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# **A CHARACTERISATION OF SHEERNESS, KENT PROJECT REPORT**

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

Sheerness is a historic naval town with a unique heritage. Whilst its military installations have been well-studied, the development of civilian settlement and civic facilities have received less attention leading to biases in understanding historic development and, potentially, protection of heritage assets. It is also a town where changes in economic fortunes since the latter part of the 20th century have had a serious effect on the use and survival of heritage assets and where current and foreseeable land use proposals threaten to continue this trend. This project was developed to address these issues by providing a thorough study of the town which explains its current character, the historic influences which have shaped it, the significance of its heritage assets and trends in archaeological potential across the town. It has used documentary sources, mapping analysis and fieldwork to unpick how the complex interplay of human and environmental factors have shaped Sheerness as it is today.

The key project outputs are this report and accompanying GIS data. Together these encapsulate aspects of the town's historic character spanning developmental influences, phases of growth, below-ground archaeological potential and built environment character.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 This report presents the results of an historic landscape characterisation of Sheerness, Kent. It was funded under Historic England's National Heritage Protection Plan (NHPP). The project was commissioned prior to the transference of English Heritage's heritage protection functions to a newly-created body, Historic England (HE), at the start of April 2015. The NHPP outlines priorities for heritage management and supporting research over a five year period, at present 2011-2015. The NHPP has identified historic towns and suburbs as subject to particular pressures which require further research over this period to underpin informed heritage protection.
- 1.1.2 The project brief, issued in October 2014, identified Sheerness as a historic naval town where an incomplete understanding of the built form of the surviving settlement and certain elements of its evolution had the potential to hamper effective heritage protection (English Heritage, 2014). It is also a town where changes in economic fortunes since the latter part of the 20th century have had a serious impact on the use and survival of heritage assets. The town is also subject to a range of economic pressures, including initiatives for redevelopment, which have the potential to affect its heritage assets.
- 1.1.3 This project was designed to address these issues and provide a thorough study of the town; explaining its current character, the historic influences that have shaped it, the significance of its surviving heritage assets and trends in archaeological potential across the town. The project has used documentary sources, mapping analysis and fieldwork to unpick how the complex interplay of human and environmental factors has shaped Sheerness as it is today.

## 1.2 Project Area

- 1.2.1 The project area is c.440ha in extent, occupies the northern tip of the Isle of Sheppey and lies adjacent to the confluence of the Medway with the Thames (Figure 1). The project area coincides with the built-up area of Sheerness and comprises the town's commercial centre, the Port of Sheerness, light and heavy industrial areas and residential areas. Only a very few parts of the project area are not developed and this is in stark contrast to the remainder of Sheppey which is generally rural. The main communications routes in and out of Sheerness are the road and rail links which run through the west of the project area and connect with the bridges over The Swale to the Kent mainland. The only other routes out of Sheerness are the minor roads which run eastwards to Minster and the inland core of Sheppey. Sheerness was formerly linked to the Netherlands by a ferry service running from Garrison Point, at the northern tip of the project area. This service ceased in 1994 but ferry embarkation infrastructure remains in-situ.
- 1.2.2 As with the rest of Sheppey's coastal fringes, the project area is low-lying and ground level is relatively flat, lying at c.2 m aOD. The bedrock geology of the project area is formed of London Clay Formation clays and silts. The overlying drift geology varies across the project area; at the coastal fringe lie undifferentiated beach and tidal flat deposits whilst over the remainder are alluvial deposits of clay, silt, peat and sand.

## 1.3 Aims and Objectives

- 1.3.1 The main aim of the project was to characterise the town of Sheerness so that its historic development can be understood and its component heritage assets protected and managed appropriately.
- 1.3.2 The key objectives, as described in the project brief (English Heritage, 2014), were as follows:
- i. What were the town's main development phases?
  - ii. What effect did the development of the town's military infrastructure have on the topographic development of the town and its spatial organisation?

- iii. What character areas may be identified within the town, and which might be seen as specific to a town dominated by the military?
- iv. Were there other significant influences on the development of the town and how have these influenced its character?
- v. Which areas of the town have potential for the presence of buried archaeological resources?
- vi. Which areas of the town have potential for the further investigation of the historic built environment?
- vii. What are the key issues driving change in the project area, and which areas are most likely and least likely to be affected?

#### **1.4 Assumptions and Limitations**

- 1.4.1 This report is produced by Ramboll at the request of Historic England for the purposes laid out in the agreed Project Design for the works (Ramboll, 2015). The Project Design includes for public dissemination of this results of the project, in the form of this report, by Historic England via their website. Ramboll neither owes nor accepts any duty to any third party and shall not be liable for any loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature which is caused by their reliance on the information contained in this report.
- 1.4.2 Much of the information used by this study consists of secondary information compiled from a variety of sources. Unless otherwise stated, the assumption is made that this information is reasonably accurate.
- 1.4.3 The fieldwork undertaken for the project consisted of walkovers of publicly accessible areas. No access was gained to land inside the port or former steelworks nor were the interiors of any non-public buildings accessed.
- 1.4.4 The Kent County Council and HE datasets are records of known archaeological and historic features. They are not exhaustive records of all surviving historic environment features and do not preclude the existence of further features that are unknown at present.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Characterisation Philosophy**

- 2.1.1 Initial discussions with the HE Project Assurance Officer (PAO) indicated a desire that the characterisation data for the project area could be time-sliced to show snapshots of development at key stages in the area's history. Initial review of archival sources for the project area indicated that, whilst this would be readily achievable from 1864 onwards due to the availability of Ordnance Survey mapping, earlier phases would be harder to deal with in this way. This was chiefly due to the nature of information available prior to this date.
- 2.1.2 Prior to 1864, few sources cover the entire project area to a similar level of detail. Whilst early maps of Kent, such as the Andrews and Herbert map of 1769, covered the project area, the detail shown by them was highly schematic, poorly labelled, and largely impossible to georeference in any meaningful way. Detailed plans of parts of the project area exist, chiefly the naval dockyard and garrison fort, but are very tightly constrained to the facility in question and, hence, have little or no information on those areas of the project area lying beyond these facilities. There were, however, a series of dates prior to 1864 at which information could be derived from multiple sources to present a characterisation of the entire project area. These characterisations were developed from detail shown on specific naval or ordnance plans and the depiction of areas lying outside of these facilities on later mapping.
- 2.1.3 All period-based characterisations were developed by georeferencing a series of key sources and

tracking change between them. Key sources were identified following a detailed assessment of all archival information gathered. They were mainly those which were map based but, from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century onwards, aerial photography also provided useful information. These key sources are identified in the characterisation data and within the period-based commentary presented in this report (Section 3). Areas of identical historic land-use evolution were then identified from these key sources, digitised as polygons and attributed Historic Land-use Types (HLTs).

2.1.4 An explanation of the data structure used within the characterisation is contained within Appendix 1.

## **2.2 Sources**

2.2.1 This report has been compiled by a combination of archival and library research supported by field verification. Key sources used were:

- i. The KCC Historic Environment Record (HER);
- ii. The KCC Kent History and Library Centre;
- iii. The National Archives, Kew;
- iv. Historic England GIS data holdings, including the AMIE database, and archival collections;
- v. The National Maritime Museum, including the Caird Library;
- vi. The Institution of Mechanical Engineers Archive;
- vii. The Institution of Civil Engineers;
- viii. The British Newspaper Archive;
- ix. The National Museum of the Royal Navy Library; and
- x. The British Geological Survey.

2.2.2 A list of the primary archival sources consulted is contained in Appendix 2.

## **2.3 GIS data creation**

2.3.1 Digitisation was created by heads-up digitisation within ArcMap 10.1. All attribute data was stored within the GIS data, rather than in an allied database or spreadsheet, to ensure robustness of data and ease of transfer to project partners.

2.3.2 The base-mapping used for data capture was an export of OS MasterMap supplied to the project team by HE's data officer (David Gander) on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

## **2.4 Fieldwork**

2.4.1 The project area was visited on 23<sup>rd</sup> March and 5<sup>th</sup> August 2015. The first visit was undertaken in tandem with the HE PAO (Wayne Cocroft) and comprised a kick-off meeting and familiarisation with key parts of the project area.

2.4.2 The second visit was undertaken to verify interpretations based on archival sources and secondary information.

# **3. DEVELOPMENT PHASES**

## **3.1 Introduction**

3.1.1 The overall sequence of Sheerness's development is well-established and has been explored in several documents, such as the archaeological assessment of the town carried out as part of the *Kent Historic Towns Survey* (Kent County Council, 2004). The following discussion adds further



detail to this overall sequence where relevant and is based on the analysis of primary archival sources and secondary works and also field visits carried out as part of the current project. This discussion is supported by a series of land-use maps prepared for dates at which a reasonable coverage of historic mapping and/or aerial photographic sources is available across the full project area.

### 3.2 Activity prior to the first fortification

- 3.2.1 Prior to historic periods, human activity across Sheppey as a whole is poorly documented and the nature of activity is not clear. This lack of documentation appears to be due in part to low-levels of archaeological fieldwork on the island (Pratt, 1996).
- 3.2.2 The project area lies adjacent to the confluence of the River Medway with the River Thames and it is thought that the course of these two rivers became established c.425,000 BP following the end of the Anglian Glaciation (Heppel, 2010, p. 4 & 8). From this date onwards the project area has lain at the coast or in relatively close proximity to it. The coastline appears to have approached a position similar to that seen today by the Roman period. Low-lying land at the fringes of the island, such as the project area, are thought to have been marshy and unfit for permanent human occupation during many periods.
- 3.2.3 The exact nature of land cover in the project area prior to the advent of historic mapping and other documentary records in the post-medieval period is unclear since geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental work is lacking. The HE AMIE and KCC HER databases contain no clear evidence for settlement or other permanent human activity in the project area prior to the post-medieval period. The KCC HER has three records relating to the discovery of later prehistoric artefacts and one record of the discovery of a Roman artefact. These consist of a Bronze Age palstave, an Iron Age coin, a late Iron Age brooch and a 2<sup>nd</sup>-century AD finger ring (Figure 1). As the locational information for all of these finds is poor, caution should be exercised in using them to indicate foci of activity and they are probably better regarded as indicating some kind of human use of the landscape within the project area during these periods of an as yet unconfirmed nature. It is not clear whether this activity would translate to the presence of related archaeological deposits within the project area.
- 3.2.4 Historic mapping indicates that much of the project area was probably reclaimed from marsh and enclosed as grazing land at a relatively early date. The earliest map to show the project area appears to be the *Plotte of Sheppey* of 1572 (TNA MPF 1/240). This map appears to have been drawn up to illustrate lands held by a Lord Cheney. The map cannot be accurately georeferenced but depicts the majority of the project area as unclosed and lacking development or roads. It also depicts a number of irregular shapes across the area and this may be a convention used to show bodies of water or marshy land. Since the map appears to have been prepared to show the holdings of a particular landowner, it is not clear whether the lack of any detail in the project area indicates that the area was little modified by human activity or simply that Lord Cheney had no interests there. The next available maps of the whole area date to the later 18<sup>th</sup> century; the Andrews, Dury & Herbert map of 1769 and the Hasted map of 1798. Whilst schematic, both appear to indicate that the roads and tracks within the project area ran through enclosed land by this date. The earliest detailed mapping to cover large parts of the project area, an Ordnance Office plan of 1738 (TNA MFQ 1/41/1) and an 1827 plan prepared by a local landowner that became part of the War Office records (TNA MPH 1/599/6), depicts a landscape of irregularly shaped fields protected by sinuous banks. This landscape appears typical of "innings", land reclaimed from either marsh or intertidal land during the later medieval and/or early post-medieval periods. If the *Plotte of Sheppey* accurately depicts land use, it seems likely that this enclosure took place at some point after the later 16<sup>th</sup> century so is of post-medieval date. The only land which appears to have remained unenclosed is the land in the northern tip of the project area, close to what is now Garrison Point. In this area, unenclosed marshes with areas of surface water appear to have remained into the earlier 18<sup>th</sup> century and are shown on the 1738 plan.

### 3.3 Early fortifications and dockyard

- 3.3.1 Whilst the place name *Sheerness* is Old English in origin (derived from “clear headland”), permanent settlement in the project area is thought to have developed only following the establishment of an artillery fort at the tip of the headland in 1545 (Kent County Council, 2004, p. 2). The fort consisted of three blockhouses and was part of a series of coastal defences constructed under the auspices of Henry VIII during the French wars of the latter years of his reign (Saunders, 1989, p. 51). Whilst there are no detailed maps that accurately depict the Henrican fort, it is shown on the Plotte of Sheppey. It is shown as a circular structure and labelled “the old Bulwarke Sherenasshe”. The purpose of the fort at Sheerness appears to have been twofold; firstly, to monitor approaches along the Thames to the capital and, secondly, to guard the approaches along the River Medway and the nascent Royal Naval dockyard at Chatham and those along the Swale to the borough and castle at Queenborough. The Henrican fort was replaced by a larger fort prior to the availability of reliable mapping sources so, whilst its location is assumed to be at the very tip of the headland in the area of the present Garrison Point Fort, its precise extent and form is unclear. Consequently, it is not possible to depict an extent for this iteration of the fort within the period-based characterisation maps.
- 3.3.2 By the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, a change in threats to Britain’s security meant that Sheerness was suited to being more than just a defensive outpost. Deteriorating relations with the emergent Dutch state over the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century led to a formal declaration of war by the English Commonwealth in 1652. This was the first of four wars which took place over the remainder of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and included a substantial degree of naval warfare. The location of Sheerness and its positioning on a deep water channel, adjacent to the important anchorage at *The Nore* and in proximity to the major Chatham dockyard meant that was strategically well-sited for such hostilities and a naval dockyard was established there in 1665, early in the Second Dutch War (Coad, 2013, p. 2).
- 3.3.3 This first dockyard appears to have been established at the earlier Henrican fort. The proposals for the dockyard included dry docks and protection of the yard by a 26 gun battery at the headland, presumably replacing the earlier blockhouse fort (Kent County Council, 2004, p. 2). It is not clear to what extent this scheme was executed since no plans related to it are known to survive and also as the dockyard was attacked and burnt in the damaging and humiliating Dutch raid on the Medway of 1667 very shortly after works began on the scheme (Kent County Council, 2004, p. 2).
- 3.3.4 Reconstruction of the fort and dockyard under the auspices of the King’s Chief Engineer, Sir Bernard de Gomme, was set in train immediately after the raid (Saunders, 1989, p. 92). This work appears to have been to a new design of De Gomme’s and a plan of the fort, dated to 1667 and attributed to De Gomme himself, is held by the British Library (British Library ref. BLL01004977353). This shows the fort as roughly triangular, occupying the tip of the headland, and cut off from the remainder of Sheppey by a wet ditch in which stood a ravelin. The landward front was bastioned and both seaward sides had an indented trace. The Thames-facing indented line remains extant, incorporated into later remodelling of seaward defences, and is visible from the beach (Plate 1). The main dockyard area lay within the fort defences at the Medway side and alongside Ordnance facilities. A gate in the western front of the defences allowed access from the dockyard to the foreshore. No dry docks are shown on this plan. At the very seaward tip of the fort the De Gomme plan shows an angular walled structure, separate to the bastioned system of the new fort, labelled *the Great Platform*. This is referred to on later plans as *Half Moon Bastion* or *Half Moon Battery*. It is possible that this structure was part of the Henrican fort since such batteries were used in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and as it is described as having “at one angle, to seaward, a polygonal bastion with the salient angle flattened” and that this functioned as a gun platform which fits the presentation of this part of the fort on the plan (Saunders, 1989, p. 52).
- 3.3.5 Due to continued hostility with the Dutch, the dockyard grew over the remainder of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The early dockyard, perhaps as it had to share space with the fort garrison, appears to

have had limited numbers of permanent buildings and employed hulks extensively, both as accommodation for workers and also for offices and stores (Kent County Council, 2004, p. 2). Hulks are also reputed to have been used to reclaim land for additional waterside working space and wharfage. The shortage of accommodation was only very gradually addressed with some accommodation being added to the dockyard in the 1680s and 1690s but, despite this, hulks remained in use for accommodation after this date. This, combined with the remote nature of the dockyard, meant that many workers commuted daily by water from Chatham or Queenborough (Kent County Council, 2004, p. 2). As the area around the dockyard and garrison appears to have been marshy and unoccupied, all supplies, including fresh water and timber for boat construction, had to be shipped in with most of it coming from Chatham (Kent County Council, 2004, p. 2).

- 3.3.6 The earliest Naval plans of the dockyard held by the archives consulted date to 1714 and show that, by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the dockyard had become a sophisticated undertaking and that areas had been reclaimed from the sea to provide additional space for operations. An interesting feature of these early 18<sup>th</sup>-century naval plans is that the dockyard lies entirely outside the fort, occupying the area between the Medway-facing trace and the sea. This may imply that, by this date, the tension of accommodating growing naval operations within the confines of the garrison had come to a head, necessitating some separation of the two operations.
- 3.3.7 The 1714 plan shows the dockyard as having four docks (including a graving dock), associated wharves and jetties, slips, a mast pond and a number of buildings dedicated to specific purposes (NMM ADM/Y/S/2). These comprised offices, workshops (including a forge and glazing shop), a workers' lodging house and stores for wood, planks and pitch. Also shown are four hulks sunk to form a breakwater adjacent to the mast pond at the southern end of the dockyard. The sub-ovoid shape of some of the jetties shown indicates that they too may have been originally formed by sinking hulks.
- 3.3.8 The 1725 plan shows further growth of the dockyard, both in terms of land occupied but also in facilities (NMM ADM/Y/S/3). By this date one of the docks had been converted to a dry dock, further land had been reclaimed, more hulks had been sunk to create breakwaters and additional buildings had been constructed. No worker lodging is mentioned on the key for this plan, which probably reflects the provision of housing elsewhere. Some secondary accounts mention provision of a market and accommodation in the dockyard in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century but, since none appears on the plans discussed above, it is possible that these were sited within the garrison and not the core dockyard area.
- 3.3.9 The extent of the garrison fort is shown on the 1738 plan but no internal detail is shown (TNA MFQ 1/41/1). As discussed above, the 1738 plan is important since it is the first accurately surveyed plan on which areas aside from the dockyard or garrison appear. It is not clear for what purpose the 1738 plan was prepared since the copy held at The National Archives is one made in 1836 and annotated with what were, at that point, recently developed fortification lines not in existence in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The 1738 plan shows that the parts of the marshland immediately south of the De Gomme defences had been formalised into a large area of water, referred to on this plan as the *Outward Moat* and on later plans as *The Inundation*. It is not clear whether this moat was an addition to the De Gomme scheme or merely an element of it not clearly depicted on the 1667 plan. Crucially, the 1738 plan shows that housing had begun to be developed outside of the dockyard and garrison by this date in what was later to become the western end of Blue Town, labelled on this plan as *The Blue Houses*. As discussed in several other works, Blue Town developed as a largely *ad hoc* settlement of dock workers and in its earlier phases was comprised of buildings built with the workers' perquisites (a worker's entitlement to take surplus timber off-cuts for their own use) from the Navy. This meant that the majority of the buildings were timber and painted naval blue, leading to the area becoming known as first the Blue Houses and, later, *Blue Town*.
- 3.3.10 The extent of these land-uses by c. 1738, as inferred from the sources discussed above, is shown

on Figure 2. Only part of The Fleet watercourse is shown as later development has made it impossible to trace the eastward course of this channel.

### 3.4 Later 18th century to the turn of the 19th century

- 3.4.1 Whilst there are fewer mapping sources for the remainder of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with only a single plan of the dockyard of this period found (NMM ADM-Y-S-9 1773), there are a series of plans and proposals covering the dockyard and garrison dating to c.1800 which illustrate development up to this date. In addition, a scale model was made of the dockyard and fort in the 1770s and this illustrates their extent and component facilities. The model was one of several made of Royal Dockyards in the later 18<sup>th</sup> century following an initial model built of the Portsmouth yard (Coad, 2013). It is possible that the paucity of mapping sources over this period may reflect Sheerness' importance to the Navy or may be an artefact of the survival of records. Sheerness is thought to have become less important during this period for a number of reasons; Royal dockyards on the south coast had become more relevant by this date as they were better suited to the growing importance of Atlantic trade and growing tensions with Revolutionary France; a serious programme of investment had been undertaken at the nearby Chatham Dockyard and, finally, Sheerness itself was considered a difficult location for a dockyard due to a number of factors (Saunders, 1989, pp. 4-5 & 10-11). These included its exposed position making it vulnerable to attack, the marshy ground meaning that the large structures required by the navy were difficult and costly to engineer and also an infestation of a hull-boring worm in the water around the docks (Coad, 2013). Despite this, the dockyard remained in use and progress had been made on one of the factors that made Sheerness a difficult site as supply of fresh water at the dockyard and garrison had been successfully achieved following sinking of a well in 1782 (Hasted, 1798).
- 3.4.2 The 1773 plan shows that additional land was in the process of being reclaimed using hulks, a further two dry docks had been added and further structures built. Unlike earlier plans, the names of the hulks *in situ* at that date are given. The plan also shows the existence of a small burial ground adjacent to, and connected to, the dockyard immediately south of the garrison fortifications. No such burial ground is seen at this location on other plans and its presence probably indicates that there the resident population at the dockyard had increased sufficiently to require a formal burial place. As the plan extends no further than the dockyard it is not clear whether this reflects increased population resident at the garrison or in Blue Town.
- 3.4.3 A series of Admiralty plans of 1800 provides a detailed overview of both the dockyard and garrison and also some information on their wider environs (TNA ADM 140/670). These plans include, for the first time, detail of buildings within the fort. The plans show that, despite all the issues described above, the dockyard had expanded significantly. This expansion included a further dry dock, an expanded waterside dock area (the culmination of the reclamation seen in train on the 1773 plan) and a further increase both in buildings and ranges of trades accommodated. Land had also been reclaimed for the dockyard from the former Outward Moat by this date.
- 3.4.4 The fort defences appear to have remained largely unaltered from De Gomme's 17<sup>th</sup>-century work. Within the fort, a wide range of buildings existed in a series of courts and a chapel had been built over the gateway to the dockyard. Interesting to note is that around a third of the area, that lying adjacent to the dock gate, was occupied by buildings operated by the dockyard. These are in a similar location to the dockyard shown on the De Gomme plan and may indicate continuity of use of that area by the Navy. The remainder of the fort interior was occupied by the garrison.
- 3.4.5 The 1800 Admiralty plans show that Blue Town had developed significantly since 1738, coming to occupy a roughly triangular area south of the fort which was slightly larger than the present Blue Town. By this date, it had developed a High Street, with a dense network of closes and alleys on its south side, and had its own well and pier, enabling access to the Medway. The Naval and Ordnance wells were also located adjacent to Blue Town. Despite clearance of historic structures,

Blue Town retains much of the street and alley layout shown on historic maps from 1800 onwards.

- 3.4.6 By this date, a road had also been built to allow access from Blue Town into the fort, bridging the southern end of the De Gomme wet ditch and entering via a new gate built into the *Queenborough Bastion*. A hospital is shown a short distance to the southeast of Blue Town. Documents from 1807 held by The National Archives show that this was the garrison hospital and that it was in a building hired from a local landowner rather than a purpose-built facility (TNA MFQ 1/1315/13-14). This plan proved difficult to georeference, probably due to surveying errors in the original plan, which means that the exact site of the hospital building cannot be accurately depicted on the period-based characterisation maps. That said, the building's site appears to have been in the area of the surviving Sheerness Lines wet ditch in the vicinity of where it is crossed by the road between Blue Town and Mile Town.
- 3.4.7 The plans also show that that a settlement had developed around a bend in the road that led from the headland toward Minster. This settlement is labelled *Mile Town* and comprised a cluster of buildings around the main road and the few short streets that led off it. This settlement appears to have developed since the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century as nothing is shown in this area on the 1738 plan.
- 3.4.8 Some new defensive work appears to have begun by 1800. This was designed to protect the expanded dockyard and the associated Blue Town settlement, the majority of which lay outside the existing defences, and was to designs put forward in 1783 by Captain M. Pitts (Saunders, 1989, p. 128). The initial scheme for this appears to have entailed a line of defence cutting-off the area around the dockyard and garrison from the rest of the peninsula and appears to have included a fort, known as *Fort Townsend*. The execution of this plan is somewhat unclear as sources provide conflicting information. A typescript account of the development of fortifications at Sheerness, prepared by Captain EDJ Robertson of the Royal Artillery in 1944 (copy supplied by Peter Kendall, Historic England) states that Fort Townsend was constructed in the 1780s adjacent to the Medway but there appear to be no contemporary plans available. A plan of 1794 held amongst a collection of papers relating to Sheerness and Chatham (TNA MPI 1/208) indicates that Fort Townsend consisted of a bastioned trace built around the Ordnance Well and a central guard house. It also shows, however, that fort was crossed through by part of a bastioned line of defence. This new line of defence was part of the system to cut-off the end of the headland, which became known as the *Sheerness Lines*, and appears to have put Fort Townsend out of use since it is not depicted on later mapping of this area. The northern section of the Sheerness Lines survives and is in relatively good condition.
- 3.4.9 The gap in mapping sources around the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century is unhelpful in tying down the chronology of the completion of the Sheerness Lines. The 1800 Admiralty plans give little detail on these defences as they focus chiefly on the docks and fort. The wider area plan in this collection shows only the Fort Townsend section of the defences but it is not clear if that was as no other elements existed at this date or, alternatively, because such detail was not considered necessary for the purposes of this plan. In this context, it is notable that the Garrison Moat does not appear on this plan but is shown on the contemporary detailed plan of the fort. A plan of 1806 relating to a proposed fire barn covers only the proposed site for the structure, to the immediate south of Blue Town, but does include the southern extent of the Sheerness Lines (TNA MFQ/1/1315). The 1806 plan suggests that the Lines had been completed by this date as Bastion Nos. 3 and 4 and the connecting lines are shown as built. Fort Townsend barracks is shown adjacent to Bastion No. 4 on this plan, some distance from where it was depicted on the 1800 plan, and a series of ditched fieldworks are shown to the immediate north of this building. This may support the view that the 1800 plan is somewhat schematic in its depiction of the lines.
- 3.4.10 The extent of these land-uses by c.1800, as inferred from the sources discussed above, is shown on Figure 3. As previously, only part of The Fleet watercourse is shown as later development has made it impossible to trace the eastward course of this channel.

### 3.5 Mid-19th century

- 3.5.1 The increasing size of warships meant that, by the later 18<sup>th</sup> century, existing dockyards along the Thames, including Sheerness and Chatham, were in need of either modernisation or rationalisation to ensure they were able to answer demands placed upon the Navy by conflict with France. Following abandonment of a plan for a single dockyard on a new site that would have succeeded all existing yards, Sheerness was selected as most suitable of the existing yards for a co-ordinated programme of expansion (Coad, 2013, p. 11). A series of designs were sought by the Navy Board from their engineers, partially progressed, abandoned and revamped before eventually settling on a plan by John Rennie in 1813 (Coad, 2013, pp. 12-13). The development of the Rennie dockyard, its subsequent history and survival is explored in detail in RCHME work (RCHME, 1995) and the recent publication on naval base architecture, *Support for the Fleet* (Coad, 2013), so only a high-level discussion of this is presented in this report.
- 3.5.2 Rennie's plan was an ambitious expansion to the dockyard, entailing extensive reclamation works and the appropriation and levelling of the southeast part of De Gomme's fort and the north side of Blue Town's High Street to form part of the new dockyard. Works commenced in 1813 but full-scale construction was only possible after 1815 and the end of war with France. All preceding structures were cleared as part of the scheme. The new yard included the creation of several dock basins, adjacent wharves and dry docks, and a core of dockyard buildings specifically designed to accommodate specialised uses. The dock basins were similar to those used in London's commercial docks and, as such basins had not previously been widely employed by the Navy, mark a significant development in naval infrastructure in the British Isles (Coad, 2013). The bulk of reclamation and dock infrastructure was completed between 1815 and 1823, during which time the dockyard was completely closed (Coad, 2013, p. 13). On reopening of the dockyard, the southern part of the docks had been completed and construction in of the majority of buildings had only recently got underway (RCHME, 1995, p. 2). The northern part of the dockyard and the majority of buildings were completed by 1830 (RCHME, 1995, p. 3).
- 3.5.3 The new dockyard was delineated by a high boundary wall on its landward boundary. A series of gates allowed access from Blue Town and the garrison. The majority of this wall remains but the South Gate, from Blue Town High Street, is now blocked. The main gates and flanking buildings on the northern side of the dockyard remain.
- 3.5.4 In addition to specialised naval structures, high quality accommodation for dockyard officials and a dedicated dockyard church were also inherent parts of the scheme. These were mostly sited at the eastern edge of the dockyard and away from the main docking and maintenance operations. The majority of these, including the dockyard church, officer's terrace and mews remain. The majority of surviving dockyard buildings and boundary structures are listed buildings (Figure 1). The Admiral's House, built immediately north of the dockyard in the former garrison area, no longer survives.
- 3.5.5 The engineering challenges posed by building in the marshy substrates of the former dockyard area and the newly reclaimed land were overcome by using very deep foundations (comprising extensive inverted brickwork support pillars and deeply sunk wooden piles), coffer dams and pumping machinery (Coad, 2013, p. 14). These were relatively innovative methods at the time. The depth of ground disturbance associated with these foundations is well illustrated by a scale model of the entire dockyard, built in 1825, and in the care of Historic England. This shows that, in the areas where both piling and brick foundations were required, a building's foundations may penetrate to a depth equivalent at least to its above ground height (Plate 1). The dock basins and walls, lying in areas of reclamation, possessed equally extensive supporting piling (Plate 2). In places where the substrate was better, such as at the dockyard church, only brick foundations appear to have been required but these appear to still have needed to be several metres deep (Plate 3). These extensive foundations have implications for the survival of archaeological deposits relating to uses prior to the dockyard redevelopment and will be discussed below in Section 4.4.

