

SHETLAND COASTAL CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

SECOND EDITION 2021



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Shetland



Shetland Marine
Planning Partnership

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Islands
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Fethaland Haaf Station

Section 1: Introduction

Nature Scot define seascape as “The visual and physical conjunction of land and sea which combines maritime, coast and hinterland character”. Combine this with the Oxford Dictionary definition “a view of an expanse of sea- a depiction of a seascape” and it gives an idea of the complexity of a seascape or coastal character assessment which needs not only to address the physical characteristics of the seascape, but also the cultural aspects.

1.1 Purpose of Study

This Coastal Character Assessment (CCA) of the Shetland Islands has been prepared by the [Shetland UHI](#) with guidance from [Nature Scot](#) and [Shetland Islands Council](#) as part of ongoing development of the [Shetland Islands Marine Regional Plan](#) (SIRMP).

The aim of this report is to map the various Coastal Character Types (CCTs) found around Shetland to inform maine planning.

The objectives of the report are to:

- Identify and map different coastal character types at a local level;
- Describe the key features and character of each area which relates to the experience of the place;
- Identify any areas around the coast sensitive to onshore and/or offshore development;
- Relate the study to other published documents such as the Shetland Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) and the Shetland Local Development Plan (LDP); and
- Assist planners and developers to make well informed decisions around coastal developments.

1.2 Assessment report structure

The Report is divided into nine main sections.

Section 1: Introduction- Includes an introduction to the project, aims and objectives of the project and the structure of the report.

Section 2: Methodology- Details the CCA methodology including the approach, purpose and

scope of the project, scope of the study, how the boundaries were defined, landscape setting of CCAs and coastal processes that affect the coast.

Section 3: Shetland Definitions- Defines the CCTs and Coastal Zones found in Shetland, the difference in inner and outer coasts in Shetland, and how anthropogenic lights affect the characteristic dark skies found in the isles.

Section 4: Policy Summary- Summarises the policies that cover the coast and marine environment out to 12 nautical miles at a national, regional and local context.

Section 5: Evolution of Seascape- Discusses how physical influences have created the islands known today including geology, soils, tides, climate, coastal erosion and what habitats this has created in the marine and terrestrial environments. Important species and habitats are also detailed in this section.

Section 6: Cultural Heritage- Looks at how man has contributed to the changes in the landscape and coast of Shetland, and the cultural associations with the sea through folklore, dialect and place names.

Section 7: Coastal Activity- How people use the coast around Shetland recreationally and commercially.

Section 8: Inspirational Coast- How the coast inspires and has influenced artists, writers and musicians throughout history.

Section 9: Coastal Character Areas



Pool of Virkie, South Mainland

East Mainland

- 1 Bressay Sound
- 2 Eswick- Bressay
- 3 Lunna Ness
- 4 Nesting Bay
- 5 Noss
- 6 West Linga

Remote Islands

- 7 Whalsay
- 8 Fair Isle
- 9 Foula Coast
- 10 Papa Stour
- 11 Skerries

North Isles

- 12 Bluemull Sound
- 13 Burra Firth, Unst
- 14 Colgrave Sound
- 15 East Fetlar
- 16 East Unst
- 17 East Yell
- 18 Gloup- Breckon
- 19 Hermaness
- 20 Skaw
- 21 Whalefirth

North Mainland

- 22 Eshaness
- 23 Hillswick- The Hams
- 24 North Roe Coast
- 25 Ronas
- 26 Sullom Voe
- 27 Yell Sound

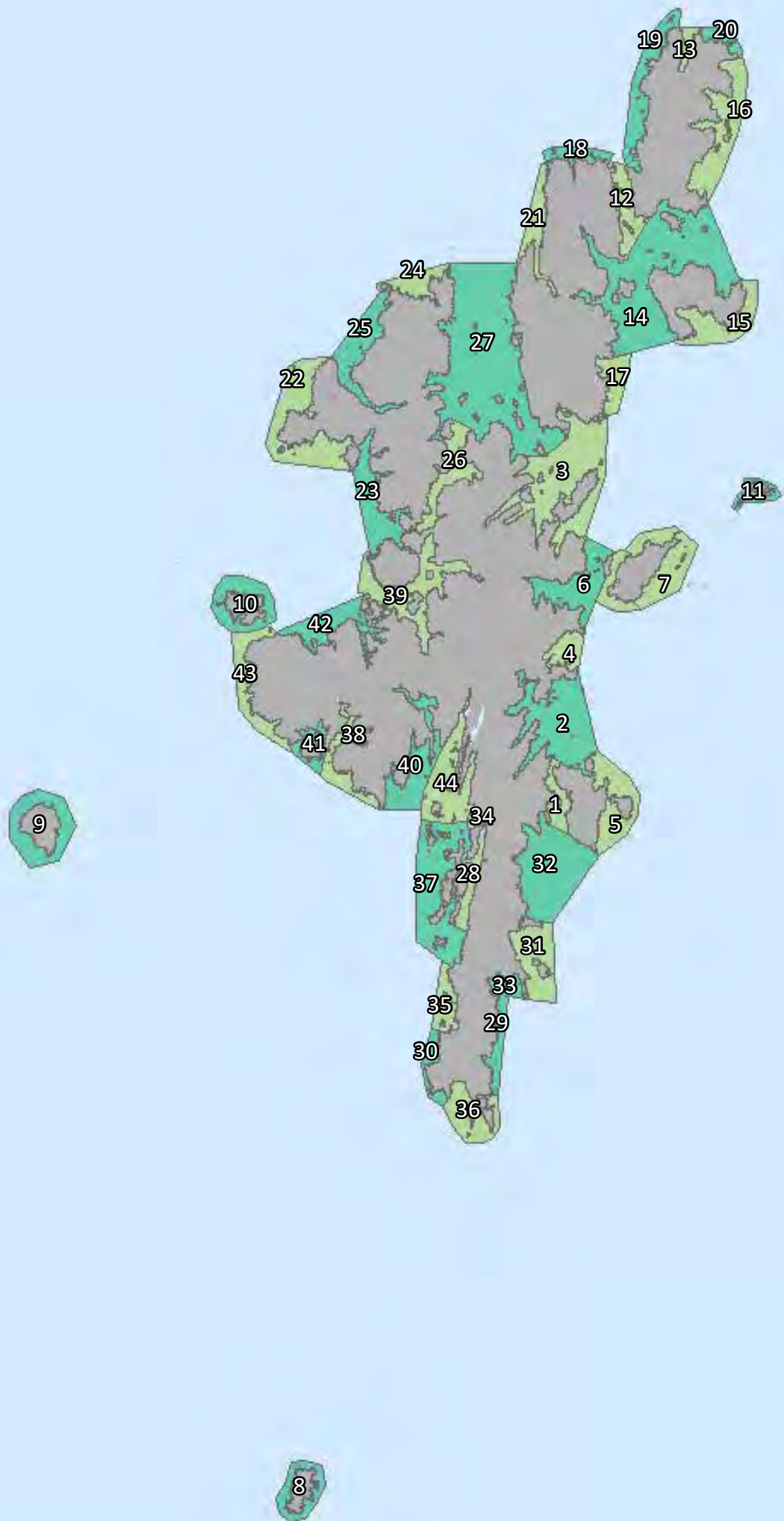
South Mainland

- 28 Clift Sound
- 29 Dunrossness
- 30 Fitful Head
- 31 Mousa

- 32 Quarff
- 33 Sandwick
- 34 Scalloway
- 35 St Ninian's
- 36 Sumburgh
- 37 West Burra & Trondra

West Mainland

- 38 Gruting Voe
- 39 Muckle Roe
- 40 Skeld
- 41 Waas
- 42 West Burrafirth
- 43 West Side
- 44 Whiteness & Weisdale

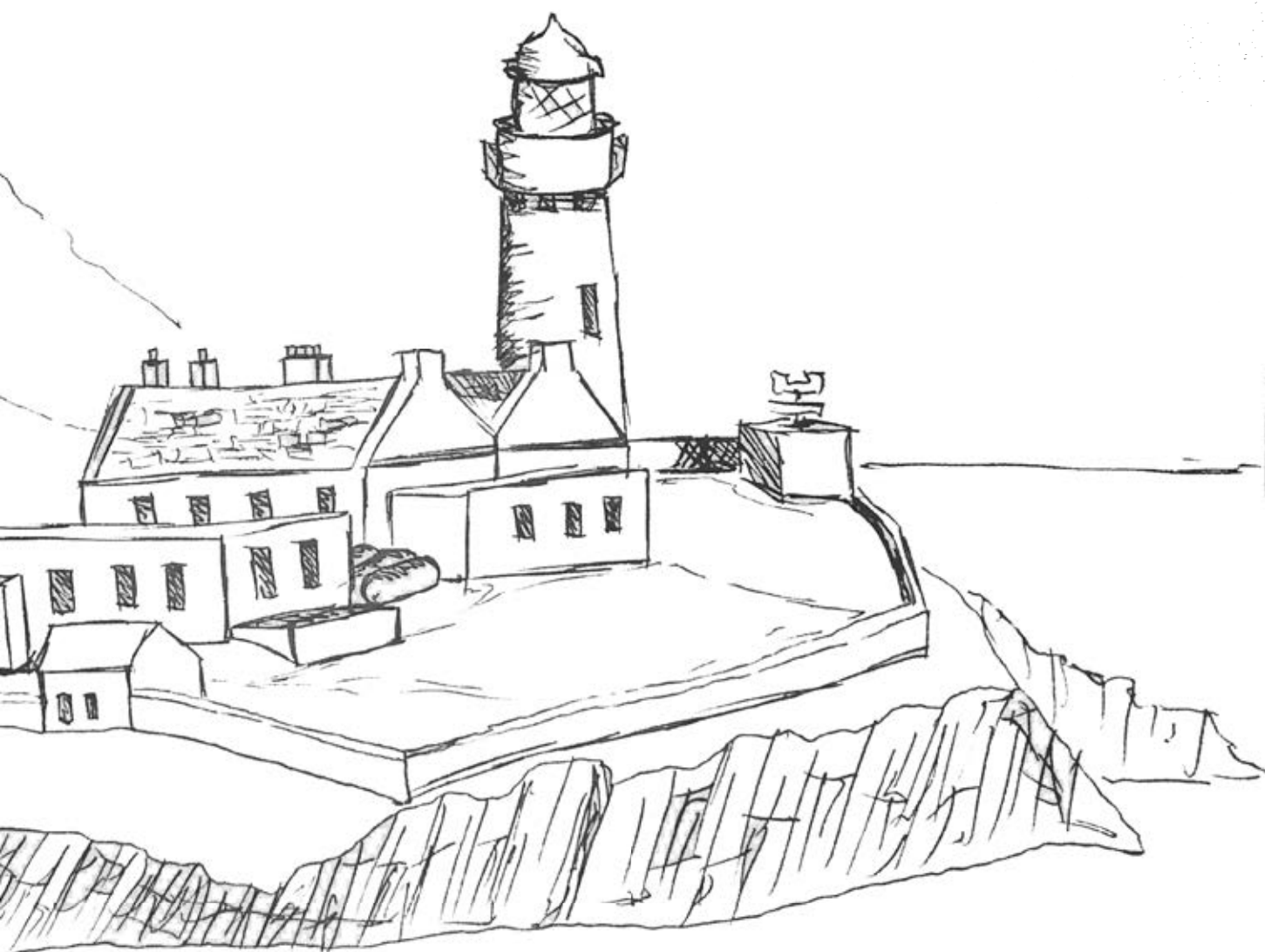


Map 1: Study Areas

02

Methodology





Bressay Lighthouse



View from Ronas Hill

2.1 Approach

The approach used in this assessment follows guidelines for Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) and the approaches used in other seascape character assessments (SCA). Guidance was also provided by [Nature Scot](#) landscape specialists at the project inception.

2.2 Scope of Assessment

The assessment has been carried out at a local level, considering coastal character types (CCTs) in each of the coastal character areas (CCAs). The areas include terrestrial (coastline), intertidal and marine environments which have been assessed as an interrelated setting through visual connections.

2.3 Integration with Other Policies and Guidance

Initial boundaries have been established and relevant policy documents, including the [SIRMP](#), [Shetland Landscape Character Assessment](#) (LCA), [LDP](#), and [Marine Policy Statement](#), have been considered so that the CCA works with all the relevant policies. Research into the approach of a SCA has also been undertaken to ensure consistency of approach with other assessments and to help in the development of the Shetland CCA.

2.4 Defining Boundaries

This assessment covers terrestrial, intertidal and marine environments along Shetland's 2,702km long coastline. The CCA focuses mainly on the intertidal area and how the immediate coastal landscape up to 1km inland and inshore waters out to 12 nautical miles, relate to the coastal character.

2.5 Landscape Setting

Although the CCA focuses on the coastline, there are parts of Shetland independent of the terrestrial boundary which have a visual connection to the coast

and form a distinctive landmark, for example; Ronas Hill in Northmavine. To avoid duplicating information from the [LCA](#), these areas will not be included in the CCA as a separate character area, but will be detailed in the landscape setting section for each CCA.

2.6 Natural Processes

Shetland has a very varied seasonal cycle ranging from calm sunny days to ferocious winter storms. These variations can affect debris and long shore drift processes along the coast. Another influence is the ever changing light conditions which moves with the seasons from [Simmer Dim](#), when the sun is perceived to hardly set, to the mid-winter, when it is only visible for a few hours a day.

As the surveys have been done over a relatively short period of time, seasonal variations must be taken into consideration when using the CCA; an area surveyed on a bright sunny day may give a different experience when compared to a dark stormy day.

2.7 Surveying

Surveys were undertaken from December 2014 to May 2015. Additional surveys were undertaken 2019-2021. The surveys were carried out within the CCAs on foot and by boat and included:

- An assessment of the boundaries and classifications developed in the desk based research was undertaken to ensure they were practical.
- A survey form based on [Nature Scot](#) guidelines was used to take detailed notes about topography, character, usage etc. CCAs were split into manageable walking routes to allow surveying of the transition between CCTs.
- Photography, sketching and GPS were used as a reference for drafting the report, illustrating the final report, and giving specific locations for photos.



During the survey of the Shetland coastline, the assessment was not limited to just the physical elements such as the landscape, ecology and marine uses but included the colours and textures too. As a way to record the subtle changes along the shore, sand samples and pebbles were collected. Flotsam and shells were also collected to give an indication of abundant species in the area and the sorts of marine litter that is washing up.

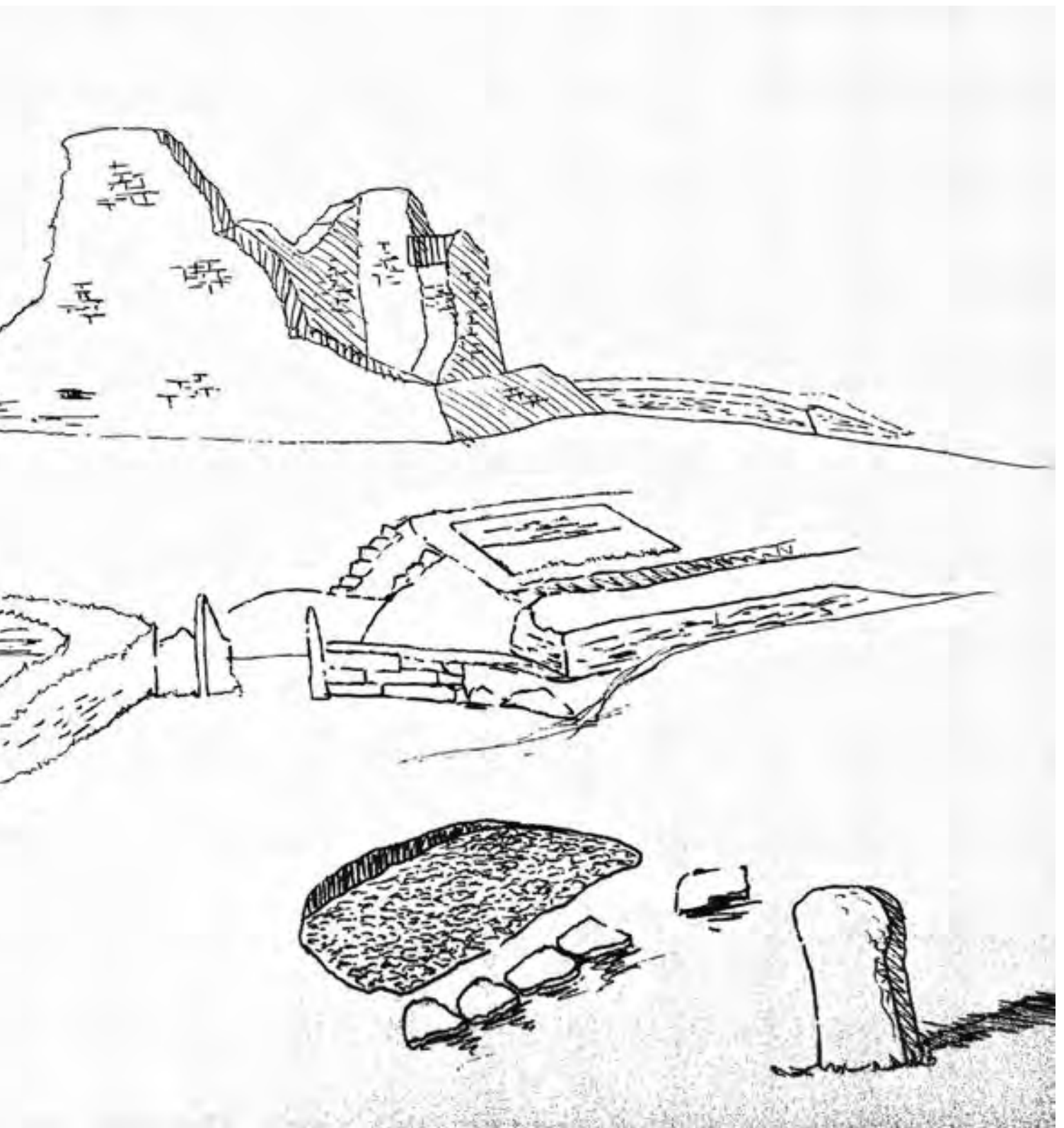
2.8 Assessment Output

Information gathered from the desk based study and the field surveys were collated with information from other sources to create a detailed document of each area including maps, photographs, illustrations and a thorough account of the CCa. The report is available in PDF format and the CCT map is available in GIS format (Google Earth, ArcGIS, MapInfo).

03

Shetland Coastal Definitions





Jarlshof



Developed Voe and Firth, Brae

3.1 Coastal Character Area (CCa)

The division of the coast around Shetland is based on landscape and coastal features. Each CCa has its own character and identity but shares similar Coastal Character Types (CCTs) and Coastal Character Features (CCF) with other areas. There can be more than one CCT within an area. Each CCa is named and can be seen on the map on [page 7](#). For a summary of each CCa, please refer to [Appendix A](#).

3.2 Coastal Character Types (CCT)

Distinct types of coast that are similar in character. They may be found in different areas of the islands but share comparable physical and aesthetic features.

CCT 1: Developed Voe and Firth

Key Characteristics

- *Long and narrow, usually with steep sides.*
- *Product of flooded landscape, relatively deep.*
- *Area of sand or mud flats and/or saltmarsh are a common occurrence at the head of the voe or firth.*
- *Settlement frequently at head of voe/firth and/or,*
- *Numerous aquaculture sites within the voe/firth.*

Coastal Character

The Developed Voe and Firth Coastal Character Type (CCT) covers voes and firths with settlements established at the head of the voe or firth and/ or aquaculture sites within the water, with associated onshore bases. Voes and firths are found throughout Shetland.

Notable settlements can be found at the heads of Busta Voe (Brae), Olna Firth (Voe) and Aith Voe (Aith). Voes and firths with established aquaculture sites but with smaller settlements include Laxfirth, Sandsound Voe and Basta Voe. Voes and firths can provide ideal sheltered spaces for aquaculture production, which

in Shetland is currently dominated by salmon and mussel production.

The voes and firths around Shetland are not solely used for commercial purposes, with recreational activities such as fishing, rowing, walking and sailing also taking place.

Physical Influences

Voes and Firths are long narrow inlets that were originally river valleys, then during subsequent ice ages were carved out by glacier movement, before being flooded due to a rise in sea level. Mud and sand flats are a common occurrence at the heads of voes and firths, ranging from fine to coarse sediment depending on the tidal range. Saltmarshes are also a common occurrence at the head of a voe or firth.

Coastal defences such as rock armour can sometimes be found at the head of voes or firths where there are settlements to prevent erosion and protect marinas, but voes and firths are normally quite sheltered, even during rough weather.

Although developed, there are various designations covering some of the voes and firths in Shetland including Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Marine Consultation Areas (MCAs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Nature Conservation MPAs and the Shetland National Scenic Area (NSA). Ronas Voe also cuts through the only Ramsar site in Shetland.

Many of the voes and firths are home to a range of wildlife from invertebrates, found in the tidal flats, to birds, otters and seals found along the shoreline, and occasional visiting marine mammals such as porpoises, dolphins and whales.



Undeveloped Voe and Firth, Ronas Voe

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

The Developed Voe and Firth CCT is often a key component to the viewpoints found throughout Shetland, with views down a voe or firth and out to sea relatable to the much larger scale fjords of Norway. The steep sides and lack of vehicular access is quite common along voes and firths, giving them a remote appearance with **croft** ruins being a common sight along the banks.

During rough weather, there is almost an invisible line across the mouth of a voe/firth where the rough open sea meets the more sheltered waters.

Developed Voes and Firths can be a hive of activity at certain times of day when boats head out to the aquaculture sites to feed or harvest the fish and shellfish. During the summer months sailing and rowing regattas and **eela** competitions can make these areas busy places.

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe and Firth

Key Characteristics

- *Long and narrow, usually with steep sides.*
- *Product of flooded landscape, relatively deep.*
- *Area of sand or mud flats and/or saltmarsh are a common occurrence at the head of the voe or firth.*
- *Lack of infrastructure with sparse to no shore developments or settlements.*
- *No or limited aquaculture development.*

Coastal Character

The Undeveloped Voe and Firth Coastal Character Type (CCT) is a lot quieter than the Developed Voe or Firth CCT. Single houses are sometimes found around the shore but few settlements are found and no or limited aquaculture sites are found on the water. This may be because of development restrictions such as busy shipping areas, designated scenic areas, or because of a lack of access.

Shetland Islands Council (SIC) and **Lerwick Port Authority** (LPA) policy restricts certain types of new development in a number of voes and firths around Shetland; including Sullom Voe and associated voes and firths in north Yell Sound, Dales Voe (Lerwick), Busta Voe, Whiteness Voe and Weisdale Voe.

Many Undeveloped Voes and Firths were historically busy places with the ruins of **crofts** and **böds** a common sight. However, changes in sea and land use patterns meant their remoteness made the **crofts** undesirable places to live. The main land use around Undeveloped Voes and Firths is normally rough grazing.

Physical Influences

Voes and Firths are long, narrow inlets that were created from river valleys, being carved out by glacier movement during subsequent ice ages, before being flooded due to a rise in sea level. Mud and sand flats are a common occurrence at the heads of voes and firths ranging from fine to coarse sediment depending on the tidal range. Saltmarsh is also a common occurrence at the head of a voe or firth.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

The Undeveloped Voe and Firth CCT often feels very isolated with low to no development. Ruins and ancient settlements can be common and these areas can be valued for their “natural” scenic qualities.

CCT 3: Voe and Firth Network

Key Characteristics

- *Long narrow voes or firths sitting close together.*
- *Views channelled out to sea or into the next voe/firth.*
- *Fairly sheltered, often used for aquaculture sites.*

Coastal Character

The Voe and Firth Network Coastal Character Type



Developed Island Sound, Lerwick

(CCT) comprises three or more voes or firths in close proximity, usually separated by a narrow headland at varying scales.

Headlands are often over 10m high and covered either by the Steep Banks or High Cliffs CCTs. Voe and Firth networks offer shelter, aquaculture sites are a common occurrence.

Physical Influences

Voe and Firth Networks are created from river valleys which were carved out by glaciers during the Ice Age before being flooded by sea level rises. Most have a small burn running down into the head of the voe or firth. Most have steep sides and low levels of terrestrial development.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

Voe and Firth Networks are a contained coast with views constrained by the steep banks of the voes and firths. Although the landscape has little development, it is common to find aquaculture sites with a shore base servicing the network.

Often the voes and firths are visually connected.

CCT 4: Developed Island Sound

Key Characteristics

- *Channel of water between two land masses.*
- *Can have strong tidal currents.*
- *Often has pier infrastructure.*
- *Aquaculture sites and/or onshore development are a common occurrence.*

Coastal Character

The Developed Island Sound Coastal Character Type (CCT) occurs over stretches of water situated between an island and the Shetland mainland such as Bressay Sound, or between two islands where there are high levels of activity due to aquaculture sites, ferry ports

or other onshore development. There can be other CCTs within the Island Sound, such as harbours.

The dominant view is to any offshore development that may sit in the sound or across to the development on the opposite side of the sound.

Many sounds are important commercially, offering good tidal movement for aquaculture and potential for renewable energy production, inter island ferries connecting islands to the mainland and fishing vessels of varying size using sounds for anchorage as well as fishing grounds.

Physical Influences

Sounds were either formed by rising sea levels flooding river valleys, or by glaciers scouring out a valley along a shore and then receding back allowing the space to fill with water. Sounds which have been created by flooded river valleys usually have sloping sides which continue under the waters surface such as Clift Sound. Whereas sounds created from glacier movement have flat bottoms with steep, sometimes near vertical sides such as Yell Sound.

Industrial land uses are a regular occurrence within the Developed Island Sound CCT with aquaculture shore bases, pier infrastructure and harbour facilities common features. Some of Shetland's busiest harbours are found within sounds e.g. Lerwick and Scalloway. This is due to the sheltered and deep water commonly found in sounds providing suitable conditions.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

The 'Developed Island Sound' CCT is valued visually due to the number and variety of vessels using the sounds providing an interest. Onshore development is often concentrated to certain areas of the sound, creating a focal point. The view from various inter-



Low Rocky Shore, Unst

island and the Northlink ferries are also valued as they give a different perspective on the sounds, looking back at the landscape.

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound

Key Characteristics

- *Channel of water between two land masses.*
- *Can have strong tidal currents.*
- *Limited to no onshore or marine development.*

Coastal Character

The Undeveloped Island Sound Coastal Character Type (CCT) is a lot quieter than the Developed Island Sound CCT. The Undeveloped Island Sound CCT is usually found in more remote areas, with the islands associated with the sound usually uninhabited. There is no or limited aquaculture development.

The dominant view is across to the opposite landform with features such as geos, stacks and arches found along the coast, especially at the entrances to the sound where high cliffs may occur.

Physical Influences

Sounds were either formed by rising sea levels flooding river valleys, or by glaciers scouring out a valley along a shore and then receding back allowing the space to fill with water. Sounds which have been created by flooded river valleys usually have sloping sides which continue under the waters surface such as Clift Sound. Whereas sounds created from glacier movement have flat bottoms with steep sometimes near vertical sides such as Yell Sound.

The dominant land use is often crofting, with land type ranging from improved to rough grazing, depending on the dominant land cover and the ease of access. Many of the Undeveloped Island Sounds in Shetland are remote, and most of the islands associated with the sounds are now uninhabited.

Sounds can be important for wildlife and can support important seabed habitats (e.g. horse mussel beds) and foraging area for birds, otters and marine mammals.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

The Undeveloped Island Sound CCT is usually valued for its scenic qualities. The relationship between the sky, sea and land creates an attractive seascape, as does the different textures and colours. Because of the strong currents often present in the sounds, the water can offer an energetic seascape which can increase around the entrances of the sound during severe weather, creating dramatic views.

As there is minimal development along much of the coastline, such as the north end of Yell Sound, this creates peaceful and powerful views across the water.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore

Key Characteristics

- *Intertidal strip based on solid rock.*
- *Diverse habitat.*
- *Characterised by erosional features such as wave cut platforms.*

Coastal Character

The Low Rocky Shore Coastal Character Type (CCT) is a dominant type in Shetland. This CCT usually transitions into low banks before becoming high cliffs at various stretches around the islands, typically when the coast meets open seas.

Physical Influences

Rocky Shores vary between exposed bed rock where the land cover has been eroded away and the rock usually having erosional features such as rock pools and wave cut platforms, to narrow stretches of boulders and rocks often with shingle or sand which



Scalloway Harbour

have been eroded and deposited during rough weather. Unlike pebbles found on beaches, the rocks on rocky shores are not usually as rounded.

The erosional features within rocky shores allows for a varied habitat to form with species which have to be able to cope with extreme changes in temperature, water and oxygen levels.

The land cover behind this CCT varies within Shetland with improved grazing, moorland and peat being most common, and crofting being the dominant land use.

Skerries and reefs are a common feature just offshore from rocky areas, creating dangers for vessels if not navigated carefully.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

Low Rocky Shore is an integral part of much of Shetland's coastline and provide important habitats for numerous species. Many expansive views are from Low Rocky Shore areas within Shetland, with few visual obstructions.

Access varies with areas at the base of low cliffs usually inaccessible for most. Areas which are easily accessible can prove popular for whelking, rock pooling and beach combing.

Marine litter is a common sight on Low Rocky Shores with rope and plastics causing problems in particular. The **Voar Redd Up** carried out annually goes some way to alleviate the problem, but it is a continuing concern.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks

Key Characteristics

- *Varies from exposed rock to bare earth/peat.*
- *Usually has rocky shore below.*

- *No higher than 10m.*
- *Usually topped with rough grassland/heather.*

Coastal Character

The Low Banks Coastal Character Type (CCT) covers low banks no higher than 10m which can be composed of exposed rock or bare earth/peat. There is often a rocky beach at the base and some Low Banks show important events that happened thousands of years ago in the layering of different materials.

Low Banks usually end in a definitive edge creating restricted access to the shore below. Low Banks have been used historically to place look out points such as brochs.

Physical Influences

Low Banks are created by coastal erosion with the sea breaking up the bank. Bare earth and peat banks are more fragile than exposed rock, being a softer material.

Usually the stretch of rocky shore protects the banks from all but the most extreme weather. The tops of the banks are mainly rough grass or heather, and usually fenced to stop livestock going over the edge.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

Low Banks usually have low levels of development and are valued for their remote feeling. Quite often they form part of a core path and/or are popular walking routes in their own right due to the elevated view they offer for relatively easy walking.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks

Key Characteristics

- *Steep slope upwards of 10m high.*
- *Usually vegetated.*
- *Common in voes and firths.*
- *Low to no development.*



High Cliffs, Silwick

Coastal Character

The Steep Bank Coastal Character Type (CCT) covers banks which are over 10m high and slope down to the water's edge. They are usually vegetated, unlike cliffs, and are commonly grazed by sheep, depending on their steepness.

Physical Influence

Commonly found along the edge of voes and firths, steep slopes were created by glaciers scouring the river edges during the Ice Age.

Steep Banks are similar in height to High Cliffs CCT but have a shallower gradient, although they are usually too steep for people to walk up and down. Grazing animals are able to move along the slopes creating very narrow paths.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

Offering good views from the top of the banks, the Steep Banks CCT is valued for the wildlife and the secluded sense they give due to most being undeveloped. The elevated view of the voes and firths that Steep Banks are commonly found in is also a valued outlook. Along more exposed coast, a variety of birdlife can usually be viewed flying around the Steep Banks with their nests found further down.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs

Key Characteristics

- *Cliff tops provide panoramic views.*
- *Usually topped with heather or grassland.*
- *Ledges providing important nesting/ breeding habitats for seabirds.*
- *Often fragmented edge with stacks, skerries and arches.*
- *Mainly sandstones, granites and Dalradian rocks.*
- *Development normally limited.*

Coastal Character

The High Cliffs Coastal Character Type (CCT) covers

cliffs that are generally composed of sandstone, granite or Dalradian stone on average over 10m high. The cliffs are usually vertical or near vertical and form a dramatic background to the surrounding seascape. Notable cliffs are around Sumburgh Head, Eshaness and Foula.

High Cliffs are often a focal point of the view due to their height above the water, colour and stratification of the rock. The view from the cliff tops are a valued panorama out to open sea, and can feel remote and exposed.

The ledges on some of the cliffs are important nesting sites for various species of seabirds. Some cliff ledges also have "hanging gardens", areas of vegetation home to wildflowers and plants, such of which are now rare elsewhere in Shetland due to sheep grazing. The cliffs vary in hardness but are normally stable. However, during the violent winter storms experienced in Shetland, it is not uncommon for large pieces of the cliff face to be broken off, creating raised beaches.

Physical Influences

Many cliffs around Shetland are valued geologically, for example the volcanic cliffs of Eshaness with examples of blow holes and geos.

The cliff top habitats in Shetland are mainly bare rock, rough grassland or heather grassland with most being part of croft grazing. Beaches associated with the cliffs are usually inaccessible as most are located at the end of steep sided geos or small bays, the most notable exception is Maywick in the South Mainland.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

The height and different colours of many of the High Cliffs CCTs make them valued landmarks. The reds around Muckle Roe and Hillswick are particularly



Hay's Dock, Lerwick

striking.

Many of Shetland's [access routes](#) follow cliff tops with stiles and gates provided. This gives views of a variety of erosional features and are popular places to visit for tourists and locals alike.

CCT 10: Large Harbour

Key Characteristics

- *Large protected and sheltered area of water.*
- *High concentration of port activities including commercial fishing, cruise ships and ferries.*
- *Water based recreational activities such as sailing and rowing.*
- *Related wide-ranging linked onshore activities and industries e.g. fish processing.*
- *Important for settlement and historic buildings.*

Coastal Character

The Large Harbour Coastal Character Type (CCT) includes the enclosed harbours at Lerwick, Scalloway and Sullom Voe. The harbour is an important setting for Lerwick and Scalloway which are both natural harbours within a sound.

The Large Harbour CCT is characterised by high levels of use, usually including commercial and recreational vessels. In Shetland, this ranges from ferries, commercial fishing vessels, oil and gas service vessels, cruise ships, to rowing, sailing boats.

The 'Large Harbour' CCT is a refuge for various different craft during rough weather and also because of Shetland's strategic position, is a place to refuel and replenish resources between the Arctic and Europe. Lerwick Harbour is also part of the [Bergen Shetland Races](#) held annually at the end of June.

Physical Influences

The Large Harbour CCT is strongly related to onshore

developments and settlements. Lerwick and Scalloway have been extended through the years with some interesting historical buildings found on the shore such as the [lödberries](#) in Lerwick. As industries have grown, in particular oil, gas and fishing, land has been reclaimed in Lerwick and Scalloway to extend the port infrastructure.

Various marine and intertidal habitats can be found throughout this CCT including tidal flats, salt marsh and sand dunes.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

The Large Harbour CCT is usually a busy area, with various commercial and recreational vessels coming and going. Shetland has many vessels related to the oil and gas industry using the ports around the islands. Larger vessels can appear to dwarf the landscape as they move in and out of the harbours.

Many areas covered by the Large Harbour CCT have been used for many years, with historic buildings such as the [lödberries](#) in Lerwick, found close to the shore and are usually valued for their aesthetic qualities giving insight into a different era.

CCT 11: Small Harbour

Key Characteristics

- *Low to moderate level of activity, less suitable for larger commercial vessels.*
- *Used by small inshore fishing vessels.*
- *Often used for water based recreational activities.*
- *Small area of protected water usually with some human intervention e.g. rock armour.*
- *Important setting for adjacent settlements.*
- *May have historical significance.*
- *Often a small settlement around the pier.*

Coastal Character

The Small Harbour Coastal Character Type (CCT)



includes Hamnavoe (Burra), Walls, West Burrafirth, Collafirth (north Mainland), Mid Yell, Uyea Sound, Balta Sound, Cullivoe, Symbister, South Mouth (Out Skerries) and North Haven (Fair Isle). The harbour is an important setting for many of the settlements and has historical significance.

While many are naturally sheltered by the surrounding coastline, some have additional features such as breakwaters etc. to allow access and protection in all wind directions.

Physical Influences

Most Small Harbours are a small bay which has historically been chosen to create a Small Harbour due to its sheltered nature. In more recent times hard sea defences have been used to try and allow more frequent access. Marinas are also a more recent addition as many of the historical reasons for setting up the harbours, such as the herring fishery, are no longer a considered usage.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

Quieter than the Large Harbour CCT, the Small Harbour CCT has a more relaxed and rural feel with small fishing boats, yachts and ferries coming in and out of the harbour creating a visually dynamic landscape. Many of the Small Harbours provide interesting historical information via interpretation panels, for example detailing links to Da Haaf, the herring fisheries and whaling.

Many of the Small Harbours create visual amenity for the surrounding settlements and often have a strong relationship with historical buildings on the shore such as Greenwell's Booth in Unst.

CCT 12: Large Bay

Key Characteristics

- *Large sweeping coastline, often with a sandy beach.*

- *Open mouth into the wider sea.*
- *Popular for surfing among other recreational activities.*

Coastal Character

The Large Bay Coastal Character Type (CCT) includes areas with a large body of water contained between two headlands. Valued for recreational activities such as surfing, dog walking and swimming, the Large Bay CCT may include a large sandy beach e.g. the Bay of Quendale.

Physical Influences

Formed by a softer area of rock eroding faster than harder rock found on either side of the bay. Depositional features such as dune systems and beaches are frequently found.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

This CCT includes some of the most popular beaches for residents and visitors alike. Many Large Bays in Shetland have a feeling of seclusion and tranquillity, with no more than a handful of people to be found even on a sunny day.

CCT 13: Ness and Wick Network

Key Characteristics

- *Indented coastline with sheltered sandy or rocky wicks (bays) and nesses (headlands) jutting out either side.*
- *View restricted by headlands.*
- *Settlements common within wicks.*

Coastal Character

The Ness and Wick Network Coastal Character Type (CCT) comprises areas with wicks protected by nesses at varying scales. The headlands can sometimes be over 50 metres high, with various geological features such as stacks, arches and skerries. Where wicks are of a substantial size, settlements are quite often found such as around Hoswick and Sandwick.



Offshore Coastal Island, Mousa

Many headlands are important landmarks locally and often provide nesting sites for a wide variety of seabirds.

Physical Influences

Wick and Ness Networks are formed by softer rock between the nesses eroding more quickly than the nesses themselves, the sheltered wicks allow material to be deposited and a beach to accumulate. Although the headlands erode at a slower rate, erosional features such as stacks or geos are a common sight.

Many of the beaches found within the wicks are quite small and vary from fine sand to large pebbles. Sometimes there is very little depositional materials, with only exposed rock. The more remote wicks, especially if facing the open sea, can be affected by marine litter such as buoys, rope, plastic and driftwood.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

Many of the nesses provide local landmarks, with the wicks that they shelter providing beaches of some recreational value depending on size. Many wicks are a haven for beach combers with various items washed ashore. This is still a regular pastime for many people.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands

Key Characteristics

- *Uninhabited isle, can have historic remains.*
- *Restricted access.*
- *Usually low lying.*

Coastal Character

The Offshore Coastal Islands Coastal Character Type (CCT) covers a range of small islands which are not currently inhabited, although some may have been

in the past. There is usually restricted access with only small boats able to land during calmer weather. A number of the islands have small automated lights built on them.

Physical Influence

Low lying with very little shelter, although some were inhabited in the past, these islands became undesirable places to live with most being uninhabited by the early 1900s. Most are heather and rock unless they are used for grazing sheep in the summer months which has improved the land.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities

Many of the smaller islands offer an interesting viewpoint, and where it is possible to see historic remains on the island.

Often used by wildlife as a safe refuge, it is sometimes possible to watch them from afar.

3.2 Coastal Character Sub Types

CCT 1a: Sub Type- Mini Voe and Firth

Mini Voe and Firth CCT is similar to the Developed/ Undeveloped Voe and Firth CCT but don't usually have the steep sides that are characteristic of the larger voes and firths. They usually have limited marine development such as aquaculture, but dispersed settlement is a common occurrence.

CCT 11a Sub Type: Marina

A small scale purposely designed harbour to provide mooring facilities, usually floating pontoons, for small boats and yachts.

CCT 12a Sub Type: Small Bay

Similar characteristics to the Large Bay CCT but on a smaller scale. A more intimate space than with the Large Bay CCT.



Saltmarsh, Gluss

CCT 14a Sub Type: Tidal Island

Similar to the Offshore Coastal Island CCT, however it is possible to walk across to the island via a tombolo, which can vary from sand to shingle. Some of these islands are only accessible during low tide whereas others are only inaccessible during rough weather.

3.3 Coastal Character Features (CCF)

Stand out feature which contributes to the overall character of the area.

Ayre- A beach or sandy headland.

Bay-head Bar- A ridge of sand which has developed across a bay/voe to cut it off from the sea.

Geo- A long narrow split going inland created by erosion along a fault in the rock.

Gloup- A sea cave which has been eroded until the roof falls in.

Isthmus- A narrow area of land with sea on either side that connects two land masses.

Lagoon- A shallow body of water separated from the sea by an ayre or sand bar. Can develop into a salt marsh.

Machair- Low lying fertile land created on the coast by sand and shells being blown inland.

Salt Marsh- Wetlands on the coastline which are regularly flooded by the sea.

Sand Dunes- Formed by sand blowing inland and being stabilised by vegetation. Continually changing due to weather conditions and longshore drift.

Skerry- A small rocky island which is usually too small to live on.

Stack- A rocky outcrop usually steep with vertical columns of rock created by erosion from the sea and wind.

Tidal Flats- Coastal wetlands created in a sheltered area, such as the head of a voe, by tides depositing mud or sand particles.

Mudflats- An area of muddy land built up of silt deposited by tides or burns, which is exposed during low tide.

Sandflats- Similar to a mudflat but with bigger

particles. Often has less biodiversity.

Tombolo- A sand or shingle spit which connects an island to the mainland.

3.4 Inner and Outer Coast

The complexity of the Shetland coastline can be split into two different categories: inner and outer coast. The difference between the two categories is best seen during stormy weather when there can appear to be an invisible barrier dividing where the two coastal types meet. Typically, voes, bays and sounds make up the sheltered inner coastlines, where the outer coastlines tend to be more open and exposed to ocean waters such as high cliffs.

3.5 Coastal Zones

For assessing the level of development, infrastructure and sensitivity to change of the Shetland coastline, each CCa was classified into the following categories. Please refer to map 2.

3.5.1 Developed Coast

- Includes towns, villages and industrialised areas such as aquaculture shore bases and sea sites.
- Well connected via transport links.
- Some areas valued for cultural heritage.
- In regards to sensitivity, the reuse of sites within developed areas should be promoted to help reduce the risk of degrading more sensitive areas of the coast. The overall character of the existing development should be considered when regenerating the area, and where possible enhanced and improved. If it is not possible to reuse existing sites, the landscape and seascape setting of the existing development should be considered in conjunction with any proposed development.

3.5.2 Undeveloped Coast

- Includes agricultural land and **crofting townships**.
- Lower levels of development along the shoreline,



North Roe Coast

but scattered houses follow the main road above the coast.

- Common to find disused settlements and structures such as **horizontal mills** or **planticrubs** reflecting historical uses.
- Although there is currently little development on the coastline, undeveloped coasts can accommodate some development if it is sited at an appropriate scale and place.

3.5.3 Remote Coast

- Poorer accessibility, usually a track for part of the way.
- Land use mainly rough grazing.
- Common occurrence to find disused settlements close to the shore such as Haaf fishing stations.
- Many of the aquaculture sites in Shetland are located off remote coasts which can sometimes detract from the landscape setting. An associated land based shore development also has the potential to have a detrimental effect on the overall character, with the need to put in infrastructure to service any development.

3.5.4 Isolated Coast

- Poor accessibility.
- Land use mainly rough grazing.
- Usually quite steep which is unfeasible/undesirable for development.
- Has expansive views of open seascape.
- Isolated coasts are highly sensitive to development and should be avoided where possible. The majority of the isolated coast in Shetland is along the outer coast which, although not practical for aquaculture, are potential sites for marine renewable development and should take into consideration the intrinsic values isolated coast offers.

3.6 Dark Skies

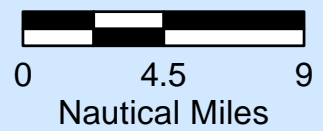
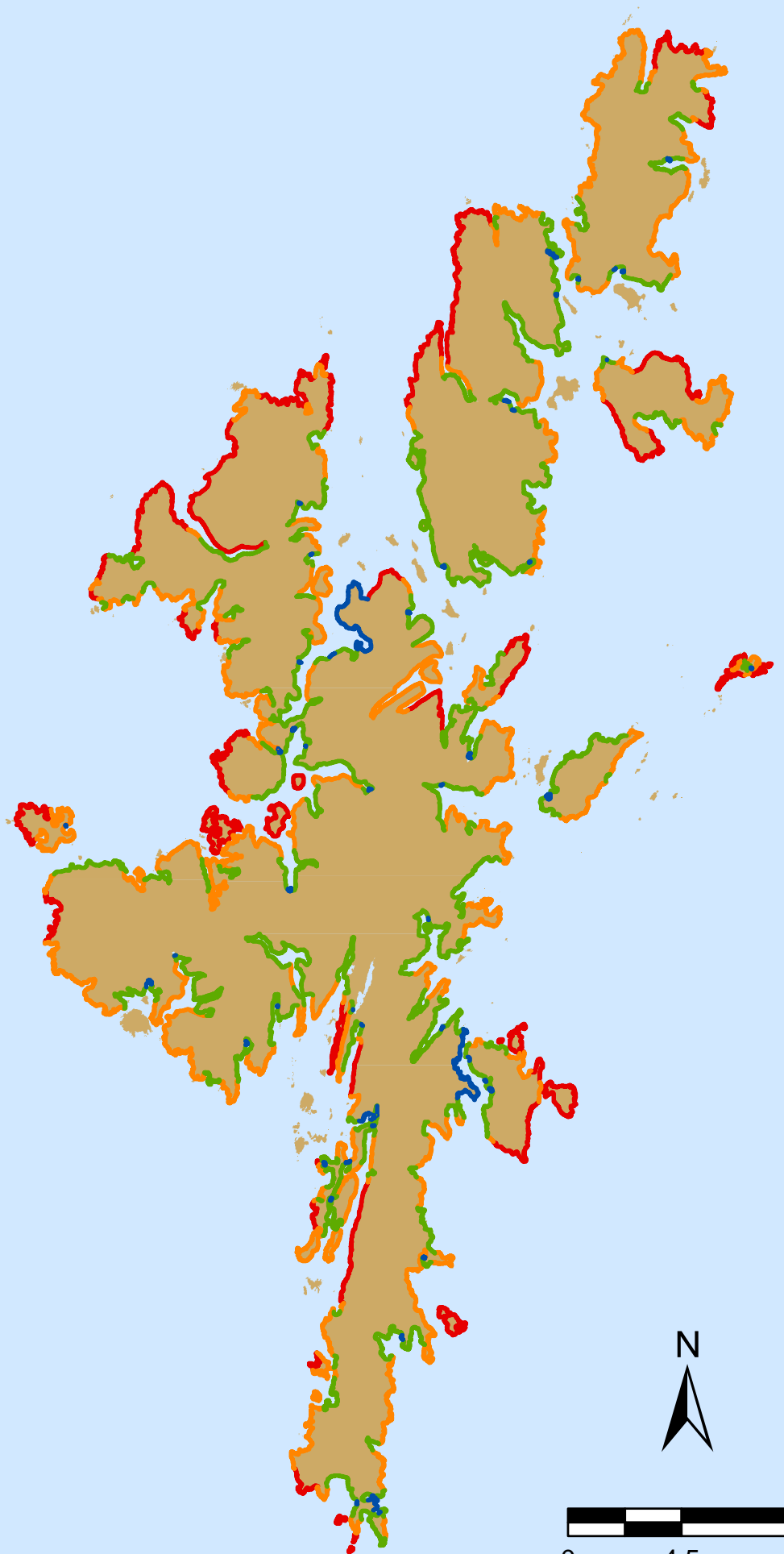
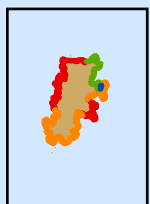
Due to its latitude, Shetland is plunged into darkness every winter with mere hours of daylight around the winter solstice. Because of this, Shetland is a prime spot to see the “**mirrie dancers**” where the night is illuminated with streaks of colour that move across the sky.

The towns and villages are also lit up at night with many sitting along the shores, creating beautiful picturesque reflections on the water. These views are a valuable component of the coastal experience within Shetland.

In addition to light from coastal towns and villages, there are various **lighthouses**, navigational lights and buoys found along the Shetland coast to guide boats safely into the harbours and ports- a reassuring sight for many marine navigators.

New developments must be sensitive to the night time light conditions along coastline and avoid altering the desired rural ambiance that is enjoyed by both local residents and visitors.

- Developed Coast
- Undeveloped Coast
- Remote Coast
- Isolated Coast



Map 2: Coastal Zones

04

Policy Summary





Lödberries, Lerwick



Leon, Northmavine

4.1 Introduction

The coastal environment is a highly desirable place to live, and due to marine industries such as commercial shipping and fishing, is also a prime location for industrial and commercial developments. These pressures have raised the importance of planning and management of the coastal landscape around the globe as it is a highly valued asset for ecological, social and economic progress within an area.

The geology of Shetland is of international significance and the islands were designated a **Geopark** in 2009. Many areas within Shetland are also valued for other attributes which has resulted in the designation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), a National Scenic Areas (NSA), Ramsar site, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). These sites can be found scattered across the isles, showing how diverse and important the habitats in Shetland are.

As nowhere in Shetland is more than 5km away from the sea, the residents of Shetland have had strong cultural ties with the coast for centuries. Fishing in particular is a large part of island life ranging from small-scale creel fishing in dinghies, to large **pelagic** trawlers landing in Shetland. The majority of farms and **crofts** are located right up against the coastline to take advantage of the more fertile and free draining soil found there.

Economically, the seas around Shetland have provided much wealth for the islands, and more recently the oil industry has also had a large economic and cultural impact. The Sullom Voe Oil Terminal is the largest in Europe. Aquaculture is also a major industry with fish and mussel farms taking advantage of the sheltered voes around the isles. In more recent times, there has been interest in using

the tidal resources for renewable energy with a tidal farm in the Bluemull Sound providing power to the grid.

All these factors have made Shetland a rich and diverse place which needs relevant policies to ensure future developments are carried out in a way that helps to protect, conserve and enhance the coastal marine environment, and contribute to its future success.

4.2 International Context

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) was adopted in Florence in 2000 and came into force in 2004. It was the first international convention to concentrate primarily on landscape and has been summarised by the council of Europe as follows:

"The Convention aims to encourage public authorities to adopt policies and measures at local, regional, national and international level for protecting, managing and planning landscapes throughout Europe. It covers all landscapes, both outstanding and ordinary, that determine the quality of people's living environment. The text provides for a flexible approach to landscapes whose specific features call for various types of action, ranging from strict conservation through protection, management and improvement to actual creation.

The Convention proposes legal and financial measures at the national and international levels, aimed at shaping "landscape policies" and promoting interaction between local and central authorities as well as transfrontier cooperation in protecting landscapes. It sets out a range of different solutions which States can apply, according to their specific needs."

In 2006 the UK Government ratified the ELC, committing to uphold the European Council's principles but as it is not a European Union Directive, the ELC has no legal basis. The Scottish Government



Fethaland, Northmavine

believes that current legislation and administrative systems meet the requirements of the ELC but also see it as an opportunity to improve and expand landscape practice. The Shetland CCA will contribute to meeting the aims of the ELC by providing data sets that can inform planning and management along Shetland's coastline.

4.3 National Context

At a national level The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and the UK Marine Policy Statement 2011 (MPS) are considered key documents in progressing the management of the marine environment. The Shetland CCA has particular relevance to the Marine Act as the assessment can be used to inform national and regional marine plans. It is the Scottish Government's aim that marine environments will be:

"clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas, managed to meet the long term needs of nature and people."

Scotland's Geodiversity Charter was created by the Scottish Geodiversity Forum and has received support from the British Geological Survey, GeoConservationUK, Nature Scot and the Scottish Government.

Geodiversity is internationally recognised by the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (2004) that:

"geological heritage constitutes a natural heritage of scientific, cultural, aesthetic, landscape, economic and intrinsic values, which needs to be preserved and handed down to future generations".

UNESCO has also emphasised its importance through the Global Geoparks Network, promoting the cultural and sustainable economic importance of geodiversity.

4.4 Regional Context

4.4.1 Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan

The Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan has been developed by the Shetland Marine Planning Partnership comprising Shetland UHI (formally NAFC Marine Centre) and Shetland Islands Council. Information can be viewed on the [Shetland UHI website](#).

The objectives of the SIRMP are set out by the Shetland Marine Planning Partnership advisory group and are as follows:

- **SOCIAL:** Ensure a high quality, fully functioning marine and coastal ecosystem for the health, benefit and prosperity of local communities.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL:** Protect and enhance the local marine waters and coastal environment particularly where there are regionally, nationally or internationally important marine biodiversity and geodiversity features whilst taking account of natural changes.
- **ECONOMIC:** Promote sustainable marine development and identify, in consultation with marine stakeholders, the differing priorities for sustainable use (for example fishing, aquaculture, recreation & tourism, marine renewables and nature conservation).

The Shetland CCA will underpin a number of policies within the SIRMP with particular relevance to the policies detailing about the landscape and seascape around the Shetland Islands:

Policy MP VIS1: Safeguarding National Scenic Area (NSA) and Local Landscape Areas (LLAs)

Developments that affect the NSA or a LLA will only be permitted where:

- a) it will not adversely affect the integrity of the area or the qualities or protected features for which it has been designated, or
- b) any such adverse effects are clearly outweighed



Hays Dock, Lerwick



Stenness, Eshaness

by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance for NSA and local importance for LLAs.

Policy MP VIS2: Safeguarding Seascape Character and Visual Amenity

Where requested by the planning authority : developers should undertake an appraisal to assess the potential effects of their proposed development on the landscape/ seascape, including upon designated areas (such as the NSA or proposed LLAs) and on the landscape character of the area, such appraisal should follow the guidelines set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd edition (LI & IEMA), 2013 (GLVIA3).

4.4.2 Shetland Local Development Plan

As well as the [SIRMP](#), the CCA will help to inform the assessment of developments against the Shetland Islands Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) policies ensuring there is integration between the two documents. Relevant policies include;

NH 6 Geodiversity

Development will only be permitted where appropriate measures are taken to protect and/or enhance important geological and geomorphological resources and sites, including those of educational or research value. Proposals that will have an unavoidable effect on geodiversity will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated that:

- *The development will have benefits of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature that outweigh the local, national or international contribution of the affected area in terms of its geodiversity;*
- *Any loss of geodiversity is reduced to acceptable levels by mitigation, and a record is made prior to any loss.*

For certain scales of development where a soil

management plan is required, reference should also be made to the geodiversity on site.

HE1 Historic Environment

The Council should presume in favour of the protection, conservation and enhancement of all elements of Shetland's historic environment, which includes buildings, monuments, landscapes and areas.

HE4 Archaeology

Scheduled monuments, designated wrecks and other identified nationally important archaeological resources should be preserved in situ, and within an appropriate setting. Developments that have an adverse effect on scheduled monuments and designated wrecks or the integrity of their settings should not be permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

All other significant archaeological resources should be preserved in situ wherever feasible. Where preservation in situ is not possible the planning authority should ensure that developers undertake appropriate archaeological excavation, recording, analysis, publication and archiving in advance of and/or during development.

CST1 Coastal Development

Proposals for developments and infrastructure in the coastal zone (above Mean Low Water Mark of Ordinary Spring Tides) will only be permitted where the proposal can demonstrate that:

- *It will not have a significant impact, either individually or cumulatively, on the natural, built environment and cultural heritage resources either in the sea or on land;*
- *The location, scale and design are such that it will not have a significant adverse impact.*
- *It does not result in any deterioration in ecological status or potential for any water body or prevent*



Shetland UHI, Scalloway campus



Scalloway

it from achieving good ecological status in the future;

- *There is no significant adverse impact on other users of marine resources, and/ or neighbouring land.*

Proposals for marine aquaculture developments or amendments to existing fish farm developments will require to have regard to the foregoing criteria and will be assessed against Supplementary Guidance for Aquaculture.

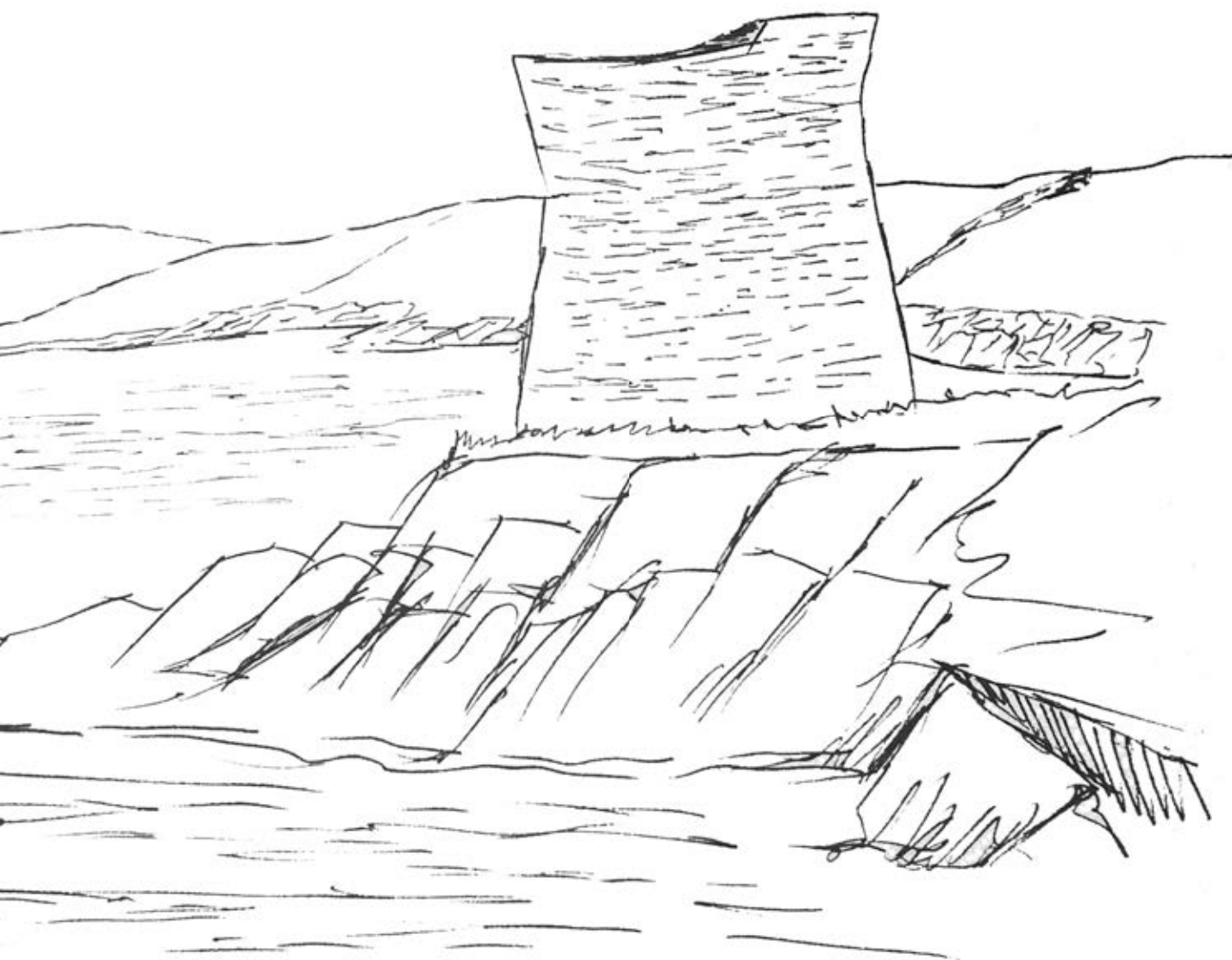
All proposals will be assessed against the Shetland Islands' Marine Spatial Plan that sets out a spatial strategy and policy framework to guide marine developments in the coastal waters around Shetland. The marine Spatial Plan identifies the constraints developers are required to consider when contemplating development in the coastal area and will form supplementary guidance to the plan.

For more information about marine environment policies at an international, national and regional context, please refer to the [SIRMP](#).

05

Evolution of the Seascape





Mousa Broch



North Roe Coast



Papa Stour

5.1 Introduction

Shetland's landscape has evolved over millions of years to create a dynamic and diverse group of islands on the periphery of British and Scandinavian borders, with Bergen and Aberdeen being a similar distance from Lerwick. This evolution is not a static entity, and is continually changing which is something that should be accounted for when considering future uses.

5.2 Geology and Landforms

The Shetland Islands have a highly complex and diverse range of geological features, created over millions of years. The movements of tectonic plates has juxtaposed young and old rocks. Fire and ice have moulded and shaped the islands over millions of years, leaving exposed rock faces. This geodiversity has made Shetland arguably one of the most geologically interesting places in the world. This has been recognised by the islands being designated a **Geopark** in 2009, also receiving UNESCO recognition.

The variety of rock types found in Shetland include igneous and **metamorphic** rocks, which were mainly formed in the roots of the Caledonian mountain range deep below the surface of the Earth during the **Devonian period**, and **sedimentary** rock which was layered on top of the existing rock. They were exposed to the elements through erosion. The mountains were created by tectonic plates colliding together pushing rock above and below the surface of the Earth. At one time, the mountain range ran from Scandinavia through Scotland and Ireland across to North America.

The oldest rocks in Shetland are called Lewisian **gneisses** which were part of the Earth's original crust and are estimated to be around 3000- 1500 million years old.

After the formation of the Caledonian mountain range, the new landform was highly volatile for millions of years after. **Fault lines** were still highly active and evidence of movement can be seen through the difference in rock types on either side of **fault lines** running through Shetland.

Shetland has been covered in ice many times throughout history with glacial movement shaping some of the landscape. However, the main contributors to shaping the landscape we see today is the rain, wind and sea, a process which continues to this day.

Around 15 000 years ago, when the glaciers melted, sea levels rose and created the drowned landscapes in Shetland's inner coast. Voes which were once river valleys were eroded further by glaciers and then submerged by the sea, giving a clear indication of sea level rise. Due to the sheltered nature of the inner coast, various depositional features such as tombolos, ayres and spits can be found in abundance around Shetland. The outer coast has been shaped by wild seas and winds to produce many erosional features such as geos, gloop (collapsed caves) and stacks, which are caused by the elements eroding along faults and joints within the cliff face.

The dramatic differences between the inner and outer coast found in Shetland creates a continual sequential journey through different scales of sea, land and sky, moving from uninterrupted views of the Atlantic, to steep sided voes which penetrate the landscape, forming a unique coastline.

5.3 Soils

In most parts of Shetland the soils are acidic and of a poor quality for farming purposes. Much of the isles are covered in blanket bog and **peat** moorland. Farming is mainly restricted to the coastal fringe



Skerry Holms, Fair Isle



Eshaness Coast

where land has been improved traditionally using seaweed, manure, **peat** ash and sand, and in the south of the mainland where extensive areas of blown sand provide naturally fertile soil. The underlying geology also has a part to play in the makeup of soils, for example in Ollaberry and Gluss a more nutrient rich soil can be found due to the **limestone** beneath the surface, whereas the land around Eela Water which has underlying **granite** is only suitable for rough grazing.

5.4 The Tides

The tides around Shetland are caused by the interaction of two different tidal systems in the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Tidal streams in the Atlantic Ocean are not very strong, but as they get to shallower waters, their speeds increase. Largely, the tidal streams around Shetland move to the south during the flood tide and to the north on the ebb tide at around 0.5 to 1.25 m/s. There are areas with a much higher speed such as the Bluemull Sound and the Yell Sound where tidal streams can move between 3.5 to 4 m/s.

5.5 Climate

Shetland has a relatively mild maritime climate in comparison to other places along the same latitude, with the temperature relatively stable normally ranging from 1-16°C. This is due to the slope current which flows along the continental shelf to the north past Shetland. The wind has a significant impact on the islands climate. The highest wind speed and strongest gusts in Britain have been recorded in Shetland, with gales on average 58 days of the year.

5.6 Coastal Erosion

Shetland is being continually eroded and changed by the sea. The large Atlantic fetch to the west of the isles brings powerful waves crashing into the cliffs, creating stacks, arches, geos and blowholes by

attacking lines of weakness in the rock.

Globally sea levels are rising every year with more land being lost to the sea. It has been estimated that over half the agricultural land present in **Neolithic** times is now under water.

5.7 Coastal Marine Environment

The sea bed deepens rapidly down to 100m less than 1.5 km off the coast, with local depressions increasing depths to over 140m in some areas. The seafloor is mainly made up of coarse sediment due to the high tidal movement moving finer sediment elsewhere. Listed in **Appendix B** are the marine habitats considered of national or international importance and are included as Priority Marine Features by the Scottish Government. Known locations of these habitats and species are shown in the **SIRMP**.

5.8 Coastal Environment

There is a diverse range of habitats around Shetland's shores. **Appendix C** identifies coastal habitat types and distribution maps can be found in the **SIRMP**.

Many of Shetland's coastal landscapes are of national and international importance and have been given protection under a variety of legislation. **Appendix D** is an updated list of nature designations in Shetland.

5.9 Marine Flora and Fauna

Shetland's location is one of the reasons for the variety of important flora and fauna found around the isles. Shetland has many species at the southern or northern limit of their range. It is also an important staging post for many migratory species on passage between Greenland or Arctic Scandinavia, and mainland Europe.

The Shetland coast is dominated by rocky shores, with rock pools and crevices providing home to marine life. Shingle and sand beaches, mud and



Dunrossness Coast



Gloup Voe, Yell

sand flats, and salt marshes make up a much smaller percentage of the coastline, but are important habitats for foraging birds.

5.9.1 Important Marine Animals

Cetaceans- Whales, dolphins and porpoises are a common sight in Shetland due to the island's location near the European continental shelf.

European Otters (Draatsi)- Are one of the most endangered mammals across Europe, but in Shetland there is a strong presence of otters. It is thought that Shetland is home to around 14% of the UK's population of otters, making the isles population of national and international importance. There is an SAC and SSSI for otters in Shetland.

Otters in Shetland are mainly found around the coast, preferring low rocky coastlines with shallow water. There will usually be a source of freshwater close to their holt as they must regularly clean their fur to keep it insulated in the cold sea water while hunting.

It was originally thought that otters had swum to Shetland but it is now known that is not possible. It is now believed that human settlers introduced them to Shetland, most likely the **Vikings**.

Seabirds- Shetland is home to over a million breeding seabirds with 21 of the 24 native British seabirds found here. Due to Shetland's location it is also a stopping point for many migratory birds to refuel and attracts many bird watchers, especially in autumn and spring.

There are many areas designated for their internationally important seabird colonies including Fetlar, Fair Isle, Sumburgh Head, Foula, Noss and Hermaness, which are all SPAs.

Historically, eggs were harvested for food from the more accessible nests, as were chicks and sometimes fully grown individuals. At the time, humans controlled numbers but it was not done to any level to threaten species viability. However, when the gun was introduced, it became far easier to hunt birds and in the nineteenth century it became a sport for gentry and collectors rather than a food source. Many species went into decline and the sea eagle was exterminated completely from the isles in 1918.

The first Bird Protection Acts came into existence in the 1880's which reduced shooting significantly, but not entirely, with shags still being shot and exported as a delicacy until just after the **Second World War**.

Seals (Selkies) - There are two main species of seal in and around Shetland, the harbour seal or common seal, and the grey seal. Shetland provides an important habitat for seals with a number of important haulout sites around the coast.

Historically, seals were hunted for blubber, skins and meat using nets, clubs and rifles. After the **Second World War**, seals skins were a highly sought after commodity, with baby seal skins being particularly valued. Harbour seals were previously targeted more frequently than grey seals, because a permit was required to hunt grey seals from 1914. However harbour seal numbers declined dramatically and in 1970 a Seal Conservation Bill was passed which introduced a permit requirement to hunt for them as well. In 1973 a complete hunting ban was introduced.

There are 47 protected seal haul-outs around the Shetland coast and two SACs for harbour seals (Mousa and Yell Sound).



Otter, Delting



Seals, Lerwick

5.9.2 Important Species and Habitat Protection

There is various legislation, conventions and policies to protect vulnerable species and habitats which are important for biodiversity. These are listed below with more information found in the SIRMP:

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)
- Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
- Marine (Scotland Act) 2010
- Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011
- Scotland's Biodiversity: It's in Your Hands
- 2020 Challenge document
- OSPAR list of threatened and/ or in decline species and habitats
- Scottish Biodiversity List
- Birds of Conservation Concern
- Priority Marine Features (PMFs)

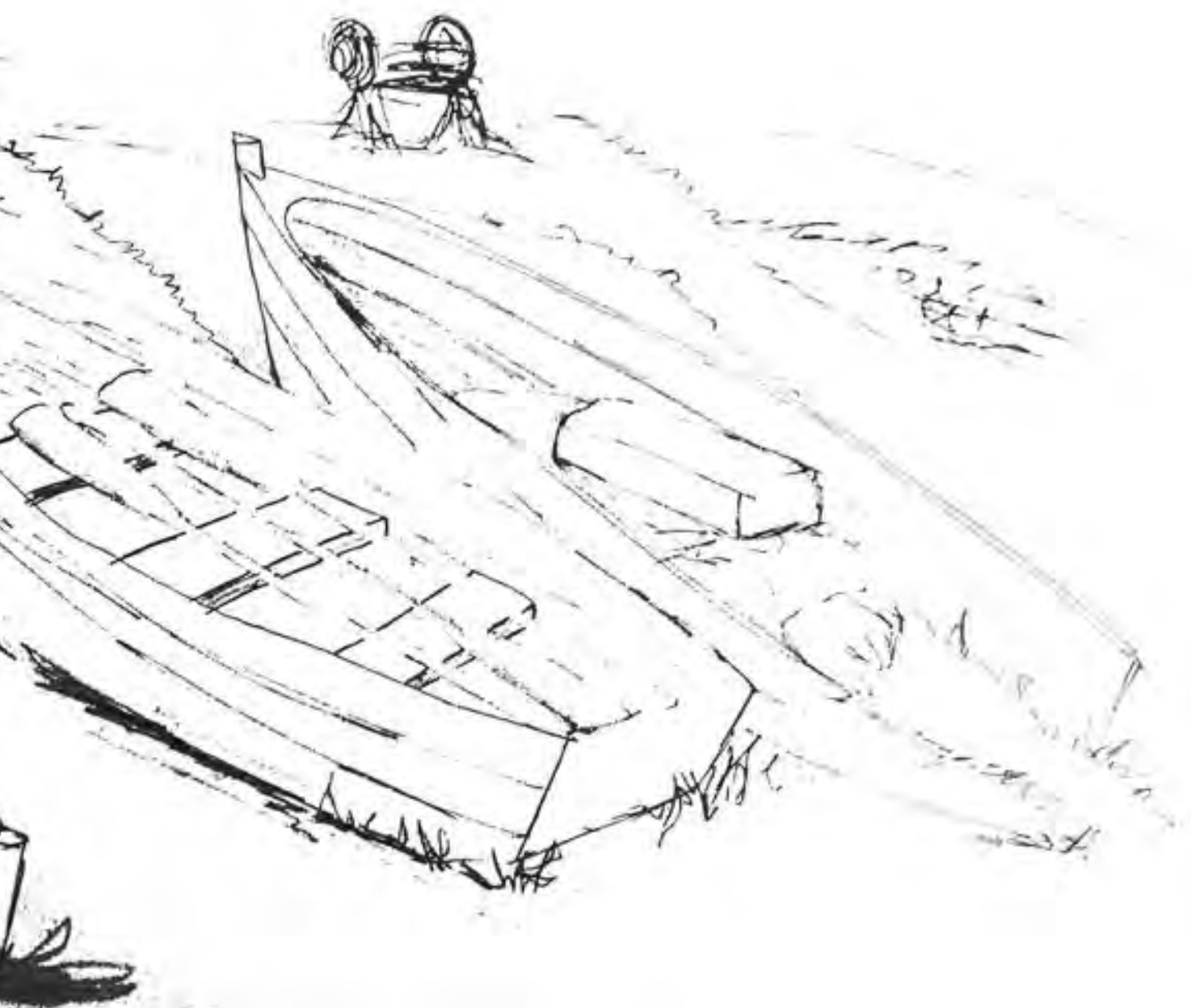


Otters Playing, Delting

06

Cultural Heritage





Boat Noosts, Bressay



Haaf Station, Stenness



Voe, Delting

6.1 Historic Use of Coast and Sea

Although people have lived in Shetland for over 6500 years and travelled across the sea to get here, it wasn't until during the **Bronze Age** (2500BC to 700BC) that people began to fish in the waters around the islands. This change was due to the climate becoming wetter and cooler which meant that there was less fertile land for growing crops, and settlements moved down closer to the coast where it was more sheltered. It is thought that from the **Iron Age** (700BC- AD43) to Medieval times (AD43-1485) there was very little change in land use and settlement.

From 800AD the Norse began to settle in Shetland due to the lack of arable land and resources to support the expanding population in Scandinavia. Shetland became central to the **Vikings** for pirate expeditions from Norway and Scotland.

In 1469, Shetland and Orkney were pledged as security against payment of a dowry for Christian I of Denmark and Norway's daughter Margaret's marriage to James III of Scotland. Although there was various attempts to reclaim Shetland and Orkney, they were taken by the Scottish Crown.

In terms of land use and settlement patterns, very little changed for a few hundred years, but sea trade was expanding with ties to Germany and Holland who were mainly interested in the rich fishing grounds around the isles. By 1700, the majority of the crofters were now tenants of Scottish landowners who mainly came from the Lowlands of Scotland, thus the lack of any Gaelic language. The landowners could see the profit to be made in fishing and established the Haaf stations around Shetland, making their tenants work at the stations as part of the **croft** lease. As the **lairds** owned the stations, boats and equipment used, the tenants were given a poor deal. However, if it were not for the **laird's** need of able bodies to go off

fishing during the season, it is likely Shetland would have been hit much harder during the **Highland clearances** and crofting would probably not exist to the same extent as it does today. Towards the end of the 1700s, the herring fishing was starting to expand, with hundreds of boats following the migrating shoals of fish down the coast of Scotland. It was a valuable source of employment in many of the rural coastal villages and towns. By the late 1800s herring was just as important as the haaf fishing, and there were over 150 stations with houses and facilities developing around them.

Due to over fishing, the herring stocks went into a serious decline and was no longer a viable option by the early 1900s. As the main employment in the isles had gone, and Shetland was lagging behind the Scottish mainland in development, causing the population to drop from over 31000 in 1861, to below 18000 in the 1960s.

Shetland's population continued to grow in the 70's with the discovery of oil off the coast of Shetland. The construction of the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal saw over 7000 workers flood into Shetland who needed accommodation and facilities such as schools and entertainment.

Another industry based on the coast was whaling. Due to stocks being over exploited a ban on whaling was placed around northern Norway. Rather than give up, some companies moved their businesses to Shetland, which was ideally located. Although whaling had been happening in Shetland for 1000s of years, this was the first time it was done on such a large scale. In 1903 two companies opened and were based in Ronas Voe; the Zetland Whaling Company and the Norrona Company. In 1904 another two companies opened with the Norwegian Alexandra Company based in Collafirth and the Olva Whaling



Company based in Olna Firth. All four companies operated until 1914 when war broke out and whaling in British waters was suspended. In that first 10 years, roughly 4900 whales were caught. In the subsequent years from 1920- 1929 less than 2000 were caught showing how dramatic the declines in whale populations were.

Whaling offered local employment but there was some ill feeling due to the smell and pollution the processing plants created. The herring fishermen also blamed the blood, offal and carcasses of the whales for attracting sharks and thus scaring away the fish.

The industry was short lived with the Olna Whaling Company closing down in 1929 and spelling an end to whaling in Shetland.

6.2 Cultural Associations

Shetland is very rich in culture and is particularly well known for knitting and music. The isles cultural heritage would probably not be as rich as it is today if it were not for the isolation of the islands in the past the need to make do and mend, and the exchanging of ideas with other nationalities.

6.2.1 Fair Isle Knitting

The origin of Fair Isle patterns is unknown. Some believe they were inspired by patterns found aboard the Spanish Armada ship El Gran Grifon which was wrecked on Fair Isle in 1588. Others believe it was a skill developed by **Vikings** who settled in the area. What is certain is that the inspiration travelled to Fair Isle across the sea. The motifs found in the patterns are thought to be connected with island life with religion, rams horns and flowers featured.

The colours of the wool are also connected to the Isle with some coming from local plants, whereas

others such as the blues and reds were created from indigo and madder, bartered for from passing ships.

6.2.2 Traditional Music

Shetland is well known for its distinctive fiddle playing style around the globe. The beginning of the fiddles reputation was at the start of the 1700s when a German man, Freidmann Stickle, jumped ship in Unst with apparently only a few clothes and a fiddle. There are records of a two string instrument called a Gju being used before this date.

The fiddle grew in popularity mainly because it was easy to transport and quite a diverse instrument. It was noted in the Statistical Account for Scotland in 1794 that music and dancing were favoured pastimes.

Due to Shetland's location, many ships from all over the world used the isles as a stop off point. With them they brought music from their native countries which along with music collected by travelling Shetlanders, influenced the traditional style. With increased communication and easier transport links with the Scottish mainland from the 1920s, the traditional Scottish music began to supersede the Shetland style. If it were not for the efforts of Tom Anderson in the post war years to preserve and encourage younger players, the unique style may have been lost.

Today, Shetland enjoys a vibrant music scene with various festivals throughout the year catering for most music genres.

6.2.3 Place Names

As Shetland was part of Scandinavia for so long, it is not surprising that the dialect and the majority of place names originate from **Norn**, a derivative of Old Norse. Norn was in common use up until the 1700s and survived longer in some of the more remote



Selkie, Lerwick

areas until the end of the 18th century. Historically, place names were used as navigational aids due to inaccurate maps. It has been recorded that there was around 30,000 place names in Shetland in the 1950's.

Certain terms had specific meaning such as names ending in –a or –ay, are derived from –øy which means island. Other names were used to describe features or wildlife found in certain areas. Further information is available online on the [Shetland Amenity Trust website](#).

6.2.4 Folklore

The Shetland folklore is deeply rooted in the history of the islands and the reliance of the residents on the land and sea for survival. There is also much Scandinavian influence on the stories and sayings told in Shetland.

Finn people were thought to be powerful enchanters who could row 50 miles with one stroke of an oar and could transform into frightening sea monsters, chasing and sinking fishing boats. They were thought to be the seas equivalent to a trow. Other monsters featuring in Shetlands history include the Brigdi and Sifan. The Brigdi was a terrifying creature which could drag boats down into the depths using its huge fins. An axe was carried to cut off its fins and an amber bead would be thrown at the monster to ward it off. The Sifan was a gentler creature who had a long neck and humps along its back, not dissimilar to creatures found elsewhere. The Sifan, if sighted at the beginning of summer, was a good omen for the season ahead.

Another creature of the deep was a Seefer, thought to be a coffin shaped whale. The whale would leap clear out of the water and the direction it landed defined the fate of the fishermen or the fish.

The best known folklore connected to the sea are

the stories of [Selkies](#). The traditional tale of a selkie woman taking her skin off to bathe in the sunshine on land, only for it to be stolen by a man smitten by her good looks is a common story in many different countries folklore. Indeed, selkies or seals are still shrouded in some mystery with the people in Shetland still having a connection with them. Thankfully, the selkie women in the folk stories normally find their skin and manage to return to the sea.

