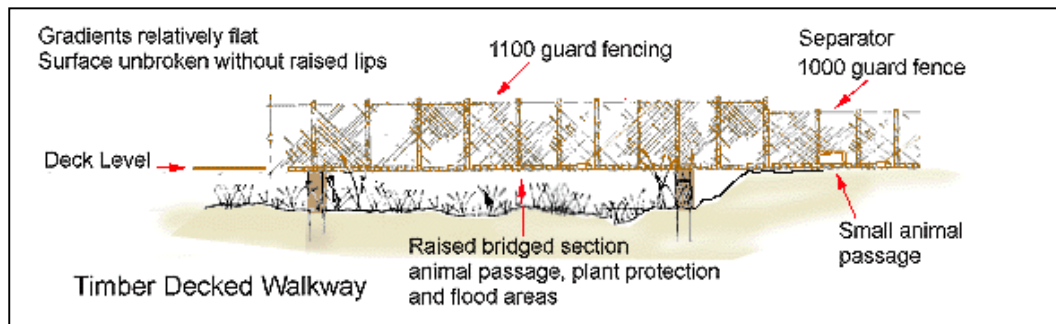


## Sand Dune Routes Timber Decked Paths

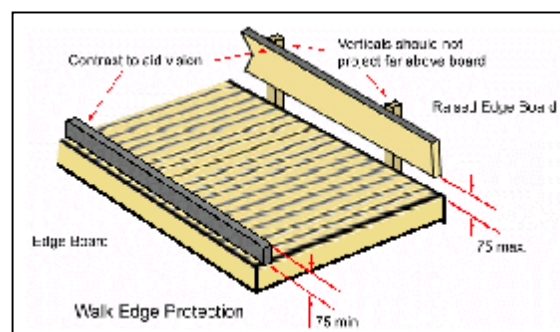
Country paths, cycle and motor cycle tracks and bridleways should avoid crossing sand dunes when ever possible as surfaces are easily damaged and eroded. (See also our guide “Boardwalk Construction and Maintenance” for details)

- Habitats of protected species of animals, birds or plants may need special consideration and appropriate guidance should be sought.
- Sand blown surfaces or sand finished walkways are not suitable for wheelchairs, some mobility vehicles, mobility aid users and people with low vision.
- The walkway should be raised clear of normal high water levels where flooding is possible, and to permit small animals to pass underneath the walk.
- The walkway should not be less than 1200 mm wide 1800 width preferred minimum, wider in heavily trafficked areas and passing places.
- Wood slats should be placed as close together as possible while still allowing for drainage between them. Joints should be as level as possible (5 mm up or down max.). This enables people who use mobility aids, have low vision or ride wheelchairs to travel safely. If drainage gaps are used between planks the



maximum gap should be 12 mm.

- Planks should be perpendicular to the direction of travel to prevent walking sticks, bicycle tires and wheelchair wheels from becoming stuck in the openings.
- Decks should not be springy as this can cause loss of traction or tripping.
- Curves and angles should be very slight as they reduce



- traction especially when wet or muddy.
- The low level walkway should have defined edges. A 150 mm high tapping rail or raised 75 mm plus edge board which contrasts to the background.
  - In some hazardous sections and sections where the habitat needs protection, a 1000 mm high guardrail should be provided. Where there are long sections of fencing are used, gaps should be left for small animals and birds to pass through every 5 to 10 metres. Where there is a regular animal track gaps should always be provided.
  - Inclined joining and leaving sections should have handrails at 600 and 950 mm heights.
  - Hand and guardrails should not provide the opportunity for children to climb up them (no horizontal rails) and should follow the 100 mm ball rule for gaps.
  - On narrow decks passing places should be provided at appropriate intervals.
  - Observation points should not obstruct the pathway width, wider fenced sections should be provided.
  - On long sections (over 70 metres) provision of seating set along the path should be considered.
  - On longer pathways space for wheelchairs and scooters to turn should be provided every 50 metres. These should be level and 2500 mm wide and 2800 mm long.
  - Where possible gradients should be 1:20 or less, rest places should be as per BT Country standards (see Country Pathways and Surfaces). Any sections of 1:20 or more should be provided with handrails.
  - Consider providing alternate stepped routes for inclines greater than 1:20 as many people find ramps and slopes difficult to walk along.
  - Blown sand should be cleared from the surface at regular intervals.
  - The path surface and rails should be inspected weekly and repaired promptly. An annual (pre-season) check should be made of all underside supports.
  - Construction elements floor boards, posts, handrails, etc. should not pose trapping hazards. The 100 mm ball rule should be used on all fence elements. But managers need to remember that gaps between boards should not tend to trap children's fingers, a 5 mm gap permits drainage and will not trap small fingers.

While every effort is made to ensure that information held within this document is accurate and up to date, Croft Consultants will not be held responsible for any loss, damage, injury, or inconvenience caused by any inaccuracies contained herein.

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