- 3.5.6 Numerous engineering drawings related to the proposed dockyard structures survive from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. A plan filed amongst these engineering drawings shows that a burial ground had been created immediately outside the wet ditch to the south of Nos. 3 & 4 Bastion. It is possible that this was for military use since later plans label it containing Garrison and Convict burial plots (TNA MFQ 1 1315).
- 3.5.7 Despite the existence of engineering plans associated with the dockyard redevelopment, detailed maps and plans showing the finished dockyard and attendant changes to Blue Town and the garrison fort are only patchily available until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest plan to show the docks as built following the redevelopment is an 1850 Admiralty plan of the dockyard (TNA ADM 140/701). The revised extent of the garrison fort is shown on plans prepared to accompany returns to the Board of Ordnance on holdings at Sheerness in 1830 (TNA WO 55/2671). No detail is depicted for Blue Town and the dockyard and they are represented only by shading over the areas occupied by them.
- 3.5.8 The 1830 plan shows that the part of the fort which remained following the dockyard expansion had changed little. The earlier fortifications (De Gomme indented line and Half Moon Battery) formed the northern and eastern defences of the garrison whilst the south was defined by the dockyard boundary. There was no defensive boundary between the western side of the garrison and the dockyard and direct access was possible from the garrison to the newly formed tidal basin at the north end of the dockyard. The only change to garrison structures visible on the 1830 plan is that an Ordnance store had been constructed adjacent to the tidal basin. No buildings are shown in the interior of the Half Moon Battery on the 1830 plan. The 1841 Board of Ordnance return plan shows that a coastguard building had been established in its interior by this date at (TNA WO 55/2834). An additional coast guard building had been constructed adjacent to the battery by the time of the 1851 Board of Ordnance return plan (TNA WO 55/3008)
- 3.5.9 The 1830 plan also shows that the Sheerness Lines had been completed by this date and that they incorporated a wide wet ditch on the landward side. Access into the lines was via two bridges; that at the Medway end carrying the route south to Queenborough and that between Nos. 1 and 2 Bastions, carrying the road from Blue Town to Mile Town. The ravelin between Nos. 1 and 2 Bastion is not shown on this plan. This is thought to have been an integral part of the Sheerness Lines and it interesting that it does not appear on this plan, suggesting that is a later addition. The bastioned trace linking the De Gomme fortifications and Sheerness Line No. 1 Bastion is, however, shown on these plans but is represented by a dashed line, suggesting that it was either in planning or was not yet finished. Whilst not shown on the plans accompanying the 1841 Ordnance return, both the linking trace, including Centre Bastion, and the ravelin had apparently been constructed by the middle of the century since both are shown on the returns plans of 1851. The 1851 return plan shows that, in addition to the older garrison buildings adjacent to the Indented Lines, a new barracks and parade ground had been constructed to the immediate south of the Centre Bastion.
- 3.5.10 A series of military buildings are shown inside the newly established lines on the 1830 plan. Magazines had been constructed in each bastion apart from No. 4 Bastion and a Royal Engineers' Yard had been established at the eastern end of Blue Town. Immediately to the rear of No. 4 Bastion a hospital and the Ordnance well compound are shown in the area formerly occupied by Fort Townsend. The Board of Ordnance return plan for 1841 describes the hospital as being "formerly Fort Townsend", suggesting that the hospital took over the fort's buildings rather than being a purpose-built construction (TNA WO 55/2834). The hospital is shown in the same building on the 1851 return plan (TNA WO 55/3008). No traces of the former fort ditches are shown and no fort is labelled at this location suggesting they had been infilled. The remaining land between the new lines and Blue Town remained undeveloped, being annotated "swampy" on the plan and having several areas of open water. By 1841 this area appears to have been drained and no water bodies are shown. The use of this area at this date is unclear but, on the 1851 returns plan, it was rented to a private individual so it seems reasonable to assume that it functioned as grazing land. The burial ground first shown on the 1817 plan is shown on this plan.

- 3.5.11 The first detailed plan of Blue Town in this period comes from an 1848 copy of the Sheerness portion of the Minster tithe map (TNA MR 1/1258). This shows that the surviving area of Blue Town remained densely occupied with buildings and that the street pattern was largely unchanged. This is despite a serious fire in 1820 that is believed to have destroyed many of the town's buildings which were, at that date, largely made of timber (DPP Heritage, 2011, p. 16). It seems that reconstruction was rapid since the only empty plot visible on this map was at the corner of High Street and West Street. It is thought that many of the surviving historic buildings at Blue Town date to the post-fire rebuilding (DPP Heritage, 2011, p. 16).
- 3.5.12 Land lying outside of the Sheerness Lines is relatively well covered over this period as a series of plans were prepared by Sir Edward Banks, a local landowner, and submitted to Board of Ordnance in 1827. The 1848 copy of the Minster Tithe Map also covers the entirety of the study area. The 1827 plans show that Mile Town had grown significantly since 1800 with the addition of a series of planned streets to the west of the earlier settlement. These were focussed around a series of grids formed by the present Rose Street, Hope Street, Short Street, Broad Street and Pepys Avenue. Many of the plots on these streets were undeveloped in 1827 but most had been developed by 1848 with housing occupying the frontage and some backplot development. A windmill, which survives to the rear of Sheerness' High Street, is shown on these plans. It has been attributed an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century date and is designated as a grade II listed building (Figure 1: NHLE 1258330). The majority of land in this area was owned by Banks. Immediately to the east of Mile Town, a further windmill is shown on the Bank's plans. Part of this windmill survives and has been attributed an 18<sup>th</sup>-century date. It is designated as a grade II listed building (Figure 1: NHLE 1242981).
- 3.5.13 The 1827 plans also show an area of land, extending south and eastwards from the landward edge of the Sheerness Lines, that the Board of Ordnance proposed to buy from Banks (TNA MR 1/1367). This covered a distance of 600 yards from the lines and was designed to create a buffer zone in which development was prohibited. This was required since the Board of Ordnance were becoming concerned about the effect that the increasing size of Mile Town could have on the effectiveness of the Sheerness Lines. The establishment of a buffer zone would ensure that troops stationed on the lines had clear lines of sight and also that the cover available to the enemy was limited. The landward edge of the buffer still persists to an extent in the current landscape as both St George's Avenue (from the High St to the junction of Wheatsheaf Road) and Alma Road follow its course. Item No. 1 of the 1830 Board of Ordnance returns show that they successfully acquired this land, amounting to 211 acres, from Banks in 1828 (TNA WO 55/2671).
- 3.5.14 In addition to detailing Banks' Mile Town landholdings, the 1827 plans show his proposals for development of areas on the fringes of the existing settlement, including land needed from the Board of Ordnance. Banks was a self-made man who saw potential for Sheerness to develop into a seaside resort and set about a series of schemes to transform Mile Town, then a relatively *ad hoc* development, into a place befitting such a destination (Swale Borough Council, 2000). Banks was responsible for the development of The Broadway, the Royal Hotel and the Parish Church of Holy Trinity. The Broadway, originally known as Edward Street, remains one of the town's most coherent historic streetscapes, recognised by the listing of the entire street at grade II listed (Figure 1: north side – NHLE 1259823; south side - NHLE 1258038). Holy Trinity remains in use and is also grade II listed (Figure 1: NHLE 1242870). The surrounding churchyard is no longer in use as a graveyard and has been landscaped into a public garden. It retains some burial monuments, two of which are listed at grade II (Figure 1: NHLE 1258056 & 1259824). The Royal Hotel was originally built as a private house for Banks' son. The present Royal Hotel, which stands at the junction of Royal Road and The Broadway is a later 19<sup>th</sup> century addition to the original house. The original house appears to have been demolished in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century, being recently redeveloped into housing.
- 3.5.15 The 1827 plans show Banks' ambitious plans for other developments which do not appear to have been realised. These include an extensive area of terraced housing which would have occupied the majority of the land immediately south of the Sheerness Lines between Mile Town and the



Medway (TNA MPH 1/599/6). This development is not shown on later maps and it is probable that it failed to progress since it lay entirely within the land purchased by the Board of Ordnance in 1828. Banks also proposed a new wide road, branching off from the road to Halfway, south of the existing built-up area of Mile Town, and terminating in an ornamental square at the eastern end of The Broadway. This also does not appear to have been realised and the area is still shown as undeveloped, with no road shown other than the original route to Halfway, on the 1848 map. Again, it is possible that this didn't progress due to the Board of Ordnance ownership of the bulk of land needed.

3.5.16 The extent of these land-uses by c.1850, as inferred from the sources discussed above, is shown on Figure 4.

### 3.6 Later 19th century

- 3.6.1 Interpretation of change and growth from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century onwards is hampered by the existence of fewer archival records than for preceding periods. This is particularly evident for the dockyard and garrison facilities which appear to have few extant maps and plans. It is possible that this apparent lack of records reflects the transfer of the Board of Ordnance's responsibilities to the War Office (later War Department) in the later 1850s. The presence of Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping from 1864 onwards helps to an extent, however, since military facilities are censored on these, some aspects of the development of the dockyard and defences remain unclear.
- 3.6.2 In the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Sheerness expanded significantly. This has been attributed by some to a growth in importance of the naval dockyard due to the Crimean War and an attendant increase in the workforce (Swale Borough Council, 2000). It is clear that Sheerness was an important dockyard during this period but, rather than attributing this to a particular event, it is probably more likely its growth was due to its position as the best-equipped naval dockyard on the English east coast which made it well-placed to service navy requirements in general.
- 3.6.3 As the dockyard had only recently been entirely revamped, there was limited new construction over this period. The most significant dockyard facility built during this period was what is now known as *the Boat Store, Building Number 78*. The Boat Store was built between 1856 and 1860 and, whilst such facilities were common to naval dockyards, its construction makes it of extremely high heritage significance and this is recognised by its designation as a Grade I listed building (Figure 1: NHLE 1273160). A key element of its heritage significance is that it is the first known portal-framed iron building in the world and an example of pioneering structural techniques employed by Royal Engineers in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. These structural innovations are of wide importance since the principles were adapted in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Chicago in the construction of the first skyscrapers. As such, the Boat Store may be regarded as having international significance.
- 3.6.4 Whilst there were two popular panics over the state of Britain's land-based defences in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century amid fears of French invasion, there appear to have been no associated changes to Sheerness' defences. The third, and most extensive, panic was in 1859 and led to the setting up of a Royal Commission to review the adequacy of defences (Saunders, 1989, p. 171). This reported early in 1860 and identified protection of naval dockyards from both from sea attack and land offensive as a priority for the country's security.
- 3.6.5 The Commission's proposals for Sheerness comprised a major new fort at Garrison Point and new landward defences further back into Sheppey (Saunders, 1989, p. 174). The latter were to counter the increased range of guns of up to 8000 yards (c.7.3 km) (Saunders, 1989, p. 172). The landward defences were to consist of three new redoubts to be constructed on hills two miles inland. When this was deemed prohibitively expensive, an earthwork defensive line, the *Queenborough Lines*, across the peninsula was proposed as an alternative. The Queenborough Lines are unusual as, by this date, continuous earthwork defences were considered obsolete as

defence in depth from strong points, as envisaged in the original scheme of inland redoubts, was believed more effective. They represent the last example of this type of fortification in the country and are closer in form to earlier works, such as the Napoleonic *Royal Military Canal* at Romney Marsh, than other works constructed after the 1859 Commission. This odd solution was adopted mostly due to the cost of constructing the proposed redoubts but also as the low-lying and marshy nature of the land at Sheerness made such an earthwork defence a relatively easy and low-cost alternative. The lines were to be constructed 1000 yards (c.1 km) inland of the existing Sheerness Lines and to be crossed only by the two existing coastal routes and the road from Mile Town to Halfway. It was intended that the lines would be supported by batteries sited at the coast, at Queenborough and Cheney Rock. These were designed to provide both seaward and landward cover to the lines. Construction of the Queenborough Lines was largely completed by 1868 and the new Garrison Point fort was completed by 1872. Due to a combination of expense and changed priorities, the proposed supporting batteries at each end of the Queenborough Lines were never built.

- 3.6.6 Whilst preparatory works for both the Garrison Point fort and the Queenborough Lines were set in train shortly after the Commission's report, neither is shown as completed by the time of the OS first edition 25" coverage in 1864. Whilst military land is censored on this map, some inferences can be made based on the shape of censored areas and what detail is shown in the area of the garrison. The first edition OS shows no change in, or censored area at, the land that would become part of the Queenborough Lines, implying that its construction had not progressed by the time this map was surveyed. At Garrison Point, the censored area follows the outer extent of the fortification lines and, judging by its shape, the outer extent appears unchanged when compared to earlier plans. As such, it can be inferred that they had not been significantly modified by this date and the new fort had not yet been built. Immediately south of the lines, the Admiral's House area and parts of the adjacent barracks are shown on the OS. Since these are uncensored, this may infer that they were not in active military use at the time of the map's publication. That military property was rented out to civilians is documented in the Board of Ordnance returns from the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 3.6.7 Despite some later alterations, the Garrison Point fort remains largely extant and forms a landmark in views along the coast and of the coast from the estuary. The fort was included in the RCHME 1995 survey work covering the dockyard, defences and Blue Town (RCHME, 1995). It is casemated work in a style typical of the forts built under the auspices of the 1859 Royal Commission and makes extensive use of fine stonework, including granite facing. Unlike the majority of these forts, Garrison Point's guns were housed in two-tiered casemates (Saunders, 1989, pp. 182-3). It is not clear if this was a response to its confined site, at the tip of the peninsula and in close proximity to the thriving naval dockyard, or due to other operational considerations. The fort is of high heritage significance, due in part to its surviving form and also as it is an exemplar of the Commission forts. This significance is recognised by its inclusion in the scheduled area of the *Sheerness defences* scheduled monument and its designation as a grade II listed building (Figure 1: NHLE 1005145 & NHLE 1259029).
- 3.6.8 The Queenborough Lines, as built, also remain largely extant and were subject to detailed survey in 2001 (Probert & Pattison, 2001). The lines were a simple earthwork defensive line cut across the peninsula from coast to coast and were originally 3.6 km in length, 3.5 km of the lines still survives. The lines consisted of an earthen rampart on the Sheerness side, with a military road or covered way to its rear, and a wide wet ditch on the Sheppey side. The main ditch was fed by catchwater ditches, one at each edge of the lines. The majority of the rampart and military way remain. Whilst the western end of the main ditch has been infilled, it remains visible as a grassed feature in the landscape. The remaining 2.5km of the main ditch is still water-filled. The lines were generally straight except for a curved section at the seaward end which is believed to have been constructed to accommodate the proposed battery at the Cheney Rock end. The lines possessed a central re-entrant which appears to have been provided with flanking cover since magazines were sited within the rampart at each end of the re-entrant. Since the proposed

coastal forts were not built, these magazines were originally the only permanent provision for landward defence of the lines. The eastern magazine survives, apparently intact, and footings of the western magazine exist. As with the fort, the Queenborough Lines are of high heritage significance, due in large part to its survival and status as an unusual and late example of continuous earthwork defences. This significance is recognised by its designation as a Scheduled Monument (Figure 1: 1404499). The extreme northern end of the lines are excluded from the scheduling and are not physically separate from the scheduled part of the lines. The unscheduled tip of the lines remains water-filled and appears to have the same footprint as that shown on historic mapping.

- 3.6.9 The phasing of other changes at the garrison and dockyard over this period is hard to gauge as plans of this area appear lacking between 1851 and c.1890. An 1889 War Office plan covers the area (WO 78/5116) and an 1890 War Department 1:25" map cover the dockyard and garrison (KHC U3681 P1). The c.1890 plans show that there had been limited change in the dockyard but that, by this date, it was equipped with two batteries; *Ship's Gun Battery* was sited on the Medway-facing dock wall immediately south of Middle Camber whilst Dockyard battery, lay at south end of the dockyard overlooking Sheerness Pier. Extensive tramways had also been laid out around the dockyard and garrison to link buildings with the dock basins. The most notable change on these plans was at the garrison where all land with the exception of the old and new parade grounds had been developed for with buildings. One building is labelled as a school but the majority are unlabelled and, since they lay in the garrison, it is probable that they were military structures.
- 3.6.10 Aside from the changes to the landscape changes wrought by the 1859 Royal Commission, growth at Sheerness over this period is exemplified by the expansion of housing and associated facilities. It is probable that this growth was spurred by the continued importance and growth of the dockyard over this period and the connection of the town to the rail network.
- 3.6.11 By the time of the first edition OS a railway branch line had also opened to Sheerness, terminating at Blue Town adjacent to the pier. As the Sheerness Lines were censored on this map, it is unclear how the conflict of the railway line running over the seaward tip of the lines was managed nor what modifications may have been made to accommodate this. The coming of the railway appears to have had limited direct effect on Blue Town as little change is visible in the layout of the settlement when compared to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century plans. The only major changes by this date were that a dedicated court building had been built at the western end of High Street and the school been built on Chapel Street. The court building survives, albeit converted into domestic properties, and is a grade II listed building. The school building no longer survives and its site has been redeveloped. A synagogue had also been established at Blue Town by this date and is marked on one of the alleys at the south side of the settlement. The site of this building has since been cleared and it does not survive. The lack of change at Blue Town following the arrival of the railway is probably as available land at was already densely built-up by this date and as development on its fringes was prohibited to maintain the integrity of the Sheerness Lines. The c.1890 War Office plan of the area shows that the marshy area between Blue Town and the Sheerness Lines was in use for recreation by this date.
- 3.6.12 Owing to censoring of the first edition, detail on facilities within the footprint of the Sheerness Lines, including the garrison hospital and the nearby burial ground, is lacking from this map. A War Office plan of ditches at Sheerness, dated to c.1860, does, however, include some detail on these (WO 785876-8). This plan shows that the hospital building still existed and appears to still label it as the garrison hospital. The burial ground is also shown but is labelled solely as a "convicts burial ground". Interestingly a building at Bastion No. 2 is shown in outline on this plan but is unlabelled. This building survives, is undesignated, and is known variously as the *Sheerness Military Hospital* or *Garrison Hospital*. Aside from a mention of the contract to build a military hospital at Sheerness in a building trade paper of 1856 and an undated postcard showing the hospital (Peter Kendall, Historic England – pers. comm.) few records appear to survive in relation to this facility. It cannot be definitively identified as the garrison hospital on the basis of

mapping evidence until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when it is labelled as such on the third edition of c.1908. On the basis of this evidence, the building appears to be a purpose-built military hospital and, as an early example of a post-Crimean War military hospital, will be of some heritage significance.

- 3.6.13 As the area in which the burial ground and putative hospital buildings lie is largely censored until the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the OS, it is difficult to consistently track their development. The c.1890 War Office plan of the area shows both putative hospital buildings but neither is labelled so it is impossible to tell from this whether either were in active use as a hospital at this time. The plan also shows that a railway branch line had been constructed from the original Blue Town terminus to a new station at Mile Town. Within the Sheerness Lines it ran parallel to the original branch and, after crossing the lines, turned northeast to Mile Town taking the line over the area of the earlier burial ground. No burial ground is shown at this location on the c.1890 plan and none is marked on any later maps or plans, suggesting that it was disused by this date.
- 3.6.14 The OS first edition shows that housing growth had begun east of Mile Town, with the construction of terraced streets immediately beyond the Ordnance buffer, at what had become known as Marine Town by that date. In 1864, the housing covered only two small areas; one tightly focussed around the junction of Alma Road and the seafront, the other around Charles Street (the northern end of what is now Richmond Street) and Alma Street. In both cases, terraces of greater architectural refinement were constructed at the seafront, being larger and possessing architectural detailing (some including bay windows), whilst those inland were smaller and more basic. Much of both types of housing survives and is still in use. Perhaps the most architecturally sophisticated of this surviving early housing is Neptune Terrace. This terrace is rendered and includes a pedimented front with maritime-themed ornament including mermaids, seahorses and shells. It is a grade II listed building and, whilst the listing description attributes it an early 19<sup>th</sup> century date, it does not appear on any mapping prior to the OS first edition, including the 1848 Tithe map copy (Figure 1: NHLE 1258778). The c.1860 ditches plan includes these first streets at Marine Town (WO 785876-8). Judging by the convention used for these streets, construction of the housing was either in planning or not yet finished by this date. Interestingly this plan indicates that that area was then known as *Ward's Town*. There is little published work on Marine Town and it is not presently clear who Ward may have been or why the area changed its name so early.
- 3.6.15 Subsequent housing development focussed almost exclusively around Marine Town with development so extensive that it became linked to the earlier settlement at Mile Town by the time of the second edition OS (1896). The housing built was very similar in character to preceding development at Marine Town, replicating the pattern of higher quality terraces at the seafront with smaller and less sophisticated terraces inland. Higher quality housing was also built along the roads linking the core of Mile Town to the seafront at Marine Town, such as Broadway, Strode crescent and Trinity Road. Some small scale housing construction, again of terraces, had begun on Halfway Road adjacent to the Queenborough Lines. During this time, a large Roman Catholic church, the Church of St Henry and St Elizabeth, was built adjacent to the seafront between Neptune Terrace and the windmill. The church was designed by Pugin and still exists, acting as a major landmark on the seafront. It is Gothic in design and is a grade II listed building (Figure 1: NHLE 1242869).
- 3.6.16 By the time of the second edition OS, a formal Esplanade had been constructed at the seafront adjacent to Mile Town, terminating at the Church of St Henry and St Elizabeth. The remaining undeveloped land between the esplanade and edge of the settlement had also been formalised into a recreation area by this date. This area contained grassed areas and formal paths and facilities including a bandstand, outdoor swimming pool and urinals. Much of this area is still in use for recreation and retains some of the layout of areas and paths shown on the second edition OS, however, none of these original facilities appear to survive. The presence of both seaside amenities and dense workers' housing in close proximity to each other by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century has been commented on in published works on Sheerness (Swale Borough Council,

2000). This has been seen as conferring a somewhat discordant character to Sheerness and is a physical manifestation of the conflict between civic ambitions to turn the town into a seaside resort and the real need to house dockyard workers which was sustained over the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century. This remains evident in the current landscape in the manner in which the resort-like seafront abruptly gives way to densely packed terraces.

- 3.6.17 Many of the commercial buildings along the High Street were also redeveloped at this date. This is particularly evident around, and north of, its junction with The Broadway where there are a number of fine late Victorian buildings commercial buildings on the frontage. None of these structures are listed. The redevelopment along the High Street appears piecemeal and took place within existing plots, consequently, it did not have any substantive effect upon plot pattern.
- 3.6.18 The expanded settlement also had a number of civic facilities and institutions by this date, such as a water works and school adjacent to Holy trinity church and a further School north of Mile Town's High Street. Whilst the school buildings no longer survive, much of the water works does. The water works was built in the Romanesque style and its main building, which formerly housed the pumping machinery and was topped by the water tank, lies derelict adjacent to the Trinity Road car park whilst its offices are now in use as a doctor's surgery. The structures which formerly connected these two elements have been removed. Whilst subject to significant alteration, both structures remain good examples of Victorian utilities buildings, neither is listed.
- 3.6.19 Other amenities had also been created on the edge of the settlement by the 1890s. The second edition OS shows three areas of allotments fringing the Mile Town/Marine Town settlement. Further west of Mile Town, a football ground had been built on the north side of Botany Road (now St. George's Avenue).
- 3.6.20 Some minor development had also occurred in areas away from the earlier foci of activity. The first edition OS shows that a new settlement, West Minster, had been established immediately south of the confluence of the Fleet with the Medway. A gas works lay immediately adjacent to this and it is probable that the settlement was established to house its workers. The settlement consisted of two streets of terraced housing and, by the time of the second edition OS, it also had a Sunday school and a public house. By this date, the section of the fleet adjacent to West Minster had been infilled. Part of and the resulting land was used for construction of a sewage works whilst the remainder was incorporate into the fields to the north of the settlement. To the south of the railway junction at the Sheerness Lines, a slaughterhouse and naval recreation ground had been established by the time of the second edition OS. The naval recreation ground included a rifle range.
- 3.6.21 Much of the later 19<sup>th</sup> century housing was built in the buffer zone established for the Sheerness Lines. Whilst the buffer zone west of Mile Town remained largely intact, that to the east appears to have been disposed of since no War Department boundary stones are visible in this area on the second edition OS and the area had become entirely developed by this date. This apparent disposal may indicate that, due to the presence of the Queenborough Lines, the Sheerness Lines buffer zone became less important. Alternatively, it may reflect a recognition that too much development had already occurred in this area by the time the buffer zone was created for it function effectively and may mark the War Department cutting its losses and capitalising on the need for housing in the town.
- 3.6.22 A notable feature of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century development at Sheerness is the patriotic themes evident in the names of streets and public houses. Many streets are named after current members of the royal family, and recent generals and battles. It is not clear whether this merely reflects general trends in naming over this period or is evidence of an attempt to cater to the envisaged population of the area, namely military workers or in allied trades and services.
- 3.6.23 The extent of these land-uses by c.1890, as inferred from the sources discussed above, is shown on Figure 5.

### **3.7 To the First World War**

- 3.7.1 Aside from OS mapping, few documentary sources were located for this period and, consequently, the third edition OS (1908) is a major source. As with preceding OS editions, military areas are censored on these maps which hampers interpretation of change and development. Work undertaken by the RCHME and, later, English Heritage on specific defensive installations at Sheerness is also key in understanding change over this period.
- 3.7.2 Over the period from c.1890 to the outbreak of the First World War, the growing power of Germany and fears over German invasion shaped Britain's defence policy (Saunders, 1989, pp. 190-192). Sheerness remained an important dockyard over this period but, since significant work had been carried out on upgrading its defences under the auspices of the 1859 Commission, few entirely new fortifications were constructed in this period and the focus fell instead on upgrading existing installations. There appear to have been few changes to the dockyard over this period. As discussed above, the Garrison hospital is shown on the third edition OS 1:10560 coverage for Sheerness and appears to have been in use during this period.
- 3.7.3 Changes in defensive philosophy since the 1859 Commission meant that the works constructed over this period were very different to those built previously. Unlike the Commission forts, British defences of this period made extensive use of partially sunken emplacements with covering earthworks to absorb and deflect artillery fire. This led to batteries with limited visible above-ground elements rather than prominent and architecturally sophisticated forts. Three entirely new batteries were constructed at Sheerness over this period; *Barton's Point Battery*, *Albermarle Battery* and the *Ravelin Battery*. These batteries were built as part of upgrades to the Medway's defensive system and illustrate the new defensive form well. There were also modifications to defences at Garrison Point and Centre Bastion as part of the same measures. Due to a brief period in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when the role of fixed land defences in the defence of Britain was called into question, some of these batteries were placed into care maintenance. This was reversed in the run-up to WW I and all saw use during that war.
- 3.7.4 Barton's Point Battery was constructed between 1889 and 1891 at the Cheney Rock end of the Queenborough Lines (Pattison, 2001). It was a partial fulfilment of the forts originally proposed for the seaward ends of the Queenborough Lines but was designed to provide intense seaward firepower and, unlike the originally planned forts, lacked the capacity to cover inland areas. During the First World War it operated as a heavy anti-aircraft battery. The battery survives to an extent, despite significant later alteration, and was also subject to detailed survey in 2001 (Pattison, 2001). It retains one emplacement and associated underground facilities and an observation post. The battery has extensive use of brick and concrete and covering earthworks in its construction. Whilst subsequent accretions and damage combine with this to make the battery less readily appreciable as a 19<sup>th</sup> century coastal artillery fortification, it retains some heritage significance as a physical document of Sheerness' defensive history. A rifle range is shown on the third edition OS to the immediate south of Barton's Point Battery and the Queenborough Lines. It is not clear if this is a military rifle range. Some earthwork remains survive associated with the range.
- 3.7.5 Albermarle Battery was built to the rear of Indented Line No. 2 in 1899. It comprised four gun emplacements and also saw use as an anti-aircraft battery in the First World War. Field survey by the RCHME in 1993 found that the battery survived well. The emplacements and battery observation post remained in very good condition and at least four ancillary buildings surviving as well as coastal artillery searchlights. The area in which the battery lives is not publicly accessible so the present condition of the structures is not clear.
- 3.7.6 The Ravelin Battery was built between 1902 and 1905 and was sited between the Sheerness Lines Ravelin and the seawall. The battery consisted of two gun emplacements and associated underground facilities. It no longer survives as the area was redeveloped in 1993 to enable construction of the present *Tesco* new superstore. The battery was surveyed in detail by the RCHME prior to its removal.
- 3.7.7 Several alterations were also made to Garrison Point fort over this period. A Brennan torpedo

station was added in 1887 and its casemates were converted to barracks and stores by 1896. Additional armament was added by 1909, comprising two 6-inch breech-loading guns mounted outside the fort. During the First World War a coastal artillery searchlight emplacement, concrete magazine and machine gun pill box were built at the fort. Garrison Point Fort survives in complete condition. Whilst the fort was in generally good condition at the time of the RCHME survey, some of these additions, such as the Brennan torpedo station and pillbox, no longer survive. The current condition of the remaining features is not clear since the fort does not lie in a publicly accessible area.