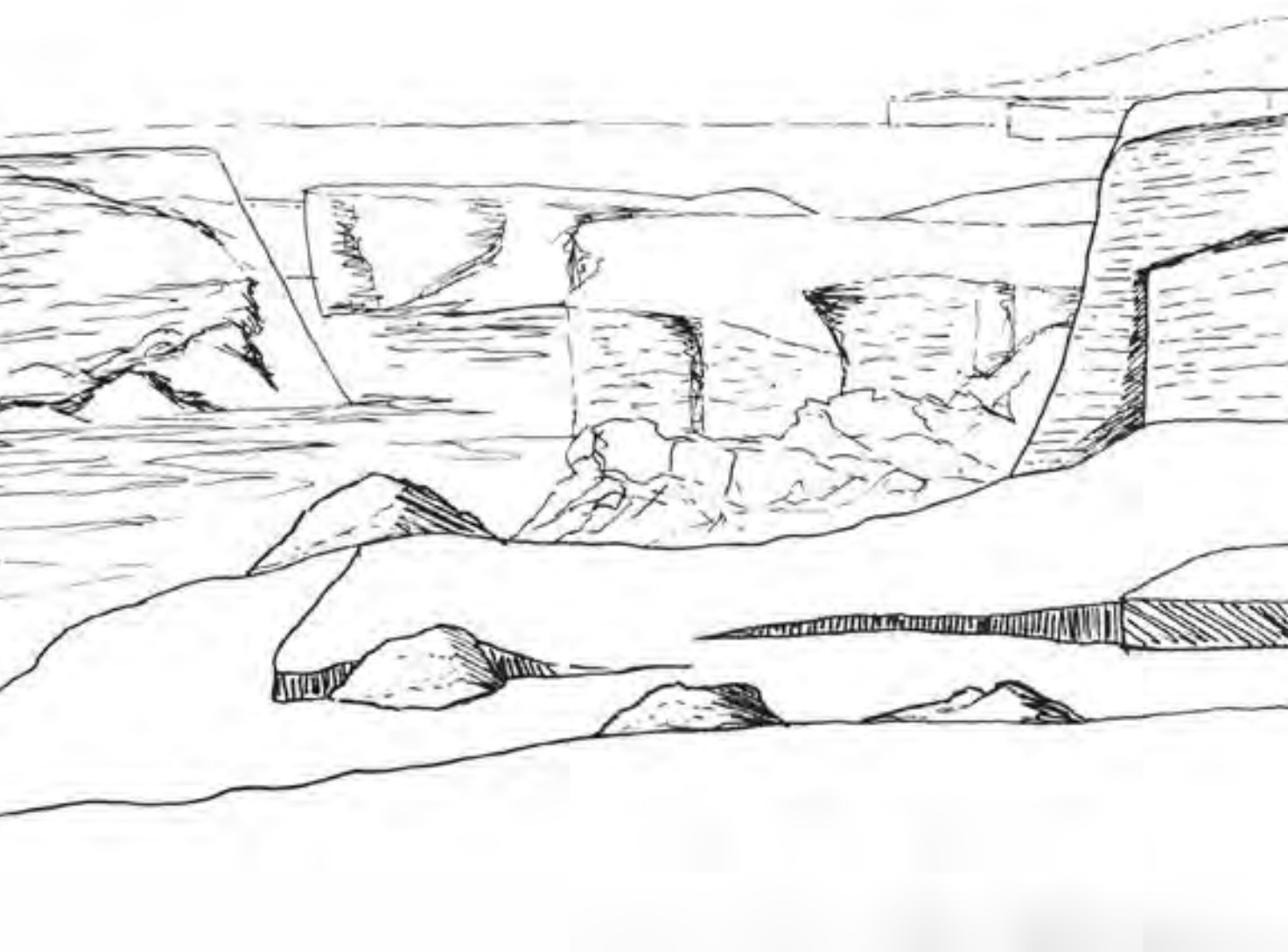
The folklore of Shetland has remained so strong due to the tradition of telling stories especially in the winter months where it was seen as entertainment.



07

Coastal Activity





Eshaness



7.1 Recreational Activities

The waters around Shetland provide excellent resources for a number of different water based activities such as [yoal](#) racing, kayaking, surfing, SCUBA diving and windsurfing. There are over 30 groups and clubs listed on the [Shetland Community Directory](#), with more found on social media sites such as Facebook. The summer is the busiest time for water sports with local, national and international competitions using the seas around Shetland. Important areas of recreational use are mapped within the [SIRMP](#).

7.1.1 Surfing

There has been a small group of surfers based in Shetland for around 20 years. There is now a newly established group, [60°N Boardriders surf club](#), formed to promote their enthusiasm for the lifestyle. The 60N Boardriders surf club express *"Surfers are proactive in protecting the waves, wildlife and coastline, there is a sense of ownership and responsibility too in safeguarding the marine environment for future generations". Although the equipment used may have become more sophisticated over the years, the raw passion for utilising the waves found in Shetland is instilled in every surfer. As surfers look back towards the land, they can "marvel at the amazing scenery surrounding them, before paddling to catch the next wave."*

7.1.2 Wind and Kite Surfing

Wind and kite surfing seem to be growing sports in Shetland with their [Facebook page](#) currently standing at over 100 members. Shetland is a perfect place for these sports due to the constant wind the islands are subjected to. Whilst the club is based in Brae, the group travel all over Shetland depending on the prevalent wind which allows them to marvel at the variety of scenery available in Shetland.

7.1.3 Sea Kayaking and Canoeing

The [Shetland Canoe Club](#) is primarily a sea kayaking club, although a small number of members also kayak surf and play water polo. The club has around 60 members and they offer training in the summer and trips around the Shetland coast with camping trips out to various locations, including Papa Stour and Vaila. There are a variety of reasons the club values Shetland including scenery, peacefulness, variety/diversity and remoteness. It can offer a challenge/test for participants, helping members quickly and easily escape the 'real world'. Members enjoy the freedom of being able to access short trip locations which still offer these properties, as well as longer weekend trips. The water quality is also valued by members.

7.1.4 Sea Angling

Shetland has such rich fishing grounds with fishing being a major component of island life for centuries, so it is no surprise that sea angling is a big hobby for many people with [eelas](#) organised throughout the summer months. Now that it is for fun rather than survival, there is more opportunity to enjoy the surroundings looking back onto the landscape and viewing the wildlife with the bonus of a fish or two to fry when back on shore.

7.1.5 Yoal Rowing

Yoal rowing is a popular sport in Shetland with competitions held between the clubs every summer. Everyone is encouraged to join in from young children to experienced adults. One of the draws is being able to view the spectacular coastline of Shetland from a different perspective and getting up close to the various wildlife found around the islands.

7.1.6 Diving

The clear waters around Shetland offer excellent SCUBA diving opportunities with three clubs



Walkers, Eshaness



Aquaculture, Copister

operating in the isles. The majority of SCUBA diving is done from a boat, with only a handful of sites suitable for shore diving such as the east side of Mavis Grind.

7.1.7 Terrestrial Activities

There are other activities based on land that still use and enjoy the coastline with walking, photography, ecology and explorer groups to name but a few. The coastline not only provides inspiration and interest but also has healing properties, allowing people to *“get away from it all”*.

Although there may be varying reasons for different sports and groups to use the shore and water, each group is passionate about protecting this valuable asset to Shetland to continue being able to use it.

This is by no means a comprehensive list with many other groups based in Shetland. These selected few are just an indication of the variety of activities happening in the isles.

7.2 Commercial

Unsurprisingly, being an archipelago, Shetland's economy has a strong connection to the waters surrounding the isles, historically through fishing and trade. Today, fishing is still a major component but newer industries such as aquaculture, oil and renewables are also important.

7.2.1 Fishing

Shetland has always had a strong connection with the sea and fishing from the early settlers through to the herring and haaf stations. Currently, there is over 100 commercial fishing vessels operating from Shetland and over 1000 jobs related to the industry, this shows how important it is to the island's economy.

7.2.2 Aquaculture

Finfish and shellfish farms are found throughout

Shetland producing more shellfish and finfish than any other region in Scotland, and employing more people than any other sector. Current Shetland Island Council Policy means that the size of farms is restricted and they have to be a certain distance apart to assist in disease control. This also reduces the chances of farms dominating the seascape. Seaweed is also cultivated in Shetland on a very small scale as it is a relatively new industry. It is currently gathering more interest.

7.2.3 Marine Renewables

There is a great potential for renewables in Shetland due to the tidal and wave resource around the coastline. Although the industry is still in its infancy, the world's first tidal array became operational in Bluemull Sound in 2016. There was also an exploratory works licence granted on the south east coast of Shetland for a wave farm however the works licence for the wave power development expired in 2014.

7.2.4 Oil and Gas

Since the 1970's Shetland has been important to the oil and gas industry due to its proximity to several oil and gas fields, and also due to the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal which was built in the 1970's and is the largest oil terminal in Europe. The industry is a large part of the island economy and supports over 600 jobs. The extraction of oil is thought to continue for at least the next 30 years and a new gas plant was opened in early 2016.

Once the oil reserves come to an end, Shetland will still be an important place for the next phase, decommissioning. Lerwick Port Authority already has some capacity in this area with plans to expand as needed.



Columbus, Bressay Sound

7.2.5 Tourism

Other than flying to Sumburgh, the main route to Shetland is by boat with Serco Northlink operating a ferry between Lerwick, Kirkwall and Aberdeen. In the summer months Shetland is visited by cruise ships and visiting pleasure yachts. There is also wildlife tours around some of the isles by boat such as Bressay, Noss and Mousa.



08

Inspirational Coast





Muckle Roe



Scalloway, Thomas Woore



Exhibition, Bonhoga Gallery

8.1 Inspiration

There are numerous factors that come together to make Shetland an inspiring place for creative industries and people. From the dramatic skies and ever changing light, to the cultural heritage with folklore, patterns and music stimulating creative thought. The creative industries in Shetland are growing from strength to strength and looks set to continue, being a contingent part of the Shetland economy and culture.

8.1.1 Historic

The Shetland landscape and coast has been an inspiration to artists, musicians and writers for centuries, from the intricate lace and Fair Isle patterns passed down through families, to 'The Pirate' written by Sir Walter Scott about the infamous John Gow.

The landscape and seascape paintings can give an insight into how Shetland has changed over the years with [Thomas Woore's](#) painting of Scalloway Harbour from 1828 showing only a few buildings around the ruined castle and land cultivation running up East Voe.

8.1.2 Art

Visual art in Shetland is very varied with people producing fine art, contemporary knitting, woodwork, pottery, glasswork and photographs to name but a few. Many of the companies and individuals who work in Shetland take inspiration from their surroundings and Shetland history for their pieces. A common theme seems to be the flotsam washed on to the shores. Helen Robertson creates beautiful jewellery inspired by silver birch bark that washes up on the shore from places afar. Luke Holt, who runs Green Croft, is also inspired by the things washed on to the beach, *"As a small boy in the 1980s I roamed freely around the banks and geos of the isle and what I found there was treasure. Floats, Fish boxes, Toys,*

Animals and Drift wood washed up could change my little world."

Other influences can be the colours and textures found on the shore, with GlobalYell offering residencies to create woven textile objects, where participants are told to go out and view the landscape around them as a starting point for the project. Some go into a much smaller scale with Kathy Coutts, a designer based in Fair Isle, creating knitted work that was inspired by the lichens found on the rocks in Shetland.

Some artists have found the Shetland landscape and ever changing light a haven to develop and enhance their skills, Anne Barron an illustrator and artist moved to Shetland around 10 years ago. *"Since living in Shetland, landscape, or more particularly seascape, has become the inspiration in itself."*

8.1.3 Word

The Shetland dialect is unique, with distinct variations found throughout the isles. Much is being done to preserve and increase the use of this part of the islands cultural heritage with [Shetland ForWirds](#) promoting the use of dialect in education, broadcasting, writing and recording. There are many poets, prose and song writers who are inspired by Shetland with [Hugh MacDiarmid](#), a well known twentieth century Scottish writer, believed to have written some of his best work while living in Shetland. The most common theme through work related to the sea in Shetland is the relationship between man and the sea which is viewed in a very down to earth manner. For many the sea was part of their livelihood, a dangerous place and not to be viewed with any romanticism. There is also a connection with the past as fishing has been an integral part of Shetland for centuries.



Willie Lou Earrings

***“Fag-end glint i da wheelhooose window;
Tide-lumps brakkin laek ghosts on da baem;
Lost aa sight o da laand fir an oor noo –
Dis is da rodd da Norsemen cam haem”***

John J Graham

Today there are various projects to keep the written word alive in Shetland using dialect, and using Shetland as inspiration such as [Writing the North](#), a project looking at the links between contemporary and historical writing in Orkney and Shetland.

8.1.4 Music

Shetland has a strong music scene with groups both traditional and contemporary playing all over the world. Margaret Robertson, a music tutor and composer from Shetland, thinks that *“we are inspired by our surroundings, not just the landscape but also the people and events that happen and the emotive responses they create”*. Music can be inspired by the landscape through physical aspects such as the rhythm created by waves washing the shore, to the emotions created from cultural ties to a certain place. This can be found in a tune by Tom Anderson called “Da Slockit Light” which was inspired by the depopulation of rural Shetland as the lights in the crofts went out as people left the area. The piece is very slow and melancholic.

09

Coastal Character Areas





Norwick, Unst



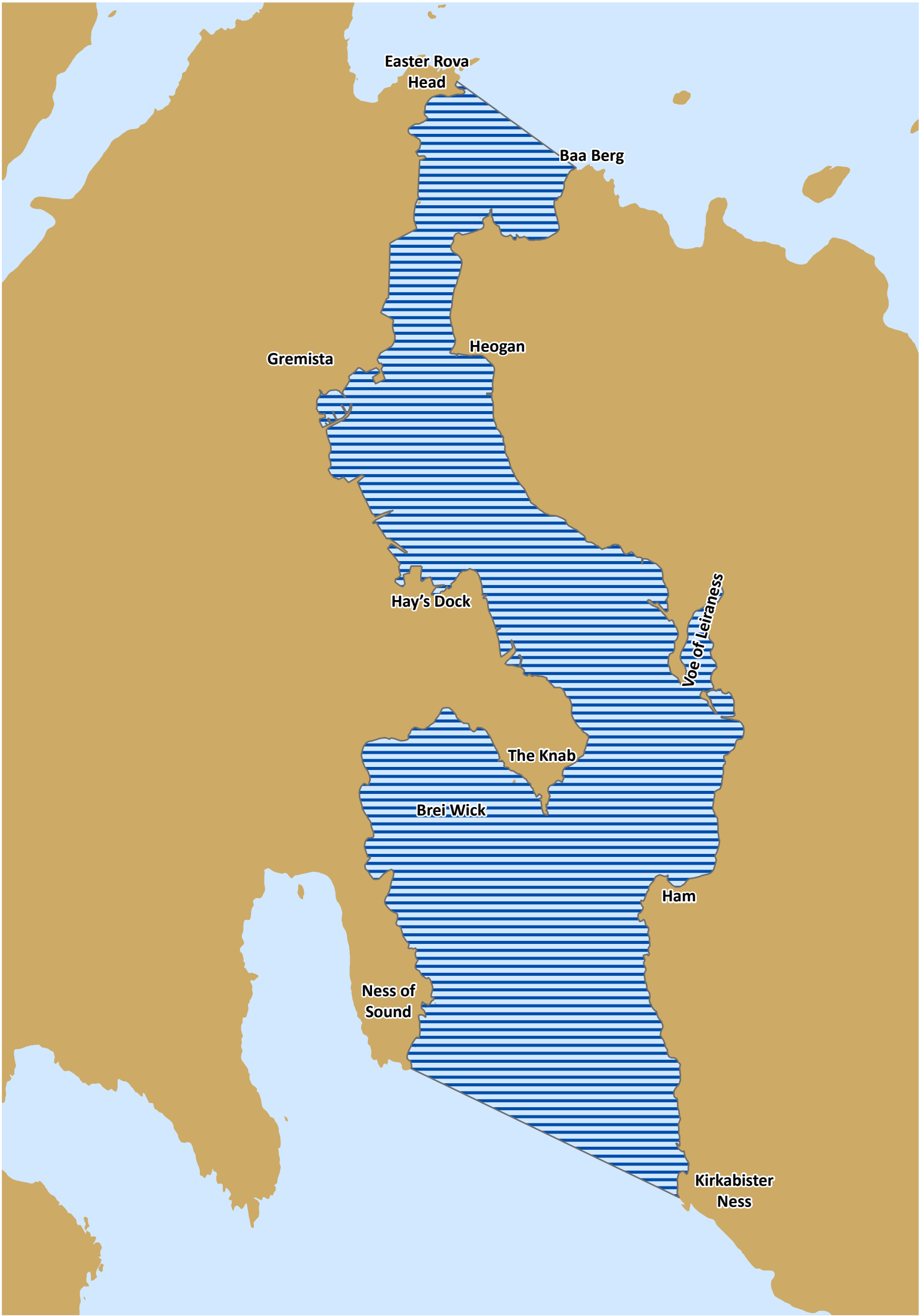
North Haven Storehouse, Fair Isle



East Mainland

1. Bressay Sound Coastal Character Area





Easter Rova
Head

Baa Berg

Gremista

Heogan

Hay's Dock

Voe of Leirness

The Knab

Brei Wick

Ham

Ness of
Sound

Kirkabister
Ness



Lerwick

Summary Description

The Bressay Sound Coastal Character Area (CCa) is on the east coast of Shetland between Lerwick and Bressay. The CCa extends across from the Ness of Sound to Kirkabister Ness to the south and from Easter Rova Head to Baa Berg to the north.

Bressay Sound is a very busy shipping area containing Lerwick Harbour, Shetland's largest port. Various vessels use the Sound including fishing, cruises, ferries, oil related and surveying. The sound is not only used for commercial shipping but also for recreational use with marinas in Lerwick and Bressay, and seasonal pontoons in Lerwick. There is also a lifeboat base and coastguard station.

The proximity of Bressay has given the sound great protection from the wild weather that is often experienced in Shetland, and so has been in use for hundreds of years as a safe haven.

The coastline on Bressay is mainly used for rough grazing which contrasts dramatically with the heavily industrialised coast of Lerwick. The most dominant feature of the area is the Ward of Bressay which at 227m high, towers over the relatively low lying coastline.

Key Characteristics

- *Medium sized island sound running in a slight bow shape at a north- south orientation.*
- *Has an enclosed feel to the north and central areas with the south opening up to more exposed waters.*
- *West side of the sound (Lerwick) is highly developed with industrial, historic townscape and regenerated areas along the waterfront*
- *East side of the sound (Bressay) has low levels of development with a small village at Glebe and a factory at Heogan. Gardie House has a strong presence.*

Historic Context

Bressay Sound has been important for centuries, long before Lerwick existed. It has been used for many years as a safe place to wait out the stormy weather that is common in the area.

Lerwick did not exist as it is known today until some 300 years ago when booths began to appear on the muddy banks offering services and supplies to the Dutch fishermen who were attracted to the plentiful fishing grounds around Shetland.

Lerwick has expanded, taking over the crofting **townships** surrounding the town, and is now home to 34% of Shetlands population. When looking back across to Lerwick from Bressay, you can see the distinct eras of the town growth.

Historic Features

Clickimin Broch, Lerwick (**Scheduled Monument** & property in care of **Historic Environment Scotland**)- The broch is an important landmark within Lerwick, although it is not on the coast. The broch was constructed on an island, probably between 400-200BC.

Fort Charlotte, Lerwick (**Scheduled Monument**)- Fort Charlotte creates a formidable feature with its high walls towering above the waterfront. The fort was originally built in 1652, later replaced in the 1660s. Fort Charlotte never engaged in defence of the coast and the guns were removed in 1855.

Gardie House, Bressay (**Category A listed building**)- Built in 1724 for Magnus Henderson, Gardie House is an intimidating building that dominates the shores of Bressay. Associated with the house are Gardie Cottage and Steading and a small pier in front of the house.

WWII Remains- Shetland was in a strategic place during the World Wars and played a vital part in the North Sea Blockade.

Around Lerwick there were four batteries at Greenhead Point, Ness of Sound, Point of Scattland and Twageos Point.

*The Ness of Sound battery (**Scheduled Monument**) is unusual as all the main buildings were linked with covered passage ways. It is still possible to see the ruins of the battery and a fantastic piece of art can be seen on the back wall of one of the gun emplacements.*

Twageos Point's engine room is now being used as a private garage.

The Greenhead Point battery was flattened and land reclaimed as the oil industry expanded.

The Point of Scattland has also been developed over as Lerwick has expanded.

There is also an installation at the Knab which was a torpedo tube platform and the concrete base can still be seen today.

Bressay Lighthouse (**Category B listed building**)- Building began in 1856 with the light being first lit in August 1858. It was engineered by David and Thomas Stevenson. The lighthouse was made electric in 1967 and was finally switched off in 2012, being replaced by an LED light operated by the Lerwick Port Authority (LPA).

Industry

Lerwick may have only become an established settlement around the seventeenth century but since then it has continued to grow, swallowing up the crofting **townships** around it. The industries using the port are continually developing and changing as a reflection of trends and variations in the market.

The harbour is run by the LPA which was formed in 1999, superseding the Lerwick Harbour Trust established in 1877 by an Act of Parliament. The LPA has had a major influence on the development within the port and own a lot of the buildings and land in the area. The main industries using the

Bressay Sound are fishing, fish processing, tourism, oil and decommissioning.

Commercial Fishing- The initial industry for the town was commercial fishing and this continues today with a large fish market operating every week and a new pier was opened in 2017 and a new whitefish market due to open in 2020.

Fish Processing- There are three seafood suppliers listed by Seafood Shetland that are based around the Bressay Sound. The companies process salmon, pelagic fish, fishmeal and oil.

Tourism- Tourism in the Sound includes the Serco Northlink ferry, cruise liners, tour boats and private yachts. Numbers have been increasing over the past 30 years and are projected to continue, although the weather can have a massive impact on visitor numbers.

Oil- Oil related vessels were most numerous during the 1980s before a steep decline, but there has been a steady increase in the number using Lerwick Harbour over recent years.

Decommissioning- Lerwick Port is one of the first in Britain to provide decommissioning facilities with Greenhead Base and Dales Voe the main areas provided so far. This industry will become more important as offshore structures come to the end of their working life.

Recreation- Bressay Sound is a popular area for on and offshore recreation such as rowing, sailing, walking and rock climbing.

Landscape

The Landscape around the coast within the Bressay Sound CCA varies dramatically between Lerwick and Bressay.

- Bressay is a quiet and peaceful place with crofts and larger farms dotted across the hillside and only a few pockets of shoreline development at Heogan, Maryfield and Holm of Mel. On a calm day it is possible to hear the town hall bell tolling across the Sound but considering how close Lerwick is, Bressay doesn't suffer much from industrial noise apart from around Heogan.
- Lerwick on the other hand is a hub of activity with large piers and quays servicing many different types of vessels. Lerwick is built up and over a hill and has expanded greatly over the last half a century.

Geology

The main underlying rock in the Bressay Sound CCA is sandstone and because of this, the land around

Lerwick and Bressay is quite fertile with larger scale farms able to operate in the area. The stone was also quarried in Bressay to build many of the more prominent buildings of the surrounding area.

Geosites

60. Easter Rova Head and South Bight of Rova Head- National Significance

61. South Bight of Rova Head- National Significance

70. Clickimin Broch- Local Significance

Landscape Features

The Ward of Bressay- Sitting overlooking the Bressay Sound at 227m high, the Ward commands attention. The Ward sits within a major upland LCT in the Shetland LCA and has also been marked as having some wildness value. From the top it is possible to see the whole of Shetland and on a very clear day, down to Fair Isle.

The Knab- A popular walking route for locals and tourists alike, the Knab offers panoramic views of the south end of Bressay Sound and has paths connecting into the town. A small seating area also has historical information boards about the area.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a: Mini Voes and Firths- There is only one voe within the Bressay Sound CCA, Leiranes Voe in Bressay. There is no aquaculture development within the voe and terrestrial development is minimal.

CCT 4: Developed Island Sound- The whole of Bressay Sound is considered a developed island sound as it is a harbour. However, most of the development can be found on the Lerwick side. There is no aquaculture development due to the high levels of marine traffic in the area.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- The majority of the low rocky shore is found to the north of the CCA with some fragmented features around Easter Rova Head. There are also various beaches with the White Ayre on Bressay the largest beach area within the CCA at roughly 0.15 miles long. There are also small pockets of beach at the Sands of Mel, Will Houll, Taing of Ham, Gardie House, Cruester, Heogan and Sandwick found on Bressay.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are two areas of low banks in the Bressay Sound CCA. A small

area can be found around Twageos Point and a larger section from Taing of Ham to Kirkabister Ness.

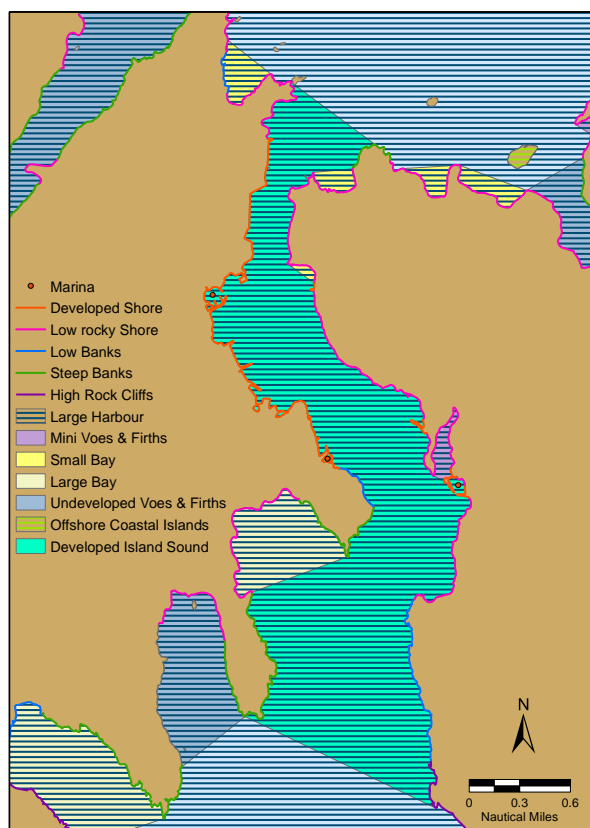
CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- There are steep banks around the Knab in Lerwick and the Ness of Sound.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Rock Cliffs- Cliffs can be found mainly in the south of the CCa with the area around the Bressay **Lighthouse** being particularly dramatic.

CCT 10: Large Harbour- Lerwick is the main port of Shetland and the harbour is used by a wide variety of vessels. There is access from both the north and south of Bressay Sound and the waterfront is continually changing in response to industry needs.

CCT 12: Large Bay- There is one large bay in the Bressay Sound CCa called Brei Wick situated to the south of the CCa. It is mainly a rocky beach.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There is a small bay at Heogan, Bressay with an area of shingle to the north of the bay.



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Experiential

The views running down the South Mainland and out to the open waters is contrasted to the north with the views of South Nesting and Whalsay feeling enclosed. Some of the vessels coming into the harbour seem to

dwarf the town and create a sense of awe.

Lerwick and Bressay contrast one another but neither would probably prosper if it were not for the other. The green fertile land has been contained within striking stone dykes and the old **runrig systems** are still evident on the ground. The older part of Lerwick is like being transported back in time with narrow closes and buildings crowded up against the waterfront fighting for space.

Sensitivities

Lerwick is highly developed already, care must be taken to develop buildings and infrastructure that is sensitive to the landscape and culture of Shetland but also innovative. Thought must be given to how future developments could improve and enhance the waterfront with recent builds such as the Shetland Museum and Archives and the Mareel showcasing this approach. As buildings need to be replaced, there is opportunity to create a more visually attractive harbour with form and function at the core.

Bressay has quite low development levels along the shore and this should be maintained where possible without reducing the islands viability. There is scope for expansion at Heogan which already has pier infrastructure but it would need to be done sensitively so as to not degrade the island aesthetics.

Forces for Change

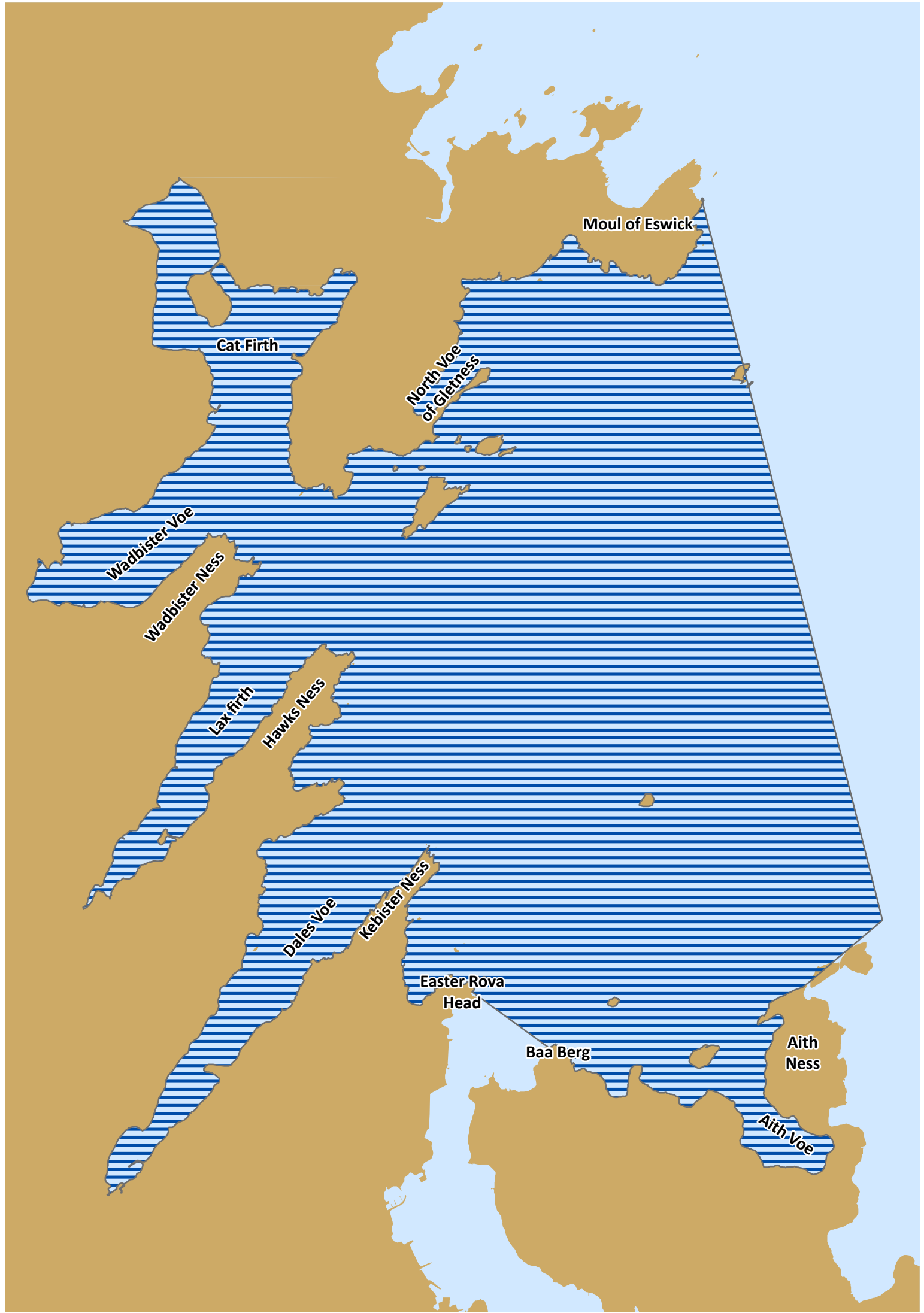
Once the new power station has been commissioned, the old station will be decommissioned and removed opening up a space of around 14 acres on the waterfront.



East Mainland

2. Eswick- Bressay Coastal Character Area





Moul of Eswick

Cat Firth

North Voe
of Gletness

Wadbister Voe

Wadbister Ness

Laxfirth

Hawks Ness

Dales Voe

Kebister Ness

Easter Rova
Head

Baa Berg

Aith
Ness

Aith Voe



Catfirth, looking to Bressay

Summary Description

The Eswick- Bressay Coastal Character Area (CCa) is on the east of the Shetland mainland. It runs from the Moul of Eswick to Aith Ness on Bressay.

With the southern half of the CCa being a development restricted area, there is aquaculture to the north situated in the sheltered voes.

The landscape is quite steep in areas especially around Dales Voe.

Key Characteristics

- *Voe and Firth Network*
- *Busy aquaculture area*
- *Views out to Whalsay*



Dales Voe

Historic Context

Much of the Eswick- Bressay CCA has been worked by **crofts** with other industries such as fishing, **lime production** and otter trapping occurring too. The coastline was defended, with remains of **brochs** found on various headlands.

Historic Features

Brochs

Aith Ness- Possible site for a broch in Bressay, today a mound can be seen with a viking longhouse site close by.

Wadbister Ness- Eroded remains of a possible broch on a tidal islet

Hawks Ness (Scheduled Monument)- Possible broch on a rocky knoll close to the cliff edge with stones having been reused for dykes and sheepfolds.

Kebister Ness- The only tithe barn known in Shetland is situated on Kebister Ness. It was used to gather tithe (taxes) for the church.

Laxfirth House (Category C listed building)- Built in the 18th century and remodelled in the 19th century.

World War I- During **WWI** Cat Firth was used for a seaplane base. There are still the remains of buildings found along the coast.

Girlsta Lime Kiln- Built in 1870 by Hay & Co. to make lime for building the “new town” in Lerwick.

Mill of Girlsta (Category B listed building)- Built in 1861 for processing grain.

Industry

Aquaculture- There are eleven aquaculture sites within the Eswick- Bressay CCA with five being finfish farms and six shellfish farms. They are contained within Lax Firth, Wadbister Voe, Cat Firth and the South Voe of Gletness. A shore base can be found in Wadbister Voe.

Hatchery- Grieg Seafood have a salmon smolts hatchery based at Girlsta, situated next to the lime kiln and water mill.

Decommissioning- Dales Voe is potentially going to be used as part of decommissioning works of Lerwick Harbour.

Shipping- The mouth of Bressay Sound is a busy area with a variety of vessels going to and from Lerwick Harbour.

Landscape

The landscape of the Eswick- Bressay CCA is a matrix of improved **croft** land and moorland. Most of the nesses are coastal moorland with improved land in geometric patterns surrounding settlements. There are numerous lochs found in the hill ground with the largest being the Loch of Girlsta.

There are five LCTs across the area. Major Uplands around Kebister Ness and half way into Dales Voe; Peatland and Moorland around Hawks Ness and the Hill of Brunt Hamarsland; Undulating Moorland and Lochs around the Hill of Taing and the Noup; Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast along the Bressay coast at Gletness and Eswick; and finally, Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds around Dales Voe, Laxfirth, the head of Wadbister Voe, and Catfirth.

Geology

Around Dales Voe, Rova Head and the east coast of Lax Firth is a mixture of mudstone, **siltstone** and **sandstone** that has been **metamorphosed**. The west coast of Lax Firth, Wadbister Voe, Cat Firth and Eswick is a mixture of **calcareous**, **migmatitic**, **sandstone** and **siltstone**. Finally along the Bressay coast is a mixture of **sandstone**.

Geosites

60. Easter Rova Head- National significance

91. Bressay Flagstone Quarries- Local significance

Landscape Features

Gletness- Gletness is a picturesque area with small **croft** houses and rich green fields. The views out to Bressay are expansive and the area has visual similarities to Harris in the Western Isles.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1: Developed Voe and Firth- There are three developed voes and firths within the Eswick- Bressay CCa: Lax Firth, Wadbister Voe and Cat Firth. All have a settlement along the shore and aquaculture sites within the water. Wadbister Voe and Cat Firth are steeper along one coast.

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth- There are four mini voes and firths: Elvis Voe off Aith Voe, Loura Voe and Vassa Voe within Cat Firth, and the North Voe of Gletness. All the voes are low lying with minimal development on and offshore.

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe and Firth- There are two undeveloped voes and firths in the Eswick- Bressay CCa; Dales Voe and Aith Voe. Dales Voe does have pier infrastructure, however onshore development is restricted to Frakkafeld and the golf club, and due to it being a development restricted area there are no aquaculture sites. Aith Voe is also a development restricted area with no aquaculture and there is no modern development along the coast only ruins of former **crofts** at the head of the voe.

CCT 3: Voe & Firth Network- There is a voe and firth network to the west of the Eswick- Bressay CCa encompassing Dales Voe, Lax Firth, Wadbister Voe and Cat Firth. Dales Voe and Lax Firth have the typical voe and firth shape but Wadbister Voe and Cat Firth are less conformed.

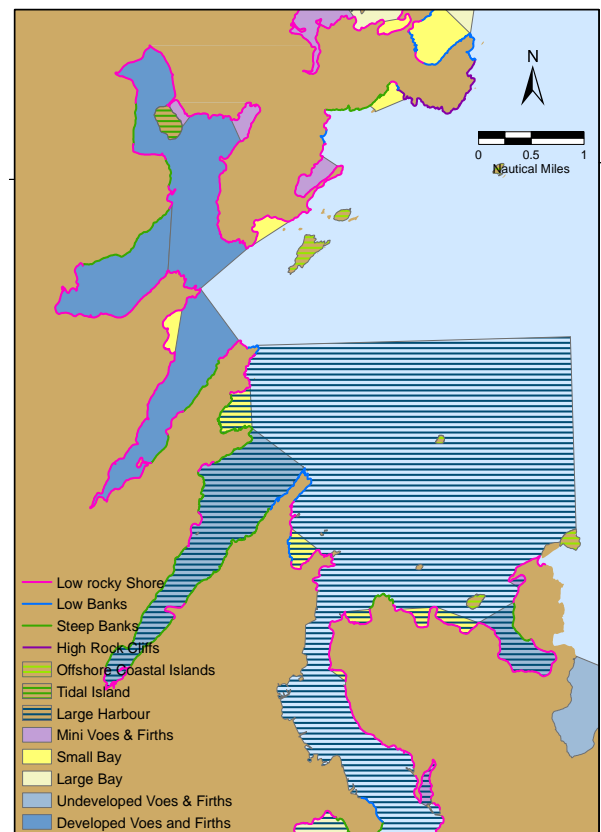
CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- From Inner Score to White Hill is a low rocky shore with small sandy beaches at Sand Garth, Ayre of Ness, Gardie and the head of Elvis Voe. From Rova Head it runs to the Bight of Vatsland and along the eastern shore of Kebister Ness. The point of Hawks Ness is the next area of low rocky shore and continues into Lax Firth with large areas of sand and shingle. Around Wadbister Ness and to the head of the voe low rocky shore continues. From the head of Cat Firth round to As Wick is low rocky shore with a mix of boulders and shingle.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There is only one small area of low banks around Kebister Ness.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- Steep banks can be found around White Hill, Bressay; Dales Voe; the east coast of Lax Firth; Hill of Brunt Hamarsland; Long Hill; the Ribbans; and the Noup.

CCT 9: Exposed High Rock Cliffs- There aren't many areas of cliffs, they are mostly restricted to the exposed eastern coast around Eswick and Aith Ness.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are nine small bays in the Eswick- Bressay CCa: South Bay of Eswick with a small area of shingle; As Wick; Bight of Lingness with two small areas of shingle; Bight of Brimness; Foraness Voe with a sandy beach; Brei Wick has two sandy beaches, Bight of Califf and Bight of Vatsland; and Sand Garth with a sandy beach.



CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are eight offshore coastal islands: Hoo Stack; North and South Isles of Gletness; Holms of Vatsland; Green Holm; Holm of Beosetter; and the Holm of Gunnista. The South Isle of Gletness is the only one to have settlement remains.

CCT 14a: Tidal Islands- There is only one tidal island in the Eswick- Bressay CCa, Little Holm. There are no

remains found on the island.

Sensitivities

The nature of the Eswick- Bressay CCa with its variety of voes and firths and open water mean it can cope with a fair amount of development. The development restrictions to the south of the CCa mean it should stay relatively unchanged in the near future, however development of Dales Voe could change this.

The coast between Gletness and Eswick is probably the most sensitive due to its scenic value and low level of development.

Forces for Change

Dales Voe- The development of Dales Voe as a decommissioning base will change the view of the voe but should have little effect on the rest of the CCa.

Easter Rova Head- There is potential for onshore development at Easter Rova Head expanding the industrial sites in the near future.

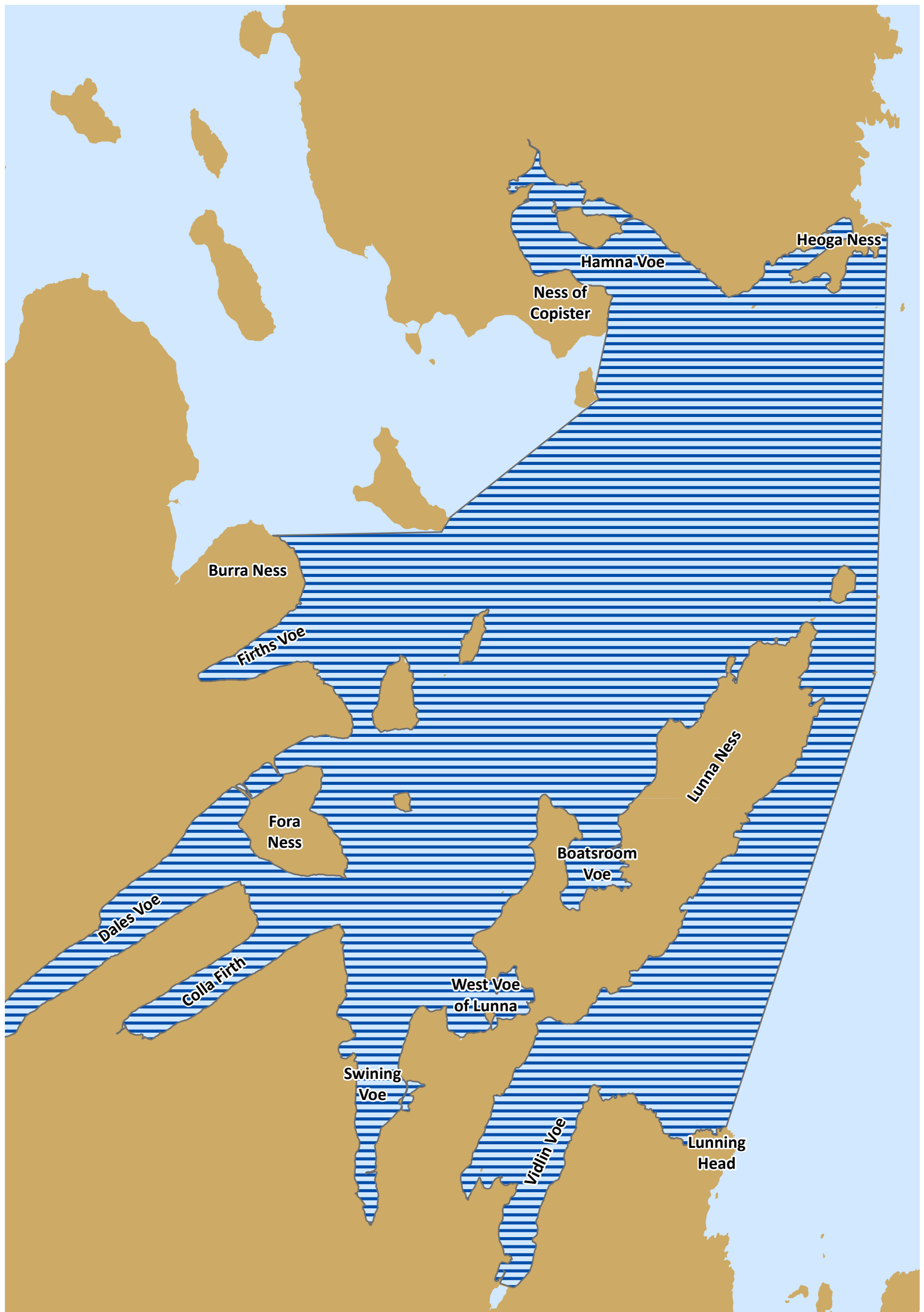
There is potential for more shipping traffic in the area with a variety of vessels such as oil support and cruiseliners using Lerwick Harbour.



East Mainland

3. Lunna Ness Coastal Character Area





Heoga Ness

Hamna Voe

Ness of
Copister

Burra Ness

Firths Voe

Fora
Ness

Dales Voe

Colla Firth

Boatsroom
Voe

West Voe
of Lunna

Swining
Voe

Vidin Voe

Lunning
Head

Lunna Ness



West Lunna Voe

Summary Description

The Lunna Ness Coastal Character Area (CCa) is found on the east side of Shetland running from Lunning Head around the coast to Moss Bank, across Yell Sound to the Ness of Copister and along to Heoga Ness.

This is a very busy area for aquaculture with the variety of voes and firths offering an ideal location. It is also a popular area for commercial fishing.

The landscape is a mixture of steep sided voes and firths and low lying coastal moorland. There is also a number of islands in the CCa.

Key Characteristics

- *Long, narrow voes*
- *Aquaculture*
- *Small nucleated settlements*



Burravoe, Yell

Historic Context

The Lunna Ness CCa has been inhabited for many centuries evident from the remains of **cairns** which can be found along the coast. There are also numerous **booths** found showing the importance of fishing in the area. Lunna Ness CCa was strategically important during **WWII** with Lunna House being the first base for the infamous **Shetland Bus**.

Historic Features

There are two **brochs** within the Lunna Ness CCa.

Vidlin (*Scheduled Monument*) - *The stones from this broch were used in the building of the Methodist Chapel.*

Lunna- *There is a broch site close to the Lunna Kirk with hints of a Viking settlement around it.*

Ward of Outrabister- Extensive remains of a prehistoric landscape with a number of house remains and burial cairns.

St Margarets Kirk, Lunna (*Category B listed building*)- The oldest church to have been in continual use, the **St Margaret's** or Lunna Kirk was built in 1753 by the Hunter family. Among the interesting features are large buttresses on either side of the small kirk and a small hole that lepers were allowed to use to hear and see the service without coming into contact with the congregation.

Large Houses

Lunna House (*Category B listed and Garden and Designed Landscape Designation*)- *Built in 1660 for Robert Hunter the Chamberlain of the Lordship of Zetland. Later 18th and 20th century additions. Important base for the **Shetland Bus** in the **Second World War**.*

Swinister Old Haa (*Category B listed*)- *Sitting looking over Swinister Voe late 18th century **laird's** house.*

Manor House of Burravoe (*Category C listed*)- *Built in 1860 with later 20th century alterations. Associated pier and boat house.*

Boat yard and Bothy, Burravoe- An arch above the pier in Burravoe is the remains of access to a boat yard that was used to store boats during the winter. There are also the remains of a **böd** from the 19th century which was altered in the 20th century. The **böd** is a *Category C listed building*.

Bothy, Lunna (*Category B listed building*)- A trading **booth** that was used in the 18th century. An unusual T plan building and thought to be one of the best examples of a large fishing **böd** in Shetland.

Lunna Harbour (*Category B listed*)- Associated with Lunna House, the harbour was built in the early 19th century and has two piers, a pier building probably a **booth**, and a **limekiln**.

Industry

Aquaculture- Aquaculture is a large industry in this area of Shetland with 27 aquaculture sites; 18 finfish and nine shellfish farms. There are associated shore bases found in Vidlin Voe, Dales Voe and Swinister Voe.

Landscape

The landscape of the Lunna Ness CCa is mainly hill ground with some area around the voes quite steep. At the head of each voe there is an area of improved land usually associated with a settlement. It is possible to still see the **rigs** from the **runrig** systems used in the past. The moorland is interspersed with lochs of various sizes and rocky intrusions.

Geology

The geology in the Lunna Ness CCa is fairly complex with an array of different rock types found in the area. Around Lunning Head, the east side of Vidlin Voe, Lunna Ness, the west side of Swining Voe, Copister, and Burravoe are various types of **migmatitic** rock. The west side of Vidlin Voe and along the Dales Voe coast is a mixture of **quartzite**, **pelite** and **semi-pelite**. Finally, Fora Ness is a mixture of **metamorphosed limestone** and **dolostone**.

Geosites

50. Ayres of Swinister- n/a

54. Grutwick Quarry- National significance

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1: Developed Voe and Firth- There are three developed voes and firths in the Lunna Ness CCa: Dales Voe, Swining Voe and Vidlin Voe. Dales Voe and Swining Voe have very little onshore development, however, Dales Voe has six shellfish sites and Swining Voe has three finfish sites. There is a medium sized settlement around Vidlin Voe with local amenities and a marina. There is also finfish sites in the voe.

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth- At Burra Voe there is a small settlement with a museum and marina. Burra Voe has no aquaculture sites but there are cages stored here from time to time. The landscape is gently sloped around the voe.

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe and Firth- There are five undeveloped voes and firths in the Lunna Ness CCa: Hamna Voe in Yell; Hamna Voe in Lunna; Colla Firth; Firth Voe; and Grunna Voe. All these voes have aquaculture development within them or close by, but the sites have minimal impact on the scenic quality of these voes.

CCT 3: Voe and Firth Network- There are eleven voes and firths within the Lunna Ness CCa. Five of which create a voe and firth network; Firths Voe, Swinister Voe, Dales Voe, Colla Firth, and Swining Voe. They are mainly on a north-east axis with Swining Voe being north-south. Dales Voe is the largest within the network.

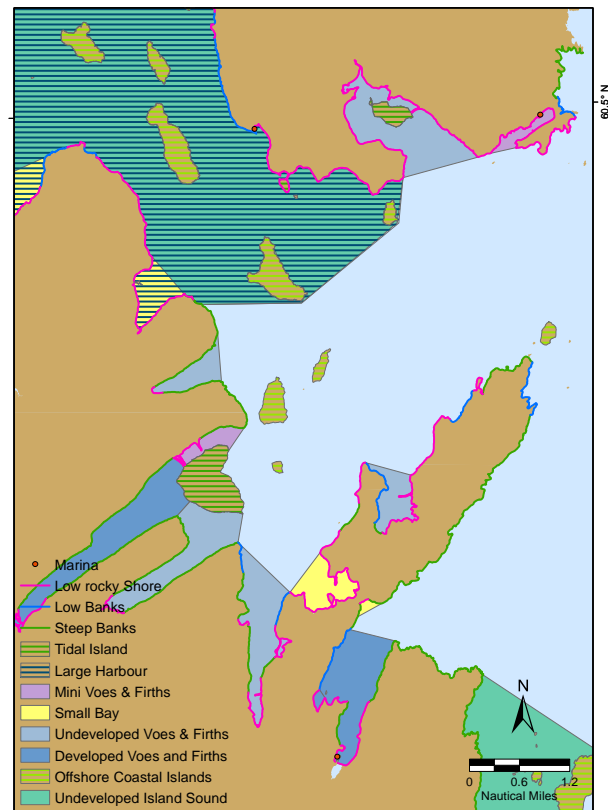
CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- There is low rocky shore around Vidlin Voe, the west side of Lunna Ness and around Hamna Voe into Burra Voe on Yell. Various shingle ayres can be found in wicks and geos with a tombolo in Hamna Voe, Yell and a large spit between Hamna Voe and Boatsroom Voe in Lunna.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- Since this stretch of coast is mainly a voe network, much of the coast is steep banks. The steepest area is around Dales Voe and Colla Firth.

CCT 11a: Marina- There are two marinas in the Lunna Ness CCa, one in Burra Voe, Yell and one in Vidlin Voe. Burra Voe has visitor berths and a pier. Vidlin has visitor berths.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There is one small bay in Swining Voe called Sand Wick. There is a small area of sand and low rocky shore.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are four offshore coastal islands; Lunna Holm, Fish Holm, Linga and Wether Holm. There is also a range of smaller islets and skerries. There are no remains on any of the islands.



Experiential

The Lunna Ness CCa is an interesting area scenically and historically. The range of voes gives a variety of views from enclosed coastline in the voes to exposed coastline along the nesses with views of Yell, Whalsay and Skerries.

The diversity of historical remains found along the coast, especially in Lunna, creates great interest showing the historic connections with the sea.

Sensitivities

There is already a lot of aquaculture around the Lunna Ness CCa and it is fairly busy with fishing vessels and the Yell ferry leaving Toft multiple times a day. The area has low sensitivity.

Forces for Change

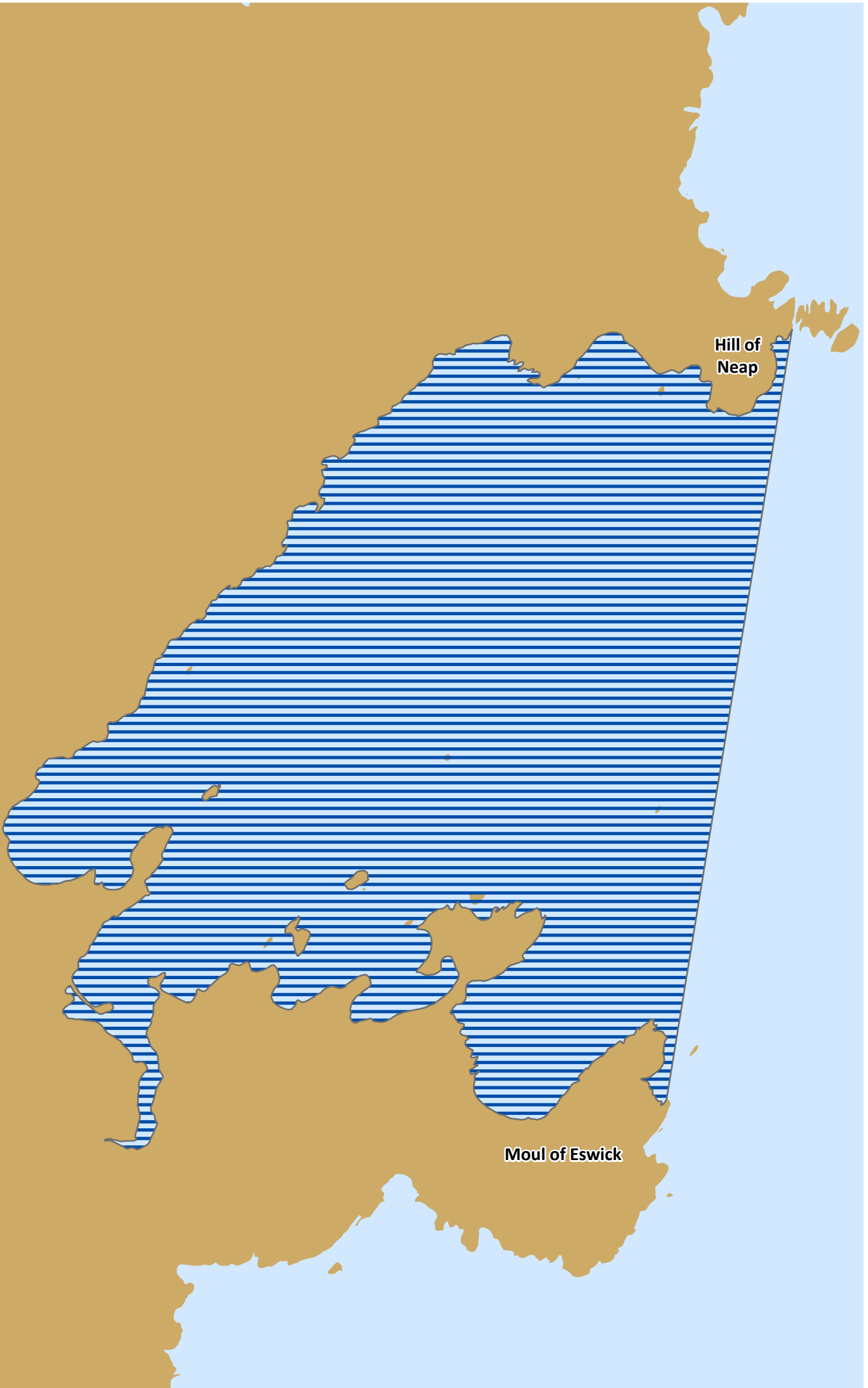
There are currently no forces for change.



East Mainland

4. Nesting Bay Coastal Character Area





Hill of
Neap

Moul of Eswick



Vadills of Garth

Summary Description

The Nesting Bay Coastal Character Area (CCa) is located on the east side of Shetland in the parish of Nesting. The CCa encompasses the whole of South Nesting Bay from the Hill of Neap to the Moul of Eswick.

It is a quiet area with scattered development and no aquaculture sites.

The landscape slopes down to the shore with a few small beaches found along the south coast of the CCa.

Key Characteristics

- *Large bay*
- *Rocky shore with small beaches*
- *Low on and offshore development*



West Voe of Skellister

Historic Context

The Nesting Bay CCa has been a relatively quiet area with many crofting remains such as **horizontal mills** and **planticrubs**. There are a variety of features that have been found in the area from a **post medieval** house to a **pictish** symbol stone.

Historic Features

Brochs

The Burrian- Roughly 16m in diameter, the broch sits on a rocky knoll.

Corn Holm- Possible broch site, although there are no visible remains, not accessible from land.

Housabister- Possible broch site. Now just a mound of stones with the broch being reused to build the nearby kirk.

Ling Ness- Thought to be a possible **Viking boat burial**, there are stones laid out in a boat shape around 8m long and 2m at its widest point.

Burnt Mounds- There are a large amount of burnt mounds within the Nesting Bay CCa with an area around the head of the Vadill of Garth of particular interest.

Industry

Fishing- There is some creel and scallop fishing within the bay and very low levels of inshore fishing at the mouth of the bay.

Landscape

The landscape of the Nesting Bay CCa slopes down to the shore, quite steeply in some areas. It is mainly covered with rough grass and some rocky outcrops with a small area of moorland around Ling Ness. The landscape is low lying with expansive views out to sea and around the rest of the CCa coast.

There are two LCTs covering the bay, Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast and Undulating Moorland

with Lochs. Directly behind the Lowland and Coast on the west coast of the Nesting Bay CCa, there is an area of Major Uplands which relates to the steep ground.

Geology

The north of the bay down to the West Voe of Skellister has underlying geology of **migmatitic** rock. The rest of the Nesting Bay CCa is a variety of **sedimentary** rocks such as **sandstone** and **limestone** which has been **metamorphosed**.

Geosites

There are no geosites within the Nesting Bay CCa.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- The majority of the Nesting Bay CCa is covered by the low rocky shore CCT with a variety of fragmented features around the south coast.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are two small pockets of low banks found on either side of Es Wick.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- Much of the low rocky shore is backed by steep banks especially along the western edge of the CCa.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- High rock cliffs can be found around the Moul of Eswick, Ling Ness and the Hill of Neap.

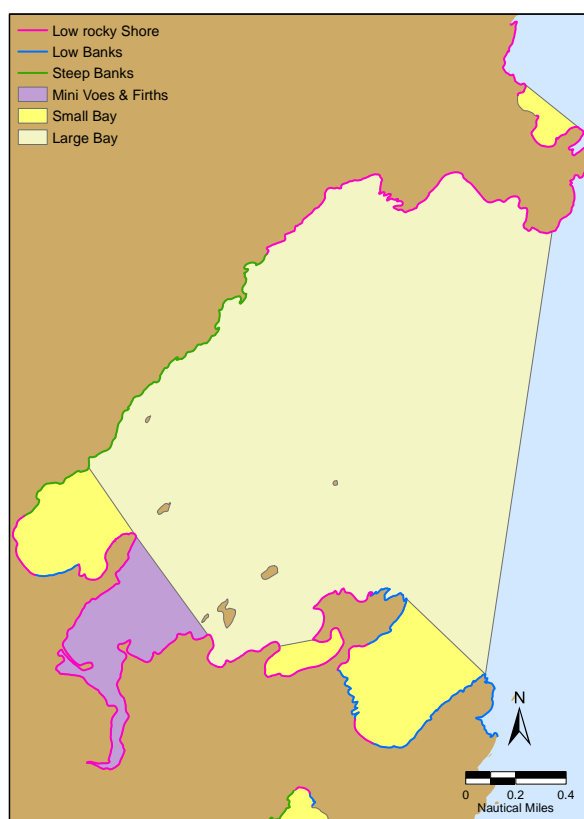
CCT 12: Large Bay- The entire CCa is covered by the Large Bay CCT however, there are only small beaches to the south rather than a continuous sweeping beach round the bay.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- Within the Nesting Bay CCa there are a number of smaller bays mainly along the southern coast of the CCa. Es Wick has a small sandy beach; Dock of Lingness is a boulder and shingle beach; East Voe of Skellister has a shingle ayre, mudflats and is linked to Trowie Loch; Turness Bay has a shingle ayre called Ness ayre; Muckle Ayre has a sandy beach; Wick of Kirkabister has a large area of low rocky shore and a sandy beach; and finally, the Wick of Fluig has a small shingle beach.

Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are a number of small coastal islands within the Nesting Bay CCa. Corn Holm, Cuning Holm, Holm of Skellister, Hog Island and Stany Hog. There are also a number of small rocky skerries.



Released 01/09/2016 by the NAFC Marine Centre.

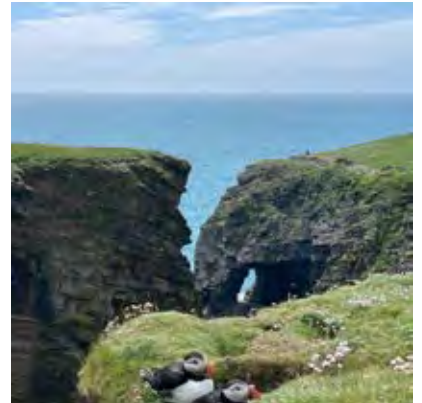
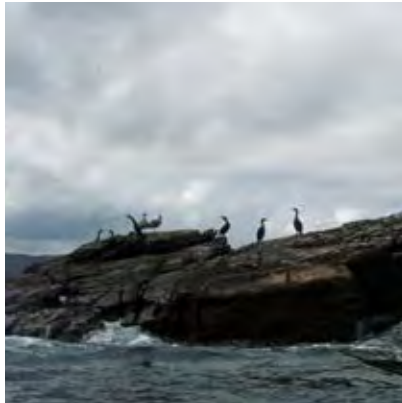
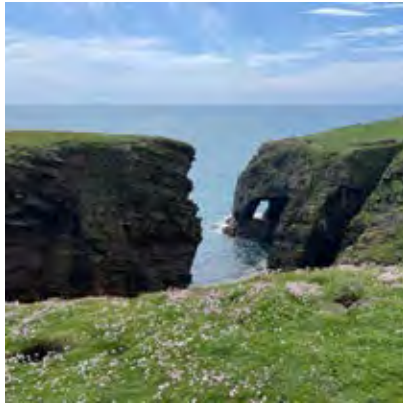
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Experiential

The Nesting Bay CCa is quite a picturesque area which is contained between the headlands. The variety of islets and skerries give interest to the water and the beaches all have different characteristics. Es Wick is of particular note.

Sensitivities

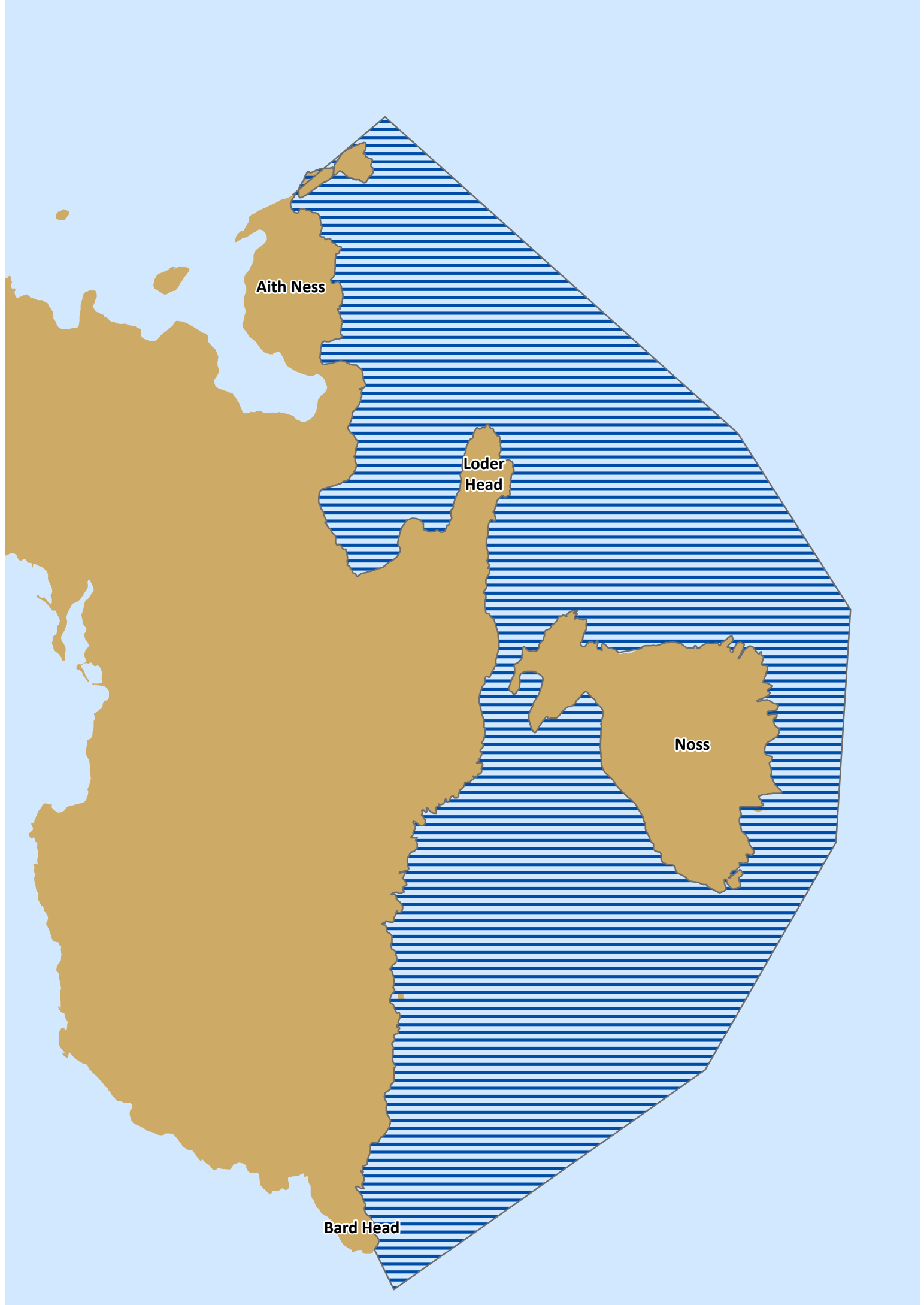
Currently the Nesting Bay CCa is a very quiet area with low onshore development and no offshore development. It is valued locally for its scenic qualities. The combination of these two factors mean it is highly sensitive to any development.



East Mainland

5. Noss Coastal Character Area





Aith Ness

Loder
Head

Noss

Bard Head



Noss Ferryman's Cottage

Summary Description

The Noss Coastal Character Area (CCa) is along the east coast of Bressay from Loder Head down to Bard Head and includes the island of Noss.

The island of Noss is a National Nature Reserve (NNR) managed by Nature Scot with two rangers staying on the island during the summer months.

The Noss CCa has some spectacular cliffs which are important for nesting birds and are a great tourist attraction with boat tours operating out of Lerwick Harbour and walking around Noss Isle.

Key Characteristics

- *Spectacular Cliffs*
- *Important habitat for seabirds*
- *Very little on or offshore development*



Noss Cliffs © Katie Brigden

Historic Context

The Noss CCa has very little development with Noss being uninhabited most of the year and most houses in Bressay found along the west coast. However, this was not always the case with remains of field boundaries, brochs and artefacts found all along the coast. There are also the remains of a camp and coastal battery from the First World War.

Historic Features

Gungstie Pony Pund: (Category B listed) in 1870 the Marquis of Londonderry acquired the lease for the island of Noss to breed Shetland ponies that were used to pull carts in his coal mines located in Durham. The pony pund was restored in 1986.

Horizontal Mills: there are four horizontal mills in the Noss CCa. They are located at Voe of the Mels, Setter and Cuppa. The mills were low small buildings located along a burn used to mill grain from the nearby crofts.

Burnt Mound: there are five burnt mounds along the coast of the Noss CCa. These are located at Hellia Cluve, Cuppa, Garth, Cullingsburgh and Skeo Back.

St Mary's Church: scheduled monument a pre-Reformation chapel, one of the few examples of a cross church in Shetland and is of national importance. The church yard sits on the remains of a broch and the Bressay Stone was found here with the original now sitting in the Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh.

First World War: scheduled monument There are a number of sites across Bressay that are the remains of first world war structures with some having national importance. These sites are located at Bard Head, Score Hill and Ander Hill.

Industry

Tourism – during the summer months there are trips to Noss organised by NatureScot rangers and boat trips around Noss to see the cliffs and wildlife in the area.

Crofting- the land is mainly hill land used for sheep grazing with a few small areas of improved grass land.

Landscape

The landscape is fairly remote with very little development. The main land cover is heather moorland with some areas of improved land where townships used to be.

There are four landscape character types in the Noss CCa which are major uplands found around the Ward of Bressay and the central area of Noss; peatland and moorland around Ander Hill; farmed and settled lowlands and coast around the Voe of Cullingsburgh, Millburn Geo and the west coast of Noss; and coastal edge around the east coast of Noss and from Green Head up to Bard Head.

Geology

The main geology of the Noss CCa is Old Red Sandstone with four fault lines cutting on a south west axis through Noss.

Geosites

Muckle Hell

Coastal Character Types and Features

The dominant coastal character type is high rock cliffs and steep banks with some spectacular cliff scenery found along the east coast of Noss. There is also some stretches of low rocky shore and one sandy beach at the head of Nesti Voe.

Physical Character

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound

Noss Sound is a small sound which separates Noss from Bressay. It is thought that Noss could have been attached to Bressay when the Vikings began to move across Shetland. The Noss passenger ferry operates across the sound during the summer months to allow people to visit Noss.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast – Low Rocky Shore

There are small sections of low rocky shore starting at Inner Score in the North down to Bars Geo, Skeo Taing to the Sands of Bruntland, Blue Geo to Loder Head and; Hamar to Croo Geo. On Noss, low rocky shore can be found from Mansie's Berg around to the Headless Banks and Hellia Cluve to the Barn Stane.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast – Low Banks

There are short sections of low banks found from the Blue Geo to Skeo Taing, the Sands of Bruntland to Blue Geo, Croo Geo to Tammy Pittfirth Geo and Seli Geo to Litla Clett. In Noss there are three sections, around Mansie's Berg, from the Headless Banks to Hellia Cluve and from Barn Stane to the Geos of Hovie.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast – Steep Banks

Steep banks stretch from Bars Geo to Blue Geo, Seli Geo to the Geo of Vatsvie, Tammy Pittfirth Geo to Seli Geo and Litla Clett to Mana Berg. On Noss, there is a area to the north of the island from Papil Geo to Fugla Skerry.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast – High Cliffs

High cliffs can be found at the Sloags down to Hamar and from Mana Berg to Bard Head. On Noss much of the east side of the isle is high cliffs, stretching from the Point of Hovie up to Fugla Skerry.

CCT 13 Large Bay

There is one large bay on Bressay at the Voe of Cullingsburgh.

CCT 13a Sub Type: Small Bay

There is one small bay on Bressay called Minni of Aith and there are three on Noss called Nesti Voe, Voe of the Mels and Rumble Wick.

Experiential

The Noss CCA is characterised by spectacular cliff scenery and an abundance of wildlife with tours operating out of Lerwick and ferry trips to Noss in

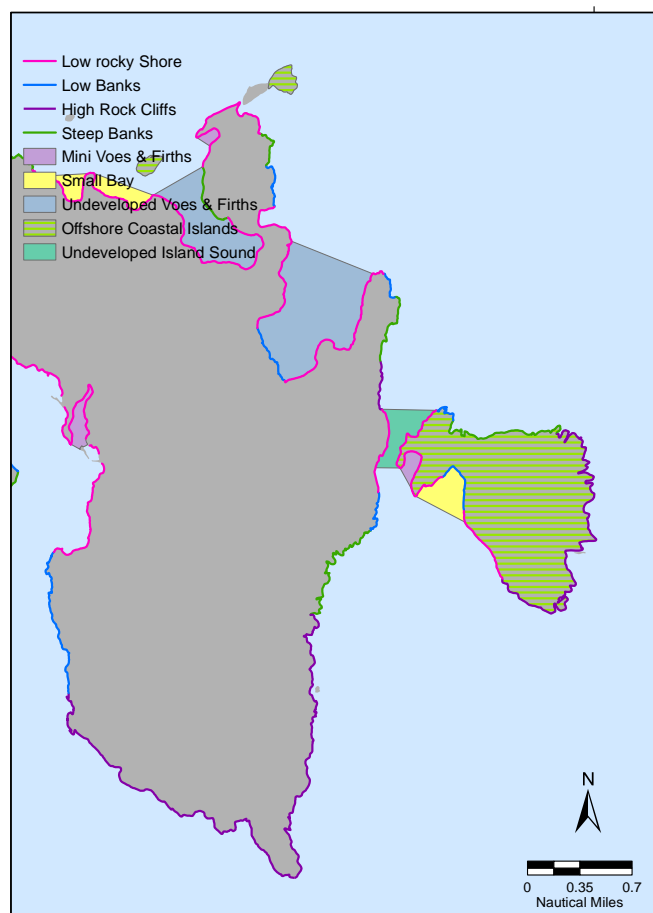
the summer months. The lack of development in the area gives a real sense of remoteness and the open seascapes along the eastern coast of Noss and around Bard Head add to this.

Sensitivities

The Noss CCA would be sensitive to development on and off shore.

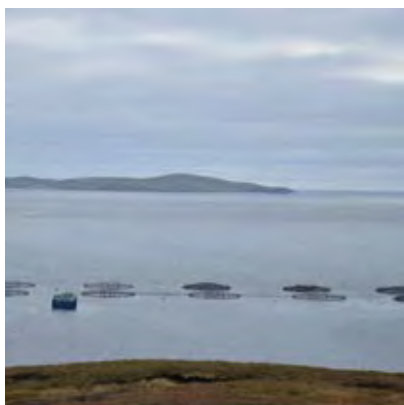
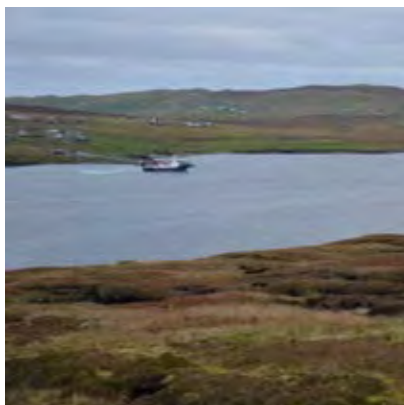
Forces for Change

None currently



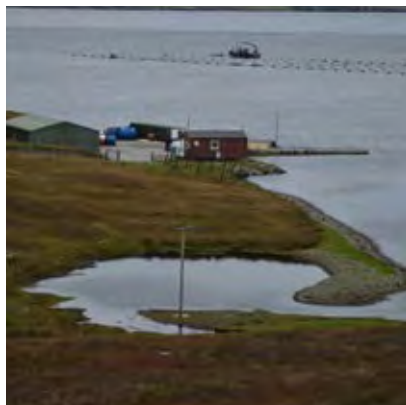
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East Mainland

6. Laxo Coastal Character Area







Laxo Pier

Summary Description

The Laxo Coastal Character Area (CCa) is in the east mainland of Shetland. It runs from the Hill of Neap up to Lunning Head, including West Linga to the east and all the islands in between.

It is a busy area with aquaculture, fishing and a ferry service to Whalsay and Skerries.

The landscape becomes quite steep towards the mouth of Dury Voe and the land cover reflects this changing from improved grassland to heather and moorland.

None of the smaller islands are inhabited and there is scattered settlement on the mainland.

Key Characteristics

- *Wide voe*
- *Busy shipping area*
- *Small islands*



Brei Wick from Clett Head © Callum Fraser

Historic Context

Around Dury Voe has been a **crofting** area for centuries with the remains of **Neolithic** and **Bronze Age** settlements found along the coast. It has been a relatively quiet area in the past.

A few of the isles that sit between Whalsay and the Mainland were also inhabited at one time with structures still remaining on a few.

Historic Features

Brochs- There is one possible broch site:

Stava Ness- *Situated at the mouth of Dury Voe, however there is no evidence visible today.*

Neap Old Manse - built around 1770, the manse is now in a ruinous state. It is still possible to see the haa characteristics of the manse.

Hog Sound Fort - remains of a promontory fort on the edge of the cliff.

Industry

Aquaculture- There are a few aquaculture sites within the Laxo CCa, three sit within Dury Voe itself and one can be found between West Linga and Whalsay. Three are finfish sites and one is a shellfish site.

Fishing- Scalloping and creeling occur within the Laxo CCa.

Tourism- There is some tourism around the Laxo CCa, mainly using the ferry terminal at Laxo to visit Whalsay and Skerries. There is also a museum in Vidlin.

Landscape

Much of the landscape around the Laxo CCa is heather and peat moorland with improved land found around the various **townships**. Houses on the mainland are scattered along the main road. There is some development around the ferry terminal at Laxo.

There are four LCTs covering the Laxo CCa: Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast; Peatland and Moorland; Undulating Moorland and Lochs; and finally, Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds covering most of the coast within Dury Voe, backed by Major Uplands for most of the way.

Geology

The main underlying geology of the Laxo CCa is **migmatitic** rock. There are small areas of **granite** around Muckle Ness and Collifield Ness.

Geosites

100. Laxo- Local significance

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth- There are three mini voes and firths: Loura Voe; Laxo Voe; and Lax Firth. Loura Voe and Laxo Voe have no development on or offshore, whereas Lax Firth has a pier infrastructure at the mouth of the firth and some development along the shore.

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe & Firth- There is one undeveloped voe in the Laxo CCa and that is Dury Voe. Onshore development is scattered around both sides of the voe and although there are a few aquaculture sites within the voe, they are spread out and have low visual impact.

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound- Sitting between the Mainland and West Linga, Lunning Sound is the only undeveloped island sound in the Laxo CCa. There is no onshore or offshore development.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- There is a small stretch of exposed low rocky shore from Stava Ness to Collifield Ness.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are one small areas of low banks within the Laxo CCa around Dragons Ness on the mainland.

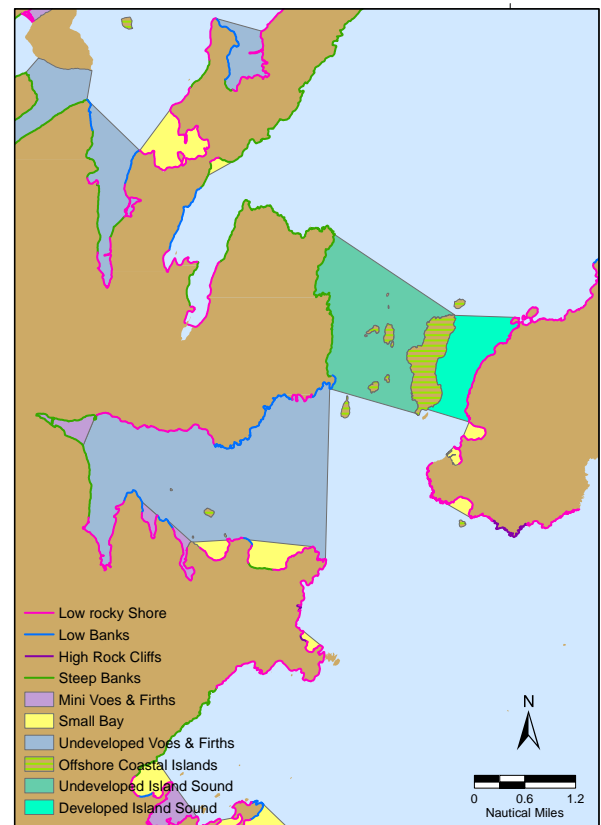
CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- Steep Banks are a common feature in the Laxo CCa with a stretch of open bank running from Lunning Head down to the Ward of Dragon- ness.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- Cliffs run from Stava Ness down to the Wick of Neap.

CCT 11: Small Harbour- Symbister is a small harbour that is fairly busy with the daily ferry service from the Mainland, large pelagic boats berth here along with a variety of smaller vessels. Historically important harbour.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are three small bays in the Laxo CCa. They are the Wick of Neap, Bight of Stavaness and the Bight of Bellister. Each has a shingle or sandy ayre.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are nine offshore coastal islands: Green Isle, Hunder Holm, Bruse Holm, Ketill Holm, Score Holm, Little Linga, Wether Holm, West Linga, and the Holm of Sandwick. Most are found around West Linga, the largest of the group. There are also a number of skerries.



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Experiential

The Laxo CCa is an interesting area with a wide variety of views. Dury Voe is quite quiet with low onshore development, moving up to Lunning Head the landscape becomes more remote with no development and steep banks.

The ferry crossing offers an ideal opportunity to see much of the coastline of the Laxo CCa.

