

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Agenda
Meeting Date:	28th July 2022, 2-4 pm
Author/Contact:	Anna McGowan
Venue:	The Lounge, Pinewood Community Hall, Laburnum Close, Pinewood Ipswich IP8 3SL

		Paper Number
1.	14:00 Welcome, apologies and housekeeping	
2.	14.05 Minutes of previous meeting	LAF 22/13 - BH
3.	14.10 Declaration of interest	
4.	14.15 IBC Planning Presentation Chris Ward, and Roz Claxton	
5.	15.00 Network Rail – Public Rights of Way & Level Crossings Higham FP1 Diversion Higham FP1 Ramblers Byway 38/Restricted Byway 38A Ipswich	LAF 22/14 - SK LAF 22/14 Appendix A LAF 22/14 Appendix B LAF 22/15 - SK
6.	15.10 England Coast Path	LAF 22/16 - AW
7.	15.15 Energy Schemes	LAF 22/17 - AW
8.	15.25 National Highways Copdock Interchange	LAF 22/18 - DF
9.	15.30 Reply from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	LAF 22/19 - AW
10.	15.35 Open Access Review of Directions	LAF 22/20 - DF
11.	15.40 Annual Report	LAF 22/21 - DF
12.	15.45 Public Question Time	
13.	15.50 Any Other Business	Verbal - AW
14.	16.00 Dates & Venues of Future Meeting 27 th October, venue to be confirmed	

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Minutes of Meeting
Paper:	LAF 22/13
Meeting Date:	28th April 2022, 2-4pm
Author/Contact:	Anna McGowan
Venue:	The Grandiflora, Hintlesham Hall, George St, Hintlesham IP8 3NS

1. Welcome, apologies and housekeeping

Present: Barry Hall (BH) (Chair); David Barker (DB) (Vice Chair); Jane Hatton (JH); Margaret Hancock (MH); Susan Mobbs (SM); Suzanne Bartlett (SB); Clare Phillips (CP); Gordon Merfield (GM); John Wayman (JW); Anthony Wright (AWr)

SCC Officers Present: Anna McGowan (Minutes); Andrew Woodin (AW); Steve Kerr (SK); David Falk (DF)

Apologies: David Barker (DB); Roland Wilson (RW); Monica Pipe (MP); Cllr James Mallinder (JM)

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2022 LAF 22/07, were reviewed, and agreed.

Action: AM to distribute RLAf minutes of meeting held 13th January 2022

3. Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Network Rail – Public Rights of Way and Level Crossings

SK present paper LAF22/08 and gave updates on the NR projects.

Needham Market Gipsy Lane and FP6 Needham Market

SK attended the Programme Board meeting with NR on 26th April 2022, which meets online fortnightly. Agreement has been reached between NR and the landowner, including a compensation package, to be signed by both parties.

NR have shared their communications strategy with SCC and there will be a press release in due course.

TWAO General/Countywide

Taziker has been appointed for Cambridgeshire and Suffolk.

The Notices on Land Managers are being served by NR this month.

Joint SCC and NR site visits will take place next month.

The detailed designs are yet to be done. Works will provisionally commence in the summer.

The commuted amount is also yet to be agreed

Footpath 1 Higham (High Bridge)

Option 1 route has been agreed with the landowner. This option runs parallel to the railway. SCC's consultant will undertake the formal consultations. The former A45 road verge improvements that NR have committed to as part of the package will be progressed separately to the Rail Crossing Diversion Order (RCDO) but an Indemnity Costs Agreement will be entered into with NR to ensure that all costs for the RCDO are recovered and the A14 improvement scheme is delivered.

Footpath 6 Brantham (High Bridge)

This is still awaiting a completed application rail crossing order from NR.

Barham FP 12 (Broomfields)

There are no further updates.

5. Byway Open to All Traffic 38/ Restricted Byway 38A Ipswich (New Cut West, Ipswich)

SK gave an update on LAF 22/09.

SK attended a meeting on 16 March 2022.

The Police insisted on the lighting columns being operational before the Public Open Space (POS) is opened up to the public. Suffolk Highways' Lighting team visited the site the following week and will install lighting in May. EA designed the lighting columns to Suffolk Highways' specifications and a commuted sum was provided for their future maintenance., A further extension has been granted for the hoarding licence until such a time as the lighting columns are operational, at which time Associated British Ports (ABP) have confirmed their contractors are on standby to remove the hoarding.

When the POS is accessible by the public, the operational railway will be 'boxed in' with temporary fencing to prevent members of the public crossing over the railway.

The train needs to go into the POS in order to transfer onto another line.

Some concrete blocks will remain in place to prevent cars accessing the POS but it was acknowledged that, whilst cyclists would be able to access the area, this would also allow motorcycle access and going forward, this would need to be monitored.

As part of ABP's permanent proposal, they are applying to SCC to progress a Magistrates Court order under s116 Highways Act 1980, to stop up the footprint of the operational railway coincident with parts of Byway 38/Restricted Byway 38A Ipswich and introduce some permanent fencing around the railway corridor.

For both the temporary access and permanent proposals, SCC and other stakeholders have requested a level crossing access at the junction of Bath Street and another access around the railway buffers.

JH joined the meeting at 2.30pm.

6. The England Coast Path

AW gave an update on LAF 22/10.

Orwell Bridge

AW noted his membership of the Orwell Bridge Suicide Prevention Group (OBSPG), representing access.

CCTV cameras have been installed and there are people counters in place on the bridge. AW related his experience of walking over the bridge this week, there were fine views and it felt safe. SCC is liaising with Natural England regarding maintaining the access and has been in contact with the AONB. An alternative route would need to be found if pedestrian access is stopped up and establishing it will need to go through a lengthy legal process. AW invited SLAF members to take up a position on this.

MH said she cycles over the bridge using the ramp to access it, stating that the bridge is a better alternative than going through Wherstead.

There new appointed England Coast Path Officer will be starting the role early May, paid for by NE.

7. Suffolk Energy Schemes

Sizewell C

AW gave updates on the paper LAF 22/11.

SZC is still awaiting the decision on the application which will generate a significant amount of work when approved, and all the different workstreams will need to be refamiliarized.

SCC not happy with the way PRoW were described in the plans.

SCC will ensure Kenton Hills new PRoW will be connected.

DF will be involved with the money spend over next 10 years, which equates to one good sized project per year. There is a list of suggested projects for more accessible networks, with the aim of reducing car usage.

There will be one new PRoW Officer for 10 years.

There will potentially be some new ideas for projects through ESC's cycling and walking strategy which is about to be published which will include a new tourist route.

JH asked if there will be improvements for equestrians.

DF said that everything will be a bridleway or above. There is sensitivity regarding the Stone Curlews, so the area will not be overdeveloped in terms of access.

SB asked what about the rules for cyclists on footpaths.

AW said that cycling is a trespass on footpaths but not an offence. For cyclists to be banned on footpaths it would need to be made into a bylaw or subject to a traffic order.

