

Coastal Access – Silecroft to Silverdale



Representations on SCS 5: Greenodd footbridge to Kents Bank - and Natural England's comments

March 2020

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1. Introduction

This document details representations we have received on the stated coastal access report. These fall into two categories:

- Representations received from persons or bodies that must be sent in full to the Secretary of State ('full' representations, reproduced below); and
- Those which have not come from those persons or bodies whose representations we are required to send in full to the Secretary of State ('other' representations, summarised below).

It also sets out any comments that Natural England choose to make in response to these representations.

2. Background

Natural England's compendium of reports setting out its proposals for improved access to the coast from Silecroft to Silverdale was submitted to the Secretary of State on 8th January 2020. This began an eight week period during which representations and objections about each constituent report could be made.

In relation to the report for SCS 5, Natural England received 5 representations, of which 3 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 3 of this document together with Natural England's comments where relevant.

As required by the legislation this document also summarises and, where relevant, comments on the 2 representations submitted by other individuals or organisations, referred to here as 'other' representations. There were no representations submitted by other individuals or organisations, referred to as 'other' representations.

Before making a determination in respect of a coastal access report, the Secretary of State must consider all 'full' representations and our summary of 'other' representations, together with Natural England's comments on each.

3. Record of 'full' representations and Natural England's comments on them

Representation number:	MCA/SCS5/R/3/3332
Organisation/ person making representation:	Historic England – [redacted]
Route section(s) specific to this representation:	SCS-5-S057 to S062
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates:	N/A
Representation in full	
Historic England has no issues with, or objection to, the Coast Path proposals as they affect the scheduled Cark Airfield.	
Natural England's comments	
Natural England is grateful to Historic England for this confirmation.	
Relevant appended documents (see section 5):	
None	

Representation number:	MCA/SCS5/R/4/3229
Organisation/ person making representation:	Ramblers – [redacted]
Route section(s) specific to this representation:	Full Report
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates:	N/A
Representation in full	
<p>We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S001 to SCS-5-S002.</p> <p>SCS-5-S003 to SCS-5-S017: We are strongly against this proposal because:</p> <p>a) This proposed route is exceedingly difficult to walk where it is rocky and most people using this currently permitted route go onto the sands below. There is a proposed Directive banning walkers from the sands.</p> <p>b) S004 is on saltmarsh which has two gullies up which the tide creeps, potentially trapping walkers. There is also a small but important area of reedbed which deteriorating due to the current usage of this permitted route.</p> <p>c) S012 to S017 (as far as where this track passes under the overhead power lines) cannot be considered as a coastal route and therefore we suggest it does not fulfil the Approved Scheme criteria.</p> <p>d) The reasons given by NE for not taking an alternative route (other options SCS 5a and 5b re S011 to S018 in para 5.3.3. of their report) are untenable. There would be an absolutely minimal, if any, impact on flora. We understand there is no record of rare or unusual species in this location; and the route is largely one that is already walked. The sea defence embankment to the east of Mearness is used for rough shooting and walkers would cause significantly less disturbance. Indeed, in other parts of England such wall tops are to be used for the ECP through the heart of bird Nature Reserves.</p>	

- e) There are issues of conflict of use between vehicles, cyclists and walkers at S015 and, particularly, S016 due to the narrow and undulating metalled road having poor sight lines. See also our representation in respect of the route encompassing the whole of the Leven Estuary.
- f) We understand that during earlier consultations NE, as site managers, agreed a route similar to our suggestion. It is our view that the current proposed route fails the requirement of adhering to 'the periphery of the coast' and consequently to the principle of s297 (2) of the 2009 Act.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S018 to SCS-5-S025.

SCS-5-S026 to SCS-5-S028: We are strongly against this proposal. This is another tidally affected section on the Leven Estuary (see our separate representation). We note that NE have concerns about this part of the route and have therefore provided an alternative route. We ask that NE reconsider placing SCS-5-S026 and S027 in the adjacent fields (seaward edge).

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S029 to SCS-5-S030.

SCS-5-S031 to SCS-5-S032 We are strongly against this proposal and ask that NE consider a route closer to the coast. We acknowledge that some seasonal closures of this section would be required, and the proposed route would then be available as an alternative route. The route we propose largely makes use of an existing path, which is well-used by both local residents and caravan site clients. See also our separate representation on proposed Directions in this area.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S033 to SCS-5-S038.

