

Map 11: Howland to Scar

Landscape, Built Heritage & Archaeology

From the rugged coastline at the North shore of North Bay, this map section progresses north to Whale point. From here, access can be gained at low tide to the Holms of Ire: two small islets joined by a reef. Returning from the holms, this map section progresses into the small bay of Roos Wick, and eastward along the rocky shore to Woo and the dunes of Sand Ayre. There is little modern coast settlement in this area. Much of the hinterland is enclosed pasture land, but there are also wilder and more marshy areas, particularly to the east side of Roos Loch.

A dispersed group of probable burial mounds lie to the south of this area. The Knowe of Yarrow (SY145) is known only from records, having been destroyed some time before 1928. It is said to have contained a burial in an urn, of which no trace remains. At Rethie Taing (SY146) a chambered cairn lies on the coast edge and is eroding. Part of the entrance passage is visible to the seaward side; the cairn is very vulnerable to destruction from continued erosion. Further to the north, an undistinguished grassy mound at Rue (SY154) may also be a funerary monument; it is situated over 50m from the coast and is not currently at risk.

A low mound close to the coast edge at Runna Clett (SY153) has been recorded as the site of a broch. Coastal erosion to the seaward side of the mound has exposed archaeological deposits, but while some large stone blocks and midden-type deposits are present in the section, there is little to indicate the presence of such a substantial structure. In another coastal exposure at Woo (SY156), shell midden is revealed in close association with a relict soil. these deposits may be suggestive of an early prehistoric settlement. They derive from a long, low mound which is being eroded by the sea.

Two churches have been reported here; one at Kirk Geo (SY144) may be based merely on place name evidence, but the other (SY148) is located on the inner Holm of Ire and can still be seen. Said to be dedicated to St. Colm, this small and presumably early chapel has been damaged both by coast erosion and impromptu investigations. Situated close to a storm beach, the interior is now covered by quantities of loose stone, which although obscuring it may serve to protect the remains to some degree.

Geology and Geomorphology

In this unit, the west shore comprises of rocks which dip slightly to the west, with a well defined coast edge. A quarry lies to the north of this coastline while a lake lies within Roos Wick. Cobble and boulder storm beaches are a main feature of the north shores and Holms of Ire. Gradients are moderate along the west and gentle elsewhere.

Erosion

There is little erosion around the coast line of this unit although most localised erosion occurs along the northern facing coast. There is also accretion of boulders and cobbles on the southern island of Holms of Ire.

SY144 HY64SE23
HY6568 4381
Curcasetter or Kirk Geo
Alleged site of chapel
Unknown: ?10-14th C
Not seen
Monitor

SY145 HY64SE17
HY6547 4401
Knowe of Yarrow
Site of mound & cist
3rd-1st mill BC
Not seen
Monitor

SY146 HY64SE39
HY6511 4424
Rethie Taing
Possible chambered cairn
4th-3rd mill BC
Fair/poor
Survey

SY147 HY64SE64
HY651 448
Airon
Sheep fold
18-20th C
Not seen
Nil

SY148 HY64NE1
HY5605 4577
Holms of Ire
Chapel
10-14th C
Poor
Monitor

SY149 HY64NE10
HY651 457
Holms of Ire
Kelp workings
18-20th C
Fair/poor
Nil

SY150 HY64NW3
HY6498 4598
Holms of Ire
Crues & structures
18-20th C
Fair
Nil

SY151 HY64NW2
HY647 461
Castle Geo, Holms of Ire
Natural feature
N/A
Not seen
Nil

SY152 HY64NW8001
HY6475 4710
Holms of Ire
Wreck of the Alex Hastings
18-20th C
Not seen
Nil

SY153
HY6511 4542
Whale Point
Cairn
Unknown: ?prehistoric
Fair
Monitor

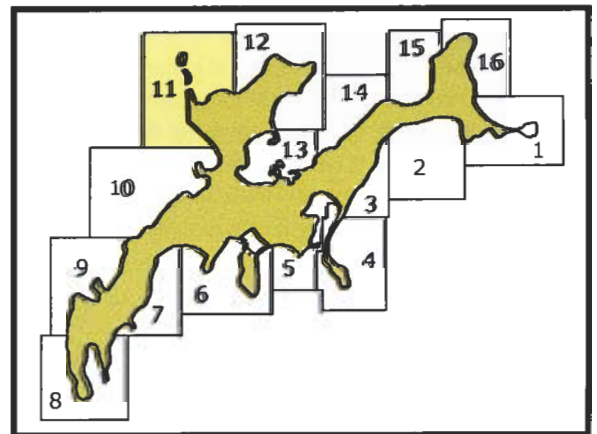
SY154
HY6610 4527
Rue
Mound
Unknown: ?prehistoric
Fair
Survey