SK said that cyclists are required to give way to walkers on bridleways.

It is an offence to cycle on pavements.

MH asked if the Discover Suffolk app contributed to cyclists using footpaths.

DF said that the functionality has been taken off the app.

Action: AW to provide SLAF with an update once the application is approved by the Secretary of State, at a future meeting ie. workstreams.

EA1 & 2

AW said this scheme has been approved.

The £400k Access Fund will go to ESC, and it needs to be discussed how this money is going to be spent. The overall impact will be high on local green access.

BH noted the visual intrusion and impact of the schemes on the access users.

CP arrived at 3.08pm

8. National Highways

DF gave an update on LAF 22/12.

DF attended a drop-in session by NH and said the meeting was very informative.

The Copdock Interchange scheme is one of 32 around the country. There is a lot of national competition. NH have spent quite a lot of money on the drop-in sessions. It is not clear how much this scheme will cost.

Option 1 and option 4 are the most popular options. SCC would be pushing for better access and improvements to culverts with either option.

Option 1 is the dedicated slip road improvement and is less intrusive.

Option 4 is a new network with a new underpass, giving better connectivity, and will have the most positive impact on traffic flows and improve traffic, creating less need for rat-runs. This option also potentially gives more support for walking, cycling and horseriding.

Belstead had a campaign against option 4, stating that it would cut across a field which is farmed, and people were concerned about footpaths being lost.

NH are looking at both options and possibility of merging both options 1 and 4.

NH is committed to WHCHAR. After carrying out an assessment NH will engage with SCC and SLAF.

It will become clear at the end of the year which option has been selected and then the WHCHAR process will start.

9. General update

AW gave a verbal update.

1. The 2026 cut off has been repealed which is significant news. Councils still have work to do. DEFRA will share the guidance for the new requirements and full costs are to be recovered.

Whilst this date has been repealed the underlying pressures are still there:

- Increase in resultant claims
- The need to record urban PROW shown on lists of streets
- Unrecorded widths should be investigated
- The right to apply, introduced by the Deregulation Act.

AW has put in a bid for more resources which was approved on the same day as the repeal. The extra resources are needed irrespective of the appeal as 2026 prompted claims to be put in. The funding has been allocated to recruit extra staff to address pressures.

JW asked about the implications of the repeal and whether claims will continue.
JW asked how many claims there are. SK said there were around 117 formal applications on the backlog but there had recently been more BHS claims submitted

Action: SK to provide figures.

2. An additional £50k for revenue maintenance has been approved and will go mainly on extra reactive cutting. To illustrate between 1st May 2021 to 30th August 2021 there were 532 reports regarding overgrown routes, out of a total number of 2410 reports for that period. This number is over four times the amount of cutting reports from the previous year. Whilst the extra £50k provides more capacity to respond, it is noted that costs are rising with inflation.
3. AW is also looking at pressures in the area teams, and the recruitment of development officers to scope and deliver externally funded improvements – mainly development related to Section 106 funding.
SCC looking at how to use the new funding in areas supported by the Green Access Strategy.
4. If SZC is approved, it will fund a dedicated development officer from a £2.5m PRow Fund. AW said that there will also be some money coming through to PRow from the two new roads that will be developed from the SZC project.
5. AW updated on the process of large bridge works:
 - Fen Bridge – a new bridge will be installed in September, cost c.£400k.
 - Mildenhall River Lark Bridge – was installed a couple of months ago, cost c.£150k.
 - Bailey Bridge – ongoing but the works are substantially completed, cost c.£500k.

BH said that the money streams are being allocated well and that the SLAF Annual Reports play a big part in the success of getting the funding from the county council, which helps in the delivery of projects.

6. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

7. Any Other Business

There was no any other business.

8. Dates of Next Meetings

- 28th July, Pinewood Community Hall
There will be a morning site visit.
- 27th October*, venue to be confirmed
*please note that this date has changed from 20th October.

END

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Network Rail – Public Rights of Way Level Crossings
Paper:	LAF 22/14
Meeting:	28th April 2022, 2-4 pm
Author/Contact:	Steve Kerr / Andrew Woodin
Venue:	The Lounge, Pinewood Community Hall, Laburnum Close, Pinewood Ipswich IP8 3SL

Introduction

This paper updates the forum on the main level crossings being addressed by Network Rail (NR) and Suffolk County Council ('the Council' or 'SCC'), and progress on their Transport and Works Act proposals.

Needham Market Gipsy Lane and FP6 Needham Market



Further to the update provided in April, NR and the affected landowner are in the final stages of their negotiations.

The s278 agreement has been progressed further and consensus reached on the commuted sums for the Stowmarket footway widening element of the scheme but the legal agreement is not yet finalised, and as such NR have yet to confirm an actual start date for the works.

General/Countywide

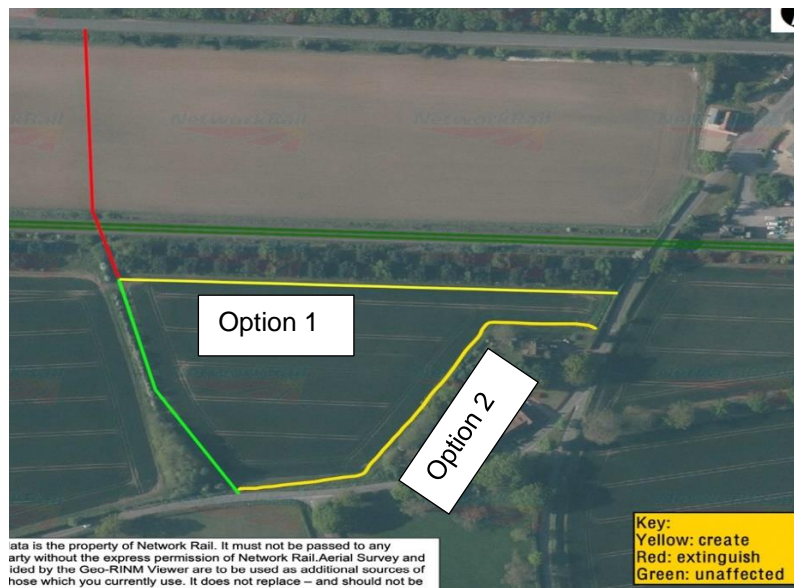
NR's Suffolk Level Crossing Reduction Strategy - Transport and Works Act Order

At the monthly meeting held on 19 July, NR confirmed that all landowner consents had now been secured and that their appointed contractor, Taziker, are undertaking topographical and

ecological surveys w/c 25 July. NR will be sharing their indicative programme with the county council in due course but officers will provide a further verbal update at the Forum's meeting.

Footpath 1 Higham (High Bridge)

Following agreement with the landowner on the Option 1 diversionary route shown below, SCC's consultant has undertaken the formal consultations with interested parties, including the consultations required with the utility companies (New Roads and Street Works Act). The Forum's Secretariat was consulted on 14 June (see consultation letter, location map and diversion plan attached at Appendix A), with a request for comments by the 14th of July 2022.



