

Improving Coastal Access

Report to the Natural England Board 21st February 2007

Notes for the JLAF informal meeting on 2 March 2007

Following the publication of the advice being given to the Government by Defra in the above paper it would appear that the issue of improved access to the coast by the public will be opened for consultation in late March or early April. The three month timescale makes it impossible for the JLAF to respond formally. Do members have a view on this?

Among the points of interest are:

- 1) Tailored legislation - i.e. not trying to squeeze change out of the existing statutory methods.
- 2) A coastal access corridor that is flexible enough to cope with changing coastlines to be decided by a methodology yet to be published but including a right of appeal for landowners.
- 3) Improved access routes to the coast.
- 4) Spreading Room e.g. headlands opened for general access.
- 5) Working the detail through Local Authorities where they are willing and able.
- 6) Consultation to include Local Access Forums.
- 7) A presumption against compensation – some ringing prose: “Because free access to its undeveloped coastline should be the birthright of an island race.”
- 8) Enhancement of coastal landscapes and wildlife.
- 9) Farmers not to cultivate to the cliff edge – rewarded through single payments scheme and cross compliance.
- 10) Estuaries normally included up to the first permanent crossing point. Surely this does not mean the Second Severn Crossing.
- 11) Generally salt marshes and mudflats will be excluded.
- 12) Improved provision for horse riding and circular walks to be made possible by prioritisation by Local Authorities.

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/about/board/feb07/210207_coastal_access_NEB_P07_03.pdf

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February 2007