generic and detailed comments on HSG 2, HSG 4, HSG 5 and HSG 6.

Summary of representation:
Significant numbers of people now use all-terrain mobility vehicles to travel on access routes in rural and urban environments. Users have the same access rights as walkers, so Natural England should ensure that, unless the natural terrain prevents access, any existing or new infrastructure does not present a barrier to these vehicles, which tend to be larger than traditional ones.

Pleased to see that where there are unavoidable barriers to access, provision has been made for alternative, signed routes.

Important that dropped kerbs are in place wherever the trail, or alternative route, meets a road. It is thought that they need to be installed where the route crosses the road at the junction of HSG-1-S038 and HSG-1-S039.

There are two existing kissing gates shown on Map 1c at HSG-1-S037 and HSG-1-S038. It is hoped that these are accessible by large mobility vehicles (see attached document *Disabled Ramblers*

Notes on Infrastructure). If not, they will be a barrier to access and should be replaced with suitable structures, preferably gates.

Disabled Ramblers requests that Natural England:

- Complies with the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty).
- Complies with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- Complies with British Standard BS5709: 2018 Gaps, Gates and Stiles.
- Takes account of the needs of those with limited mobility and the information in the attached document *Disabled Ramblers Notes on Infrastructure*.

Natural England's comments:

Natural England acknowledges its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and also the extra responsibilities conferred by the Public Sector Equality Duty, under the former. In section 4.3.8 of the Coastal Access Scheme we outline that in delivering the England Coast Path we follow the principles set out in our publication "By All Reasonable Means" to make the trail as easy to use as we reasonably can for disabled people and others with reduced mobility, whilst accepting that such opportunities will often be constrained by practical limitations.

An important element of this is ensuring that the needs of those with constrained or restricted mobility are taken into account throughout the planning, design and implementation processes, and that they are not simply treated as an 'add on'. We have endeavoured to achieve this as we have developed our proposals for the Harwich to Shotley Gate stretch, and, if our proposals are approved, will continue to do so through the implementation phase, working alongside Essex and Suffolk County Councils, which share the same responsibilities and duties.

We also recognise the importance of satisfying the relevant British Standards, and the desirability of complying with the advice contained in the *Disabled Ramblers Notes on Infrastructure*, and will also be focusing on these documents as we work with the access authorities.

We also note the Disabled Ramblers' pertinent advice regarding the larger/ all-terrain mobility vehicles, and believe that many parts of the Harwich to Shotley Gate Stretch, including the great majority of the alignment covered by Report HSG 1, lend themselves to use by such vehicles. Both kissing gates highlighted by the Disabled Ramblers have already been identified as needing to be upgraded to accommodate mobility vehicles, pushchairs, etc.

We accept the Disabled Ramblers' comment about the provision of alternative, signed routes however while coastal access legislation enables us to propose 'official' alternative routes for certain purposes, those purposes don't include accommodating those with constrained mobility.

When we proposed that the trail be aligned over the railway footbridge at Dovercourt (HSG-1S017) we were acutely aware of the implications for a significant proportion of potential trail users, and looked hard for a more inclusive solution. We ultimately concluded that the arrangement we have proposed (alignment over the bridge and management signage advising of a potential accessible route that users might prefer to follow) was the best compromise. Fortunately as this particular

location (the Harwich/ Dovercourt area), is very urban, there are a number of route options available to anyone wishing to stay on a relatively level alignment.

With regard to the Disabled Ramblers request for dropped kerbs, we would be happy to consider this in large urban areas such as Harwich, and will work with Essex County Council at establishment stage to provide a dropped kerb where the route crosses the road at the junction of HSG-1-S038 and HSG-1-S039. We estimate that this will increase the establishment costs of Coastal Access Report HSG 1: Harwich to Ray Lane, Ramsey by £3000.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5):

Disabled Ramblers Notes on Infrastructure

Length Report HSG4

Full representations

Representation number:

MCA/HSGstretch/R/2/HSG0675

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Suffolk County Council

Route section(s) specific to this representation:

All those in Suffolk

Reports within the stretch to which this representation relates:

HSG 4, HSG 5, and HSG 6

Representation in full

Suffolk County Council welcomes Natural England's use of the estuary discretion to enable a continuous coastal path along the Stour estuary

Although much of the proposed trail will use existing public rights of way, currently promoted by Suffolk County Council as the Stour & Orwell Walk, there are areas where these are vulnerable to erosion and tidal processes or have already been lost to erosion. The County Council particularly welcomes the proposals for the stretches between Stutton Mill and Stutton Ness (HSG-5-S006 and HSG-5-S014) and south and west of Nether Hall, Harkstead (HSG-6-S014 to HSG-6-S017.)

The use of roll back on many of the sections is also welcomed, as this will enable the continued existence and use of the trail in conjunction with coastal processes, without reliance on public rights of way that have fixed positions.

It is disappointing that it has not been possible to provide a route seaward of Crowe Hall, Stutton (HSG-5-S014 to HSG-5-S029).

The County Council is concerned as to the future of the maintenance funding for National Trails.

The County Council is concerned that works proposed as mitigation in order to fulfil the objectives of the Habitat Regulations, are not included in the National Trail maintenance funding formula.

The County Council is concerned that the National Trail maintenance funding does not include an uplift for those sections of the trail that run immediately adjacent to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). The uplift only applies for parts of the trail that run directly within a SSSI. However, a significant length of the proposed trail runs immediately adjacent to the Stour SSSI (also the Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar), for which mitigation works are proposed, but this will not be recognised in the maintenance funding.

The mitigation works will include information signs. As a public body the County Council must have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity (NERC Act 2006), so this could result in disproportionate pressure on the use of the maintenance funding for this stretch.

The County Council believes that the maintenance funding should include the uplift for those parts of the trail immediately adjacent to a SSSI where mitigation works have been proposed.

Overall, the County Council believes that the proposals for improving coastal access on this stretch of the coast strikes the appropriate balance between public and private interests and recreational and environmental objectives as required by the approved coastal access scheme.

Natural England's comments

We warmly welcome Suffolk County Council's support for the England Coast Path initiative, and very much appreciate the time and effort invested in it by rights of way officers and other County Council staff.

We agree that a crucial element of our proposals is the establishment of cliff-top paths that will, effectively, replace access routes that have been undermined by coastal erosion, and that the application of roll-back will, if approved, ensure these routes remain available in perpetuity.

In relation to the comments regarding a financial uplift for those sections of the trail that run immediately adjacent to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Natural England acknowledge that the Suffolk County Council have concerns in this area. As noted the current uplift applies only where the trail runs directly through an SSSI. This is to recognise the potential for additional maintenance costs to be incurred and this element of the current funding formula was originally agreed by a stakeholder group representing all the established National Trails in England following a review of funding that was completed in 2013. A subsequent review by a group representing all the trails was carried out in 2015. It is Natural England's intention to undertake a further review of the funding formula as the England Coast Path is completed so that we can look to see if there are any changes that can be made. This process will begin later this year and will be carried out with the involvement of coast path managers. Suffolk Council's constructive input will be welcomed as part of this process although we are not making any assumptions at this time as to how this review may change the existing formula.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5): N/A

Representation number:

MCA/HSGstretch/R/3/HSG0739

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Colchester Borough Council, on behalf of Essex Coast RAMS Steering Group

Route section(s) specific to this representation:

All

Reports within the stretch to which this representation relates:

This representation is regarding the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Harwich to Shotley Gate proposals, and is therefore relevant to the whole stretch.

Representation in full

See first occurrence of the representation under Length Report HSG1.

Natural England's comment

See Natural England's comments under the first occurrence of the representation under Length Report HSG1

Relevant appended documents (see section 5):

The Essex Coast RAMS Strategy Document and draft SPD is available on the Bird Aware Essex Coast website:

<https://essexcoast.birdaware.org/article/31618/Our-Strategy--SPD>

Representation number:

MCA/HSGstretch/R/4/HSG0739

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Colchester Borough Council, on behalf of Essex Coast RAMS Steering Group

Route section(s) specific to this representation:

All

Reports within the stretch to which this representation relates:

This representation is regarding the Harwich to Shotley Gate Overview document, and is therefore relevant to the whole stretch.

Representation in full

See first occurrence of the representation under Length Report HSG1.