On 15th July the Secretariat requested a 2-week extension to the deadline, to allow the Forum to discuss the proposal at its meeting on 28th July and agree a response, and following a discussion with officers, on the 23rd of June the extension request was agreed.

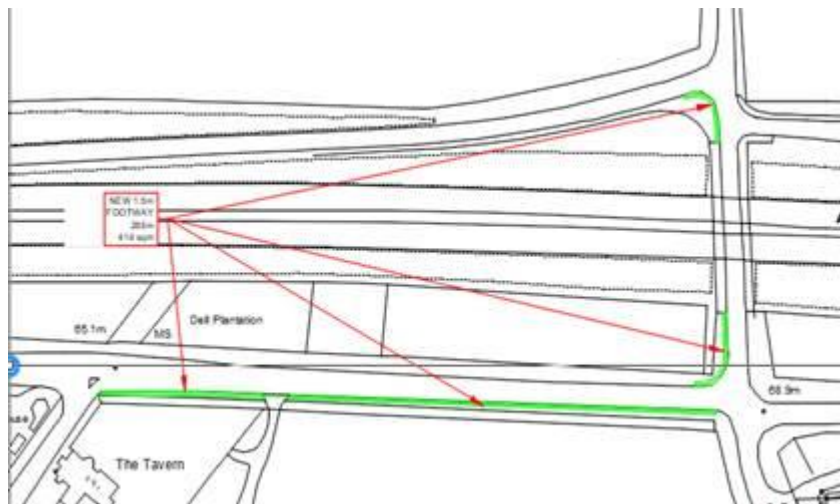
On the 5th of July the Chairman of SLAF commented that “whilst not objecting to the diversion, where the railway goes over the road there appears to be no footway and I thought there was also going to be some work done to make walking on the slip road safer”.

Officers can confirm that there is no existing footway on Higham Road where the diversion exits onto the carriageway (including on the section of road bridge across the operational railway), although a highway verge pedestrian refuge does exist along most of its length. The google image below is taken approximately at point D as indicated on the consultation map.

Higham Parish Meeting have yet to formally respond to the consultation but on 12th of July the Ramblers' representative for Newmarket and District responded, to indicate his support for the diversion. A full copy of his response can be seen at Appendix B.



As advised at the Forum's meeting in October 2021, officers can also confirm that in July 2021 NR agreed to improve pedestrian connectivity within the A14 slip road highway verge, between the junctions of Higham Road and Coalpit Lane, together with sections of Coalpit Lane itself. Please refer to the sketch below.

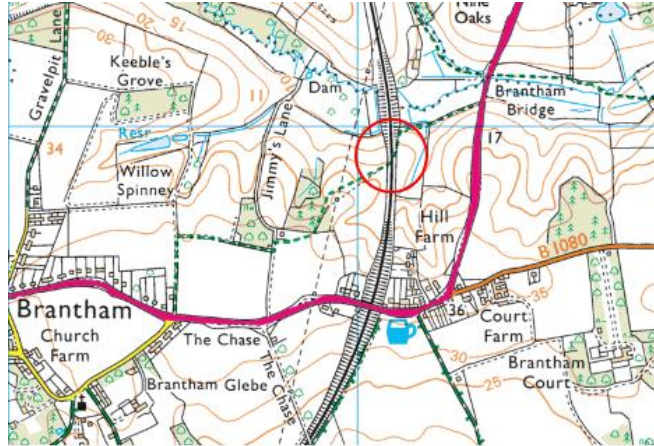


Last year Suffolk Highways estimated the works for this scheme would be approximately £45-£50k, with an additional circa £10K for the detailed design. The path would have a bound rather than unbound surface, as it was felt this would be more cost effective. This was given a while ago and is likely to need updating.

There would be additional costs were there to be a need to alter any utilities. The detailed design estimate would include the production of detailed design drawings, a topographical survey and GS6 survey (a risk assessment of overhead power lines) and checks on utility asset records, as well as a road safety audit.

Officers are currently liaising with NR to draft a costs agreement that will legally commit the railway operator to fund these improvements. NR are also funding the costs associated with Rail Crossing Diversion Order.

Footpath 6 Brantham (High Bridge)



Since the Forum's last meeting, there has not been any further progress on the above case and SCC still awaits receipt of the completed Rail Crossing Extinguishment/Diversion Order application from the railway operator.

END – SK July 2022

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Network Rail – Public Rights of Way Level Crossings
Paper:	LAF 22/14 Appendix A
Meeting:	28th July 2022, 2-4 pm
Author/Contact:	Steve Kerr /Andrew Woodin
Venue:	The Lounge, Pinewood Community Hall, Laburnum Close, Pinewood Ipswich IP8 3SL

APPENDIX A



Your Ref:
 Our Ref: Higham FP1 Div
 Date: 14 June 2022
 Enquiries to: Mrs Rosalinde Emrys-Roberts
 Tel: 07850 506 924
 Email: ros@routewise.org

Dear Sir or Madam,

**Proposed Diversion of Higham Footpath 1
 Highways Act 1980 Section 119A**

I am writing to consult you about an application made by Network Rail to Suffolk County Council to divert the footpath that crosses the railway line between Newmarket and Bury St Edmunds, at Higham. The footpath leads from Gazeley Road, Higham, northwards across the railway line to the westbound slip road of the A14 as shown on the enclosed plan 'Proposed Diversion of Higham FP1'.

I have been appointed by Suffolk County Council, to act on their behalf regarding this application. I am consulting interested parties¹ at this initial stage to inform you of the proposal and to invite your views.

Background

In 2017, Network Rail applied to the Secretary of State for Transport to extinguish this footpath as part of an order made under the Transport Works Act 1992 (TWA). Objections were made against the proposed closure of this crossing at that time. These were on the grounds that an alternative walking route needed to be provided, as walking on the road by the war memorial was considered unsafe. The Inspector considered that provision of an alternative route could not be made within the proposed TWA order and that a fresh application for the diversion of the footpath would be required to achieve this. The

Secretary of State noted the Inspector's conclusions and agreed that this crossing should be removed from the TWA Order. This outcome led to this application being made to divert this footpath.

What is the legal test to be met for a diversion?

The application has been made under section 119A of the Highways Act 1980². This sets out the legal test to be met for an order to be made. The test provides that where it appears to the Council that in the interests of the safety of members of the public using a footpath over a level crossing the path should be diverted, the Council may make an order

¹ i.e. *landowners, councils, users and statutory undertakers*

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/66/section/119A>

Phoenix House, Goddard Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 5NP
www.suffolk.gov.uk

to divert the path.

Any decision to make an order diverting the path would need to take into consideration how the path would be changed, what works might be needed to create the new route, and when the new path would become a public right of way. If an order were made, consideration would, in addition, need to be given to whether it was reasonably practical to make the crossing safe for use by the public, and the arrangements made to ensure that appropriate barriers and signs were erected and maintained.

