

Map 13: Northskail to Cleat

Landscape, Built Heritage & Archaeology

This map section progresses around the inner coast of Otter's Wick. Here, the sheltered, shallow tidal waters are fringed by sandy beaches. The dune system does not extend much past Lama Ness and from here, the coast edge is generally formed from low, grassy banks. Around the bay to Cleat, the hinterland is divided into a regular pattern of small fields, mostly of pasture but with some arable and vegetable crops also in evidence. This area is quite well settled, by local standards, although most of the modern houses focus on the roads rather than the coast.

At Thorsness, three hitherto unreported probable burial mounds were identified by this survey (SY172). They are located close to a fourth mound which was previously noted. Old records state that an urn was recovered from a mound in this area; but it is unclear which, if any, of these mounds is referred to. The mounds are not at risk from coastal erosion, but they are suffering from cattle poaching.

A well-defined crescentic mound (SY174) located close to Quivals Loch is in good condition and is completely covered with turf. It is most likely to be a burnt mound, of which there are number in this area. Three burnt mounds have been recorded at Colligarth (SY177), for example, and several more are located outwith this map section in the hinterland between Cleat and Sellibister. A grassy mound at Russ Ness (SY175) may belong to this group, but could not be positively identified.

A large and very interesting site is located on top of a prominent rise on Colli Ness. Records indicate that this was formerly the site of a broch, over which a chapel and cemetery were built in later times. The remains were disturbed in recent times when the top of the rise was used by the military. Architectural fragments, which may derive from the earlier church, have however survived through being incorporated into the stone and concrete army building which currently occupies the summit. Furthermore, substantial masonry, seen in an exposure, suggests that a large structure and possibly a broch survives beneath the modern constructions.

A large grassy mound at Cleat, at the end of this map section, is likely to be a farm mound or settlement of extended duration. It extends beneath the modern road and is not currently eroding.

Geology and Geomorphology

The unit runs around the shallow bay of Otters Wick. A small vegetated sandy isthmus runs south from Saville to Lama Ness. The coast edge is well defined along the western and south shores although it rarely exceeds two metres in height. The coast edge is less well defined around the saltings and ayres of Mid Holm to the south east of the bay and only becomes more well defined from Point Nevin. The hinterland is fairly flat to gently sloping with fenced grassed fields. Soils are generally freely drained podzol for the most part with imperfectly to poorly drained salting areas to the south east.

Erosion

The inner bay of Otters Wick is generally stable with a few obvious points of erosion and accretion. The small bars and salting area to the south east is fairly stable with as much accretion as there is erosion. However most of this area is low lying and evidence suggests that much of the hinterland in this area is flooded during high tides.

SY171

HY6830 4420
Northskaill
Store & dwelling
18-20th C
Fair
Survey

SY172 HY64SE2

HY6723 4304
Thorsness
Probable burial mounds
3rd-1st mill BC
Poor
Survey

SY173 HY64SE53.00/.01

HY6705 4204
Quivals
Farmstead
18-20th C
Not seen
Nil

SY174 HY64SE40

HY6703 4186
Quivals Loch
Burnt mound
3rd-1st mill BC
Good
Monitor

SY175

HY6797 4174
Russ Ness
Mound
Unknown: ?prehistoric
Fair
Monitor

SY176 HY64SE21

HY6850 4212
Colli Ness
Probable broch, chapel & cemetery
1st mill BC-1st mill AD
Fair/poor
Survey

