



Department for

**Communities**

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Department fur

**Commonities**

[www.communities-ni.gov.uk](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)

Historic Environment Division  
Heritage Buildings Designation  
Branch  
Ground Floor  
9 Lanyon Place  
Town Parks  
Belfast  
BT1 3LP  
Direct Tel No: 9056 9281

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council  
Via email: [info@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](mailto:info@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)

Our Ref: HB05/10/018 A

Date: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

**PUBLICATION OF A RECORD OF A BUILDING OF ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST**

**Ref: THE HARBOUR, HARBOUR ROAD, BALLINTOY, BALLYCASTLE, CO. ANTRIM, BT54**

The Department for Communities (the Department) is currently engaged in a survey of all Northern Ireland's buildings for the purpose of updating and improving on the list of buildings of special or architectural/historic interest. Where this letter refers to building(s), this term includes all types of structures.

The Department has considered the heritage value of the above building and concluded that though of some interest it is not of the sufficient interest required for statutory protection as a listed building. Under Section 80 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 such buildings must be of '*special architectural or historic interest*'.

I attach a copy of our report which explains our understanding of the current heritage value of the building in more detail. This report (with the exclusion of internal information) will be published on our website in due course. If you have details of the history of the property additional to that contained in the report I should be most grateful if you would make this information available to me and I will ensure that it is considered by the appropriate architect.

Please note also that this decision does not affect any other heritage protection applicable to your building for example: Conservation Area controls.

If you would like to find out more about Northern Ireland's historic buildings and the work of this Department to protect and promote this legacy please log onto our website at [www.communities-ni.gov.uk](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)


Yours faithfully



**TINA CLARKE**  
Enc: Owner Report

**Second Survey Database – Owner/Occupier Report      HB05/10/018 A**

*This record has not been fully processed in HED:PHB and may contain omissions, errors or inaccuracies.*

<b>Address</b> The Harbour Harbour Road Ballintoy Ballycastle Co Antrim BT54	<b>HB Ref No</b> HB05/10/018 A
<b>Extent of Listing</b> Not listed	
<b>Date of Construction</b> 1860 - 1879	
<b>Townland</b> Ballintoy demesne	
<b>Current Building Use</b> Harbour/ Pier	
<b>Principal Former Use</b> Harbour/ Pier	

<b>Conservation Area</b>	No		<b>OS Map No</b>	2/13 NW
<b>Industrial Archaeology</b>	Yes		<b>IG Ref</b>	D0377 4530
<b>Vernacular</b>	No	<b>Date of Listing</b>	<b>IHR No</b>	07501:001:00
<b>Thatched</b>	No		<b>Date of Delisting</b>	
<b>Monument</b>	No		<b>SMR No</b>	Ant004:500
<b>Vacant</b>	No			
<b>Derelict</b>	No			

<b>Owners</b>			
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council	Cloonavin 66 Portstewart Road COLERAINE Co Londonderry BT52 1EY	(028) 7034 7034	Local Govt

<b>Occupiers</b>

## Building Information

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### Exterior Description and Setting

For the purposes of this description, eleven features have been identified in and around the harbour.

#### 1. Inner harbour

The inner harbour is entered through a gap formed between the quay along its NW side and an L-shaped pier projecting at right angles from the other side. This pier was originally wholly of squared limestone blocks but most of it has been replaced with mass concrete. A concrete footing was subsequently also added to its seaward face to counteract undercutting.

A quay runs along the NW and SW sides of the inner harbour. It is faced with squared limestone rubble and coped with roughly-dressed limestone blocks. Cut into the section along the NW side are two flights of steps down to the water, both with modern galvanised metal safety railings. The deck of this part of the quay is of concrete, and gradually ramps down to its NE end. Embedded between the two stairways is a wooden post which bears various metal plaques commemorating various boating accidents. The back of this section of the quay is protected by a rubble limestone wall (dating from 1976-77) which continues NE as a low mass concrete wall which stone gabions on top. The latter wall continues up to the concrete wall at the SW end of the outer quay. The inner quay is lit by modern street lights and there is also a picnic table and benches at its SW end.

The quay along the SW end of the inner harbour is partly recessed and has a flight of stone steps towards its south end. The recessed section has a relatively recent mass concrete footing. A slip was cut through this section of quay in 1910-13 (feature 2 below). It has several mooring bollards and a picnic table along its grassy top. The back of the quay is delineated by a low rubble limestone wall. This is a relatively modern feature to separate the quay from the tarmaced public carpark behind.