Natural England's comment

See Natural England's comments under the first occurrence of the representation under Length Report HSG1.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5):

The Essex Coast RAMS Strategy Document and draft SPD is available on the Bird Aware Essex Coast website: <https://essexcoast.birdaware.org/article/31618/Our-Strategy--SPD>

Representation number:

MCA/HSGstretch/R/6/HSG0038

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Essex County Council

Route section(s) specific to this representation:

All those in Essex

Reports within the stretch to which this representation relates:

HSG 1, HSG 2, HSG 3 and HSG 4

Representation in full

See first occurrence of the representation under Length Report HSG1.

Natural England's comment

See Natural England's comments under the first occurrence of the representation under Length Report HSG1

Relevant appended documents (see section 5):

Notes and maps supporting the representation

Representation number:

MCA/HSG4/R/4/HSG0730

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], The Ramblers, Essex Area

Route section(s) specific to this representation:

HSG-4-S001 to HSG-4-S022

Other reports within the stretch to which this representation also relates:

N/A

Representation in full

We support the route from the B1352 at TM117318 through Mistley, Manningtree and on to Cattawade Bridge, which makes use of good existing paths. We note that the area of most concern for walker safety along this stretch (between Manningtree Station and Old Cattawade Bridge) has recently been changed from a rough strip of grass to a tarmac path and now offers a safe crossing from Essex into Suffolk. We are therefore fully supportive of its use for the route of the coast path.

Natural England's comments

We welcome Essex Ramblers' supportive comments and acknowledge the improvements that have been made recently, which will benefit England Coast Path users if our proposals are approved.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5): None

Representation number:

MCA/HSG4/R/3/HSG0655

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Ramblers Association,
Suffolk

Route section(s) specific to this representation:

HSG-4-S019 to HSG-4-S034

Other reports within the stretch to which this representation also relates:

HSG 5 and HSG 6

Representation in full

Representation on HSG4b to HSG6f the Suffolk section

Most of the section HSG, Harwich to Shotley Gate is in Essex, the Suffolk section is from A137 at Cattawade to Shotley Gate only. This representation refers to the Suffolk section only.

All of the Suffolk section was surveyed by members of Suffolk Area Ramblers in the winter of 2015 - 2016, and meetings were held with Essex Area Ramblers and the relevant Suffolk County Council Rights of Way Officers.

Following further discussion with interested members of the Ramblers in the area, Maps of the Ramblers suggested route, together with a detailed report of why we were recommending this route, and what works we considered to be necessary were then submitted to Natural England in January 2016.

Subsequently I have been in regular contact with the Natural England representatives for this section, and have made some further visits to the proposed section of path as changes in the situation occur. Also, I have been appraised regularly of the differences between our initial suggestions and the Natural England preferred route, all of which changes have been explained and the reasons for alternative routes discussed.

The most recent changes have been brought about by natural erosion, which has necessitated moving the pro-posed line of the path further inland than originally determined mostly near the Shotley Gate end. I have been brought up to date with these final overview proposals during the Autumn of 2019.

Finally, the Report published on Wednesday 22nd January 2020 has been made available to all interested parties in the Ramblers Ipswich area group, and the maps of the Suffolk section were on display at the Suffolk Area Ramblers AGM on 1st February 2020. The responses from those consulted have been generally favorable, and although some expressed disappointment where the path has to be moved inland, there have been no suitable alternatives suggested.

I would therefore, on behalf of Suffolk Area Ramblers, like to commend the proposed route for this section of the England Coast Path, and we look forward eagerly to the path being made available on the ground along the full length, and open to public use.

Natural England's comments

We welcome Suffolk Area Ramblers' supportive comments.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5): N/A

Other representations

Representation ID:

MCA/HSGstretch/R/5/HSG0737

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Tendring District Council

Name of site:

All land within Tendring District Council area (equates to all land on Essex bank of stretch).

Report map reference:

HSG 1, HSG 2, HSG 3 and HSG 4

Route sections on or adjacent to the land:

HSG-1-S001 to HSG-4-S019

Reports within stretch to which this representation relates

HSG 1, HSG 2, HSG 3 and HSG 4

Summary of representation:

See first occurrence of the representation under Length Report HSG1.

Natural England's comments:

See Natural England's comments under the first occurrence of the representation under Length Report HSG1

Representation ID:

MCA/HSG4/R/5/HSG0734

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted], Chair of Footpaths sub-committee, Brantham Parish Council

Name of site:

Brantham re-development site and land to SE of railway.

Report map reference:

HSG 4b

HSG 5a

Route sections on or adjacent to the land:

HSG-4-S023 to HSG-5-S002

Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates

HSG 5

Summary of representation

1. Brantham Parish Council (BPC) welcomes the proposed alignment over the Environment Agency's sluice, on the line of the informally used path. This would enhance what would otherwise be a long length of roadside walk [HSG-4-S017 to HSG-4-S030].
2. BPC has concerns over a number of "unknown factors" that may impact on the trail:
 - a. The future of the former factory site [between Factory Lane and the railway] being unknown, the plan to develop it into a railway depot [as mentioned in our report] having been scrapped.
 - b. Development of land on/ adjacent to the proposed trail between Factory Lane and Decoy Pond, and the "currently incorrect recording of the PRow" [our understanding is, in fact, that the PRow is recorded accurately, but the currently walked path is at variance with it].
 - c. The outcome of the Public Inquiry into Network Rail's proposals to close the railway crossing (SO1), and to make changes to the local footpath network, is not yet known.

"Under such circumstances, Brantham Parish Council feels unable to usefully comment on the proposed route of the path but urges Natural England to keep this section of the route under review and should, as and when these uncertainties are resolved, and opportunity arise in future to utilise more of the sea wall in Brantham for the coast path that currently appears to be the case this should be given due consideration."

Natural England's comments

We welcome Brantham Parish Council's support for our proposal to align the trail over the Environment Agency's sluice (HSG-4-S023 to HSG-4-S026), and agree that, if approved, it will provide a welcome break between roadside trail sections, and it will also offer good views of the upper estuary.

We also acknowledge the Parish Council's valid point that there are a number of inter-related issues playing out in the local area which have some relevance to the England Coast Path, and that it may be some time before they are fully resolved. However, we believe there is enough information available for us to be relatively confident that the route we have proposed will remain available, and that it is likely to be preferable to any other options that might emerge.

In particular:

- a. Although there remains doubt about how the land between Factory Lane and the railway will be redeveloped, it seems unlikely that the alignment of Factory Lane (and therefore the trail) will be changed.
- b. We understand there to be a high level of agreement between Suffolk County Council and the site owners/ developers as to the revised alignment of the PRoW between Factory Lane and Decoy Pond, and there has been some work on site to accommodate it.
- c. Regardless of whether or not the railway crossing is to be closed, we would not propose that it be used for the ECP, for safety reasons.
- d. For the reasons set out in our response to [redacted]'s representation (below), we are confident that the trail should be landward of the railway throughout the length described by report HSG 4. Given that we also believe the trail should not use the railway crossing, the only other possible trail alignment is over the railway footbridge, as we propose. From that point it is clear that the existing PRoW, which goes in a south-easterly direction to join the seawall, is the best option when taking all coastal access criteria into account. Any other routes likely to come about as a consequence of the rail crossing being closed (the most likely outcome being a route sticking to the south-easterly side of the railway embankment), would offer no foreseeable advantages to the ECP. In particular, any such routes would be likely to be much less direct.

Finally, it would be possible for Natural England to propose changes to trail alignment in the future, if unforeseen circumstances were to bring about any route options with clear advantages. In the meantime, we feel it is important that a route is identified that follows what we believe to be the best alignment, using the best information currently available to us.

Relevant appended documents (see Section 5): N/A

Representation ID:

MCA/HSG4/R/6/HSG0725

Organisation/ person making representation:

[Redacted]

Name of site:

Brantham re-development site and land to SE of railway

Report map reference:

HSG 4b

HSG 5a

Route sections on or adjacent to the land:

HSG-4-S027 to HSG-4-S035 HSG-5-S001 to HSG-5-S002

Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates

HSG 5

Summary of representation

This is a duplicate of the representation also recorded against HSG 5. [Redacted] previously submitted two representations which he withdrew on submission of this one; they were MCA/HSG4/R/1/HSG0725 and MCA/HSG4/R/2/HSG0725.

[Redacted] makes the case that the route proposed by Natural England is not what would be recognised as a coastal path by users. It goes through an industrial area, past an unpleasant smelling sewage works, has no view of the coast, and involves crossing the road into the industrial area.

He asserts it will not be possible to properly establish the coast path [through sections HSG4-S027 to HSG-4-S032] until at least 2026, when the adjacent housing development is due to be completed, as the area will be in a state of upheaval until then.