SY177 HY64SE3

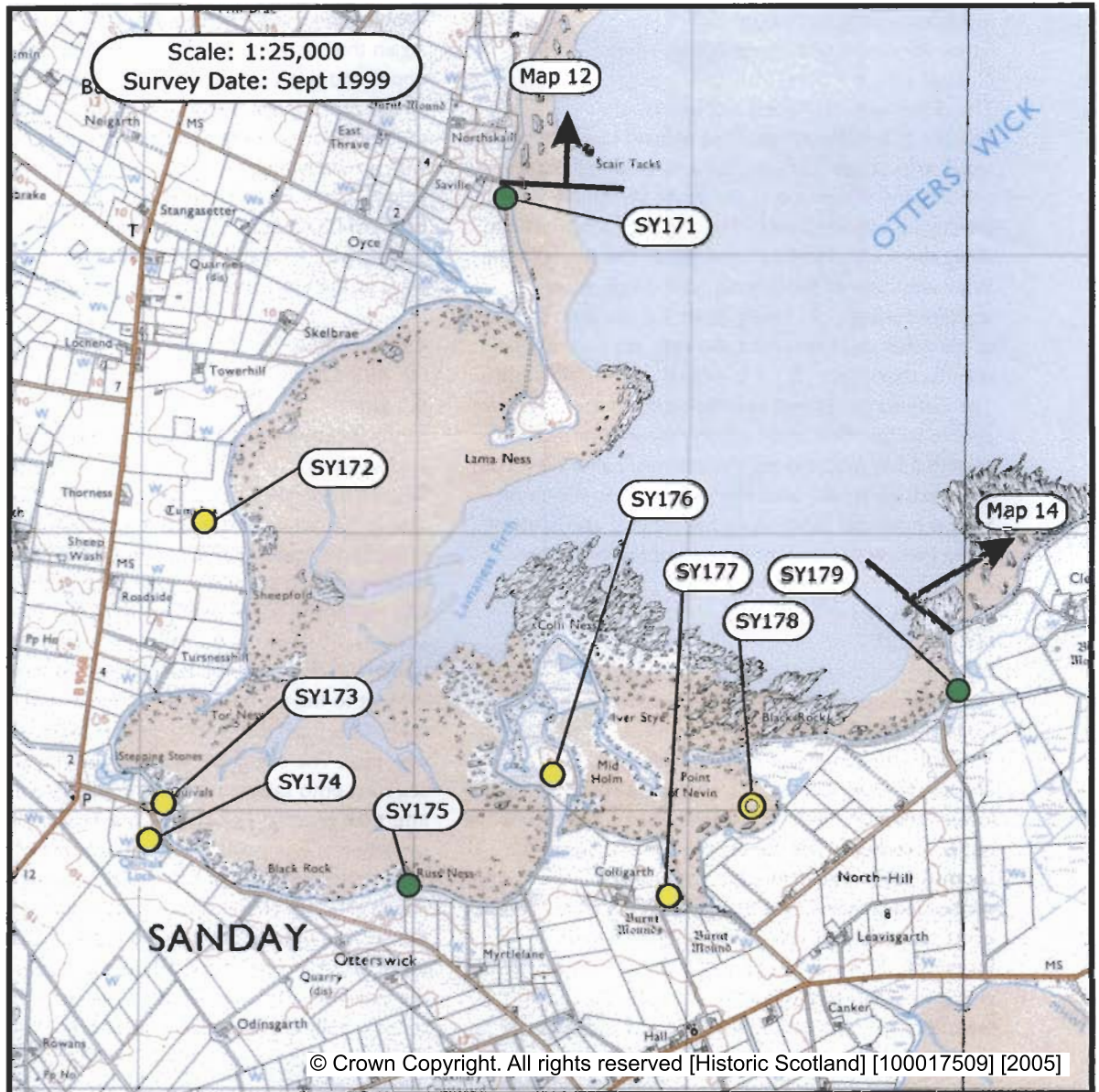
HY689 416
Colligarth
Burnt mounds
3rd-1st mill BC
Fair
Monitor

SY178

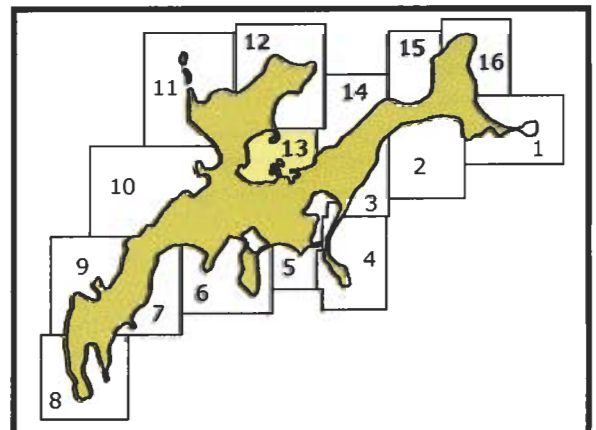
HY6920 4201
Cleat
Vessel: hulk
18-20th C
Fair/poor
Nil

SY179

HY6996 4243
Cleat
Possible farm/settlement mound
Unknown: ?prehistoric
Fair
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



1. Saville

HY 685 433

1.6 km

Sandy foreshore with some cobble cover.

