

(EFR99)

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HEADLAND
ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd

Albion Business Centre · Unit B4
78 Albion Road · Edinburgh · EH7 5QZ

**Marking-out survey and 1:2500 mapping:
Eilean Fladday, Raasay, Highland**

WGS Reference no. 030/002048

Chris Lowe & Magnar Dalland

21st April 1999

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL
ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE**



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INTRODUCTION

This report forms a supplement to the earlier survey of the island (Dalland & Lowe 1999) which was curtailed because of deteriorating weather and adverse tidal conditions. The fieldwork reported here consisted of revisiting the previously identified sites and accurately mapping them with a Total Station EDM on an arbitrary grid which was linked to Ordnance Survey via a series of mapped reference points. A marking-out survey was also undertaken. The products of this fieldwork therefore comprised the following:

- amendment to 1:10,000 scale mapping;
- production of 1:2,500 scale mapping;
- amendments to previous report / gazetteer;
- marking-out of the identified sites with bamboo canes.

The tidal island of Eilean Fladday lies off the northwestern coast of Raasay (OS 1:10,000 sheets NG 55 SE & NG 54 NE). The planting scheme comprises a complicated pattern of planting, covering roughly a third of the island (Dalland & Lowe 1999, Figure 1). The only previously-known archaeological site within the WGS area was the old township (Site 10) which was inhabited up to 1966. A second site, a fish trap, lies in the tidal zone on the isthmus that links Fladday to Raasay.

The survey area presently supports a few small groups of broadleaf trees but most of the areas consist of heather moorland towards the north and west and improved pasture around the township to the south-east.

MARKING-OUT SURVEY

An indicative marking-out plan was supplied by Allison Fox of Highland Council Archaeology Service. Based on the earlier 1:10,000 plan (Dalland & Lowe 1999, Figure 1), it provided for a 20m boundary around all buildings and a 10m boundary zone around any plotted dykes or banks.

All parts of the WGS planting scheme, with the exception of those areas coincident with or adjacent to Sites 1 -3, had been planted or were in the process of being planted at the time of the marking-out survey (April 13th 1999). Discussion with the planting team revealed that they were operating a 5m and 2m boundary zone for buildings and dykes respectively.

With the exception of Sites 10/11, the nineteenth-century township, and Site 14, in the south-east corner of the island, which could not be marked-out within the time available, all boundary areas around the sites were flagged with bamboos in accordance with the Highland Council specification.

The areas which were marked-out vary to some extent from the indicative plan supplied. Areas adjacent to or in the vicinity of crags, for example, were generally only taken as far as the crags themselves, and were not continued onto the lower ground below. Similarly, some

of the indicative 20m boundary zones clearly merged into one another.

RESULTS

A total of 14 features, or groups of features, of archaeological interest were recorded; their locations are given in Figure 1 at a scale of 1:10,000. Detailed plans of Sites 1-9 and 12-13 are illustrated in Figures 2 and 3, respectively, at a scale of 1:2500.

Gazetteer site numbers have been broadly retained. Some redefinition, however, has been required as a result of the marking-out survey: Site 1 comprises Sites 1 and 2 in the previous report; the marked-out area around the new Site 2 corresponds to a series of structures which were previously recorded under Site 3. Meanwhile, the marked-out areas at Site 5 have been divided into northern (Site 5a) and southern (Site 5b) components.

Figure 1 Fladday WGS
Location of features of archaeological interest
Scale 1:10,000

Based on the 1966 Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 map NG 55 SE
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GAZETTEER

Site No. 1

Grid ref: NG 5900 5175 (centre of area)

Location: Fladday (north)

Class: Dykes, structures and cultivation remains

Land use: Rough grazing

A group of twelve small sub-rectangular structures, up to 4 x 2 m, defined by low stony banks roughly 1 m wide. Associated with the structures are single lines of stones, possible marking boundaries of cultivated areas, occasional cairns and banks.

Condition: The structures are very low and covered in heather and bracken. All appear to be in a stable condition.

