

# Hartlepool

## Port Heritage Summary

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## Abbreviations

c	circa
CMEW	Central Marine Engineering Works
HD&R Co	Hartlepool Dock and Railway Company
HE	Historic England
HER	Historic Environment Record (County Durham)
LAT	Lowest Astronomical Tide
LB	Listed Building
MA	Management Area (within a Policy Development Zone in SMP2)
MLW	Mean Low Water
NAS NE	Nautical Archaeology Society North-East
NER	North Eastern Railway
OS	Ordnance Survey
PDZ	Policy Development Zone (in SMP2)
Ro-Ro	Roll on – Roll off
RNLB	Royal Navy Life Boat
S&HRC	Stockton and Hartlepool Railway Company
SM	Scheduled Monument
SMP2	Shoreline Management Plan 2
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

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### Cover illustration

Looking to Irvine Quay in Victoria Harbour from the 14th century town wall on Hartlepool Headland.



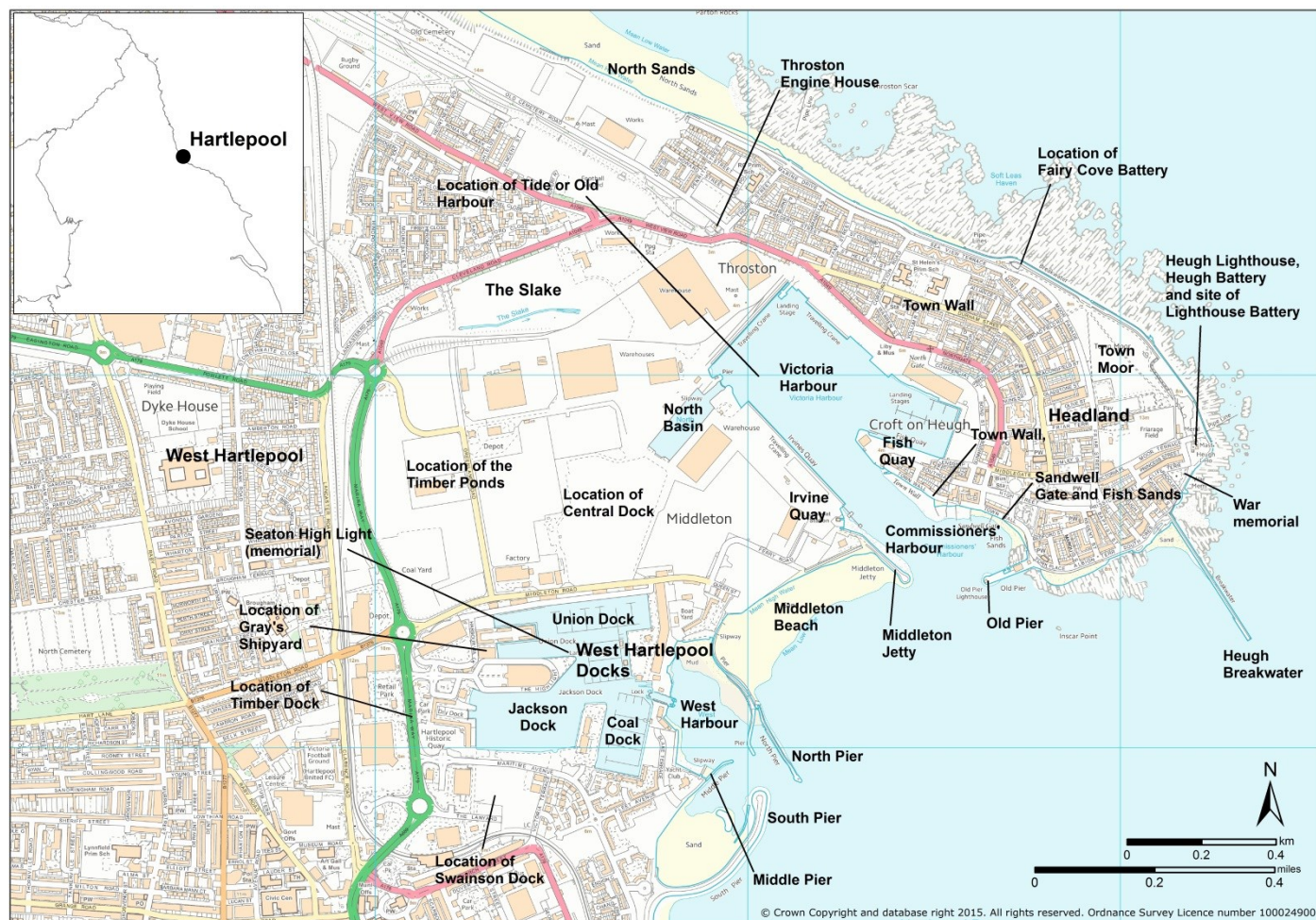


Fig 1 Location, topography, place-names and features.

## 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 Hartlepool, in the unitary authority of the Borough of Hartlepool, where eight individual areas of port-related character have been identified. The Summary explains how port heritage within those areas contributes to Hartlepool's distinctiveness today, to the interpretation of Hartlepool's 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 Hartlepool's future, retaining its rich cultural distinctiveness while meeting its changing economic needs.

## Location

Hartlepool is situated on the east coast of County Durham, 27km to the south of Sunderland and 6.5km northwest of the mouth of the River Tees.

Hartlepool is a large town positioned around the edge of Hartlepool Bay, a small bay within the northern part of the larger Tees Bay.

Hartlepool Bay is defined to the north by the Headland, a Magnesian limestone promontory projecting eastwards out into the North Sea. The shelter of the Headland forms a natural harbour between it and the mainland of West Hartlepool.

Today, West Hartlepool and the Headland are amalgamated as one town known as Hartlepool.

## The Port

PD Ports are the owners and operators of the Port of Hartlepool. They are also the statutory harbour authority responsible for the safe operation and navigation of the port (PD Ports website).

The modern commercial port is centred upon Victoria Harbour and comprises four distinct operating areas: the Commissioner's Harbour which is predominantly an entrance channel; Victoria Harbour with its quays and dockside facilities; the North Basin which is used by short-sea vessels; and a large area of land-based industrial facilities west of Victoria Harbour, formerly known as The Slake.

The port includes five cargo berths, one Roll on – Roll off (Ro-Ro) berth and railway sidings. There are several large warehouses and areas of open storage space. In addition to general and bulk cargo the port handles petrochemicals, provides services for the offshore wind energy industry and facilities for the import and export of vehicles (PD Ports website).

To the south of the main commercial port operations is the former West Hartlepool Docks, formed by the Union and Jackson Docks. These are now a leisure marina with part of Jackson Dock used to moor historic vessels on display as part of Hartlepool's Maritime Experience tourist attraction (Hartlepool Marina Ltd website; Hartlepool's Maritime Experience website).

The landward edge of the modern commercial port and the West Hartlepool Docks is bordered by two main roads, the A179 (Marina Way) to the west and the A1048 (Cleveland Road) to the north.

## Local Authorities and heritage organisations

Hartlepool comes under Hartlepool Borough Council, a unitary authority. The Council has a consultative role on planning applications, the development of strategies and plans, and participation in regeneration strategies and proposals. The management of the Historic Environment Record (database of historic buildings and archaeological sites and monuments for the area) is overseen by Tees Archaeology.

The Historic England (HE) North East office is in Newcastle. HE provides input and advice on heritage matters including the roles of the inherited cultural environment in the management of change and specific advice for Listed Buildings (LB) and Scheduled Monuments (SM), together with strategic overviews and support at local, regional and national levels.

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

Hartlepool is an ancient settlement and port, founded in the early medieval period as a monastic centre around a natural harbour. The later town of West Hartlepool grew up around the West Hartlepool Docks to the southwest of Hartlepool Headland.