Sensitivities

Since Dury Voe is quite low lying and open, any more aquaculture development could begin to detract from the seascape. The stretches of coast from Stava Ness to the Hill of Neap, and Lunning Head to Dragon Ness are highly sensitive to any development due to their untouched nature.

Forces for Change

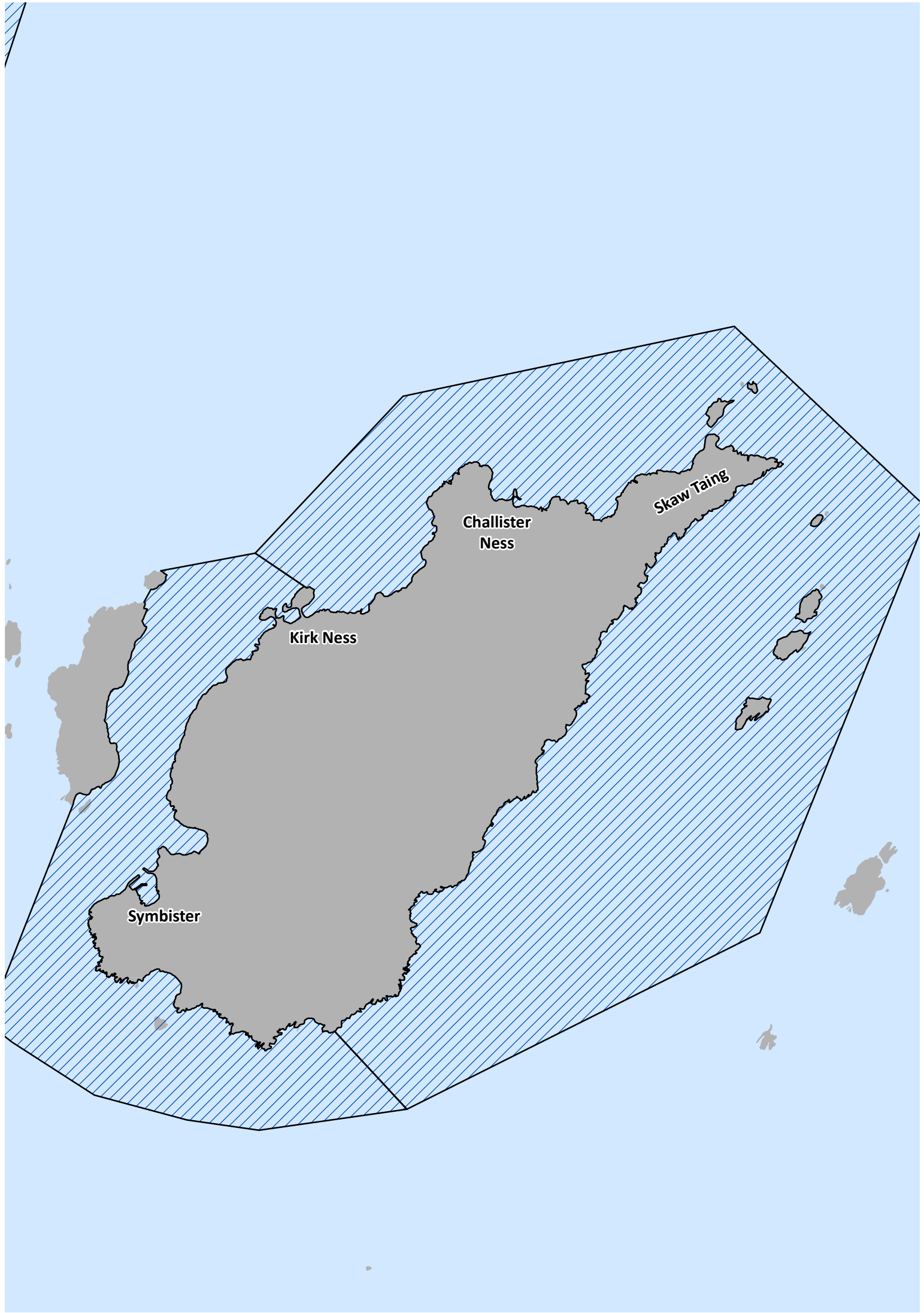
There are no forces for change currently.



Remote Islands

7. Whalsay Coastal Character Area







© Mary Shearer Stewart

Summary Description

Whalsay is an island on the east coast of Shetland sitting around 3 km miles off shore. There are over 1000 residents on the island and it is the base for most of Shetland's pelagic fleet. Much of the island is undeveloped with small settlements found along the coast. The most northerly 18 hole golf course in the UK can be found at Skaw.

Whalsay has been inhabited since at least the Neolithic period with a range of remains such as standing stones, settlements and cairns found along the coast.

The isle is fairly low lying with the highest point, the Ward of Clett, standing at 119m offering panoramic views across Whalsay, Out Skerries, Yell, Fetlar, Bressay, Noss and the east coast of Shetland. The predominant land cover is peat moorland with improved land around the settlements.

The main coastal character types of the Whalsay CCa are low rocky shore and cliffs. There are only mini voes in Whalsay with nowhere suitable for aquaculture along the east coast of the island due to its exposed nature.

Key Characteristics

- Rocky Shore
- Busy small Harbour
- Expansive views
- Peatland predominant land cover



Bremen Bod

Historic Context

Whalsay has been inhabited since the Neolithic period. Rich fishing grounds can be found just offshore of Whalsay and has led to the island being a centre for various fishing industries from da haaf, through the herring to the modern day pelagic and white fish industries. Some of the smaller islands lying between Whalsay and the Mainland, were also inhabited at one time, with some structures still remaining.

Historic Features

Symbister - Many of the buildings around the harbour listed, the old harbour and pier house are also a scheduled monument. It has been an important fishing port from the Hanseatic League to the modern day, changing the type of fish caught depending on the market.

Symbister House (Category B listed building) - built in 1823 for the Bruce family, Symbister House has a commanding position on the hillside. In the 1940s it became a school which is still in use today.

Hanseatic Böd - Used by German merchants for trading from at least 1557, the böd was restored in 1984 and opened as an interpretive centre.

Standing Stones of Yoxie - on the north east coast of Whalsay, the Standing Stones of Yoxie is thought to be a Neolithic 'temple'. Similar sites have been found in Malta and Gozo.

Benie Hoose - Benie or Bunyie Hoose is thought to be the 'Priests' house for the close by Standing Stones of Yoxie.

Brochs - There are two possible broch sites.

Salt Ness - now a grass cover mound, much of the stone was reused by the 1800s.

Brough - no remains left, was still in local knowledge up until the late 1800s.

Industry

Aquaculture - there is one fish farm in the Whalsay

CCa, at the mouth of North Voe on the west side of the island and it is a fin fish farm.

Fishing - fishing is an important industry in Whalsay. The majority of the Shetland pelagic fleet are owned by Whalsay families, however as the vessels have gotten larger, most of them are unable to berth in Whalsay anymore. Whitefish, scalloping and creeling boats are also based in Whalsay.

Tourism - There are a number of tourism sites in Whalsay including the Heritage Centre and the Hanseatic Merchant's museum. The golf course is the most northerly 18 hole course in the UK and there is a café and some small shops including the infamous Shoard charity shop on the island which open on certain days through the week.

Landscape

Much of the landscape of the Whalsay CCA is rough grassland and heather and peat moorland with improved land found around the various townships along the coast. There has been quite a bit of development around the main village of Symbister which relates to the rich fishing industry found on the island.

There are three LCTs covering Whalsay. Undulating Moorland with Lochs, Farmed and Settled Lowlands and Coast and Coastal Edge.

Geology

The main rock type found in Whalsay is pelitic gneiss with a number of granite intrusions. The south east coast has granite like rocks which has been caused by migmatization.

There are a number of small geos and caves along the eastern coast of Whalsay and the south west corner.

Geosites

There are no Geosites in the Whalsay CCA.



Symbister Harbour

Landscape Features

Ward of Clett - The Ward of Clett is the highest point on Whalsay found in the south-east corner of the isle. It is 119 m above sea level and offers panoramic views across the whole of Whalsay and along the eastern coast of Shetland mainland, Fetlar, Yell, Bressay, Noss and Out Skerries. There are numerous remains from the Second World War at the top of the hill including a radar station.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a Mini Voe or Firth - There is one mini voe in the Whalsay CCa, North Voe on the western side of Whalsay. There is no development in the voe, however there is a fin fish farm at the mouth of the voe.

CCT 5 Undeveloped Island Sound - There is one undeveloped island sound in the Whalsay CCa. Linga Sound sits between Whalsay and the uninhabited island, West Linga. There is sparse development along the Whalsay coast but no development on West Linga or within the sound.

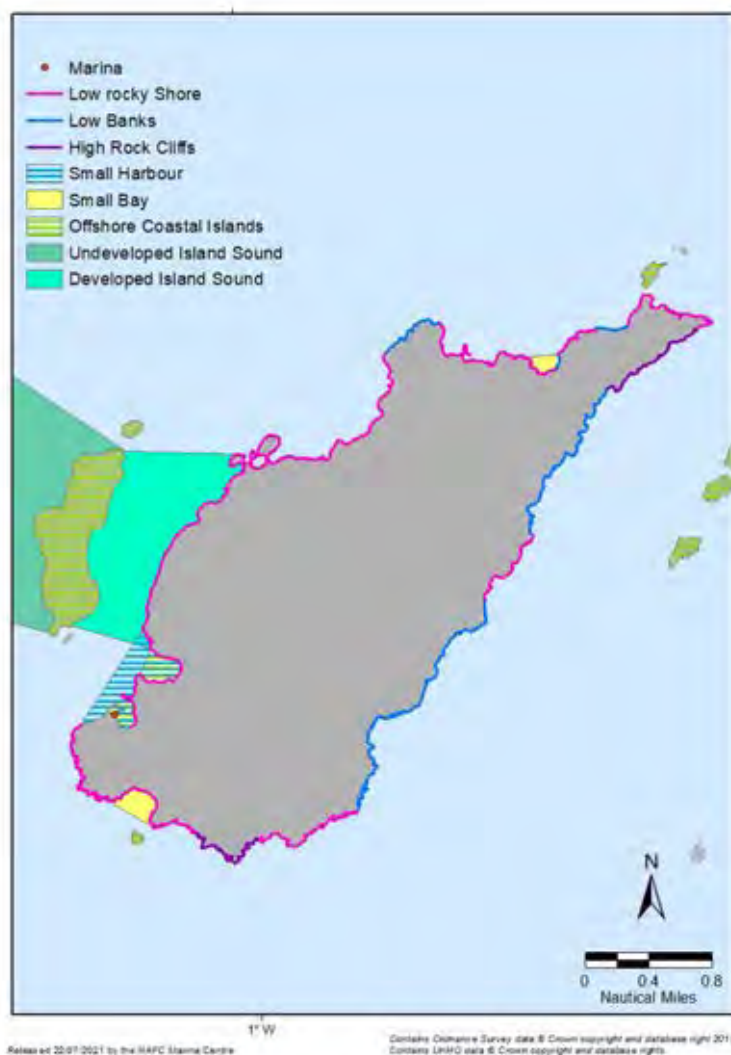
CCT 6 Exposed Coast: Low Rocky Shore - The majority of the Whalsay CCa coast is low rocky shore.

CCT 9 Exposed Coast: High Rock Cliffs - There is one small area of low banks around Challister Ness to the north of Whalsay.

CCT 11 Small Harbour - Symbister is a small harbour that is fairly busy with the daily ferry service from the Mainland and Out Skerries, large pelagic boats berthed here, and a variety of smaller vessels as well. The harbour is historically important with a number of listed buildings.

CCT 11a Marina - There is one marina in the CCa based in Symbister, Whalsay.

CCT 12a Small Bay - There are three small bays in the Whalsay CCa. Sand Wick, Symbister Bay and Skaw Voe. Each has a shingle or sandy ayre and Symbister also has pier infrastructure.



CCT 14 Offshore Coastal Islands - There are ten offshore coastal islands; West Linga, Wether Holm, Holm of Sandwick, Flaeshans of Sandwick, Nacka Skerry, Isbister Holm, Nista, Mooa, Inner Holm of Skaw and Outer Holm of Skaw. West Linga is the largest offshore island and there are a number of smaller skerries around the whole of Whalsay.

Experiential

The Whalsay CCa offers views out to Fetlar and Yell to the north, Out Skerries to the east, Bressay and

Noss to the south and the east coast of the Mainland of Shetland on the west. Symbister is a bustling small harbour. The ferry crossing offers an ideal opportunity of seeing much of the coastline of the Dury Voe CCa.

Sensitivities

There are a number of historic buildings around the harbour at Symbister which are an important part of not only Whalsay's fishing heritage but Shetland's as a whole. Much of the eastern coast of Whalsay is undeveloped.

Forces for Change

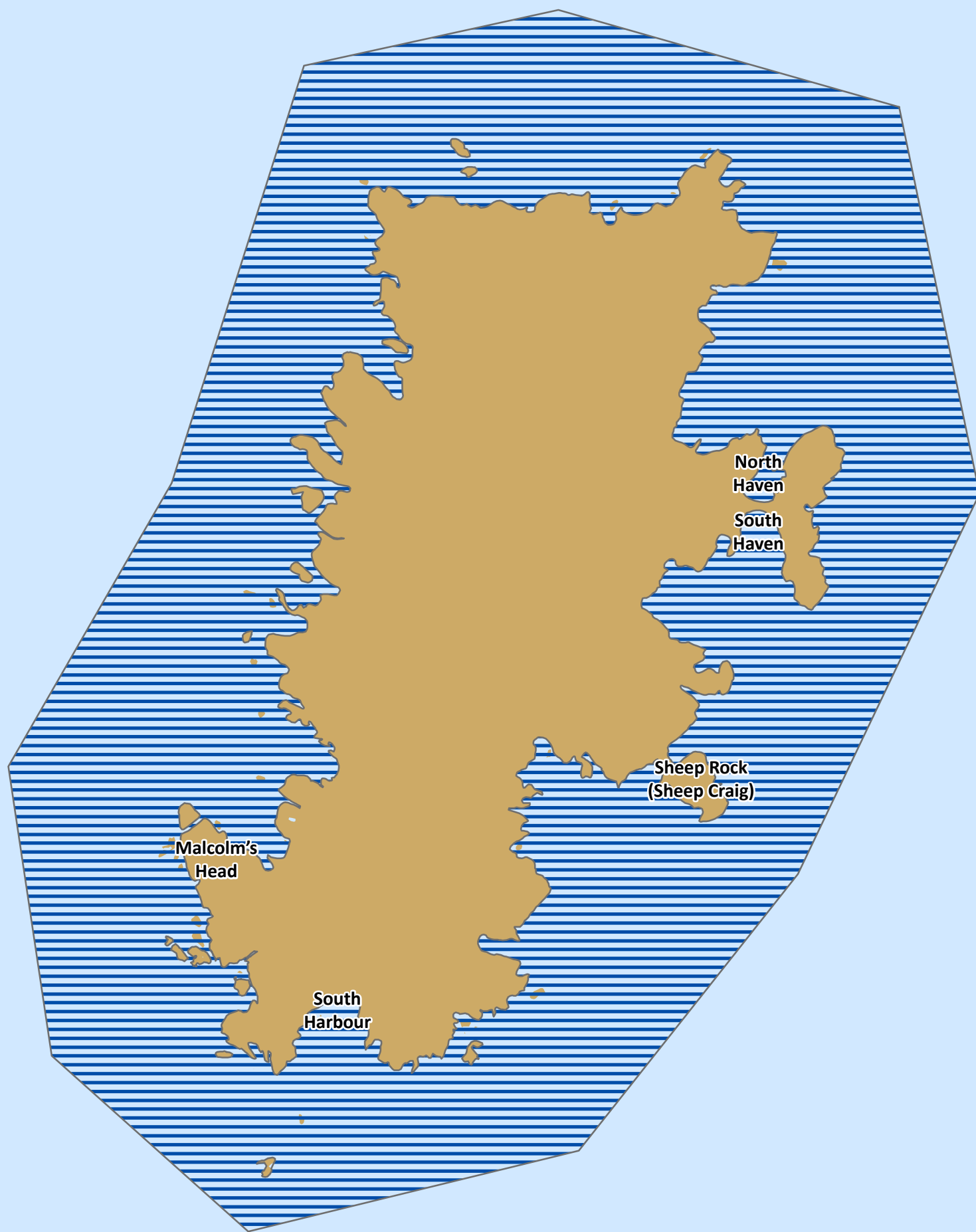
There is ongoing discussion whether a fixed link should replace the ageing ferry service.



Remote Islands

8. Fair Isle Coastal Character Area







South Harbour, Fair Isle

Summary Description

Fair Isle is an island sitting roughly 24 miles south of Sumburgh. There are around 55 inhabitants on Fair Isle. It has recently become a Research and Demonstration MPA.

Fair Isle has been inhabited since the Bronze Age probably due to the rich fishing grounds that surround it. The island was bought by the National Trust in 1954 from George Waterston who founded the Bird Observatory which sits just above North Haven. It is a renowned area for bird watching and the famous Fair Isle knitting. The highest point on the isle is the Ward Hill at 217m. It is possible to see north to Shetland and south to Orkney.

The Island is roughly split in two with improved land found to the south and heather moorland to the north.

The main coastal character type is high rock cliffs. There is only one area where it is suitable to dock, in North Haven meaning the isle can be cut off for several weeks in bad weather, especially in the winter. The coastline is fragmented with dramatic cliff scenery and many stacks and geos.

Key Characteristics

- *High Cliffs*
- *No Aquaculture and limited commercial inshore fishing*
- *Views back to Shetland mainland and down to North Ronaldsay, Orkney*
- *Teeming with summer seabird colonies, with associated experiential value*
- *Fair Isle is one of the most important monitoring sites for seabird populations in the UK with a bird observatory on the island*



North Haven, Fair Isle

Historic Context

Thought to have been inhabited for over 5000 years, Fair Isle has a number of sites dating back to the **Neolithic period** including oval houses and dykes such as the **Feely Dyke** which separates the **crofts** from the scattland. There are also a number of **cairns** and **burnt mounds** scattered across the island.

Fair Isle has been the site of a large number of shipwrecks over the years. Indeed the famous **Fair Isle knitting** motifs were said to have originated from men wrecked off a **Spanish Armada** ship in 1588 but this has now been proven to be just a myth.

The island has been owned by **lairds** in both Shetland and Orkney before being bought by the **National Trust** in 1954 from George Waterston, the co founder of the Fair Isle Bird Observatory.

Historic Features

Skadan Lighthouse (**Category B** listed building)- Built in 1892 by David and Charles Stevenson, Skadan or the South **Lighthouse**, was automated in 1998, the last lighthouse in Scotland to do so. Skadan was hit twice within six weeks during air raids in 1941 with wives of two of the keepers killed. Tours are available by appointment only.

Skroo Lighthouse (**Category B** listed building)- Also built in 1892 by David and Charles Stevenson. Skroo also known as the North **Lighthouse**, has a lower lighthouse tower than Skadan but sits at a higher elevation. The light was automated in 1983.

Former Community Hall (**Category B** listed building)- The hall which is now used as the island's museum, was built 1870- 1875.

The Haa (**Category B** listed building)- Built in the early 1700s, the Fair Isle **Haa** was owned as part of the Fair Isle estate by the Sinclair's of Quendale before passing to Stewarts of Brough in Orkney in 1766. It was over a hundred years before the island became part of Shetland again. In 1814 Sir Walter Scott was entertained at the **Haa** during a trip to Shetland

which inspired his novel *The Pirate*.

Aerogenerator (**Category B** listed building)- The first commercial wind generator built in the UK in 1982.

Landberg Fort (**Scheduled Monument**)- A **promontory fort** found on the eastern coast of South Haven. A number of ditches and the cliffs surrounding the fort protect the approaches.

Kirki Geo (**Scheduled Monument**)- Encompassing a number of different aspects, Kirki Geo includes mid to late **Iron Age** settlement remains, a cemetery and at least fourteen boat **noosts**.

Industry

Crofting- Fair Isle has a strong crofting community with both sheep and cattle on the island. The community work together to help with annual tasks such as baling, shearing and lambing.

Knitting- Fair Isle is famous the world over for the distinctive patterns used within the knitting on the island. Still a very strong cottage industry with many residents knitting items to sell to visiting cruise liners and tourists.

Tourism- A large part of the economy for Fair Isle. There are a number of accommodation options on the island and a number of cruise liners stop past the isle in the summer months.

Landscape

Fair Isle can be roughly split in two halves separated by the **Feely Dyke**. To the north the landscape is more rugged with rocky moorland and relatively few buildings. To the south the land was better for crofting and has been continually improved. It is where most of the **crofts** are situated.

The island forms part of the **Shetland National Scenic Area** (NSA) and areas are covered by European Diploma for Protected Areas, **SSSI**, **SPA** and **SAC** designations.

Geology

The Fair Isle CCa mainly consists of (Middle) **Old Red**

Sandstone which is a **sedimentary** rock. There are some areas of **dolomitic mudstone** and **siltstone**, also sedimentary rocks. There are a large number of caves, arches and stacks along the Fair Isle coast due to the continual erosion of the rock.

Geosites

94. Fair Isle- National Significance

95. Slogar, Fair Isle- National Significance

Landscape Features

Sheep Rock (Sheep Craig)- Connected to the island by an impassable isthmus called Da Whills, Sheep Rock or Sheep Craig as it is also known, was used until 1977 for summer grazing with sheep lowered down to boats using ropes from the headland. A landmark of Fair Isle.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- There are two areas of low rocky shore on Fair Isle, the isthmus between North and South Haven and South Harbour along the southern coast of the island. There is a small sandy beach in North Haven, backed by round pebbles.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Rock Cliffs- The main CCT for the Fair Isle CCA, High Rock Cliffs stretch from Head of Tind below the Skadan **Lighthouse**, right up the coast round to North Haven and around Bu Ness. The cliffs continue from the western edge of South Haven down to Aaglass in South Harbour. There are a huge amount of caves, arches and stacks around the Fair Isle coast.

CCT 11: Small Harbour- North Haven is a small harbour used by the Good Shepherd IV. It is a very exposed harbour with a large breakwater. The ferry gets hauled out of the water between trips to protect it. The ferry runs to Grutness or Lerwick depending on the day of the week. The harbour is also used by visiting yachts.

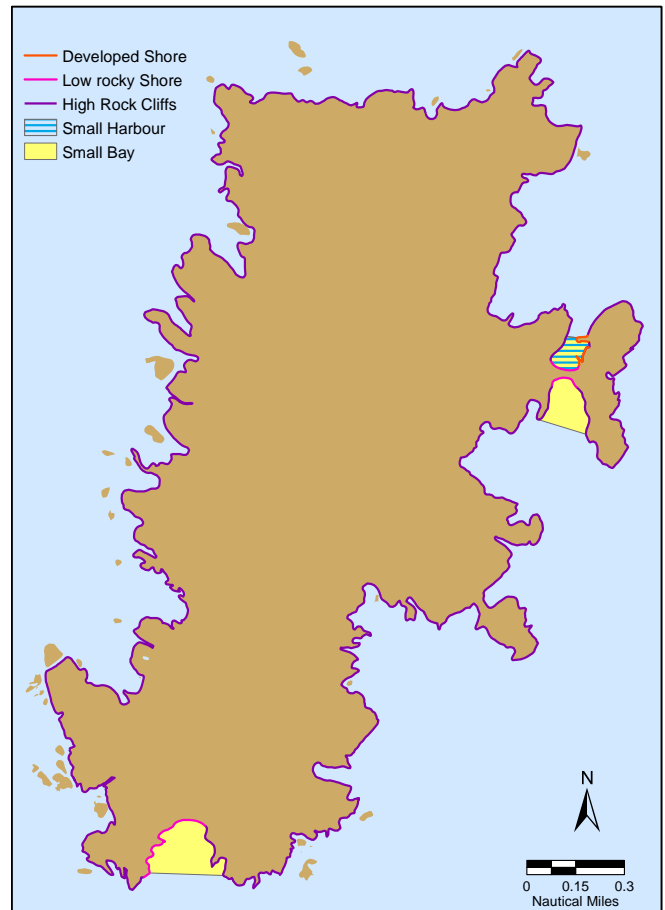
CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are three small bays in the Fair Isle CCA; North Haven, South Haven and South Harbour. North Haven is also a small harbour with pier facilities and a fine sandy beach backed by pebbles. South Haven has a pebble beach at the head of the bay and South Harbour has areas of shingle along the rocky shore.

Experiential

Fair Isle is a picturesque island with more rugged landscape to the north and most of the **crofts** to the

south. The coastline has many spectacular features such as arches, caves and skerries and the island is rich in wild flowers through late May to August, which is much appreciated by summer visitors. There is a variety of bird life with migrant visitors attracting many people to the isle during the spring and autumn.

There is a great community spirit on the island with everyone happy to help each other. Most people have several jobs to keep the island viable.



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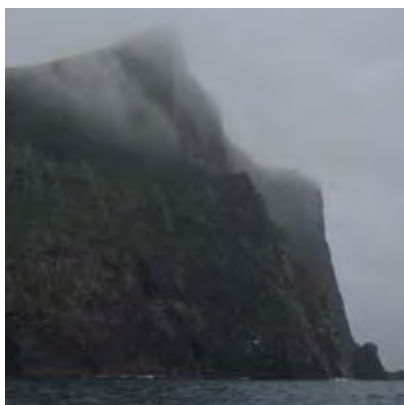
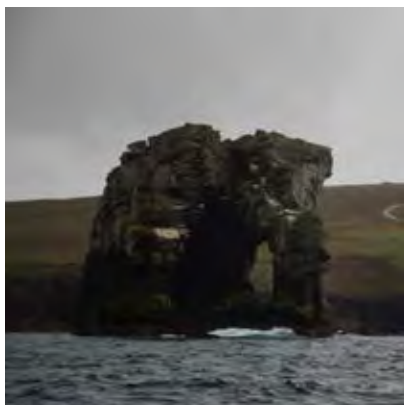
Sensitivities

As with all small island communities, depopulation is always a sensitivity. There is very low development around the coast of Fair Isle and this is unlikely to change. The island has recently been designated a Research and Demonstration Marine Protected Area (DRMPA) which gives the island and surrounding waters more protection.

Forces for Change

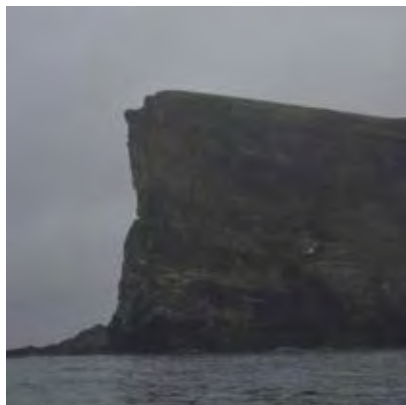
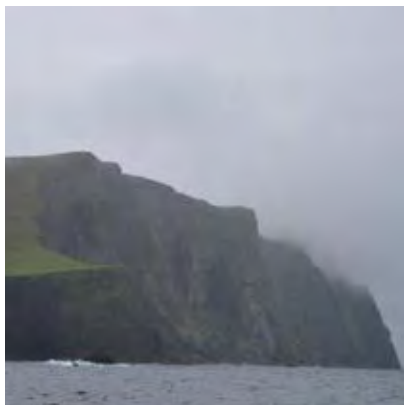
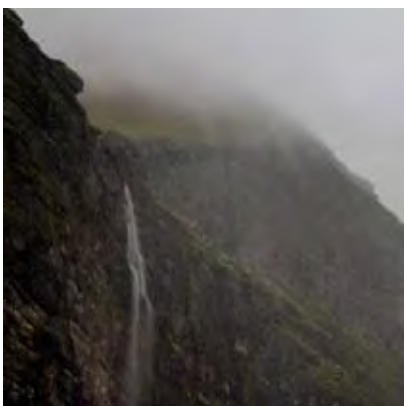
The Fair Isle population has been relatively stable over the past 50 years however, a lack of housing could lead to further declines in the future.

After a devastating fire at the Bird Observatory in 2019, a **new observatory** is due to be built in the next few years.



Remote Islands

9. Foula Coastal Character Area



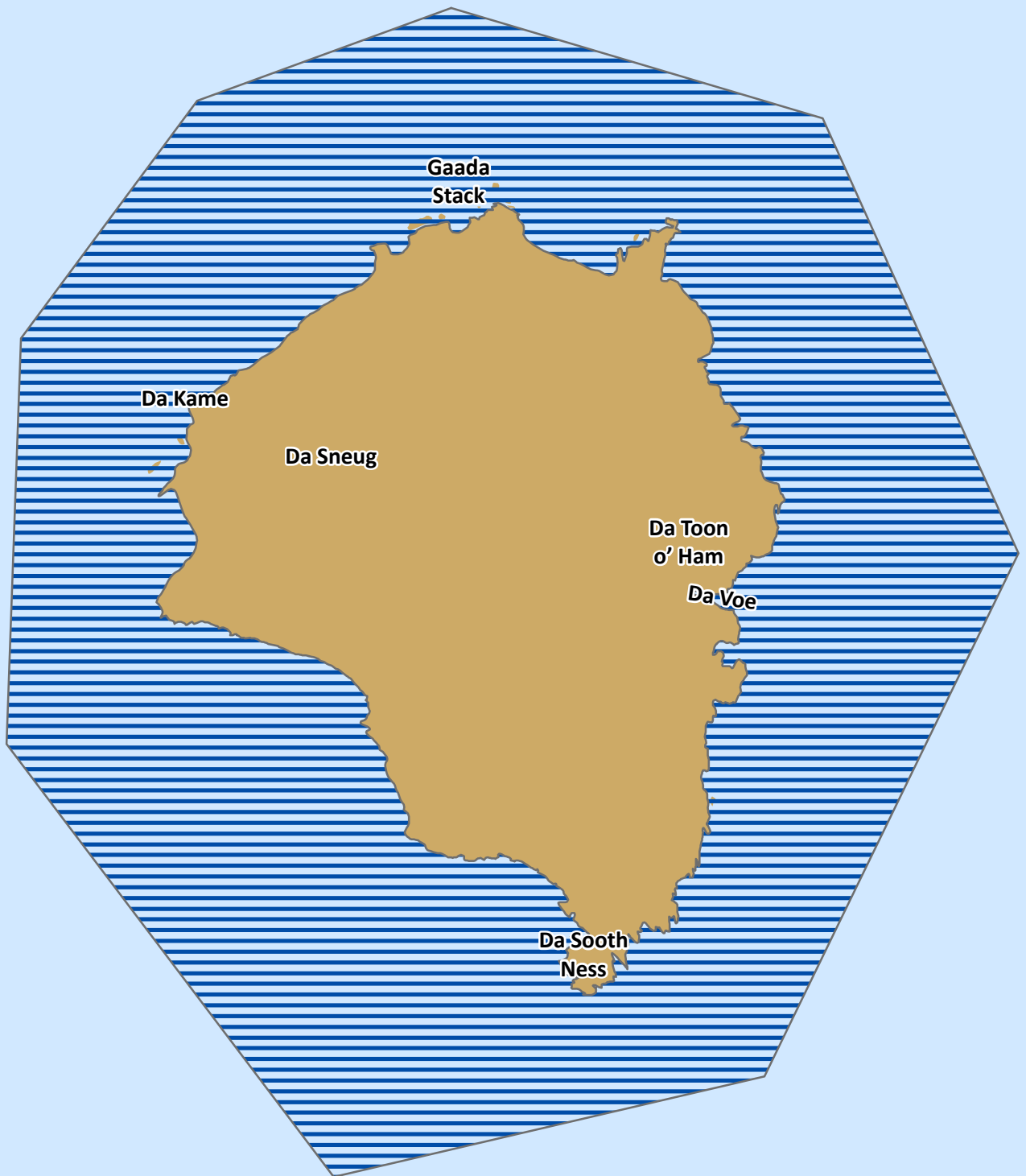
Summary Description

The Foula Coastal Character Area (CCa) covers the entire coastline of Foula, which is a small island around 13 miles off the west of Shetland. It is one of the most remote, permanently inhabited islands in Britain, with a population of 38 in 2011.

*The name Foula originates from Fuglaey, which means bird island in **Old Norse**. This is still relevant today, with the whole island being a SPA for seabirds and an SSSI for seabird colonies. Foula forms part of the Shetland National Scenic Area (NSA).*

Key Characteristics

- *High cliffs*
- *Dramatic coastline*
- *Much of the coastline is undeveloped*
- *Secluded, cut off from the mainland for days at a time.*
- *Part of the Shetland NSA*





Peat stack, Da Toon o' Ham

Historic Context

It is believed that there has been human occupation for over 5000 years. A monument dating back to before 1000 BC can be found at Da Heights.

After 800 AD the Norse settled on Foula, and although there is not much physical evidence, this is reflected in the place names and folklore.

Although the rest of the UK began to use the Gregorian calendar in 1752, Foula still to this day uses the Julian calendar, celebrating Yule on the 6th of January and New Year on the 13th of January. It was also one of the last places that the **Norn** language was spoken.

Historic Features

Boat Nousts- There are stone lined **nousts** at Hesti Geos and winter **nousts** at Da Rigs.

Haa of Foula (**Category C Listed building**)- Built in the late 18th century for the Scott's of Melby.

War Memorial (**Category C Listed structure**)- Built in 1925 to honour men lost in the **First World War**.

Industry

The main industry is **crofting**, however most residents have various occupations to make a living. There is a wool company that uses the **native Foula sheep** fleeces to create yarn for knitting.

Landscape

The landscape of Foula is dominated by the five summits; Da Noup, Hamnafield, Soberlie, Da Sneug and Da Kame. These are along the west side of the island with the east being a low lying coastal strip where the three settlements; the Hametoon, Toon o' Ham and Da Nort Toons are based.

Despite Foula being a relatively small island, it is still possible to lose sight of the sea while walking through

the landscape. The main land cover is heather and **peat** with some improved land around the **crofts**.

Foula is covered by three LCT's; Coastal Edge, Major Uplands, and Farmed and Settled Lowlands and Coast. The Coastal Edge and the Major Uplands are mainly confined to the west of the island and the Farmed and Settled Lowlands and Coast is the east.



Da Kame

Geology

The geology of Foula is mainly **sandstone** with a small area of **schist** to the east. The rocks are separated by a **fault line** which runs right through Foula. The island has many interesting geological features such as the perpendicular cliffs at Da Kame which rivals Conachair in St Kilda as the highest sea cliffs in the UK and the Gaada Stack around the north of the island.

Geosites

89. Foula Coast- National Significance

Landscape Features

Da Sneug- Rising up to a height of 418m, Da Sneug is a dominant feature not only on Foula but also when looking to Foula from mainland Shetland.

War Memorial- Designed by Ian Holbourn, the **Laird** of Foula at the time, the war memorial on Foula is a square structure with a castellated top and was built

to commemorate the five men lost during the **Great War** (1914-1919).

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth- Da Voe is a mini voe on the east coast of Foula. It is the only place sheltered enough to allow the ferry to land in relatively fine weather. The sides are not very steep and there is an area of shingle at the head of the voe. The settlement of Ham sits just above the voe.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- There is a small area of rocky shore in Da Voe.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- A small area of low banks can be found around Ham Little.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- High Rock Cliffs is the dominant CCT on Foula running around most of the west coast. At the back of Da Kames is considered some of the highest sea cliffs in the UK. From the top there are panoramic views of open sea with the next land fall not until the Americas. The cliffs are an important nesting/breeding habitat for seabirds and are pretty spectacular when viewed from the sea.

To the north and east the shore is a mix of low rocky shore and low cliffs, with the north also becoming fragmented with various features such as stacks, arches and caves.

Experiential

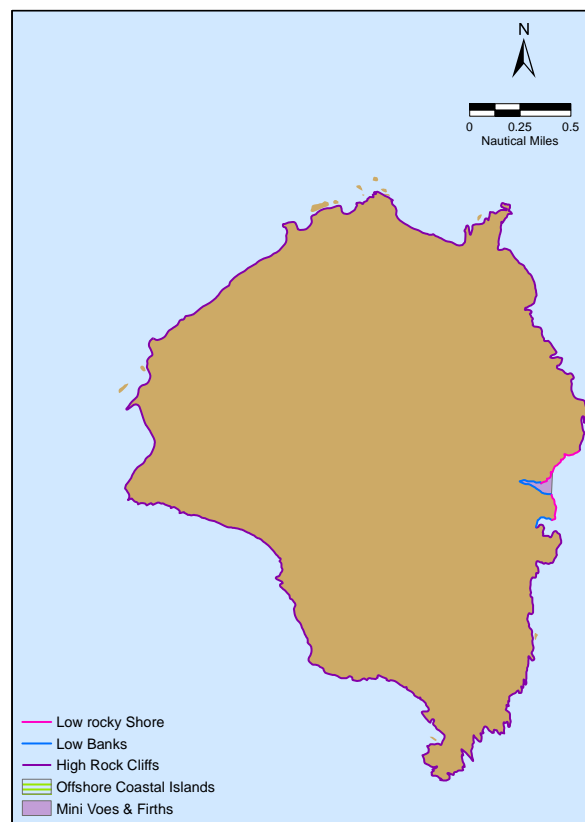
Foula is an extreme island, the most westerly island in the Shetland archipelago, and arguably the most remote inhabited island in the whole of the UK. Foula has to deal with high winds, large seas and weeks cut off from the mainland. The residents are resilient and hardy but the island has an air of neglect with cars abandoned where they stopped running and various things littering the roadside. The sea cliffs are some of the most dramatic in Shetland.

Sensitivities

Foula is highly sensitive to offshore development such as marine renewables. The island is greatly valued for its scenic qualities being part of the Shetland NSA. The cliffs are particularly sensitive to development due to being extremely remote and offering uninterrupted views of the North Atlantic.

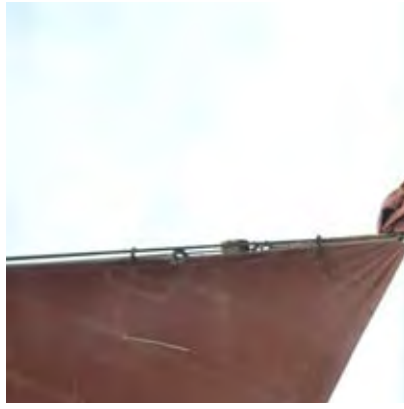
Forces for Change

The population on Foula is fairly small and there is a possibility that there will be nobody left in the future unless population trends change. This would mean big changes in the way the island is managed and possibly even accessed.



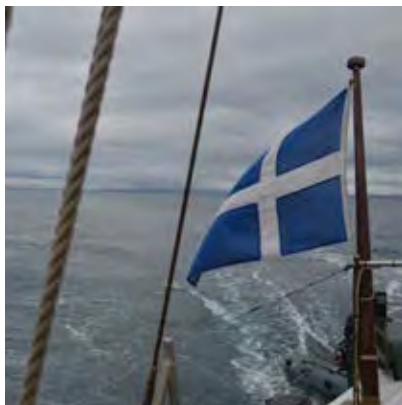
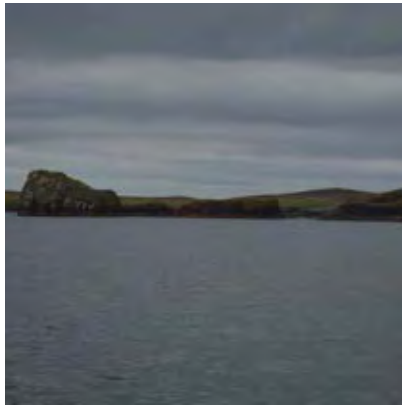
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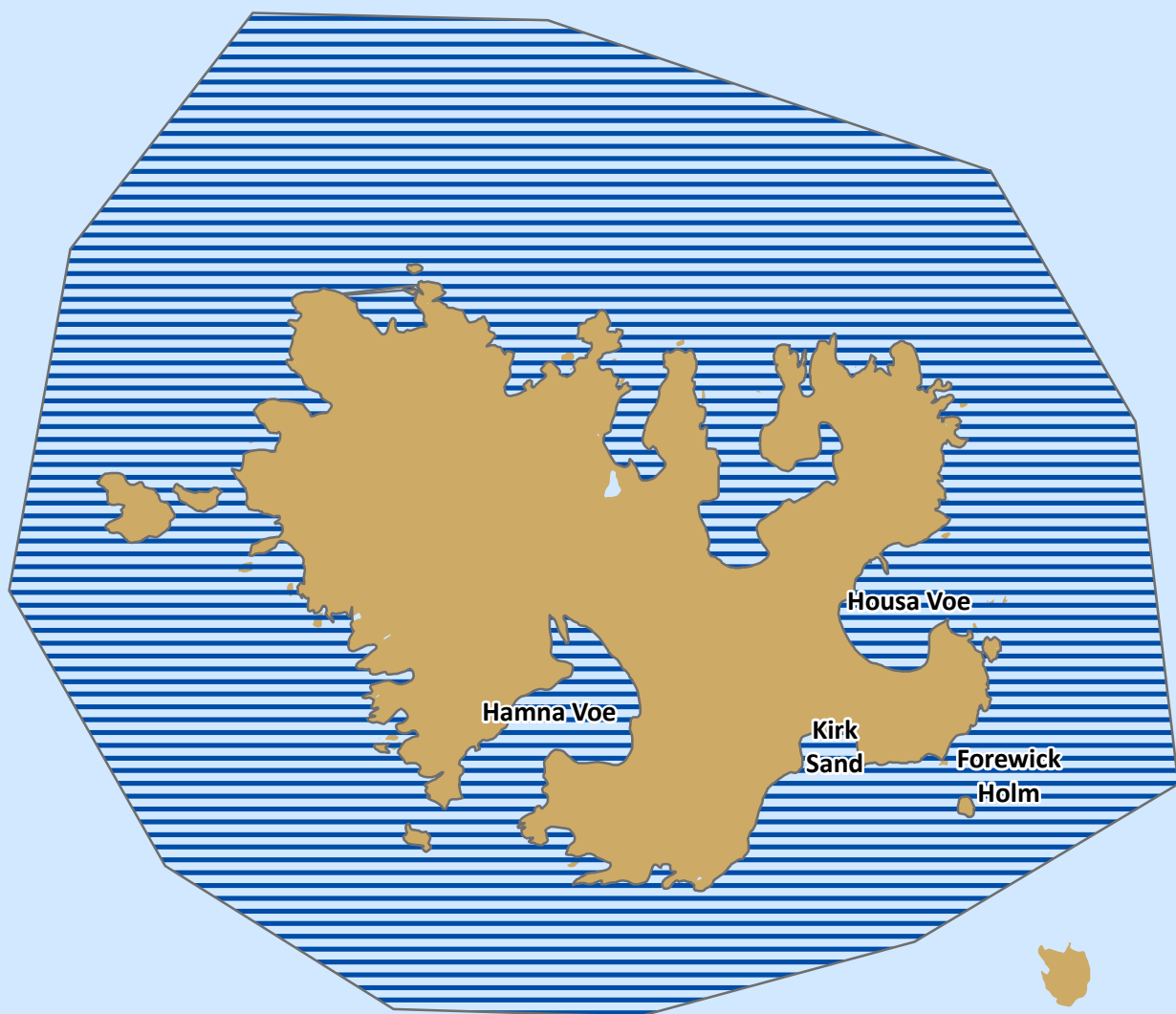
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Remote Islands

10. Papa Stour Coastal Character Area







Papa Stour

Summary Description

The Papa Stour Coastal Character Area (CCa) is located off the west coast of Shetland and includes the entire coast of Papa Stour. It is a fragmented coastline with various stacks, arches, caves and tunnels.

The population on the island has reduced dramatically over the last few years and there are no aquaculture sites in the CCa.

Key Characteristics

- *Dramatic fragmented coastline*
- *Numerous caves and stacks*
- *Scattered settlement kept to the south east of the island*
- *Panoramic views of the West Coast of Shetland*



Snalda

Historic Context

Papa Stour comes from the Norse Papey Stóra which means big island of the priests. It was thought that the **Celtic monastery** could have been situated there from the early 6th century. However, there is also remains from the **Neolithic** through to the **Bronze Age**, so the priests were not the first settlers on the island.

For the **Vikings**, Papa Stour became an important island for its strategic position and a safe place for their boats. By late the 13th century, Papa Stour was a royal farm owned by **King Hakon**. It continued to be owned by Norse **lairds** into the 17th century.

The sheltered voes on the north coast of the islands offered a base for herring stations in the 19th century.

Historic Features

Muckle Fru (Scheduled Monument)- A stack at the mouth of Housa Voe also known as Maiden Stack, Muckle Fru, it is told, was where a Norwegian Lord imprisoned his daughter because she refused an arranged marriage as she had fallen in love with a fisherman who rescued her before they eloped. There are the remains of a settlement found on the top.

Da Biggins- In the 1970s and 80s, excavation at the Da Biggins uncovered the foundations of a **Stofa**. Nearby the remains of a **Ting** can be found.

Papa Stour Kirk (Category B listed building)- The kirk was built in 1806 and it is planned that it will become a visitor centre for the island. There is a stained glass window which is the only surviving work of Victor Noble Rainbird.

Industry

Tourism- There is a small tourism industry as Papa Stour is valued for its history, geology and flora and fauna.

Landscape

The Papa Stour CCa is a quiet area which is used for **crofting**. The more fertile green land is restricted to the south east corner of the island around the scattered settlement, with a **feely dyke** separating the rest of the island which is mainly heather and peat moorland.

There is one LCT, Coastal Edge running around much of the coast of Papa Stour.

Geology

The coastline of Papa Stour is one of the most exposed in the whole of Britain and has many important features such as stacks, tunnels and caves. The main geology of Papa Stour is Rhyolite with areas of **sandstone** and **basalt**. There is also till and blown sand deposits with **glacial moraine** marking where the edge of an ancient ice sheet was.

Geosites

- 87. Papa Stour Coast- International significance
- 88. Papa Stour Fishbed- tbc.

Landscape Features

Virdi Field- The highest point on Papa Stour at 87m, Virdi Field offers panoramic views of the island and out across to the Vee Skerries.

Snolda- A stack found off the South Horn is a prominent feature of the coastline with an arch forming at the base.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth- There are four mini voes in Papa Stour; Housa Voe, Hamna Voe, West Voe and Culla Voe. Housa Voe is the only one with much development, with pier infrastructure for the ferry coming in and a few houses along the shore.

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound- The Sound of Papa separates Papa Stour from the Mainland. It is not a very wide sound and there are two islets; Forewick Holm and the Holm of Melby. There is no aquaculture development and the terrestrial development is scattered.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- There is not much low rocky shore around Papa Stour's coastline and it is mainly constrained to the south west of the isle. There are a few sandy beaches that have built up along the shore at Tussleby Sands, Kirk Sand, Housa Voe, Sand of Creed, Crubarbara and Raeversand. As well as these there are various shingle ayres at The Brough, Culla Voe, Skeo Taing, Robie's Noust, Breid Ayre and Ayre of Gardie.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- The main area of low banks is found around North Ness on Papa Stour with small areas found around Forewick Ness, Gorsendi Geo, Mo Geo, Wilma Skerry, Lamba Ness and Quida Ness.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- The majority of Papa Stour's coastline consists of cliffs and is considered some of the most exposed coastline in Britain. The highest cliffs are found on the north west corner of the island which is also an area of fragmented coastline. There are twelve pocket beaches with most being situated in geos; Galti Geo, North Lunga Geo, Binnie Geo, Burrie Geo, Hund Geo, Akers Geo, Geo of Bordie, Sholma Wick, Tarri Geo, Geo of Breistacks, Mo Geo and Cals Geo. Most of the beaches are shingle and are not accessible from land.

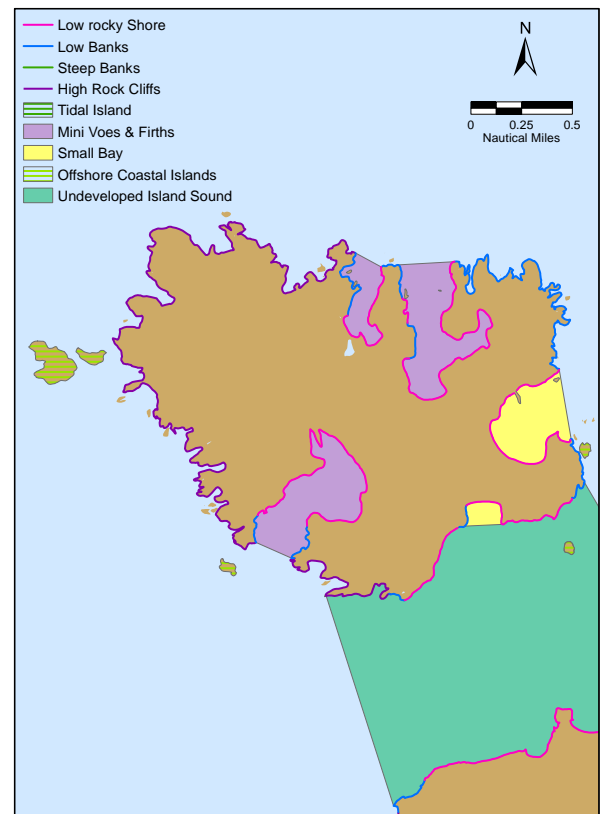
CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are two coastal islands in the Papa Stour CCA; Forewick Holm and Holm of Melby. The Holm of Melby is the larger of the two however Forewick Holm has been inhabited in the last 10 years.

Experiential

The Papa Stour coastline is spectacular and is some of the most valued coastline of Britain in particular for the caves and subterranean passages. This landscape is contrasted by the low lying land around the voes found on the island.

Sightings of whales, dolphins and porpoise is common and the island is highly valued for geology, wild flowers and birds.

The red rock seems to nearly glow when the sun hits it and the array of colours found within the caves is captivating.



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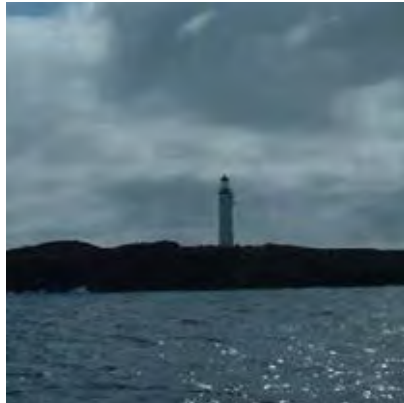
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Sensitivities

Much of Papa Stour and the seas around it are protected by various designations such as SSSIs, Geosites and a SAC. The small bays found mainly around the east of the island are sensitive to marine development as even a small scale development would appear to 'fill' the area. The sound between Papa Stour and the mainland is also sensitive to development as it forms an important setting for the island. Finally, the fragmented coastline to the north west of the island is highly sensitive to any development due to the exposed and remote nature of the area.

Forces for Change

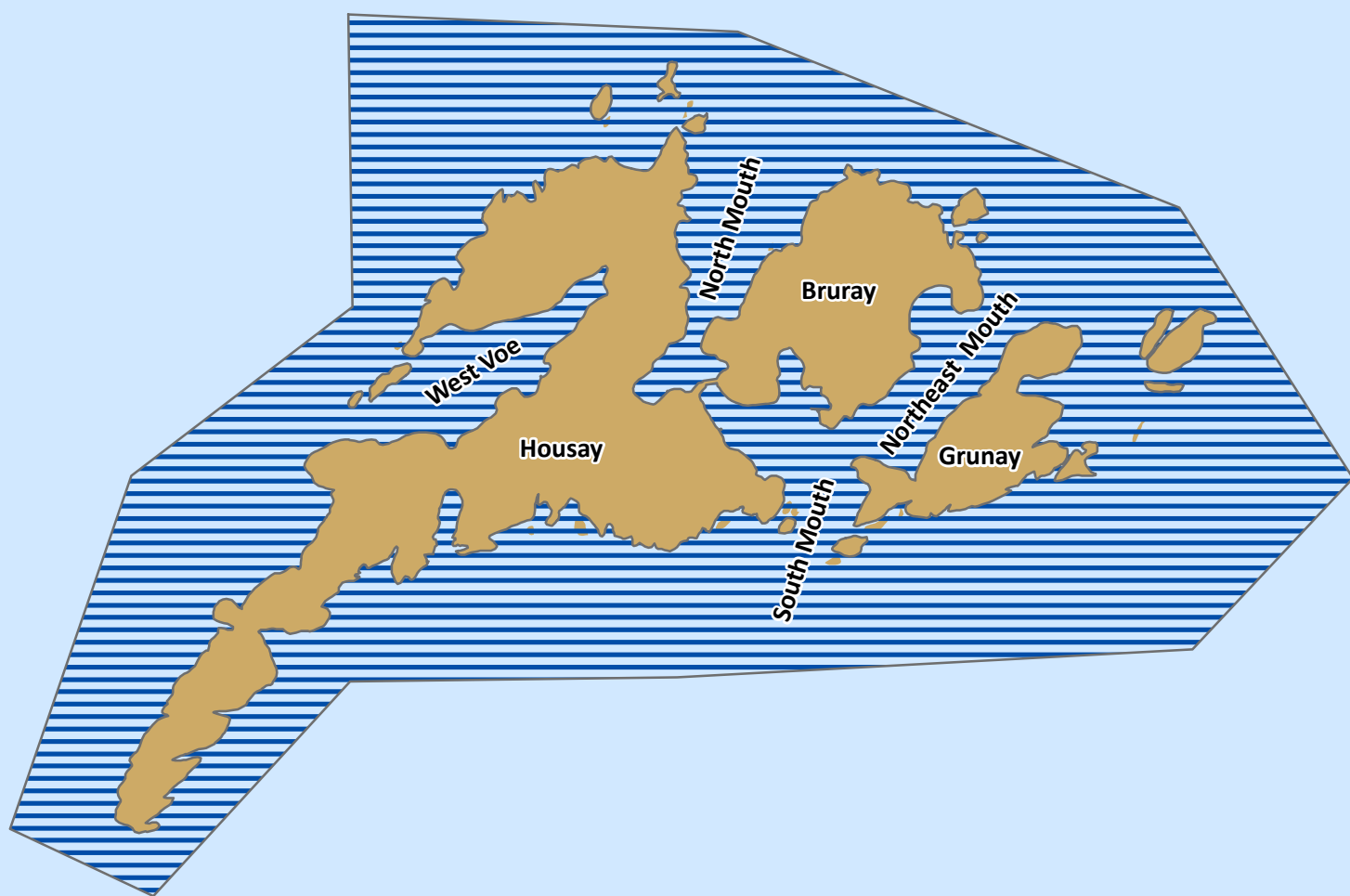
The population of Papa Stour is in a critical position with only eight full time residents in 2012. Unless something changes very soon the island will be uninhabited for the first time in over 3000 years.



Remote Islands

11. Out Skerries Coastal Character Area







© Ryan Arthur

Summary Description

The Skerries Coastal Character Area (CCa) covers the islands of Grunay, Bruray and Housay and a number of smaller islets which make up the islands of Out Skerries or Skerries as it is known locally. Skerries lies around 10 miles off the east coast of Shetland with a population of 76 people at the last census in 2011, although with the closure of the fish farm and the school, this has been greatly reduced in recent years.

There are Neolithic and Bronze Age remains on Skerries, and it is thought that the islands were permanently inhabited from the Norse period. Skerries position means it would have been one of the first landfalls from Norway and the rich fishing grounds found around the islands would have encouraged people to settle. There are a number of famous shipwrecks found around the islands.

There are three main islands with two currently inhabited, Bruray and Housay which are connected via a bridge. The shore station for the Bound Skerry lighthouse was based on Grunay, the lighthouse was automated in 1972.

The main coastal character type is low rocky shore. There is one small harbour that is very sheltered but can be difficult to approach in rough weather causing the islands to be cut off at times.

Key Characteristics

- *Low lying islands*
- *Fragmented coastline*
- *Undeveloped landscape*



© Charlotte Slater

Historic Context

The nature of Skerries with its fragmented coastline meant it was very hard to navigate during poor weather resulting in two Dutch East India Company ships wrecking here in 1664 and 1711. Shipwrecks provided materials such as wood for the islanders which would otherwise have been very hard to obtain. Skerries was also an important place for fishing with **haaf** and **herring** stations based on the isles. It was important during **WWII** especially after the occupation of Norway. Being the first landfall west of Norway a letter was sent to the post office to be opened in the event of a Nazi invasion. The envelope was returned to the government after the war unopened.

Historic Features

Battle Pund- A low enclosure made with boulders found on Housay. According to local tradition it was used as an animal enclosure on the site of where a man was killed in an argument between two fishing merchants.

Bound Skerry Lighthouse (Category B listed) and Shore Station (Category C listed)- The government asked for a **lighthouse** on Skerries during the Crimean War (1853 – 1856) because of the increased naval traffic in the area. A temporary light was built on Grunay in 1854. A more permanent structure was built in 1857 by David and Thomas Stevenson on Bound Skerry and first lit in 1858. The accommodation was built on Grunay in the form of a shore station. The lighthouse was a target in WWII with the accommodation machine gunned in 1941 with no casualties, and a bomb hit the boatman's house in 1942 with Mrs Anderson the boatman's mother dying from her injuries a few days later. Bound Skerry light was made a rock station in 1950 with the families repatriated to Lerwick. The light was automated in 1972.

Herring Station- Fishing has been an important part of Skerries history with the isle becoming a herring station in the late 19th century. However, the station closed before the **First World War** and was not reopened.

Industry

There is a small amount of fishing in Skerries, but it is not what it once was. Crofting and some knitting form part of the local industry. The closure of the fish farm site, the main employer for the isles led to a depopulation and as such the school is now closed. There is a small tourism industry with some properties used for self-catering/ B&B. Migrant birds attract day trippers during the autumn months.

Landscape

The Skerries CCA main land cover is Heather Moorland with small areas of Improved Grassland around the mile-long road on the island. There is next to no peat on the island, so islanders were granted rights to cut peat in Whalsay. Most of the houses are sited alongside the road resulting in the majority of the two main islands being unaltered by development.

Geology

The main rock type in Skerries is **metamorphic** with **granite** found on Mio Ness, and large areas of **gneiss** and **schist**. There is also some **limestone** along the south coast. These rock types mean that there is very little fertile land in Skerries with crofting having far less importance.

Geosites

There are no Geosites in the Skerries CCA.

Landscape Features

Bruray Ward- Is in the north east corner of the

islands and is the highest point in Out Skerries with the summit reaching 53 metres. The hilltop offers a panoramic view of the rest of Skerries and out towards the rest of eastern Shetland. There is a folk tale detailing a cave on Bruray Ward which historically was used for smuggling contraband.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a Mini Voe or Firth-There is one mini voe in the Out Skerries CCA at West Voe on Housay. There is some redundant development in the voe from the former fish farm site. There are no houses around the voe.

CCT 5 Undeveloped Island Sound-There are three undeveloped island sounds in Out Skerries; Northeast Mouth between Bruray and Grunay; South Mouth between Housay and Grunay; and North Mouth Bruray and Housay. Bruray and Housay are joined by a single track bridge across North Mouth.

CCT 6 Exposed Coast: Low Rocky Shore-The main character type in Out Skerries is low rocky shore.

CCT 9 Exposed Coast: High Rock Cliffs-High Rock Cliffs can be found around Bruray Taing to the north of Bruray and along the southern coast of Housay, down to Mio Ness.

CCT 11 Small Harbour-The Skerries harbour is based within South Mouth and is very sheltered with access from the south and the east. The terminus for the daily ferry is based here. There are a number of small fishing boats that use the harbour. There are some historically important sites around the harbour including [fishing stations](#) and [drying beaches](#). At the mouth of South Mouth, is a [Historic Marine Protected Area](#) for two shipwrecks the Kennemerland and the Wrangels Palais.

CCT 11a Marina-There is one marina in the CCA based in North Mouth.

CCT 12a Small Bay-There is one small bay in Northeast Mouth, Long Ayre is a shingle beach and has remains of fishing bōds from the [da haaf](#) fishing.

CCT 14 Offshore Coastal Islands-There are a number of offshore coastal islands around the inhabited islands of Housay and Bruray. Grunay was the base for the lighthouse shore station until the 1950s, Bound

Skerry on which the lighthouse was built, North and South Benelip, and Filla found to the south of Mio Ness. There are many other stacks and small skerries dotted around the coast.



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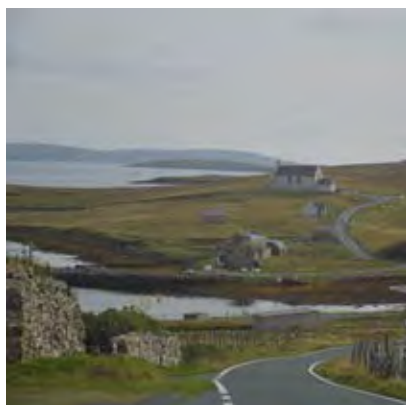
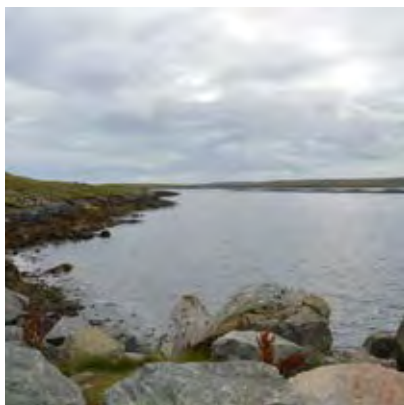
The ferry journey from Symbister/ Vidlin offers excellent views of the fragmented northern coast and once in Skerries, most of the views are internal rather than outward to other islands. There are numerous historically important buildings and sites.

Sensitivities

Much of the inhabited islands are undeveloped with most of the houses concentrated along the mile long road. However, the composition of the islands mean that small developments could have minimal effect if placed with sensitivity.

Forces for Change

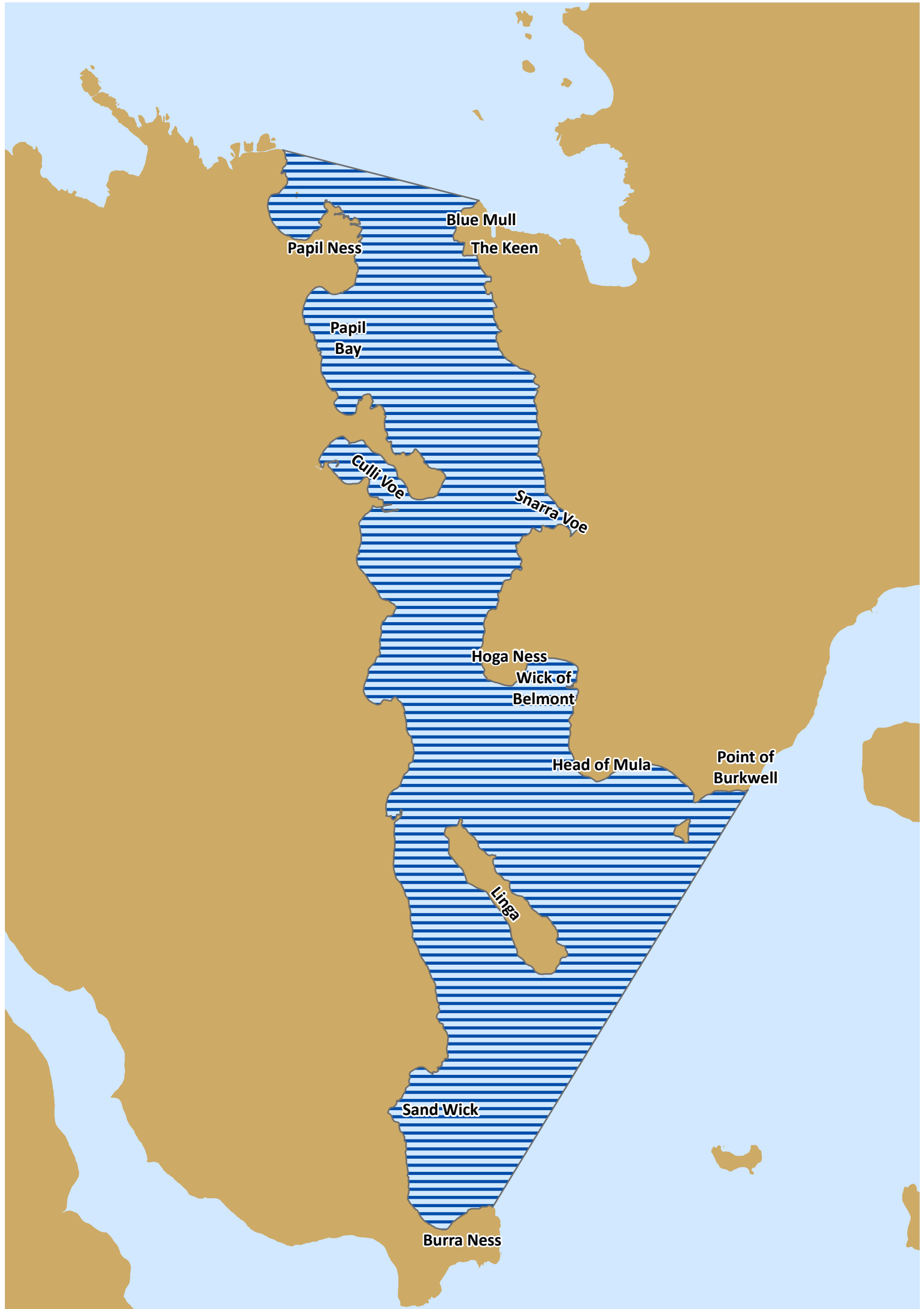
There are a number of redundant structures from the fish farm formerly based in the islands. The removal of the structures are currently being discussed.



North Isles

12. Bluemull Sound Coastal Character Area





Papil Ness

Blue Mull

The Keen

Papil
Bay

Cull-Voe

Snarra-Voe

Hoga Ness

Wick of
Belmont

Head of Mula

Point of
Burkwel

Linga

Sand Wick

Burra Ness



Papil Bay, Yell

Summary Description

The Bluemull Sound Coastal Character Area (CCa) is a narrow sound between Yell and Unst. Near the mouth of the sound the inter-island ferry runs between Gutcher and Belmont. There are some aquaculture sites located in the southern half of the sound and the first community marine turbine site in the world is not far from Cullivoe.

The landscape isn't particularly steep around the sound with cliffs found around Blue Mull to the north of the sound.

To the south of the sound, Belmont House forms a striking feature set back from the coast.

Key Characteristics

- *Small bays and low rocky shore along both coasts*
- *Heather clad low hills*
- *Belmont House and Gardens*
- *First community marine turbine farm in the world*



St Olaf's Kirk, Cullivoe

Historic Context

There have been settlements around Bluemull Sound for many centuries with the remains of farmsteads and various artefacts such as flint arrow heads found along the shore. The Vikings have a great prominence in the area with the Viking settlement below the largely dismantled Lund House (a small area owned by the National Trust) being the most southerly part of a Norse landscape centred around the bay of Lunda Wick.

It has been a productive landscape with lime kilns found to the north and farmsteads spread across both sides of the Sound.

Historic Features

Belmont House (Category A listed and scheduled Designed Landscape and Gardens)- A Georgian style house built in 1775 for Thomas Mouat. It has been restored over the past 15 years by the Belmont Trust.

Chapels and Monastries- There could be up to six sites along the coast of Bluemull Sound related to religion which is quite a high proportion for a relatively small area.

Monastery, Unst- On the cliff top just south of The Keen there are the remains of a settlement which could have been a monastery similar to the one found at the Brough of Deerness, Orkney.

St Olaf's Church, Cullivoe (Category C listed building)- Built in 1832 for the Church of Scotland.

St Ninian's Chapel, Papil- Site of a chapel and burial site, name Papil refers to priests.

Industry

Fishing- There is some small scale fishing in Bluemull Sound with Cullivoe used for landing the catch.

Aquaculture- There are four finfish sites and one shellfish site in the southern half of the sound. A shore base is located at Cullivoe.

Marine Renewables- The first community owned

tidal turbines in the world are located in Bluemull Sound with the first device deployed in 2014 and a further four to be deployed.

Landscape

The landscape of the Bluemull Sound CCA is mainly moorland with a few large lochs found close to the shoreline. To the north of Cullivoe and around Belmont there is some improved land set out in a geometric layout. To the north of the sound along the Unst coast the landscape becomes steeper rising to 68m at the Keen.

The LCTs covering the area are Coastal Edge, Coastal Island, Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast, and Peatland and Moorland.

Geology

The majority of the area is made up of migmatitic rock which is a mixture of a metamorphic and igneous rock.

Geosites

- 16. Lunda Wick- National significance
- 19. Belmont Quarry- Local significance
- 26. Ness of Cullivoe- National significance
- 27. Gutcher- National significance

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1: Developed Voe and Firth- There is one developed voe within the Bluemull CCA; Culli Voe, found in the north, doesn't have any aquaculture sites however, there is a mussel site at the mouth of the voe and pier infrastructure including a small marina.

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth- Snarra Voe on Unst is the only mini voe within the Bluemull CCA and has a

typical form with a sandy area at the head of the voe and is low lying.

CCT 4: Developed Island Sound- The whole of the Bluemull Sound CCa is covered by the Developed Island Sound CCT. There are a variety of piers on both sides of the sound as well as a number of aquaculture sites and marine renewables.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- The dominant CCT of the Bluemull Sound CCa, Low Rocky Shore runs from Burra Ness to Kellister, around Snarra Voe, the Wick of Belmont and from the Geo of Mula to the Holm of Heogland.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are only a few areas of low banks within the Bluemull Sound CCa, Papil Ness, Brei Geo, Hoga Ness and the Head of Mula.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- There is one small stretch of steep banks along the Unst coast from Fogra Dale to Brei Geo.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- The main area of high rock cliffs is found around the Keen to the north of the Bluemull Sound CCa.

CCT 11: Small Harbour- Culli Voe is the only small harbour in the Bluemull Sound CCa offering a variety of services. Some smaller fishing vessels land their catch here.

CCT 12: Large Bay- There are three large bays within the Bluemull Sound CCa:

The Wick of Belmont is the setting for Belmont House and the port for the Unst ferry.

Papil Bay has two small beaches and some small skerries just off shore.

Burra Ness has a stretch of sand but the bay is not very sheltered.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are three small bays in the Bluemull Sound CCa:

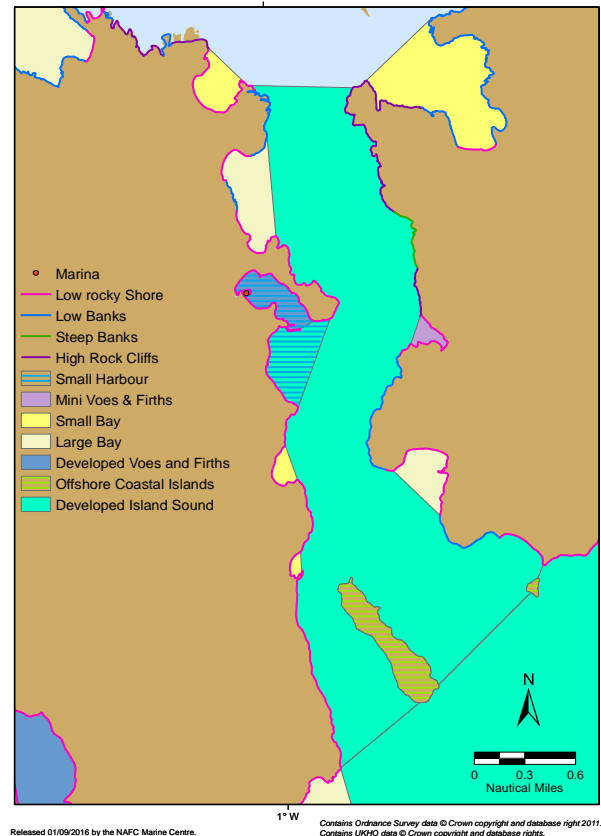
The Wick of North Garth has a small area of shingle and a lagoon behind the ayre.

The Wick of Gutcher is the port for the ferry to and from Unst. There is a shingle ayre with the Loch of Gutcher immediately behind.

The Bay of Brough has a small shingle ayre and is very sheltered.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There is one offshore coastal island within the Bluemull Sound CCa. Linga was inhabited at one time with the remains of a homestead and chapel still visible.

CCT 14a: Tidal Islands- The Holm of Heogland is connected to Unst during low tide. There is a **cairn** and evidence of a settlement on the island.



Experiential

Bluemull Sound is a busy area with a variety of fishing and aquaculture vessels using Culli Voe, the daily ferry running between Unst and Yell and out to Fetlar, and the marine renewable developments. Much of the coast is low lying with cliffs mainly found at the entrances to the sound.

Belmont House has a dominant setting in the Wick of Belmont and there are various remains related to the rich fishing history of the Shetland Islands.

Sensitivities

There is quite a high intensity of marine activity in the Bluemull Sound CCa already and thus the coast has low sensitivity.

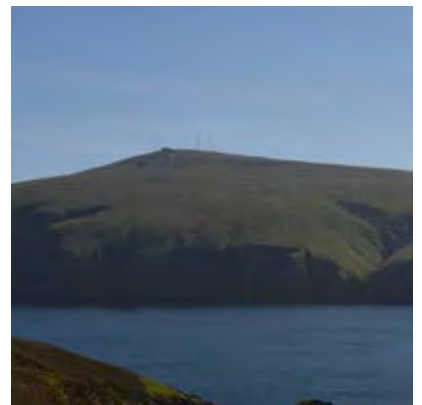
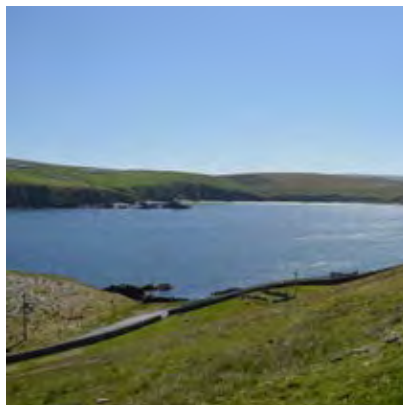
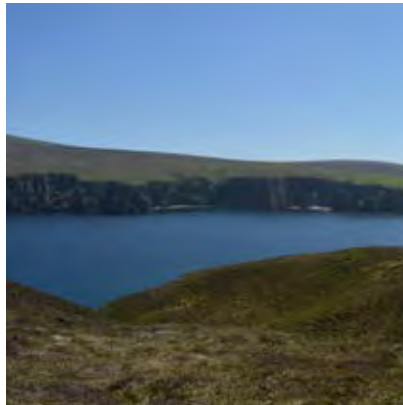
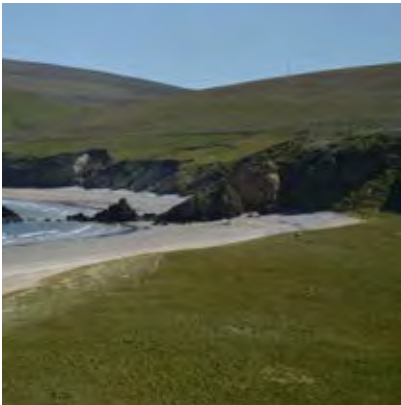
Forces for Change

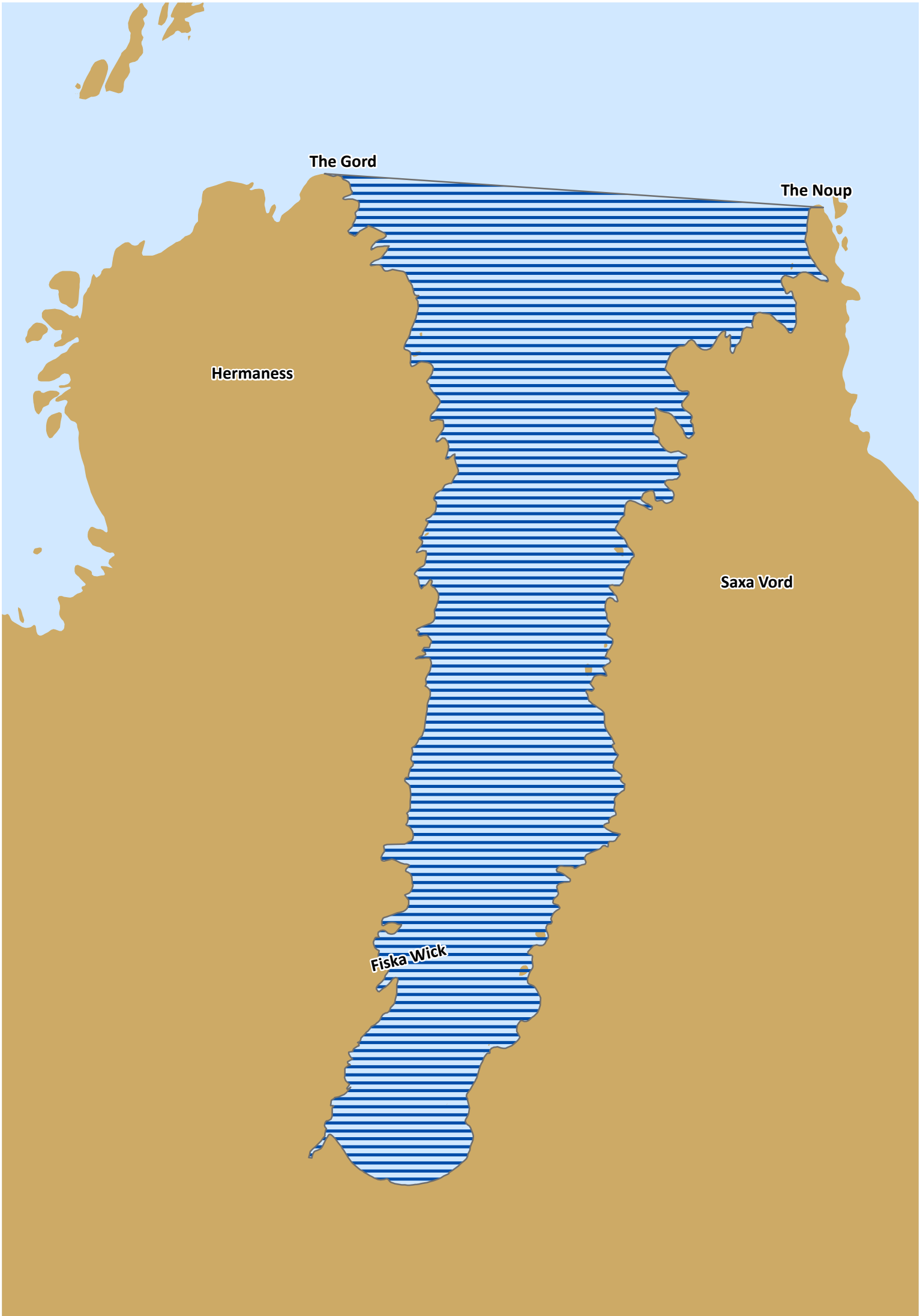
Potential for changes to the marine renewables in the future.



North Isles

13. Burrafirth Coastal Character Area





The Gord

The Noup

Hermaness

Saxa Vord

Fiska Wick



Burrafirth, Unst

Summary Description

The Burrafirth Coastal Character Area (CCa) is a long firth running in a north-south orientation along the north coast of Unst. There are no aquaculture sites within the firth, however it is used for laying creels.

*Although a relatively quiet area today, the shore base for the Muckle Flugga **Lighthouse** was based within the firth with all supplies having to be shipped out to the skerry. The area was also used by Da Haaf fishermen.*

*On the eastern edge of the firth, the former military base on Saxa Vord overlooks the area and was important during the **Second World War**.*

The Hermaness National Nature Reserve (NNR) sits along the western edge of the firth. The coast is fairly steep in places.

Key Characteristics

- Long, wide firth
- Steep cliffs especially towards the mouth of the firth
- Military base at Saxa Vord
- Fine sandy beach at the head of the firth



Muckle Flugga Shore Station

Historic Context

Around the head of the firth are remains of various farmsteads and **townships** with the land being cultivated for 1000s of years. In more recent history, along the west coast of the firth there is the shore station for the Muckle Flugga **Lighthouse**. On top of Saxa Vord there was a RAF base used during **World War II**.

Historic Features

Muckle Flugga Shore Station (Category C listed building)- Built in the 1850's to serve the Muckle Flugga **Lighthouse**, and was used until the light was automated in 1995. A slipway was built at a later date displacing the fishermen's **drying beach**.

Saxa Vord- A radar dome sat on top of Saxa Vord hill and was used to protect Britain during **World War II**. It has since been removed, however the other buildings are a popular destination for visitors.

Industry

Tourism- Burrafirth is a popular area with the car parking facilities for Hermaness National Nature Reserve located at the head of the firth. The former shore station for the Muckle Flugga **Lighthouse** is also an interesting building.

