

## Map 3: Sellibister to Plain of Fidge

### Landscape, Built Heritage & Archaeology

The section of coastline covered by this map section extends from the sandy beach to the southwest side of the Bay of Lopness, past the rocky headland at Newark, to the dune ridge which forms the coast edge at Plain of Fidge. The only modern settlement in this area is at Newark; the higher and possibly more stable ground on this headland has been the focus for settlement over an extended period, as the extensive archaeological deposits can testify. The surrounding hinterland comprises good, level grazing land over deep sandy soils.

Very substantial archaeological deposits are exposed in the coast along this section of the coast. While typical of farm mounds seen elsewhere on Sanday, the remains in this area are noteworthy for their extent and the presence of several structural features between the thick layers of organic soil. To the north side of the headland, a coast exposure (SY34) reveals deep layers of organic soils containing frequent shell, charcoal and fish bone inclusions. The fish bone appears to be articulated and present in quantities which may suggest some form of semi-industrial processing. A possible fish trap is located in the adjacent intertidal reefs. Further around the headland, fragments of coursed walling and several stone-lined drains, which may be of Viking/Norse date, are visible among the thick organic 'farm mound' layers (SY35).

To the south, the present farmhouse at Newark (SY36) stands beside the grassed-over footings of an earlier building, probably its predecessor. A lintel bearing the date 1637, said to come from an earlier building, has been preserved in an outbuilding. It would appear that while the centre of the settlement shifted over time, the headland at Newark may have been continuously occupied since at least Viking/Norse period.

A little way further along the coast, two eroding mounds (SY37 & SY38) appear to represent settlement remains of an earlier period; the latter site exhibits coursed stonework associated with extensive anthropogenic deposits. Topographic features indicate that these deposits are likely to continue inland.

### Geology and Geomorphology

The sandy Bay of Lopness finishes and runs onto a rock platform before returning to a sandy foreshore. The sand dunes are absent from the centre of the section but re-emerge again to the south side of the farm mound at Newark. In the hinterland, the fields are fenced, mainly grassed over freely drained skeletal sands and sandy soils.

### Erosion

A large proportion of this unit has an eroding coast edge; the majority of the erosion is occurring along the south western side of Lopness Bay and is due to marine action.

**SY34**

HY7237 4263  
Bay of Lopness/Newark  
Coastal exposure, mounds, (?) fish trap  
Possibly 10-14th C  
Fair/poor  
Survey

**SY35**

HY7230 4241  
Newark  
Mound & coastal exposure  
Possibly 10-14th C  
Fair  
Survey

**SY36** HY74SW19

HY720 422  
Newark Farm  
Structural remains & dated lintel stone  
14-18th C  
Not seen  
Monitor

