

Chapter 4:

# Kitty Brewster Bridge to Spital Point

England Coast Path: South Bents to Amble - Natural England's Proposals

## Part 4.1: Introduction

<b>Start Point:</b>	<b>Kitty Brewster Bridge</b> (grid reference: NZ 4282 5822 )
<b>End Point:</b>	<b>Spital Point</b> (grid reference: NZ 4308 5868)
<b>Relevant Maps:</b>	4a to 4e

### Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps:

#### The Trail:

- 4.1.1 Crosses two estuaries at the Rivers Blyth and Wansbeck.
- 4.1.2 Generally follows existing walked routes, including public rights of way, along most of this length.
- 4.1.3 Follows the coastline closely and maintains good views of the sea where the trail returns to the coast from the two estuary crossings covered by this chapter.
- 4.1.4 Includes one section of new path, at the weir over the River Wansbeck. See map 4d and associated tables below for details.
- 4.1.5 Is aligned on the beach or foreshore at Cambois links. See section numbers SBA-4-S018 to SBA-4-S022 for details (map 4c).
- 4.1.6 From Kitty Brewster Bridge to Cambois, the trail partially follows a route similar to the existing National Cycle Route 1 but departs from this in places in order to follow a route that is closer to the coast and more suitable for pedestrians.
- 4.1.7 This part of the coast includes the following sites, designated for nature conservation or heritage preservation (See map C of the Overview):
  - Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA)
  - Northumbria Coast Ramsar site
  - Northumberland shore Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its geological /wildlife interest

- Cresswell and Newbiggin shores Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its geological/wildlife interest
- Coquet to St Mary's (MCZ)

We have assessed the potential impacts of access along the proposed route (and over the associated spreading room described below) on the features for which the affected land is designated and on any which are protected in their own right.

- 4.1.8 The levels and patterns of public access along this length of coast would be unlikely to change significantly as a result of our proposals and we have therefore concluded that our proposals would not be likely to have any significant impact on these features.

In relation to those nature conservation sites listed above, refer to our published Access and Sensitive Features Appraisal for more information.

**See part 5b of the Overview - 'Natural environment' - for more information.**

### **Accessibility:**

- 4.1.9 Generally, there are few artificial barriers to accessibility on the proposed route, which makes use of existing surface paths wherever these meet the criteria in the Coastal Access Scheme.

However, there are places where it may not be entirely suitable for people with reduced mobility because:

- The trail would follow an uneven grass and bare soil path along the banks of the River Blyth at SBA-4-S004 to SBA-4-S005.
- There are steps in places where it would be necessary to cross a tributary stream and the banks of the River Sleekburn at SBA-4-S009 to SBA-4-S012.
- The trail will follow uneven sand dunes at Cambois links SBA-4-S017 to SBA-4-S020.
- The trail would follow an uneven grass or bare soil path along the cliff top at Hawks Cliff sections SBA-4-S034 and SBA-4-S035.

- 4.1.10 At Mount Pleasant Farm, either end of section SBA-4-S006 two existing stiles will be replaced with kissing gates, so as to make them easier to use. We envisage this happening as part of the physical establishment work described in part 6 of the Overview.

**See part 5a of the Overview - 'Recreational issues' - for more information.**

### **Where we have proposed exercising our discretion:**

The discretions referred to below are explained in more detail in part 10 of the Overview.

- 4.1.11 Estuary: This report proposes that the trail should include a route around the estuary of the River Blyth, extending upstream from the open coast as far as Kitty Brewster Bridge, which is the first public foot crossing point over the river. See part 10 b of the Overview. The trail covered by this chapter includes part of this estuary route.

4.1.12 Estuary: This report proposes that the trail should include a route around the estuary of the River Wansbeck, extending upstream from the open coast as far as the weir which is just west of the main A189. This appears on the map as the second public foot crossing point over the river (the A189 footway being the first). The weir is in practice the first crossing point in terms of distance walked due to the steep banks of the River Wansbeck. In addition the weir is a much more pleasant crossing point for pedestrians. See part 10c of the Overview. The trail covered by this chapter includes part of this estuary route.