The original rubble stonework continues for a short distance along the SE side of the inner harbour and is also partly reinforced with a later concrete footing. Further along is a low concrete landing stage built in 1976-77. It is cut through towards its NE end by a slipway (feature 3), the upper end of which gives access to the stage. The boat house slip (feature 8) was removed to make way for this stage which has several bollards along it.

#### 2. Slip

This concrete slipway was inserted through the SW quay wall in 1910-13. Its side walls are of mass concrete, now with extensive surface weathering. Its concrete deck was renewed in the 1970s and has a steel safety barrier across its seaward end.

#### 3. Slip

This mass concrete slip is contemporary with the 1970s' landing stage along the SE side of the inner harbour. It also gives access to the boathouse near the entrance pier. At the time of survey its bottom end was undergoing repairs, have been undermined by wave action. A small corrugated-metal shed is built into the side of the slope at the slipway's top end.

#### 4. Outer harbour

A quay was formed in mass concrete on top of the rock along the NW side of the outer harbour in 1976-77. Its deck slopes down from the slightly higher inner quay. Halfway along it is a short flight of steps and a ramp to facilitate the loading and unloading of boats at low water. There are also vertical steel access ladders set into this face and cast metal mooring bollards along its edge.

The back of the quay is protected at both ends by a c.1.4m high concrete wall with rock armour behind. Its middle section is delineated by a dwarf wall beyond which is stone cobbling to consolidate the surface. The quay is lit by four modern street lights and there is also a picnic table and benches at its SW end.

#### 5. Breakwater

This mass concrete wall was built in 1910-13 across a rocky inlet on the seaward side of the inner harbour to protect the latter from storm damage. Its faces are heavily eroded and one-third of its top was patched with concrete in 1976-77. In the more recent past, the seaward side of the wall has been

reinforced with rock armour.

#### 6. Café

Now a café (Rook's Kitchen), this single-storey, two-bay building is aligned N-S just above the west end of the inner harbour. Early 1900s photographs show it in a derelict state and a comparison of its openings then and now suggest that it has been largely rebuilt on the footprint of the previous building, but minus a small annex which originally abutted its south end. Its thatch roof has also been replaced in slate. This renovation probably took place in 1976-77 as part of the harbour's redevelopment as a tourist attraction.

As it now stands, this building has a pitched artificial slate roof, off-centre stone chimney, stone verges, metal gutters on timber eaves, and rubble masonry limestone walls brought to courses. There is a doorway at the left end of the east elevation and on the N gable. There are four window openings to the east elevation and likewise to its seaward west elevation (one of which is a bow window), all with concrete cills.

Now fitted out as a café (as seen on a previous visit), this building is now of no special heritage significance.

#### 7. Shelter

This building, at the head of the inner harbour, occupies the site of a former Coastguard boat house shown on the 1855 OS map (but was a roofless shell on the 1922 edition). Now a public shelter, it has a monopitched artificial slate roof, no rainwater goods, and random rubble basalt walls. How much, if any, of the original boat house is incorporated in the walls is uncertain. There are openings at its NW end to allow public access to benches along the inside back wall. It is now of no special heritage merit.

#### 8. Boat house

For a description and evaluation of this early 1870s Coastguard boat house, see HB05/10/018B.

#### 9. Kilns

For a description and evaluation of this pair of 1860s lime kilns, see HB05/10/018C.

#### 10. Toilets

A modern single-storey public convenience with steeply pitched artificial slate roof, harled walls (probably concrete blockwork), timber doors and casement windows. This block probably dates from the late 1970s and is of no heritage interest whatsoever.

#### 11. Houses

Old photographs show this single-storey terrace to have been thatched originally. It is shown on the 1832 OS map and subsequent editions. It probably incorporated three or four houses originally but has since been heavily refurbished as two holiday lets with a pitched natural slate roof and cement-rendered walls. Its original door and window openings have been reconfigured and the latter now have uPVC frames and concrete cills. Nothing of the terrace's original character survives.