**SY37**

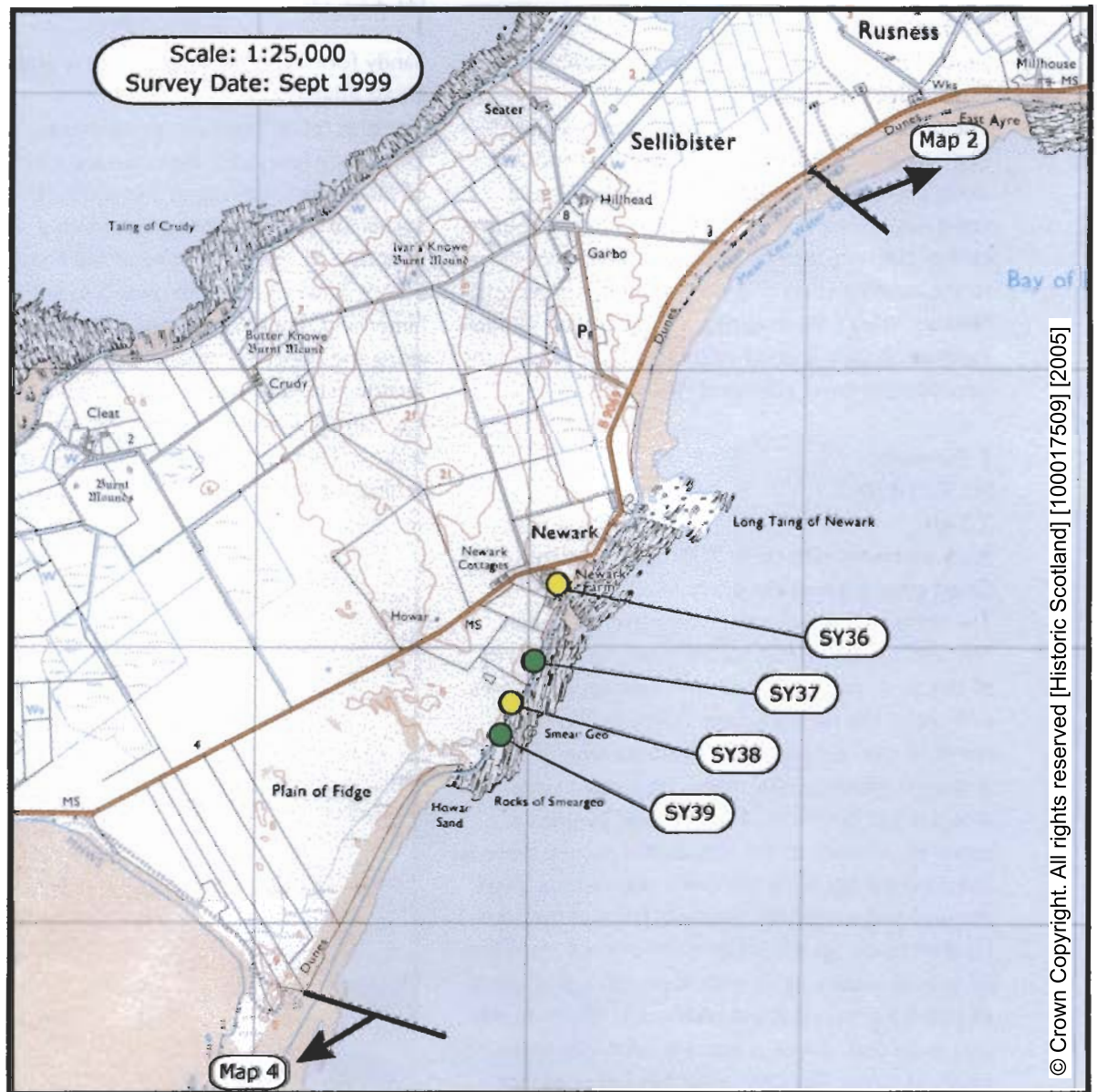
HY7202 4199  
Newark  
Mound & coastal exposure  
Unknown: ?prehistoric  
Fair/poor  
Monitor

**SY38** HY74SW16

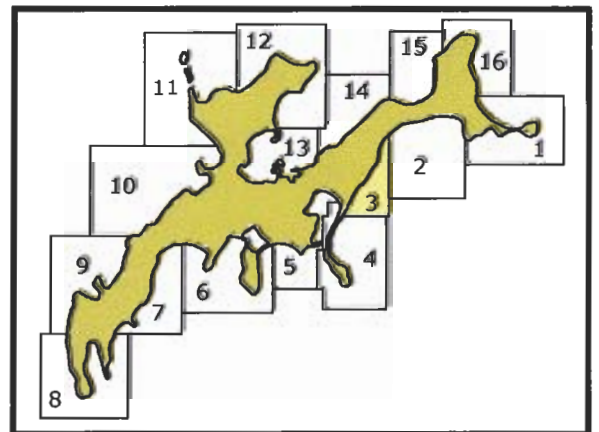
HY7198 4181  
Newark Farm/Sunday Golf Course  
Mound & coastal exposure  
Fair/poor  
Unknown: ?prehistoric  
Monitor

**SY39**

HY7190 4171  
Smear Geo  
Noost  
18-20th C  
Fair  
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. Rusness (East)

HY 725 432

1.4 km

Sandy foreshore with some areas of cobble cover.