[Redacted] proposes the following route (see attachment RDH2Guide1.pdf), to replace our proposed sections HSG-4-S028 to HSG-5-S002 (see reports HSG 4 and HSG 5):

1. From close to the eastern end of HSG-5-S027, go in a south-easterly direction through the industrial area and under the railway, via an existing short tunnel.
2. Continue in a south-easterly direction as far as the seawall at TM 108 326.
3. Follow the seawall in a north-easterly direction to the railway embankment.
4. Follow the toe of the embankment as far as the next section of seawall, which starts near the railway crossing at TM 111 331.
5. Follow the seawall (also an existing PRow) in an easterly direction until it meets with our proposed trail alignment where it joins the seawall at HSG-5-S003 (see Report HSG 5).

[Redacted] makes the point that we refer, in our Report HSG 4, to proposals that railway sidings be developed in the existing industrial area, but that this project has since been scrapped, leaving the way open for the alignment he proposes.

This route would offer good views of the estuary. Even when factories were present in the area [most have been demolished in recent years], [redacted] believes that they did not block the alignment he proposes, which, he postulates, follows the alignment of historic footpaths.

“I am going through the process of trying to get them put back on the definitive map, see attached RDHHistoricRoutesMap.JPG. If successful the major part of my proposed route would be walkable and may well be a viable alternative coastal path.”

[Redacted] makes the point that sections HSG-5-S002 and HSG-5-S003 are frequently wet “and home to much wildlife”, and that his proposal would reduce footfall in this area [these sections are both on an existing PRoW].

He also highlights that Network Rail proposes to close the railway crossing at TM 111 331, thereby severing the existing PRoW which crosses it before continuing eastwards along the seawall. This would act in combination with our proposals to mean that:

- A. Local residents would be losing, not gaining, a section of existing shoreline route [i.e. the seawall PRoW between the railway crossing and the start of HSG-5-S003; technically, this would still be in place, but could no longer form part of a circular walk, as it would be a dead end].
- B. The shortest circular walk starting from HSG-4-S022 [a logical access point] would increase in length from 2.8 to 4.25 miles. It would entail using Natural England’s proposed route as far as the end of HSG-5-S003, then going inland along Newmill Lane, before returning via a choice of (mainly road) routes. This route would involve two hazardous road crossings [albeit not part of the ECP].

Natural England’s comments

We welcome the interest shown in our proposals, and the thought that [Redacted] has clearly put into his proposed alternative alignment and the advantages it would offer. We also acknowledge the deficiencies of the route we propose, namely that it is inland of the shore and that it is not, at least at present, entirely pleasant. Having said that, it does provide excellent views from the railway footbridge, and we anticipate it will be a much more attractive route when local developments have been completed.

When we first started developing our proposals it was not at all clear how parts of the local area, particularly the industrial area between Factory Road and the railway, would ultimately be developed. There was also much uncertainty about the future of the railway crossing. Both these factors were key considerations.

However, setting aside the above uncertainties, there were two factors that prevented us from considering any route that would be closer to the shore:

1. The saltmarsh adjacent to the route proposed by [redacted] has become especially valuable to roosting waterbirds protected under international law. This is probably due, in part, to the very low levels of access to the adjacent land on the peninsula. Some of the key bird species may

also make use of the water bodies on the peninsula of disused industrial land. These factors mean that any route south of the railway line (i.e. on or around the peninsula, as proposed by [redacted]) would be excessively disruptive, especially given the centres of population in the immediate area, and the developments that already have planning permission. It would be likely that any route taking in the peninsula would be heavily used on a daily basis by dog walkers, this being a particularly disruptive activity, if dogs are off leads and uncontrolled.

2. Regardless of whether the crossing remained open, we had to acknowledge the conclusions reached by Network Rail's risk assessment of it. As the line is a high speed one, and visibility in both directions is limited, we had to concede that it would not be suitable to host a national trail. That meant that use of the seawall going east from the crossing could only be achieved by a circuitous alignment of the trail (from the footbridge it would go towards the south-west, following the seaward side of the railway embankment, before re-joining the seawall). For that reason we opted for the direct alignment over the footbridge and south-eastwards to the seawall, as depicted on maps HSG 4b and HSG 5a.

Accessibility is also a key factor here, especially given the high local centre of population. The route we have proposed would be accessible to all users, all the way from the A137 to, and perhaps beyond, the footbridge at the end of the length (HSG-4-S035), from where excellent views may be enjoyed (the footbridge spans a cutting here, and has no steps at either end). It would not be possible to achieve the same level of accessibility on [redacted]'s proposed route without considerable cost and very disruptive establishment works.

In summary, we remain convinced that the alignment we propose strikes the right balance between providing access for as wide a range of people as possible under coastal access and equality legislation, and the need to protect sensitive wildlife habitats. Although it lacks a 'coastal feel' for several sections, it provides excellent views from the end of the length and will gradually become more attractive as local developments are completed.

Relevant appended documents (see Section 5):

RDH2Guide1.pdf – Illustrates NE's proposed alignment
RDH2Guide2.pdf – Illustrates [redacted]'s proposed alignment
RDHHistoricRoutesMap.JPG – shows historic routes through the industrial area

Representation ID:
MCA/HSG4/R/7/HSG0723

Organisation/ person making representation:
[Redacted], Disabled Ramblers

Name of site:
Skinner's Wall (seawall)

Report map reference:

HSG 4a

Route sections on or adjacent to the land:

HSG-4-S011 (although the representation quotes HSG-4-S010, which is where a steep sets of steps is located and referred to in report HSG 4).

Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates

Disabled Ramblers have also submitted generic and detailed comments on HSG 1, HSG 2, HSG 5 and HSG 6.

Summary of representation

The Disabled Ramblers reproduce paragraph 4.2.7 from Report HSG 4, where we set out our proposal that the existing seawall access ramp in section HSG-4-S011 be extended and regraded to facilitate enable access to the seawall by those with disabilities/ constrained mobility (it would provide a means of avoiding the steps in HSG-4-S010).

They say they are pleased with this proposal, request we ensure any turning or resting areas are of sufficient size to accommodate large mobility vehicles, and refer us to their document *Disabled Ramblers Notes on Infrastructure*.

Natural England's comment

We welcome Disabled Ramblers' support for our proposal at Skinner's Wall, which, if approved, will facilitate access to this popular visitor spot by a significant proportion of people who currently find it difficult or impossible to do so.

We will work with Essex County Council and the Environment Agency to ensure the turning and resting areas are of suitable dimensions to accommodate large mobility vehicles, and will endeavour to include local disabled user(s) in the design process.

Relevant appended documents (see Section 5):