Hartlepool's later medieval history is bound up with that of fishing and the military use of the town and port. The town was transformed in the early 19th century by the introduction of railways linking the port with the Durham coalfield. The subsequent rapid expansion of the port led to the construction of new docks at West Hartlepool. By the end of the century the combined port was one of the busiest in the country.

The 19th century also saw the rise of shipbuilding but the subsequent rapid decline of this and the coal industry in the 20th century has been followed by a period of investment and regeneration. Redevelopment schemes included a new marina and Hartlepool's Maritime Experience.

## Early history

A buried soil containing the stumps of trees dating to the Mesolithic period extends from The Slake into Hartlepool Bay. Archaeological excavation of the soil has revealed a Neolithic burial and fish trap, but rising sea levels overwhelmed the woodland over a period of 5000 years (Waughman 2005).

A monastery was established on the Headland in AD 640 by Hieu, an abbess of Northumbria, and Bishop Aidan of Lindisfarne. The Headland was at this time known as *Heruteu*, 'the Isle of the Hart' after the deer supposed to have lived there. From AD 649 Hilda presided over the monastery and later became the founding abbess of Whitby. The monastery at Hartlepool is thought to have continued in use into the 9th century when it was destroyed by the Danes (The Tees Valley website).

The church of St Hilda (on the Headland) dates to the early 13th century and incorporates the remains of a slightly earlier church though it is located to the south of the monastery site.

## The medieval port, its trade and defences

Following the Norman Conquest the area around Hartlepool was controlled by the De Brus family. Although the port-related activities probably dated back to the town's monastic origins, the De Brus family developed Hartlepool as a port to serve Durham, inland to the northwest.

This included the building of the first docks and quayside at the east end of the natural harbour (formed by the Headland) in the 12th and 13th centuries. The town's port status was substantially raised when the merchants obtained a Charter from King John in AD 1201 allowing a regular market to be held. The market was successful and expanded so that land had to be reclaimed from the sea to accommodate it, forming what is now Southgate (Tees Archaeology website).

The De Brus family's role in the Scottish Wars of the 13th and 14th centuries eventually led them to claim the Scottish Crown. When Robert De Brus (the Bruce) VII invaded England in AD 1315, James Douglas plundered the town on his behalf. The threat posed by the Scots continued throughout the century with the town sacked again in AD 1322 (Daniels 1986).





*Fig 2 The 14th century town wall still standing as a sea defence with the Old Pier and its light visible in the background.*



*Fig 3 Fish Sands with the Sandwell Gate and the remaining Georgian housing alongside the early 20th century houses in the background.*

In response the inhabitants of Hartlepool successfully petitioned King Edward III for the right to defend the town. This was granted in AD 1328 and a massive ditch and wall was built around the southwest and northwest sides of the Headland and across its neck, from the harbour to North Sands. The entrance to the harbour was guarded with watch towers and a watergate with a chain across the gap.

The first customs officers in Hartlepool are recorded in AD 1305 collecting dues payable by foreign traders. However, a dispute soon arose as to whether the officers should only cover Hartlepool or whether duties should be shared between Newcastle, Hartlepool and Yarm (on the River Tees). This was resolved in AD 1341 when the port came under the jurisdiction of Newcastle (Page 1928a).

The provision of a market and customs officers in the 13th and 14th centuries suggests significant foreign trade from the port. A charter of murage (a toll for the building and repair of town walls) dating to AD 1339 included dues on meat, fish, animal skins, various cloths, metals, fruit, vegetables and dairy products traded through the port. A subsequent charter of AD 1384 lists pepper, almonds and spices. Local trade was also important to the port as it exported corn, herring and wool.

Hartlepool's wool trade was interrupted from AD 1353 when Newcastle was granted 'staple' port status – port where wool could be officially exported. However, a charter granted to the town by Richard II in AD 1397 conferred much of the same statutes, customs and laws enjoyed by Newcastle on the burgesses of Hartlepool.

There was a resultant growth of trade, with fishing in particular profiting from the changes. In the 14th century the Sandwell Gate was added to the defensive wall south of the harbour, possibly to provide the fishermen with access to what is now Fish Sands where they had traditionally dried their nets (Page 1928a).

Piracy in the North Sea was a problem throughout the 14th century. A Hartlepool ship bound for the garrison at Berwick in AD 1316 with a cargo of flour, corn, and salt was forced into Warkworth Harbour in Northumberland by pirates. In AD 1345, two Hartlepool ships were charged with destroying pirate vessels in the North Sea.

As an indication of the maritime strength of the town, a squadron of five Hartlepool ships took part in Edward III's French war of 1346-7, part of the Hundred Years War. Hartlepool also played a role in the suppression of the rebellion of the Earl of Northumberland against Henry IV in AD 1405 by sending ships and supplies to the King at Berwick.

The Black Death hit the town in AD 1348, devastating the population and the port's trade. Hartlepool declined to become a fishing port and as a result, Newcastle continued unchallenged as the largest port in the region.

In AD 1473 the first known record of a pier at Hartlepool is found in the writings of Bishop Booth when he stated his intention to construct a pier near the walls at the southern end of the town in order to create a deep and protected port. Booth appealed for charitable contributions to fund the project to build what is now known as the Old Pier (Daniels 1986).

## The Reformation and the post medieval port

Although documentary records show the export of commodities continued, by 1560 Hartlepool still relied on fishing as its main port industry. The Mayor of Newcastle remarked that Hartlepool 'hath time out of mind a fisher town, and so long as the inhabitants of the same framed and applied themselves to their occupation of fishing, their town prospered' (Page 1928b).

Newcastle meanwhile was attempting to reinforce its claim that Hartlepool should come under its jurisdiction, labelling it as a 'town of privilege' where goods were being exported without paying duties because of a lack of officials. In 1565 the town was described as being a very small place with many buildings decayed, only one ship in the harbour and the Old Pier in a very ruinous state.

As a strategic harbour, well positioned for vessels using the North Sea, it was often a target in the political troubles and strife that followed the Reformation. The French were said to have a map of Hartlepool in 1560 and planned to land men there to capture the town on their way to York. In 1561 an order was sent to Hartlepool to watch all shipping and to search foreign



Fig 4 Old Pier with the lighthouse on the seaward end and the location of the pilot's watch house on the landward end.

ships entering the port in a bid to find Mary Queen of Scots, thought to be *en route* from France to Scotland.

The Rising of the North rebellion by Catholic earls in 1569 saw the Spanish ambassador advising the rebels to take Hartlepool with a view to landing troops from the Netherlands there to support the uprising. The forces of Elizabeth I were sent to garrison the town with 200 men but, by the time they arrived, a rebel force of 300 men had taken it. However, the rebels fled the town soon after and it was quickly garrisoned by troops under the Earl of Sussex. On visiting the town he observed that the walls were down in many places and the town itself was very ruinous.

A new charter was granted to Hartlepool in 1593 and statutes formulated by the town in 1599 included 'Orders for the Shipping' and 'Orders for the Sands and Fishermen'. Provisions within these statutes regulated shipbound trade, the trade in fish, and the supply of locally caught fish for the inhabitants of the town (Page 1928a).

During the Civil War, the Scottish took over from the Royalist garrison and peacefully occupied the town on behalf of the Parliamentarians from 1644 to 1658. The Headland was fortified by five batteries during this period. Four of these lay along the eastern side of the Headland, the fifth, Crofton Hoe or South Battery, overlooked the southern approach to the harbour at Inscar Point (Tolan-Smith 2008).

The Anglo-Dutch fishing rivalry escalated into war between 1664-7 and saw the Government procure a report and a map of the town. The harbour was said to be capable of receiving ships of up to 100 tons and provided a safe haven for passing colliers and vessels escaping Dutch action.

