

36 Eastern Docks (operational)**Context**

The character area comprises operational areas of the dockside and the Oceanography department of the University of Southampton. There is no right of access to the general public. The area has uninterrupted water frontage to the south and borders Ocean Village (CA37) to the east. To the west is Town Quay and Royal Pier (CA35). To the north Queens Park (CA18) forms a natural edge of mature trees beyond the busy thoroughfare of Platform Road.

The CA includes land that was reclaimed and developed in phases: the eastern edge of the area was part of the Inner Dock (1851) and Outer Dock (by 1842); most of the CA forms part of the development of Empress Dock (1880) and Ocean Dock (1911). A small area at the western edge of the CA adjacent to Platform Road was reclaimed in the twentieth century. This is the area from which the great transatlantic liners of the early twentieth century sailed, including RMS *Titanic*.

Grain

The area has relatively little development other than the Oceanography centre and administrative office buildings for the port. These are of a coarse grain and primarily respond to the waterfront with their building line being parallel to the water.

Scale

Built form is the equivalent of four to five storeys with varying roof treatments; flat roofs and traditional pitches. The Oceanography building has a very distinctive skyline profile seen for some distance.

Uses

Fully functional dockside area, partly laid over to the parking of cars. The National Oceanography Centre, part of the University of Southampton, is a purpose-built waterside campus, and home to some 520 research scientists, lecturing support and seagoing staff as well over 700 undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Public Realm

Functional and utilitarian.

Connectivity

There is no connectivity between this character area and adjacent areas due to the use and ownership of the land.

Views

There are a number of local views to landmarks passing over this character area originating from Town Quay. There is a strategic view which is an open vista across the dock area from Town Quay. This view picks up on the moving crane, an iconic structure for the dockside, which



can be seen for some distance as a dynamic and functional landmark on the skyline.

The moving crane is also seen from Platform Road though a hedge and change in level prevents open views into the dock from the road.

Building types

Purpose-built university campus for the study of ocean sciences and buildings relating to the functional management of a working dock area.

Architectural qualities

Buildings in this character area are functional with aesthetic considerations secondary to their fit for purpose appearance.

Heritage Assets

The area is considered to possess a moderate to high degree of evidential value due to fact that the north-western edge of the area defines the line of the shore prior to the development of the docks. Therefore there is some potential for the discovery of maritime archaeological remains. Accordingly, the area lies within a Local Area of Archaeological Importance.

The Trafalgar Dry Dock and associated features are Grade II listed. There is potential for the survival of features, buildings or machinery that has cultural, associative and social value and interest as evidence of the industrial history of Southampton. Assessment of this potential should be undertaken prior to any development proposals being made.

This area has important associative value due to its links with the *Titanic* although only a memorial can be accessed by the public.

Materials

Various colours of stock brick and slate roofs.

Condition

Good.

Ownership

Associated British Ports and University of Southampton.

Intervention

■ An area (possibly some form of viewing platform) to the edge of the port which would allow the activities to be clearly viewed (at present a large hedge restricts views from Canute Road into the port area).

Key design principles

■ Despite being a functioning port, the detailed design of any buildings should be of the highest quality as they are exposed to far-reaching open views from Platform Road and Town Quay.



- 01 The moving crane forms a dynamic piece of industrial infrastructure clearly seen from distance on the skyline
- 02 The high hedge to Platform Road restricts open views into the operational dock area
- 03 Older, grander buildings from former periods of the docks history line this character area to the north





Heritage Assets



Townscape