

Coastal Access – Cleveleys to Pier Head, Liverpool

Representations on CPH-VR31: Douglas Boatyard and Natural England’s comments

26 January 2026

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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

On 10th May 2023, Coastal Access rights commenced between Tarleton Lock and Pier Head, Liverpool, on the length of coast covered by subreports CPH4-6 of Natural England’s compendium of reports for the wider Cleveleys to Pier Head, Liverpool stretch. Subsequently, Variation Report VR31: Douglas Boatyard was published on 27 November 2025. This began an eight week period during which representations and objections about the Variation Report could be made.

In relation to Variation Report CPH-VR31: Douglas Boatyard, Natural England received 4 representations, of which 1 was 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 3 representations submitted by other individuals or organisations, referred to here as ‘other’ representations. Of those 3 ‘other’ representations, all contain similar or identical points. Natural England’s comments on ‘other’ representations are set out in two parts:

1. The recurring themes in the 3 ‘other’ representations have been summarised in section 4 as 3 points, each with our comments on them.
2. Any of the same ‘other’ representations that make other, non-common points are then commented on separately in section 5 alongside any remaining ‘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/CPH-VR31/R/1/1628
Organisation/ person making representation:	[redacted], Open Spaces Society
Route section(s) specific to this representation:	Full report
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates:	N/A

Representation in full

The Open Spaces Society have not yet been able to re-visit the site and, if we can do so within the specified time of this consultation, may send an amending representation.

The OSS have no objection in principle to the realignment of the KC111ECP as proposed in this variation report.

There are two matters which we think need clarification.

We note that the proposed new line largely accords with PROW fp 0810046 but the variation map shows some braiding of routes and the Report, Para 2.3 table states this is not an existing walked route. It is suggested that NE need to work with LCC to ensure there is clarity and cohesion on this matter.

We have been unable to fully clarify the position on spreading room. We assume that the line between the proposed new route [CPH-VR31-S001 to S003] and the existing route will be spreading room but not east of the current open line of the ECP. Help in clarifying our understanding of this matter would be appreciated.

Natural England's comments

We thank the OSS for their representation, which has not been superseded by any further replacement or supplementary representation, and also thank them for the support for the proposed new alignment.

PROW 0810046

NE are working closely with the access authority and the landowner to resolve the issues around the footpath alignment and bring both the KC111ECP and PROW into harmony, as illustrated in more detail in the landowner's representation and our response to it, below.

Spreading room

Everything landward of the trail will become Coastal Margin. Whether the boatyard itself remains covered by Coastal Access rights (i.e. 'spreading room') will depend on its boundaries, the extent of any excepted land should boundaries be amended, and any necessary changes to operations once the trail has been realigned, subject to the landowner's site management needs and risk assessments. We have commented further on potential outcomes in our response to the landowner's representations below.

Relevant appended documents (see section 6):

N/A

4. Summary of any similar or identical points within ‘other’ representations, and Natural England’s comments on them

Representations containing similar or identical points	
Representation ID	Organisation/ person making representation:
MCA/CPH-VR31/R/4/1692	[redacted], Douglas Boatyard (landowner)
MCA/CPH-VR31/R/2/1696	[redacted], Beconsall Heritage Park CIC
MCA/CPH-VR31/R/3/0810	[redacted] (member of the public; owner on different part of the KCIIECP)
Name of site:	Full report
Report map reference:	Map VR31
Route sections on or adjacent to the land:	All sections
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates	N/A
Summary of point:	
<p>Support for new line of trail as proposed in the Variation Report</p> <p>All respondees offer strong support for the proposed new alignment of the walked line through the boatyard, and consequently the KCIIECP, due to concerns around the safety of walkers using the existing walked line and established KCIIECP through the middle of the boatyard, and the increase in footfall since the completion of a new housing estate, the nearby Henry Alt Way (an accessible footpath coinciding with the KCIIECP), the KCIIECP opening, and the Covid-19 lockdowns.</p>	
Natural England’s comment:	
<p>We are grateful for the local support for this new route and agree the majority of the new line will be a much more pleasant and safe walking experience.</p> <p>As the landowner has commented in most detail on this topic, and further developments have occurred, we deal with this topic in more detail in response to the landowner’s representation below.</p>	

