

Shetland

Local Development Plan



Consultation Draft 2014



Shetland Islands Council

Supplementary Guidance - Local Landscape Areas- Draft

The Shetland Local Development Plan (the Plan), together with any Supplementary Guidance, sets out the policies and criteria against which planning applications submitted in Shetland will be considered.

This Supplementary Guidance sets out detailed policy advice to help you meet the requirements of the Plan. It is therefore recommended that it is read in conjunction with the policies in the Plan and any other Supplementary Guidance relevant to the type of development proposed.

The purpose of this Supplementary Guidance (SG) is to provide additional information and maps of the proposed Local Landscape Areas.

Introduction

The purpose of the Local Landscape Areas is to ensure sympathetic siting and design of new development within the Local Landscape Areas, (LLA).

It is not the intention of the Council to prevent development, but to encourage appropriate consideration of the landscape. The introduction of Local Landscape Areas will help to protect and enhance some of Shetlands unique environment and may provide direction for access and tourism.

The information used to devise the Local Landscape Areas SG has been produced from the research conducted by Land Use Consultants. The full report including the research methodology can be seen in Shetland Islands Local Landscape Designation Review.

The proposed Local Landscape Areas are;

1. Ronas Hill
2. Nibon and Mangaster
3. Vementry and West Burrafirth
4. Papa Stour and Sandness
5. Walls and Vaila
6. Culswick and Westerwick
7. Weisdale
8. Scat Ness and Sumburgh Head
9. No Ness and Mousa
10. Aith Ness and Noss
11. Gletness and Skellister
12. Lunna Ness and Lunning
13. Wick of Tresta
14. Colvadale and Muness
15. Haroldswick and Skaw
16. Gloup Voe and Bluemull Sound
17. West Sandwick to Gloup Holm

Maps, Key Characteristics, Designation Statement and Development Guidelines can be seen for each area in Appendix One.

Planning Policy N3 within the Shetland Local Development Plan states that;

Development that affects a Local Nature Conservation Site or Local Landscape Area will only be permitted where;

It will not adversely affect the integrity of the area or the qualities for which it has been designated or any such effects are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits. More information and guidance can be found in Supplementary Guidance – Local Nature Conservation Sites and Supplementary Guidance – Local Landscape Areas.

Proposed LLA 1: Ronas Hill

Location and boundaries:

This area covers Ronas Hill in Northmavine, along with the long, curving Ronas Voe to the south. It includes the foothills of Ronas Hill stepping down to the sea to the west, and the rocky moorland to the north and east, as well as both sides of Ronas Voe. The north boundary of this area follows a chain of lochs and the Burn of Roerwater from the coast at Lang Clodie Wick to the A970. The eastern boundary follows the A970 as far as Swinister. The southern boundary runs along the ridgeline to the south of Ronas Voe, including the visual envelope of the voe. These boundaries enclose the setting of hill and voe, and represent the most suitable physical and visual boundaries available.

Key characteristics:

- A Shetland landmark, the highest point of the islands
- Distinctive red granite geology is clearly expressed
- Largely empty, uninhabited hills and moors
- Rocky plateau, steep cliffs, and other rugged features

Designation statement:

Ronas Hill is a Shetland landmark, distinctive as the highest point on the islands. It is widely visible from locations to the south and west, though its true size, relative to the generally lowlying Shetland Islands, is only apparent closer to. The hill has a distinctive red colour derived from its granite geology. Ronas Hill is the main peak of a broad, rounded ridge running east to west, and topped by an expansive rocky plateau. This gravelly granite surface features unusual alpine plant communities, which occur here at exceptionally low altitudes. The plateau falls away to the north, giving way to lochans and blanket bog. The hill offers wide views across the whole of Shetland, and is a popular destination for hill-walkers visiting Shetland. The chambered cairn at the summit makes for a destination, as well as speaking of the long-established human presence, even in the remotest parts of Shetland. The masts on Collafirth Hill are a reminder of more modern human influence, but otherwise this is an empty landscape, without settlement except for properties along the A970.

Ronas Voe to the south is deep and broad, a dramatic fjord-like inlet with tall cliffs of pink granite and green grass on its northern shore. These colourful cliffs are at their most imposing from Heylor on the south shore. Falling steeply into the water, their feet are fringed by narrow reddish ayres derived from the granite. Small burns tumble down incised gullies in the cliffs, and remnants of willow scrub can be seen. The eastern voe is less dramatic, with disused dwellings visible on the north shore. The open coastal edge to the west has a steep rugged edge, with sharp offshore rocks and islets. Rounded bays are gouged out of the granite, eroding onto more red-tinted beaches. A minor road follows the south shore of the voe, giving access to a very few dwellings, and emphasising the inaccessibility of the north shore. Otherwise human influence is limited to fish farms in the voe and associated landings on the coast.

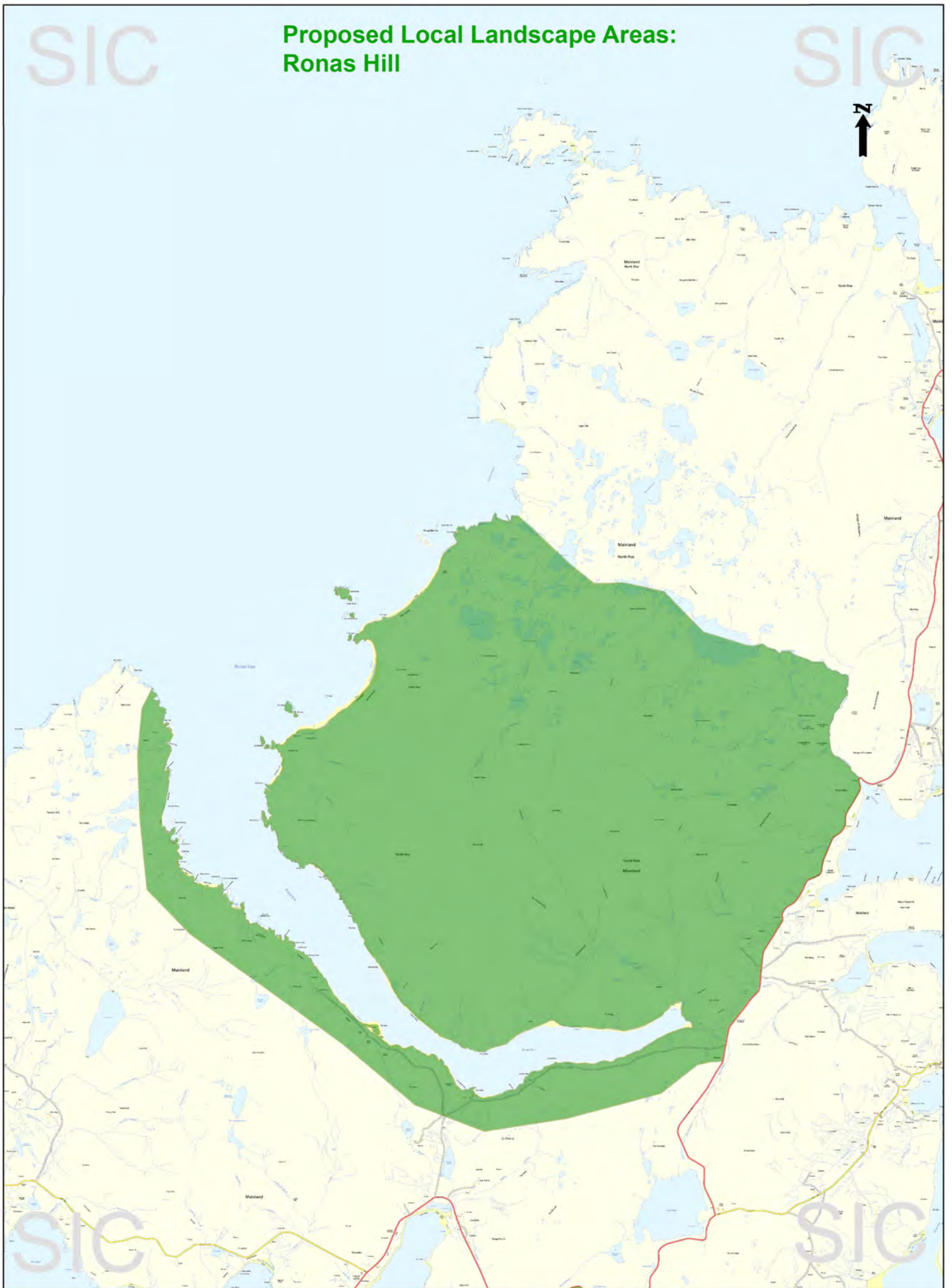
Development guidelines:

- Ronas Hill and the north shore of Ronas Voe should remain an area of very limited human influence. The further proliferation of infrastructure on Collafirth Hill may lead to visual clutter.
- Carefully consider the siting and design of any proposed development along the south shore of Ronas Voe.
- Seek to ensure that new and existing fish farms, and particularly the associated onshore components, can be assimilated into the landscape through design and ongoing maintenance Encourage sustainable and responsible recreational access into this landscape, to allow greater appreciation.

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Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Ronas Hill

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Proposed LLA 2: Nibon and Mangaster

Location and boundaries:

The area covers the south-western part of the Northmavine peninsula, including Mavis Grind and Ness of Culsetter to the south. It lies between the Esha Ness and Muckle Roe sections of the Shetland NSA.

The northern boundary follows the ridgeline to the north of Hamar Voe, and follows the A970 to the east. The southern boundary includes Mavis Grind, but not the quarry to the south, and follows the ridgeline across Ness of Culsetter. These boundaries have been selected to include the areas of highest quality along the coast. The main road forms a strong physical boundary, while the ridges to north and south provide are visual boundaries containing the voes.

Key characteristics:

- Rugged landscape of rocky coastal hills interspersed with numerous lochans.
- Sequence of long views along voes and sudden opening of wide panoramas.
- Intricate coastal edge with an array of features and colours.
- Panoramic views across St Magnus Bay.

Designation statement:

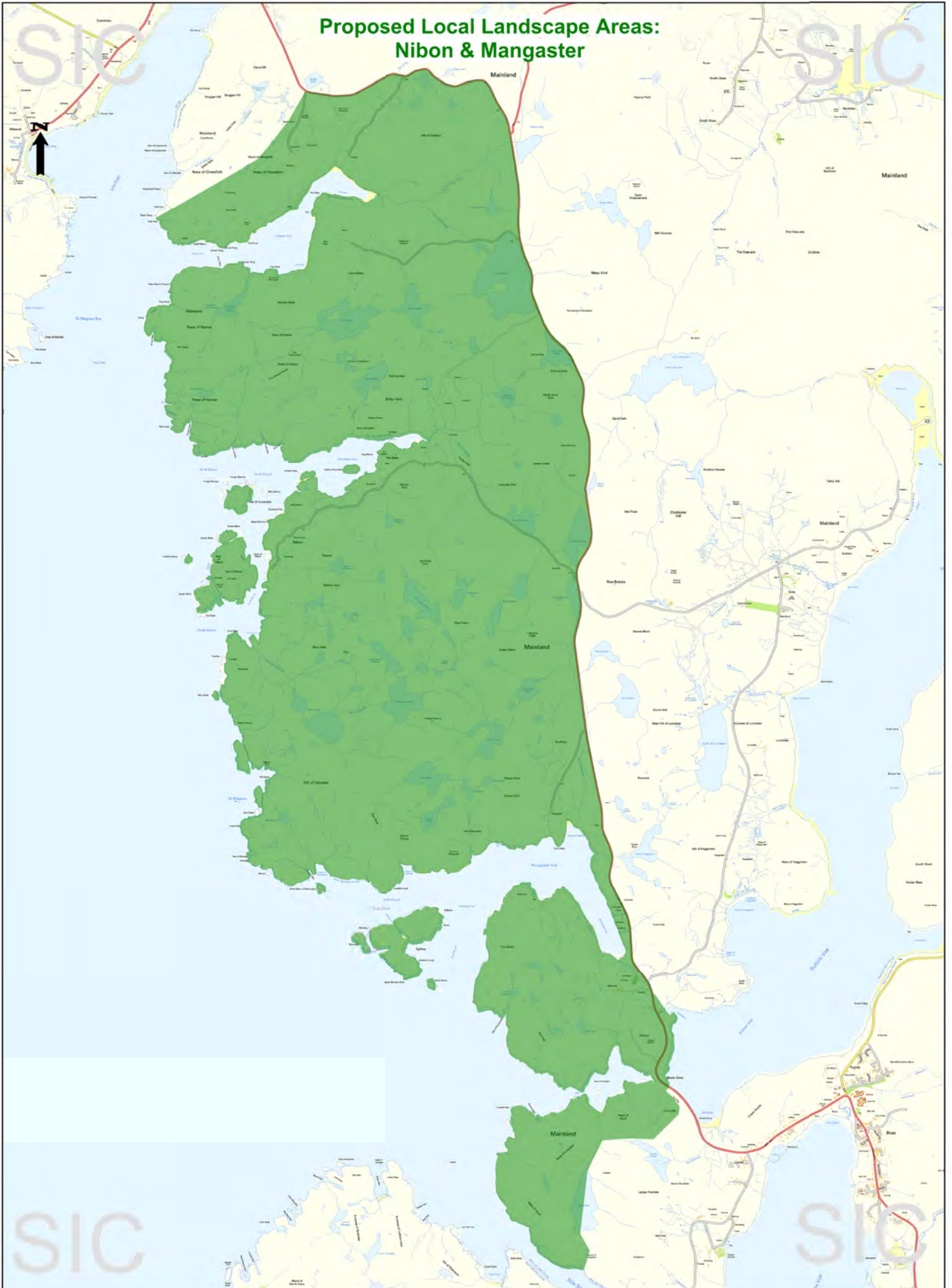
This is a rugged, largely unsettled landscape of rocky coastal hills facing St Magnus Bay. To the west, the area is deeply indented by Hamar Voe, Gunnister Voe and Mangaster Voe. These steep-sided, irregular voes divide the coast into a series of granite headlands, giving rise to a dramatic and highly scenic combination of sea, islands and rugged hills. The area offers a sense of remoteness and wildness and a rich array of coastal features and colours where outcrops of pink granite contrast with the green moorland that tops the hills. The highly complex coastal edge is manifested as a variety of headlands, geos, caves and islands. These features, together with the intricate landform of the inland areas, interspersed with numerous lochans, bring a strong visual diversity and scenic quality. At the lower coastal fringes, small pockets of relict walls and stone buildings tell of past settlement along these voes, despite the inhospitable landscape.

The low lying islands of Nibon, Gunnister and Egilsay lend a degree of enclosure to parts of the west coast around the opening of the voes, whilst the headland of Lang Head is directly exposed to the ocean. Intimate views of the landscape are experienced when travelling along the voes, gradually unfolding and opening out until, at the coast, a wide panorama is found across St Magnus Bay, and beyond to Foula. Coastal views of the overlapping layers of headlands are available in some locations. Seaward views to the northwest are focused on the landmark feature of Hillswick lighthouse at Baa Taing.

Development guidelines:

- Seek to retain undeveloped wildness character: any development should be at the smallest scale, and should be very sensitively sited and designed.
- Encourage sustainable and responsible recreational access into this landscape, to allow greater appreciation.
- Maintain the wider setting of the NSA through control of development within this area.

Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Nibon & Mangaster



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Proposed LLA 3: Vementry and West Burrafirth

Location and boundaries:

Located on the north coast of the west Mainland, this area extends east from the Hill of Bousta to Vementry, including West Burra Firth, Brindister Voe and the Voe of Clousta.

There are few physical boundaries in this open landscape. A series of watercourses and lochans has been identified surrounding the area of rugged hills which forms the core of this candidate area. These have been linked with ridge lines and field boundaries to form a suitable boundary, containing the higher quality coastal landscapes and their setting. The western boundary is shared with the eastern boundary of proposed LLA 4: Papa Stour and Sandness.

Key characteristics:

- Distinctive rugged rocky terrain based on Lewisian gneiss.
- Complex interface between land and sea, intricate pattern of voes, sounds and islands.
- Isolated pockets of settlement around sheltered voe.

Designation statement:

This area has a distinctive rugged terrain reflecting its underlying geology of Lewisian gneiss, one of the world's oldest rocks. It is an area of deeply indented coastline, with a complex interface between land and sea, exemplified by the many branches of Brindister Voe, and the irregular island of Vementry. Between these are further interlocking voes, islands, headlands, and lochs, creating a convoluted and at times disorienting shoreline.

The landward hills are low, rising to little more than 100m, but their complexity gives them a rugged drama, particularly in unfolding vistas along the voes. An unusual dense pattern of lochs and burns, and a sense of wild and remote moorland, is found inland. At the north-facing coastal edge, these views open out to take in St Magnus Bay, extending to Ronas Hill and Esha Ness, with the red cliffs of Muckle Roe a key landmark.

The complexity of the landscape also imparts a sense of separation from the sea: this is a very different coastal experience than that of Esha Ness, for example. The area feels sheltered, almost secluded in places, though remote. The scattered houses which make up the few settlements of this area are located along the lower and more sheltered edges and have the appearance of isolated but secure communities. Fish farms are a feature of the sheltered voes.

Development guidelines:

- Seek to maintain sustainable communities which are sympathetic to the landscape.
- Development should be small in scale, and be sited and designed in accordance with the landscape setting.
- Carefully consider any proposals for new aquaculture, ensuring particularly that onshore works can be sited sensitively.

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Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Vementry and West Burrafirth

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Proposed LLA 4: Papa Stour and Sandness

Location and boundaries:

This area lies at the north-west corner of the west Mainland, and includes the island of Papa Stour. The southern boundary follows the ridge line of Ramna Vord and Sandness Hill which encloses the low-lying coast. It continues along field boundaries across Herma Neuk and The Spinner. The eastern boundary follows watercourses and lochs from the higher moorland down to Bousta. The eastern boundary is shared with the western boundary of LLA 3: Vementry and West Burrafirth.

Key characteristics:

- Intact settled coastal landscape with strong crofting-derived pattern
- The varied coast of Papa Stour, including high stacks, dramatic caves, and vertical cliffs, as well as sandy bays
- Sense of a long history of settlement within a contained and relatively remote part of the Mainland

Designation statement:

The area around Sandness represents an intact settled landscape, illustrating the traditional Shetland land-use pattern derived from crofting. The limited modern development in the area has been carried out in such a way that this pattern can still be read. Distinctive crofting field patterns can be seen in the landscape, backed by moorland which forms the common scattald. There are other historic features discernible in the landscape such as planticrubs and noosts that contribute to a strong sense of historic and cultural heritage.

The stretch of coast along the mainland has a predominantly northern aspect, facing onto St Magnus Bay, across which wide views are afforded from much of the area. The low rounded hill at the Neap of Norby, which encloses the Sand of Gord, is a prominent feature. Here the coast comprises a series of small coves and beaches of shingle or white-grey sand. Inland the gradual descent from moorland to sea contrasts with the more rugged area east of Garth, where the Lewisian gneiss appears, running east into LLA 3: West Burrafirth and Vementry.

Located 1-2km offshore, the low-lying island of Papa Stour has a strong visual association with the Sandness area, with the settled part of the island facing the Mainland. The western coast of Papa Stour is particularly exposed, giving rise to varied and dramatic coastline of high vertical cliffs, arches, stacks and sea caves. On the more sheltered side of the island are found broad coves and wide sandy beaches as well as distinctive "scalped" heathland. Like the Mainland area around Sandness, the pattern of the crofting landscape can be read, but here it is even less affected by modern development.

Located at the north-western tip of the west Mainland, the area retains a sense of remoteness and containment, though it is well visited. There is an element of surprise when arriving at the settlement from the desolate moorland to the south. Coastal walks are popular around Melby Beach and along the coast the Water Mills at Huxter and Woollen Mill at Sandness can be visited. Papa Stour is also a visitor destination.

Development guidelines:

- Seek to retain the strong land-use pattern, ensuring a continuation of the sympathetic modern development of this area which have retained its cultural and natural values.
- Promote responsible access and enable interpretation of the recent and distant past as well as the geological interest of the area.
- Seek to conserve the historic features such as plantigrubs, stone walls and noosts.

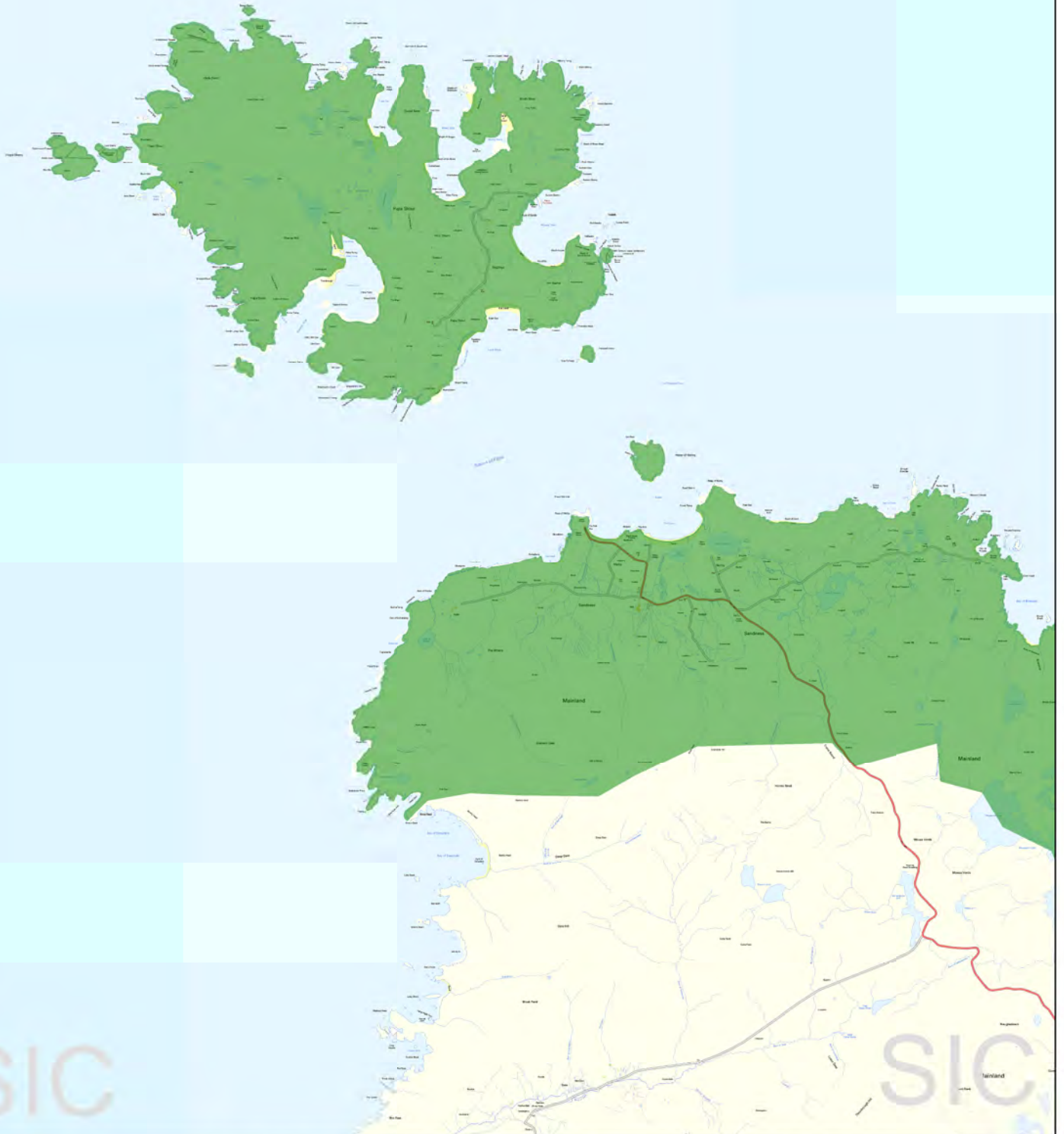
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Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Papa Stour & Sandness

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St Magnus Bay



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Proposed Local Landscape Area 5: Walls and Vaila

Location and boundaries:

This area is located to the south of the west Mainland peninsula, and is centred on Vaila Sound. It includes part of the settlement of Walls, the island of Vaila, and the wide headland between Lera Voe and Voe of Footabrough.

