

Map 2: Hollandstoun to Westness

Landscape, Built Heritage & Archaeology

This map section covers the west and northwestern coast of the island. There is no modern coastal settlement in this area; what sparse settlement as exists lies behind the wild coastal margin and is focused on the road.

Few archaeological sites were recorded in this area and it is likely that this reflects a real scarcity of sites rather than an inability to identify remains. Only one site, a mound at Ancumtoun (NR21), was thought to be of possible prehistoric date. This site displays the typical 'doughnut' profile of a burial mound excavated via a central sondage, a technique most commonly employed by 19th C antiquarians. There are several other slight rises in the surrounding area and it may be that these remains represent a barrow cemetery, albeit of a very reduced nature.

Two mounds at Antabreck (NR20) may also be burial monuments of prehistoric date, but it is equally probable, in this case, that they are of natural origin.

A 'D' shaped enclosure which backs onto the coast edge at Hollandstoun may be of early date but its reduced height and poor state of preservation may alternatively be accounted for through stone robbing, the most usual fate of redundant structures in this landscape.

Of recent origin, also, is part of a wooden boat which lies on the storm beach at Ancumtoun (NR22). The hulk is notable for the preservation of its hand-made nails. It lies close to a series of kelp-drying walls which may date to the height of the kelp-working industry in the early 1800's, but more likely have been in use in the recent past; the collection and drying of seaweed for export continues as a part-time occupation for many islanders in Orkney.

Geology and geomorphology

This north and west facing stretch of coastline extends for over 100m around Tor Ness, with a rock platform along its entire length. The sheep dyke is set generally at least 100m back from the coast edge throughout this area, with a margin of uncultivated, wild ground lying between the dyke and the coast. This area serves as rough grazing for the herds of shore-dwelling sheep. The hinterland is exposed, mostly flat and low lying; only in a short stretch at the south end of the section does the coast edge rises above 5m high.

Erosion

For most of this section the coast edge appears to be relatively stable. The till is exposed only in small sections at the coast edge and the hinterland is well covered with short grass.

