

Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal

Port Heritage Summary



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Abbreviations

c	circa
HCA	Homes and Communities Agency
HE	Historic England
HER	Historic Environment Record (Northumberland County Council)
LB	Listed Building
NGR	National Grid Reference
NTL	Normal Tidal Limit
OS	Ordnance Survey
SIT	Spittal Improvement Trust
SM	Scheduled Monument
SMP2	Shoreline Management Plan 2
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

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Cover illustration

Berwick's historic quayside from Tweed Dock.

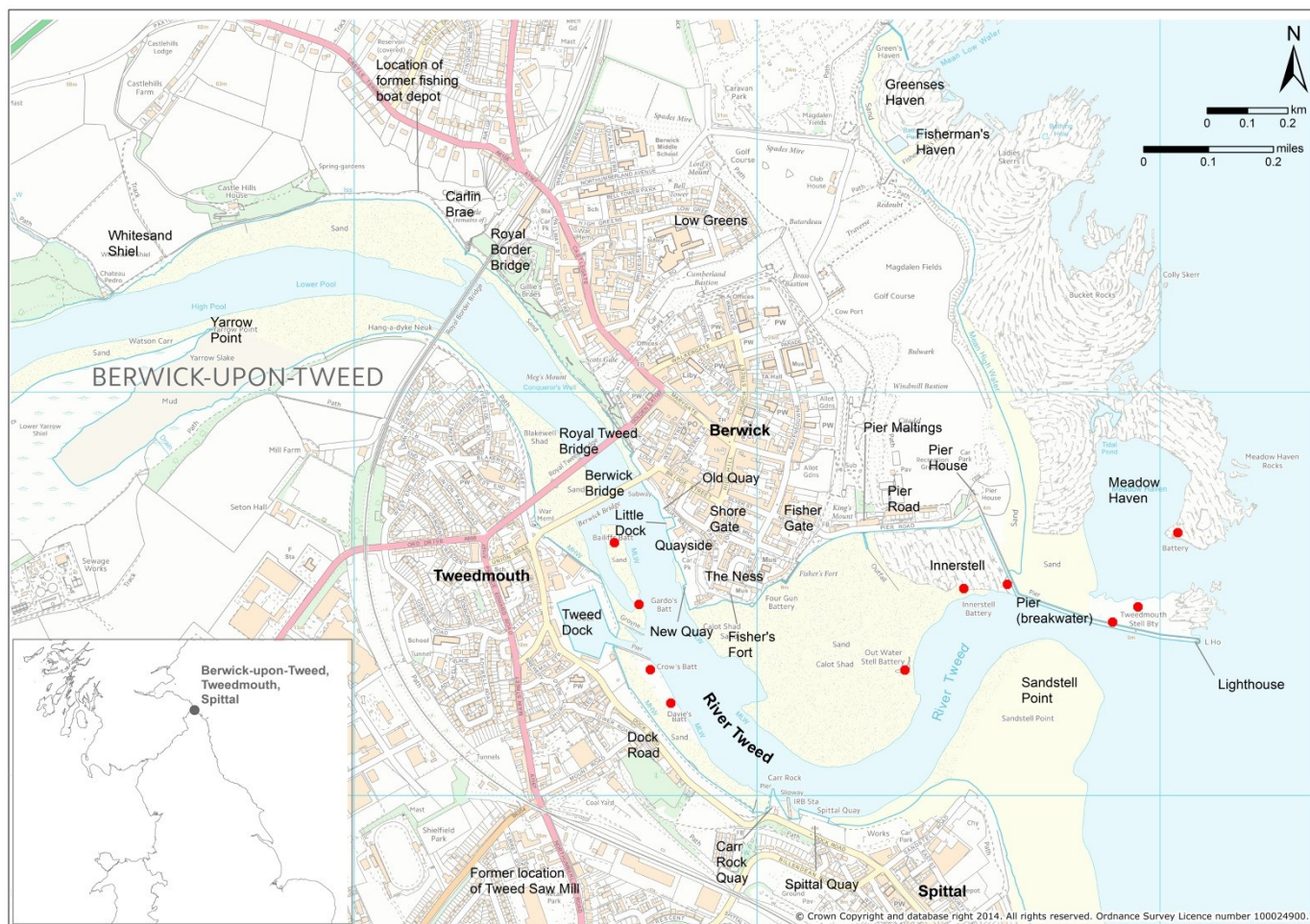


Fig 1 Location, topography, place-names and features in the Berwick area (including batts – red circles).

Introduction

The *England's North Sea Ports* project aims to improve the understanding of the heritage values, significance, vulnerability and adaptability to change of port-related heritage in nineteen major ports along England's North Sea coast, from Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland, to Harwich, Essex. The project focuses on the historical development of each port, its present character and its port-related heritage, the values attached to that heritage and the issues and opportunities it presents for future development.

The review for each port is presented as an illustrated 'Port Heritage Summary', designed to be succinct and readable, raising awareness and understanding amongst all parties interested in that port's future development and so contributing towards the sustainable management of its port-related heritage.

This Port Heritage Summary relates to Berwick-upon-Tweed, Tweedmouth and Spittal in Northumberland, where nine individual areas of port-related character have been identified. The Summary explains how port heritage within those areas contributes to the area's distinctiveness today, to the interpretation of its historical development, and that of the North East and the North Sea. This includes the cultural

associations and feelings of local people and communities to the maritime past and how it is viewed and valued by them today.

A range of management options to build on the present values and roles of its heritage are summarised, enabling them to serve as a positive asset in the future of the area, retaining its rich cultural distinctiveness while meeting its changing economic needs.

Location

Berwick is located on the northern bank of the River Tweed, on the coast of Northumberland, close to the border between England and Scotland. Its harbour is formed by the tidal estuary of the River Tweed as it enters the North Sea. Tweedmouth and Spittal are situated on the opposite, southern, bank of the river.

Upstream of Berwick Bridge, the River Tweed becomes unnavigable by larger ocean-going vessels. The Normal Tidal Limit (NTL) extends 8.5 miles inland to Whielford Shiel, west of Horncliffe. The Tweed rises 95 miles inland and drains much of the borderlands of England and Scotland.



Fig 2 Looking from Tweedmouth to Berwick across the Tweed with Berwick Bridge and the town walls in view.

The Port

The tidal extent of the river is controlled by the Port of Berwick, the port-operating arm of Berwick Harbour Commission, the harbour authority.

The Port of Berwick is a Trust port, an independent statutory body, governed by its own legislation with no shareholders or owners. All profits generated are invested back into the port and its stakeholders. As a Trust port the Port of Berwick's planning powers will derive from its enabling order/Act, the powers of which vary from port to port.

The Port owns and operates Tweed Dock, Tweedmouth and the Berwick breakwater and lighthouse.

