LLA Name: Bay of Holland, Stronsay

Location and Extent: The landscape area comprises the Bay of Holland and its surrounding land and extends from Rothiesholm Head in the west to the Sand of the Crook in the east.

Overview: A number of landscape character types make up the land which surrounds the Bay of Holland. In the west the Low Moorland landscape of Rothiesholm Head gives way northward to Low Island Pastures which is fringed by the Coastal Sand Landscape of the Sands of Rothiesholm. In the east Ridgeline Island Landscape merges southward into the Low Island Pastures landscape which surrounds the little loch of Lea Shun.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics:
- The Bay of Holland is a particularly extensive example of a wide, sandy bay, a landscape feature which is characteristic of many parts of the Orkney coastline.
- The Sand of the Crook is a gently curving ayre which encloses the large freshwater lagoon of Lea Shun. The ayre is a low-lying, vegetated, sand-capped, shingle ridge, over 500m in length. An area of machair on the east of the bay has been degraded by sand extraction.
- The higher and more rugged landscape of Rothiesholm contrasts with the otherwise low-lying landscape which surrounds the Bay of Holland.

Special Qualities:
- The Sands of Rothiesholm is an attractive amenity beach with easy access. It is a good location for finding unusual sea shells. The dune system behind the beach has been severely degraded through sand extraction.

Other Designations / Interests:
- There are no SAMs in this area but notable sites include: Mell’s Kirk, former chapel; Site of St Nicholas’ Church and burial ground; There is evidence of a previous settlement at Lower Dishes and a possible settlement at Sand of Crook; Two mounds of burnt stones, known locally as The Nays and The Wasy at Banks also include evidence of a Norse settlement at this location; Lady Kirk and Burial Ground is the site of the pre-Reformation church of Our Lady’s parish, dedicated to the Virgin Mary; a burnt mound has been cut through by the public road NE of the farm of Rothiesholm; Sections of rough drystone masonry and evidence of prehistoric occupation, in the form of pottery shards, tooled stones, various artifacts and small kitchen-midden deposits, have been exposed by tides and winter storms over the large sandy area shown as ‘Golf Links’ on the OS map at the head of Bay of Holland; A chapel which may have been dedicated to St Olaf (d 1030 AD) stood at Quoy Olie, on the shore opposite Rothiesholm farm-house; On the shoreline at Latan there are many conventional kelp burning-pits and the remains of a free-standing kiln as well as a single unroofed structure; The 19th century Holland Farmhouse and steading are C(s) listed.
- At Rothiesholm the shoreline is dynamic and the dune system incorporates interleaved peat and sand with the potential for containing valuable landscape information.
- Lea Shun is a freshwater loch close to the sea. On the inland side of the loch there is marsh and wet meadow with a variety of flowers such as ragged robin and northern marsh orchid.
• Loch of Matpow is a small, shallow loch surrounded by sandy links, wet meadow and marsh. The marsh has varied plant species including ragged robin and marsh marigold.
• Much of Rothiesholm Head consists of heather-dominated moorland which is important for a wide range of breeding birds.
• The southern coast of Stronsay features many intertidal areas that provide haul out areas for seals, e.g. along the Bight of Scarmo south to Tor Ness. Along the eastern coastline, in particular at the Bight of Scarma, the sound of seal calls adds to the sensory experience of a walk along this bay.

Sensitivity to Change

Low Moorland
• Potential visual intrusion of mechanical peat cutting and threat to sub-peat archaeology.

Low Island Pastures
• Conservation of machair and links grassland areas;
• Sensitivity of flat and open landscape to development;
• Potential flooding / inundation problems;
• Loss of drystone walls may threaten to destabilise sand based pastures;
• Damage by coastal erosion and potential loss of rich archaeological deposits;
• Damage by rabbits to turf cover and monuments.

Coastal Sand Landscape
• Sand landscapes are sensitive to erosion;
• Pressure for sand extraction;
• Archaeology is an important consideration in landscape change.

Ridgeline Island
• Impact of large-scale farm developments;
• Skylining of development on ridge line;
• Potential impacts of fish farm developments in bays or at the end of local access roads.

Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement

Low Moorland
• Peat cutting by hand should generally be preferred over mechanical cutting in this low and exposed landscape;
• Mechanical peat cutting should be restricted to less visible areas.

Low Island Pastures
• Maintain drystone wall boundaries;
• Encourage preservation of existing wetlands and uncultivated areas;
• Strict design control of development on flat headland is required;
• Where development is needed, adopt building styles which respect the vernacular tradition and building forms.

Coastal Sand Landscape
• Strict control should be applied over large scale mechanical sand extraction;
• Development of fish farms should be controlled and limited to less visible locations;
Ensure careful siting of onshore structures if fish farm development is permitted;
Avoid housing or tourism development on the shore line;
Priority should be given to recording archaeological sites threatened by coastal erosion, quarrying or other development;
Support low key methods of land stabilisation at the coast, e.g. planting marram grass.

Ridgeline Island
Maintain and extend drystone walls around new developments;
Direct development proposals to sites below the ridgeline to obtain "backclothing".
Assess visual impact of proposals for development on ridgeline against the desirability of preventing ribbon developments on the horizon;
Assess fish farm proposals against the potential for sensitive siting and the use of existing access roads.

Landscape Character
The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at www.snh.org.uk
**Location and Extent**
The Bay of Veantrow is located on the north coast of Shapinsay, one of Orkney’s North Isles. The landscape area extends from the Ness of Ork in the east to The Galt in the west.

**Overview**
The NW corner of Shapinsay is defined by a narrow promontory known as The Galt, and a number of small skerries which extend northward out to sea. At its NE corner is a headland known as the Ness of Ork. Between The Galt and the Ness of Ork is the wide arc of Veantrow Bay. The Bay is backed by an interesting assemblage of depositional features and skerries which include Lairo Water and the tidal Ouse. The entire area is described as a *Ridgeline Island* landscape.

**Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics**
- The most striking characteristic of Shapinsay is the rigid geometry of its fields and roads and the intensity of cultivation. These result from the extensive agricultural improvements undertaken by David Balfour during the 19th century. Run rig was replaced by a grid iron pattern of fields, generally 10 acre squares and extensive field drains were installed. In a short period of time the cultivated area was enlarged from 700 acres to 5,000 acres.
- In the sheltered bay-head of Veantrow Bay, a complex system of shingle depositional landforms has developed. To the east an ayre has impounded lagoons of which Lairo Water persists while others have become silted up and are now marshy areas. The ayre continues westwards as a curved spit across the tidal inlet which is known as the Ouse. On the west side, the till-capped island of Ling Holm is joined to the shore by an ayre and in turn carries a small hooked spit which extends partly across the Ouse. The two spits almost enclose the tidal Ouse but an outlet is maintained by land drainage.
- An iconic though possibly spurious monument, The Stone of Odin, is a sea-washed boulder lying in the centre of the Bay. Attributed the role of sacrificial rock by the romantic Viking hunters of the Victorian period, it was a named boundary marker.

**Special Qualities**
- Veantrow Bay is an important amenity beach in Shapinsay and a number of core paths provide easy access to its shores.

**Other Designations / Interests**
- Notable historic sites include: The Broch on the Ness of Ork which is Scheduled; Garth Burnt Mound; Skenstoft Cairn; Odin’s Stone which has folkloric significance; Hillock of Weland; The Hillock, Ness of Ork.
- Lairo Water Local Nature Conservation (LNCS) site is a coastal site comprising a small tidal inlet part-enclosed by a shingle spit and fringed by salt marsh; and the freshwater loch of Lairo Water, which is separated from the sea by a shingle ayre. There is also an area of marshy grassland and a small, heathery holm.
- The Galt LNCS comprises mainly coastal heath with a fringe of coastal grassland. There are marshy areas and pools among the heath. The heath is wind-pruned and short, the dwarf shrubs plants mainly comprising...
heather and crowberry. The marsh is on shallow peat and has many plant species, including bog cotton, sedges and ragged-robin.

**Sensitivity to Change**

**Ridgeline Island**
- Impact of large-scale farm developments;
- Skylining of development on ridge line;
- Potential impacts of fish farm developments in bays or at the end of local access roads.

**Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement**

**Ridgeline Island**
- Maintain and extend drystone walls around new developments;
- Direct development proposals to sites below the ridgeline to obtain “backclothing”.
- Assess visual impact of proposals for development on ridgeline against the desirability of preventing ribbon developments on the horizon;
- Assess fish farm proposals against the potential for sensitive siting and the use of existing access roads.

**Landscape Character**

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. [Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100.](http://www.snh.org.uk)

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the [Scottish Natural Heritage website at www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)
LLA Name: Calf Sound and Calf of Eday

Location and Extent

The Landscape Area encompasses the northern extremity of Eday as well as the much smaller neighbouring island which is known as the Calf of Eday.

Overview

The north end of Eday offers many visual contrasts – from the isolated and exposed Moorland Hill landscape which extends from the Red Head southward, surrounding the Coastal Basin landscape of Mill Loch, to the settled areas of the low-lying Inclined Coastal Pasture with the seascape containing the heather-clad Holm, the Calf of Eday to the east.

From much of the moorland area of Noup Hill no contemporary settlement can be seen, and there is a marked sense of “wildness”, with the only indications of human influence being the scars of former peat workings and the occasional fence line. Within this landscape the visitor’s attention becomes focussed on the surrounding environment – the colours and scents of its moorland vegetation, the calls of its soaring birds and an overwhelming sense of remoteness and isolation.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics

- Attractive views eastward from the little settlement of Calfsound towards the Calf of Eday, and also southward from the high cliffs of the Red Head;
- Varied and dramatic coastline. The relatively low sandstone cliffs interspersed by secluded little sandy geos below Calfsound give way northwards to predominantly sand and shingle shores before rising abruptly to form the impressive cliffs of the Red Head.
- The Red Head is a key landmark within views from the neighbouring islands of Sanday, Westray and Papa Westray, as well as in views enjoyed by travellers on the ferries which serve the North Isles.

Special Qualities

- Strong sense of remoteness and isolation both on Noup Hill and on the Calf of Eday. There are few obvious signs of contemporary human influence in the rugged moorland of Noup Hill and the Calf of Eday is accessible only by small boat.
- This landscape is rich in archaeology, built features and other cultural association, containing many archaeological sites including the Stone of Setter, which at 4.5m is Orkney's tallest standing stone and the Muckle Hill of Linkataing chambered cairn, homestead and field system which consists of three discrete archaeological entities. The 17th century Category B-listed Carrick House was the home of the original Lairds of Eday and John Gow, the pirate, was once held prisoner here. The landscape surrounding the archaeological sites is not intensively farmed and its relative naturalness provides a sympathetic setting to the monuments.
- The hill land incorporates many sub peat dykes which provide evidence for prehistoric land divisions.
- The site of a former salt works is located on the Calf of Eday.
- This landscape includes extensive areas of natural or semi natural habitat which is extremely important for biodiversity.
- Surrounded on three sides by dark moorland hill, the setting of Mill Loch evokes experiential qualities of tranquillity and calm.
Other Designations / Interests

- The Calf of Eday is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Protection Area (SPA) due to the assemblage of seabirds which breed on the island. Mill Loch is designated as a SSSI and is of national importance for breeding red-throated divers, supporting one of the densest breeding concentrations in the British Isles.
- The moorland area occupied by the Muckle Hill of Linkataing, Vinquoy Hill, Noup Hill and Red Head is designated as a Local Nature Conservation Site and represents important bird habitat, and features considerable populations of rock doves and fulmars.
- Core paths allow access to Noup Hill and the Red Head and also to the Castles, a cliffed landscape to the south of the settlement of Calfsound. Sandy Geos is a secluded sandy cove on the shores of Calfsound, which is backed by low red sandstone cliffs. A well-used pathway down to its sandy shores indicates that it is a popular amenity beach.
- The Eday Heritage Trail begins close to Mill Loch and leads the visitor northward through an area of exceptionally rich archaeology.

Sensitivity to Change

Moorland hill
- Moorland hills are sensitive to vertical developments such as wind turbines or electricity transmission poles.

Coastal basin
- Maintenance of stone walls;
- Visual intrusion of developments into coastal basin;
- Fish farm developments may target this landscape if conditions are suitable.

Inclined Coastal pasture
- Decline in drystone walls;
- Derelict farm buildings;
- Large farm developments, particularly cluttered ancillary buildings;
- New building developments, including possible demand for housing along main roads, creating linear development;
- Possible impacts on archaeological/architectural heritage.

Holms
- Holms may be potential sites for new development.

Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement

Moorland hill
- Examine the potential for native woodland establishment in gullies and valleys;
- Site development carefully with regard to visibility from other landscapes;
- Utilise existing tracks and sites of former development in preference to all new developments in the exposed moorland landscape;
- Maintain and extend stone wall enclosures; where possible extend round new developments; visual emphasis should be placed on those running down to the coast.

Coastal basin
- Protect uncultivated coastal areas from expansion of cultivation and small scale sand extraction;
- Maintain and restore stone wall enclosures;
Avoid intrusive developments on coastal basin floor;
Respect local settlement patterns and cultural history in the placement of new developments on the basin sides.

**Inclined Coastal pasture**

- Encourage the restoration and re-use of any traditional structures;
- Examine the potential for native woodland establishment in gullies and valleys;
- Site development carefully with regard to visibility from other landscapes;
- Utilise existing tracks and sites of former development in preference to all new developments in the exposed moorland landscape;
- Maintain and extend stone wall enclosures; where possible extend round new developments; visual emphasis should be placed on those running down to the coast.
- Linear housing development along roadsides should be prevented;
- Large/extending farm developments should use coordinated massing and roof pitch to achieve greater coalescence;
- New building should reflect the surrounding geology and vernacular tradition in building materials and style;
- New building should be sited with respect to the contours and orientation of the underlying land;
- Small scale tree planting should be encouraged around individual residential and farm developments;
- Restoration of old farm buildings should be encouraged;
- Protect archaeological and architectural heritage from obtrusive development which may detract from local views;
- New development in inclined coastal pastures should be oriented in relation to the coast, and should reflect vernacular tradition in distribution and design.

**Holms**

- Apply strict standards to siting and design of buildings to minimise visual impact and to establish a sympathetic relationship with other buildings or structures.

**Landscape Character**

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. [Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100](http://www.snh.org.uk).

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk).
Location and Extent
The landscape area is located towards the southern end of Westray at Rapness. It is a relatively small area of agricultural land and the associated cliffed coastline.

Overview
Consisting entirely of the Ridgeline Island landscape character type, a major landscape attraction in this part of Westray is the presence of a tall sea stock, the Castle of Burrian, close to the north-facing coast. The remainder of the area consists of sparsely settled farmland.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics
- The Castle of Burrian is an isolated cliff stack site within a cliff bound bay. Due to its height and its proximity to the coast the stack forms a dramatic feature in the landscape.
- There are attractive views northward along the east coast of Westray and towards Papa Westray but the sea stack is the main focus of views into this area.

Special Qualities
- The top of the stack is occupied by the remains of two sub-rectangular bow-sided buildings, thought to the remains of Pictish or Viking age buildings. They are likely to represent the remains of a monastic hermitage site. This is an exceptional site, and although inaccessible, is viewable from the land, and forms the centre-point of a short walk. These sites are rare, and demonstrate a view of ancient religious practice that is extraordinary. Here the landscape setting was essential to the people of the past, and can be seen to this day. An alternative, less favoured theory would be that the stack may be the resort of Vikings requiring a castle retreat, and there may be an element of fortification to this stack. This too would be extremely rare.

Other Designations / Interests
- The north-facing cliffs and adjacent Castle of Burrian are designated as a Local Nature Conservation Site. During the summer months the stack is home to about 250 pairs of puffins. The cliff edge has some patches of maritime heath and grassland, with plants such as sea pink and spring squill.
- The sea stack is the main geomorphological feature of interest but there are also good examples of folded strata in the cliffed coastline at the start of the walk.
- Inland, the landscape is less remarkable but is an attractive, sparsely settled farmed landscape.
- The area is very accessible via a well maintained path which includes a good car park close to the Castle of Burrian. The pathway continues southward along the coast before linking up with the public road and provides a popular circular walk.

Sensitivity to Change
Ridgeline Island
- Maintenance of agricultural features;
- Impacts of large-scale modern farm developments;
• Sky lining of new development on ridge line;
• Potential impacts of fish farm related developments in bays or at the end of local access roads.