NR18 HY75SE20

HY7515 5389

Hollandstoun

Enclosure

Unknown

Fair

Nil

NR19

HY7530 5411

Antabreck

Noost

Unknown: ?18-20th C

Fair

Nil

NR20

HY7545 5421

Antabreck

Mounds

Unknown

Fair/poor

Monitor

NR21 HY75SE8

HY7605 5550

Ancumtoun

Mound

Unknown: ?prehistoric

Fair

Monitor

NR22

HY7623 5557

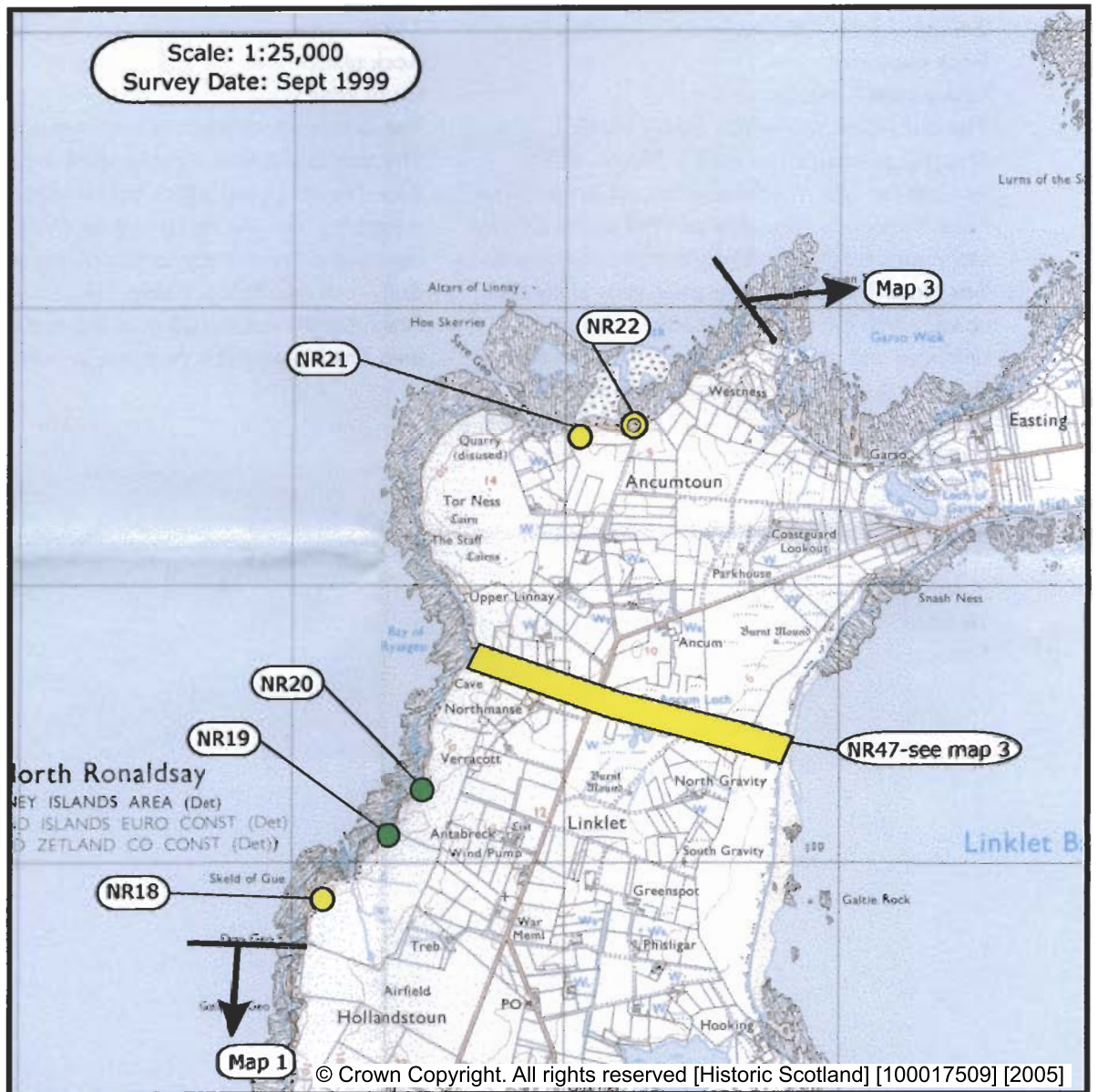
Ancumtoun

Hulk and kelp drying walls

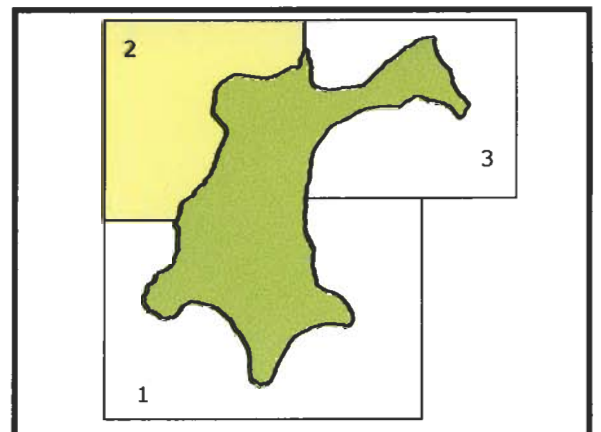
18th-20th C

Poor

Nil



- Built Heritage & Archaeology**
- Protected Ancient Monument or area of Designated Wreck
 - Monument formally proposed by Historic Scotland for scheduling or wreck for designation
 - + Listed Historic Building
 - Undesignated wreck
 - Known ancient monument
 - Site found by this survey
 - Site complex



1. Doo Geo

HY 756 546

2.6 km

Rock platform

Coast edge is mostly < 5 m

The drift/rock interface is mostly visible

This unit of coast has a rock platform, which extends for 100 m + from the coast, around Tor Ness. There is a great deal of small storm thrown stone on the hinterland which increases towards Tor Ness. There are many small geos along the coast, which have cobble beaches. The land is unfenced and used for grazing. There has been sporadic dumping of building rubble along the coast between Skeld of Gue and Bay of Ryasgeo. It is unclear if this is an attempt at armouring the coastline.