Tweed Dock deals with in excess of eighty thousand tonnes of cargo each year mainly as bulk cargo (aggregate, fertiliser, animal feed, timber and grain) with the occasional project cargo (including offshore energy). Trade is mainly to and from the Netherlands and Belgium and more occasionally, Denmark and Norway (Port of Berwick website).

Local Authorities and heritage organisations

The area comes under Northumberland County Council, a unitary authority, which oversees management of the Historic Environment Record (HER - database of historic buildings and archaeological sites and monuments) and provides heritage input and advice for archaeological mitigation within the normal planning process.

At a local level, including Tweedmouth and Spittal, the area is covered by Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council.

The Historic England (HE) North East office is in Newcastle. HE provides input and advice on heritage matters for Listed Buildings (LB) and Scheduled Monuments (SM), together with strategic overviews and support at local, regional and national levels.



Fig 3 Berwick's historic quayside. The cobbled surface of the Old Quay is visible in the foreground, the former Granary, now a retail and office space (upper left), with the later New Quay in the distance.

Historical development of the port and its North Sea roles and relationships

The modern port has its origins in the medieval period when Berwick was of strategic importance to both England and Scotland. Its success had much to do with its location, the economic development of the town and the agricultural produce and natural resources from its surrounding hinterland.

In the 18th century Berwick became an important fishing port, nationally renowned for its salmon fishery, the success and longevity of this trade resulting in a rich and perhaps unique heritage.

Trade in herring and grain also had an important impact on the character of the area's port heritage. It is still considered an important centre for the malting industry, with much of the trade passing through the port.

As with many other ports on the North Sea coast, attempts to improve facilities and navigation were made in the late 19th century. The port is still important regionally, with Tweed Dock used mainly by short sea or coasting vessels.

A medieval port - the wool trade

Berwick had a turbulent history due to its strategic importance and wealth of natural resources. The River Tweed not only forms a natural boundary, but is valuable as a natural harbour between the Tyne and Forth, however, it has been prone to fluctuating changes in depth.

Little is known of the town's early history although it is speculated that there has been a river crossing near Berwick since at least the Roman period (Northumberland County Council 2009; Menuge and Dewar 2011).

Documentary sources dating to 11th and 12th centuries show that Berwick was already an important economic hub. By AD 1124 the town was Scotland's richest royal burgh and port, prized for its defensible position and its lucrative wool trade.



Fig 4 The River Tweed looking from the riverside promenade at Whitesand Shiel to the ruins of Lower Yarrow Shiel on its southern bank.

It is likely that many religious houses were involved in the trade, with the majority of the wool exported to the Low Countries.

It is believed that the early port area and shoreline lay in the vicinity of Bridge Street and may have been a simple landing place for merchants and fishermen to haul their shallow-bottomed boats on to the foreshore. Available evidence also suggests that there were store houses and merchant halls in this area. Archaeological excavation shows that a considerable amount of material was deposited in the area in the late medieval period, partly the result of the dumping of ballast from boats using the port (Northumberland County Council 2009).

When Edward 1 of England captured the town from the Scots in 1296 he built a castle and walled defences surrounding the town. The town was constantly battled over in the following centuries changing hands several times before English rule was permanently established in 1482 but despite this, the town still has a distinctive architectural character that is more Scottish than English.

As an important location to cross the Tweed, from the 12th to 13th centuries AD three bridges were built to span the river but all were destroyed by flooding, leaving Berwick bridgeless for almost two centuries until a new wooden bridge was built in the late 15th century. The exact locations of the early bridges are unknown but it is likely these were in the general location of the present stone-built Berwick Bridge which was built between 1611 and 1634 (Menuge and Dewar 2011).

At the beginning of Elizabeth I's reign Berwick's defences were remodelled on the bastion system whereby huge earthen banks revetted in stone on their outer face were built. Funds were intermittent and in its final form the scheme retained the medieval walls where they followed the river (Menuge and Dewar 2011).

By c 1580 Berwick had a stone-faced quay (corresponding with 'Old Quay' or the northern part of the present quayside) with ships moored next to it.



Fig 5 Pier Road and the recently redeveloped Pier Maltings, also a former oil house for Berwick's whale fishery, looking to the Coastguard Cottages (top right).

Access to the quay from within the town's defences was provided by a narrow gate called the Shoregate, located at the bottom of Sandgate.

In the medieval (AD 1066 to 1540) and post-medieval (AD 1541 to 1749) periods Tweedmouth and Spittal were small coastal villages that developed quite independently to Berwick. They were administered separately and engaged in fishing and farming. *Hallowstell* at Spittal was recorded in a grant made by the Bishop of Durham for fishing rights in the years from AD 1099 to 1122, a *stell* being a place where fishing nets were set or placed.

Forerunners to Berwick's breakwater also date to the medieval and early post-medieval periods. In the 13th century the Holdman Wall was built to protect the harbour mouth and in 1557 Queen Elizabeth's pier, a 300-yard long wall, was built (Northumberland County Council 2009).

18th century – fishing and trading

The town of Berwick was administered as a corporation, generating its own income through tolls for commercial activity, including exports and imports via its quay and the processing of salmon.

By the 18th century the wool trade was no longer important. Instead Berwick had a profitable trade in salmon and herring, agricultural produce and coal, as well as trade in Scandinavian and Baltic timber, hemp and iron. Pantiles (orange roof tiles) are recorded as cargo imported from the Netherlands in the early 18th century but a little later they were being manufactured locally.

Well into the 19th century the salmon fishery represented Berwick's most valuable commodity. Salmon could be dried, salted, smoked, pickled or packed in ice for preservation and shipped in barrels or boxes (known as 'kits').

An engraving dated to 1793 shows a group of fisherman landing salmon in the vicinity of Carr Rock, and in the background, nearer to Tweedmouth, another group of fisherman hauling in a net to shore (a detail from *View of the Town and Bridge of Berwick* reproduced in Menuge and Dewar 2011).

The boat depicted is presumably a coble, a flat-bottomed, high bowed, clinker-built boat found on

the North Sea coast from the Scottish borders down to the Humber (Menuge and Dewar 2011, fig 49; Coble in art website).

The salmon fishery was seasonal and strictly managed with fishing rights. Fishing houses or 'shiels' were built alongside the river to provide lodging for the fisherman and a place to store their nets and equipment.

Only a few shiels survive but many more were recorded on historic maps. The fisherman kept watch from a 'watch-box' or 'fording box' which either resembled a 'crow's nest' of a ship attached to the gable of the shiel, or took the form of a free-standing timber tower on which a viewing platform was mounted. The free standing watch-boxes were usually downstream of each shiel to give the fisherman time to react to the cries of the look-out. Upon hearing the shout the fisherman would rush to their coble and the crew would row out into the channel, lay their nets in the path of the approaching salmon (Menuge and Dewar 2011).

The profit in the salmon trade was principally made by servicing London, where the fish were transported in boats known as smacks. The Berwick Smack was a fast sailing ship well designed for the rigours of the North Sea.