- 3.7.8 A battery had also been created at Centre Bastion by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This consisted of at least two sunken gun emplacements and a control building and further structures were added to it in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These structures comprised two circular concrete towers, each housing a gun emplacement, with and an elevated fire control building. These are thought to have been built c. 1913 and are dissimilar to other works of the period. It has been suggested that their unusual form is as they were built to resemble Martello towers. The battery was in use during the First World War and one tower saw use as a minefield control position. The battery survives and, despite later alteration, the external elements of the towers appear in in good condition. Subsequent alterations are thought to remove the majority of original fixtures and fittings from the battery. The current condition of the features is not clear since the fort does not lie in a publicly accessible area.
- 3.7.9 During the First World War temporary military installations were established at Sheerness. These included anti-aircraft batteries and an airfield. The batteries were located at the Naval Recreation Ground at Blue Town and near the crossing of the Halfway Road at the Queenborough Lines. The exact location of these batteries and their extent is not clear and their sites have subsequently been developed. The military airfield was lay on the eastern side of Marine Town north of the Queenborough Lines and close to Barton's Point Battery. It was established as a Royal Flying Corps emergency landing ground in early 1917 for use by home defence aircraft. In 1918 it was also used by airplanes operating in the Sheerness ranges. The airfield does not appear on any OS mapping and its exact extent is unclear since the area was developed into housing by the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, removing any associated physical remains. Due to the limited or no spatial extent and transitory nature of these temporary works, they are not shown on the period-based characterisation maps.
- 3.7.10 Away from the military facilities, change over this period appears to have been limited. There appears to have been limited growth in the area occupied by the town. The third edition OS shows that only small areas of housing had been built on the fringes of the existing settlement, at Harris Road (Mile Town) and Jefferson Road (Marine Town), and further infill had occurred at West Minster. No real change is visible at Blue Town. The second review of Britain's defences occasioned by fear of German invasion reported in 1908 and led to the disposal of some War Department in proximity to existing defences (Saunders, 1989). It is possible that land made available by such disposals at Sheerness facilitated further expansion of the town but there is no additional mapping evidence prior to the First World War to corroborate this.
- 3.7.11 Other changes visible on the third edition OS are the creation of further facilities for the town and changes in industrial concerns. The additional facilities included further areas of allotments at Mile Town and Marine Town and additional schools at Mile Town. At West Minster the area occupied by industrial concerns, including the Gas works, had expanded by this date. An isolation hospital had also been established West Minster adjacent to the sewage works by this date. Conversely, the slaughterhouse shown adjacent to the railway junction on the second edition OS had been removed by this date.
- 3.7.12 The extent of these land-uses by c.1914, as inferred from the sources discussed above, is shown on Figure 6.

### **3.8 Interwar and the Second World War**

- 3.8.1 Aside from OS mapping, few documentary sources were located for this period and, consequently, the fourth edition OS (1933) is a major source for this period. Also important is the RAF collection of aerial photography dating to the latter years of the Second World War and the immediate post-war years. As with preceding OS editions, military areas are censored on this map which hampers interpretation of change and development to an extent. Again, work undertaken by the RCHME and, later, English Heritage on specific defensive installations at Sheerness also assists understanding change over this period.
- 3.8.2 During the interwar period, there appear to have been few changes to facilities at the dockyard and garrison. The dockyard itself appears to have diminished importance over this period and, following an end to ship construction in 1922, seems to have functioned only as a maintenance base. The Garrison hospital appears to have become disused by this date and is labelled on the fourth edition OS as "Senior Officers' School". Whilst new structures were added to some existing defences, no new permanent defensive installations appear to have been built during this period. During
- 3.8.3 The censored areas on the fourth edition OS are much smaller in extent than previous editions. The only censored areas on this map are around the core of the naval dockyard, Centre Bastion Battery and Barton's Point Battery. This implies that, while still extant and not redeveloped or transferred to other uses, many of the former military areas were not in active military use at this date. Lack of censoring of earlier defences on the fourth edition OS may to an extent reflect the slightly lower priority placed on fixed coastal defences in the run-up to the Second World War. This is as greater priority was being placed on building up countries aerial warfare capability during this period with coastal defences being perceived as relatively easy to update in the event that hostilities broke out.
- 3.8.4 The lack of censoring means that OS mapping detail is available for areas such as the Sheerness Lines and naval housing and stores for the first time. Of particular note is the detail shown of the new barracks and other facilities at the garrison since these do not appear to be covered by any other archival sources. The fourth edition OS shows that a gun emplacement had been built at No. 1 Bastion Sheerness Lines by this date. The mapping also shows that the old barracks structures remained at this date and that there was still a coastguard station at Garrison Point fort.
- 3.8.5 The interwar period saw a big expansion in the area occupied by housing at Sheerness. As described above it is possible that some of this housing expansion was facilitated by disposal of some War Department land in the run-up to WWI. The fourth edition OS shows that housing had been built on much of the land lying either side of Halfway Road north of the Queenborough Lines. On the third edition OS some of this land was clearly part of the War Department's holdings as its boundary stones were mapped in this area. On the fourth edition OS no such stones are visible in this area. The majority of housing built during this period was terraced. These were of a higher quality than the earlier terraced housing and had greater levels of architectural detailing, including moulded stonework and bay windows. There are also examples of streets of semi-detached housing constructed during the 1930s. These are mostly at the fringe of the existing settlement and include St Helen's Road, Park Road, South View Gardens and sections of both Coronation Road and Victoria Road, There appear to have been no substantive changes at Blue Town during this period.
- 3.8.6 The expanded settlement required further facilities and amenities. Extensive sport and recreation grounds had been established at the western end of Mile Town and the eastern edge of Marine Town. Further schools had also been built to serve the increased population including a large school on the eastern edge of Marine Town which had extensive areas playing fields. Further works the seafront has been undertaken by this date. The Esplanade adjacent to Marine Parade had been reconstructed with a continuous series of steps running down to the beach from the walkway and the series of semi-circular platforms added to the top of the Esplanade.
- 3.8.7 The other notable change by this date a bypass branch line had been built to take the railway line



directly to Mile Town. Prior to this date, the line had still to run into the Blue Town station before travelling to the terminus at Mile Town. Bypassing Blue Town in this manner may indicate a decline in the significance of that settlement.

- 3.8.8 The majority of defences at Sheerness appear to have been revamped either immediately before or during the Second World War. Anti-aircraft guns were mounted at the majority of extant batteries. At Centre Bastion, minefield control and observation posts were added to the towers giving them their distinctive appearance. At Garrison Point fort, an anti-motor torpedo boat battery was built and further emplacements and a searchlight emplacement were built. The No. 1 Bastion battery had two new emplacements built during World War II which survive in fragmentary form. Machine gun emplacements and a roadblock were added to the Queenborough Lines during this period. Some footings and other fittings related to these installations remain. From 1938 Barton's Point Battery was the site of a training school for naval anti-aircraft gunnery. This training establishment occupied the site until the late 1960s.
- 3.8.9 Temporary defensive installations were also created during the Second World War. These included a searchlight emplacement on the Esplanade at Marine Town and temporary ditched firing positions at the Marine Town school. As with the WWI temporary defences, nothing appears to survive of these structures and their sites have since been developed. Beach defences are visible on 1940s aerial photography on the beach eastwards from Barton's Point, outside of the project area, but do not appear to have been used on the Sheerness beachfront. This is unusual but may be because the area, having existing defensive positions at several points along the seafront and a concrete sea wall, did not need additional defences. Due to the limited spatial extent and transitory nature of the temporary defensive works, they are not shown on the period-based characterisation maps.
- 3.8.10 The extent of these land-uses by c.1945, as inferred from the sources discussed above, is shown on Figure 7.

### **3.9 Later 20th century**

- 3.9.1 This period saw extensive change in Sheerness as the military facilities which had been its main employer closed. Redevelopment schemes were put forward by the local authority over this period to modernise housing and business premises in the town. Key sources for this period are historic aerial photographs and OS mapping, War Department correspondence, KCC planning information and newspaper cuttings.
- 3.9.2 Following the end of the Second World War, fixed permanent coastal defences became gradually obsolete and the War Office gradually wound down the defensive installations at Sheerness and disposed of the associated land and buildings. The majority of these disposals had been achieved by the early 1960s. Initially, the nature of the defensive structures meant that new facilities using the sites worked around them rather than removing them. This is evident at the Ravelin Battery where a caravan park was established by the 1960s. The camp's caravans were laid out amongst the gun emplacements and ancillary buildings. As discussed above, the battery and caravan park was removed by redevelopment in the 1990s. A similar change in use took place at Barton's Point Battery and a static caravan park still exists amongst the remains of the battery and gunnery training establishment.
- 3.9.3 Despite disposal of military holdings, the majority of the existing defensive lines were not subject to redevelopment and remained visible landscape features during this period. Accordingly, they are mapped as defensive lines the period-based characterisation map for this period. The only exceptions to this were Garrison Point fort, the southern section of the Sheerness Lines and part Queenborough Lines. The changes to Garrison Point and Sheerness Lines discussed below. The western end of the Queenborough Lines ditch had been infilled by the 1960s. It is not clear why only part of the Lines' ditch was infilled and the remainder left water-filled. The infilled sections appear to have not developed any kind of active use and are mapped as waste ground on the period-based characterisation maps. With the exception of a housing development access road,

no alterations appear to have been made to the Lines' ramparts over this period.

- 3.9.4 In recognition of the economic blow that winding down of military activity would have to the town, the War Department and local authority made attempts to secure industries and employment at Sheerness. Whilst this included high-profile measures, such as the sale of the dockyard to a commercial port concern (see below), there was also stimulus to smaller companies by disposal of the Ordnance Marshes to be developed as a light industrial estate. This was proposed in the early 1960s as part of discussions over disposal and, by the mid-1970s, much of the area had been developed was beginning to be developed into small office and factory developments.
- 3.9.5 As discussed above, the naval dockyard had been declining in importance since the 1920s. It was formally closed in 1960 and was taken over by a private concern, initially known as Sheerness Port. The port was to be a commercial dockyard and took advantage of the well-developed naval infrastructure for imports and exports. The northern part of the Sheerness Lines and former garrison area was included in the lands occupied by the commercial port. The effect of commercial ownership of this area was fairly instant. KCC records of correspondence over this period show that the dockyard management wasted no time in removing what they considered to be obsolete military buildings from the dockyard (Kent Archives CC/P1/19/258). A greater degree of clearance was initially undertaken by the port in the garrison area than in the naval dockyard and, by the early 1970s, the majority of garrison buildings south of the north front of the Sheerness Lines had been demolished. Both Garrison Point fort and the Indented Lines were subsumed into the commercial port but were not extensively affected by the clearance activity undertaken by the port. Highly significant naval structures were demolished by the later 1970s, including the Quadrangular Storehouse which was listed at the time. These early demolitions are largely responsible for the patchy survival of structures associated with the 1820s dockyard. The cleared areas were used either as working and storage space or large industrial sheds were built.
- 3.9.6 Initially the existing dockyard area provided sufficient working space for the port but, as it came to specialise in the import and export of vehicles, additional space was required. As the dockyard occupied a constrained site, with Blue Town to the immediate south, this additional space was created through an extensive programme of land reclamation from the adjacent Medway foreshore and channel. Permission for the scheme, known as the Lappel Reclamation, was granted in the 1960s but did not get underway until the late 1970s (Peel Ports, 2014). The small area of reclaimed land, and subsequent jetty construction, which had been completed by the mid-1970s led to the removal of the head of Sheerness Pier.
- 3.9.7 War Department land south of Blue Town, including the Naval Recreation Ground and Sheerness Lines, was purchased by the port company as part of the military disposals. This was developed into a steelworks by the early 1970s. Correspondence held by KCC indicates that the port also wished to acquire large areas of land in Blue Town to form part of the steelworks complex (Kent Archives CC/P1/19/258). The only lands the port eventually acquired that lay outside historic War Department ownership was that lying south of Terminus Road comprising the railway station, police station and Catholic Church of St Paul. With the exception of the former garrison hospital building at No. 2 Bastion, all preceding buildings were demolished to enable construction the steelworks. The majority of railway line infrastructure was retained for use as part of the steelworks. Construction of the steelworks entailed the infilling of the majority of the Sheerness Lines' wet ditch. The only sections of the wet ditch that now remain are that adjacent to No. 2 Bastion and that between No. 3 Bastion and No. 4 Bastion. The latter section was modified to form settling ponds and survives in heavily modified form. The former garrison hospital was used for the steelworks offices. Whilst recently disused, the majority of the steelworks complex remains extant. The core of its buildings date to the early 1970s and it is not clear whether any have heritage significance. The condition of industrial buildings and earlier military structures at the steelworks is not clear if this area is not publicly accessible.
- 3.9.8 The immediate post-war period saw ambitious plans for redevelopment at Mile Town. This

consisted of a new civic centre, commercial area and housing. This was to be built on land lying west of Mile Town's High Street, an area defined by Rose Street, Broad Street and Railway Road. Plans entailed clearance of this entire area and was designed to address the slum conditions that existed in this part of Sheerness at this date. This was some of the earliest housing in Mile Town and had not been modernised. Plans for the redevelopment were put forward in 1947 but, aside from the clearance of some areas and some minor redevelopment, the scheme, as planned, was not realised.

- 3.9.9 Plans were also put forward for the wholesale redevelopment of Blue Town in the mid-1950s. This would have seen the majority of existing buildings demolished, a new road layout created and the majority of land industrial commercial purposes. As with the Mile Town redevelopment, these proposals were not fully progressed. Significant progress was, however, made on the demolition and clearance required for the scheme and is visible on aerial photographs from the 1960s and early 1970s. This clearance, and the subsequent redevelopment, is largely responsible for the balance of historic built form (surviving buildings and street pattern) and modernised areas which is a distinctive feature of Blue Town.
- 3.9.10 By the early 1970s, and despite the mixed fortunes in the town's key industries, housing had reached approximately its current extent. The majority of housing constructed in this period was either semi-detached or short terraces. Unlike the preceding phases, the housing of this period was built using the distinctive curvilinear street pattern and cul-de-sacs which typify development of this date. This is best seen at the south-western tip of the project area around Hawthorn Avenue and Queen's Way.
- 3.9.11 The local authority also put forward plans for a massive expansion of Sheerness during the late 1960s. This was to be achieved through construction of housing estates on Sheppey Court Marshes, south of the project area. This would have extended the built-up area of the town beyond the Queenborough Lines for the first time. Like proposed works Mile Town and Blue Town, this development was not realised. The only housing actually constructed beyond the Queenborough Lines was a small development around Edenbridge Drive which was built by the early 1970s. It is probable that this area was never developed due to the marshy nature of the land and perceived likelihood of contamination.
- 3.9.12 As with preceding phases of development, further amenities and facilities were provided on the fringes of the town. These included a large area of allotments adjacent to the Fleet, several large schools and further recreation areas. Additional amenities were added at the seafront, including a permanent funfair and play area on the recreation area immediately north of Mile Town and shelter buildings on the semi-circular platforms on the Esplanade at Marine Town. Much the funfair has since been redeveloped but the play area remains. This continued updating of the seaside facilities, as well as the construction of caravan parks on former batteries, demonstrates the continuing importance of the seaside economy to Sheerness.
- 3.9.13 By the mid-1970s, there were few areas which had not been developed into either housing, industrial concerns, residential amenities or schools. Only a handful of open areas, remnants of the preceding pasture fields, existed across the project area. The majority of these lay around the railway line near West Minster.
- 3.9.14 The extent of these land-uses by c.1975, as inferred from the sources discussed above, is shown on Figure 8.

### **3.10 Late 20th century to present**

- 3.10.1 As discussed above, much of the land within the project area had already been developed by the mid-1970s and, consequently, recent change has largely comprised redevelopment at already developed sites. Key sources for this period are historic and modern aerial photographs and OS mapping, newspaper articles and the current land cover as observed during fieldwork.
- 3.10.2 Around the turn of the millennium, major construction schemes were undertaken at Mile Town

and Blue Town, comprising a mix of infrastructure improvements and commercial redevelopments. Due to the continued success of the port's import/export business both the port landholding and the existing road infrastructure in the vicinity of the port were inadequate by the 1990s. To address lack of space further extensive reclamation was undertaken on the Medway coast. Additional berths and warehousing were created at the northern end of this reclaimed land and the remainder is used for the storage of cars.

- 3.10.3 To allow for increased haulage traffic into the port and to enable better road connections between Sheerness and the mainland, a road scheme, now known as the A429 *Brielle Way*, was undertaken in the 1990s and was completed c. 2000. The northern part of this scheme entailed upgrading existing roads and tracks running from Mile Town to West Minster, whilst the south comprised an off-line bypass. The settlement that had existed at West Minster since the later 19<sup>th</sup> century was cleared in the early 1990s. This is contemporary with early preparatory works for the A249 road scheme. The area has not subsequently been redeveloped.
- 3.10.4 As part of the A249 scheme, new roundabout junctions were added either side of the Sheerness Lines and a new section of road was built to bypass eastern end of Blue Town's High Street. On the Mile Town side, road widening was carried out at the top of the High Street removing part of the railway station precinct. To the north of the roundabout on the Mile Town side, the former Ravelin Battery and part of the seaside funfair were redeveloped into a Tesco supermarket with extensive car parking areas. Land between the supermarket and the main road was developed into a higher education college as part of the same redevelopment.
- 3.10.5 Another road improvement scheme was undertaken at the same time at Mile Town, now known as the A250 *Millennium Way*, to bypass the upper section of its High Street. This new road did not coincide with any existing roads so required the clearance of earlier buildings to enable its construction. Whilst some plots adjacent to the road, which were cleared but not required for the road itself, have since been developed into commercial properties, including a Lidl supermarket, others have been converted into car parking. In some cases plots cleared have not been developed and have become waste ground.
- 3.10.6 Aside from these major schemes, small-scale development took place across the project area. This includes the redevelopment of a park into housing, at Bridgwater Road, and the addition of sections the former Naval Recreation Ground into the Ordnance Marshes industrial estate. In recent years, a small housing development was built on the eastern side of Marine Town, to the rear of Seager Road on land that was formerly a pasture field. The development, as built has been shown to deviate from the approved plan and is likely to be demolished and the site reinstated following planning for planning enforcement action. (Kent Online, 2015). The school on the eastern edge of Marine Town, by this date known as the *Isle of Sheppey Academy*, was subject to extensive redevelopment in 2012. This expanded school buildings into the adjacent playing fields but retained the earlier buildings.
- 3.10.7 There remain some small areas that have not been developed. These mainly comprise areas of waste ground where preceding development has been removed but not yet redeveloped. The majority of these lie adjacent to the railway line in the west of the study area. They include the site of the settlement of West Minster and the Naval Recreation ground. Only one remnant of an earlier pasture field remains which appears to be quasi-agricultural use as it shows signs of regular mowing. This lies adjacent to the Ordnance Marshes industrial estate.
- 3.10.8 Following the extensive changes and loss of historic buildings that followed the establishment of the commercial port, there have been few further losses in this area. As described above much of the Sheerness Lines north of the steelworks, including the bastion gun emplacements and Garrison Point fort, and several Royal Naval dockyard buildings remain extant. The caravan park established at the former Barton's Point Battery remains in operation. With the exception of play areas established on the Queenborough Lines infilled ditch adjacent to Edenbridge Drive, there have been no substantive changes to this defensive line. Both the Queenborough Lines and the surviving parts of the Sheerness Lines remain tangible landscape features. Poor public

understanding of Queenborough Lines military origin, and evidenced by the fact the wet ditch is referred to locally and on official street signage as “The Canal”, has been highlighted (Probert & Pattison, 2001).

3.10.9 The current extent of these land-uses, as inferred from the sources discussed above, is shown on Figure 9.

## 4. DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Character Areas

4.1.1 A total of 23 Historic Character Areas (HCAs) have been identified which have distinct historic landscape and/or historic townscape character. Their extent is shown on Figure 10 and the character of each area is described in Appendix 3.

### 4.2 Military influences

4.2.1 Aside from those areas directly related to military activity, such as the former naval dockyard and defensive installations (HCAs 01, 03 and 04), there are actually few areas of Sheerness whose character derives simply from the long-lived military presence. The only clear exception to this is *HCA 07: Blue Town - historic*. Since this settlement developed to serve the naval dockyard, it possesses characteristics associated with the presence of the Navy and dockworkers. The most obvious characteristic is the high concentration of pubs still evident in the surviving townscape. Whilst some of these remain in operation, such as The Albion and The Red Lion, the majority have since closed. Many of the former pubs have since been converted to housing, including The Royal Fountain Hotel, The Lord Nelson Inn and The Crown and Anchor. The closely-packed surviving housing is also fairly typical of the quality of accommodation that would be expected to house dockworkers at this date.

4.2.2 The initial planned housing developments at Mile Town and Marine Town, despite apparently being developed by private individuals, could also be regarded as indicative military influence. The influence here is subtler and relates chiefly to the impetus behind the initial development of the settlements. Of these two areas, only *HCA 10: Marine Town – core* survives to any extent as that at Mile Town was largely removed as part of slum clearance in the 1950s. The core of the HCA is almost entirely comprised of small terraced housing designed for workers. As described above, it contains streets named principally after monarchs, generals and notable battles. It also appears to have had public houses spaced regularly throughout the development as originally conceived. These were generally sited on street corners and the majority had names with military themes. Some of these pubs remain use, including *The Napier* and *The Heights of Alma*, but others, such as *The Hero of the Crimea*, are now disused and converted into residential accommodation. As with the earlier and less formally planned settlement at Blue Town, the housing and provision pubs is likely to be due to this settlement being created to cater for a military workforce.

4.2.3 In other areas, the military presence has influenced development more subtly. The areas developed into housing from c. 1830 to the 1960s were constrained by military ownership of land. Whilst housing developed over this period became less obviously designed to cater for the military workforce, the chronology and location of development is a direct reflector of the waxing and waning of military holdings during this time. The post-war industrial and commercial development of Sheerness was also directed, to an extent, by the ambition of the War Office to minimise economic hardship as a result of winding down their activities. This is not to deny the significant influence of businesses and the local authority in realising the potential to develop formerly military land into viable economic concerns.

### 4.3 Other influences

- 4.3.1 As discussed above, much of the impetus to develop Sheerness in the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century came from local landowners. These included Sir Edward Banks, whose initial attempts to develop the town into a genteel seaside resort in the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century laid the foundations for much of the town's subsequent prosperity. Whilst Sheerness failed to develop into the kind of resort envisaged by Banks, holidaymakers have remained a constant in the town and led to the development of a range of seafront facilities to cater for them.
- 4.3.2 Much of the later 19<sup>th</sup> century housing also appears to have been developed by private individuals. While some, such as the terraced core of Marine Town, was clearly designed to cater to military workers, much of the seafront development was aimed at the resort trade.
- 4.3.3 From the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the local authority also made its presence felt through redevelopment schemes and slum clearance. Such activity is evident in *HCA*s 08 and 12 despite council plans for these areas not being fully achieved. It also is expressed in the large-scale road improvements undertaken at the end of the 1990s.
- 4.3.4 The successful conversion of the naval dockyard to a commercial port and establishment of the steelworks in the 1960s also had a significant influence on development. This is not only felt in the *HCA*s directly associated with these concerns (*HCA*s 01, 02 and 20) but also in the continued need for housing and facilities since their establishment. Their presence led to the maintenance and renewal of existing housing and the development of additional housing and facilities, such as schools, over this period. Such development would not have been required had these concerns not been economically successful.
- 4.3.5 The other main influence upon development was the quality of the land. As discussed, the entire peninsula was naturally marshy and it is this quality which acted as a check on development and meant that settlement did not develop here prior to the establishment of the dockyard. That the quality of the land continued to inhibit development into recent times is evidenced by explicit reference to the marshy nature as an obstacle to development in local authority correspondence of the 1960s relating to proposed development of Sheppey Court Marshes.

#### **4.4 Archaeological potential**

- 4.4.1 The archaeological potential of the project area was reviewed with reference to:
- i. The KCC HER;
  - ii. HE designations data and AMIE database;
  - iii. Mapping dating from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards;
  - iv. Aerial photography from the 1940s onwards;
  - v. Documentary evidence associated with naval and military facilities;
  - vi. The model of the 1820s Royal Naval dockyard; and
  - vii. Fieldwork observations.
- 4.4.2 Archaeological potential is identified by either the presence of either known features or heightened archaeological potential related to specific features thought to have existed at a location. These have not been graded with any values such as low, medium or high since there are significant issues with establishing the likely survival of deposits within the project area. This latter aspect is due to a lack of archaeological fieldwork and opportunities to understand the degree of truncation caused by subsequent land-use and development.
- 4.4.3 Areas where neither known features nor specific archaeological potential were identified have been labelled as "No specific potential identified". This is to make clear that such areas may, as they have clearly been used the human activity since at least the earlier post-mediaeval period, contain archaeological deposits but that there is no clear information suggest what form any such deposits may take.
- 4.4.4 The majority of records within the HER and AMIE database relate to relatively recent features

such as the defences, dockyard and surviving historic buildings which are discussed above and in the character area descriptions. As such, these sources are not particularly useful for assessing potential related to any other aspects. Much of the interpretation of archaeological potential is based on information from historic mapping and aerial photography.

- 4.4.5 Twenty *Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAP)* were identified which have clear archaeological potential and these are shown on Figure 11. These are named after the features thought to lie within them. The majority lie at the northern tip of the project area.

#### **Early dockyard**

- 4.4.6 A series of areas have been identified with potential for the very earliest phases of activity at the dockyard. AAPs with such potential contain the term *early dockyard* in their title. This activity will date between the 1660s and 1820s.
- 4.4.7 It has been suggested that archaeological deposits associated with the early dockyard may be unique, due to the fact that all material had to be brought into the area since there was no existing settlement to supply the yard for much of its early life and no other Royal Naval dockyard existed in similar circumstances (English Heritage, 2014). Additionally, the area may include remains of naval hulks sunk to enable land reclamation and create jetties during this period. On some early mapping, such hulks are named, so it may be possible to identify any such archaeological deposits with individual vessels. This is likely to increase the heritage significance of any such remains and has the potential to provide valuable information on the nature of naval vessels of the time.
- 4.4.8 It has also been suggested that deposits associated with the early dockyard may be well preserved since the marshy conditions historically documented within the area are likely to have created waterlogged conditions (English Heritage, 2014). Review of evidence for the foundation techniques used in the Rennie dockyard of the 1820s indicate that extensive deep below ground disturbance is likely associated with its construction. This is largely associated with the piled foundations known to have been used to support the majority of structures. Since no archaeological fieldwork, other than building survey, is documented within this AAP it is unclear what truncation or disruption to archaeological deposits may have been caused by these foundations, nor whether the installation of piles has compromised any waterlogged conditions.
- 4.4.9 The AAPs associated with the early dockyard may be regarded as having a high potential for archaeological deposits of high heritage significance but with the possibility for somewhat compromised survival. Until any intrusive archaeological fieldwork is undertaken in this area, this assessment of potential cannot be refined.

#### **The early Garrison Fortifications**

- 4.4.10 The early garrison fortifications consists of the Henrican fort, occupying the tip of the peninsula, and the De Gomme fort which included this earlier fort and extended southwards lying adjacent to the early dockyard. AAPs with such potential contain the terms *Henrican* and *De Gomme fort* in their titles. This activity will date between the 1540s and 1850s.
- 4.4.11 Any archaeological deposits associated with these forts will be of high heritage significance as they relate to some of the earliest coastal defences established in Britain. Some remains of the De Gomme fort, namely the Indented Lines, exist above ground. The survival of below-ground deposits or structural remains, surviving encased in later defences, associated with both phases of fortification is also possible.
- 4.4.12 As with the area of the early dockyard, there is the potential for waterlogged deposits due to the generally marshy nature of this area historically. There is also the potential for waterlogged deposits within the moat that existed at the landward end of the De Gomme fort. As the majority of the area formerly occupied by these fortifications has been subject to subsequent development, including the Rennie dockyard and the extensive works entailed by construction of the Garrison Point Fort in the 1860s, truncation of deposits and compromising of waterlogged

conditions is also possible. Since no archaeological fieldwork, other than building survey, is documented within these AAPs it is unclear what truncation or disruption archaeological deposits may have been caused.

- 4.4.13 The AAPs associated with the early garrison fortifications may be regarded as having a high potential for archaeological deposits of high heritage significance but with the possibility for somewhat compromised survival. Until any intrusive archaeological fieldwork is undertaken in this area, this assessment of potential cannot be refined.