2. Save Geo

HY 763 556

1 km

Rock platform with storm beach

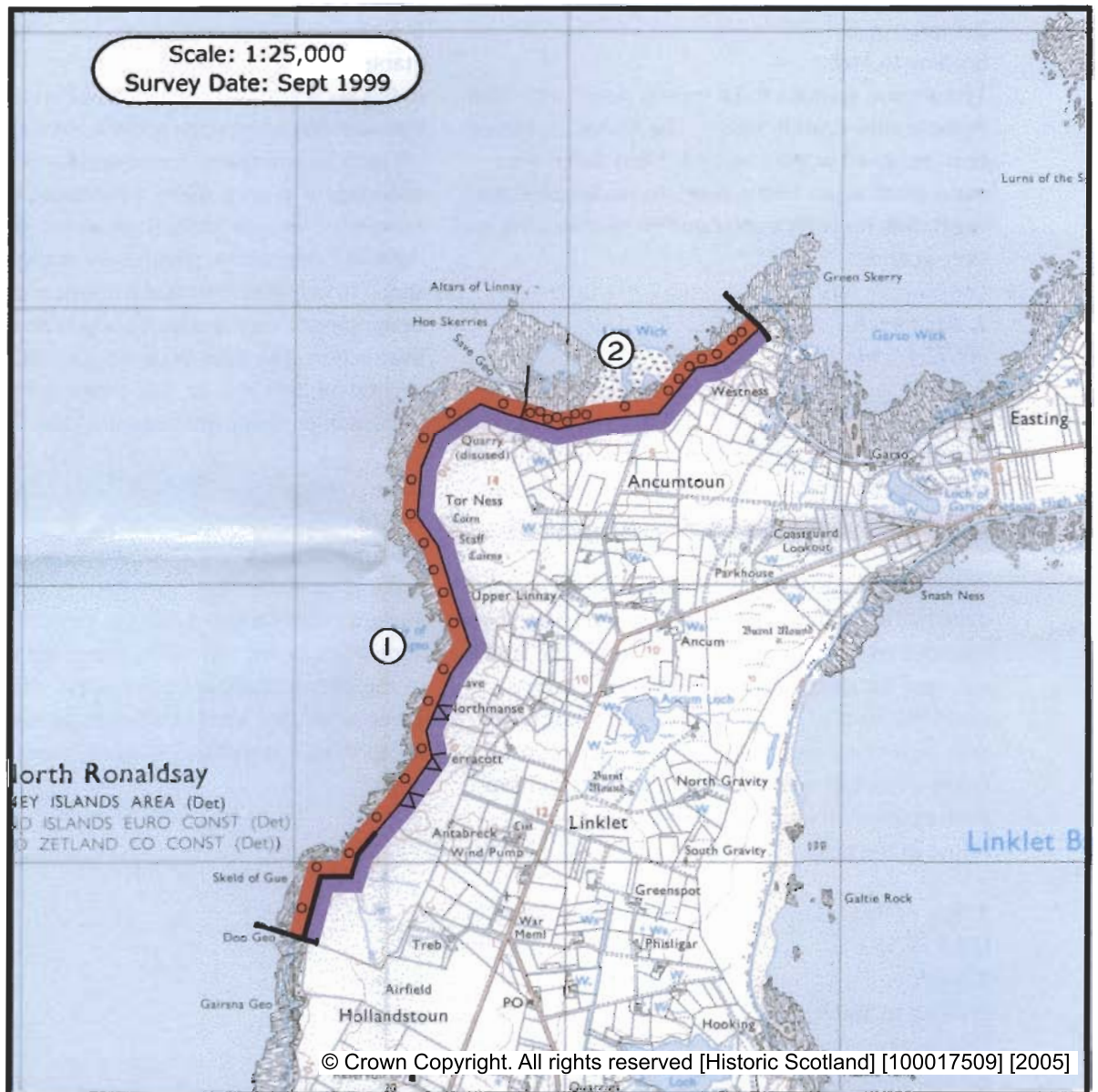
Coast edge is < 5 m

The drift/rock interface is intermittently visible

This unit begins with a rocky storm beach. There is a level berm on top which has no vegetation, suggesting that the beach may be moving. There is less cobble towards the centre of the unit, and the drift/rock interface is visible. There is a cobble beach for the last c. 200 m of the east end of the unit. The hinterland is enclosed pasture.

Hinterland Geology & Coastal Geomorphology

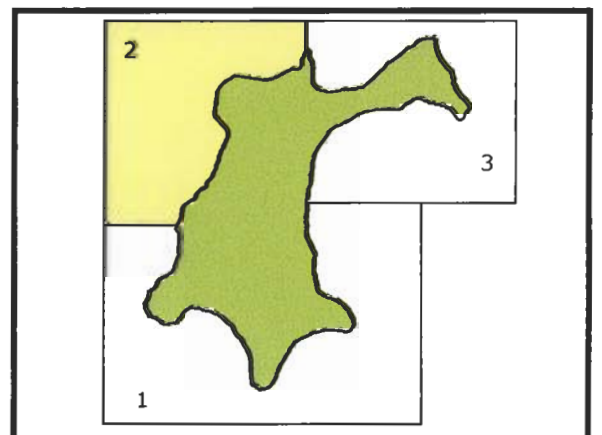
North Ronaldsay Map 2



- Foreshore**
- Rock platform
 - Mainly sand
 - Mainly alluvial/marine mud
 - Marsh

- Modifiers**
- Low edge <5m
 - Cliff >5m
 - Man made barrier
 - Shingle/storm bank
 - Human disturbance

- Hinterland**
- Drift
 - Drift on visible rock
 - Raised beach etc.
 - Blown sand
 - Glacial sand/gravel
 - Alluvium



1. Doo Geo

HY 751 539

0.7 km

Eroding to Stable

This section appears to be mostly stable with little or no severe erosion visible. The till has, however, been exposed at the coast edge and there are many small areas where sheep have denuded the vegetation through a combination of trampling and over-grazing.

2. Antabreck

HY 754 544

0.8 km

Eroding

This section is distinguished from the previous one mostly by the greater amount of storm thrown stones which litter the ground. The coast edge erosion also appears worse, with up to 0.8 m depth of till exposed in section. The long coastal dyke has apparently collapsed in this area and been replaced with one much further inland. The land is still used for rough grazing, however. There is much evidence of dumping along the coast edge, with pockets of demolition rubble lying against the coast, as well as one area which appears to have been reserved for the dumping of household refuse in the past.

3. Bay of Ryas Geo

HY 754 553

1.3 km

Eroding to Stable

This section appears to be mostly stable, with the exception of where sheep have denuded areas of vegetation. There are also localised areas of coast edge where the till has been exposed. Towards the north end of the bay, around Tor Ness, the rock platform extends in the form of level terraces for 100m+, thus giving the hinterland some protection from the sea.

4. Save Geo

HY 761 555

0.5 km

Stable

In this section there is only a small area of land between the coast edge and the sheep dyke (<10 m) with a consequent concentration of the effects of sheep. In general there is no visible erosion. Exceptions include small areas where sheep have removed vegetation, particularly at the base of the sheep dyke, where vertical sections are developing. There is a storm beach along much of this section. The level berm on top has no vegetation, this may be due either to movement of the beach or sheep grazing.