Parliament was lobbied unsuccessfully in 1665 for money towards the repair and maintenance of the Old Pier. In 1675 the town determined that the charter of 1593 entitled Hartlepool, like Newcastle, to impose levies on imported grain to bring in revenue. But despite these efforts, in 1680 its Customs House was moved to Stockton-on-Tees, with only junior officials stationed in the port.

During the latter half of the 18th century there was a further decline in port trade and the physical state of the harbour continued to deteriorate. There was also a threat from the French and American privateers and



Fig 5 The Heugh Breakwater extending into Tees and Hartlepool Bay.

the North Battery had to be renewed to counter this. At the end of the century several proposals were put forward to repair and renew the port but nothing was done.

There is a long-standing tradition and legend associated with Hartlepool and the Napoleonic Wars and the infamous, but probably fictitious, story of the monkey captured by local fisherman and then hung for being a French spy. The story is celebrated in a statue within the West Hartlepool Docks marina and the mascot of the local football team (The Tees Valley website).

As an indication of the port's decline, in 1808 part of the harbour was reclaimed and enclosed for agriculture. The town's corporation was facing bankruptcy and neither they nor the Bishop of Durham were able to intervene in time to prevent the enclosure. This prevented the fishermen from laying up their boats and the lack of tidal scour from The Slake threatened to silt up what was left of the waterway. An Alderman indicted the enclosure as a nuisance and the case was tried at the assizes court in Durham in 1813. The jury found that the harbour should be restored (Page 1928a).

By 1810 the Old Pier was in ruins. Petitions to the Government for funds proved unsuccessful and public subscriptions did not raise sufficient money for the complete repairs. Eventually in 1813 an Act of Parliament for 'improving of the pier and port of Hartlepool' was granted, establishing the Hartlepool Port and Harbour Commission which could collect dues from every vessel using the port.

The Act also vested management of the Pier to the Commission to form port bye-laws and carry out improvements. In addition it set the physical limits of the port as extending from 'the black shore in the River Tees, on the south part of the town, as far as Blackhalls, along the sea-shore on the north side of the said town'. These improvements coincided with the restoration of the land enclosed for agriculture.

Additional batteries, Lighthouse and Heugh, were built on the south and east coasts of the Headland during the Crimean War in the 1850s, along with the Fairy Cove Battery, which fell into the sea soon after its completion and was not rebuilt.

The batteries were designed to combat the new ironclad warships that had sparked fears of invasion. To



this end the Heugh Battery was equipped with four 68 pounder guns with a range of a mile and a half. Initially the Battery was garrisoned by the Militia Artillery although responsibility soon passed to local volunteers. Following the Battle of Sebastopol during the Crimean War, the Secretary of State, Lord Panmure, offered a captured gun to Hartlepool. It was transported from London on a steamship and arrived in 1858 for display near the Heugh Battery, being referred to as the 'Sebastopol Gun' ever since.

## Railways and docks

In 1795 proposals were put forward to convert The Slake into a wet dock large enough to contain the entire Royal Navy. This ambitious but expensive plan came to nothing. However, at the turn of the 19th century merchants were looking for an alternative to the Tees and Tyne for the export of coal from the coalfields of south and east Durham.

The Hartlepool Dock and Railway Company (HD&R Co) was authorised by an Act of Parliament in 1832 to construct a railway linking the town to Durham. This challenged the ports of Newcastle and Sunderland who complained about their competitive advantage being undermined. The HD&R Co started to build a dock but poor progress and a lack of funding meant the new dock scheme was abandoned. However, as part of the scheme the Middleton Jetty was built to secure the entrance to the existing harbour which was extended to receive the first coal shipments from Thornley Colliery in 1833. It was renamed the Tide Harbour, and was flushed out during ebb tides through a series of sluices from The Slake (Jackson 1983; Rowe 2000).

Competition between the North Sea coal ports and railways was fierce, particularly between Port Clarence on the Tees and Hartlepool, but Port Clarence was a long way up the river. An extension to Hartlepool from the Port Clarence railway was proposed by Christopher Tennant to give Hartlepool an advantage. Tennant, a railway promoter originally from Stockton, had involvement either as a promoter or superintendant of works in many of the railway and dock schemes across the Tees river and Durham coalfield.

The new Stockton and Hartlepool Railway Company (S&HRC) line was built on the understanding that construction of the abandoned dock was resumed. Named Victoria Dock, the wet dock was capable of being used at all states of the tide. The Dock was dug on the northern side of the Tide Harbour and was connected to it via a lock, the two separated by a narrow neck of land (Rowe 2000).

Throston Engine House was built as part of the Dock development as a hauling engine to hoist the rail coal tubs (wagons) up the incline from track level to the coal staithes. Victoria Dock opened in 1840 and was supplied by two railway lines bringing 400,000 tons of coal per annum and making Hartlepool one of the first proper rail ports in Britain (Jackson 1983).

Unfortunately, the Port Clarence railway line lowered its charges and the trade on the new Stockton and Hartlepool line was minimal. It resulted in a breakdown in cooperation between the S&HRC and the HD&R Co.

Led by Ralph Ward Jackson, the S&HRC secured an Act of Parliament in 1844 to construct an entirely new port

west of the Headland under a new company, the West Hartlepool Dock and Railway Company. The company took over the Port Clarence railway and was able to divert coal to the West Dock.

The West Dock (also referred to as the West Harbour or Coal Dock) was opened in 1847 and included the building of a new Coal Dock Office whilst the excavated stone was used as building material for the new town of West Hartlepool (Page 1928a; Jackson 1983).

Within 20 years the port of Hartlepool had been converted from a struggling fishing harbour to a large coal port. The combined infrastructure had cost £1.5 million and included the installation of three steam cranes and 16 coal drops capable of discharging 106 tons an hour, so that in 1850, 1.56 million tons of coal was exported from the port.

Increased traffic to the port demanded improvements in navigation and a white sandstone lighthouse was built on the Headland adjacent to the Heugh Battery in 1846. It was equipped with a gas light and had its own gas holder or tank so that it never ran out of fuel. The Old Pier carried a basic beacon on an open timber frame. The frame has since been boarded over and painted with red and white stripes.

The new West Dock was so successful that it was quickly and repeatedly expanded. Jackson Dock opened in 1852 and coincided with the completion of a railway that connected West Hartlepool with Liverpool, via Leeds and Manchester. This opened up new opportunities for the port as coal and processed wool products went east, and fresh fish and fleeces went west. The Swainson and Timber Docks along with a Timber Pond opened in 1856 and two graving or dry docks were inserted between these and Jackson Dock.

In 1862 Ward Jackson was forced to resign as Chariman of the West Hartlepool Harbour and Railway Company. His removal eventually led to the North Eastern Railway (NER) gaining possession of the West Hartlepool Docks in 1865. The NER had been on an aggressive path to controlling several docks in the North East of England, having brought itself into direct competition with West Hartlepool Docks by gaining the HD&R Co in 1857 and the Stockton and Darlington Railway in 1863 (Rowe 2000).

As part of the plan to create a Harbour of Refuge, construction of the Heugh Breakwater had begun in 1859 but the scheme was quickly made largely redundant with the advent of steam ships, the movement of which were not dependent on the direction of the wind.

Now in control of the whole port infrastructure, the NER continued to expand the dock facilities. Much of The Slake was altered to form a series of timber ponds in 1864. In 1872 work was started on Union Dock, Central Dock and the North Basin which joined the West Hartlepool Docks with the Tide Harbour. This was completed in 1880 (Rowe 2000).

The success of the West Hartlepool Docks reached such an extent that it acquired its own Customs House in 1880. This was situated in the former Ship Hotel, located next to the Coal Dock Office to the south of the Coal Dock.



Fig 6 The Union Dock, now part of Hartlepool Marina.