### **Blue Town**

- 4.4.14 Settlement at Blue Town developed due to the presence of the naval dockyard. The AAPs identified relate to areas where settlement and associated activity is documented in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This includes the present extent of Blue Town, which remains occupied, and the area known to have been cleared to enable construction of the Rennie dockyard. AAPs with such potential contain the term *Blue Town* in their titles. To the north of Blue Town High Street, this activity will date from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. To the south, it will date between the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and the present day.
- 4.4.15 Archaeological deposits associated with settlement will vary in their level of heritage significance. Any deposits to the north of Blue Town High Street are likely to be of relatively high heritage significance because very little is known of the settlement in this area as it was cleared before the availability of detailed mapping and other documentary sources. This area also includes a burial ground of later 18<sup>th</sup> century date. Any surviving burials and associated memorials are likely to have high heritage significance as very little is known of the resident population during this time and, as since they lived a hard lifestyle in an inhospitable place, human remains may have interesting pathologies. Any deposits lying around the junction of High Street and West Street are also likely to have relatively high heritage significance since this appears to be where the very earliest phase of settlement occurred and very little is known of the nature of the settlement during this time. Any deposits over the remaining area are likely to be of varying levels of heritage significance, this is as this part of the settlement remained in use from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. Those associated with poorly documented features or which are of a particularly early date are likely to be of higher heritage significance than those which relate to more recent activity or that which is well attested by documentary sources.
- 4.4.16 As with the other areas, there is the potential for waterlogged deposits due to the generally marshy nature of this area historically. As the majority of the area formerly occupied by these fortifications has been subject to subsequent development, including the Rennie dockyard and redevelopment associated with the settlement itself, truncation of deposits and compromising of waterlogged conditions is also possible. Since no archaeological fieldwork is documented within this AAP it is unclear what truncation or disruption to archaeological deposits may have been caused.
- 4.4.17 The AAPs associated with Blue Town may be regarded as having a high potential for archaeological deposits of varying levels of heritage significance but with the possibility for somewhat compromised survival. Until any intrusive archaeological fieldwork is undertaken in this area, this assessment of potential cannot be refined.

### **Rennie dockyard**

- 4.4.18 The Rennie dockyard was created between the 1820s and 1830s, with some related structures added in the 1850s. The dockyard functioned until the end of the 1950s. AAPs with such potential contain the term *Rennie dockyard* in their titles, and significantly overlap with those AAPs associated with the early dockyard, Henrican and the De Gomme fortifications and Blue Town. Rennie dockyard activity will date between the 1820s and 1950s.
- 4.4.19 The AAPs are likely to contain the following below-ground remains associated with the Rennie dockyard, surviving structural remains (including infilled dock basins, dry docks and ship access channels) and footings and foundations associated with buildings were demolished in the latter



part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The dock basins and dry docks which remain visible within the landscape are designated as a grade II\* listed buildings. It is reasonable to see those comparable and contemporary features which are known to exist buried under sections of the modern commercial port as of a similarly high level of heritage significance. It is known that the majority of structures in the Rennie dockyard have very extensive piled foundations. The foundation methods used in the dockyard were at the time relatively innovative and, as such, are likely to be of some heritage significance. There is also some potential for remains of dockyard infrastructure, such as tramways, to survive both above and within the hard surfacing of the current commercial port. Such features are likely to be of a lower heritage significance.

- 4.4.20 There appears to have been limited subsequent ground disturbance within the Rennie dockyard and it is probable that below-ground remains associated with it are relatively undisturbed. As with the early dockyard and fortifications, there is the potential for waterlogged deposits due to the generally marshy nature of this area historically. It is, therefore, likely that the wooden piles which form part of the foundation substructure survive well. Since no archaeological fieldwork, other than building survey, is documented within this AAP the condition of any buried archaeological deposits and structural remains unclear.
- 4.4.21 The AAPs associated with the Rennie dockyard may be regarded as having a high potential for archaeological deposits of varying levels of heritage significance which are likely to survive well. Until any intrusive archaeological fieldwork is undertaken in this area, this assessment of potential cannot be refined.

### **Garrison**

- 4.4.22 Two AAPs were identified which explicitly relate to the 19<sup>th</sup> century garrison at Sheerness and include facilities with somewhat different periods of operation.

#### *Garrison AAP*

- 4.4.23 This AAP appears to have developed in the 1830s as a barracks area following the displacement of the garrison due to construction the Rennie dockyard and continued for this purpose into the late 1950s.
- 4.4.24 All structural remains associated with the barracks were cleared from the AAP by the early 1970s. As such, remains associated within the structures that formerly stood in this area are likely to be composed of archaeological deposits relating to their foundations. Far less detail is available on the foundations required by these buildings than for the 19<sup>th</sup> century military developments at Sheerness so it is not clear how deep remains might extend or whether they include wooden piling as in the Rennie dockyard. The AAP is known to have included a parade ground and it is possible that surfacing associated with this use might survive below the modern hard surfacing of the commercial port. As there is limited understanding of the nature and use of the area during garrison occupation, any archaeological deposits associated with this may be of some heritage significance. The exact significance of these cannot yet be established it is not clear what remains may survive in this area.
- 4.4.25 Since clearance of garrison buildings from the area, few structures or buildings appear to have been built in this area. This implies that below-ground remains associated with the 19<sup>th</sup>-century garrison buildings may be relatively undisturbed. As with the early dockyard and fortifications, there is the potential for waterlogged deposits due to the generally marshy nature of this area historically. Since no archaeological fieldwork, other than building survey, is documented within this AAP the condition of any buried archaeological deposits remains unclear.
- 4.4.26 This AAP may be regarded as having a high potential for archaeological deposits of varying levels of heritage significance which are likely to survive well. Until any intrusive archaeological fieldwork is undertaken in this area, this assessment of potential cannot be refined.

#### *Military burial ground AAP*

- 4.4.27 This AAP appears to have been established for use by the garrison by the later 1810s and

become disused by 1890s. It now lies within the steelworks complex and is occupied by mixture of railway lines and hardstanding with a small area of warehousing at its very northern tip. Archaeological deposits in this area are likely to exclusively relate to this period of operation.

- 4.4.28 The burial ground appears to have been for the garrison, convicts and may have also been used for some naval burials. The convicts are likely to have been present as they were used in the construction of military projects during this period. The burial ground is not recorded on either the KCC HER or the HE AMIE and, as such, any surviving deposits are likely to be of some heritage significance in physically documenting a previously unrecorded activity. Any surviving burials, and associated memorials, are likely to have high heritage significance. This is as there is little physical evidence associated with the individuals who worked in the garrison. Additionally, as burials would be of a quite specific kind, being likely to comprise males of a restricted age range and from potentially divergent social groups, the nature of pathologies may be of considerable heritage significance.
- 4.4.29 The burial ground lies in an area occupied by heavy industry since the later 1960s and it is not clear what level of ground disturbance this use may have caused. Ground surface within the area appears relatively unaltered and it is possible that limited disturbance occurred. If this is the case then burials may be well preserved, particularly considering the likelihood of waterlogging.
- 4.4.30 The AAP may be regarded as having a high potential for archaeological deposits of high heritage significance. It is unclear whether their survival has been compromised by recent industrial activity. Until any intrusive archaeological fieldwork is undertaken in this area, this assessment of potential cannot be refined.

### **Sheerness Lines**

- 4.4.31 This AAP comprises above and below ground remains associated with the defensive line built between the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to protect the naval dockyard and Blue Town. It includes the Sheerness Lines proper and the Linking Trace. These defences remained in use into the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Archaeological deposits relating to this are likely to span the entire period of use of these defences.
- 4.4.32 The AAP contains above-ground structural remains associated with these defensive features, including alterations made by the addition of gun emplacements to bastions in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and a former garrison hospital building. It is also likely contain the following below-ground remains associated with the defences; a buried section of the Sheerness Lines within the steelworks and footings and associated with Fort Townsend, the Ordnance Well compound and the Royal Engineers' Yard. Fort Townsend is also thought to have been used as a hospital for the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and there may be deposits associated with this use. It is not clear whether deep foundations of a similar kind to that used in the Rennie dockyard were used for any of these structures. Much of the surviving defensive infrastructure that is visible above-ground is designated as a scheduled monument. Any buried remains of a comparable and contemporary nature are also likely to be of a relatively high heritage significance. Remains associated with Fort Townsend are likely to also be of high heritage significance since little is known of the nature of this structure. It is also possible that there may be evidence relating to the original profile of the ground prior to the construction of the Sheerness Lines preserved under their ramparts. Such remains are likely to be of a lower heritage significance than those related to military activity.
- 4.4.33 This AAP is one of the few in which archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken. This fieldwork related to the Ravelin and was undertaken during construction of the college in the 1990s. It found that the superstructure and ditch associated with the Ravelin survived well. As no other fieldwork has been undertaken, it is unclear what level of disturbance recent activity is likely to have caused to any buried military remains in the remainder of the area. This is a particular concern case for that section lying within the steelworks. Truncation is likely, has there been any fieldwork

4.4.34 The AAP may be regarded as having a high potential for archaeological deposits of high heritage significance. It is unclear whether their survival has been compromised by recent industrial activity. Until any intrusive archaeological fieldwork is undertaken in this area, this assessment of potential cannot be refined.

#### **Queenborough Lines**

4.4.35 This AAP comprises above and below ground remains associated with the Queenborough Lines defensive system built in the 1860s to protect the naval dockyard. These defences remained in use into the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Archaeological deposits relating to this are likely to span the entire period of use of these defences.

4.4.36 The AAP contains above-ground earthwork and structural remains associated with these defensive features, including alterations made by the addition of temporary gun emplacements and a roadblock during the Second World War. The majority of the Lines is designated as a scheduled monument and accordingly they are of high heritage significance. It is also possible that there may be evidence relating to the original profile of the ground prior to the construction of the Queenborough Lines preserved under their ramparts. Such remains are likely to be of a lower heritage significance than those related to military activity.

4.4.37 Archaeological deposits and structural remains of Queenborough Lines appear to survive well and to have not experienced much in the way of subsequent disturbance.

4.4.38 The AAP contains archaeological deposits and structural remains which are of high heritage significance.

#### **Barton's Point Battery**

4.4.39 This AAP comprises the extent of the Barton's Point Battery which was built in the 1890s. From the late 1930s until the 1960s it functioned as a naval gunnery training establishment and is now in use static caravan park.

4.4.40 The AAP contains above-ground earthwork and structural remains associated with both the battery and training establishment. These remains are of some heritage significance. It is also possible that there may be evidence relating to the profile of the ground, including earlier sea defence embankments, prior to the construction of the battery. Such remains may be of a lower heritage significance than those related to military activity, however, any associated with sea defence embankments may be of higher significance since the process of land reclamation and enclosure in this part of Sheppey is not well understood.

4.4.41 There has been some removal of structures from the battery to enable use of the area as a static caravan park. This does not appear to have entailed extensive below-ground disturbance so truncation to any buried remains is likely to be low.

4.4.42 The AAP contains archaeological deposits and structural remains relating to military activity since the 1890s which are of some heritage significance. The survival of these structural remains has been compromised to an extent by subsequent use of the area as a caravan park. It may also contain archaeological deposits relating to land-use prior to construction of the battery. These may be of some heritage significance but their condition and survival is not clear. Until any intrusive archaeological fieldwork is undertaken in this area, this assessment of potential cannot be refined.

#### **Mile Town**

4.4.43 Two AAPs were identified at Mile Town; *Mile Town - historic core* comprises the core of initial development at Mile Town which dates to c.1800 and *Mile Town - initial planned expansion* which relates to a planned expansion dating to the early 19th century. These areas have remained settled since their establishment and may contain archaeological deposits dating from their establishment to the present day.

4.4.44 The street frontages have remained built-up over the period of use of these areas and it is likely

that archaeological deposits are more likely to survive within the backplots. In general, any such deposits are likely to relate to settlement and small-scale industrial activities. Any early deposits would be of some heritage significance since they would deepen understanding of the chronology, nature and growth of the initial settlement at Mile Town. Some known features exist within the townscape which are likely to contain more specific archaeological deposits. These include the Jewish cemetery on Hope Street and the windmill which lies in the backplots on the western side of the High Street. As with the other burial areas discussed above, any surviving burials, grave markers and memorials are likely to be of a high heritage significance. This is particularly so given that the Jewish population was not resident at Sheerness over a long period of time. Similarly, the origin of the windmill is not particularly well understood so any archaeological deposits related to it are likely to be of some heritage significance since they would advance understanding of this feature which would have been a key element in the early settlement.

- 4.4.45 With the exception of the Jewish burial ground, which appears to have been relatively undisturbed, the majority of this area has been subject to significant levels of subsequent piecemeal redevelopment since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. As such, any deposits are likely to have experienced some degree of truncation. The degree of truncation is likely to be highly variable, probably even from plot to plot, over the AAP.
- 4.4.46 Any deposits associated with the Jewish burial ground will be of high heritage significance and are likely to be well preserved. Archaeological deposits within the AAP in general will be of variable heritage significance and survival. Until any intrusive archaeological fieldwork is undertaken in this area, this assessment of potential cannot be refined.

### **Cheney Rock**

- 4.4.47 This AAP relates to a settlement nucleus at Cheney Rock which is of unclear date and origin.
- 4.4.48 The present house, which forms the core of this settlement nucleus, appears to be of later 18<sup>th</sup> century date. The house itself, although a grade II listed building, has not seen any documented investigation. As such, it may yield information about the development location which is of some heritage significance. The house stands in grounds which are slightly truncated from their original extent and it is possible that they may contain archaeological deposits relating to settlement activity. Since very little is known about the origin of settlement at this location, any deposits which relate to the earliest phases of activity will be of some heritage significance. Deposits associated with activity later than the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century are likely to be of limited heritage significance since activity over this period is attested by documentary sources.
- 4.4.49 There appear to have been low levels of subsequent activity in the immediate grounds of the house and, although they are in a poor state of repair, the ground does not appear particularly disturbed. It is possible that there may be relatively undisturbed deposits within this area.
- 4.4.50 The AAP contains a standing building of relatively high heritage significance and may contain buried archaeological deposits which are of some heritage significance in understanding the chronology of settlement at this location. The state of preservation of any such deposits is not clear but, if present, they may be relatively disturbed. Until any intrusive archaeological fieldwork is undertaken in this area, this assessment of potential cannot be refined.

### **The Fleet**

- 4.4.51 This AAP comprises land associated with the Fleet watercourse. The alignment of the current course is of at least early 18<sup>th</sup> century date. The channel in which it flows is much narrower than it was historically and the AAP includes the historic extent the channel as shown on earlier maps.
- 4.4.52 The AAP may contain evidence, in the form of earlier channels and man-made interventions, for the evolution of this watercourse. These may be of some heritage significance by enabling an understanding the development of the drainage regime in the Sheerness area. It may also contain palaeoenvironmental deposits and, if present, these may be of some heritage significance in understanding past climatic conditions.

4.4.53 Since the Fleet now flows through a narrower channel than it did historically, it is possible that there has been some truncation associated with engineering of the watercourse as the surrounding area became developed. It is not clear what truncation may be associated with any such work since no archaeological work has been undertaken within the AAP.

4.4.54 The AAP has the potential to contain deposits associated with the evolution of the Fleet's channel and palaeoenvironmental deposits. If present, these may be of, some heritage significance. The state of preservation of any such deposits is not clear and it is possible that they may have experienced some truncation or have been compromised to an extent. Until any intrusive archaeological fieldwork is undertaken in this area, this assessment of potential cannot be refined.

## 4.5 Built-environment potential

4.5.1 There have been several studies of the built environment within the project area. These consist of conservation area appraisals, reviews of surviving historic structures at Port of Sheerness associated with management of the port and building recording projects. The majority of these have been focused around the former naval dockyard, Blue Town and the surviving defensive features. Consequently, there are a large swathes of the project area in which the built environment has received little or no attention. The following areas or specific structures would merit further study into their nature:

- i. Back plot areas of Blue Town;
- ii. Historic areas of Mile Town outside of the conservation area;
- iii. Marine Town;
- iv. Cheney Rock; and
- v. The steelworks.

4.5.2 Much of the existing work at Blue Town focuses on prominent or visibly historic buildings on the street frontages. This is reflected by the fact that the majority of recorded heritage assets lie on the West Street and High Street frontage. Walkover survey of the back streets and alleys of this area undertaken for this project indicates that back plot areas are likely to also contain significant historic buildings and structures. These appear to include buildings related to small-scale trade and industrial practices. As such activities are likely to have underpinned the success of the settlement, further study of them would be valuable and allow a greater understanding the nature of the settlement and evolution. Back plot areas also contain some surviving historic boundary treatments, such as fences comprised of vertically laid sleepers and planking, which may be of some age and which appear to be otherwise undocumented.

4.5.3 The *Mile Town* Conservation Area does not include the full historic extent of the early core of development in this area. Its extent also does not tally well with the documented phases of expansion of the town or the surviving historic built environment. The rationale behind inclusion and exclusion of areas of the town from the conservation area is not clear since the conservation area appraisal is only a brief document which does not particularly cover this aspect. Due to the exclusion of some areas of early development, many buildings which appear to have clear heritage significance lie outside of the conservation area. The majority of these are undesignated and many are otherwise unrecorded, appearing neither on the KCC HER nor HE AMIE database. Good examples of such buildings include a group on the south side of Hope Street, adjacent to the eastern side of conservation area, and the surviving group of historic buildings relating to the early planned expansion which survive around the junction of Russell Street and Broad Street. There are also buildings within the conservation area which appear to be of relatively high heritage significance but have received little research. The most obvious example of these is the buildings related to the former waterworks to the south of Holy Trinity, including the pumping house and office block. There are also a number of buildings within the southern portion of the High Street which appear to have some heritage significance and are neither designated nor

recorded. These include Nos. 174 to 176 (currently occupied by Kent Carpets), which appears to be of least early 20<sup>th</sup> century date and includes some apparently Art Deco architectural detailing.

- 4.5.4 At Marine Town, the conservation area does not include the entirety of the very earliest stage of development. This conservation area also lacks an appraisal so it is unclear why the boundaries have been drawn in the locations they have been. This means that buildings of clear heritage significance which tell the story of the early development of this area, such as Neptune Terrace and development around Alma Road, lie outside the conservation area. Neptune Terrace is at least designated as a listed building, but the other buildings in this area have neither recognition as historic structures via the KCC HER or HE AMIE database nor any protection through inclusion within the conservation area. This suggests that the *Marine Town* conservation area needs urgent review and reappraisal. As a whole, the built environment of Marine Town appears to have received little attention and this area, both those sections lying within and outside the conservation area, would benefit from further study.
- 4.5.5 As discussed above, there is what appears to be an early nucleus of settlement at Cheney Rock and the origins of this are poorly understood. Whilst two of the buildings in this area are designated as listed buildings, little is known of the nature and date of surviving buildings at this location and they would merit further study.
- 4.5.6 The steelworks complex includes structural remains that, since disuse of the facility in 2012, appear to have remained relatively untouched. It is not clear whether any of the surviving structures at the steelworks have heritage significance since it was not possible to visit this area as part of walkover survey undertaken for this project. As such the steelworks would merit further study to clarify whether any structures or machinery are of heritage significance.

## 4.6 Drivers of change

- 4.6.1 Key drivers of change at Sheerness relate largely to economic factors. These include:
- i. Proposed major redevelopment at the Port of Sheerness;
  - ii. Competition with other local centres;
  - iii. The need for housing;
  - iv. The economic vacuum created by closure of the steelworks and pressure to redevelop its site; and
  - v. Maintenance of an attractive seafront.
- 4.6.2 Lesser, but potentially significant in historic environment terms, drivers of change are piecemeal alterations to the existing built stock by householders and business owners and neglect.
- 4.6.3 The Port of Sheerness has recently published its master plan for development over the next 25 years (Peel Ports, 2014). This proposes a series of alternatives for development at the Port, the majority of these will have some impact on the surviving heritage assets within their estate. The effect upon assets will be dependent upon which option for development is selected.
- 4.6.4 Sheerness currently functions as the main commercial centre for Sheppey. Recent redevelopments at Sittingbourne, such as the addition of new retail parks and a cinema, combined with improved road links over the Swale mean that Sheerness is now competing with the mainland to retain business. Although no formal plans have yet been put forward, it is possible that either the local authority or local business leaders may seek to progress a similarly ambitious scheme for Sheerness in order to retain spend within the town. Since developable space is extremely limited within the town this is likely to mean redevelopment of existing built form which may lead to direct and indirect effects to designated and undesignated heritage assets.
- 4.6.5 Much of the housing at Sheerness is historic in origin, with large amounts dating to prior to WWI. As such, it will need periodic renewal to remain fit for modern standards and aspirations. The majority of housing appears to be in private ownership so any such renewals are likely to be on a

piecemeal property-by-property basis. This has the potential to affect the composition and appearance of such housing. Although the effect of this will be controlled to an extent within the conservation areas, away from these a much greater range of alterations will be possible. This may have the effect of breaking-up what are at present relatively coherent streetscapes.

- 4.6.6 Although production had been winding down for several years, closure of the steelworks in 2012 removed a key employer within the town. This creates twofold influences on the town; economic downturn and the presence of a large site which present an opportunity for development. In economic terms, lower levels of income across the town have the potential to undermine the viability of other businesses and affect the ability of inhabitants to maintain their properties. The High Street at Mile Town shows little evidence at present having been severely affected by the downturn and most properties remain open and occupied by what appear to be flourishing businesses. The effect of lesser income on whether properties are maintained, and to what extent this may be related to closure of the steelworks, is much harder to gauge as there is limited baseline. The steelworks site has been earmarked as a potential location for expansion of the Port of Sheerness but it is possible that other concerns may seek to develop this site. Any redevelopment of the steelworks has the potential to affect heritage assets, including the Garrison hospital, above and below-ground remains associated with the Sheerness Lines and a military burial ground.
- 4.6.7 Visitors and holidaymakers are clearly still an important source of prosperity for Sheerness. Maintenance of an attractive seafront and associated facilities is, therefore, a key priority for the town. The present seafront area appears to be in relatively good repair and well-used by visitors. As such, it is not clear that any redevelopments are likely to be put forward for the area in the near future, however, schemes for renewal of this area will remain likely as the town seeks to retain visitors. This has some potential to affect heritage assets.
- 4.6.8 The following areas are considered to be at greatest risk associated with these drivers of change:
- i. The Port of Sheerness;
  - ii. Blue Town, particularly areas away from the street frontage;
  - iii. Sections of the historic core of Mile Town which lie out with the conservation area;
  - iv. Sections of the historic core of Mile Town which lie out with the conservation area;
  - v. The historic settlement nucleus at Cheney Rock;
  - vi. The above-ground section of the Sheerness Lines; and
  - vii. The steelworks.
- 4.6.9 With the exception of the Sheerness Lines, the above areas are identified as being at risk due to change associated with development, as described above. The Sheerness Lines have been identified as at risk due to neglect. This is as there appears to be no maintenance regime in place for the lines, with the exception of regular mowing in the area adjacent to the Tesco car park. The level of vegetation currently growing on the banks of the lines in all other areas is getting to an extent whereby root action is likely to begin compromising monument if not addressed in the near future.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1 Influences on the development of Sheerness

- 5.1.1 This project has refined understanding of the evolution of Sheerness, particularly that of its civilian development which had previously received much less attention than its high-profile and highly significant military remains. A total of 23 Historic Character Areas (HCAs) were identified which have distinctive origins and surviving historic landscape and/or townscape character.
- 5.1.2 The influence of the military in providing the original impetus for the development of a settlement

in this area cannot be understated. Military influence on the growth of Sheerness has, however, proved to be complex and, away from those areas occupied by formal military installations, subtle. This ranges from influencing the character of the initial areas of settlement expansion, evidenced by the presence of a dense concentration of pubs and worker's housing at both Blue Town Marine Town, to constraining where housing could be developed through military ownership of land. This latter factor is largely responsible for the phasing of the town's expansion and the presence of blocks of housing of coherent type in spatially distinct areas.

- 5.1.3 Local initiatives appear to have been very important in the development of the town and have resulted in much of the character of the town that is appreciable today. This ranges from the genteel housing and civic facilities of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century attempt to create a seaside resort, largely at the impetus of Sire Edward Banks, to the large-scale clearance and redevelopment of the sections of the town centre in the immediate post-war period. Recent initiatives, such as infrastructure upgrades and the growth of Sheerness as a commercial port following closure of the naval dockyard, have also had a significant, though localised, impact on the area's character. This latter is most obvious adjacent to the Port of Sheerness, both in the expanded port and associated land reclamation but also in the greatly improved road connections to the mainland.

## 5.2 Opportunities and issues

- 5.2.1 The project has also established that there are numerous areas, referred to as *Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAPs)*, which have heightened archaeological potential. These range from those that encompass the dockyard and fortifications, early settlement nuclei and also palaeoenvironmental remains. As there has been little or no archaeological fieldwork in any of these AAPs, the extent of preservation of deposits remains unclear. Some AAPs, namely those relate to the earliest phases of the dockyard and fortifications, are likely to contain archaeological deposits of high heritage significance.
- 5.2.2 The high heritage significance of structural remains associated with the many phases of activity at the dockyard and fortifying the peninsula is acknowledged. These features document many of the major phases of Britain's military activity and connect Sheerness to the wider history of our island's naval and defensive history. Despite the designation of much of the military heritage, civilian structures are not as well understood or designated. Though there are three conservation areas and several listed buildings in the historically civilian areas of the town, the study found that there are several individual buildings and parts of Sheerness's townscape which are of previously unrecognised or unrecorded heritage significance. Of particular concern are the current extents of the Mile Town and Marine Town conservation areas which do not appear to encompass well-preserved sections of each settlement's historic core. This makes these areas, and their constituent buildings, vulnerable to change.
- 5.2.3 A series of key drivers of change in the area have been identified which have the potential to affect heritage assets and which need to be addressed in future management of the area. These range from likely major redevelopment at the commercial port and steelworks complex to the need to compete with local centres on the nearby mainland. The potential for piecemeal alteration to historic housing, particularly that not covered by any formal heritage designation. Redundancy and neglect of heritage assets, particularly those associated with the dockyard and Sheerness Lines, is also a key issue.

## 6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Data for the project was supplied by Historic England and Kent County Council and the assistance of David Gander (HE) and Andrew Mayfield (KCC) is gratefully acknowledged in this regard.



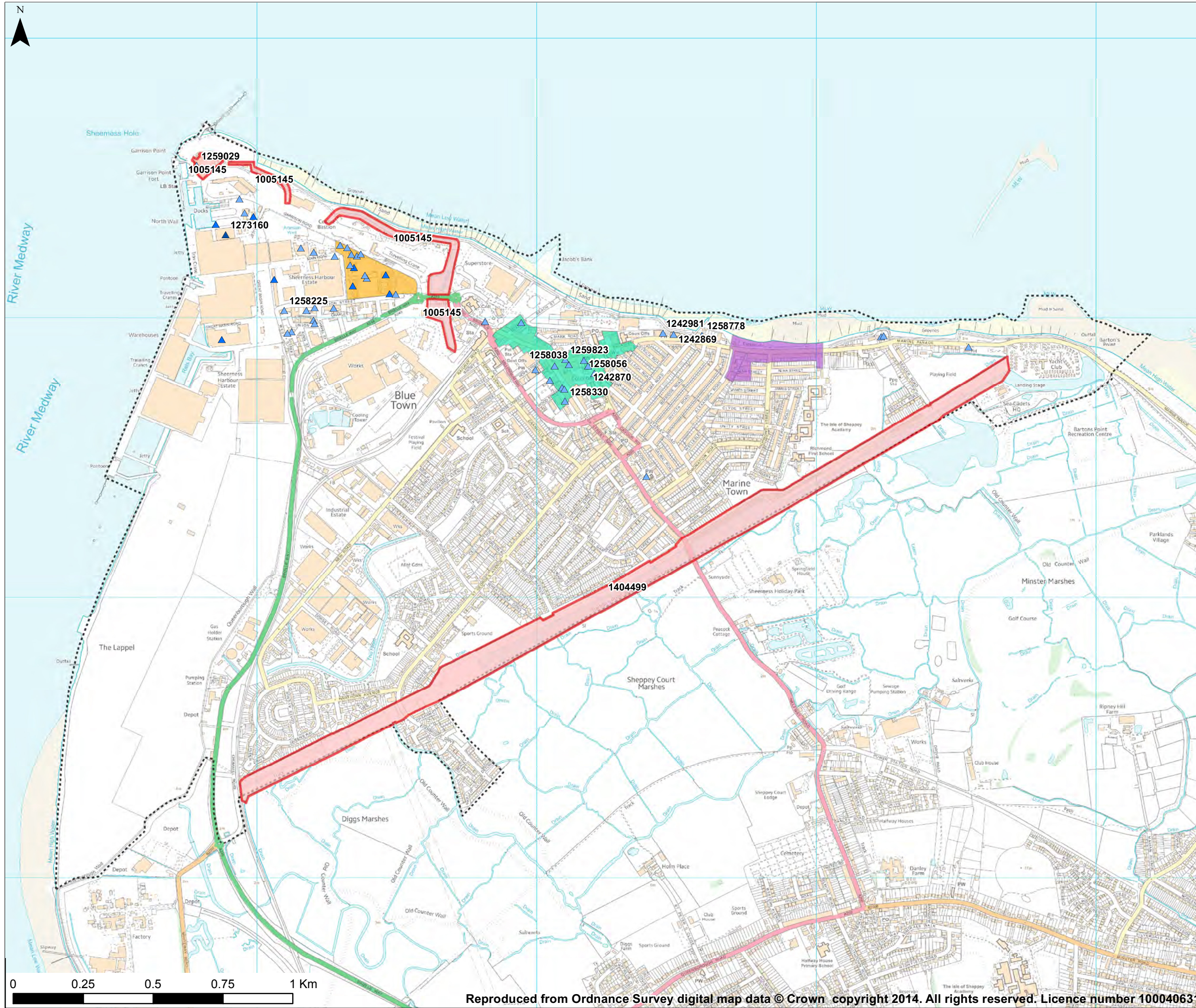
Research was undertaken at the following archives; KCC Kent History and Library Centre, The National Archives at Kew, The National Maritime Museum's Caird Library and The National Museum of the Royal Navy's Library. Thanks are extended to the staff of these institutions for their assistance.