For most of the 18th century the salmon was transported as pickled or boiled but in 1788 the continental practice of shipping fresh fish in ice was adopted and a number of ice houses were built in the town; for example, the Bank Hill Ice House. Ice was initially gathered from local water courses and ponds but increasingly the demand was met by imports from Norway. Shiels also began to have small ice houses associated with them to ensure the catch was kept in the best possible condition.

In later times, at the foot of the steep slope of Carlin Brae, Berwick, an area of the foreshore became a depot for cobbles. It adjoined an area of common land with easy access to and from the Greenses area of Berwick (where many fishing families lived, see below).

The herring fishery out of Berwick never reached the same level of importance as the salmon fishery. It was a staple food of the poor but only a small proportion was sold to local people, with the remainder smoked and pickled and shipped elsewhere. Pickling was monopolised by the coopers (barrel makers) based in Berwick but curing was already being undertaken on a large scale at Tweedmouth before the end of the 18th century. At a smaller scale smokehouses were also built in the yards of several houses in the area (Menuge and Dewar 2011).

Greenses and Fisherman's Havens were frequently used by the herring fisherman up into the later 19th century. The Low Greens part of Berwick was a residential area located between the medieval town walls and the remodelled 16th century defences. Traditionally it was an area where fishing families lived and once considered quite different in character from the rest of the town (The Greenses website).

In the 18th and early 19th century Berwick was also involved in the Greenland whale fishery although on a very small scale. A reminder of this industry is the Pier Road oil house which was later adapted as a malt house and recently converted to a residential property.

Berwick quayside was also important for the export of the corn grown in the hinterland of the town. The multi-storey granaries of the corn merchants are a feature of the Bridge Street area of Berwick, crowding close to the quayside. The granaries were simple, robust buildings, usually with floors supported by large timbers of Baltic pine, ventilated by small openings fitted with wooden shutters. Ideally they enjoyed direct communication with the quayside: the example at Dewar's Lane is notable for the survival of a small tramway passing through an opening in the defensive wall (Menuge and Dewar 2011).

19th century – Industrial development and improvements to the harbour

Into the 19th century the town's importance as a border garrison diminished, especially after the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The look of the Quay Walls was particularly affected by this change as many people were allowed to build atop the rampart, including the Customs House, transforming the area's character.

From the turn of the 19th century industry rapidly developed in size and scale and was increasingly focussed on Tweedmouth and Spittal. Both areas had more space for large scale industry than Berwick, fewer influential people to object to any resulting noise and smells, and more of a sea breeze to whisk away any pollution.

In 1793 Thomas Cockburn opened a sacking factory in Tweedmouth to process hemp imported from the Baltic seaports. Smithies working imported iron had been an important part of Berwick's economy from an early date and by the 18th century the iron was also being imported from Scandinavia (Menuge and Dewar 2011).

The industrial development of Tweedmouth and Spittal is also linked to improvements in communications and the development of Tweed Dock and other harbour infrastructure.

In 1808 an Act of Parliament was passed to set up the Harbour Commissioners at Berwick, granting them powers to build a new pier or breakwater, to protect the harbour mouth from waves and to stabilise the channel, to extend the quay at Berwick and to build a quay at Carr Rock.

The 19th century breakwater or Pier was to be built on a large scale - work started in 1810 and the 960-yard long breakwater was completed in 1821, with the lighthouse finished in 1826 (Berwick Pier information board).

To enable the construction of the Pier the Berwick Pier railway, a horse drawn waggonway, was built on the Spittal side of the Tweed. This was used to transport stone from a coastal quarry near Huds Head to a jetty at Sandstell Point where the stone



Fig 6 Berwick's historic breakwater or pier and its lighthouse.

was floated down the Tweed to the river mouth on barges.

By the 1830s herring warehouses (curing houses) had been built on the eastern side of Sandstell Point by Robert Boston, a company which later employed up to 100 workers at its peak in the early 20th century; presumably using fish landed on the nearby jetties. To the east of the Point the first of three life boat stations had been built (all removed by the later expansion of industrial development).

In the same period Spittal began to emerge as a spa resort for people to sample the mineral water and to bathe in the sea.

The main railway arrived in the 1840s further stimulating the industrial development of Tweedmouth. A major development was the Tweed Sawmills by the Allan Brothers, who transferred their timber and slate business to Tweedmouth between 1852 and 1855 (Menuge and Dewar 2011).

The scale of development on the Berwick side of the river had a much smaller footprint but was significant in terms of the present character of the quayside area. In the 1750s Berwick's Old Quay had been extended to the south to include the area of 'New Quay'. The area of New Quay had been extended further along the walls of Fisher's Fort by the 1850 Tithe Map due to the dumping of ballast, and the quay frontage altered with the construction of a slipway (Northumberland County Council 2009).

Due to the lack of available space in Berwick for development, the limited extent of its quayside (despite its extension), and the problems of deeper draft vessels approaching the port, Tweed Dock was opened to vessels of 500 tons in 1876. This changed the focus of import and export away from Berwick's quayside to Tweedmouth. The construction of the dock was enabled by an Act of Parliament in 1872. The dock was later linked to the main line via an offshoot from Tweedmouth junction, thus fuelling further industrial development on the south side of the Tweed (Berwick Harbour Commission 1976).

A late 19th-century Ordnance Survey (OS) map records a number of shiels and batts or stone-built islands constructed by the salmon fisherman in the inter-tidal range of the Tweed. It is unclear when the



Fig 7 A short sea vessel from the Low Countries being loaded with bulk cargo in the west dock at Tweed Dock.

batts were first built and they could be unique to the River Tweed. They were used to help the fisherman cast their nets at different stages of the tide. Each batt and shiel was associated with a stell or area of fishing rights.

At Carr Rock the stone-built quay may have been used by the herring fisherman to land their catches for the curing companies located on Sandstell Point. Between Carr Rock and Tweed Dock the edge of the foreshore was defined by the railway line feeding the Dock. Further up the Tweed, the Royal Border Bridge had been built to connect the railways in 1850.

In this period the quayside area of Berwick covered an area similar to that today. A notable difference, however, was the number of narrow, rectangular lean-to buildings built against the Quay Walls, mostly stores and warehouses. Close to Berwick Bridge were a harbour office (now destroyed) and a small Customs House (presumably a small office on the quay). The Quayside Granary occupied the upper central part of the quay (now the 'The Chandlery'). On the water's edge was a slipway, possibly built for a shipyard (now destroyed) and further to the south, the customs watch house.

Beyond the Ness, near to the Pier a coastguard station and terrace of houses had been built together with a flagstaff, semaphore position and rocket house. To the north, Greenses Haven is recorded with a sea wall to offer protection to the small vessels that used it, and perhaps to help protect the shipping of stone and lime from the nearby quarries and kilns.

