

Map 1: Scuthvie Bay to Lop Ness

Landscape, Built Heritage & Archaeology

This map section extends around the easternmost extremity of Sanday, from Scuthvie Bay to Start Island and onward to Lop Ness. At Scuthvie Bay a ridge of dunes stands between the sandy beach and the hinterland; the local topography of this area is endlessly shaped and reshaped by large quantities of blowing sand. In illustration of this, a mound (SY1) last noted here in the 1980's could not now be relocated because the drifting sands have rendered it indistinguishable from the surrounding dunes. At Park, however, localised coast erosion has exposed shell midden and concentrations of stone, which may be part of a settlement of prehistoric date. Further indications of prehistoric activity in this area are provided by a burnt mound site (SY5) recorded previously but now destroyed.

To the centre of this section lies Start Island, which can only be reached at low tide. Fragments of rough walling found among the reefs between Start Island and the mainland of Sanday may be part of a fish trap (SY16). This walling surrounds a pool, which may have been artificially deepened. While its exact nature and usage remain uncertain, it is likely that such a trap would work by filtering fish into the pool at high tide and trapping them there to be readily caught when the water subsided again at low tide.

On Start Island, the earliest remains are those of a chambered cairn (SY15), which although not affected by coast erosion, has been damaged by antiquarian investigations and through use as a potato store. This Maes Howe type cairn is said to have a rectangular chamber and no side cells; part of the entrance passage remains visible. The lighthouse at Start Point was originally built as a beacon in 1802 to partner the beacon at Dennis Head on North Ronaldsay. Rebuilt in brick in 1870, it forms a striking landmark with its vertical black and white stripes. The accompanying keepers cottages are currently under renovation.

There is evidence of Iron Age settlement at Buryan, where a broch (SY18) has been bisected by coast erosion and old records indicate a possible cemetery (SY17) and probable undefended settlement (SY19). On the opposite side of the Bay of Wheevi, faint traces point to eroding structures of unknown date at Scofferland (SY22). This map section finishes with remains of more recent date; the WWII radar station at Whale Head (SY23). This station, which was part of the chain of home defences guarding Britain against aerial attack, remains in good condition.

Geology and Geomorphology

The underlying geology is made up of Rousay Flags but there are very few areas where the geology can be seen due the large amount of drift cover, comprised largely of sand. Other than the sand dunes at the beginning of this unit, there are few prominent natural hills. The hinterland is mostly flat or gently sloping. The foreshore has rock platform for the most part with a large sandy foreshore at Scuthvie Bay. As would be expected most coast soils are freely draining with a notable exception to the North Side of Start Point where there is an area of waterlogged saltings.