Site No. 2

Grid ref: NG 5910 5170 (centre of area)

Location: Fladday (north)

Class: Dykes, structures and cultivation remains

Land use: Rough grazing

A group of four small sub-rectangular to sub-circular structures, up to 4 m across defined by low stony banks up to 1 m wide, and located on the south side of a rocky knoll to the east of Site 1. The remains of a short stone dyke lie to the east. A small patch of rig-and-furrow cultivation and two short lengths of dyke lie outwith the marked-out area, to the north-east. The rigs are 3.5 m across and stand 0.2 m high.

Condition: The structures are low and covered in heather and bracken. All appear to be in a stable condition.

Site No. 3

Grid ref: NG 5918 5155 (centre of area)

Location: Fladday (north)

Class: Structures and cultivation remains

Land use: Rough grazing

The remains of two small sub-rectangular structures up to 4 m across. To the north of the buildings, outwith the marked-out area, are the remains of rig-and-furrow cultivation covering an area of some 40 by 100 m in what is now wet marshy ground. The rigs are 4 to 5 m wide.

Condition: All the features are covered in bracken. All appear to be stable.

Site No. 4

Grid ref: NG 5875 5160 (centre of area)

Location: Fladday (north)

Class: Structures, dyke and cultivation remains

Land use: Rough grazing

A sinuous stone dyke runs roughly east-west along the edge of the crags. Built from stone and turf, the dyke is 1 m wide and up to 0.8 m high. It is marked on the current 1:10560 OS map.

The remains of three structures lie to the south of the dyke. One to the west is sub-circular, roughly 1.5 m across internally with stone walls some 0.8 m wide and standing to a height of 0.5 m with an entrance to the north-east. A small sub-rectangular structure lies 85 m to the south-east. Measuring 1.5 by 2.5 m internally, it is defined by low stony banks 1.5 m wide and 0.15 m high. A third structure, formed of two possibly conjoined sub-circular cells, lies a few metres to the north. Each cell is roughly 1.5 - 2 m across internally, within bracken-covered banks 0.9 m wide and 0.2 m high.

A fourth building lies on the terrace below and to the north of the crags. Roughly 3 x 2 m internally, the building occupies a small bracken-covered knoll overlooking a plot of rig-and-furrow cultivation to the north and east. The rigs are 4 - 4.5 m across and up to 0.3 m high.

Condition: The structures are well defined and clearly visible. The dyke is well preserved in places but becomes more fragmentary towards its east end.

Site No. 5a

Grid ref: NG 5893 5155 (centre of area)

Location: Fladday (north)

Class: Enclosure, dyke and structures

Land use: Rough grazing

The remains of a small rectangular enclosure, 5.5 by 6.5 m, a low stone dyke and four small sub-rectangular to sub-circular structures up to 4 m across defined by low stony banks some 1 m wide. The features are located on and to the north of a small rocky ridge some 100 m to the south of Site 1.

Condition: The structures are low and covered in heather and bracken. All appear to be in a stable condition.

Site No. 5b

Grid ref: NG 5897 5144 (centre of area)

Location: Fladday (north)

Class: Structures

Land use: Rough grazing

The remains of three small sub-rectangular to sub-circular structures up to 4 m across defined by low stony banks roughly 1 m wide and 0.3 m high. The structures are laid out in a line on a ridge just to the north-east of an inlet of Loch Mor.

Condition: The structures are low and covered in heather and bracken. All appear to be in a stable condition.

Site No. 6

Grid ref: NG 5886 5146 (centre of area)

Location: Fladday (north)

Class: Structures

Land use: Rough grazing

The remains of two dry-stone structures. One, to the north, is sub-circular, 1.2 by 1.5 m across internally, with an entrance towards the north. Its walls, 0.9 m wide at base, taper to a width of 0.4 m at the surviving wall-head, 1 m high. There is a recess, 0.6 m high and 0.3 m wide, in the south wall. The structure is situated in a patch of exposed stones.

A second building, a dry-stone multi-cellular structure, lies to the south. The main compartment is oval, 1.6 m by 2.5 m internally, within walls up to 0.9 m thick. To the north are two smaller cells, 1.2 by 1.5 m and 1.5 by 1.5 m internally. The smaller cell to the northwest opens into the main compartment. To the south of the building there is a curving wall, creating a third cell 1.3 by 1.3 m, open to the west.