Research and fieldwork for the project was undertaken by Karen Averby of Archangel Heritage and Melissa Conway, Patrick Dresch and Mike Pantling of Ramboll.

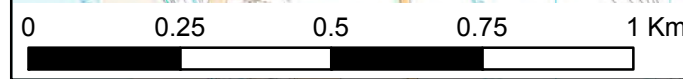
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**Figure 1: Project area and recorded heritage assets**



- Project area
- ▲ Grade I Listed Building
- ▲ Grade II\* Listed Building
- ▲ Grade II Listed Building
- Scheduled Monuments
- Conservation Areas**
- Mile Town, Sheerness
- Sheerness - Dockyard, Swale
- Sheerness - Marine Town, Swale



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Client  
**Historic England**

Project Title  
**Sheerness  
Characterisation**

Project Number  
**61034355**

Figure Title  
**Project area and designated  
heritage assets**

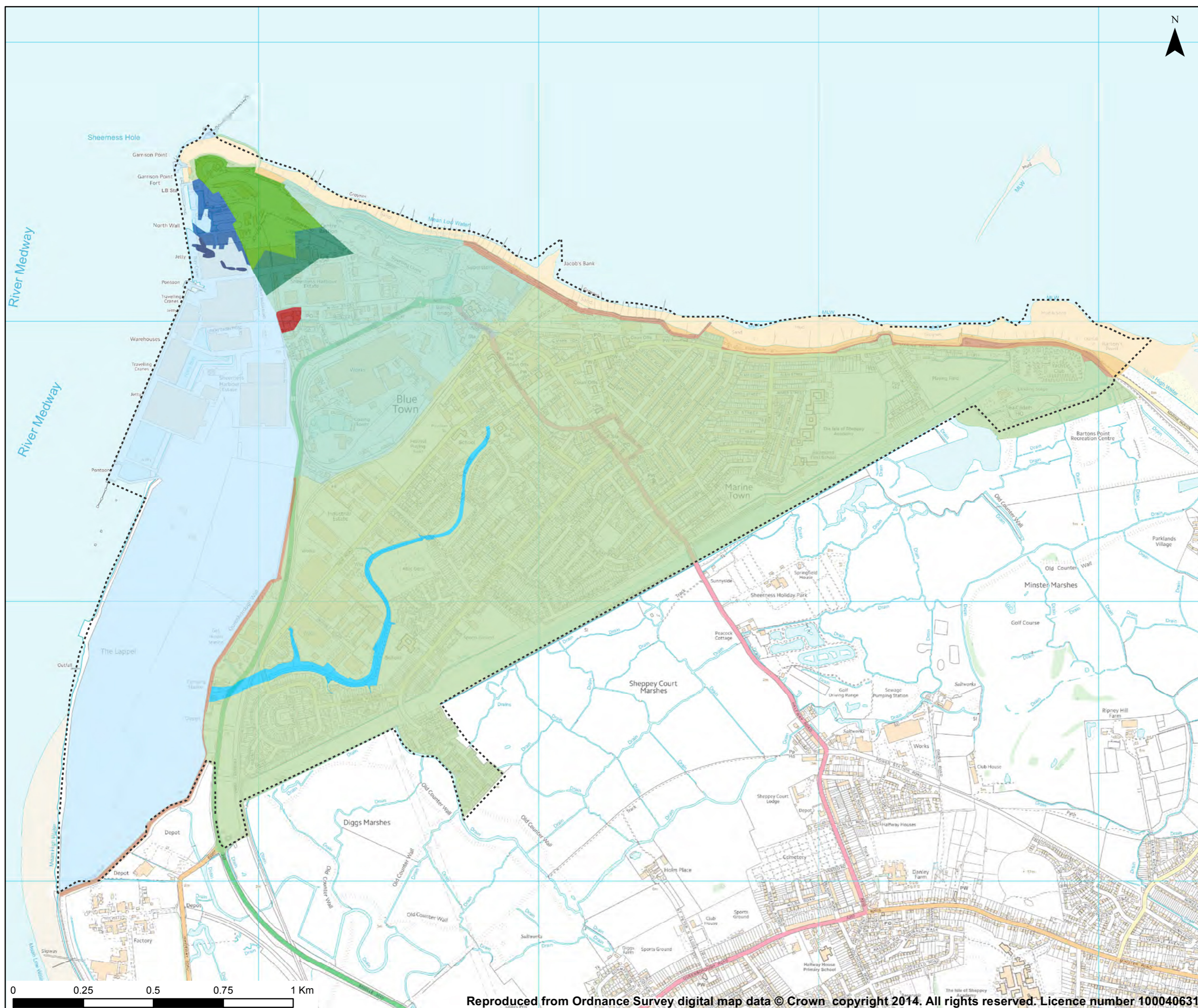


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Figure No.      1      Revision  
-

**Figure 2: The early 18<sup>th</sup> century landscape**



- Project area
- Naval dockyard
- Hulk breakwater
- Defences - fort
- Moat
- Historic settlement core
- Enclosed rough grazing
- Marsh
- Sea defences
- Intertidal
- Beach
- Sea
- Watercourse

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**Historic England**

Project Title  
**Sheerness  
Characterisation**

Project Number  
**61034355**

Figure Title  
**Land use c.1738**

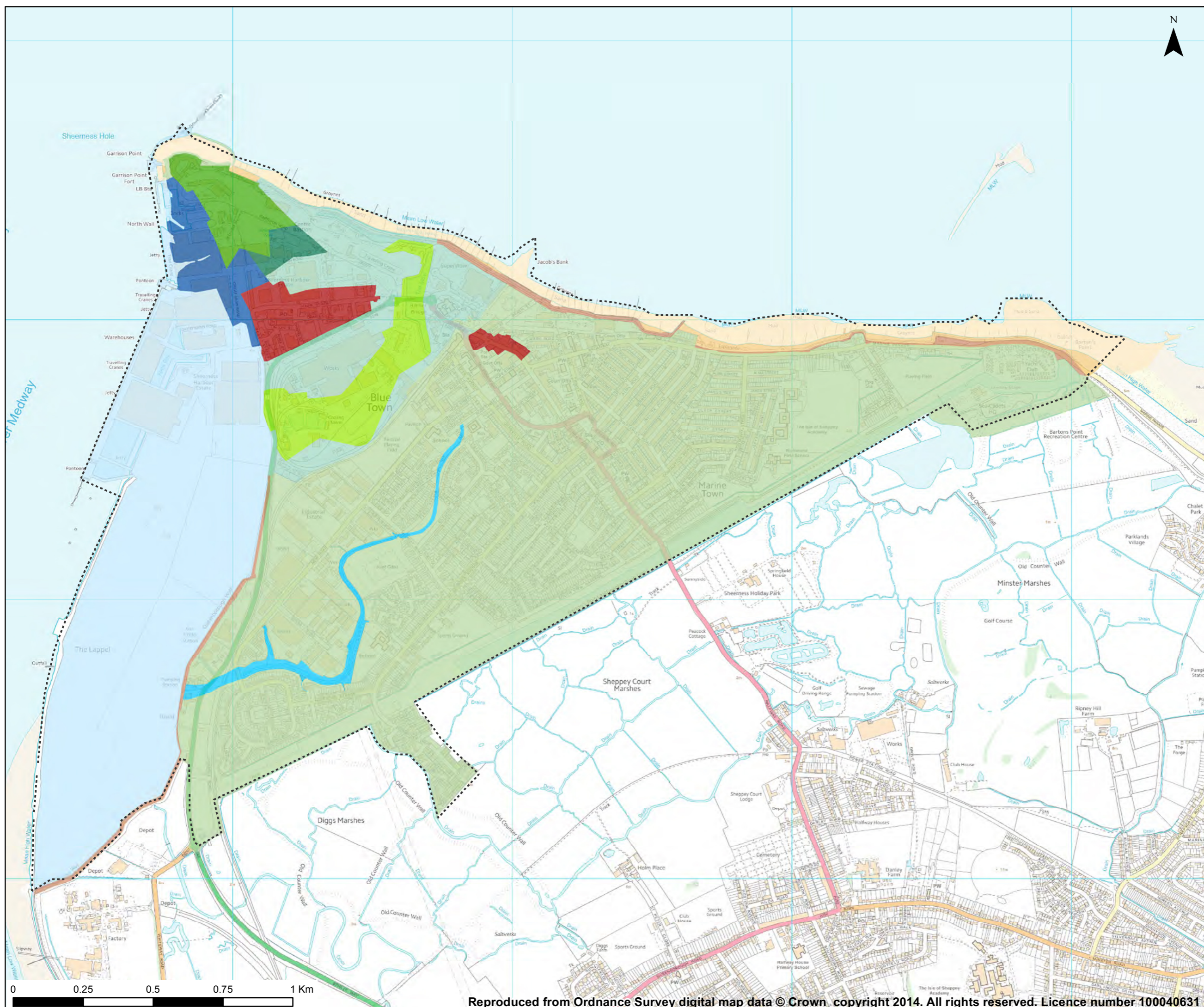


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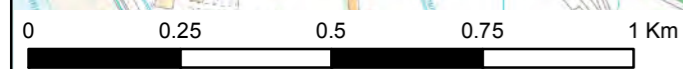
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Figure No.	2	Revision	-
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**Figure 3: The landscape c.1800**



- Project area
- Naval dockyard
- Defensive line
- Defences - fort
- Moat
- Historic settlement core
- Enclosed rough grazing
- Marsh
- Sea defences
- Intertidal
- Beach
- Sea
- Watercourse

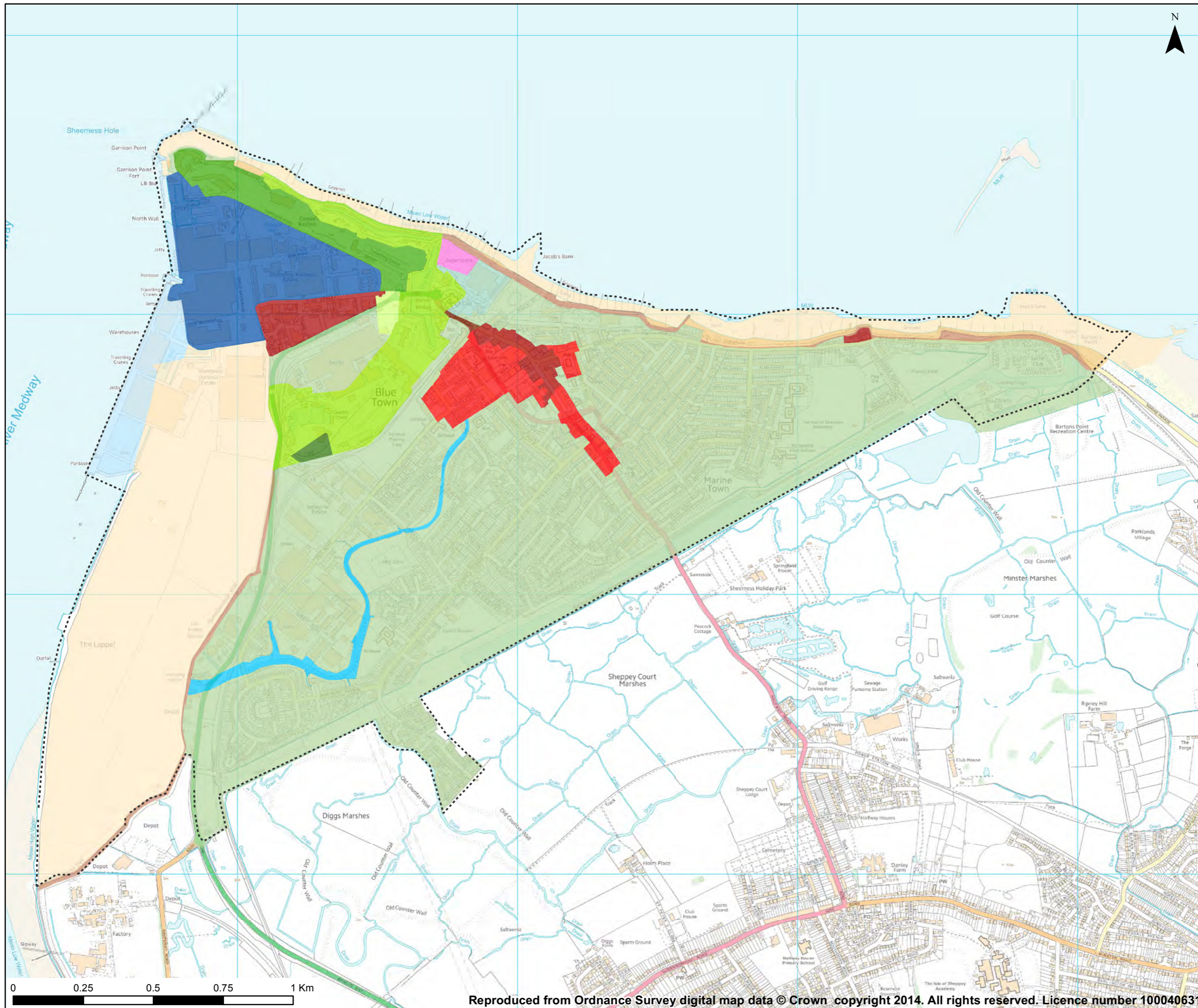


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<b>Land use c.1800</b>	
	
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**Figure 4: The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century landscape**





- Project area
- Naval dockyard
- Defensive line
- Defences - fort
- Military support facility
- Military burial ground
- Historic settlement core
- Housing
- Recreation Area
- Transport - road corridor
- Enclosed rough grazing
- Marsh
- Sea defences
- Intertidal
- Beach
- Sea
- Watercourse

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Project Title  
**Sheerness  
Characterisation**

Project Number  
**61034355**

Figure Title  
**Land use c.1850**

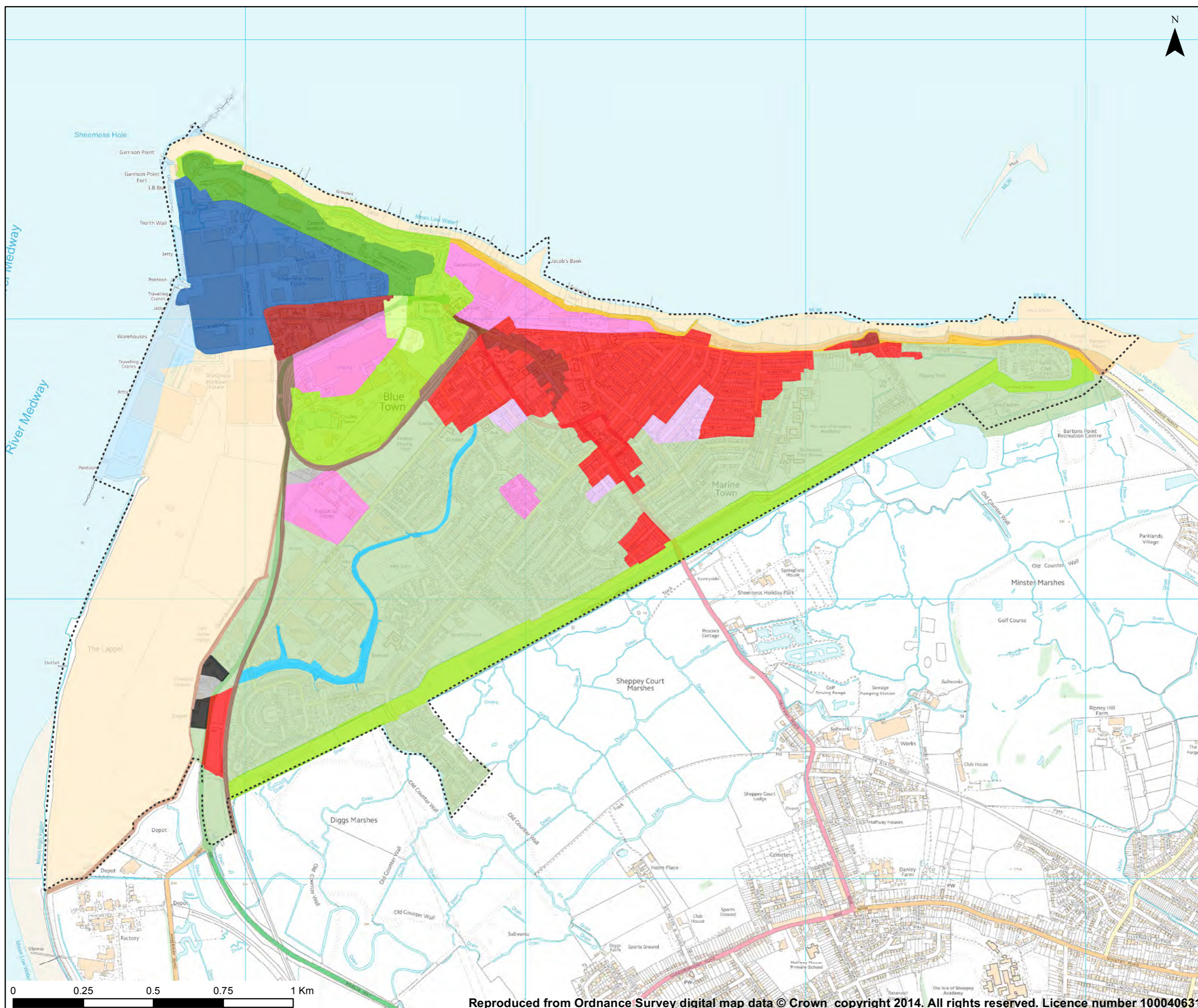


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Figure No.	4	Revision	-
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**Figure 5: The late 19<sup>th</sup> century landscape**



- Project area
- Naval dockyard
- Defensive line
- Defences - fort
- Military support facility
- Historic settlement core
- Housing
- Industrial - light
- Utilities
- Commercial properties
- Holiday park
- Recreation Area
- Allotments
- Transport - rail corridor
- Transport - road corridor
- Enclosed rough grazing
- Esplanade
- Sea defences
- Intertidal
- Beach
- Sea
- Watercourse

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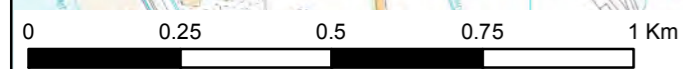
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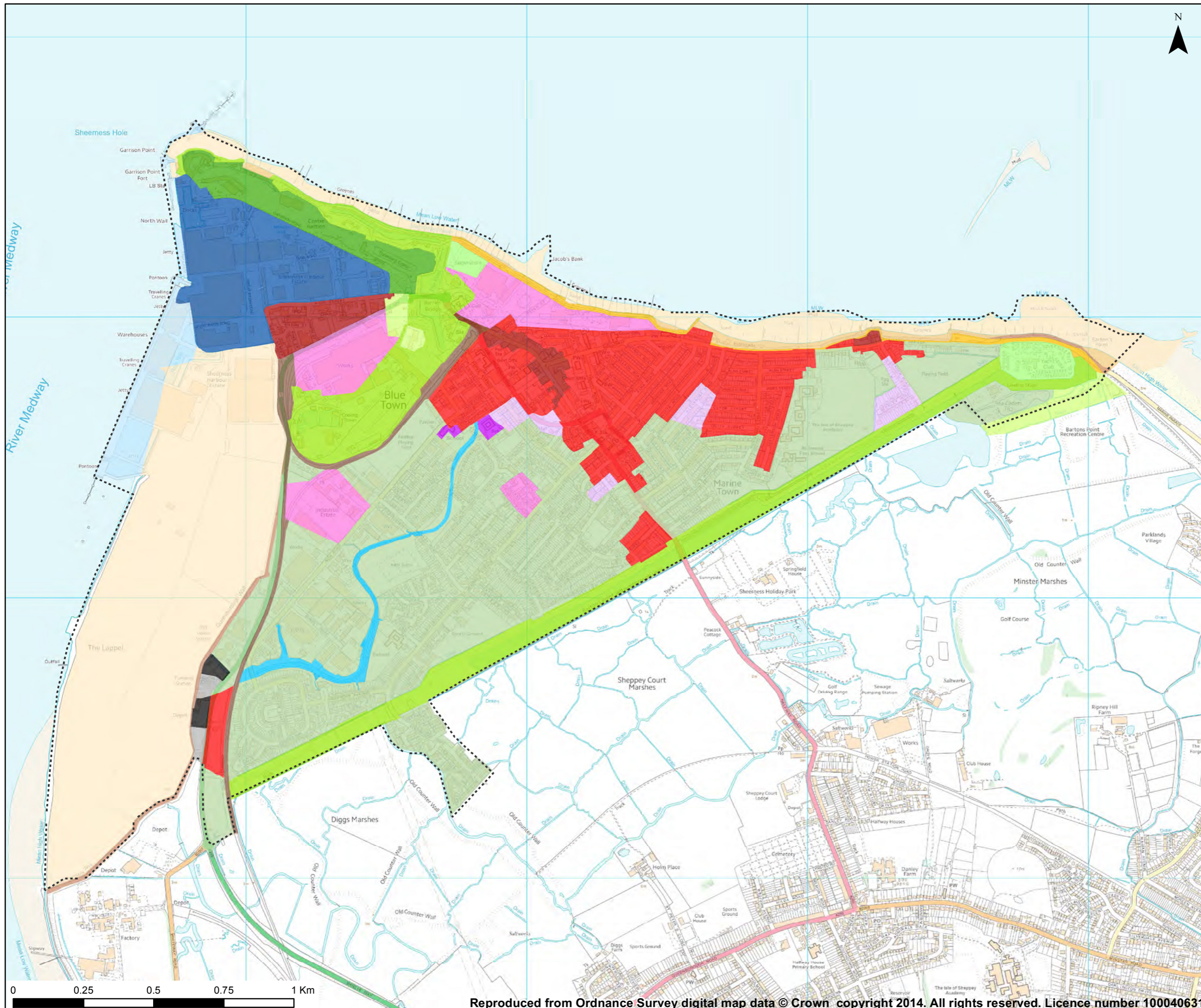
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**Figure 6: The early 20<sup>th</sup> century landscape**



- Project area
- Naval dockyard
- Defences - battery
- Defensive line
- Defences - fort
- Military support facility
- Historic settlement core
- Housing
- Industrial - light
- Utilities
- Recreation Area
- Allotments
- Schools and colleges
- Transport - rail corridor
- Transport - road corridor
- Enclosed rough grazing
- Esplanade
- Sea defences
- Intertidal
- Beach
- Sea
- Watercourse

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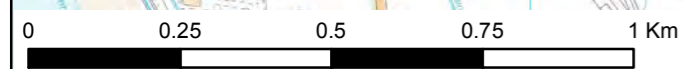
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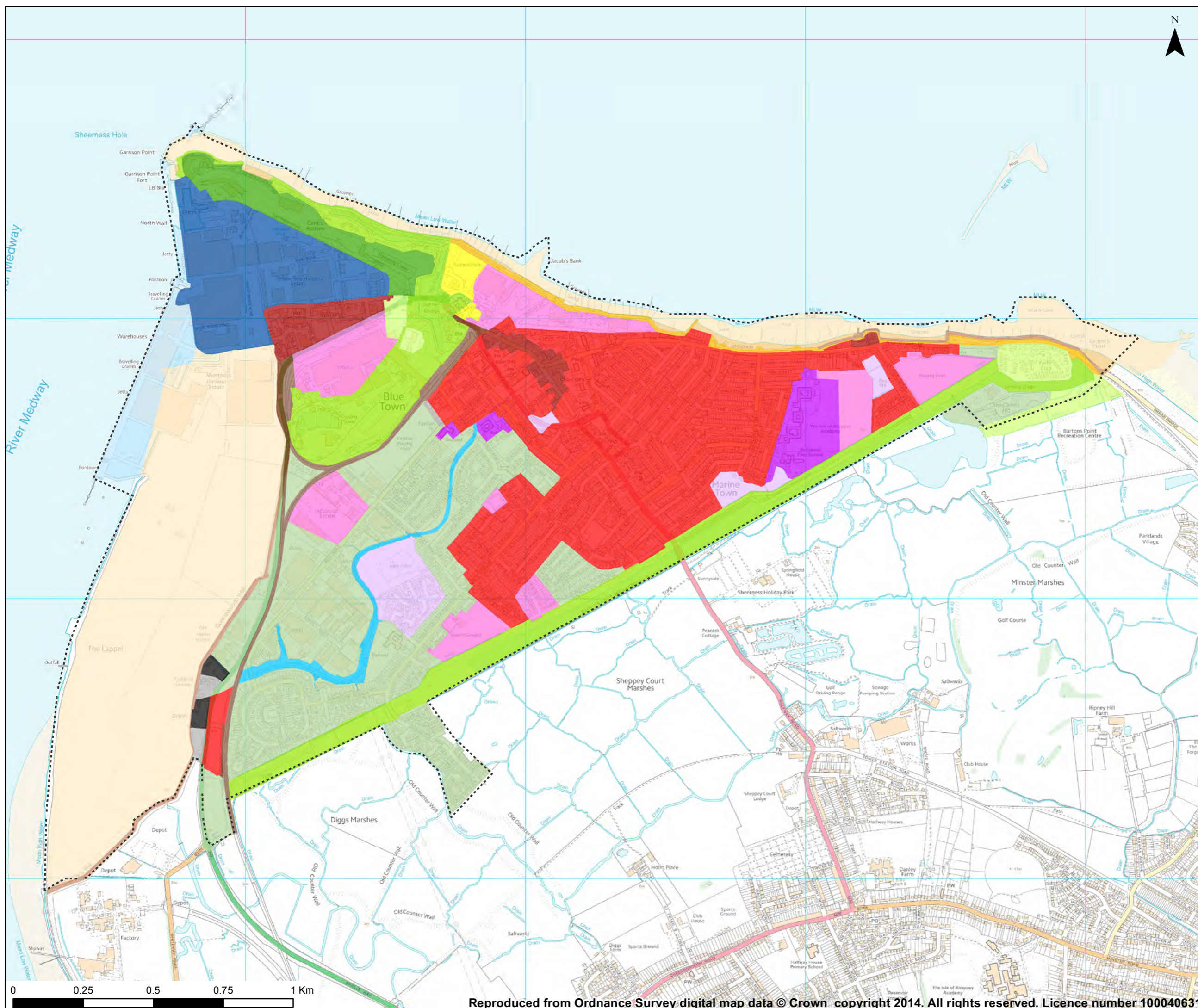
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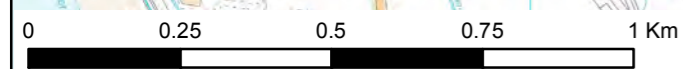
**Figure 7: The interwar century landscape**



-  Project area
-  Naval dockyard
-  Defensive line
-  Defences - fort
-  Military support facility
-  Historic settlement core
-  Housing
-  Industrial - light
-  Utilities
-  Holiday park
-  Recreation Area
-  Allotments
-  Schools and colleges
-  Transport - rail corridor
-  Transport - road corridor
-  Enclosed rough grazing
-  Esplanade
-  Sea defences
-  Intertidal
-  Beach
-  Sea
-  Watercourse

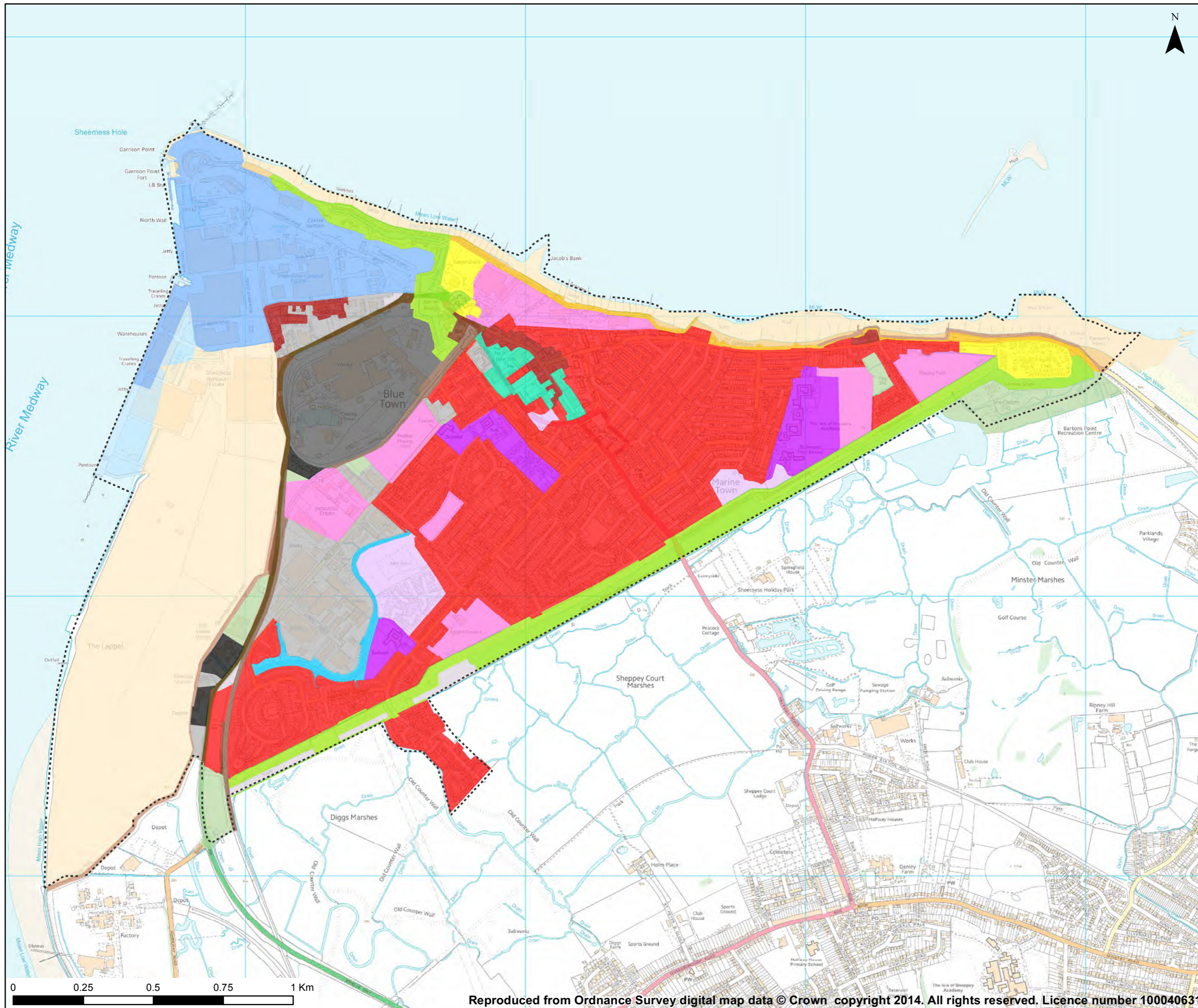


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Project Number		<b>61034355</b>
Figure Title		<b>Land use c.1945</b>
		
