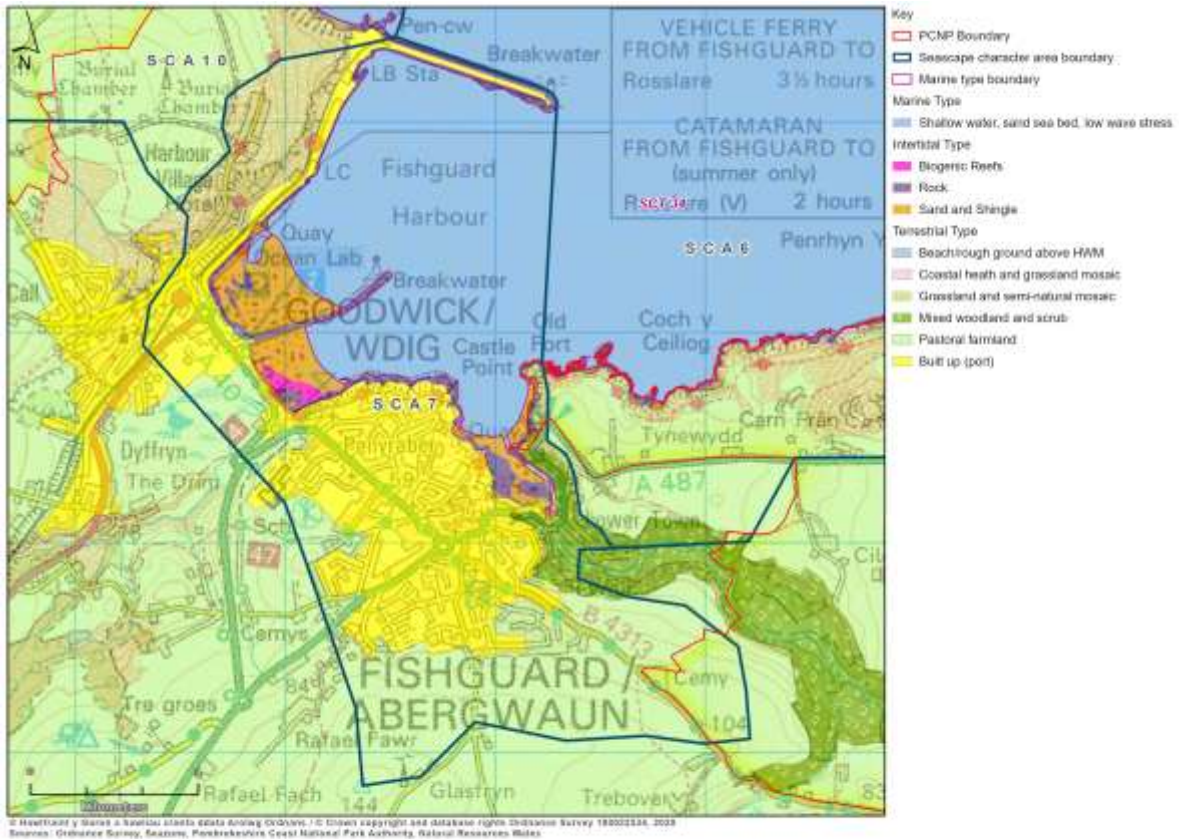


No: **7** Seascape Character Area Name: **Fishguard and Goodwick Harbours**



SCA7: Fishguard and Goodwick Harbours



Harbour and ferry terminal at Goodwick



Harbour with Fishguard above and Goodwick in distance



Old Fishguard harbour and Lower Town, © PCNPA

Summary Description
<p>Fishguard harbour including the ferry port and the old harbour, located on the north Pembrokeshire coast, is one of most intensively used areas along the coast, with significant settlement, commercial and recreational use. It is an area of contrasts between the more open and commercial Goodwick area and the contained and picturesque Lower Town harbour, with wooded valleys and sea edge to Fishguard.</p>
Key Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sheltered bay with substantial breakwaters enclosing a modern harbour and ferry terminal to the east and an old harbour with quay to the west.</li> <li>• 50m high cliffs and steeply sided, wooded sea edges.</li> <li>• Narrow and steep sided valleys at Lower Town and broad, flat valley and wetland at Goodwick.</li> <li>• A busy seascape with regular ferries including catamaran and traditional ferries linking to Rosslare and recreational boating and fishing [mainly from the old harbour] with two slipways including rowing and sailing and bases for diving charters.</li> <li>• Traditional village and harbour at Lower Town, elevated town of Fishguard, and mixed commercial and residential areas with modern landscaped seafront and facilities at Goodwick.</li> <li>• Long breakwaters, boat moorings and boats drying.</li> </ul>
Physical Influences
<p>The west side of north-facing Fishguard Bay includes Fishguard and Goodwick harbours below the headland of Garn Waun at around 50m AOD. The steep headland with cliffs is formed mostly of resistant Ordovician volcanic gabbros (Fishguard Volcanic Group) striking east-west, while mudstones and sandstones dominate in the harbour areas. Fishguard harbour lies at the mouth of the Afon Gwaun at Cwm Gwaun, where volcanic rocks again form cliffs. The intertidal areas are dominated by sand (53%) and rock (42%). In Fishguard tidal estuary, the intertidal zone comprises muddy sand to sand with rocky shore margins. In Goodwick harbour a rocky shore passes seaward through biogenic reefs (4%) into muddy sand seafloor. The estuary forms a sediment sink where sediment is transported in suspension and through traction.</p> <p>The sea floor sand sediment, covering the same bedrock succession, slopes gently (&lt;1°) and is very shallow (&gt;10m) across the NE-E facing part of the bay. The sea is sheltered from wave stress south of the long breakwater with groynes and a sea wall on the Goodwick frontage. The tidal range is &lt;4.8m.</p> <p>Semi-natural vegetation covers much of the cliff slopes and steeply sloping land behind. There is one SSSI- Fishguard Cliffs, either side of the old harbour. A wooded valley contains Lower Town and extends along the Cwm Gwaun. The low lying flats and marshland of Goodwick Moor contrast to the otherwise sloping landscape. The landscape scheme at the waterfront at the Parrog improves this edge. South of Fishguard there is pastoral agriculture in a pattern of small fields.</p>
Cultural influences
<p>The town displays a very strong linkage between Britain and Ireland with railway linking inland ultimately to London and busy ferry to Rosslare. As a settlement it may have a Scandinavian origin, the Old Norse <i>fiskigarðr</i> ('fish catching enclosure') indicating the importance of fishing to the local riparian economy. The town then developed as a Marcher borough. It has a long history of trading in herring and oats, with Ireland, Bristol and Liverpool, which only declined in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There was a visit of the Lusitania in 1909 and a seaplane base was established here in 1917.</p> <p>Fishguard Fort occupies Castle Point overlooking Fishguard Harbour from the south-east, built in the 1780s. It successfully warded off the French invasion force of 1797 (the Last Invasion of</p>