The application has been made by Network Rail on the grounds that the crossing is unsafe due to the poor sight lines that in particular affect vulnerable users. The application notes that the northern end of the footpath does not connect with any traffic-free routes likely to be desirable to walk. The cost of improving the level crossing, either with lights, or a bridge is likely to cost between £1-3.5 million. Network Rail also states that if the order were successful, the level crossing would be securely fenced off to prevent unauthorised access and any signage reasonably required by the Council would be provided.

Description of the proposed path

The line of the proposed path (Points A-B-D) and a comparison of this with the line of the existing path (Points A-B-C) can clearly be observed in the accompanying plan.

The current path leads northwards from Grazeley Road (Point A), across a field to the railway line, and then over another field to the slip road of the A14 (Point C). The proposal is that the new footpath would start from this footpath at Point B, south of the railway, and run eastwards towards Higham Road along the south side of the belt of trees. The new path would connect with Higham Road through a gap in the hedge at Point D. Where the new path would cross the ditch alongside the hedge at Point D, there would need to be a bridge/culvert to provide a slope up from the field to the road.

The width of the new path is proposed to be 2 metres. Network Rail will be responsible for making sure that any works required are provided, including making the surface of the new path firm and level, crossing the ditch and the exit onto Higham Road, before the line of the path could be changed.

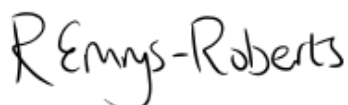
The Process

Consideration will be given to any comments received to this consultation. A report will be produced and submitted to the Council's Development and Regulation Committee to make a decision as to whether the order should be 'made'. If an order is 'made' it will be advertised and there will be further consultation.

If you wish to discuss what is proposed, or to make any comments or suggestions, please contact me using the contact details at the head of this letter. As this is a consultation process, your comments will need to be shared with Network Rail. Therefore, could you please state if you do not wish your personal details to be shared³.

Please could you send any comments that you wish to make to me by Thursday 14th July 2022.

Yours sincerely,



Rosalinde Emrys-Roberts
Routewise Consulting
On behalf of Suffolk County Council

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Network Rail – Public Rights of Way Level Crossings
Paper:	LAF 22/14 Appendix B
Meeting:	28th July 2022, 2-4 pm
Author/Contact:	Steve Kerr /Andrew Woodin
Venue:	The Lounge, Pinewood Community Hall, Laburnum Close, Pinewood Ipswich IP8 3SL

APPENDIX B

Rosalinde Emrys-Roberts

Routewise Consulting

11th July 2022

Dear Rosalinde

Proposed diversion of Higham Footpath1. (Crossing S23-Higham).

Highways Act 1080 Section 119A.

Thank you for consulting me on behalf of the Ramblers on this proposal by Network Rail, (NR).

Back in 2016, when Network Rail were intent on closing, literally, every foot crossing in Suffolk, (and elsewhere), I spent a great deal of time considering NR's original proposals, and the possible options.

In the case of this crossing, and the one described by NR as Higham Ground Frame, to the east of the village and its former station, we were faced with a legacy left by the builders of new, dualled, A14, who failed, in both cases, to take the interests of pedestrians into account, in theory leaving them to either attempt a hazardous crossing, on the line of the definitive footpath, across both carriageways, or to undertake a long walk along the slip roads before crossing the A14 by a newly constructed bridge. A later diversion of Higham fp. 1, north of the A14, removed the possible use of its dangerous crossing, but greatly increased the distance to walk to re-join fp. 1, via the slip road, south of the A14. This scenario would have made walking southwards on the road from the former A45, (at the Round House), passing the former station, a more attractive proposition.

The value of retaining of what remains of Higham fp. 1 between the A14 and the railway is debateable, particularly with the railway being in a cutting, with steps down to it and prone to erosion, providing further hazards to walkers.NR 'jumped the gun' here and physically closed the foot crossing in 2016, perhaps for repair, (?), but it remains closed and fenced to this day.

An alternative route through the village was suggested by NR entirely on the road, from the southern end of Higham fp. 1 via the war memorial, where there is a nasty bend, and railway bridge to reach the former A45 at the Round House. (i.e.as indicated two paragraphs earlier, but in reverse).

I have walked the current proposal since receiving your enquiry, having first eliminated the, difficult to maintain, overgrown parallel route between the wood and the railway, that I once had in mind, and I consider this to be the safest option and worthy of support.

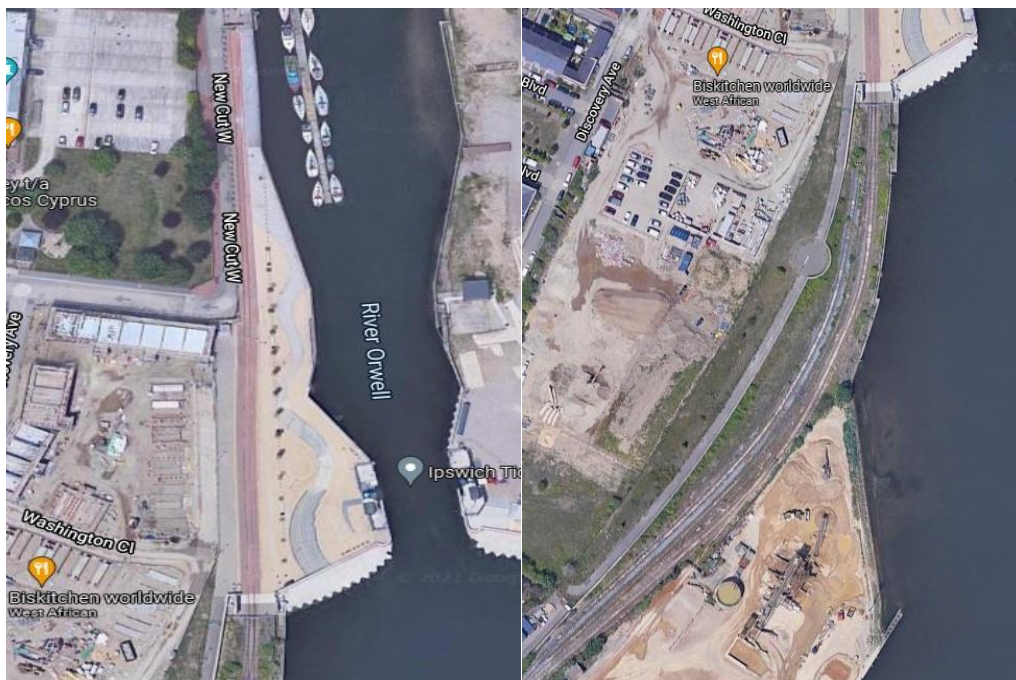
Yours sincerely

Phil Prigg

Group Footpath Secretary, Ramblers, Newmarket & District Group

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Byway 38/Restricted Byway 38A Ipswich
Paper:	LAF 22/15
Meeting Date:	28th July 2022, 2-4 pm
Author/Contact:	Steve Kerr
Venue:	The Lounge, Pinewood Community Hall, Laburnum Close, Pinewood Ipswich IP8 3SL

Further to the update provided to the Forum in April, unfortunately the Public Open Space (POS) is still not accessible to the public.