Relevant appended documents (see Section 6):

N/A

Representations containing similar or identical points

Representation ID	Organisation/ person making representation:
MCA/CPH-VR31/R/4/1692	[redacted], Douglas Boatyard (landowner)
MCA/CPH-VR31/R/2/1696	[redacted], Beconsall Heritage Park CIC
MCA/CPH-VR31/R/3/0810	[redacted] (member of the public; owner on different part of the KCIIECP)
Name of site:	Full report
Report map reference:	Map VR31
Route sections on or adjacent to the land:	All sections
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates	N/A

Summary of point:

Installation of a fence

All 3 ‘other’ representations support the notion of a fence separating the trail from the boatyard for the safety of walkers and to prevent boatyard equipment encroaching on the path.

Natural England’s comment:

Many of the risks referred to are present currently, such as the ability for children and dogs to run between boats, moving vehicles, and the nature of the boat struts and supports. Therefore, the realignment of the path alone is a significant improvement, regardless of any fence installation. The realignment is carried out due to the landowner’s desire to amend the line of the Public Right of Way, and there is no reason to suggest a fence would be more necessary on the new line than the present line, and no requirement on NE to pay for such a fence – we would have not done so in other similar circumstances. There are however alternative access management measures such as clear signage which we would deem adequate in this scenario, and we have dealt with these in more detail in response the landowner’s more detailed representation below.

Relevant appended documents (see Section 6):

N/A

Representations containing similar or identical points

Representation ID	Organisation/ person making representation:
MCA/CPH-VR31/R/4/1692	[redacted], Douglas Boatyard (landowner)
MCA/CPH-VR31/R/2/1696	[redacted], Becconsall Heritage Park CIC
MCA/CPH-VR31/R/3/0810	[redacted] (member of the public; owner on different part of the KCIIECP)
Name of site:	Full report
Report map reference:	Map VR31
Route sections on or adjacent to the land:	All sections
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates	N/A

Summary of point:

Permissive access from Becconsall Lane

All 3 'other' representations note that permissive access is currently provided from the end of Becconsall Lane, adjacent to Becconsall Old Church, into the boatyard, so that walkers can join the current path there. Further comments on the value of this connection are presented in the Becconsall Heritage Park's representation below; and further comments on the landowner's intentions around this connection are detailed in his representation below.

Natural England's comment:

This is a key access point for local walkers wishing to join the pre-existing path south through the boatyard or north east onto the floodbank, and so we recognise its value to the local community and links to the Becconsall Heritage Park. However, it does not form part of the KCIIECP itself and as such will be for the boatyard and local authority to discuss outside of the remit of the Variation Report.

Relevant appended documents (see Section 6):

N/A

5. Summary of ‘other’ representations making non-common points, and Natural England’s comments on them

Representation ID:	MCA/CPH-VR31/R/4/1692
Organisation/ person making representation:	[redacted], Douglas Marine Ltd (Landowner)
Name of site:	Full report
Report map reference:	Map VR31
Route sections on or adjacent to the land:	CPH-VR31-S001 to S003
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates	N/A
Summary of representation:	
<p><i>Note: Although representations from landowners are not required to be included in full here, we have done so out of respect for the landowner and the detail included within his representation.</i></p> <p>For the proposed change to be effective in achieving its goal of providing a “clear and safe” footpath through a working boatyard, the establishment work to be implemented and funded by Natural England (NE) should include a secure fence along the full extent of the newly proposed sections of trail, except for the existing gated section which provides access from Becconsall Lane into the boatyard.</p> <p>In support of my representation, I address the reasons for it in greater detail below.</p> <p>By implementing the new route referenced in the VR, together with the inclusion of a security fence along the full extent of the trail, it will have a clear benefit over the existing route as it will significantly improve privacy, security and safety.</p>	

However, if a fence is not installed as part of the implementation, it means that walkers using the King Charles III England Coast Path (KCIIIIECP) will be able to continue to walk along the existing line; therefore, rendering the new route as defined in the VR ineffective.