Disabled Ramblers Notes on Infrastructure

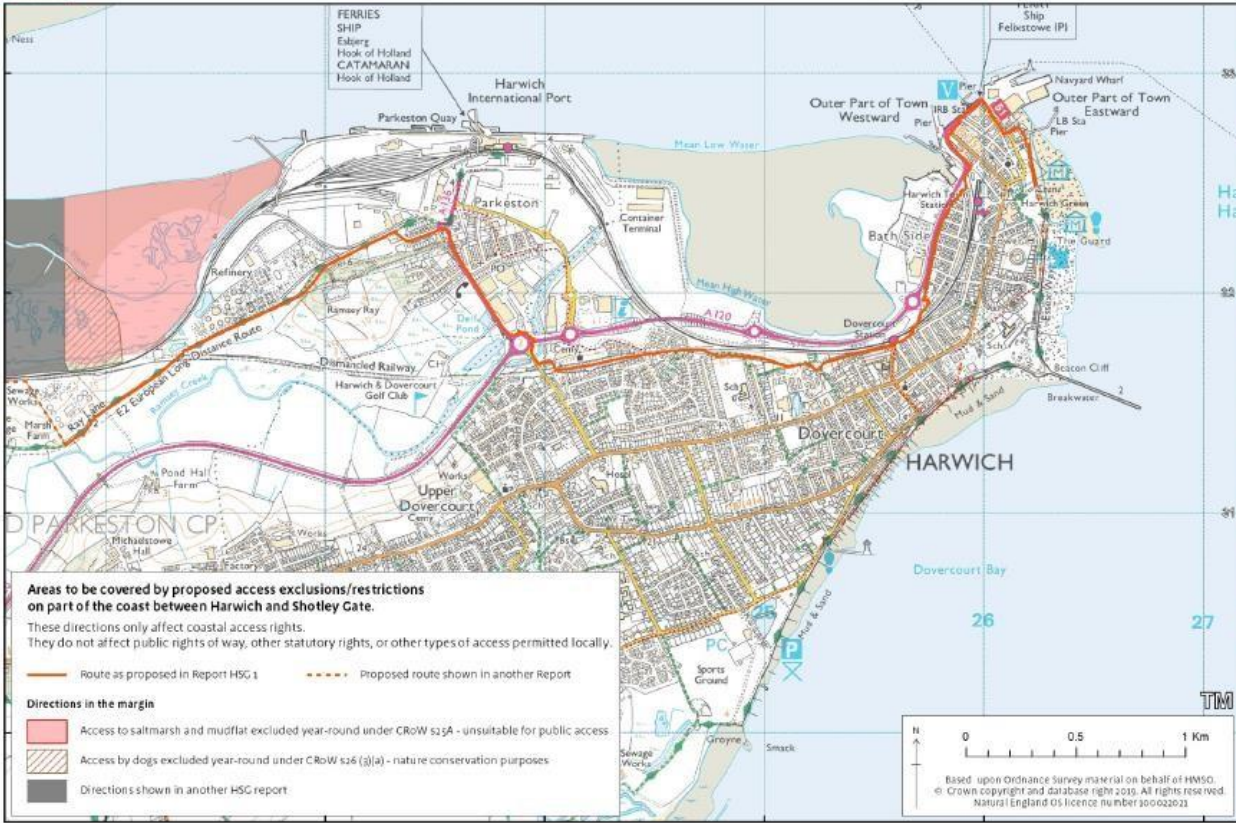
5. Supporting documents

MCA/HSG1/R/3/HSG0038 and MCA/HSGstretch/R/6/HSG0038: Essex County Council Representation: Harwich to Shotley Gate

Report HSG 1, Map F1 – Bathside Bay

1. The whole of Bathside Bay has been omitted from the proposed s25a direction on both the Overview Report map and the Report HSG1 map. It is important that the public are provided with clear and accurate health and safety information regarding coastal access. The omission of this area implies that it is suitable for public access which, as a mudflat, it is not. The s25a direction should be extended to include Bathside Bay.

Map F1: Directions to exclude/restrict access - as proposed for area covered by Report HSG 1



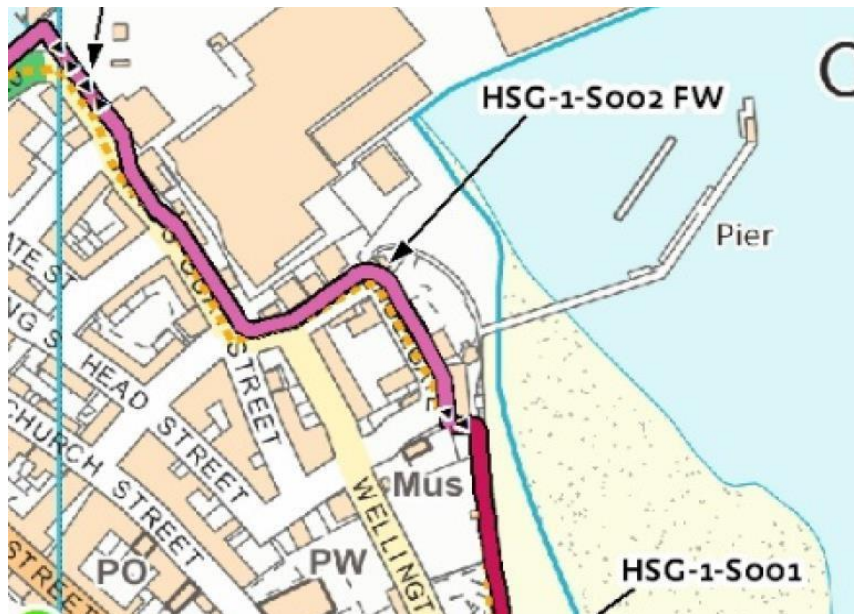
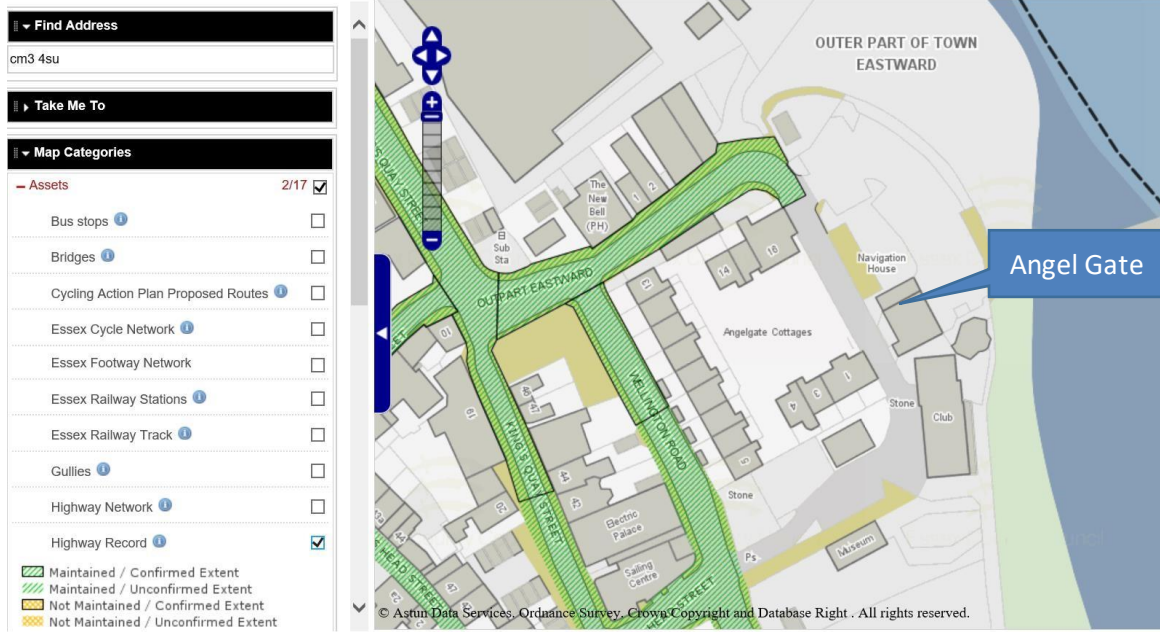
Map F1: Directions to exclude/restrict access - as proposed for area covered by Report HSG 1

