## Runswick Bay Coastal Defences

### Key Issues:
Runswick Bay is a popular tourist town located along the North Yorkshire coast, 5 miles north of Whitby and set within the North Yorkshire Moors National Park (NYMNP). The site forms part of the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast (NY&CHC). The bay is approximately 2 km long and is situated between Caldron Cliff (north) and Kettleness (south). Runswick Bay Village is located in the north-western part of the bay, between the Nettledale and Runswick Beck valleys. The older part of the village, located closest to the sea, is designated as a conservation area for its historical and aesthetic value. Within the Bay there are several listed buildings. The Bay lies within a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ).

The local planning authority was the North York Moors National Park Authority however the scheme was also regulated by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). Due to the size and nature of the proposal it was determined that the proposal falls under Schedule 2, Part 10 (Infrastructure Projects) Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011. Under the EIA: Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) 2009 and the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 an EIA was also required. It was confirmed that the North York Moors National Park Authority will act as determining authority.

A Marine Licence application, issued under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 was also submitted to cover the proposed scheme.

### Purpose of the project:
The Runswick Bay Coastal Protection Scheme was promoted by Scarborough Borough Council and includes construction of a 180m rock armour fillet approximately 2.5 metres high and 10 metres wide. The scheme is designed to reduce the risk of coastal erosion, deterioration of the sea wall, wave overtopping and flooding to Runswick Bay Village over the 100-year design period of the Scheme. The scheme provides protection to 96 residential and 17 non-residential properties.

### Description of the project:
Runswick Bay area has a history of coastal instability with risk of landslips and coastal erosion to the village and local community, due to the deterioration of the existing seawall, toe erosion and wave overtopping. The Shoreline Management Plan Review (2007) recommended a ‘Hold the Line’ policy. The Runswick Bay Coastal Strategy (Environment Agency 2015) was developed to determine the preferred strategy option. The process was undertaken in two stages comprising a preliminary assessment of a long list of options and a more detailed assessment of short-listed options. The preferred option was selected as a rock armour fillet again existing seawall. A Strategic Environmental Assessment was undertaken to support the coastal strategy. EIA screening and scoping was completed in 2015.

The preferred option was delivered through a Design and Build contract. The EIA was prepared alongside the detailed design and submitted in July 2017. Permission was granted in November 2017 and construction started in March 2018.
Lessons learnt:

Like many similar schemes within a sensitive marine environment, the option development and approval took several years. The preferred option was confirmed in 2015. EIA Scoping was completed in 2015. During the period 2015 and 2017 the EIA regulations were replaced, however given that EIA Scoping had been completed under the previous 2011 regulations, NYMNP confirmed that the application could be progressed under these regulations, through the transitional arrangements of the 2017 regulations.

During post-scoping period the Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) was confirmed. Originally the MCZ did not include the intertidal zone, however the final alignment was located against the toe of the seawall meaning the rock fillet was situated within the MCZ. Discussions with Natural England allowed for enhancements to be considered as mitigation measures. This included distressing boulders and placement of seed boulders to encourage colonisation by marine invertebrates. The distressing of the new boulders included drilling of rock pool features and thin horizontal grooves (approx. 60cm long x 1cm deep) and thicker, coarser grooves (approx. 60cm long x 2cm wide) cut into the rock using an angle grinder.

Lessons learnt continued:

During determination the Environmental Statement the consultation comments that were returned varied from those received during EIA Scoping consultations from the same organisations. A lesson learnt from this is, where scoping has been undertaken several years previously (and through a different contract arrangement), it would be beneficial to review the scoping decision and make sure that relevant department had been included in the original response especially for the larger public-sector bodies. However, this would also have had implications, with further delays to the consenting programme. The change to the MCZ alignment underlines the importance of reviewing environmental designations.

The project required joint approval from the local planning authority and the MMO. At the start of the detailed design stage, a concordat approach was agreed with the NYMNPA and the MMO. NYMNP was confirmed as the lead determining authority and the EIA approval was deferred to the National Park, allowing a smoother route during the determination period. Time was still required to ensure good communication between the NYMNPA and MMO and the effort required for even a deferred submission to work smoothly should not be under-estimated.

In addition to the coastal improvement works Yorkshire Water Services were upgrading the existing mains sewer that was located alongside the existing seawall. This posed some logistical problems as the coastal works could not be started until the sewer had been upgraded since access to the sewer services needed to be provided within the rock armour.

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