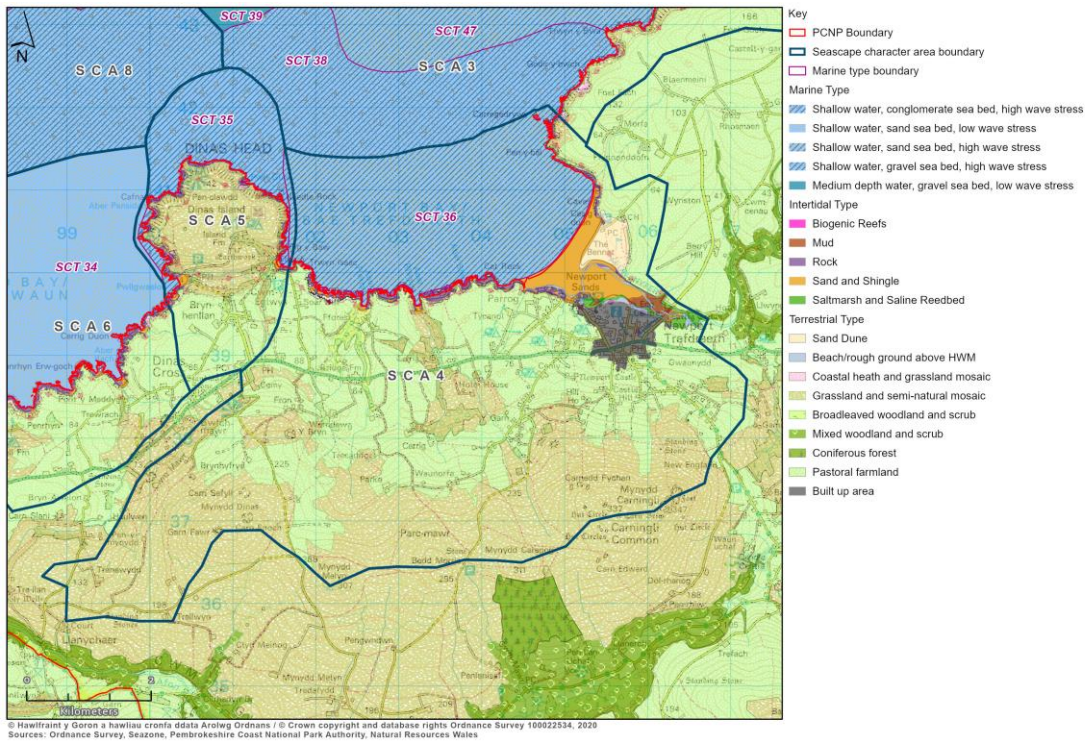


No: 4 Seascape Character Area Name: **Newport Bay**



SCA4:Newport Bay



Newport Bay from Trwyn y Bwa (Photo© PCNPA)