**Potential for Landscape Enhancement**

**Ridgeline Island**

• Maintain and extend drystone walls around new developments;
• Direct development proposals to sites below the ridgeline in order to obtain “backclothing”;
• Assess visual impact of proposals for development on ridgeline against the desirability of preventing ribbon development on the horizon;
• Assess fish farm proposals against the potential for sensitive siting and the use of existing access roads.

**Landscape Character**

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. [Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100](https://www.snh.org.uk).

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk).
LLA Name: Central Sanday

Location and Extent
The landscape area is located in the south-east end of Sanday and extends from Newark in the north-east to the boundary of Kettletoft village in the south west.

Overview
This is predominantly a Coastal Sand Landscape with only a small proportion of Low Island Pasture. The high dunes behind Bay of Newark represent a distinctive landmark which is visible from other parts of Sanday and, indeed from other islands, e.g. Stronsay and North Ronaldsay. This part of Sanday contains the most extensive area of Coastal Sand Landscape within Orkney as well as very significant natural and cultural heritage resources.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics
- This area contains an outstanding assemblage of blown-sand and shingle landforms including tombolos (accumulations of sand and shingle connecting headlands and islands), spits, sand-flats, dunes and machair (links) of great complexity. Such an extensive area of machair is unusual outside the Outer Hebrides and the effects of severe deflation are particularly well demonstrated. The tombolos, bars, spits, and shingle ridges, collectively make up a set of related features which is unique in the Highlands and Islands and perhaps in Britain as a whole.
- The wide sweep of sandy beach along Bay Newark is impressive in its extent and its quality, and the dunes behind the beach are the highest in Orkney.

Special Qualities
- Crossing through to Cata Sand, the contrast between the dune landscape and the wide expanse of sand/mud flat is striking, particularly at low water. The low-lying and flat topography of both Cata Sand and Little Sea allow a strong sense of closeness and connection to the sea.
- These are important feeding areas for birds, in particular wintering waders and the sound of bird calls adds to the sensory qualities of this landscape, as do the scents and colours of the many flowering species from spring through until autumn.
- This is a fragile and mobile coastal landscape which is highly vulnerable to the erosive forces of wind and sea.

Other Designations / Interests
- The landscape is rich in features of archaeology and built heritage. Scheduled Ancient Monuments include: Augmond Howe Cairn and cairn-derived bank; Quoyness Chambered Cairn; Sivers Geo Mounds; Tresness Chambered Cairn; Wasso Broch on Tres Ness, which is surrounded by bog.
- Quoyness chambered cairn is considered one of the finest examples of this type of cairn in Orkney. It is relatively easily accessed and has interpretation. A further 27 cairns are located at Els Ness and it is thought that these date back to the Bronze Age.
- Wasso Broch located at Tres Ness is thought to date back to the Iron Age.
- Tres Ness House, steading and ancillary buildings are Category B-listed.
- Other noteworthy historic sites in this area include the farmstead and associated buildings on Els Ness.
- The landscape performs a key function in providing a setting for the Scheduled Ancient Monuments located within it. The headlands of Tres
Ness and Els Ness are almost islands, being linked to the main island of Sanday by tombolos.

- The area is part of the Central Sanday SSSI, the East Sanday Coast SPA and RAMSAR site and the Sanday SAC. The peripheral salt-marshes of Cata Sand and Little Sea comprise one of the largest and floristically most diverse concentrations of this habitat in Orkney, and support several locally scarce species.
- The Dunes are dominated typically by Marram associated with a variety of herbs such as Lady’s bedstraw, Birdsfoot-trefoil and Hearts-ease Pansy. Adjacent to the Dunes, the extensive machair comprising blown shell-rich sand supports a relatively herb-rich plant community, the species’ composition varying in relation to proximity to water table, sand stability and management.
- Dry machair areas are characterised by Lesser Meadow Rue, Thyme, Limestone Bedstraw, Fairy Flax and Felwort. Where wind-deflation has exposed the water-table, plants characteristic of wetter conditions occur such as the Jointed Rush Grass of Parnassus, Lesser Clubmoss, Curved Sedge and Early Marsh Orchid.
- The inter-tidal areas are of importance for wading birds.
- This is a popular amenity site for residents of Sanday and also visitors to the island. There are a number of core paths in this area as well as a car parking area and picnic site alongside Cata Sand. There is also interpretation here.
- Part of the Plain of Fidge has been developed as a golf course.

**Sensitivity to Change**

**Coastal Sand Landscape**

- Sand landscapes are sensitive to erosion;
- Pressure for sand extraction;
- Archaeology is an important consideration in landscape change.

**Low Island Pastures**

- Conservation of machair and links grassland areas;
- Sensitivity of flat and open landscape to development;
- Potential flooding / inundation problems;
- Loss of drystone walls may threaten to destabilise sand based pastures;
- Damage by coastal erosion and potential loss of rich archaeological deposits;
- Damage by rabbits to turf cover and monuments.

**Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement**

**Coastal Sand Landscape**

- Strict control should be applied over large scale mechanical sand extraction;
- Development of fish farms should be controlled and limited to less visible locations;
- Ensure careful siting of onshore structures if fish farm development is permitted;
- Avoid housing or tourism development on the shore line;
- Priority should be given to recording archaeological sites threatened by coastal erosion, quarrying or other development;
- Support low key methods of land stabilisation at the coast, e.g. planting marram grass.

**Low Island Pastures**
• Maintain drystone wall boundaries;
• Encourage preservation of existing wetlands and uncultivated areas;
• Strict design control of development on flat headland is required;
• Where development is needed, adopt building styles which respect the vernacular tradition and building forms.

**Landscape Character**

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. [Scottish Natural Heritage Review](https://www.snh.org.uk) No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)
Overview

The combination of landscape character types found in this area is unusual in an Orkney context. Within a relatively small area, the diversity of landscape features, in particular its natural habitat and geological/geomorphological features combined with the low level of development make this an interesting and attractive landscape.

In the west Fers Ness is backed by *Inclined Coastal Pasture* and this gives way eastward to the *Coastal Sand Landscape* of the Sands of Mussetter and the Sands of Doomy. These wide sandy bays are backed by boulder clay cliffs and low sand dunes respectively which create a linear boundary along the western margins of an area of *Peatland Basin*. This low-lying, flat landscape represents a narrow “pinch point” between the two higher landmasses of Eday and is the location for the island’s airstrip, which is known as London Airport.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics

- The boulder clay cliffs behind the Sands of Mussetter contrast sharply with the adjacent sand dunes which back the Sands of Doomy. The wide sweep of sand created by both beaches is visually pleasing.
- The low lying Peatland Basin, which is occupied by the airstrip, is otherwise largely undeveloped and contains areas of wetland and many colourful wildflowers.

Special Qualities

- The geology of Eday is more complex than that of the other North Isles and takes the form of a geological syncline known as the Eday Syncline, whose axis trends north-south through the Sands of Mussetter. The southern shores of Fersness Bay provide an excellent section through its western limb. This coastline, which is designated as a Local Nature Conservation Site, exposes Rousay Beds, Lower Eday Sandstones, Eday Flags and Middle Eday Sandstones.
- The coastal exposures are supplemented by a large disused quarry which was formerly worked for fine building stone and fine dressed stone. Large-scale planar cross-bedding still exists at the southern end of the quarry.
- A clear section of till occurs both on the coast of Fersness Bay and along a deeply incised burn just west of the Sands of Mussetter. The section exposes, at its western end, some 8m of tough red boulder clay containing erratics of predominantly local origin as well as shell fragments and rare, exotic erratics. Where the stream has cut down to bedrock, sandstone surfaces bear striae with orientations generally between SE-NW and S-N. At the eastern end of the section red till overlies brown till.

Other Designations / Interests

- Doomy Hill forms part of the Doomy and Whitemaa Site of Special Scientific Interest, an area of sub-montane heath which supports nationally important numbers of breeding whimbrel and Arctic skua.
- Loch of Doomy and the adjacent dune system is a Local Nature Conservation Site and is important for the bird life it supports.
- Notable historic sites in this area include the Scheduled Ancient Monuments of Doomy Chambered Cairn and Dale Burnt Mound. Doomy Hill is the site of a possible settlement and at Fersness a number of ruinous
properties are a clear feature in the landscape as well as a treb dyke which has supported a more recent “feelie dyke”.

- Stone for the construction of St Magnus Cathedral was taken from the quarry at Fersness.