**See also part 3 of the Overview - 'Understanding the proposals and accompanying maps', for an explanation of the default extent of the coastal margin and how we may use our discretion to adjust the margin, either to add land or to provide clarity. See also Annex C of the Overview - 'Excepted land categories'.**

4.1.13 Restrictions and/or exclusions: Access rights to the spreading room would be subject to the national restrictions on coastal access rights listed in Annex D of the Overview. These restrictions would not apply to public rights of way.

**See part 9 of the Overview - 'Restrictions and exclusions' - for details.**

4.1.14 Establishment: Some physical establishment of the trail would be necessary, in accordance with the general approach described in part 6 the Overview.

4.1.15 Mount Pleasant Farm: The proposals include a route at sections SBA-4-S004 to SBA-4-S005 that will move northwards taking it away from (but parallel to) the current right of way which is being damaged and rendered impassable by erosion from the River Blyth. The new proposals will require fencing and kissing gates as it passes through permanent grazed pasture.

4.1.16 Wansbeck Weir: The proposals include the use of the Wansbeck weir as the first crossing of the river. This requires a small (5 metre) bridge at the southern extent of SBA-4-S026 to connect the southern bank of the river to the lock and gain access to the existing walkway along the top of the weir. Additionally, grating will need to be attached as health and safety improvements to the existing utility fencing.

4.1.17 Ongoing management: Ongoing management and maintenance would be necessary in accordance with the general approach described in part 7 of the Overview.

**See parts 6 - 'Physical establishment of the trail' and 7 - 'Maintenance of the trail' of the Overview for more information.**

#### **Future Change:**

4.1.18 Part of the route of the trail on this length of coast would be able to change without further approval from the Secretary of State in response to coastal erosion or other geomorphological processes, or encroachment by the sea. This would happen in accordance with the criteria and procedures for 'roll back' set out in part 8 of the Overview. See table 4.2.1 below for details of the sections likely to be affected in the foreseeable future.

4.1.19 At the time of preparing the report, we do not foresee any other need for future changes to the access provisions proposed for the length of coast described in this chapter.

**See parts 5e - 'Coastal processes' and 8 - 'Future changes' of the Overview for more information.**

## Part 4.2: Commentary on Maps

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

### 4.2.1 Section Details – Maps 4a to 4e: Kitty Brewster Bridge to Spital Point

Notes on table:

Column 2 – an asterisk (\*) against the route section number means see also table 4.2.4: Other options considered.

Column 5 – ‘Yes – normal’ means roll-back approach is likely to follow the current feature (e.g. cliff edge/beach) for the foreseeable future.

1	2	3	4	5	6a	6b	7
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Current status of this section	Current surface of this section	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 8 of Overview)	Landward boundary of margin (See maps)	Reason for landward boundary discretion	Proposed exclusions or restrictions (see Part 9 of Overview)
4a	SBA-4-S001 MU*	Multi-use route	Other	No	Pavement edge	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S002	Other existing walked route	Other	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	SBA-4-S003 FP*	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Yes – Saltmarsh and Mud
	SBA-4-S004 FP*	Public footpath	Bare soil: Compacted	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Yes – Saltmarsh and Mud
	SBA-4-S005 FP*	Public footpath	Grass	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Yes – Saltmarsh and Mud
	SBA-4-S006 FP*	Public footpath	Grass	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Yes – Saltmarsh and Mud
	SBA-4-S007 FP*	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Yes – Saltmarsh and Mud
	SBA-4-S008 FP*	Public footpath	Bare soil: Ploughed	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Yes – Saltmarsh and Mud
	SBA-4-S009 FP*	Public footpath	Bare soil: Ploughed	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Yes – Saltmarsh and Mud
	SBA-4-S010 FP*	Public footpath	Bare soil: Ploughed	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Yes – Saltmarsh and Mud
	SBA-4-S011 FP*	Public footpath	Bare soil: Compacted	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Yes – Saltmarsh and Mud
	SBA-4-S012 FP*	Public footpath	Bare soil: Compacted	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	Yes – Saltmarsh and Mud
	SBA-4-S013 FW*	Public footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Pavement edge	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S014 RD	Public highway	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
4b	SBA-4-S015 FW	Public footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Pavement edge	Clarity and cohesion	None
4c	SBA-4-S016 FW	Public footway (pavement)	Tarmac	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	SBA-4-S017	Other existing walked route	Gravel	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of dune	Not used	None
	SBA-4-S018	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of dune	Not used	None
	SBA-4-S019	Other existing walked route	Tarmac	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	SBA-4-S020	Other existing walked route	Gravel	Yes - Normal	Track	Clarity and cohesion	None