The delay has been caused by the ongoing work to identify the infrastructure works required to make the lighting columns operational. Suffolk Highways' Lighting team have visited the site on 3 occasions now and have identified a series of works that are required to connect the electrical cables and junction boxes to the mains electricity supply.

Officers have continued to chase progress on these works, with the latest position being that the Lighting team visited the site on 7th July in order to allow the streetlighting contractor to look at what site investigation works will be required to connect the units to the lighting columns.

The Lighting team are now waiting for a costing from their contractor in respect of the outstanding works, which will consist of various options depending on the complexity of the works involved. There will need to be investigation works as part of these costs, to ensure all the cabling ducts are clear from the POS to electricity supply points in Bath Street.

Rights of Way officers will be alerted once the costings are received but Councillor Paul West (Cabinet Member for Ipswich, Operational Highways and Flooding) is due to visit the site next month as part of a Rights of Way briefing, and officers have asked that the works costings referred to above be made available before the briefing, so that Councillor West is made aware of the latest position.

Both Associated British Ports and the Environment Agency have also sought regular updates on when the lighting columns will be operational but unfortunately Street Lighting are unable to provide a timeline.

END – SK July 2022

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	The England Coast Path
Paper:	LAF 22/16
Meeting Date:	28th July 2022, 2-4 pm
Author/Contact:	Andrew Woodin
Venue:	The Lounge, Pinewood Community Hall, Laburnum Close, Pinewood Ipswich IP8 3SL

1. Progress on Establishing The England Coast Path (ECP)

The latest information from Natural England's (NE) on its progress for the ECP in Suffolk and Norfolk is shown on their website. The website progress overview map was last updated on 7th July 2022.

Stretch name	Progress
<u>Harwich to Shotley Gate</u>	Stage 4 and 5: Partially approved (not yet available for public use - work to establish the route is currently taking place on approved lengths)
<u>Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Ferry</u>	Stage 5: Open (not yet available for public use - work to establish the route is currently taking place)
<u>Felixstowe Ferry to Bawdsey</u>	Stage 4: Determine
<u>Bawdsey to Aldeburgh</u>	Stage 4 and 5: Partially approved (not yet available for public use - work to establish the route is currently taking place on approved lengths)
<u>Aldeburgh to Hopton-on-Sea</u>	Stage 4: Determine
<u>Hopton-on-Sea to Sea Palling</u>	Open to the public

The remaining stages to establish Coastal Access in Suffolk are as follows:

Stage 4: Determine

After the report has been published, there's an opportunity to comment on the proposals. At this time:

- anyone who wishes to comment can make a representation on the report
- owners or occupiers can submit an objection relating to particular aspects of the proposals

See the guidance about how to comment for more information.

Once the period to comment on the proposals has ended, the Secretary of State will decide whether to approve the proposals in Natural England's report. When making a decision, any representations or objections that have been submitted will be considered along with the recommendations from the Planning Inspectorate.

Stage 5: Open

The Secretary of State approves the route of the England Coast Path on this stretch, or a report within the stretch.

Preparations are then made on the ground and the necessary legal paperwork is completed. Once complete, the new public rights of access will come into force on the stretch.

Note: Whilst individual reports for sections within a stretch can be approved, in Suffolk stretches will not normally be launched until all of the Coastal Access Reports comprising the stretch have been approved.

Further information on the England Coast Path can be found [here](#).

2. The Stretches in More Detail

Natural England has provided the following updates around the Suffolk coast stretches.

The right of access to the approved stretch of coast does not come into effect at this stage. Natural England will work with the county council to establish any infrastructure works before an Order is made by the Secretary of State under the 2009 Act to bring the rights into effect.

Natural England, Suffolk County Council, Defra and the Planning Inspectorate continue to work together to ensure much of the England Coast Path is open as soon as possible.

The Five Suffolk Stretches

Harwich to Shotley Gate – Sally Fishwick. Last updated 12.07.22

- Stage 4 and 5 (Determine and Open)
- The Overview, and the compendium of six separate reports (covering individual lengths of coast within the stretch) were published on 22 January 2020. The 8 week period for comment closed on 18th March 2020
- Natural England received 7 objections, to 5 of the 6 individual reports.
- Natural England have submitted their comments on the objections and representations received.
- The Appointed Person visited the stretch in June 2021 and sought further advice from Natural England in relation to some of the objections received. They are undertaking a further visit in July 2022. They will then advise the Secretary of State on the objections.

- Coastal Access Reports 1 and 4 have been approved by the Secretary of State. Work to establish the route can now take place on these lengths.

Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Ferry – Darren Braine. Last updated 12.07.22

- Stage 5 (Open) – but not yet available for use
- All 5 reports are approved by the secretary of state and are available for Suffolk County Council to apply for the establishment grants.

Felixstowe Ferry to Bawdsey – Sally Fishwick. Last updated 12.07.22

- Stage 4 (Determine)
- Natural England published proposals on 9th December 2020 and the 8 week period for public comment ended on 3 February 2021.
- 7 objections were received. As stretches are published as a compendium of reports, the absence of objection on 2 of the 6 reports means Natural England expects these 2 reports to progress positively to Secretary of State approval which would then allow Suffolk CC to undertake establishment works.
- Natural England are currently writing their comments on the objections and representations received.

Bawdsey to Aldeburgh –Jonathan Clarke & Darren Braine. Last updated 12.07.22

- Stage 4 and 5 (Determine and Open)
- The report was published on 3rd of February 2021 and closed for public comment at midnight on 31st March 2021.
- The Planning Inspector ruled the objections were admissible.
- The Appointed Person visited the stretch in July and will advise the Secretary of State on the Objections.
- Coastal Access Report 3 has been approved by the Secretary of State. Work to establish the route can now take place on this length.

Aldeburgh to Hopton-on-Sea – Sally Fishwick. Last updated 12.07.22

- Stage 4 and 5 (Determine and Open)
- Natural England published proposals on 29th January 2020. The 8 week period for public comment, closed on 25th March 2020.
- 23 objections were received, to 1 of the 6 individual reports. As stretches are published as a compendium of reports, the absence of objections on 5 of the 6 reports means Natural England expects these will progress positively to Secretary of State approval, which would then allow Suffolk CC to undertake establishment works.
- Natural England is currently writing their comments on the objections and representations received.
- Coastal Access Reports 1,3,5 and 6 have been approved by the Secretary of State. Work to establish the route can now take place on these lengths.

The new ROW & Access coast path officer started in May and is making inroads into reviewing the works required to bring the Orwell stretch of the England Coast Path into operation.