SCS-5-S039 to SCS-5-S046: We are not convinced that the main route should go through Cark but accept NE's proposals could form part of the alternative route. We consider that the main route of the ECP should cross the existing bridge situated between SCS-5-S038 and SCS-5-S047. Even if this was not waymarked as the ECP, we strongly suspect that many walkers would take this option. It is therefore in the interest of the landowner and tenant if this position was regularised.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S047 to SCS-5-S049.

SCS-5-S050 to SCS-5-S055: We are strongly against this proposal due to the unsuitable nature of walking surfaces and tidal overwash of the proposed route (see our representation on the overall route around the Leven Estuary). Additionally, the route goes through an alleged illegal reclamation site where heavy vehicles are not infrequently churning up the existing foreshore path and making the path virtually unusable (SCS-5-S054 south of Canon Winder Farm). For most, but not all, of this route (e.g. passing Canon Winder Farm) the ECP should be above the direct tidal affected sections on the seaward margin of adjacent fields. This may make the route installation and maintenance less costly.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S056 to SCS-5-S058.

SCS-5-S059 to SCS-5-S068: We are strongly against this and propose a route on the embankment top (according to the principle set in other more sensitive sections of the ECP in other parts of England). This is because:

- a) The confinement of people by fences (which are, in locally similar situations, noted as places where deer cross onto the saltmarsh and are not infrequently badly injured or killed) is unacceptable and especially when (on S061 to S062) walkers would have to look at the unsightly mass of a huge caravan park.
- b) The choice of route, by NE, ignores the significant current public use of the area around Rougholme Point.
- c) This area is also of significant geological interest.
- d) The road route is potential one of conflict of walkers, cyclists and motorists and is usually best avoided. We have not seen any risk assessment for this part of the route.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S069 to SCS-5-S072.

SCS-5-S073 to SCS-5-S075 We are strongly against this proposal this part of the route. We strongly suggest that the route should be direct between SCS-5-S072 and S076. This field is small, with limited

grass, and consequently rarely used for stock grazing whilst the proposed route (especially S074) has grazing cattle for much of the year.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S076 to SCS-5-S092 provided that the issue of slurry coming over the path by Wyke Farm has been solved. We have heard of one walker getting waist deep into such an unhealthy morass. Despite previous reporting of this issue to Cumbria CC and the Environment Agency, the problem has been a potential hazard to walkers for decades.

Natural England's comments

Natural England is grateful to the Ramblers for the message of support for parts of the proposals. The proposed route in the vicinity of Mearness follows a popular existing path, before being obliged to turn in land, so as to avoid areas which are likely to be impacted by a new right of access. We acknowledge that the area of Mearness Point is susceptible to coastal change and that we are likely to need to consider roll-back in this location in the future.

We further acknowledge that the route towards and through Roudsea Wood & Mosses National Nature Reserve is not particularly close to the coast and often does not offer views to the coast. However, we concluded that this was the best option as a result of our Habitats Regulations Assessment. Whilst the principle of a new route in the open corridor under the power lines was accepted, the extent of works that would have been required to bring this up to the required standard was not deemed acceptable.

South of the woodland, the only part of the proposed route that is likely to be tidally affected with any regularity is SDC-5-S026 to S027. Elsewhere, the main route sits mainly on dry land above the foreshore.

We explored all options for a route closer to the coast around Barker Scar, but concluded that none of these were viable for reasons including land management and habitual standing water.

The proposed route south of Cark follows an existing public right of way, which we believe to be suitable, with some improvements. We do not believe that it would strike a fair balance if we had proposed an entirely new route through fields above the foreshore, given the nearby public right of way.

The alignment of the main route east of Cark airfield was guided by the conclusions of our Habitats Regulations Assessment and Nature Conservation Assessment, taking into account the risk of disturbance to key bird species on the marsh and around the seaward flanks of the flood embankments.