Report HSG1, Route sections: HSG-1-S002, HSG-1-S010, HSG-1-S017, HSG-1-S024

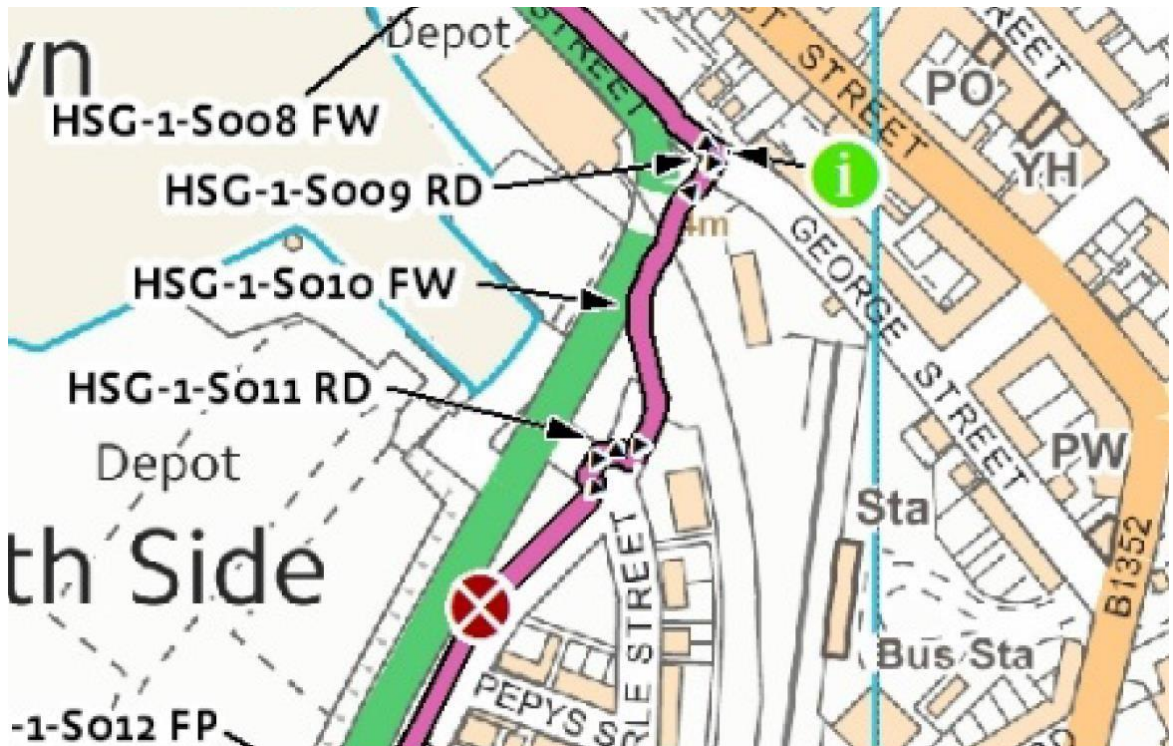
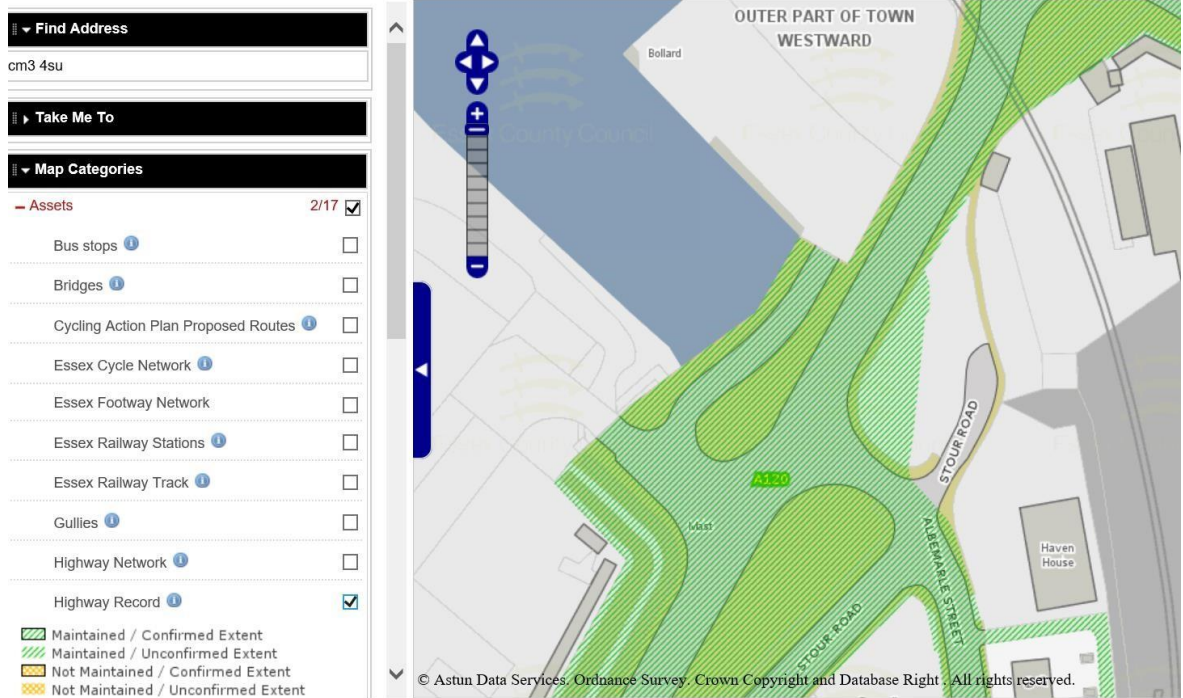
- There are 4 sections of the proposed trail route in the Harwich, Dovercourt and Parkeston areas which appear to have been incorrectly recorded as having existing highway rights over either part of or the whole section. Our understanding is that if this is not corrected then the proposed new Coastal Access Rights will not come into force on these sections as intended upon approval by the Secretary of State. Those sections being incorrectly marked as “existing highway” in this report will remain as private land with no access rights unless the report reflects their legal status and the need to create a public right through the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

The maps below show the extent of the Highway boundary in green. Terms and conditions apply to the use of these maps, see page 6 [see text below final map].

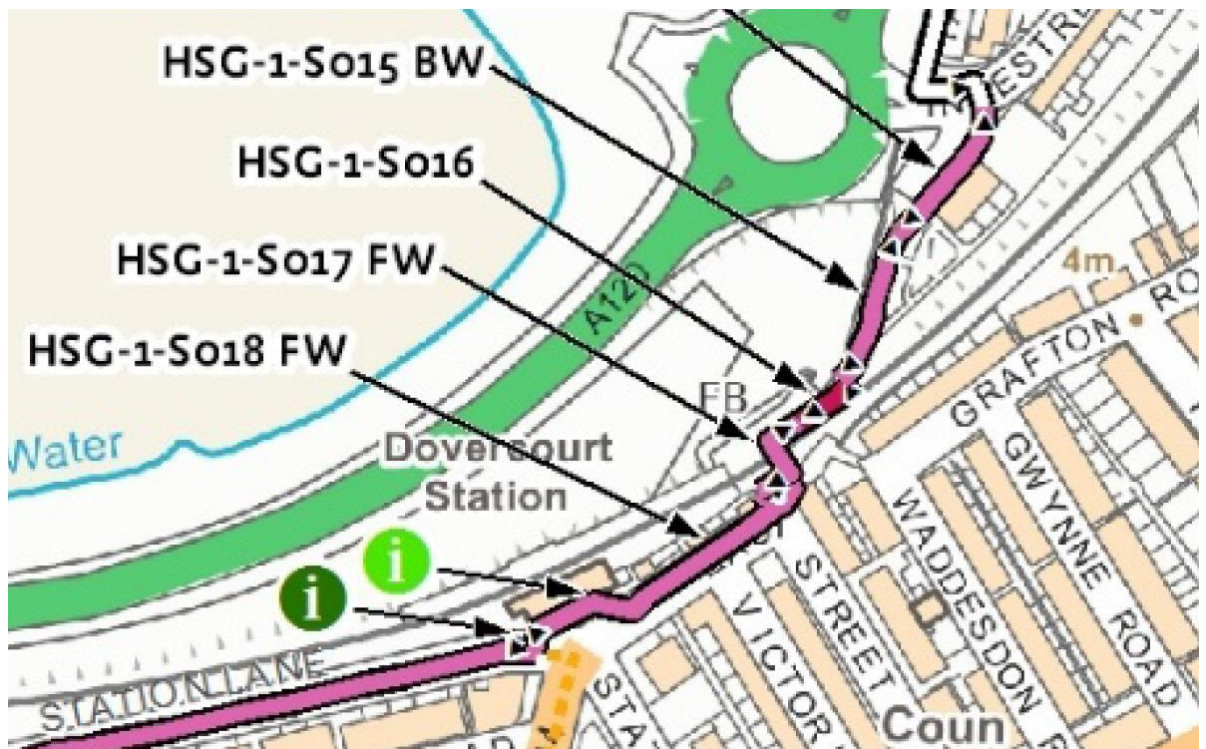
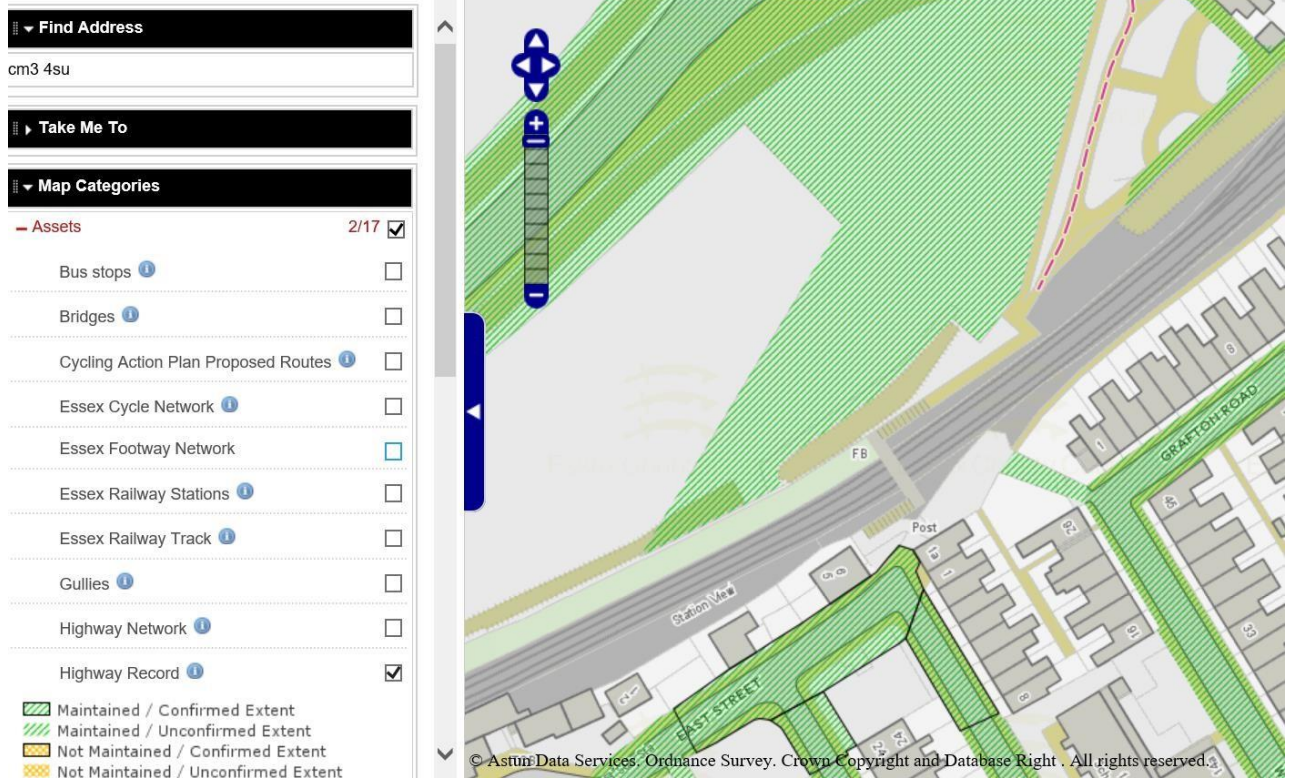
a. Angel Gate, Harwich – part of HSG-1-S002