In addition to the KCIIIIECP, there is an existing Public Right of Way (PRoW) that historically passed through Douglas Boatyard on the landward side of the boatyard where it ascends a steep banking before exiting the boatyard onto public land. Due to heavy overgrowth, together with the steepness and the deterioration of the banking over many years, the path has become unusable and would not be feasible to utilise the route for the KCIIIIECP or the PRoW.

As the boatyard owners we have engaged with the Access Authority and have agreed in principle, that the existing PRoW will be realigned with the line proposed in this Variation Report. This will mean that both the PRoW and the KCIIIIECP will follow the same line. The new trail will create a pleasant and uninterrupted walking experience which if fenced off will offer a safe route that is clear of any obstructions and has improved links to the local community and facilities.

There is currently no recorded PRoW from Beconsall Lane that provides access through Douglas Boatyard to the KCIIIIECP.

Beconsall Lane is the main point of entry and exit to the KCIIIIECP for most walkers.

To date, public wishing to access the KCIIIIECP has been given “Permissive” rights to pass through the gate into Douglas Boatyard where they can then join the KCIIIIECP. Due to the increased number of people now using the KCIIIIECP, it is having a substantial impact on the business of the boatyard to such an extent that if a safe and satisfactory solution for the KCIIIIECP cannot be agreed it is likely that permission will be rescinded. If this VR is implemented, together with the inclusion of a security fence along the new route, it will provide a permanent solution to this issue.

Assuming the route proposed in the VR is implemented, it means the footpath will be located outside the existing entrance of the boatyard, thereby giving direct access to the public wishing to join the coastal path from Beconsall Lane without the need to gain access through the main boatyard gateway.

Despite the footpath being outside the gate, it will still be located on the property of Douglas Boatyard. However, once the trail is implemented and fenced off from Douglas Boatyard, it will enable the Access Authority to establish a new public right of way from Beconsall Lane, thus ensuring any future boatyard owner does not obstruct access to the path.

Douglas Boatyard provides moorings and storage on land for 130 privately owned leisure craft.

There are 3 work sheds and multiple containers/storage units around the property.

There are 4 residential caravans which were granted a “Certificate of Lawfulness” in 1993.

The existing route of the KCIIIIECP is routed through the centre of the boatyard along what was originally a Permissive footpath.

The route through the centre of the boatyard is currently the only means of access through the property and is used by the boatyards heavy plant machinery; it is also used for vehicular access by all boat owners, caravan residents, and pedestrians using the KCIIECP.

The day-to-day business of the boatyard involves frequent movement of boats using a 30 tonne crane, forklift, tractors and trailers. Despite carefully controlled use of heavy plant machinery, walkers along the KCIIECP are often unaware of the apparent dangers and frequently put themselves in potentially dangerous positions. The presence of walkers around the machinery is a significant risk to their safety as well as a great concern to the boatyard staff that must cease operations immediately.

All boats and caravans are privately owned. The owners are free to work on their boats without any constraints in relation to weekdays or business hours. It is therefore quite normal for owners to engage in DIY activities during the weekend, early evenings, or at other times when use of the KCIIECP may be at its busiest.

The work undertaken by owners frequently includes the use of power tools, welding equipment, spraying and painting, or cables and hoses lay along the ground. As these activities are undertaken by private individuals, they are not covered by the HSE guidelines, and they do pose a significant risk to the public using the existing line of the KCIIECP.

Both the caravan owners and all boat owners are free to access the boatyard anytime and usually do so by car which creates a further safety issue along the narrow path of the KCIIECP.

The boatyard has been established as a marina for recreational sailing craft for over 100 years.

All vessels stored on the hardstanding use the traditional method of support which involves wooden props to keep the vessels upright.

Most of the boats are stored close to each other, which means there is little or no space to walk between them.

The boatyard is also full of other property/obstructions which may present a danger if the public do not stick to the footpath.