Coast edge is predominantly < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not generally visible.

The sandy foreshore has a few areas of cobbles along the upper foreshore. The sandy ridge of coast edge has a buried soil horizon to the south east of the section. This is about 30 cm thick close to the road junction and intermittently visible until Newark where there appears to be buried midden material. A well drained vegetated dune ridge runs between the coast edge and the road.

## 2. Newark

HY 720 420

1.1 km

Rock platform with up to 70% cobble cover.

Coast edge is generally < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is intermittently visible.

The rock platform has cobble cover to the north of this section with a small storm beach of cobbles in front of the Newark farm buildings. To the north of this section a large accumulation of archaeological material makes up a coast edge which is just over 5 m. This material overlies a sandy till. In front of the houses at Newark there is some rubble tip along the coast edge with a short sea wall and some farm waste in front of the farm. Further to the south the drift to rock interface can be seen in places, again with about 30 cm of sandy till overlying the rock but with a relic storm beach also in section. There is also a small midden mound south of Smear Geo and a further minor storm beach on the upper foreshore. After the buildings there is a stone wall and then an open grassed area to the south. Soils are sandy and imperfectly to well drained.

## 3. Howar Sand

HY 715 414

1 km

Sandy foreshore with only discrete areas of cover.

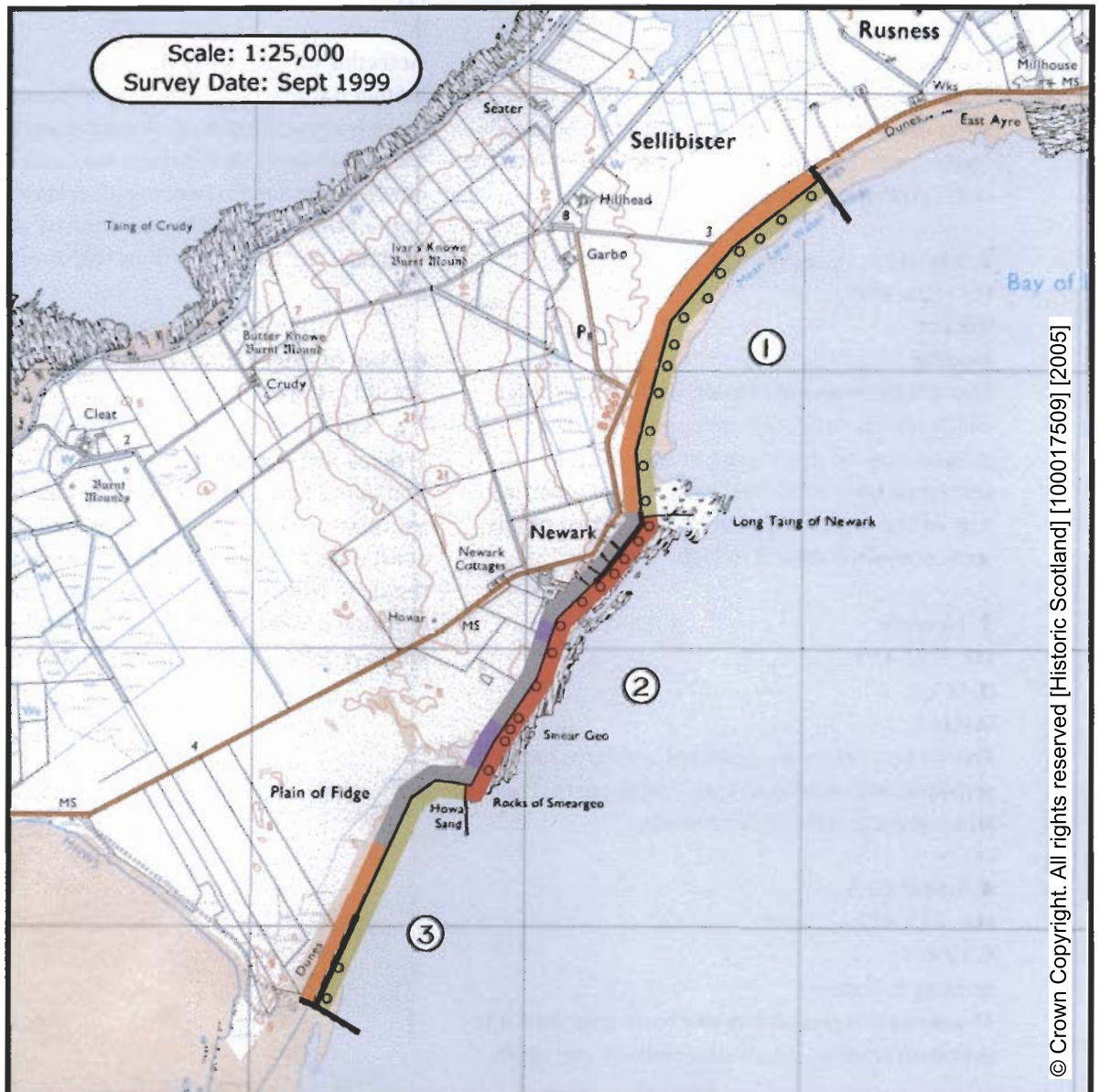
Coast edge is < 5 m.