Fishing- There are low levels of fishing at the mouth of the firth and some creels for crabs and lobsters are set within the firth.

Landscape

The landscape of the Burrafirth CCa is very steep with development and infrastructure restricted to the head of the firth.

The land cover is mainly peatland and moorland with a small area of improved land at the head of the firth. Saxa Vord is the highest point at 284m and this is mirrored by Hermaness Hill on the other side of the

firth at 200m. Burrafirth is included in the Shetland National Scenic Area and is part of a SPA for birds.

There are two LCTs covering Burrafirth. Coastal Edge is found at the mouth of the firth and the rest is Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds. Directly behind the narrow coastal fringe is Major Uplands.

Geology

Along the east coast of the firth is **pelite** and along the west coast is **migmatitic**. The two rock types are split by a **fault line**.

Geosites

There are no Geosites within the Burrafirth CCa.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe and Firth- The whole of the Burrafirth CCa is covered by the Undeveloped Voe and Firth CCT. There is no aquaculture or any other marine development within the firth and onshore development is restricted to the head of the firth.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- There is a small area of low rocky shore around the head of the firth with a sandy ayre.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- One of the most common CCTs in the Burrafirth CCa, Steep Banks, run from The Fidd down to Cleva Ness on the west coast of the firth and from Stoots Geo to Norwick Hevda on the east coast of the firth. There is no development along either side of the firth.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- Can be found at the mouth of the firth from Norwick Hevda to The Noup on the east side and The Fidd to The Gord on the west side.

Experiential

Burrafirth is a secluded area with no major developments along the coastline due to its steep nature. The head of the firth is sheltered except during a northerly wind and the view out of the firth is spectacular.

Saxa Vord radar station is a focal point along the east coast of the firth and the shore station for the Muckle Flugga Lighthouse is an interesting piece of history.

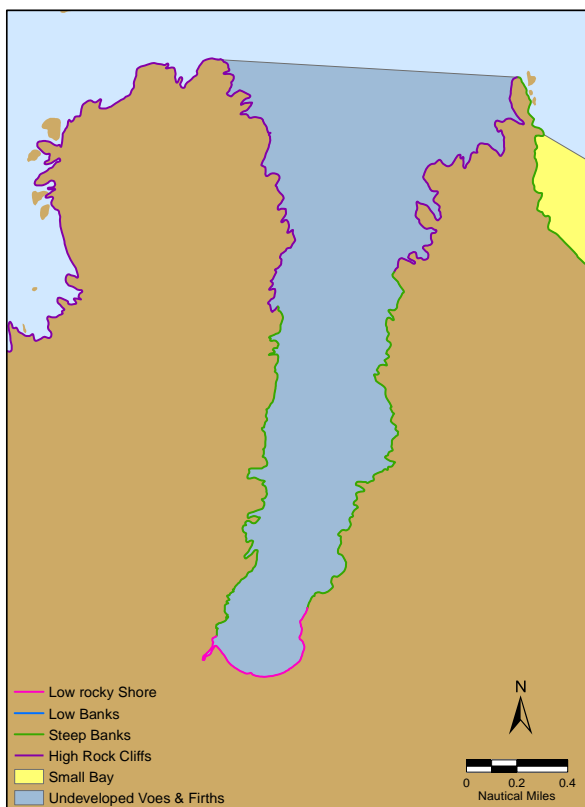
The dramatic cliffscape found at the mouth of the firth is awe inspiring, particularly around Hermaness.

Sensitivities

The lack of development within the Burrafirth CCa on and offshore make it highly sensitive to any development. The scenery is highly valued for its unmanaged appearance and this should be retained.

Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change.



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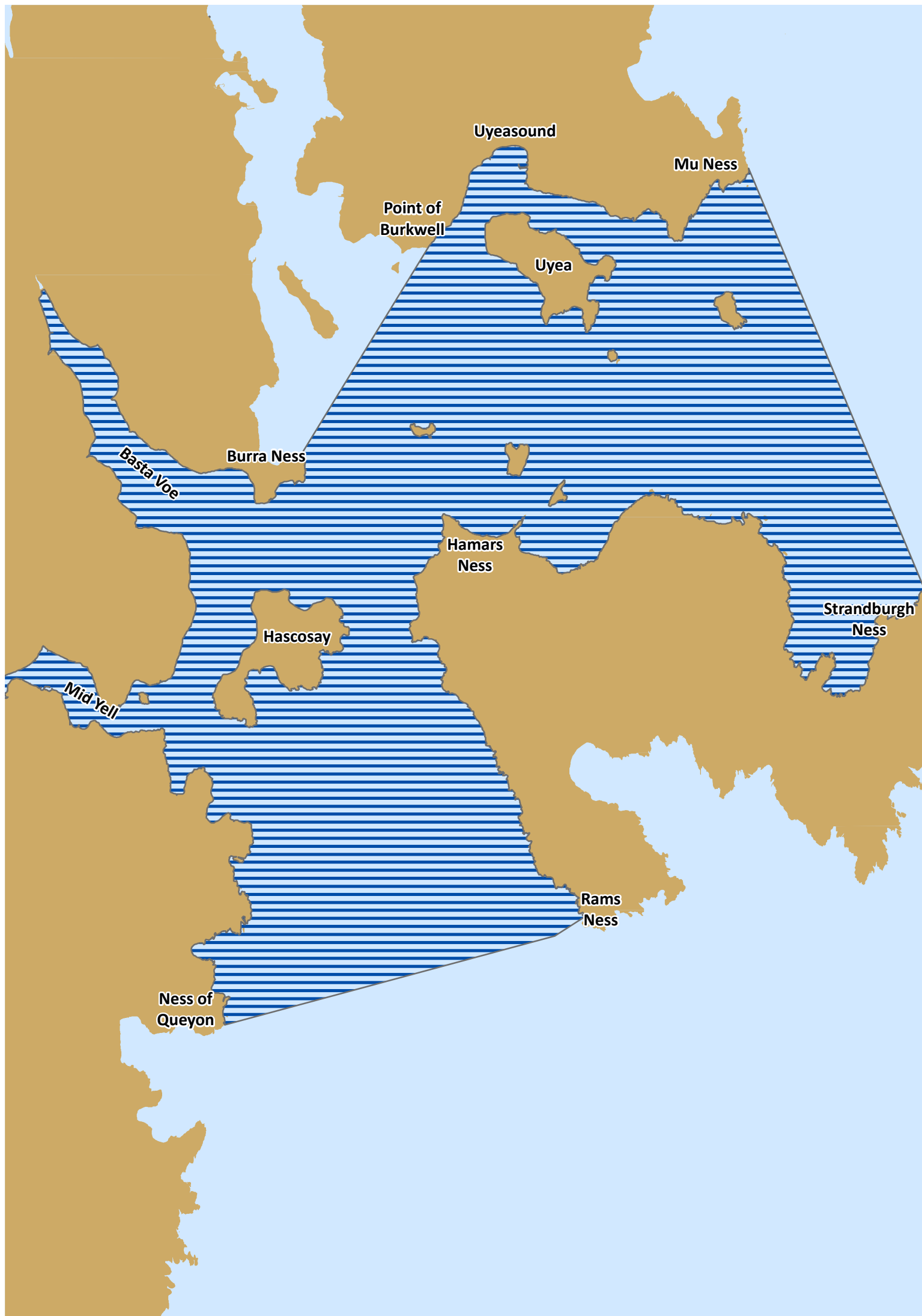
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North Isles

14. Colgrave Sound Coastal Character Area





Uyeasound

Mu Ness

Point of
Burkwell

Uyea

Burra Ness

Basta Voe

Hamars
Ness

Hascosay

Strandburgh
Ness

Mid-Yell

Rams
Ness

Ness of
Queyon



Vatsetter, Yell

Summary Description

The Colgrave Sound Coastal Character Area (CCa) covers the area of water that sits between Yell, Unst and Fetlar. It runs from the Ness of Queyon up to the coast of Yell to Burra Ness; across to the Point of Burkwell, Unst; along the coast to Mu Ness; across to Strandburgh Ness, Fetlar; along the coast to Rams Ness and back across to the Ness of Queyon.

There are a large number of aquaculture sites within the area making it busy for shipping, and various types of fishing occur. The landscape around Colgrave CCa varies with a range of beaches, cliffs and low rocky shore.

Key Characteristics

- *Busy aquaculture area*
- *Offshore islands*
- *Nucleated settlements at the head of voes and wicks*



Uyeasound, Unst

Historic Context

Colgrave Sound CCa has been a busy and productive area for many years with a large amount of **laird** and merchant houses built around the beginning of the 19th century due to the prosperous fishing in the area.

It has been well defended in the past with five **broch** sites around the sound and also a large number of **cairns**, field systems and **horizontal mills**.

The **Vikings** also used this area extensively, founding a settlement in Reydarfjordur which would later be known as Mid Yell.

Historic Features

Brochs

Stoal (Scheduled Monument)- Remains on the top of the cliffs, eroded badly.

Sna Broch, Fetlar (Scheduled Monument)- Under 4m in diameter and was heavily defended by a series of ditches and ramparts.

Brough Lodge (Scheduled Monument)- A possible broch site on top of a hill, now covered by a tower with no remains to be seen.

Burra Ness (Scheduled Monument)- Built on flat ground on the ness, the broch is just over 18m in diameter.

Uyeasound- Site of a possible broch, now covered by a modern pier.

Monasteries- On Fetlar there are two possible monastic sites.

Strandibrough- Consisting of two different sites on stacks off the shore of Fetlar.

The Clett- A small settlement found on top of a secluded stack, thought to be similar to the Kame of Isbister.

Mid Yell- The largest settlement in Yell, Mid Yell was founded by **Vikings** around 800 AD. It has been an important area for fishing for 100s of years with

a number of prominent merchant houses found overlooking the voe.

Uyeasound- A small village in Unst, Uyeasound was a base for the **Hanseatic League** with Greenwell's **Booth** (Category C listed) used for trading in the 1700's. It was also a port of call for a steamer service from Lerwick until 1946.

There were numerous **booths** around Colgrave Sound such as Greenwell's Booth and Mid Yell, which have already been mentioned, three in Fetlar and one in Basta Voe.

Lairds Houses

Brough Lodge (Category A listed and Garden and Designed Landscape designation)- Built circa 1820 for Arthur Nicolson, Brough Lodge, the surrounding buildings and landscape are an unusual layout for Shetland creating a distinct landmark.

Uyea Haa (Category C listed)- Built in 1818 with later additions, now a ruin.

Haa of Dalsetter (Category C listed)- Early 19th century **haa** making a striking feature at the head of Basta Voe.

Haa of Gardie (Category C listed)- Early 19th century **haa** in Mid Yell, once home to Laurence Williamson.

Industry

Aquaculture- Colgrave is a very busy area for aquaculture with 26 aquaculture sites in the Colgrave Sound CCa. Seventeen are finfish sites and the remaining nine are shellfish sites.

Fishing- There is a variety of fishing conducted in the Colgrave Sound CCa including scallops, crabs, lobsters and buckies. Low levels of demersal fishing occurs in the CCa and there are three SSMO closed areas.

Sellafirth Business Park- Located in Basta Voe, the business park has a range of creative industries such as GlobalYell and the Shetland Gallery.

Tourism- There are a number of tourist attractions

within the Colgrave Sound CCa including but not limited to Bayanne House, Mid Yell, Uyeasound and Brough Lodge.

Landscape

The landscape of the Colgrave Sound CCa is pretty similar across the whole CCa. The landscape gently slopes down to the coast with the south coast of Unst being the flattest. There are small pockets of improved land found mainly around the wicks and voes where **crofting townships** have been established for 100s of years.

Part of Burra Ness is managed by RSPB Scotland. Various species of birds nest in the hill and storm petrels use a ruined **broch** during the summer months.

The isle of Hascosay has an SSSI and SAC designation with a blanket bog habitat that has remained largely undisturbed.

The area of Fetlar included in the Colgrave Sound CCa is mainly heather moorland with Vord Hill being a dominant landscape feature.

Colgrave Sound CCa is covered by four LCTs. Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds covers a large amount of the CCa including Basta Voe, Mid Yell, Aywick and Uyeasound. This is interspersed by areas of Peatland and Moorland which also backs much of the coastal fringe. There are three small areas of Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast found both sides of Hamars Ness and the south east corner of the island of Uyea. Finally there are three stretches of Coastal Edge, between Mid Yell and Aywick, at the Ness of Ramnageo and from the Wick of Gruting to Tresta Ness.

Geology

The main underlying geology is **migmatitic**. There is a small area of **gneiss** around Vatsetter and a **granite** rock at Basta. Areas of **ophiolite** can be found around Uyeasound, the island of Uyea and areas of Fetlar. The isle of Hascosay has three bands; **migmatitic** on the east and west of the isle and **mylonite**.

Geosites

- 20. Tressa Ness-Colbinstoft- International significance
- 21. Virva- International significance
- 31. Hascosay- National significance

98. Hamars Ness Quarry- tbc.

Landscape Features

Vord Hill- The highest point on Fetlar at 158m, Vord Hill is a dominant feature within the Colgrave Sound CCa offering panoramic views of the area and also being a landmark from other areas in the CCa.

Coastal Character Types and Features Physical

CCT 1: Developed Voe and Firth- There are two developed voes within the Colgrave Sound CCa; Basta Voe and Mid Yell. Both have a number of aquaculture sites within the voe and associated onshore development however, Mid Yell is more densely populated.

CCT 4: Developed Island Sound- There are three developed island sounds, two around the island of Uyea; Uyea Sound and Skuda Sound which both have aquaculture development, and the entire CCa is covered by the Developed Island Sound CCT as well.

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound- There are two undeveloped island sounds around Hascosay; South Sound and Hascosay Sound. Although there are some aquaculture sites in the area, Hascosay has been uninhabited since the 1800s and there is very little onshore development on the Yell coast across the sounds either.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Low Rocky Shore is one of the dominant CCTs of the Colgrave Sound CCa running from Burra Ness round the Head of Hevdagarth, round Mid Yell to Salt Wick (North), Aywick to Salt Wick (South) and the Point of Burkwell into Uyeasound. There are small areas of sand and shingle intermingled with the low rocky shore.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are a number of areas of low banks within the Colgrave Sound CCa. Ayre of Birrier, Mouth of Mid Yell, Ore Wick, Scolla Wick and Dale of Oddsta.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- There are steep banks from Basta to the Head of Hevdagarth, Hill of Lussetter, and Tressa Ness to Urie Ness.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- The largest stretch of cliffs in the Colgrave Sound CCa can be found in Fetlar running from Tressa Ness round to the Wick of Gruting and from Corbie Head to the Noust of Helliersness. There are other small areas found

throughout the CCa between Mid Yell and Aywick and at the Ness of Ramnageo.

CCT 11: Small Harbour- Mid Yell and Uyea Sound has a small harbour with pier infrastructure.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are 10 small bays in the Colgrave Sound CCa. Salt Wick (South) has a small sandy ayre, Ay Wick is a rocky beach, Salt Wick (North) is a larger bay with a shingle ayre, the Wick of Vatsetter has a deep sandy beach and is backed by a loch, Kay Wick is a small bay with a shingle beach, Housa Wick has a shingle ayre, Djuba Wick is also shingle, Scolla Wick is a rocky wick, the Wick of Gruting has a couple of small sand ayres but is mainly cliffs, and the Sands of Sands is a small sandy bay below Brough Lodge.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are eight offshore coastal islands: Uyea, Hascosay, Kay Holm, Haaf Gruney, Wedder Holm, Sound Gruney, Urie Lingey, and Daaey. There are also a number of small skerries and holms. None of the islands are currently inhabited but there are remains of settlements found on Hascosay and Uyea.

settlements with various interesting historic features relating to Shetland's rich maritime past.

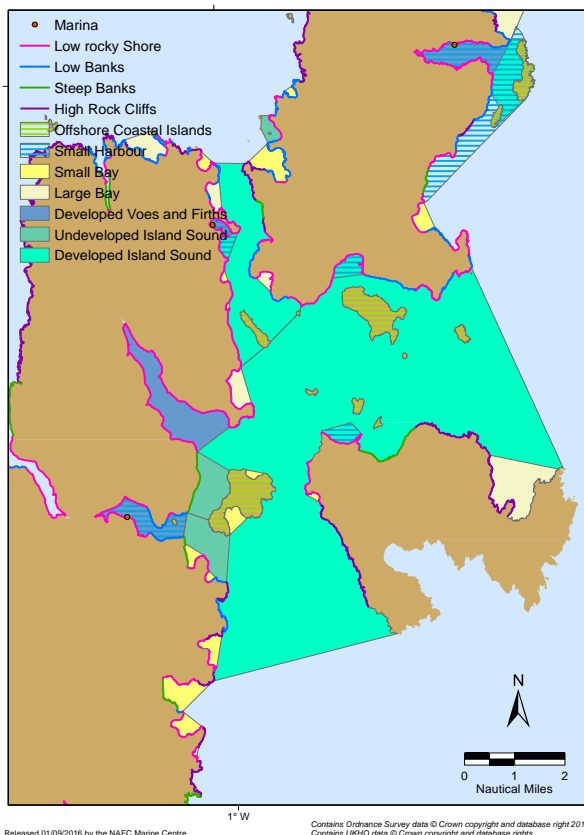
There are a variety of islands within the Colgrave Sound CCa offering interest from much of the coast. Brough Lodge on Fetlar offers a particularly distinctive landmark and is currently being renovated.

Sensitivities

There are a large number of aquaculture sites within the Colgrave Sound CCa with the area being less sensitive to offshore development. However, onshore development is mainly restricted to nucleated settlements separated by remote undeveloped coast making it sensitive to development.

Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change.



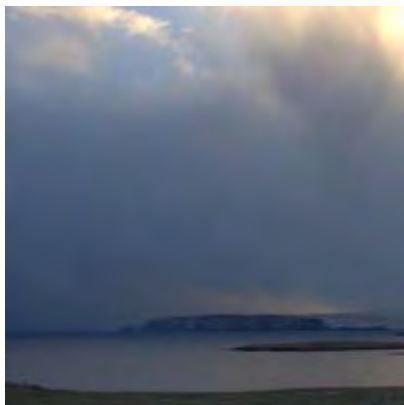
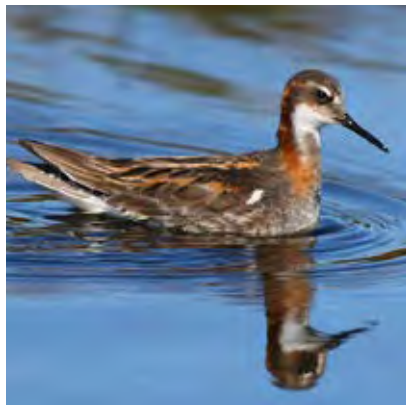
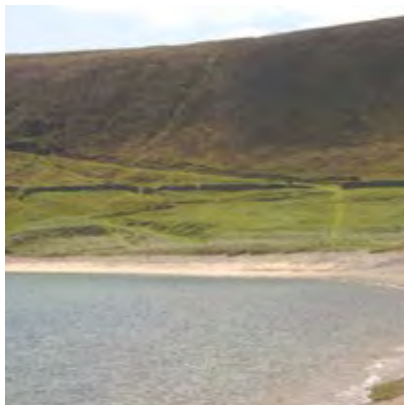
Experiential

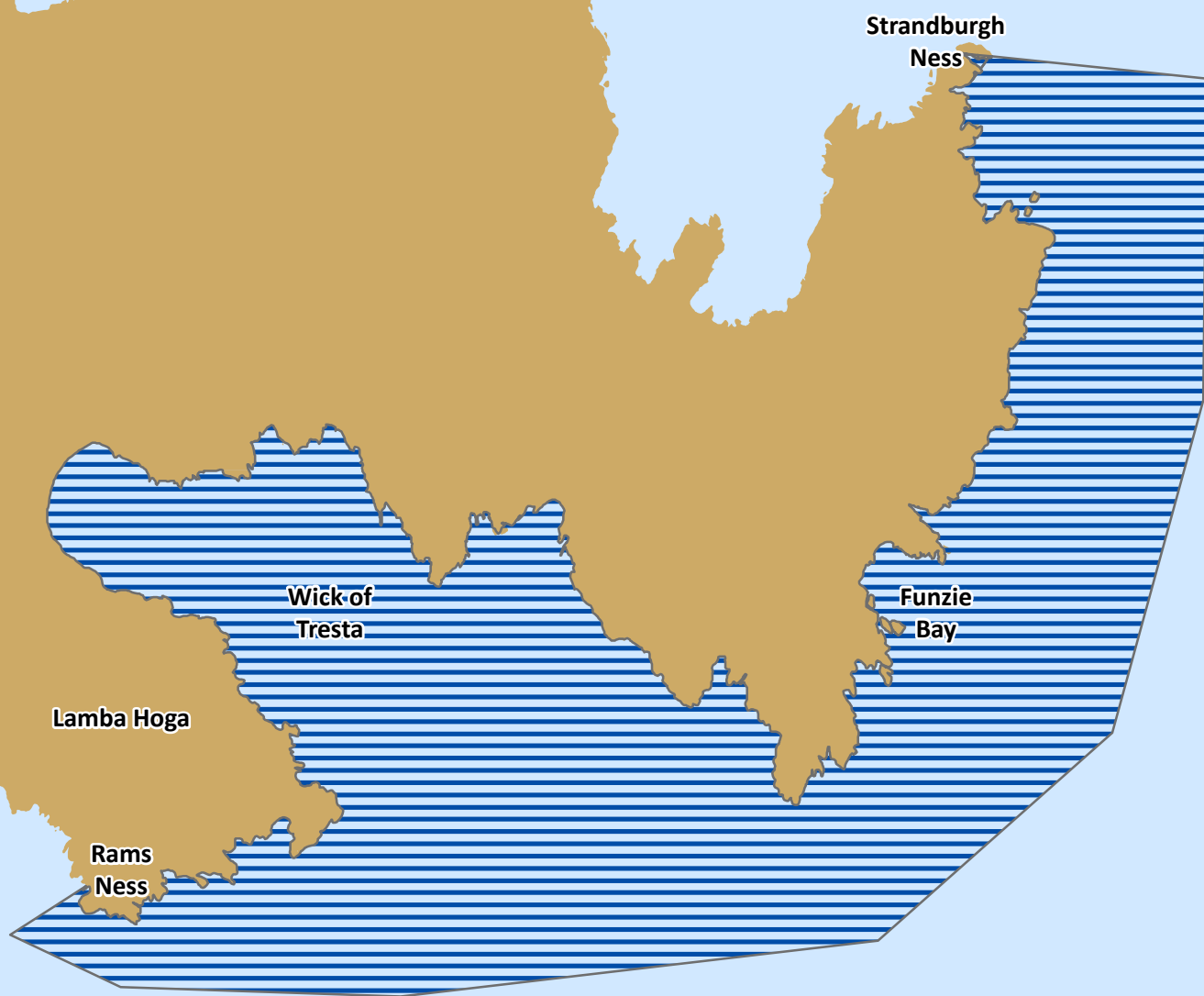
Most of the Colgrave Sound CCa is quite low lying with stretches of cliffs mainly confined to Fetlar. Basta Voe, Mid Yell and Uyeasound are picturesque



North Isles

15. East Fetlar Coastal Character Area





Strandburgh
Ness

Wick of
Tresta

Lamba Hoga

Rams
Ness

Funzie
Bay



Summary Description

The East Fetlar Coastal Character Area (CCA) is along the east coast of Fetlar, one of the north isles in Shetland. It runs from Strandburgh Ness round to Rams Ness. There are around 60 residents in Fetlar and it has been inhabited since prehistoric times with a variety of archaeological remains.

The predominant landcover is moorland even though the island is quite fertile and known as the 'Garden of Shetland'. Much of the improved land is found around Tresta and Funzie.

Key Characteristics

- *Large beaches*
- *Historic sites of importance*
- *Low levels of development*



Historic Context

Fetlar has been occupied since prehistoric times with archaeological sites across most periods. It was an important area for the Viking invasion and settlement and was one of the few places in Shetland to suffer significantly from the Highland Clearances in the late 19th century.

Historic Features

Steatite Workings: Steatite or Soapstone was used from the Neolithic period but was at its height during the Norse period. Its soft nature means it can be easily carved and was used to create bowls, fishing weights, line sinkers, spindle whorls and beads. There are two steatite quarries in Fetlar at Clemmil Geo and Strandburgh Ness.

Leagarth (Category C Listed): Leagarth House was built in 1901 for Sir William Watson Cheyne, a famous surgeon who was instrumental in the development of antiseptic surgery. The house sits right above the shore and has a number of Victorian features including a large lean to glass house that was added at a later date.

Giant's Grave: There are different stories around the Giant's Grave. Some say it was the burial place for a giant who had his boat laid over the top of him and his money under his head. Another story is that a Viking man was washed ashore in a storm and given a boat burial after he died. Time Team excavated the site in 2002 and found a large amount of iron nails but no skeletal remains. A brooch has also been found at the site suggesting it might have been a woman that was buried.

Fetlar Church and War Memorial: The church sits just about the Tresta beach and was built in 1790 although there are remains of another chapel at the opposite end of the beach. The manse next door dates from 1756. There is also a memorial for men from Fetlar killed in the first world war.

Industry

Crofting: Crofting is probably the main occupation for many of Fetlar's residents, but it is usually supplemented with other incomes. There are cattle, sheep and pigs on the island as well as horses and poultry.

Tourism: Fetlar is a popular tourist destination for Shetlanders and visitors to the isles. With an abundance of wildflowers, wildlife, coastal scenery and archaeological sites. The island has a four star interpretative centre full of information about the island.

Landscape

The landscape of the East Fetlar CCa is a mixture of coastal pasture and moorland. Around the bays and in the valleys the land is fertile and used for crofting. Further inland and along the higher cliffs the landscape is moorland and used for rough grazing.

Most of the CCa is covered by a SPA for which overlaps three SSSI's on the island; North Fetlar, Lamb Hoga and Trona Mires. The SPA also extends 2km out to sea. There is a SAC for Base-rich fens and Dry Heaths too. At the Mires of Funzie there is a RSPB reserve.

There are three LCTs across the East Fetlar CCa. The largest area is Peatland and Moorland with stretches of coastal edge and a small area of Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds around Tresta and Houbie

Geology

The geology of Fetlar is roughly divided in two parts with metamorphic rock to the west of the isle and serpentine and greenstone to the east.

Geosites

Bay of Funzie

Geo of Litlaland



© Mike Pennington

Coastal Character Types

Physical

CCT 8 Exposed Coast: Steep Banks – There is a stretch of steep banks from the Wick of Aith round to the Tresta Beach.

CCT 9 Exposed Coast: High Cliffs – High Cliffs is the most common CCT of the East Fetlar CCA running from Strandburgh Ness to Funzie Bay, Funzie Ness to Wick of Aith, the south end of Tresta Beach round to Rams Ness.

CCT 12 Large Bay – There is one large bay at Tresta which is an award winning sandy beach.

CCT 12a Small Bay – There are two small bays in the East Fetlar CCA, Funzie Bay and the Wick of Aith. Both have rocky beaches.

Experiential

The East Fetlar CCA mainly consists of high cliffs offering panoramic views out to sea and south to Whalsay and Out Skerries. The Tresta Beach is a highlight of the area with a large sandy beach and great views out to sea.

There are low levels of development in the area and a variety of protections for wildlife and habitats.

Sensitivities

Because of the low levels of development in the area, any large scale industrial expansion could have potentially damaging effects on the scenic qualities of the area.

Forces for Change

No forces for change currently.



Released: 2015/2021 by the NERC Marine Centre

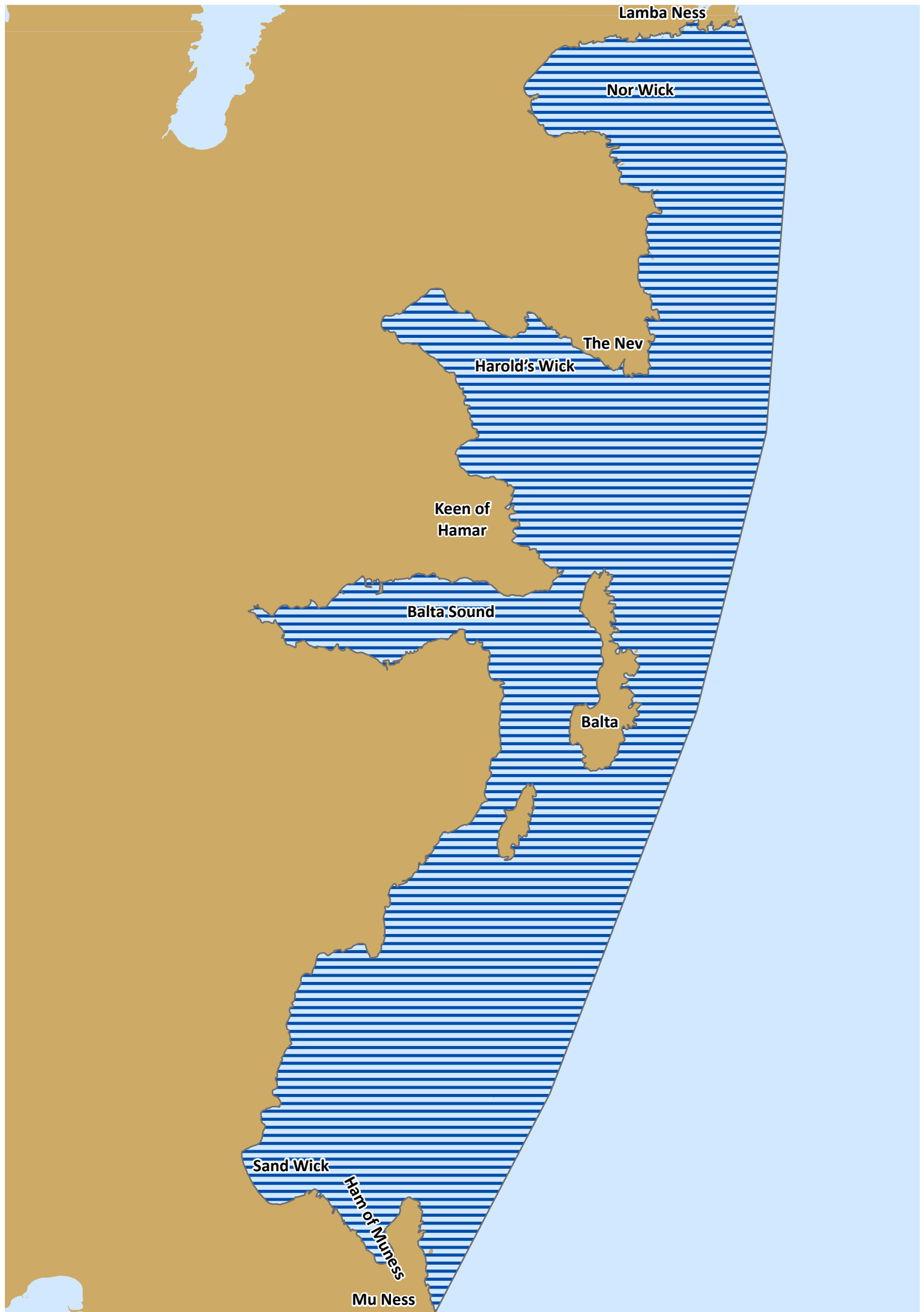
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North Isles

16. East Unst Coastal Character Area





Lamba Ness

Nor Wick

The Nev

Harold's Wick

Keen of
Hamar

Balta Sound

Balta

Sand Wick

Ham of Muress

Mu Ness



Baltasound Marina, Unst

Summary Description

The East Unst Coastal Character Area (CCa) is in the most northerly island of the Shetland archipelago. It runs from Lamba Ness in the north to Mu Ness in the south. There is some aquaculture in the area confined to Basta Voe. It is also a busy fishing and shipping area in general.

The landscape is a largely moorland ending in cliffs and steep banks along the coast. There are a few areas of special interest such as the Keen of Hamar.

Key Characteristics

- Large sandy bays
- Historic landscapes such as Sand Wick
- Busy shipping area
- Low levels of aquaculture



Replica longhouse and Gokstad ship

Historic Context

The East Unst coast has been a productive area in the past with a range of quarries, haaf and herring bases and an array of mills.

It was an important area during both world wars with bases at Lamba Ness and in Balta Sound.

Historic Features

Balta Sound- Balta Sound has been important historically being the biggest herring fishing port in Shetland and also being a seaplane base in **World War I**.

Brochs

Geo of the Broch (*Scheduled monument*)- Ruined broch around 15m in diameter on isle of Balta off the coast of Unst.

There are 60 excavated Norse farmsteads in Unst with more yet to be discovered. The graveyard at Norwick has a mound which is thought to be have been a Norse chapel and other remains from the Viking and Iron Age were found when the graveyard was extended. At Harold's Wick there is a replica of a **Gokstad ship** and a **longhouse**, letting people get a feel for **Viking** life. At Hamar there are the remains of one of the best preserved **longhouses** in Scotland and it is a **scheduled monument**. In Sandwick there are various remains of Viking settlements and farms and the remarkable remains of a late Norse house on the beach. There are also remains of a Viking longhouse and chapel at Framgord.

Cairns

Ham Booth- Possible **cairn** site. Has been heavily robbed.

Otterhad Geo- **Heel shaped cairn**.

The Givv, Huney- Possible **chambered cairn**.

Quarries- There are a large number of quarries in the East Unst CCA with some dating back to the **Viking** period. **Steatite** or Soapstone was used extensively by the Norse for making various implements. **Chromate**, a salt used as part of metal coating processes was

also quarried, and finally **serpentine** was quarried in this area.

Horse Mill (*Category B listed building*)- Sitting above the coast at Hagdale is a horse mill where horses were yoked in to grind the **chromate** that was quarried in the area.

Buness House (*Category B listed building*)- A late 17th century house with additions added in the 1800s and 1900s. Home of **Thomas Edmundston**.

Muness Castle- A dominating feature of the south east coast of Unst, the castle was built in 1598 by Laurence Bruce.

Industry

Fishing- **Demersal** fishing, scalloping and creeling are undertaken along the East Unst CCA, mainly conducted by small inshore boats.

Aquaculture- Restricted to Balta Sound, there are five aquaculture sites with three finfish and two shellfish. The rest of the east coast of Unst is too exposed and shallow to accommodate aquaculture.

Tourism- There are many tourist attractions along the east coast of Unst including, but not limited to, Unst Boat Haven, Norwick Beach, Keen of Hamar and Muness Castle.

Landscape

The landscape of the East Unst CCA is a mixture of coastal pasture and moorland. Around each wick and voe the land has been improved over the years and split into fields creating a patchwork over the island. The headlands and hills immediately behind the coast consist of moorland and lochs.

The Keen of Hamar is an SSSI along with Norwick Beach, Colvadale, Balta, Framgord and Ham Ness.

There are three LCTs across the East Unst CCA. Peatland and Moorland can be found at the Ward of Clugan, Keen of Hamar, Muckle Heog and the Hill

of Clibberswick. The main LCT is Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds which runs around Norwick, Harold's Wick, Balta Sound and along the coast from Huney to Sand Wick.

The Isle of Balta is covered by the Farmed and Settled Lowlands and Coast LCT although it is no longer inhabited. Finally areas of Coastal Edge can be found at Ham Ness, Hill of Clibberswick and Lamba Ness.

Geology

The main underlying geology of the East Unst CCa is **Ophiolite** which is an igneous rock largely composed of serpentine. It can be found from Clibberswick to Sandwick including the isle of Balta and Ham Ness. The rest of the CCa consists of **pelite**, a metamorphosed mudstone.

Geosites

3. Norwick- International significance
6. Clibberswick & Cross Geo- tbc.
7. The Punds- Wick of Hagdale- International significance
9. Wick of Hagdale- International significance
11. Hagdale Chromite Quarry and Horse Mill- International significance
12. Keen of Hamar- International significance
13. Skeo Taing- Clugan- International significance
14. Balta Island- National significance
17. Qui Ness- Punds Stack- International significance
18. Ham Ness- International significance

Landscape Features

Keen of Hamar- The Keen of Hamar is a SSSI and although it appears to be a barren landscape likened to the moon, is actually covered in rare wildflowers. One of the largest expanse of **serpentine** debris in Europe, the Keen of Hamar is thought to be what most of northern Europe looked like after the last Ice Age.

Coastal Character Types and Features

CCT 1: Developed Voe and Firth- There is one developed voe and firth at Balta Sound. Although it doesn't have the steep sides, it is a long, relatively narrow stretch of water with onshore development stretching down both sides of the voe and offshore development contained within the voe.

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth- There is one mini voe; the Ham of Muness with gradually sloping sides but no onshore or offshore development.

CCT 4: Developed Island Sound- Balta Sound sits

between Unst and the island of Balta. Although Balta is no longer inhabited, there is aquaculture sites in the area.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Mainly confined to the wicks; Norwick, Harold's Wick, Wick of Hagdale, Swina Ness, Balta Sound, Sand Wick and Ham Ness.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There is one small stretch of Low Banks on the east coast of the Horse of Burravoe.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- There are some steep banks found around the Hill of Clibberswick.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- Can be found around the north coast of Norwick, Keen of Hamar and from the Houll Stacks down to Rumble Geo.

CCT 11: Small Harbour- Balta Sound is a small harbour which is sheltered by Balta Isle.

CCT 11a: Marina- There is a small marina in Balta Sound which has no room for visiting craft.

CCT 12: Large Bay- There is one large bay within the character area; Norwick which is a white sandy beach.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are five small bays. Sand Wick has a white sandy beach and the rest the Wick of Smirgirt, Burga Wick, Wick of Hagdale and Girr Wick have no beaches.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are two islands; Balta and Huney. Neither of them are inhabited, however Balta was important during the herring fishing era with stations on the island.

Experiential

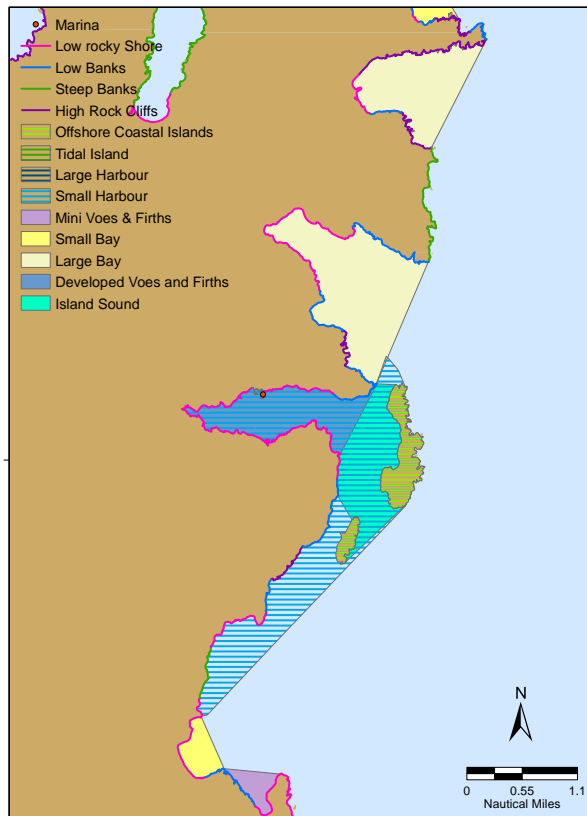
The East Unst CCa is an interesting area with a rich history. To the north, the attractive Norwick beach is a popular area in summer. Various tourist attractions can be found around Haroldswick and Baltasound. The Keen of Hamar has an almost other worldly feel, being compared to a lunar landscape. Sand Wick is another appealing area with a large sandy beach and Muness Castle has a commanding view over the Ham of Muness.

Sensitivities

Much of the East Unst CCa is devoid of modern development and many areas are important internationally, therefore the coast is highly sensitive to new development.

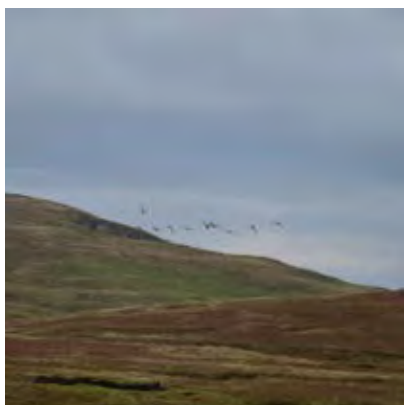
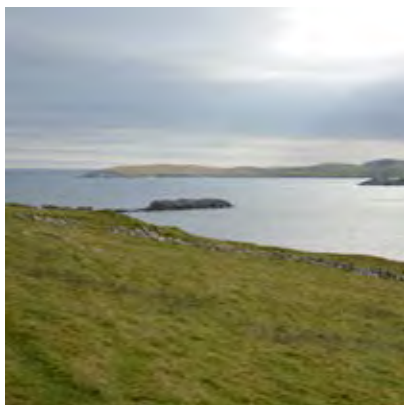
Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change.



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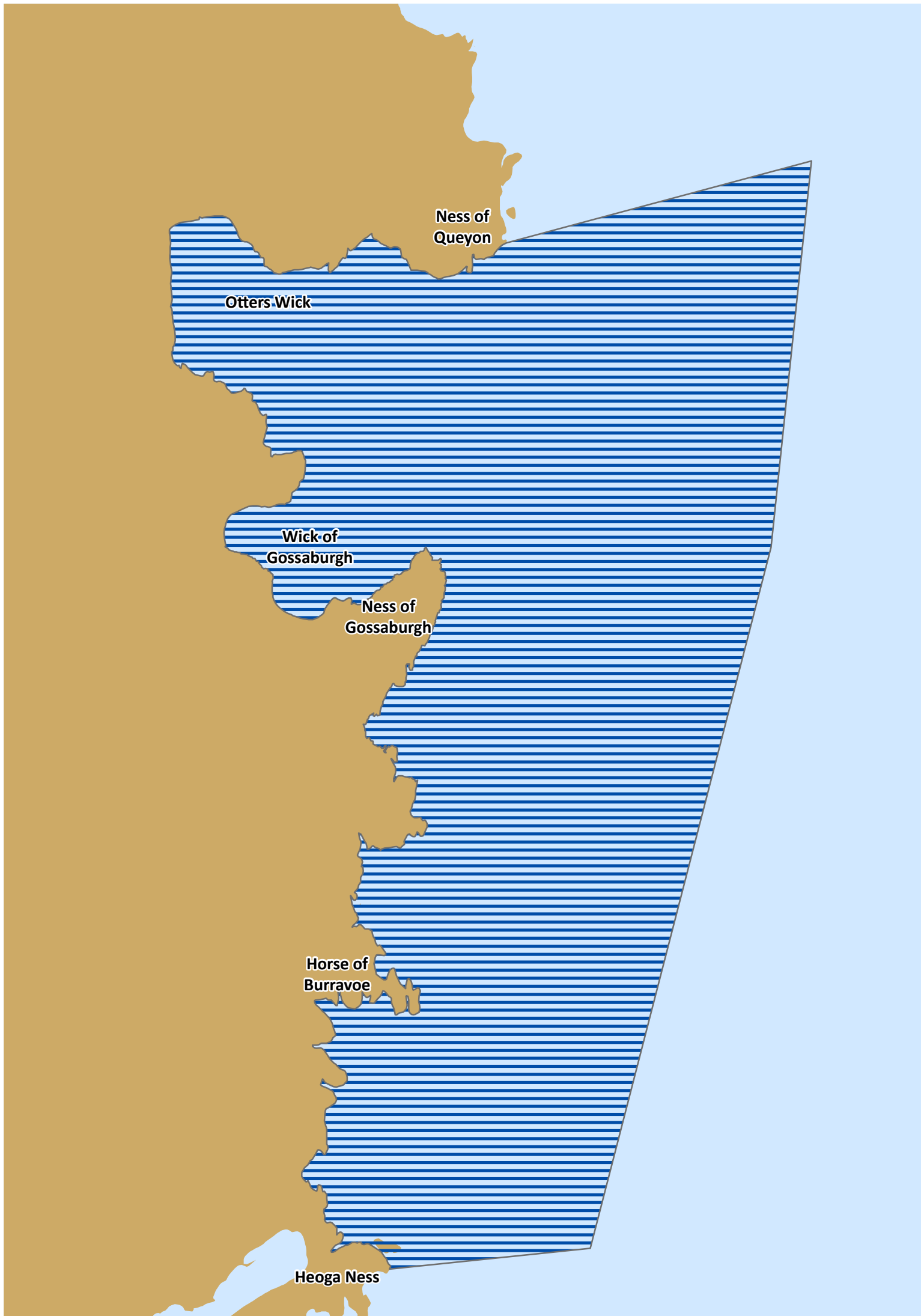
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North Isles

17. East Yell Coastal Character Area





Ness of
Queyon

Otters Wick

Wick of
Gossaburgh

Ness of
Gossaburgh

Horse of
Burra

Heoga Ness



Horse of Burravoe from Heoga Ness

Summary Description

The East Yell Coastal Character Area (CCa) runs from the Ness of Queyon down to Heoga Ness along the Eastern coast of Yell, an island in the north of Shetland.

There are no aquaculture sites within the CCa and low levels of onshore development.

In general, the landscape slopes down towards the coastline with steep hills immediately behind.

Key Characteristics

- *Coastal strip backed by hills*
- *Panoramic views to Fetlar*
- *Low development levels*



The White Wife

Historic Context

Mainly a **crofting** area, East Yell has seen some excitement in the past with a number of ship wrecks occurring in the area. There are two **Haas** in close proximity around the Wick of Gossabrough, one was also used as a shop.

Historic Features

Ness of Gossabrough Broch (**Scheduled Monument**)- Roughly 17m in diameter, nearly destroyed.

Gossabrough Haa- With a commanding view over the Wick of Gossabrough, the Gossabrough **Haa** is now in a ruinous state. Was at one time used as a shop.

The White Wife- In 1924 the German ship Bohus was shipwrecked off of Yell due to a navigation error. Of the 39 crew, only 4 drowned due to the quick reaction from the men of Yell. The white wife was the ships figure head erected as a memorial.

Industry

Fishing- There is low fishing activity in this area with most occurring off the coast.

Landscape

The landscape of the East Yell CCA mainly consists of peat moorland with small pockets of improved land found around Otters Wick and Gossabrough. Immediately behind the coastal fringe, the landscape becomes quite steep.

The East Yell CCA is covered by three LCTs. Small areas of Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds can be found at Otters Wick and Gossabrough. This is interspersed by areas of Peatland and Moorland which also backs much of the coastal fringe. Finally, there are two stretches of Coastal Edge around the Ness of Queyon and from the Horse of Burravoe down to Heoga Ness.

Geology

The main underlying geology is **migmatitic** rock which is a mixture of **metamorphic** and igneous rock.

Geosites

There are no Geosites within the East Yell CCA.

Coastal Character Types and Features Physical

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Low Rocky Shore is one of the dominant CCTs in the East Yell CCA, running from the Saddle of Swarister to the Sullock, and around North Taing at Heoga Ness.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- There are two areas of steep banks, the west coast of Otters Wick and from the Horse of Burravoe to Ladies Hole.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- There are three areas of high rock cliffs in the East Yell CCA; around the Ness of Queyon, from the Sullock to Muckle Head, and the Point of White Hill to Ladies Hole. None of the cliffs are over 100m high.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are three small bays in the East Yell CCA; the Bay of Whinnifirt is a small rocky beach; the Wick of Gossabrough has two sandy beaches separated by an area of rocky shore, and finally, Otters Wick has a small sandy beach to the north and is surrounded by steep banks.

Experiential

The East Yell CCA is not particularly steep with only small areas of cliffs and steep banks. Settlements are confined to Otterswick and Gossabrough and the area is fairly remote coastline with extensive views across to Fetlar.

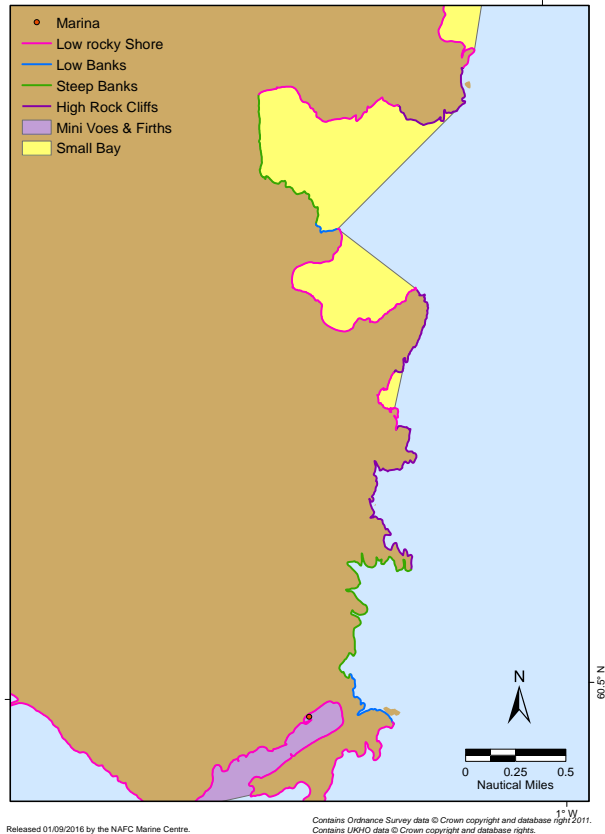
The White Wife is an important feature of the area and a significant memorial.

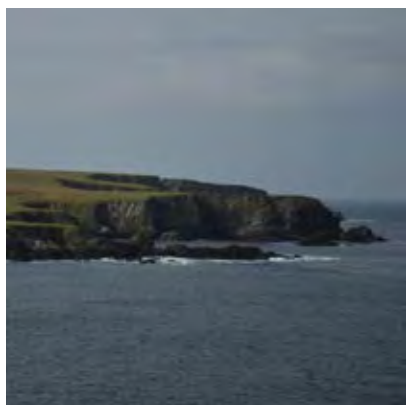
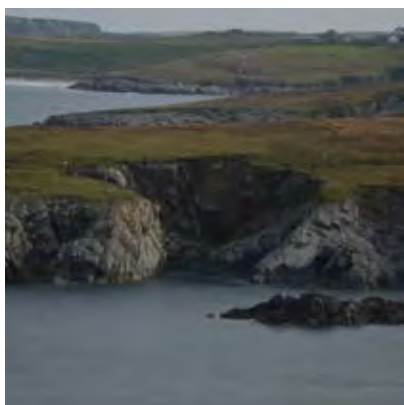
Sensitivities

Due to the remote and rural nature of the East Yell CCa and with the absence of marine development, the area is highly sensitive to large scale development but could cope with small scale development on and offshore.

Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change affecting the East Yell CCa.

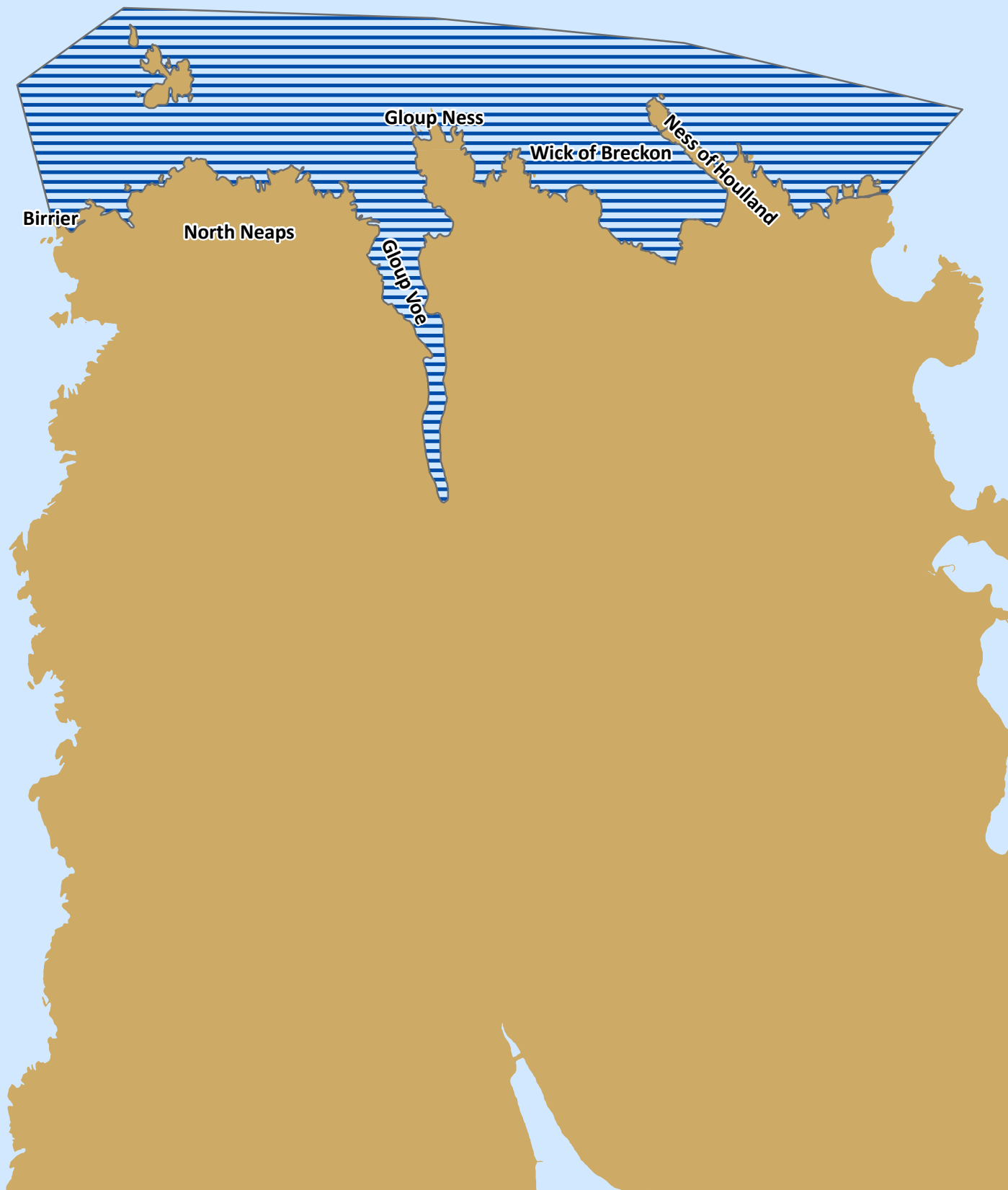




North Isles

18. Gloup-Breckon Coastal Character Area







The Sands of Breckon

Summary Description

The Gloup-Breckon Coastal Character Area (CCa) is along the northern coast of Yell. It runs along the coast from Birrier to Migga Ness. There is a mixture of steep cliffs and small bays with Gloup Voe on a north-south axis.

The Sands of Breckon have been awarded a Beach Award by Keep Scotland Beautiful. Gloup is a poignant place being the setting for a fishing disaster in 1881.

Key Characteristics

- *Sandy beaches*
- *Cliff top walk*
- *Gloup Memorial*



Gloop Voe

Historic Context

The coast of the Gloop-Breckon CCA has been settled for many years with the remains of **croft**s still visible on the landscape. During the **Iron Age** it was heavily defended with five possible **broch** sites along the shore. It was an important area during Da Haaf fishing with a terrible accident in 1881 when 58 fishermen were lost in a freak storm as they returned from the fishing grounds. Religion has also been important with four chapel and church sites found along the coast.

Historic Features

Brochs

Kirks- Possible site. Daggers and arrow heads were found in the 1800s.

Cruneess- Possible broch site, however in the late 1960s it was thought to be a **Neolithic/Bronze Age** homestead.

Fillacomb Point- Possible site although it was reported in 1969 that the broch was gone and in the 1980s there was no evidence it had ever been the site of a broch.

Greenbanks (Burgi Geo)- Remains of a broch which was around 16m in diameter. There was apparently a passage which linked the broch to a cave below but nothing remains of that now.

Chapels and Churches

West-a-Firth- Thought to be the site of a 14th century chapel and burial ground, however there are no remains now. Was still known locally in the 1960s.

Kirks- Chapel and burial ground thought to have been in use until the 18th century. However, no remains can be seen now. In the past loose stones and human remains have turned up from time to time.

Breckon- Thought to have stood at the western end of the sand before **St Olaf's** Church at Ness. Remains are now covered by sand.

St Olaf's Church, Kirk of Ness- Fourteenth century

church in use until 1750, now in a ruinous state.

Sands of Breckon- There was field work done in the early 1980s which discovered settlement patterns and farming activity from **prehistory** up to the late 1800s. Because the sand is ever moving, it is difficult to interpret due to a lack of context.

Gloop Haa (Category B listed)- Late 18th century house overlooking Gloop Voe.

Gloop Memorial- Situated below Gloop Haa, the memorial depicts a woman looking out the voe with a child in her arms to commemorate the men lost in 1881.

Industry

Fishing- There is some fishing off the coast of the Gloop-Breckon CCA and creels are also set in this area.

Tourism- The Sands of Breckon and the **Gloop Memorial** are important draws for tourism.

Landscape

The landscape of the Gloop-Breckon CCA is mainly heather moorland cliff tops with areas of improved land around Gloop and Breckon which has been **crofted** for 1000s of years.

To the west of Gloop Voe the landscape is a mixture of moorland hills sloping towards the sea with a network of burns and small ponds. To the east of Gloop Voe around Breckon the land is much greener and fertile with smaller fields grazed by sheep. The sandy soil will have contributed to this.

There are three LCTs in this area; Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast found around Gloop and Breckon, Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds around Gloop Voe and Coastal Edge along much of the coastline.

Geology

The main underlying geology of the Gloop- Breckon

CCa is **migmatitic** rock which is a mixture of igneous and **metamorphic** rock. There are two small **granite** intrusions at the Ness of Houlland and the Hill of Brimness.

Geosites

- 24. Sands of Breckon- Local significance
- 25. Gloop Voe- Local significance

Landscape Features

Sands of Breckon- The Sands of Breckon is a beautiful sandy beach and one of the largest areas of sand dunes found in Shetland. The beach is sheltered from the prevailing south westerly winds by the Ness of Houlland and is a popular spot for tourists and residents during the summer.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe & Firth- Gloop Voe is the only voe in the Gloop- Breckon CCa. There is no aquaculture development and minimal onshore development at Gloop. The voe is on a north-south axis and has large sand flats at the head of the voe.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- There are some areas of low rocky shore found around the Ness of Houlland.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are a few sections of low banks with the largest stretch running from the Wick of Trutis to the Sands of Breckon. There is also an area at the mouth of Gloop Voe and around Brei Wick.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- There are steep banks found throughout the Gloop- Breckon CCa in particular along both sides of Gloop Voe. More can be found at Brei Wick.

CCT 11: Exposed High Rock Cliffs- Most of the Gloop- Breckon CCa consists of High Rock Cliffs with dramatic scenery found along much of the coast.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There is one small bay; the Sands of Breckon. Sheltered except from the north, the Sands of Breckon is a top visitor attraction with blue flag accreditation.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There is one offshore coastal island, Gloop Holm. With remains

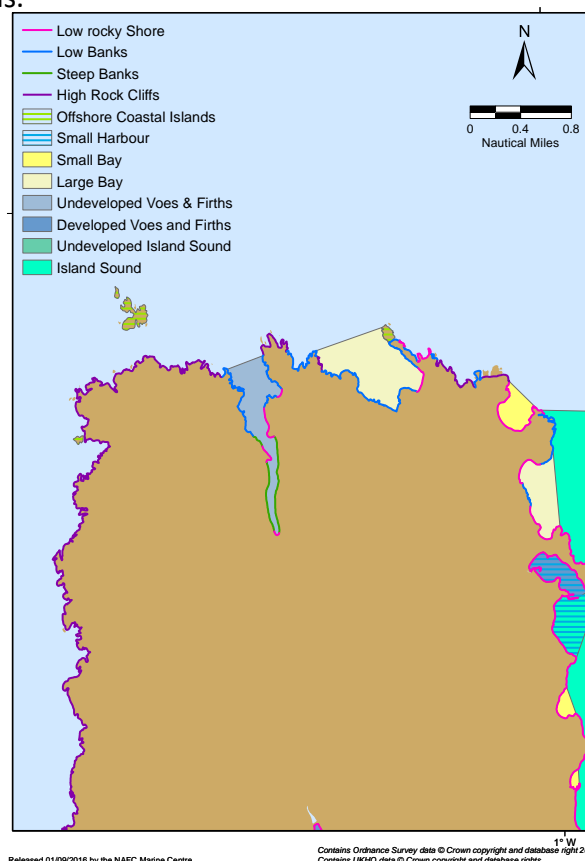
which could possibly be a **broch**, this island was inhabited at one time.

Experiential

The Gloop- Breckon CCa is nearly split in two by Gloop Voe. To the west of the voe, access is limited with no development and the landscape has a wild and rugged feel. To the east it is much easier to access the coast with a walking route connecting Gloop to Breckon. Also there are places to get down to the shore, which is not possible to the west of Gloop Voe.

The Sands of Breckon are a particular highlight with beautiful white sand and a large area of dunes to explore.

Finally the **Gloop Memorial** has a very poignant feel reminding us what a harsh existence Da Haaf fishing was.



Sensitivities

With low levels of development on and offshore, and being of high scenic value, the Gloop- Breckon CCa is sensitive to large scale development.

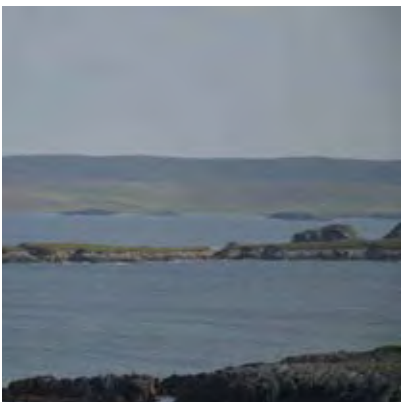
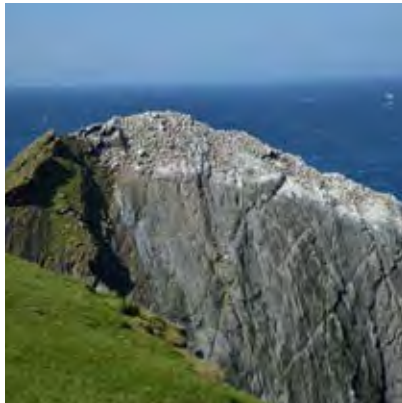
Forces for Change

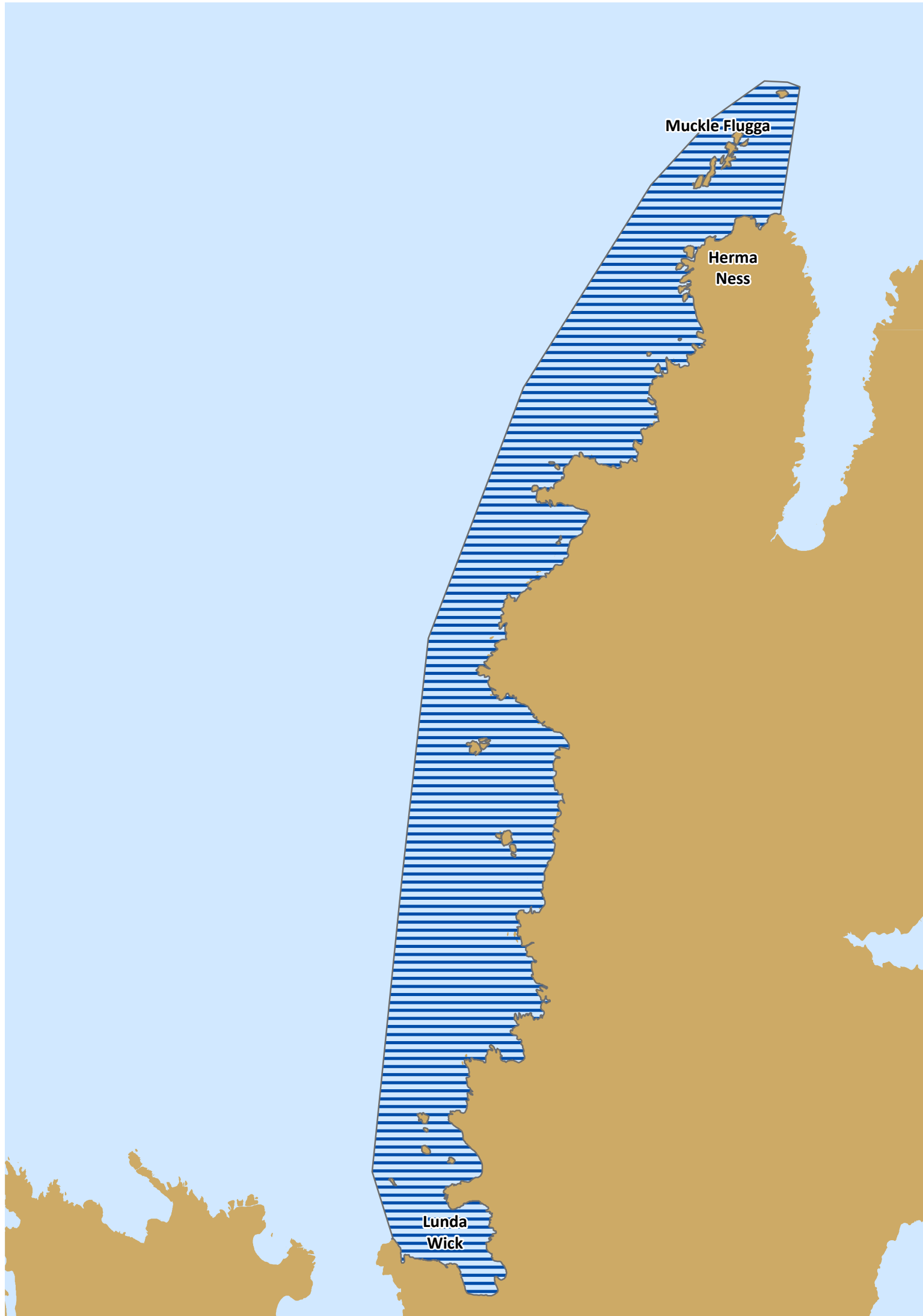
There are currently no forces for change.



North Isles

19. Hermaness Coastal Character Area





Muckle Flugga

Herma
Ness

Lunda
Wick



Tonga, Unst

Summary Description

The Hermaness Coastal Character Area (CCa) runs from Blue Mull up to Herma Ness on the island of Unst. More than half this stretch of coastline is classed as remote with no infrastructure or development.

Three areas are owned by the [National Trust](#) with Hermaness being a popular National Nature Reserve. There is no aquaculture development along this coast as there is very little shelter. The landscape is mainly heather moorland ending in cliffs at the coast with small wicks.

Key Characteristics

- *Cliff scenery*
- *Important seabird habitat*
- *Very low levels of development*
- *Panoramic views across the northern coast of Yell*



Muckle Flugga Lighthouse

Historic Context

The landscape around Lunda Wick, from Underhoull to Lund was heavily settled by the Vikings. There is a vast array of remains to be discovered including Viking longhouses, possible Viking boat noosts, and graves and a Viking Chapel at Lund. As you move further along the coast to Hermaness, there is very little remains found showing the area has never been heavily populated.

Historic Features

Brochs

Underhoull (Scheduled monument)- *Almost completely destroyed, the broch at Underhoull would have been around 17m in diameter.*

Brough Holm (Scheduled monument)- Thought to have been a broch on this small island with no evidence of a causeway connecting it to Unst. There is a later building on top of the site and some stone was taken as ballast for Haaf fishing boats.

Flubergerdie- This is a possible broch site or a promontory fort. There is a mound and substantial ramparts.

Industry

Fishing- There is low fishing activity found around this area of Shetland and no aquaculture sites.

Tourism- There are a variety of tourist attractions along this area of coast with historic remains around Lund and geological features at Hermaness.

Landscape

The landscape in the Hermaness CCA is fairly steep heather and moorland ending in cliffs and steep banks. Around Lunda Wick, Westing and Flubergerdie, the landscape is much flatter and has been cultivated for many years. There are two LCT's along the coast: Farmed and Settled Lowlands and Coast, and Coastal Edge. Directly behind this are two areas of Major

Upland which correlates with the steep areas of the landscape.

Geology

The underlying geology of the Hermaness CCA is **migmatitic** rock which is a mixture of **metamorphic** and **sediment** rock. There is also a small area of **limestone** around Westing.

Geosites

8. Dale of Woodwick- n/a

Landscape Features

Hermaness- Hermaness is a popular attraction for residents and tourists alike offering close up views of the many seabirds which nest on the cliffs. The landscape appears nearly untouched with few historic remains and no modern development.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound- There is one small island sound between Unst and Lang Holm. It is narrow with no development offshore and minimal onshore development set back from the coast.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- There are minimal areas of low rocky shore mainly around Lund, Westing and Flubergerdie.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- Low banks can be found around the north edge of Lunda Wick, Houllan Ness and around the Wick of Collaster.

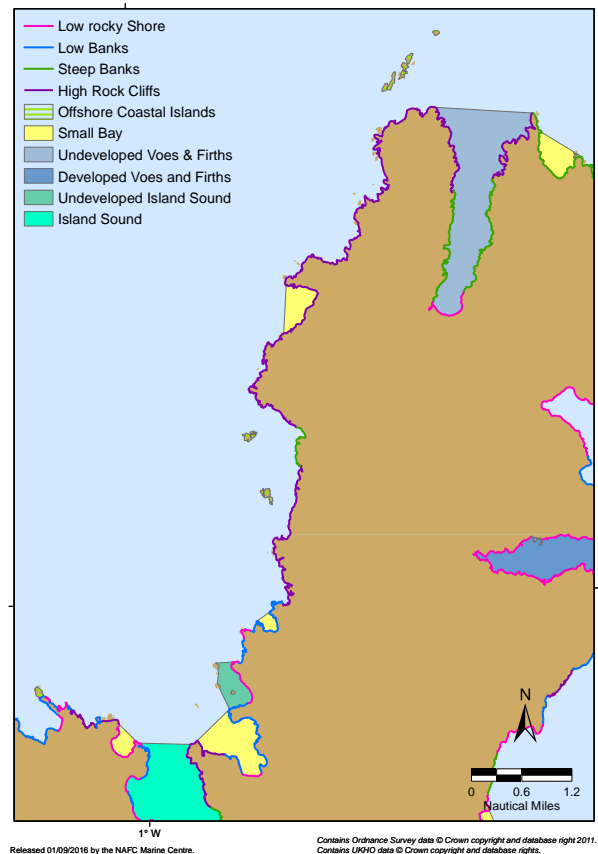
CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- Tonga to Flubergerdie is an area of steep coastal banks.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- High Rock Cliffs is the dominant Coastal Character Type of the

Hermaness CCa. Cliffs run from Hermaness down to Tonga, Greff to Gable, around Flubergerdie and Hevda Hill to Skitsack. The cliffs offer a nesting habitat for a variety of seabirds.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are five small bays in the Hermaness CCa. The Ayre of Tonga is backed by steep banks with no beach, Wood Wick has a small area of shingle, the Wick of Collaster has a shingle beach with rocky outcrops, the Beach of Newgarth is a shingle ayre with offshore islets and Lunda Wick has three sandy beaches separated by rocky outcrops.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are eight small islands in the Hermaness CCa; Out Stack, Muckle Flugga, North Holms, South Holms, Lang Holm, Round Holm, Brough Holm and the Vere. Only two of the isles have any remains. Muckle Flugga which has a **lighthouse** built by D and T Stevenson in the 1850's and Brough Holm has remains of a **broch** and a fishing **böd** built by a local **laird** using stone from the **broch**.



Experiential

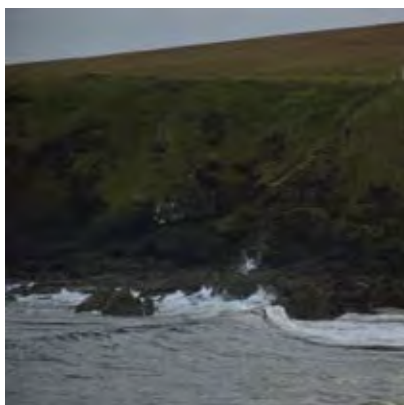
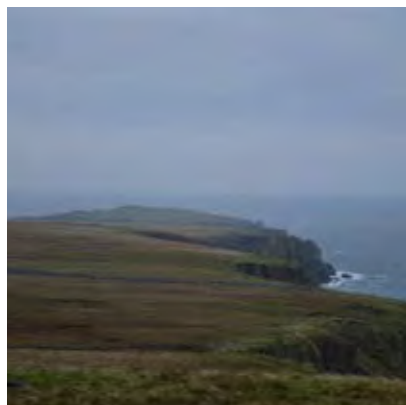
The Hermaness CCa is an interesting area as there is no offshore development and the onshore development is very limited. Much of the landscape has a remote and wild feel with very little infrastructure.

Sensitivities

The Hermaness CCa is highly sensitive as much of the coast is isolated and covered by various pieces of legislation.

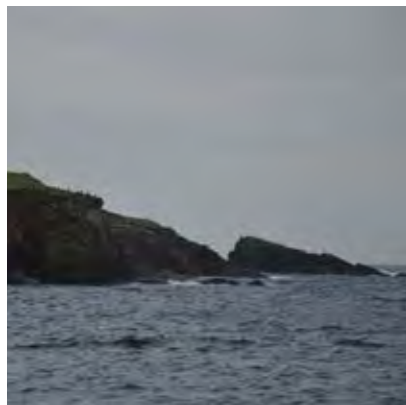
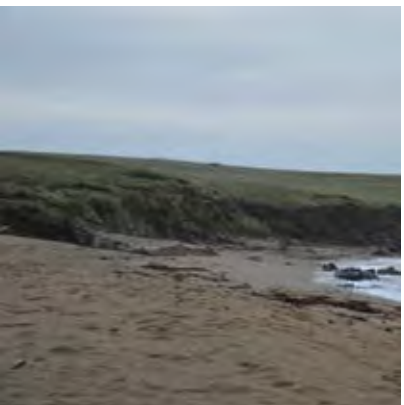
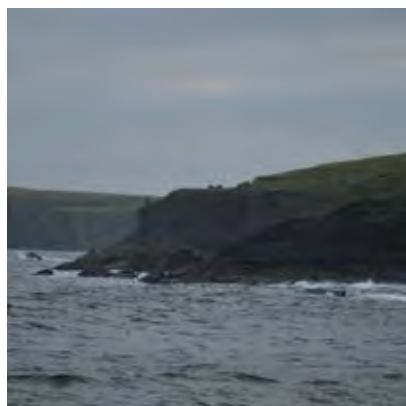
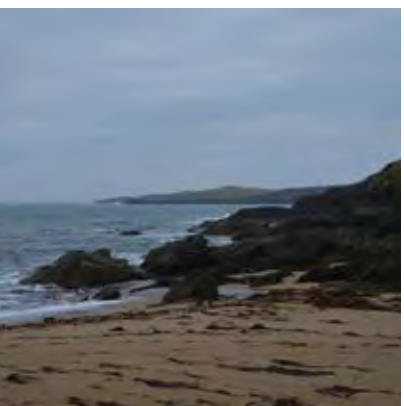
Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change.



North Isles

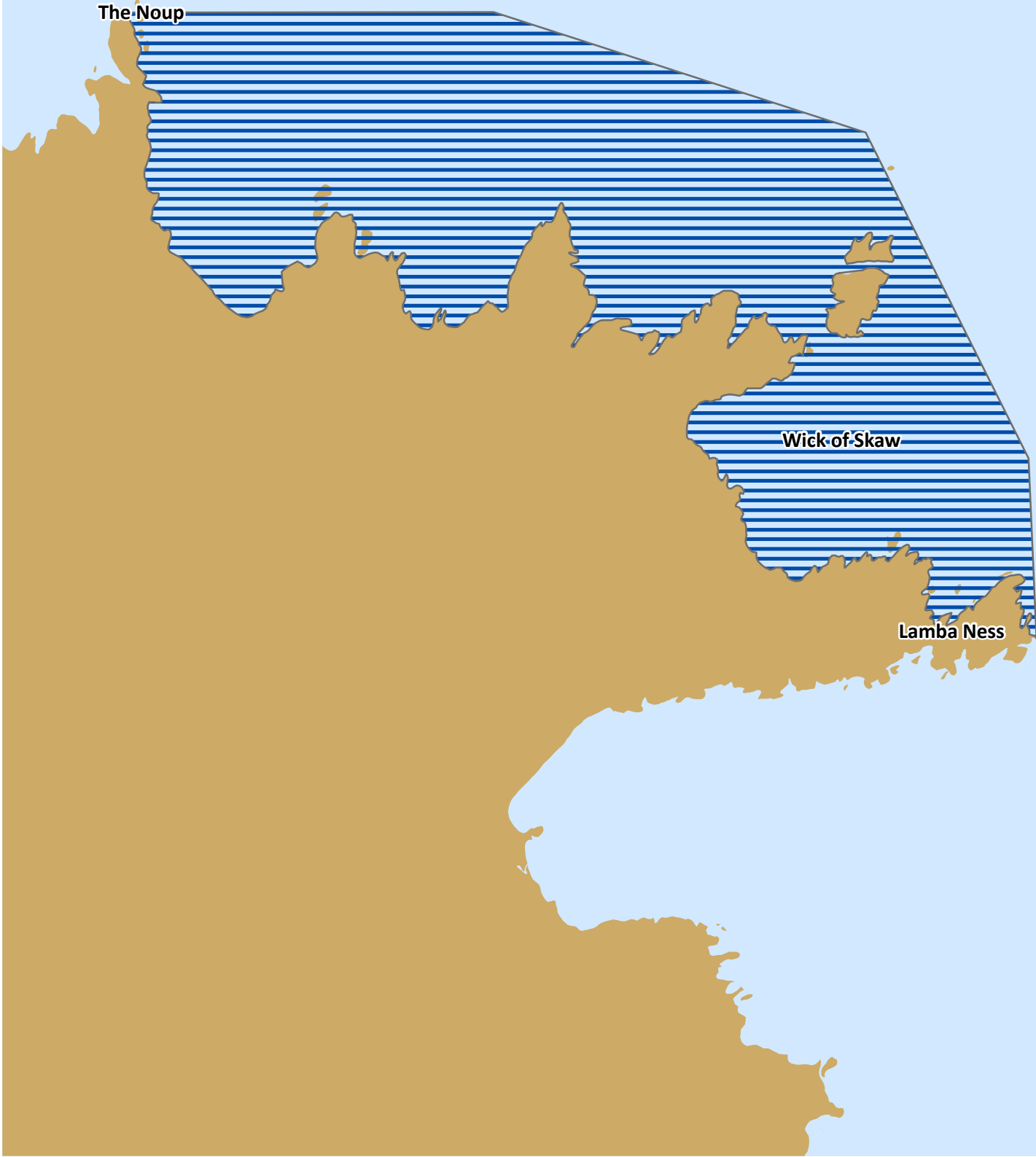
20. Skaw Coastal Character Area



The Noup

Wick of Skaw

Lamba Ness





Wick of Skaw

Summary Description

The Skaw Coastal Character Area (CCa) is along the northern coast of Unst running from the Noup to Lamba Ness. It is a fairly rocky coastline with small bays. There is no aquaculture in this character area as there is nowhere sheltered enough.

The landscape is mainly heather moorland ending in cliffs.

Key Characteristics

- *Cliff scenery*
- *Small beaches*
- *Most northerly house in Britain*



WWII Remains, Lamba Ness

Historic Context

There is very little **prehistoric** remains other than a possible site of a **broch** above Ura Geo. During the 20th century however, Skaw became a strategically important site during **WWII** being the most northerly reaches of Britain.

Historic Features

WWII Remains- Radar Station with a main and reserve site at Inner Skaw and Bluejib (scheduled monument). Over 50 buildings stood at Lamba Ness during the Second World War.

Industry

Fishing- Some creels are placed along the coastline but it is at a low intensity.

Tourism- Unst is home to many things that are considered “the most northerly in Britain”. In the Skaw CCA this includes the road and house.

Landscape

The landscape is relatively flat ending in low cliffs for much of the character area with the summits of the Ward of Norwick and Saxa Vord creating an imposing backdrop.

The remnants of the **WWII** radar station has left its mark on the landscape with various ruins and bunkers around Lamba Ness and Skaw.

The land cover has been improved around the Wick of Skaw and Sand of Inner Skaw with drainage ditches running across the fields.