#### Setting:

The harbour has been formed in a natural inlet at the bottom of a precipitous headland just north of Ballintoy village. It is open to the sea at NE, with a former Coastguard boathouse just inside the entrance to the inner harbour. It is protected to NW by wave-washed rocks and at its SW end is a public carpark and a pair of lime kilns (HB05/10/018C). It is hemmed in along its SE side by limestone cliffs down which a serpentine access road from the village. Along this road are two listed buildings - Ben Dhu (HB05/10/013) and the former Coastguard Station (HB05/10/010A-C).

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#### Interior Description

N/A

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#### Architects

Not Known

**Historical Information**

The north coast of Co Antrim abounds with small inlets which were used by fishermen for countless generations. The first serious attempt to construct a harbour at Ballintoy was in the 1750s when Alexander Stewart successfully applied to the Irish Parliament for grants to develop coal mining in this neighbourhood (probably lignite in reality). Although he claimed to have spent £500 on a quay, his endeavour ultimately proved unsuccessful. Whatever the quay's size and exact location, it seems to have been washed away and no such structure is shown hereabouts on either the 1832 or 1855 OS maps.

In October 1860, James Francis McKennan (also spelt McKennon) purchased the foreshore between the high and low water marks from the Crown Estate for five guineas. On it he proposed to build what became the present inner harbour. Earlier that year he had completed a pair of lime kilns and a tramway to convey rock and burnt lime from an adjoining limestone quarry out to a small timber jetty at the north end of what is now the outer harbour. The purpose of the harbour was to create a safer anchorage and better facilitate the loading of boats to export his quarry's products.

Work was, in fact, already underway on the harbour, as reported by the Coleraine Chronicle in February 1860: "A small harbour has been commenced for the speedier exportation of the limestone, and which, if completed in spite of its natural enemies - the raging sea beating that fearful coast, and the shifting sands which beset it - will be of very general benefit to that part of the country". McKennan appears to have gone into partnership with Mr John Herdman as the pair is cited in subsequent references to the quarry. Mr Herdman may, in fact, have contributed the capital for the harbour, said in a 1907 newspaper report to have been £6000 - £7000 (equivalent to c.£400,000 in 2017). The high cost of the work was seemingly because it was first necessary to build the entrance and then insert a coffer dam so that bedrock could be blasted away to give a depth of up to 10ft.

In June 1860, the County Antrim Grand Jury sought tenders for the construction of a road from Ballintoy Church to the limeworks at the harbour; this is the present switchback road.

Her Majesty's Coastguard erected a boat house at the NE end of the new harbour in the early 1870s (for details of which see HB05/10/018B).

The harbour is described in 1873 as "a new and neatly constructed landing place" where vessels of up to 150 tons burthen could operate for ten months of the year. It had c.10ft of water but could easily be deepened. Boats of this size were capable of crossing to Scotland and further afield with heavy cargoes of stone. Whereas the traditional local fishing boat - the Drontheim - could be manhandled up the shore, these larger vessels required sheltered quayage for the loading of bulky materials such as quarried rock and barrels of burnt lime.

The Glasgow-based Eglinton Chemical Company acquired the lease of the limeworks and harbour from Mr Herdman around 1879. It may be no coincidence that the original partner, John Herdman, was dead and his son William had died in an accident the previous year. The new owners spent £10,500 on filling a gap in the reef at the north end of what is now the outer harbour with large stone blocks to improve the approach to and from the harbour.

In an endeavour to stamp its authority on the harbour's operation, the Company also placed a lockable timber boom across the entrance in 1880 to prevent a rival quarry operation from exporting stone setts. This blockage also hindered the fishermen whom the new owners now wished to charge for the harbour's use as a contribution towards its upkeep. Following a complaint to the Board of Trade and the Fisheries Board, the Company removed the boom in January 1881. At the same time, however, they blocked the public road to prevent the fishermen carting away their catches. Whether and when this dispute was ever resolved must await future research.

The 1905 OS map shows the harbour to comprise the present-day masonry quays and an entrance gap and Coastguard boathouse its NE end. Although initially built for industrial use, the harbour was now being used mainly by fishermen. In 1907, for example, there were 75-80 fishermen and 35-40 fishing boats. At that time, the harbour was in poor repair: some of its stonework had been damaged in a storm and the basin was infilled with sand. Indeed, it had been remarked in Parliament in 1899 that the harbour was filling up with sand and jeopardising the fishermen's operations.