Coastal edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not visible.

The sandy foreshore continues around Lama Ness. The small strip of sands linking Lama Ness with Sanday has cobbles and shingle along the upper foreshore almost making up a storm beach. The storm beach is definite along the south shore of Lama Ness. The sands to the inner west side of the isthmus have much more scattered shingle. At Saville there is a sea wall made up of old tyres and then rocks. A relic sea wall can be seen further south, 2 - 4 m onto the upper foreshore. The isthmus has almost been breached in one place with cobble throw. Peat at or slightly below HWM can be seen in a few places along the isthmus. Lama Ness has some cobble throw onto the hinterland to the south. Soils are skeletal sands along the isthmus and most of Lama Ness with freely drained podzol elsewhere.

2. Skelbrae (East)

HY 673 431

2.7 km

Sandy foreshore with shingle and cobble cover.

Coastal edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not generally visible.

The sandy foreshore has minor shingle cover along the lower foreshore with up to 90% cobble cover along the upper foreshore. The cobble cover increases to the south. The coastal edge is fairly well defined for most of the section. A small ayre lies at Tor Ness with a cobble cover increasing to over 70% along the upper foreshore. There is dumping of rubble to the north west of the isthmus with old cars along the upper foreshore to the south of Skelbrae and some rubble tip close to the tumulus. In most areas of the coastal edge a red till can be seen which is > 1 m to the north yet this changes to a buff colour to the south. Some small organic lenses of soil are apparent with some sections to the north. The hinterland is gently sloping for the most part with grassed fenced fields. Soils are freely drained podzol with more imperfectly drained podzol or gley to the south. A small area of salting lies to the extreme south of this section at Quivals where some fencing runs across the area.

3. Quivals

HY677 416

1.9 km

Rock platform & sandy foreshore, cobble cover.

Coastal edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not generally visible.

The rock platform emerges at Quivals with the rock to drift interface visible. Up to 90% of the upper foreshore has cobble cover. There is also much scrap metal

around the farm area on the foreshore. The sandy foreshore then continues albeit under a cover of cobbles and shingle before the rock platform emerges. Again the cobble cover is still predominant over the upper and mid foreshore until the end of this section where there is more sand along the lower and mid foreshore. A sea wall lies along the coastal edge with a road running alongside for much of the bays length. There is some dumping of farm waste to the north of Myrtlelane. The hinterland is flat to gently sloping with fenced grass fields to the west and stone walls to the east. Soils are imperfectly drained podzol.

4. Mid Holme

HY 685 426

4.5 km

Sandy foreshore and rock platform with shingle and cobble cover.

Coastal edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not generally visible.

The coastal edge meanders around the bulk of Mid Holm and then around an ayre back in towards a bay and meanders out to another ayre. The foreshore has cobbles or shingle in discrete areas with most along the upper foreshores of the two ayres. The rock platform is evident to the north east of Mid Holm and to the east side of the inner bay with a smaller exposure before the new pier. The edge itself is less well defined where the sea runs onto salting areas with small talards of intertidal grasses. The ayre at Iver Stye has been breached at one point with cobble cover of 40 to 60%. The hinterland is flat to moderately sloping and with rough grazing. There is also a stone wall at the start of the section with fencing around the rest apart from the ayres. A small rise of coastal edge to the east side of the inner bay shows at least 0.5 metres of buff till in section. Soils are imperfectly to poorly drained sandy gleys.

5. North Hill

HY 699 423

0.8 km

Sandy foreshore with storm beach.