There are three LCT's in the Skaw CCA. Unsurprisingly the majority of the coastline is covered by the Coast Edge LCT backed by Major Uplands. To the east of the character area around the Wick of Skaw the LCT is mainly Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast.

Geology

From the Noup to Virdik, much of the coastline is **pelite** which is mudstone that has been **metamorphosed**. A **fault line** runs down from Virdik to Norwick with the underlying geology around the Wick of Skaw being **granite**.

Geosites

2. Wick of Skaw- Local significance.

Landscape Features

Saxa Vord- Sitting at 284m high, Saxa Vord is a dominant feature in the north of Unst. There are expansive views out to Muckle Flugga during good weather and back across Unst to the south. The summit was contained within an RAF base but the fence was removed in 2007.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound- There are three very small island sounds in the north east corner of the character area; Inner Sound, Ham Sound and Outer Sound. Outer Sound is the largest sitting between the Holm of Skaw and the Inner Flaess.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Low Rocky Shore is one of the main character types in the Skaw CCA, especially from Forn Geo round to Lamba Ness where there are large wave cut platforms.

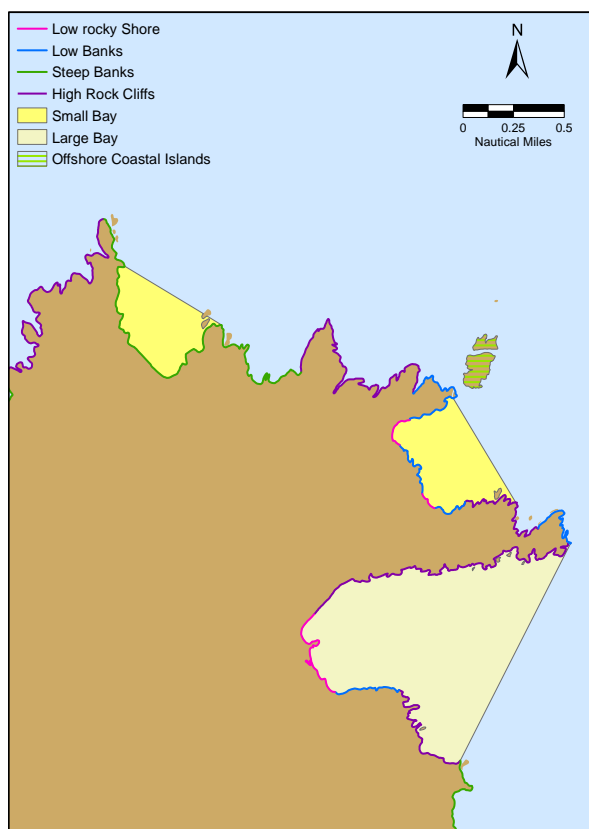
CCT 7: Exposed Coast: Low Banks- Small pockets of low banks can be found around the Wick of Skaw with a mixture of low rocky shore and high cliffs.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast: High Cliffs- The northern coast of Unst is mainly cliffs with various erosional features such as geos and stacks. In some areas they are over 120m high. There is a small wick, Brei Wick

however this is not accessible from land. The cliffs offer plenty of nesting sites for seabirds.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There is a small bay along the east coast of the character area which incorporates the Wick of Skaw, Sand of Inner Skaw and the Snouska Sand. Between these areas of sand along the head of the bay are rocky outcrops. Snouska Sand is backed by low cliffs.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are three offshore coastal islands in the north east corner of the Skaw CCa; Holm of Skaw, Inner Flass and Outer Flass. The only structure is a beacon built in 1993 on the Holm of Skaw.



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Experiential

The Skaw CCa is a dramatic coastline with panoramic views out to sea. It has a remote and almost abandoned feel with the remains of the Radar Station indicating its strategic importance during the **Second World War**.

The beach at the Wick of Skaw is a lovely secluded spot and one of the only places in Shetland where the oysterplant (*Mertensia maritima*) can be found.

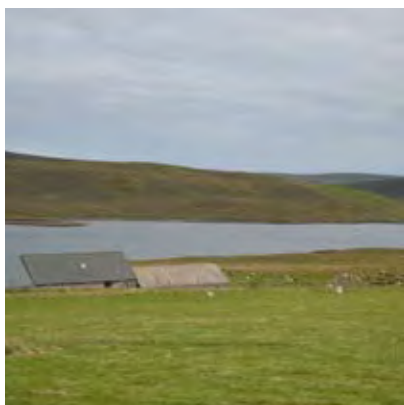
From the point of Lamba Ness looking back across the landscape there are great views along the cliff faces and up to Saxa Vord.

Sensitivities

The Skaw CCa is part of the **Shetland NSA** and is clearly valued for its scenic qualities. Any large scale development on or offshore could have detrimental effects on this relatively untouched landscape. Although there has been large development in the past, this has largely been taken over by nature and is not as blatantly obvious as it was in the 1940s.

Forces for Change

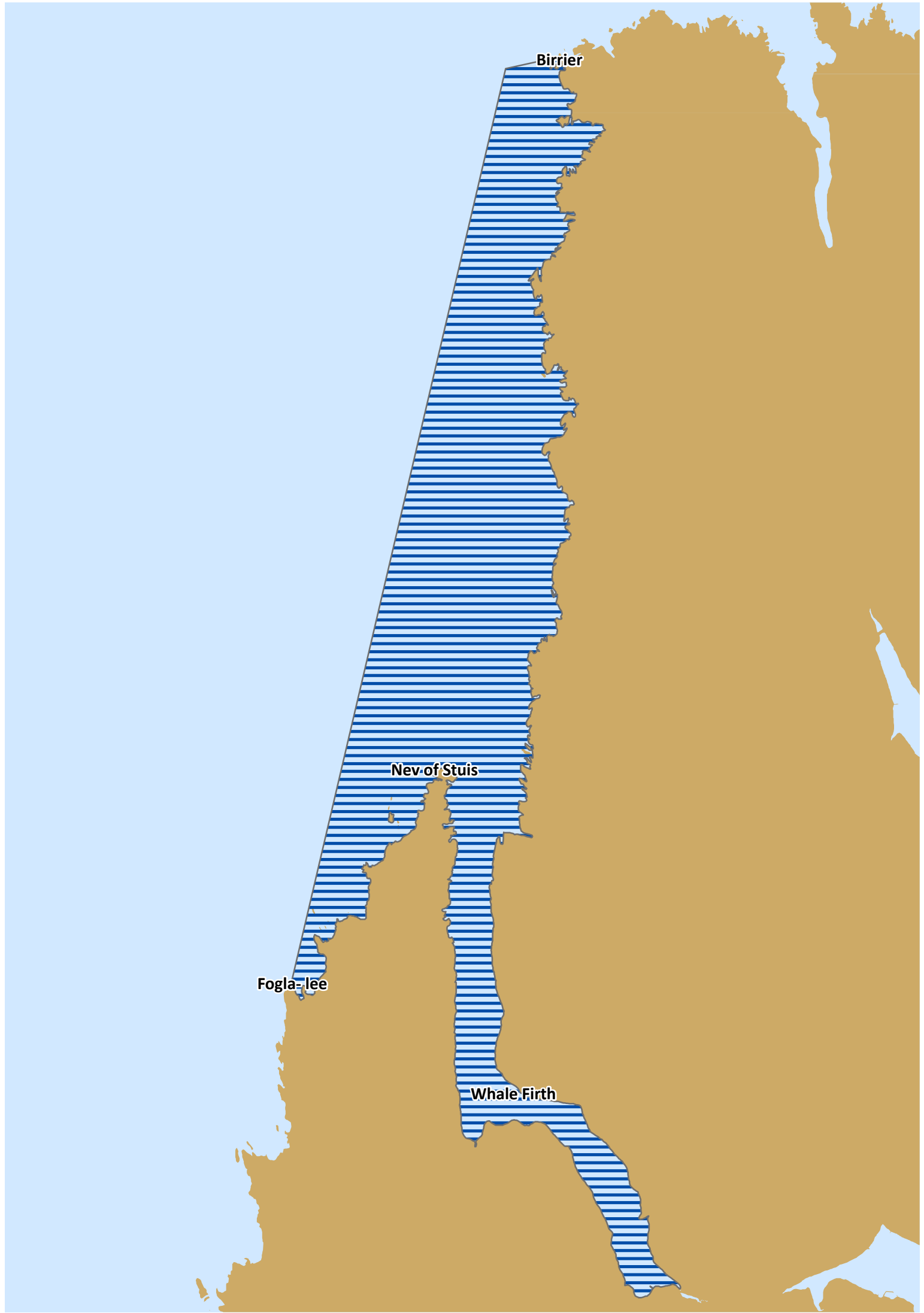
There are currently no forces for change



North Isles

21. Whale Firth Coastal Character Area





Birrier

Nev.of Stuis

Fogla-lee

Whale.Firth



Mouth of Whale Firth

Summary Description

The Whale Firth Coastal Character Area (CCa) is along the west coast of Yell. It runs from Fogla Lee round the headland into Whale Firth and up to Birrier.

The coastline is rugged with high cliffs found in most of the character area. There are lots erosional features such as stacks and arches.

Whale Firth is a sheltered area within the character area. Fairly long and narrow, it is said to have been used historically to drive whales into and beach them. The area is at the mouth of Yell Sound, therefore is a fairly busy area with ships heading to and from Sullom Voe.

Key Characteristics

- *High cliffs with erosional features*
- *No aquaculture*
- *Panoramic views*
- *Undeveloped area*



Windhouse, Yell

Historic Context

The high cliffs of the Whale Firth CCa have been historically used as a natural defence with sites of **forts**, **blockhouses** and **brochs** found along the stretch of coast. Sitting back from the edge, small **crofting townships** can be found.

At the head of Whale Firth the remains of Windhouse can be seen sitting on a high point. There are no large settlements within the character area, and the main industry has been **crofting**.

Historic Features

Windhouse (**Category C listed building**)- An 18th Century Lairds house with later additions, now in a ruinous state.

Brochs- There are two broch sites within the Whale Firth CCa.

Windhouse (**Scheduled monument**)- *Broch sited at the head of Whale Firth thought to have been 17.5m in diameter. Remains stand at 3m high. Good example of a chambered cairn sitting below the broch.*

Burgi Geos (**Scheduled monument**)- *Remains of a **promontory fort** and **block house** from the **Iron Age**. It is of national importance and the style and layout is unusual with only six examples currently known in Shetland.*

Aastack- Thought to be the remains of a **monastery** found on the top of the stack. Could have still been connected to the mainland at its time of use.

Industry

Aquaculture- Five sites can be found within Whale Firth; two finfish and three shellfish.

Landscape

The landscape is a series of hills with no development to the north. Between Basta Voe and Whale Firth

there are a number of lochs. There are small pockets of improved land around Whale Firth but the landscape is very steep, especially near the mouth of the Firth.

There are three LCTs in the Whale Firth CCa, Coastal Edge; Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast; and Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds. The Coastal Edge corresponds with the cliffs within the CCa. Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast is found along the more exposed landscape whereas the Voe and Sound LCT is sheltered at the head of Whale Firth. Directly behind the thin strip of farmland are large areas of Peatland and Moorland.

Geology

The main underlying geology of the CCa is **migmatitic** rock which is a mixture of **metamorphic** and igneous rock. There is a tiny pocket of **gneiss** found around Fugla Geo.

Geosites

105. Lumbister- Local significance

Coastal Character Types of Features

Physical Character

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voes & Firths- Whale Firth is the only firth within the character area. It is a fairly narrow firth which runs north- south for half of its four miles before bending south east into Setter.

Although there is relatively little onshore development, there are aquaculture sites within the firth.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- There are small areas of low rocky shore found within Whale Firth with shingle ayres. Notably at the head of the firth.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- Low banks are

confined to within Whale Firth itself running from the Struis of Graveland down to the Herra and around Grimister.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- Some steep banks can be found at the mouth of Whale Firth. These become cliffs to the north.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- The most dominant character type in the Whalefirth CCa, high cliffs can be found running down the coast with various features such as geos, caves and stacks. The cliff tops offer panoramic views into Yell Sound and along the Northmavine coast.

Experiential

Much of this coastline is undeveloped giving it an isolated feel. There are fantastic panoramic views across Yell Sound. The contrast between the high open cliffs and the narrow sheltered Whale Firth should be noted as an interest.

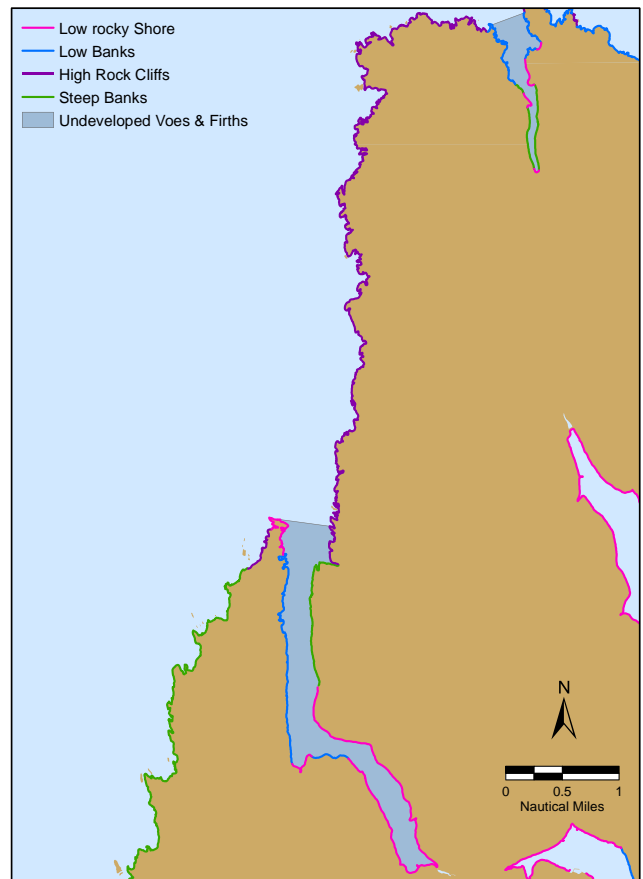
The ruins of Windhouse create an impact on the skyline at the head of the firth.

Sensitivities

Because of the undeveloped nature of the Whale Firth CCa, any development could have a detrimental effect on the landscape on and offshore. However, the lack of infrastructure in the area means this is unlikely to happen.

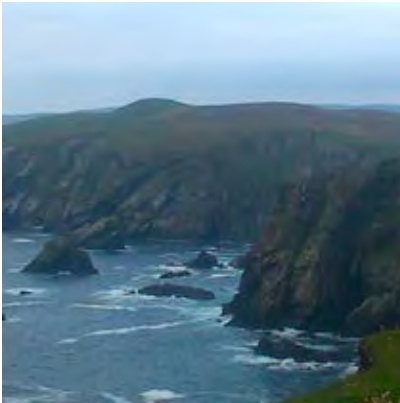
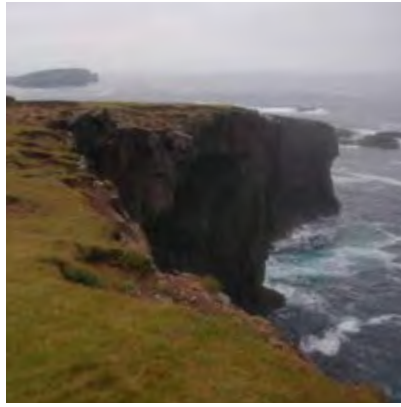
Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change.



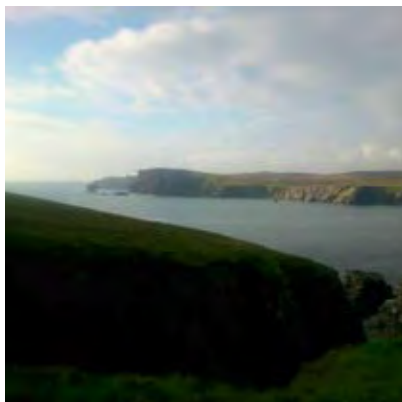
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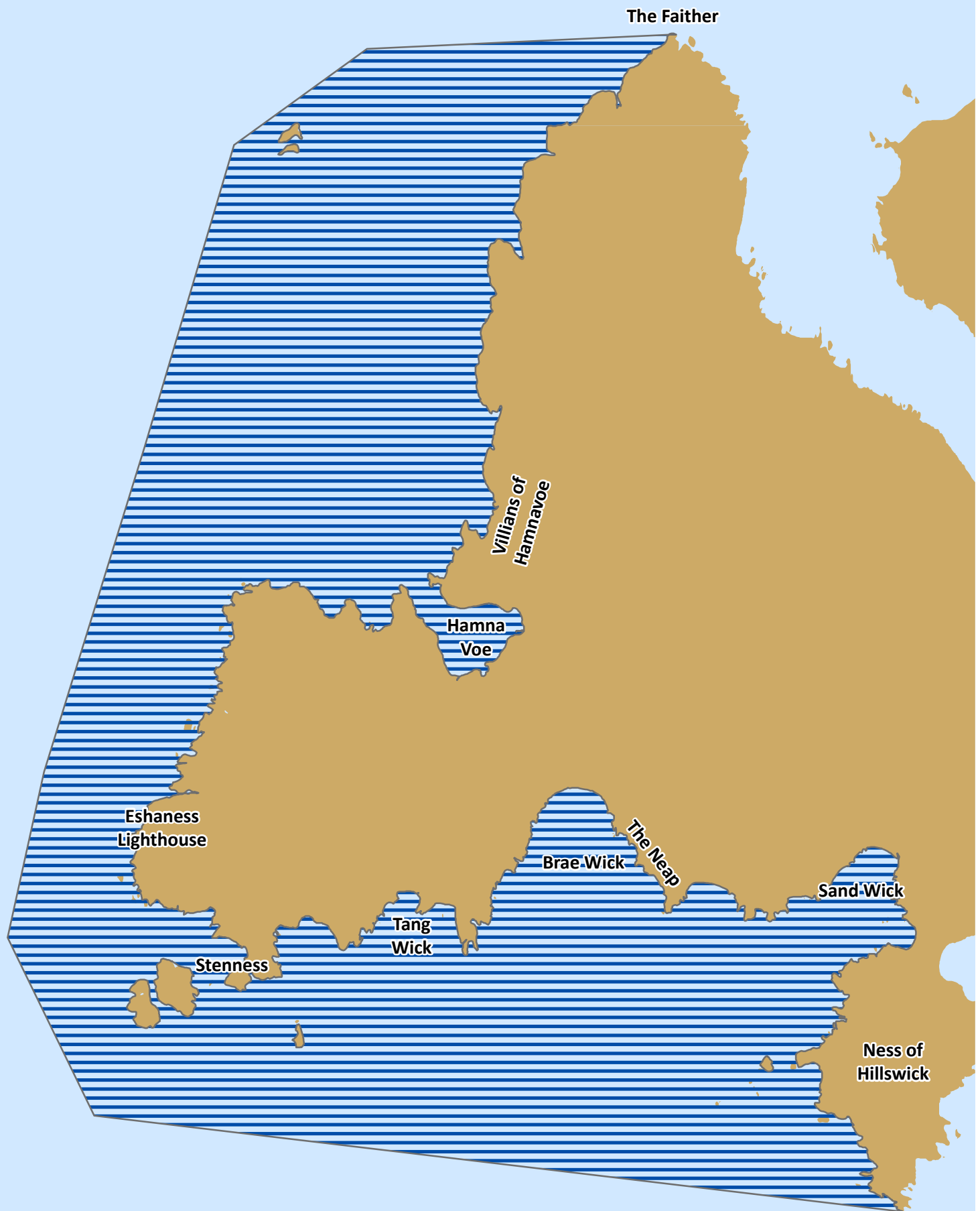
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North Mainland

22. Eshaness Coastal Character Area





The Faither

Villians of
Hamnavoe

Hamna
Voe

Eshaness
Lighthouse

Stenness

Tang
Wick

Brae Wick

The Neap

Sand Wick

Ness of
Hillswick



Eshaness Cliffs

Summary Description

The Eshaness Coastal Character Area (CCa) is located in the Northmavine and runs from Hamnavoe along the coast to the Ness of Hillswick. It is a dramatic coastline of cliffs, storm beaches and bays, and is a popular tourist destination with a coastal access route.

Development in the area is limited, with scattered settlement and no aquaculture sites in the CCa.

Key Characteristics

- *Dramatic cliff scenery*
- *Cultural landscapes with historical fishing stations, **lighthouse** and Tangwick **Haa** close to the shore.*
- *Popular area for residents and visitors for its scenic qualities and recreation opportunities including walking routes, kayaking and climbing*
- *Popular destination in calm and dramatic weather conditions*
- *Offers a range of facilities including campsite, café, toilets and visitor centre*
- *Varied wildlife and sea watching opportunities for whales and dolphins*
- *Part of the Shetland NSA*



Tangwick Haa from the Houb

Historic Context

There is an indication that the Eshaness CCa has been lived in for thousands of years, with evidence of **burnt mounds** along the coast. Historically mainly a **crofting** community, there was a fishing station at Stenness Beach. The Eshaness **Lighthouse** was built in the early 1900s for safety of navigation.

Historic Features

Eshaness Lighthouse- Built in 1929 by David and Charles Stevenson the Eshaness Lighthouse replaced a temporary structure which was taken down after WWI. The lighthouse only had one keeper's cottage which was unusual. It was automated in 1974.

Stenness Haaf Station- Run by the Cheyne family who lived in Tangwick **Haa**, the Stenness Haaf Station was one of the largest in Shetland with around 70 boats working from the station in the summer months. The large pebble beach was used to dry the fish before being shipped.

Tangwick Haa- Set back from the coast, Tangwick **Haa** is a 17th century building and was the home of the Cheyne family. In the late 1980s the **Shetland Amenity Trust** restored the haa and it was opened as a museum.

WWII Buildings- There are the remains of a small number of **WWII** buildings to the east of the Eshaness **Lighthouse**.

Industry

Tourism- The Eshaness CCa is a popular tourist destination with a range of facilities including a museum, caravan and camp site, café and valued scenic areas.

Fishing & Creeling- There is fishing and creeling off the coast of the Eshaness CCa.

Landscape

The Eshaness CCa is a quiet area with the majority

of the land used for farming and **crofting**. There are various **planticrubs** and **horizontal mills** scattered across the landscape, showing how the land has been used for growing and producing for many years.

Close to the **lighthouse**, wave and wind action has stripped the earth back to reveal the bedrock beneath, with large boulders cast effortlessly onto the cliff tops by stormy seas. Around the townships; Stenness, Catwell, Tangwick and Braewick, the grass is much greener and fertile, being used for grazing and silage. Between these areas of improved pasture are expanses of **peat** moorland and maritime heath.

There are two LCTs over the area; Peatland and Moorland and Coastal Edge, with a sub type of Eshaness and Papa Stour Maritime Heathland.

Geology

The Eshaness coastline is built up from layers of volcanic ash and lava flows from 420 million years ago. It is an important part of **Geopark Shetland** and the cliffs and features around the **lighthouse** in particular, are a big draw for tourists to the area. The majority of the rock is volcanic with large areas covered in **peat**. There is also a large area of glacial deposit from The Bruddans and Tang Wick. Geological interpretation panels are present at Breiwick café and the Eshaness **Lighthouse**.

Geosites

- 38. Villians of Hamnavoe- National significance
- 41. Grind o' Navir- National significance
- 42. Braewick Beach- Local significance
- 43. Eshaness Coast- National significance
- 44. Stenness Beach- Local significance

Landscape Features

Dore Holm- The Dore Holm is a small islet off the south coast of Eshaness and is a focal point from

much of the coast. A large natural arch makes the holm look like a horse drinking from the sea.

Stenness Cross- Erected in 1927 by the Commissioners of the Northern Lighthouses to mark where supplies for the Eshaness Lighthouse were landed.

Drongs- Distance views to the Drongs from Hillswick Ness

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound

There is a small sound between the Skerry of Eshaness and the Isle of Stenness, Whilse Sound. Impassable other than by very small craft as there are three small skerries in the middle of the sound.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- The shore on both sides of Stenness Beach and from the Houb to No Ness are the main areas of low rocky shore. Unlike the majority of the other character areas there is only a small area of low rocky shore, although there is some inaccessible stretches at the base of cliffs. The ayres at Stenness and Tang Wick both fall under this CCT. The ayre at Stenness is backed by rounded pebbles and it is not uncommon to find agates. The ayre at Tang Wick is a lot smaller with no bank of pebbles. The shingle is also a lot darker in colour being mixed with peat deposits.

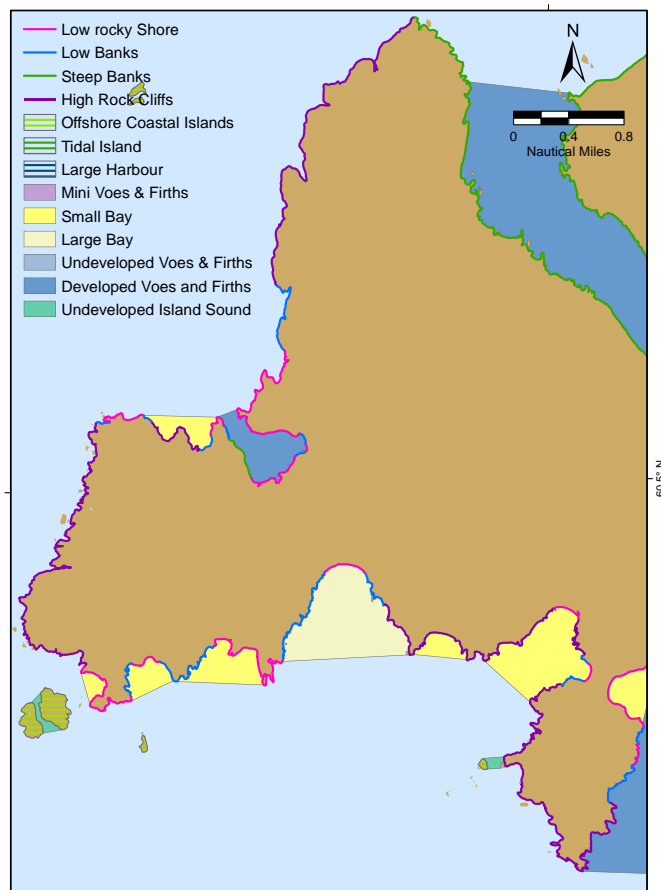
CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are a number of small stretches of low banks mainly sitting between the low rocky shore and high cliffs. Low banks can be found at Sand Wick, Brae Wick, Gro Taing, Fiorda Taing, Hamna Voe and the Villians of Hamnavoe.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- The High Cliffs is the most dominant feature within the Eshaness CCA with the cliffs around the lighthouse valued in particular. Cliffs run from the lighthouse down to Stenness Beach, Fiorda Taing to the Houb and from the east side of No Ness up to Braewick. The cliffs are full of erosional features such as caves, arches and geos and is categorised as fragmented coast.

CCT 12: Large Bay- Brae Wick is a large bay with a sandy beach at the head. There are cliffs on either side, with the Neap being quite steep.

CCT 12a Small Bay- There is a small bay behind Fiorda Taing and Tang Wick. There is a small shingle ayre at Tang Wick and a pocket beach at Fiorda Taing.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are four offshore coastal islands within the Brae Wick CCA and a large number of stacks and skerries especially to the north of the CCA. The Isle of Stenness is the largest, followed by the Skerry of Eshaness, Dore Holm and the Isle of Westerhouse. Dore Holm is probably the most visually interesting with a large arch running through the middle.



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Experiential

The coastline in the Eshaness CCA is valued for its scenic qualities making up part of the Shetland NSA and forms an important area of the Shetland Geopark. The dramatic cliffs include a range of features such as caves, geos and stacks, with various skerries just off the coast. With panoramic views of the open sea on the west side of the CCA. Coming round past Stenness there are views out to the Skerry of Eshaness and the Dore Holm.

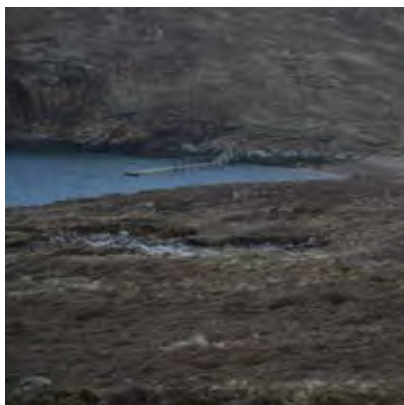
The area offers easy walking over relatively flat ground and it has a well maintained access route with gates and stiles. It is also a popular tourist walking route. The coast feels quite isolated in areas. The coastline is visited during all weathers with the cliffs around the lighthouse particularly popular during stormy weather.

Sensitivities

The Eshaness CCa is a dramatic coastal landscape which has many remote areas with expansive views out to sea. There is scattered housing along some of the coastline, however much is left undeveloped making the CCa sensitive to both onshore and offshore development.

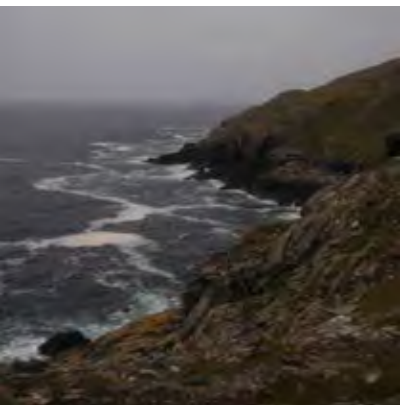
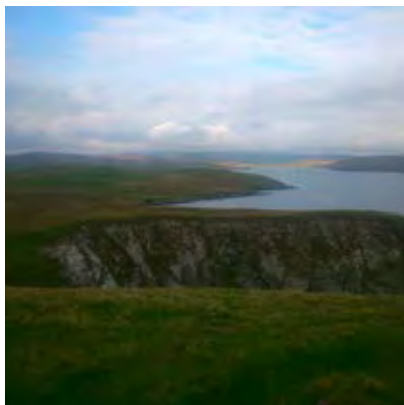
Forces for Change

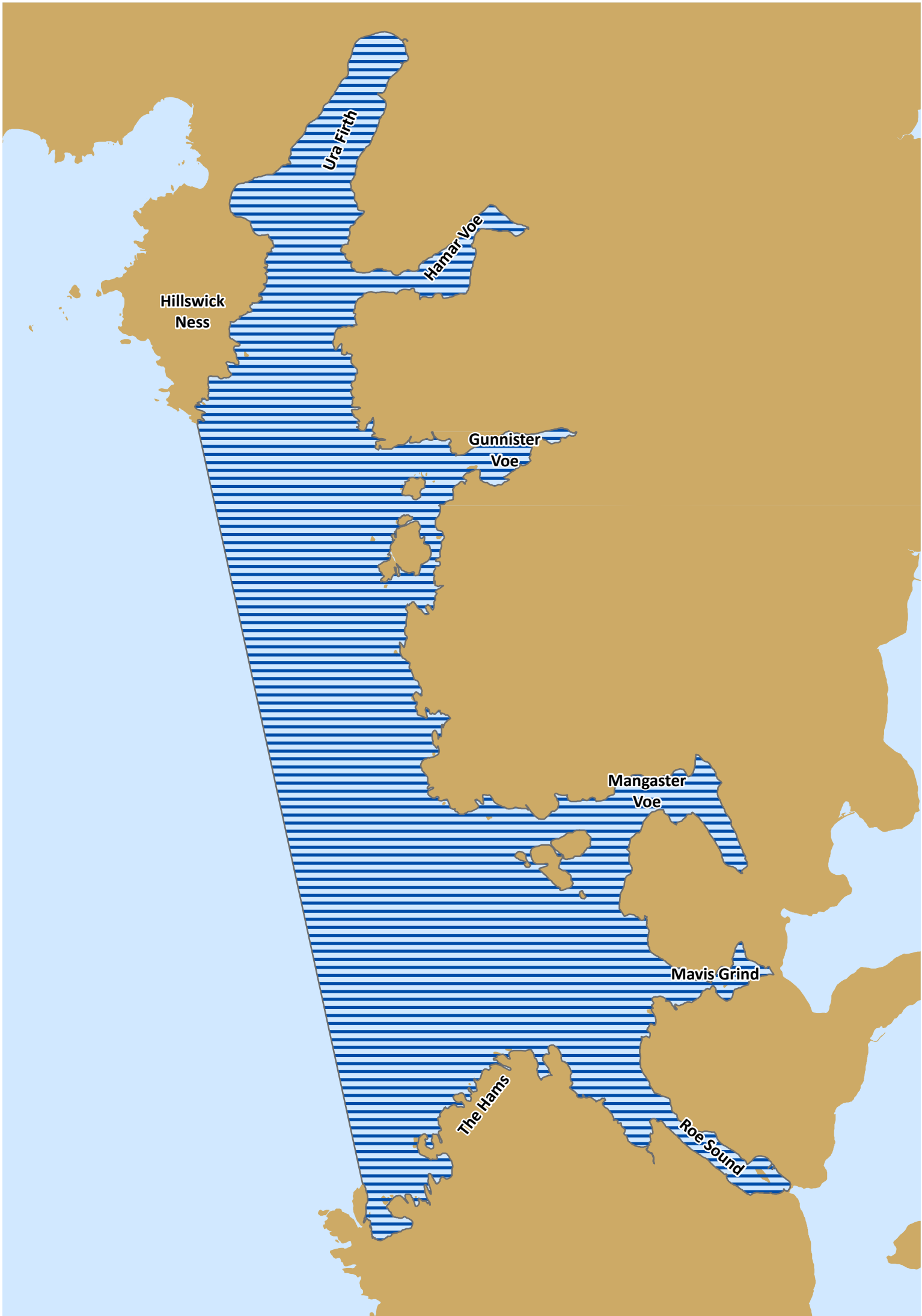
There is a potential for marine renewable development within St Magnus Bay which could affect the remote feel within the area.



North Mainland

23. Hillswick- The Hams Coastal Character Area





Ura Firth

Hamar Voe

Hillswick
Ness

Gunnister
Voe

Mangaster
Voe

Mavis Grind

The Hams

Roe Sound



The Hams, Muckle Roe

Summary Description

The Hillswick -The Hams Coastal Character Area (CCa) runs from the Baa Taing on Hillswick Ness down to Strom Ness on Muckle Roe.

The area has low onshore development with the largest settlement at Hillswick. There are a few aquaculture sites but a lower number compared to other areas in Shetland.

The landscape seems to have improved land around the heads of voes and firths related to the settlements, the headlands inbetween are heather moorland.

Key Characteristics

- *Divided between enclosed and open coast*
- *Historic centre of Hillswick*
- *Spectacular cliff scenery*
- *Remote coastline*
- *Parts of the CCa included in the Shetland NSA*



Northmavine Up Helly Aa Burning, Hillswick

Historic Context

There are signs this area has been inhabited for 1000's of years with **chambered cairns**, axe heads and **Neolithic** pottery found along this stretch of coast. It has been an important area for fishing, especially at Hillswick.

Historic Features

St Magnus Bay Hotel (**Category C listed building**)- The hotel was built by the North of Scotland, Orkney & Shetland Steam Navigation Co Ltd in 1900 with a sister hotel in Stenness, Orkney.

Hillswick House (**Category B listed**)- 18th century house with later additions.

Fishing- There are various remains related to the fishing industry in Hillswick including, Hillswick **Booth** (later a public house), **Cutch Kettles** and **Drying Beach**. There is also the remains of Hagrie's **Böd** which was used by the **Hanseatic League** in Gunnister Voe.

Industry

Aquaculture- There are seven sites within the CCa, six finfish and one shellfish.

Tourism- The St Magnus Bay Hotel is important for tourism in the area. There are also some places such as Mavis Grind which attract tourists. It is a popular area for walking especially around Muckle Roe and Hillswick Ness.

Landscape

There are a variety of landscape types around the Hillswick - The Hams CCa with sheltered improved land found at the head of most voes interspersed with heather hills with rocky outcrops. Much of the landscape is quite steep resulting in terrestrial development levels being quite low along the coast.

There are four LCTs covering the area; Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds, Peatland and Moorland, Undulating Moorland with Lochs and Coastal Edge.

Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds can be found mainly at the head of voes and firths with coastal edge corresponding with cliffs around Muckle Roe. The Ness of Hillswick and part of Muckle Roe are included in the **Shetland NSA**.

Geology

The Hillswick - The Hams CCa is mainly composed of igneous rock types such as **granite** and **dacitic** rock. Around the Baa Taing on the Ness of Hillswick the geology is **metamorphic** with areas of **schist**. The other half of the Ness of Hillswick and back to Gateside has **calcareous** geology which is **sedimentary** and corresponds with the productive farmland in the area.

Geosites

- 48. Clothister Hill Quarry- National significance
- 53. Virdins Quarry- International significance
- 96. Haggister Quarry- National significance
- 99. Nibon- Local significance

Landscape Features

Hams of Muckle Roe- With dramatic cliff scenery the Hams of Muckle Roe are a popular walking area. The coastline is fragmented with a variety of arches, stacks and geos. There are panoramic views from the cliff top of St Magnus Bay.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical

CCT 1: Developed Voe and Firth- There are three developed voes and firths in the Hillswick - The Hams CCa. Mangaster Voe has two finfish sites and associated onshore development. There are not many houses around the voe due to its steep sides. Hamar Voe also has two aquaculture sites both finfish farms and related onshore development. Much of the coast is undeveloped with a few small crofts set up on the hillside.

Ura Firth has two settlements, Hillswick and Urafirth. There are two aquaculture sites, one finfish and one shellfish. There are houses between the road and coast along with a school and community hall.

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe and Firth- There are two undeveloped voes; Gunnister Voe and Mavis Grind. Gunnister Voe has dispersed settlement at the head of the voe and along the southern coast. Mavis Grind has no onshore or offshore development.

CCT 3: Voe and Firth Network- There are two voe and firth networks within the Hillswick - The Hams CCa separated by a stretch of moorland between Nibon and Mangaster.

In the north, Ura Firth, Hamar Voe and Gunnister Voe create a network. Ura Firth is the largest firth in the CCa. There is some aquaculture in Ura Firth and Hamar Voe. To the south of the CCa, Mangaster Voe and Mavis Grind create a small network with Roe Sound. Aquaculture is not found in Mavis Grind.

CCT 4: Developed Island Sound- There is one developed island sound, Roe Sound between Muckle Roe and the mainland. In this small sound a bridge was constructed in 1905 and replaced in 1999. There is a small pier next to the bridge, a marina and terrestrial development along the south coast of the Sound. Hamar Voe does have aquaculture development, however the finfish site is at the mouth of the voe and the shellfish farm has relatively low visual impact. The sound connects Busta Voe to St Magnus Bay.

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound- There are four undeveloped island sounds in the Hillswick - The Hams CCa with two named North Sound and two named South Sound. North Sound at the mouth of Gunnister Voe separates the Isle of Gunnister from the mainland, and South Sound sits between the Isle of Nibon and the mainland. At the mouth of Mangaster Voe North and South Sound separate Egilsay from the mainland on either side of Mangaster Voe.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- There is some low rocky shore along the western shore of Ura Firth with a shingle ayre at the head of the firth. Rocky shore can be found as outcrops mainly around the head of the voes and firths, usually mixed with shingle ayres.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- Mainly found within the voes and firths of the Hillswick- The Hams CCa, such as Mavis Grind, Mangaster, Roe Sound, South Ham, Ness of Hamar and the Bight of Niddister.

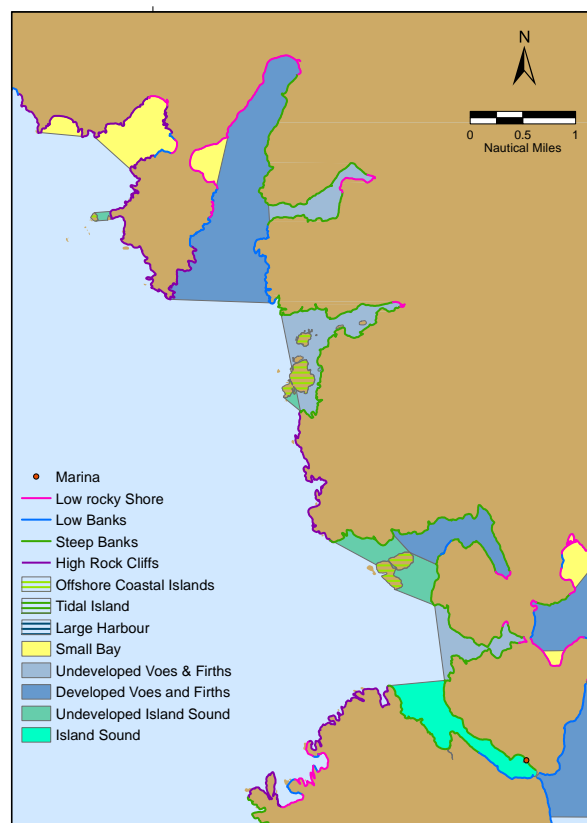
CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- Steep banks is the dominant CCT for the Hillswick - The Hams CCa as there are so many steep sided voes. This has a direct impact on development levels as much of the coast is too steep to build on with very limited vehicular access.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- There are two areas of high cliffs in the Hillswick - The Hams CCa. Around the Ness of Hillswick and the Hams of Muckle Roe with both areas popular walking routes.

CCT 11a: Marina- There is one small marina in Roe Sound.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- there is one small bay at Hillswick with a shingle ayre which was used historically to dry fish on.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are five islands in the Hillswick - The Hams CCa; Egilsay, Isle of Nibon, Crog Holm, Isle of Gunnister and the Holm of Gunnister. There are no remains on any of the islands other than sheep folds.



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Experiential

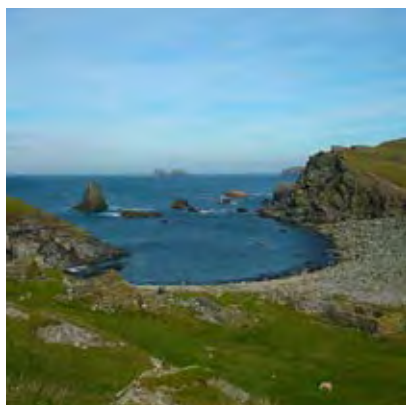
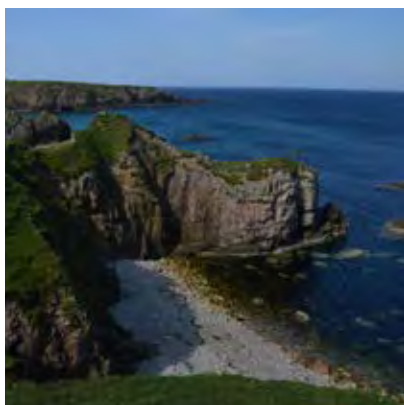
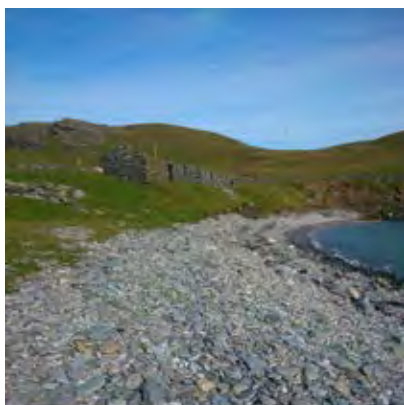
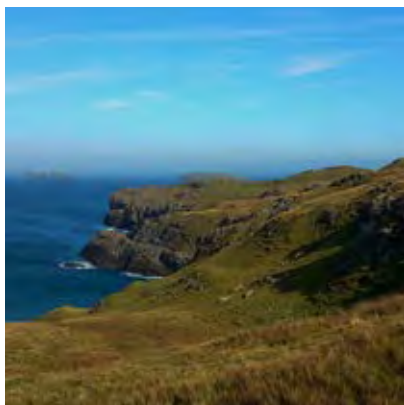
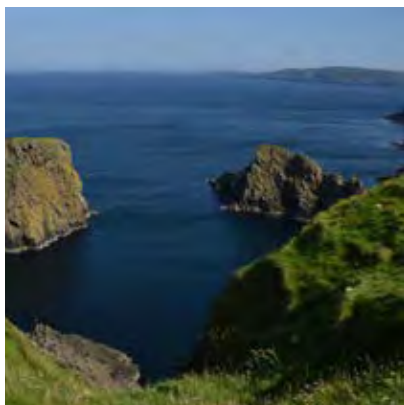
The Hillswick - The Hams CCa is an interesting coastline with a variety of open and enclosed coast. Hillswick Ness and the Hams of Muckle Roe offer panoramic cliff top walks and the various voes create intimate spaces. Mavis Grind is a big tourist attraction due to the geology of the area. It also has remnants of anti-tank traps from the [Second World War](#).

Sensitivities

There are relatively low levels of terrestrial development in the Hillswick - The Hams CCa due to much of the coastline being either steep banks or cliffs. Therefore any large scale development would need to be strategically placed. There are a number of aquaculture sites throughout the CCa. Most of the voes and firths are medium to small in size and would not be able to have many more farms without it detracting visually.

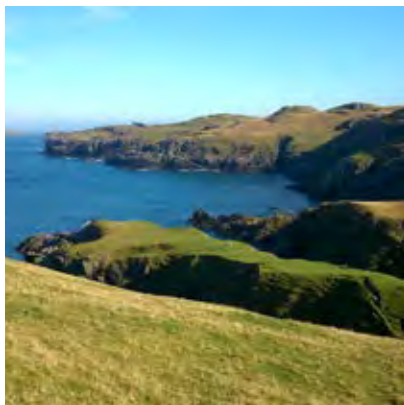
Forces for Change

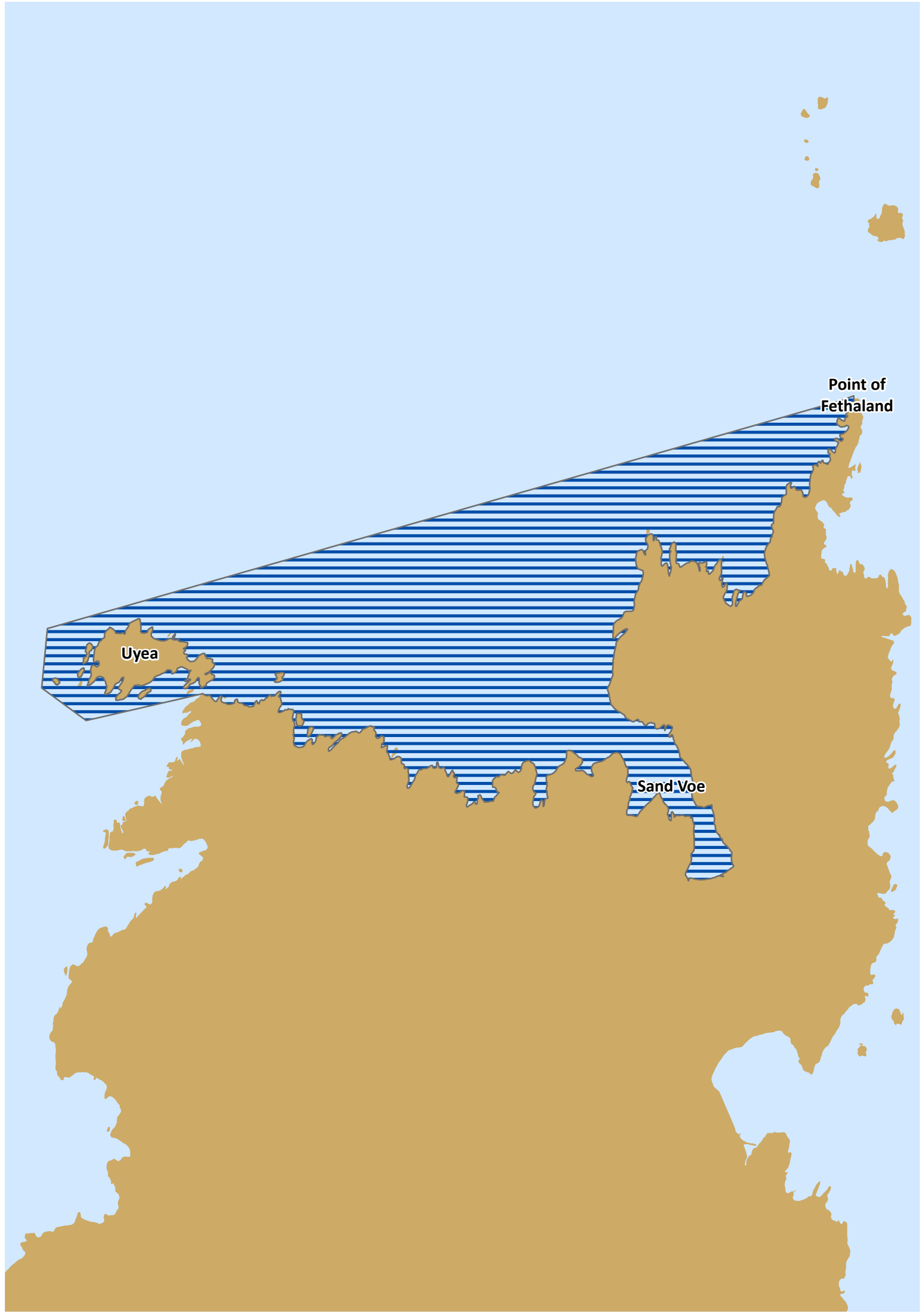
There are currently no forces for change.



North Mainland

24. North Roe Coastal Character Area







Uyea Isle

Summary Description

The North Roe Coastal Character Area (CCa) is along the northern coast of the Shetland Mainland. The study area extends from the Isle of Uyea to the Point of Fethaland.

*Once a busy **crofting** and fishing area with a large fishing station at Fethaland, the coastline is quiet today. A Shetland **access route** between Uyea and Fethaland is a popular walking route with much to see along the fragmented coastline.*

There is a small cluster of settlements around Sand Voe.

Key Characteristics

- *Fragmented Coast*
- *Historically important sites*
- *Popular for walkers*



Remains of Fethaland Haaf Station

Historic Context

There is evidence that people have lived around North Roe for thousands of years. Of particular interest is the remains of a **Neolithic** axe factory on the way to Uyea. **Steatite** was also quarried by the **Vikings** on the Point of Fethaland and in the 18th century Fethaland was an extremely important fishing station with remains of the huts still able to be seen. **Crofting** was, and still is, an important part of the community with **township** ruins found along the North Roe coast.

Historic Features

Uyea Township- The **township** of Uyea was a large community at one time, with eleven **crofts** in use in 1851. By 1906 they were nearly all derelict, and now they have been merged into one **croft**. Close to the shore there are fishing **böds** ruins. Leaving from North Wick, the men would take their catch to Roer Mill, Fethaland to be dried.

Steatite Quarry- On the Point of Fethaland, there is a **steatite** or soap stone quarry site. It is possible to see the hollow marks where bowls were carved out by the **Vikings**. People have also been etching their initials into the rock for hundreds of years. The site is however currently under threat of coastal erosion, with a large piece already lost to the sea.

Fethaland Haaf Station- The haaf station at Fethaland was one of the largest in Shetland and was used during the 17th century herring fishing boom with around 60 boats working from it. The **böds** were situated along the shore with roofs that were removed during the winter. The fish was salted and dried on the large pebble beach connecting the Isle of Fethaland to the Mainland. Small **böds** related to the fishing industry can also be found along the coast to Uyea.

Industry

Fishing- Creels are laid along the coast close inshore

between Uyea and Fethaland and further offshore larger boats fish for white fish, shellfish and mackerel.

Tourism- There is an **access route** that runs from Uyea to Fethaland and it is a popular walking route for tourists and residents. Fethaland is also popular due to its historic importance.

Landscape

The North Roe coast is a **crofting** landscape with much of the outer coast covered by heather moorland and the inner coast, which is closer to the **crofting townships**, having more improved grazing. Much of the landscape is quite steep and there are panoramic views out to the north.

There is one LCT covering the North Roe CCa which is Coastal Edge due to the cliffs running along the shore. At Fethaland this is immediately backed by Peat Moorland and the rest of the CCa is mainly backed by Undulated Moorland and Lochs.

Geology

The North Roe CCa is valued for its complex geology. Between The Breck and Raas Wick, the landscape is mainly **peat** with small intrusions of **granite** scattered across the landscape. From Sand Voe to Fethaland there is an array of rock and **peat** running in a nearly north south orientation, with many **fault lines** cutting through the landscape. The isle of Uyea is mainly comprised of glacial deposits.

Geosites

- 32. Fethaland- n/a
- 33. Uyea to North Roe Coast- International significance
- 34. Fugla Ness- National significance
- 35. Beorgs of Uyea- National significance

Landscape Features

Ronas Hill- Although not visible throughout the whole of the CCa, Ronas Hill is still a dominant feature of the landscape.

Fethaland Light- The automated light on the Point of Fethaland is a focal point for the isle and also for the shipping coming into Yell Sound.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth: Sand Voe is the only voe within the CCa. There are no aquaculture sites within the voe and limited shoreline development. At the head of the voe there is a sandy beach and to the east a rocky outcrop which is prominent due to the dark colour of the rock and the angular shapes. Sand Voe is on an approximately south west orientation, with the only view out to sea from the eastern corner of the beach.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks: In some areas along the coast the cliffs become steep banks particularly around Garmus Taing up to Fethaland.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs: High Rock Cliffs is the dominant CCT of the North Roe CCa. Cliffs are found around the Isle of Uyea, along the coast to the Point of Fethaland. The cliffs are sheer in places with the cliffs on the Point of Fethaland and Uyea particularly dramatic.

The highest cliffs in the CCa can be found along the side of Brunt Hill. The cliff scenery along this stretch of coast is fragmented with various stacks, skerries, caves and arches.

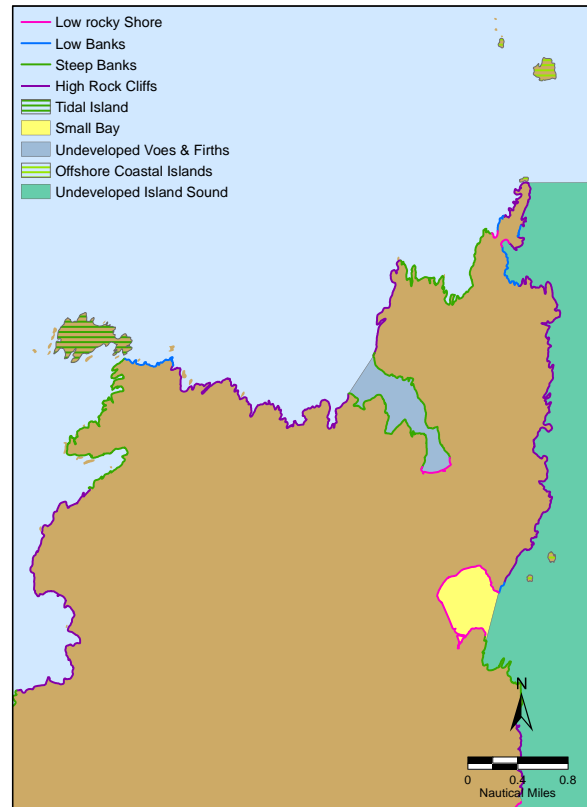
CCT 14a: Tidal Island- There is one tidal island, Uyea which is connected to the mainland via a tombolo. The tombolo across to Uyea is striking white sand. People crossing the tombolo is quite seldom so it often has an untouched quality with no foot prints visible. On a calm day the white sand and bright blue water give the beach a very picturesque appearance.

Experiential

The scenery along the North Roe CCa is spectacular and is a valued asset with SSSI designations and makes up part of the Shetland NSA. The remoteness of the settlements, especially at Uyea and Fethaland is thought provoking and the area is an important part of Shetland's cultural heritage.

The view from the cliffs is exhilarating with many different features such as caves, geos, stacks and skerries. It is also possible to see across to Yell on a clear day.

The North Roe CCa is valued because of its remote and isolated feel. The walking can be challenging at times.



Sensitivities

The North Roe CCa is a remote coastline with very little modern development. There is no vehicular access to much of the coast and it is prized for its scenic qualities being part of the **Shetland NSA**. Although the coast is highly sensitive to onshore development, offshore development would not effect it as much.

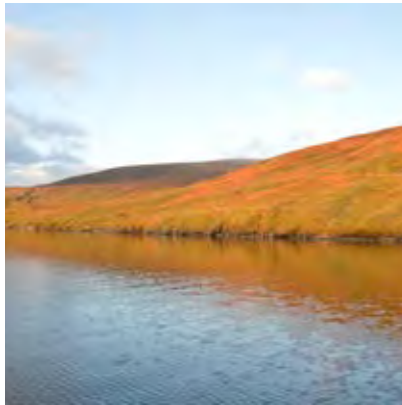
Forces for Change

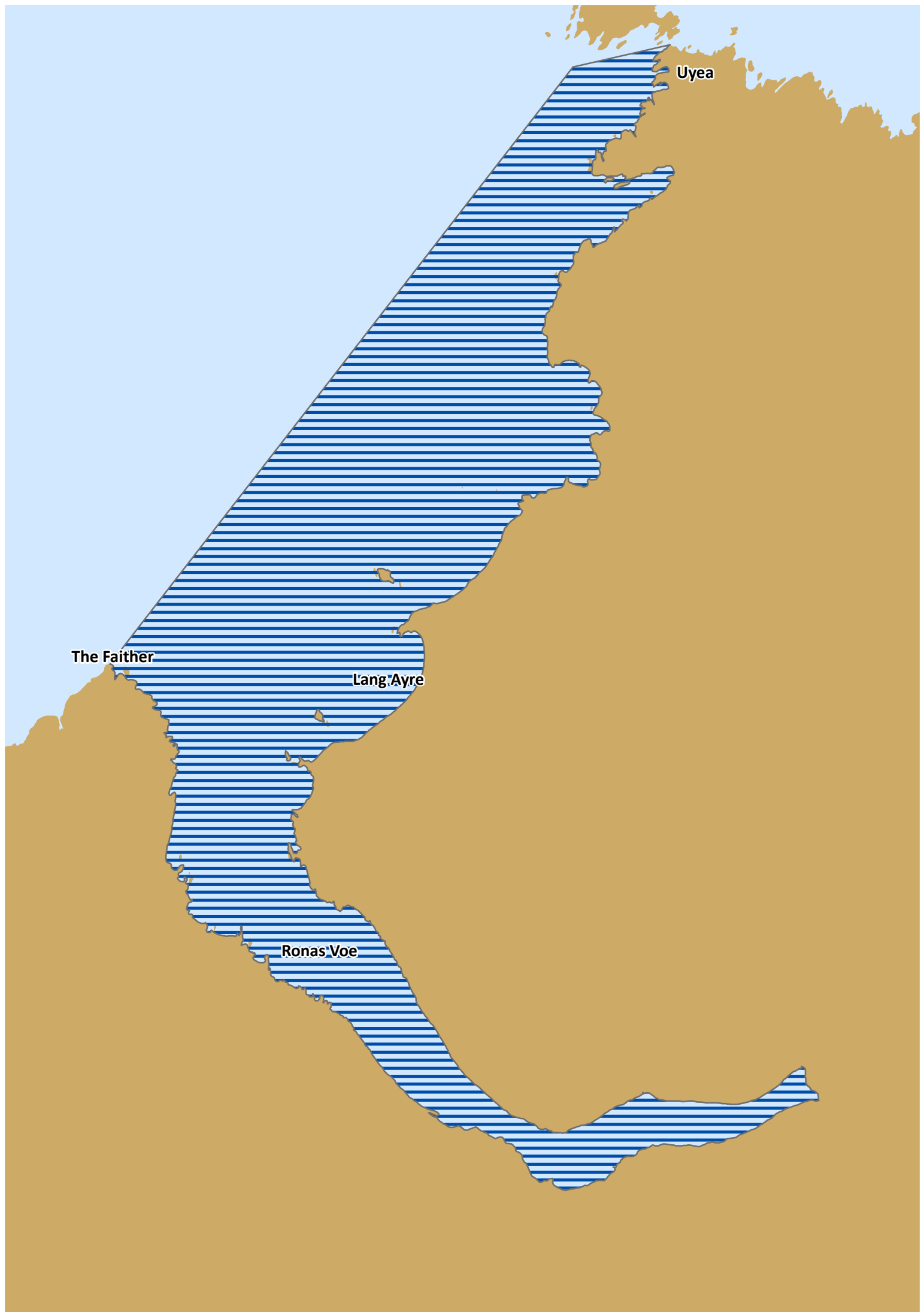
The coastal path and associated stiles and gates need to be continually maintained so they do not cause any negative impacts and their usage can continue.



North Mainland

25. Ronas Coastal Character Area





Uyea

The Faither

Lang Ayre

Ronas Voe



Summary Description

The Ronas Coastal Character Area (CCa) covers Ronas Voe, a large voe running six miles inland, and the west coast of North Roe in Northmavine. It runs from The Faither, round Ronas Voe and up the coast to Uyea.

Offshore and onshore development is constrained to within Ronas Voe, with eight aquaculture sites and terrestrial development mainly on the southern coast of the voe.

The landscape is mainly heather moorland ending in steep banks or cliffs used for rough grazing and has remained mainly undeveloped through history.

Key Characteristics

- *Dramatic cliff scenery*
- *Ronas Voe is a large voe cutting through the landscape*
- *Ronas Hill is a dominant feature*
- *Lang Ayre popular locally*



Burrier Wick

Historic Context

With high cliffs and steep banks along much of the coastline, the Ronas CCa has always been a fairly quiet area with minimal development. The main structures found along the coast are related to the **crofting** that has occurred for centuries.

Historic Features

Whaling Stations- After restrictions were put on whale catching in Norway in 1903, two whaling stations were established in Ronas Voe. Both companies had stopped trading in Shetland by the 1930s due to the industry being no longer viable. There are no remains of the stations today.

Industry

Aquaculture- There are eight aquaculture sites within Ronas Voe with five shellfish and three finfish.

Processing- There is one shellfish processing factory based in Ronas Voe. The factory mainly works with crab.

Landscape

The landscape of the Ronas CCa is highly valued for its scenic qualities especially around Ronas Hill with a variety of designations covering the area. Most of the area is covered by heather moorland and peatland with rocky outcrops of red rock characteristic of the area. Swinister, Heylor and Uyea have improved land due to centuries of cultivation.

The coast is covered by two LCTs. From the Faither to the Brough is covered by Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast. The rest of the coast is covered by the Coastal Edge LCT. Immediately behind the coastal fringe are areas of Major Uplands around Ronas Hill and Undulating Moorlands and Lochs.

Geology

The majority of the coastline is made up from **granite** rock which constitutes the red rock of the area. It covers the coast from Hamara Field down to Pobie Sukka and from Skeo Head to the Stack of Sumra. There are a number of **dacitic** intrusions which are an igneous, volcanic rock within the granite area. From the Stack of Sumra to the Faither is a mixture of volcanic lava and **tuff** related to the volcano that was once found at Eshaness. Finally, there is a small area of meta igneous rock around Uyea which is a igneous rock that has been **metamorphosed**.

Geosites

- 34. Fugla Ness (North Roe)- National significance
- 39. The Blade, North Roe- Local significance

Landscape Features

Ronas Hill- Please refer to [page 196](#).

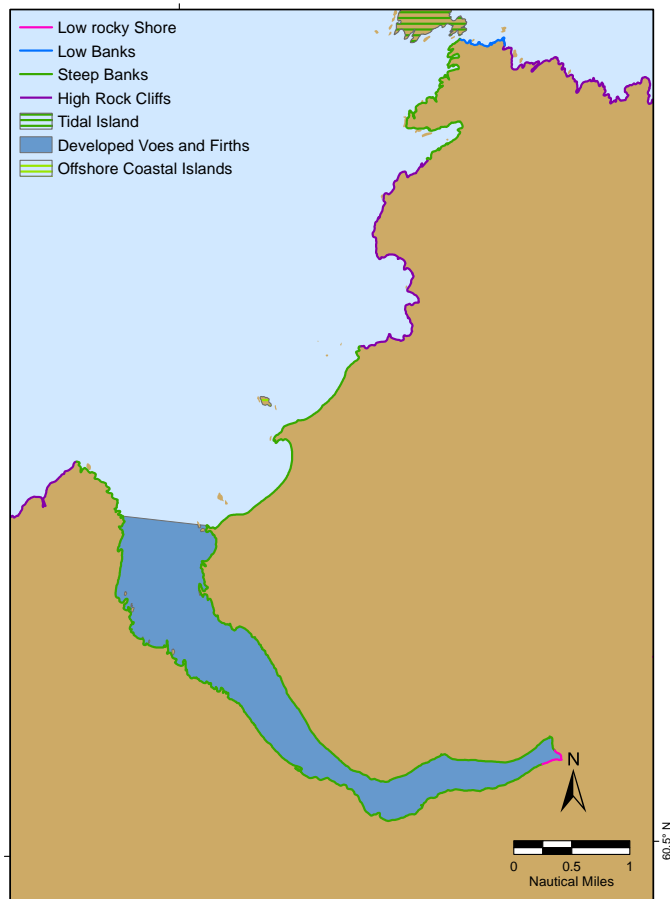
Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1: Developed Voe and Firth- Ronas Voe is the only voe in the CCa. It is a large voe with the typical steep sides especially on the northern coast. Although there is minimal onshore development, there are numerous aquaculture sites within the voe and pier infrastructure at Skeo Head.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks: From Stany Sneutit down to Ketligill Head are steep banks with the Lang Ayre at the base of Stonga Banks, a prominent feature of the area. Steep banks can also be found from the Geo of Lerradale round to the Faither.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs: From South Wick down to Stany Sneutit there is some spectacular cliff scenery with a variety of stacks and skerries just offshore.



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Experiential

Much of the Ronas CCa is very remote with walking the only way to access much of the coastline. Most of the CCa is made up of cliffs and steep banks giving panoramic views out to sea. Ronas Hill is a dominant feature of the area and Lang Ayre a popular destination. Ronas Voe is a large voe with similarities to the fjords of Norway. A number of waterfalls cascade down the cliffs into the sea around the Brough and heather clad hills create a variety of colours through the seasons.

Sensitivities

Ronas Voe has a number of aquaculture sites already and pier infrastructure making it have a low sensitivity to most development. The rest of the CCa however, is highly sensitive due to the remote coast and the undeveloped nature it currently possesses.

Forces for Change

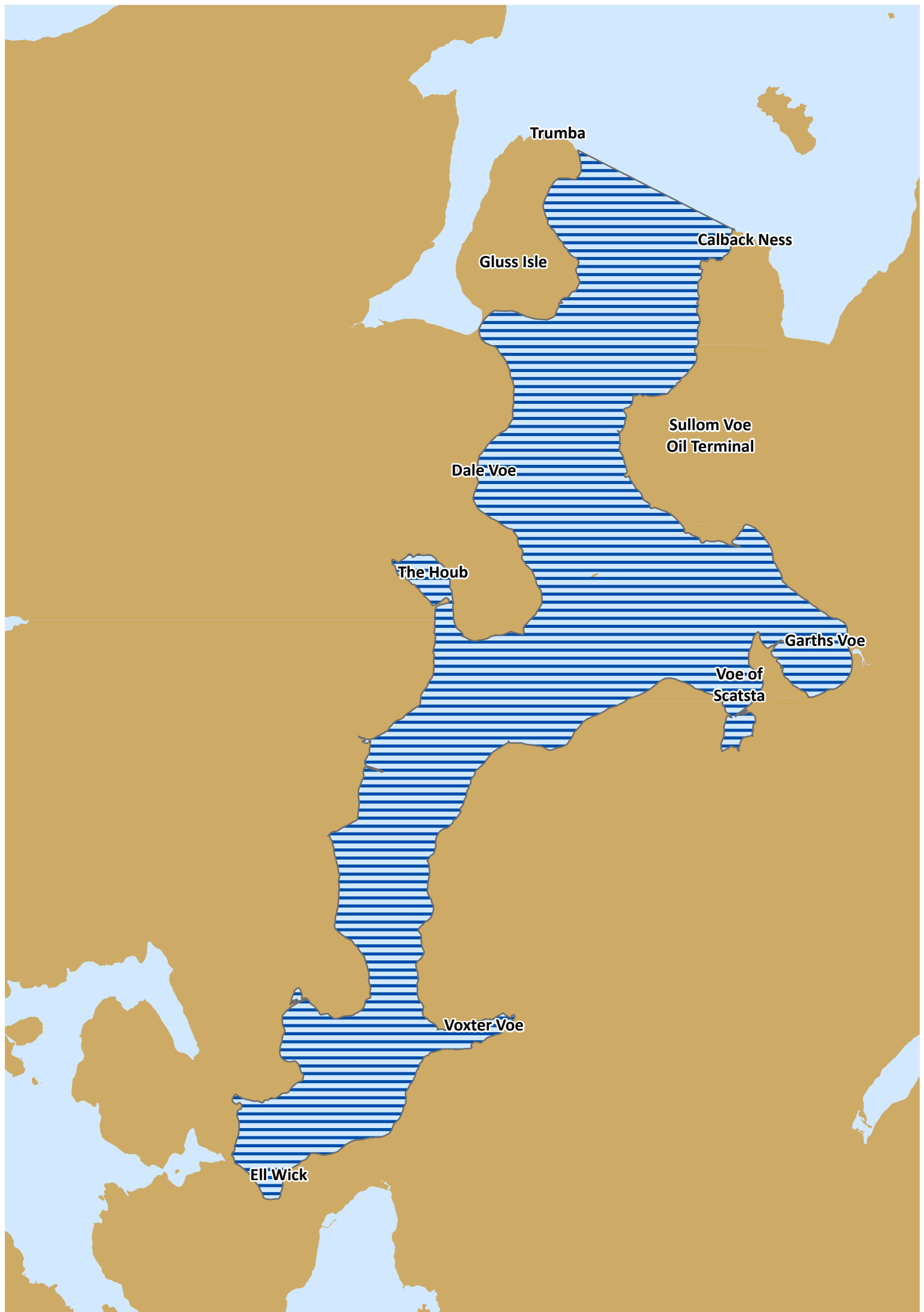
There are currently no forces for change.



North Mainland

26. Sullom Voe Coastal Character Area





Trumba

Gluss Isle

Cālback Ness

Sullom Voe
Oil Terminal

Dale Voe

The Houb

Garths Voe

Voe of
Scatsta

Voxter Voe

Ell Wick



Sullom Voe

Summary Description

The Sullom Voe Coastal Character Area (CCa) is in the north between Northmavine and Delting. The CCa extends from Brae up to Skaw Taing (Delting) across to Trumba (Gluss Isle) across to East Ness (Northmavine) and back down the coast through Sullom to Brae.

The mouth of Sullom is a busy area as it is the entrance to the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal and Sella Ness port. Around half the voe is included in the Sullom Voe harbour limits. It is used recreationally and on a small scale commercially for fishing and creels.

To the north the voe deepens and opens up into Yell Sound. As you move further south, the voe becomes narrower and steeper. The most dominant features around the voe are Ronas Hill and the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal.

Key Characteristics

- *Longest voe in Shetland running north south orientation with a slight bow shape*
- *North end opens up into Yell Sound, becomes narrower towards Brae*
- *Landscape is mainly rough grazing with heather clad hills and a large industrialised area in Delting including the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal, Sella Ness port and Scatsta airport*
- *Ronas Hill is a dominant feature.*
- *Coastline is mainly low rocky coast with areas of salt marsh, beach and low cliffs.*



Vaxter Voe

Historic Context

Until the 1940s, Sullom Voe was relatively quiet with small fishing settlements and **croft**s along the shore. During **WWII** military camps and airfields were set up at Calback, Graven and Scatsta to cover the air and sea space between Iceland and Norway. The camps were abandoned at the end of the war and the area returned to a **crofting** area once more. In 1969 the discovery of crude oil in the North Sea changed Shetland forever. Because of Shetland's proximity to the oil fields, it was apparent that the isles would be vital in the development of the industry. Around 20 companies had interest in the oil and all presumed they would build their own premises in the isles. Thankfully this was not the case and because of a piece of legislation passed by the UK Government, the Zetland County Council Act 1974, one site was created with Sullom Voe being chosen due to the naturally deep waters and relatively sparse community.

Historic Features

Calback Battery (Scheduled Monument)- Situated at the Kames within the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal fences, the Calback Battery was in operation from 1940-1944.

Scatsta and Sullom Voe Airfields- Sullom Voe seaplane base was set up in 1939 and was the most northerly base in Britain. The base was to cover the area between Norway and Iceland with flying boats being used to scour the area for German U-Boats. Scatsta Airfield was set up not long after the seaplane base with the plan to have three runways. However, a lack of labour and the hard terrain saw this reduced to two. Both bases were reduced to care and maintenance in 1946.

Vaxter House (Category B listed building)- Vaxter House has a commanding setting at the head of Vaxter Voe in Delting. The house was originally a manse for the Church of Scotland. The last owner

Robbie Hughson, donated the house to the Shetland people and it is now run as an outdoor centre.

Industry

Oil and Gas- Sullom Voe is the base for Europe's largest oil terminal. Covering 400 ha of land at Calback Ness, Delting the terminal is a lot less visually intrusive than many would think. Construction of the terminal began in 1975 and was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 1981. The terminal receives oil from over two dozen oil fields to the east and west of Shetland.

Gas is also taken onshore at Sullom with some of the gas used to power the power station which is operated by Fortum. The rest is exported to the Magnus platform for enhanced oil recovery. A new gas plant built for Total is located next to the oil terminal and was officially opened in 2016.

Sella Ness Port- Run and owned by the [Shetland Islands Council](#), the port provides access to the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal and the Sella Ness industrial estate. It also provides facilities for ship to ship transfer, moorings for vessels and pilot and tug services.

Fishing- There is a small amount of fishing and creeling in Sullom Voe with Sella Ness providing a vital landing pier.

Landscape

The landscape around Sullom Voe seems to be a mirror image for the most part on each side of the coast. To the north around East Ness; Ollaberry; and Skaw Taing, Delting; the landscape is quite low, with East Ness and Gluss having some improved grazing for sheep, ponies and cattle. However, Skaw Taing on the opposite side is heavily industrialised. From Gluss down to Sullom the landscape changes to heather and peat moorland used for rough grazing for sheep. Around Sullom there is more improved grazing and some crops. On the east side of the Voe the topography is comparable with land along the

coast backed by relatively steep hills, but there is no settlement along the coast. The landscape becomes steeper around Voxter and the Ness of Haggister. As you come into Voxter Voe the topography begins to descend towards Brae. Cliva Hill is a sheer face of red rock to the south west of the Voe and a definitive edge to the CCa.

There are three LCTs found within the CCa: Peatland and Moorland, Undulating Moorland and Lochs and Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds.

Geology

The [Walls Boundary Fault](#) runs along part of the west coast of Sullom Voe and extends north along the coast of Yell Sound and south through Walls. The main underlying rock type is igneous which is found at the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal site, Sella Ness, Scatsta Airport, Brae in Delting and Gluss Isle down to Sullom in Northmavine. From Scatsta to Brae the bedrock is Moine which is categorised under the Yell Sound 'Division'. Around Sullom is also Moine but it comes under the Fethaland 'series'. Finally there is a small area of [Dalradian](#) rock around Lunnister and Haggister which forms part of the Ollaberry 'series'.

Geosites

- 46. Maggie Kettles Loch- International significance.
- 47. Garths Voe, Quoy of Garth- International significance
- 49. Houb of Scatsta- International significance
- 104. Ell Wick- Local significance

Landscape Features

Cliva Hill- A sheer rock face with the main road into Northmavine running past the base, cutting through the landscape. The reddish coloured rock draws the eye down to the south west of the voe and along to Mavis Grind.

Ronas Hill- Ronas Hill is included in the 'Yell Sound' CCa please refer to [page 196](#) for a description.

Plantations- There are a small number of tree plantations around Sullom Voe which is uncommon in Shetland. The plantations are made up of a variety of species such as beech, willow, pine and dog rose. These reflect the shelter offered in the voe which has allowed these trees to mature.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1: Developed Voe and Firth- Sullom Voe is a

developed voe with a concentration of development close to the mouth of the voe. Sullom Voe Oil Terminal, Sella Ness Port and Scatsta Airport are all found on the eastern coast of the voe. As the voe is a restricted development area, there are no aquaculture sites within the voe. There is some scattered development on the western coast of the voe with a small settlement at Sullom.

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth- There are two mini voes within the CCa however, only one is actually called a voe. Voxter voe is found near the head of the voe and differs to other mini voes as it has a steep face along the northern edge. The other mini voe is the Houb at Fugla Ness which has low lying sides, an area of salt marsh and a sand spit developing across it.

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe and Firth- Gluss Voe is a smaller undeveloped voe found at the mouth of Sullom Voe. There is some scattered development at the head of the voe and no marine development within the voe.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore: Most common CCT in the Sullom Voe CCa, low rocky shore is similar on both sides of the voe, shifting between layers of rock flat on the shore and rocky outcrops.

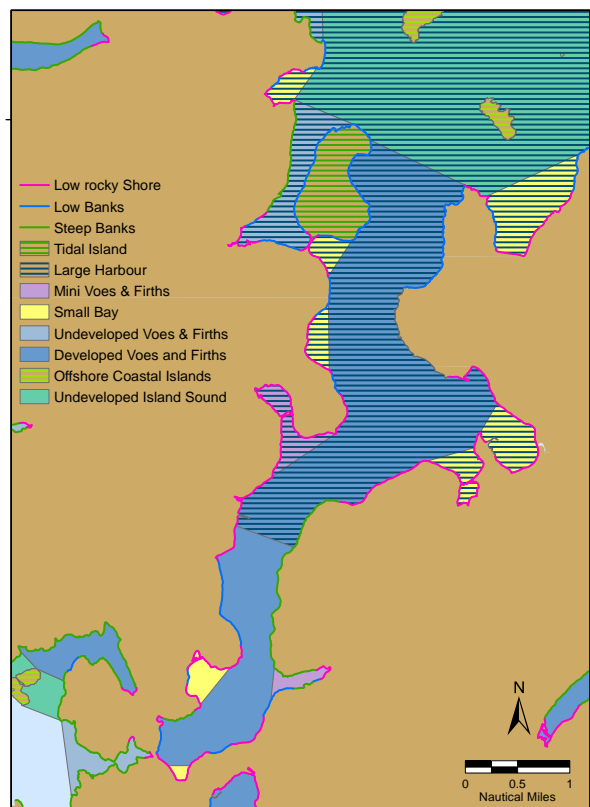
CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks: There are a number of large stretches of low banks in the Sullom Voe CCa. Around Gluss Isle and Calback Ness are the largest areas with smaller sections found at the head of the voe.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks: There are a few stretches of steep banks within the CCa with the main areas found around the Ness of Bardister, North Ward and South Ness. The banks around the mouth of Voxter Voe are particularly steep.

CCT 10: Large Harbour- Sullom Voe is a deep water harbour with facilities for oil and gas related vessels and smaller fishing and recreational boats. It is a busy area for vessels collecting oil and gas from the terminal.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are five small bays within the Sullom Voe CCa; Garth Voe, Voe of Scatsta, Dale Voe, Ell Wick and the Bight of Haggister. All have shingle ayres and are backed by a low bank.

CCT 14a: Tidal Islands- Gluss Isle is an uninhabited island connected to the mainland via a shingle ayre. The isle is only cut off during extreme high tides and is used to graze sheep through the year.



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infringe on the landscape setting of the Voxter centre without careful planning.

Tree planting in a more natural approach should be encouraged for future plantations to make them appear as if they are an intrinsic part of the landscape and coast.

Forces for Change

Oil Terminal and Gas Plant- Please refer to [page 198](#).

Brae- With the continuing works at the oil and gas plants, Brae has grown exponentially over the last few decades. There is potential for future expansion.

Experiential

Sullom Voe varies dramatically with areas of high levels of industrial works around the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal, to contrasting stretches of coast usually only seen by sheep with no access routes. The various voes and houbes create intimate spaces and make the entire voe feel more compact than it actually is. Areas around the North and South Ward in Delting feel as if they have not changed for thousands of years. The lack of access to certain stretches of coast mean they are remote even when the view out shows development on the opposite side.

Sensitivities

Sullom Voe Oil Terminal has an active environmental programme, ensuring the water around the terminal is kept clean, with yearly surveys being completed on the adjacent shore to monitor the environment. The continuation of this work is important as any contaminants could be very harmful for the wildlife and habitats further into Sullom Voe.