As the 19th century progressed Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal increasingly had more areas given over to recreation. With the decline of the military role of the ramparts they became a promenade and in 1816, to alleviate unemployment after the end of the Napoleonic Wars, Pier Road was built as a promenade leading to the newly completed pier and lighthouse. Also built as a walkway in the same period was the New Road extending to Carlin Brae from Love Lane alongside the river. In 1869, at the southern end of Love Lane, the headquarters of Berwick Amateur Rowing Club was established with the building extended in 1893.

Into the 20th century – a small regional port

Berwick began to develop as a minor resort and visitors increasingly came to admire the townscape, its sea and river views. Greenses Haven became a popular beach. A bathing hole was noted on early historic OS maps and by the 1920s two concrete-walled pools, one for men and one for women, were in use (Menuge and Dewar 2011).

While tourism and recreation in the area began to flourish in the 20th century there was a sharp decline in the herring and salmon fisheries. Following the retirement in 2014 of the last fisherman working Gardo's fishery there is no salmon fishery being worked by nets on the Tweed (Berwick Advertiser website, Tweed's salmon fishing tradition at an end article).

Despite the decline in fishing there were further developments to the port. Between 1897 and 1920 a fish quay had been developed at Spittal probably to serve the herring curing factories and on Berwick Quayside, a coastguard station and wooden slipway had been built. The lifeboat station at Sandstell Point had moved for a third time. The present lifeboat station and its concrete-built slipway next to Carr Rock quay was built in the 1930s and later adapted in 1993 for the new Mersey-class lifeboat (Berwick-upon-Tweed lifeboat station webpage).

A major development was the Tweedmouth Maltings building to the south east of Tweed Dock. This huge building was built in 1901 but destroyed by fire in 1933. The end of the railway servicing the Dock came with the improvements to the road network including the construction of the Royal Tweed Bridge in 1928 (Friends of Berwick and District Museum and Archives website).

In the 20th century Tweed Dock continued as the main centre of port activity on the Tweed, mainly importing materials for local businesses including the import of timber, cereals, clays and, up until the 1950s, the materials needed for the production of fertiliser (ammonia, phosphates, potash, bones, etc.) and since then, fertilisers themselves.

Coal was exported from the port until the closure of Scremerston Colliery in the 1950s. In the 1970s, sand and gravel dredged from the River Tweed and, until recently, locally quarried stone, was exported from the Spittal Quay. In the report celebrating the first hundred years of Tweed Dock the export of barley and wheat to Northern Ireland and the Continent were considered the main items of trade (Berwick Harbour Commission 1976). Today, cereals, aggregates and fertiliser constitute the main aspects of trade with imports and exports mainly to and from ports located in the Low Countries (Alan Irving, Port of Berwick Chief Executive pers comm).

The quayside area of Berwick is now comparatively quiet. From the 1950s until the 1970s the area was much busier as a small shipbuilding yard. The modern yard was linked to several boatbuilding firms, including Weatherheads (1950-1953) and Fairmile (1953-1972). The yards built a variety of vessels including yachts, barges, launches, tugs,

ferries and Royal Navy support vessels (Berwick shipbuilding website).

The Berwick shipyard was extremely cramped with limited space for expansion especially as vessels got larger. Tweed Dock also experienced similar issues with the ever growing size of commercial vessels. In the 1980s the Port authority removed the lock gates and its sill and widened the entrance to the dock from 10m to 16m (Alan Irving, Port of Berwick Chief Executive pers comm).

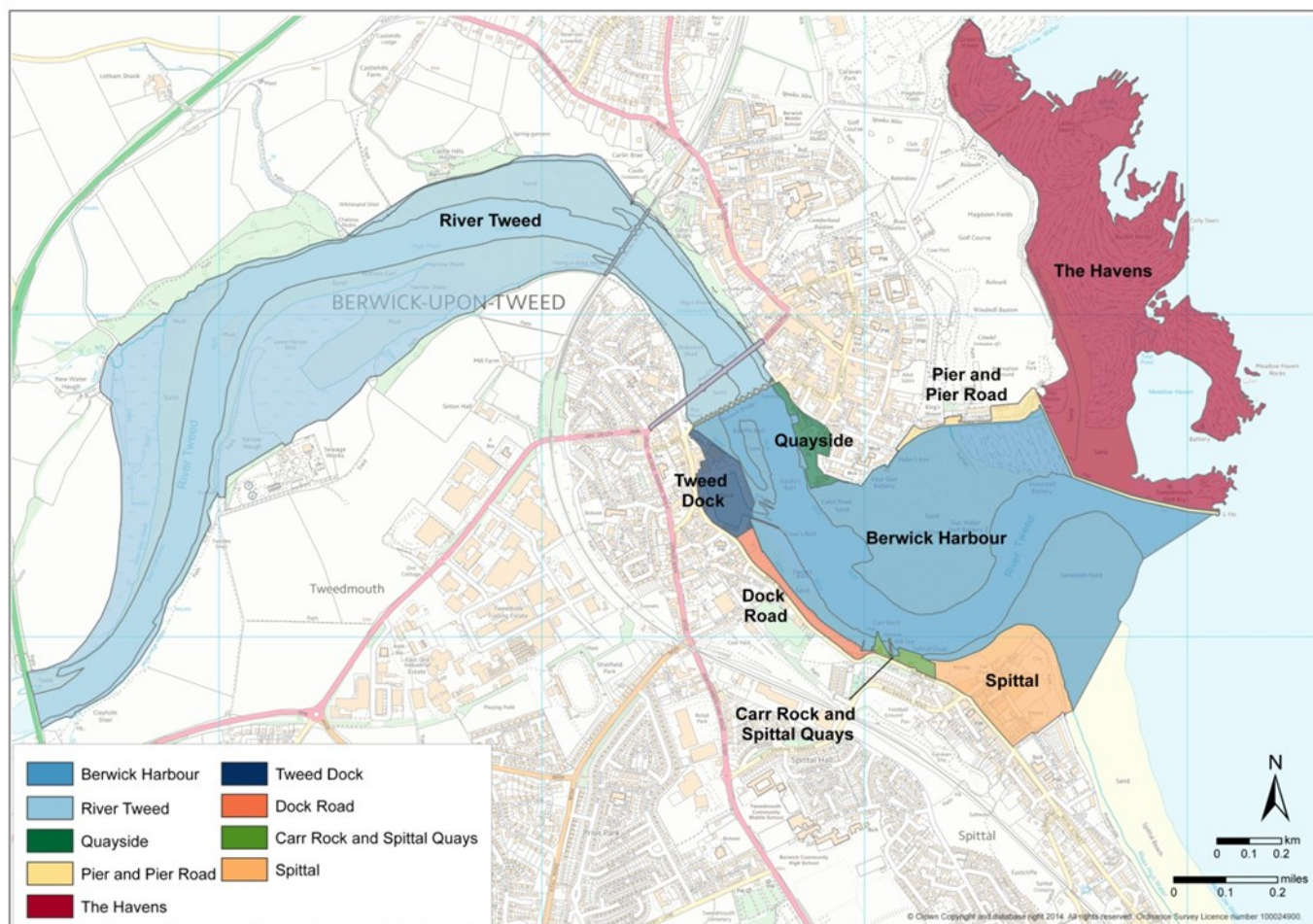


Fig 8 Character Areas.