Britain), and is now restored with four cannon facing bravely out to sea. The Royal Oak pub was the scene of the French surrender in 1797.

Scheduled monuments include:

- PE030 (chambered tomb): community: Fishguard
- PE096 (fort): community: Fishguard

There are a scattering of small wrecks around Goodwick harbour.

The film *Moby Dick* starring Gregory Peck was filmed here in 1955, as was the Richard Burton film of *Under Milk Wood* in 1972.

Fishguard is a major ferry port with two sailings every day to Rosslare in Ireland and two arrivals every day including fast ferries. It is served by a railway and the termination of the A40 (T), both from London. There is a proposed marina at Fishguard harbour. Diving charters and other recreation services are based here.

At Fishguard Lower Town, there is a slipway and quayside moorings which dry out at low water. There are approx. 40 swinging moorings in the small estuary which again dry out. The Parrog in Fishguard - running along the foreshore of the main Fishguard Bay - also has a slipway and boat storage facilities. Sea angling takes place from the breakwaters as well as the quay in Lower Town. Kayaking and sea rowing are popular activities the craft being launched at both Lower Town and Fishguard Bay. Inshore fishing boats operate out of Lower Town and Fishguard Harbour. Fishing in the area comprises of lobster and crab potting and potential for light otter trawling.

The waters off Lower Town and Fishguard Bay are popular with both motor and sailing cruisers. There is a heavily used cruising route from here around the coast to Milford Haven and points south east. There are also routes across to Ireland and north Wales across Cardigan Bay. There is a lifeboat station in the harbour area.

The Pembrokeshire Coast path runs around the bay, keeping close to the coast except where it diverts up the hillside above the commercial quayside at Goodwick.

#### **Aesthetic, perceptual and experiential qualities**

These sheltered harbours and associated urban areas contrast with the wild coastal scenery to west and east. Fishguard has a picturesque old harbour contrasting with the associated utilitarian ferry port with associated sprawling development at Goodwick. The area is medium scale and partially enclosed, with much diversity and busyness and movement emanating from the ferry terminal and harbour. Colours are muted in natural landscape but stronger in harbours. The rough texture of the wood, scrub and other semi-natural vegetation of the hillsides and cliffs contrasts with the settled areas and harbour walls.

Lighting pollution from the port and urban areas is evident but not severe.

There is a strong sense of place particularly in Lower Town; whilst less coherent in Goodwick. There is little tranquillity due to urban and recreational activities, ferry and industrial areas.

Wide views are possible from high points on coastal path and from some road viewpoints, but channelled or framed from harbour edges.

#### **Cultural benefits and services**

The area contributes significantly towards leisure and recreational services in the form of marine recreation and as a centre for visitor accommodation, to natural heritage in the form of the wooded cliffs SSSI, sea edges and valleys, and to cultural and spiritual services in respect of the diversity of cultural activity in the urban areas.

Forces for change								
Summary	Key forces for change							
<p>The estuary is a sediment sink subject to deposition through river outflow and tidal flow. Shoreline management plan states 'hold the line (Fishguard, Goodwick, harbours) to 'do nothing' elsewhere.</p> <p>Potential conflicts between recreational and commercial use of bay.</p> <p>Litter on beaches and in urban areas, and pollution may detract from visual quality and may affect marine ecosystem.</p>	<b>Special Qualities</b>	Natural processes/ climate change	Visitor pressure	Marine use- commercial and fishing	Offshore energy or minerals	Development pressure	Land management changes	MOD use
	Coastal Splendour							
	Islands							
	Diversity of Landscape							
	Remoteness, Tranquillity and Wilderness							
	Diverse Geology							
	Richness of Habitats and Biodiversity							
	Rich Archaeology							
	Distinctive Settlement Character							
	Cultural Heritage							
	Accessing the Park							
	Space to Breathe							
	<b>Key</b>		Change occurring in the area affecting the selected special quality					
Key sensitivities								
Factors contributing to sensitivity				Factors detracting from sensitivity				
<p>Historic character of settlements and old harbour.</p> <p>Focal point for visitor activity.</p> <p>Open views in main area of bay and number of urban receptors.</p> <p>Initial impressions of Wales for Irish visitors on ferry.</p> <p>Pembrokeshire Coast Path as a sensitive receptor.</p>				<p>Housing, quays and industry.</p> <p>Main roads, railway and ferry traffic.</p> <p>Established recreational use.</p> <p>Contained views from Lower Town harbour.</p>				