The drift/rock interface is not visible.

This sandy foreshore becomes a part of a long spit of sand dunes running to the south. The north corner of the foreshore grades into a shelf structure of vegetated sand at the coast edge before again rising up to over 5 m within the hinterland. There is perhaps 30% cobble cover along the upper foreshore to the south of this section. The dune ridge draws closer to the coast edge and is well over 5 m to the south of this section. There is some fencing of grassed fields behind the dune ridge.

# Hinterland Geology & Coastal Geomorphology

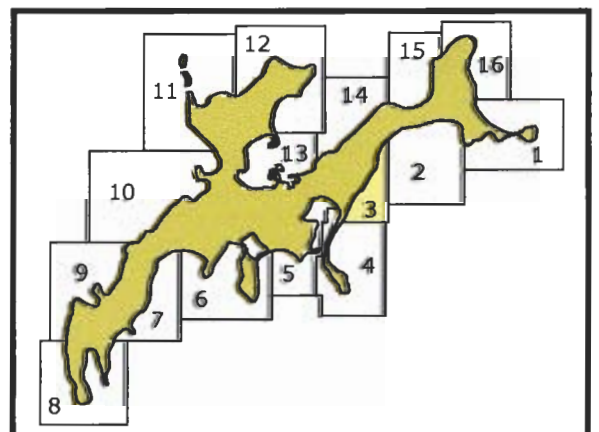
# Sanday Map 3



- 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. Rusness (East)**

HY 727 434

0.45 km

Eroding to Stable

Continued stable coast edge with more localised areas of coast erosion to the west. The erosion continues to become worse and so grades into the next eroding section.

**2. Bay of Lopness (West)**

HY 724 429

0.9 km

Eroding

There is fairly severe erosion of the dunes ridge which now forms a definite coast edge. The erosion may be due in part to the soft soil sediments lying within the sand. This is especially true of the large midden area to the west of this section which is over 5 m high.

**3. Newark**

HY 722 423

0.46 km

Stable

The section below the buildings and farm has been stabilised with rubble and sea wall in parts. There is also some dumping of farm waste.

**4. Smear Geo**

HY 719 417

0.55 km

Eroding to Stable

The section begins with a low coast edge which is definitely eroding, which decreases to the south.

**5. Howar Sand**

HY 715 413

0.72 km

Accreting to Stable

Within the small bay and along the south coast line there is an accumulation of sand along the back shore and sandy shelf behind the coast edge. The newly blown sand is becoming vegetated along both of these areas. The accretion of sand continues for a few 100 m to the south of the cove.

**6. Plain of Fidge (South East)**

HY 712 408

0.33 km

Eroding and Accreting

The dunes have areas of accretion along the back shore and coast edge with erosion of the dunes coast edge by marine action and some erosion of the dune where aeolian activity has created a few deflation pockets. The section also includes an area which is definitely eroding due to deflation.