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**Figure 8: the later 20<sup>th</sup> century landscape**





- Project area
- Commercial port
- Defences - battery
- Defensive line
- Historic settlement core
- Housing
- Industrial - heavy
- Industrial - light
- Utilities
- Commercial properties
- Holiday park
- Recreation Area
- Allotments
- Schools and colleges
- Transport - rail corridor
- Transport - road corridor
- Enclosed rough grazing
- Marsh
- Esplanade
- Sea defences
- Intertidal
- Beach
- Sea
- Watercourse
- Waste ground

Client  
**Historic England**

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Figure Title  
**Land use c. 1975**



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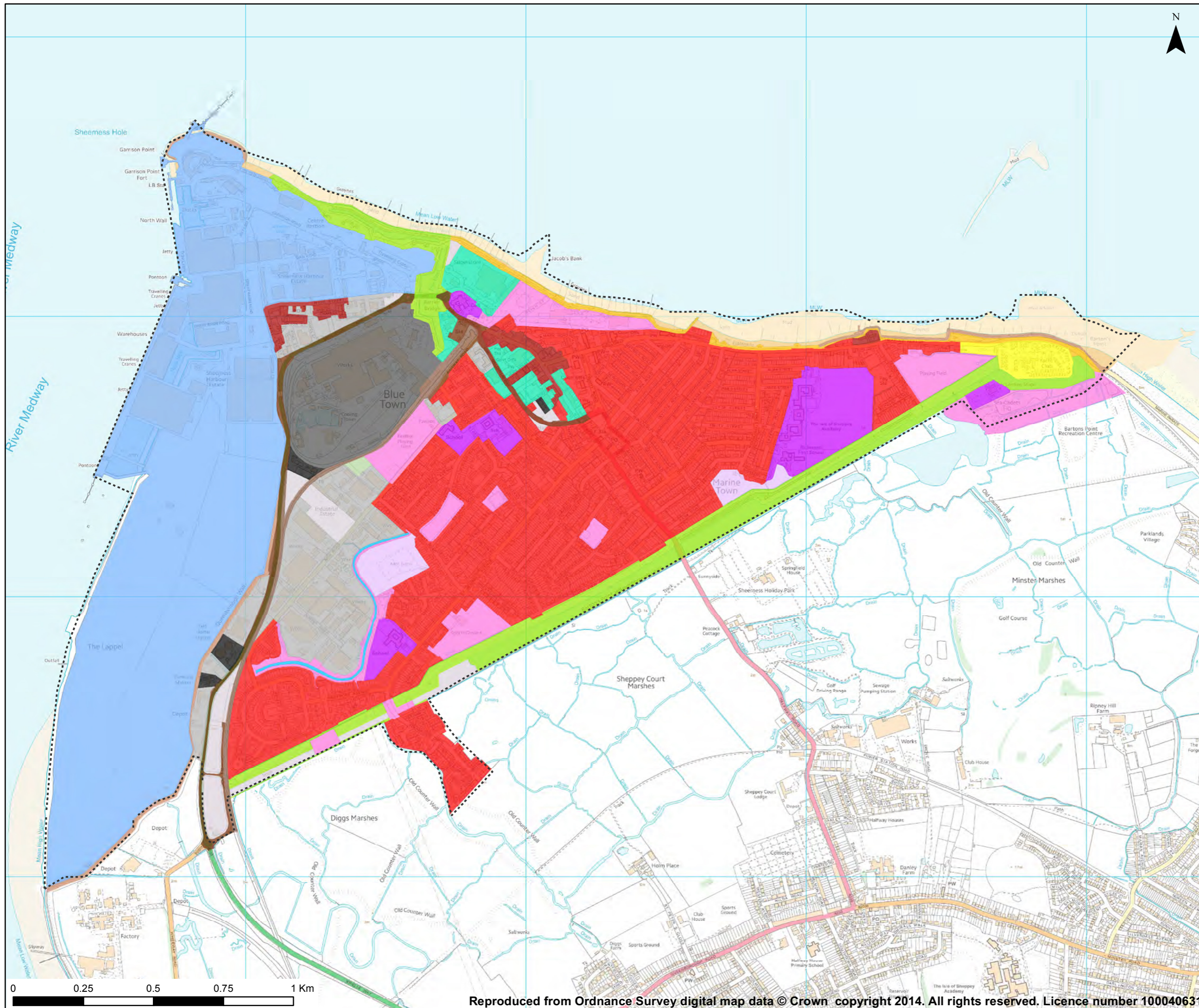
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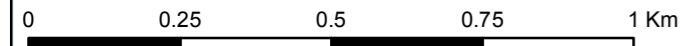
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**Figure 9: Present historic landscape character**

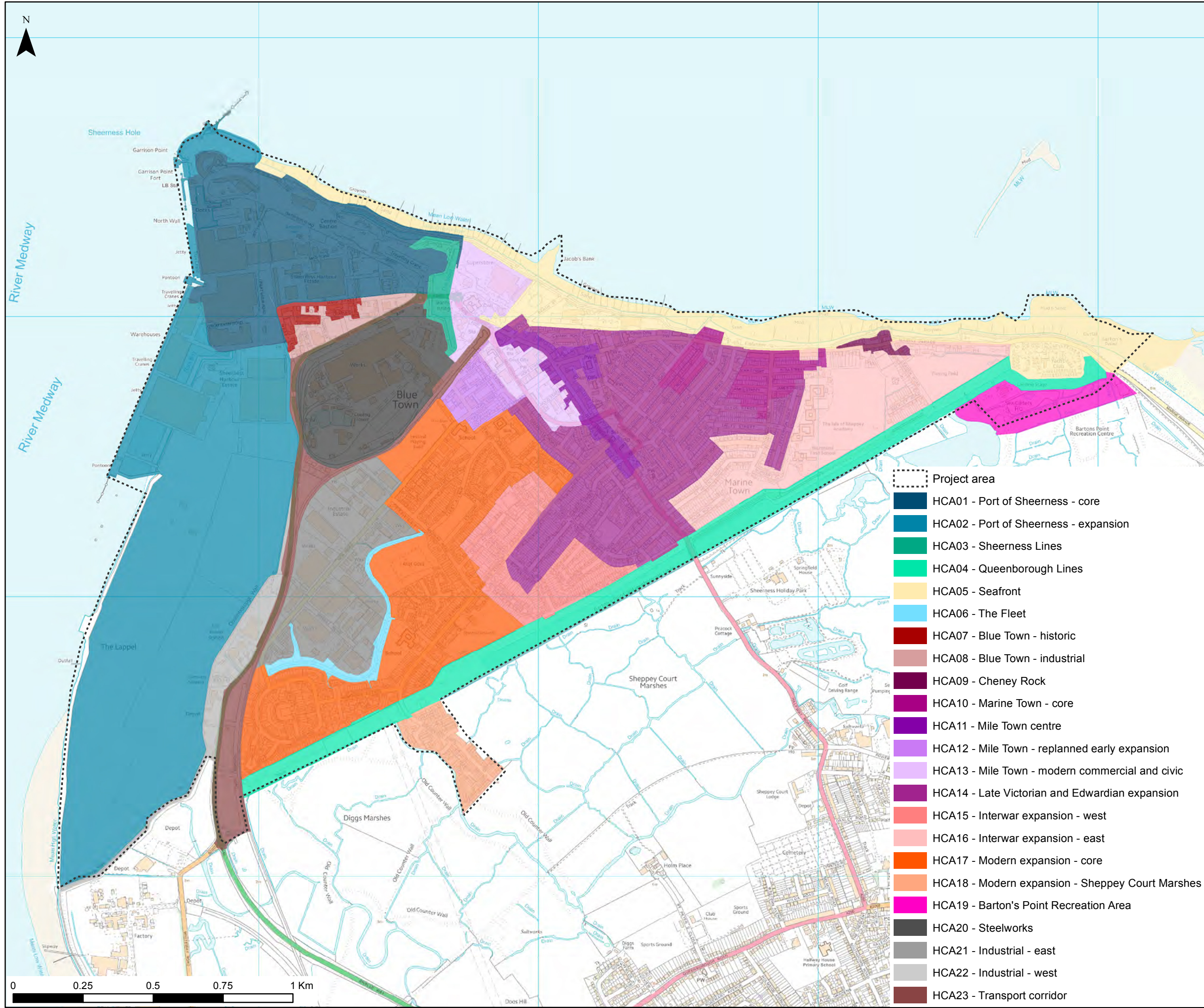


- Project area
- Commercial port
- Defensive line
- Historic settlement core
- Housing
- Industrial - heavy
- Industrial - light
- Utilities
- Commercial properties
- Holiday park
- Recreation Area
- Allotments
- Schools and colleges
- Transport - rail corridor
- Transport - road corridor
- Enclosed rough grazing
- Esplanade
- Sea defences
- Intertidal
- Beach
- Watercourse
- Waste ground



Client		<b>Historic England</b>	
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Figure Title		<b>Present day land use</b>	
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**Figure 10: Character Areas**



- Project area
- HCA01 - Port of Sheerness - core
- HCA02 - Port of Sheerness - expansion
- HCA03 - Sheerness Lines
- HCA04 - Queenborough Lines
- HCA05 - Seafront
- HCA06 - The Fleet
- HCA07 - Blue Town - historic
- HCA08 - Blue Town - industrial
- HCA09 - Cheney Rock
- HCA10 - Marine Town - core
- HCA11 - Mile Town centre
- HCA12 - Mile Town - replanned early expansion
- HCA13 - Mile Town - modern commercial and civic
- HCA14 - Late Victorian and Edwardian expansion
- HCA15 - Interwar expansion - west
- HCA16 - Interwar expansion - east
- HCA17 - Modern expansion - core
- HCA18 - Modern expansion - Sheppey Court Marshes
- HCA19 - Barton's Point Recreation Area
- HCA20 - Steelworks
- HCA21 - Industrial - east
- HCA22 - Industrial - west
- HCA23 - Transport corridor

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**Historic England**

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Figure Title  
**Character Areas**

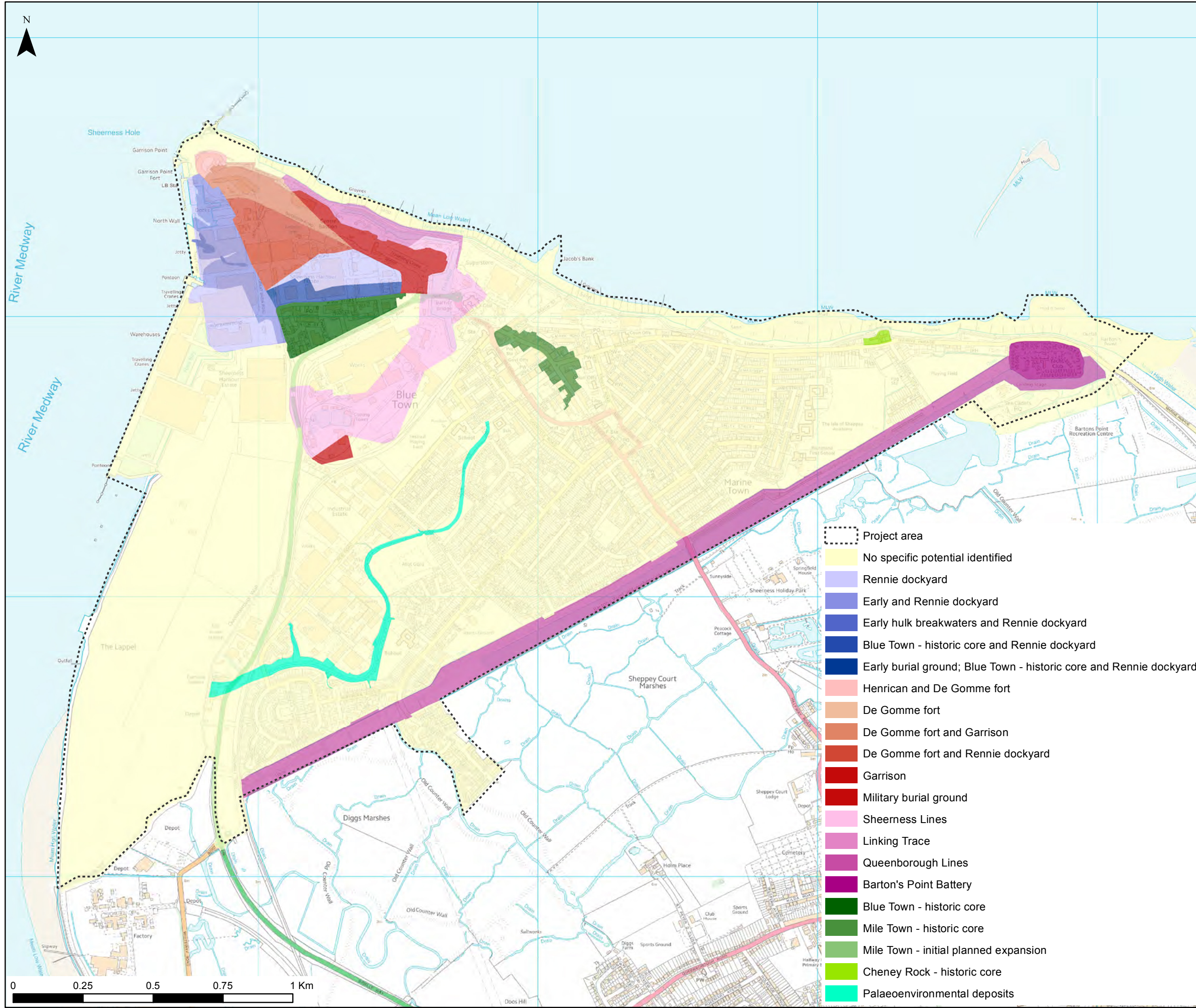


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**Figure 11: Archaeological potential**



- Project area
- No specific potential identified
- Rennie dockyard
- Early and Rennie dockyard
- Early hulk breakwaters and Rennie dockyard
- Blue Town - historic core and Rennie dockyard
- Early burial ground; Blue Town - historic core and Rennie dockyard
- Henrican and De Gomme fort
- De Gomme fort
- De Gomme fort and Garrison
- De Gomme fort and Rennie dockyard
- Garrison
- Military burial ground
- Sheerness Lines
- Linking Trace
- Queenborough Lines
- Barton's Point Battery
- Blue Town - historic core
- Mile Town - historic core
- Mile Town - initial planned expansion
- Cheney Rock - historic core
- Palaeoenvironmental deposits

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Characterisation**

Project Number  
**61034355**

Figure Title  
**Archaeological potential**



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Date	04/11/2015	Prepared By	MJC/PZD
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Figure No.	11	Revision	-
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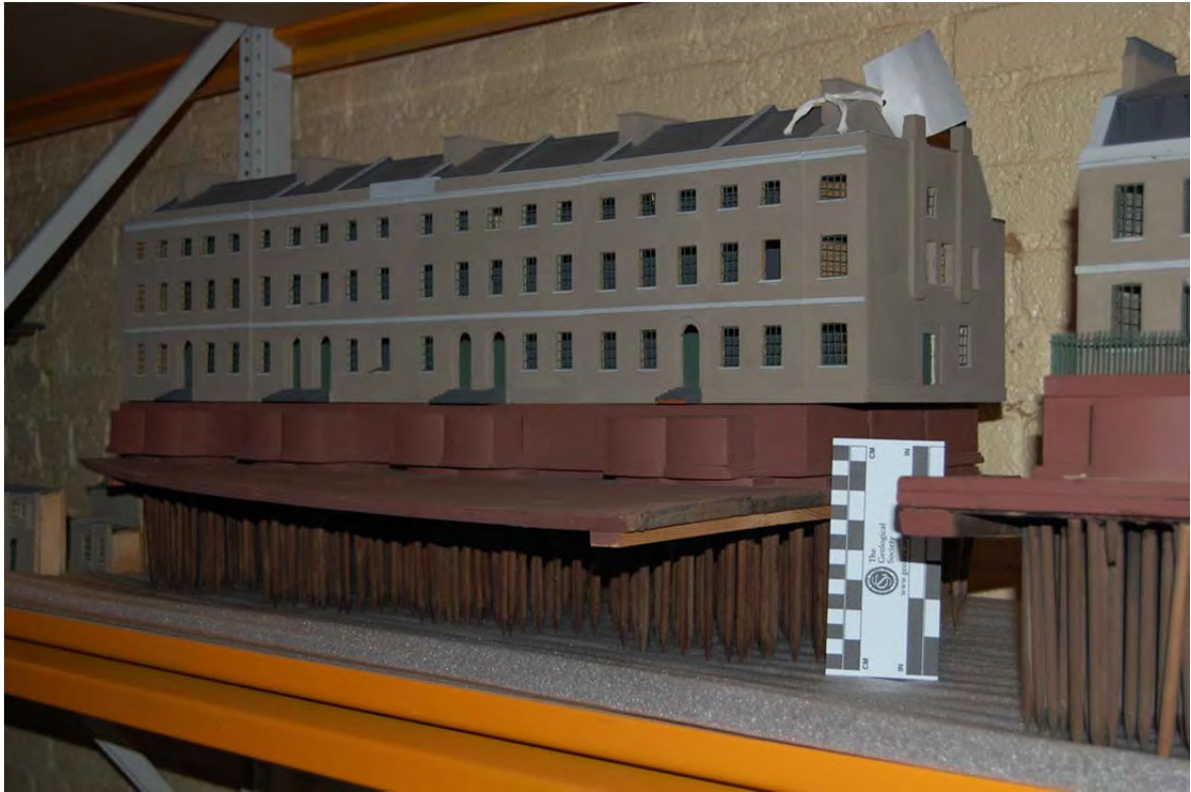


Plate 1: Sheerness Dockyard Model – Naval Terrace



Plate 2: Sheerness Dockyard Model – Dock 2





**Plate 3: Sheerness Dockyard Model – Dockyard Church**

## **APPENDIX 1 DATA STRUCTURE**

<b>Field Name</b>	<b>Description of field content</b>
Current_HLT	Historic land-use type (HLT) currently evident
CurrentSource	Source of current HLT attribution
CurrentStatus	Whether current HLT is in active use or inactive
HLT_e18C	HLT evident from mapping of this date
Srce_e18C	Source of HLT attributed for this date
HLT_c1800	HLT evident from mapping of this date
Srce_c1800	Source of HLT attributed for this date
HLT_m19C	HLT evident from mapping of this date
Srce_m19C	Source of HLT attributed for this date
HLT_l19C	HLT evident from mapping of this date
Srce_l19C	Source of HLT attributed for this date
HLT_e20C	HLT evident from mapping of this date
Srce_e20C	Source of HLT attributed for this date
HLT_m20C	HLT evident from mapping of this date
Srce_m20C	Source of HLT attributed for this date
HLT_l20thC	HLT evident from mapping of this date
Srce_l20thC	Source of HLT attributed for this date
CharArName	Name of character area
ArchPotl	Name of area of archaeological potential

N.B. the name of some fields has had to be truncated to fit within character limits within ArcMap

## **APPENDIX 2 PRIMARY ARCHIVAL SOURCES**

Source	Reference	Description	Date
Kent History Centre	n/a	1769 Andrews and Herbert Map of Kent	1769
The National Archives	MPH 1/293	Plan of buildings on Ordnance ground at Blue Town, Sheerness, Kent. Scale: 1 inch to 50 feet. Drawn by W. Booth, Capt RE.	1791
National Maritime Museum	ADM/Y/S/2	Plan of the Royal Dockyard at Sheerness.	1714
National Maritime Museum	ADM/Y/S/3	Plan of the Royal Dockyard at Sheerness.	1725
National Maritime Museum	ADM/Y/S/4	Plans (two on one paper) of the North and South part of the yard, signed Poole.	1749
National Maritime Museum	ADM/Y/S/22	Plan showing the workmen's lodgings finished and proposed, officers lodgings and stables.	c.1740
National Maritime Museum	SLR2148	Topographic model of the Royal Dockyard at Sheerness, Kent, in about 1774. This model is one of a set six commissioned by Lord Sandwich for George III in 1773-74, showing the Royal Dockyards as they were at the time. As with all six of these models (Chatham, Deptford, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Sheerness and Woolwich), ships of various sizes are shown at the different stages of construction ranging from just a keel through to a ship on the slipway ready for launching. These models are also extremely accurate and detailed and illustrate all the different processes, materials and buildings within the dockyards you required to build and maintain the fighting warship. This model includes frame models of the 'Nottingham' (rebuilt in 1745) and 'Mars', along with the bomb vessel 'Squirrel' (1755). Contemporary references have been found stating that the model of the 'Squirrel' was made by George Stockwell, one of the finest model makers of the late 18th century. There are also several old hulks in the mud births on the river, which were used for accommodation. Sheerness Dockyard was established in 1665 in a convenient situation at the mouth of the Medway, where the cleaning of ships and the storage of supplies had taken place since a fortification protecting the developing base at Chatham had been established there in the mid-16th century. Sheerness assumed as its primary function the cleaning, refitting and minor repair of ships rather than specialising in their construction, and except for a small ship in 1677, no vessel was built there until 1691. The absence of a nearby town, creating difficulties of lodging, provisioning and water supply, limited the expansion of the Dockyard and prevented it from attaining a position of major importance. The yard remained useful for cleaning and minor repairs, however, and ships were often sent there to be surveyed. To	c.1774

Source	Reference	Description	Date
		cope with an increasing number of vessels, the facilities were improved in the years 1742-45 and the yard was further enlarged between 1815 and 1826, but the lack of a victualling depot remained a major source of inconvenience. It was finally closed down in March 1960.	
National Maritime Museum	SLR2148	Duplicate of above.	c.1774
The National Archives	ADM 140/670	Sheerness, garrison, dockyard, Blue and Mile towns.	1800
The National Archives	ADM 140/1404	Geometrical elevation of a new dockyard designed for improvement of HM Naval Arsenal.	1812
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1103	<p>9 items extracted from ADM 106/3189. Detailed descriptions are given at item level. Detailed descriptions:</p> <p>(1) Kent: Sheerness. Plan and elevation of the new clock storehouse, showing two proposed passages for the delivery of stores. The prison and guardhouse are also shown. Reference table. Scale: 1 inch to 12 feet. Signed by S Jones. Originally enclosed with recommendation dated 13 August 1809 to the Navy Board.</p> <p>(2) Kent: Sheerness. Ground floor plan of the west end of the New Chapel, showing proposed additional pews. A seating plan of pews, showing also part of the walls, vestry and private entrance for the Commissioner, is also included. Scale: 1 inch to 4 feet. Originally accompanying petition dated 26-27 December 1814 with covering letter, requesting additional accommodation for Captains and Commodores in the New Chapel.</p> <p>(3-4) Kent: Sheerness. (3) Site plan of the magazine, with colouring to show proposed alterations. The clock storehouse, gateway, battery, and ordnance storehouse are also shown. (4) Plan of the magazine showing proposed alterations. The work room, magistrates' room and waiting room are also shown. Scales: (3) 1 inch to 50 feet; (4) 1 inch to 16 feet. Dimensions of sheets: (3) 20.5 cm x 31 cm; (4) 21 cm x 32 cm. Originally enclosed in letter dated 6 December 1814 from Mr Boyle.</p> <p>(5) Kent: Sheerness. Plan of ground on the west side of West Street, Blue Town. The Fountain Inn and the dockyard are also shown. Scale: 1 inch to 60 feet. Originally accompanying an offer dated 18 November 1813 from V Simpson, son in law of Mr Bennett, deceased, to sell the land to the Commissioners to the Navy Board.</p> <p>(6) Kent: Sheerness. Plan of a proposed additional schoolroom to be housed in the centre room of the magazine store, for use of the National Schools. Scale: 1 inch to 8 feet. Originally accompanying proposal for the schoolroom dated 2 August 1815 from Mr Boyle to the Commissioners of</p>	1809-1817

Source	Reference	Description	Date
		<p>the Navy.</p> <p>(7) Kent: Sheerness. Plan of the north end of HM Dockyard showing a proposed boundary for contractors. Docks, slips, temporary smithy, check office, cement shed, steam engine and kilns and the mess wall are also shown. Scale: 1 inch to 50 feet. Originally accompanying letter dated 16 January 1817 from Commander Boyle, Sheerness Yard to the Commissioners of the Navy.</p> <p>(8-9) Kent: Sheerness. (8) Plan of part of HM Dockyard and Majors Marsh, showing drains to be filled in. Officers' and Commissioners' gardens, chapel, wells and New Road are also shown. (9) Plan showing necessary additions to the covered drain to be constructed in Majors Marsh 'in the event of the Moat being kept dry'. Signed by William Cawham. Scales: 1 inch to 100 feet. Dimensions of sheets: (8) 32 cm x 39.5 cm; (9) 20 cm x 32 cm.</p>	
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1315/48	Kent: Sheerness. Plan showing the proposed site for an Ordnance storehouse and quay. Scale: 1 inch to 50 feet. Compass indicator. Signed by Lieutenant Colonel H Rudyerd, Royal Engineers, 14 April 1806.	1806
The National Archives	WO 55/1605/3	Sheerness. Sketch - land of Ordnance applied for by local board of health	1853
The National Archives	WO 55/2340	Sheerness. Lands and Buildings Owned and hired by the Ordnance	1806
The National Archives	WO 55/2671	Sheerness. Lands and Buildings Owned and hired by the Ordnance	1830
The National Archives	WO 55/2834	Sheerness. Lands and Buildings Owned and hired by the Ordnance	1841
The National Archives	WO 55/3008	Sheerness. Lands and Buildings Owned and hired by the Ordnance	1851
The National Archives	WO 78/3539	Sheerness Yard Drill Battery (Naval) Plan and sections of proposed gunnery establishment and Revolver Range.	1895
Kent History Centre	U3681	WAR DEPARTMENT MAPS OF SHEERNESS GARRISON Ordnance Survey 25 inch _ 1 mile map showing Garrison, prepared for War Department	1890
Kent History Centre	UD/SH/T1/8	Sale particulars to property in Mile Town, Blue Town, and Marine Parade, Sheerness, and High Street, Queenborough 1898, 1921, 1926.	1898-1926
Kent History Centre	UD/SH/TP/2/1	Small plan of Mile Town Redevelopment Scheme	1947
Kent History Centre		KHC Town Map 1950 Written analysis - reports and correspondence File 2 Ref C P1 19 5 251	1950
Kent History Centre		KHC Town Map 1950 Written analysis - reports and correspondence File 3 Ref C P1 19 5 252	1950
Kent History Centre		KHC Town Map 1950 Written analysis- reports and correspondence File 1 Ref C P1 19 5 250	1950

Source	Reference	Description	Date
Kent History Centre		KHC Town Map 1958 Admiralty and War Dept - disposal of redundant properties- reports, correspondence and plans Written analysis- reports and documents	1958
Kent History Centre		KHC Town Map 1958-9 Reports, correspondence and plans File 1 C P1 19 5 243	1958-9
Kent History Centre		KHC Town Map 1960-1 Reports, correspondence and plans File 2 Ref C P1 19 5 245	1960-1
Kent History Centre		KHC Town Map 1961 Reports, correspondence and plans File 3 Ref C P1 19 5 245 1961	1961
Kent History Centre		KHC Town Map 1961-62 Reports, correspondence and plans Ref C P1 19 5 243	1961-2
Kent History Centre		KHC Town Map 1962-3 Reports, correspondence and plans File 5 Ref C P1 19 5 247	1962-3
Kent History Centre		KHC Town Map 1964-5 Reports, correspondence and plans File 6 Ref C P1 19 5 248	1964-5
Kent History Centre		KHC Town Map 1965-1974 Reports, correspondence and plans File 7 Ref C P1 19 5 249	1965-1975
Kent History Centre		Mile Town regeneration & newspaper cuttings	1940s
Kent History Centre		Newspaper cuttings re dockyard closure and Papers on Mile Town redevelopment	Mid-20th Century
The National Archives	ADM 267/130	Sheerness Dockyard, 11 Sept 1940	1940-1942
The National Archives	HLG 79/642	Mile Town Area redevelopment: Hope Street clearance	1947-1950
National Maritime Museum	ADM/Y/S/8	Plan of the Royal Dockyard at Sheerness.	1735
National Maritime Museum	ADM/Y/S/9	Plan of the Royal Dockyard at Sheerness.	1773
National Maritime Museum	ADM/Y/S/18	Plan with the extensions marked in.	c. 1740
National Maritime Museum	ADM/Y/S/25	Plan of the Storehouses, Offices and officers and workmen's lodgings in the Garrison belonging to the Navy, undated.	c. 1740
Kent History Centre	UD/SH/TP/1-14, UD/SH/TP/15-16 & UD/SH/TP/17	Photos of derelict property in Sheerness. Aerial photographs of western Sheerness. Aerial photograph of Mile Town.	1940s.