**Sensitivity to Change**

**Inclined coastal pasture**
- Decline in drystone walls;
- Derelict farm buildings;
- Large farm developments, particularly cluttered ancillary buildings;
- New building developments, including possible demand for housing along main roads, creating linear development;
- Possible impacts on archaeological/architectural heritage.

**Coastal Sand**
- Sand landscapes are sensitive to erosion;
- Pressure for sand extraction;
- Archaeology is an important consideration in landscape change.

**Peatland basin**
- Vertical or large scale structures would be highly intrusive in this landscape;
- Wildlife interest of whole peatland basin may be compromised by any drainage activity.

**Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement**

**Inclined coastal pasture**
- Encourage the restoration and re-use of any traditional structures;
- Examine the potential for native woodland establishment in gullies and valleys;
- Site development carefully with regard to visibility from other landscapes;
- Utilise existing tracks and sites of former development in preference to all new developments in the exposed moorland landscape;
- Maintain and extend stone wall enclosures; where possible extend round new developments; visual emphasis should be placed on those running down to the coast.
- Linear housing development along roadsides should be prevented;
- Large/extending farm developments should use coordinated massing and roof pitch to achieve greater coalescence;
- New building should reflect the surrounding geology and vernacular tradition in building materials and style;
- New building should be sited with respect to the contours and orientation of the underlying land;
- Small scale tree planting should be encouraged around individual residential and farm developments;
- Restoration of old farm buildings should be encouraged;
- Protect archaeological and architectural heritage from obtrusive development which may detract from local views;
- New development in inclined coastal pastures should be oriented in relation to the coast, and should reflect vernacular tradition in distribution and design.

**Coastal Sand**
- Strict control should be applied over large scale mechanical sand extraction;
- Development of fish farms should be controlled and limited to less visible locations;
- Ensure careful siting of onshore structures if fish farm development is permitted;
- Avoid housing or tourism development on the shore line;
- Priority should be given to recording archaeological sites threatened by coastal erosion, quarrying or other development;
- Support low key methods of land stabilisation at the coast, e.g. planting marram grass.

Peatland basin

- Strict control of building developments should aim to keep the basin floor clear of development;
- Target mechanical peat cutting to visually contained but accessible areas, ensure reinstatement of surface vegetation;
- Small scale woodland and scrub planting should be encouraged in hollows and around wetlands;
- High standards in building design should apply to any building development.

Landscape Character

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at www.snh.org.uk
**Location and Extent**
The entire area of this, the most northerly of Orkney’s islands, is designated as a Local Landscape Area.

**Overview**
The most striking feature of the North Ronaldsay landscape is its low relief and wide open spaces. Indeed the largest part of the island consists of *Low Island Pasture* with the remainder comprising the *Coastal Sand Landscape* of South Bay and Linklet Bay.

**Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics**
- Very flat, low lying island with a very strong association with the surrounding marine environment;
- Apart from the sandy beaches of South Bay and Linklet Bay, the intertidal consists of gently sloping bedrock and, in places, banks of flat stones.
- The many, low, derelict stone cottages appear to echo the stony, rocky character of much of the coast of North Ronaldsay;
- The sheep dyke which encircles the island is unique to North Ronaldsay and in many places is an attractive addition to the landscape. However, in parts it has broken down and gaps have been replaced by stretches of fence line or sheep hurdles.
- The red and white striped lighthouse in the north-east of the island is a striking landmark in the flat landscape.

**Special Qualities**
- North Ronaldsay is an island in which the early 19th century kelping trade created a large labouring population with little land to support them. There are subsequently many unusually small crofts.
- The sheep dyke around North Ronaldsay is a unique and important structure. Management of sheep was in common. The dyke was designed to keep the sheep, for the majority of the year, on the foreshore where they would graze on seaweed. A sheep court, still active, was set up to oversee the maintenance of the flock and its welfare, Tulloch noting that, ‘regulations covering the authorised allocation, management of the flock, and the maintenance of the sheep-dyke were worked out and agreed between the laird and the crofters in 1839....’.
- The nine circular ‘punds’, or pens, which can be found at the north end of the island, were part of the sheep management system. The dwindling population finds the dyke very difficult to maintain. Nevertheless it is symbolically at the heart of North Ronaldsay.
- The North Ronaldsay sheep themselves are a key element of the landscape as they graze on fronds of seaweed. Much smaller than the sheep breeds more commonly seen elsewhere in Orkney, and with much finer features, they are nimble and flight of foot as they scamper along the rocky coastline.
- Inland, the island is divided into three sections by large prehistoric dykes (treb dykes) and these are prominent landscape features. They probably have their origins in prehistory but parts have been in use until modern times.
- The North end of the island is now best known for its breeding birds, but in the heath is an extensive Bronze Age landscape with dozens of burial mounds. At the opposite end is the area of lighthouses and associated features. This too is a very special part of North Ronaldsay’s history.
- The large tracts of sand covered landscape preserve the prehistoric landscapes within and beneath them. They create a soil environment especially kind to the preservation of bone. Erosive pressures are now
exposing these previously hidden places. Kelp pits abound close to the shores.

- Very important island for ornithology, in particular for species which break their journey here during the spring and autumn migrations;

**Other Designations / Interests**

- The entire island is designated as a Local Nature Conservation Sites due to its importance for ornithology. Sites of specific value include the Lochs of Ancum, Bride’s Ness, Gretchen, Hooking and Gerson as well as an area of marsh at Kirbist.
- The coastline is particularly important for black guillemot and wintering waders, the former finding suitable nesting sites in the rocky and stony coastline and the latter attracted to the large quantities of rotting seaweed which accumulate on the shoreline during autumn and winter and provide a rich source of invertebrate life.
- Grey and common seals can be seen and heard at various locations along the coastline;
- The high shell sand content of the soil behind the sandy beaches has allowed areas of colourful flower-rich grassland to develop.

**Sensitivity to Change**

**Low Island Pastures**

- Conservation of machair and links grassland areas;
- Sensitivity of flat and open landscape to development;
- Potential flooding / inundation problems;
- Loss of drystone walls may threaten to destabilise sand based pastures;
- Damage by coastal erosion and potential loss of rich archaeological deposits;
- Damage by rabbits to turf cover and monuments.

**Coastal Sand**

- Sand landscapes are sensitive to erosion;
- Pressure for sand extraction;
- Archaeology is an important consideration in landscape change.

**Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement**

**Low Island Pastures**

- Maintain drystone wall boundaries;
- Encourage preservation of existing wetlands and uncultivated areas;
- Strict design control of development on flat headland is required;
- Where development is needed, adopt building styles which respect the vernacular tradition and building forms.

**Coastal Sand**

- Strict control should be applied over large scale mechanical sand extraction;
- Development of fish farms should be controlled and limited to less visible locations;
- Ensure careful siting of onshore structures if fish farm development is permitted;
- Avoid housing or tourism development on the shore line;
- Priority should be given to recording archaeological sites threatened by coastal erosion, quarrying or other development;
- Support low key methods of land stabilisation at the coast, e.g. planting marram grass.

**Landscape Character**

2
The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)
Location and Extent
The area occupies the north-eastern end of the island of Sanday and extends eastwards from Garbo. It is a low-lying area where the coastline is fringed by sand dunes.

Overview
Northwall is a low-lying area comprising predominantly Low Island Pasture and Coastal Sand Landscape. The flat, low relief of the landscape means that long views characterise the area and, whilst these may not be particularly dramatic, it also means that any high or large-massed structures are easily visible from a distance. Northwall features a number of little lochs, some of which are fringed by attractive vegetation. These are clearly seen from the public road.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics
- The flat, open landscape of Sanday has been created by an extensive covering of windblown sand over the shallow contours of the underlying Rousay Flags. The dune systems which extend along the shoreline of Scuthvie Bay in the east, Bay of Lopness in the south and Bay of Sandside in the north are illustrative of the coastal processes which have contributed to Sanday's formation. They also play an important role in protecting the interior of the island from coastal erosion.
- The low-lying and generally flat nature of this area means that its most elevated features are the sand dunes which fringe the coastlines. The wide sandy beaches of Scuthvie Bay and Bay of Sandside are particularly attractive.
- In summer the wildflowers of the machair and the numerous little lochs with their fringing vegetation add colour and texture to the landscape.
- The style of the little traditional cottages is appropriate within the flat landscape.