SY155 HY64NE3
HY6659 4540
Runna Clett
Mound & coastal exposure
Unknown: ?prehistoric
Fair/poor
Survey

SY156 HY64NE5
HY6679 4533
Woo
Coastal exposure: settlement"
Unknown: ?prehistoric
Fair/poor
Monitor



- 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



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved [Historic Scotland] [100017509] [2005]

1. Viggar

HY 651 442

2 km

Rock platform with only discrete cobble cover.

Coast edge is intermittently < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is visible

A small discrete cobble storm beach lies within a small cove below Viggar. The coast edge is generally well defined with a stone wall running along close to the edge. To the north the promontory is unfenced with a quarry which appears to be in use of the time. The slopes are generally moderate with grassed fields. Soils are freely to imperfectly drained podzol which are very thin to the north.

2. Holms of Ire

HY 649 468

2.4 km

Rock platform with storm beaches.

Coast edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is intermittently visible.

The rock platform extends out to both intertidal islands.

The main feature of the coast line are the large storm beaches mainly composed of boulders with some cobbles. Most of the coast edge is covered by cobbles and boulders along the eastern sides. Some of the boulders have been thrown > 40 m into the hinterland and are now overgrown. A buff till is prominent on the north island where it is > 1 m deep. An old sea wall also lies to the south east of the north island which is now almost covered by storm beach with an old coast wall almost obliterated. The hinterland is fairly clear of thrown rock on the west side of the north island. The west side of the south island has much boulder and cobble thrown over 20 m into the hinterland. Soils are freely drained podzol.

3. Iron Geo

HY 652 453

0.7 km

Rock platform with intermittent cobble cover.

Coast edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is generally visible.

The rock platform has intermittent cobble cover with up to 40% cover mainly along the upper foreshore. The coast edge is well defined with a moderate to steeply sloping hinterland. Fields are grassed with stone walls and an underlying freely drained podzol.

4. Airon

HY 656 449

0.4 km

andy foreshore with large storm beach.

Coast edge is > 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not visible.

The upper foreshore is covered with a storm beach of cobbles which extends up to a ridge with a track. A newly built stone wall lies to the east of the bay in front of a house. The hinterland drops down to Roos Loch lying behind the ridge. Some of the ridge may well have been enhanced and appears man made in areas.

5. Rue

HY 664 454

1 km

Rock platform with storm beaches.

Coast edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is intermittently visible.

The rock platform has a storm beach to the west grading to cobble cover of the upper foreshore with another storm beach past the first point which then grades to cobble cover of the upper foreshore again which grades to more shingle further to the east. The coast edge is well defined with some overgrown cobble throw on the east side. Further to the east the coast edge is better defined and may be up to 3 m high in a few places. Generally the soils of the hinterland are freely drained podzol with more sand content towards Woo.

6. Woo

HY 670 453

0.4 km

Rock platform grading to sandy foreshore..

Coast edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not visible.

The rock platform has more sand cover to the east. The coast edge is well defined to the west with some farm waste in front of Woo to help slow down erosion. A berm of sand grades into cobble along the upper foreshore over the sand with a sandy ridge along the coast edge to the east of Woo. The cobble increases along the upper foreshore and coast edge to the east of this section. A small dumping area of farm waste lies on the coast edge to the west of Woo. The hinterland has a freely drained podzol to the west of Woo with a wet area behind the buildings and sand dune ridge to the east.