East of Humphry Head Outdoor Centre, a main route alignment close to the coast was ruled out on grounds of land management and safety of walkers, given the relatively small size of the grazing enclosure.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5):

None

Representation number:	MCA/SCS5/R/5/0016
Organisation/ person making representation:	The Open Spaces Society – [redacted]
Route section(s) specific to this representation:	Full Report
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates:	N/A
Representation in full	
We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S001 to SCS-5-S002.	
SCS-5-S003 to SCS-5-S017: We are strongly against this proposal because:	
a) This proposed route is exceedingly difficult to walk where it is rocky and most people using this currently permitted route go onto the sands below. There is a proposed Directive banning walkers from the sands.	
b) S004 is on saltmarsh which has two gullies up which the tide creeps, potentially trapping walkers. There is also a small but important area of reedbed which deteriorating due to the current usage of this permitted route.	

- c) S012 to S017 (as far as where this track passes under the overhead power lines) cannot be considered as a coastal route and therefore we suggest it does not fulfil the Approved Scheme criteria.
- d) The reasons given by NE for not taking an alternative route (other options SCS 5a and 5b re S011 to S018 in para 5.3.3. of their report) are untenable. There would be an absolutely minimal, if any, impact on flora. We understand there is no record of rare or unusual species in this location; and the route is largely one that is already walked. The sea defence embankment to the east of Mearness is used for rough shooting and walkers would cause significantly less disturbance. Indeed, in other parts of England such wall tops are to be used for the ECP through the heart of bird Nature Reserves.
- e) There are issues of conflict of use between vehicles, cyclists and walkers at S015 and, particularly, S016 due to the narrow and undulating metalled road having poor sight lines. See also our representation in respect of the route encompassing the whole of the Leven Estuary.
- f) We understand that during earlier consultations NE, as site managers, agreed a route similar to our suggestion. It is our view that the current proposed route fails the requirement of adhering to 'the periphery of the coast' and consequently to the principle of s297 (2) of the 2009 Act.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S018 to SCS-5-S025.

SCS-5-S026 to SCS-5-S028: We are strongly against this proposal. This is another tidally affected section on the Leven Estuary (see our separate representation). We note that NE have concerns about this part of the route and have therefore provided an alternative route. We ask that NE reconsider placing SCS-5-S026 and S027 in the adjacent fields (seaward edge).

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S029 to SCS-5-S030.

SCS-5-S031 to SCS-5-S032 We are strongly against this proposal and ask that NE consider a route closer to the coast. We acknowledge that some seasonal closures of this section would be required, and the proposed route would then be available as an alternative route. The route we propose largely makes use of an existing path, which is well-used by both local residents and caravan site clients. See also our separate representation on proposed Directions in this area.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S033 to SCS-5-S038.

SCS-5-S039 to SCS-5-S046: We are not convinced that the main route should go through Cark but accept NE's proposals could form part of the alternative route. We consider that the main route of the ECP should cross the existing bridge situated between SCS-5-S038 and SCS-5-S047. Even if this was not waymarked as the ECP, we strongly suspect that many walkers would take this option. It is therefore in the interest of the landowner and tenant if this position was regularised.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S047 to SCS-5-S049.

SCS-5-S050 to SCS-5-S055: We are strongly against this proposal due to the unsuitable nature of walking surfaces and tidal overwash of the proposed route (see our representation on the overall route around the Leven Estuary). Additionally, the route goes through an alleged illegal reclamation site where heavy vehicles are not infrequently churning up the existing foreshore path and making the path virtually unusable (SCS-5-S054 south of Canon Winder Farm). For most, but not all, of this route (e.g. passing Canon Winder Farm) the ECP should be above the direct tidal affected sections on the seaward margin of adjacent fields. This may make the route installation and maintenance less costly.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S056 to SCS-5-S058.

SCS-5-S059 to SCS-5-S068: We are strongly against this and propose a route on the embankment top (according to the principle set in other more sensitive sections of the ECP in other parts of England). This is because:

- a) The confinement of people by fences (which are, in locally similar situations, noted as places where deer cross onto the saltmarsh and are not infrequently badly injured or killed) is unacceptable and especially when (on S061 to S062) walkers would have to look at the unsightly mass of a huge caravan park.
- b) The choice of route, by NE, ignores the significant current public use of the area around Rougholme Point.

- c) This area is also of significant geological interest.
d) The road route is potential one of conflict of walkers, cyclists and motorists and is usually best avoided. We have not seen any risk assessment for this part of the route.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S069 to SCS-5-S072.