Special Qualities
- The entire area is rich in archaeological sites, including chambered cairns and mounds. The area surrounding the farm of Tofts is a farm mound which exemplifies many such sites in Sanday and North Ronaldsay where prominent 19th century farms sit on top of probably 1500 years of deposit of midden material and sand.
- The remote reserve radar station for Whale Head Chain Home Low radar station is situated at Lettan, and comprises three elements – a Transmitter block, Receiver block and a large electricity generating house. All are constructed of reinforced shuttered concrete and were formerly covered with earth.
- A number of ruinous dwellings can also be seen, which are generally of a long, low style of construction, often with flagstone roofs. A number of similar dwellings have in recent years been sensitively renovated and restored.
- Listed buildings include Start Point lighthouse and Lopness House and Dovecot.
- In the Bay of Lopness the boilers and turbines of the B98, an ex-German destroyer which was driven ashore in 1919, lie near low water.
- This NE headland of Sanday is probably one of the more remote parts of the island and, although it is settled, it has a sense of isolation, particularly during the months of winter.

Other Designations / Interests
- Parts of this area are elements of the Northwall SSSI which represents the largest extent of machair outside the Western Isles. The associated plant communities appear to be more natural and represent a more complete series than any other Orkney dune system. Botanically the machair is diverse with an abundance of Yellow Rattle, Grass of Parnassus and Ragged Robin. The area includes five machair lochs, one of which (North Loch) is brackish. These lochs support a range of submerged and emergent aquatic vegetation.
- The entire coastline of this area, below MHWS is part of the East Sanday Coast SPA and RAMSAR site due to its importance to wintering waders. It also forms part of the
Sanday SAC, notified for its populations of common seals and coastal habitats, which include intertidal mudflats and sandflats, reefs and subtidal sandbanks.

- On the northern headland an area known as Tofts Ness is designated as a LNCS. This site comprises rough grassland with small pools and wet areas and is important for a wide range of breeding birds.
- Seals haul out on the Taing of Tor Sker in the west of Bay of Sandside.

**Sensitivity to Change**

**Low Island Pastures**

- Conservation of machair and links grassland areas;
- Sensitivity of flat and open landscape to development;
- Potential flooding / inundation problems;
- Loss of drystone walls may threaten to destabilise sand based pastures;
- Damage by coastal erosion and potential loss of rich archaeological deposits;
- Damage by rabbits to turf cover and monuments.

**Coastal Sand Landscape**

- Sand landscapes are sensitive to erosion;
- Pressure for sand extraction;
- Archaeology is an important consideration in landscape change.

**Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement**

**Low Island Pastures**

- Maintain drystone wall boundaries;
- Encourage preservation of existing wetlands and uncultivated areas;
- Strict design control of development on flat headland is required;
- Where development is needed, adopt building styles which respect the vernacular tradition and building forms.

**Coastal Sand Landscape**

- Strict control should be applied over large scale mechanical sand extraction;
- Development of fish farms should be controlled and limited to less visible locations;
- Ensure careful siting of onshore structures if fish farm development is permitted;
- Avoid housing or tourism development on the shore line;
- Priority should be given to recording archaeological sites threatened by coastal erosion, quarrying or other development;
- Support low key methods of land stabilisation at the coast, e.g. planting marram grass.

**Landscape Character**

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)
Papa Westray and Holm of Papay

Location and Extent

Papa Westray, also known as Papay, is a small island off the east coast of Westray. The Holm of Papay, in turn, is an even smaller island off the east coast of Papa Westray.

Overview

The settled area of Papa Westray, which is predominantly managed for agriculture, consists of Ridgeline Island Landscape, whilst North Hill, in the north of the island, is an area of Low Moorland. Holm of Papay is an example of the Holms landscape. The landscape contains pleasing contrasts and a combination of features which make this an attractive and tranquil island.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics

- The island has a low density population, and features a number of small farms and scattered houses. Development is generally of a scale and design that is sympathetic to the landscape.
- The relatively low relief and lack of major development means there are views from almost every point of the island across the landscape, towards the sea and beyond.
- A number of little lochs are scattered across the low lying parts of the island and their fringing vegetation, e.g. large stands of iris, adds texture and colour to the landscape.
- The Low Moorland landscape of North Hill is isolated and remote from human influence. It is managed as a wildlife reserve by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. In late summer the hill is awash with the purple hues of heather.

Special Qualities

- Even by Orkney standards Papa Westray is rich in archaeology and other sites of cultural heritage. The Knap of Howar is the earliest example of a Northern European dwelling and has the advantage over similar sites in that visitors can gain access to the site and walk around rather than simply view it from above.
- Other important historic sites include chambered cairns on the Holm of Papay, St Boniface Church and the ruins of St Tredwell Chapel. The name Papa Westray is illustrative of its long association with the priesthood.
- A barrow cemetery is located in the north of the island within the moorland;
- Weelies Taing, a fish trap on a modified natural coastal feature, is used as a haulout point and feeding point for seals. The coastal fish trap is a rare feature in an Orkney context.
- The Cunnan Gairsty is a large turf dyke, a landscape feature that divides the southern end of the island and is an example of a treb dyke.

Other Designations / Interests

- Together, the North Hill and Holm of Papay are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Protection Area due to their importance for populations of breeding Arctic skua and Arctic tern.
- A number of areas are designated as Local Nature Conservation Sites. These include areas of wetland at Backaskaill, Hookin, Mayback and Wellpark; as well as the Lochs of St Tredwell, Ness, and Via. These sites provide habitat for a number of bird species. The Links of Moclett, an area of dune grassland, is an important botanical site which during spring and summer is filled with the colour and scent of wildflowers and provides important habitat for bumblebees and other pollinating insects.
• Often described as a miniature version of Orkney, Papay is a popular destination for visitors to Orkney, many of whom are keen to experience the remoteness of the island. Historic sites, such as the Knap of Howar and St Boniface Kirk are popular destinations and core paths allow walkers to see the majority of the island. One large core path encircles the entire coastline.

**Sensitivity to Change**

**Ridgeline Island**

• Maintenance of agricultural features;
• Impacts of large-scale modern farm developments;
• Sky lining of new development on ridge line;
• Potential impacts of fish farm related developments in bays or at the end of local access roads.

**Low Moorland**

• Potential visual intrusion of mechanical peat cutting and threat to sub-peat archaeology.

**Holms**

• Holms may be potential sites for new development

**Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement**

**Ridgeline Island**

• Maintain and extend drystone walls around new developments;
• Direct development proposals to sites below the ridgeline in order to obtain “backclothing”.
• Assess visual impact of proposals for development on ridgeline against the desirability of preventing ribbon development on the horizon;
• Assess fish farm proposals against the potential for sensitive siting and the use of existing access roads.

**Low Moorland**

• Peat cutting by hand should generally be preferred over mechanical cutting in this low and exposed landscape;
• Mechanical peat cutting should be restricted to less visible areas.

**Holms**

• Apply strict standards to siting and design of buildings to minimise visual impact and to establish a sympathetic relationship with other buildings or structures

**Landscape Character**

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. [Scottish Natural Heritage Review](http://www.snh.org.uk) No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)
Rousay Interior

Location and Extent

This landscape area comprises the central part of Rousay.

Overview

This, the “hidden” interior of Rousay is an area of Moorland Hill with a central Peatland Basin. It features extensive areas of moorland and bog along with a number of upland lochs and other water bodies.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics

- Extensive area of moorland and bog where a mosaic of rough grassland and heathers form a simple composition which changes with the seasons and with light conditions, where purple heather prevails during late summer.
- The open landscape, i.e. not broken by fence lines, is an important factor in the enjoyment of this landscape.
- Two freshwater lochs, Muckle Water and Peerie Water are attractive elements in this landscape.
- The distinctive shape of Rousay and in particular its central moorland hill sets it apart from Orkney’s other North Isles and it is an instantly recognisable landmark from surrounding areas.
- The moorland hill slopes are terraced, a feature which is characteristic of a landscape shaped by glaciation and which is not commonly seen in Orkney.