Additional works included an extension to the Heugh Breakwater in 1870 and the dredging of the harbour channel to a depth of 20 feet below Lowest Astronomical Tide (LAT).

A new fish quay was built on the north side of the Tide Harbour in 1880 allowing the fishermen to move their boats away from Fish Sands, giving them better access to the port's railway links for the export of fish to the rest of the country (Rowe 2000).

Although the Headland and West Hartlepool Docks were now connected by port development they occupied a huge area to travel around for workers. To shorten the journey the Old Ferry and the New or Commissioner's Ferry, first established in 1845, operated between the Headland, Middleton and West Hartlepool Docks. These services ran into the mid-20th century (Rowe 2000).

## Shipbuilding and associated industries

Hartlepool became renowned for shipbuilding as the industry developed alongside the expansion of the docks in the 19th century. It is possible that shipbuilding may have taken place earlier in the port's history, however there is little surviving physical evidence of this.

On the Headland, business partners Parkin and Richardson had a yard for building wooden ships. This was not an ideal location as they had to dismantle the historic town wall to launch each ship and so they quickly moved to a new yard at Middleton in 1836. The *Castle Eden* was completed in 1837 but their partnership had been dissolved and the yard sold by 1839. Richardson returned to his family foundry, just outside the town, making iron fittings and anchors with which to supply the growing shipbuilding industry in Hartlepool (Grace's Guide website; Hartlepool History Then and Now website).

Ward Jackson, pioneer of the West Hartlepool Docks, was keen to encourage industry to support the new docks and asked John Pile, a ship builder on the River Wear, to set up a yard adjacent to the Jackson Dock in 1853. Pile's business was successful and grew to include the founding of the West Hartlepool Rolling Mills in 1855.

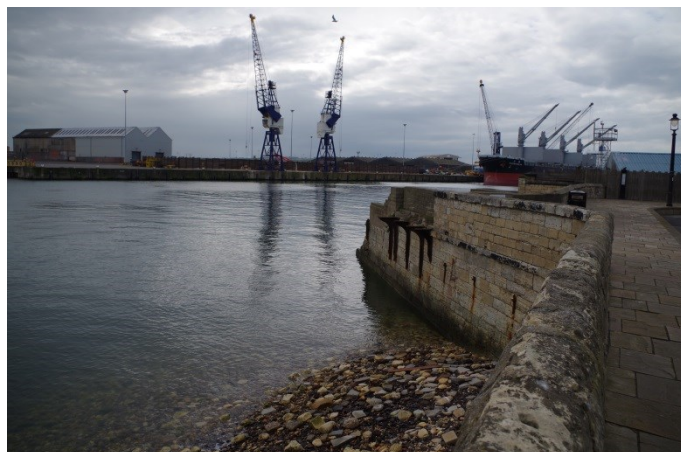


Fig 7 Looking to Irvine's Quay across Victoria Harbour.

The first iron ship in the town was built by the sons of Richardson who built the *Sir Colin Campbell* in 1854. However, the Richardson brothers success was short-lived as they ran into financial difficulties and their yard ceased operation in 1857.

Pile's business grew to obtain a second yard at Swainson Dock and the West Hartlepool Steam Navigation Company. However, the company lost all its funds when their bank failed and Pile went out of business in 1861.

In 1863 Irvine Currie and Company was formed and built five ships in three years. Their Harbour Yard in West Hartlepool closed temporarily in 1866 for the addition of a dry dock and Currie left the partnership. From then on Irvine gained a reputation as a salver and repairer (Hartlepool History Then and Now website).

JP Denton, a ship repairer, bought the Parkin and Richardson's later yard and expanded his business to build ships.

Of all the shipbuilding companies in Hartlepool, Denton's became the largest and most well known from 1863 when he set up in partnership with William Gray becoming Denton Gray and Co. Gray was a draper and local businessman. Together they grew the company, taking over the yards of the Richardson brothers in 1863 and Pile in 1869 when their whole business moved from Middleton to Jackson Dock, where the two dry docks allowed the company to include ship repair in the services offered (Page 1928a; Rowe 2000).

Denton Gray became innovative builders, launching the first well-deck (with lower decks than those fore and aft) steamer, the *Lizzie English*, in 1867. Steamers were increasingly popular but their design was little different from traditional cargo ships. These had cargo holds in the front and back of the ship. Steamers used part of the rear cargo hold for the steam engine which was extremely heavy and forced the cargo into other locations on the ship. This made them so poorly balanced and unstable that they frequently capsized, leading to significant loss of life. Denton Gray's new design lowered the front hold and raised the rear hold above the engine, allowing more cargo to be carried in a steamship and improving the balance, reducing the casualties.

Denton died in 1874 and Gray took over the entire business, continuing its expansion and innovative work. He sat on the Parliamentary Committee that



recommended the Plimsoll Line become law for all ships. This line, painted at the waterline of a ship when it was loaded, highlighted its safe loading levels. If the line was below the waterline the ship was too heavy, a frequent problem in the 19th century.

In 1878 Gray's earned the 'blue riband' for launching 18 ships in one year, the most of any British shipyard. They went on to win the award a further five times in the years up to 1900.

In a separate yard (and a much smaller concern) run by Edward Withy, Hartlepool's first steel ship, *Cyanus*, was launched in 1880 (Hartlepool History Then and Now website).

Yet again, Gray's diversified and founded the Central Marine Engineering Works (CMEW) in 1883. This supplied engines and metalwork to Gray's ships.

Gray's *Bakuin* of 1886 missed out on the accolade of being the first ever tanker but it proved to be a lucrative move as Gray's was commissioned to build many more tankers for the company that was eventually to become Shell. The following year, Gray's opened a new yard for building larger ships at the Central Dock (Hartlepool History Then and Now website).

In 1896 William Cresswell Gray took over as Chairman from his father. In the following four years he purchased four local iron and steel works to increase the capacity and diversity of operations at CMEW. These became known as the South Durham Steel and Iron Company Ltd and provided virtually all the materials for the Gray's shipbuilding works. Two berths were also added to the Central Dock shipyard in 1900. In this year the company owned 11 berths adjacent to their yards and employed 3000 men.

Meanwhile, a local businessman, Christopher Furness, became principal shareholder of several of the smaller shipyards including Irvine's and Withy's. Furness merged the Irvine and Withy businesses in 1909 to form Irvine's Shipbuilding and Dry Docks Company Ltd and the name Irvine is retained on the southwest quay of Victoria Harbour, close to the company's former base (Hartlepool History Then and Now website).

In addition to the iron and steel works that were allied to the ship builders, the yards were supplied by a range of supporting industries such as canvas manufacturers, iron foundries, and block and mast makers.

The scale of shipping activity at Hartlepool also meant that lifeboat and pilotage operations were important to the town. A lifeboat house is shown on 19th century 1:25 inch Ordnance Survey (OS) maps, firstly at the north end of the Tide Harbour and then, from 1897, at the south eastern end, on Irvine Quay.

Pilotage responsibilities were reorganised many times throughout the same period. At times these were shared with the River Tees, whilst at other times were completely independent. Traditionally, pilotage in Hartlepool has had a connection with certain local families. In the early 20th century the pilots' watch house was on Old Pier (Tees Bay Pilotage website).

## Twentieth century

In 1910 the south eastern end of Victoria Dock was redeveloped and extended to create a new fish quay and market. This allowed for the addition of further berthing space for the export of coal at Tide Dock, now renamed the Old Harbour (Rowe 2000).

As a strategically important port Hartlepool was a target for attack in the First World War. A bombardment by the German Navy on 16th December 1914 launched around 1150 shells at the town resulting in the deaths of 117 people, including the only British soldier killed by enemy fire on British soil. The Heugh Battery returned fire and damaged three of the German ships, and in so doing became the only British battery to directly engage the enemy in the course of the war (Rowe 2012; Heugh Battery Museum website).