1	2	3	4	5	6a	6b	7
Map(s)	Route section number(s)	Current status of this section	Current surface of this section	Roll-back proposed? (See Part 8 of Overview)	Landward boundary of margin (See maps)	Reason for landward boundary discretion	Proposed exclusions or restrictions (see Part 9 of Overview)
4c	SBA-4-S021	Other existing walked route	Gravel	Yes - Normal	Track	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S022	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	SBA-4-S023 RD	Public highway	Tarmac	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	SBA-4-S024 RD	Public highway	Tarmac	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
4d	SBA-4-S025	Other existing walked route	Gravel	Yes - Normal	Track	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S026*	Trail not using existing walked route	Metal Bridge deck	No	Bridge deck	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S027 FP	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes - Normal	Path	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S028 FW	Public footway (pavement)	Tarmac	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	SBA-4-S029 FP	Public footpath	Gravel	Yes - Normal	Path	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S030	Other existing walked route	Other	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	SBA-4-S031 BW	Public bridleway	Tarmac	Yes - Normal	Road	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S032	Not an existing walked route	Tarmac	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
4e	SBA-4-S033	Other existing walked route	Grass	Yes - Normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S034	Other existing walked route	Bare soil: Compacted	Yes - Normal	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	SBA-4-S035	Other existing walked route	Bare soil: Compacted	Yes - Normal	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S036 FP	Public footpath	Grass	No	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S037	Other existing walked route	Gravel	No	Landward edge of trail	Not used	None
	SBA-4-S038 FP	Public footpath	Gravel	No	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None
	SBA-4-S039	Other existing walked route	Gravel	No	Fence line	Clarity and cohesion	None

#### 4.2.2 Other options considered: Map 4a river crossing at Kitty Brewster Bridge, Blyth, Map 4a North Bank of the River Blyth to East Sleekburn Bridge, Map 4d River Wansbeck crossing

Map(s)	Section number(s)	Option(s) considered	Reasons for not proposing this option as the route
4a	SBA-4-S001 MU	<p>We considered using Furnace Bridge as the crossing point. However investigation into the feasibility of a stairway at Kitty Brewster Bridge south east embankment showed that this would be the first available crossing point.</p> <p>No other options were identified for the trail in relation to this map.</p>	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ we concluded that overall the proposed route struck the best balance in terms of the criteria described in chapter 4 of the Coastal Access Scheme.</li> </ul>
4a	SBA-4-S003 FP to SBA-4-S013 FW	<p>Here we considered a shorter route which ran parallel to the A189 and Brock Lane. This would have been a short distance on new access rights.</p> <p>No other options were identified for the trail in relation to this map.</p>	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ this proposal is made with the support of the landowner.</li> <li>■ we concluded that overall the proposed route struck the best balance in terms of the criteria described in chapter 4 of the Coastal Access Scheme.</li> </ul>
4d	SBA-4-S026	<p>Here we considered using the A189 road crossing of the Wansbeck. The road bridge has a shared use (cycles/pedestrians) barrier crossing, however the road bridge is at a much higher elevation than the weir crossing. This means considerable distance is needed to access and use the road bridge. The weir is used informally at present and had considerable support from walking groups.</p> <p>No other options were identified for the trail in relation to this map.</p>	<p>We opted for the proposed route because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ this proposal is made with the support of the landowner.</li> <li>■ we concluded that overall the proposed route struck the best balance in terms of the criteria described in chapter 4 of the Coastal Access Scheme.</li> </ul>

## Part 4.3: Chapter 4 - Formal Proposals

- Below are our formal proposals to the Secretary of State for the length of coast shown on maps 4a to 4e.
- They should be read in conjunction with the relevant maps.
- The commentary above explains the practical effect of these proposals.