The western boundary follows a watercourse at Mid Walls. The northern and eastern boundaries follow minor roads from Mid Walls through Walls to Whitesness. These boundaries enclose the immediate setting of Vaila Sound and the broad headland to the west.

Key characteristics:

- Contrasting landscape of gentle and sheltered inner voes and sounds, and a rugged, exposed seaward coast
- An intact settled area with layers of past settlement and visible time depth
- Inland, larger scale open areas of moorland provides a wild setting to the more intimate coastal edges

Designation statement:

This area is representative of an intact and highly attractive settled coastal landscape, with a strong sense of place. It is composed of the contrasting gentle and sheltered inner waters of Lera Voe and Vaila Sound and a rugged, exposed outer coast. The smooth landforms of the low islands of Linga and Vaila give way to more rocky outlines west of Lera Ness. Views are focused around Vaila Sound and from inland areas the undulating landforms often frame views towards the water, leading the eye seaward. Distinctive landmarks are located at the coastal edges of the sounds and voes, such as Burrastow House, and Vaila House.

Inland the low, undulating hills, although not rising much above 60-70 m (90m on Vaila) are experienced as relatively elevated areas of moorland which contrast with the sheltered and settled edges of the sounds and voes. Long views inland across an undeveloped landscape are available, and the empty moorland provides a sense of wildness. At the narrow and rocky coastline of the seaward edges are found large cliffs and sculpted geological features. These are largely unseen from the more active areas of settlements and can only be accessed on foot. The remote and inaccessible nature of these outer seaward edges gives rise to a sense of a hidden coastal landscape to be explored.

Landcover is a patchwork of rocky moorland, enclosed grazing and crofts. The traditional crofting pattern of the landscape remains legible, giving visible time-depth to the area. There are numerous stone enclosures, including many planticrubs.

Vaila Sound provides the setting for active settlement, with traces of past settlement extending across this area. This is an intact, if only partly settled landscape, with limited modern development aside from fish farms. Recent development in the village of Walls, including the new marina, fits sympathetically with the landscape.

Development guidelines:

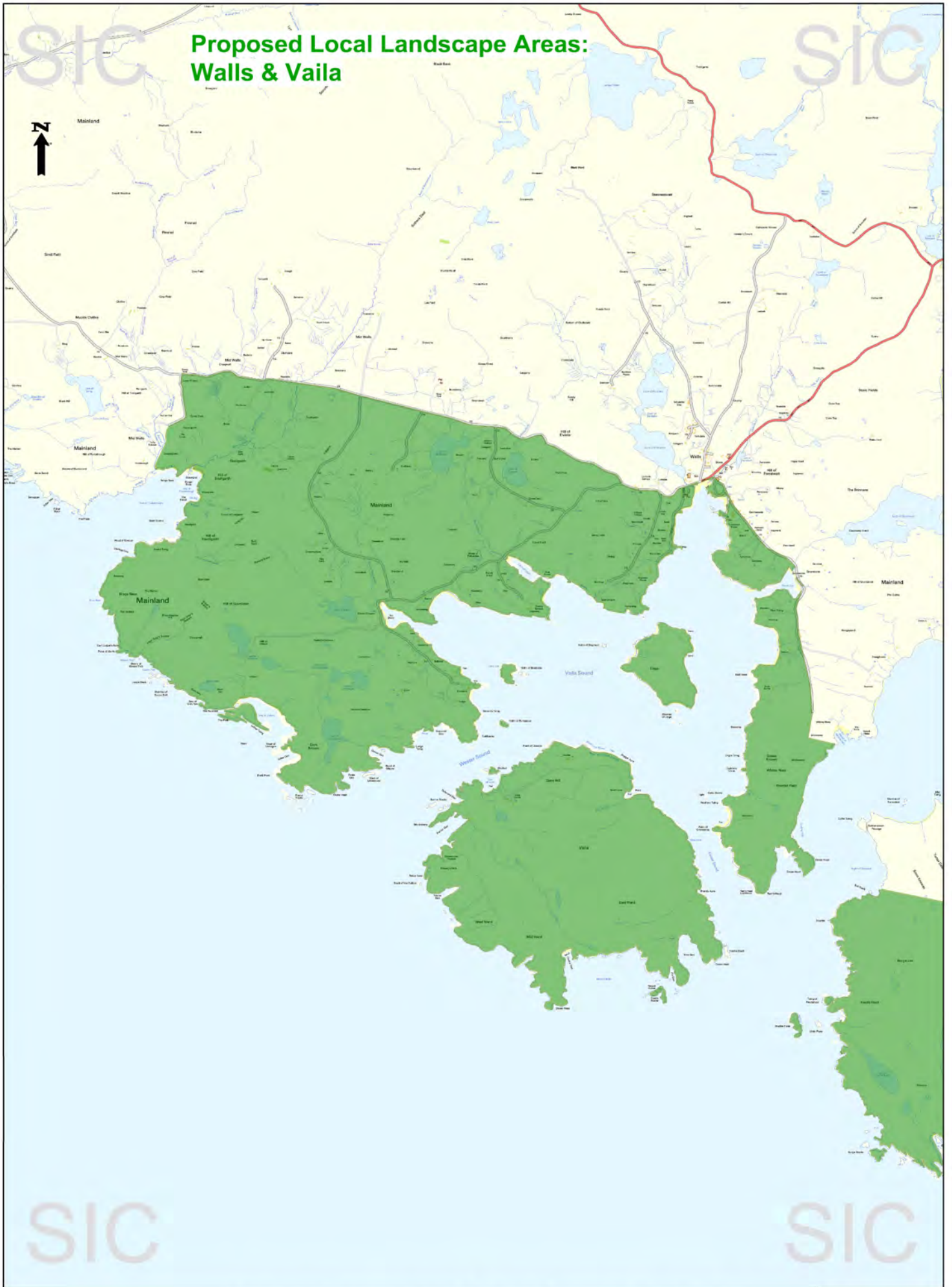
- Seek to retain the strong land-use pattern, ensuring a continuation of the sympathetic modern development of this area which have retained its cultural and natural values

- Development should be directed away from the higher areas of moorland that enclose the coast and should be set below the skyline to retain the focus of development around the shoreline
- Encourage sympathetic siting and design of new development, including restoration of traditional buildings where appropriate

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Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Walls & Vaila

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Proposed Local Landscape Area 6: Culswick and Westerwick

Location and boundaries:

This candidate area lies to the northwest of The Deeps and includes the granite coast of the southernmost section of the west Mainland peninsula, with the villages of Culswick, Westerwick and West Skeld. It adjoins the NSA to the east. The northern boundary runs over the ridgeline of Ward of Culswick, then follows the B9071. The eastern boundary follows the edge of the NSA. These boundaries visually enclose the coastal area which forms part of the NSA setting.

Key characteristics:

- Rugged, intricate coastline with tall cliffs, dramatic caves, and rocky coves expressing the granite geology
- High variety of coastal features
- Inland topography of gently undulating moorland interspersed with a high concentration of lochs and water courses
- Intact crofting landscapes

Designation statement:

This candidate area represents an intricate section of coastline that expresses its granite geology in tall cliffs, dramatic caves, and rocky coves. The variety of coastal features gives this coast high visual and natural interest. This is a rugged south-east-facing coast, open and directly exposed to the sea, and composed of complex headlands and intimate rocky bays, such as the enclosed Wester Wick, from which an array of offshore stacks and skerries extend. The high cliffs east and west are pitted with caves, and deep geos, inland the landform is undulating, rising to the high point of Ward of Culswick (118m), which is prominent in views from the west. Enclosed valleys, such as the bowl-like depression at Culswick, contain small settlements. The interior displays a pattern of moorland, broken up by numerous lochs and lochans, which is common across the west Mainland. The coast is largely hidden from view from these inland areas. The enclosed and short views across moorland can suddenly open out to a dramatic coast, taking in long seaward views to the south. The sudden juxtaposition of rugged coastal edge and low, undramatic moorland hills is very different to the more gentle transition from land to sea that occurs around Vaila Sound.

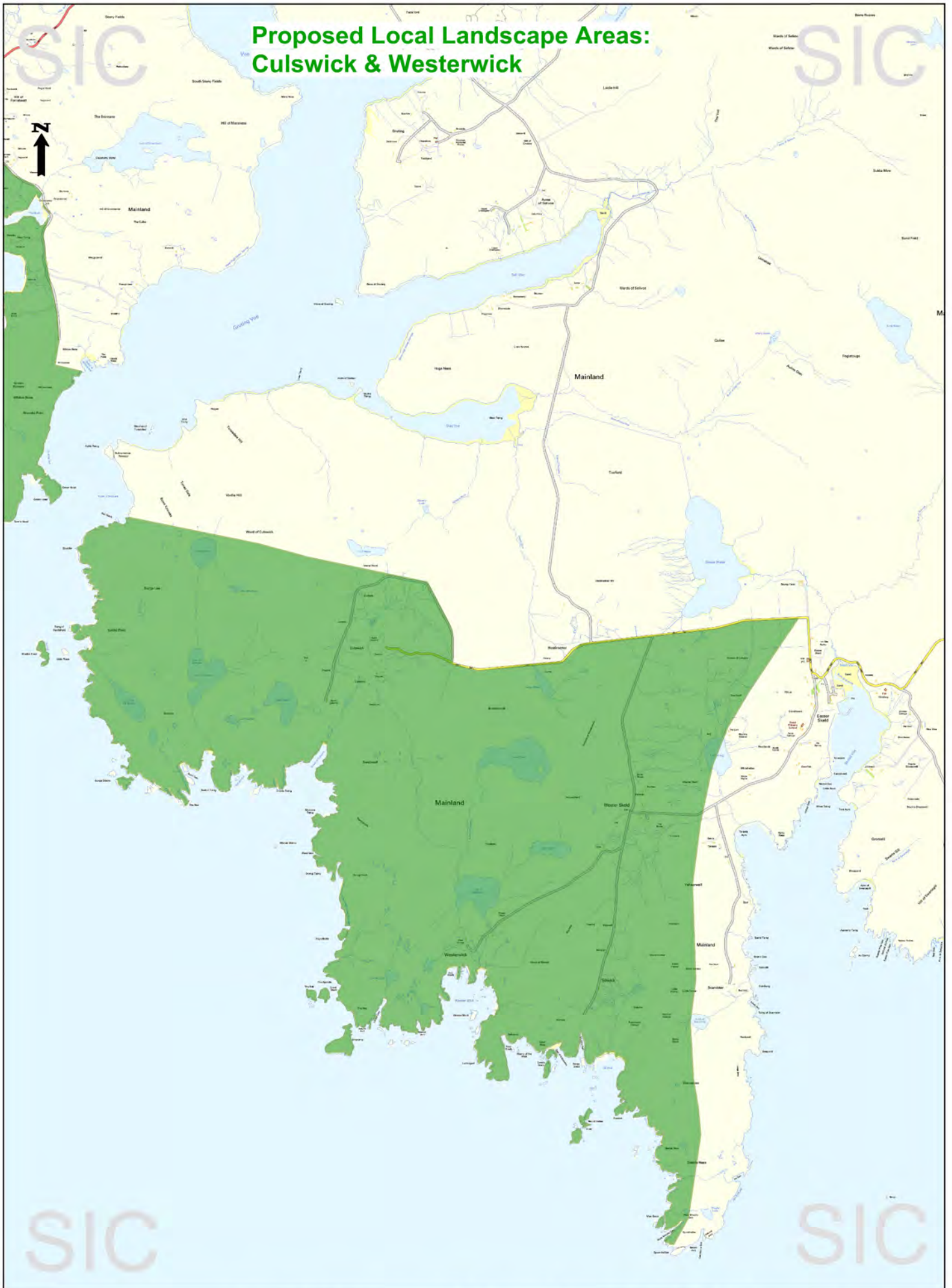
The small settlements exhibit the traditional crofting pattern so typical of the west Mainland. They are generally located within the more low-lying and sheltered coastal areas, such as the gentle Stead of Culswick, or inland as at Skeld. The area is largely unaffected by modern development, which has been carried on in a sympathetic manner. Many traditional buildings are still in use, and relict features such as noosts are common.

