

Annex I - Coastal Access – Lulworth Cove to Kimmeridge Bay

Representations on LCK 1: Lulworth Cove to Lulworth Ranges Gates West & LCK 3: Lulworth Ranges Gates East to Gaultier Gap, Kimmeridge and Natural England's comments

February 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

Natural England's compendium of reports setting out its proposals for improved access to the coast from Lulworth Cove to Kimmeridge Bay was submitted to the Secretary of State on 23rd July 2025. This began an eight week period during which representations and objections about each constituent report could be made.

In relation to the report for Lulworth Cove to Kimmeridge Bay, Natural England received 4 (four) representations, of which 3 (three) 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 1 (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.

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:	<i>MCA/LCK/R/3/LCK2871</i>
Organisation/ person making representation:	<i>[redacted], The Ramblers</i>
Route section(s) specific to this representation:	<i>Report LCK 1</i> <i>Map LCK1a</i>
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates:	
Representation in full	
We accept Natural England's decision not to seek a route immediately above the Cove and the reasoning behind it (erosion, cliff falls and slippage (starting from point LCK-1-S001). We also note that a recent cliff fall has blocked the beach.	

The route presently followed by the South West Coast Path (SWCP) offers an alternative which has the advantage of not involving any steep ascents or descents as it leaves/approaches Lulworth. However, it does involve walking alongside the Main Road into the Cove.

We note that Natural England did consider using a now closed permissive path from Main Road to join FP SE26/18 (the path now followed by the SWCP). We are not persuaded that this path would impact on the privacy of the neighbouring properties as it appears to run beside a thick hedge/tree line. Its use would reduce the length on the inland detour by over half a kilometre. However, we acknowledge that using the existing route of the SWCP would require no new infrastructure beyond signage. (LCK-1-S007)

After leaving Bindon Road (between LCK-1-S010 and LCK-1-S011), the current SWCP signage is confusing: both FP SE26/18 and FP SE26/17 seem to have the 'Acorn' long distance path waymarks. It appeared to us that FP SE26/18 is the route of the SWCP and that which is being proposed for the KC III ECP. FP SE26/17 involves steps which are in reasonable condition.

The proposed path (and route of the SWCP) turns south and descends the eastern side of the cove via fairly steep steps (LCK-1-S014 to LCK-1-S017). These (336 in total) are stone steps and in a reasonable condition although they will require careful examination and remedial works as necessary. Consideration should be given to the provision of a handrail, at least on the steepest stretches.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Whilst Natural England's decision not to make any KCIII ECP proposals in relation to the Ranges area, or any proposals for a formal alternative route around the back for people to use when the ranges are closed is very disappointing, we acknowledge and accept the reasoning behind it. And, of course, people will still be able to use the permissive route of the SWCP when the ranges are open. (We understand that the SWCPA has put forward proposals for the improvements of the SWCP within the ranges and we would welcome such works.)

However, information and signage about the closures is paramount. We suggest that in Lulworth Cove there should be an information board/map showing all public rights of way in the vicinity, including the KCIII ECP and the SWCP. Such an information board should include a QR code which links to the Government website where the closure dates are set out. Information about the closures (Including the QR code mentioned) should be provided at other locations either side of the ranges and in the guidebooks and on the relevant website.

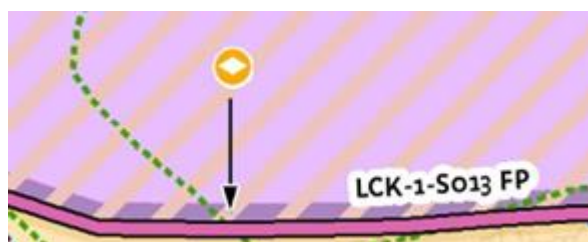
The present situation regarding public rights of way at Lulworth is very confusing with a number of paths still shown on the definitive map being lost to cliff falls and erosion. A wall has been built over the path originally used by the SWCP, but it is still on the definitive map. We will be writing to Dorset Council about this separately.

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMENTS

Items on the map LCK1a: a step stile shown as being retained which does not currently exist:



one to be removed, which also does not currently exist:



and a new gate suggestion which seems unlikely to be required.



Signage of the diversion route is particularly poor from the Cove: a replacement boardwalk and scrub clearance need doing.

Fencing: the path around the top of the cove is fenced with a relatively new fence with two strands of barbed wire on top which are attached on the path side of the fence posts.



This barbed wire should either be removed or placed on the 'non-path' side. Ideally new fencing would be installed, as part of the proposals.

Natural England's comments

We recognise the Ramblers' local knowledge and believe that the clarity & usability of the trail would benefit from continued liaison with this group during the establishment phase.

This is a complex area within the stretch and several alignment options were considered during development of our proposals. After several site visits and much discussion with relevant landowners it was determined that the proposed route struck the best balance between private and public interests.