Since opening of the KCIIECP, the number of people using the path has greatly increased, including the number of dog walkers and small children accompanying their parents. Despite signs that dogs should be kept on a lead, many are let loose. It is not uncommon to see dogs and children running in and out of the props underneath the boats without any awareness of the inherent danger.

With the increase of footfall there has also been a significant increase in the minor damage and theft of property belonging to the boat owners.

By moving the trail from the centre of the boatyard to the landward side of the property it significantly increases the "Margin" of the KCIIECP to cover the entire curtilage of the boatyard.

If the new trail is not fenced off it means the public are free to walk via any route from the KCIIECP to the water's edge. This means that the public have a legal entitlement to walk

between the boats and many other obstructions that are within the boatyard in order that they can walk to the water's edge.

If pedestrians walk between the boats that are stored close together, they will be subjected to many hazards and may be unsighted by the heavy plant or other vehicles using the road at the centre of the boatyard. This situation would seriously contravene HSE guidelines.

In consideration of whether a security fence should be installed as part of the new VR, a Health and Safety risk assessment was completed in relation to the dangers the public would potentially be subjected to:

If a security fence "is not" installed, there is a "High" probability that an incident will occur involving a member of the public in the boatyard. Should an incident occur the resulting injury to a member of the public will likely have a "Severe" outcome.

If a security fence "is" installed there is a "Low" probability that an incident will occur involving a member of the public in the boatyard. Should an incident occur the resulting injury to a member of the public will likely have a "Low" impact since they will only have access to the office and controlled public areas of the boatyard, which are not subject to boat or vehicular movements.

To address the issues of public safety, business impact, and restricted access to the KCIIECP, Douglas Boatyard have undertaken the following so that the new trail reflected in the VR can be implemented:

- Douglas Boatyard will "set aside" a strip of land with a minimum width of 2 metres along the landward boundary of the boatyard which is approximately 400 metres in length.
- Douglas Boatyard will remove all vessels and obstructions along the proposed new trail.
- Douglas Boatyard will level the 400m strip of land.

Despite the new trail remaining on Douglas Boatyard property, it will be routed so that it crosses over the boatyard entrance on the outside of the boatyard security gate.

Once the new route of the VR is established, the 400m strip of land on the landward side of the new boundary fence could then be permanently "Dedicated" under section 16 of the CROW Act.

Once the trail is established with a fence and the gate that clearly demarks the KCIIECP from the boatyard, it means the boatyard buildings and curtilage can be considered as "Excepted" land.

The KCIIECP provides a low level of occupier liability for landowners, which means the boatyard would generally not be responsible for injuries or damages caused by features on the land of the whole boatyard.

Occupier liability does not cover Excepted land which means if a fence is erected as part of the VR, it would reduce NE's liability to the KCIIECP trail itself instead of the whole curtilage of the boatyard.

Implementation of the existing route did not consider the adverse impact of privacy and security on the occupiers of the 4 residential caravans.

The position of the caravans is well documented and is shown on maps used by NE (due to the scale of the map attached to the VR, the line depicting the proposed route obscures their location).

A statutory notice was not sent to the residents, but they are now fully informed and in support of the changes proposed in this VR.

The existing route passes directly in front of the caravans with no separation from the path to protect the privacy and security of the occupiers.

It is not uncommon for inquisitive walkers using the KCIIECP to look through the caravan windows.

There have been numerous instances of minor damage and theft of property belonging to both the caravan residents and boat owners alike.

The proposed line of the VR is a significant improvement as it runs behind the caravans. However, the path is still adjacent to the caravans so to protect everyone's privacy and security it essential that a fence is erected between the boatyard and the KCIIECP.

Furthermore, whilst a fence would restrict walkers from direct access to the caravans, it is requested that along a 50-metre stretch at the southern end of the boatyard, where the caravans back directly up to the path, that the fence be of a "privacy fence" type, to further protect the privacy of the caravan residents.

Douglas Marine Limited is the business name under which the boatyard operates in what can be described as a struggling leisure industry.

Douglas Marine can ill afford to undertake the realignment of the KCIIECP which has an estimated capital cost to the business of £57,000 in order just to clear the line of the new path.