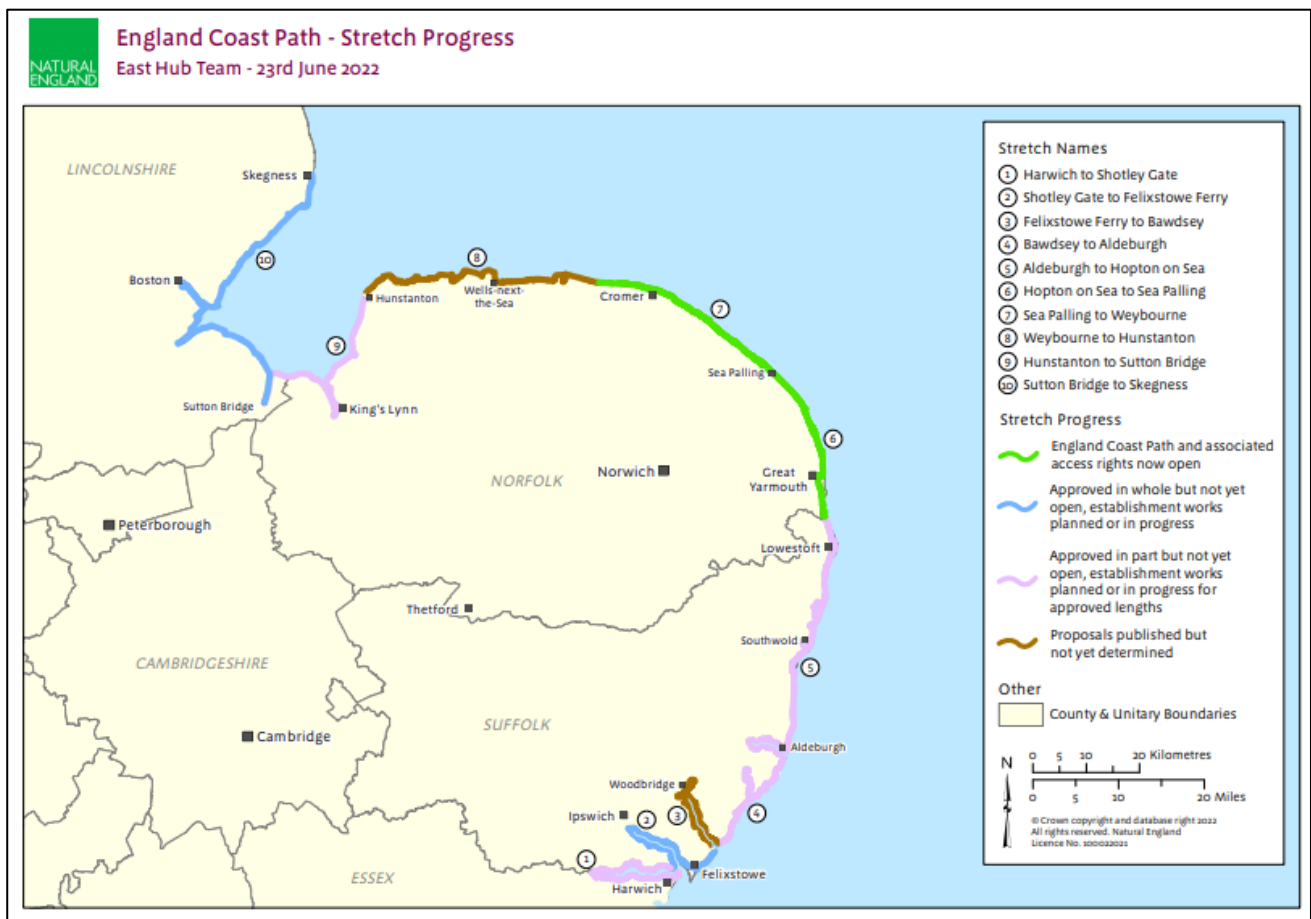
As further reports and stretches are approved, the pace of establishment will depend on capacity within the ROW & Access team.

The county council and Natural England have been in discussions about launching this first section of the coast path when the works are complete.

3. Future Management of the England Coast Path in the East of England

A meeting has been arranged with Norfolk and Essex county councils next month, to resume discussions on forming a trails partnership to promote and manage the England Coast Path in the east of England.

4. England Coast Path – Progress Map for the East (Updated Gov UK 23/6/22)



END
AW/SCC July 2022

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Energy Schemes
Paper:	LAF 22/17
Meeting Date:	28th April 2022, 2-4 pm
Author/Contact:	Andrew Woodin
Venue:	The Lounge, Pinewood Community Hall, Laburnum Close, Pinewood Ipswich IP8 3SL

Sunnica

The County Council have held meetings over the last month with Sunnica representatives to discuss a Statement of Common Grounds (SoCG), this is not concluded, and further discussions are anticipated imminently. The Examining Authority has set a deadline for the SoCG as 30 August 2022 with SCC representatives agreeing this prior to that date. This includes effects on the public right of way network including footpaths, bridleways and on non-motorised users (NMUs) and road closures.

The Examining Authority has set a preliminary meeting for 26th July 2022. The purpose of the Preliminary Meeting is to enable views to have put them about how the application should be examined.

Work is continuing for preparation for the examination phase with the County Council focusing on the Local Impact Report and Statement of Common grounds in preparation for the examination phase. As yet no date has been set for the hearing, but we anticipate this will commence in the autumn.

An over view of the Sunnica application can be found here - [Sunnica Energy Farm | National Infrastructure Planning \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](https://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/sunnica-energy-farm/)

National Grid Bramford to Twinstead

The scheme currently remains at pre application stage with a statutory consultation carried out in February and early March. Pre consultation meetings have commenced between the County Council and National Grid consultants. As part of the discussions the County Council have requested that Public Rights of Way is a separate topic to Landscape and Highways. The Development Consent Order effects a vast number of public rights of way in Suffolk and Essex. No timescale has been set for the Developers Application.

Further details can be found on the National Grid website here - [Bramford to Twinstead | National Grid ET](https://www.nationalgrid.com/uk/energy-projects/bramford-to-twinstead)

East Anglia Green

Note – this is a new entry to the energy schemes paper.

This scheme was launched earlier this year with the initial consultation being undertaken in late April through to June. The county council submitted comments regarding the network and amenity land. The scheme runs from Norwich to the sub station at Bramford, then through the Dedham Vale to Tilbury in Essex. The statutory consultation is anticipated in late Spring next year.

The proposed route will affect a high volume of routes, including several promoted trails. Full details of the exact route are yet to be confirmed with the proposed option heading through Mid Suffolk to Bramford and then southeast through Babergh.

Discussions are currently underway regarding the cumulative and in combination effects of multiple energy projects on green access in the Mid Suffolk and Babergh, focusing particularly on the Bramford area.

Further details on the EA Green scheme can be found on the National Grid website here - [About East Anglia GREEN | National Grid ET](#)

SLAF may want to consider where the forum wants to respond.

1. **Sizewell C**

The Secretary of State has consented Sizewell C. Full details at [The Sizewell C Project | National Infrastructure Planning \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](#)

The County Council's key remaining points at the end of the examination (removal of Sizewell Link Road, removal of outage car park at Goose Hill, removal of pylons, changes to the design of SSSI crossing) were dismissed by both Examining Authority and Secretary of State.