Special Qualities

- Strong sense of “wildness” and isolation.
- The basin landscape of the lochs is quite protected from wind, and other intrusive sounds, hence birdsong is a prominent feature.
- The height of the water in the Muckle Water is controlled by a dam, created in the 19th century, but still operational, to enable the Mill in Sourin to run as required. Other water management features includes the connection between the Peerie Water and the Muckle Water.
- The basin around the Muckle Water’s main feature is underlain by peat, and the historic landscape is related to the practice of peat cutting. Many houses still have peat rights and, after a decade of neglect, some peat banks are being cut again for domestic use, due to the high price of oil.
- There are several other archaeological sites around the basin of the lochs, and these mostly lie beneath the peat, but the peat itself is an important reservoir of potential information about the past environment. It has also conserved various items found during peat cutting, including a yew-wood dagger, and a presumed-cache of reindeer antlers.
- A new discovery, at the west end of the Muckle Water, of a prehistoric enclosure that is attached to the lake by a dyke, is a unique find in Orkney. There are stories locally about it being a Goosey-Crue. There may some truth in this use in more recent times, but it is undoubtedly prehistoric in origin. Additionally there are a range of other monuments, prehistoric burial mounds, houses, and later features related to quarrying and grazing.

Other Designations / Interests

- This area is part of the Rousay SSSI, The moorland supports a diverse breeding bird assemblage. The vegetation is typical heather Calluna
vulgaris dominated moorland (including large tracts of wet heath and blanket bog) within which are colonies of the nationally scarce serrated wintergreen round-leaved wintergreen and the shady horsetail. On the hill tops the vegetation communities contain certain species usually found at much higher altitudes elsewhere in Scotland. The high degree of exposure enables these “Arctic” plants such as dwarf willow, Arctic bearberry and alpine saw-wort to survive at much lower altitudes than is usual.

- Knitchen Hill and Loch of Knitchen are managed as an RSPB reserve.

**Sensitivity to Change**

**Moorland hills**

- Moorland hills are sensitive to vertical developments such as wind turbines or electricity transmission poles;

**Peatland basin**

- Vertical or large scale structures would be highly intrusive in this landscape;
- Wildlife interest of whole peatland basin may be compromised by any drainage activity.

**Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement**

**Moorland hills**

- Examine the potential for native woodland establishment in gullies and valleys;
- Site development carefully with regard to visibility from other landscapes;
- Utilise existing tracks and sites of former development in preference to all new developments in the exposed moorland landscape;
- Maintain and extend stone wall enclosures; where possible extend round new developments; visual emphasis should be placed on those running down to the coast.

**Peatland basin**

- Strict control of building developments should aim to keep the basin floor clear of development;
- Target mechanical peat cutting to visually contained but accessible areas, ensure reinstatement of surface vegetation;
- Small scale woodland and scrub planting should be encouraged in hollows and around wetlands;
- High standards in building design should apply to any building development.

**Landscape Character**

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)
LLA Name: Rousay South Coast

Location and Extent: The landscape area is located in the south coast of Rousay and extends from the village of Brinian in the east to North Howe broch in the west.

Overview:
Rousay south coast consists of a settled area of Inclined Coastal Pasture which is managed for agriculture and backed by Moorland Hill. The moorland areas of the site consist of natural or semi-natural vegetation and include a number of derelict stone cottages whose weathered stone blends in well with the rocky outcrops on the south-facing hillside. Rousay has a rich cultural heritage and this area includes many historic sites, in particular archaeology dating from the Neolithic and Bronze ages.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics:
- Striking visual contrast between the more elevated Moorland Hill above the B9064 and the Inclined Coastal Pasture below.
- The Moorland Hill slopes are terraced, a feature which is characteristic of a landscape shaped by glaciation and which is not commonly seen in Orkney.
- On the hillside slopes the colours of the natural vegetation against the stone terracing is particularly attractive. This is complemented by the scent of wildflowers, e.g. heathers and meadowsweet.
- Old abandoned buildings do not look out of place in this landscape as their weathered stone is sympathetic to the outcrops of stone terracing.
- The landscape of Rousay provides a distinctive landscape feature from vantage points in the West Mainland and neighbouring islands.

Special Qualities:
- The landscape is rich in features of archaeology, built heritage, and other features of cultural association and includes sites which are valuable in terms of raising public awareness of Orkney's cultural heritage. Scheduled ancient Monuments include Blackhammar Chambered Cairn; Knowe of Yarso Chambered Cairn; Taversoe Tuick Chambered Cairn; Westness Viking Houses, Noust and Graveyard; Midhowe Chambered Cairn; Midhowe Broch; Knowe of Rowiegar, Chambered Cairn; Knowe of Swandro, Mound; Westside Broch; Longstone Standing Stone, Frotoft; Knowe of Ramsay; North Howe Broch and Knowe of Hunclett.
- At Taversoe, Blackhammer and Yarso the cairns are built on the hillside, high above the main areas of settlement and they have a commanding view over the surrounding land-and seascape. The steep, terraced slope with its natural vegetation and rocky outcrops provides a sympathetic setting for these structures. These are all accessible to the public and have interpretation.
- Midhowe, and many of the other SAMS of this area were built on more low-lying land close to the western coastline, suggesting that a coastal location was more critical to their development.
- Listed buildings in this location include Trumland House; Viera Lodge including its outbuildings, boathouse, gatepiers and boundary walls and Westness House.

Other Designations / Interests:
- The moorland hill element of the landscape area contains a significant area of natural or semi-natural habitat, which is important for biodiversity. It also borders the Rousay SSSI, an area of moorland that supports a diverse breeding bird assemblage;
At Trumland House an area of broad-leaved plantation is designated as a Local Nature Conservation Site.

The coastline to the west of Westness is botanically rich and is also designated as a LNCS.

**Sensitivity to Change**

**Moorland hills**

- Moorland hills are sensitive to vertical developments such as wind turbines or electricity transmission poles;

**Inclined coastal pasture**

- Decline in drystone walls;
- Derelict farm buildings
- Large farm developments, particularly cluttered ancillary buildings;
- New building developments, including possible demand for housing along main roads, creating linear development;
- Possible impacts on archaeological/architectural heritage.

**Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement**

**Moorland hills**

- Examine the potential for native woodland establishment in gullies and valleys;
- Site development carefully with regard to visibility from other landscapes;
- Utilise existing tracks and sites of former development in preference to all new developments in the exposed moorland landscape;
- Maintain and extend stone wall enclosures; where possible extend round new developments; visual emphasis should be placed on those running down to the coast.

**Inclined coastal pasture**

- Encourage the restoration and re-use of any traditional structures;
- Examine the potential for native woodland establishment in gullies and valleys;
- Site development carefully with regard to visibility from other landscapes;
- Utilise existing tracks and sites of former development in preference to all new developments in the exposed moorland landscape;
- Maintain and extend stone wall enclosures; where possible extend round new developments; visual emphasis should be placed on those running down to the coast.
- Linear housing development along roadsides should be prevented;
- Large/extending farm developments should use coordinated massing and roof pitch to achieve greater coalescence;
- New building should reflect the surrounding geology and vernacular tradition in building materials and style;
- New building should be sited with respect to the contours and orientation of the underlying land;
- Small scale tree planting should be encouraged around individual residential and farm developments;
- Restoration of old farm buildings should be encouraged;
- Protect archaeological and architectural heritage from obtrusive development which may detract from local views;
- New development in inclined coastal pastures should be oriented in relation to the coast, and should reflect vernacular tradition in distribution and design.

**Landscape Character**
The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. *Scottish Natural Heritage Review* No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)
Location and Extent
The landscape area is a headland on the north-east point of Rousay and extends westward to the B9064 and to the Riff of Lythe on the northern coast.

Overview
Faraclett Head is an area of Moorland Hill which is separated from the adjacent Kierfea Hill by an area of Coastal Basin. Scockness, in contrast, is an area of Low Inclined Pasture.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics
- This is an area of contrasting topography and land cover, from the exposed moorland vegetation of Faraclett Head to the more gentle landscape of the agriculturally managed land and the little lochans on Scockness.
- The geology of Orkney’s sandstone landscape, sculpted by glaciers into terraces (often mistaken for anthropogenic cultivation terraces) and valleys is particularly marked at this place, contributing to its beauty.