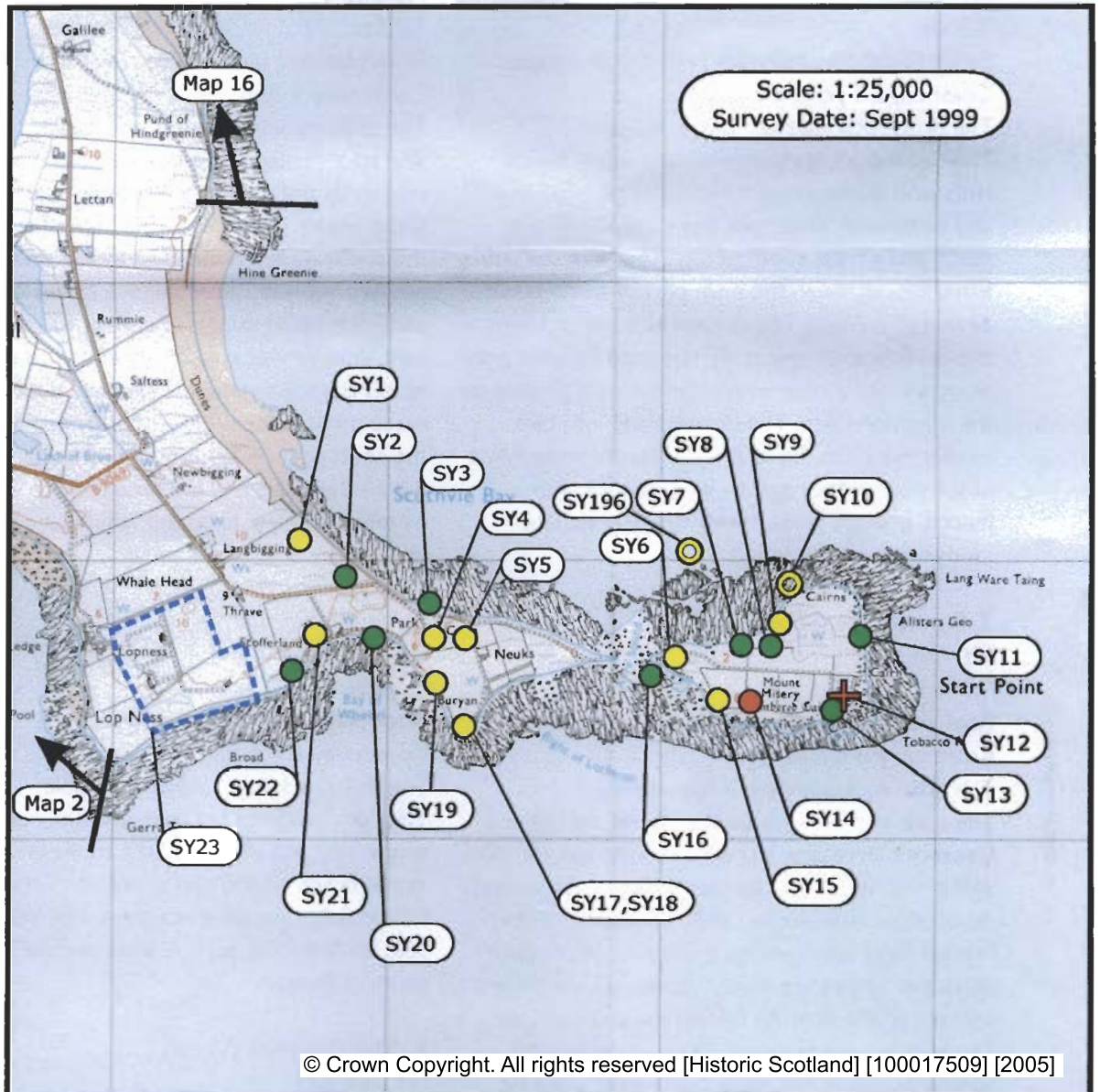
Erosion

While there are large stretches of eroding coast edge to the western side of Start Island there is also a great deal of sand accretion on the lower-lying eastern side. Most of the accretion is due to sand blow; stabilising vegetation has trapped further blown sand, culminating in the formation of coast ridge sand dunes.