Douglas Marine has taken a substantial loan to complete this work; and it is likely to take several years to repay it.

In addition to the capital cost, there is the ongoing yearly cost to the business from the loss of earnings due to the setting aside of a 2-metre strip of land spanning the 400-metre length of the boatyard.

The path has resulted in the loss of more than 800 square metres of land that could have generated a substantial yearly rental income from boat storage. Additionally, the average length of boat that can be stored on the hardstanding has been reduced by 2 metres thereby limiting the operational capabilities of the boatyard.

At this time, the business of Douglas Marine cannot afford to fence off the KCIIECP. This means that if NE does not fund the installation of a fence as part of the implementation, it will likely be several years where the public are free to roam the whole Margin within the boatyard which will subject them to the associated dangers.

Natural England's comment:

With respect for the landowner of all the land covered by the Variation Report, we have included the representation in full above. Whilst the representation fully supports the realignment of the trail, its key point is the desire for a fence to separate the trail and the boatyard.

Variation of the trail alignment

We acknowledge the owner's support for the variation to the line of the trail. The variation was developed in support of the owner's existing desire to realign the existing Public Footpath and currently walked line to the landward side of the boatyard for operational and safety reasons.

For clarity, this Variation Report does not result from a safety or risk assessment on Natural England or Lancashire County Council's part, but from the landowner's own assessments that increasing footfall may cause an increased risk to the public walking through this working site and have an impact on the operation of the boatyard, and as a result he wished to divert the currently mapped (unwalkable) Public Right of Way through his land to a line at the rear of the boatyard, and to move the current permissive path onto this. Consequently, there would be grounds for the KCIIECP to move onto this line so as to prevent multiple walked lines through the site.

As a working boatyard with an existing well-walked line through the middle, all pre-dating the KCIIECP, any safety and risk assessments are the landowner/business operator's responsibility, as is the responsibility to manage the site accordingly to minimise risks to the public whilst access is in place. The KCIIECP route alignment assumes this management is in place. Section 305 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 also clarifies the position on Natural England's liability in relation to the law of negligence, stating that no duty of care is owed by NE under the law of negligence in submitting our proposals.

These discussions began some time back and Natural England had always agreed that should the PROW be moved, we would assist with the cost of establishing the path as we can see the benefit of the new route to the public. However, as the process of diverting the PROW has not progressed as quickly as anticipated, we are now nearing the end of the KCIIECP establishment process and do not have funds available beyond the end of this financial year. Without taking action now, the cost of all works to establish a new PROW would fall to the landowner and the KCIIECP variation would be a formality to re-map it to the new PROW. As such, we agreed an approach with the owner whereby we would prioritise a Variation Report for the KCIIECP and establishment of the trail to the standards (2m width, surfacing etc.) required by LCC for a diverted PROW, and on the proviso that they would support a PROW diversion. This was also on the proviso that should any issues arise during exploratory clearance works and while the VR was awaiting approval, these could impact whether the variation could ultimately be approved.

We asked the landowner to move a number of boats and equipment so that it would be possible to assess this line. We recognise that a great deal of work has been carried out and we are grateful for his cooperation. Tree and ground clearance works have also been carried out by the landowner (not requested by NE and LCC), which raised a few issues since the

Variation Report was published. Most of these have been resolved following site visits with West Lancashire Borough Council's tree and environmental health officers. However, Lancashire County Council have confirmed they no longer support a diverted PROW on a part of the line to the south of site, landward of residential caravans. This is primarily due to a recent reassessment of DEFRA guidance relating to diversions and privacy, but concerns around bank stabilisation, despite the owner's offers to carry out remedial works, do remain. Additionally, the section in question does not sit within the main operational area of the boatyard, and is thus not subject to the same level of interaction with works on the site. Regardless, as the main objective of this Variation Report is to bring the KCIIECP and likely future route of the PROW together, we no longer feel it appropriate for the varied route to be approved in this location., meaning the existing walked line seaward of the caravans now remains, in our view, the most fairly balanced route choice.