A120 to Albermarle Street – HSG-1-S010



Footbridge over railway line near Dovercourt Station – HSG-1-S017



Access to cemetery off Parkeston Road – HSG-1-S024



Terms and Conditions: Essex Highways Interactive map

By accessing and viewing the Highways Map, you are required to acknowledge and agree to the following conditions:

- This digital mapping data is representative and informative only and not definitive. Users should not draw conclusions from it or make commitments based on these datasets.
- The mapping data layers are subject to constant change as data is updated and programmes amended.

Important note regarding accessing the Highway Record information

By accessing this mapping layer, you are required to acknowledge and agree to the following conditions:

This digital mapping layer is representative only and is not definitive. Users should not draw conclusions from it or make commitments based on this dataset.

This mapping layer is subject to constant change as research is ongoing.

The information displayed without borders has not been verified as it has not yet been researched. The information with borders is based on what data we have digitised and remains subject to change, should further information to the contrary come to light.

The highway record layer displays information pertaining to publicly maintainable highway, in the meaning of the Highways Act 1980.

In respect of historic highway boundaries, this information is given with the proviso that where there is a roadside ditch or pond, that ditch or pond and any land to the rear would not normally form part of the highway.

This mapping layer may not reflect changes which have occurred in respect of new developments or alterations to the landscape.

This dataset is intended as a guide only and should not be relied upon for planning purposes or legal decisions and is provided pursuant to the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. It is not a definitive statement from Essex County Council as to the legal position of highway boundaries and measurements should not be scaled from this mapping layer.

The Ordnance Survey provides a base upon which the digitised mapping layer has been plotted and the highway record is plotted in relation to it. New developments may not be shown on this base map. For further information in respect of the Ordnance Survey, please refer to www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk

Should you require further information in respect of the extent of highway at any location within Essex (excluding the unitary authorities of Southend and Thurrock), please contact Highwayrecords@essexhighways.org in the first instance. Charges for provision of this information may apply.

Important note regarding the Public Rights of Way digital mapping layer

This is an interactive map of Public Rights of Way and is for general purposes only. It is not the statutory Definitive Map which is held at County Hall.

District, borough, town and parish councils must also keep copies for their particular areas.

The Definitive Map and its associated Map Modification Orders must be referred to in the case of any specific legal query or dispute. In law the Definitive Map provides conclusive evidence of the existence of any Public Rights of Way shown on it. This interactive map does not.

For enquiries pertaining to land transaction related matters or for any legally related enquiries, professional interpretation of the map is required and must be referred to the Definitive Map Office, Essex Highways, County Hall, Chelmsford.

On the Map of Public Rights of Way each path is identified on the map by a code number both for the parish and the path. For example 'PROW 1035 - 25'. This code number can be seen by clicking on the path. If you have any comments about this path, please quote this code when contacting Essex Highways to enable the Public Rights of Way team to deal with your query more easily.

DISABLED RAMBLERS NOTES ON INFRASTRUCTURE

Useful figures

- **Mobility Vehicles**
 - **Legal Maximum Width of Category 3 mobility vehicles: 85cm** Same width is needed all the way up to pass through any kind of barrier to allow for handlebars, armrests and other bodywork.
 - **Length:** Mobility vehicles vary in length, but **173cm is a guide minimum length.**
- **Gaps** should be 1.1 minimum width on a footpath (BS5709:2018)
- **Pedestrian gates** The minimum clear width should be 1.1m (BS5709:2018)
- **Manoeuvring space** One-way opening gates need more manoeuvring space than two-way opening ones and some mobility vehicles may need a three metre diameter space.
- **The ground** before, through and after any gap or barrier must be flat otherwise the resulting tilt effectively reduces the width

Infrastructure

Infrastructure on the route of the England Coast Path should be assessed by Natural England for suitability for those with limited mobility, and particularly for those riding large or all-terrain mobility vehicles. The assumption should always be that these individuals will be alone, and will need to stay sitting on their mobility vehicle, ie they will not be accompanied by someone who could open a gate and hold it open for them. The principle of the least restrictive option should always be applied.

□ **New infrastructure**

New infrastructure should comply with Bristol Standard with BS 5709: 2018 Gaps, Gates and Stiles.

□ **Existing infrastructure**

The creation of the England Coast Path provides a perfect opportunity to improve the trail to make it as accessible as possible. Unsuitable existing infrastructure could be removed now and, where necessary, replaced with new, appropriate infrastructure in line with BS 5709: 2018 Gaps, Gates and Stiles.

Gaps

A Gap is always the preferred solution for access, and the least restrictive option (BS 5709:2018). The minimum clear width of gaps on footpaths should be 1.1metres (BS 5709:2018).

Bollards

On a footpath, these should be placed to allow a minimum gap of 1.1metres through which large mobility vehicles can pass.

Pedestrian gates A two-way, self-closing gate closing gate with trombone handle and Centrewire EASY

LATCH is the easiest to use – if well maintained, and if a simple gap is unacceptable. Yellow handles and EASY LATCH allow greater visibility and assist those with impaired sight too. <https://centrewire.com/products/easy-latch-for-2way-gate/> One-way opening gates need more manoeuvring space than two-way and some mobility vehicles may need a three metre diameter space to manoeuvre around a one-way gate. The minimum clear width of pedestrian gates should be 1.1 metres (BS 5709:2018).

Field gates

Field gates (sometimes used across roads) are too large and heavy for those with limited mobility to use, so should always be paired with an alternative such as a gap, or pedestrian gate. However if this is not possible, a York 2 in 1 Gate <https://centrewire.com/products/york-2-in-1/> could be an alternative, with a self-closing, two-way opening and yellow handles and EASY LATCH.

Bristol gates

(Step-over metal gate within a larger gate.) These are a barrier to mobility vehicles, as well as to pushchairs, so should be replaced with an appropriate structure. If space is limited, and a pedestrian gate not possible, a York 2 in 1 Gate <https://centrewire.com/products/york-2-in-1/> could be an alternative, with a self-closing, two way opening, and yellow handle and EASY LATCH for the public access part of the gate.

Kissing gates

A two-way, self-closing gate is hugely preferable to a kissing gate, but in certain situations a kissing gate might be needed. Many kissing gates can be used by smaller pushchairs and small wheelchairs, but are impassable by mobility scooters and other mobility vehicles. Unless an existing kissing gate has been specifically designed for access by large mobility vehicles, it should be replaced, if possible with a suitable gate (see above). If a kissing gate really must be used, Disabled Ramblers recommend the [Centrewire Woodstock Large Mobility](#) kissing gate, fitted with a RADAR lock, which can be used by those riding mobility vehicles. NB this is the only type kissing gate that is large enough to be used by all-terrain and large mobility vehicles.