Hinterland Geology & Coastal Geomorphology

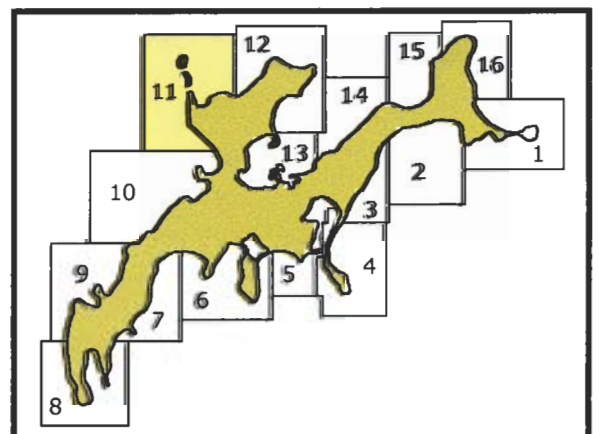
Sanday Map 11



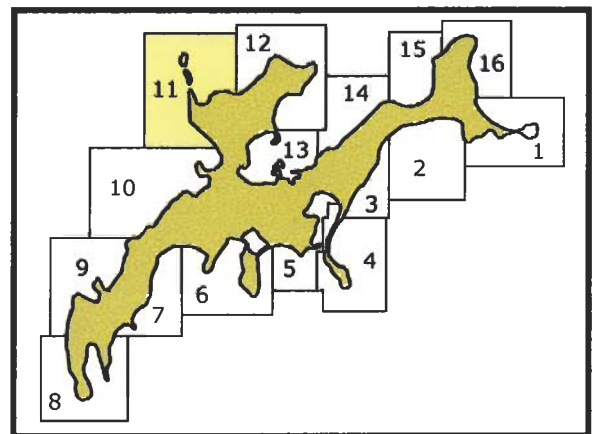
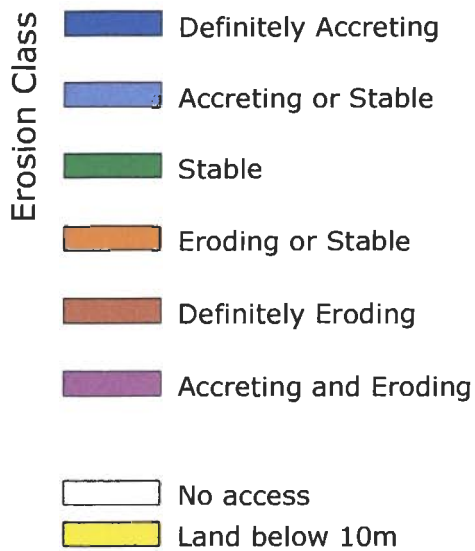
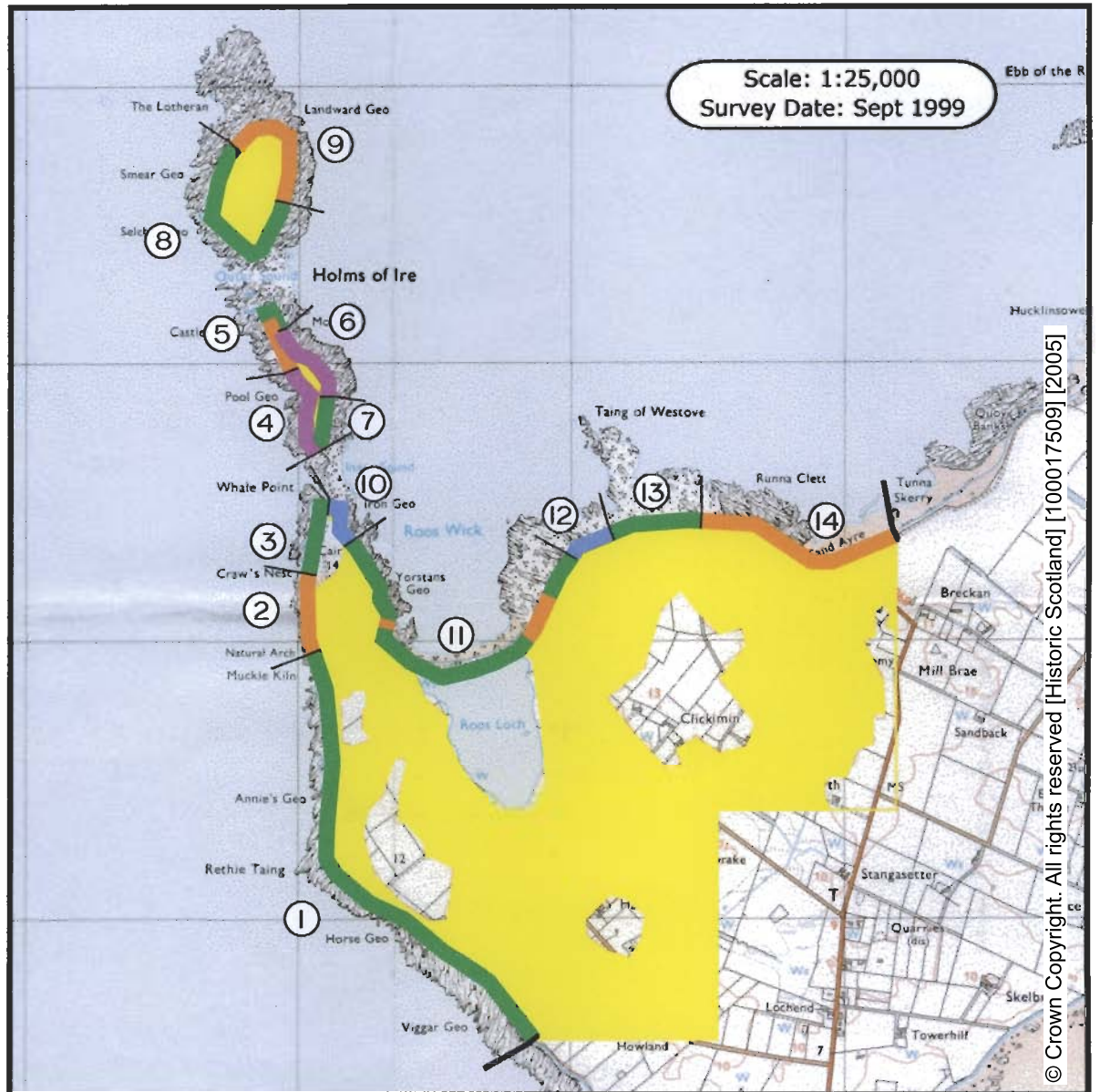
- Foreshore**
- Rock platform
 - Mainly sand
 - Mainly alluvial/marine mud
 - Marsh