Newport Sands



Afon Nyfer estuary

Summary Description
<p>Located on the north coast, Newport Bay is a shallow, sheltered, north facing bay of muddy sand 3km wide enclosed and defined by Dinas Island to the west, small indented cliffs to the south and east, with the small Nyfer estuary extending inland and a strong hill backcloth of Mynydd Carningli. The fine medieval town of Newport lies back from the estuary in the rural hinterland, but extends down the hill to the edge of Newport Sands at The Parrog. The bay is a popular visitor destination for the town, the beach and watersports such as sailing.</p>
Key Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A shallow, sheltered, north facing bay of muddy sand 3km wide enclosed and defined by Dinas Island and the higher ground and cliffs from Pen-y-bal eastwards. • The bay has a distinctly inshore character, providing a sea sheltered from the prevailing south westerlies which encourages swimming and beach activities on Newport Sands. • To the south east lies the estuary of the Afon Nyfer. This estuary progresses from an area of reed beds with wooded edges, through mud to a wide area of sand before meeting the sea. • The south coast comprises a rhythmic, linear series of indented low cliffs with some small inlets with sandy or shingly beaches. Behind these inlets run wooded, steep sided cwms. • The medieval town of Newport with its Conservation Area lies close to but separate from the coastal edge, but extends down the hill to the edge of Newport Sands at The Parrog with its stone sea walls, where holiday homes and a busy sailing centre form a focus of summer activity. • The coastal path hugs the cliff edge and diverts down along the Nyfer estuary, where it meets the road crossing point across the river. • There are channelled view across the bay and out to sea from the coastal path, especially where this is on the cliff edge. • Inland, pasture is the dominant rural landcover, with Mynydd Carningli and Mynydd Caregog acting as a strong backcloth with prehistoric remains with strategic commanding views of the sea and coast.
Physical Influences
<p>The north facing bay comprises a shallow (<10m), gently northwest-sloping (<1°) sea floor of muddy sand. The sea is more exposed to wave stress on the west-facing side of the bay but is generally sheltered. The sea floor sediment covers bedrock of east-west striking Ordovician sandstones and mudstones.</p> <p>The bay has a cliff coastline indented by small coves. The small estuary of the Afon Nyfer enters at the east side. The inner estuary of mud and saltmarsh passes outwards into muddy sand before the meandering river channel crosses the sandy beach. The wider muddy sand bay is flanked by a moderately exposed rocky shore and foreshore, with areas of shingle and sandy coves. Ribs of sandstone extend into the beach between caves and blowholes on the northeast (Traeth y bal). Tidal flow is dominantly from the northwest, with a range <4m.</p> <p>The bay forms part of the West Wales Marine SAC. Newport Cliffs to the north and west are an SSSI. Intertidal species include red seaweeds, barnacles and other species normal on high and medium energy littoral rocks. The estuary of the Afon Nyfer has sands with associated species and alluvial deposits with reedbeds and other saltmarsh habitat. The Afon Nyfer is important for salmon, sewin and brown trout.</p> <p>The hinterland is predominantly improved pasture, with larger fields and low hedges near to the coast, and a more organic, small scale field pattern with mature hedgerows at the foot of Carnigli Common and Mynydd Caregog which have semi-natural moorland vegetation (and an SSSI designation). There is some arable cropping, and a golf course near Newport Sands.</p>

Cultural influences

The enclosed bay emphasises the strategic location of the Norman town of Newport, as with Fishguard to the west and Cardigan to the north-east. The area as a whole is rich in Prehistoric remains which reflect its coastal location and the intervisibility of shore, hillslope and sea.

The town of Newport is a late 12th century *bastide* situated where the Afon Nevern flows into the bay; its castle was the centre of the Anglo-Norman lordship of Cemais. The historic centre and the Parrog form a Conservation Area. The town may have supplanted an earlier settlement on the shore at Parrog, but silting in Nevern meant that trade reverted here in post-Medieval times, reflected in its warehouses, many old cottages and narrow lanes. Slate quarried from sea-cliffs, pottery and wool were the main exports, and limestone and coal the main imports.

Herring was traditionally fished from small open wooden boats in a wide area off Dinas. These also caught mackerel and lobster. There are no apparent wrecks in the shallow bay. However, records indicate that two vessels, the *Oline* and the *Lively* were lost in the vicinity. The *Oline*, a Swedish schooner on passage to Glasgow was blown onshore at Cat Rock, just west of Newport, in 1882. The *Lively* was a wooden sloop from Aberystwyth which sprang a leak in the bay in 1820.

The pattern of small fields and smallholdings on the hill-slopes reflect the land-hunger of the 19th century, partly relieved by the tradition of emigration to the USA. The later years of the 19th century were more prosperous, as many summer visitors came from the mining valleys.

Scheduled monuments include:

- Carn Ingli camp- an enigmatic landscape of uncertain date
- Carn Ffoi prehistoric hillfort.
- Cerrig y Gof and Carreg Coetan Neolithic chambered tombs,
- Bedd Morris standing stone.

The area includes the Newport and Carningli Landscape of Special Historic Interest.

Carn Ingli is where St Brynach Wyddel ('the Irishman') reputedly conversed with angels. George Owen of Henllys, the historian (c1552-1613), author of *The Description of Pembrokeshire*, was lord of Cemais. A more recent writer associated with Newport was the novelist Menna Gallie (1919-1990).