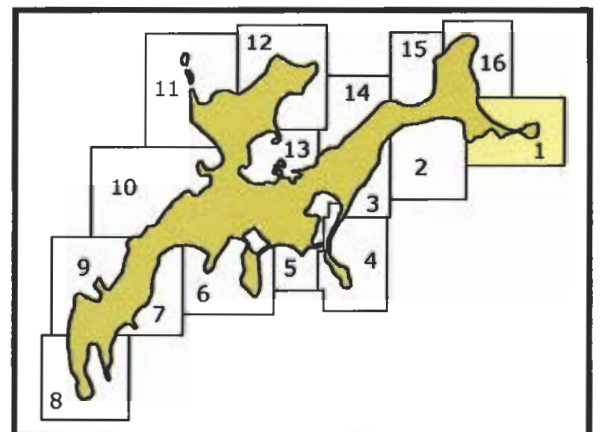
Built Heritage & Archaeology

Sunday Map 1

<p>SY1 HY74SE16 HY7668 4404 Crue Marron Deme Mound Unknown Not seen Monitor</p>	<p>SY7 HY7829 4370 Start Island Channel Good Nil Unknown: ?18-20th C</p>	<p>SY13 HY7861 4344 Start Island Noost & channel Fair Nil 18-20th C</p>	<p>SY19 HY74SE3 HY7719 4355 Park Alleged site of settlement 1st mill BC/1st mill AD Not seen Monitor</p>
<p>SY2 HY7684 4392 Scuthvie Bay Crue 18-20th C Fair Nil</p>	<p>SY8 HY7840 4368 Start Island Mound Unknown: ?prehistoric Good Monitor</p>	<p>SY14 HY74SE4 HY7831 4351 Mt. Maesry Chambered Cairn 4-3rd mill BC Fair Monitor</p>	<p>SY20 HY7693 4373 Bay of Wheevi Channel & possible noost 18-20th C Fair Nil</p>
<p>SY3 HY7715 4382 Park Coastal exposure: shell midden Unknown: ?prehistoric Poor Monitor</p>	<p>SY9 HY74SE17 HY7840 4368 Start Island Mound: possible site of church 10-14th C good Monitor</p>	<p>SY15 HY74SE18 HY7831 4353 Start Island Alleged site of mariner's graves 18-20th C Fair Nil</p>	<p>SY21 HY74SE24 HY767 437 Scofferland Farmstead 18-20th C Fair/poor Nil</p>
<p>SY4 HY74SE14 HY771 437 Park Site of chapel 10-14th C Not seen Monitor</p>	<p>SY10 HY7844 4393 Start Island Wreck 18-20th C Poor Nil</p>	<p>SY16 HY7795 4355 Start Island Fish trap Unknown: ?18-20th C Fair Survey</p>	<p>SY22 HY7665 4360 Scofferland Mound & coastal exposure Unknown: ?prehistoric Fair Monitor</p>
<p>SY5 HY74SE1 HY7727 4371 Park Site of burnt mound 3rd-1st mill BC Not seen Monitor</p>	<p>SY11 HY7871 4374 Alisters Geo Mound & crue Unknown: ?18-20th C Poor Monitor</p>	<p>SY17 HY74SE7 HY7730 4339 Buryan Burial ground Unknown Not seen Monitor</p>	<p>SY23 HY74SE23.00/.01/.03 HY761 436 Whale Head Radar Station 18-20th C Good Monitor</p>
<p>SY6 HY74SE29 HY780 436 Start Farmstead 18-20th C Fair/poor Nil</p>	<p>SY12 HY74SE20 HY7868 4350 Start Point Lighthouse & cottages 18-20th C Fair Monitor</p>	<p>SY18 HY74SE2 HY7724 4340 Buryan Broch 1st mill BC/1st mill AD Poor Survey</p>	<p>SY196 HY74SE8002 HY7816 4410 Start Point Wreck of HMS 'Goldfinch' 18-20th C Not seen Nil</p>



- 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. Hindgreenie

HY 762 447

1.3 km

Sandy foreshore, generally with < 10% cobbles.

Coast edge is generally < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not visible.

The bay has a large gently sloping sandy beach with sand dunes along the coast edge coast edge and hinterland. There are some cobbles to the north and the far south of this section of the upper foreshore although the main part of the beach is devoid of cobbles. The dunes rise to over 5m to the north and are generally stabilised by lyme grass along the coast edge with other tussock grasses to the hinterland side. The dunes divide into two smaller ridges to the south. On the hinterland side of the dune ridge ragwort is ubiquitous within fenced, grassed fields. Freely draining skeletal sands make up the soils.

2. Scuthvie Bay (South)

HY 774 438

1.2 km

Rock platform with 50 - 80% cobble cover.

Coast edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not visible.

