### Purpose of the project (1)

The York Potash Project is a nationally important proposal to develop a new state-of-the-art potash mine in the area between Whitby and Scarborough – the first new deep mine in the UK for many years.

As the global population rises, and demand for food intensifies, fertilisers help global farmers meet demand. Polyhalite is a unique, natural-occurring mineral, which combines four of the six essential nutrients plants need and has been certified for use in organic farming by the Soil Association.

The Project focuses on an area containing the largest, highest grade resource of polyhalite in the world. A key issue, however is that the mineral is located beneath the North York Moors National Park.

The EIA covered the mine surface development site and shafts, the 37.5km tunnel for the mineral transport system, the materials handling facility at Teesside and the harbour export facilities. Royal HaskoningDHV led complete Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment.

### Purpose of the project (2)

Royal HaskoningDHV was also responsible for development of the route from the material store at Wilton along a 3km conveyor, to the banks of the River Tees where a new quay will be built to allow for loading of the polyhalite onto ocean going vessels for export.

### Key Issues

One of the main challenges in the Project assessments was the consideration of the Special Qualities of the National Park. These attributes are identified in the National Park designations and reflect some of the key reasons why tourists visit and residents enjoy living in the Park. But they can be very subjective. The planning applications had to include a comprehensive assessment of the potential of the Project to impact on these Special Qualities, and such an assessment had not been done before.
Lessons learnt (1)

The project relied upon many of the company’s numerous technical disciplines working as a single unit to deliver a robust and cohesive solution for York Potash.

Dr Matthew Hunt, Director of Water Land and Industrial Development, Royal HaskoningDHV, said: “The undertaking of the EIA on this project was vast. In such a unique location, gaining consent for a major development in a National Park is, quite rightly, very difficult but it is not impossible. It is challenging, complex and requires full integration with the design team.”

The project has now achieved planning consent for the mine, mineral transport system and the materials handling facility. The development of the harbour facilities at Teesside requires a Development Consent Order (DCO), to be considered by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State as a ‘Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project’. This was submitted on 27 March 2015 and a decision is expected in July 2016.

Lessons learnt (2)

“The team at Royal HaskoningDHV have provided sound advice to the Project, ensuring that the Environmental Impact and Habitats Regulations Assessments were both proportionate and robust. This was an important part of our drive to secure consent. I have been involved in major projects for over thirty years and the depth of environmental study completed by Royal HaskoningDHV’s has been fundamental to the project’s ability to secure Planning Approval.”

Allan Gamble, Project Director, York Potash

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