



Designation Consultation

This designation consultation is open for comment until 28/04/2022.

Give us your comments

Historic Environment Scotland consult with those who are directly affected by designation proposals – including owners, occupiers and tenants – and with the planning authority.

We also welcome comments from interested persons or groups.

When we consult about a designation case we will have carried out research and set this out in a **report of handling**. This report is an assessment produced for consultation and it sets out our view, including a proposed decision. The assessment is not intended to be a definitive account or description of the site or place. We consider the comments received before we take a final decision.

We consider comments and representations which are material to our decision-making, such as:

- Your understanding of the cultural significance of the site or place.
- Whether sites or places meet the criteria for designation.
- The purpose and implications of designating the site or place. We consider whether these are relevant to the case.
- Development proposals related to the site or place. Where there are development proposals, we consider whether to proceed with designation in line with our designation policy.
- The accuracy of our information.

You can find more guidance on providing comments and how we handle your information on our [website](#).

Information on how we treat your personal data is available on our [Privacy Notice](#).

How to make a comment

Please send your comments to designationconsultations@hes.scot and provide us with the case reference. You can also make comments through our [portal](#) by clicking on the link 'email your comments about this case'.

If you are the owner, occupier or tenant or the planning authority please email us at: designations@hes.scot.

If you are unable to email your comments please phone us on 0131 668 8914.



Case information

Case ID	300055401
Name of Site	Carsethorn Pier, 85m NNE of Clearviews, Carsethorn
Local Authority	Dumfries and Galloway
National Grid Reference	NX 99251 59993
Designation Type	Scheduled Monument
Designation No. (if any)	SM13750
Case Type	Designation
Received/Start Date	01/12/2021
Decision Date	Pending

1. Proposed decision

Scheduled monument name (including designation number)	Proposed action
Carsethorn Pier, 85m NNE of Clearviews, Carsethorn (SM13750)	Add to the schedule of monuments (designate)

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument was proposed for designation on 01/12/2021. The monument has no previous designation record but is recorded on Canmore (Canmore ID 349074).

Carsethorn Pier was considered for designation as a listed building (case 300007006) on 14/07/2008 but it was not considered to meet the criteria at the time.

2.2 Development Proposals

We are unaware of any development proposals affecting this site.



3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

We received a proposal to designate this site on 01/12/2021.

We have not visited the site. The present assessment is desk-based, using available information and has included reference to recent photographs.

3.2 Assessment of national importance

We carried out an assessment using the selection guidance to decide whether a site or place is of national importance. (see Annex A).

We found that the site meets the criterion of national importance.

The designation selection guidance for scheduling is published in the Historic Environment Scotland Designations Policy and Selection Guidance 2019, Annex 1, pp 9-10, <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy>.

3.3 Policy considerations

We consider that scheduling is the most appropriate means with which to recognise and protect the cultural significance of the monument.

4. Consultation

4.1 Consultation information

Consultation period: 07/04/2022 to 28/04/2022.

We consult with the owner, occupier and/or tenant and the planning authority.

The consultation report of handling is published on our portal for comment from interested parties.

Dara Parsons

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Heritage Directorate
Historic Environment Scotland

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ANNEX A – Assessment of national importance

Carsethorn Pier, 85m NNE of Clearviews, Carsethorn

1 Description

The monument comprises the remains of Carsethorn Pier, constructed in 1831. The pier is visible as upstanding and prone wooden posts or piles with some associated metalwork. The site is situated immediately northeast of Carsethorn village, between the current low and high-water marks.

The remains of the pier projects approximately 30m into the adjacent sea inlet known as Carse Gut. It is roughly T-shaped on plan with a section of paired piles running north-northeast from the shoreline for approximately 25m. The pier head is a truncated triangle on plan with its north-northwest – south-southeast running face measuring approximately 20m in length. Most of the piles measure up to 30cm square in section and survive up to 4m tall. Some have metalwork attached, the remains of bracings and fixings. A survey of the site in 2021 recorded a total of 31 surviving piles and around 10 bracing members adjacent.

The scheduled area is irregular. It includes the remains described above and an area around within which evidence relating to the monument's construction, use and abandonment is expected to survive, as shown in red on the accompanying map.

