

# Proposed changes to the King Charles III England Coast Path at Ken Hill Estate, Snettisham Beach, Norfolk

Natural England's Variation Report to the Secretary of State

Coastal Access Variation Report HSB-VR26  
May 2025

## Part 1: Purpose of this report

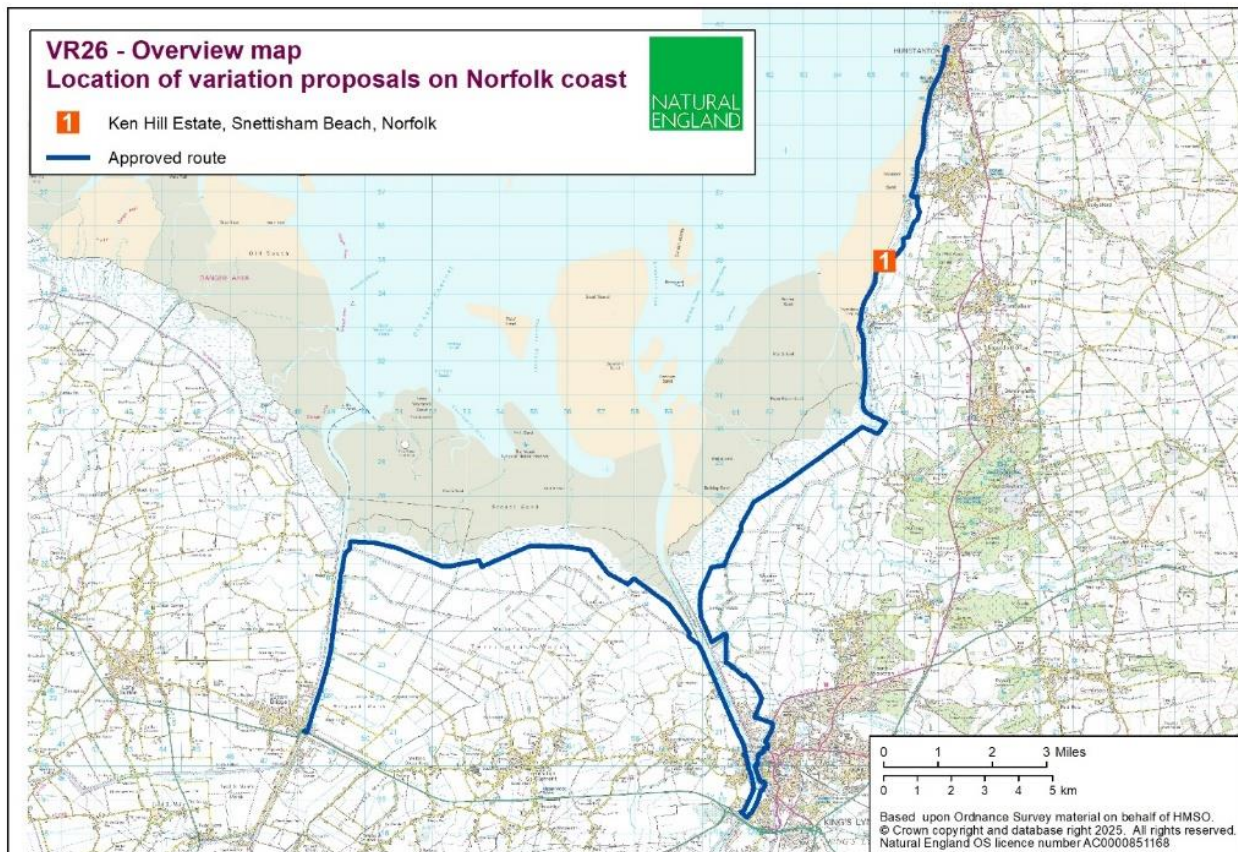
1.1 Natural England has a statutory duty under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to improve access to the English coast. The duty is in two parts: one relating to securing a long-distance walking route around the coast; the other to creating an associated “margin” of land for the public to enjoy, either in conjunction with their access along the route line, or otherwise.

1.2 On 10th August 2022 the Secretary of State approved Natural England's proposals relating to HSB 1: Hunstanton to Beach Road, Shepherd's Port which formed part of our proposals for the Hunstanton to Sutton Bridge stretch <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-coast-path-from-hunstanton-to-sutton-bridge-comment-on-proposals>

1.3 Since the approval of the report, it has become clear that a change is desirable to the route of the KCIIIIECP. This report contains Natural England's proposals relating to that change at Ken Hill Estate, Snettisham Beach which is at the location shown on the Overview Location Map below.

1.4 In order for this proposed change to come into force it must be approved by the Secretary of State.

1.5 The original stretch [Overview](#) provides vital context to the proposal set out in this Variation Report.



## Part 2: Proposed variation at Ken Hill Estate

**Start Point:**                      **Grid reference: TF 6535 3498**

**End Point:**                      **Grid reference: TF 6547 3491**

**Relevant Original Proposal Map: HSB 1e**

### 2.1 Introduction

#### Reason for variation:

2.1.1 The approved route, that runs alongside the base of a flood bank is sometimes wet. Since the route was approved the top of the bank is now accessible, and walkers are using it as it is drier, and route establishment works were done there, in recognition of the better route. This proposed variation would formalise that change and is supported by the landowner.