Port-related heritage assets and contributions to present character

Berwick's overall port area has been divided into nine distinctive Character Areas (Fig 8).

The distinctive feel of these Character Areas is shaped by their historical development and influenced in the present by patterns and sometimes direct survivals from their inherited past. That heritage can be many and various – place-names, street layouts, patterns of open space, whether public or private, a sense of enclosure by closely spaced or large buildings, or the presence of readily recognisable historic buildings and features – they all provide links in the present to the area's past, even if the original structures which influenced and defined present aspects of the townscape and streetscape may have long gone and been replaced by modern features. These distinctive aspects of place add interest, texture and unique character to the port. The way in which surviving historic aspects within the port's fine-grained landscape, often called heritage assets, interact with that present character serves as a tangible reminder of the cultural origins of the port's distinctiveness. Whether or not people who live in or use Berwick, Tweedmouth or Spittal have interest in its heritage as such, its historical development has shaped the place which is familiar to them, with which they have cultural associations and where they undertake their recreational, industrial and commercial lives.

This section seeks to examine how the surviving port-related heritage contributes to the present character of the area.

Character Area Summary

1. Berwick Harbour

The main axis through which port-related activity on the Tweed takes place. The harbour is now much quieter than in times past but the channel is still navigated by small numbers of coasters heading in and out of Tweed Dock, local fishing boats and sailing dinghies. It also has a long-standing tradition of commercial salmon fishing evidenced by the batts located on each stell or fishing ground, the term preserved in the place-name Sandstell Point. Many of the batts are partially hidden at high water but with the ebb of the tide these small stone-built mounds begin to reveal themselves. Built with blocks of stone from the rocky foreshore they vary in size and shape. They are distinctive, curious features and significantly, potentially unique to the Tweed. It is only recently that commercial salmon net-fishing stopped in this Character Area with Gardo's Batt located between Tweed Dock and Berwick's Quayside being the last stell worked. The river channel is dredged to maintain it for the short sea vessels that use Tweed Dock.

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2. River Tweed

The more sheltered part of the River Tweed, upstream from the Berwick Harbour Character Area. The river here is inter-tidal but upstream of Berwick Bridge shallow and only navigable by small craft. When not in spate the river flows steadily down to the sea. At its western end the surroundings are rural; the River is tinged brown by peat and its unmodified river channel at low tide meanders through flats of sand and small rocks. Moving downstream, at Yarrow Point is a large area of salt marsh and the remains of an historic shiel surviving as a romantic looking ruin. On the opposite bank the New Road, an historic promenade, allows the public to walk along the river from Castle Hills House to Berwick Bridge, passing by Whitesand Shiel, the remains of the medieval town walls and past the distinctive club house of the Berwick Amateur Rowing Club. At its eastern end three historic bridges cross the Tweed and form a distinctive group of structures – each representative of the changes in modes of transport and communication, reflecting the changing economic needs of town and country and differing political structures and strategies.

The sheer scale and height of the bridges visually dominate the Area. It is easy to miss the surrounding historic structures and buildings beneath them, located alongside the River Tweed. These all relate to the varied uses of the port and river: as part of a line of defence (the old medieval walls), to draw inspiration and enjoyment (the Love Lane – Carlin Brae promenade), to use for sports and recreation (Berwick Amateur Rowing Club), and for commercial salmon fishing (Whitesand Shiel). Other than the ruins of the medieval wall, the historic features date to the 19th century and are small and intimate in scale.

As with other stretches of the river this was once an important salmon fishery and the remains of historic shiels are located either side of its length – Clayhole Shiel, Toddles Shiel, English New Water Shiel and Lower Yarrow Shiel.

3. Quayside

Once the focus of Berwick's historic port-related activity the Area is easily interpreted as the most ancient area of port-related infrastructure. Nestling beneath the medieval defensive walls (Quay Walls) of the town, pedestrian and vehicular access on to it is constrained to a number of narrow gateways. One of these, the 'Shoregate' suggests a predecessor to the quay: the area was reclaimed from the inter-tidal area which was once used as landing point for vessels in the medieval period, and perhaps earlier. Archaeological evidence has proven that the shoreline was once further inland, potentially corresponding with the line of Bridge Street. The present quay was formed in two main phases and the character of its northern and southern areas differs today: Old Quay to the north has a cobbled surface whereas the later part of the quay to the south is mostly fenced off, inaccessible to the public, with unused areas of grass and scrub awaiting

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redevelopment. Most of the quay is now fronted by a modern quay wall built with steel shuttering although a remnant of historic stone-built facing is visible in the Little Dock located mid-way along its length.

There is a scatter of historic buildings in the Quayside Area. The number was once much greater but following the closure of the shipyard in the 1970s many were removed to greater expose the Quay Walls to view. A former warehouse and the tower of a customs watch house are now unused. This contrasts with the buildings that have found reuse - The Harbour Office (tourism), the Quayside granary (retail), an office building and the former coastguard station (both residential).

4. Pier and Pier Road

Originally built as a promenade Pier Road leads out from Fisher or Ness Gate to the landward end of Berwick's historic breakwater or pier.

The port-related character of the Area is dominated by the breakwater that stretches 700 metres out to the edge of the river mouth, where it is crowned by Berwick's lighthouse – a distinctive local landmark and the focus of many a walk out of the town. There are fine views of the Tweed and up along the coast from the walk, taking in from afar the industrial character of Spittal, the defensive walls of Berwick, the maritime traffic using the harbour, and the historic batts at Out Water Stell, Innerstell and Tweedmouth Stell in the Harbour and Havens Character Areas.

Nearer to Fisher or Ness Gate, there is a small historic seat built against the defensive walls from which people can watch the comings and goings of the river. It is possible that many of the people walking nearby will not realise that the historic buildings of 'The Maltings' was first associated with Berwick's historic whale fishing industry before its re-use as a malthouse. The buildings have recently been converted to residential use. Above Pier Road the historic Coastguard Cottages still stand looking across the River Tweed and Harbour Entrance, although the flagstaff is now gone, the rocket house survives but is tucked away and possibly interpreted as a grand-looking garage by many people. Pier House looks like many of the other residential historic properties in the area but the name preserves its historic link to the workings of the breakwater.