For clarity, an updated map is provided, with trail section CPH-VR31-S001 now split into CPH-VR31-S001a and S001b. Our recommendation to the Secretary of State is that trail sections CPH-VR31-S001b, S002 and S003 are approved, with S001a left unapproved until such time as a permanent solution can be formalised. In the interim, we will work with the landowner to enact a temporary link between trail section S001b and the existing path seaward of the caravans (trail section CPH-4-S016 in our original proposals). This means that establishment works on the vast majority of the trail may be carried out whilst budgets are in place, such that only a short section is left subject to permanent formalisation, still vastly reducing the overall expense which would have fallen entirely to the landowner had we waited for the PROW realignment to be actioned and confirmed.

Security fence

Many of the risks referred to are present currently, such as the ability for children and dogs to run between boats, moving vehicles, and the nature of the boat struts and supports. Indeed, on a number of a site visits, a crane has been sited across the track (technically obstructing the KCIIECP), forcing walkers to find a way around. Therefore, the realignment of the path alone is a significant improvement, regardless of any fence installation. NE's view is that given no fence exists now, and the realignment is carried out at the landowner's instigation, there is no reason to suggest it would be more necessary on the new line than the present line. There are however alternative access management measures available such as clear signage, as follows.

Managing access in the margin (i.e. the boatyard) once realignment has been carried out

Whilst currently the walked line runs unconstrained through the middle of the yard, with an assumption that the yard's risk assessments govern operations accordingly, the realignment of the trail involves the relocation of a number of boats and other items and structures within the yard. We may therefore reasonably assume that the operations and movement of boat owners and equipment will differ once the full realignment and reorganisation has been carried out. Accordingly, and in addition to the concerns raised regarding increased footfall, we consider there is reasonable justification to erect signage informing walkers of the new situation and requesting that they and their dogs to remain on the new path for their own safety. The proposed path includes surfacing which will in itself provide an intuitive directional

steer and a clearly delineated path boundary. It is also within the landowner's right erect his own fence and subsequently judge whether the yard would then be considered excepted land should a physical curtilage to the site's buildings be established. He would also be within his rights to erect signs that advise the public of the extent of excepted land so long as they are not misleading. He may also apply for a direction to exclude access on land management grounds now or at any time in the future. We would also point out that where CROW access rights apply (i.e. parts of the coastal margin that are not excepted land or where no direction to exclude access exists), then the lowest level of occupiers' liability under English law applies.

Permissive access from Beconsall Lane to the boatyard

See our comments above in Part 4.

Dedication under s16

'Dedication' in this sense (as opposed to in relation to a PROW), would not be required to establish the varied route, because the varied route would not be excepted land under any of the categories set out in Schedule 1 to the CROW Act, even without a fence to separate it from the boatyard. Boatyards are not excepted land in and of themselves, and we do not consider that a dedication is required for this location.

Occupier's liability and NE's liability

The landowner is correct in that the lower level of occupier's liability applies to the landowner and to most natural and manmade features (negligence and recklessness aside); but that land excepted from Coastal Access rights would not hold this lower level of occupier's liability.

As noted above, section 305 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 clarifies the position on Natural England's liability in relation to the law of negligence. It states that no duty of care is owed by NE under the law of negligence in submitting our proposals. Natural England does not have any ongoing role in the management of the trail or coastal margin. That role falls to the access authority (or a future trail partnership) for the trail.

Caravans on site

We had previously communicated with the landowner (and previous landowner) of the site based on land registry data. We have not been provided with any direct contacts for the caravan tenants, but had requested the landowner to ensure they were aware of the proposals and their ability to respond to the consultation. We are grateful to the landowner for his written confirmation that this has been carried out and that they are in support of the proposals in this report. We have not received any direct communications from them requesting discussions around the privacy of their caravans, and no existing screening exists where the path currently passes them, but appreciate the landowner speaking on their behalf.