2 Statement of National Importance

The national importance of the monument is demonstrated in the following ways (see Designations Policy and Selection Guidance, Annex 1, para 17):

- a.** The monument is of national importance because it makes a significant contribution to our understanding or appreciation of the maritime heritage of southwest Scotland, and its contribution to the history of 19th century emigration.
- b.** The monument retains structural attributes which make a significant contribution to our understanding or appreciation of the past. The surviving elements help us understand the design and construction of wooden piers used for regional and international trade and mass migration.
- c.** The monument is a rare example of a wooden pier with clear upstanding remains dating from the first half of the 19th century.
- d.** The monument is a good example of a fairly standardised structure that had a key role in local, regional, national and international trade and migration in 19th century Scotland and is therefore an important representative of this monument type.



e. The monument has research potential which could significantly contribute to our understanding or appreciation of the past. The remains reflect the development and expansion of Scottish maritime trade and, wider still, international migration from Scotland.

g. The monument has significant associations with historical and social events. Records show up to 21,000 people from the Dumfries area emigrated from Carsethorn Pier in the mid-late 19th century. Most of the emigrants left for a new life in places such as the United States of America, Australia and Canada. The Pier was also the departure point for possibly hundreds of Scottish convicts being deported to penal colonies.

3 Assessment of Cultural Significance

This statement of national importance has been informed by the following assessment of cultural significance:

- **Intrinsic characteristics** (how the remains of a site or place contribute to our knowledge of the past)

Carsethorn Pier was constructed in 1831 by the Nith Navigation Commission for use by the Liverpool Steam Packet Company. Strong demand for a landing point to accommodate larger vessels with goods destined for Dumfries led to the construction of the pier. Coastal trade in the Solway Firth reached a peak in the late 1840s with nearly 25,000 tons arriving on steamboats such as the *Countess of Nithsdale*, maintaining established trading links with Liverpool.

The pier consists of a long parallel run of piles providing access to the pier head. The pier head is roughly triangular on plan and the long face allowed the large vessels to dock alongside it. 1st and 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey maps clearly depict the pier and these depictions closely resemble the plan of the remains currently visible. A wooden pier is inherently less likely to survive than one built of stone due to weathering and coastal processes attacking the timber piles. Therefore, the survival of Carsethorn Pier to the extent that allows its plan form to still be interpreted and its scale appreciated is significant. The survival of some metalwork on the pier allows for greater understanding and appreciation of 19th century construction methods. Study of the remains of the pier can help provide understanding for the design needs of such industrial structures that were key to local, regional and national trading economies.

- **Contextual characteristics** (how a site or place relates to its surroundings and/or to our existing knowledge of the past)

Almost every coastal settlement in Scotland would have had some form of landing point, whether it was a natural sandy beach, a simple jetty with mooring posts, a substantial stone pier and harbour area or a structure such as Carsethorn Pier.



However, most of these structures were to serve local communities and supported small scale economies. Carsethorn Pier was built specifically for supporting large scale trade on at least a national level. The pier had a vital role in the trade network within the Solway Firth and had direct links with the regional centre of Dumfries. The main and earlier harbour on the River Nith in Dumfries (Canmore ID 65521) and the later, contemporary with Carsethorn Pier, Kingholm Quay in Dumfries (Canmore ID 65705) were the trading destinations linked with Carsethorn. Carsethorn Pier was crucial in the peak maritime trading era of 1840s Kirkcudbrightshire and Dumfries-shire.

A secondary but equally important use for the pier was emigration. Carsethorn had been established as a departure point for earlier emigration vessels and the pier of 1831 would continue this role. The industrial slump of 1851-52 drove around 21,000 people from the southwest of Scotland to Carsethorn to board ships for places such as Canada and Australia. This is an important link between Carsethorn and contemporary socio-economic events driven by agricultural and trading slumps at local industrial sites and helps illustrate the importance of the site in the mid-19th century.