The Lighthouse and Heugh Batteries were updated for service during the First World War. However, the sandstone lighthouse was removed in 1915 so that it did not interrupt the line of sight of the battery guns. It was rebuilt as a white steel tower, similar in appearance to the original, by Trinity House in 1927 (Photographer's Resource website).

The outbreak of the First World War brought a boom time for the Hartlepool shipyards as they built ships for the Admiralty and gained repair and rebuilding works from commercial companies that lost merchant vessels as a result of the war.

Following the War the economic turmoil of the 1920s combined with a slump in orders for vessels resulted in the closure of the Irvine yard in 1924. Gray's was the sole survivor and managed to finally open its Graythorp yard on the River Tees in the same year, having purchased the land in 1913 but not developed the site fully because of the War. The company launched its thousandth ship in 1929. To survive the Great Depression of the 1930s Gray's closed its yard temporarily until 1934 when they took an order for two paddle steamers from the NER, *Wingfield Castle* and *Tattershall Castle*.

During the Second World War the Heugh and Lighthouse Batteries were again used for coastal defence. A searchlight emplacement was located on the Headland with pillboxes and an anti-aircraft battery built close to the cemetery overlooking North Sands (Tolan-Smith 2008; Rowe 2012).

The Second World War saved Gray's as new orders came flooding in and the heavy shipping losses incurred meant the yard was kept busy into the 1950s. However, foreign yards had been re-equipped with the latest technology to make them more efficient and the ships required were getting too big for most British shipyards. The industry went into decline nationwide and Gray's also began to suffer. Their last ship, the *Blanchland*, was launched in 1961 and the company closed in 1963 (Hartlepool History Then and Now website).

The twin towns of Headland and West Hartlepool grew and gradually merged in the course of the 20th century. Formal unification came in 1967 when the county borough of Hartlepool was formed from Hartlepool, West Hartlepool, and Seaton Carew. Whilst

the towns grew the port saw a great deal of change with the loss of shipbuilding and the coal trade.

Subsequently, the plan and layout of the Docks was radically changed. In 1974, Old Harbour and Victoria Dock were fully merged to form a single harbour basin, now known as Victoria Harbour. The timber ponds on the western side of The Slake were infilled during the early 1960s and the coal staithes at Coal Dock were cleared away in 1967, whilst the Swainson Dock was infilled the following year. Central Dock and its graving dock were reclaimed in the early 1990s (Rowe 2000).

The Coal, Union, and Jackson Docks of the West Hartlepool Docks were retained and redeveloped as marinas, and the area surrounding the docks was regenerated with residential development. As part of the scheme there was some alteration of the quayside to the north of the lock entrance from West Harbour.

Recent years have seen the construction of Hartlepool's Maritime Experience on the site of Gray's shipyard at the western end of Jackson Dock. The tourist attraction uses the shipyard's graving dock but is otherwise a carefully built reconstruction of an 18th century quay on the site of a 19th century shipyard. The attraction includes the paddle steamer *Wingfield Castle* built by Gray's in 1934 and the former British warship, *HMS Trincomalee*, built in Mumbai in 1817, and currently the oldest warship afloat (Hartlepool's Maritime Experience website).

*HMS Trincomalee's* association with Hartlepool began in 1862 when she was stationed there as a training ship and continued when she was restored by the HMS Trincomalee Trust in the 1990s in the dry dock (HMS Trincomalee Trust website).

Meanwhile, the commercial port operations have focussed on Victoria Harbour (including the North Basin). At the mouth of Commissioner's Harbour the Middleton Jetty was realigned and rebuilt in the early 1990s to help widen and better protect the entrance to Victoria Harbour (Rowe 2000).



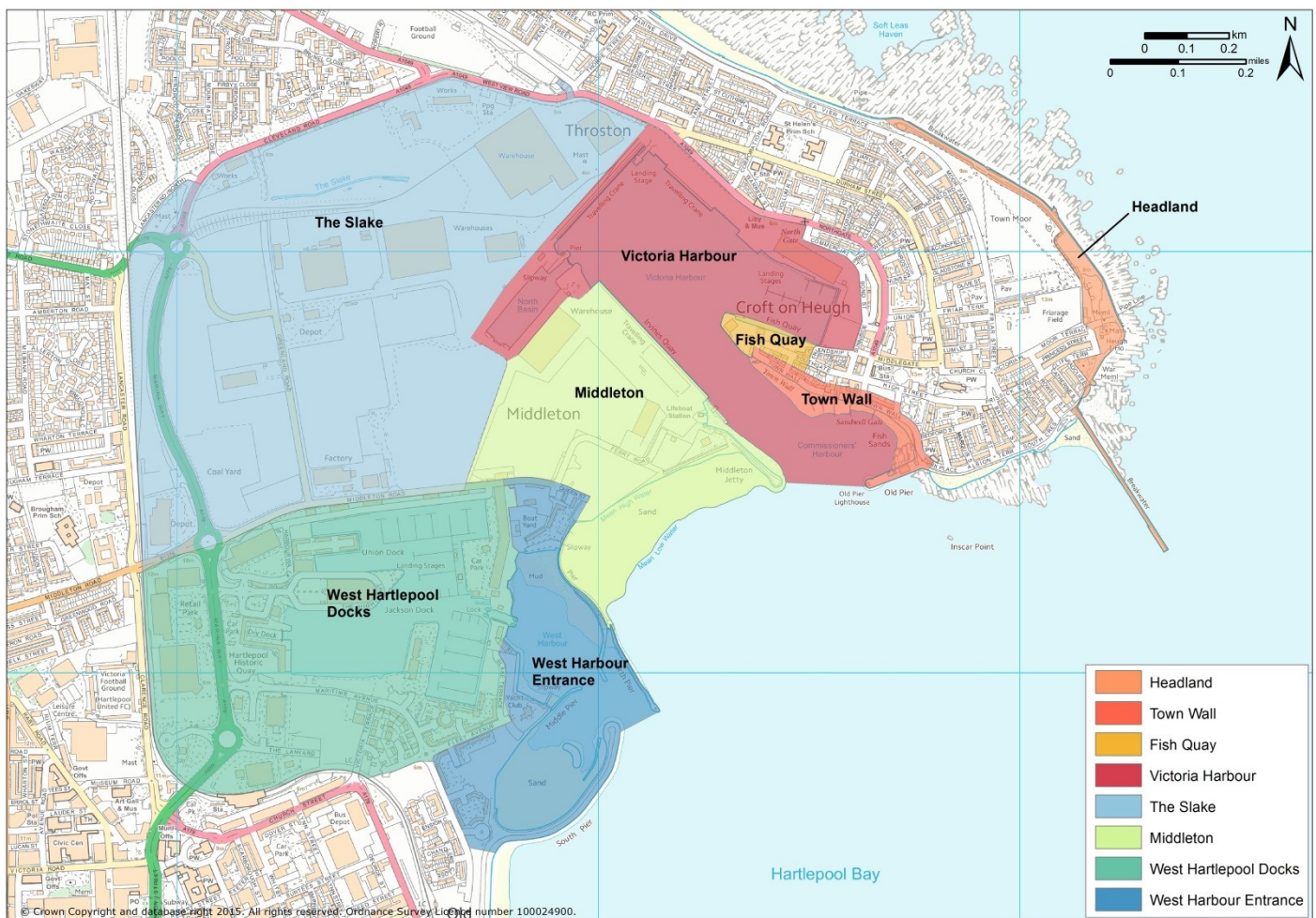


Fig 8 Character Areas

## Port-related heritage assets and contributions to present character

Hartlepool's port area has been divided into eight distinctive Character Areas (Fig 8).

