

Devon economy handed £3m boost with more to come as Network Rail commits to using local businesses where possible

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Figures released this month confirm that an additional £3m has been spent locally in south Devon between June 2019 and May 2020 by Network Rail and its contractors as a result of the government funded project to build a new sea wall at Dawlish.

By the time the first section of the new sea wall is completed in summer this year Network Rail and its main contractor, BAM Nuttall, expect to spend a further £1.56m in south Devon on local labour, materials and accommodation bringing the total spend in the local economy to nearly £5m.

The boost to the local economy around Dawlish and Teignbridge comes as a result of Network Rail and BAM Nuttall committing to spend as much money locally as possible whilst they build the new sea wall which will help protect the railway and town from rising sea levels and extreme weather for generations to come.

Based on the amount spent in the Dawlish and surrounding areas to support the construction of the first section of the new sea wall, the team building the sea wall estimate that they will spend a further £5m locally as part of the plans to complete the second section of the new sea wall.

Network Rail's plans for the second phase of the project to complete the new sea wall, which will be 410m in length from Colonnade underpass towards Dawlish Warren, are expected to be submitted to Teignbridge District Council in the next month. The Government has committed £80m of funding to complete the upgrade of the Dawlish sea wall.

Mike Gallop, Network Rail's Western route director, said: "I am delighted that we've spent nearly £5m with local suppliers and businesses in the Dawlish and Teignbridge area as a result of the first section of the new sea wall.

"We are committed to continuing to support the local economy, particularly in these difficult times. The proposed second section, which would continue the new sea wall north-eastwards adjacent to the station, is likely to bring in another £5m to be spent locally with contractors, suppliers and accommodation providers. I know how vital this will be for many businesses struggling to cope with the impact of the coronavirus outbreak."

Phil Bowcock, operations manager at BAM Nuttall, said: "BAM Nuttall have a history of working at Dawlish since 2014. We are proud to continue this association with the area and help secure this vital piece of the UK railway. We have and will continue, through close collaboration, engage with local people, suppliers and stakeholders to support the local economy.

"This project is of great benefit to local people and the South West Region. BAM are really proud to be involved in such a great legacy."

Photo credit: Network Rail