Special Qualities
- The landscape is rich in features of archaeology, built heritage, literacy and artistic interest and other features of cultural association and includes sites which are valuable in terms of raising public awareness of Orkney's cultural heritage. There are five Scheduled Ancient Monuments in this area: Chambered cairns at Faraclett Head east and west; Taft of Faraclett broch; Rinyo Neolithic village; Faraclett Head Chambered Cairn; Faraclett Head prehistoric burial mound;
- Other notable sites include: Possible prehistoric burial mound at Scockness; Medieval church and burial ground at Scockness; Standing stone and prehistoric houses near to Yetnessteen; Bigland long chambered cairn; Bigland round chambered cairn; Prehistoric land division at Garsnie Geo; Also a number of burial mounds on the moorland of Faraclett Head just above the Hammers.
- A sculpture created by Ian Hamilton Finlay, was placed by the sculptor himself in relation to the seascape and cliffs at HY425325, to the west of Faraclett Head.

Other Designations / Interests
- Faraclett Head is part of the Rousay SPA/SSSI. The SPA consists of sea cliffs and areas of maritime heath and grassland in the northwest and northeast of the island. The boundary of the Special Protection Area overlaps with the boundary of Rousay SSSI, and the seaward extension extends approximately 2 km into the marine environment to include the seabed, water column and surface. This area is important for breeding seabirds.

Sensitivity to Change
Moorland hills
- Moorland hills are sensitive to vertical developments such as wind turbines or electricity transmission poles;

Coastal basin
- Maintenance of stone walls;
- Visual intrusion of developments into coastal basin;
Fish farm developments may target this landscape if conditions are suitable.

**Low Island Pastures**
- Conservation of machair and links grassland areas;
- Sensitivity of flat and open landscape to development;
- Potential flooding / inundation problems;
- Loss of drystone walls may threaten to destabilise sand based pastures;
- Damage by coastal erosion and potential loss of rich archaeological deposits;
- Damage by rabbits to turf cover and monuments.

**Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement**

**Moorland hills**
- Examine the potential for native woodland establishment in gullies and valleys;
- Site development carefully with regard to visibility from other landscapes;
- Utilise existing tracks and sites of former development in preference to all new developments in the exposed moorland landscape;
- Maintain and extend stone wall enclosures; where possible extend round new developments; visual emphasis should be placed on those running down to the coast.

**Coastal basin**
- Protect uncultivated coastal areas from expansion of cultivation and small scale sand extraction;
- Maintain and restore stone wall enclosures;
- Avoid intrusive developments on coastal basin floor;
- Respect local settlement patterns and cultural history in the placement of new developments on the basin sides.

**Low Island Pastures**
- Maintain drystone wall boundaries;
- Encourage preservation of existing wetlands and uncultivated areas;
- Strict design control of development on flat headland is required;
- Where development is needed, adopt building styles which respect the vernacular tradition and building forms.

**Landscape Character**

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. [Scottish Natural Heritage Review](https://www.snh.org.uk) No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)
Location and Extent  
The landscape area is located on the west coast of Rousay and extends from North Howe Broch in the south-west to Lair Geos in the north.

Overview  
In the west, Quandale and Brings together represent an area of Coastal Hills and Heath with some Moorland Hill; Wasbister is an area of Loch Basin landscape which merges into Moorland Hill where the land rises to the south. This is an area of significant natural and cultural heritage interest as well as considerable scenic value and Quandale and Brings in particular are of great value due to their isolated and “wild” character.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics

- The cliffs along the western coast of Rousay rise to 50m, generally dip to the NE and are cut in flagstones traversed by camptonite dykes and faults. Differential erosion has picked out lines of weakness to produce a coastline of great variety with numerous geos, blowholes, caves and arches, e.g. at Sinians of Cutclaws. A number of deep holes occur further inland and these have been interpreted as collapse features formed in carbonate-rich flagstones.

- Near the Kilns of Brin-Novan the sea has thrown shingle to the top of 30m high cliffs to form a crescent-shaped high-level storm beach made up of large angular flagstone boulders, many of which have highly weathered and lichen-covered surfaces. The beach lies some distance landward from the cliff top from which it is separated by a bare, flat rock platform.

- The views over the Loch of Wasbister with the moorland hills behind provide an altogether different landscape with little settlements nestling in the shelter of the hills. The greenness of the lochside vegetation contrasts well with the purples and browns of the moorland.

Special Qualities

- Quandale and Brings is an isolated area which is extremely exposed to Atlantic storms;

- The overriding importance of Quandale in an Orkney context is the open undivided landscape which was enclosed as one piece in the later 19th century. The cleared houses, gardens, quoys and rigs of the pre-enclosure landscape can all be made out as part of the relict landscape that has features extending our understanding of its habitation back to the Bronze Age. Quandale has a special place in Orkney’s history being a unique clearance landscape (as such it shared its unfortunate fate with many Highland areas). It is redolent of the events that might have led to a peasants’ revolt, and thus to the establishment of the Crofters Commission. It was on the road not far from Quandale that the crofters’ Minister met the Laird and striking his stick down dramatically intoned “The Earth is the Lord’s and the fruits thereof”. It seems not to have impressed the Laird for he evicted the crofters and subsequently had them on day labour for road and dyke building, grant-aided. The great dyke that encloses Quandale is testament to their skill, and his design.

- In addition to the abandoned farmsteads of Quandale this area includes the following notable sites: Erne Tower, Sacquoy Head - a mound, probably a barrow; Treb dyke at Skatequoy; Historic farmstead at
Skatequoy; a boulder wall running from Quoy Geo parallel with the Limmers Burn; a number of burnt mounds which indicate significant human activity in this area predating the crofting township of Quandale.

- Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the area include: Quoynalonga Ness Burnt Mound; Lower Quandale Burnt Mound; Cogar Burnt Mound; Knowe of Lingro Chambered Cairn
- The oldest two storey house in the island, at Tofts, is said to have been defensible against pirate raids from the Western Isles.
- There are two crannogs in the Loch of Wasbister: The Burrian, a small island in the Loch of Wasbister contains the site of an ancient chapel and was formerly connected to the shore of the loch by stepping stones. An Iron Age house formerly stood on Bretta Ness, a small promontory on the east side of the Loch of Wasbister, on a man-made platform or island.
- On the south shore of Wasbister Loch, there is a much destroyed burnt mound which is locally called 'The Bleaching Knowe'. There are also traces of cist-like boxes formed of slabs set on edge in and close to the water.

**Other Designations / Interests**

- This area forms part of the Rousay SPA/SSSI which consists of sea cliffs and areas of maritime heath and grassland in the northwest and northeast of the island. The boundary of the Special Protection Area overlaps with the boundary of Rousay SSSI, and the seaward extension extends approximately 2 km into the marine environment to include the seabed, water column and surface. This area regularly supports large assemblages of breeding seabirds which include Arctic tern, Arctic skua, black-legged kittiwake, common guillemot and Northern fulmar.
- Two areas are designated as Local Nature Conservation Sites: The Loch of Wasbister, a loch surrounded by an unimproved marginal fringe and wet grassland and Skatequoy and Saviskaill Head, both areas of species-rich grassland.
- Exceptional views within this site, e.g. along the extremely exposed and eroded cliffed coastline and from Sacquoy across the Loch of Wasbister towards the Moorland Hills of Rousay’s interior. Clear and uninterrupted views of Westray to the north, Eynhallow and Evie/Birsay to the south. Open seascapes of the North Atlantic to the west.
- The western coastline of Rousay is a popular area for both visitors to and residents of Rousay and there is access along the entire coastline round to Saviskaill Head. It provides an opportunity to experience a sense of “wildness” along one of Orkney’s areas of Isolated Coast.
- There is also easy access to the shoreline at Nousty Sand to the east of the farm of Saviskaill.

**Sensitivity to Change**

**Coastal Hills and Heath**

- Decline of remaining drystone walls;
- Deterioration and potential loss of ruined crofts and farmsteads;
- Potential sites for radio masts or wind turbines with consequential visual intrusion and potential scarring by access tracks;
- Housing development on lower slopes to obtain good but remote vantage points.

**Loch basin**

- Residential pressures;
- Agricultural development pressures;
- Decline of remaining drystone walls;
• Deterioration of wartime relics;
• Visitor pressure on key archaeological sites.

Moorland hills
• Moorland hills are sensitive to vertical developments such as wind turbines or electricity transmission poles;

Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement

Coastal Hills and Heath
• Maintain and restore remaining drystone walls;
• Strict limitations to new development should be applied, only accessible lower slopes should be considered;
• Support the restoration and re-use of abandoned crofts/farmstead buildings;

Loch basin
• Restore and conserve drystone dykes;
• Protect the archaeological resources and improve its context through countryside management;
• Support the planting of small scale woodlands and tree groups around farmsteads, new buildings and village developments;
• Control the siting and design of buildings to prevent obscuring long views and compromising local building character.

