

Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000

NOTICE OF RELEVANT AUTHORITY DECISION FOLLOWING REVIEW OF DIRECTION RESTRICTING COASTAL ACCESS RIGHTS

Prepared by Natural England

Access Authority: Redcar & Cleveland

Relevant Authority: Natural England

Local Access Forum: Tees Valley

Direction reference: 2014087357

| Land Parcel Name | Direction Reference | Details of restriction on original direction |
|---|---------------------|--|
| South Tees Estuary Industry and supporting land | 2014087357 | Total exclusion to the coastal margin for the purposes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">preventing danger to the public from the presence of heavy industrial activities and practices. (section 25(1)(b) CROW) and <ul style="list-style-type: none">the purpose of managing industrial processes on this land (section 24 CROW) |

Natural England has now decided how to proceed following its review of the long-term direction to restrict coastal access rights in association with the England Coast Path on this land. A consultation was held between 07th May and 03rd June 2021 with statutory consultees and the public. We received feedback from several consultees including:

- Teesworks (South Tees Development Corporation).
- Sembcorp.
- Anglo American (York Potash Processing and Ports Limited).
- British Steel (to clarify changes in land ownership).
- Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

In summary the feedback was as follows:

Despite several changes of ownership on land covered by this direction since the direction was first granted in 2015, the use of the land has remained the same.

One of the major new landowners, Teesworks stated that:

‘the land remains a top tier COMAH site (Control Of Major Accident Hazards) and is currently, and will be for the 5-10 years, subject to a major programme of planned Demolitions, Land Remediation and Regeneration related construction activities all of which make any form of open public access impossible to contemplate on Health and Safety grounds.’

Note: The purpose of COMAH regulations is to prevent major accidents involving dangerous substances, and to seek to limit as far as possible the consequences for human health and the environment of such accidents.

Sembcorp *‘strongly advocates that the exclusion zone remains in place, as the safety and protection of industrial apparatus, as well as the safety of people in this area remain a high priority.’*

Anglo American (York Potash Processing and Ports Ltd) also agreed that they: *‘would be in continued support to keep this (area) restricted in the interest of safety.’*

Finally, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council are of the view that: *‘It is inappropriate to have public access to the industrial complex in South Tees so the access restrictions should remain in place.’*

Outcome of the review:

Natural England’s decision is to leave the original direction unchanged in the way it was originally proposed and extend the end date for a further six years.

Although there have been changes to land ownership, the way in which the land is used remains the same, heavy industrial activities and practices which are incompatible with public access.

Natural England’s policy for long-term directions is that they should not be given for a period of more than six years. Therefore, the original direction will be extended to an end date of 21st July 2027.

Where a direction restricts access indefinitely, for more than five years, for part of every year, or for part of at least six consecutive years, we have a statutory duty to review it within five years of the date of its issue.