Development guidelines:

- Development should be sympathetic to the existing pattern of settlement and located within the low-lying sheltered valleys
- There is scope for small-scale development in association with existing settlements, provided that it is appropriately sited and designed

- Continue to promote opportunities for responsible access to the coast

Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Culswick & Westerwick



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Proposed Local Landscape Area 7: Weisdale

Location and boundaries:

The candidate area encompasses the settled part of the Weisdale valley and Weisdale Voe, from the NSA boundary in the south, to Springfield in the north. The eastern and western boundaries follow the prominent linear ridge lines which contain Weisdale. The southern boundary is shared with the NSA. To the north, the boundary follows the B9075 and a watercourse. These boundaries enclose the visually interesting valley, separate from the open moorland to the north.

Key characteristics:

- Unique in Shetland as the location of the only substantial woodlands
- An enclosed valley landscape, opening out to wide voe
- Panoramic views across Weisdale Voe to the south, taking in an attractive composition of the islands and sea towards Fitful Head

Designation statement:

Weisdale is enclosed by prominent ridges of low moorland running north-south, which define the linear valleys of central Shetland. The open and undeveloped moorland provide an important setting to the lower-lying settled valley and shore. As such, they are integral to the sense of remoteness within the valley itself, particularly in the north. Weisdale is unique in Shetland as the location of the only substantial area of woodland. These small plantations that extend up the valley from the head of the voe give the north of the area a sheltered character not found on other parts of the islands. Closely interwoven with the woodland belts, the larger farm buildings and pastoral enclosures of the settled lower valley are also unusual. The remnants of croft houses are visible on the hillsides, providing visual links to past patterns of settlement.

Weisdale Voe is an extensive long and broad inlet, enclosed by steep sided hills that drop down to a low-lying coastal margin of green pasture. This is a simple coastal edge without cliffs or beaches. Much of this southern part of the area is highly visible from the western parts of the central mainland, particularly from the NSA to the south. The A971, which winds through and around the voe, alternately down at the waterside and elevated on the enclosing hills, offers an attractive sequence of views. From elevated areas it offers panoramic views along the broad, long valley and voe. Views south are particularly scenic, taking in the interlocking layers of water, islands and the low forms of Strom Ness and Whiteness and Fitful Head in the far distance. Within the long ridges containing the area direct the eye up through the valley to the north and south along the voe.

The shores of Weisdale Voe are well settled, including modern developments at Kalliness and new houses at Helgibister. Older remnants of historic settlement are present in the landscape and on the western shore there remains a regular, linear pattern of enclosures extending up the lower slopes of the Hill of Sound. Within the valley Weisdale Mill is a local landmark and a key visitor attraction.

Development guidelines:

- Seek to retain the distinctive woodland of the upper valley
- Retain largely undeveloped skyline that encloses the area and forms an important back-drop to the voe

- Development should be sympathetic to the existing pattern of settlement and located on the lower-lying coastal edge

Proposed Local Landscape Area 8: Scat Ness and Sumburgh Head

Location and boundaries:

These two headlands form the rocky southern tip of Mainland Shetland. The northern boundary of this area follows the A970 as it skirts the airport and separates the promontories from the developed area around the airfield.

Key characteristics:

- Dramatic headlands jutting into the open sea
- Rich historical background represented by world-class archaeological sites
- The distinctive approach to Sumburgh Airport across the headland
- An accessible area for viewing scenery, history and wildlife

Designation statement:

Scat Ness is the lower lying headland, occupied in the north by the village of Scatness, which illustrates a traditional pattern of tofts, although overlaid with more recent development. South of the settlement, the headland becomes more open, breaking up into a series of rocky spits and geos. Its southern extremity, the Ness of Burgi, is accessible by a narrow rocky path with the sea on either side, and only a metal chain for protection. Once past this narrow exposed neck, the headland broadens out, and is topped by a well reserved Iron Age blockhouse. Low cliffs fall sharply to jagged skerries and clear shallow seas on all sides. The smaller islands around Scat Ness, including Lady's Holm, Little Holm and Horse Island, form part of the setting of these headlands. The two headlands are linked by a long beach of grey-white sand.

Sumburgh Head is much more upstanding. Although low and relatively gentle on its western side, it rises to over 100m at Compass Head, with steep cliffs on its eastern face. It narrows southward in an arrowhead shape to an angular headland, with rocky slopes tilting sharply into the sea, and surrounded by knife-edged offshore rocks. The lighthouse on the headland is a landmark, and along with several aerials and masts, is visible from aeroplanes approaching Sumburgh Airport. The angled descent onto the runway is a distinctive feature of arrival into Shetland for many visitors. This area is also very accessible: a public road links the lighthouse with viewpoints and car parks, and the headland is a popular bird reserve. The multi-layered archaeological site of Jarlshof is located on Sumburgh Head.

Development guidelines:

- Seek to resist the further proliferation of communications equipment on Sumburgh Head, which may give rise to visual clutter
- Seek to retain the pattern of tofts in Scatness. Development within the settlement should be sympathetically sited and designed. The open, undeveloped nature of the southern part of Scat Ness should be maintained
- In planning for access, the distinction between the more accessible Sumburgh Head and the less accessible Ness of Burgi should be retained to preserve their individual characters

Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Scatness & Sumburgh



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Proposed Local Landscape Area 9: No Ness and Mousa

Location and boundaries:

This narrow headland and adjacent island lies west of Sandwick on the southern Mainland, approximately midway between Sumburgh Head and Lerwick. The land boundary of the area follows the minor road between Sandwick and Sand Lodge, separating the undeveloped peninsula from the more settled landscape around Sandwick.

Key characteristics:

- An undeveloped headland within the most densely settled part of Shetland
- Prominent position on the south Mainland coast, with long visual links
- Important cultural landmarks
- Jagged rocky foreshores and sandstone strata

Designation statement:

The narrow headland of No Ness extends south and west from the southern Mainland, separating Sand Wick to the west from Mousa Sound to the east. The peninsula is very sparsely settled, in contrast with the more densely settled area around Sandwick and Houlland to the west. The long headland forms an important part of the setting of the small, traditional hamlet of Sandwick at the head of the deep bay.

No Ness overlooks the small uninhabited island of Mousa to the east. Both ness and island are surrounded by an exposed rocky coastal edge, displaying an intricate pattern of sandstone strata.

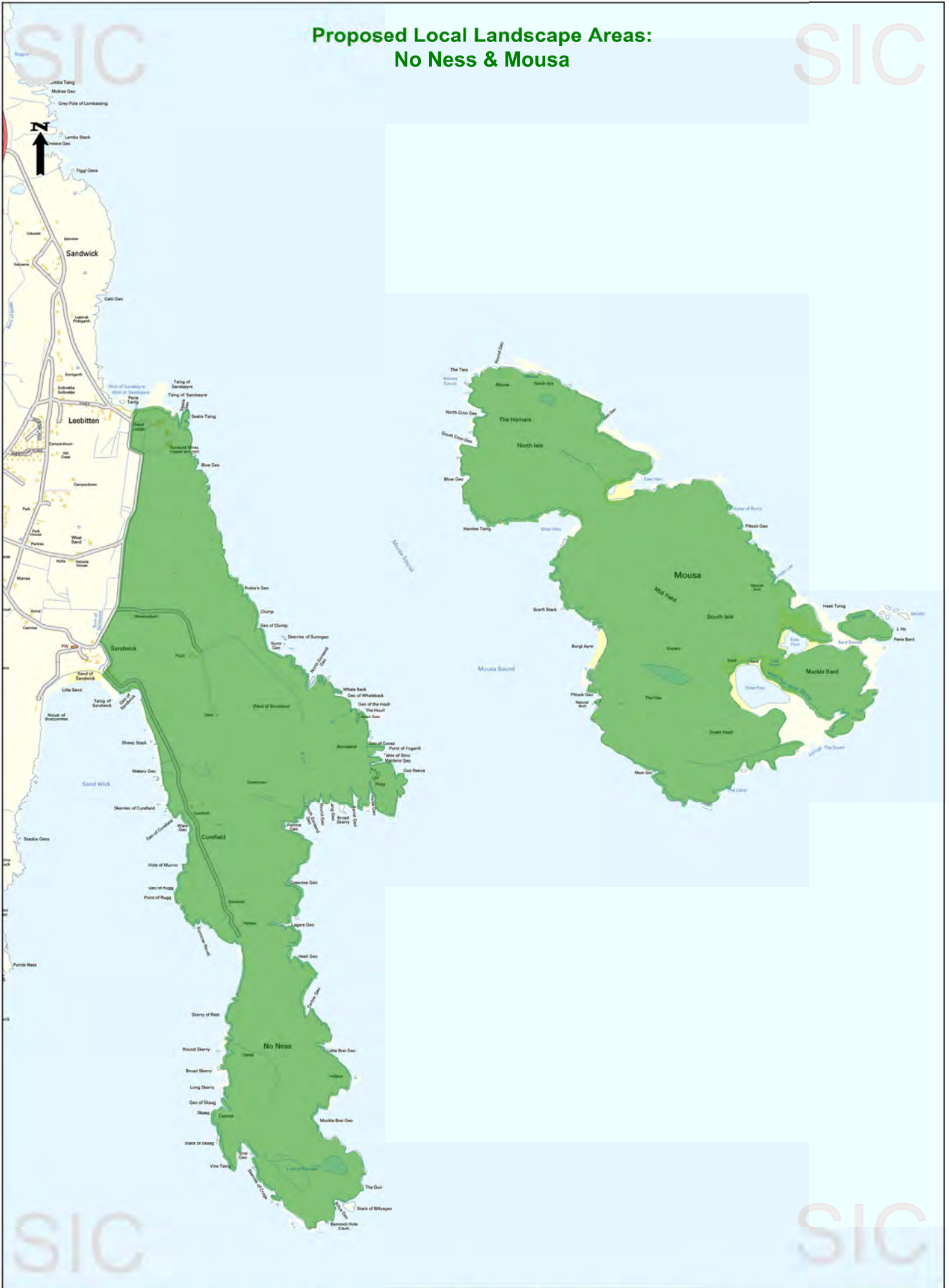
The low lying island is subtly rounded, almost separated into smaller islands where the landform dips. The tidal lagoons of East and West Pool, connected by rocky sounds, are attractive features, hidden from the Mainland. Jagged rocks jut from the foreshore, and rock outcrops extend into the grassy interior. The island is a popular visitor destination, known for its population of storm petrels. It is also highly visible from the settled parts of the Mainland, and from the main A970, as is No Ness. Signs of historic settlement include the impressive Mousa Broch, the most intact surviving example of this Iron Age building type, which is strongly associated with the Northern Isles.

Facing Mousa Broch are the remains of its sister, the Broch of Burreland on No Ness. Together, these two remnants offer a glimpse of the Shetland past, where sea transport was more important than land. Long views from the headland allow long views along the seaways north to Bressay and Noup of Noss and south to Sumburgh Head.

Development guidelines:

- Seek to protect the largely undeveloped nature of the headland, as a contrast to the settled land to the west
- Promote responsible access and understanding of the area's past
- Seek to protect the setting of the important group of historic buildings and Sand Lodge

Proposed Local Landscape Areas: No Ness & Mousa



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Proposed Local Landscape Area 10: Aith Ness and Noss

Location and boundaries:

This area comprises the eastern part of the island of Bressay, together with the smaller island of Noss to the east. The landward boundary of this area follows field boundaries south from Leir Wick across Hill of Setter, then minor roads and a track across West Hill, and then follows the Burn of Grutwick to Seli Geo. These boundaries contain the key parts of the visual setting of Noss, as well as the headland of Aith Ness. The areas outside the line are generally the parts of Bressay more affected by development.