- **Associative characteristics** (how a site or place relates to people, events, and/or historic and social movements)

Carsethorn has a long-established maritime history, the settlement is heavily linked to seafaring and trade. Historical records indicate the site was settled by Danes and the site on the sands was probably ideal for the landing of ships and trade. At a time when the sea was exploited as a major highway, the location of Carsethorn in the Solway Firth was important – it could link to the more inland Dumfries, south to Cumbria and England, southwest to the Isle of Man and further west to Ireland. Later, in post-medieval and modern times, Carsethorn was used as the official out-port for Dumfries. Larger vessels that would struggle to navigate to and land at Dumfries would dock here and unload, or take on, goods.

Early emigration ships sailed from Carsethorn, during the 18th and 19th centuries, when emigration to the American and Australian colonies was common. One such early example is in 1775 when the ship *Lovely Nelly* sailed from Carsethorn. It was Captained by William Sheridan and took 82 emigrants to Lot 59 on Prince Edward Island. In 1760, a local boy aged 13, named John Paul Jones, who would become the founder of the American Navy, sailed from Carsethorn to England. After a career in merchant shipping, he joined the Revolutionary Navy and on one cruise he raided the home of the Earl of Selkirk near Kirkcudbright.

These examples are earlier than the construction of the surviving pier but demonstrate the importance of this location for emigration which continued into the 19th century. Records show up to 21,000 people from the Dumfries area emigrated from Carsethorn Pier in the mid-19th century. The economic slump of 1851-2 was particularly hard and was a key date for mass emigration from Carsethorn. The pier was the final Scottish ground almost all those individuals ever stood upon as they set out to start a new, hopefully more prosperous, life abroad. The emigration of Scots



acted as a catalyst for the spread of Scottish culture, placenames and even genetics across the world. This has had a lasting impact particularly in parts of Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

A specific example of emigration from Carsethorn Pier was in 1872 when the entire village of Dunscore, near Dumfries, set sail for Sydney, Australia. Every inhabitant of the village, including the teacher and blacksmith with his horses, opted to seek a new life in Australia. Individual examples of emigration such as this contribute to the wider story of rural depopulation in 19th century Scotland.

Other even less fortunate people passed through Carsethorn. Possibly hundreds of convicts were transported from Kirkcudbright and Dumfries to Carsethorn Pier, spending their last nights in Scotland in a building in the village known as the Barracks, which was later converted into a warehouse. The convicts then boarded ship at Carsethorn Pier to be transported to the penal colonies, usually in Australia.

Although a relatively small settlement by size, Carsethorn had an important and busy role in maritime heritage. This extended into the period when Carsethorn Pier, the remains of which still stand today, were in use and explain why it was built.

4 References

Historic Environment Scotland <http://www.canmore.org.uk> reference number CANMORE ID 349074 (accessed on 17/02/2022).

Local Authority HER/SMR Reference MDG5940 (accessed on 17/02/2022).

Alfred Truckell, Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society biography:

http://www.dgnhas.org.uk/biography_truckell_ae (accessed on 17/02/2022).

Carsethorn, a Coastal Village in Kirkbean Parish:

<https://www.kirkbean.org/about/carsethorn> (accessed on 17/02/2022).

Carsethorn, Historical Emigrant Port: <http://www.steamboatinncarsethorn.co.uk/> (Accessed on 17/02/2022)

Carsethorn Pier Survey, March 2021, by Andrew Dutton:

https://canmore.org.uk/site/349074/contribution/carsethorn/CAN1_80249 (accessed on 17/02/2022)

Kirkcudbright Historical Society, Convict Transportation to Australia from Dumfries and Galloway (1787-1869) and my Convict Ancestors:

<https://www.kirkcudbrighthistorysociety.org.uk/news/convict-transportation-to->



[australia-from-dumfries-and-galloway-1787-1869-and-my-convict-ancestors/](#)
(accessed on 17/02/2022).

Kirkcudbright Historical Society, Dumfries and Galloway: the Measure of Migration:
<https://www.kirkcudbrighthistorysociety.org.uk/news/dumfries-and-galloway-the-measure-of-migration/> (accessed on 17/02/2022)

Notes on Carsethorn Pier by Alfred Truckell (Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society), transcribed by Andrew Dutton:
<https://canmore.org.uk/site/349074/carsethorn#mycanmore-text-fragment> (accessed on 17/02/2022).

Ports and Harbours of the UK, Carsethorn:
<http://www.ports.org.uk/port.asp?id=823> (accessed on 17/02/2022).