Source	Reference	Description	Date
Institute of Civil Engineers	n/a	Rennie Collection. View of the Royal Dockyard of Sheerness, looking from the northward, 1824	Published 1850
Institute of Civil Engineers	n/a	Rennie Collection. View of the Great Basin, looking from the Medway, Sheerness Dockyard.	1854
Institute of Civil Engineers	n/a	Rennie Collection. View of the northern portion of the new dockyard at Sheerness.	1854
National Maritime Museum	BHC0294	Dutch Ships in the Medway, June 1667. A panoramic bird's-eye view taken from above Sheerness on the Isle of Sheppey and looking roughly south-west towards Chatham and Rochester. In the distance is Rochester Castle and Cathedral, with Upnor Castle discernible to the right and the winding River Medway visible in the centre of the picture. The painting shows Admiral de Ruyter's bold foray into English waters, an event that took place during the Second Dutch War, 1665-67, following the Peace Conference at Breda in May 1667.	Late 17th century
National Maritime Museum	PAI0855	(Recto) Sheerness Dockyard from stern port of the 'Trafalgar', 25 January 1851; (Verso) 'Monarch' at Sheerness from the 'Trafalgar' 29 January 1851. No. 7 of 36 (PAI0849 - PAI0884). (Recto) Inscribed top left: 'Sheerness / Dock Yard / Jany 25th 51/ seen from stern port of Trafalgar'. Identified at the bottom are the receiving ship 'Minotaur' on moorings in front of Blockhouse Point and the '10'clock boat' (steamer) in the foreground. This appears to be a naval picket boat carrying officers out from the Dockyard to ships in the anchorage. The Commissioner's House can be seen to the right of the fort, with a ship shed and other buildings round one of the basin entrances, and a small schooner close in off the wharf. On the far left other shipping can be seen passing in the Thames. 'Minotaur' was a 74-gun 3rd rate, launched at Chatham in 1816. She was used on harbour service from 1842 and (as 'Hermes' from 1866) broken up at Sheerness in 1869. (Verso) Inscribed top left, 'Monarch. Sheerness / Jany 29th 51 / from Stern Port Trafalgar'. The view is up the Medway towards Chatham, from the Sheerness side, showing 'Monarch' from off the port bow, with her topmasts struck down. Though she carries both main and topmast yards she is on harbour service, without her running rigging; she flies the white ensign. The river curves to the right beyond the ship, to whose left in the distance is the smoke of a steamer, probably a naval picket vessel if their presence in Mendis's other Sheerness sketches is a guide. A stiff breeze is blowing roughly from the east and the choppy river is of an authentically muddy colour.	1851

Source	Reference	Description	Date
National Maritime Museum	PAD7889	Sheerness Yard from the window of the Fountain Inn. Print from Moses' 'Sketches of Shipping', entitled 'Sheerness Yard from the window of the Fountain Inn'. Signed, inscribed and dated by the artist. The view is from a bedroom window in the Fountain Inn looking north towards the Medway. There is a preparatory drawing (PAE9954) in the NMM collection.	1824
National Maritime Museum	PAD7890	Sheerness Yard from the window of the Fountain Inn. Print from Moses' 'Sketches of Shipping', entitled 'Sheerness Yard from the window of the Fountain Inn'. Signed, inscribed and dated by the artist. A view from a window of the Fountain Inn over Sheerness Dockyard toward the Medway. There is a preparatory drawing (PAE9939), dated 9 September 1824, in the NMM collection.	1824
National Maritime Museum	PY9378	View of Sheerness. Here, van de Velde depicts Sheerness, a port town on the mouth of the River Medway in Kent. The drawing has a relatively low horizon and an expansive sky. The town's dockyard is viewed from just outside the palisade to the north. On the extreme left are a bell tower and a ship in dock. There are also a number of little dwellings depicted on the left, as well as masts of ships in the background extending into the sky. To the right is the Medway, with ships and vessels at anchor. The drawing is inscribed on the back in ink with the number of a former owner, Whyte: 'No. 28 RW'. It has been dated based on its watermark and presumed to have been drawn around the time of van de Velde's return to the Medway after the battle of Schooneveld.	c.1673
National Maritime Museum	PY9701	The opening of Sheerness docks, 5 September 1823. William John Huggins (artist & publisher); Edward Duncan (engraver)	1828
The National Archives	IR 124/3/128	OS Sheet Reference: Kent XIII 6 NW (Sheerness)	c.1910
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1103/1	Kent: Sheerness. Plan and elevation of the new clock storehouse, showing two proposed passages for the delivery of stores. The prison and guardhouse are also shown. Reference table. Scale: 1 inch to 12 feet. Signed by S Jones. Originally enclosed with recommendation dated 13 August 1809 to the Navy Board.	1809
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1103/2	Kent: Sheerness. Ground floor plan of the west end of the New Chapel, showing proposed additional pews. A seating plan of pews, showing also part of the walls, vestry and private entrance for the Commissioner, is also included. Scale: 1 inch to 4 feet. Originally accompanying petition dated 26-27 December 1814 with covering letter, requesting additional accommodation for Captains and Commodores in the New Chapel.	1814

Source	Reference	Description	Date
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1103/3-4	Kent: Sheerness. (3) Site plan of the magazine, with colouring to show proposed alterations. The clock storehouse, gateway, battery, and ordnance storehouse are also shown. (4) Plan of the magazine showing proposed alterations. The work room, magistrates' room and waiting room are also shown. Scales: (3) 1 inch to 50 feet; (4) 1 inch to 16 feet. Dimensions of sheets: (3) 20.5 cm x 31 cm; (4) 21 cm x 32 cm. Originally enclosed in letter dated 6 December 1814 from Mr Boyle.	1814
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1103/5	Kent: Sheerness. Plan of ground on the west side of West Street, Blue Town. The Fountain Inn and the dockyard are also shown. Scale: 1 inch to 60 feet. Originally accompanying an offer dated 18 November 1813 from V Simpson, son in law of Mr Bennett, deceased, to sell the land to the Commissioners to the Navy Board.	1813
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1103/6	Kent: Sheerness. Plan of a proposed additional schoolroom to be housed in the centre room of the magazine store, for use of the National Schools. Scale: 1 inch to 8 feet. Originally accompanying proposal for the schoolroom dated 2 August 1815 from Mr Boyle to the Commissioners of the Navy.	1815
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1103/7	Kent: Sheerness. Plan of the north end of HM Dockyard showing a proposed boundary for contractors. Docks, slips, temporary smithy, check office, cement shed, steam engine and kilns and the mess wall are also shown. Scale: 1 inch to 50 feet. Originally accompanying letter dated 16 January 1817 from Commander Boyle, Sheerness Yard to the Commissioners of the Navy.	1814
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1103/8-9	Kent: Sheerness. (8) Plan of part of HM Dockyard and Majors Marsh, showing drains to be filled in. Officers' and Commissioners' gardens, chapel, wells and New Road are also shown. (9) Plan showing necessary additions to the covered drain to be constructed in Majors Marsh 'in the event of the Moat being kept dry'. Signed by William Cawham. Scales: 1 inch to 100 feet. Dimensions of sheets: (8) 32 cm x 39.5 cm; (9) 20 cm x 32 cm.	1814
The National Archives	MFQ 1/41/1	Kent: Isle of Sheppey. 'Copy of plan of Sheerness, 1738': map of the town showing the embankment beach formed since 1801 and a place proposed by the Naval Department for the collection of cement. Reference table. Scale: 1 inch to 200 feet. Signed: Lieutenant Colonel G Graydon, Commanding Royal Engineers, 16 July 1836. Originally accompanying a letter from Graydon to the Inspector General of Fortifications, 16 July 1836.	1836
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1315/10	Kent: Sheerness. (10) Plan of Bastions Nos 1 and 2 showing the proposed powder magazines, shifting houses and traverse. (12) Plan of a fortress between Minster Bastion and Queenborough Bastion showing the position of an old magazine used partly as a depot for receiving and issuing stores for the sea service. Scales: (10) 1 inch to 100 feet;	1807

Source	Reference	Description	Date
		(12) 1 inch to 50 feet. Signed by Colonel H Rudyerd, Royal Engineers, and originally accompanying his letter dated 22 May 1807. Dimensions of sheets: (10) 35.5 cm x 48 cm; (12) 35.5 cm x 36 cm.	
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1315/13-14	Kent: Sheerness. Two sheets of plans and sections of the present garrison hospital at Mile Town hired by the Board of Ordnance from Mr Chalk of Queenborough. Scales: 1 inch to 5 feet. (13) signed by Lieutenant Colonel H Rudyerd, Royal Engineers, 2 October 1807 and originally accompanying his letter dated 1 October 1807. Dimensions of sheets: (13) 46 cm x 34.5 cm; (14) 43 cm x 34.5 cm.	1807
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1315/34-35	Kent: Sheerness. Two sheets of plans and sections showing (34) the west end of the north storehouse on the gunwharf showing the construction of the floor; and (35) the construction of the floor of the north storehouse on the gunwharf 'which has sunk in consequence of the great weight of Case & Grape Shot in a small space 19th April 1806'. Reference notes to the sunken floor on (34). Scales: 1 inch to 5 feet. (34) Signed by Lieutenant Colonel H Rudyerd, Royal Engineers, 9 May 1806 and originally accompanying his letter of that date. (35) Signed by Lieutenant Colonel Rudyerd and referred to in his letter dated 14 April 1806, itself originally accompanying a letter dated 19 April 1806. Dimensions of sheets: (34) 37.5 cm x 58 cm; (35) 50 cm x 35 cm.	1806
The National Archives	MFQ 1/1315/36	Kent: Sheerness. Plan of Ordnance land showing a proposed new road and bridge, the site of a house and garden for the Lieutenant Governor and part of Blue Town. Scale: 1 inch to 50 feet. Compass indicator. Dated at Sheerness 22 August 1805.	1805
The National Archives	MPH 1/293	Plan of buildings on Ordnance ground at Blue Town, Sheerness, Kent. Scale: 1 inch to 50 feet. Drawn by W. Booth, Capt RE.	1791
The National Archives	MPH 1/942/2	'Sketch of Lot N o. 2 Ordnance Land leased by the Board of Ordnance to J.B. Johnson, Blue Town Sheerness'. Scale: 6 inches to 18 chains. Compass indicator. Signed by G S Tilley, Lieutenant, Royal Engineers, 8 August 1853. Pencilled notes added by S B Howlett and others relate to the extent of the letting.	1853
The National Archives	MPH 1/942/3	'Sheerness. Sketch Shewing the present Channel from the new Sluice & also the channel cut by the Pier Commis rs. ...'. Scale: 5.5 inches to 110 [?feet]. Compass indicator. Signed by J W Lovell, Captain, Royal Engineers; and by W B Ord, Lieutenant Colonel, Royal Engineers, 15 June 1852. A duplicate of this plan was sent to the Ordnance Solicitor.	1852
The National Archives	MPH 1/942/4	'Sheerness. Plan of a portion of the Ordnance Property shewing the Site... proposed to be sold for New Gas Works'. Scale: 1 inch to 200 feet. Compass indicator. Originally drawn to accompany the Commanding Royal Engineer's	1855

Source	Reference	Description	Date
		letter of 31 March 1855.	
The National Archives	MPH 1/908/1	Kent: Sheerness. 'Sketch showing the locality of the Ordnance Ditch ...'. Scale: 5.33 inches to 800 feet. Signed by G Whitman, Capt RE, 12 July 1847.	1847
The National Archives	MPHH 1/599/1	Plan showing proposed site for Admiral's house and land required for the Dockyard at Sheerness. Reference table. Scale: 1 inch to 50 feet. Compass indicator. Copied by S B Howlett, Inspector General's Office, 14 June 1827; from an original plan signed by George L Taylor, Navy Office, 1 June 1827. Annotated: 'I consent to surrender to the Admiralty the ground...on the conditions stated in the Admiralty letter of 31 st May 1827. (signed) Anglesey'.	1827
The National Archives	MPHH 1/599/2 & 4-5	(4) Plan of Mile Town and the ground in front of the New Lines. Scale: 1 inch to 200 feet. Compass indicator. By W Chambers, Royal Military Surveyor and Draughtsman. Signed Major General H Rudyerd, to accompany his letters to Lieutenant Colonel Mann, dated 28 November and 20 December 1815. Later MS annotation: 'See L t [Lieutenant] General Mann's Letter to M r Crew ...'; 3 January 1816. (2) Similar version to (4); copied by J Nightingale, March 1821. (5) Similar version to (4); copied by Thomas Beer, 2nd Class Royal Military Surveyor and Draughtsman, December 1815. Dimensions: (2) 54.9 cm x 97.8 cm; (4) 56.1 cm x 100.1 cm; (5) 63.5 cm x 97.8 cm.	1815-1821
The National Archives	MPHH 1/599/3 & 7	(7) 'No.32 Plan of Bankstown and Miletown Sheerness': showing the towns, fortifications and proposed pier. Reference table. Scale: 1 inch to 200 feet [1:2400]. Inset: section of the pier. MS pencil additions. (3) Similar version based on (7). Approximate scale: 1 inch to 275 feet [1:3300]. Annotated: 'Sent to Gen l [General] Mann with a Minute of the Board [of Ordnance] of the 16 th Feb. 1827, on a letter from Sir E.Banks, of 10 th Feb 1827'. Appears to be a scaled reduction based on (7). Dimensions: (3) 55.1 cm x 74.9 cm; (7) 62.7 cm x 94.2 cm.	1827
The National Archives	MPHH 1/599/6	Plan of Bankstown and Miletown. Scale: 1 inch to 400 feet [1:4800]. Compass indicator. MS pencil annotation: 'This Plan belongs to Sir Edw d Banks and it is desirable that it should be returned to him. The Land coloured deep Pink is already built upon, the part coloured light Pink are projected ...'.	1827
The National Archives	MR 1/1258	Kent: Isle of Sheppey: Sheerness. Map on two sheets, showing numbered land lots: (1) covering coastal areas, including Blue Town, Mile Town and the Cheyney Rock oyster beds; (2) covering areas immediately inland (south) of those shown on item (1). Scale: 1 inch to 3 chains. [East at the top]. Both sheets endorsed: 'Tithe Survey ...Capt. Dawson ...'; this map was apparently copied from the tithe map of Minster parish.	1848

Source	Reference	Description	Date
The National Archives	MR 1/1367	2 items. (2) 'Plan of an Estate belonging to Sir Edward Banks surrounding Mile Town at Sheerness in the Isle of Sheppey in the County of Kent'. Reference note. Scale: 1 inch to about 3 chains. Compass star. Surveyed by E and G M Driver, August 1827; this copy made by J Nightingale, November 1827. (1) Reference table to acreages of the land lots shown on item (2).	1827
The National Archives	MRQ 1/29	1 item (accompanying Board of Ordnance correspondence on the boundary line between Ordnance and Royal Navy lands May 1817) extracted from WO 44/141. Kent: Sheerness. Plan of the dockyard and adjacent areas showing the boundary line, defensive lines, batteries, docks and buildings. Mayors Marsh and the High Street, Blue Town are also shown. Scale: 1 inch to 50 feet. Signed by John Rennie, 2 August 1816. Copied by G Williams RMS&D 28 November 1816. Annotated 'Signed Robert Pilkington, Col. Royal Engineers with a letter to Lt. Gen. Mann dated 11th September 1816'. ('too long to photograph in one shot, so photographed in sections')	1816
The National Archives	WO 78/587	Kent: Isle of Sheppey: Sheerness. Eight maps. (1) Rough sketch map of land on the east bank of the River Fleet, south of Mile Town High Street, showing the acreage of numbered land lots. Compass indicator. (2) Map showing properties and drains adjacent to the High Street. Copied from an original map supplied to the local Board of Health by Mr John Court. Stamped at the Royal Engineers' Office, Sheerness, 16 October 1860. (3) Sketch plan showing a drain and a fence adjacent to the High Street. (4) Rough sketch map showing government ditches in Mile Town and adjacent coastal and inland areas. Scale: 1 inch to 3 chains [1:2,376]. Compass indicator. Signed by Lieutenant Colonel Montague, Commanding Royal Engineer. (5) Copy of item (4), on tracing cloth. (6-7) Two copies of item (8), on tracing cloth. (8) Street map of the whole town showing government ditches; also showing the sheetlines of detailed maps of particular areas [none of which are filed at this reference]. Scale: 1 inch to 3 chains. Compass indicator. Item (4) originally produced to accompany a report from the Commanding Royal Engineer, 23 February 1861. The War Office map docket book (which was the original means of reference to the War Office maps) states that all of these items were originally used by the Court of Chancery in the case of Felkin v Herbert, and received from the Solicitor, War Office, 16 July 1864.	1860

<b>Source</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
British Library		<p>A Map of the Isle of Sheppey. This map of the Isle of Sheppey dates from 1574 and is thought to be the work of the cartographer Robert Lythe. Lythe was a cartographer of note as he created the first accurate map of Ireland while under the employ of the Crown and is therefore comparable to Christopher Saxton in his importance in the context of the history of cartography.</p> <p>This map was created for the purposes of defence and also to solve the problem of drainage in the area. The emphasis on streams and waterways suggests a link with the repeated attempts to avoid the silting up of Sandwich Haven by increasing the amount of water it could hold. The works were to be financed by a local levy, hence perhaps the prominence of names which may be a guide to apportionment.</p>	1574

## **APPENDIX 3 CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS**



### **HCA 01: Port of Sheerness – core**

This area comprises the core operation area of the commercial port. Whilst much of the area is currently occupied by large modern industrial warehousing, since the area comprises land formerly occupied by the Royal Naval dockyard and garrison many traces of these former uses survive and assist in defining this area as distinct from the more recent areas of the port. Additionally, much of the external boundary of this HCA is defined by features deriving from these earlier uses; the southern boundary of the HCA is formed by the 1820s dockyard boundary wall whilst the northern boundary is formed by defensive work of 17th to 19th century date, including a visible section of the De Gomme work. The presence of these distinctive features on the most publicly visible edges of the HCA contributes to recognition of this HCA as distinct from the surrounding landscape.

Owing to extensive demolitions between the early 1960s and early 1970s the survival of earlier naval and military structures is patchy and varies across the HCA. Consequently, extensive coherent groups of earlier structures are rare which militates against their identification as a separate HCA. The areas of the HCA in which coherent groups of earlier structures survive are:

- i. At the northern boundary where Garrison Point fort, the Indented Lines, the Linking Trace and the Sheerness Lines survive;
- ii. At the Boat Basin and Gun Wharf where many buildings of the 1820s dockyard survive around contemporary basins and dry docks; and
- iii. Adjacent to the dockyard boundary to Blue Town High Street. In this area many of the original dockyard structures and much of the original layout survive. This is disrupted in the centre of the area by clearance of buildings and construction of a large modern warehousing area. To the north and west of this warehousing, dockyard stores and other support buildings survive whilst to the east lie officers and other officials housing and the dockyard church plus associated gardens and landscaping.

Whilst these areas are publicly inaccessible, many of these structures are visible from adjacent paths and roads. Garrison Point fort, the Centre Bastion gun emplacement towers and the dockyard church are all highly visible and act as local landmarks.

In the remainder of the HCA, earlier structures and features are visible more sparsely and comprise a former mast house, in the north-west corner of the HCA, and the former boundary wall of the naval dockyard, which forms a major internal division in the northern part of the HCA. In addition, there are known buried remains associated with infilled dry docks, basins and channels and there are likely to be others associated with the foundations of structures that were demolished early in the life of the commercial port.

The majority of surviving dockyard structures are listed buildings and these include several highly graded structures such as the grade I Boat Store and the grade II\* dry docks, housing and dockyard church. There are several buildings shown on a 1958 Admiralty disposal plan of the dockyard (Kent Archives CC/P1/19/258) which remain and are unlisted. Much of this HCA lies within the *Sheerness Royal Naval Dockyard and Blue Town Conservation Area*. The Conservation Area Appraisal covers many of the surviving dockyard structures and their legibility well (DPP Heritage, 2011).

Many of the listed buildings within the port are on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register. Recent work on the dockyard housing has sought to address the decline of these structures.



**Photograph 1: HCA01 – junction of Indented Lines and Linking Trace**



**Photograph 2: HCA01 – visible section of De Gomme fortification surmounted by later defensive work at the northern port boundary**



**Photograph 3: HCA01 - Centre Bastion emplacements, Garrison Point Fort and defensive line at the northern port boundary**



**Photograph 4: HCA01 – port interior showing listed structures: (L-R) Dockyard Church, Dockyard Wall, North Gate House and South Gate House**



**Photograph 5: HCA01 – Dockyard Church**



**Photograph 6: HCA01 – Dockyard Terrace**



**Photograph 7: HCA01 – listed Dockyard Wall adjacent to junction of High Street and West street, Blue Town, showing blocked former South Gate**

**HCA02: Port of Sheerness – expansion**

This HCA comprises areas of the port which have been reclaimed, either from the intertidal zone or the Medway channel, since the 1970s. In the north of the HCA this consists of jetties, hard-standings used for aggregate storage and now-defunct ferry embarkation infrastructure. In the south of the HCA this consists of quays built out from the edge of the naval dockyard core and an extensive area of hard-standing built on land reclaimed from the Lappel. The northern tip of the Lappel reclamation contains warehousing whilst the remainder is open and used for storage of cars.

As this HCA contains land of very recent origin, no early features or structures exist within it.

### HCA03: Sheerness Lines

This HCA comprises the only largely unaltered section of the Sheerness Lines which remains visible above ground. The Lines date to c.1800 and were originally constructed to protect Royal Naval dockyard and Blue Town. The HCA comprises the facing ramparts and associated parapet walls, the wet ditch and the section of Bridge Road which runs across the Lines. With the exception of the section adjacent to the Tesco car park, the ramparts are highly overgrown with vegetation. That adjoining Tesco forms part of a footpath to the seafront and appears well maintained, with the crest regularly mown.

Bridge Road runs on a brick viaduct as it passes through the Lines. The viaduct brickwork is similar in appearance to work found elsewhere on the defensive line and is likely to be contemporary. The road passes through a cutting on the Blue Town side of the Lines and what appear to be original Victorian railings survive atop the brick retaining wall on the north side of this cutting.

The HCA is either publicly accessible or visible from well-used roads and paths; Bridge Road carries the main road into Sheerness from the Sheppey Crossing and is one of the busiest routes in the project area whilst the seafront path lies immediately to the north and Tesco car park to the east. As such, the HCA is one of the most publicly recognisable elements of the area's historic defences. There is, however, limited interpretation in and around the HCA which explains what this highly visible feature actually is.

With the exception of Bridge Road, this HCA is covered by the *Sheerness Defences* scheduled monument (Figure 1: NHLE 1005145). The majority of this HCA lies within the *Sheerness Royal Naval Dockyard and Blue Town* conservation area. The Conservation Area Appraisal does not cover these defensive features in the same level of detail as seen for historic dockyard structures (DPP Heritage, 2011).



**Photograph 8: HCA03 – northern section of Sheerness lines showing Bridge Road and supporting sub-structure**



**Photograph 9 : HCA03 – Bridge Road from dockyard side**



**Photograph 10: HCA03 – section of former Ravelin lying between Bridge Road and Tesco carpark**



#### HCA04: Queenborough Lines

This HCA comprises the relatively unaltered remains of the Queenborough Lines, a defensive line cut across the peninsula in the 1860s following a Royal Commission of enquiry into Britain's defences. It comprises the ramparts, remains of magazines, the main and catchwater ditches, the military road plus the crossing of Halfway Road. The Lines, as built, consisted of an earthen rampart containing two magazines on the Sheerness side, with a military road to its rear, and a wide wet ditch on the Sheppey side. The main ditch was fed by catchwater ditches, one at each edge of the lines. The Lines form a highly visible feature within the landscape and largely delimit the edge of the Sheerness. They have historically constrained the development of Sheerness and this still results in a marked difference in the landscape either side of this HCA with the densely built-up town to its north and the largely undeveloped Sheppey Court Marshes to its south.

The majority of the rampart and military road remain. Whilst the western end of the main ditch has been infilled, it remains visible as a grassed feature in the landscape. The rest of the main ditch remains water-filled. The majority of the southern catchwater ditch survives and the northern catchwater ditch also generally survives well although a section has been lost to construction of South View Gardens. The eastern magazine remains, whilst the western magazine survives only as footings. The bridge which carries the Halfway Road over the Lines retains structural remains associated with a Second World War roadblock.

The HCA is publicly accessible and crossed by busy routes. The Halfway Road, one of few routes eastwards out of the town, crosses the HCA and the military road is now in use as a cycle path forming part of the *Sheerness Way*, a promoted traffic-free walking and cycling route around the town. Despite the highly visible, landmark nature of the Lines, local recognition of their historic origin and significance is at times poor and reflected, to an extent, by the fact that they are known as *Canal Bank*.

With the exception of the northern tip of the Lines lying adjacent to the former Barton's Point Battery, this HCA is covered by the *Queenborough Lines* scheduled monument (Figure 1: NHLE 1404499). This northern is not physically separate from the scheduled part of the lines, remains water-filled and appears to have the same footprint as shown on historic mapping.



Photograph 11: Queenborough Lines at Bartons Point



**Photograph 12: HCA04 – wet section of Queenborough Lines, east of Halfway Road**



**Photograph 13: HCA04 - Queenborough Lines, south of South View Gardens, showing rampart and wet defences**



**Photograph 14: infilled section of the Queenborough Lines, west of Edenbridge Drive**

### **HCA05: Seafront**

This HCA comprises the intertidal zone, beach, Esplanade and seaside facilities. It is one of the most well-used and recognisable parts of the project area and continues to draw visitors to the town. The overwhelming majority of this HCA is publicly accessible. The only exceptions are the caravan park at Barton's Point and service yards associated with the funfair and leisure centre. The HCA is defined by the sea to the north and the built-up area of the town and port to the south.

The HCA has its roots in attempts to create a seaside resort at Sheerness in the earlier 19th century, largely associated with Sir Edward Banks. Prior to these, earthwork sea defences ran along the coastline within the HCA, with the land to the rear being composed of enclosed pasture. Whilst a seaside recreation ground and walkway was established to the immediate north of Mile Town in the earlier part of the 19th century, a formal esplanade along the seafront was not created until later that century. This esplanade has been subject to periodic grading and renewal, most notably in the interwar period when the section adjacent to Marine Parade was reconstructed with a continuous series of steps running down to the beach from the walkway and a series of semi-circular platforms added. Subsequent renewal of other sections of the Esplanade is associated with a wider scheme of sea defences constructed on the Sheppey coast in the 1960s.

The part of the HCA occupied by the recreation ground, leisure centre and funfair was formalised into this use by the time of the second edition OS. Whilst none of the facilities associated with this early phase appear to survive, some of the original layout of paths shown on the second edition OS does remain visible in the landscape. The only historic structures which exist in this section of the HCA are the town's war memorial and a low-lying oval structure adjacent to Beach Street. The war memorial is a grade II listed building. The oval structure is now in use as a play area and first appears on the fourth edition OS (1933). Whilst unlabelled on this map, it appears water-filled on historic aerial photography up to the 1970s so is likely to have been either a paddling pool or model boating lake.

The caravan park at Barton's Point lies within the former Barton's Point Battery, established in the 1890s and converted to a Naval Gunnery Training Establishment in the 1930s, and retains traces of this earlier land-use. These include one gun emplacement and associated underground facilities and an observation post. Accretions and damage to the battery since its conversion to a caravan park make it less readily appreciable as a 19<sup>th</sup> century coastal artillery fortification unlike other defensive features in Sheerness. The battery has clear heritage significance as a physical document of Sheerness' defensive history.



**Photograph 15: HCA05 – seafront looking north to Garrison Point Fort**



**Photograph 16: HCA05 – seafront looking south to Barton's Point**

### **HCA06: The Fleet**

This HCA comprises the watercourse of the Fleet and adjacent amenity areas on its banks. These latter comprise grassed areas and a cycle path runs along that on the south bank. It is defined by industrial development to the north and housing development on all other sides.

The present Fleet is a much narrower watercourse than that shown on historic maps and it is likely that the present course is somewhat engineered. That notwithstanding, it follows the same course as shown on historic mapping dating back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. As such, it is one of the few landscape features that have survived the urban expansion of the town and is one of the few reminders of the marshy landscape that predated settlement in this area.



**Photograph 17: HCA06 – path beside the Fleet adjacent to Hawthorn Avenue**

### **HCA07: Blue Town – historic**

This HCA comprises the surviving core of the historic settlement of Blue Town. It is defined by the naval dockyard boundary wall to the north and west and the redeveloped section of Blue Town to the south and east.