5. The Havens

Facing the North Sea the Havens Character Area feels remote from the town. Open to the sea, the wind and winter swells, it includes the rocky foreshore which has been eroded into a wide, level wave-cut platform to reveal the folded beds of sandstone which outcrop to form corrugated lines of rock exposures. Cut into these rocks by natural processes are three small inlets – Meadow Haven to the south and Fisherman's and Greenses Havens to the north. The inlets were historically used by fisherman as harbour pools to moor their small boats known as cobs. At Greenses Haven a low

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breakwater still survives but the inlet is now more routinely used by day trippers to the beach than fishing boats, though the occasional vessel is moored in the haven. At Meadow Haven, the distinctive forms of two fishing batts are visible with the drop of the tide.

At Greenses Haven two historic tidal bathing pools survive as breached low walls which hold little water back.

6. Tweed Dock

The centre of commercial port activity on the Tweed for well over 100 years, Tweed Dock is the focus of the port's imports and exports via the 'coaster' vessels of the short sea shipping trade. Modern-built large warehouses located on the quayside surround the historic dock with lorries loading and unloading bulk cargo to and from the vessels berthed there.

As a commercial dock public access is restricted but it is clearly visible from several vantage points and many people find it interesting to watch the comings and goings of the port from them. The dock is enclosed by quay walls of sandstone with dressed coping stones, its floor formed by clay laid to provide a watertight seal as it was once a wet dock where the water level could be maintained by lock gates. The gates were removed in the 1980s and the dock is now tidal.

Originally bulk cargo was moved to and from the dock by railway but now it is redistributed by road and the dock is often crowded with the lorries of local haulage firms. Near to Berwick Bridge a mason's yard and two small brick-built buildings may date to the late 19th century and the original development of Tweed Dock.

At the south eastern end of the Dock a historic wooden-built jetty or pier projects out to the edge of the river channel and was formerly part of the entrance to the Dock.

7. Dock Road

Now a quiet open area of public space located on the southern bank of the Tweed. This contrasts with its industrial past when it was reclaimed from the inter-tidal area to build the railway to serve Tweed Dock. The sea defence wall has recently been updated and improved with stone gabions.

The Area also includes the site of the Tweed Maltings, a large malthouse built in 1901 to export malt to Ireland but which burnt down in the 1930s.

Abutting the Tweed Dock Character Area is a small fenced off area that now awaits redevelopment. This is the former location of two large modern warehouses associated with Tweed Dock.

8. Carr Rock and Spittal Quays

Two quays and the slipway of the all-weather Lifeboat Station project out into the river channel. Carr Quay, originally built to help with the construction of Berwick Pier in the early 19th century, is now home to the inshore lifeboat station

Character Area Summary

and its adjoining concrete-built raised slipway. Adjacent is the launch building and slipway for the all-weather lifeboat which was built in the 1930s. Nearby is the fenced off area of Spittal Quay, also known in the past as Fisher's Quay. It was built in the early 20th century to land fish for use in the industrial-sized curing sheds developed in Spittal in the 19th and early 20th centuries. More recently it was used to export stone. Now the quay area and the adjoining wooden wharf await redevelopment.

9. Spittal

With a long-standing tradition of historic fishing-related activity and later industrial use, the Character Area is an interesting mix of historic and modern buildings, now used for residential, recreational and light industrial purposes. The area has a long-standing association with fishing activity, a tradition with its origins in the late medieval period. Turning off Dock Road on to Sandstell Road, are the surviving remains of a pair of historic smoke houses. On East Street a row of historic buildings is associated with the former manure and chemical works. Nestled next to Sandstell Road is a fishing shiel which is unused and flanked by a modern warehouse. Opposite the shiel is a low line of concrete-built buildings which may be former herring store sheds but are now used by Berwick Sailing Club. Further on, against the edge of the sailing club, is an historic rocket house. At Sandstell Point the brick-built chimney of the former chemical works is an important landmark. It now stands alone in an area of rough grassland behind a security fence and a wall which was once the perimeter wall to the chemical works.

Sandstell Point is a busy place, much visited by people who park up to enjoy the fantastic views across to Berwick, up the Tweed and out to the North Sea. There is also easy access to the coastal walk which leads to Spittal promenade or on to Sandstell Point itself, a large expanse of sand exposed with the drop of the tide. From here it is pleasant to watch the comings and goings of coaster traffic using Tweed Dock or watch the sailing dinghies and their races from the nearby club.

Coarse grassland extends down the western edge of the Point towards Dock Road forming an area of rough ground. Nearer to Dock Road the remnants of a former quay wall are still visible. The area's historic ground level has been altered with much of it now made-ground.

Conservation values of the port heritage assets

In 2008, English Heritage published *Conservation Principles*, containing its framework and guidance for assessing the range of values pertaining to the historic environment (English Heritage 2008). Conservation Principles identifies four main types of values: Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal Values (*ibid*). The following subsection uses that framework to present a preliminary

assessment of the values and significance attached to Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal's port-related heritage.

Evidential

– *'the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity'*

Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal contain a wealth of surviving port-related heritage, contributing greatly to their character, the understanding of their historic development, their unique sense of place and a greater understanding of the border region and the national histories of England and Scotland.

The past role of Berwick's Quayside Character Area is of high evidential significance, especially in relation to the town's historical development; its defences, its past administration, its political and logistical significance, and its sea-borne economy and trade. The significance extends beyond the purely local and regional to the past and present understanding of the inter-action between Scotland and England, and across the North Sea to the Low Countries, especially for the late medieval period.

The diminished commercial role of Berwick's Quayside Character Area from 1876 reflects the changing needs of maritime trade and the main adaptations ports had to make as vessels got bigger – a situation which continues today. The development of the Tweed Dock Character Area in the late 19th century and its connection to the railway is of high value to the understanding of the port's later development.

Many of the commercial ports on the North East coast underwent similar changes and similarly the development of the Berwick Pier as a breakwater, the dredging of the river channel, and the improvements in infrastructure associated with maritime safety is a common characteristic of many ports across the North East in the 19th century.

Justifiably much has been made of Berwick's defences, and the town's other port-related heritage such as its quay, bridges, warehouses, pier and lighthouse. But there are also other heritage assets, such as the batts, that deserve further attention and could, with further research, be confirmed as unique to the Tweed. The fishing shiels and batts of the Harbour, Havens and River Tweed Character Areas together with the ice-houses found in the town, and potentially any surviving smacks and cobbles, are the last physical, built reminders of Berwick's historically pre-eminent role in the commercial salmon industry.

Although historically less prominent, the herring fishery has been highly significant to the local economy and character. At a lesser scale the vestiges of the early activity survive in the small smokehouses located to the back of several properties in Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal. In the 19th century, the large scale elements of the industry were more often associated with Spittal, where much of the built heritage is no longer extant except for the Sandstell Road area (in the Spittal Character Area) where there is a pair of surviving smokehouses and a possible herring store shed.

Spittal Quay may be a surviving vestige of the area's herring industry in its later years but to confirm this association further research is needed.