Note about RADAR locks on Kissing gates

Often mobility vehicle riders find RADAR locks difficult to use, so they should only be used if there is not a suitable alternative arrangement. Here are some of the reasons why:

- Rider cannot get off mobility vehicle to reach the lock
- Rider cannot reach lock from mobility vehicle (poor balance, lack of core strength etc)
- Position of lock is in a corner so mobility vehicle cannot come alongside lock to reach it, even at an angle
- RADAR lock has not been well maintained and no longer works properly.
- Not all disabled people realise that a RADAR key will open the lock, and don't know how these kissing gates work. There must be an appropriate, informative, label beside the lock.

Board walks, Footbridges, Quad bike bridges

All of these structures should be designed to be appropriate for use by large mobility vehicles, be sufficiently wide and strong, and have toe boards (a deck level edge rail) as edge protection. On longer board walks there may also be a need to provide periodic passing places.

Sleeper bridges

Sleeper bridges are very often 3 sleepers wide, but they need to be at least 4 sleepers wide to allow for use by mobility vehicles.

Steps

Whenever possible, step free routes should be available to users of mobility vehicles. Existing steps could be replaced, or supplemented at the side, by a slope or ramp. Where this is not possible, an alternative route should be provided. Sometimes this might necessitate a short diversion, regaining the main route a little further on, and this diversion should be signed.

Cycle chicanes and staggered barriers

Cycle chicanes are, in most instances, impassable by mobility vehicles, in which case they should be replaced with an appropriate structure. Other forms of staggered barriers, such as those used to slow people down before a road, are very often equally impassable, especially for large mobility vehicles.

Undefined barriers, Motorcycle barriers, A frames, K barriers etc.

Motorcycle barriers are to be avoided. Often they form an intimidating, narrow gap. Frequently put in place to restrict the illegal access of motorcycle users, they should only ever be used after very careful consideration of the measured extent of the motorcycle problem, and after all other solutions have been considered. In some areas existing motorcycle barriers are no longer necessary as there is no longer a motorcycle problem: in these cases the barriers should be removed.

If no alternative is possible, the gap in the barrier should be adjusted to allow riders of large mobility vehicles to pass through. Mobility vehicles can legally be up to 85 cm wide so the gap should be at least this; and the same width should be allowed all the way up from the ground to enable room for handle bars, arm rests and other bodywork. The ground beneath should be level otherwise a greater width is needed. K barriers are often less intimidating and allow for various options to be chosen, such a shallow squeeze plate which is positioned higher off the ground.

<http://www.kbarriers.co.uk/>

Stepping stones

Stepping stones are a barrier to users of mobility vehicles, walkers who are less agile, and families with pushchairs. They should be replaced with a suitable alternative such as a footbridge (which, if not flush with the ground should have appropriate slopes at either end, not steps). If there are good reasons to retain the stepping stones, such as historic reasons, a suitable alternative should be provided nearby, in addition to the stepping stones.

Stiles

Stiles are a barrier to mobility vehicles, walkers who are less agile, and families with pushchairs. They should be replaced with suitable alternative infrastructure. If there are good reasons to retain the stile, such as historic reasons, an alternative to the stile, such as a pedestrian gate, should be provided nearby in addition to the stile.

Urban areas and Kerbs

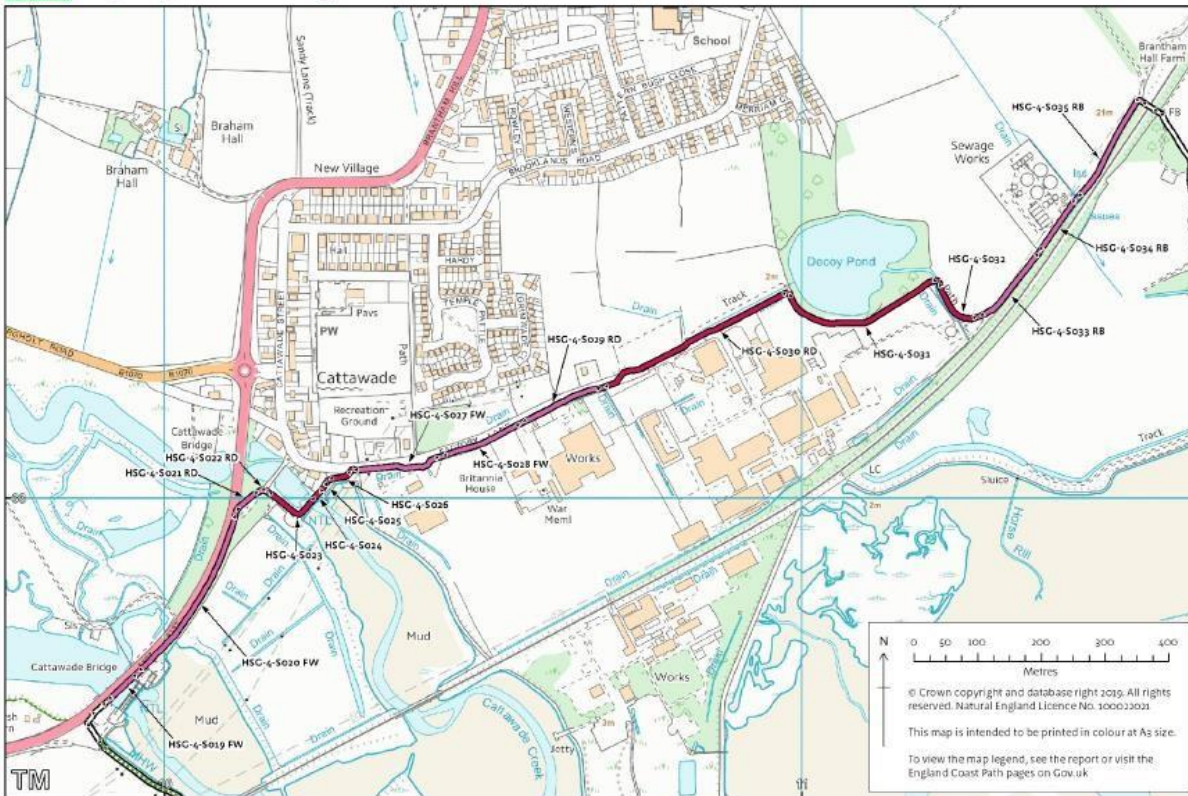
In urban areas people with reduced mobility may well be using pavement scooters which have low ground clearance. Where the trail follows a footway (eg pavement) it should be sufficiently wide for large mobility vehicles, and free of obstructions. The provision and correct positioning of dropped kerbs at suitable places along the footway is essential. Every time the trail passes over a kerb, a dropped kerb should be provided. Disabled Ramblers March 2020

Guide to the Proposed Coastal Path Brantham

Welcome to the proposed coastal path Suffolk









Coastal Access - Harwich to Shotley Cate - Natural England's Proposals
Report HSG 4 - Hopping Bridge, Mistley to Brantham Hall Farm
Map HSG 4b - Cattawade Bridge to Brantham Hall Farm



Map HSG 4b - Cattawade Bridge to Brantham Hall Farm

Highlights of the walk as I enjoyed it today

	<p>The view from HSG-4-S026. You can see the sea wall on the left going as far as the rail line(Could that be walkable?).</p>
	<p>20 yards from HSG-4-S026 you can see our new cycle ways painted on the road. As you can see this route is well able to cope with the traffic to the factories and a major housing development. I am campaigning for the right hand foot path from this point to Decoy pond to allow cyclists thus keeping them off what is fast becoming a busy road.</p>
	<p>170 yards further on at HSG-4-S027 FW is the first of 4 roads you will need to cross on this stretch, it has dropped curbs but no pedestrian crossing. I have walked down the right of this road and made my way to a bridge under the rail line from where you can see the coast. It requires 240 yards of path to be firmed up.</p>
	<p>180 yards from HSG-4-S027 FW is a 2nd road crossing complete with dropped curbs. The building will eventually be new flats. No coast though.</p>
	<p>60 yards further on is our 3rd road crossing complete with dropped curbs. While this road is gated now it still has traffic in and out. If you look carefully down this road you can see the bridge under the rail line</p>
	<p>70 yards further we reach HSG-4-S029 on the map and our 4th road crossing complete with dropped curbs. It is actually going to be quite nice here eventually with views over the drainage lagoons. No coast though.</p>



60 yards on to the left of the road you will be able to watch the development work of 288 Taylor Wimpey houses
The bridle way you should be on has been diverted. It's hoped this work will be finished by 2026 but...