Moorland hills
• Examine the potential for native woodland establishment in gullies and valleys;
• Site development carefully with regard to visibility from other landscapes;
• Utilise existing tracks and sites of former development in preference to all new developments in the exposed moorland landscape;
• Maintain and extend stone wall enclosures; where possible extend round new developments; visual emphasis should be placed on those running down to the coast.

Landscape Character
The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at www.snh.org.uk
**LLA Name**  South East Stronsay

**Location and Extent**  This area is located in the island of Stronsay, one of Orkney's North Isles, and comprises a stretch of coastline which extends from Bluther's Geo in the north to the Bay of Houseby in the south.

**Overview**

This stretch of coastline is fairly typical of an Orkney coastal landscape and illustrates the gradation from the exposed cliffed landscape of the east coast to the more low-lying and sheltered shorelines of the southern coast of this part of Stronsay. Along much of the east coast the landscape consists of *Plateau Heaths and Pasture*, with the steep slopes of Burgh Hill representing the highest point. Southwards from the adjacent Burgh Head the land drops slowly towards Lamb Head becoming a *Coastal Basin* landscape which extends round the Bay of Housebay. There is much to interest the walker along this route – the interesting geomorphology of the eastern cliffs; a wide range of cliff top vegetation, especially on Burgh Head; abundant bird life, including great skuas and cliff nesting species; and the presence of seals in the Bay of Houseby.

**Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics**

- Interesting cliff scenery along the east coast where the erosive forces of wind and wave have produced a range of geomorphological features, including stacks, caves and arches. The Vat of Kirbister, an arch, is a popular visitor attraction and interpretation is provided;
- The cliffed landscape of the east coast is dramatic and wild – in summer the greens of the coastal vegetation, the rugged cliffs and blue sea provide attractive contrasting colours and textures.
- There is a marked contrast between the high, exposed cliffs of the eastern coastline and the gently sloping shores of the Bay of Houseby.

**Special Qualities**

- The stretch of coastline between the Vat of Kirbuster and Lamb Head is relatively isolated and remote from human influence. Burgh Head in particular has a feeling of “wildness”.

**Other Designations / Interests**

- The landscape has some features of archaeology, built heritage and other features of cultural association. These include the Scheduled Ancient Monuments of Lamb Head Broch; Beni Cuml Mound, Housebay; and Ward of Houseby Chambered Cairn;
- Other notable sites include Malme, an east coast sea stack; Middle banks Fort; Tam’s Castle, a pair of sea stacks; Possible treb dyke on Burgh Head; A sea stack at Brough of Burgh Head; a mound at Cleat; a possible Iron Age settlement on Lamb Head; a chambered Cairn on Lamb Ness; a natural feature thought to be a Pictish Pier – known in Stronsay as the Dane’s Pier; and a Boat Noust at Nousty Geo. The stack sites may be locations of hermitage.
- Burgh Head is an extensive area of grassland maritime heath with a diverse and colourful plant assemblage which includes heathers, crowberry, orchids, mosses and lichens. Swooping great skuas add to the experience when visiting Burgh Head.
- South-east Stronsay is important for its ornithological interest, e.g. populations of breeding black guillemot and overwintering purple sandpiper.
- The southern coast of Stronsay features rocky intertidal areas that represent important haul out areas for seals.
Sensitivity to Change

Plateau heaths and pasture

- Open plateau makes built structures highly visible within the landscape.

Coastal basin

- Maintenance of stone walls;
- Visual intrusion of developments into coastal basin;
- Fish farm developments may target this landscape if conditions are suitable.

Potential for Landscape Conservation / Enhancement

Plateau heaths and pasture

- Enhance landscape structure by restoring/extending areas of stone wall field boundaries;
- Maintain the widely dispersed settlement pattern; site and design new buildings with regard to skyline views;
- Encourage woodland planting of small and medium scales and particularly around developments.

Coastal basin

- Protect uncultivated coastal areas from expansion of cultivation and small scale sand extraction;
- Maintain and restore stone wall enclosures;
- Avoid intrusive developments on coastal basin floor;
- Respect local settlement patterns and cultural history in the placement of new developments on the basin sides.

Landscape Character

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land Use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at www.snh.org.uk
Location and Extent
The landscape area extends along much of the west coast of Westray, from Kirbist in the south to the Noup Head in the north.

Overview
This is an area of *Cliffed Landscape* backed by *Coastal Hills and Heath*. There is a strong sense of isolation and exposure along this westward-facing coastline and the contrast between cliff and sea is marked.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics
- The topography, in particular the hills, is the dominant feature of the landscape and these help define this part of Westray.
- An important feature of this landscape is its wide open sea views towards the North Atlantic.
- On the western hills of Westray there is no boulder clay and only very thin soils. During periods of glaciation the sides of Fitty Hill have been scoured by ice emphasising the stepped outline of the hill – each step representing one of the sedimentary cycles of the underlying flagstone.

Special Qualities
- The West Westray Site of Special Scientific Interest / Special Protection Area is made up of four parcels of coastline and adjacent areas of maritime grassland and maritime sedge-heath. The coastline stretches for 8 km between Noup Head and Inga Ness and supports a colony of breeding seabirds. Further inland the maritime cliff habitat provides breeding sites for Arctic skua and Arctic tern. The site provides good examples of maritime grassland and maritime sedge-heath which supports a rich variety of species, including the nationally scarce Scottish primrose, Alpine meadow-rue and Alpine bistort. The rock outcrops support well developed fern communities and some of the wetter rock ledges and ablation areas are characterised by moss campion.
- Further south an area of coastal heath and grassland known as Kirbist has been designated as a Local Nature Conservation Site. The vegetation is a fine example of the habitat on lime-rich bedrock, with short, wind-clipped heather and crowberry, interwoven with small herbs such as Scottish primrose, thyme and bird’s-foot trefoil. Nearer to the sea, heath gives way to short grassland, with sea pinks, sea plantain and even saltmarsh plants usually found at sea level, such is the exposure to sea spray. The steep southern face of Fitty Hill is broken by vertical crags, in the cracks of which grow ferns that are rare in Orkney. The lower ground is flowery, semi-natural grassland on stony ground with springs and runnels of lime-rich water, and these too have a distinctive array of small plants and mosses. At the lowest level of the site is a marsh with bog-cotton.
- The qualities of remoteness from human influence and openness to the vast expanse of the North Atlantic are enjoyed by walkers through the provision of the West Westray Walk. The linear pathway extends from Kirbist in the south to Noup Head in the north with further sections linking in from the east along the slopes of Fitty Hill and Coutier’s Hill. Although the area is lightly grazed by sheep, the lack of fenced enclosures and ploughed land anywhere in sight of the coastal pathway makes this walk an unusual experience in an Orkney context.

Other Designations / Interests
• The highly indented and eroded nature of this coastline has resulted from the immense physical forces of wind and waves which over time have created its rocky platforms, caves and steep-sided geos.
• The wide open seascapes, which can range from serene and blue to turbulent, grey and foaming with spray, add an important element to the visitor experience at any time of the year.
• The Gentleman’s Cave is associated with the Jacobite Lairds and was used as a refuge for some time during 1746.
• Noup Head lighthouse which is Category B listed is a noteworthy feature in the landscape.
• The Bis Geos 12-mile run / walk is held here each year and is a popular fundraising event for charity, attracting many participants and visitors to Westray.

**Sensitivity to Change**

**Cliffed landscape**

• Marine erosion.

**Coastal Heaths and pasture**

• Decline of remaining drystone walls;
• Deterioration and potential loss of ruined crofts and farmsteads;
• Potential sites for radio masts or wind turbines with consequential visual intrusion and potential scarring by access tracks;
• Housing development on lower slopes to obtain good but remote vantage points.

**Potential for Landscape Enhancement**

**Cliffed landscape**

• Restrict the development of barriers, signs and other "clutter" along cliff-top footpaths.

**Coastal Heaths and pasture**

• Maintain and restore remaining drystone walls;
• Strict limitations to new development should be applied, only accessible lower slopes should be considered;
• Support the restoration and re-use of abandoned crofts/farmstead buildings.

**Landscape Character**

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in Land use Consultants 1998 Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100.

All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)