The settlement at Blue Town has its roots in the earlier 18th century. It developed as a largely ad hoc settlement of dock workers and, in its earlier phases, was comprised of buildings built with the workers perquisites from the Navy. The meant that the majority of the buildings were timber and painted naval blue, and is this is thought to be the root of the settlement's name. The settlement developed from a core close to the junction of the present High Street and West Street, growing to its maximum extent by c. 1800. The settlement possesses characteristics associated with the presence of the Navy and dockworkers. The most obvious characteristic is the high concentration of pubs still evident in the surviving townscape. Whilst some of these remain in operation, such as *The Albion* and *The Red Lion*, the majority have since closed. The closely-packed surviving housing is also fairly typical of the quality of accommodation that would be expected to house dockworkers at this date.

As there was little formal planning was largely absent from the settlement, it developed a very intimate network of streets and alleyways. This street pattern had been established by c. 1800 and largely survives. The surviving street pattern is of some heritage significance since it demonstrates well the ad hoc and intimate nature of the Blue Town settlement. The HCA occupies roughly the central third of maximum extent of Blue Town and includes key streets at the core of the historic settlement.

High Street lies on the northern edge of character area and retains many historic buildings, four of which are listed. These are all grade II and comprise a public house, the former courthouse and two other properties which originally combined ground-floor commercial premises with residential accommodation above. Whilst many historic buildings are no longer in use for their original functions, the High Street frontage is relatively coherent and these buildings are of some heritage significance. The High Street also features a former musical hall now in use as the *Blue Town Heritage Centre*.

West Street occupies the western part of the HCA and, whilst containing some gap sites due to demolition, still retains many historic buildings but is less coherent than High Street. Buildings on West Street include several public houses of which one, the *Royal Fountain Hotel*, listed along with one of its ancillary buildings, both are grade II listed buildings. The other, unlisted, pubs have many surviving external original features, such as the coloured external tiling and stucco signage at the former *Crown and Anchor*.

The backplots and streets to the rear of these main streets also contain surviving historic buildings, of which only two are listed. These comprise a house and a former chapel close to the junction of Union Street and Hope Street, both are grade II listed buildings. Again, the unlisted historic buildings are also of some heritage significance. Also within back plots, historic boundary treatments, such as fencing made from reclaimed planking and sleepers, survives in places.

The built form and materials used varies across the HCA and reflects the periodic renewal of properties and that much of this building was not carried out at the same time. Owing to a catastrophic fire at Blue Town in the 1820s, few buildings survive that are of demonstrably 18th century date. The only building which had been conclusively dated the 18th century is the former Bethel Chapel on Union Street which is listed.

The generally coherent nature of the HCA and its siting adjacent to the largely contemporary dockyard perimeter foster recognition of the area's historic character. Understanding and appreciation of the settlement's character and history has recently been fostered by a number of local heritage initiatives, many under the auspices of the Blue Town Heritage Centre. This is evidenced most tangibly by improvements to the High Street streetscape, which have included the installation of interpretation panels and commemorative artworks.

The HCA lies entirely within the Sheerness Royal Naval Dockyard and *Blue Town* conservation area. The Conservation Area Appraisal covers the surviving built form and townscape relatively well.



**Photograph 18: HCA07 – former shops on the street frontage at the eastern end of High Street, Blue Town**



**Photograph 19: HCA07 – lower quality housing and industrial buildings in backplots at the eastern end of High Street, Blue Town**





**Photograph 20: HCA07 – surviving historic streetscape at the western end of High Street, Blue Town**



**Photograph 21: HCA07 - listed former Court House at the junction of High Street and West Street, Blue Town**



Photograph 22: HCA07 – listed former Royal Fountain Hotel complex on West Street, Blue Town



Photograph 23: HCA07 – the former Crown and Anchor on West Street, Blue Town



**Photograph 24: HCA07 – detailing of plasterwork signage on the former Crown and Anchor on West Street, Blue Town**



**Photograph 25: HCA07 – distinctive sleeper fencing adjacent to lane running between Charles Street and High Street, Blue Town**

### HCA08: Blue Town – industrial

This HCA comprises those parts of the historic core of Blue Town which have been redeveloped for light industrial and commercial premises. It is defined by historic buildings associated with the naval dockyard and Blue Town to the north and west and the A249 to the south.

The HCA has its roots in a large-scale redevelopment of the entire Blue Town settlement proposed by the local authority in the 1950s. This scheme would have seen the entire area of Blue Town developed for industrial and commercial uses and the creation of a rationalised road system to replace the convoluted and narrow roads and alleys which characterised the settlement's street pattern. Whilst this scheme was not achieved as designed, buildings were cleared from this part of Blue Town and minor alterations were made to the road layout in the east of the HCA and the area has subsequently been developed for small scale industrial and commercial premises. These concerns are housed in sheds and warehouses of recent origin and varied construction.

The sole surviving historic building in the HCA is No. 15 High Street, a three-storey Victorian building comprising commercial space on the ground floor with accommodation above. Its frontage is painted and has some architectural sophistication, featuring quoining and decorative mouldings. It is currently in use as a barbers' and is unlisted. The HCA has a high potential for buried archaeological deposits associated with settlement at Blue Town since the later 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Whilst only very limited structural remains survive, the HCA does retain its historic street pattern and naming and this does, to an extent, testify to this its historic depth. Due to the very modern nature of land-use in the area, however, there is limited recognition of this part of Blue Town as part of the historic settlement.

Despite a general lack of surviving historic buildings, sections of the HCA lie within the *Sheerness Royal Naval Dockyard and Blue Town Conservation Area*.



Photograph 26: HCA08 – industrial development west of King Street, Blue Town



**Photograph 27: HCA08 – retail and carpark area west of Chapel Street, Blue Town**

### HCA09: Cheney Rock

This HCA comprises a small area of early housing development lying away from other foci of development at Sheerness. It includes buildings of probable 18<sup>th</sup>-century to early 20<sup>th</sup>-century date and is defined by the seafront to the north and interwar housing to the south.

The history of this area is unclear and little appears to be documented regarding the origin of, and impetus for, housing growth at this location. A house, known variously as Cheney Rock House and Cheneyrock House, forms the core of the HCA. This, and its stable block, are grade II listed buildings and the house itself is attributed an 18<sup>th</sup> century date in the listing description. The area is covered poorly by early sources and the earliest map to depict the house is the 1848 Tithe Map. By the time of the first edition OS, a series of cottages had been built at the western tip of the HCA. The area between these and Cheney Rock House was infilled by the time of the second edition OS. Land on the south side of the road was developed into terraces by the time the third edition OS.

The majority of these structures survive and are still in use for housing, although some of the later 19<sup>th</sup> century development immediately west of Cheney Rock House has been redeveloped into a sailing club. The earlier structures, including the listed buildings, appear to be in a poor state of repair. Cheney Rock House has lost much of its original context as it appears to have been built to face out to sea, overlooking a garden on its north side. This garden has been truncated and is largely cut by the concrete embankment which forms the sea defences and carries the Esplanade along this stretch of the seafront.



Photograph 28: HCA09 – Cheneyrock House

### HCA10: Marine Town – core

This HCA comprises the area of initial housing development at Marine Town. The HCA comprises two spatially distinct, but highly similar, areas; one tightly focussed around the junction of Alma Road with the seafront and the other around the northern end of Richmond Street, originally known as Charles Street, and Alma Street. It is defined by the seafront to the north and later housing development on all other sides. The core of the HCA is almost entirely comprised of terraced housing of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century date.

The area was originally developed into housing in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as expansion at Mile Town and Blue Town was not feasible due to restrictions imposed by military landownership. Early plans of the area indicate that it was originally known as Ward's Town. There is little published work on Marine Town and it is not presently clear who Ward may have been or why the area changed its name so early but Marine Town appears to be the name used for the area by the time of the OS first edition (1864).

The housing along the seafront comprises terraces of greater architectural refinement whilst those inland were smaller and more basic. The terraces are constructed to a rectilinear street pattern typical of housing development of this date. Much of both types of housing survives and is still in use. Perhaps the most architecturally sophisticated housing is Neptune Terrace. The entire terrace is a grade II listed building, which is rendered and includes a pedimented front with maritime-themed ornament. Its listing description attributes the terrace an early 19<sup>th</sup> century date but it does not appear on any mapping prior to the OS first edition (1864). The terraces to the rear of the seafront are much smaller and lack architectural sophistication. There are no other listed buildings within the HCA. The HCA remains a coherent area of early housing and distinct from the development that surrounds it. As such, it has some heritage significance.

The area appears to have been largely designed to accommodate workers for the dockyard and the street naming and facilities provided appear characteristic for such an area. Streets are named principally after patriotic themes, such as monarchs, generals and notable battles, and public houses were spaced regularly throughout the houses. Some of these pubs remain in use, including *The Napier* and *The Heights of Alma*, but others, such as *The Hero of the Crimea*, are now disused and converted residential accommodation.

The *Marine Town* conservation area only partly overlaps this HCA. The Conservation Area lacks a description or an appraisal.



Photograph 29: HCA10 – Dolphin Terrace from seafront



**Photograph 30: HCA10 – terraced housing and the former Hero of the Crimea pub at the junction of Alma Street and Richmond Street**



### **HCA11: Mile Town centre**

This HCA comprises the historic core of Mile Town and takes in those areas of the town which functioned as its commercial and civic backbone from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. It is defined by the modern commercial area to the west and Victorian housing to the east.

The HCA focuses around the High Street and The Broadway. Despite recent commercial developments outside of this historic core, the High Street remains the commercial focus of the town and houses a bustling shopping area which includes some high-street chains but many more independent local retailers.

The earliest part of the settlement was at the northern end of the High Street, the section lying north of The Broadway. This appears to have been in existence by c.1800 and is thought to have developed as an alternative to Blue Town which, by this date, had become cramped and unhygienic. Further impetus to growth at Mile Town was provided by the extension of the naval dockyard in the 1820s, which required clearance of swathes of Blue Town, and by the initiatives of Sir Edward Banks who was, in the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century, seeking to develop Sheerness as a seaside resort. Banks was so influential in the growth of the town during this period that it became referred to as *Banks Town* in the early part of the century. By the 1860s, however, this name appears to have dropped out of use and the settlement was referred to as Mile Town once more.

The HCA reflects the extent of the centre of Mile Town by the mid-19th-century. By this date the High Street was entirely built up, mostly with properties combining commercial space at the street frontage with domestic accommodation, and The Broadway and adjacent structures had been built. The High Street contained several inns and one of the earliest co-operative societies. The majority of the High Street contains surviving historic buildings at the frontage but, owing to the continued importance of the street and the need for renewal, these buildings vary considerably in date and construction. The upper High Street contains a relatively coherent group of early 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings at the street frontage, which include some use of weatherboarding. Despite their early date, none of these are listed. Buildings over the remaining part of the High Street contain a more mixed range of buildings but the street still feels tangibly historic. Two buildings on this section of the High Street are listed but the remaining historic structures are unlisted.

Banks was also responsible for the development of The Broadway, originally known as Edward Street after his son. This remains one of the town's most coherent historic streetscapes and this is recognised by the listing of the entire street at grade II. Banks also was behind construction of the Parish Church of Holy Trinity and the Royal Hotel. Holy Trinity remains in use and is also grade II listed. The surrounding churchyard is no longer in use as a graveyard and has been landscaped into a public garden. It retains some burial monuments, two of which are listed at grade II. The Royal Hotel was originally built as a private house for Banks' son. The present Royal Hotel, which stands at the junction of Royal Road and The Broadway is a later 19th century addition to the original house. The original house appears to have been demolished in the later 20th century, being recently redeveloped into housing. A cast-iron clock tower, installed to mark the coronation of Edward VII, stands at the junction of The Broadway and the High Street.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the town also had the kind of facilities and institutions that would be expected of a settlement of this size and type. These included a windmill, pumping station and religious institutions. These latter included non-conformist chapels and a Jewish burial ground. The windmill and a chapel survive in plots to the immediate west of the High Street and are designated as Grade II listed buildings. The Jewish burial ground lies on Hope Street and appears to have many memorial stones and burial markers surviving above-ground. It is undesignated and not yet formally recorded in any registers of known heritage assets such as the KCC HER or the HE AMIE database. Sections of the pumping station complex survive to the immediate south of Holy Trinity. The pumping station is a fine structure in Italianate style and its associated office building has similar architectural detailing. The pumping station is derelict whilst the offices are in use as a doctor's surgery.

Part of the HCA is covered by the *Mile Town* Conservation Area. The southern sections of the HCA around the High Street lie out with the Conservation Area. A very brief appraisal conservation area was prepared in 2000 but this has not been recently revised. This appraisal covers The Broadway and Banks-related development well but includes less detail on the High Street.



Photograph 31: HCA11 - north end of High Street, Mile Town, showing early weather-boarded buildings



Photograph 32: HCA11 - Clock Tower at junction of High Street and Broadway, Mile Town



Photograph 33: HCA11 – north side of Broadway, Mile Town



Photograph 34: HCA11 – south end of High Street, Mile Town, showing 1960s infill and historic street frontage



**Photograph 35: HCA11 – unlisted pumping station and adjacent offices, fronting Trinity Road**



**Photograph 36: HCA11 – rear of unlisted pumping station**



**Photograph 37: HCA11 – Jewish burial ground, Hope Street**

### **HCA12: Mile Town - replanned early expansion**

This HCA comprises an area of recent housing lying within an early planned expansion of Mile Town. It is defined by modern commercial properties to the east, housing development the south and west and the railway line.

The HCA has its roots in a planned expansion of Mile Town constructed between 1800 and 1827. In 1827 the area was owned by Sir Edward Banks and it is probable that he was behind this development since he was responsible for many contemporary improvements. The development was focussed around a series of grids formed by the present Rose Street, Hope Street, Short Street, Broad Street and Pepys Avenue. Many of the plots on these streets were undeveloped in 1827 but most had been developed by 1848 with housing occupying the frontage and some backplot development. Early editions of the OS show the area as densely packed with terraced housing although some facilities, such as a public house and a chapel, also existed. The area continued to be densely occupied into the post-war period. By this date, the dense nature of the housing combined with the age of the property and lack of maintenance, meant that slum conditions existed in this HCA. The local authority, consequently, put forward an ambitious plan for redevelopment of the area. Plans entailed construction of a new civic centre, commercial area and housing and all existing buildings were to be cleared. As with other redevelopment schemes of the time, the scheme, as planned, was not realised. The area was largely cleared and housing built along the frontages of the original streets. This housing comprised three-storeyed blocks of flats with shared open space to the rear. Further redevelopment along what is now Pepys Street, but was originally North Street and South Street, took place in the 1990s. The flats fronting this street, which had been built as part of the post-war redevelopment, were demolished and replaced with short terraces of two-storeyed houses.

Although the majority of earlier buildings were cleared post-war redevelopment, the area retains its historic street pattern and there is a small area of surviving historic townscape in the HCA. This lies around the junction of Russell Street and Broad Street and consists mostly of small terraced housing although some commercial properties are also present. It lies outside of the *Mile Town* conservation area. These buildings are one of the few tangible reminders that this area has a history which predates the post-war redevelopment and, as such, have some heritage significance.

There is evidence for alterations to the post-war blocks of flats lying on Short Street, Russell Street and Hope Street. They have frontages which look to be late 1980s or early 1990s in date but occupy the same footprints as the post-war flats and have roofs which appear unchanged on aerial photography dating back to the 1960s. There appears to be a butt-joint and different brickwork at the frontage of these flats on their gable elevation which suggests that they were simply re-fronted at this time. The housing related to the post-war and later appears of standard construction and style typical of the period. As such, it is unlikely to have any heritage significance.



**Photograph 38: HCA12 – surviving historic streetscape on Broad Street between its junctions with Hope Street and Railway Road**



**Photograph 39: HCA12 – former Sheerness Economical and Industrial Society building at the junction of Broad Street and Railway Road**



**Photograph 40: HCA12 – recent housing, possibly refronted 1960s blocks, on Hope Street**



### HCA13: Mile Town - modern commercial and civic

This HCA comprises an area of commercial developments and civic buildings of recent origin. It is defined by housing to the south, the core of Mile Town to the east, the seafront the north and, to the west, the Sheerness Lines, railway line and steel works. The HCA has mixed origins and is defined largely by recent land-use since it takes in areas of disparate preceding uses.

The HCA developed its current character following road improvements completed in c.2000. The majority of the northern part of the HCA is occupied by Tesco supermarket and car park whilst the remainder occupied by a disparate mix of buildings including small office development, the bus station, a higher education college and a McDonald's. Preceding land-use in this area comprises part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century seafront recreation area and defensive features. The defensive features consist of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century ravelin associated with the Sheerness Lines and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Ravelin Battery. Whilst construction of Tesco largely removed the defensive features, a section of ravelin's musketry wall survives adjacent to the Sheerness Lines at Bridge Road. Some efforts were made to landscape this surviving structure into public realm, with the addition of planting and benches, but the area appears little used and it is not clear whether there is much recognition locally that this wall is a historic feature of some heritage significance.

The southern part of the HCA is more coherent and consists of large areas of car parking, a series of commercial properties (including a Lidl supermarket), doctor's surgery and offices. This area was formerly occupied by early growth of Mile Town, comprising sections of both the planned early 19<sup>th</sup> century expansion and also the Victorian terraced expansion.

With the exception of the Ravelin Battery, which appears to have been entirely grubbed out to enable redevelopment, it is possible that buried remains associated with preceding land-uses survive within the HCA. Watching briefs undertaken during construction of the college found remains associated with the ravelin and Sheerness Lines.

The recent structures which comprise the majority of the built form in this HCA appear to be of standard construction and in styles typical of the period. As such, they are unlikely to have any heritage significance.



Photograph 41: HCA13 – Bus station, Tesco carpark and Sheppey College



**Photograph 42: HCA13 – recent development around Millennium Way**

### HCA14: Late Victorian and Edwardian expansion

This HCA comprises extensive areas of terraced housing built between later 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is defined by the seafront and core of Marine Town to the north, more recent housing and the Queenborough lines south and west and modern redevelopments in Mile Town to the north.

This area was developed into housing to meet growing need for accommodation at Sheerness as the dockyard and town centre continued to thrive. The areas developed during this period were conditioned by the availability of land in proximity to the existing settlement. Without exception, all housing during this period was built onto an existing settlement edge. This is in contrast to earlier periods which saw the establishment of separate and new settlements, such as Mile Town and Marine Town. Initial development during this period appears to have focussed on Marine Town but, by the time of the second edition OS (1896), had become so intensive that the gap between Marine Town and Mile Town had disappeared.

The housing built was very similar in character to preceding development at Marine Town, replicating the pattern of higher quality terraces at the seafront with smaller and less sophisticated terraces inland. Higher quality housing was also built along the roads linking the core of Mile Town to the seafront at Marine Town, such as Broadway, Strode Crescent and Trinity Road. All were built on a rectilinear street pattern typical of housing of that date. The majority of this housing remains and is in use, all is unlisted. It, and the associated streetscape, is of some heritage.

Two grade II listed buildings lie adjacent to the seafront at Marine Town; the partial remains of a windmill and a large Roman Catholic church. The *Church of St Henry and St Elizabeth*, was built in the 1860s and was designed by Pugin in the Gothic style. Owing to its scale and prominent position, it acts as a major landmark on the seafront.

Sections of the HCA are covered by the *Mile Town* and *Marine Town* conservation areas.



Photograph 43: HCA 14 – terraced housing along Invicta Road from the junction with Winstanley Road

### **HCA15: Interwar expansion – west**

This HCA comprises housing of interwar date of the western edge of Mile Town. It is defined by earlier housing to its east, more recent housing to the north and west and the Queenborough Lines.

The HCA derives from housing growth in the interwar period. The entirety of Sheerness saw a major expansion in the area occupied by housing during this period. It is likely that development of this HCA was facilitated by disposal of War Department land in the run-up to the First World War since the northern portion of it lies in what was the buffer zone established for the Sheerness Lines in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Unlike expansion on the east side of Sheerness, which appears slightly later, the majority of housing built in this HCA was terraced. These were distinct from the earlier terraces to the west to the east of the HCA since they were of a higher quality, having greater levels of architectural detailing including moulded stonework and bay windows. There are also examples of streets of semi-detached housing constructed during the 1930s. These can be seen at South View Gardens and sections of both Coronation Road and Victoria Road.

Unlike contemporary expansion on the east Sheerness, this area lacks schools and extensive playing fields.

The housing appears of standard construction and of a style typical of the period. As such, it is unlikely to have any heritage significance.



**Photograph 44: HCA15 – housing on South View Gardens, adjacent to the Queenborough Lines**

### **HCA16: Interwar expansion – east**

This HCA comprises the eastern end of Marine Town, which has its origins in the interwar period. It is defined by the seafront to the north, earlier housing to the west and the Queenborough Lines to the south.

The HCA derives from housing growth in the interwar period. It comprises housing, schools and recreation areas. The entirety of Sheerness saw a major expansion in the area occupied by housing during this period. The majority of housing within the HCA comprises streets of semi-detached housing constructed during the 1930s. These are typified by St Helen's Road and Park Road. These developments are in contrast to the earlier housing since they are not terraced and have features such as rounded bay windows.

The majority of the rest of the HCA was occupied by playing fields and a school. The school has been recently expanded, leading to the loss of part of a large playing field, the playing field at the extreme east of the HCA remains intact. Extensive playing fields and purpose-built schools were a feature of development of this date at Sheerness and their presence is an important element of this HCA's character.

The housing appears of standard construction and style typical of the period. As such, it is unlikely to have any heritage significance.



**Photograph 45: HCA16 – housing on St Helen's Road**

**HCA17: Modern expansion – core**

This HCA comprises the post-war expansion of housing at Sheerness. It is defined by earlier housing to the east, the Queenborough Lines to the south, the railway line north and, to the west, the Fleet and the New Road industrial estate.

This HCA consists mostly of mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century housing estates with some smaller, more recent housing developments. The majority of housing is semi-detached or short terraces and is typical of development of this date. Unlike earlier housing at Sheerness, the housing of this period was built using the distinctive curvilinear street pattern and cul-de-sacs which typify development of this date. This is characteristic is best seen at the south-western tip of the project area around Hawthorn Avenue and Queen's Way.

The housing appears of standard construction and style typical of the period. As such, it is unlikely to have any heritage significance.



**Photograph 46: HCA17 – housing on Hawthorn Avenue**

### **HCA18: Modern expansion - Sheppey Court Marshes**

This HCA comprises a small modern housing estate built in the late 1960s. It is defined by the Queenborough Lines north and the undeveloped Sheppey Court Marshes on all other sides.

The HCA has its roots in an ambitious local authority proposal for a massive expansion of Sheerness during the late 1960s. This was to be achieved through construction of housing estates on Sheppey Court Marshes, south of the project area and would have extended the town beyond the Queenborough Lines for the first time. As with the majority of schemes forward at the time, this plan was not fully achieved and only this small housing estate was built. It is probable that this scheme was never progressed fully due to concerns over the marshy nature of the land.

The housing consists of short terraces and three-storey blocks of flats, laid out around cul-de-sacs radiating from the main arterial road of Edenbridge Drive. There has been some recent infill development of houses in a similar style which use similar, but more modern, surface treatments.

The 1960s housing appears to be of standard construction and style typical of the period. As such, it is unlikely to have any heritage significance.



**Photograph 47: HCA18 – Housing at Edenbridge Drive**

**HCA19: Barton's Point Coastal Park**

This HCA comprises an area of broadly recreational land-use at the edge of the project area. Similar land use extends to the south of the HCA but this has not been included within the HCA since it lies outside of the project area. The northern tip of the HCA comprises the Sheppey Sea Cadets premises whilst the remainder comprises a coastal park. The park contains artificial boating areas, one of which is joined to the Queenborough Lines wet ditch, and facilities including a cafe.

The HCA includes remains of a firing range established to the immediate south of the Queenborough Lines in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These include embankments adjacent to the coast road at the eastern end of the HCA.



### **HCA20: Steelworks**

This HCA comprises the steelworks established to the south of Blue Town on land disposed by the military in the 1960s. The core of its buildings date to the early 1970s and further development had taken place at the site by the early 1990s. Although the HCA is not publicly accessible, the steelworks' buildings, due to their scale, act as a local landmark.

In addition to the steelworks' buildings, structures associated with preceding military use of the area survive. These include a former garrison hospital and a section of the Sheerness Lines' wet ditch. The former garrison hospital appears to date to the late 1860s and was used as the steelworks' offices. The section of the Sheerness Lines was modified to form settling ponds and survives in heavily modified form in the southwestern part of the HCA. Buried remains associated with structures demolished or cleared to make way for the steelworks are also likely to survive within this HCA. These include a further section of the Sheerness Lines, which runs through the central part of the HCA, as well as footings and other deposits associated with the late 18<sup>th</sup> century garrison well compound and Fort Townsend and also 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings including a railway terminus, police station, Catholic church and Royal Engineers yard.

Whilst recently disused, the majority of the steelworks complex remains extant. It is not clear whether any of its surviving industrial buildings and structures have heritage significance. The former Garrison Hospital is undesignated but, since it is an early example of a post-Crimean War military hospital, is likely to be of some high heritage significance. Although the more well-preserved section of the Sheerness Lines to the north of this HCA is designated as a scheduled monument, the heritage significance of the section of the Lines which lies in this HCA has been compromised due to modification associated with operation of the steelworks. The condition and heritage significance of industrial buildings and earlier military structures at the steelworks is not clear since this area is not publicly accessible.

### **HCA21: Industrial – east**

This HCA comprises a light industrial estate developed since the 1960s on land disposed by the military. It also contains areas of overgrown undeveloped ground. Buildings are of highly varying dates, with examples dating from the late 1960s onwards, and most are of a simple construction. The majority consist of single-storeyed warehouses although some office buildings of one and two storeys also exist. The HCA is bisected by New Road and defined to its north and west by the railway line, to its east by housing and to its south by the Fleet.

The area was formerly part of the Ordnance Marshes and lay largely within the buffer zone established to secure the Sheerness Lines against development which might compromise their effectiveness. New Road was laid out in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to create a route from Mile Town to Queenborough and negate the need to travel through the Sheerness Lines via Blue Town. New Road is no longer a through route to Queenborough as it was truncated, and superseded, by the A249 improvement of c.2000.

With the exception of New Road, there are no structures or landscape features within the HCA that predate its development as an industrial estate. Based on an inspection of the area from publicly accessible land, the industrial buildings appear to be utilitarian and of standard construction so are unlikely to have any particular heritage significance.



**Photograph 48: HCA21 – industrial properties around New Road**

### HCA22: Industrial – west

This HCA comprises an area of light industrial development and utilities infrastructure which has developed since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Buildings are of varying date and construction. It also contains small areas of overgrown undeveloped ground. The HCA formerly lay at the coast but is now 0.5 km inland due to reclamation works at the Port of Sheerness. It is defined by the Port of Sheerness to the west and the A249 to the east.

Although there have been utilities installations and some industrial development in the HCA since the establishment of the Sheppey Gas Works in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, there appear to be no structures surviving within the area that predate the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. With the exception of two gas holders and a pumping station, buildings appear entirely comprised of metal-clad warehouses of very recent date. The gas holders appear to date to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, since they do not appear on aerial photography from the 1940s but are shown on those in the 1960s, whilst the pumping station dates to the 1980s.

It is possible that buried remains associated with the early industrial development survive in this HCA. The HCA also has some potential for palaeoenvironmental deposits since the Fleet formerly flowed into the Medway at this location. The channel of the Fleet, as it existed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, underlies the section of the HCA which lies near the pumping station.

Whilst some gas holders and pumping stations are listed buildings, these are usually those of an early date or interesting construction. The gas holders and pumping station within this HCA are of recent origin and appear to be of standard construction so are unlikely to have any particular heritage significance. Based on an inspection of the area from publicly accessible land, the industrial buildings which occupy the remainder of the HCA appear to be utilitarian and of low quality so are highly unlikely to have any heritage significance.



Photograph 49: HCA22 – pumping station and gas holders adjacent to Brielle Way

### **HCA23: Transport corridor**

This HCA consists of the corridor of land occupied by the main arterial road and rail routes into Sheerness from the mainland. It also includes land which lies between these routes. The road and rail routes run largely parallel to one another until an additional railway branch line springs off and runs to the present railway station at Mile Town. The transport corridor forms a distinct boundary and barrier between surrounding land-uses.

The rail route into Sheerness was built in two phases. The first dates to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and ran into a terminus which now lies within the steelworks HCA. The second phase, the branch line into Mile Town, dates to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The road route into Sheerness has its roots in an informal coastal track running between the naval dockyard and Queenborough. This was gradually formalised into a single carriageway road over the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Until post-war clearance and redevelopment at Blue Town, the road only ran as far as the Blue Town railway terminus. The present road, the A249, dates to c.2000 when an extensive programme of upgrading the route from Sheerness to the Sheppey Crossing was completed.

For much of the distance within the project area, the road and rail routes run side-by-side. In places, however, the distance between the routes widens and areas of land lie between them. In the north of the HCA, one such area lies directly to the south of the steelworks and comprises an electric transmission station and the area of waste ground. In the south of the HCA, there is a similar area of waste ground. This area is the site of the settlement of West Minster that was established during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and existed until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The settlement appears to have been cleared to allow construction of the A249 in the 1990s and has not subsequently been developed.



**Photograph 50: HCA 23 – waste ground, the former site of West Minster, lying between the main road and rail links into Sheerness**