



Appendix 5.3: Coastal Character Areas within the 20km study area



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Appendix 5.3

Coastal Character Areas within the 20 km study area

5.3 Introduction

- 5.3.1 The Shetland Coastal Character Assessment (CCA), Second Edition, was prepared by Shetland UHI on behalf of the Shetland Marine Planning Partnership in 2021, with guidance from NatureScot (NS) as part of the development of the Shetland Island’s Marine Spatial Plan.
- 5.3.2 It provides information about the various coastal character types (CCTs) found around Shetland, the experiences the coast currently offers to local people and visitors, and identifies sensitivity to development.
- 5.3.3 The report identifies and maps different coastal character types, describes the key features and character of each area and identifies any areas around the coast which are considered to be sensitive to onshore and/or offshore development. The report was developed so that it relates to the Shetland Landscape Character Assessment.
- 5.3.4 The following four Coastal Character Areas (CCAs) which fall within the 20 km study area, and which are within the zone of theoretical visibility, illustrated in **Figure 5.1.3** (refer to Volume III), are listed below:
- 1. Bressay Sound
 - 2. Eswick - Bressay
 - 5. Noss
 - 40. Skeld

Landscape Character Areas within 20km

- 5.3.5 This section describes the relevant Coastal Character Areas that coincide with the core 20km radius study area. The descriptions and the assessment of sensitivity of the Coastal Character Areas form the baseline to the assessment of effects on Landscape Character.
- 5.3.6 A short description of each of the CCAs, taken from the Shetland Coastal Character Assessment, is provided in the baseline assessment tables below. These describe the main features, key characteristics and sensitivity of the coastal character area to development of the type proposed. The locations of the CCAs within the 40km study area are shown on **Figure 5.1.3**, and within the core 20 km study area overlaid onto the ZTV mapping in **Figures 5.2.7** and **5.2.8** illustrating visibility to blade tip and hub height respectively.

Table 1 Coastal Character Area:

Key Characteristics
The Bressay Sound Coastal Character Area (CCA) is on the east coast of Shetland between Lerwick and Bressay. The CCA extends across from the Ness of Sound to Kirkabister Ness to the south and from Easter Rova Head to Baa Berg to the north.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medium sized island sound running in a slight bow shape at a north- south orientation.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has an enclosed feel to the north and central areas with the south opening up to more exposed waters. ▪ West side of the sound (Lerwick) is highly developed with industrial, historic townscape and regenerated areas along the waterfront ▪ East side of the sound (Bressay) has low levels of development with a small village at Glebe and a factory at Heogan. Gardie House has a strong presence. 	
Coastal Character Description	
Coastal Experience	<p>Bressay Sound is a very busy shipping area containing Lerwick Harbour, Shetland's largest port. Various vessels use the Sound including fishing, cruises, ferries, oil related and surveying. The sound is not only used for commercial shipping but also for recreational use with marinas in Lerwick and Bressay, and seasonal pontoons in Lerwick. There is also a lifeboat base and coastguard station.</p> <p>The proximity of Bressay has given the sound great protection from the wild weather that is often experienced in Shetland, and so has been in use for hundreds of years as a safe haven.</p> <p>The coastline on Bressay is mainly used for rough grazing which contrasts dramatically with the heavily industrialised coast of Lerwick. The most dominant feature of the area is the Ward of Bressay which at 227m high, towers over the relatively low lying coastline.</p>
Overall Sensitivity to the Proposed Development	<p>Whilst Lerwick is highly developed and Bressay by contrast has low levels of development, they are both sensitive to development.</p> <p>The coast is of Medium sensitivity to the Proposed Development.</p>

Table 2 Coastal Character Area: 2, Eswick - Bressay

Key Characteristics	
<p>The Eswick- Bressay Coastal Character Area is on the east of the Shetland mainland. It runs from the Moul of Eswick to Aith Ness on Bressay.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Voe and Firth Network ▪ Busy aquaculture area ▪ Views out to Whalsay 	
Coastal Character Description	
Coastal Experience	<p>The landscape of the Eswick- Bressay CCa is a matrix of improved croft land and moorland. Most of the nesses are coastal moorland with improved land in geometric patterns surrounding settlements. The landscape is quite steep in areas especially around Dales Voe.</p>

<p>Overall Sensitivity to the Proposed Development</p>	<p>The diverse nature of the Eswick- Bressay CCA with its variety of voes and firths and open covey a lower sensitivity to development.</p> <p>The coast between Gletness and Eswick is probably the most sensitive due to its scenic value and low level of development.</p> <p>The coast is of Medium sensitivity to the Proposed Development.</p>
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Table 3 Coastal Character Area: 5, Noss

<p>Key Characteristics</p>	
<p>The island of Noss is a National Nature Reserve (NNR) managed by Nature Scot with two rangers staying on the island during the summer months.</p> <p>The Noss CCA has some spectacular cliffs which are important for nesting birds and are a great tourist attraction with boat tours operating out of Lerwick Harbour and walking around Noss Isle.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spectacular Cliffs ▪ Important habitat for seabirds ▪ Very little on or offshore development 	
<p>Coastal Character Description</p>	
<p>Coastal Experience</p>	<p>The dominant coastal characteristic is high rock cliffs and steep banks with some spectacular cliff scenery found along the east coast of Noss. There is also some stretches of low rocky shore and one sandy beach at the head of Nesti Voe. The landscape is fairly remote with very little development. The main land cover is heather moorland with some areas of improved land where townships used to be.</p>
<p>Overall Sensitivity to the Proposed Development</p>	<p>The Noss CCA is of High sensitivity to the Proposed Development.</p>

Table 4 Coastal Character Area: 40, Skeld

<p>Key Characteristics</p>	
<p>The Skeld Coastal Character Area is in the West Mainland. It covers the area of coastline from Skelda Ness to Russa Ness and includes a range of skerries and holms just offshore.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Variety of voes at different orientations ▪ More sheltered than other areas in Shetland ▪ Busy aquaculture area ▪ Enclosed coast 	

Coastal Character Description	
Coastal Experience	The landscape of the Skeld CCA is mainly a narrow strip of improved land along the shore, backed by heather and moorland hills which are fairly steep in places. There are two gardens which are popular attractions to visit at Sand and Tresta. Aquaculture sites use the sheltered voes.
Overall Sensitivity to the Proposed Development	The Skeld CCA is of High sensitivity to the Proposed Development.