The steeper areas with a higher wildness value around Voxter could be sensitive to new development with further expansion from Brae having the potential to



North Mainland

27. Yell Sound Coastal Character Area



Point of
Fethaland

Fogla-lee

Burra Voe

Southladie
Voe

Colla Firth

Quey Firth

Bay of
Ollaberry

Gluss Voe

Calback
Ness

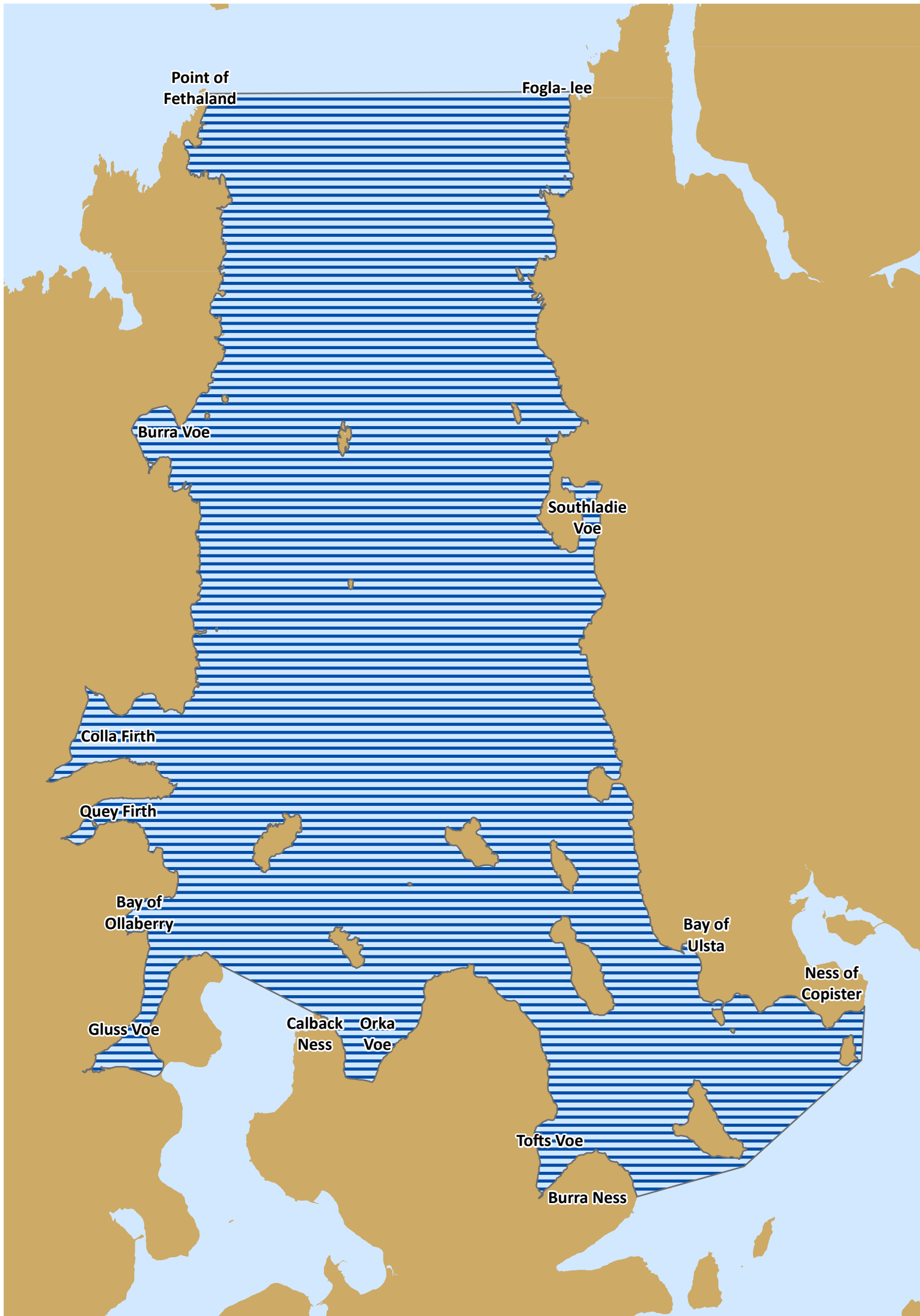
Orka
Voe

Tofts Voe

Burra Ness

Bay of
Ulsta

Ness of
Copister





Yell from Croo Taing

Summary Description

The Yell Sound CCa sits between Northmavine, Delting and Yell. The CCa extends from the point of Fethaland (Northmavine) to Fogla-lee (Yell) to the North, Longa Tonga (Yell) around Orfasay and Samphrey to Mossbank (Delting) to the south-east and Skaw Taing (Delting) to Trumba (Gluss Isle).

Yell Sound is a busy stretch of water as it is the only route into Sullom Voe, Europe's largest oil terminal, for oil tankers. The sound is included in the Sullom Voe harbour limits. Various other vessels use the sound including inter-island ferries, commercial fishing boats, scallop dredgers and creel boats. There is also a small number of yachts touring around Shetland in the summer months. The sound is used recreationally for fishing and creels, kayaking and sailing. There is a marina at Collafirth (Northmavine) and various piers and jetties throughout the CCa providing commercial and recreational access.

Key Characteristics

- *Large island sound with a north- south orientation.*
- *North end more exposed with views to open water and Ramna Stacks, more enclosed towards the south with various islands.*
- *Landscape mainly agricultural with industrial uses and a larger settlement on the northern coast of Delting.*
- *Ronas Hill is a central landscape feature.*
- *Coastline is fragmented to the north with a true remote feel, becoming lower and more developed to the south.*



Fethaland Fishing Station

Historic Context

Yell Sound was mentioned in the [Orkneyinga Saga](#) as Alasund, so was well used by the Norse but the numerous [brochs](#) and ruins along the coast would suggest it was used long before then.

Small settlements seem to have developed at the heads of bays and voes, presumably where it was more sheltered, and [crofts](#) are scattered across the landscape. Whaling and Haaf Stations were other traditional industries in the area with a whaling station at Collafirth operating until the 1920s and a Haaf Station at Fethaland which was the busiest in Shetland up until 1900.

There is also the possibility of submerged archaeology just within the Sound but with such strong tides it is unlikely that anything has survived.

Historic Features

Fethaland Haaf Station, Northmavine ([Scheduled Monument](#))- The Fethaland Haaf Station was one of the busiest in Shetland up until the beginning of the 20th century with around sixty boats working from the shore. In the 17th Century herring was also brought into Fethaland to be dried.

Collafirth Whaling Station, Northmavine- The whaling station at Collafirth was owned by the Norwegian Alexandra Company and opened in 1904. Nothing remains now.

Haas- There are a number of [laird](#) houses in the area.

North Haa, Yell ([Category A listed building](#))- Original haa built in the 17th century which was extensively remodelled by John Oglivy. Now ruinous.

Bardister Haa, Northmavine ([Category B listed building](#))- Built for the Henderson family in the late 18th century, Bardister is a traditional haa with the narrow gable end. House is now uninhabited.

Ollaberry House, Northmavine ([Category B listed building](#))- Built in 1789 also for the Henderson

family, Ollaberry was modified in the 20th century. Traditional haa which is still lived in today.

Lochend House, Northmavine ([Category C listed building](#))- Built in the late 18th century for the Nicholson family. Traditional haa with later additions. The house is still currently lived in.

North Haa, Northmavine ([Category C listed building](#))- Built in the early 19th century, North Haa is a smaller example. Currently inhabited.

Erlangen, Delting ([Category C listed building](#))- Built in the early 19th century for the Pole family. A small example of a haa. Still inhabited.

Mossbank Haa, Delting ([Category C listed building](#))- Built in the 18th century, traditional haa which has been modified over the years. Is still inhabited.

Brochs

Holm of Copister, Yell ([Scheduled Monument](#))-

A grassy mound about 6m high, the broch was built from local [limestone](#) in thin layers which is quite unusual. The overall diameter of the broch is thought to have been just over 18m.

The Brough, Yell- Situated on a tidal island, only the foundations remain which are covered in grass. The overall diameter of the broch is thought to be around 17.5m.

Head of Brough, Yell ([Scheduled Monument](#))- Sitting on a mound just above the coast, the broch has been reduced to its foundations. The broch had been surrounded by a ditch originally and was just over 18m in diameter.

Broch of Infield, Delting- ([Scheduled Monument](#))- The remains of a broch near Mossbank which has had a small lighthouse built on top of it. The diameter is thought to have been just over 18m.

Fugla Ness, Delting ([Scheduled Monument](#))- The structure is in a ruinous state but it is still possible to see where the entrance and two cells either side were. The diameter of the broch was around 17m.

North Roe, Northmavine- A mound around 10.5m in diameter has been known locally as a broch in the past however, there is no trace of a structure.

Industry

Commercial Fishing- White fish and pelagic boats travel through Yell Sound with the Altaire, which berths at Collafirth (Northmavine), being the most northerly pelagic trawler in the British fleet. Landings in Yell Sound are limited to inshore shellfish boats.

Dredging and Creels- Scallops, crabs and lobsters are fished in the Yell Sound and are a good income for the island as many are shipped abroad.

Oil- Large oil tankers are a common sight in Yell Sound as it is the only route into Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. Helicopters are also a common occurrence travelling between Scatsta airport and the northern oil rigs. Pipelines run the length of Yell Sound and into Sullom Voe Oil Terminal through Orka Voe. Export pipelines run from Firths Ness to the UK mainland.

Landscape

The northern landscape of Shetland is still largely managed in a traditional way. The best crofting land is generally found along the coast around the bays and voes with the hinterland mainly composed of peat and heather moorland. The steeper areas on the coast are also mostly moorland as it would have been unfeasible to improve the ground. The majority of settlements are small and compact around the bays and voes with larger more modern communities developed at Mossbank and Firth. There is scattered development which runs along the main roads. The Sullom Voe Oil Terminal and Gas Plant can be seen along a lot of the coast of the Yell Sound

Four LCT's cover the Yell Sound CCA; Coastal Islands, Peat Moorland, Coastal Edge, and Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds.

Geology

There is a wide variety of geology around the Yell Sound and the water body itself sits between two fault lines- the Walls boundary fault and the Nesting fault.

Yell lies to the east of the Nesting fault line and the bed rock is mainly composed of moine schist running from north to south, a characteristic which can be seen along the coastline. The impermeable bed rock, boulder clay in the area and the cool damp climate thousands of years ago combined to create the large areas of peat found in Yell with 2/3rd of the island being covered.

Northmavine lies to the west of the Walls boundary

fault thought to be part of the Great Glen fault which runs through mainland Scotland. There are 20 different types of rock in Northmavine with three being found along the Yell Sound Coast. North Roe is known for its hard granite, with Ollaberry consisting of Dalradian rocks which have contributed to the fertility of the land.

Delting sits between the two fault lines and is mainly composed of sandstone. You can see the layers of rock on the foreshore.

Geosites

- 29. West Sand Wick, Yell- Local importance.
- 30. Ness of Sound, Yell – Site of local significance.
- 32. Fethaland, Northmavine- tbc.
- 36. Brig of Collafirth, Northmavine- Local importance.
- 40. Back of Ollaberry, Northmavine– National importance.

Landscape Features

Ronas Hill- Standing at 450m, Ronas Hill dominates Yell Sound with very few places along the coast where it is not visible. It is categorised as one of the wildest landscapes in Shetland and has some important Arctic plant species, being designated a Ramsar site. The Subarctic climate has led to freeze-thaw action creating interesting features such as fell fields.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth- There are two mini voes in the CCA: Toft Voe, Delting, and Southladie Voe, Yell.

Southladie Voe- At the head of the voe there is the scattered development of West Sandwick. The landscape is low lying on either side of the voe with no marine development.

Toft Voe- There is a dispersed settlement near Toft Voe and there is pier infrastructure as it is the port for the Yell ferry. It is also used by some smaller fishing boats.

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe and Firth- There are two undeveloped firths in the Yell Sound CCA, Colla Firth and Quey Firth. There is scattered developments at the head of each firth and Colla Firth also has a pier and marina. There is no aquaculture development.

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound- Yell Sound is covered by the Undeveloped Island Sound CCT. Although it is a busy area for shipping, there is no

aquaculture development and very little terrestrial development sitting on the coast.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- One of the dominant CCTs in this character area. The low rocky coast varies between the Mainland and Yell due to the underlying geology. In Yell the rock runs to a north-south axis with sharper edges pointing upwards, whereas on the Mainland generally, the rocks are layered flat on the shore.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are a number of areas of low banks spread across the Yell Sound CCA. The largest section runs from Ulsta up to the Taing of Setter on Yell.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- There are a few stretches of steep banks within the Yell Sound CCA such as around Colla Firth and Quey Firth. North Ward and South Ward are also quite steep with Voxter Ness being the steepest.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- Mainly confined to the north of the Yell Sound CCA, high rock cliffs form dramatic scenery on both sides of the sound. There is some fragmented coast found around Fethaland.

CCT 12: Large Bay- There is one large bay in the CCA, Orka Voe. Due to the voe being filled in as part of the construction work for the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal, it is now a shallow bay with an ayre along the shore.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are a number of small bays within the Yell Sound CCA.

Burra Voe is a sheltered area with a narrow entrance. There is a pebble beach to the north and a shingle beach to the south. Both have a lagoon behind them.

West Sandwick is a beautiful sandy beach with an area of sand dunes and machair behind. It has blue flag status.

The Bay of Ulsta is where the Yell ferry docks. There is a small area of shingle at the head of the bay and hard landscaping associated with the pier.

The Bay of Ollaberry is the setting for the settlement of Ollaberry. There are two sandy beaches along the southern edge with a shingle beach found next to the pier along the northern edge of the bay.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are numerous islands within Yell Sound and some were inhabited in the last 150 years.

Samphrey- Had a small township with 36 residents

during the 1841 census but they had all left by 1881.

Orfasay- There are the remains of two structures on the island and it used to be connected to Yell during low tide.

Bigga- inhabited until the 1930s, there are the remains of a township, chapel and burial grounds on the island.

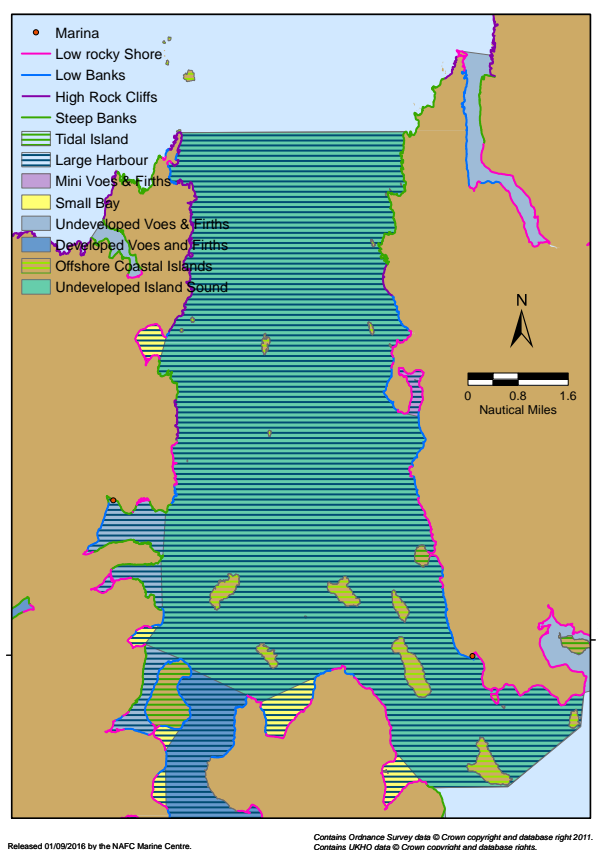
Uynarey- Now an RSPB reserve.

Brother Isle- There are the remains of one farmstead, however there are no census records, indicating the island was abandoned before the census began.

Lamba- Appears to never have been inhabited, used for grazing sheep over the summer.

Little Roe- There are the remains of some houses. In the 1841 census there were 11 people on the island, all living in one house.

There are a number of smaller islands in Yell Sound too; North and South Holms of Burravoe, Holm of West Sandwick, Muckle Holm and Little Holm.



Experiential

Yell Sound is a vast area which is over 4 miles wide from the Point of Fethaland (Northmavine) to Fogla-lee (Yell). The north is open to the power of the sea with a rugged coast bearing the impact. Within the Sound it feels more sheltered and enclosed. Even with the large scale development along the southern coast of the Sound, it is not difficult to find remote pockets of shore where you feel withdrawn from the modern world. This seclusion is only broken by the

regular helicopters and planes landing and taking off at Scatsta airport and the oil tankers coming into the Sound. The large amount of navigational aids, in the form of lights and buoys, give the impression that the Sound is a well-used area.

future as more emphasis is put on using renewable energy sources.

Sensitivities

Yell Sound comprises a lot of undeveloped landscape with a medium to high wildness value. This should be conserved and enhanced. Many of these areas are too steep or remote for development to be considered in the first place but any development close to these areas need to consider the cumulative impact it may have.

The Sullom Voe Oil Terminal which, considering its size, has a quite a low impact on the landscape. Any future developments should be carefully considered so as to continue this trend and not affect the surrounding coastline.

Thought should be given on how to preserve and improve current land management practices to make sure the peat and heather moorland landscape is sustainably managed for future generations.

Forces for Change

Sullom Voe Oil Terminal- Considering that the oil terminal is the biggest in Europe, the visual impact is a lot lower than would be expected. The current oil reserves will eventually run out which will lead to the terminal needing to be decommissioned, although it is expected that the oil terminal will continue for at least another 20 years. When this will be carried out is unknown but it will change the landscape dramatically and every possible measure must be in place to make sure it does not damage the environment.

Total Gas Plant- The £800 million project which began in 2010, was officially opened in 2016. The site sits close to Orka Voe but doesn't have a great impact on the coast.

Toft Pier- The pier at Toft is currently being rebuilt and is projected to be finished during 2020. It is an important pier for fishermen needing to come ashore quickly and was used by aquaculture firms up until its closure to vehicle traffic in 2014.

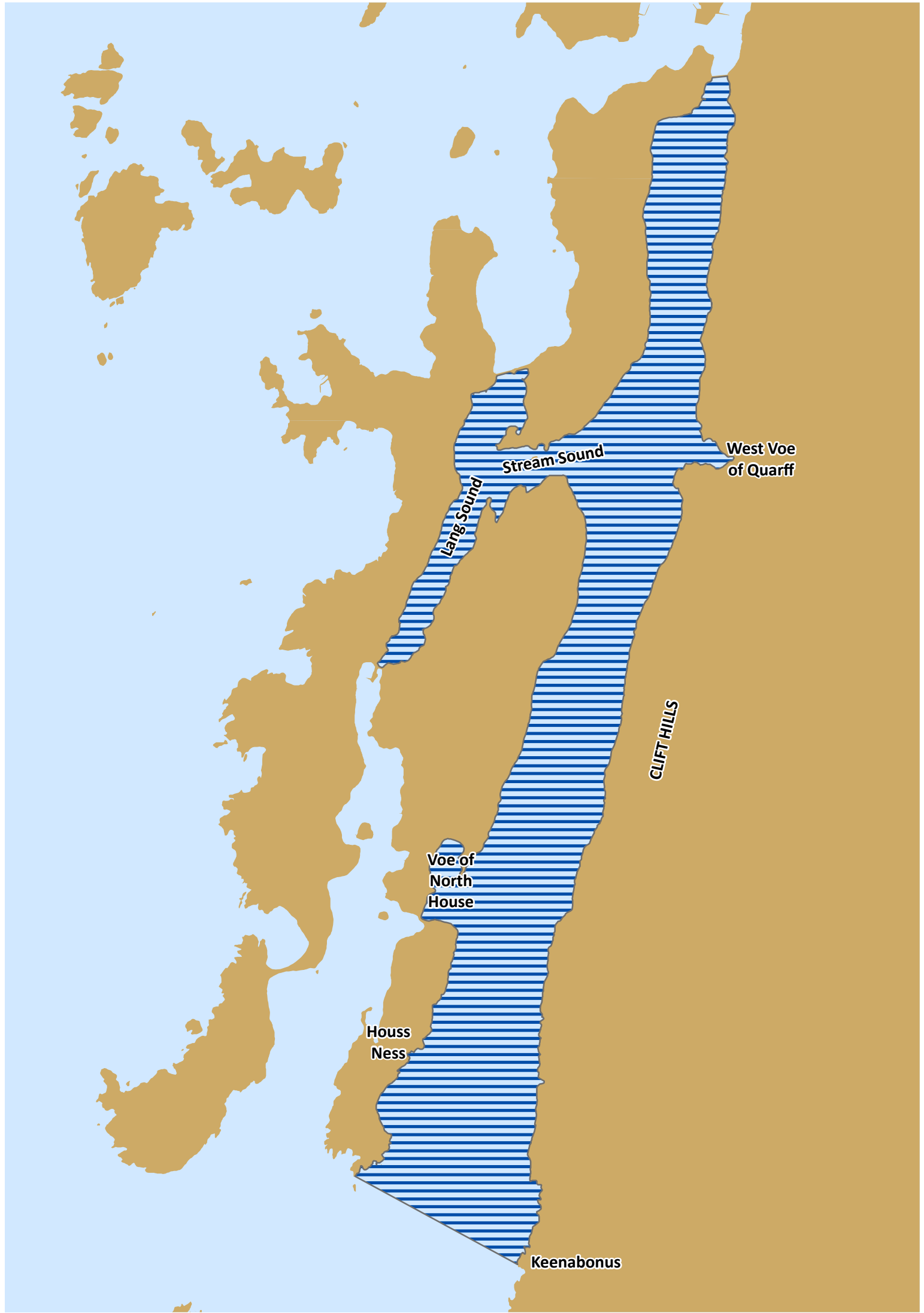
Renewable Potential- Yell Sound is very tidal and could lend itself to being used for renewables but at the moment this is unlikely to happen as Yell Sound is a Harbour Area and any devices could potentially disrupt users of the sound. This could change in the



South Mainland

28. Clift Sound Coastal Character Area





Stream Sound

West Voe
of Quarff

Lang Sound

CLIFT HILLS

Voe of
North
House

Houss
Ness

Keenabonus



Clift Hills from Houss Ness

Summary Description

The Clift Sound Coastal Character Area (CCa) is located on the west side of Shetland between Trondra, East Burra and the mainland. The area has dispersed, sparse settlements between predominantly heather moorland. The CCa includes Stream and Lang Sound.

*The landscape is very steep along the eastern edge of the sound which has hampered any development on the shore. The islands of Trondra and East Burra are low lying with **crofting** development.*

There are numerous aquaculture sites in the sounds, with associated onshore developments.

Key Characteristics

- *Clift Hills running along eastern shore visible throughout most of the CCa*
- *View down the west of Shetland to Fitful Head*
- *Numerous aquaculture sites*
- ***Crofting** landscape on Trondra and Burra*



Ward of Symbister, Houss

Historic Context

Although Clift Sound is relatively quiet compared with the rest of Burra and Trondra, this was not always the case. There was a fishing station just south of where the Trondra Bridge is currently located, and there are also ruins of **crofts** and **townships** with associated features such as field patterns and enclosures down both sides of the sound. At Houss there is a **Haa** and there are the remains of six **horizontal mills** along Mill Burn in East Burra.

Historic Features

Trondra Fishing Station- There was a small fishing station just south of the Trondra Bridge. It was in use from the 18th to the 20th century. There is very little left of its existence now.

Houss Haa (Category C Listed building**)-** Sitting on a small hill, the Houss Haa was a typical 2 ½ storey **Laird's** house of Shetland. Now in a ruinous state.

Industry

Aquaculture- Clift Sound is a busy area for aquaculture with 13 licenced sites. There is also an associated shore base in the Voe of North House on East Burra.

Landscape

The landscape around the Clift Sound CCA is reminiscent of the fjords in Scandinavia. The Clift Hills end in a sheer drop down into the water while Trondra and East Burra on the opposite side of the Sound are relatively low lying. There is only a small settlement on the eastern side of Clift Sound, Wester Quarff.

The Clift Sound CCA is covered by four LCT's; Coastal Edge, Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds, Inland Valleys and Major Uplands.

The coastal edge correlates with the steep face of the Clift Hills and the southern coast of Houss which has some low cliffs.

Geology

The geology of the Clift Sound CCA is mainly **granite**, **sandstone** and **limestone**. The **limestone** areas help to create fertile soils especially on Trondra.

The main geology of the Clift Hills is a **semi-pelite** or **metamorphosed siltstone** which is covered by a large deposit of **peat**.

Geosites

There are no Geosites within the Clift Sound CCA.

Landscape Features

Clift Hills- The Clift Hills is made up of five hills running down the eastern coast of the Clift Sound. Royl Field is the highest summit sitting at 293m. There is no development on the Clift Hills due to their steep nature and lack of vehicular access. They are a focal point for much of the west and central areas of Shetland.

Ward of Symbister- On the adjoined island of Houss to the south of East Burra, The Ward of Symbister is 62m high. Although not particularly high, the Ward offers panoramic views over East and West Burra, Trondra and on a fine day, Foula. There are also views to the south of the island of South Havra and Fitful Head.

Quarff- Quarff is an example of an inland valley, which is rarely found in Shetland as most were flooded after the last Ice Age to form the voes and firths so characteristic of Shetland. Quarff cuts across on an east to west orientation which is also uncommon.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a: Mini Voe or Firth- There is one mini voe; West Voe of Quarff which has a steeper northern shore but is very short in length. There is an area of sand flats at the head of the voe.

CCT 4: Developed Island Sound- The Developed Island Sound CCT covers the whole Clift Sound CCa. Although there is minimal development along the east coast of the CCa, Clift Sound is a busy area for aquaculture and also inshore fishing.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Majority of the west side of the sound is low rocky shore as both East Burra and Trondra are quite low lying. There are various shingle ayres found along the shore.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- Most of the eastern shore of the Clift Sound is steep banks making it comparable to fjord landscapes in Norway.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- There are cliffs along the south and east coast of Houss Ness, Green Point in East Burra and the southern coast of Trondra. There is one pocket beach called The Haas found at the base of cliffs on Houss Ness. It is only accessible by boat.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There is one small bay in the CCa. Contrary to what its name suggests, the Voe of North House is shaped like a bay with a shingle ayre at the head and there is also the shore base for the Scottish Sea Farms aquaculture sites on the eastern edge of the bay.

Experiential

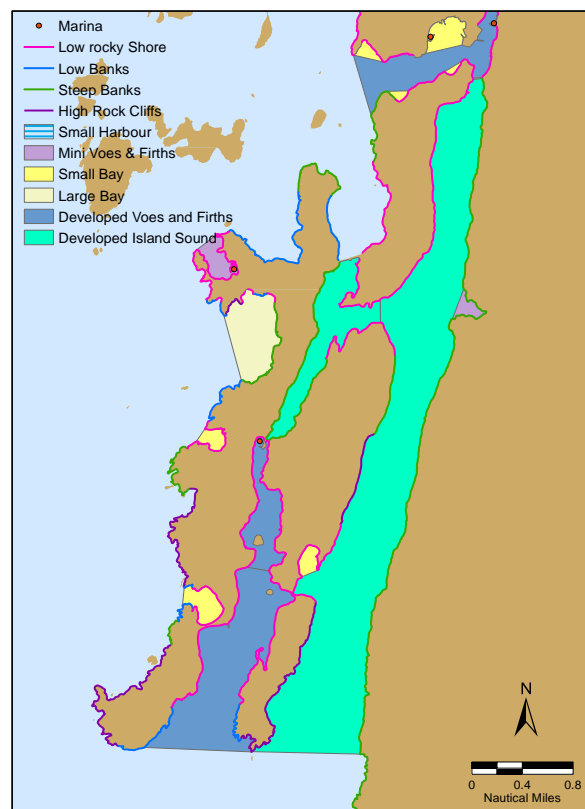
Despite its sheltered location Clift Sound offers a dramatic seascape. The steep Clift Hills plunge down into the water creating similar landscapes as found in Scandinavia. It is possible to see the hills and Trondra Bridge from the Tingwall Valley.

There are tremendous views down the south mainland and there is easy walking along most of the western coast of the Clift Sound.

Sensitivities

The Clift Hills are a mostly undeveloped and wild landscape, and as such are highly sensitive to terrestrial development. However, because of the

scale of Clift Sound, the area is able to accommodate a reasonable amount of marine activity, currently aquaculture.



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The area is also part of the Shetland NSA valued for its scenic qualities.

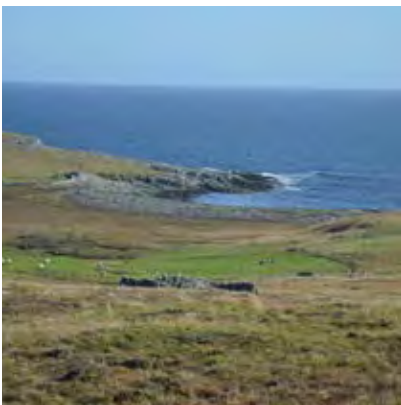
Forces for Change

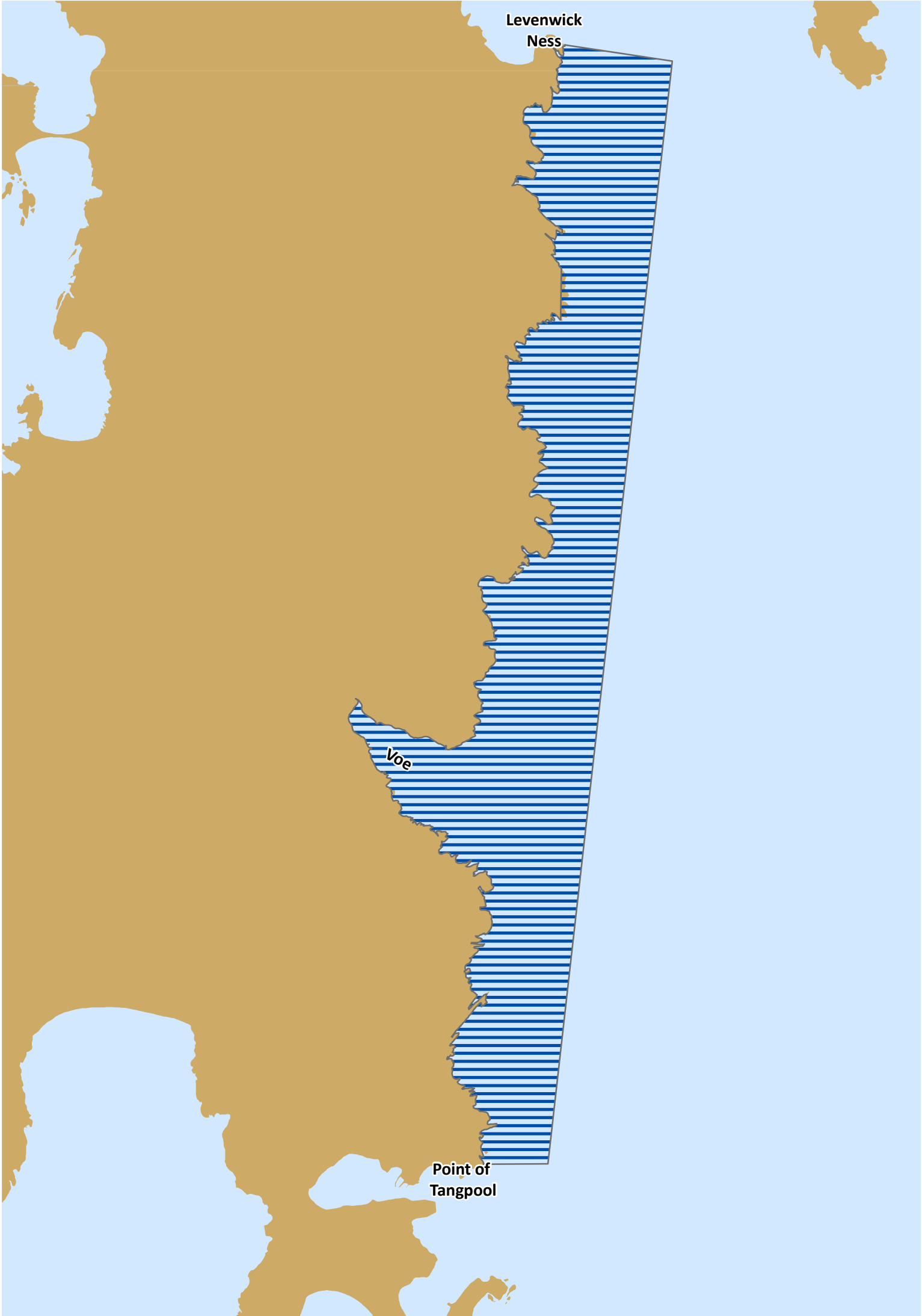
The area is unlikely to be used for marine renewables but there is the potential for increases or alterations to the aquaculture use in the area.



South Mainland

29. Dunrossness Coastal Character Area





Levenwick
Ness

Voe

Point of
Tangpool



Dunrossness Coast

Summary Description

The Dunrossness Coastal Character Area (CCa) runs from Levenwick Ness down to the Point of Tangpool. This area of coast is relatively quiet with no marine development and only three small settlements at Levenwick, Boddam and Exnaboe, with some scattered housing between.

The landscape follows a repetitive pattern, with moorland, cliffs and small rocky bays down the coastline.

There is no aquaculture in the Dunrossness CCa due to a lack of shelter.

Key Characteristics

- *Cliffs and steep banks are the predominant character types*
- *Expansive views out to sea*
- *Moderately remote coastline with little access*
- **Crofting** Landscape



Outvoe Fishing Station

Historical Context

In the South Mainland there are a proportionally high number of **brochs** in a comparatively short distance, with four found within the Dunrossness CCa. In addition, there is a range of evidence that the land has been worked by man for 1000's of years, including **burnt mounds**, **townships**, **kilns** and **horizontal mills**.

The coastline was also busier in the past, with a fishing station and curing station found in Boddam.

Historic Features

Brochs- There is four **brochs** within the Dunrossness CCa.

Levenwick Broch (Scheduled monument)- large broch over 16m in diameter found south of Levenwick. A wheelhouse has been inserted at a later date, not an uncommon occurrence in Shetland.

Dalsetter Broch (Scheduled monument)- Almost completely demolished broch that was once well defended by a series of ditches. Now stands only 50m from the edge of the cliffs.

Southvoe Broch- Located across the voe to the Dalsetter Broch, Southvoe is in a poor state. It is around 15m in diameter and stands on a raised area.

Clevigarth Broch (Scheduled monument)- found on a secluded area of coast north of Exnaboe, the Clevigarth Broch has a diameter of over 15m and the walls are distinguishable.

Outvoe Fish Curing Station (Cat B Listed Building)- The remains of two buildings can be seen, the **böd** and the store used during Da Haaf fishing in the 19th century.

Industry

Crofting and Farming- these are the main industries for the area with some crops, improved and rough

grazing.

Fishing- there is some fishing done off the coast of the Dunrossness CCa.

Landscape

The landscape of the Dunrossness CCa is similar to other CCas in the South Mainland being quite green and fertile along the coast and around the settlements, backed by moorland on the hills running roughly down the centre of the South Mainland. There is also an area of hill ground around Viridi Field creating coastal moorland along the cliff tops.

There are three LCTs in the Dunrossness CCa: Major Uplands, Peatland and Moorland, and Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast. The LCTs relate to how the landscape has been modified and managed.

Geology

The geology is a mixture of **sandstone** and **limestone** which attribute to the fertile land of the area. There are also various geomorphological features along the coastline where **fault lines** in the rock have been eroded to create geos, caves and stacks.

Geosites

80. Dalsetter- International significance

81. The Cletts, Exnaboe- National significance

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT1a: Mini Voe and Firth- There is one mini voe within the Dunrossness CCa at Boddam. Once a busy area for the fishing with a fishing station and curing station, it is now a quiet area. Low rocky shore fringes the voe with small rocky beaches gathering in sheltered areas.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Mainly

found on nesses where the cliffs have been eroded back, there are pockets of low rocky shore along the entire coastline. Because of the exposed nature of this area of coastline, there are quite often very large rocks above the high water mark.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are four stretches of low banks within the CCa: Scarfi Taing into Voe, Levenwick Ness, Blovid and Boats Noost.

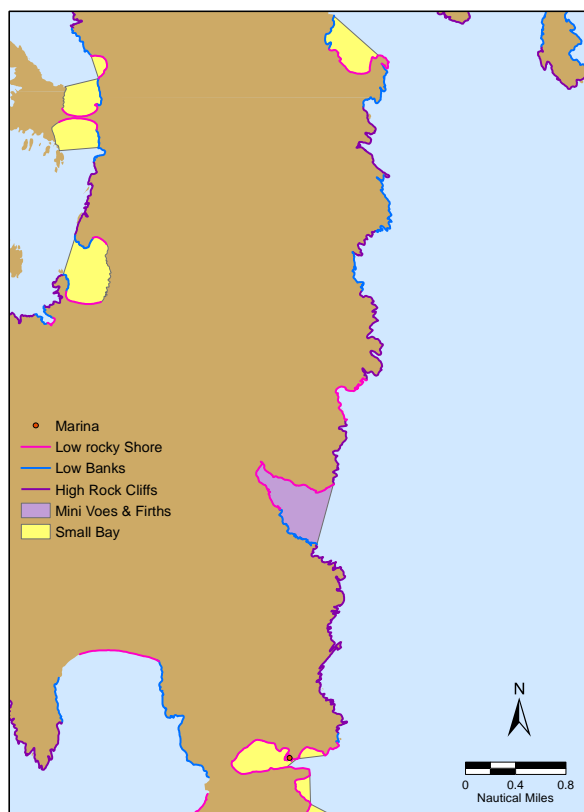
CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- Most of the Dunrossness CCA consists of the High Cliff CCT with various geos and caves where the rock has been breached. Most of the cliffs have a wave cut platform at the base caused by the waves eroding the cliffs back. There are vast panoramic views along much of the coastline out to sea and up and down the South Mainland coastline.

Sensitivities

The relatively undeveloped nature of the coast and the proximity of various archaeological features, mean that the Dunrossness CCa is sensitive to near-shore and coastline development. However, the landscape has the potential to accommodate development in particular areas due to the large scale of the landscape.

Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change.



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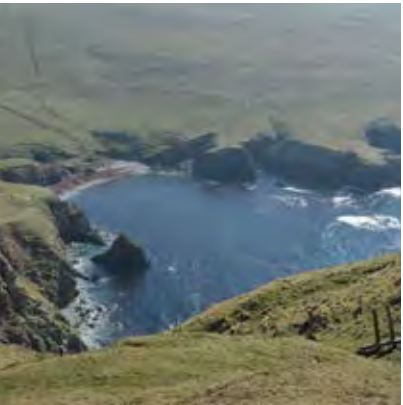
Experiential

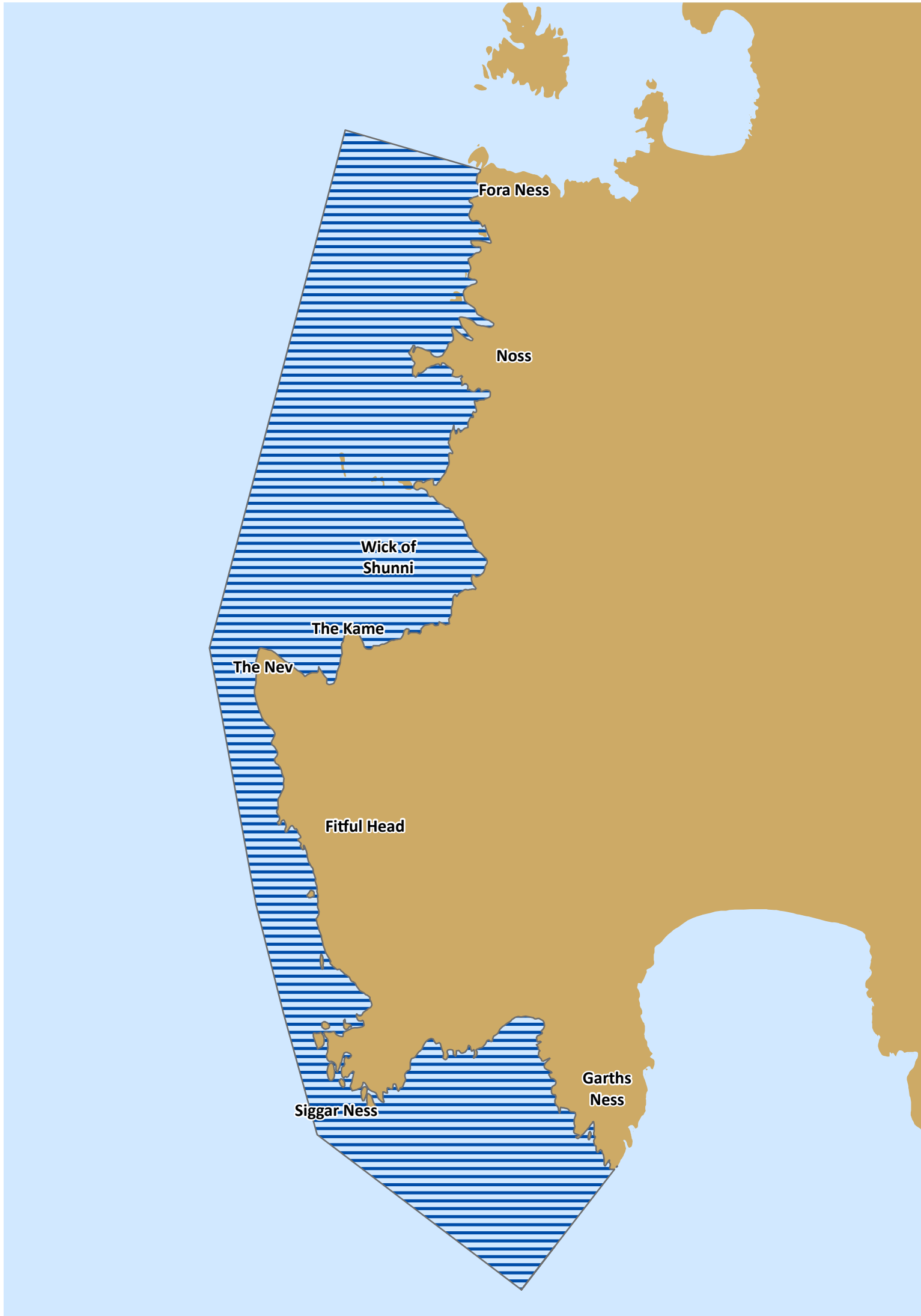
The Dunrossness CCa has some spectacular panoramic views, and although most of the coastline is viewable from the road, many areas are not accessible by vehicle giving them a secluded feeling. The abundance of historic and archaeological remains in the area, spanning 1000s of years of human occupation, add additional interest to the area. Despite this, with no beaches along this stretch of coastline, it is not maybe visited as much as other parts of the wider area.



South Mainland

30. Fitful Head Coastal Character Area





Fora Ness

Noss

Wick of
Shunni

The Kame

The Nev

Fitful Head

Siggart Ness

Garths
Ness



View from the Kame to the North

Summary Description

The Fitful Head Coastal Character Area (CCa) is located on the west side of the South Mainland. The CCa covers from Fora Ness down to Garth Ness.

The Fitful Head CCa is a quiet area due to most of the coastline being high cliffs and steep banks with very little access. There are no aquaculture sites in the area and most development is set back from the coastline.

Key Characteristics

- *High dramatic cliff scenery*
- *Low development*
- *Fitful Head is a key focal point*
- *Heather moorland*



Garth's Ness

Historic Context

There are few remains along the coastline of the Fitful Head CCa and the majority that can be seen are from the 20th century in the form of radar and radio stations and military camps from World War II.

There are also a lot of shipwrecks just off the coast and the fragmented coastline is very dangerous especially during poor weather. The most recent wreck was the Braer oil tanker which went aground in 1993.

Historic Features

Garth's Ness- The buildings found at Garth Ness were once a radio navigation station. Used to aid long range patrol aircraft and ship convoys with crossing the Atlantic, the station at Garth's Ness was operational from 1961 until 1977 and was decommissioned in 1978.

Noss Hill- Remains of a chain home radar station part of network across Shetland. There was a transmitter and receiver, engine rooms, mast bases and a remote reserve.

Industry

Fishing- There is some fishing off the coast of the CCa including creeling, scalloping and low levels of demersal fishing.

Agriculture- The land along the coast is mainly heather moorland which is used for rough grazing.

Landscape

Most of the landscape in the Fitful Head CCa slopes up to the coast ending in high cliffs. This means there is very little connection to the sea other than when right at the edge of the cliffs. Around Fitful Head and Fora Ness the land cover is mainly heather moorland. The rest is coastal maritime heath with small areas of heather.

Around Fitful Head the LCT is Coastal Edge which is immediately backed by Major Uplands. The rest of the CCa is covered by the Farmed and Settled Lowlands and Coast LCT. This shows how the landscape is more fertile around the Fitful Head CCa and allows for larger scale farming unlike other areas in Shetland.

Geology

The main geology of the southern half of the CCa is pelite with small sections of schist found at Garth's Ness and the Nev. To the north of the CCa, there is a mixture of pelite, semi-pelite, psammite, ultramafic rock, monzonite and monzogranite. There is also a layer of till and moraine deposits around Noss Hill and a layer of Peat just back from the coastline along Fitful Head. A fault line runs from Klenni Wick up parallel to the coast coming out at the Bay of Scousburgh.

Geosites

82. Garth's Ness- Local significance.

Landscape Features

Fitful Head- Fitful Head is a dominant feature not only in the Fitful Head CCa but across much of the South Mainland and up to the West Mainland too. The cliffs at Fitful Head reach a high of 283m and are a dramatic seascape. A memorial can be found past Sigar Ness for a plane that crashed into the cliffs during the WWII and there are numerous wrecks found at the base of the cliffs showing how dangerous the area is to navigate.

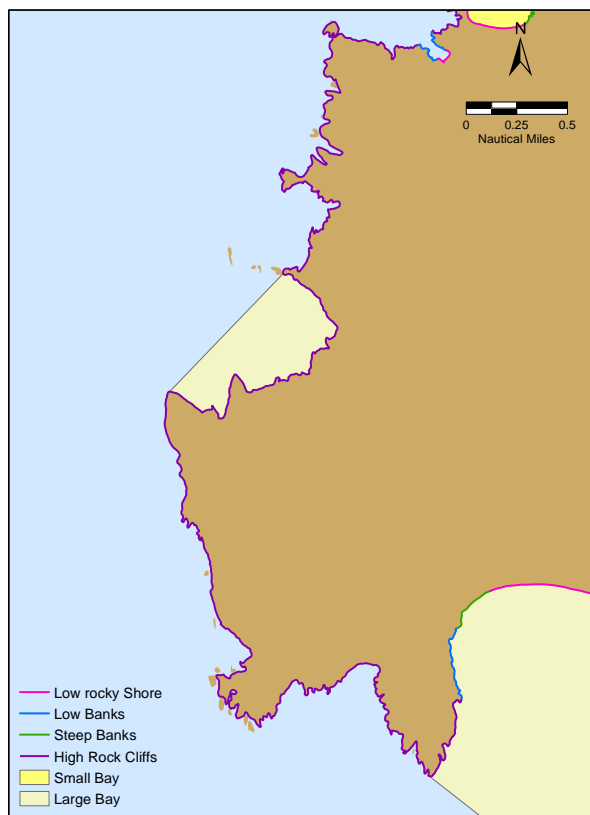
Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- High Cliffs is the main CCT in the Fitful Head CCa. Running from Garth's Ness up to Fora Ness, the highest can be found around Fitful Head at 283m. There are a variety of

stacks and skerries just off the coast.

CCT 12: Large Bay- There is one large bay in the CCa, the Wick of Shunni sitting just north of the Kame. There is no beach at the head of the bay and it is not accessible from land.



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Experiential

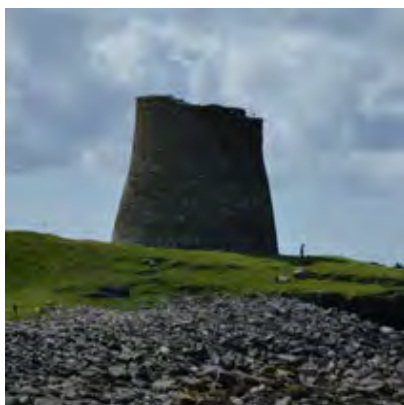
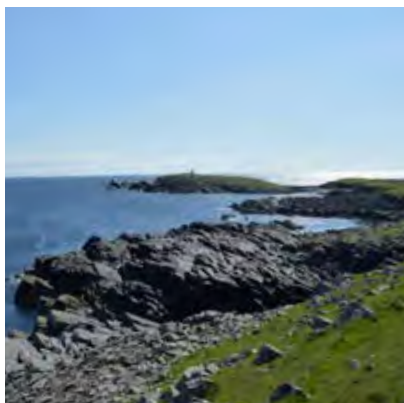
The Fitful Head CCa is a fantastic area for panoramic views with much of the coastline being high cliffs. The immediate hinterland is fairly sheltered with minimal views out to sea due to the landscape rising up to the coastline. This has created fertile farming land with large farms such as Quendale operating in the area. Much of the coastline is undeveloped and with very little vehicular access, feels remote and isolated.

Sensitivities

Much of the coast is undeveloped and thus is sensitive to large scale development onshore. However, because there is relatively little onshore development on the coastline, the area could possibly cope with marine development at an appropriate scale.

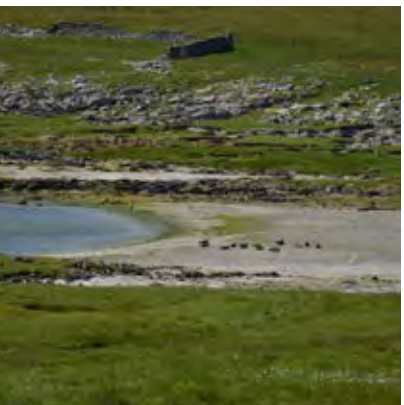
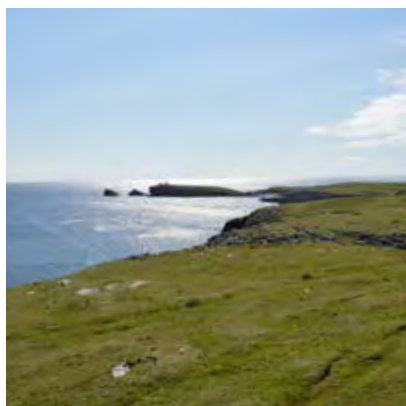
Forces for Change

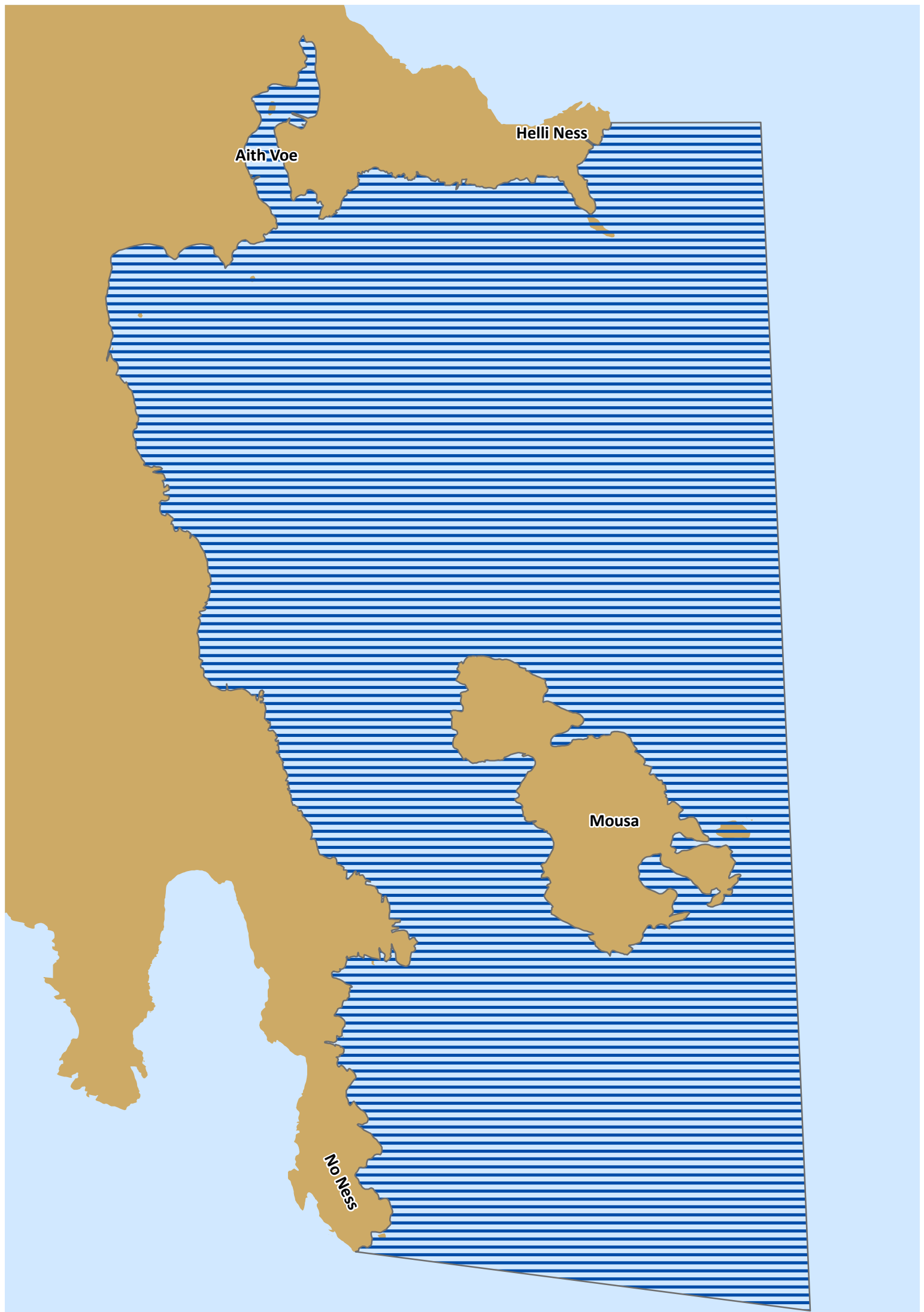
There are possibilities of marine renewables in the area in the future.



South Mainland

31. Mousa Coastal Character Area





Aith Voe

Helli Ness

Mousa

No Ness



Sandwick from Mousa

Summary Description

The Mousa Coastal Character Area (CCa) runs from Helli Ness down the coast to No Ness and out around Mousa. The coastline is relatively quiet with boats passing by to and from Lerwick and ports further afield. There is also a passenger boat to Mousa during the summer months. There is no aquaculture along this stretch of coast, however there are small piers and jetties dotted along the shore, with a marina within Aith Voe.

Mousa is a top tourist attraction and there are two sign posted viewpoints looking across to Mousa along the A970.

Key Characteristics

- *Low Rocky Shore is the predominant character type*
- *Mousa **Broch** and Sand Lodge are important features*
- ***Crofting** Landscape*



Mousa Broch

Historical Context

The Mousa CCa is similar to the Quarff CCa with the landscape having been used mainly for **crofting** but was well protected with two definite **brochs** at Burralland and on Mousa and two suspected **brochs** in Aith Voe and on the Mail coast.

The landscape was not just used for cultivation and grazing, but also quarried with **steatite** workings found at Catpund.

There was also an attempt to mine **chalcopyrite**, **malachite** and **haematite** on a commercial scale at Sand Lodge but this failed.

Historic Features

Brochs- There are four brochs along this relatively small area of coastline:

Mousa Broch (*Scheduled Monument & cared for by Historic Scotland*)- One of the best examples of an **Iron Age** broch in Scotland and stands at an impressive 13.3m high.

Burralland Broch (*Scheduled Monument*)- Standing parallel to Mousa Broch the remains of Burralland Broch are another imposing feature and although not as well preserved as Mousa, it still stands at around 4m high in some places.

Clodie Knowe- A mound at the head of Aith Voe, when it was in use it would have had a commanding view.

Broch of Mail- Although there is very little evidence to be seen today, there is written account of a broch on a tidal islet just off the coast of Mail.

Sand Lodge (*Category B listed building*)- An imposing **laird's** house with walled garden, pier and various other features.

Industry

Crofting and Farming- The land around the Mousa CCa is steeper than other areas within the south

mainland and thus is **crofted** rather than farmed on large scale.

Tourism- Mousa **Broch** is a huge draw for many people, with a seasonal ferry running from Leebittion pier.

Fishing- Fishing occurs off the coast of the Mousa CCa but at a fairly low intensity.

Landscape

The coastal fringe around the Mousa CCa is quite green and fertile, a patchwork of fields. This is backed by the heather clad Ward of Veester, Hamari Field and Hoo Field.

Mousa can be seen from most of the coast and provides a focal point for many houses.

There are four LCTs within the area; Coastal Edge, Coastal Island, Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast, and Major Uplands.

Geology

There are two main types of underlying geology in the Mousa CCa, **metamorphosed** mudstone or **pelite** and sandstone which are split with a **fault line** running through Helli Ness and No Ness.

Geosites

74. Mail, Cunningsburgh- National significance

75. Catpund- International significance

93. Mousa- International significance

Coastal Character Types & Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth- There is one voe in the character area which does not have steep sides and is moderately small. Aith Voe does have a marina and some yachts anchor in the voe during the summer months. At the head of the voe it is very shallow with sand flats.

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound- There are two undeveloped Island sounds with in the Mousa CCa. Mousa Sound sits between the island of Mousa and the mainland. The area has very little terrestrial development other than around Sand Lodge, although there is lots of evidence of habitation in the past. There is also little marine activity in the area with only a seasonal ferry going out to Mousa during the summer and the Mousa to Boddam MPA covering the area.

Bard Sound cuts off the Perie Bard on the south east corner of Mousa during high tide.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- The majority of the Mousa CCa comes under the low rocky shore CCT, with some interesting formations on Mousa. As much of the coastline consists of **sandstone**, there are large areas of layered rock exposed during low tide. This also connects various skerries and islets to the mainland during low tide. There are also various features such as ayres and geos found along the coast.

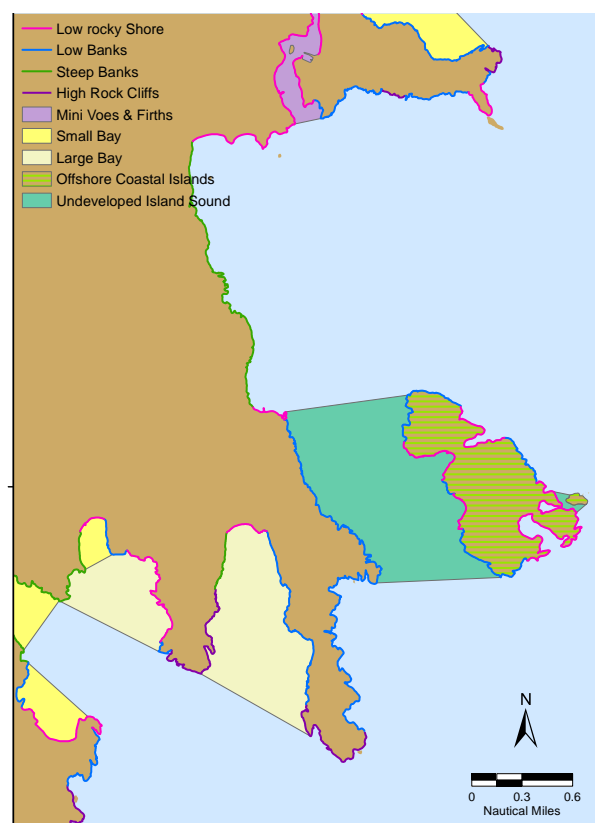
CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are large stretches of low banks in the Mousa CCa such as from Helli Ness to the Point of Pundsta and Sand Lodge down to Muckle Brei Geo. There are also small areas on Mousa itself.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- Between Mail and Leebiton the coastline is mainly steep banks with various features such as geos, waterfalls and skerries just off the coast. More gradual than other steep banks in Shetland, it is a picturesque area of coastline.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- There are some cliffs around the **Broch** of Burraland giving good views across to Mousa and was possibly a reason for siting a broch here. There are more around the north end of Mousa.

CCT 11a: Marina- There is a marina within Aith Voe for pleasure craft. The marina sits sheltered near the top of the voe, with an area of rock armour to offer additional protection.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There is one offshore coastal island within the Mousa CCa which is the island of Mousa. The last residents left in 1853 and it is now an RSPB Scotland reserve. The coastline varies from high cliffs in the north to low rocky shore in the south.



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Sensitivities

The area around Mousa island is a MPA, SAC, SPA and the island is a SSSI and RSPB Scotland reserve. Highly regarded for its natural, geological, archaeological and scenic value, great care must be taken with any future development that may affect these designations. While the sound could accommodate some development, the area is highly valued for the views across to Mousa **broch**, and any development would need to consider the impact to the landscape setting of the **broch** and the island itself.

Forces for Change

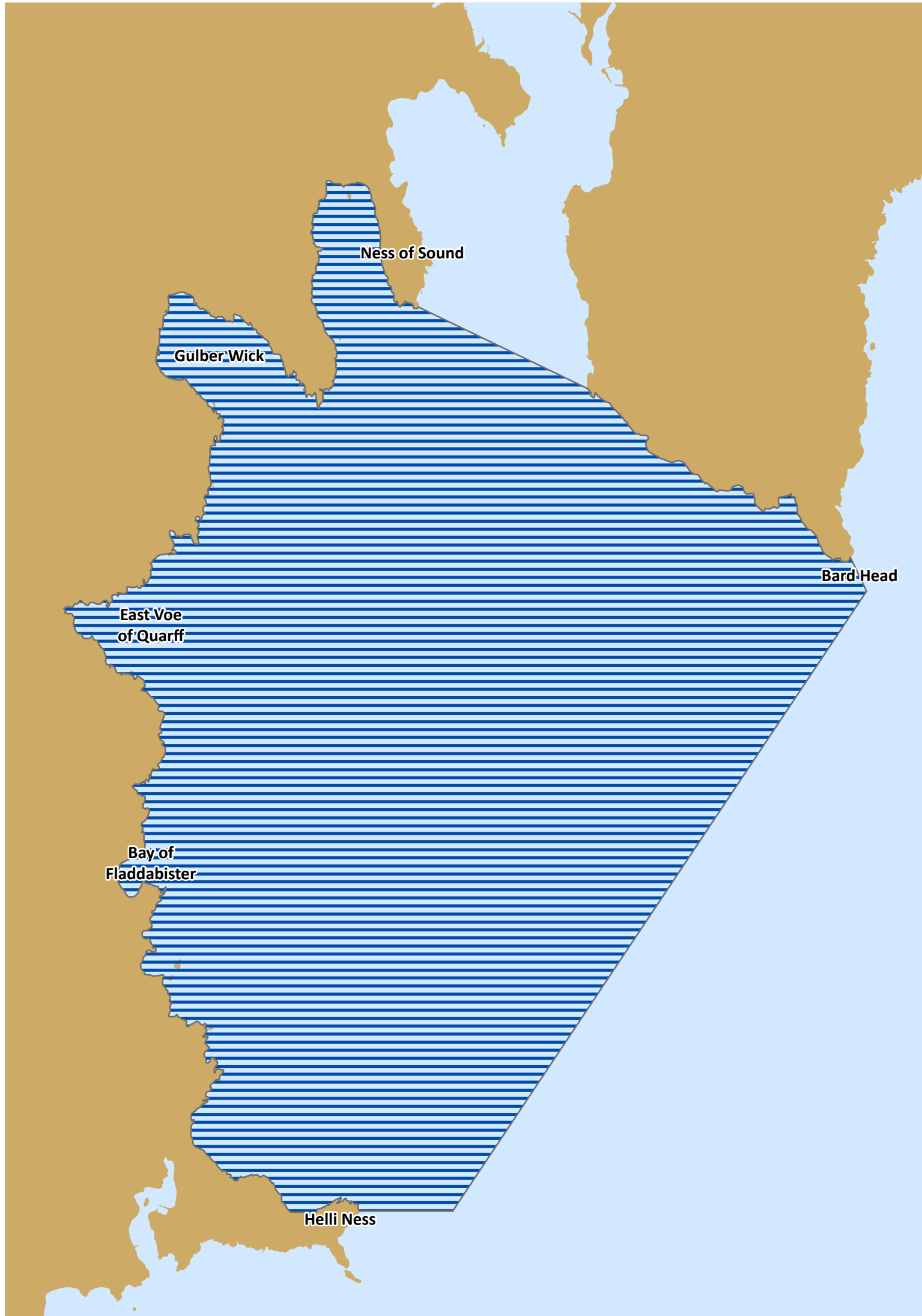
There are areas on Mousa which are being eroded due to high levels of tourists visiting the island which is an ongoing concern. RSPB Scotland who manage the island are working to alleviate the problem with raised walkways and restricted areas.



South Mainland

32. Quarff Coastal Character Area







Summary Description

The Quarff Coastal Character Area (CCa) comprises the coastline from the Ness of Sound in Lerwick, down to Helli Ness in Cunningsburgh.

The area is busy for shipping going to and from Lerwick Harbour and further afield. There are no aquaculture sites in this area.

Terrestrial development is restricted to a few nucleated settlements which relate to crofting townships of the area. Most of these settlements can be found at the heads of bays which relates to the historical use of the coast.

Key Characteristics

- *Ness and Wick network*
- *Large bays, particularly to the north*
- *Repetitive pattern along the coast*
- *Panoramic views across to Bressay and down South Mainland*



West Hall, Lerwick

Historic Context

The Quarff CCa has been a productive area for thousands of years. There is evidence of **Neolithic** settlements, **planticrubs**, **punds**, **grain drying kilns**, **lime kilns** and fishing stations along the coastline. The area was also important enough to warrant protection with a series of **brochs** along the coast.

Historic Features

West Hall, Lerwick (**Category C listed**)- Built in 1837 by James Grieg, West Hall or “The Sheriff’s Hoose” dominates the landscape which is low lying around district of Sound. Now a B&B.

Lime Kilns (**scheduled monuments**)- There are two kilns in the area used to make mortar, one found on the shore at the Bay of Fladdabister and one in the Bay of Okraqouy. Limestone and peat was layered in the kiln and burned for over 24 hours, the lime was then carried across to straw roofed sheds and extinguished with buckets of water.

Brochs- There are two brochs along the coastline:

Broch of Burland (**Scheduled monument**)- *Still standing 9-10 ft high, the broch is surrounded on three sides by a precipice and a series of ditches on the neck of land connecting it to the mainland.*

Broch of Aithsetter (**Scheduled monument**)- *A mound 8-10 ft high covered in turf with a hollow in the centre. Joined to the mainland with a narrow neck of land which has evidence of defensive features.*

Industry

Crofting & Farming- The main industry in the isles, there is extensive fertile land in the South Mainland.

Fishing- There is a small amount of creeling and fishing off the coast.

Quarry- There is one large quarry owned by the Garriock Bro’s. in Quarff.

Landscape

The landscape pattern of the Quarff CCa is repetitive, with bays and settlements punctuated by headlands. The dominant land cover is heather moorland which is used for rough grazing. Round the bays the ground has been improved through cultivation and is usually in geometric shapes.

There are three LCT’s across the character area; Coastal Edge around Aithsetter, Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast and two areas of Peatland and Moorland.

Geology

The main underlying rock in the Quarff CCa is **sandstone** which makes up most of the headlands and the northern coast of Bressay. There are small pockets of **limestone** found at Fladdabister and Okraqouy which relates to the lime kilns found on the shore.

Geosites

- 71. East Voe of Quarff- Local significance.
- 72. Fladdabister- Local significance.

Landscape Features

Bressay- Bressay forms a focal point for much of the Quarff CCa especially the southern coast of the island and the Ward of Bressay.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe or Firth- The Voe of Sound does have some development set back from the coastline at the head of the voe but housing is limited along the coastline, especially along the Ness of Sound and the Ness of Trebister. There are no marine developments in the voe.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Low Rocky Shore is the main CCT in the Quarff CCa, with the majority of it backed by low and high cliffs. There are various features along the shore such as rock pools which have an added interest.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are a few stretches of low banks within the Quarff area found at Gulberwick, north of Fladdabister, between Okraquoy and Aith Wick and Turri Ness to Helli Ness.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- In some areas there are steep banks rather than cliffs. This is found mainly around the headlands such as the Ness of Trebister.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- There are some exposed cliffs around the south end of Gulberwick and between Quarff and Fladdabister. There are excellent views across to Bressay from the cliff tops.

CCT 12: Large Bay- There is one large bay in the Quarff CCa which is Gulber Wick. There is a small area of sand at the head of the bay with steep rocky shore either side. Often used by oil vessels when waiting to move into Lerwick or out to the oil fields.

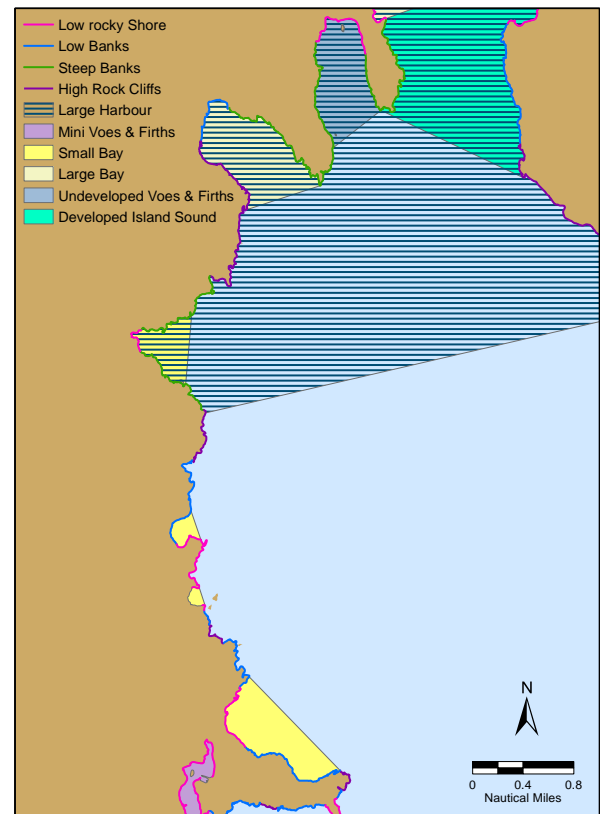
CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are four small bays in the Quarff CCa. Aith Wick which has a small shingle ayre, Bay of Okraquoy which is a mixture of boulders and shingle, Bay of Fladdabister which is also a mixture of boulders and shingle, and the East Voe of Quarff which has a rocky beach to the north and a sandy beach to the south.

CCT 13: Ness and Wick Network- Starting at Gulberwick, the network runs down the coast with wicks found at Easter Quarff, Fladdabister, Okraquoy and Aithsetter. They vary in size with Gulberwick being the largest and getting smaller down to Aith Wick. Each one has an area of sand and a settlement at the head of the bay.

Experiential

The Quarff CCa is repetitive consisting of a series of bays and headlands, which begin on a larger scale in the north and get progressively smaller coming down the coastline. Around Sound and Gulberwick is far busier on land and at sea, being so close to Lerwick. As you move further down the coast it becomes quieter. There are a number of sites of interest along this coastline, including a variety of

defensive, industrial and agricultural structures from 1000s of years of occupation.



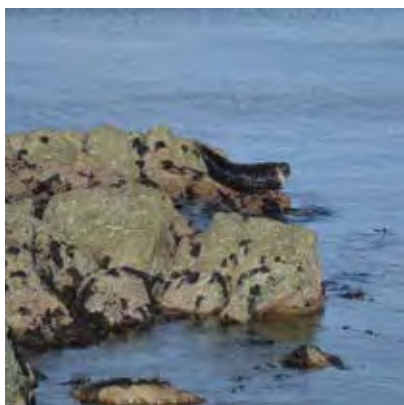
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Sensitivities

The north end of the Quarff CCa is less sensitive to terrestrial development due to the larger settlements of Gulberwick and Sound. Any near-shore development would be best sited in one of the larger bays and at the mouth of the bay away from settlement. The south of the Quarff CCa is much more sensitive to development on and off shore. Any development should consider the landscape setting of archaeological features and the smaller rural communities dotted along the shore.

Forces for Change

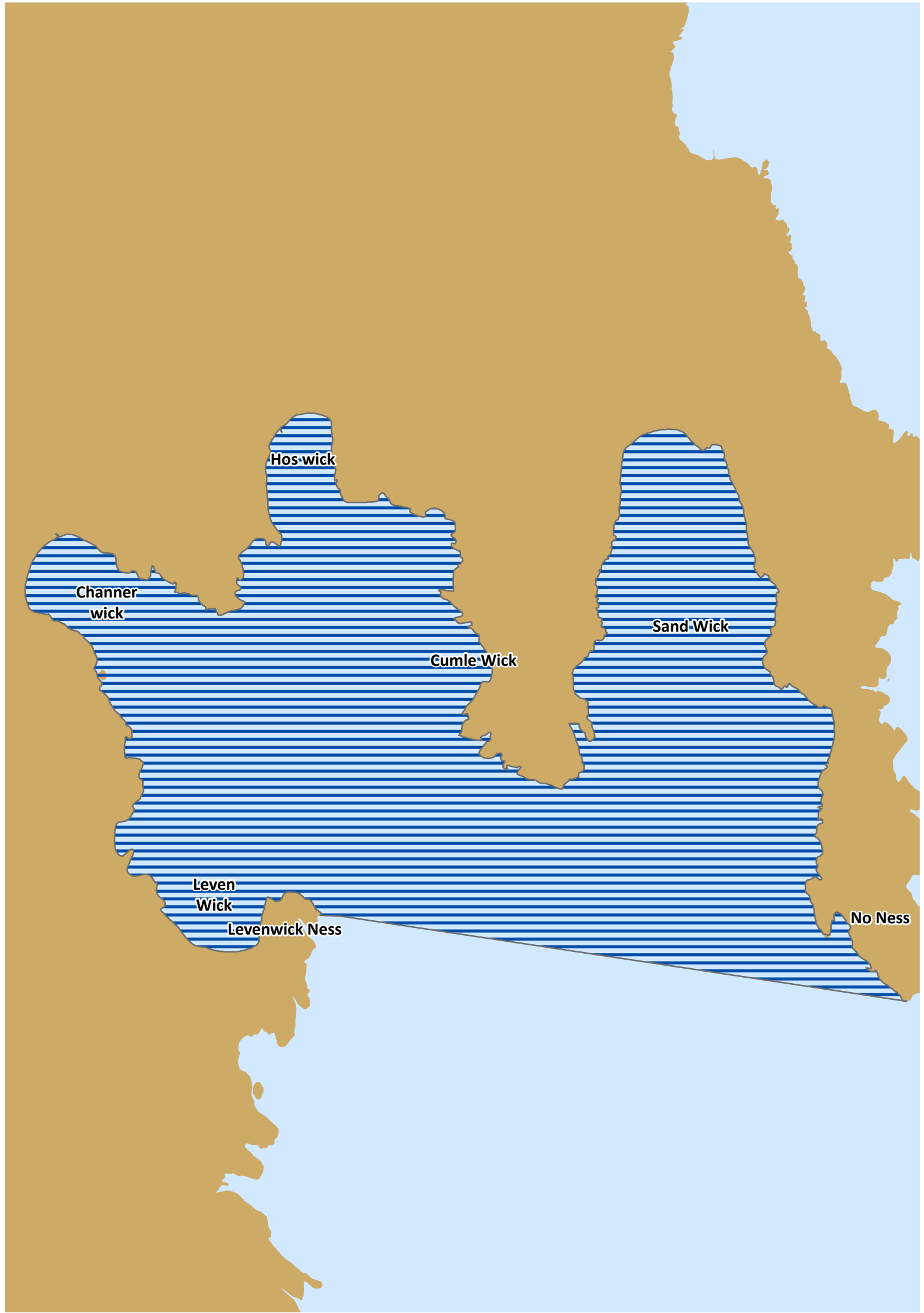
There are currently no forces for change.



South Mainland

33. Sandwich Coastal Character Area





Hos-wick

Channer
wick

Cumle-Wick

Sand-Wick

Leven
Wick

Levenwick Ness

No Ness



Leven Wick

Summary Description

The Sandwich Coastal Character Area (CCa) is on the east coast of Shetland sitting between Levenwick, Channerwick, Hoswick and Sandwick. The CCa extends from Levenwick Ness to No Ness and includes all the small wicks in-between.

Within the bays it is relatively quiet, further offshore, fishing vessels, the Northlink ferries, cruise liners and oil related vessels can be seen passing.

The various nesses or headlands give shelter to the wicks and almost create separate “rooms” within the network.

Key Characteristics

- *Enclosed bay with wicks round the edge*
- *Sheltered within the bay, with views out to open sea*
- *Views down the south mainland to Sumburgh Head*
- *Sparse settlement, with concentrations at the head of each wick*
- *Land is a mixture of rough grazing, improved grazing and hill ground*
- *Coastline is gently sloping down to the wicks with steep banks and cliffs found along the nesses*



Historic Context

The settlements around the Sandwick CCA are **crofting townships** which also used the sheltered beaches to dry their catch from Da Haaf and the herring fishing. There are around 20 different **townships** within the immediate area, although some of these are now amalgamated.

Historic Features

Knitwear and Weaving- The Hoswick Visitor Centre is housed in a former weaving shed that was used by J. L. Smith to create Shetland Tweed, a light, soft fabric that was of great quality. Mr Smith also set up a knitwear centre where patterns were sent out to home knitters who then brought the products to the centre for sale.

Chapels and Churches- There are currently two churches in Sandwick, The United Free Church and the Church of Scotland. There was also a Methodist chapel, Brethren hall and chapel in Channerwick.

Broonies Taing- Historically, Broonies Taing was a very busy area, with a pier being developed in 1903/1904 to accommodate the large number of herring boats in the area. Numerous fishing **booths** could be found along the adjacent shore, the remains of which can still be seen around Nicolson's Noust.

During **World War I** part of the slipway was demolished and the area abandoned due to fears of being targeted by enemy attack. In the 1970s the pier was extended and used as a base for the oil industry for a short period.

Industry

Knitwear- There is a small cluster of knitwear shops in the area. In 2004, Laurence Odie took over the J.L. Smith knitwear centre and invested in new knitting machines. There is now a small shop located within the building. Designer knitwear is also created by Nielanell, set up by Niela Kalra.

Broonies Taing- In 1976 the Broonies Taing Pier Trust

was set up to manage and promote the use of the pier facilities. The pier area has been used as a site for a marine hatchery, with a cod hatchery present on site from 2002-2008. The hatchery is not currently in use.

Landscape

The landscape around the Sandwick CCA varies between headlands and bays. On the headlands there are low to medium height cliffs, with rough grazing being the prominent land cover. Around the bays, the landscape is less steep and consists of improved and rough grazing. The grass is notably greener closer to the shore due to the sandy soil.

The area is covered by the Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast LCT. This sub type is repeated at Exnaboe, Aithsetter and from Gulberwick down to Easter Quarff, showing the repeating pattern along the east coast of the South Mainland.

Geology

The geology around the bay is mainly **sandstone** with **till deposits** around Hoswick, Sandwick and Channerwick. A **fault line** runs from Crossie Geo through Hoswick and across the bay to Levenwick.

Landscape Features

No Ness- No Ness is a headland sitting between Sand Wick and Mousa Sound. There are a range of habitats found including **peat** bog and coastal grassland. The near vertical cliffs are home to black guillemot, rock doves, guillemots, razorbills, kittiwakes and shags. A small secluded beach can be found at the road end.

Sumburgh Head- From the North side of the Sandwick CCA it is possible to see down to Sumburgh Head on a clear day.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Low Rocky Shore can be found on both sides of Leven Wick, around Channer Wick, from the Berg round Hos Wick to Troni Geo, and around Sand Wick. There are fairly large stretches of low rocky shore in the Sandwich CCa.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- The largest stretch of low banks runs up the west coast of No Ness into Sand Wick. There are also small areas in Hos Wick and between Channer Wick and Leven Wick.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- There are steep banks between Beni Taing and Channer Wick, and at the Ness of Hoswick.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- Cliffs can be found around Cumlewick Ness and No Ness, with the highest found at No Ness.

CCT 12: Large Bay- There is one large bay in the CCa and that is Sand Wick. A small sandy beach can be found at the head of the bay and there are low banks either side. A large church creates a focal point above the bay.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are three small bays in the Sandwich CCa, Hos Wick, Channer Wick and Leven Wick. Leven Wick has a fine sandy beach and is popular with residents and visitors. Channer Wick and Hos Wick both have shingle beaches with an accumulation of pebbles. They are all fairly sheltered.