- 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. Viggar**
HY 651 442
1.7 km
Stable
Generally the coast edge is protected from the sea by a rock platform. There is localised erosion of some soil in front of the field walls that run the length of this section.
- 2. Muckle Kiln**
HY 651 451
0.26 km
Eroding to Stable
There is localised erosion around a quarry and part of the coast edge. Much is due to sub-aerial activity over disturbed ground, ie. the quarry faces and surrounding area. Most of the erosion is confined to the hinterland.
- 3. Craw's Nest**
HY 651 454
0.26 km
Stable
The coast edge from the quarry to Whale Point is stable.
- 4. Pool Geo (Holmes of Ire)**
HY 650 458
0.25 km
Accreting and Eroding
Large boulders and cobbles are being thrown up along this section of coast. There is obviously some accretion but there is also some erosion of the coast as the storm beach is migrating landwards in some areas.
- 5. Castle Geo (Holmes of Ire)**
HY 649 461
0.34 km
Eroding to Stable
The storm beach lessens to the north and a well defined coast edge is being eroded in a few places.
- 6. Selchie Geo (Holmes of Ire)**
HY 648 465
0.57 km
Stable
The coast edge and hinterland is stable.
- 7. The Lotheran (Holmes of Ire)**
HY 649 468
0.28 km
Eroding to Stable
There is some erosion of the coast edge. A storm beach begins to emerge to the south east with some (stable) throw back into the hinterland.
- 8. Moo Geo**
HY 650 460
0.36 km
Accreting and Eroding
There is a large accretion of boulders and cobbles much of which is being thrown back into the hinterland destroying the old field wall. There is some apparent migration of the storm beach landwards.
- 9. Holmes of Ire Chapel**
HY 651 458
0.25 km
Stable
The south west of the island has a stable coast edge.
- 10. Iron Geo**
HY 651 455
0.15 km
Accreting to Stable
There is some accretion of shingle and sand in the small cove on the west side of the point.
- 11. Roos Wick**
HY 656 449
1.26 km
Stable
Most of the coast edge is stable although there are two areas of localised erosion.
- 12. Rue**
HY 660 453
0.12 km
Accreting to Stable
There is some accretion of cobbles along one section of the storm beach. Some of the cobbles have been thrown back into the hinterland in two places. The coast edge is stable.
- 13. Taing of Westove**
HY 663 454
0.28 km
Stable
The coast edge is stable.
- 14. Woo**
HY 669 452
0.74 km
Eroding to Stable
Parts of the coast edge are eroding, inc. a section below the house at Woo where marine action is the main eroding agent. There is some tipping of farm waste to the west in a bid to lessen the erosion.



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved [Historic Scotland] [100017509] [2005]