We thank the Ramblers for their comments regards how best to communicate the closures of the MOD Firing Ranges. Currently the information is available via the South West Coast Path website ([Lulworth Cove to Worth Matravers - Walk - South West Coast Path](#)) and will continue to be linked to any of the National Trails information regards this stretch. This gives details of a local circular walk but also links to the firing times, a description of an inland route and details of a local bus service. When we come to undertake the establishment works on LCK3 we will work with the Dorset Council about the possibility of adding a QR code as suggested, to any signage.

With regards the comments regard Infrastructure:

The stile marked as to be retained at LCK-1-S012 was still there when we last visited but heavily overgrown. As there is no proposal to alter what is there, we will check with Dorset Council and amend our records as necessary.

Similarly for the stile at LCK-1-S013, we will check with Dorset Council and amend our records as necessary if the stile is no longer there.

The gate at LCK-1-S011 is marked in our records as to be retained rather than as incorrectly shown on Map LCK 1a as being replaced, so we will update our mapping.

We are proposing to replace the old, damaged boardwalk and undertake scrub clearance as required along the stretch.

We will raise the comments about the position of the barbed wire on the fencing along the top of the cliff with the landowner and Dorset Council. There may be land management reasons why the barbed wire can't be moved but we will investigate the possibility of moving it to the non-walking side of the fence.

Relevant appended documents: n/a

Representation number:	MCA/LCK/R/4/LCK2871
Organisation/ person making representation:	[redacted], The Ramblers
Route section(s) specific to this representation:	Report LCK 3

	<i>Map LCK3a</i>
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates:	
Representation in full	
We have no specific comments to make on the proposals for the path from the Lulworth Ranges East to Gaultier Gap, Kimmeridge Bay (map reference LCK 3a). However, we want to take this opportunity to stress that information and signage about the closures on this stretch are paramount. We suggest that in Kimmeridge Bay there should be an information board/map showing all public rights of way in the vicinity, including the KCIII ECP and the SWCP. Such an information board should include a QR code which links to the Government website where the closure dates are set out. Information about the closures (Including the QR code mentioned) should be provided at other locations either side of the ranges and in the guidebooks and on the relevant website	
Natural England's comments	
We thank the Ramblers for their comments regards how best to communicate the closures of the MOD Firing Ranges. Currently the information is available via the South West Coast Path website (Lulworth Cove to Worth Matravers - Walk - South West Coast Path) and will continue to be linked to any of the National Trails information regards this stretch. This gives details of a local circular walk but also links to the firing times, a description of an inland route and details of a local bus service. When we come to undertake the establishment works on LCK3 we will work with the Dorset Council about the possibility of adding a QR code ,as suggested, to any signage.	
Relevant appended documents: n/a	

Representation number:	<i>MCA/LCK/R/2/LCK1274</i>
Organisation/ person making representation:	<i>Dorset and Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Local Access Forum</i>
Route section(s) specific to this representation:	Lulworth Cove to Lulworth Range Gates West, LCK 1a
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates:	
Representation in full	

These observations were made whilst walking the path in an easterly direction. We accept Natural England's decision not to seek a route heading north immediately above the Cove slipway and the reasoning behind it (erosion, cliff falls and slippage (starting from point LCK-1-S001)). We also note that a recent cliff fall has blocked the beach. The route presently followed by the South West Coast Path (SWCP) offers an alternative which has the advantage of not involving any steep ascents or descents as it leaves/approaches Lulworth. However, it does involve walking alongside the Main Road into the Cove with zero sea views.

We note that Natural England did consider using a now closed permissive path from Main Road to join FP SE26/18 (the path now followed by the SWCP). We are not persuaded that this path would significantly impact on the privacy of the neighbouring properties as it appears to run beside a thick hedge/tree line. Its use would reduce the length on the inland detour by over half a kilometre and would be more in keeping with the ethos of a Coastal Path. However, we acknowledge that using the existing route of the SWCP would require no new infrastructure beyond signage.

(LCK-1-S007) After leaving Bindon Road (between LCK-1-S010 and LCK-1-S011), the current SWCP signage is confusing: both FP SE26/18 and FP SE26/17 seem to have the 'Acorn' long distance path waymarks. It appeared to us that FP SE26/18 is the route of the SWCP and that which is being proposed for the KC III ECP. FP SE26/17 involves steps which are in reasonable condition and might be a better option. Beyond this point, this is a pleasant easy to use path, with views of the sea gradually emerging. The proposed path (and route of the SWCP) turns south and descends the eastern side of the cove via fairly steep steps. These are stone steps and in a reasonable condition although they will require careful examination and remedial works as necessary. Consideration should be given to the provision of a handrail, at least on the steepest stretches. Whilst Natural England's decision not to make any KCIIIECP proposals in relation to the Ranges area (or any proposals for a formal alternative route around the back for people to use when the ranges are closed) is very disappointing, we acknowledge and accept the reasoning behind it. And, of course, people will still be able to use the permissive route of the SWCP when the ranges are open. (We understand that the SWCPA has put forward proposals for the improvements of the SWCP within the ranges and we would welcome such works.) However, provision of information and signage about the closures is crucial. We suggest that in Lulworth Cove there should be an information board/map showing all public rights of way in the vicinity, including the KCIII ECP and the SWCP. Such an information board should include a QR code which links to the Government website where the closure dates are set out. Information about the closures (Including the QR code mentioned) should be provided at other locations either side of the ranges and in the guide books and on the relevant website. Whilst we have no specific comments to make on the proposals for the path from the Lulworth Ranges East to Gaultier Gap Kimmeridge Bay [Map LCK 3a], the comments made above about the need to provide clear information explaining the options available to users when the Army Ranges are closed apply with equal force at the Kimmeridge access point.