A number of the technical changes to the DCO, put forward through the council solicitors, have been agreed – although unfortunately the Secretary of State went against our view, and indeed the Examining Authority's advice that SCC should be the discharging authority for surface water drainage, and gave ESC the discharging role.

Now we are entering a 6-week period where Judicial Reviews can be launched (which we expect will happen). EDF indicate that FID may be in first half of next year, commencement from mid-2023 all being well. We will find out over the coming months what this means in terms of EDF's work programme over the coming months.

In the meantime, we have been working with EDF on plans to upgrade level crossings on the Leiston branch line, consulting on plans for the creation of a badger sett and more significantly, the creation of a large wetland habitat close to the Minsmere boundary. This habitat is necessary to mitigate the impact on marsh

harriers and hence has to be ready before any existing marsh harrier habitat is disturbed. EDF have submitted a planning application to ESC following extensive discussions regarding transport and access to the site. We have agreed that bridleway 19 can be temporarily closed for a period of 6 months over the winter while it is used as the site access. An alternative route has been scoped on site and will be physically improved and maintained by EDF during the temporary closure. The Kenton Hills car park will remain open.

2. East Anglia One North and EA2 offshore windfarms with onshore infrastructure

The SoS approved these applications on the 31st of March 2022, allowing for both offshore windfarms and cable corridors onshore, a National Grid substation and a substation for each windfarm to be built at Friston.

SPR are working towards discharging their requirements for highway improvements and the public rights of way changes. We have been discussing the public rights of way work with SPR, particularly the proposed permanent new footpath at the Friston site and liaising with the local community.

3. East Anglia 3 offshore windfarm with onshore infrastructure

This application was approved in 2017 and SPR have prepared and have approval from the district councils for works at some of the construction sites. Works are now starting.

4. SEAS – National Grid offshore link from Suffolk to Kent-onshore cable corridor , new converter station and connection to Friston NG substation (if approved as part of EA1N &EA2 application)

The National Grid intend to hold a public consultation in summer 2022 to outline their emerging proposals.

5. Nautilus Interconnector -an electrical connection between Belgium and Britain -National Grid Ventures

A non statutory consultation was held in October 2021 but there has been no further consultation since.

END
AW/SCC July 2022

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	National Highways Copdock Interchange
Paper:	LAF 22/18
Meeting Date:	28th July 2022, 2-4 pm
Author/Contact:	David Falk
Venue:	The Lounge, Pinewood Community Hall, Laburnum Close, Pinewood Ipswich IP8 3SL

A14 J55 Copdock Interchange

The following correspondence was emailed to SLAF on 17th June 2022 with an update on proposals by National Highways for A14 J55 Copdock Interchange

From: A14J55copdock <A14J55copdock@nationalhighways.co.uk>
Sent: 17 June 2022 12:05
To: A14J55copdock <A14J55copdock@nationalhighways.co.uk>
Subject: A14 Junction 55 Copdock Interchange

Dear Sir or Madam

As you will be aware, the A14 Junction 55 Copdock Interchange is among the schemes being considered in the Road Investment Strategy 3 (RIS3) pipeline. Each of the schemes is evaluated against a range of factors including strategic fit, value for money, affordability, deliverability, environment, and stakeholder views.

All the schemes in the RIS3 Pipeline programme remain uncommitted, with no guarantee they will be taken forward into construction. We won't know which schemes are committed until the Road Investment Strategy 3 (RIS3): 2025-2030 is published. Recently the schemes have been reviewed to determine the next steps for their development through the pipeline.

The Department for Transport has asked that we progress the scheme through the current stage to do further analysis.

Some schemes, like the A14 Junction 55 Copdock Interchange, are advanced in their early stages. A few of the more advanced schemes may see work slow down while we carry out development and assessment on some schemes that haven't progressed as far. The pipeline schemes are considered as part of an overarching potential programme for the future.

We'll continue to work with key stakeholders such as yourself as we take the next steps in this project's development. We will be in touch as we have more news to share.

If you have any questions about the pipeline or the project, please do let me know.

Kind regards

James Goodman
A14 J55 Copdock Interchange Project Manager

The A14 J55 Copdock Interchange Public Consultation report is at:
https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a14-j55-copdock-public-consultation/supporting_documents/BED21_0078%20A14%20copdock%20scheme%20brochure.pdf

The A14 J55 Copdock Interchange Options Consultation Report is at:
https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a14-j55-copdock-public-consultation/results/he604639-jac-gen-schw_00-rp-zh-0009-final.pdf

A11 Fiveways Junction

A meeting of the Traffic and Design Technical Working Group for the A11 Fiveways Junction was held on 5th July.

National Highways are considering and reviewing options with surveys on NMU improvements still to be conducted. A consultation lasting a minimum of 6 weeks is planned for winter 2022.

END
DF JULY 2022

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Reply from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
Paper:	LAF 22/19
Meeting Date:	28th July 2022, 2-4 pm
Author/Contact:	Andrew Woodin
Venue:	The Lounge, Pinewood Community Hall, Laburnum Close, Pinewood Ipswich IP8 3SL



The Rt Hon George Eustice MP
Secretary of State for Environment,
Food and Rural Affairs

Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

T 03459 335577
defra.helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Rt Hon Dr Thérèse Coffey MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Our ref: MC2022/06636/BG

8 June 2022

Dear Thérèse,

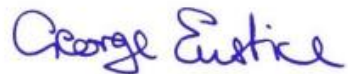
Thank you for your email of 22 March on behalf of the Suffolk Local Access Forum about access to the countryside. I apologise for the delay in responding. Defra is currently dealing with high volumes of correspondence.

The Government is a great supporter of the health and wellbeing benefits that access to the countryside can bring. As set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan, public access to the countryside provides a huge range of benefits, including improving physical and mental health and supporting local communities and economies.

We are continuing to support and enhance access to the countryside in different ways. This includes work to complete the England Coast Path and to support our network of National Trails and we intend to create a new National Trail across the North of England. We have also decided to take forward a streamlined package of measures in order to improve the way that rights of way are recorded and managed. This consists of repealing the 2026 cut-off date to record historic rights of way, as set out in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, in order to prevent unrecorded historic rights of way from being lost forever. This will also provide the right to apply for landowners to divert or extinguish rights of way in certain circumstances.

Increasing access to the countryside, heritage and engagement is currently supported by schemes like Farming in Protected Landscapes and Countryside Stewardship. Later this year, we will be considering how to maintain investment in these areas as part of future schemes, such as our new environmental land management schemes.

We are working with stakeholders and end users to determine the specific land management actions that will be supported, for example, funding the creation of new paths, such as footpaths and bridleways, which provide access for pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists. We will publish more details on the schemes, including how farmers can get involved, throughout this year.



