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Hollicombe Bay

The problem.

Hollicombe Bay is a popular Torbay beach backed by attractive red sandstone cliffs. The stability of these soft cliffs is constantly undermined by the sea forming and enlarging beach level caves. In the past the caves have been sealed with masonry walls which have deteriorated in recent times. In 2008 the beach was closed due to a number of significant rock falls. To complicate matters, the base of the cliff is tidal.



Hollicombe bay cliffs prior to remedial works

The solution

After a geotechnical inspection was undertaken, a plan of action was developed with the consulting engineer Frederick Sherrell.

- Remove 400m³ of unstable sandstone pillars from the cliff.
- Install rock netting to control further erosion and protect the VT work force.
- Excavate the caves down to a foundation level.
- Build concrete filled sandbag bunds at the cave openings.
- Fill the caves with pumped concrete contained by the bunds.





The rock face scaled, netted and bunds part built



Pumping concrete into caves and Rock netting detail