Natural England's comments

We thank Dorset and Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Local Access Forum for their detailed comments and acknowledgement of why we chose the proposed route. This is a complex area within the stretch and several alignment options were considered during development of our proposals. After several site visits and much discussion with relevant landowners it was determined that the proposed route struck the best balance between private and public interests.

Our rationale for not using the now closed permissive path is explained in Table 1.3.2 Other options considered: Map LCK 1a – Lulworth Cove to Lulworth Ranges Gates West. Having conducted a site visit to the cottages adjacent to the closed permissive path it was very clear any reinstatement would

have an impact on privacy. The hedge at that location has now been cut back to a very low level and the layout of the cottages means walkers would have direct line of sight into bedrooms and a living room. We concluded that proposing to route the path here would not be a fair balance between private and public interests.

With regards the current National Trail signage being confusing, we will work with Dorset Council and the South West Coast Path to ensure that during our establishment phase we tidy up the signage here and address the issues raised. Any remedial works to the steps along the eastern end of the cove will also consider the addition of a handrail if feasible.

We thank the LAF for their comments regards how best to communicate the closures of the MOD Firing Ranges. Currently the information is available via the South West Coast Path website ([Lulworth Cove to Worth Matravers - Walk - South West Coast Path](#)) and will continue to be linked to any of the National Trails information regards this stretch. This gives details of a local circular walk but also links to the firing times, a description of an inland route and details of a local bus service. When we come to undertake the establishment works on LCK1 and LCK3 we will work with the Dorset Council about the possibility of adding a QR code, as suggested, to any signage.

Relevant appended documents: n/a

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

Representation ID:	MCK/LCK/R/1/LCK2879
Organisation/ person making representation:	[redacted]
Name of site:	Lulworth to Kimmeridge
Report map reference:	LCK 1a
Route sections on or adjacent to the land:	
Other reports within stretch to which this representation also relates	
Summary of representation: [redacted] congratulates NE on getting the proposals for Lulworth Cove to Kimmeridge Bay published. 1. Overview.	

A pity that no agreement could be reached with the MOD about proposing that the current route of the SWCP through the ranges should form part of the ECP. Acknowledges that a considerable amount of effort was made to try and achieve that aim.

Map B. [redacted] states that the extent of the MOD ranges could have been shown on one of the maps in the overview – perhaps map B – together with the existing ‘round the ranges’ public rights of way. This would have put into context the extent of the ‘ranges’. Also thinks that map B (and others in the more detailed report maps) should show that parts of the SWCP are now fully open parts of the KCIII ECP.

2. Report LCK 1

LCK-1-S001. The map shows the SWCP and public footpaths heading directly north of the start of this section. This section of the SWCP was closed a number of years ago (probably as long ago as 2016) due to cliff collapses.

General comment.

[redacted] is pleased to see that the information boards/signage at both East and West Range gates will be tidied up as they have been unclear in the past. [redacted] asks that advance warning that the ranges may be closed should be clearly shown at the start of the LCK section in Lulworth Cove and at Kimmeridge Bay to save SWCP walkers having to turn back at the gates.

Natural England’s comment:

Natural England welcome [redacted]’s support for the proposed route alignment and appreciate his understanding of the amount of time and effort taken in preparing our proposals.

We chose not to include a map in the Overview showing the extent of the MOD Firing Ranges or any possible routes around the ranges as we did not wish to suggest we were promoting one specific “alternative” route over another, as there are several options available to walkers. We do however agree with [redacted] that including the extent of the MOD firing ranges on a map in the Overview could have provided useful context to those unfamiliar with this stretch.

We are aware of mapping issues on the OS Map (as also raised by The Ramblers) however correcting these mapping anomalies are not within the remit of NE to resolve. We are aware that the matter has been raised with Dorset Council.

In line with our comments on the representations from The Ramblers and the LAF we thank [redacted] for his comments regarding the need to communicate the closures of the MOD Firing Ranges. Currently the information is available via the South West Coast Path website ([Lulworth Cove to Worth Matravers - Walk - South West Coast Path](#)) and will continue to be linked to any of the National Trails information regards this stretch. This gives details of a local circular walk but also links to the firing times, a description of an inland route and details of a local bus service. When we come to undertake the establishment works on LCK1 and LCK3 we will work with the Dorset Council about the possibility of adding a QR code, as suggested, to any signage.

Relevant appended documents: n/a