RT HON GEORGE EUSTICE MP



Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Open Access Review of Directions
Paper:	LAF 22/20
Meeting Date:	28th July 2022, 2-4 pm
Author/Contact:	David Falk
Venue:	The Lounge, Pinewood Community Hall, Laburnum Close, Pinewood Ipswich IP8 3SL

Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000

REVIEW OF STATUTORY DIRECTIONS

**CONSULTATION NOTICE
Prepared by Natural England**

1. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Access Authority: Suffolk County Council
Relevant Authority: Natural England
Local Access Forum: Suffolk LAF

Natural England is reviewing the following directions:

Open Access land parcel name	Direction reference	Details of restriction on original direction
Brick Kiln Walks	2007020104	Dogs on leads between <u>1 August and 31 August each year annually</u> until 31 August 2023 to protect ground nesting birds under Section 26 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000.
Westleton Heath	2007020105	
Dunwich Heath	2007020106	
Walberswick Common, Tinkers Walk & East Sheeps Walk, Newdelight Walks	2007020109	

This is in line with the relevant authority's statutory duties (see Annex 1).

Your views on the current directions are sought to assist Natural England in deciding whether the restrictions are still necessary for their original purpose; and if so, whether the extent and nature of each restriction is still appropriate for the original purpose.

Natural England originally gave these directions on 1 February 2007, and last reviewed the directions in August 2017. Following consultation, no change was made to the extent or nature of the restrictions.

If the relevant authority decides to vary or revoke the directions, a further round of public consultation may be necessary (see Annex 1) in which case a second Consultation Summary Report will be published.

2. SUMMARY OF EXISTING DIRECTIONS

All of the sites are located within Suffolk Coasts and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Brick Kiln Walks, Westleton Heath, Walberswick Common, Tinkers Walk and East Sheeps Walk are located within Suffolk Coast National Nature Reserves (NNRs), managed by Natural England, Walberswick Common Lands Charity, Suffolk Wildlife Trust and RSPB. The NNR supports populations of nationally and internationally protected ground nesting birds such as Avocet, Bittern, Nightjar and Woodlark.

Dunwich Heath is located within the Dunwich Heath Coastal Centre and Beach and is managed by the National Trust. The site supports populations of nationally and internationally protected ground nesting birds such as Avocet, Bittern, Nightjar and Woodlark.

Under Schedule 2 of the CROW Act there is a national restriction to keep dogs on leads from 1 March to 31 July on CROW open access land. Whilst there are a number of nesting bird species that are vulnerable to disturbance by dogs on these sites, nightjars in particular can be rearing young from a second clutch of eggs into August. The current directions extend the dogs on short leads restriction to cover the period from 1 August to 31 August annually, to protect nesting birds from disturbance.

3. SUBMITTING COMMENTS ON THE REVIEW

If you wish to comment on the review of this direction then you must do so before 9 August 2022 directly to sarah.haigh@naturalengland.org.uk. A map accompanies this notice and is attached and can be seen on the [Consultation Pages](#) of the Government's Website.

Using and sharing your consultation responses

In line with Natural England's [Personal Information Charter](#), any comments you make, and any information you send in support of them, will help us to determine the application and / or determine if the restriction is still necessary in relation to the review or reassessment of a current direction.

We may wish to pass such comments or information to others in connection with our duties and powers under the open access legislation. This may mean for example passing information, including your name and contact details, to the Secretary of State or their appointees, the Planning Inspectorate or to the relevant access authority(s).

We do not plan to publish individual comments in full, but we may publish extracts from them when we report on our consultation(s).

There may also be circumstances in which we will be required to disclose your response to third parties, either as part of the statutory process for consideration of representations and objections about our decision, or in order to comply with our wider obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you do not want your response - including your name, contact details and any other personal information – to be publicly available, please explain clearly why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. However, we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not be regarded as binding on Natural England.

Annex 1

In accordance with statutory guidance, the relevant authority has a duty to:

- review directions of a long-term character no later than their fifth anniversary; and
- revoke or vary directions where necessary.

Under CROW section 27(3) the relevant authority must review, at least every five years, any direction it has given that restricts access indefinitely; for part of every year; for part of each of six or more consecutive calendar years; or for a specified period of more than five years.

During the review the relevant authority must, having regard to the interest of the public in having access to the land, consider whether the restriction is still necessary for its original purpose; and if so, whether the extent and nature of the restriction is still appropriate for the original purpose.

Before reviewing a long-term direction the relevant authority must consult:

- the local access forum;
- the applicant or his successor in title, where reasonably practicable – for directions under section 24 or 25 made on application; or
- the relevant advisory body – for a direction made under section 26.

The authority must also publish a notice on a website (and send a copy to statutory consultees) that must explain that the authority proposes to review the direction in question; where documents relating to the review may be inspected and copies obtained; and that representations in writing with regard to the review may be made by any person to the authority by a date specified in the notice.

Once consultation is complete the relevant authority should have regard to any representations it receives before making a decision.

If following the consultation, the Relevant Authority decides to:

- leave the original direction unchanged, the relevant authority should record the date that the decision was made and should schedule a subsequent review where necessary.

If following the consultation, the Relevant Authority decides to:

- vary the extent or nature of a restriction, the relevant authority will issue a new direction under the same section and direction number that was used to give the original direction. If the new direction is long-term, it must be reviewed within five years of the date it is given;
- revoke a direction, we will record the date that the decision was made.

Before varying or revoking a direction the relevant authority must: consult the original applicant or his successor in title, where reasonably practicable – for directions given under section 24 or 25 on an application; or consult the relevant advisory body – for directions given under section 26. In either case, follow the consultation procedures set out in the Relevant Authority Guidance but only if it proposes to give a new direction that would restrict access indefinitely or for more than six months continuously.

END
DF/SCC July 2022

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	SLAF Annual Report 2021-2022
Paper:	LAF 22/21
Meeting Date:	28th July 2022, 2-4 pm
Author/Contact:	David Falk
Venue:	The Lounge, Pinewood Community Hall, Laburnum Close, Pinewood Ipswich IP8 3SL

The SLAF Annual Report is due to be presented to SCC Cabinet by the SLAF Chair in autumn 2022.

The topics discussed since October 2021 are:

- Post-EU agricultural policy and DEFRA response
- Suffolk Energy Schemes: Sizewell C; Scottish Power; Sunnica.
- Solar Farm Position Statement
- Network Rail and Public Rights of Way Level Crossings
- New Cut West, Ipswich – ABP
- Planning – presentations from BMSDC and IBC
- National Highways Trunk Roads
- The England Coast Path
- Regional LAF
- New SLAF appointment

SLAF members are asked if this covers all aspects of work in the past year and if there are any other items to be included.

You may also wish to make comments on:

- Rights of Way and Access budget increased by £150k
- Delivery of the Discovering Suffolk Project outdoor app and QR codes
- Delivery of the 2022 Suffolk Walking Festival

The Annual Report and the response by Cabinet will be an agenda item for the October SLAF meeting.

END
DF/SCC July 2022