The distinctive feel of a Character Area is shaped by its historical development and influenced in the present by the presence and patterns of the surviving heritage within it. That heritage can be many and various – place-names, street layouts, patterns of open space, whether public or private, or a sense of enclosure by closely spaced or large buildings, or the presence of readily recognisable historic buildings and features – they all provide a link to Hartlepool'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 features 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 Hartlepool have any 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 activity.

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

### Character Area Summary

#### 1. Headland

As a natural vantage point located on the seaward edge of the Headland, the Area has been the focus of the town's seaward military defences throughout the port's later history. Its fine views across the North Sea and Tees Bay means the Area is now public open space used for recreation.

At the northern end of the area, near Soft Leas Haven, the site of the mid-19th century Fairy Cove Battery is marked by a paved seating area and information post. It is an appealing place to sit and watch the sea with good views to the surrounding coastline.

Crossing the open park of Town Moor to the eastern end of the Area is the 19th century Heugh Battery. The Battery is now a museum but its defensive origins can be identified by its high red-brick built curtain wall. The different phases of its use are reflected in the varying character of its buildings and structures which also date to the First and Second World Wars.

Towering above the Battery is the bright white steel lighthouse tower built in 1927 on the site of the

## Character Area Summary

earlier stone lighthouse constructed in 1846. The lighthouse and Sebastopol Gun are the only markers of the former site of the Lighthouse Battery, built in conjunction with the Heugh and Fairy Cove Batteries in 1860.

Surrounding the lighthouse are the 20th century white and blue painted brick buildings of the former coastguard station and its communication tower. Formerly located north of the Heugh Battery, the coastguard moved at the outbreak of the First World War closer to the Batteries to aid co-ordination between the two.

The Station is dominated by its communication tower, facing out to the bay, which is almost as high as the lighthouse. These tall structures, along with the lookout post in the Heugh Battery, are focal points in the open landscape of the clifftop.

Nearby, the War Memorial, erected in 1921, stands in the austere and formal surroundings of the Redheugh Gardens. The memorial has a central statue of the Winged Victory atop a stone column listing local people who lost their lives in the First World War and subsequent 20th century conflicts.

Defining the southern extent of the Character Area, the Breakwater dates to the early 19th century and was extended in the late 19th century. Initially part of a harbour extension scheme, the shorter pier was built in stone. The extension, built in concrete, was intended to help protect the entrance to the harbour. The substantial modern concrete walls and reinforcements indicate that it still performs this role. However, the public access along its spine gives it a feel of a promenade, allowing wide ranging views across Hartlepool and Tees Bays, and to the West Hartlepool Docks.

### 2. Town Wall

The surviving section of medieval town wall defines the location of the historic core of Hartlepool, its harbour and the centre of its fishing activities.

The town wall dates to the 14th century and extends across the south side of the headland. It has, throughout its lifetime, consolidated this stretch of coastline and provided defence from attackers threatening the port. It continues to be a sea defence and to define the north side of Commissioner's Harbour. The later 14th century Sandwell Gate, built into the wall, continues to provide access to the Fish Sands, an area of sandy beach that until the 19th century was the centre of Hartlepool's fishing industry.

Running parallel, and protected behind the wall, is a residential street with a range of houses dating to the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

At the northern end of the Area, a short stone pier was the site of a leading light aiding navigation into the Old Harbour in the 19th century. It also functioned as a ferry landing pier in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Access is now restricted by a concrete blockwork wall but there is evidence of modern concrete block consolidation and repair to

## Character Area Summary

the pier walls.

The Old Pier, or breakwater, at the southern end of the Area, is the earliest structure built to defend the natural harbour pool and has been consolidated and rebuilt on several occasions. At first sight its true time-depth is not apparent as its concrete outer walls and rock defences give it a modern appearance. However, its lower courses are of stonework. As a vantage point commanding the approaches to Victoria and Commissioners Harbours it is the location for the old pilot's watch house. Now painted white with blue shutters, it forms a bright daymark to aid navigation.

At the end of the breakwater is the Old Pier Lighthouse. A square wooden-clad tower painted white with thin red stripes to act as a daymark, it is still used as a navigation light and has a radar installation on the top. Its sturdy construction reflects the exposed nature of its location. Whilst the pier is publicly accessible, the lighthouse is protected with a large security fence to deter vandalism.

### 3. Fish Quay

The quay is an early 20th century redevelopment of an earlier quay to form the focus of Hartlepool's fishing industry.

Its true time-depth and historic phasing are evident in the fabric of its quay walls. Due to it being a commercial part of the port, on the landward side of the Quay is a 20th century red brick wall and security fence preventing public access. On the quayside are stacks of nets, baskets and boxes that form the paraphernalia of modern commercial fishing. Modern industrial steel sheds provide merchant and retail space for the fish companies using the Quay.

The main mooring space formed by the Quay is on the internal side of Victoria Harbour. Here fishing boats use a landing stage to unload their catch. The Area had been substantially redeveloped in the late 20th century with large areas given over to storage space.

### 4. Victoria Harbour

The plan and extent of Victoria Harbour is a late 20th century adaptation of the early 19th century Old Harbour and Victoria Docks. Old Harbour was itself an earlier attempt to extend the natural harbour pool which helped to give the Hartlepool its name, and was fundamental to the founding of the town as a port.

Victoria Harbour has become Hartlepool's principal commercial port facility. It is formed in three parts: the Commissioner's Harbour, Victoria Harbour and North Basin. The Commissioner's Harbour continues to be an entrance channel. Its present shape and extent is the result of the redevelopment the port underwent in the late 20th century. On its northern side it is defined by the Town Wall and Fish Quay Character Areas and on its southern side, the Middleton Jetty which was redeveloped in the 1990s.

The present Victoria Harbour was created by the removal of its dividing coal staithe in 1974. It is now



## Character Area Summary

a large rectangular tidal dock basin. The surrounding quays were converted in the 1960s to handle cargo (instead of coal) and the quay walls updated with concrete and steel walling. The quayside infrastructure includes modern travelling cranes and, on its northern side, a Ro-Ro platform. At the eastern end of the Area are two modern pontoons used by small recreational vessels. This reflects the growing influence of recreational craft using the port.

At the north western corner of Victoria Harbour a narrow entrance lock provides access to the North Basin. The Basin is a wet dock with lock gates used to control its water levels. Still used as part of the commercial port, it has retained its later 19th century plan although its quay walls have been updated in concrete to handle the modern short-sea vessels that now use it.

The Area is regularly dredged to maintain depth for the modern cargo vessels that continue to use the commercial port.

### 5. The Slake

Now an area of modern port infrastructure dominated by large warehouses, service roads, storage areas with cabling drums and components for wind turbines and brownfield land, there is little indication of the inter-tidal mudflats which gave its name, The Slake.

In the early use of Victoria Harbour it provided water for scouring the dock. It also provided development land that could be easily enclosed and reclaimed. As part of the port infrastructure it was gradually built upon and developed from the late 19th century into the mid-20th century when the last remnant of the inter-tidal area was reclaimed.

To the north and west the Area is defined by the modern roads of the A1048 and A179, reflecting the growing importance of road distribution to the workings of the port. However, the Area is still served by a railway branch line continuing the link between the port and the main network.

### 6. Middleton

An open area of modern portside development with concrete storage areas and warehouses with large areas of brownfield land. The Area is built on land reclaimed from The Slake in successive phases during the 19th century expansion of the port.

Once dominated by shipyards, the Hartlepool Engine Works and the small settlement of Middleton, the Area is now used by metal merchants and wind turbine component fabricators. These utilise large open storage areas formed by concrete surfaces and Irvine Quay, preserving the name of Irvine's Shipbuilding and Dry Docks Company, for loading ships. The quay, one of the longest at Hartlepool, is now of modern construction with two travelling cranes used to load ships with metal. These tall and distinctive structures painted bright blue contrast with the surrounding flat landscape formed by the storage areas.