The boat club at Newport has mainly dinghies and most activity is during the summer with racing throughout August. There is also kayaking throughout and Celtic Longboat racing during the summer). There are swinging moorings (approx.20) along the course of Nevern river as it reaches the sea at Newport, which mainly dries out at low water. Access to beach is reached by 4 points for launching craft which are motor dayboats, sailing dinghies, kayaks & jet-skis. Water skiing is occasionally known. Small coastal fishing boats operate out of Newport which are mainly used for potting. The navigable channel at Newport constantly changes and is marked with buoys. Surfing and wind/kite surfing takes place off the beach, mainly towards north end of beach. Sea angling is enjoyed from both the beach and small boats.

The Coast Path runs along the top of the cliff edge, and around the Nyfer estuary. Newport Golf club offers an 18-hole links course at the Bennet. At Newport, the large sandy beach is popular with tourists, especially summer. This is used for swimming and other activities including land yachting. Beach walking is a popular pastime with links to the Coast Path. Bird watching takes place on the mudflats and sandbanks in Newport Bay. Newport is popular with cultural tourists. To the rear of boat club is a boat park with small boats on the ground or on trailers. There is a car park adjacent to the boat club.

Aesthetic, perceptual and experiential qualities

The bay has a strong sense of containment, between the enclosing cliffs of Dinas Head and those to the east. The south coast has a rhythmic pattern of small headlands and bays between

the cliffs, contrasting with the recreational focal points at the Parrog and Newport Sands, and again with the reedbeds and mudflats of the Nyfer estuary.

The bay has a contained, inshore quality, which creates a feeling of safety as a recreational area. There is an interesting balance and contrasts between the cliffs, small beaches, sand bars and estuary, and open bay. In places, such as the Nyfer estuary, salty smells are evident, and in onshore wind Newport Sands are exhilarating, whilst there can be significantly sheltered spots such as to the east.

The naturalness of the sea edge is set against the harder edge around Newport/the Parrog and the recreational activities here and associated with the beach and golf course at The Bennet. The latter has a 20c linear character, slightly incongruous in the sweeping rural setting of the bay. The majority of the coast has a low level of lighting associated with Newport and the surrounding semi-rural settlement.

There are wide views across the bay and beyond. Dinas Head adjacent forms a significant focal point, rising gently to a high point on its northern edge. Also there are superb views to Newport sands, the backdrop of Mynydd Carningli and Caregog and associated open access land.

Cultural benefits and services

The area contributes significantly towards leisure and recreational services in the form of marine recreation and beach, to natural heritage in the form of the mainly unspoilt coast and estuary, and to cultural and spiritual services in respect of the historic settlement of Newport and the prehistoric remains on Mynydd Carningli.

Forces for change									
Summary		Key forces for change							
<p>The town and bay are popular and act as a honeypot for visitors.</p> <p>Parking on the beach at the Bennet is a visual detractor.</p> <p>The use of the Coast Path has created compaction and erosion in some areas.</p> <p>Development at the Bennet and to the east affect the rural hinterland character. Development pressures could affect the character of the settlement of Newport and its setting.</p> <p>Agricultural change has led to invasion of fields with bracken and deterioration of the field pattern and boundaries.</p> <p>The Bennet dunes, the estuary and the Parrog are prone to storm damage/high sea levels.</p>	Special Qualities	Natural processes/ climate change	Visitor pressure	Marine use- commercial and fishing	Offshore energy	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								
	Key		Change occurring in the area affecting the selected special quality						

Key factors to be taken into account when assessing sensitivity to change

Simple, open character of the sandy bay with views possible from adjacent headlands and other vantage points mean that opportunities for further development are limited.

The nature of the picturesque headlands either side frame unspoilt views out to sea.

Steep indented coastline with cliffs and coves forming a natural coastal edge.

Rural pastoral character of the hinterland, estuary and hill backcloth.

Historic character of the town and The Parrog including views to the castle.

Hill backcloth of the bay including the historic landscape pattern and character of Mynydd Carningli.

Coast Path as a receptor.

Biodiversity, historic and landscape designations.

Presence of scattered 20c housing, such as around the Bennet to the east.

Presence of A487 reducing tranquillity.

Presence of established recreational use at the beach by The Bennet and the golf course.