Key characteristics:

- Dramatic seascapes: high cliffs; rocky headlands; sheltered bays
- Landmark cliffs of the Noup of Noss
- Relict landscapes both ancient and modern

Designation statement:

In contrast to the busy western side of Bressay, the eastern half of the island is undeveloped and intact. The long, low-lying but complex and rugged headlands of Aith Ness and Rules Ness extend northwards, enclosing the sheltered Voe of Cullingsburgh. The scores at the north of Aith Ness in turn enclose the white sand beach of Score Minni. Relict crofting patterns are apparent amongst the rolling landscape of heather moors, for example the moss-encrusted buildings at Wadbister, and the plantigrubs around Ander Hill. The abandoned settlement and church at Cullingsburgh tell of a greater population in the past. More recent relics visible in the landscape include old slate workings, and the remnants of wartime defences, including an abandoned gun on Erne's Hill.

The uninhabited island of Noss is separated from Bressay by a narrow sound, clear blue in fine weather, but with violent swells during storms. The islands are and joined by a short ferry crossing popular with visitors to the nature reserve on Noss. From Bressay, the smaller island appears as a smoothly sloping conical hill, rising from the sandy beaches either side of Gungstie.

Only on reaching the top of the island is the scale of the cliffs apparent, dropping 180m into the sea at the Noup of Noss. Gannets, puffins, and hundreds of other seabirds wheel around the exposed cliffs, which are pitted with cliffs and narrow geos. The high point of Noss Head is a prominent landmark tying eastern Shetland together, visible from as far away as Saxa Vord on Unst, and Sumburgh Head to the south.

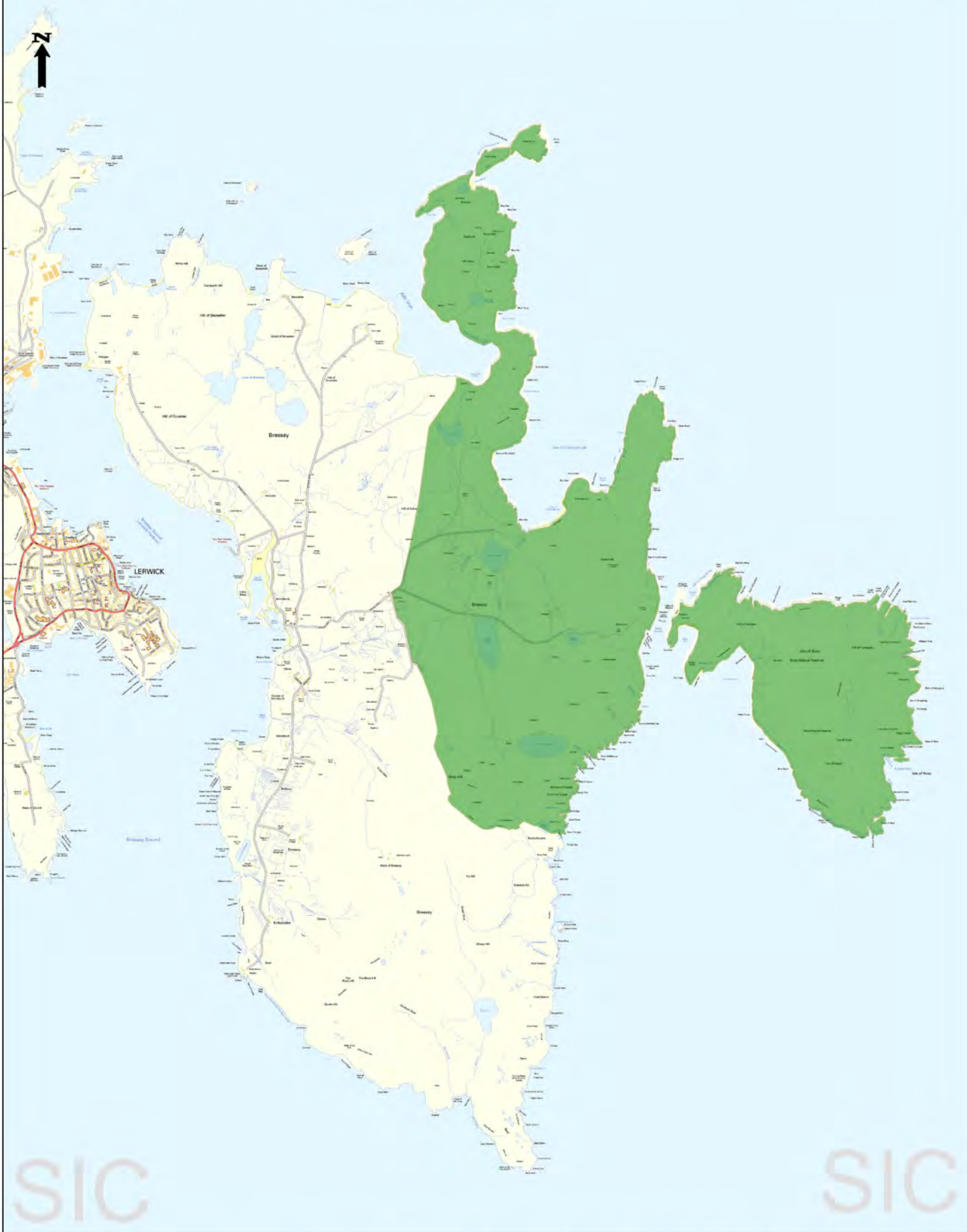
Development guidelines:

- The designation focuses on the distinction between the settled west of Bressay, associated with Lerwick, and the less developed east. Planning should seek to maintain this distinction.
- Substantial development should be resisted, to retain the open landscape.
- Small-scale development should be sympathetically sited and designed, in order to maintain the character of the landscape.
- Continue to promote responsible access to features of interest within the area, while protecting their landscape setting.

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Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Aithness and Noss

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Proposed Local Landscape Area 11: Gletness and Skellister

Location and boundaries:

This headland in South Nesting is located between Cat Firth and South Nesting Bay. The landward boundary of the candidate area follows the B9075 between Cat Firth and Wester Voe of Skellister.

Key characteristics:

- An intact, settled area, whose character has been preserved through a sympathetic
- approach to development
- An understated beauty of intricate and generally sheltered coast, rocky islands and ayres
- Rich in wildlife, a quiet tranquil area

Designation statement:

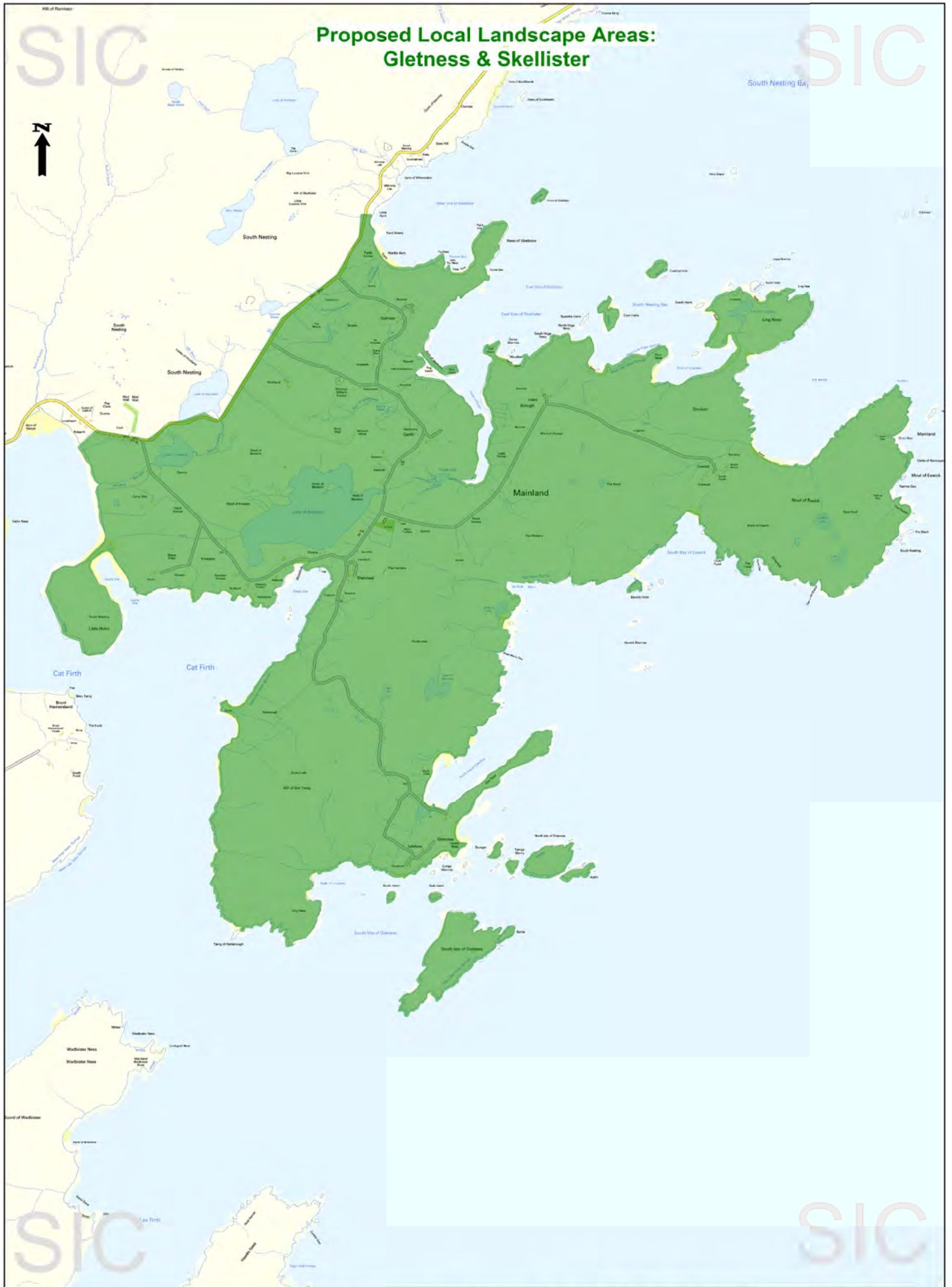
This area is an intact example of a settled coastal landscape. Although close to Lerwick, and actively settled, unlike other similar landscapes it remains largely unaffected by adverse development. It has time-depth in the relict crofting pattern of the landcover, and numerous plantigrubs and other relict features. More recent development has been generally sympathetic, including the renovation of traditional buildings, and its character has not been eroded.

The headland is not greatly exposed, and being located on the more sheltered east coast it is a calmer coast than elsewhere. Cat Firth to the west is enclosed on both sides. The coastline is intricate and varied, low-lying, with an often jagged rocky shoreline. The range of rocky headlands, skerries, and ayres gives the area a strong visual appeal. The Vadill of Garth is a long sinuous shingly inlet extending inland, the reverse of the gravelly ayres linking the islands off Skellister. Several such islands lie just offshore: some rugged like North isle of Gletness and Hoo Stack, others low and smoother like Little Holm. Opportunities abound to view seals and otters in and around the shallow waters. The varied coast is backed by settled pasture and lochs in the north-western part of the headland. The south-eastern areas comprise open rocky moorland, more sparsely settled, rising to Hill of the Taing (66m) near Gletness, and The Noup (72m) by Eswick. Long views from Gletness look south to Bressay and Noss. The headland of Gletness is clearly visible from the A970 as it heads north past Wadbister.

Development guidelines:

- Development should be permitted in this area if it is at an appropriate scale, and is suitable in terms of siting and design
- There is potential for careful development to contribute to this landscape, as shown by sympathetic modern buildings in the area
- Seek to preserve the more open, remote character of the outer headlands, in contrast to the more settled area around Benston

Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Gletness & Skellister



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Proposed Local Landscape Area 12: Lunna Ness and Lunning

Location and boundaries:

This area at the north-east of the Mainland includes the long, narrow, Lunna Ness, together with Vidlin Voe and the broader headland to the south. The landward boundary follows the minor road south from West Lunna Voe, past Vidlin, and south to Levaneap. This boundary includes the headlands and the settlement which form the core of the candidate area.