### Formal Proposals – Kitty Brewster Bridge to Spital Point

#### Discretion to include an estuary

- 4.3.1 Natural England proposes to exercise its functions as if the sea included the estuarial waters of the River Blyth as far as Kitty Brewster Bridge as indicated by the extent of the trail shown on map 4a.
- 4.3.2 Natural England proposes to exercise its functions as if the sea included the estuarial waters of the River Wansbeck as far as Cambois Weir- also known as Sheepwash Weir- as indicated by the extent of the trail shown on map 4d.

#### Proposed route of the trail

- 4.3.3 In relation to route sections SBA-4-S001, SBA-4-S002, SBA-4-S006 to SBA-4-S016 to SBA-4-S026 and SBA-4-S036 to SBA-4-S039 the route is to be at the centre of the line shown on maps 4a to 4e as the proposed route of the trail.
- 4.3.4 In relation to route sections SBA-4-S003 to SBA-4-S005, SBA-4-S017 to SBA-4-S025, SBA-4-S027 to SBA-4-S035 the route, as initially determined at the time the report was prepared, is to be at the centre of the line shown on map 4a, 4c, 4d and 4e as the proposed route of the trail.
- 4.3.5 If at any time any part of a route section listed in the previous paragraph needs, in Natural England's view, to change as a result of coastal erosion or other geomorphological processes or encroachment by the sea, 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 8 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.

#### Landward boundary of coastal margin

- 4.3.6 Adjacent to route sections SBA-4-S033, SBA-4-S035, SBA-4-S036, SBA-4-S038, SBA-4-S039 and the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the existing boundary fence which, at the time of writing this report, is landward of the trail on map 4e.
- 4.3.7 Adjacent to route sections SBA-4-S001, SBA-4-S013 and SBA-4-S015 the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with landward edge of the pavement shown as the trail on map 4a and 4b.

Adjacent to route sections SBA-4-S020, SBA-4-S021, SBA-4-S025 to SBA-4-S027, SBA-4-S029, SBA-4-S031 the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the

track, path, bridge deck or road shown as the trail on maps 4c and 4d.

- 4.3.8 Adjacent to route sections SBA-4-S017 and SBA-4-S018 the landward boundary of the coastal margin is to coincide with the landward edge of the dune, as indicated by the coastal margin landward of the trail on map 4c.