At the southwest corner of the Area is the modern brick-built lifeboat house. Two slipways, a concrete

## Character Area Summary

slip and wooden ramp for an earlier 20th century lifeboat house are still extant adjacent to the modern jetty used for mooring lifeboats.

To the south of the lifeboat station the Middleton Jetty or breakwater dates to a re-alignment in the 1990s of that built in the early 19th century to secure the entrance to Commissioner's Harbour. It is a modern concrete pier with rock cluster sea defences. The Middleton Jetty has helped to consolidate the sand which forms Middleton Beach (the extent of which has been greatly affected by the development of the port infrastructure from the early 18th century onwards).

Middleton Pier and the Beach have public access and are popular places to visit. Both provide good views across Hartlepool Bay and to the ships moving in and out of Victoria Harbour and the yachts and motor vessels using the West Hartlepool Docks.

### 7. West Hartlepool Docks

The West Hartlepool Docks are now the centre of the port's recreational sailing and motor boat activities. Although the Area has been substantially redeveloped in recent times it retains the Union, Jackson and Coal Docks in their early 20th century plan and extent. The quay walls enclosing the docks, their different construction materials and design represent the successive phases of port development.

Jackson Dock was the second built for the West Hartlepool Dock Company in 1852. It was served by the railway and equipped with a graving or dry dock. The dry dock is now used as the berth for *HMS Trincomalee*, a museum exhibit for 'Hartlepool's Maritime Experience', built on the former railway sidings, warehouses and Gray's shipyard. The Experience is a recreation of an 18th century dockside. In addition to museum and exhibition spaces the buildings surrounding the dock are used as restaurants and bars. In appearance these modern buildings look historic but they have been designed to look older than they are.

Nearby, the sandstone and yellow brick-built dock office and customs house draws the eye because of their built character, design and scale. The Customs House, converted from a hotel in 1880, is a grand symmetrical classical style building and the Dock Office of 1847 is similarly imposing with bay windows and a clock tower. They contrast in build and appearance with their modern surroundings, providing an extra layer of time-depth to the built environment.

The former Coal Dock, opened in 1847, and the 1880 Union Dock have been converted for use as Hartlepool Marina. The coal staithe and railway lines have been removed and an extensive area redeveloped for flats, houses, bars and restaurants.

At the eastern end of the Area is the later lock entrance to the West Hartlepool Docks, a late 19th/early 20th century replacement of the earlier entrance. To the north of the lock entrance is the early 20th century red brick-built Customs House

## Character Area Summary

with its clock tower

Standing on the western quay edge between Jackson and Union Docks, the sandstone tower of the former Seaton High Light (a navigation light) stands proudly above the docks. Built of sandstone its appearance contrasts the modern steel and brick-built buildings nearby. Moved to the site in 1997, it now forms a monument dedicated to people who lost their lives at sea.

### 8. West Harbour Entrance

The Area is formed by a complex arrangement of piers or breakwaters built to protect the entrance to the West Hartlepool Docks. The piers enclose an area of water known as the West Harbour. The Area retains much of its original mid-19th century layout although further land has been reclaimed on the western side of Middle Pier. Here, in the late 19th century, this was a shipyard with a graving dock but it is now used by Hartlepool Yacht Club, reflecting the growing importance of recreational sailing to the port. Its development also continues a tradition of using the land protected by the piers.

Likewise, at the foot of the North Pier, on the Middleton side, a modern boat yard reuses the site of an early 20th century small ship-repair yard.

The fabric of the Piers has been refurbished to strengthen them. The South Pier is the most altered, resulting in its more substantial construction, although within its core the historic pier survives. The other piers are smaller and narrower in comparison. The South Pier has a concrete walkway, allowing public access, and is substantially protected by a large concrete wall and at water level by rock boulder sea defences.

All the piers have modern navigation equipment; however, the beacon tower on the seaward end of the North Pier is a cast iron Victorian example. It is painted white with an ornate style and lantern at the top. The North Pier, a mix of stone and modern concrete construction, is publicly accessible.

Projecting out into Hartlepool Bay the Piers offer great views out to the North Sea as well as back to the West Hartlepool Docks. Fine views also extend to the Headland and the Town Wall Character Areas.

## Conservation values of 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 Hartlepool's present port-related heritage.

## Evidential

– ‘the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity’

Hartlepool's more recent history of large scale expansion and redevelopment of earlier port activity gives the surviving maritime features significant evidential value, contributing strongly to the historic character and time-depth of the port's present landscape.

Foremost among the surviving features is the Town Wall on the western edge of the Headland. Dating to the 14th century it is the earliest surviving feature of the medieval town. The Sandwell Gate highlights the probable location of the early port and its fishing activity. Not only are the walls and gate of high evidential value to the development of the port, they are also significant in the political and defensive history of the Headland.

The Heugh Battery is also of high evidential value to the defensive significance of the headland, especially as the only surviving example of a battery. The time-depth displayed by its earliest stone walls to its Second World War watch tower demonstrate the strategic significance of Tees and Hartlepool Bays to commercial shipping and naval activity.

The surviving docks in the West Hartlepool Docks and Victoria Harbour Character Areas are evidence for the massive 19th century expansion of the port. In its broader context its growth is linked to the massive expansion of the south Durham coalfield during the same period, and the leading role railway companies played in the port development of the North East.

The Old Pier is of good evidential value as the earliest surviving heritage asset associated with the efforts to improve the port. On the end of Old Pier, the lighthouse is of square and sturdy construction, necessarily robust for its exposed location. Without the Pier, Victoria Harbour would be less suitable as a commercial part of the port. The location of the pilot's watch house on the Pier is also of good evidential value to the administration required for the volume of shipping using the port at its height in the late 19th century.

Likewise, the eye-catching former Customs Houses in the West Hartlepool Docks Character Area are of strong evidential value in that they signify the administration needed to run the port and the wealth it generated.

Fish Quay also provides evidence for the continuation of fishing activity from the port into the modern period. Its phasing of construction and its successive adaptation also demonstrates the ability of the port to change, a theme which has been evident throughout its history.

As the last surviving unaltered structure associated with the use of Hartlepool as a coal port, Throston Engine House is Listed and of high evidential value. Formerly housing part of the engine mechanism that lifted the coal tubs from the rails on to the staithe, it is now outside the modern operation of the port and is awaiting restoration.





Fig 9 Looking across West Harbour to the North Pier with the Beacon Tower on its seaward end (right).



Fig 10 The view out to Commissioner's Harbour and the approaches to the port with the ends of Old Pier (left) and Middleton Jetty (right).

## 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 Heugh and Lighthouse Batteries are of historical value because of their association with the First World War. They are believed to be the only batteries on British soil to engage enemy warships in battle and the only place where a British soldier died as a result of the enemy bombardment.

Similarly, from the perspective of defence, the Town Walls are a testimony to the history of politics and conflict between Scotland and England in the medieval period, and the family history of the de Brus family. The constant threat of attack was once of the key factors in the post medieval decline of medieval Hartlepool as a port until its resurgence in the Industrial Revolution.

Ward Jackson was a highly significant figure in the later growth of Hartlepool, leading the creation of the West Hartlepool Docks Company. The Jackson Dock is named after him but it was the introduction of a second rail line to the coal fields from Hartlepool that made the town foremost among the coal export ports in the North East of England for a short period. In this role Jackson is an important figure in the history of Hartlepool.

The various entrepreneurs that led the shipbuilding industry in Hartlepool are significant to understanding the port's development. The list could include, amongst others, Parkin, Blumer, Richardson, Irvine and Pile, however, the most significant players are Denton, William Gray and Christopher Furness.