Key characteristics:

- Attractive settlements around Vidlin Voe, with a distinctive pattern and character
- Long, narrow and remote headland of Lunna Ness
- Rugged moorland hills around Lunning
- Historic features and associations at Lunna, including the ancient kirk and the Shetland Bus

Designation statement:

These outlying peninsulas of the north-east Mainland include a range of contrasting landscapes, from the settled, sheltered bay of Vidlin Voe, to the rocky moorland around Lunning, and the long, irregular and sparsely inhabited Lunna Ness. The land is covered with heather moorland where not enclosed as part of a croft. East of Vidlin Voe, this moorland is rocky and irregular, with a network of small lochs and watercourses. This headland is sparsely populated, with only a few houses at Lunning. There are deserted croft houses at Lunning and also further south at Bonidale.

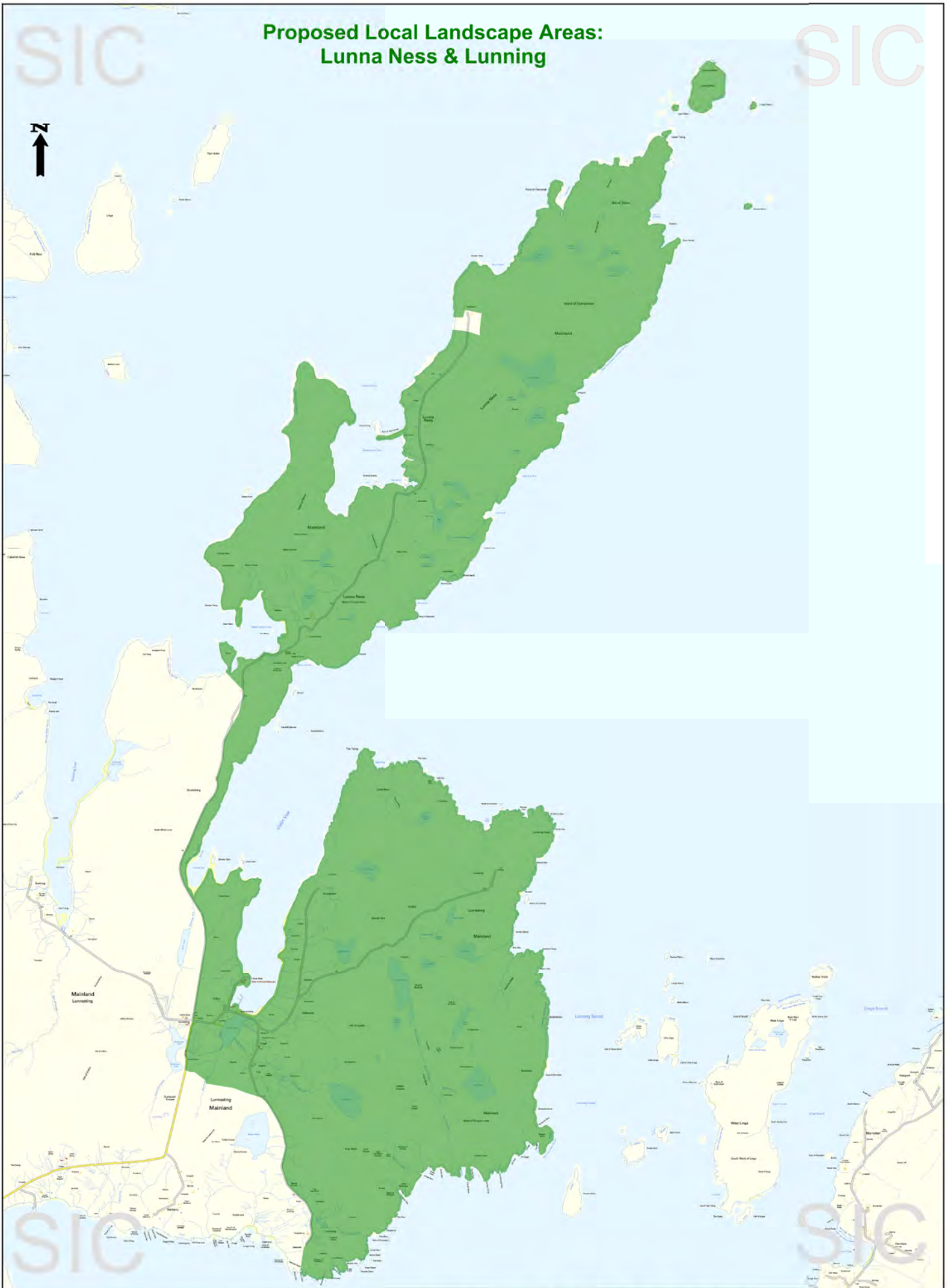
Around Vidlin Voe, a distinctive pattern of settlement is evident. Houses at Gillsbreck and Kirkabister are located on the slopes above the voe, their croft lands running down to the shore, and moorland grazing behind. The marina and associated development fits into this landscape without affecting its character. Across the voe, Lunna Ness stretches out, a long finger extending out to Yell and Whalsay. At the narrow neck halfway along, the designed landscape of Lunna House provides an interesting and unusual attraction, and is associated with the wartime 'Shetland Bus' operation, as well as with the ancient church nearby. The northern part of the headland is empty, with only a few houses and deserted buildings. Lunna Ness tapers northwards to the rocky Ward of Outrabister (90m), and a scatter of outlying skerries and taings.

Views are often contained within this medium-scale landscape, but on occasion these open out to take in panoramic views of surrounding islands and sounds, particularly from the northern end of Lunna Ness, which overlooks both Yell and Whalsay. The area is intact, and visually appealing, with a sheltered, welcoming character.

Development guidelines:

- Seek to preserve the distinctive character of the settlement around Vidlin Voe
- Ensure that any development is appropriate in scale, siting and design, and that it complements the landscape character of the area
- Protect the undeveloped nature of Lunna Ness, while continuing to promote responsible access to sites within the area

Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Lunna Ness & Lunning



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Proposed Local Landscape Area 13: Wick of Tresta

Location and boundaries:

The candidate area is located on the island of Fetlar, and comprises the Wick of Tresta, the dispersed settlement of Tresta, and the surrounding landscape. The south-west boundary of this area follows the ridge of Lamb Hoga, across Gillis Field and Fitsyi Field, then turns north-east along a field boundary to the B9088, which forms the northern boundary as far as Wick of Aith. These boundaries enclose the visual setting of the bay and the beach.

Key characteristics:

- Secluded bay, a hidden gem;
- Bright, broad sandy beach;
- Enclosed by soft green cliffs and sinuous profile of Lamb Hoga;

Designation statement:

Hidden from views from off the island, the Wick of Tresta is at the heart of Fetlar. The wick is contained between the bulk of the island to the north, and enclosed by the tall headland of Lamb Hoga to the south. Its secluded location imparts a sense of discovery for visitors. The setting also provides shelter, a marked contrast from the rugged wild shores which make up much of the coast of Fetlar.

At the head of the wick is the broad sandy beach which forms the focus of this candidate area, backed by low dunes. The Papil Water forms part of a wider pattern of hill and dale behind the beach. The sand shelves gently into the clear water, creating attractive colours when viewed from elevated points on Lamb Hoga. Behind the beach the kirk and the manse, with its wooded garden, add to the picturesque scene.

The southern shore of the wick comprises the long, sinuous profile of Lamb Hoga, rising to Gillis Field then sweeping down to Head of Lambhoga. The grassy moor of the headland extends onto the slopes of the soft, eroded cliffs which line the bay. The northern part of this area is settled, with a number of crofts and houses, and a campsite above Tresta. Along this northern shore the coastline is lower, extending out in rocky spits and skerries which separate smaller bays. Views south from this coast extend to the Out Skerries and Noup of Noss.

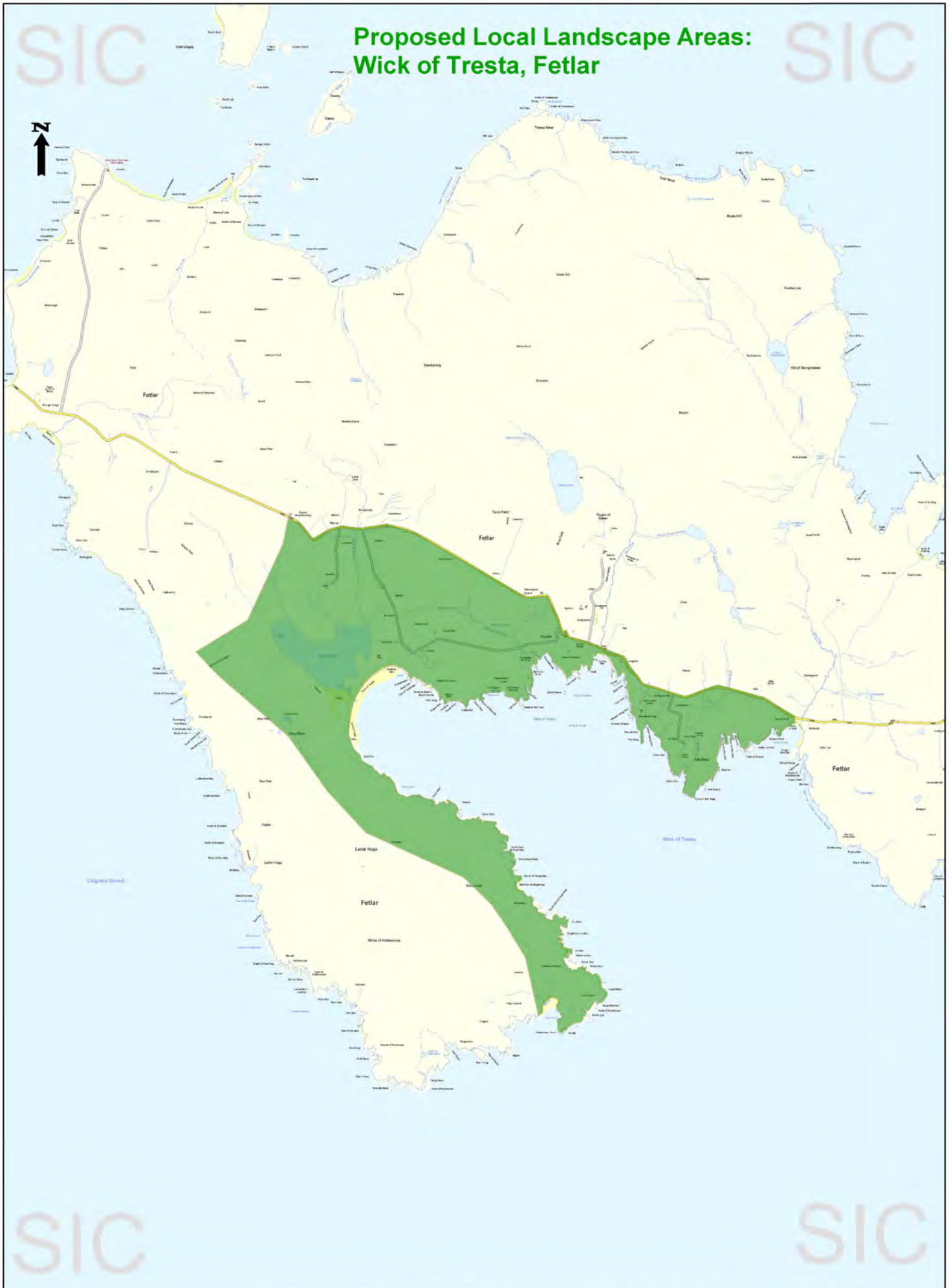
Development guidelines:

- Any development within the area should be sympathetic to the setting of the beach within the bay;
- Development should not be permitted in the area behind the beach, to preserve the setting of kirk and manse.
- Development should not be permitted south and west of Papil Water and the beach, to preserve the open backdrop to the beach when viewed from Tresta

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Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Wick of Tresta, Fetlar

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Proposed Local Landscape Area 14: Colvadale and Muness

Location and boundaries:

This area is located on the southeast coast of Unst, centred on the bay of Easting. The northern boundary follows the ridge line from Clugan, turning south across Virda Field, Hill of Colvadale and along a watercourse behind Vord Hill. From Loch of Hoversta the boundary follows tracks and minor roads across Breck of Still to Muness, then south to Scolla Wick. These boundaries enclose the visual setting of the wide bay between Mu Ness and Huney.