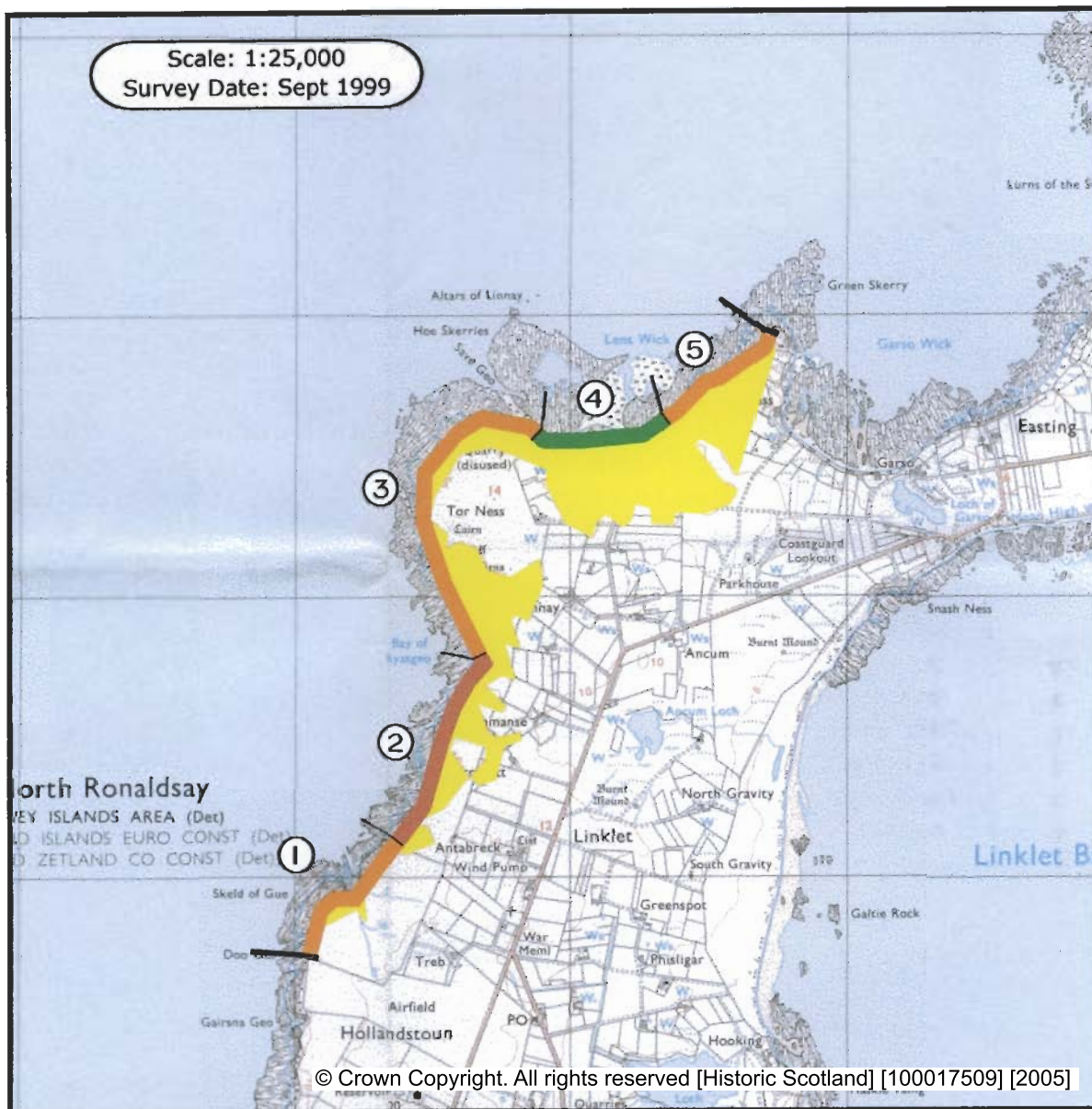
5. Lens Wick

HY 765 557

0.5 km

Eroding to Stable

Here, as with section 3, above, the coast edge appears to be mostly stable, especially with regard to the effects of the sea but it is the effects of sheep which are most noticeable. In places the sheep dyke is less than 3 m away from the coast edge.



- Erosion Class**
- Definitely Accreting
 - Accreting or Stable
 - Stable
 - Eroding or Stable
 - Definitely Eroding
 - Accreting and Eroding
 - No access
 - Land below 10m