CCT 13: Ness and Wick Network- The whole of the study area falls under the Ness and Wick Network. Leven Wick, Channer Wick, Hos Wick and Sand Wick form four bays which are separated by Bein Taing, the Ness of Hoswick and Cumlewick Ness. Levenwick Ness encloses Leven Wick and No Ness encloses Sand Wick on the eastern side.

Experiential

The Sandwich CCa is an intimate space with each wick having its own character creating an enclosed space which are linked together through the views. Although there is development at the head of each wick, Hos Wick has the most densely developed area. Large pier infrastructure near Cumlewick enforces this.

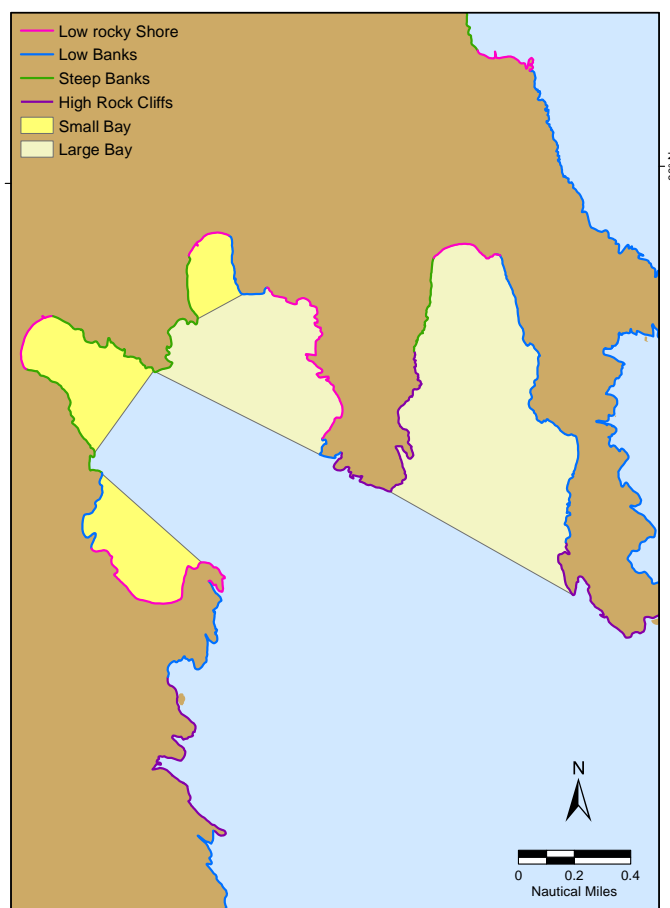
The area is sparsely populated however, with the A970 running along the hillside above the area, it distracts from any sense of seclusion.

Sensitivities

The enclosed nature of the bays mean that the area would be sensitive to large scale developments which could block the views out into the open sea.

Forces for Change

Housing- The settlements around the Sandwich CCa are becoming increasingly more used by commuters and thus expanding. This has the potential of causing the settlements to amalgamate, however the landscape is quite steep between the wicks so it is unlikely to be a concern along the coastline.



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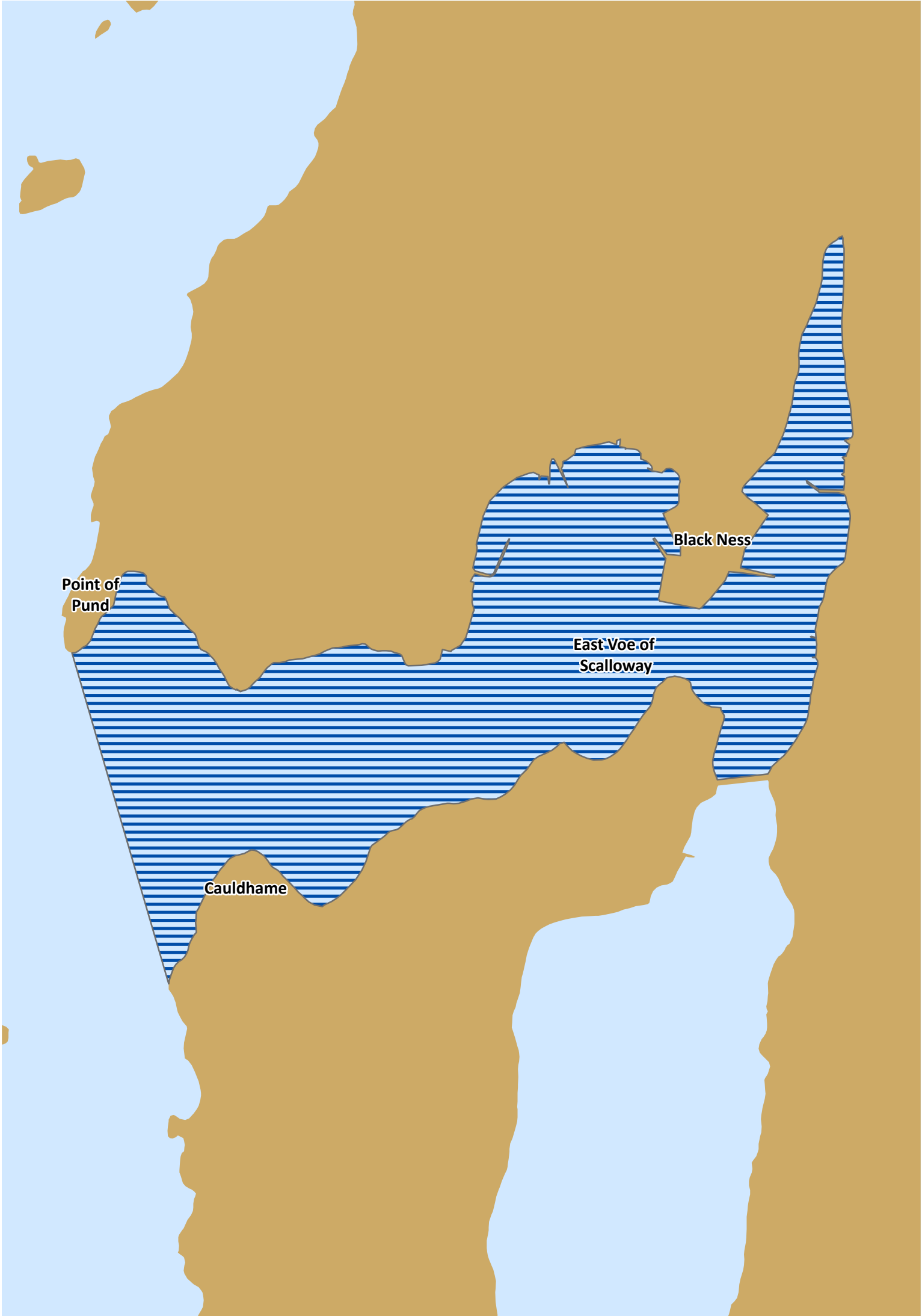
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South Mainland

34. Scalloway Coastal Character Area





Point of
Pund

Cauldhame

East Voe of
Scalloway

Black Ness



Summary Description

The Scalloway Coastal Character Area (CCa) is located on the west side of Shetland and includes the large village of Scalloway. The Scalloway CCa covers the East Voe of Scalloway out to the Point of Pund and Cauldhame (Trondra). Scalloway is a busy shipping area used by fishing vessels, aquaculture, and oil and gas related vessels.

Key Characteristics

- *Large sheltered harbour*
- *Busy shipping area*
- *Scalloway has a Scandinavian influence*
- *Views to Scalloway isles*
- *Aquaculture at the mouth of the voe*



Colourful houses, Scalloway

Historic Context

Scalloway was the original capital of Shetland before it was moved to Lerwick in 1708. There is evidence of settlement in the area from the late **Iron Age**. It was an important landing place for the **Vikings** on route to the “**Ting**” in the valley behind Scalloway. During the 16th century, **Earl Patrick Stewart** built the imposing Scalloway Castle; the ruins are still an important landmark in Scalloway.

Historic Features

Scalloway Castle (**Scheduled monument**)- Built by **Earl Patrick Stewart** in 1600, Scalloway Castle is an impressive building towering over the harbour, even in its ruinous state.

Shetland Bus- During **WWII**, Scalloway was a base for the Norwegian resistance. There are various buildings and slipways such as Prince Olav’s Slipway and Norway House, which have associations to the bus. There are also two memorials along the main street. Both buildings mentioned are **Category C listed**.

Trondra Bridge- Built in 1971, the bridge to Trondra and Burra allows for easier access to the mainland and changing island life forever.

Industry

Oil and Gas- Various vessels use the harbour facilities throughout the year.

Fishing- Scalloway is used by numerous fishing vessels for shelter, harbour facilities and landing their catch. There is a fish market in Scalloway with a new market constructed in 2019.

Aquaculture- Around Scalloway is a busy area for aquaculture and the harbour is used daily by boats heading to and from the sites.

Fish processing- Scalloway harbour is used to process farmed fish and wild caught fisheries

Landscape

The landscape of Scalloway CCA is quite fertile in the inner voe turning to heather moorland at the mouth of the voe. There is **crofting** along the shore with Scalloway itself being quite industrialised around Blacks Ness. The Tingwall Valley which sits to the north of Scalloway continues down into Clift Sound making Scalloway a fairly sheltered area. This has allowed for a relatively large number of trees to prosper.

There are two LCTs over the area; Major Uplands, and Farmed and settled Voes and Sounds.

Geology

The main underlying geology in the area is **granite** with pockets of **limestone**. There are small areas of **till deposits**, with the largest being around the Scalloway campus of Shetland UHI. There is also a small area of alluvium deposits at the head of East Voe. There is also a **fault line** which begins on the southern coast of Dury Voe and runs down through Shetland passed the western edge of Blacks Ness and through Trondra.

Geosites

62. Scord of Scalloway- Local significance

Landscape Features

Scord- A large quarry overlooking Scalloway. The hillside has been significantly changed over the years.

Scalloway Isles- Group of isles off the coast of Scalloway offers a focal point for much of the CCA.

Woodland- Small pockets of trees throughout Scalloway, a somewhat uncommon feature of the Shetland landscape.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1: Developed Voe or Firth- The East Voe of

Scalloway is a busy voe with two marinas, aquaculture sites and harbour facilities.

CCT 4: Developed Island Sound- Although not named as such, East Voe is also an island sound separating the mainland from the island of Trondra.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Running from the Point of Pund round to Port Arthur, with a stretch at Westshore and picking up again at the back of the castle. There is also a stretch around Cauld Hame on Trondra. There are shingle ayres at Pund Voe, along Port Arthur Road, Ministers' Beach, Burn Beach, Mussel Scaap and Meadow Ayre. There are also stretches of shingle between East Voe marina and the Trondra Bridge, and around Cauld Hame.

CCT 10: Large Harbour- Scalloway is a busy port throughout the year. Used commercially and recreationally, the harbour is an important part of the landscape setting for the village.

CCT 11a: Marina- There are two marinas in the Scalloway CCa; one next to the Scalloway Boating Club and one below housing in East Voe. They are both equipped for visiting craft and a variety of services are offered in Scalloway.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- Pund Voe, Cauld Hame and Meadow Ayre are all small bays with areas of shingle and land offering shelter on either side.

Experiential

The Scalloway CCa is a very busy area and has a Scandinavian feel with the colourful buildings along the hillside and shore, surrounded by large hills such as the Clift Hills. The older buildings around the castle have historic character, and the piers and jetties coming off Main Street add to this.

Moving round towards East Voe and out to Trondra, the settlement becomes more scattered and transitions into a crofting landscape with views back across the water to Scalloway.

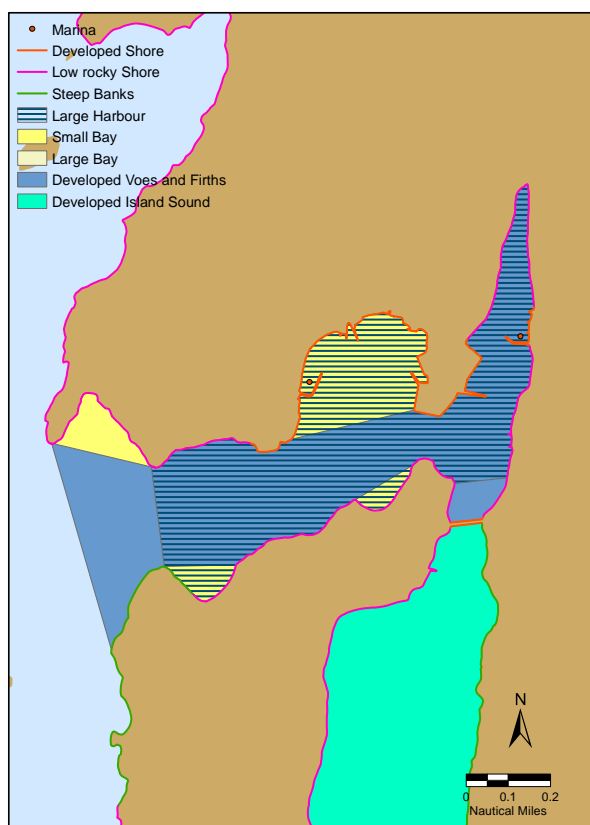
Sensitivities

The northern shore of the Scalloway CCa is highly developed already and any future development would need to consider the distinct character of the village, and the setting of the castle. From Easterhoull down onto Trondra, the settlement is more dispersed and this needs to be considered for any future developments.

Forces for Change

Much has been done to improve the appearance of Scalloway's water front over recent years. The Recreate Scalloway Project which began in 2018 looks to continue this work insuring that Scalloway is an attractive and sustainable village.

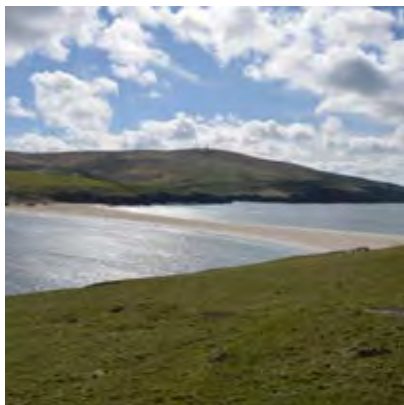
Port Plan- There are plans for growth of the harbour in the future.

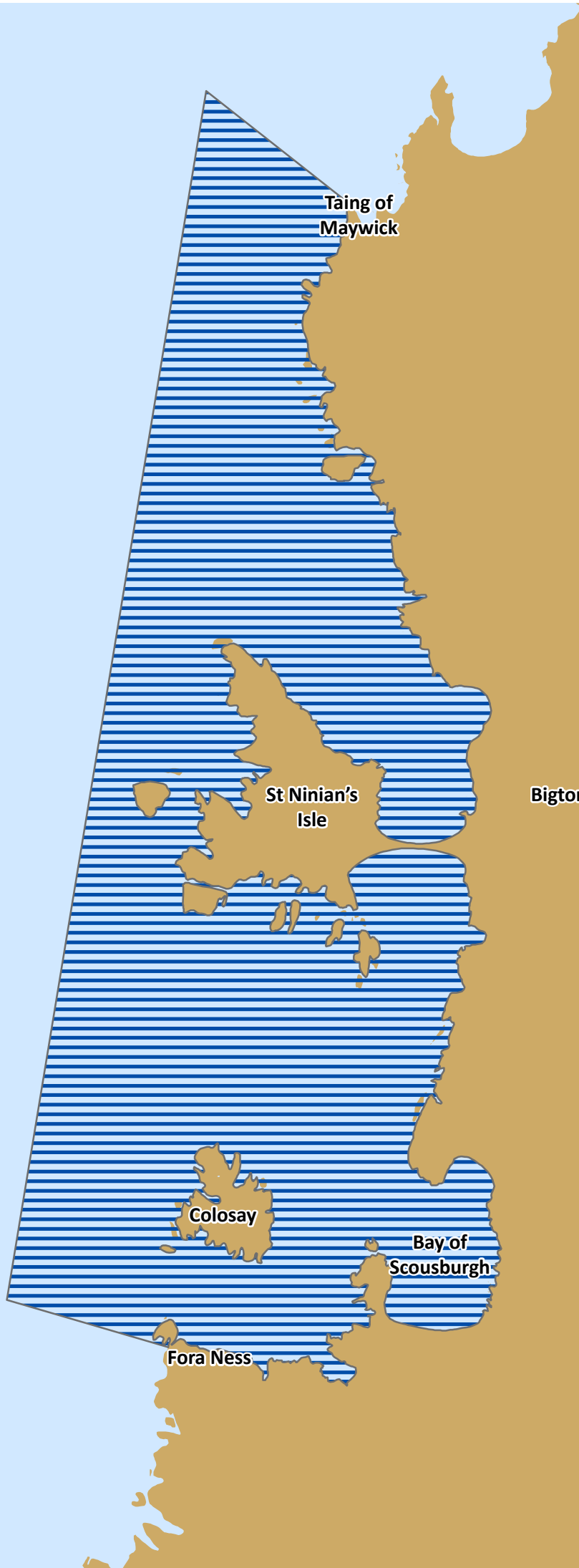




South Mainland

35. St Ninian's Coastal Character Area





Taing of
Maywick

St Ninian's
Isle

Bigton

Colosay

Bay of
Scousburgh

Fora Ness



St Ninian's Isle tombolo

Summary Description

St Ninian's Coastal Character Area (CCa) covers the whole of St Ninian's Isle, the mainland coast from the Taing of Maywick down to For Ness and the stretch of water between.

St Ninian's is a peaceful area of coastline with very little development. There are no aquaculture sites and terrestrial development is mainly around the small settlements of Bigton and Ireland.

A real hotspot for tourists and residents alike, St Ninian's is famous historically for the discovery of a hoard of silver during excavations of the church site on the island in the 1950s and also for the sweeping tombolo which connects the island to the mainland.

Key Characteristics

- *Largest active tombolo in the UK*
- *Sheltered bays to the north and south*
- *Popular tourist destination*
- *Used for recreation*
- *Much of the coastline is low cliffs*



Good farming ground

Historic Context

The land in the **St Ninian's** CCA has been used for **crofting** for hundreds of years and there was even a **township** on **St Ninian's** Isle with the last family leaving in the late 1700s, however there is no physical evidence as the stone was reused to build a dyke across the island.

Along the Burn of Ireland, the remains of five **horizontal mills** can be found, which shows that this area was very busy for cultivation in the past.

The most well-known story of the area is how a young school boy discovered a hoard of **Pictish** silver during the late 1950's while he was helping with an archaeological dig on **St Ninian's** chapel site. The pieces can be viewed at the National Museum in Edinburgh with replicas on show in the Shetland Museum, Lerwick.

Historic Features

Bigton House (**Category B listed**)- Built in 1788 for the Stewart family it was one of the largest estates during the mid-18th century.

St Ninian's Chapel and burial grounds (**Scheduled monument**)- Now a ruin of a twelfth century chapel, there is evidence of an older building underneath it. The burial grounds were used for around 2000 years with the last burials taking place in the 19th century.

Ireland War Memorial- Within the Ireland Cemetery, there is a war memorial for seven men lost during the **First World War**.

Industry

Farming- In the South Mainland, farming is done on a larger scale due to the better quality ground and because it is low lying. This makes farming the dominant industry in the area.

Tourism- **St Ninian's** Isle is a big draw for many tourists visiting the Shetland Islands and is usually

included on bus tours from cruise liners which call into Lerwick.

Recreational use- Important area for recreation for tourists and residents. Used for dog walking, surfing, rowing and is an **Up Helly Aa** galley burning site.

Landscape

The landscape around the **St Ninian's** CCA is green and fertile with evidence of rigs easily seen running down to the shoreline on the mainland.

The tombolo is the most prominent feature at 500m long and up to 70m wide during low tide, it is a tourist hotspot, and features regularly in tourism promotion.

To the south, Fitful Head dominates the skyline with the southern coast of St Ninian's Isle. On a clear day there are also views across to Fair Isle, Foula and the west side of Shetland.

Geology

The geology of **St Ninian's** Isle is mainly a mix of **metamorphic** and igneous rock with a small area of mudstone in the south west corner. Across the tombolo, a spectacular geomorphological feature, the main geology is **quartzite**. There are also areas of blown sand at each end of the tombolo with the largest area found on the mainland.

Geosites

77. **St Ninian's** Tombolo- National significance

Landscape Features

Fitful Head- Rising to 283m, Fitful Head is a dominant landscape feature for most of the South Mainland and beyond.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- There is some low rocky shore in the **St Ninian's** CCa, however it is mainly found at the base of cliffs or steep banks during low tide.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are a number of areas of low banks along the **St Ninian's** CCa coast with the biggest section just north of Ireland Wick. There are four other small sections along the coast.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- To the south of the CCa the coastline is mainly steep banks varying between 30-40m high.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- High Rock Cliffs is the dominant CCT for this CCa with the south and west of **St Ninian's** Isle having the most dramatic and fragmented coastline.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are two small bays, **St Ninian's** Bay to the south and Bigton Wick to the North. They are separated by the tombolo which is the dominant feature of the CCa. Both bays are fairly shallow, sandy and sheltered on the west side by the island of **St Ninian's**.

CCT 14a: Tidal Islands- **St Ninian's** isle has been uninhabited since the late 1700s but is connected to the mainland via a tombolo. It is mainly cliffs with some interesting stacks and caves found to the immediate south of the island. It can be cut off during extreme high tides.

Experiential

The **St Ninian's** CCa is a contrasting character area with the west side of **St Ninian's** Isle having panoramic views while the east side is contained by the shape of the coastline.

St Ninian's is a popular beach for residents and tourists, however it is common to have the beach all to yourself, giving the CCa a tranquil and peaceful feeling.

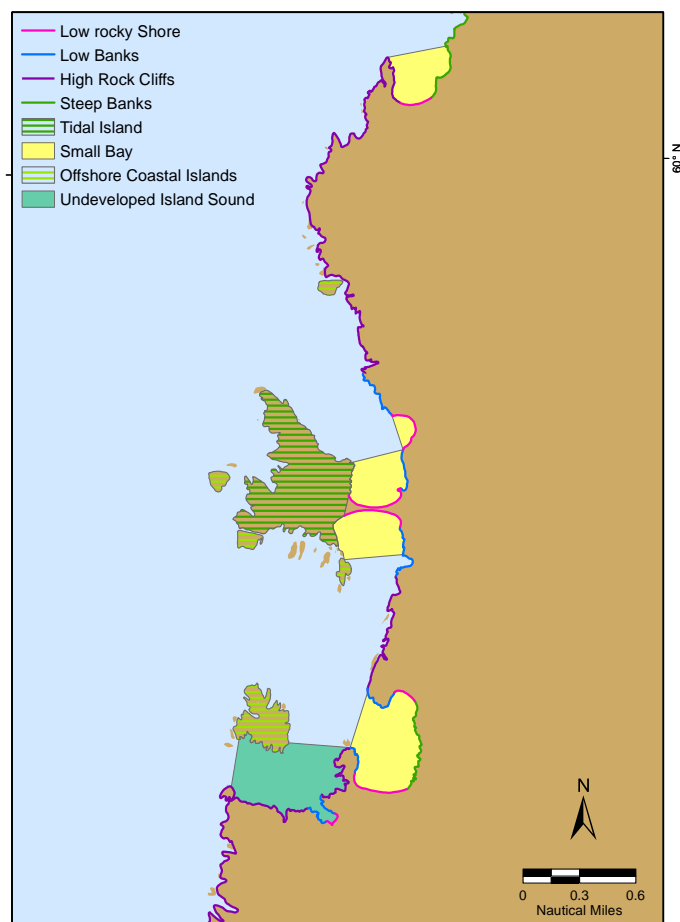
Sensitivities

St Ninian's Isle is an undeveloped landscape and an important landscape setting for the area. The tombolo connecting the island to the mainland is

highly valued for its scenic quality with the CCa forming part of the **Shetland NSA**. The area is also the base for a variety of recreational activities and because of a combination of the reasons stated above, the area is highly sensitive to any close-to-shore marine development. However, **St Ninian's** Isle could form a visual barrier for the settlements of Bigton and Ireland to any offshore development to the west of the island.

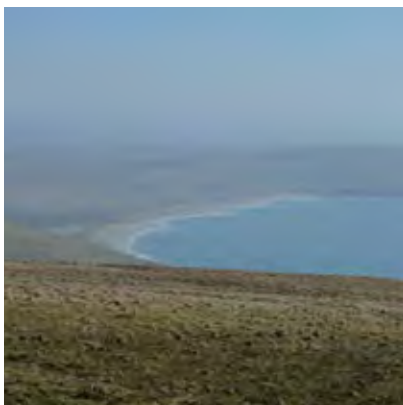
Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change.



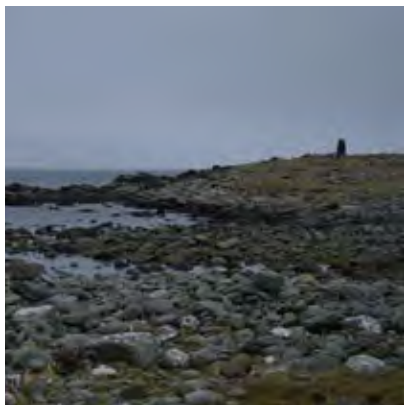
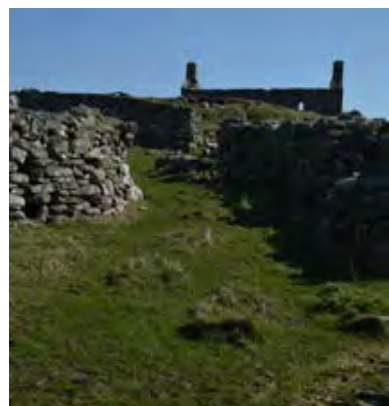
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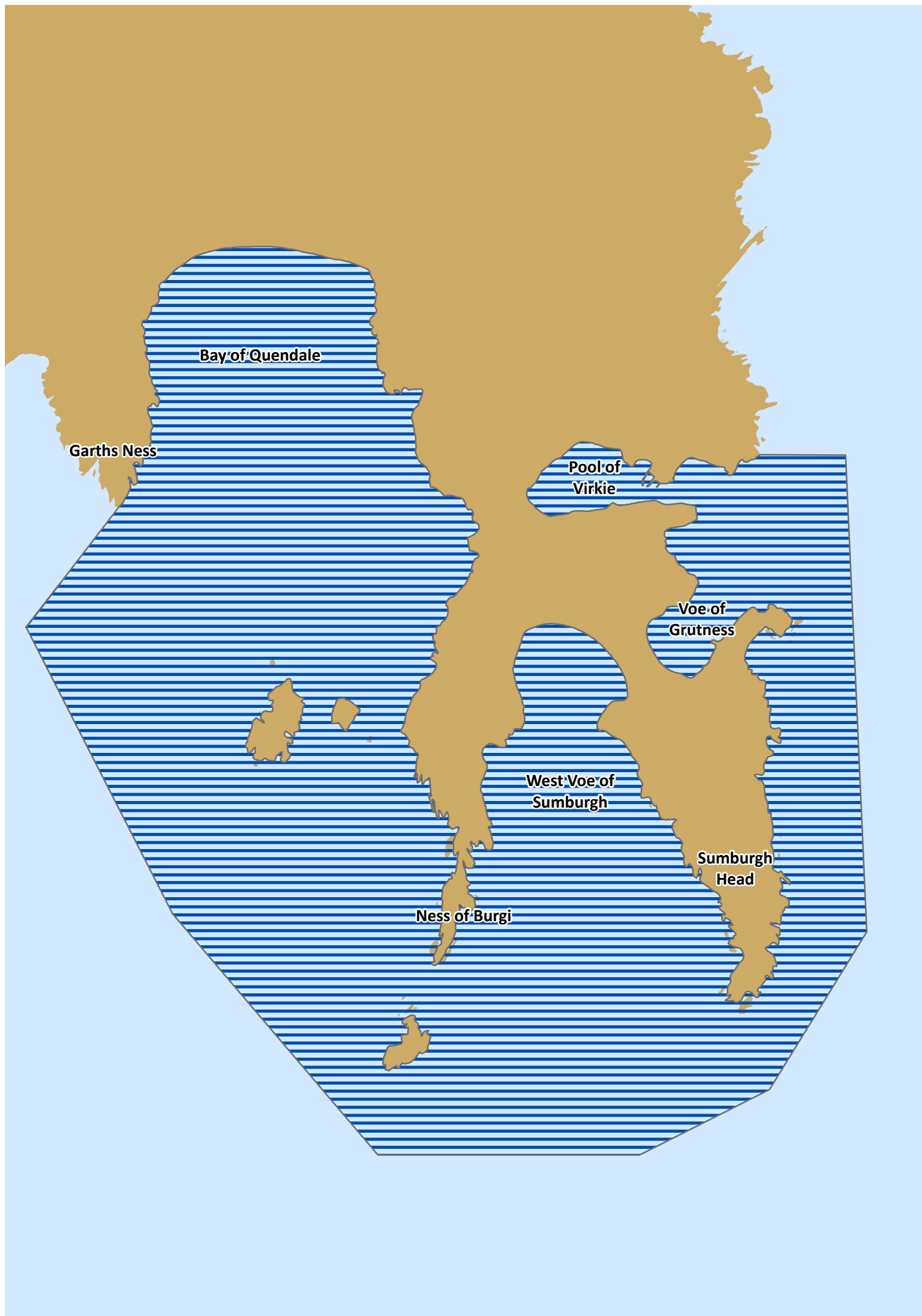
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South Mainland

36. Sumburgh Coastal Character Area





Bay of Quendale

Garths Ness

Pool of
Virkie

Voe of
Grutness

West Voe of
Sumburgh

Sumburgh
Head

Ness of Burgi



Bay of Quendale

Summary Description

The Sumburgh Coastal Character Area (CCa) comprises the southern tip of the Shetland Mainland. The CCa runs from the Pool of Virkie round the coastline to Garths Ness.

Sumburgh is a busy area with a marina in the Pool of Virkie, ferry service for Fair Isle running from Grutness, large and small fishing vessels working around the coast and various vessels heading north such as Northlink Ferries and cruise liners. On land, there is Sumburgh Airport, the main airport for the islands.

Large sandy beaches are a characteristic of the CCa with Quendale being the longest beach in Shetland. Sumburgh Head and Fitful Head both dominate the landscape.

*Clustered settlements can be found at Scatness, Exnaboe, Toab and Quendale. Sumburgh is also rich in archaeological remains with **Jarlshof** being one of the most famous in Shetland. Sumburgh **Lighthouse** visitor centre is also key tourist attraction for history, wildlife and the views it offers.*

Key Characteristics

- *Busy shipping area for various vessels passing by*
- *Large sandy bays, which are scarce across Shetland*
- *Many internationally important archaeological sites*
- *Internationally important areas for seabirds*
- *Clusters of settlement along the coast*
- *Some of Shetland's highest cliffs found around Fitful Head*
- *Key viewpoints which are visitor attractions*



Iron Age Fort, Ness of Burgi

Historic Context

People have been living around Sumburgh for the past 5000 years which is probably not that surprising as it would have been the first land fall for people travelling from the south. Settlement remains spanning over 2000 years can be found at [Jarlshof](#). Close by a similar site was found at [Scatness](#) and has been under excavation for many years.

During [WWII](#), Sumburgh was an important base for the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy with bases and stations found throughout the surrounding area. The radar station on Sumburgh Head played a significant role in thwarting an enemy attack on Scapa Flow in 1940.

Historic Features

Sumburgh Lighthouse- The [lighthouse](#) was built by Robert Stevenson in 1821 and is the oldest lighthouse in Shetland. During WWII radar stations were built in the grounds of the lighthouse much to the objection of the [Northern Lighthouse Board](#) and the Ministry of Shipping at the time.

The light was automated in 1991 and recently the buildings have been extensively renovated offering accommodation and a visitor centre. Part of the [lighthouse](#) building is also the main office for RSPB Scotland in Shetland, who operate the wider area as a nature reserve.

Jarlshof- Provides examples of settlements from the late [Neolithic period](#), [Bronze Age](#), [Iron Age](#), [Pictish era](#), Norse era and the [Middle Ages](#). The name originated from Walter Scott who used the ruined [laird](#) house as inspiration for his novel *Pirate*.

Old Scatness- During the construction of an access road to Sumburgh Airport, the remains of an [Iron Age broch](#) and surrounding village were discovered. It is thought the site was occupied for over 2000 years.

Pool of Virkie- Today the Pool of Virkie is fairly shallow but during the 15th and 16th centuries it

was the base for the [Hanseatic League](#) in the South Mainland.

Industry

Agriculture- Some of the most productive agricultural land in Shetland is found in the South Mainland. Farming and [crofting](#) is an important industry in the Dunrossness area.

Sumburgh Airport- Built originally in the 1930s, Sumburgh Airport was an important base during [WWII](#). It was not used as a commercial airport until 1953. In the 1970s, the airport was expanded greatly due to the oil boom.

Tourism- Is important to the area, with the area benefiting from good public transport links, and a range of facilities and attractions, including archaeological sites, the recently renovated Sumburgh [Lighthouse](#), wildlife, and the panoramic views of the land and sea.

Landscape

The landscape in the Sumburgh CCA is relatively fertile compared to other areas in Shetland and has a complex shape with dramatic headlands at Fitful Head and Sumburgh Head, and golden sandy beaches at Quendale, West Voe and Grutness. The dominant landcover is grass. There are also areas of sand dunes, which are uncommon in Shetland.

Sumburgh Head is managed by RSPB Scotland as a nature reserve, and the [Lighthouse](#) buildings are managed by the [Shetland Amenity Trust](#) as a tourist attraction. The archaeological remains at Jarlshof are managed by [Historic Environment Scotland](#) and the Old Scatness site is managed by the Shetland Amenity Trust.

The area is covered by three LCTs: Major Uplands, Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast, and Coastal Edge. This wide variety of LCTs gives another

indication of the complexity of the area.

Geology

The main underlying rocks in the CCa are **sandstone**, **dalradian** and plutonic. There is also a large area of blown sand from Quendale across to Grutness Voe and up to the Pool of Virkie. This relates to the fertile land found in the South Mainland.

Geosites

- 82. Garth's Ness- Local significance
- 83. Old Scatness- National significance
- 84. Jarlshof- National significance
- 85. Ness of Burgi- National significance
- 86. Sumburgh Head- National significance

Landscape Features

Sumburgh Head- Sumburgh Head is a headland being cut through from the West Voe of Sumburgh and Grutness Voe. It is an RSPB Scotland reserve and a good place to see puffins and various other species of seabird. Sumburgh Head is a prominent feature across much of the South Mainland, providing a visual focal point within the area, as well as a viewpoint across the South Mainland and down to Fair Isle on a clear day.

Fitful Head- The cliffs at Fitful Head reach a height of 283m and are a dominant feature across much of the Southern and Central Mainland .

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Low rocky shore can be found at the mouth of the West Voe of Sumburgh, Sandy Geo at the back of the airport, between Brough Head and Stack of Otter Geo, around Scat Ness and the mouth of the Bay of Quendale.

The rock is mainly **sandstone** and layered horizontally on the shore. Much of the low rocky shore is backed by banks showing how the sea has eroded the land back.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- More than half the CCa is covered by the Low Banks CCT. Small areas are found either side of the Scult of Laward, the west side of Sumburgh Head and the west coast of Quendale. Larger areas are found around the Ness of Burgi and the east coast of the Bay of Quendale.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- There are a few dramatic cliffs in the Sumburgh CCa. Indeed, the fragmented coastline has proved dangerous for ships with Sumburgh Head being chosen as a suitable site

for a **lighthouse** in the late 1800s. The most well-known wreck would be the **Braer oil spill** in 1993 when an oil tanker was swept onto the rocks around Garth Ness in terrible winter storms.

Sumburgh Head- The cliffs at Sumburgh Head are around 100m high. The area is an RSPB Scotland reserve and the cliff edges are home to a variety of seabirds. Sumburgh Head is also a popular location for sea watching.

The cliffs begin to ascend from the Waals up around Sumburgh Head and along the Slithers to Compass Head. From here they begin to descend down to Grutness Voe.

Ness of Burgi- The Ness of Burgi extends out from Scat Ness and has a range of fragmented low cliffs which continues to back to the Loch of Gards on Scat Ness. These cliffs give a dramatic setting to the **Iron Age block house**, especially in rough weather.

CCT 11a: Marina- At the mouth of the Pool of Virkie, Harper Marina was built in the 1980s and is now also home to the Ness Boating Club. The club host a variety of events throughout the year and the marina has one visitor berth.

CCT 12: Large Bay- There are two large bays within the Sumburgh CCa each with a sandy stretch at the head of the bay.

Quendale- One of the largest bays in Shetland, and on a clear day offers panoramic views out south to Fair Isle. In windy conditions the bay is also a popular surf spot.

West Voe of Sumburgh- Although called a voe, West Voe has more characteristics of a bay. It is possible it was narrower centuries ago. West Voe offers good views to Sumburgh Head and **Jarlshof** along its shore.

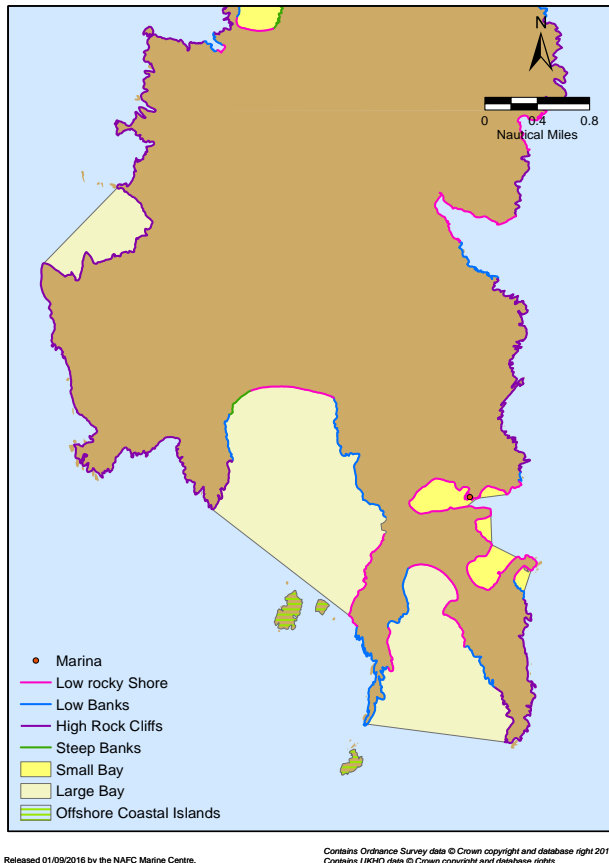
CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are two small bays within the Sumburgh CCa each with a sandy stretch at the head of the bay.

Grutness Voe- Grutness while called a voe is more like a bay. It is a very low lying area of shore with a storm beach on the southern point showing the brute force the coast is subjected to. Grutness has a small area of development with a pier used by the Fair Isle ferry and public toilets.

Pool of Virkie- Historically used as a harbour for the **Hanseatic League**, Virkie is silted up and is now an important tidal flat habitat and area for wading birds.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are three offshore islands in the Sumburgh CCa; Horse Island, Little Holm, and Lady's Holm. Little Holm is the only

one to have any built remains.



Experiential

The Sumburgh CCa offers some theatrical coastline and is an important setting for many of the archaeological sites found in the area. It is also an important recreational and tourist hot spot. For many people, past and present, this stretch of coastline is their first, and last glimpse of the Shetland Mainland and is important because of this.

Despite the size of Sumburgh Airport, the visual impact is relatively low, however planes and helicopters taking off and landing do contribute obvious noise pollution to the area.

Quendale and West Voe have a very secluded feeling and are highly valued for recreation.

A sense of awe can be found at Grutness when looking at the size of some of the rocks the sea has thrown inland.

Sensitivities

The Sumburgh CCa is a valued agricultural landscape and also a tourist hotspot with some of Shetland's best beaches and well known archaeological sites found in the area. The area has a key panoramic

viewpoint at Sumburgh Head which allows views across Shetland, as well as out to open sea. The large open bays offer panoramic views and the dramatic coastline is an important landscape setting for many of the historical sites, Jarlshof in particular. The Sumburgh area is also highly regarded for recreation on land and in the water and should be taken into account in regards to future development.

For all developments a balance needs to be sought between the need for industry expansion, the setting of the historic and natural heritage assets, and the secluded feel offered along the coastline of the Sumburgh CCa.

Forces for Change

Potential marine and coastal development in the area need to be carefully considered so that it does not detract from the aesthetic appeal much of the coastline offers.

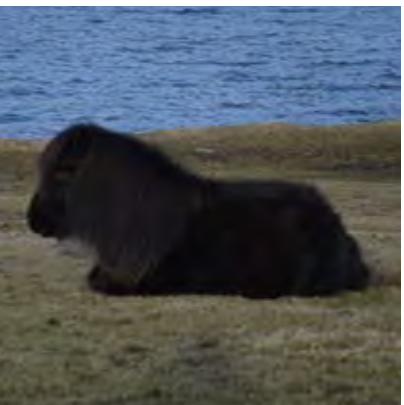
Aquaculture- There is potential for aquaculture sites within the South Mainland, however due to the open nature of the coastline, development in the area is, at present, unlikely.

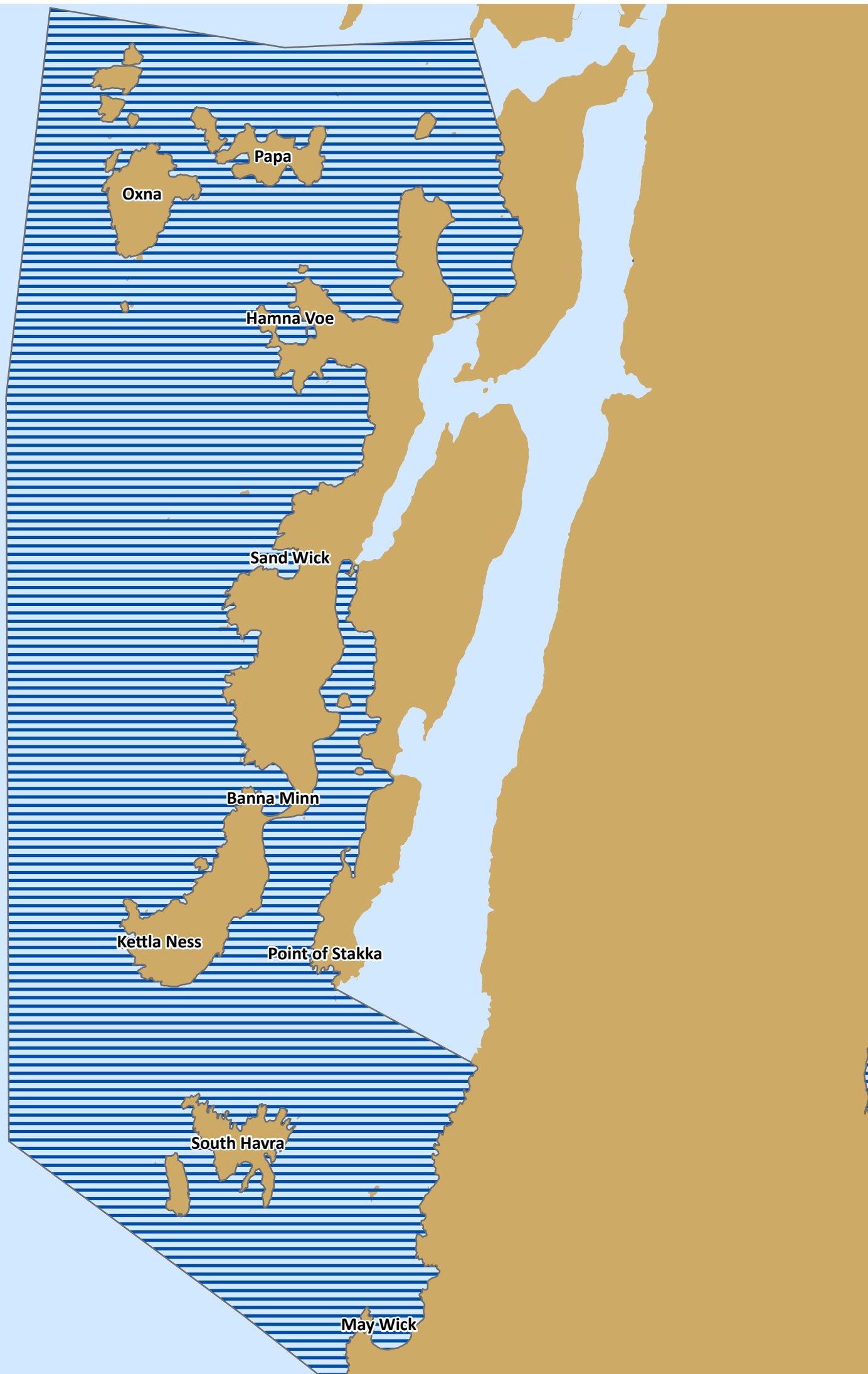
Marine renewables- There is potential for tidal and wave development off the coast of Sumburgh, although the current absence of an interconnector is restricting the local growth of this industry.



South Mainland

37. West Burra & Trondra Coastal Character Area







Hamnavoe

Summary Description

The West Burra & Trondra Coastal Character Area (CCA) runs from Kettla Ness on West Burra up to the Point of Pund east of Scalloway. It also includes the islands of Oxna, Papa and Cheynies and the smaller skerries and holms between Trondra and the Point of Pund.

The marine environment is busy with both finfish and shellfish aquaculture sites and various types of vessels moving to and from Scalloway Harbour.

Key Characteristics

- *Offshore coastal island seascape*
- *Busy aquaculture area*
- *Good panoramic views of the West Side, Foula and Fair Isle.*
- *Cliff and small bay pattern repeated along the coast*



Storm beach, Fugla Ness

Historic Context

The West Burra & Trondra CCA has been a very industrious area of coastline in the past, with evidence of at least four **burnt mounds** and a metal working site. Hamnavoe was also an important port during the herring and Da Haaf fishing.

Historic Features

Burnt Mounds- Can be found at Sand of Meal, Brandsiclett, Setter and Bruna Ness. Their intended use is still unknown.

Brochs

***Sand of Meal-** Possible broch site at the Sands of Meal.*

***Burland Broch (Scheduled Monument)-** Located on an islet just off Trondra and connected with a causeway.*

Both are in a poor condition.

Metal working site- Situated on Trondra not far from the Burland Broch. An anvil stone was found inside the building along with fragments of quern stones and pottery.

Hamnavoe- Unlike most other settlements in Shetland, **Hamnavoe** was a planned village centred around the pier. The houses were single storey and faced out to sea. Quite a few have now been joined together to make larger homes.

Industry

Fishing- There are some small fishing vessels based in Hamnavoe. The area has had a strong relationship with fishing for many years.

Aquaculture- There are around eight aquaculture sites within the West Burra CCA with the shore base found in Scalloway.

Landscape

The landscape of the West Burra CCA is a mixture of low hills and small bays. The main land cover is

heather moorland with some improved grazing and arable land found around settlements.

The largest settlement is Hamnavoe, has similarities to small fishing towns found along the east coast of Scotland.

There are four main LCTs; Major Uplands, Farmed and Settled Lowlands and Coast, Coastal Edge, and Coastal Island.

The landscape is valued as it is part of the **Shetland NSA**.

Geology

The main geology of the CCA is a mixture of **psammite** and **semi-pelite** which are **sandstone** and siltstone that has **metamorphosed**. There are also areas of **granite** found around Hamnavoe, Kettla Ness, Oxna and Papa.

Geosites

There are no Geosites within the West Burra CCA.

Landscape Features

Clift Hills- A dominant feature for the area, the Clift Hills can be seen across most of the islands in the CCA.

Fugla Ness- The **lighthouse** and storm beach on Fugla Ness are both features of the area and the large boulders on the beach are evidence to the power of the waves.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a: Mini Voe and Firth- There are four mini voes in the West Burra CCA; South Voe and North Voe on Papa, Sandy Voe on Oxna, Pund Voe near Scalloway, and Hamna Voe on Burra. Hamna Voe is the largest

with the settlement of Hamnavoe at the head of the voe. The remaining three have no settlements.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- The majority of the coastline in the West Burra CCa is a low rocky shore with shingle ayres found at Burland, Ayre of Sandwick, Hamnavoe and Branchiclett.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- Low banks are confined to West Burra in the CCa. The largest area can be found running from Bruna Ness round to Hamnavoe. Other areas are Biager, The Coall, Mouth of Banna Minn and Kettla Ness. There is also a small area on the southern coast of Houss Ness.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- The cliffs are mainly constrained to the southern end of the West Burra CCa with fragmented coastline found around Kettla Ness.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There are a number of small bays along the coast, with the Sands of Meal, Banna Minn and Sand Wick also having areas of sand with the Sands of Meal and Banna Minn highly valued.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are three coastal islands. Papa and Oxna were both inhabited at one point with the remains of farmsteads still visible. Cheynies has no remains other than a cairn on the highest point on the island. There is also a scattering of skerries and holms with some used for grazing but with no signs of inhabitancy in the past.

Experiential

The West Burra CCa is a scenic area with a variety of coastline to choose from. The cliffs around Kettla Ness are quite dramatic with stacks and geos a common feature. The sheltered bays at the Sands of Meal and Banna Minn have created lovely sandy beaches which are popular for residents and tourists alike. The village of **Hamnavoe** nestles along the hillside above the pier. Trondra sits with minimal development near the shore. The low lying landscape offers easy walking for much of the coast and the walk from the Sands of Meal to **Hamnavoe** is a popular route. When it is clear enough, it is possible to view Foula and Fair Isle from much of the coastline in the West Burra & Trondra CCa.

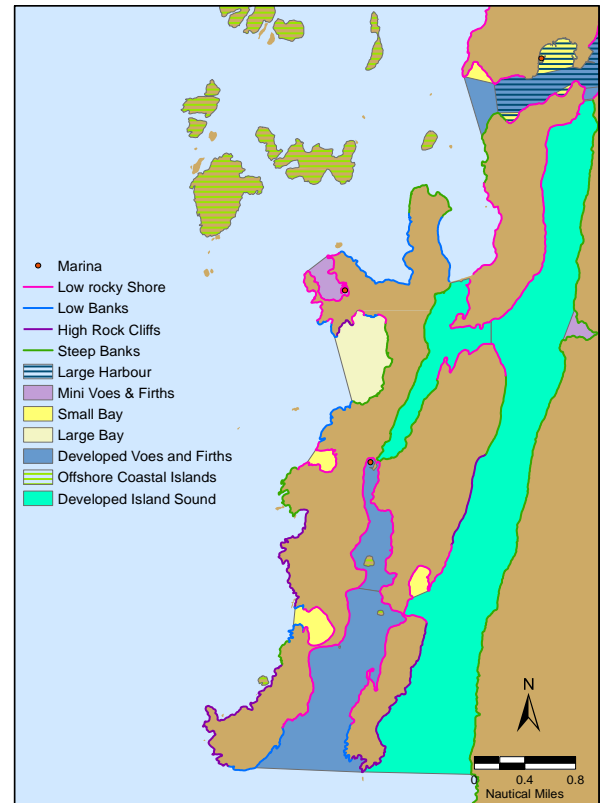
Sensitivities

The West Burra CCa has much low lying land with minimal development on the coast. Any large scale

development could have detrimental effects on the rural landscape.

Forces for Change

The amount of aquaculture in the area and the amount of marine traffic passing through could change with fluctuating markets.



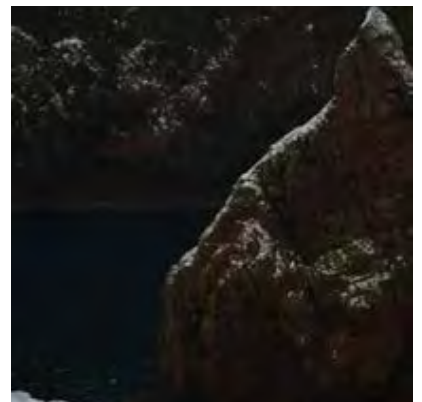
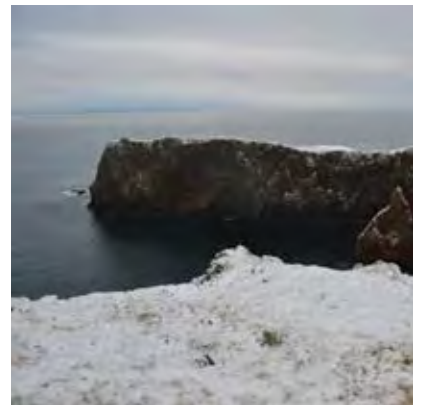
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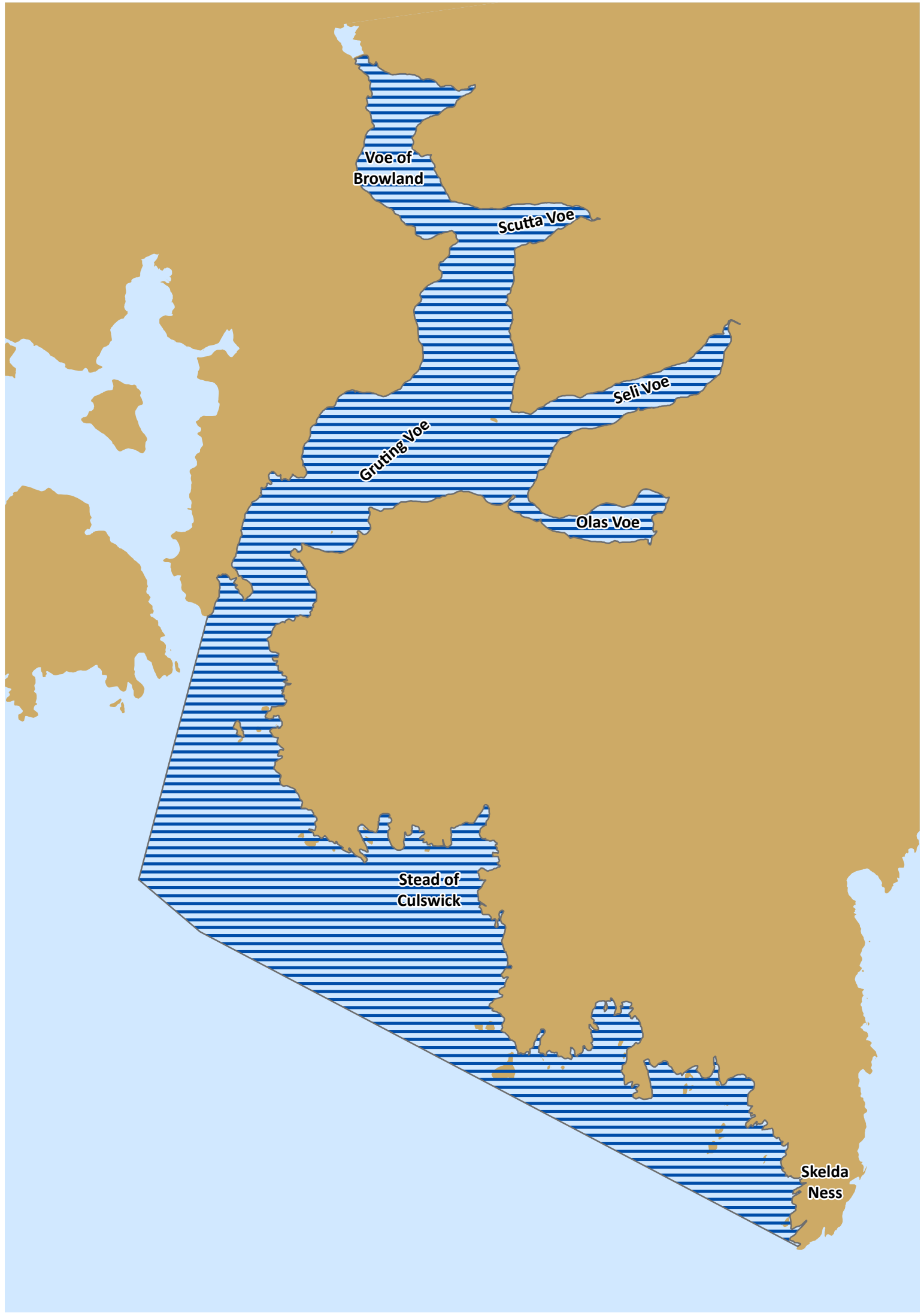
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West Mainland

38. Gruting Voe Coastal Character Area





Voe of
Browland

Scutta Voe

Seli Voe

Gruting Voe

Olas Voe

Stead of
Culswick

Skelda
Ness



Gruting Voe

Summary Description

Gruting Voe Coastal Character Area (CCa) is found to the east of Walls in the West Mainland of Shetland and is a large voe with four smaller voes coming off it. It has a variety of small settlements found at the heads of voes and a range of heather clad nesses. It is a busy area for aquaculture being fairly sheltered most of the time.

Key Characteristics

- Voe network
- Small settlements
- Busy aquaculture area
- Sloping coastline



Westerwick

Historic Context

The Gruting Voe CCa has been inhabited for 1000s of years with remains spanning this time. It is clear that residents went fishing often with lots of **boat nousts** found along the coast. The land has also been cultivated with a large amount of **planticrubs**, **kale yards** and field systems evident.

Historic Features

Setter Cairn (**Scheduled monument**)- A **heel shaped chambered cairn** situated on a rocky outcrop.

Ness of Gruting- There are three **Neolithic/ Bronze Age** houses.

Industry

Aquaculture- There are nine aquaculture sites within Gruting Voe CCa being a mix of finfish and shellfish.

Fishing- There is some creeling done in Gruting Voe.

Landscape

The landscape around the Gruting Voe CCa is mainly gentle slopes with improved land around settlements and rough grazing everywhere else. Around Olas Voe the landscape changed to heather moorland. The landscape also gets a bit steeper around here too. The main LCT is Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds with Peatland and Moorland to the south of Olas Voe.

Geology

Around the Ward of Culswick, the main underlying geology is **granite**. The rest of the CCa is mainly **sandstone** which explains the better quality soil found in the area.

Geosites

- 66. Scord of Brouster- National significance
- 68. Stanydale Temple- National significance

Landscape Features

Ward of Culswick- The Ward of Culswick sits at 118m and has fantastic panoramic views out across the whole of the West Mainland and Foula on the horizon. The main land cover is **peat** and heather moorland with large boulders scattered. The Ward also creates a focal point for the surrounding area.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1: Developed Voe and Firth- There are two developed voes in the Gruting Voe CCa. Gruting Voe itself has a fair number of aquaculture sites within it and development can be seen from most places, although most is set back from the coast. Seli Voe is the other developed voe with one shellfish farm and onshore development along both sides of the voe. There are piers on both sides of the voes.

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe and Firth- There are three undeveloped voes in the CCa; Voe of Browland, Scutta Voe and Olas Voe. There is minimal onshore and offshore development in any of these voes.

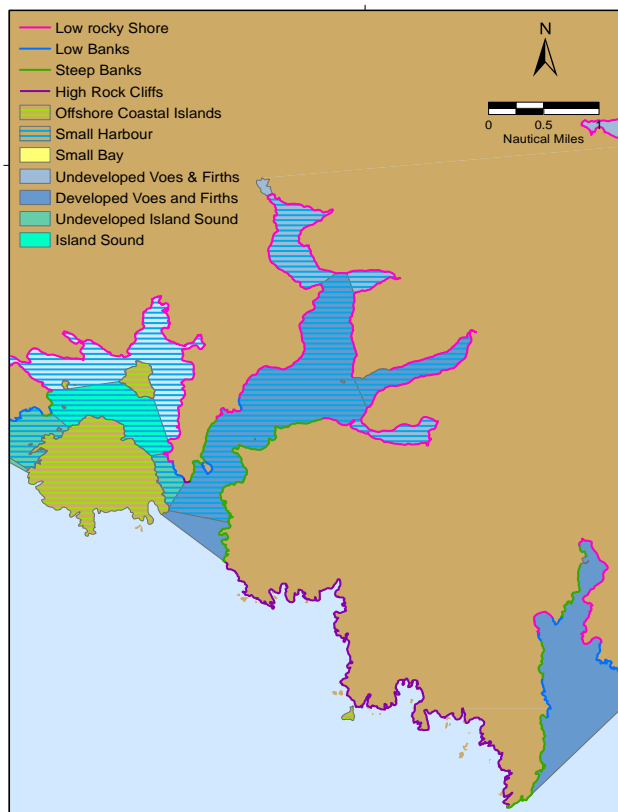
CCT 3: Voe and Firth Network- Gruting Voe is a large voe with four voes coming off it; Olas Voe, Seli Voe, Scutta Voe and the Voe of Browland.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Most of the Gruting Voe CCa is low rocky shore with a mixture of rocks and shingle.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- Green Head near the mouth of Gruting Voe is the only area of low banks within the CCa.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- There are some steep banks towards the mouth of Gruting Voe although they are not particularly steep.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Island- There is one small islet in the CCa; The Holm of Gruting. There are no remains on this island.



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Sensitivities

The Gruting Voe CCa is an enclosed seascape with fairly low lying landscape making it highly sensitive to most development types. There are already some aquaculture sites within the voes which do not detract too much from the scenic values of the area but this should be considered in regards to future development.

Forces for Change

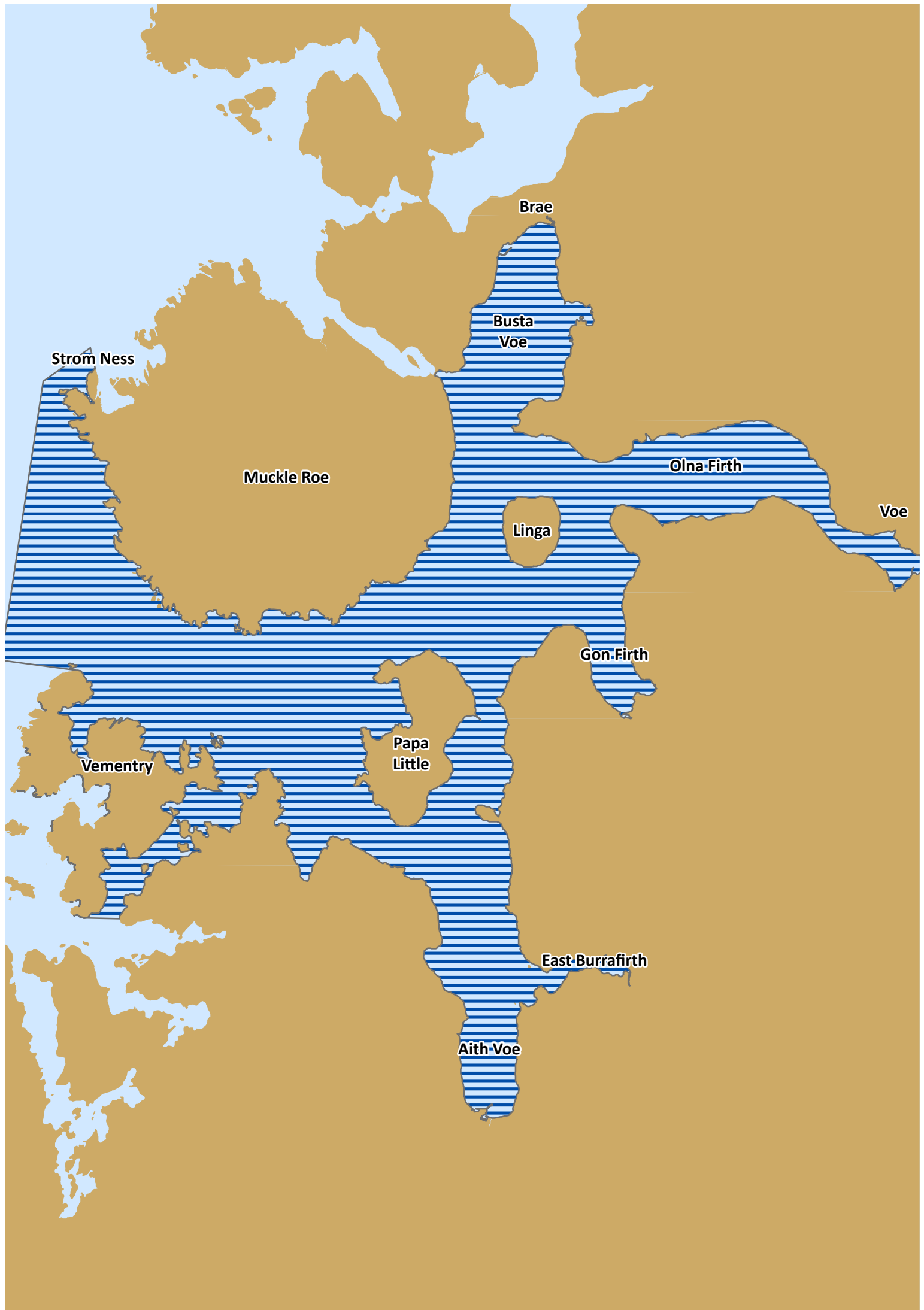
There are currently no forces for change.



West Mainland

39. Muckle Roe Coastal Character Area





Brae

Busta
Voe

Strom Ness

Muckle Roe

Olna Firth

Voe

Linga

Gon Firth

Vementry

Papa
Little

East Burrafirth

Aith Voe



Vementry from Muckle Roe

Summary Description

The Muckle Roe Coastal Character Area (CCa) sits between Delting and Aithsting on the west coast of Shetland. The CCa runs from Muckle Roe round to Voe, down to Aith and around Vementry and back to Muckle Roe.

The Muckle Roe CCa is a busy area for aquaculture with over 40 different licenced sites for shellfish and finfish aquaculture production. Busta Voe has planning restriction in place to restrict further aquaculture development to protect recreation in the area. There are three marinas in the CCa located in Brae, Aith and Voe with fishing competitions ('eelas'), sailing and rowing regattas an important social aspect of the summer months for many.

Settlements can be found at Aith, Voe and Brae. Brae is the third largest settlement in Shetland. Small pockets of development can be found at Wethersta, Gonfirth, East Burrafirth and Muckle Roe. With the many aquaculture sites there is also the associated shore bases dotted along the coastline.

Voes are the main characteristic of the CCa with some dramatic cliff scenery around Muckle Roe and Vementry. There are four islands in the character area: Papa Little, Vementry, Linga and Muckle Roe, with the latter connected to the mainland by a bridge.

Key Characteristics

- *Busy aquaculture area*
- *Popular marine recreational space, including fishing, windsurfing, diving, rowing, sailing and yachting*
- *Voes are the predominant feature of the area*
- *Muckle Roe and Vementry offer shelter from the North Atlantic*



Busta House

Historic Context

The Muckle Roe CCa was, and still is, mainly a **crofting** area. **Croft** ruins are a common feature along the steep banks of voes in the CCa. Other features such as **cairns** and **burnt mounds** indicate that people have been living in the area for thousands of years.

During the Norse era, Aithsting was an important place with 'ting' being roughly translated to mean parliament. Muckle Roe was also mentioned in the **Orkneyinga Saga**.

Busta Voe played an important part in both world wars, with Busta House being used as a base during **WWII**. There was also a First World War coastal battery situated on the isle of Vementry, with the guns still present.

During the 19th and 20th century, Voe was an important herring and whaling station in Shetland, which likely contributed to its notable Scandinavian aesthetics.

Historic Features

Busta House (**Category B listed**)- First built in the late 1580s with additions added later, Busta was the seat of the Gifford family until a long running legal battle brought the family to ruins. The house is now run as a hotel.

Olna Whaling Company - Set up by Christian Salvesen in 1904, the Olna Whaling Station was to become part of the largest whaling company in the world. At its peak in 1924, the station processed nearly 450 whales. The station was closed in 1929 due to the unviability and the owner wanted to concentrate more on his operations in the Antarctic. Nothing remains of the station.

Aith Lifeboat Station- The Aith lifeboat is the most northerly lifeboat station in Britain and was set up in 1933 in response to the Ben Doran, an Aberdeen trawler, being wrecked on the Ve Skerries in March 1930.

Industry

Aquaculture and Fishing- There is a large amount of aquaculture within the area due to the sheltered waters with salmon and mussels both farmed. Inshore fishing also occurs with small fishing boats based in Voe, Brae and Aith.

Industrial Estate- There is a small industrial estate found at Wethersta sitting between Busta Voe and Olna Firth.

Processing- Blueshell Mussels is based at Saltness in Busta Voe, shipping mussels all over the world.

Landscape

The landscape around the Muckle Roe CCa is fairly steep and for the most part undeveloped. The heads of the voes are a focus for development, with settlements at the heads of Busta Voe, Olnafirth and Aith Voe, the former two spurred on by the oil boom in the 1970s, but between these settlements, shoreline development is low. Much of the landscape is a mixture of unimproved grassland and heather. Closer to shore there is improved grassland. The landscape can be very dramatic when looking down or up the voes, with the steep sides plunging down into the dark water.

The area is covered by two LCTs Undulating Moorland with Lochs, and Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds. Considering there are only two LCTs across a moderately large area shows the repetitive nature of this area.

Geology

The geology around the area is fairly complex with three main types: **Granite** around Muckle Roe and Brae, **Dalradian** around Olnafirth, and Moine around Aith. The **Walls Boundary Fault Line** also runs through the centre of the CCa.

Geosites

55. Kirkhouse Quarry and Burn of Kirkhouse- Local

significance

97. Hill of Lee Quarry- tbc.

Landscape Features

Hill of Grobness- The Hill of Grobness sits around 130m high, reaching 219m at the Sneugie. Descending steeply down into the waters of Olnafirth, Grobness is a vivid feature at the mouth of the Voe especially when the mist comes tumbling down over the banks into the voe.

Linga- Sitting nearly central within the CCa, Linga is a circular shaped uninhabited isle which forms a focal point from many points around the coastline of the CCa.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1: Developed Voe- There are four developed voes within the CCa; Busta Voe, Olnafirth, Gonfirth and Aith Voe.

Busta Voe- With Brae at the head of the voe, Busta Voe has an extensive shoreline development on both sides of the voe. There are also aquaculture sites within the voe but policy restrictions control further development of the industry. There are two areas of saltmarsh below the Co-operative supermarket in Brae, and below Burravoe between Brae and Voe. The voe gives a romantic setting for Busta House, which sits along the western shore creating a focal point. Busta Voe also has a large marina with associated boating club and caravan park, offering facilities for residents and tourists.

Olnafirth- Olnafirth is a bowed shape voe on an east-west orientation, with the settlement of Voe at the head of the voe. There are also a dispersed settlements sitting above the northern shore, whereas the southern shore only has **croft** ruins with no road access. Aquaculture development is found in the voe and a small marina can be found at the head of the voe. Voe has a Scandinavian look and it is quite picturesque around the pier. Voe offers a range of facilities including carparking, pub and restaurant, slip way, marina and camping **böd**.

Gonfirth- The smallest voe in the CCa, Gonfirth, has limited shoreline development. There are a small number of aquaculture sites, and a small aquaculture shore base. The voe sits on a roughly north-south orientation and gives a picturesque setting for the Gonfirth Kirk. At the head of the voe there is a sand bar building up creating an area of salt marsh behind it.

Aith Voe- With a north-south orientation, Aith Voe has a marina and pier infrastructure and is home to

the Aith Lifeboat Station. There is also aquaculture development. Scattered development can be found along both shores. On the eastern shore there is a mini voe, and on the western shore a spit is developing with a lagoon behind.

CCT 5: Undeveloped Island Sound- There are five undeveloped island sounds in the CCa, Sound of Houbansetter, The Rona, Uyea Sound, Cribba Sound and Swarsbacks Minn.

The Sound of Houbansetter- A narrow sound between Papa Little and Voxter on the mainland. Runs on a north-south axis.

The Rona- Another narrow sound between Papa Little and Aith Ness on the mainland. The sound curves round the southern coast of Papa Little.

Uyea Sound and Cribba Sound- Nearly separated by a small headland, Uyea Sound and Cribba Sound are the smallest sounds within the CCa. They run on a northeast-southwest orientation between the mainland and the isle of Vementry.

Swarsback Minn- Between Muckle Roe and Vementry, Swarsback Minn offers access out into St Magnus Bay and is the largest sound in the Muckle Roe CCa. It sits roughly on an east-west axis.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Low Rocky Shore is the dominant CCT of the area covering the majority of the coastline with exceptions around the southern edge of the CCa. There are around 20 ayres within the Muckle Roe CCa varying in size. Each ayre has different sized and coloured particles depending on the geology and the tidal movement. The most well-known and used is Muckle Ayre on Muckle Roe.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- The majority of the low banks are found on Muckle Roe and leading back into Brae. There are also small areas at the mouth of Olna Firth and Aith Voe.

CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- Steep Banks can be found in most of the voes in the Muckle Roe CCa, particularly in Olnafirth. There is a stretch of low rocky shore at the base of the banks which can be covered during high tide.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- The cliffs in the CCa are mainly confined to the south-west corner of the CCa around Muckle Roe, Vementry, Papa Little and the coast between Vementry and Aithness.

CCT 11a: Marina- There are three marinas in the CCa located at Brae, Voe and Aith. There are also various small piers ranging in size and condition.

Brae- The Brae marina is owned and operated by the

Delting Boating Club and is the largest marina in the CCa with 54 berths and room for visitors.

Voe- Recently rebuilt, the pier and marina in Voe is the smallest in the CCa. It also has space for visiting craft.

Aith- The marina in Aith has two visitor berths with more space and deeper water found along the pier. It is quite sheltered.

CCT 14: Offshore Coastal Islands- There are four offshore coastal islands in the Muckle Roe CCa. Linga, Papa Little, and Vementry are uninhabited and Muckle Roe, the largest island, has a small population. It is also connected to the mainland by a bridge.

Experiential

The Muckle Roe CCa feels quite contained and intimate within the voes and sounds, with scenery ranging from developed and busy shores such as Brae, to remote high cliffs including those found around Muckle Roe.

Although never far from development, with the Muckle Roe CCa being a busy area for aquaculture, the area still retains striking views, in particular down Olva Firth to Linga, the cliff scenery around Muckle Roe and Vementry and the quietness of East Burrafirth.

Sensitivities

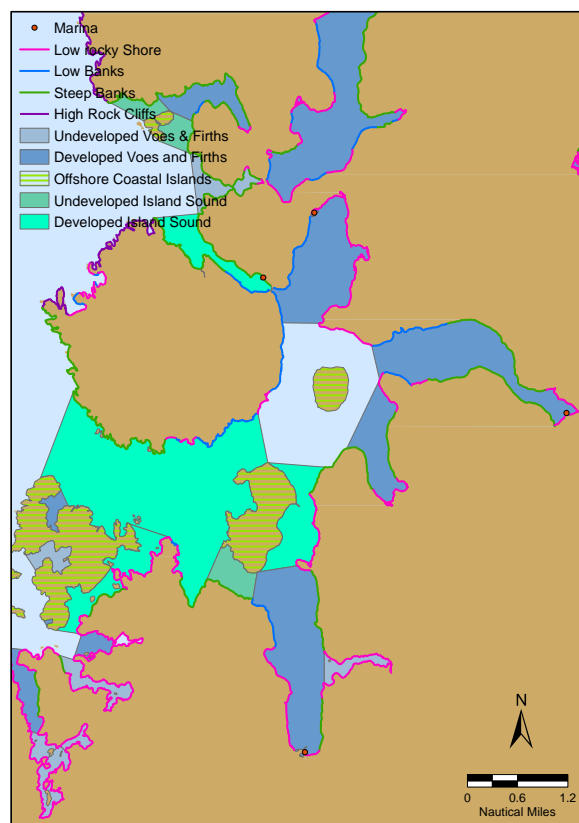
The Muckle Roe CCa is a busy CCa with numerous aquaculture sites and concentrations of shoreline development in Aith, Brae and Voe. Because of this, areas of low development, such as Muckle Roe, are more sensitive to onshore development as they provide a relatively limited resource in the area. Care needs to be taken regarding linear expansion of the settlements around the voes to make sure the less developed areas are retained.

Forces for Change

Aquaculture- The area is important for aquaculture production. There are just under 40 aquaculture sites within the CCa and there is potential that this number could increase or decrease in the future depending on the demand for the products and changes in production methods.

Settlements- The settlements around the CCa are continuing to expand at a slow rate, changing the views to and from the shore. The rate of growth of communities such as Brae could be influenced by

housing demand generated by the nearby Sullom Voe Oil Terminal and the Total Gas Plant.

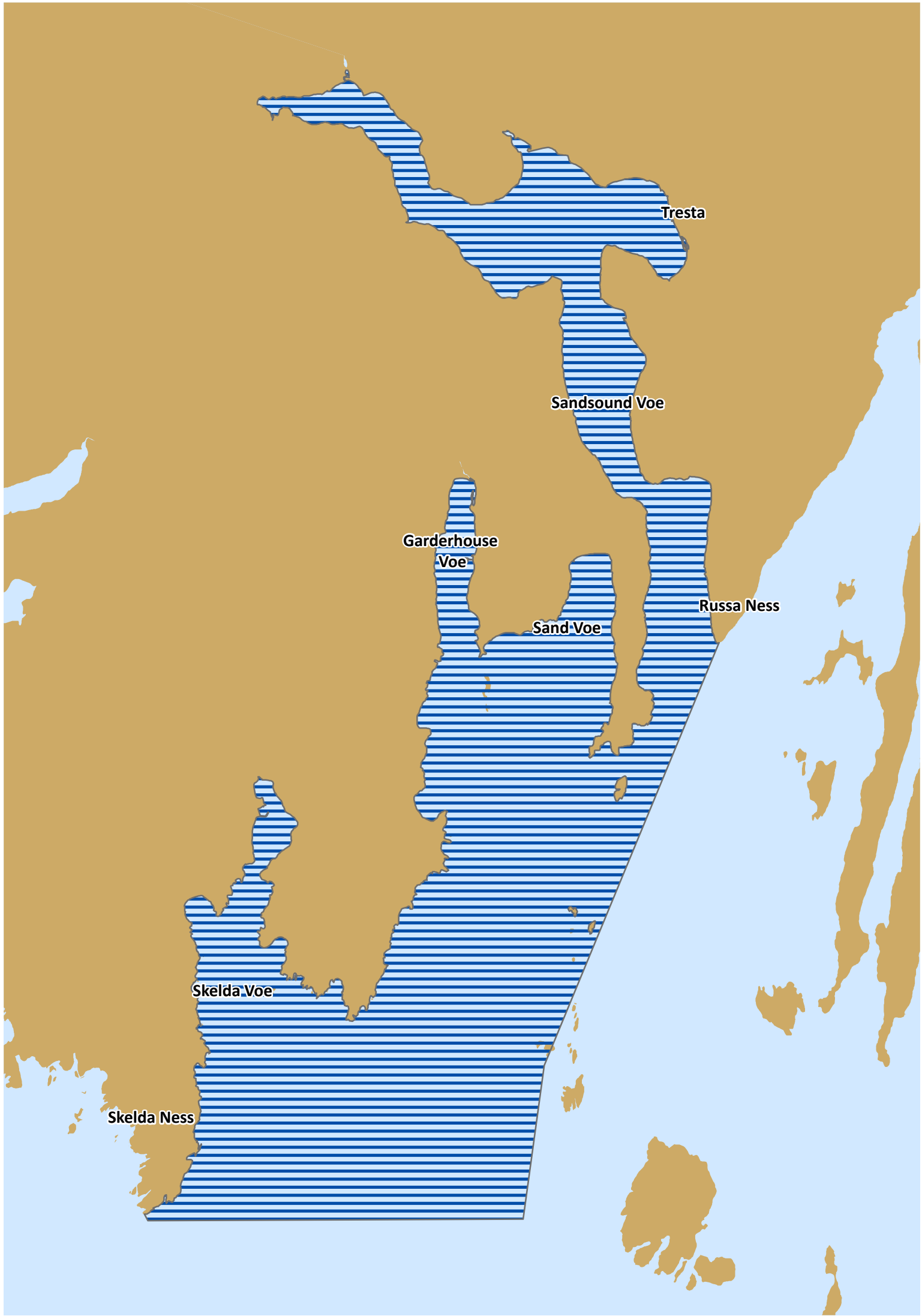




West Mainland

40. Skeld Coastal Character Area







Skeld Marina

Summary Description

The Skeld Coastal Character Area (CCa) is in the West Mainland. It covers the area of coastline from Skelda Ness to Russa Ness and includes a range of skerries and holms just offshore.

There is a large number of aquaculture sites using the sheltered voes.

Along the coast, improved land can be found backed by heather clad hills. At Sand and Tresta there are beautiful gardens which are infamous in Shetland.