The historic industrial activity of the Spittal Character Area also reflects an interesting aspect of the area's industrialisation, in the movement of industrial activity out of Berwick's historic core, the interaction of the area with its regional agricultural hinterland and the development of Tweed Dock for the sea-borne import and export of bulk commodities.

The Havens Character Area also has a long standing association with fishing but its surviving heritage is more subtle in scale than the other Character Areas. The two surviving batts at Meadows Haven and the breakwater are significant evidence of that association.

A number of areas have some archaeological potential to reveal further buried evidence for the past use of port-related activities, and the industrial development of the 19th and early 20th centuries, especially in the Dock Road and parts of the Spittal Character Areas. However, the potential survival of archaeological features in these areas may be limited due to later disturbance.

Historical

– *'the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative'*

The past and present role of Berwick's quay and Tweedmouth's dock is highly significant to the understanding the history of the area, and the historical development of the two settlements. The same can be said for Spittal although its past relationship with the herring and salmon fishing is not always so apparent in its surviving built heritage.

Tweed Dock continues the link to commercial port-related activity into the modern era. Its continuing trade in imports from the Baltic and Low Countries reflects the economic past of the area, and its location on the North Sea. The import and export of bulk agricultural cargo including fertiliser, barley and malt also continues a historic trade and underlines the importance of Tweed Dock as a regional port with links into the surrounding farming and commercial hinterland. The heritage of the barley and malt industry in the area is also of significance, especially in relation to the surviving historic granaries, maltings and brewery buildings in Berwick and Tweedmouth.

The area's historic role as the centre of a commercial salmon fishery based upon the River Tweed is significant and deserves further attention. The continued use of the commercial fishery up until recent years is of great historic interest, and still of great value to the local community.

The breakwater and lighthouse are a tangible reminder of the efforts to improve the navigation of the harbour and the early history of Berwick as a Trust port created through Acts of Parliament.

As for a number of ports in the North East, shipbuilding was once an important part of Berwick's

historic maritime activity. The New Quay area of Berwick's Quayside is the last site associated with the town's shipbuilding heritage.

Aesthetic

– 'the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place'

As a working port, Tweed Dock and Berwick Harbour Character Areas are busy with constantly changing activity which generates interest for many, whether from the coming and going of visiting ships, the type of cargoes being stored and redistributed, and the buildings and structures associated with their use. To some, these activities may not always be seen as attractive but nonetheless many find them stimulating and they arise as a direct consequence of the port's historic industrial development and its continuing industrial use today.

The breakwater protecting the harbour entrance draws people to it not only as a reminder of the port's historic past, but as a place to walk and enjoy the view of the port. It is also an ideal place to view the batts in Meadow Haven and Innerstell as they are revealed by tide. The historic lighthouse and its distinctive shape and colour draw the eye and from the end of the breakwater a fantastic view can be gained along the surrounding coast and to Sandstell Point and Spittal.

The area's visual aesthetics combine influences from the natural and man-made environment. The dramatic mixture of historic town and seascape has drawn artists to it and one of its most famous visitors, TS Lowry, often chose port-related activity as a subject. The visual appeal of the River Tweed is why the historic promenades were created on the northern bank at Pier Road and New Road.

The character of the estuary's upper reaches is aesthetically quite different: much more sheltered with the river smaller and more intimate. The mud and sand flats exposed at low tide make the bustle of the port and its wharves seem distant.

Communal

– 'the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory'

As a Trust Port, the harbour and Tweed Dock is an important focus for the local area and its community. Its continued economic success is seen as an important part of Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal and the surrounding agricultural hinterland of Northumberland and the Borders.

Considerable pride is associated with the River Tweed and the commercial salmon fishery. This pride is reflected in a high level of local interest in the heritage of the industry and its potential future role in the economy and culture of the area.

There is also considerable interest in Berwick's shipbuilding past - a past which still lives in the memory of many inhabitants with the closure of the yard in the 1970s.

The area has very active heritage-focused groups including the Berwick upon-Tweed Preservation Trust; Berwick, Spittal and Tweedmouth Conservation Area Advisory Group; Berwick Buildings Study Group; Berwick upon Tweed Civic Society; Spittal Improvement Trust (SIT) and Berwick Arts and Crafts.

Berwick Preservation Trust has restored and conserved several buildings and structures in the town since their formation in 1971. This has included many buildings indirectly associated with port-related activity including the Dewars Lane Granary and the Bankhill Icehouse and more directly with the port, for example, the Quayside Lookout.

Spittal Improvement Trust (SIT) is a local community organisation that organises events in the town. A key project that SIT publicise on their website is the 'securing, conservation and presentation' of the Sandstell Road fishing shiel as a link to the area's past as a fishing settlement.

Current levels of heritage protection

There are twenty Listed Buildings located in the Character Areas but not all are port-related.

In the River Tweed Character Area Berwick Bridge (LB 104165) is a Grade I Listed Building and Scheduled Monument (SM 1003654). The Royal Border Bridge (LB 1211052) is Grade I Listed and the Royal Tweed Bridge (LB 1393563) Grade II* Listed. The club house of the Berwick Amateur Rowing Club is Grade II Listed (LB 1393927). The section of the medieval town walls which extend down to the river's edge form part of a Scheduled Monument (SM 1015520).

Berwick's Quayside Character Area contains a high number of Listed Buildings including the Grade I Shore Gate (LB 1233671) and Custom House (LB 104237). Most of the buildings built on the Quay Walls are either Grade II or II* Listed. On the quay itself Quayside Granary (LB 1233693) and the Customs Watch House (LB 1410505) are both Grade II Listed. The medieval defensive Quay Walls are a Scheduled Monument (SM 1015968).

The Pier and Pier Road Character Area includes the Grade II Listed Pier Maltings (LB 1391849) and Pier and Lighthouse (LB 1041698).

The Spittal Character Area includes the Grade II Listed Sandstell Road fishing shiel (LB 1390817) and pair of smokehouses (LB 1242923).

The Quayside and Pier and Pier Road Character Areas are within the Berwick-upon-Tweed Conservation Area, but only the lower 150m of the Pier is included. The Conservation Area also includes the New Road promenade within the River Tweed Character Area up to the medieval town walls below Carlin Brae (North of England Civic Trust 2008a).

The Tweed Dock Character Area falls within the Tweedmouth Conservation Area, as does the northern half of the Dock Road Character Area. The Spittal Character Area is fully within the Spittal



Fig 10 The historic wooden jetty or pier at the opening to Tweed Dock with the chimney at Sandstell Point in the distance.

Conservation Area (North of England Civic Trust 2008b; 2008c).

Berwick has been seen as an exemplar for the mix of local authority, public and community bodies which have worked together to conserve and regenerate historic buildings and structures. The town has included a Heritage Lottery Fund Townscape Heritage Initiative Project and two English Area Partnership Schemes to help keep historic buildings in active use and good repair.