Antrim County Council was lobbied by the fishermen to acquire the harbour and carry out the necessary repairs to facilitate their export of herring. The possibility of constructing a new harbour and slip in a nearby inlet were investigated, but it was concluded to be more economical to repair the existing one.

As the harbour was in private ownership, for legal reasons it was first necessary for the Congested Districts Board to acquire it. The Board could then transfer it to the Council who were able to avail of government grants to carry out the works. Fortunately Mr Herdman, to whom the harbour's ownership had passed upon the death of William in 1878, was willing to sell it to the Board for £50. Given that it had reportedly cost over one hundred times this amount to construct, he was evidently keen to dispose of it. These transactions were duly enacted between 1907 and 1909.

With the harbour now in its ownership, the Council secured a grant of £1533 from the Department of Agriculture & Technical Instruction towards the £2300 estimated cost of its improvement. The Department's Chief Engineer, Mr Charles Oliver, prepared a scheme of works which entailed repairing the quay walls, dredging the basin, removing a sandbar at its entrance, and constructing a breakwater. The Council was liable for the remaining one-third (£767) and also agreed to an extra £100 being spent on a slip at the back end of the harbour for use by fishermen.

Works started in 1909 but it was not until early 1914 that they were completed except for the bar at the mouth of the harbour. In September 1915 this final impedance was removed by the Department's dredger 'Fàg An Bealach' (Clear the Way). Poor weather conditions doubtless contributed to the five years or so it had taken to execute these works. In spite of that, the total cost of the works came to £2406, only £6 above the original estimate.

The 1922 OS map shows the quays as before, but now with the recently-constructed slip at its SW end. Ominously, the back end of the harbour is captioned 'sand', indicating that regular dredging had been neglected after the extensive works of the previous decade. The accumulation of sand within the basin is also evident in some earlier 20th century photographs. Indeed, the harbour seems to have been particularly prone to silting up throughout its life. From 1879 to 1882 for instance, the amount of sand removed per year averaged 3600 tons.

On the positive side, the combination of a sheltered sandy beach and stunning scenery made the harbour a magnet for day-trippers. By 1936, visitors could avail of a tea room operated by the Misses Esma White and Vera Taylor of Craignamaddy. Unfortunately for them, they were burgled and a gramophone, 33 records, and "a quantity of culinary articles" were stolen; the two thieves were caught. A 1939 edition of the Belfast Telegraph described the harbour as "an Antrim Coast beauty spot". In 1953, Ballycastle Rural District Council petitioned Antrim County Council and the Ministry of Commerce to develop the harbour to "facilitate the export of lime and farm produce and the import of coal and manures. It would also provide employment for a large number of workers". Nothing came of this initiative.

The last major scheme was initiated in the 1970s by Moyle District Council to refurbish the harbour not for industry or fishing, but for tourism. A scheme was prepared for the Council by the Department of Finance in 1976. It entailed (1) underpinning the masonry quay wall, (2) a dwarf wall along the seaward side of the quay with rock armour behind, (3) relaying of the deck of the 1910s slip, (4) repairs to the 1910s' breakwater, (5) a new landing stage and slip on the SE side of the inner harbour, (6) a new quay along the NE side of the outer harbour, (7) renovation (or rebuilding more likely) of the building at the SW end of the harbour as a café, and (8) extending the visitor car park. In recent years, the harbour has become very popular with fans of HBO's 'Game of Thrones', some episodes of which were filmed here.

#### References - Primary sources:

1. PRONI OS/6/1/4/1. First edition OS 1:10,560 map, Co Antrim sheet 4 (1832).
2. PRONI OS/6/1/4/2. Second edition OS 1:10,560 map, Co Antrim sheet 4 (1855).
3. Coleraine Chronicle, 18/2/1860. p.4.
4. Belfast News-Letter, 30/6/1860, p.1.
5. PRONI COM/9/7. Department of Agriculture & Technical Instruction files on Ballintoy Harbour, 1880-1907. They include an indenture of 24 Oct 1860 between J.F. McKennan and the Commissioners of Woods, Forests & Land Resources (aka Crown Estate) and also a plan of McKennan's lime kilns, tramway, wooden jetty, and the location of his proposed harbour.
6. Coleraine Chronicle, 10/6/1865, p.6.
7. Belfast Weekly News, 25/01/1873, p.2.
8. Coleraine Chronicle, 1/3/1873, p.4.
9. PRONI COM/9/7. Correspondence with Board of Trade and Dept Fisheries regarding disputed use of harbour, 1880-1881.