Key Characteristics

- *Variety of voes at different orientations*
- *More sheltered than other areas in Shetland*
- *Busy aquaculture area*
- *Enclosed coast*



Red Ayre

Historic Context

There is evidence of people living along this coastline since the **Neolithic period** with settlement remains dotted along the shore.

The Skeld CCa has been a prosperous and picturesque area with at least three **Laird's** houses along the coast. There are also the remains of two fishing stations in close proximity.

Historic Features

Laird's Houses- There are three houses which were **Laird's** homes at one time.

Reawick House (*Category B listed building*)- Eighteenth Century house with later 19th century additions.

Haa of Sand (*Category A listed building*)- Built in 1794 for Sir Andrew Mitchell from Scalloway. It incorporates stone from Scalloway Castle. Thought to be one of the finest 18th century mansions in Shetland.

Park Hall (*Category C listed building*)- Built in 1900 for a local doctor. Now in ruinous state.

Fishing Stations- there were two fishing stations.

Sandsound Station (*Category C listed*)- Eighteenth century fishing station.

Haa of Sand Böd (*Category C listed*)- Eighteenth century trading booth.

Kirk Holm (*Scheduled monument*)- Thought to be the remains of a **monastic settlement** from the Medieval-Norse period.

Industry

Aquaculture- There are 13 sites in the eastern half of the character area with seven finfish farms and six shellfish. A shore base is located at Skeld.

Fishing- Some small scale fishing occurs in the Skeld CCa including creels and scalloping. There is also a SSMO closed area off Fora Ness.

Fish Processing- Originally a processing and packing

factory for salmon, the factory in Garderhouse Voe is currently empty.

Landscape

The landscape of the Skeld CCa is mainly a narrow strip of improved land along the shore, backed by heather and moorland hills which are fairly steep in places. There are two gardens which are popular attractions to visit and are contrary to the common thought that trees do not grow in Shetland. These gardens are located at Sand and Tresta.

There are five different LCTs found across the CCa with Farmed and Settled Lowland and Coast, and Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds covering the majority of the area, with a small area of Coastal Edge around Roe Ness; Peatland and Moorland below Muckle Ward; and Major Uplands at Russa Ness.

Most of the Skeld CCa is covered by the **Shetland NSA** meaning that it is valued for its scenic qualities.

Landscape Feature

Gairdin's i' Sand- A public garden cared for by a **trust**. Large pine trees create vistas down to the sea with a mixture of wildflower planting and ponds.

Geology

The main underlying geology is an igneous rock with **granite** qualities. To the east around Russa Ness and Fora Ness the geology is a mixture of **sandstone**, mudstone and siltstone which has been **metamorphosed**. Finally, there is a small area of **calcareous** rock around sand which would constitute to the better soil for creating the gardens.

Geosites

57. Ward of Tumblin Quarry- Local significance

69. Skelda Ness- National significance

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1: Developed Voe and Firth- Out of the eight voes and firths, four are developed; Garderhouse Voe, Sandsound Voe and The Firth, mainly offshore with aquaculture sites. There are some onshore development but it is dispersed. In Garderhouse Voe there is also a former fish processing plant with pier infrastructure. Skelda Voe does not have any aquaculture sites but there is a marina and pier infrastructure, with a small settlement nestled around the voe.

CCT 2: Undeveloped Voe and Firth- Tresta, Bixter, Effirth and Sand Voe are undeveloped voes. There is no aquaculture development and onshore development is sparse.

CCT 3: Voe & Firth Network- The Skeld CCa is a voe network with seven voes and one firth. They vary in size and width with Sandsound Voe leading into Tresta Voe, The Firth, Bixter Voe and Effirth Voe.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Much of the Skeld CCa is low rocky shore with stretches of shingle. The largest stretch can be found in the bottom half of Sandsound Voe. Areas can also be found on both sides of Sand Voe, Rea Wick and Skelda Voe.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- There are four main stretches of low banks in the Skeld CCa with three occurring within Skelda Voe. The other area sits between Garderhouse Voe and Sand Voe.

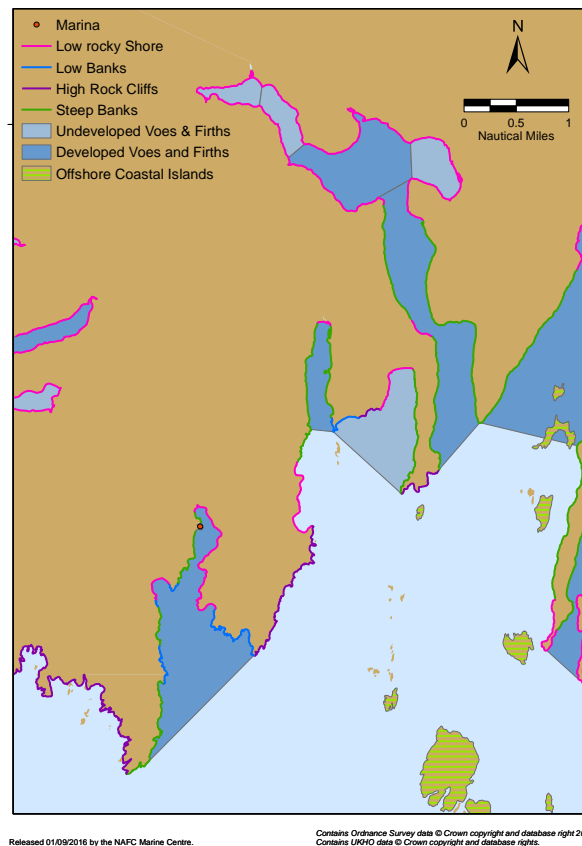
CCT 8: Exposed Coast- Steep Banks- There are steep banks found in Garderhouse Voe and the head of Skelda Voe. Some stretches of Sandsound Voe also end in steep banks mainly in the top half of the voe. Lung Ness and the Ness of Bixter are also covered by the steep banks CCT.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- There is a small stretch of cliffs running from Swarta Gill to Roe Ness with a few caves and two ayres which are accessible.

CCT 11a: Marina- There is a marina located in Skelda Voe below Easter Skeld. There are over 20 berths with eight for visiting craft.

CCT 12a: Small Bay- There is one small bay in the Skeld CCa found at Rea Wick. It has the classic bay shape with a stretch of red sand between two rocky promontories.

CCT 14: Offshore Coast Islands- There are three islands; Kirka Holm, Fore Holm and Sanda Stour. There is also a variety of Skerries and islets. The largest isle is Sand Stour, however Kirka Holm is the only one to have remains of a settlement.



Experiential

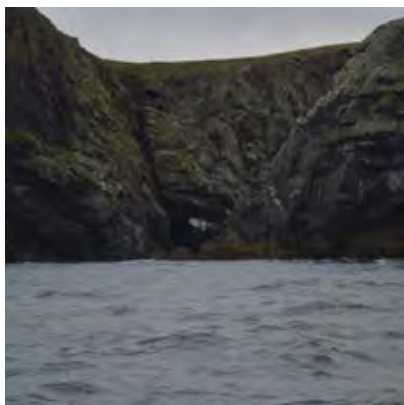
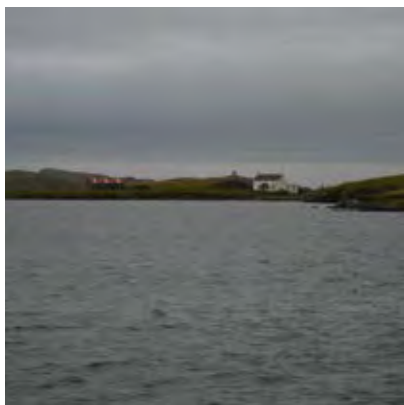
There is a lot of interest along the stretch of coast that makes up the Skeld CCa. The open coast around Skelda Voe is contrasted by the enclosed coast found in Sandsound Voe where there is no view out to open water. There is plenty of scenic qualities with much of the area included in the [Shetland NSA](#).

Sensitivities

Because the area is valued for its scenic qualities, it is sensitive to most development.

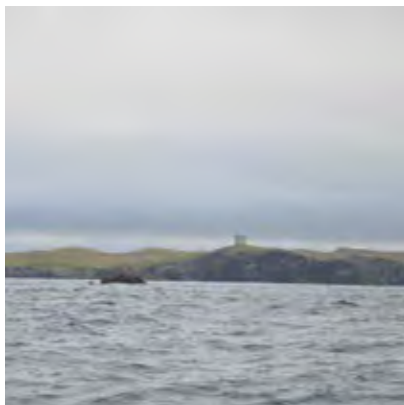
Forces for Change

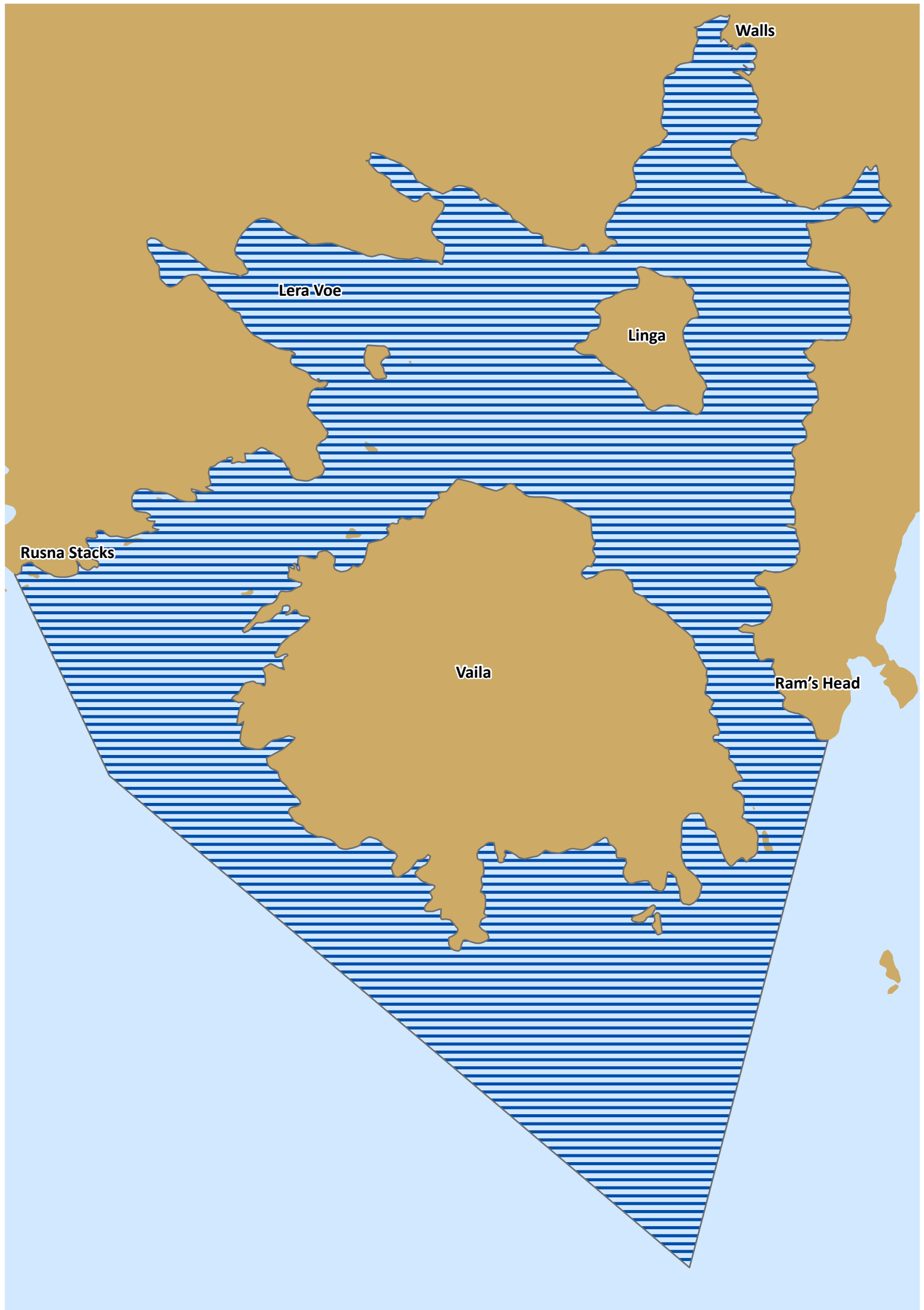
There are currently no forces for change.



West Mainland

41. Waas Coastal Character Area





Walls

Lera Voe

Linga

Rusna Stacks

Vaila

Ram's Head



Village of Walls

Summary Description

The Waas Coastal Character Area (CCa) is located in Walls, known locally as 'Waas', and includes the area of water protected by the island of Vaila. It is a sheltered area used by the ferry that runs to Foula and by some small fishing boats. The village of Walls sits at the head of the sound with houses scattered down both sides of the coast. The sound has been extensively developed for aquaculture, in particular mussel farms.

Key Characteristics

- Sheltered sound
- Village of Walls along coastline
- Busy area for aquaculture



Low lying landscape

Historic Context

Walls was a prosperous area at one time. This can be seen from the five large houses and three kirks within the small CCa. The village of Walls was an important base for the herring fishing with many jetties and **böds** along the shore.

Historic Features

Haas- There are five large houses around the sound, Vaila Hall, Sutherland House, Haa of Bayhall, Voe House and Burrastow House.

Vaila Hall (Category B listed)- Originally built in 1696 and remodelled in the 1890s. Located on the island of Vaila.

Haa of Bayhall (Category B listed)- Built in 1750.

Burrastow House (Category C listed)- Built in 1759.

Sutherland House and Voe House (Category B listed)- Both manse were built before the 1880s.

Jetties- There are many jetties around the sound, a remnant of the prosperous fish curing business of the late 1800s. Some are still in use today.

Churches- There are three churches within the CCa; **St Paul's** Church, the Methodist Chapel and the Congregational Church. There was also a chapel on the shores of the Loch of Kirkigarth, just outside the CCa.

Industry

Aquaculture- There are eight aquaculture sites within the CCa, with a finfish shore base at Vadhure.

Fishing- There are a small number of fishing boats working from the pier at Walls.

Tourism- There are various B&Bs and self-catering cottages available within Walls and there is also the Burrastow House Hotel. Voe House also offers accommodation as a camping **böd**. There is a marina which has spaces for visiting craft and the ferry to Foula also leaves from the Walls pier.

Recreation- A popular place for walking, there are three **core paths** around the Waas CCa. The Walls

Regatta Club is situated in the heart of the village hosting various activities through the year.

Landscape

The landscape around Waas CCa is relatively low lying with areas of improved grazing around Walls village, Whiteness, Burrastow, and Riskaness.

There is only one landscape type in the Waas CCa, Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds.

Geology

The underlying geology in the Waas CCa is **sandstone** with large deposits of **till** around the village and **peat** on Vaila.

Geosites

There are no Geosites in the Waas CCa.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a: Mini Voe or Firth- There are two mini voes in the Waas CCa. The Voe of Vaila appears to be more like a small bay, however with Gluibuil along the right side, it is possible that there was no gap when it was named by the Norse many years before. The other is Lera Voe which is a lot bigger and has a tidal flat at the head of the voe.

CCT 4: Developed Island Sound- There are three sounds within the Waas CCa; Vaila Sound, Easter Sound and Wester Sound. Vaila Sound has various aquaculture sites within it with Easter and Wester Sounds offering access out into the Atlantic.

CCT 6: Exposed Coast- Low Rocky Shore- Low Rocky Shore is the dominant CCT in the Waas CCa. It runs from the pier at Burrastow round to Ram's Head. There are 15 shingle ayres within the Waas CCa however, the majority don't actually have names.

They are located below Sutherland House, Vadlure, Kaili Ness, Heathery Taing, Cloudin, Voe of Vaila, Quinnin Geo, Callibanks, Burrastow, Crookataing, Vadill, Pointataing, and Bratanoust. There are two named; Dogger Ayre and Sparrow- Ayre.

CCT 7: Exposed Coast- Low Banks- Low banks are mainly confined to the western coast of the Waas CCa, near the mouth of the sound.

CCT 9: Exposed Coast- High Cliffs- There are high cliffs from Ramna Stacks up to Burrastow and around most of the island of Vaila.

CCT 11: Small Harbour- The whole of Vaila Sound comes under the small harbour CCT with pier and marina infrastructure. The island of Vaila creates a natural shelter, even from southerly gales.

CCT 14: Offshore Islands- Linga, Vaila and the Holm of Breibister are all offshore islands. Linga has the remains of two farmsteads but it has not been lived on for 100s of years. Both Linga and the Holm of Breibister are fairly low lying with the highest point on Linga being 28m. Vaila is the largest island in the Waas CCa and has a high point of 91m at East Ward. There are also residents on Vaila.

Experiential

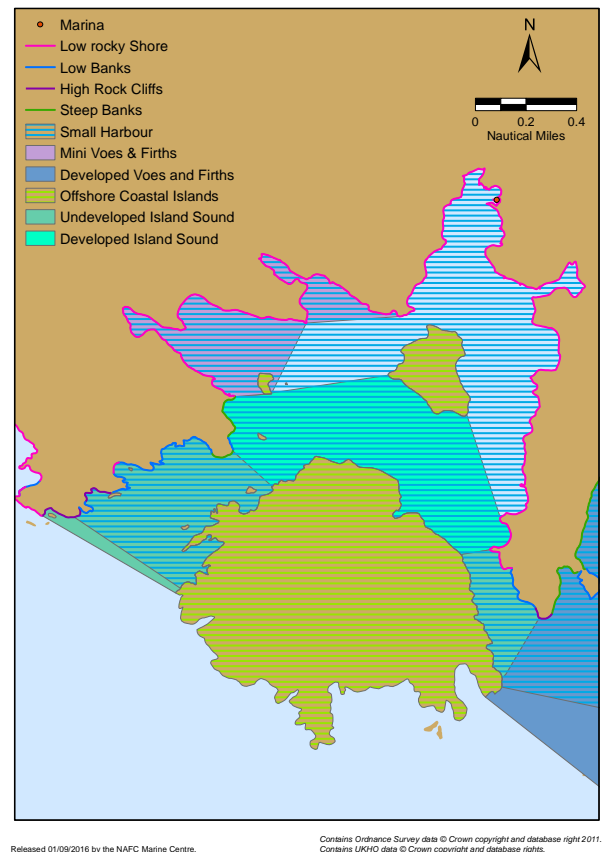
The Waas CCa is an intimate space with a lot of activity. There are eight aquaculture sites within the CCa, a large amount for a relatively small area. It is easy to see the area has been important for the fishing in the past with many larger houses close to the shore. The village forms the main focal point to the north with the watch tower on Vaila to the south.

Sensitivities

The sounds are already extensively developed for aquaculture. Additional developments or alterations to developments should consider the low lying nature of the surrounding landscape and should stay in-line with the coastline as much as possible, not obstruct areas of water that are currently empty which could give the area a cluttered feel, and finally consider the high level of recreational activities of the area.

Forces for Change

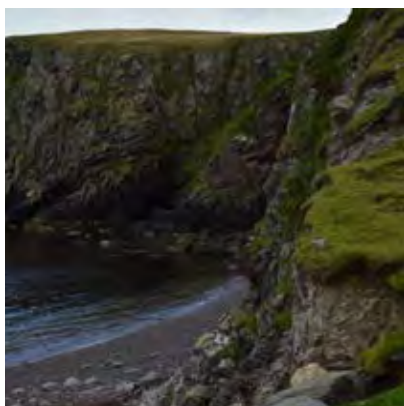
There are currently no forces for change.

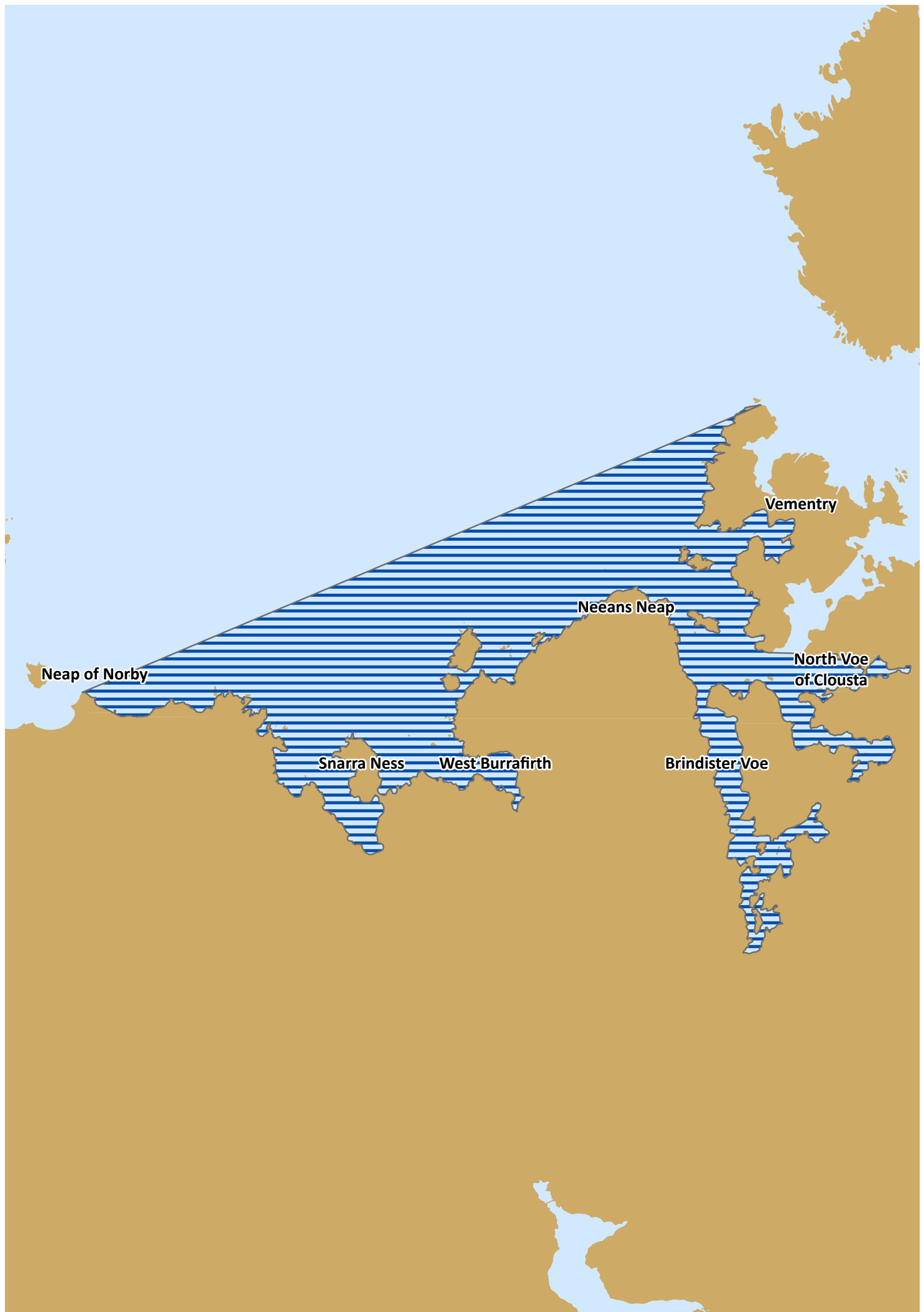




West Mainland

42. West Burrafirth Coastal Character Area





Neap of Norby

Snarra Ness

West Burrafirth

Neeans Neap

Brindister Voe

North Voe
of Clousta

Vementry



West Burrafirth Pier

Summary Description

The West Burrafirth Coastal Character Area (CCa) is located in the West Mainland. It incorporates the West Side of Vementry and runs from John's Head on Vementry along the coast to the Neap of Norby. The coastline is fairly indented with a number of voes and firths. There are also a reasonable amount of aquaculture sites within the area and the terminal for the Papa Stour ferry is located at West Burrafirth.

Key Characteristics

- *Indented coastline*
- *Sparsely populated area with little onshore development along the coast*
- *Ferry route to Papa Stour*



Broch in Brindister Voe

Historic Context

Although the area has been industrial in the past it was on a small scale with **horizontal mills** dotted across the hillside, numerous **townships** and two **lime kilns** out on the points at Skinhoga and Snarra Ness.

Historic Features

Cairns- There are four **heel shaped cairns** in the West Burrafirth CCa; Ness of Noonsbrough (**Scheduled Monument**), The Runie and two at the Loch of Kellister.

Brochs- There are three brochs in the West Burrafirth CCa.

Bousta- *Just under 14m in diameter, the broch is almost totally destroyed.*

Noonsbrough (**Scheduled Monument**) - *Around 18m in diameter and less than a metre high, the broch is now a grass covered mound.*

Brindister- *Ruined broch of an undetermined size on a small islet which is connected to the mainland with a causeway.*

Industry

Aquaculture- There are 10 aquaculture sites within the CCa, a mixture of finfish and shellfish with shore bases located in West Burrafirth and Brindister.

Fishing- There is a high level of commercial fishing not far offshore with West Burrafirth used to land catch on a regular basis. Some creeling for crab and lobster also occurs.

Landscape

The landscape of the West Burrafirth CCa has similarities to the west coast of Scotland with heather moorland and rocky outcrops. Although never far from the sea, at times it appears completely land locked.

There are two LCTs within the CCa, the largest being Undulating Moorland and Lochs with small areas of Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds.

Geology

The main rock type in the West Burrafirth CCa is sandstone with small pockets of volcanic, igneous and **metamorphic** rocks. There are also a number of **fault lines** running through the area on a roughly south west axis. Together this creates quite a complex geology.

Geosites

63. Ness of Clousta to the Brigs- National significance.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1 Developed Voe & Firth- There are two developed voes, North Voe of Clousta and Brindister Voe, within the character area. Neither have much onshore development with North Voe not having road access either. However, they both have aquaculture sites for both finfish and shellfish.

CCT 2 Undeveloped Voe & Firth- There are seven undeveloped voes and firths; Voe of Snarraness, West Burrafirth, Uni Firth, The Vadills, Mo Wick, Voe of Clousta and Suthra Voe. Although West Burrafirth has a large pier, this is the only development in the firth and due to the natural shape the pier is unobtrusive. There is also a finfish site in Voe of Snarraness but again there is only limited onshore development in addition to the aquaculture site.

CCT 3 Voe & Firth Network- The east side of the West Burrafirth CCa is a voe and firth network with seven on a north to east axis. Brindister Voe links into Uni Firth, The Vadills and Mo Wick.

CCT 5 Undeveloped Island Sound- There is one

small island sound between The Heag and the Isle of West Burrafirth. There is no onshore or offshore development around the two islands.

CCT 6 Exposed Coast: Low Rocky Shore- Low rocky Shore can be found from the Bay of Garth round the coast to Filli Geo. Large areas around Snarraness and along to West Burrafirth. Coming into Brindister Voe there is a stretch of low rock shore with three sand ayres. The rest of the West Burrafirth CCa is mainly low rocky shore with stretches of shingle.

CCT 7 Exposed Coast: Low Banks- There are a few areas of low banks mainly confined to the western half of the CCa. The largest stretch runs around the Crokna Vord. Other areas are the east coast of Snarra Ness and in the Bay of Brenwell.

CCT 8 Exposed Coast: Steep Banks- Steep banks can be found along Vementry, North Green Hill and around the Voe of Snarraness.

CCT 9 Exposed Coast: High Cliffs- The only stretch of cliffs in the West Burrafirth CCa can be found at the Face of Neenans.

CCT 11 Small Harbour- There is a small harbour in West Burrafirth where the ferry runs to Papa Stour and various smaller commercial fishing vessels land their catch.

CCT 14 Offshore Coastal Islands- There are five islands in the West Burrafirth CCa; Isle of West Burrafirth, Linga, Gruna and two islands both called The Heag. There are no remains on any of these islands.

Experiential

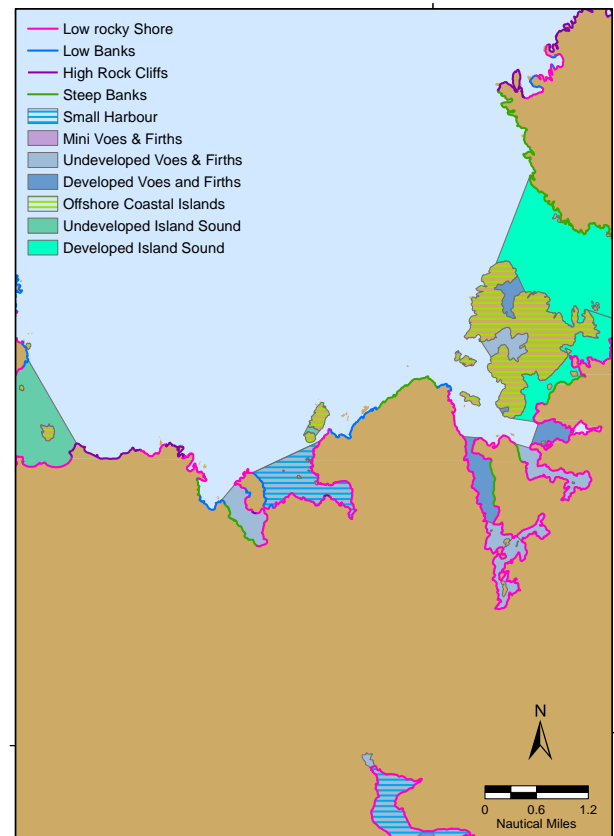
The West Burrafirth CCa is quite remote with much of the landscape not accessible via road. The lack of development in these areas heightens the feeling of seclusion. Vementry is also an uninhabited island with no ferry links. Since much of the CCa is within the network of voes and firths, the coastline feels contained with few views out to open water.

Sensitivities

Because of the nature of the voe and firth network and the topography of the landscape the West Burrafirth CCa could cope with an amount of small on and offshore development if sensitively sited. However, with the lack of infrastructure in the area this is unlikely to happen in the near future.

Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change.



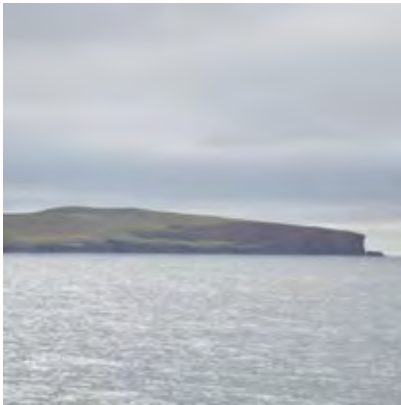
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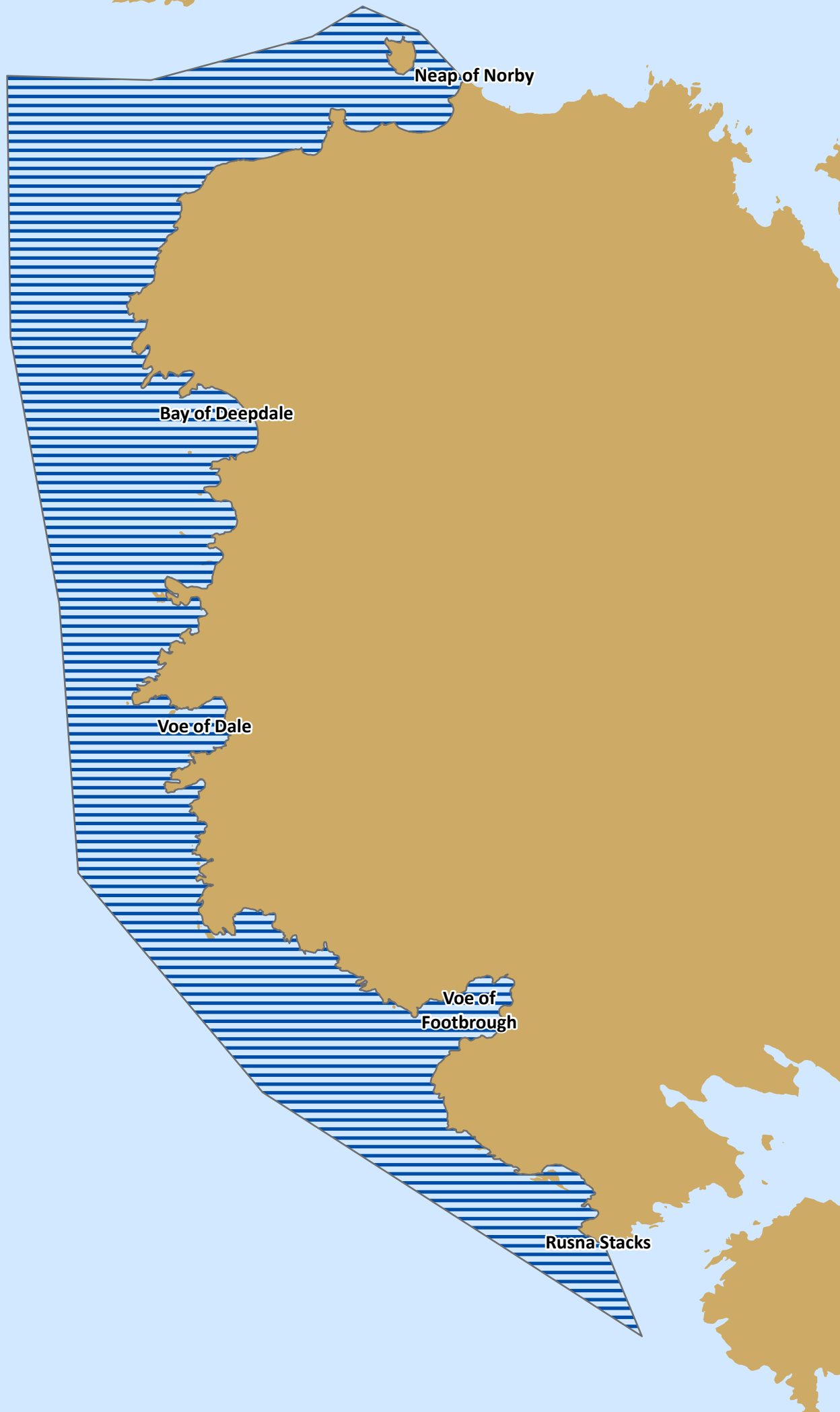
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West Mainland

43. West Side Coastal Character Area







West Side

Summary Description

The West Side Coastal Character Area (CCa) is located in Walls and Sandness between Rusna Stacks at the mouth of Wester Sound up to the Neap of Norby. It is a theatrical coast of cliffs, arches, skerries and stacks. Development is scattered, with a vast stretch of the coastline empty. There is no aquaculture along this stretch of coast as it is very exposed.

Key Characteristics

- *Cliff scenery*
- *Large areas with no development*
- *Views across to Foula and Papa Stour*



Melby House, Sandness

Historic Context

The west side of Shetland has been occupied for 1000s of years and is still quite a traditional **crofting** landscape, remaining relatively untouched by further development. Evidence has been found of ancient farmsteads and field systems on what is now heather moorland, showing that the landscape used to be highly productive.

Historic Features

Burnt Mounds- There are numerous burnt mounds along the coastline. Little Brownie's Knowe and Littlure are **scheduled monuments**.

Defences

Loch of Huxter Broch (**scheduled monument**)- Around 9m in diameter the broch at the Loch of Huxter is now in a ruinous state.

Loch of Watsness Broch (**scheduled monument**)- Thought to have been 15m in diameter there is now only a grass covered mound left on the shore of the loch.

Footabrough Broch (**Scheduled Monument**)- A grass covered mound around 4m high.

There are also the remains of three **promontory forts** at Weinnia Ness, Mu Ness and Burrier Head.

Industry

Tourism- An important industry with the landscape being a big draw, especially for day visitors.

Wool Mill- Sandness is home to the only spinning mill in Shetland creating a range of knitted and woven goods.

Fishing- There is a small amount of fishing and creels off the coast.

Landscape

The landscape of the West Side CCA is highly valued for its scenic qualities. The land is mainly used for crofting with a patchwork of green around settlements and

townships which mainly sit in a corridor between the cliffs and a large area of moorland in the middle.

There are four different LCTs; Major Uplands, Inland Valley, Farmed and Settled Lowlands and Coast, and Coastal Edge.

Geology

The geology of the West Side CCA is composed of three main rock types; **schist**, **sandstone** and **limestone**. **Sandstone** is the predominant type covering much of Walls and Sandness with **schist** and **limestone** only found in small areas along the coast. It is possible to see fish fossils in the sandstone at Melby. A large **fault line** runs around the Voe of Dale up to Aith Voe.

Geosites

64. Melby- National significance

65. Sel Ayre- tbc.

67. Fidlar Geo to Watsness- National significance

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1a Mini Voe or Firth- There are two undeveloped mini voes within the West Side CCA; Voe of Footabrough and Voe of Dale. Both are relatively small but Footabrough and Dale have steeper sides. There is no development along the coastline of the voes or within the voes as they are too exposed for aquaculture. There are three ayres situated at the head of the voes all consisting of quite coarse shingle and although there are no roads, the beaches are accessible.

CCT 7 Exposed Coast: Low Banks- There are a few small areas of low banks along the coast of the West Side. These are found around the Hamar, Fidlar Geo, Rams Head, Voe of Dale, around Pobie Skeo and Clumpers.

CCT 8 Exposed Coast: Steep Banks- Some stretches

of the coast are steep banks rather than cliffs such as around the bay of Deepdale.

CCT 9 Exposed Coast: High Cliffs- The majority of the West Side CCa is hard rock cliffs with most sitting at 30m or above. There are also many fragmented coastal features such as stacks and geos. There are nine pocket beaches along the coast of the West Side CCa. The beach at the Ayre of Huxter is backed by 10m cliffs but can be accessed from the east end of the beach.

CCT 12a Small Bay- The Bay of Deepdale is the only small bay within the CCa. It is not accessible from land but there is a shingle beach. There is also a cave to the west of the bay.

Experiential

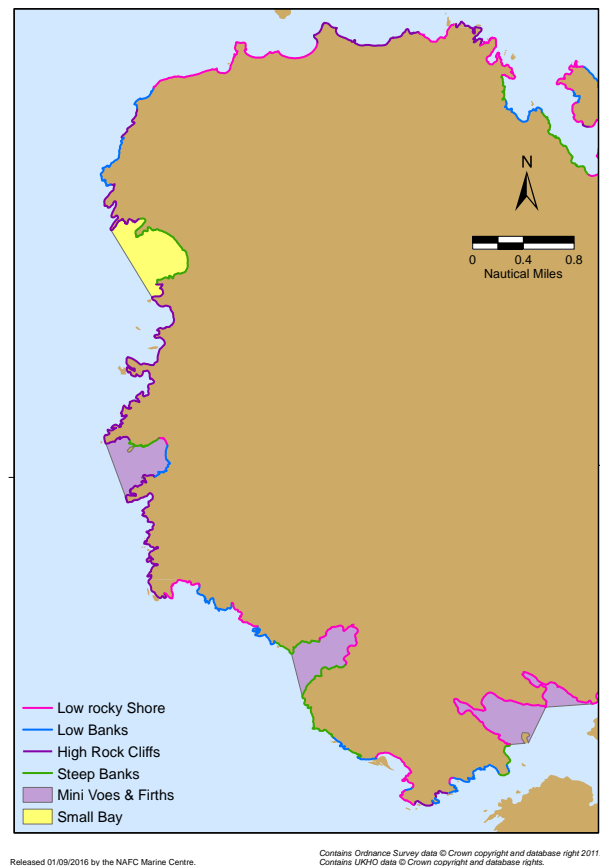
The West Side CCa is a secluded coastline with no aquaculture due to lack of shelter. The cliffs offer a dramatic walking route which can be quite tough in places. The views out to Foula and up to Papa Stour create a connection between the islands and the mainland.

Sensitivities

The West Side CCa is relatively undeveloped with most houses sitting back from the shore and no aquaculture development. The area is highly sensitive to near- shore development due its relative remoteness and wilderness qualities and to offshore development due to the proximity of Foula and Papa Stour.

Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change

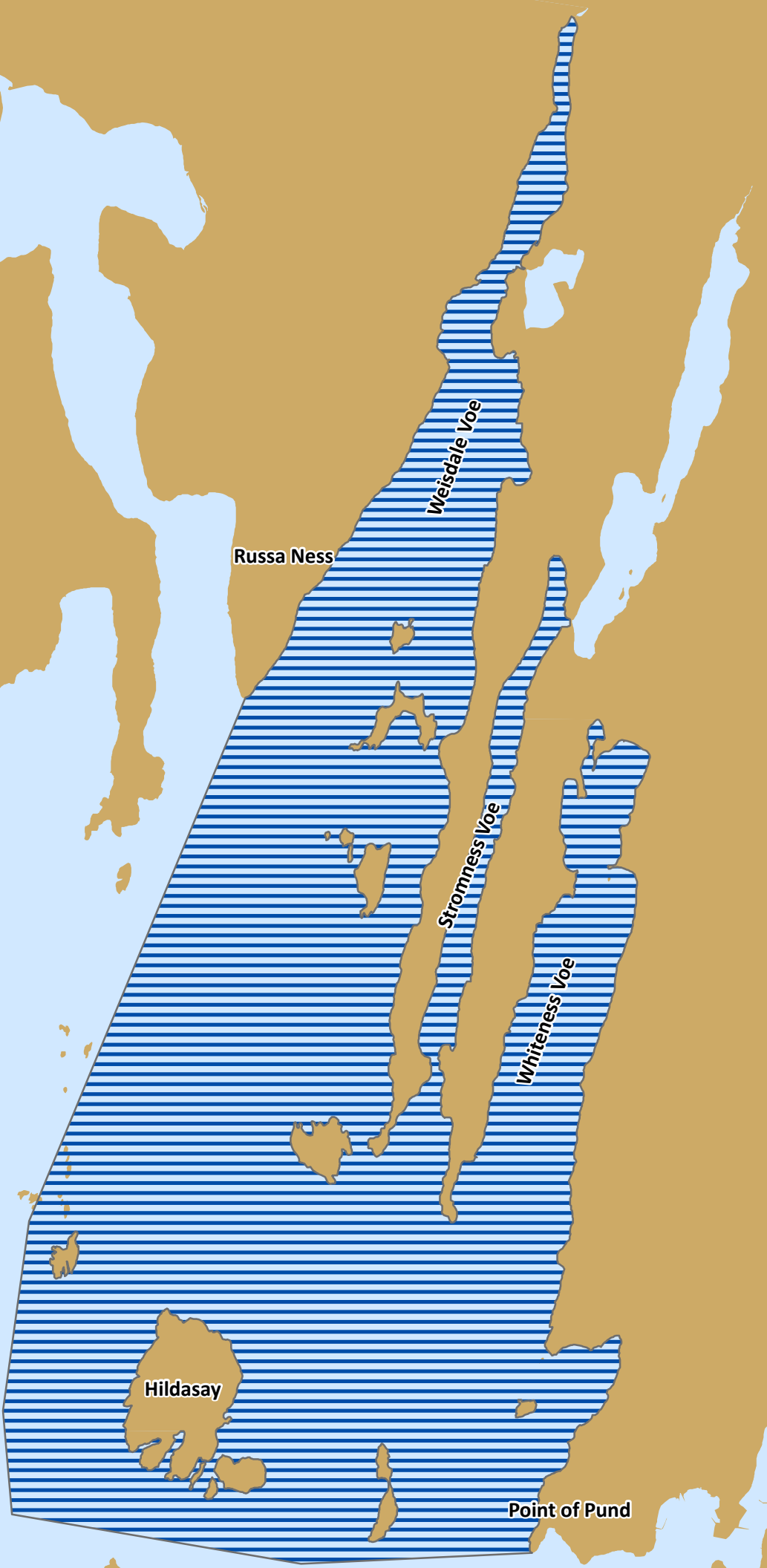




West Mainland

44. Whiteness & Weisdale Coastal Character Area







Whiteness Voe

Summary Description

The Whiteness & Weisdale CCa runs from the Point of Pund up to Russa Ness and consists of three voes on a north-east axis and various offshore islands which includes Greena, Flotta, Hoy, North Havra, Hildsay, Linga, Langa and Burwick holm.

The area is busy with aquaculture sites, however terrestrial development is low.

Key Characteristics

- Long narrow voes
- Busy area for aquaculture
- Part of **Shetland NSA**
- Offshore coastal islands



John Clunies Ross' House

Historic Context

A traditional **crofting** landscape, the Whiteness & Weisdale CCa has been a productive area for many years. The remains of two fishing **böds** can be found in the CCa and there are seven **horizontal mills** found along a burn running down to Whiteness Voe from the Loch of Ustaness.

There are various interesting houses in the area, the ruins of John Clunies Ross' House, Binna Ness only accessible by boat and a possibility of five **brochs** along the coastline.

Historic Features

Brochs- There are five potential brochs in the Whiteness and Weisdale CCa.

Heglibister Broch (*Scheduled monument*)- A mound around 3m high. It is thought that a large settlement surrounded the broch however, the removal of stones make this hard to determine.

Burra Holm Broch- Thought to have been just under 16m in diameter, now a mound standing around 2m high.

Burwick Holm Broch- Possible broch site.

Ness of Burwick Broch- Thought to possibly be a broch around 10.5m in diameter and a natural tombolo connecting to the mainland. However, this is all circumstantial.

Linga Broch- Possible broch on the island of Linga.

Sound Fishing Station- A number of building ruins left from Da Haaf fishing.

Nesbister Böd (*Category C listed*)- Sitting on a low rocky isthmus, the böd can be completely cut off in bad weather. Still in use but as a camping böd.

John Clunies Ross' House (*Category B listed*)- The King of the Cocos, John Clunies Ross took over a group of islands to the north of Australia in the 1800s. The remains of his childhood home are marked with a plaque.

Binna Ness House (*Category B listed*)- Also known as

Jackville, The house dates from the mid-1800s. With no road access, the easiest way to get to the house is to take a 5 minute boat ride.

Industry

Aquaculture- Whiteness Voe is a development restricted area for visual amenity but Strom Ness Voe and Weisdale Voe have both finfish and shellfish sites. There are also sites just off Scalloway.

Landscape

The landscape of the Whiteness and Weisdale CCa is predominantly hill ground with large areas with no vehicular access. The heads of the voes are usually surrounded by improved land. White Ness is the only ness which has been cultivated more intensively.

Due to a lack of access, much of this CCa is valued for its unspoilt nature and is included in the **Shetland NSA**.

There are two LCTs covering the area. Farmed and Settled Voes and Sounds is the main LCT with Major Uplands coming in at the Point of Pund and Russa Ness along the west coast of Weisdale Voe.

Geology

There is a small area of **granite** near the Point of Pund. Along the western shore of Weisdale Voe there is a mixture of **pelite**, **semi-pelite** and **quartzite** which are **metamorphic** equivalents to mudstone, siltstone and **sandstone**. White Ness consists of **psammite** a **metamorphism** of **sandstone** and **dolostone**. The eastern shore of Whiteness Voe is a mixture of different **metamorphic** and igneous rocks.

Geosites

- 58. Scord of Sound, Weisdale- Local significance
- 59. Wormdale- Local significance
- 90. Hildasay Granite Quarry- Local significance

Landscape Features

Burwick- A small ruinous **crofting township** north of Scalloway, the landscape of improved grassland sits nestled between the purple heather hills.

Weisdale- There are not many valleys in Shetland due to flooding from sea level rises. The valley of Weisdale has offered enough shelter for an area of woodland to establish and is very different from the typical Shetland landscape.

Coastal Character Types and Features

Physical Character

CCT 1 Developed Voes & Firths- There are three developed voes within the Whiteness and Weisdale CCa.

Whiteness Voe has a settlement at the head of the voe and dispersed settlement along the whole of the White Ness. There are no aquaculture sites within the voe as it is a development restricted area.

The narrowest voe in the CCa, Stromness Voe has a small settlement at the head of the voe called Haggersta, there is some aquaculture development in the voe.

Weisdale Voe also has a small settlement at the head of the voe and scattered development about half way out the voe on both sides. There are a number of aquaculture sites within this voe however, similar to Whiteness, the head of the voe is a development restricted area.

CCT 3 Voe & Firth Network- The Whiteness and Weisdale CCa is a voe and firth network with three voes right next to each other on a north-east axis. These are Weisdale Voe, Stromness Voe and Whiteness Voe.

CCT 6 Exposed Coast: Low Rocky Shore- The low rocky shore CCT is the main CCT of this CCa being found around the majority of the coastline.

CCT 7 Exposed Coast: Low Banks- There are very few areas of low banks in the Whiteness & Weisdale CCa with two small areas found within Whiteness Voe.

CCT 8 Exposed Coast: Steep Banks- There are a lot of steep banks within this CCa as it is a common feature within voes.

CCT 14 Offshore Coastal Islands- There are a number of islands within the Whiteness and Weisdale CCa including Greena, Flotta, Hoy, North Havra, Hildasay, Linga and Langa. Hildasay, Linga, Langa and Flotta are

the only ones to have remains of settlements with Hildasay being the biggest and most productive.

Experiential

Highly valued for its scenic qualities the Whiteness and Weisdale CCa is a really striking area. The long narrow voes come so far inland that you sometimes forget that they are connected to the sea much like the sea lochs found along the west coast of Scotland.

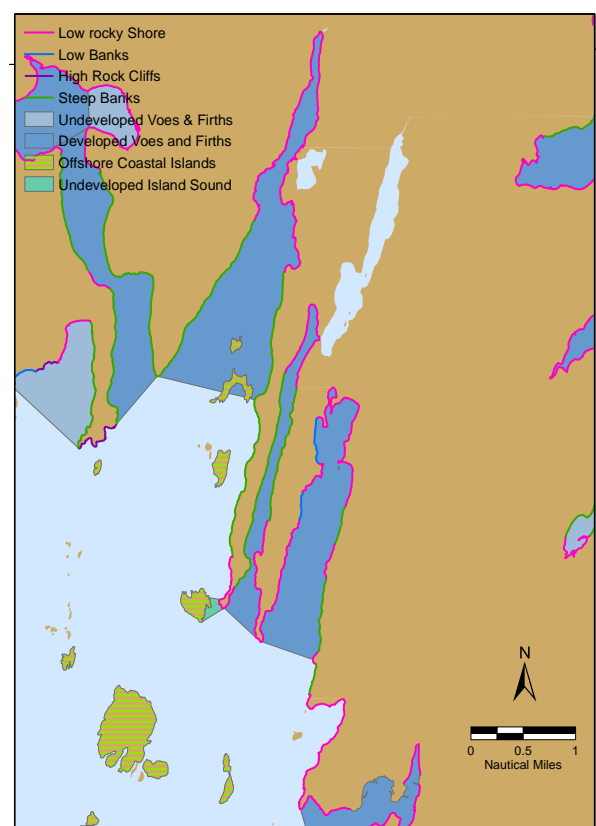
The majority of the nesses are undeveloped and have a real secluded feeling with the remains of **crofting townships** found dotted along the coastline. There are a number of trees found along the coastline showing how sheltered the area is.

Sensitivities

There are development restricted areas in the CCa and although there are some aquaculture sites in these areas they will not expand unless there is exceptional circumstances.

Forces for Change

There are currently no forces for change.



Appendices

Appendix A- Coastal Character Area Summaries

Listed below are short summaries of each Coastal Character Area (CCa).

- 1. Bressay Sound-** Busy island sound harbour area between the Shetland mainland and the island of Bressay which has developed from trading with Dutch fishing boats in the 17th century.
- 2. Eswick- Bressay-** Rural area with aquaculture development to the north of the CCa. Mainly low rocky shores with a number of voes.
- 3. Lunna Ness-** A busy area for aquaculture and commercial fishing with many steep sided voes and low lying islands.
- 4. Nesting Bay-** Quiet, low lying area of coast with no aquaculture development and low level onshore development.
- 5. Noss-** A remote CCa situated on the east coast of Bressay includes high cliffs and the uninhabited island of Noss.
- 6. West Linga-** CCa covers a number of uninhabited islands and part of Whalsay. It is a busy area with aquaculture, commercial fishing and the ferries to Whalsay and Skerries.
- 7. East Whalsay-** Covering around two thirds of the Whalsay coast. A mixture of low rocky shore and high cliffs.
- 8. Fair Isle-** Covering the whole coastline of Fair Isle, the main CCTs are high cliffs, cliffs and steep banks.
- 9. Foula-** Covering the entire Foula coastline with some spectacular cliff scenery.
- 10. Papa Stour-** Covers the whole of Papa Stour which is a fragmented coastline.
- 11. Skerries-** Covering Out Skerries off the east coast of Shetland with a low lying fragmented coastline.
- 12. Bluemull Sound-** Situated between Yell and Unst with inter-island ferries running between Yell, Unst and Fetlar. Also busy with commercial fishing, aquaculture and marine renewables.
- 13. Burrafirth-** A long firth running inland from the northern coast of Yell. Mainly high cliffs and steep banks.
- 14. Colgrave Sound-** Situated between Yell, Unst and Fetlar. It is a busy area for aquaculture with the coastline a mix of high cliffs, low rocky shore and beaches.
- 15. East Fetlar-** The main CCTs are high cliffs and bays with the Wick of Tresta of particular note.
- 16. East Unst-** There is a small amount of aquaculture within Basta Voe, the rest of the coastline is mainly high cliffs and steep banks.
- 17. East Yell-** Undeveloped coastline with stretches of steep banks and cliffs.
- 18. Gloup- Breckon-** Mixture of high cliffs and small bays. Important memorial for the 1881 fishing disaster.
- 19. Hermaness-** Mainly high cliffs and steep banks with most of the coast isolated with no development or infrastructure. Cliffs important habitat for nesting seabirds.
- 20. Skaw-** Rocky coastline with a number of small bays. Fairly exposed thus no aquaculture.
- 21. Whalefirth-** Rugged stretch of coastline along Yell's western coast with high cliffs being the main CCT.
- 22. Eshaness-** Dramatic coastline of high cliffs, storm beaches and bays. Popular tourist destination.
- 23. Hillswick- The Hams-** Voe and Firth network with low levels of development on the land and in the sea.
- 24. North Roe Coast-** Fragmented coastline. Once a busy fishing and crofting area, now fairly remote. A popular walking route.
- 25. Ronas-** Covering the large Ronas Voe and isolated cliffs running up to Uyea. Development constrained to within Ronas Voe.
- 26. Sullom Voe-** Important shipping area for the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal (SVT). Further into the voe becomes steeper and quieter, with low development levels and mainly used for small scale fishing.

27. Yell Sound- Large island sound between Northmavine, Delting and Yell. Busy shipping area for the SVT and fishing. Has low levels of development.

28. Clift Sound- Steep island sound on the west coast of Shetland with numerous aquaculture sites.

29. Dunrossness- Exposed coast on the east side of Shetland mainly a mix of cliffs and small rocky bays.

30. Fitful Head- Dramatic cliff scenery along the south mainland. Site of Braer oil spill in 1993.

31. Mousa- Quiet stretch of coastline, remote in places. Mainly steep banks and high cliffs. Includes the uninhabited island of Mousa, an important wildlife area.

32. Quarff- Mainly high cliffs and steep banks with a few small bays where small scale development can be found.

33. Sandwick- A ness and wick network with a number of popular sandy beaches. Area is fairly sheltered and relatively quiet.

34. Scalloway- Large sheltered harbour with a variety of vessels using the area. Mainly low rocky shore around the harbour.

35. St Ninians- Peaceful stretch of coastline with minimal development. St Ninians is a popular visitor attraction due to historic and aesthetic values.

36. Sumburgh- Characterised by high cliffs, Sumburgh is a highly developed area being the site of the main airport for Shetland.

37. West Burra and Trondra- Low banks and low rocky shore are the main CCTs for this area with a number of aquaculture sites.

38. Gruting Voe- Voe and Firth network, the Gruting Voe CCA is a busy area for aquaculture as it is so sheltered.

39. Muckle Roe- Voes are the main CCT for Muckle Roe CCA, with great cliff scenery around Muckle roe and Vementry.

40. Skeld- The main characteristic is the voe and firth network, with a number of sheltered voes offering

good sites for aquaculture.

41. Waas- Sheltered island sound which includes Linga and Vaila. Busy area for aquaculture, used by some small scale fishing boats.

42. West Burrafirth- Small voe and firth network with low rocky shore and low banks. Some stretches of isolated coast.

43. West Mainland- Theatrical coast of cliffs, arches, skerries and stacks. Isolated coast which is popular for walking. Area is very exposed.

44. Whiteness and Weisdale- Voe and firth network and includes a number of uninhabited islands with steep banks being a main feature.

Appendix B- Marine Habitats

Listed below are the marine habitats considered of national or international importance and are included as Priority Marine Features by the Scottish Government. Known locations of these habitats and species are shown in the SIRMP, and the table below details some of these species and habitats.

Habitat Type	Short Description	Priority
Maerl Beds	Group of calcified red seaweeds. Prefers tidal areas usually found from low water mark to 20m and sometimes down to 40m.	Nationally and internationally important
Horse Mussel Bed <i>Modiolus modiolus</i>	Thick layers of horse mussels prefer an area with reasonable tidal movement. Found from 5-70m below the surface and provide a very rich habitat for other creatures.	Nationally and internationally important
Burrowed Mud	In areas of undisturbed mud it can be extensively burrowed by several species e.g. the Norway lobster, it can also support a number of characteristic and important species including sea pens.	Nationally and internationally important
Tidal Swept Algae	Strong current movement usually leads to these sites being very diverse in species. Kelp forests grow in shallower water offering habitats for many other animals.	Nationally important
Knotted Wrack Beds <i>Ascophyllum nodosum mackii</i>	Species doesn't need to be attached to the substratum, prefers sheltered water.	Nationally and internationally important
Sea Grass Beds	Usually found in shallow, sheltered water in finer sediment such as sand and gravel. Includes the important eel grass.	Nationally and internationally important
Reefs	Covers all sub tidal rocky habitats in low to moderate tidal movement areas. Rock is covered in a variety of species related to the depth of the water.	Nationally and internationally important

Appendix C- Terrestrial Habitats

The following list is from the Shetland Biodiversity Audit conducted in 1999. For indicative distribution maps please refer to the SIRMP.

Habitat	Short Description	Priority
Coastal Grassland	Closely grazed cliff tops usually by sheep, provides a habitat that is improved by the salt spray and home to various species of wildflowers and herbs.	N/A
Sand Dunes and Machair	Dune systems are very delicate and constantly changing. They are usually dominated by marram grass which gives stability to the dunes. The slacks provide habitat for many wildflowers.	National and Local Priority Habitat
Saltmarsh	Usually found at the head of voes where it is more sheltered and get covered in salt water on a regular basis. Important habitat for waders and migratory birds.	National Priority Habitat
Coastal Cliffs (Inc. Maritime Cliff and Slope)	Can have superb hanging gardens due to the fact they cannot be grazed. Also provide habitats for nesting seabirds.	National Priority Habitat
Coastal Rock and Shingle (Inc. Coastal Vegetation Shingle Structures)	Probably one of the dominant habitats in Shetland which is able to provide environments for a few robust plants including the rare oysterplant.	National and Local Priority Habitat
Rocky Shores	Covering a wide range of habitats such as rock pools and ledges, rocky shores are found throughout Shetland and offer homes to many species which can cope being submerged and dried out every day with the tides.	Local Priority Habitat
Coastal Sand and Mud	Sandy beaches are usually restricted in plants due to the free draining nature of sand. Mud flats on the other hand can be rich in invertebrates and are important for many wading species of bird.	Local Priority Habitat

Appendix D- Nature Designations

Below is an updated list of nature designations in Shetland.

International	Number
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	13
Special Protection Area (SPA)	12
Ramsar	1
Important Bird Area (IBA)	18
National and Local	
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	2
Protected Seal Haulouts	47
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	78
National Scenic Area (NSA)	1
Marine Consultation Area (MCA)	4
Marine Protection Area (MPA)	2
National Trust for Scotland site	8
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) reserve	7
European Diploma sites	1
Local Nature Conservation Sites	49
Geosites	107

Acronyms

CCa- Coastal Character Area
CCA- Coastal Character Assessment
CCT- Coastal Character Type
ELC- European Landscape Convention
LCA- Landscape Character Assessment
LCT- Landscape Character Type
LDP- Local Development Plan
LLA- Local Landscape Area
MPA- Marine Protected Area
Ramsar- Wetlands of international importance.
SAC- Special Areas of Conservation
SIRMP- Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan
SNH- Scottish Natural Heritage - now Nature Scot
SPA- Special Protected Area
SSMO- Shetland Shellfish Management Organisation
SSSI- Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Geopark Shetland- An area with outstanding geological heritage and uses this in a sustainable manner to help the local economy. Shetland was designated as a Geopark in 2006.

Historic Marine Protected Area- Historic Marine Protected Areas 'Historic MPAs' are designated under Section 67 of the Marine Scotland Act 2010 to protect marine historic assets (e.g historic shipwrecks) of national importance within Scottish territorial waters.

National Trust for Scotland- The full title is the National Trust for Scotland for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty. It is a conservation organisation for Scotland. The National Trust for Scotland has a number of properties in Shetland, most notably Fair Isle.

Northern Lighthouse Board- Formed in 1786 to oversee the building and operation of lighthouses in Scotland. Today the board is still in charge of many of Scotland's lighthouses which are remotely operated.

Shetland NSA- National Scenic Areas were designated across Scotland by SNH (now Nature Scot) in the 1980s to landscapes which were recognised for their exceptional beauty. Nearly 15,500 ha are designated in Shetland with seven zones; Fair Isle, South West Mainland, Foula, Muckle Roe, Eshaness, Fethaland and Herma Ness.

Agriculture

Croft- A croft is a small agricultural unit which either makes up part of a larger estate or is owned by the crofter. Commonly found in the North of Scotland. The main produce is sheep both for meat and wool. Some crofts have a small number of cattle with the endemic breed the Shetland cow providing milk and meat.

Fair Isle Knitting- Colourwork knitting where stitches are knitted alternately in various colours. However, genuine Fair Isle knitted on Fair Isle carries a star motif.

Feely Dyke- Turf embankment which divides the crofts from the common grazing. Could have been in use since prehistoric times.

Grain Drying Kiln- A stone structure used to dry grain after harvesting. A fire was lit in the bottom which goes through a tunnel and heats the grain. The grain would have been strewn across corn stalks and sacking on top of a wooden frame. In the South Mainland of Shetland these kilns were round similar to ones found in Orkney. To the north of Shetland the kilns were square.

Horizontal Mills- Also known as Norse mills. A small water mill which had a wheel running on a horizontal axis turning two grinding stones (quernstones). Quite common to have more than one on the same water course.

Kale Yard- A vegetable garden.

Laird- Person that owns a large estate. Once Shetland became part of Scotland in 1472, lairds from the south of Scotland began to move up to Shetland and claim ownership of the land.

Native Foula Sheep- Sheep bred in Foula would probably have originated from Jacob and Shetland sheep breeding but in recent times have been left as their own native breed. No sheep are allowed to be imported into Foula and any that are deported cannot return to the island.

Planticrub- A small stone enclosure usually round or sometimes square in shape. They were used to shelter young plants from the wind and sheep before being planted out.

Pund- An enclosure for animals.

Rig- A narrow strip of land that was cultivated.

Runrig system- Croft tenants were allocated a number of rigs which were rotated on a yearly basis. The name came from the rigs running alongside each other.

Township- A township or toonship is a group of crofts with each croft having its own pasture or arable land known as in-bye land and a common area of rough grazing shared by all the crofts known as Scattland.

Maritime

Böd/Booth- Either a small stone hut that men would live in during the fishing season, or a trading place for merchants. There are also camping böds dotted around Shetland today offering cheaper, hostel style accommodation for tourists.

Curing Station- Fish was landed here to be processed before being shipped across the world. The most common method of curing was using salt and drying the fish on the beaches.

Cutch Kettles- Cutch or Cootch Kettles were ovens used to preserve fishing lines and nets by using bark tannin. Examples can be seen in Hillswick and Scalloway.

Da Haaf- Deep Sea Fishing. A source of income in the 18th century, men who were all local, moved into böds above the beach for the season which was fairly short from June to August due to the use of open boats.

The men used boats known as sixareens to row up to 40 miles out to sea and would spend 2-3 days fishing for white fish such as ling and cod. As this was long before radar, skippers used the things around them such as the position of the stars and the sea swell to navigate the sometimes treacherous waters.

Demersal- Demersal or white fish live on or near the sea bed. The main species found around Shetland are cod, whiting, haddock, monkfish and flatfish.

Drying Beach- Usually a pebble beach which was used to dry fish before they were packed in barrels for shipping. Usually young boys and older fishermen who were unable to go to sea would dry the fish.

Eela- Handline or rod fishing.

Fishing Station- A group of buildings including accommodation huts and stores for equipment and fish which were used seasonally for Da Haaf fishing.

Gloup Fishing Disaster- In 1881 after days of strong winds, the 20th of July was a clear calmer day and the fishermen headed out to sea. However, a fast moving depression had developed off Iceland and the fishermen were taken by surprise by hurricane force winds. Fifty eight fishermen lost their lives that day with 34 widows and 85 orphans left behind. It has been said that this disaster was the beginning of the end for Da Haaf fishery.

Hamnavoe, Burra- The only planned village in Shetland, Hamnavoe was created by the factors of the estate as a fishing village. Has similarities to villages found on the east coast of Scotland.

Hanseatic League- Merchants from Bergen, Bremen, Lubeck and Hamburg would make the journey each summer to Shetland to buy the salted fish trading grain, beer, cloth, money and other commodities in exchange. This continued until the late 17th century.

Herring Fishery- Traditionally, herring was caught in sixareens but this changed in the mid 1800's with the need for bigger vessels and the herring drifters became a common sight with the herring being landed at piers.

Hoswick Whale Case- In 1888 around 340 whales were driven on the beach in Hoswick. When the laird demanded his share of the whales, the men refused and were taken to court. The case was a pivotal moment for the men as the Court of Session ruled against the laird and from then on all whales were the property of the men that killed them.

Pelagic- Pelagic fish live usually in open waters between the shore and the edge of the continental shelf in depths of 20-400m. The main species found around Shetland are mackerel, herring and blue whiting.

Shetland Pelagic Fleet- A quarter of the UK's pelagic fleet is based in Shetland, they usually fish from October to March bringing millions of pounds into the Shetland economy.

Smolt- A stage of a salmon life cycle when the salmon is ready to go out to sea.

Spanish Armada- In 1588 130 ships under the command of the Duke of Medina Sidonia for King Phillip II of Spain, headed to England in an attempt to overthrow Queen Elizabeth I because of her establishment of Protestantism in England, to stop England interfering in the Spanish Netherlands and stop privateers attacking Spanish ships in the Americas. The Armada were defeated due to a mixture of the prowess of the English and poor weather. To avoid the English Channel on the way home, the Armada headed around the east coast of Britain. However, more poor weather caused a number of shipwrecks and the El Gran Grifon wrecked on Fair Isle. There were three other Armada ships wrecked in the Northern Isles of Scotland.#

Whale Caaing- Historically Shetlanders used to caa or drive whales into the various voes and beaches where they would then be slaughtered and shared between the community. The local laird would also take around a third of the share.

Whaling Stations- There were four whaling stations in Shetland two in Ronas Voe, one in Olna Firth and one in Colla Firth. The key motivation for building the stations in Shetland was due to whaling being banned in areas off north Norway due to over exploitation and the companies chose to move to Shetland due to its location. The whaling grounds extended out in an arc from west to east and up to 150 nautical miles north. The season ran from April to September.

Buildings & Structures

Listed Buildings- Buildings or structures of national importance for architecture or historic interest. There are different categories depending on the importance of the building/structure.

Category A- National or international importance, great examples of a particular period, style or building type.

Category B- Regional or more than local importance, major examples of a particular period, style or building type that may have been altered.

Category C- Local Importance, lesser example of a particular period, style or building type in original condition or moderately altered.

Scheduled Monument- A monument of national

importance. A list is maintained by Historic Environment Scotland. Scheduling began in 1882.

Block House- Also known as gatehouse forts were built during the Iron age but their purpose is unknown. They share some similarities with brochs.

Boat Noust- Also known as a Noost, a boat noust is a place where boats are hauled up for shelter. Sometimes it can be a dug out trench and these were sometimes lined with stone.

Broch- Round Iron Age stone tower. It is not entirely known what their use was but it is thought it was defensive. There are over 130 brochs around Shetland's coast with many being scheduled monuments.

Burnt Mound- A mound of shattered stones with a trough and hearth located close by. The stones have shattered from being heated and cooled but it is unknown the reason for this practice. There are a number of theories such as creating steam for a sweat lodge, brewing, tanning and metal work.

Cairn- A group of stones placed on top of one another to create a mound. In Shetland there are a few different kinds of cairns.

Chambered Cairn- A burial monument which usually has a low passageway leading to a chamber divided by large stone slabs

Clearance Cairn- A mound of rubble or stones which have been cleared from the landscape as part of the cultivation process.

Heel-shaped Cairn- A unique type of chambered cairn in Shetland. The front is usually curved in with one entrance leading down a passage to a chamber. The back of the cairn is usually rounded.

Celtic Monastery- Celtic Christianity began in the early middle ages and grew in popularity. Monasteries were often established on remote, isolated areas of the coast.

Haa- A haa is a large house that is, or was lived in by a laird. Similar to an estate house the traditional Shetland Haa was a tall narrow building with small windows and often crow stepped gable ends.

Jarlshof- A multi period site which was discovered after violent storms in the late 1800s. There are Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Age remains and a 9th century laird's house. Named by Walter Scott in his

novel *The Pirate*.

Lime Kilns- Limestone and peat was layered inside a round tower known as a kiln and lit from the bottom. It was allowed to burn for around 24hrs. The lime was then taken to an open backed straw roofed stone hut and extinguished with water until the lime fell down in a solid white mass. It was then used mainly for making mortar for building and also for improving the nitrogen content of the land.

Old Scatness- Not far from Jarlshof is Old Scatness the site of a broch and village discovered in 1975 when an access road was being created for Sumburgh Airport.

Promontory Fort- A defensive structure located above a steep cliff often nearly cut off from the mainland.

Shetland Lighthouses- There are 10 major lighthouses and 29 minor lights around the Shetland coastline. Seven of the major lights were once manned and had associated shore stations. The oldest light in Shetland is Sumburgh Head lighthouse which has run nonstop since 1851. The last to be automated was the Fair Isle South light in 1998.

Wheelhouse- From the Iron Age, a wheelhouse is a round structure with a thick outer wall divided by stone piers which looks similar to spokes in a bike wheel. Many found in Shetland are associated with a broch structure of an earlier date such as those at Jarlshof and Clickimin.

People

Earl Patrick Stewart- Also known as Black Patie, Patrick Stewart was a tyrant ruling over Orkney and Shetland from 1593 until 1610 when he was charged with treason and held at Edinburgh Castle for 5 years where he was beheaded in 1615.

Hugh MacDiarmid- Born in 1892 in Scotland his real name was Christopher Murray Grieve. He was a poet, essayist, journalist and political figure. In 1933, MacDiarmid moved to Whalsay in Shetland where it is argued he created some of his best work. He moved back to the Scottish Mainland in 1942.

King Hakon- Haakon Haakonsson was born in 1204 and was King of Norway from 1217- 1263 when he fell ill and died in the Bishop's Palace, Kirkwall.

St Margaret- An English princess born in Hungary, Margaret of Wessex married Malcolm III of Scotland and was known to be very charitable and devout. She passed away in 1093 in Edinburgh and was canonised in 1250.

St Ninian- A Briton thought to have been educated in Rome, St Ninian is known for converting Picts living in the southern area of Scotland during the 5th century to Christianity. There are various stories of his death some saying he was buried in Whithorn, Galloway and some saying he headed over to Ireland and died there.

St Olaf- Olaf II Haraldsson was King of Norway from 1015- 1028. Olaf Haraldsson was canonised only a year after his death at the Battle of Stiklestad in 1030 and became the patron saint of Norway.

St Paul- Also known as Paul the Apostle, taught the gospel during the 1st century.

Thomas Edmondston- Born in Unst in 1825, Edmondston was a botanist who discovered a variant of the mouse-ear which would become known as Edmondston's chickweed.

Thomas Woore- Born in Ireland in 1804, Woore was a Royal Navy Officer and a talented artist. In 1828 he was in command of a ship which was conducting a hydrological survey of Shetland for 6 months.

Historical Period

Bronze Age- Running roughly from 2500- 800 BC, the Bronze Age brought people from mainland Europe with knowledge of metal work to Britain.

Iron Age- Following on from the Bronze Age, the Iron Age began around 800 BC and lasted until around 500 AD. Many of the brochs found around Shetland date from this era.

Middle Ages- Roughly from the 5th century until the 15th century.

Neolithic- The Neolithic period followed on from the Mesolithic period. During the Neolithic age people moved away from the hunter/gatherer lifestyle and began to cultivate the land. The Neolithic period ran from around 4000 BC to 2500 BC.

Post- Medieval- Roughly from 1500- 1800 AD

Prehistoric- From the time when behaviourally and anatomically modern humans first appeared until the first written records began. Loosely the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age is included in the prehistoric era.

Picts- The Picts were tribal people who lived in Scotland during the late Iron Age and Early Medieval periods. Known as the 'Painted Ones' by the Romans they were reputed to be ferocious people.

Vikings- The Vikings were originally raiders from the Scandinavian regions who began to settle across much of Scotland and down into England and Ireland. The Viking Age began in the late 8th century and continued until the mid 11th century. Norse rule continued in Orkney and Shetland until the late 15th century.

World War I- During the First World War, Shetland was one of the leading naval bases for the UK with Lerwick used as an examination port. Foreign ships were stopped at sea and taken to Lerwick to be inspected. There was also a kite balloon base at Gremista; Lerwick, a seaplane base at Cat Firth, Nesting; a hydrophone station at the Ness of Sound, Lerwick; four batteries with two in Bressay, one in Vementry and one at the Knab, Lerwick; a wireless station in Cunningsburgh; and by 1918 there were over 250 outlook posts located across the whole of Shetland.

World War II- During the Second World War, 20,000 troops were garrisoned in Shetland. Millions of pounds were spent building roads, connecting to the power grid, creating drainage and piping water through the islands. Shetland played a vital role in the North Sea Blockade. Various camps and stations were built the length and breadth of Shetland. Daring missions to occupied Norway to take spies in and refugees out were conducted from Shetland and are known as the Shetland Bus.

Norse Heritage

Gokstad Ship- Known as the Skidbladner, it is a replica 9th century Viking ship acquired by the Shetland Amenity Trust in 2006 and is based in Haroldswick, Unst.

Longhouse- The Vikings lived in long, low dwellings known as longhouses. The walls were dry stone work lined with wood and a turf roof. A replica longhouse

can be seen in Haroldswick, Unst.

Old Norse (Norn)- An extinct North Germanic language which was spoken in Orkney and Shetland. Thought to have died out by the 19th century. Most Shetland words relate back to the Norn language.

Orkneyinga Saga- Written by an unknown Icelandic scribe between 1192 and 1206, the Orkneyinga Saga details Norway taking over Orkney and the Earldom that ensued through a mixture of oral traditions, historical account and legends.

Stofa- A Stofa was a Norse building built with log timbers and was found on more affluent farms from around the 11th century. A replica has been built in Papa Stour where there are references to one in a document from 1299.

Ting- A Norse parliament, ting is commonly found in place names across Shetland.

Up Helly Aa- A celebration that began in the late Victorian era to celebrate the Norse heritage of the islands. Occurring every year, there are 10 different Up Helly Aas beginning with the Scalloway Fire Festival on the second Friday in January and ending with the Delting Up Helly Aa in mid-March. A replica galley is marched through the streets before being set alight with flaming torches, many of the flaming galleys are set afloat on the sea. The Jarl squad wear Viking inspired outfits and the Guizer Jarl will have a name from the Norse Sagas.

Viking Boat Burial- In Shetland there are a number of Viking boat graves where stones have been lain out in the outline of a boat.

Nature

Oyster Plant- *Mertensia maritima*. A small creeping plant found on shingle beaches. Fairly fragile as usually found in the intertidal zone so can easily be washed away. Supposed to taste like oysters.

Seaside Award- Awarded to beaches by Keep Scotland Beautiful which are well managed, clean and enjoyed by people across Scotland. There are five beaches in Shetland with the award; Sands of Breckon and West Sandwick in Yell, Tresta in Fetlar, St Ninian's Isle and the West Voe of Sumburgh.

Miscellaneous

Bergen- Shetland Race- The first race in 1986 was done as a pilot race and attracted only three entries.

Now an annual competition, with around 40 yachts competing.

Braer Oil Spill- In January 1993, The Braer, a large oil tanker got into difficulty off the south coast of Shetland during a storm and began to drift towards the cliffs. The tanker eventually ran aground at Garths Ness. All of the crew were airlifted off the wreck but there was a large amount of oil spilt into the water. The storm continued to rage for days and this helped to break up and disperse much of the 85000 tonnes of oil which was leaked. However, there was some detrimental effects on the local wildlife, in particular some of the seabird species.

Draatsi- European otter

Highland Clearances- During the 18th and 19th centuries many lairds cleared their tenants off the land to make way for more profitable sheep farming causing thousands of families to be displaced. Some moved to the coastal fringes and became fishermen, some moved into the bigger towns and worked in various dangerous industries and many people emigrated to the Americas.

Lödberries- Private piers that were used to unload and load cargo into warehouses and houses on the waterfront in Lerwick.

Mirrie Dancers- Aurora Borealis or the Northern Lights.

Ness- Headland

Selkie- Used for both species of seal found in Shetland; grey and harbour seals.

Simmer Dim- Midsummer or the longest day of the year.

Voar Redd Up- An annual voluntary clean-up of beaches around Shetland.

Wick- Bay

Yoal- A six oar boat, commonly used in rowing competitions in Shetland.

Geology

Basalt- Igneous rock which has fine, dark coloured particles.

Calcareous- Anything that contains calcium carbonate. Usually has a chalky nature.

Chalcopyrite- A crystalline mineral with a yellow colour made up from sulphide of copper and iron. It is the main mineral in copper.

Chromate- a type of salt.

Dacitic- Consisting of dacite, an igneous rock.

Dalradian- Late Precambrian metamorphic rocks, around 540 million years old.

Devonian- Period in the Palaeozoic Era between 405 to 345 million years ago.

Dolostone- Sedimentary rock mainly made from Dolomite, a carbonate mineral.

Fault line- A fracture or break in the ground created by tectonic plate movements commonly causing earthquakes.

Glacial Moraine- A build-up of debris left over by a glacier.

Gneiss- Metamorphic rock made up of bands or thin layers. Mainly quartz, mica and feldspar.

Granite- Igneous rock with mica, quartz and feldspar particles. Very hard rock.

Great Glen Fault- A fault running northeast to southwest through the Great Glen in Scotland.

Haematite- A mineral made from ferric oxide which is red/ black in colour. Important mineral in Iron.

Igneous- volcanic rock which has hardened from magma or lava.

Limestone- Sedimentary rock made mainly from dolomite and calcium carbonate. Hard rock.

Malachite- A mineral of hydrated basic copper carbonate which is bright green in colour.

Metamorphic - A rock which has been changed by extreme heat or pressure.

Metamorphosed- The process of metamorphism: the change of the structure of a rock through extreme heat or pressure.

Migmatite- A rock made from two different rock types which have been mixed but are still distinct.

Mudstone- Sedimentary rock made up of very fine mud or clay particles.

Mylonite- A metamorphic rock with bands of fine grain made from the crushing and grinding of other rocks.

Nesting Fault Line- A splay from the Great Glen fault line which runs through Scotland.

Ophiolite- Igneous rock mainly made from serpentine.

Peat- Decomposed plant matter which creates an acidic, boggy landscape. Traditionally cut and dried each year in Shetland to be used as a fuel over the winter. Peat is an important carbon sink.

Pelite- Mudstone which has been metamorphosed.

Plutonic- An igneous rock that was formed deep under the earth's surface.

Psammite/ Quartzite- Metamorphosed Sandstone.

Rhyolite- Igneous rock of granitic structure which is pale in colour.

Sandstone- Sedimentary rock of quartz or sand grains.

Schist- Metamorphic rock of coarse grains in thin layers.

Sedimentary- A rock created from the layering of sediment by water or air.

Semi-pelite- Siltstone which has been metamorphosed.

Serpentine- A mineral made of hydrated magnesium silicate which sometimes has colouring similar to snake skin.

Siltstone- Sedimentary rock made from combined silt.

Steatite- Talc fused together to create a new form mainly called soapstone.

Till- A mixture of boulders, pebbles, sand and clay left over from glaciers.

Tuff- A permeable, light rock created by an amassing of volcanic ash.

Walls Boundary Fault- A continuation of the Great Glen Fault.