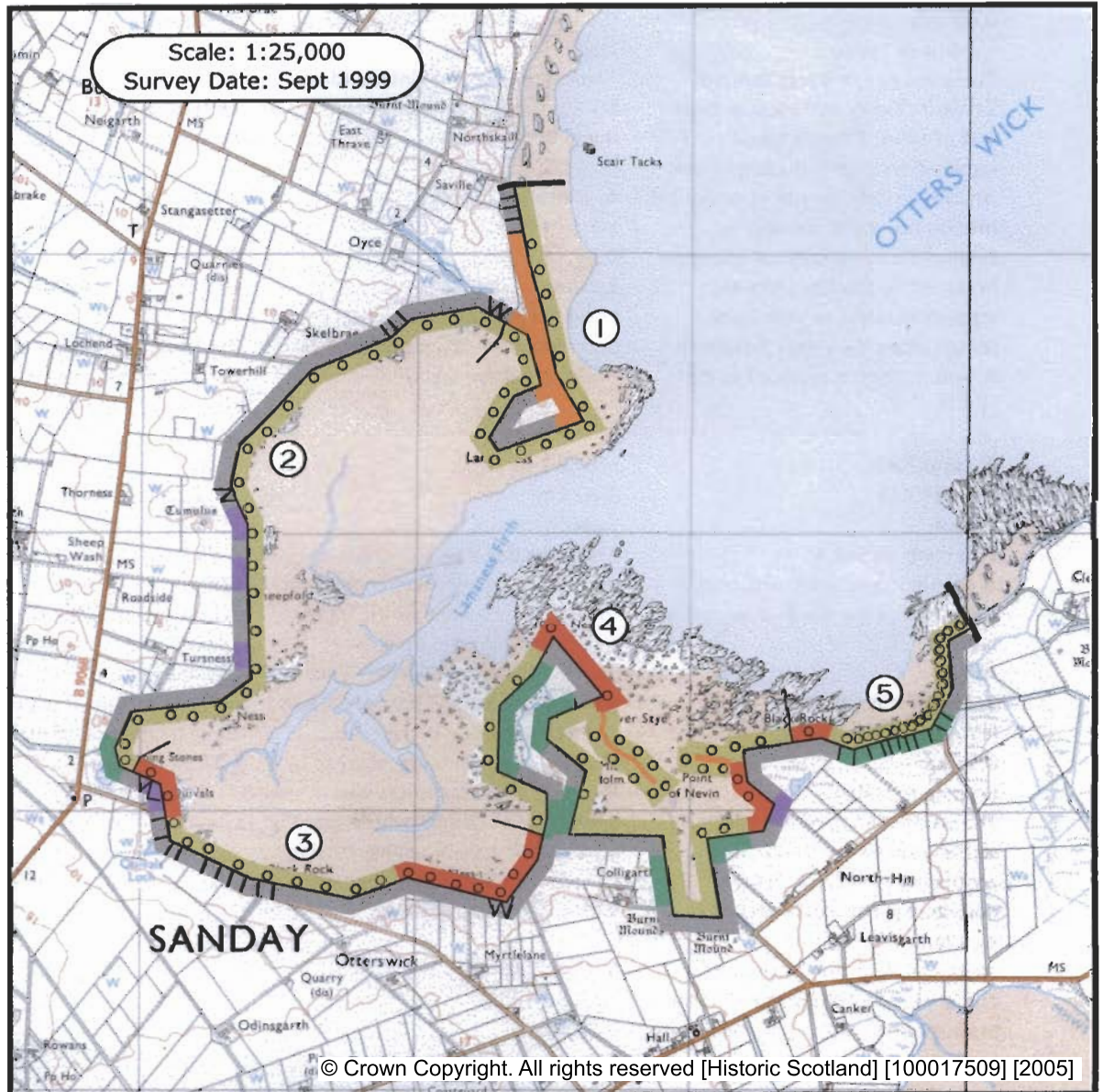
Coastal edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not visible.