Key characteristics:

- Deserted settlement and relict patterns of croft boundaries and empty buildings;
- Backed by the bare, gravelly moors derived from the underlying serpentinite geology;
- An empty landscape, no longer settled but with extensive time depth.

Designation statement:

This is an unusual landscape, characterised by attractive colours of rusty brown crags, rocky

moorland and the bright sand at Sandwick and The Yei. The area is underlain by the distinctive geology of serpentinite rock, containing rare minerals, and producing a bare gravelly moorland, supporting a rare heathland flora.

The land slopes gently from this moorland to the low-lying coast, largely rocky with occasional small shingle beaches. The large beach at Sandwick is the only stretch of sand, excepting the developing tombolo at Huney. These isolated patches of bright white-yellow sand stand out in views across the grey-green landscape. Though not greatly indented or dramatic, the coast is locally rugged and intricate.

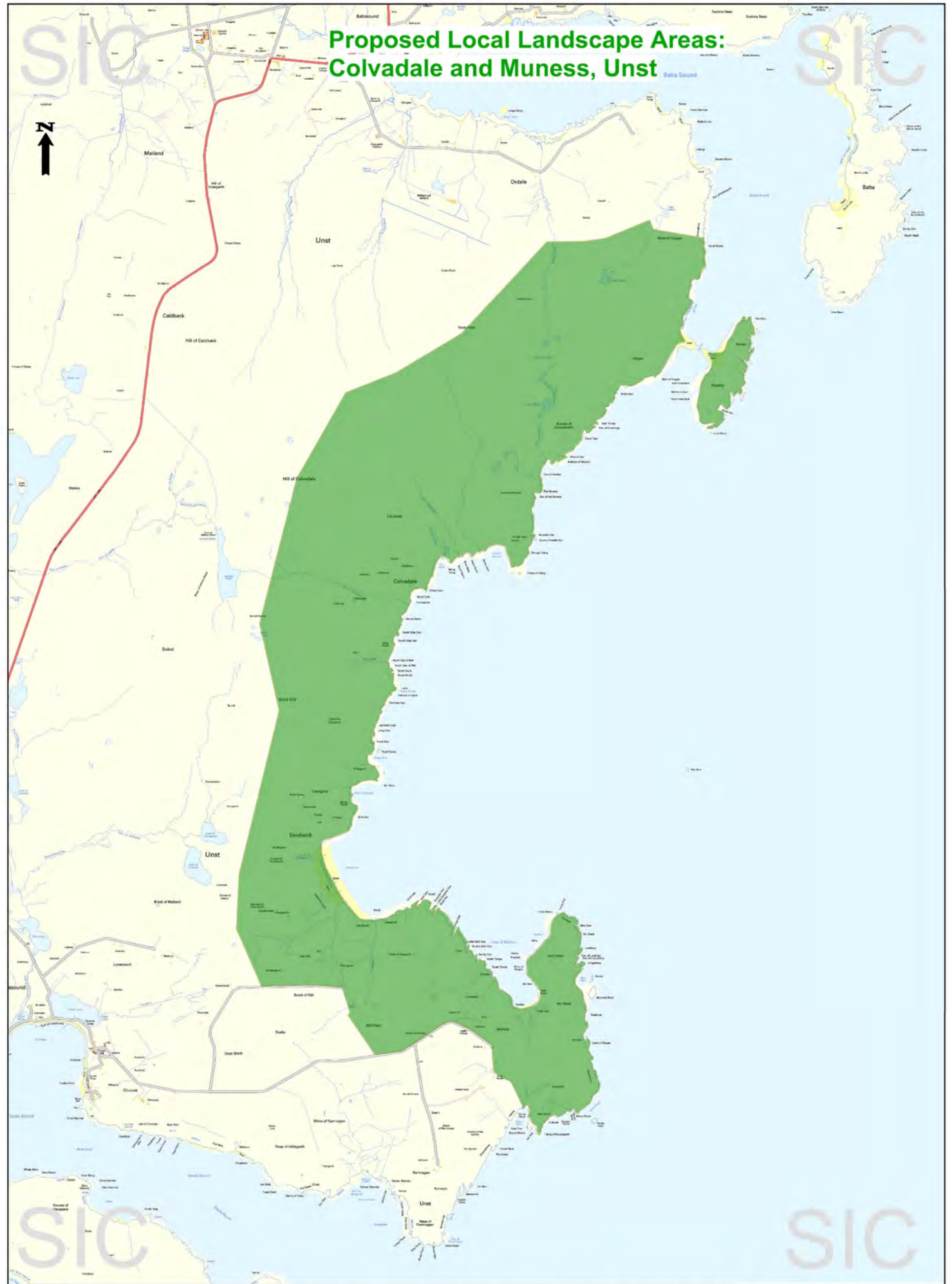
There is a strong sense of time depth, represented by a range of surviving cultural heritage

features. The excavated longhouse Sandwick is one of many Unst sites associated with the Viking period. More recent history is represented by the extensive deserted settlements in the area, the most substantial being at Colvadale, abandoned since the 1950s. The isolated burial ground at Framgord, with its ruined pre-reformation kirk, is a reminder of the population that once flourished here, as are the numerous named features along the now empty coast.

Much of this coastline is relatively inaccessible. Due to its location on the west of Unst, the area feels remote, even from other parts of Shetland. There are few views of other islands, aside from Fetlar to the south, and long scenic views to the distant Out Skerries.

Development guidelines:

- Seek to retain the unsettled isolation of this area, retaining its cultural and natural values
- Promote responsible access and enable interpretation of the recent and distant past, as well as the unique geological material
- The area around Muness, where there is active settlement, forms part of the setting of this landscape, but is not central. Development in this area should be sympathetic to the setting of the area
- Potentially, seek to conserve some of the relict stone walls and buildings



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Proposed Local Landscape Area 15: Haroldswick and Skaw

Location and boundaries:

This area is located in the northeast of Unst and includes the settlements of Haroldswick, Norwick and Skaw. The western boundary follows the edge of the Shetland NSA, from Saxa Vord south to Burrafirth. The southern boundary follows the. These boundaries define a coherent area of north-east Unst, between Burra Firth and Harold's Wick.

Key characteristics:

- Part of the most northerly area of Shetland and Britain
- Highly visible military defence infrastructure, including active and disused elements
- Rugged, exposed northern coast, with sheltered sandy bays
- Rich geology visible at the surface
- Actively settled area undergoing redevelopment as former military uses decline and new uses are found

Designation statement:

This is a rugged landscape with a great variety in landform. The rocky headlands and dramatic folded cliffs of the north coast are topped with moorland, contrasting in its smoothness. This moorland continues upwards to a group of rounded hills, the highest being Saxa Vord. South of the broad dale of Valsgarth, the Hill of Clibberswick is bare and rocky, revealing its serpentinite geology. It falls steeply at the east coast, forming cliffs up to 160m high. Between the headlands are attractive beaches at Skaw and Norwick, where the geology of Unst can be viewed up close. The area has a strong sense of place by virtue of it being the in the most northerly part of

Shetland, with several features being "the most northerly in Britain". This apparent remoteness is reinforced by the high sense of exposure along of the north-facing coast. The more sheltered dale between Haroldswick and Norwick is actively settled, with intact, if often relict, patterns of crofting. At the centre of this dale is the modern development of the former RAF Saxa Vord.

Although the clustered housing integrates surprisingly well, the larger buildings stand out among the more traditional, smaller-scale houses of the area. Good examples of restored traditional buildings are located north of Norwick.

The much-reduced RAF base dominates the area, with remnant structures scattered across

Lamba Ness and around Skaw. The hilltop radar station on Saxa Vord is widely visible across Unst and beyond, and despite its incongruity, is a Shetland landmark. Long coastal views southwards from this area take in a series of distinctive headlands and the cliffs of Fetlar in the distance. To the north, wide and open seawards views are available, with Muckle Flugga and its lighthouse a landmark feature. This area has a great sense of space and openness, increasing to exposure at the coast.

Development guidelines:

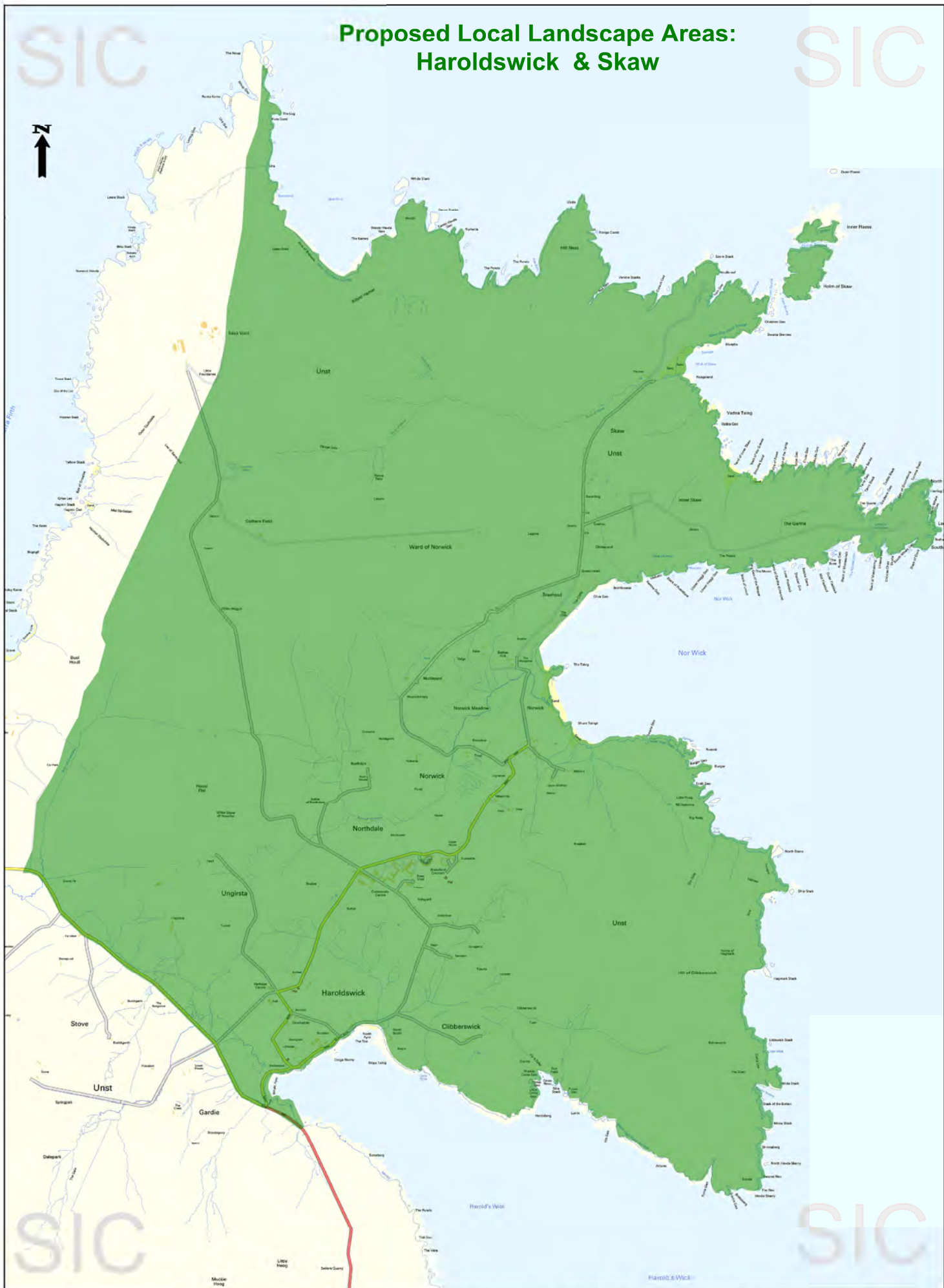
- Development in and around the actively settled part of the landscape should not be unduly discouraged, though it should be appropriately sited and designed.

- Restoration of traditional buildings should be further encouraged
- Seek to encourage sensitive redevelopment of the former RAF buildings at Valsgarth, promoting sustainable uses which will further integrate these structures into the landscape
- Seek creative reuse or interpretation of remnant military structures across the landscape

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Proposed Local Landscape Areas: Haroldswick & Skaw

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Proposed Local Landscape Area 16: Gloup Voe and Bluemull Sound

Location and boundaries:

This area is located across the south-west coast of Unst and the north-eastern coast of Yell, either side of Bluemull Sound.