SCS-5-S073 to SCS-5-S075 We are strongly against this proposal this part of the route. We strongly suggest that the route should be direct between SCS-5-S072 and S076. This field is small, with limited grass, and consequently rarely used for stock grazing whilst the proposed route (especially S074) has grazing cattle for much of the year.

We support NE's proposals for SCS-5-S076 to SCS-5-S092 provided that the issue of slurry coming over the path by Wyke Farm has been solved. We have heard of one walker getting waist deep into such an unhealthy morass. Despite previous reporting of this issue to Cumbria CC and the Environment Agency, the problem has been a potential hazard to walkers for decades.

Natural England's comments

Natural England is grateful to the Open Spaces Society for the message of support for parts of the proposals.

The proposed route in the vicinity of Mearness follows a popular existing path, before being obliged to turn in land, so as to avoid areas which are likely to be impacted by a new right of access. We acknowledge that the area of Mearness Point is susceptible to coastal change and that we are likely to need to consider roll-back in this location in the future.

We further acknowledge that the route towards and through Roudsea Wood & Mosses National Nature Reserve is not particularly close to the coast and often does not offer views to the coast. However, we concluded that this was the best option as a result of our Habitats Regulations Assessment. Whilst the principle of a new route in the open corridor under the power lines was accepted, the extent of works that would have been required to bring this up to the required standard was not deemed acceptable.

South of the woodland, the only part of the proposed route that is likely to be tidally affected with any regularity is SDC-5-S026 to S027. Elsewhere, the main route sits mainly on dry land above the foreshore.

We explored all options for a route closer to the coast around Barker Scar, but concluded that none of these were viable for reasons including land management and habitual standing water.

The proposed route south of Cark follows an existing public right of way, which we believe to be suitable, with some improvements. We do not believe that it would strike a fair balance if we had proposed an entirely new route through fields above the foreshore, given the nearby public right of way.

The alignment of the main route east of Cark airfield was guided by the conclusions of our Habitats Regulations Assessment and Nature Conservation Assessment, taking into account the risk of disturbance to key bird species on the marsh and around the seaward flanks of the flood embankments.

East of Humphry Head Outdoor Centre, a main route alignment close to the coast was ruled out on grounds of land management and safety of walkers, given the relatively small size of the grazing enclosure.

Relevant appended documents (see section 5):

None

4. Summary of 'other' representations making non-common points, and Natural England's comments on them

Representation ID:	MCA/SCS5/R/1/3247
Organisation/ person making representation:	Lower Holker Parish Council – [redacted]

Name of site:	Lower Holker Parish, including the villages of Cark, Flookburgh, Holker & Ravenstown and surrounding farmland.
Report map reference:	Map SCS 5f (Holker Quarry) to 5n (Holly Well Lane via Willow Lane)
Route sections on or adjacent to the land:	SCS-5-S036 to S066
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates	N/A
Summary of representation: The Parish Council expresses support for our proposals, but then expresses some concern for the safety of walkers on those parts of the route on the shoreline. It goes on to support inclusion of alternative routes and encourages installation of clear and effective signage to counter any such risk.	
Natural England's comment: Natural England is grateful for the message of support from the Parish Council. In fact, few parts of the route in this area are obviously affected by tidal inundation, although some sections may be impacted by spring tides and occasional flooding of low-lying areas just inland. The proposed route is, for the most part, either at the landward edge of coastal salt marsh, or at the seaward edge of land just above the coast. As has been recognised by the representation, we have proposed a series of optional alternative routes, which should allow continuous and safe access for walkers in all reasonably foreseeable situations. We agree that clear and effective signage is essential, and will be expecting to develop and install this as part of our establishment works. Signs will include information on tides and optional alternative routes, where appropriate.	
Relevant appended documents (see Section 5): None	

Representation ID:	MCA/SCS5/R/2/3364
Organisation/ person making representation:	United Utilities – [redacted]
Name of site:	Not specified
Report map reference:	Not specified
Route sections on or adjacent to the land:	SCS-5-S080 to S083
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates	N/A
Summary of representation: The representation suggests a modification to the route, away from the access road to the United Utilities compound, in order to protect the assets.	
Natural England's comment: Natural England is confident that there will be no significant risk posed to United Utilities' operations by the proposed route, which lies outside of the compound perimeter.	
Relevant appended documents (see Section 5): United Utilities Grange over Sands WwTW – Proposed route amendment	

Coastal Access – Silecroft to Silverdale

Representations on modification report SCS-MR1 (Abbot Hall) and Natural England’s comments

May 2025

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5. Introduction

This document details representations we have received on the stated coastal access report. These fall into two categories:

- Representations received from persons or bodies that must be sent in full to the Secretary of State (‘full’ representations, reproduced below); and
- Those which have not come from those persons or bodies whose representations we are required to send in full to the Secretary of State (‘other’ representations, summarised below).