Conclusion

For reasons detailed above, we invite the Secretary of State to consider approving the varied route shown as trail sections CPH-VR31-S001b to S003; and to leave trail section CPH-VR31-S001a unapproved at this stage. We do not believe a fence is necessary, as it is expected that walkers will remain responsible for their own safety, and other forms of access management would normally be deemed sufficient in similar circumstances. Clear waymarking and advisory signage will communicate the change in circumstance and advise walkers to remain on the new path, and to respect the privacy of caravan residents. We will explain the process of applying for an exclusion to the landowner, should he wish to investigate this option. Given the benefits to the public of installing the new path, in terms of safety, navigation, accessibility and confidence, we don't view the likelihood of walkers wishing to use the middle of the boatyard as being especially high. In due course, the landowner is well within their rights to install any such fences as are required according to their risk assessments (again, bearing in mind the proposed line is at the landowner's request and the current line is not fenced).

Relevant appended documents (see Section 6):

N/A

Representation ID:	MCA/CPH-VR31/R/2/1696
Organisation/ person making representation:	[redacted], Becconsall Heritage Park CIC
Name of site:	Full report
Report map reference:	Map VR31
Route sections on or adjacent to the land:	CPH-VR31-S001 to S003
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates	N/A
Summary of representation:	
<p>The Becconsall Heritage Park CIC aims to safeguard a neglected Biological Heritage Site adjacent to the Douglas Boatyard and the proposed variation to the KCIIECP by operating it as a new nature and heritage based attraction, and as a gateway to the local area and its wider recreational offers including the KCIIECP. The Park is intended to hold appeal for the public across a wide geographical area including west Lancashire and north Merseyside. Plans also include an interpretation facility at Becconsall Old Church, immediately north of the</p>	

boatyard. So far, progress on the site includes a nature trail which has proved very popular with the local community.

The CIC feels very positively about the KCIIECP, appreciates the long-term liaison with and support from the KCIIECP hub team, and sees great parallels of opportunity with their own project in terms of health, wellbeing, learning and local economy. They also appreciate the amplified potential for promotion of the area with the correlation and collaboration between multiple projects and resources such as the KCIIECP and the Heritage Park.

They were disappointed that the original Coastal Access proposals for the Cleveleys to Pier Head stretch were aligned through the middle of the boatyard, rather than the landward boundary. They are therefore in strong support of the VR.

As the now disused church to the north of the Boatyard is intended to complement the Heritage Park itself as an interpretation centre, the KCIIECP will be the main connection between the two; especially as there is little parking or pavement access near the church, but the Heritage Park will provide parking (alongside a café and visitor centre). As part of the learning and outreach programme it is anticipated that guided walks will be led from the Park, along the KCIIECP and to the church, by its volunteers.

Additionally, aligning the KCIIECP along the boundary of the boatyard means that a direct link could be created between the Park and the KCIIECP, omitting the current link route through a housing development, and facilitating much greater connectivity, synergy and visibility between the Park and the KCIIECP.

The CIC lists a number of practical considerations including the necessity for works to be completed before bird nesting season, for the path be 1.5 to 2m wide, suitable for wheelchairs and buggies, but not over-engineered. They also support the notion of a simple post and wire fence separating the path from the boatyard, citing both safety concerns, prevention of encroachment onto the path from boatyard equipment, and the confidence of their largely retired volunteer walk leaders who would be guiding visitors from the Park to the church.

They have spoken with the boatyard various times over the years and believe the variation offers the best solution for everybody.

They would be happy to see completion of the works by summer 2026 to coincide with the launch of the Heritage Park and to consider a joint launch event with the KCIIECP.

Natural England's comment:

We are grateful for the CIC's ongoing support of the KCIIECP and its potential as an asset for local people and visitors alike, as noted in Part 4 above. We agree that there is a good natural synergy between the aims of the two projects and that a link between the two would carry a great benefit for the public.

Regarding the practicalities, the aim is to install a 2m wide compacted stone path offering a much improved accessibility offer; and the access authority will work to the necessary timescales and requirements around bird nesting season. We have commented on the provision of a fence in response to the landowner's representation above.

We encourage the CIC to keep in touch regarding the launch of the Heritage Park.

Relevant appended documents (see Section 6):

N/A