### **Local restrictions and exclusions**

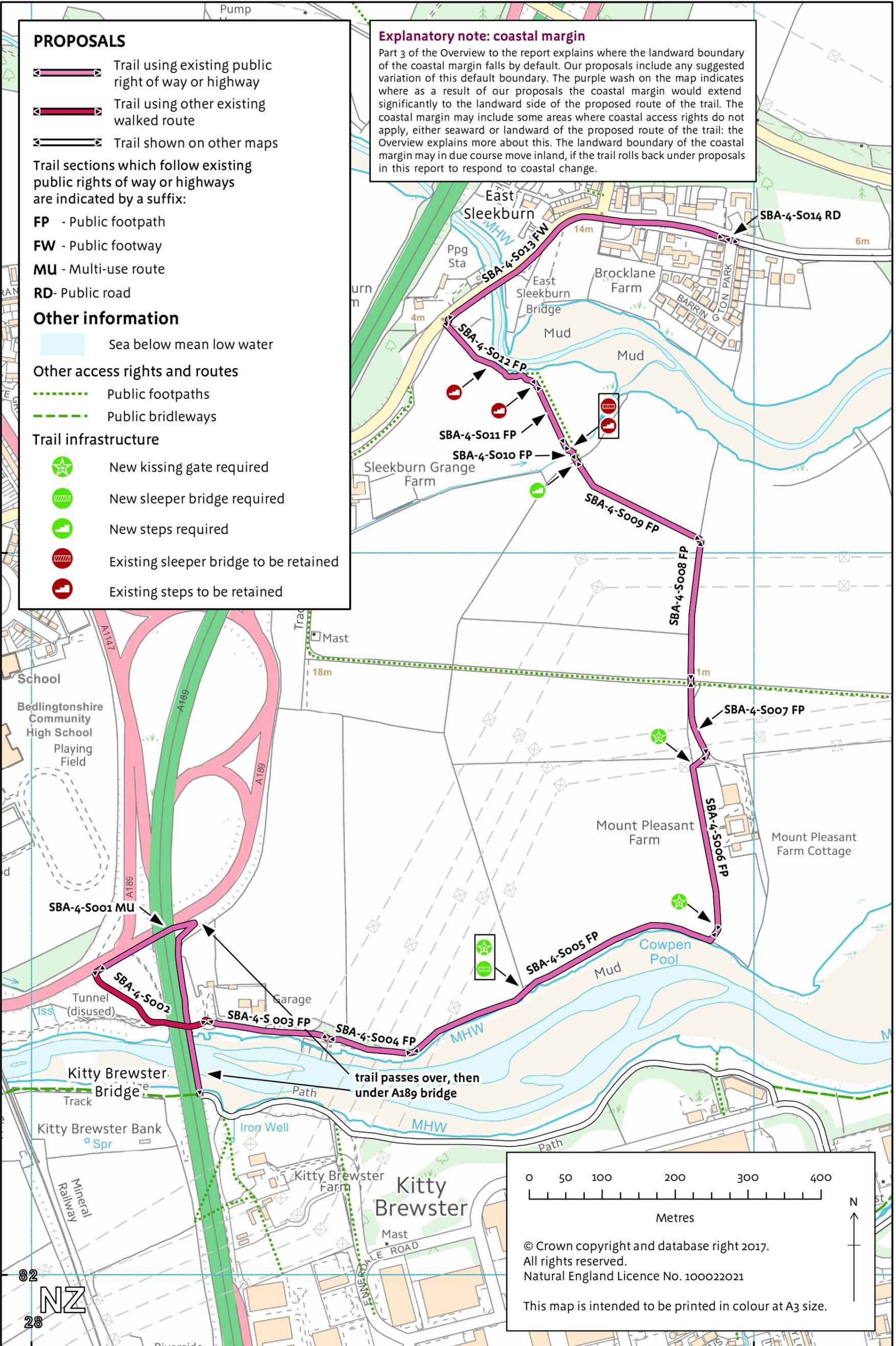
- 4.3.9 Natural England proposes to restrict or exclude access relevant to this length of coast, as follows:

Access to the land adjacent to route sections SBA-4-S003 to SBA-4-S012 is to be excluded annually by direction under s25A of the CROW Act 2000 as the mud flat is unsuitable for public access. See map overview Map E.

**Refer to Part 9 of the Overview for further details.**

### **Alternative Routes**

- 4.3.10 There are no proposals for alternative routes in relation to this length of coast.



**Explanatory note: coastal margin**  
 Part 3 of the Overview to the report explains where the landward boundary of the coastal margin falls by default. Our proposals include any suggested variation of this default boundary. The purple wash on the map indicates where as a result of our proposals the coastal margin would extend significantly to the landward side of the proposed route of the trail. The coastal margin may include some areas where coastal access rights do not apply, either seaward or landward of the proposed route of the trail: the Overview explains more about this. The landward boundary of the coastal margin may in due course move inland, if the trail rolls back under proposals in this report to respond to coastal change.