It also sets out any comments that Natural England choose to make in response to these representations.

6. Background

Natural England’s modification report setting out changes to its proposals for improved access to the coast in the vicinity of Abbot Hall, Kents Bank (part of the SCS5: Greenodd footbridge to Kents Bank length), was submitted to the Secretary of State on 26th March 2025. This began an eight-week period during which representations and objections about the report could be made.

In relation to the medication report, Natural England received three representations, of which two 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 3 of this document together with Natural England’s comments where relevant.

As required by the legislation this document also summarises and, where relevant, comments on the one representation submitted by other individuals or organisations, referred to here as ‘other’ representations. Natural England’s comments on ‘other’ representations are set out in Section 4 of this document.

Before making a determination in respect of a coastal access report, the Secretary of State must consider all ‘full’ representations and our summary of ‘other’ representations, together with Natural England’s comments on each.

7. Record of ‘full’ representations and Natural England’s comments on them

Representation number:	MCA/SCS-MR1/R/1/3229
Organisation/ person making representation:	[redacted] (Ramblers/Open Spaces Society)
Route section(s) specific to this representation:	Not specified
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates:	N/A
Representation in full	
<p>Both the Ramblers (Lake District Area) and Open Spaces Society note the need for the proposed modification. We think the existing route could still be compatible with the changed circumstances but accept its implementation could prove contrary to the Scheme. We therefore support the chosen route.</p> <p>Both bodies are hugely disappointed that the area covered by the Limestone Pavement Order was not included in the landward margin of the new route. This land appears to have been erroneously omitted from mapping of s1 following CROW, 2000. The area appears well walked by local residents and a Stravo map should illustrate this.</p> <p>Both organisations again take exception to the exclusion of land in Morecambe Bay under s25A. Part off this foreshore is well walked, it has an interesting flora to view, and includes a PROW. It is also used by thousands of people each year during cross-bay walks.</p>	
Natural England’s comments	
<p>Natural England is grateful to the Ramblers/Open Spaces Society for the views expressed. We also note the opinion expressed with regards to the area covered by the Limestone Pavement Order and suggest that this might be raised again during the forthcoming review of the CROW s4 maps.</p>	
Relevant appended documents (see section 6): None	

Representation number:	MCA/SCS-MR1/R/3/3332
Organisation/ person making representation:	[redacted] (Historic England)

Route section(s) specific to this representation:	Not specified
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates:	N/A
Representation in full	
In the opinion of Historic England, the proposed modification would have no impact upon designated heritage assets or their settings, or upon the wider historic environment. We therefore have no objection to what is proposed.	
Natural England's comments	
Natural England is grateful to Historic England for this confirmation.	
Relevant appended documents (see section 6): None	

8. Summary of 'other' representations, and Natural England's comments on them

Representation ID:	MCA/SCS-MR1/R/2/3447
Organisation/ person making representation:	[redacted] (Disabled Ramblers)
Name of site:	Abbot Hall and vicinity
Report map reference:	SCS-MR1a
Route sections on or adjacent to the land:	SCS-MR1-S001 to S005
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates	N/A
Summary of representation:	
The representation requests that due consideration is given to the installation of a ramp instead of steps, and also that advice provided in the attached document is followed in relation to the installation of gaps and gates.	
Natural England's comment:	
Natural England is grateful for the advice provided by the Disabled Ramblers and confirms that it will discuss these matters with the relevant local authority, prior to any establishment works being planned	

in detail or delivered. The local authority is bound by the Equality Act and associated public sector duty, so can be expected to deliver the most accessible route possible in this area.

Relevant appended documents (see Section 6):

Man-made barriers and Least Restrictive Access – V2 Sept 2024