The sandy foreshore has up to 90% cobble cover along the mid to upper foreshore and is of storm beach proportions. The cobble cover is slightly less to the east. To the east of the pier the coastal edge is rather like a made up embankment that is now vegetated and separates the bay from a wet hinterland. To the east of the embankment a sea wall runs below along side a road. The hinterland is made up of wet salting along the middle of the bay with grassed fenced fields on each side. The soils are imperfectly drained podzol on each side of the waterlogged salting.

Hinterland Geology & Coastal Geomorphology

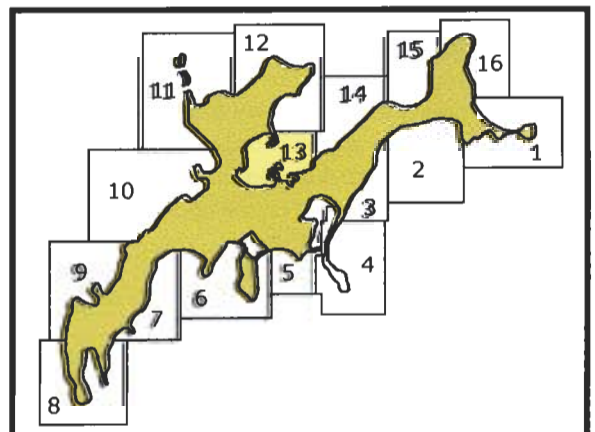
Sanday Map 13



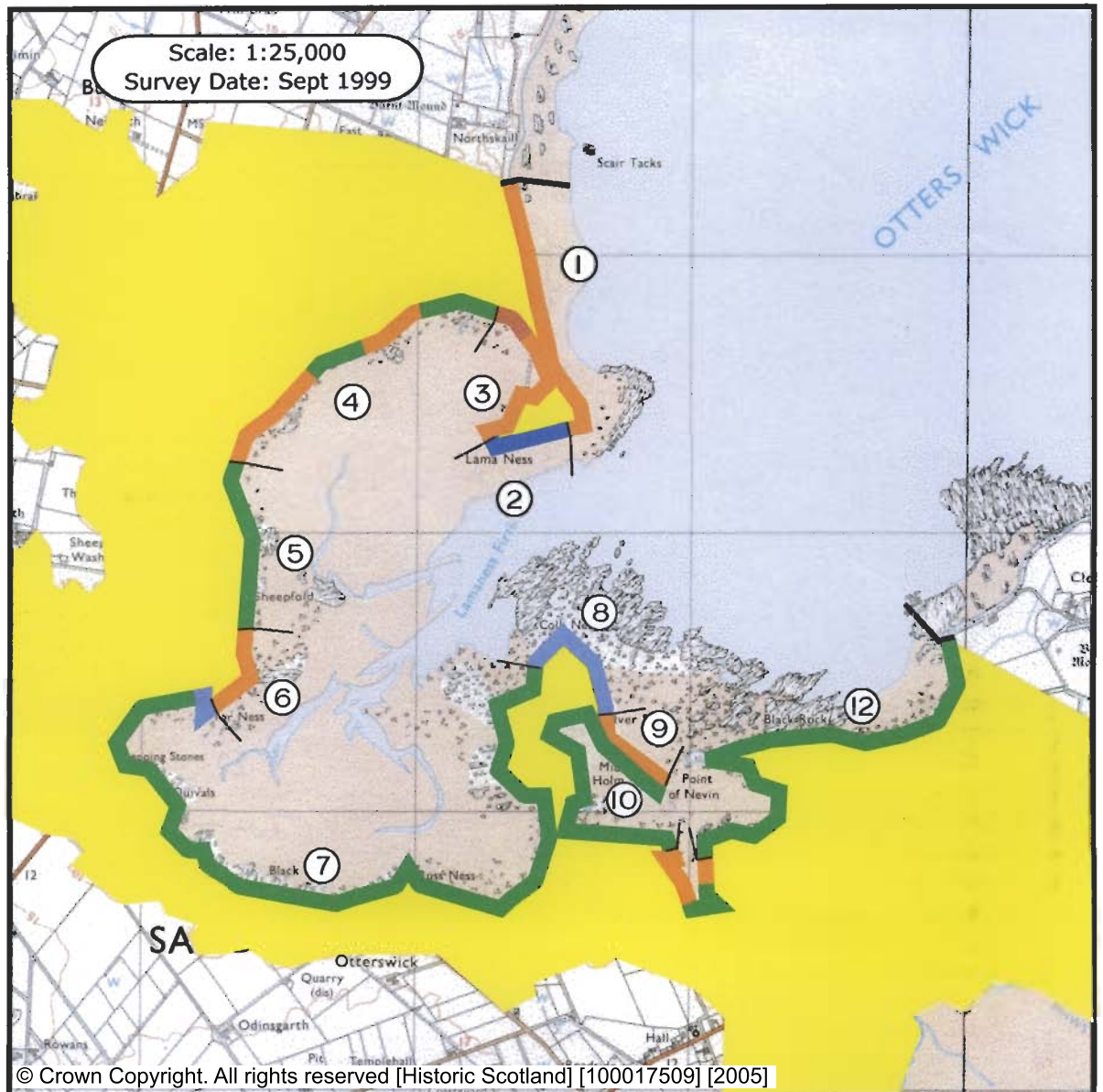
- Foreshore**
- Rock platform
 - Mainly sand
 - Mainly alluvial/marine mud
 - Marsh