**PROPOSALS**

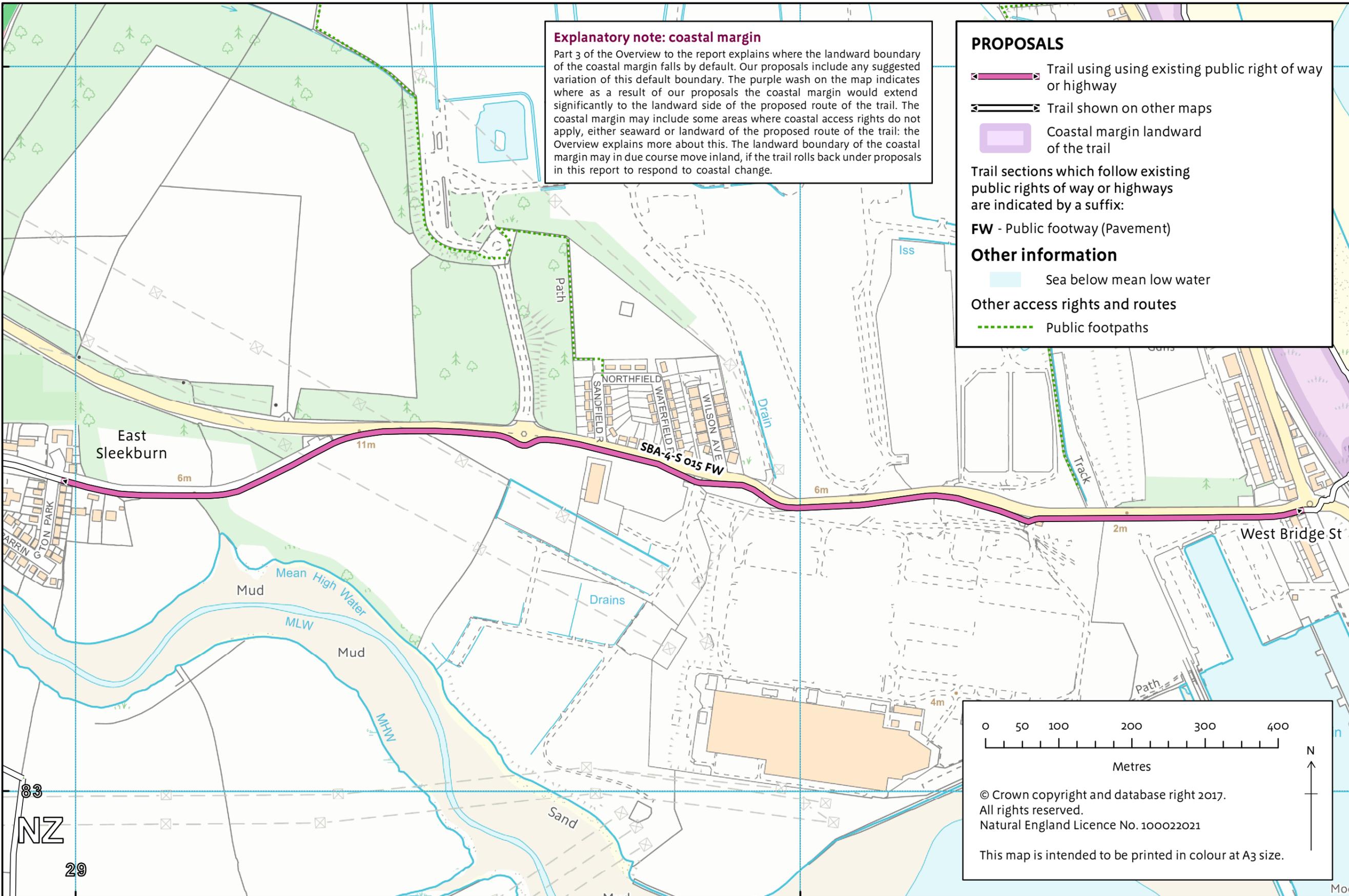
- Trail using existing public right of way or highway
- Trail shown on other maps
- Coastal margin landward of the trail

Trail sections which follow existing public rights of way or highways are indicated by a suffix:

**FW** - Public footway (Pavement)

**Other information**

- Sea below mean low water
- Other access rights and routes
- Public footpaths



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This map is intended to be printed in colour at A3 size.

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