The rock platform has cobbles along the upper foreshore increasing from 50% in the west to 80% at the east end of the section. The vegetated sand dune ridges fade out to sandy soils before Park. Fenced fields are down to grass with less ragwort apparent. Slopes are gently sloping at most. The soils are freely draining brown calcareous types. The littoral zone between Start point and the Sanday mainland has many rocks over a shingle shore area.

3. Start Point

HY 789 436

1.7 km

Rock platform with cobble cover to the S and W.

Coast edge < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not visible.

The rock platform is generally devoid of cobbles to the north and eastern side of this tidal island with some cobble cover along the upper foreshore to the south west. To the west by the causeway there are two substantial berms on a storm beach which are made up of shingle and shells for the most part. A large wet area of hinterland to the north east is classed as saltings. The field boundaries are made up of stone walls set back 7 to 15 m from the coast edge. A lighthouse and buildings lie to the western side and are set back into the hinterland. Apart from the saltings the soils are imperfectly or freely drained.

4. Neuks

HY 773 434

1.5 km

Rock platform with up to 90% cover.

Coast edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not visible.

The rock platform has perhaps 80% cobble cover to the east and less than 50% to the west with a storm beach on the east shore of Weevie Bay. The fenced fields are down to grass with freely draining soils for the most part. A small sea wall lies to the south of Buryan.

5. Bay of Weevie (West)

HY 762 434

0.7 km

Rock platform.

Coast edge is < 5m.

The drift/rock interface is not visible.

The cobble grades out to negligible cover by Gerra Taing. Although the coast edge is well defined it rarely exceeds 3 m in height. Again slopes on the hinterland are negligible to gentle gradients with fenced grassed fields on imperfectly to freely draining soils.

Hinterland Geology & Coastal Geomorphology

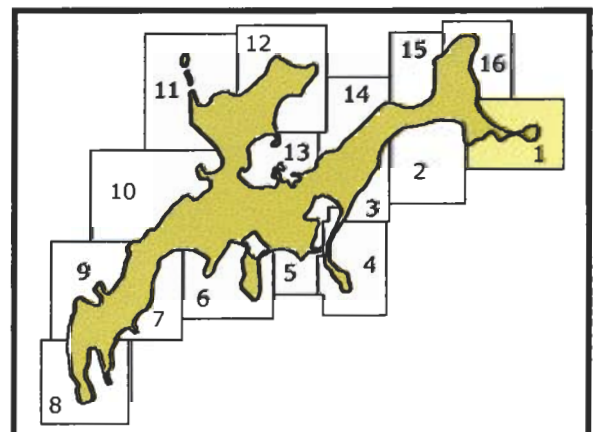
Sunday
Map 1



- 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. Hindgreenie

HY 763 452

0.41 km

Stable

The dunes at the coast edge are stable. This is generally due to the vegetation of lyme grass.

2. Scuthie Bay (North)

HY 764 445

0.8 km

Accreting and Eroding

There are large areas of accreting sand along the upper foreshore and coast edge running into the dunes. Some of the accretion along the upper foreshore may constitute seasonal storm wash. There are also small areas where the coast edge has been eroded although this tends to be localised.

3. Scuthie Bay (South)

HY 768 440

0.76 km

Eroding to Stable

There is less evidence of accretion to the south and as the sand dunes decrease in size and the coast line becomes more definite there is localised erosion of the sandy edge. This is mainly due to cobble throw against the soft unprotected sand or till edge.

4. Park

HY 772 434

4.37 km

Stable

The coast edge is stable throughout most of this section and includes the tidal island of Start Point. In many places the coast line is protected by cobble upper foreshore as it grades up to the coast edge. Most prominent points of localised erosion are at Neuky, east of Mount Merry Buryan. Although there is a small sea defence wall at Buryan there is some erosion around the sides and to the west of the point. There is also a very small area of accreting shales and shell which constitutes a berm or small ayre on the western tip of Start Point island by the farm.