- 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. Saville**
HY 684 439
0.85 km
Eroding to Stable
There are sea defences around Saville including one unusual small wall of tyres. There is some localised erosion of the sand ridge. An old sea defence wall now lies 2-4 m onto the upper foreshore. Further S a sandy isthmus has been breached by the sea. Here the vegetation is sparse with some shingle along the upper foreshore. A peat horizon is exposed at the HWM.
- 2. Lama Ness**
HY 684 433
0.2 km
Accreting to Stable
A cobble storm beach is accreting along part of the south shore of the Ness.
- 3. Lama Ness (West)**
HY 684 435
0.55 km
Eroding to Stable
The coast edge generally has more stable areas to the S and more erosion to the N. The breach described in the Saville section is apparent, where there is a continuation of the exposed peat. The erosion becomes worse to the N where some tipping of rubble has acted as a sea defence.
- 4. Skelbrae**
HY 678 437
1.11 km
Eroding to Stable
There is much more stability to this section than the last. Much of the coast edge erosion lies to the centre and west. Most erosion is localised and probably quite slow since fences have not been renewed recently. There is a small sea wall to the east side of the section with no apparent erosion around the sides. A number of old cars also lie on the upper foreshore to the SW.
- 5. Tumulus**
HY 674 430
0.6 km
Stable
The coast edge and hinterland are stable. There is a minor rubble dump at the coast.
- 6. Sheepfold (South)**
HY 674 425
0.23 km
Eroding to Stable
Localised erosion of the coast edge becomes more apparent towards the south of the section.
- 7. Tor Ness**
HY 680 417
3.62 km
Stable
The inner bay is stable. There is accretion of shingle and cobbles on the upper foreshore which appears to be extending the small ayre. Some of the coast edge has a sea wall defence around part of Quivals and along the side of the road. There is some dumping of scrap by the farm. The edge is less well defined W of Quivals where there is a very small area of salting. Further E there is a lower coast edge with salting to the extreme NE.
- 8. Colli Ness**
HY 686 425
0.29 km
Accreting to Stable
Shingle is accreting along the upper foreshore with some marine grasses now colonizing small areas in front of the coast edge.
- 9. Iver Sty**
HY 688 422
0.34 km
Eroding to Stable
There is localised erosion of the coast edge particularly at the point where Iver Sty is separated from Colli Ness.
- 10. Mid Holm**
HY 686 421
1.32 km
Stable
Although salting dominates the hinterland the coast edge appears to be stable.
- 11. Colligarth**
HY 690 416
0.4 km
Eroding to Stable
The salting areas on both sides of this small inlet appear to be eroding, particularly the talards along the coast edge and may be due to sheep as much as marine erosion.
- 12. Point of Nevin**
HY 694 422
1.95 km
Stable
A new pier at Black Rock has added stability to the coast edge. An embankment, (? artificial), is well vegetated. A small sea wall also runs along by the side of the road to the E of this section.



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