The eastern boundary on Unst follows the A968 from Belmont, then the ridge of Shore Hill. It runs north over Valla Field to the Ward of Houlland. This line forms a natural visual and physical boundary containing the area.

The western boundary on Yell follows the ridge that visually encloses Gloup Voe, and is shared in part with the eastern boundary of candidate area 17: West Sandwick and Gloup Holm. It continues to follow ridge lines to Cullivoe, enclosing the settled coastal edge and the immediate moorland setting of Sandwater Hill and Scordaback.

Key characteristics:

- Layers of historic settlement apparent in the many ruined churches and buildings and
- standing stones;
- Exposed northern coast with enclosed bays and narrow voes;
- Rolling coastal hills and the steeply rising slopes of Valla Field that enclose the area;

Designation statement:

This area represents diverse coast of prominent rocky headlands, sheltered bays and high and dramatic cliffs exposed to the open sea. The simple arrangement of hills, the water of the Bluemull Sound and open sea, and rocky coastal edge has high scenic qualities. The two coasts of Yell and Unst are intimately linked visually. Long, highly scenic views along and across the Bluemull Sound are available across the area, though they are particularly dramatic from elevated inland areas. Within the central area, the rolling coastal hills and the steeply rising slopes of Valla Field that enclose the area form important settings to the lower settled edges. At the north the area affords a variety of experiences, from expansive views focused out to the open sea to intimate areas enclosed within bays and narrow voes. To the west the long and broad Gloup Voe forms a secluded inlet enclosed by steeply rising green grass slopes. It forms an important setting to the Gloup memorial at the western edge of Gloup and despite the proximity of the settlement, there is a sense of remoteness due to the visual isolation of the area.

This is a cultivated but sparsely settled landscape, with layers of historic settlement apparent in the many ruined churches and buildings and standing stones. Remnant crofting patterns are discernible. Isolated communities are scattered along the lower, gentle and more sheltered edges of the Bluemull Sound. The limited modern development within the area also occurs at this lower edge, with the surrounding moorland hills providing an important series of undeveloped enclosing skylines.

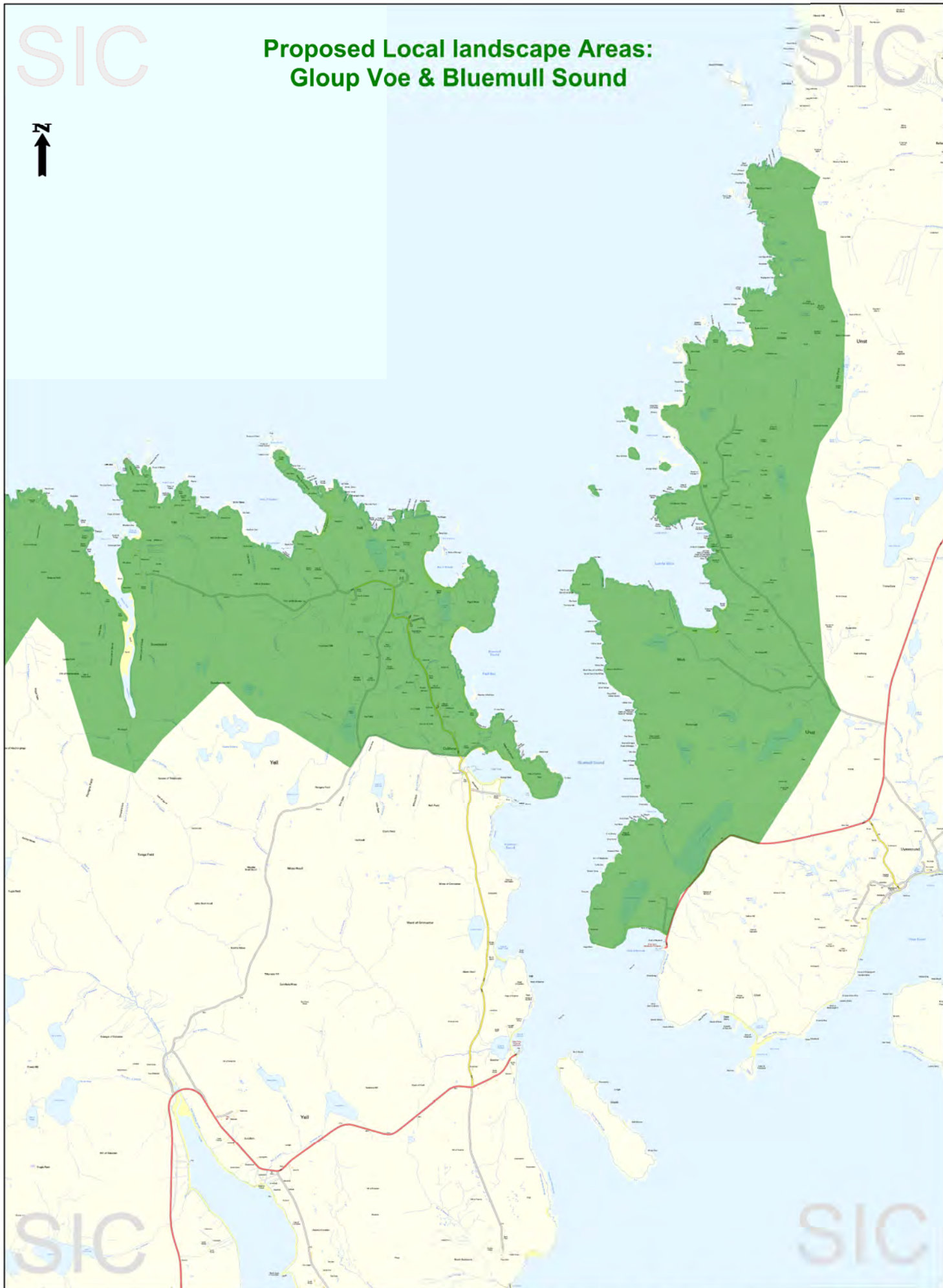
Development guidelines:

- Retain undeveloped skylines of the rolling coastal hills and Valla Field that form the setting to the area
- Ensure new development is sympathetically and carefully integrated with the existing settlement pattern

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Proposed Local landscape Areas: Gloup Voe & Bluemull Sound

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Proposed Local Landscape Area 17: West Sandwick to Gloop Holm

Location and boundaries:

This area encompasses the west coast of Yell, from the headland of Ness of West Sandwick to the small islands of The Clapper and Gloop Holm in the north.

The inland boundary is formed by ridges which form the immediate viewshed from the coast.

The northeastern boundary is shared in part by that of candidate area 16: Gloop Voe and Bluemull Sound.

Key characteristics:

- Highly isolated, long stretches of coastline increasing in exposure to the north
- Impressive wide views of great depth across Yell Sound to the rocky hills of Northmavine;
- An area of limited active settlement, with isolated pockets of historic settlement rich in
- cultural heritage;

Designation statement:

This is a dramatic coastal landscape comprising the long, exposed and largely isolated western coast of Yell. Impressive wide views of great depth across Yell Sound to the low, smooth coast backed by the rocky hills of Northmavine. The exposed coastline of stacks and high cliffs is highly visible from the North Roe headland. Views along the sound take in an attractive assemblage of water and layers of low, interlocking coastal hills rising to the rounded Ronas Hill behind. The northern coast has a heightened sense of exposure, with views to the rugged headland of North Roe, the open sea and the jagged profile of the Ramna Stacks on the horizon. The area to the north of Whale Firth is particularly rugged, with varied and distinctive coastal features, including Eigg, Ern Stack and Stuis.

The area represents a highly remote coastal margin, much of which is inaccessible and can only be explored on foot or by boat. Settlement in the area limited to the small, isolated settlement of West Sandwick, which has a strong and intact rural pattern. The area represents a rich cultural heritage that is visible in the landscape, including church, vernacular stone buildings, standing stones and an iron age fort.

Development guidelines:

- Encourage sustainable and responsible recreational access into this landscape, to allow greater appreciation
- Seek to retain the unsettled isolation of this area, retaining its cultural and natural values

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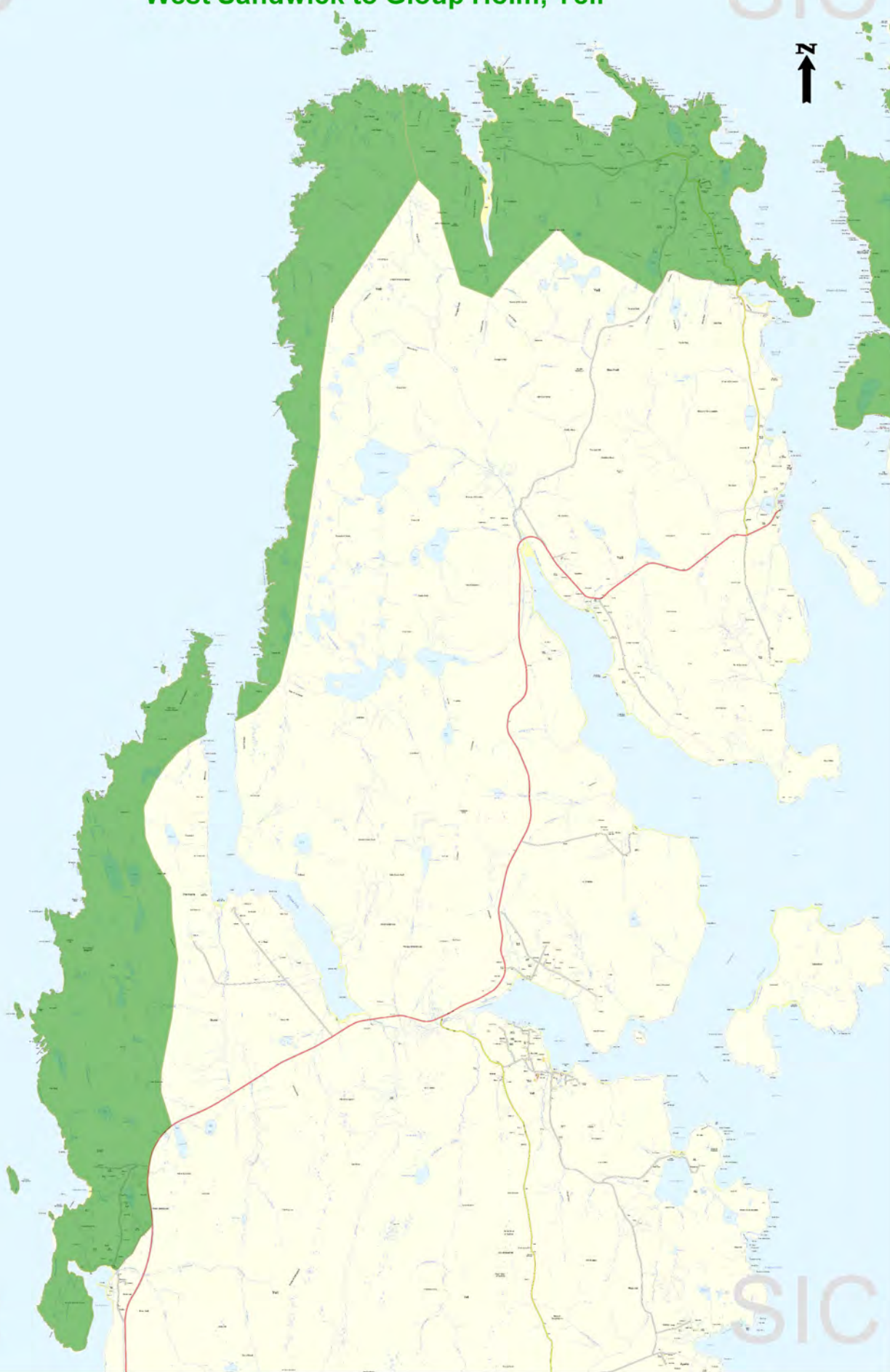
Proposed Local Landscape Areas: West Sandwick to Gloup Holm, Yell

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