William Gray is perhaps the most well-known in the region for the size and scale to which he and his heirs built their shipbuilding business. He is also highly regarded for his contributions to safety at sea in his promotion of the Plimsoll Line and his new well-deck design for steamer ships. For these reasons, Gray is also an important figure in the development of Britain's merchant shipping and its regulation. Taken together with the other associated factories and businesses, such as the CMEW, the Gray shipyards provided huge economic support to the town and national fame for the

shipbuilding awards and records the yard won in the late 19th century.

## Aesthetic

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

As a working port, Hartlepool's constantly changing activity generates interest for many, whether from the movements of visiting ships, yachts and motor vessels using West Hartlepool Docks or the scale of offshore wind turbine components being transferred around the port. To some these activities may not always be seen as attractive but nonetheless many find them stimulating.

The scale and expanse of the port infrastructure and the ships using it visually dominate the areas surrounding the port. The cranes in Victoria Harbour are prominent landmarks on the skyline and are highly visible from vantage points on the Headland and around Hartlepool Bay.

In the area of Fish Sands, the Town Wall and historic housing behind provide a contrasting view to the concrete and steel structures of the modern dock infrastructure. They also provide an easily understood visual link to the historic town and port.

Similarly, the decorative architecture of the Dock and Customs Offices in the West Hartlepool Docks Character Area are aesthetically distinct from the modern redevelopment that surrounds them. They were specifically intended to be impressive in their scale and design.

Hartlepool's harbours and maritime setting are best appreciated from the publically accessible piers and breakwaters. The North Pier and Old Pier include lighthouses which contrast with the sea defences of concrete and rock clusters that encase the piers. The aesthetic value and visual sense of time-depth is enhanced by the remaining visibility of the original stonework.



Fig 11 Throston Engine House with scaffolding to help support the building.



Fig 12 The Listed Customs House and Coal Dock Office for the West Hartlepool Docks.

## Communal

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

The Port of Hartlepool provides an important economic focus for the local area. Considerable pride is associated with the Hartlepool’s port including its medieval history and later development, its shipbuilding and iron and steel industries, and its defensive batteries.

The redevelopment of the West Hartlepool Docks into a recreational area and marina provides a second economic focus for the town. The ‘Hartlepool’s Maritime Experience’ museum within this development provides a link to the local history for visitors and residents with the attractions of *HMS Trincomalee* and the paddle steamer *Wingfield Castle*; both of local significance to the maritime history of Hartlepool.

On the Headland, a town trail tells the story of the town from its medieval beginnings including the port, town wall and batteries (Destination Hartlepool website). The Heugh Battery Museum has exhibitions on the defence of the town and in particular its war time experience.

The area has active heritage-focused groups including the Teesside Archaeological Society and Nautical Archaeology Society North-East (NAS NE), a regional branch of the Nautical Archaeology Society. The NAS NE has strong working links with local museums, heritage organisations and Local Authorities and has run several community-based projects, encouraging people to research Hartlepool’s rich maritime heritage (Hartlepool History Then and Now website).

Nautical Archaeology Society North-East has been involved in the ‘The Hartlepool Built’ project, a project to gather data on ships built in Hartlepool and on the people who sailed them

The North East England Maritime Archaeology Research Archive was established in 2006 thanks to grant funding from English Heritage and from local councils. The archive contains reference material on ships, shipbuilding and archaeological reports and is housed at the offices of Hartlepool Borough Council (Nautical Archaeology Society Wikipedia page).

In 2014 the Shipping and Shipbuilding Research Trust was founded with the main objective to encourage interest and facilitate research into the maritime heritage of North East England. The North East Maritime Trust, based in South Shields, Tyneside, undertakes conservation work to historic vessels with the aim to educate the public about maritime history and in particular, that of the North East.

## Current levels of heritage protection

Within the Headland Character Area, the Heugh Battery is a Scheduled Monument (SM 1020801). The War Memorial and Sebastopol Gun, both adjacent to the Heugh Battery are Grade II Listed Buildings (LBs 1263296 and 1250110 respectively).

In the Town Wall Character Area the Town Wall and Gate are Grade I Listed Buildings and a Scheduled Monument (LB 1250535; SM 1006761). There are also five Grade II Listed Buildings on Town Wall (road) but none are directly port-related.

The Headland and Town Wall Character Areas fall within the Headland Conservation Area (Hartlepool Council Conservation Areas website).

Within the Victoria Harbour Character Area, on the corner of West View and Old Cemetery Roads is the Grade II Listed Throston Engine House (LB 1250389).

The West Hartlepool Docks Character Area includes the Grade II Listed Customs House (LB 1263124) and Dock Office (and its walls; LBs 1250670 and 1250671) which all together form a tight cluster of Listed Buildings.

At the far eastern end of the North Pier, within the West Harbour Entrance Character Area, the Beacon Tower is Grade II Listed (LB 1250819).

## Pressures for change

The main pressure upon the port and other port-side operators is the economic need to remain commercially viable. There is significant competition from other North Sea ports, a majority of which are looking to the offshore energy industry to form part of their business. The changing nature and focus of the area’s industries, the increasing size of vessels and major changes in port technology and provision nationally, has meant that





*Fig 13 The paddle steamer Wingfield Castle, part of Hartlepool's Maritime Experience, moored in Jackson Dock and now surrounded by modern redevelopment.*

they have had to regularly revise their business models - a situation which will continue in the future.

The pressure for regeneration is high due to the recent difficult economic times and decline of many traditional portside industries in the town. There are large brownfield areas within The Slake, Middleton and Victoria Harbour Character Areas that have high potential for redevelopment.

Another challenge the area must face is the threat of sea-level rise. 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 recommendations for Hartlepool focus on 'holding the line' of sea defences protecting the town (Guthrie and Lane 2007). The economic and residential importance of the Heugh Headland, the Victoria Harbour, Middleton and the Slake and the marina in the former West Hartlepool Docks, are recognised by the plan as needing protection. However, the SMP2 also highlights the role that the piers and breakwaters play in reducing wave height and exposure of the harbours to the North Sea. The Heugh Breakwater and North Pier will be monitored and if necessary, upgraded in the longer-term.

## Heritage risk assessment and opportunities

This Port Heritage Summary has highlighted the essential historic character and heritage assets that underpin Hartlepool's port-related character.

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 Hartlepool's historic cultural development rather than emerging as if from a blank canvas. Such culturally-informed regeneration will ultimately be more sustainable for the local community.

The Headland Conservation Area, which includes the Headland and Town Wall Character Areas are on Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk Register' due their 'deteriorating' condition.

A local 'heritage at risk' study undertaken in 2013 by Tees Archaeology identified three heritage assets at risk within the Character Areas (Tees Archaeology 2013).

The Grade II Listed Throston Engine House, the only surviving piece of infrastructure relating to the 19th century coal staithes at Victoria Dock, was considered at high risk of deterioration unless conservation work and/or suitable reuse was undertaken to secure its future.

Also identified at high risk was the Grade II Listed Beacon Tower at the east end of the North Pier due to its isolation, exposure to the elements and lack of upkeep.

The Scheduled and Grade I Listed Town Walls and Sandwell Gate were also identified at high risk to ensure that they are regularly monitored for deterioration in their condition. This ongoing issue is due to their vulnerability to erosion and because recently, beach defences have been built at the foot of the walls to help prevent them from being undermined.

The coastguard lookout near Heugh Battery, in the Headland Character Area, is currently unused. Without suitable reuse in future the building will be at risk of deterioration.

The redevelopment of the West Hartlepool Docks Character Area with a heritage focus forming part of the scheme is to be broadly welcomed. It is hoped that heritage will continue to be an integral part of any future redevelopment proposals that may arise.

Large areas of The Slake and Middleton Character Areas await reuse or redevelopment and as such are at moderate to high risk of change.

Areas of ground disturbance in certain parts of the Character Areas could potentially reveal buried archaeological deposits, although in certain areas that potential could be limited by previous substantial ground disturbance.

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