

West Bay Harbour Deep Water Berth Quay Wall Stabilisation

The Deep Water Berth is a length of historic, grade 2 listed harbour wall, used by commercial fishermen and is the only part of the harbour where large boats can remain afloat at low tide. Scour of the harbour bed by water flowing into the harbour from the River Brit caused settlement and cracking of the wall over the years and a large void formed under its base.

The old heavy timber fenders were dilapidated and working loose. The rough quayside surface and awkward layout were inconvenient for boat unloading and were potentially unsafe for fishermen and the public. Loading restrictions imposed to prevent collapse of the wall made fish landing more difficult and limited the use quayside.

Several options for strengthening or replacing the quay wall were investigated. Due to the importance of maintaining the historic fabric and appearance of the harbour structures, it was agreed with planning officers and Historic England that a 30-metre length of wall would be stabilised and strengthened by inserting small diameter raking piles from ground level down through the wall, extending into strong ground below.

So that the area could be brought back into full use, a reinforced concrete slab on vertical piles was constructed behind the wall to support vehicles and boats using the quayside. Timber fenders were replaced or repaired as necessary. New mooring bollards, power and water supplies and electrically powered lifting davits were provided.

Knights Brown Construction carried out the detailed design and construction work between January and July 2017. Ramboll produced the outline design, drafted the design and build contract and supervised construction. The works were completed within budget, costing approximately £830,000. The project was managed by West Dorset District Council and was jointly funded by the council and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund grant.