#### Proposed variation:

2.1.2 The approved route HSB-1-S039 is at the base of a flood bank that adjoins an inland flood bank and the dunes at the coast. It uses the path that was the 'existing walked route' when options were originally surveyed.

2.1.3 The varied route would be aligned on the top of the bank. In 2022 a wildfire burnt off the scrub that covered the bank and the top has since become the preferred, drier route.

2.1.4 As a consequence of this proposed change, all land seaward of the trail would become part of the coastal margin. In relation to coastal access rights the top of the bank is around 9m further inland than the approved route (see Map VR26a below) and so a small increase in margin would result. The margin would also increase to include all the bank landward of the trail for a length of around 130m because 'Bank' is one of the coastal land types that are included by default in the coastal margin (see Table 2.3.1 below).

## 2.2 Proposals Narrative

### The Trail:

2.2.1 The proposed variation to the approved trail:

- would follow an existing walked route that is already being used as the KCIIECP,
- is parallel, and close to the approved HSB-1-S039,
- is on the top of a grass-covered bank,
- includes two sections of new path,
- extends for a length of 130m (same length) at a maximum of 12m metres south of the approved route

### Protection of the environment:

2.2.2 The proposed route is not covered by any national or international nature conservation or heritage designations though protected sites are nearby (see Map VR26c). No environmental concerns were identified with the approved route and the proposed varied route is not significantly different.

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

### Accessibility:

- The path surface on top of the bank is grass and will be cut as part of maintenance work. To get off the bank on the landward end (HSB-VR26-S001) there is a short set of steps down on to the cross-bank (HSB-VR26-S002) that goes to the coast. At the seaward end there is a short length of sand to cross, being the landward side of the coastal sand dunes.
- there are fewer steps and a shorter distance on the sand dune when compared to the approved alignment

2.2.4 The proposed trail consists of a path with a grass surface. Like the original approved route, the proposed varied one is likely to be unsuitable for some people with reduced mobility because both routes have a short run of steps at the landward end, though the varied route has fewer.

**2.2.5 Restrictions and/or exclusions:** Access rights to the seaward margin would be subject to the excepted land rules and the national restrictions on coastal access rights. We do not propose any additional local restrictions or exclusions to those in the approved proposals (see Map VR26d below).

**2.2.6 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.

**2.2.7** Column 4 of tables 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 indicate where the roll-back power has been proposed in relation to a newly proposed route section. Where this is the case, the route, as initially determined at the time this report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on map HSB-VR26b (below) as the proposed route of the trail.

**2.2.8** 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.

### **Establishment of the trail:**

**2.2.9** The trail has been established and opened on the line of this proposed variation.

### **Maintenance of the trail:**

**2.2.10** Ongoing maintenance of the varied sections of trail would be necessary from time to time. This variation would make no significant change to the annual costs associated with maintaining the approved route as set out in our original report.

## Part 2.3: Proposals Tables

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

**Table 2.3.1: Map HSB 1e – Stubborn Sand to Beach Road, Shepherd’s Port**

Key notes on table:

1. Column 4 – ‘No’ means no roll-back is proposed for this route section. ‘Yes – normal’ means roll-back is proposed and is likely to follow the current feature (e.g. cliff edge/beach) for the foreseeable future as any coastal change occurs.

Column 4 – ‘Yes – see table 2.3.2’ 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.

1. 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 in Annex B to the 2017 Overview) is shown in this column where appropriate. “No” means none present on this route section.
2. 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)	New route section number(s)	Current status of route section(s)	Roll-back proposed? (See part 8 of 2017 report Overview)	Landward margin contains coastal land type?	Proposal to specify landward boundary of margin	Reason for landward boundary proposal	Explanatory notes
HSB 1e/ VR26b	VR26-S001	Public footpath	Yes - see table 2.3.2	Yes - bank			
HSB 1e/ VR26b	VR26-S002	Other existing walked route	Yes - see table 2.3.2	Yes - bank			

### 2.3.2 Roll-back implementation – more complex situations: Map HSB 1e – Stubborn Sand to Beach Road, Shepherd’s Port

Map(s)	New route section number(s)	Feature or site potentially affected	Our likely approach to roll-back
HSB 1e/ HVR26b	HSB-VR26-S001 and 2	Low-lying areas of land	If it is no longer possible to find a route seaward of the low-lying land, we will choose a new route after detailed discussions with all relevant interests, either (a) to pass through the land, or (b) if this is not practicable, to pass somewhere on the landward side of it. In reaching this judgement we will have full regard to the need to seek a fair balance between the interests of potentially affected owners and occupiers and those of the public. Additionally, areas landward of the current route that may be unaffected by potential direct roll-back but may need to change to create a linked route to parts of the trail that have rolled-back.