In terms of non-heritage based designations, the foreshore and tidal area up to Mean High Water (MHW) for the Harbour and River Tweed Character Areas are included within the Tweed Catchment Rivers - England: Lower Tweed and Whiteadder Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Havens Character Area within the Northumberland Shore SSSI. Change of use and ground disturbance within the SSSIs are strictly controlled and therefore offer archaeological features general protection from unlicensed disturbance.

The Havens Character Area and those parts of the Berwick Harbour Character Area at the mouth of the Tweed below Highest Astronomical Tide are part of the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast European Marine Site and subject to its management scheme (Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast website).

Pressures for change

The main pressure upon the port is the economic need to remain commercially viable. Currently, Tweed Dock and the port's success are reliant on the region's agricultural hinterland and a handful of local businesses (most of which are involved in agriculturally-related or -derived bulk products). The occasional project cargo (offshore energy) provides further financial support.

The increasing size of short sea vessels led the port to remove the lock gates to Tweed Dock in the 1980s. It is possible that these vessels will again expand in size in the next five years, but in Europe, they are likely to be limited to the maximum draft that the main inland waterways can handle. However, there is little scope for the Tweed to be



Fig 11 The western end of Spittal Quay and its projecting wooden wharf.

substantially deepened if it became necessary (Alan Irving, Port of Berwick Chief Executive pers comm).

Brownfield sites next to, or near, the river frontage are prime areas for redevelopment. In the Quayside Character Area, the New Quay section of the quay has been awaiting redevelopment for several years. Arch, the Northumberland Redevelopment Agency, see the development of Berwick's quayside as a key aim, as well as instigating a new public realm strategy (Arch website).

Further areas of development land for sale include Spittal Quay (with existing planning permission for apartments) and another area next to Tweed Dock (in the northern part of the Dock Road Character Area). In 2010 Spittal Quay was sold to the former Regional Development Agency, One Northeast (Berwick Advertiser website), but with its abolition the quay has been transferred to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA website).

Ten years ago Spittal Point and part of the Spittal Character Area were considered as an area for redevelopment and a Development Brief was written by the former Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Council, to help guide any intended works. At present, it is uncertain if there is still any intention for the area to be redeveloped.

The Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2) provides a long-term risk assessment relating to future coastal evolution and presents a policy framework to address the risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment in a sustainable manner.

The SMP2 makes clear that Berwick and Spittal will be vulnerable to erosion and flooding in the future unless defence infrastructure is maintained and improved.

Proposed management policy items include the short term maintenance of the breakwater at Greenses Haven but leaving it to deteriorate in the medium term, updating Berwick's breakwater or Pier in the short term and maintaining it for the long term, investigating the potential to create new sea defences on Spittal Point, supporting the maintenance of Spittal's beach sea defences, and the need to improve and raise the level of sea defences on the northern and southern sides of the 'Inner'



Fig 12 The early 20th century lifeboat station at Berwick, now converted to a residence (left), and the Grade II Listed Customs watch house (right).

Tweed estuary up to and slightly beyond Berwick Bridge (Guthrie *et al* 2009).

Heritage risk assessment and opportunities

This Port Heritage Summary has highlighted the essential historic character and heritage assets that underpin the port-related character of Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal. Regeneration planning which is informed and inspired by these elements can take a proactive approach to ensure that new developments enhance the distinctiveness and strong 'sense of place' which arise from its historic cultural development rather than developing it as if from a blank canvas. Such culturally-informed regeneration will ultimately be more sustainable for the local community.

The heritage assets at highest risk are the Grade II Listed Customs watch house and the non-Listed former warehouse in Berwick's Quayside Character Area. In a declining condition, both are unused or underused and in highly visible locations (especially the Customs watch house) when viewed from the Quay Walls, from the harbour and from the southern bank of the river.

The condition of the two buildings symbolises the present underused character of the southern portion of the quayside which awaits an appropriate redevelopment scheme to rejuvenate it.

While the northern, older part of the Quayside Character Area is publically accessible and has a number of information boards which help people to better understand the heritage of the quayside and the Berwick Smack, it feels underused in terms of present maritime-related activity.

At present, the Old Quay is used by a few small vessels that moor alongside it, however, when visited in May 2014 none of the vessels were historic cobbles or Berwick Smacks, both vessels distinctive to the area and key to understanding Berwick's maritime past.

The historic relationship of these types of vessels with the commercial salmon fishing on the Tweed is also of considerable significance. There is a substantial amount of documentary evidence relating



Fig 13 A fishing batt abutting Berwick Pier.

to the history of the salmon fishery and the use of the batts and shiels, but at present there is no fully published historical assessment.

The need for such work is especially timely due to the problems and issues that the commercial salmon net-fishing on the Tweed now faces.

Further research may show that the fishing batts are unique to the Tweed, and therefore of considerable significance, especially when taken in the context of the area's dominance of the salmon trade in the 18th and 19th centuries. More work is needed to inspect and assess the condition of the batts, which are in a declining condition. If deteriorating the batts would benefit from conservation and maintenance as extant structures.

The Spittal Character Area also has considerable potential to illustrate the port's historic relationship with fishing and to the commercial use of the harbour. It includes the last largely unaltered fishing shiel in the area, and the surviving vestiges of the large-scale herring industry in the form of smoke houses and the herring sheds of Boston's fishery. The shiel is dominated by the scale of the modern warehouse that looms behind it and crowded street furniture around it. Opportunity should be taken to improve the immediate setting of this Grade II Listed Building.

Likewise, future redevelopment schemes for the broader Spittal area should consider the retention and sympathetic reuse for the undesignated herring store shed to maintain its contribution to the area's historic link with the herring fishing and smoking industry.

Spittal Improvement Trust's aim to see the shiel restored and converted to a heritage centre could be an ideal opportunity to better explain the broader character of the local area including its industrial development in the 19th century, and the impact of the coming of the railway and the development of Tweed Dock.

In the Spittal Character Area the surviving historic buildings on the eastern side of East Street are significant to the historic development of the area. The former gas company manager's house awaits reuse but appears to be in a stable condition.

It is possible that new sea defences may have to be constructed on both the seaward and estuary sides of the Spittal Character Area. Ground disturbance in this area could potentially reveal buried archaeological deposits, although in certain areas that potential could be limited by previous substantial ground disturbance.

Ground disturbance in the area of the former Tweed Maltings in the Dock Road Character Area could potentially reveal buried archaeological deposits associated with the use of this huge building.

Another aspect of the area's history that would benefit from research includes the port's historic role in malt production.

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Berwick-upon-Tweed, The Greenses –

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Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast website –

<http://www.xbordercurrents.co.uk>

Coble in art – <http://www.thecobleinart.com>

Friends of Berwick and District Museum and Archives

<http://www.berwickfriends.org.uk/history/berwick-upon-tweed>

Homes and Communities Agency –

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Produced for Historic England by Cornwall Archaeological Unit.

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