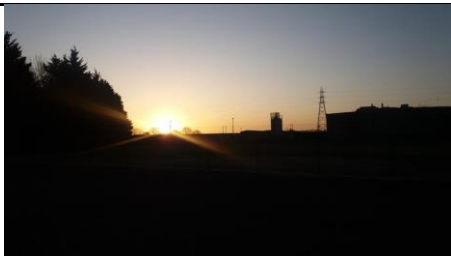
50 yards further on. A sign the developer has forgotten to remove. Please ignore it if it's still there. This is not the first time that the developer has blocked this path resulting in pedestrians and cyclist having to back track and divert onto the busy and dangerous A137.



50 yard further at HSG-4-S030 RD. Sun rise over a factory, very nice but no coast.



30 yards further. The developer has decided to protect the trees! The shot to the right is what I would have seen at this point of my walk 2 years ago when this route was being considered.



20 yards further I told you that that sun rise over the factory would be good



30 yards further you can see the new cycle way around Decoy pond. This pond really is the highlight of this coastal walk through Brantham.



At the sharp turning just before HSG-4-S032 you get the first view of our new country park. It's going to be nice when the trees grow. No coast though, the rail line is in the way.



Just past HSG-4-S032 the new cycle way ends and becomes proper bridle way maintained by Suffolk County council. If you are on foot you could take a little detour through our new country park (right)
There is a footpath over the rail line back to the coast here but it is likely to be closed soon by Network rail.



At HSG-4-S034 you will have a good view of our sewage works. It smelt a bit on this morning but I am sure that remedial work will be carried out before those 288 houses are finished in 2026.



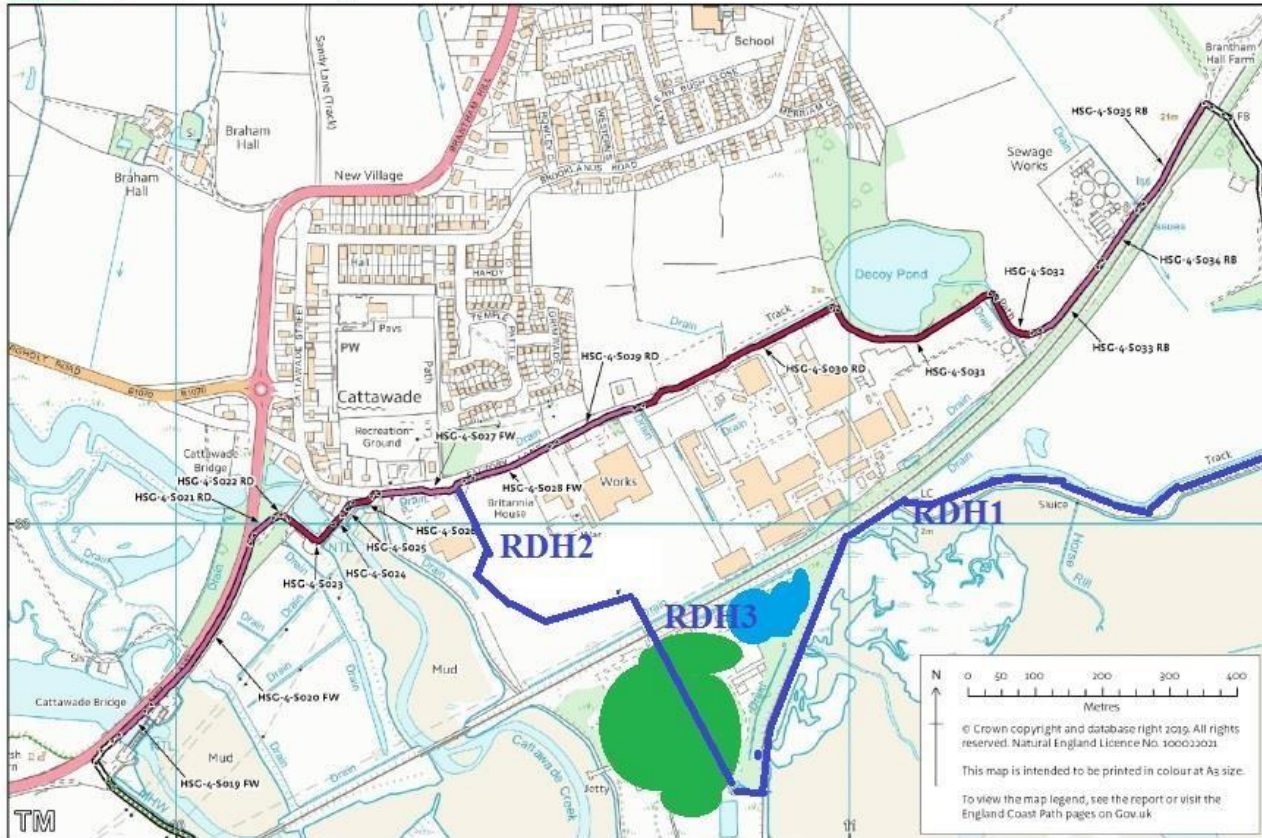
Up the hill to HSG-4-S035. Now you can see the river over the rail line. You can also see the path locals currently regard as the coastal path through the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty that you missed.
I hope you enjoyed your coastal walk through Brantham.

Guide to the Alternative Coastal Path Brantham

Welcome to the alternative coastal path Suffolk



Coastal Access - Harwich to Shotley Gate - Natural England's Proposals
Report HSG 4 - Hopping Bridge, Mistley to Brantham Hall Farm
Map HSG 4b - Cattawade Bridge to Brantham Hall Farm



Map HSG 4b - Cattawade Bridge to Brantham Hall Farm

Highlights of the walk as I enjoyed it 29/01/2020

	<p>I walked the blue route in the opposite direction having come along the coast along what is shown as a track but I believe to be a footpath to RDH1. This is the stile over the rail line that is likely to close. The straight bit along the edge of the railway maybe the only environmentally protected section, however coastal erosion will inevitably mean shoring up the railway embankment in the not too distant future.</p>
	<p>Looking left from the stile you can see the approximately 70 yards of potentially environmentally sensitive area to the sea wall surrounding the old industrial area. The sign on the left says "PRIVATE WILDFOWLING Grove shooting club Members only". The old pipe on the right is used for pumping surface water from the still used industrial properties the other side of the railway.</p>
	<p>Making my way up over the sea wall at the end of the embankment the industrial buildings have been demolished last year and replaced by a lagoon with the surrounding area now greening up.</p>
	<p>Along the sea wall I could look over the Stour river towards Manningtree and Felixstowe. I could have taken many photos here, it is stunning.</p>
	<p>Crossing what was industrial area to RDH3 I was confronted by the bridge under the railway. It was flooded but I waded through it. It would seem the recently departed JCBs had to dig out under the bridge to access this area.</p>
	<p>Under the bridge I turned left along the dyke towards RDH2. It was muddy but firmed up after about 150 yard. The footprints say I was not the first to try this route. There may be a route to the left of the dyke avoiding Factory Lane altogether but I was wet and had seen enough.</p>



Looking back from factory lane from HSG4-S027 FW to RDH2 which is 80 yards down this road. This bit of road and the next could be avoided if there is a route to be had along the sea wall behind the factory to the right.



Looking back to HSG4-5027 from HSG4-S026 along our new cycle way.



20 yards on we are back at HSG4-S026
I hope you enjoyed your coastal walk through Brantham

https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/side-by-side/?fbclid=IwAR2d48eQb_1wEWtuVF-RO0IsZDQruXtbP-T2GQVddLV National Library of Scotland [GB] Search...

Side by side georeferenced ... X

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Map images

Find by place | Explore Georeferenced Maps | Side by Side

HISTORIC PATHS

Swipe OFF | Swipe ON

1. Select a category: Great Britain


2. Select a map series: OS One Inch, 1885-1900 - Outline

Zoom to extent

1. Select a category: Bing / ESRI / OSM / LIDAR

2. Select a map series: Bing Hybrid

Zoom to extent



The image shows a side-by-side comparison of a historical map and a modern satellite image of the same location. The left panel displays a historical map with the word 'Attawade' written in a large, stylized font at the top. The map features a network of roads, a railway line, and various land parcels. A scale bar at the bottom left indicates 100 meters. The right panel shows a modern satellite image of the same area, with labels for 'Factory Lane' and 'Brantham Industrial Estate'. A scale bar at the bottom left also indicates 100 meters. In the bottom right corner of the satellite image, there is a text box containing the following information: TM 11058 32646, 611058, 232646, 51.9522, 1.0700, and 51° 57' 09" N 1° 04' 12" E. Below the satellite image, there is a copyright notice: © 2020 Microsoft Corporation © 2020 DigitalGlobe © CNES (2020) Distribution Airbus DS © 2020 HERE.