10. Greenock Advertiser, 29/01/1881, p.3.
11. National Museum Ireland W. Lawrence photographs: EB\_0698, L\_CAB\_01724, and L\_ROY\_10167. Late 1800s/ early 1900s images of harbour.
12. PRONI COM/9/7. Parliamentary question dated 14/12/1899 regarding silting up of harbour. Also letter dated 3/6/1903 suggesting that Antrim County Council acquire the harbour, 1907 report on the feasibility of building a new harbour nearby, and details of the present harbour's acquisition by Antrim CC, 1905-07.
13. National Museums N. Ireland photographs: BELUM.Y.W.01.08.1-3 (R.J. Welsh), BELUM.Y13583 (unknown), BELUM.Yt4439 (unknown), BELUM.Yt4440 (unknown), and HOYFM.WAG.2937 (W.A. Green). Early/mid-1900s images of harbour.
14. Larne Times, 20/07/1907, p.6.
15. Irish News & Belfast Morning News, 11/12/1907, p.8.
16. PRONI COM/9/8. Department of Agriculture & Technical Instruction files on Ballintoy Harbour, 1908-11. They include details of the repair works carried out in 1908-11.
17. Irish News & Belfast Morning News, 28/4/1909, p.6.
18. Coleraine Chronicle, 1/5/1909, p.11.
19. PRONI OS/10/1/4/5/1. First edition OS 1:2500 map, Co Antrim sheet 4-05 (1905).
20. Ballymena Observer, 4/11/1910, p.6.
21. Larne Times, 5/11/1910, p.7.
22. Belfast News-Letter, 14/6/1911, p.4.
23. Ballymena Weekly Telegraph, 9/8/8/1913. p.8.
24. Belfast News-Letter, 22/1/1914, p.9.
25. Belfast News-Letter, 8/9/1915, p.3.
26. PRONI COM/9/9. Department of Agriculture & Technical Instruction files on Ballintoy Harbour, 1919-20. They include a description and annotated map of the harbour dated 7 June 1920 by Alexander Gibb (Ministry of Transport), and also a printed review of previous works.
27. PRONI OS/10/1/4/5/2. Second edition OS 1:2500 map, Co Antrim sheet 4-05 (1922).
28. Belfast Telegraph, 11/5/1936, p.11.
29. Belfast Telegraph, 5/7/1939, p.14.
30. Belfast Telegraph, 12/3/1953, p.5.
31. PRONI COM/100/33. Harbour improvements by Moyle District Council, 1975-180 and also an annotated map of the harbour dated April 1945.

References - Secondary sources:

1. Hill, G. 'The Stewarts of Ballintoy' in Ulster Journal of Archaeology, series 2, vol.7, pp 9-17 (1901).

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**Criteria for Listing**

NB: In March 2011, revised criteria were published as Annex C of Planning Policy Statement 6. These added extra criteria with the aim of improving clarity in regard to the Department's explanation of historic interest. For records evaluated in advance of this, therefore, not all of these criteria would have been considered. The criteria used prior to 2011 are published on the Department's website under 'listing criteria'.

**Architectural Interest**

Not listed

**Historical Interest**

Not listed

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**Evaluation**

Ballintoy harbour has been protected under scheduling, which is a more appropriate form of protection for this structure than listing.

The site is a good example of a mid-19th century industrial harbour. It makes clever use of its setting in an existing natural inlet, with its narrow entrance to give added protection from the sea. Its various structural additions illustrate its changing primary function since inception - industry in the 1860s, fishing in the 1910s, and tourism in the 1970s. The inner quay walls survive in an intact and relatively unaltered



state. It also has interest with an adjoining pair of lime kilns (HB05/10/018C) and former Coastguard boathouse (HB05/10/018B).

The harbour was of local economic importance, enabling the quarrying and export of lime and basalt, and was also a base for fishermen. Its economic importance continues to this day as a tourist attraction, and visitor numbers have increased significantly in recent years thanks to its international exposure in 'Game of Thrones'.

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**Replacements and Alterations**

Appropriate

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**If inappropriate, Why?**

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**General Comments**

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**Date of Survey**      04/03/2019

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