The entrance into the main compartment is probably from the south. Its walls are constructed of roughly coursed stones. Parts of the three cells, however, are built with orthostats.

Condition: Although partly covered in heather and bracken, both structures are well defined and clearly visible. Both appear to be in a stable condition.

Site No. 7

Grid ref: NG 5886 5125 (centre of site)

Location: Fladday (north)

Class: Dyke

Land use: Rough grazing

The remains of a stone and turf dyke run roughly east-west across the south end of the peninsula on the north side of Loch Mor. The dyke is built of angular stone blocks exposed

along the loch shore at either end and buried beneath peat in the middle. The ground level is markedly higher on the north side of the dyke as if more peat has been removed from the southern tip of the peninsula.

Condition: The dyke appears as a well defined low stony bank. It is partly eroded at both ends where it meets the loch.

Site No. 8

Grid ref: NG 5918 5132

Location: Fladday (north)

Class: Structure

Land use: Rough grazing

The remains of a stone structure built up against the east side of a low crag. Its walls incorporate both dry-stone walling and the natural outcrop. Roughly oval, it measures 1.8 by 1.2 m internally, within walls up to 1 m high. There is a small recess, 0.3 x 0.3 m and 0.45 m deep, in the south-east corner of the building at the base of the wall. The entrance is towards the north. It is located just east of the summit of a rocky knoll to the east of Loch Mor.

Condition: The structure is well-defined and stable.

Site No. 9

Grid ref: NG 5907 5123

Location: Fladday (north)

Class: Stone structure

Land use: Rough grazing

The remains of a sub-rectangular structure some 2.5 by 4.5 m defined by a low stony bank up to 1 m wide.

Condition: The structure is low and covered in heather but is otherwise well-defined and apparently in a stable condition.

Site No. 10 NMRS NG55SE 2

Grid ref: NG 591 507 (centre of area)

Location: Fladday (south)

Class: Township; Field system

Land use: Pasture

A township comprising buildings, enclosures and field system is located on the east side of Fladday just north of the isthmus connecting the island to Raasay. Some of the buildings shown on the 1st edition OS map surveyed in 1878 are still standing. Most of them are roofless. A couple of well maintained roofed houses were built in the early 1930s and are

still used as holiday cottages. According to Callum Gillies, the buildings on the west side of the township were used as barns and for storage of potatoes and other crops. The only visible cultivation remains within the township are to the north, where two small plots of rig and furrow can be seen.

Condition: Most of the buildings are still surviving to over 1 m high. The old schoolhouse at the south end of the township, however, has been completely removed with only the footprint visible. The dykes enclosing the fields at the north end of the township are fragmented but largely traceable.

Site No. 11

Grid ref: NG 5860 5067 (centre of area)

Location: Fladday (south)

Class: Cultivation remains; dykes

Land use: Rough grazing

A stone dyke runs from the west side of the island eastwards to the settlement almost closing off the south end of the island. A second dyke runs parallel with the dyke for some 250 m only some 10 m to the north. To the south of the dykes is an area of strip cultivation consisting of linear clearance cairns 7 m apart. In addition to the linear clearances there are some clearance cairns further to the east.

Condition: The dykes are well preserved in the middle becoming more fragmentary at either end. The dyke to the south can be traced from the settlement all the way to the west shore, while the parallel dyke to the north peters out at the west end. The strip cultivation is well defined.

Site No. 12

Grid ref: NG 5865 5050 (centre of area)

Location: Fladday (south)

Class: Dykes and structures

Land use: Rough grazing

Site 12 was marked-out as three separate areas and comprises the remains of three stone dykes and six small sub-rectangular structures 2.5 - 4 m across, defined by low stony banks up to 1 m wide. The features are located around the edges of a marshy area some 400 m to the south-west of the township.

Condition: The structures are low and covered in heather but are otherwise well-defined and apparently stable.

Site No. 13

Grid ref: NG 5869 5027

Location: Fladday (south)

Class: Cultivation remains

Land use: Rough grazing

A small unenclosed patch of rig-and-furrow, comprising four rigs 12 m long and some 4 m wide.

Condition: The rigs are well defined and clearly visible.

Site No. 14

Grid ref: NG 5885 5012

Location: Fladday (south)

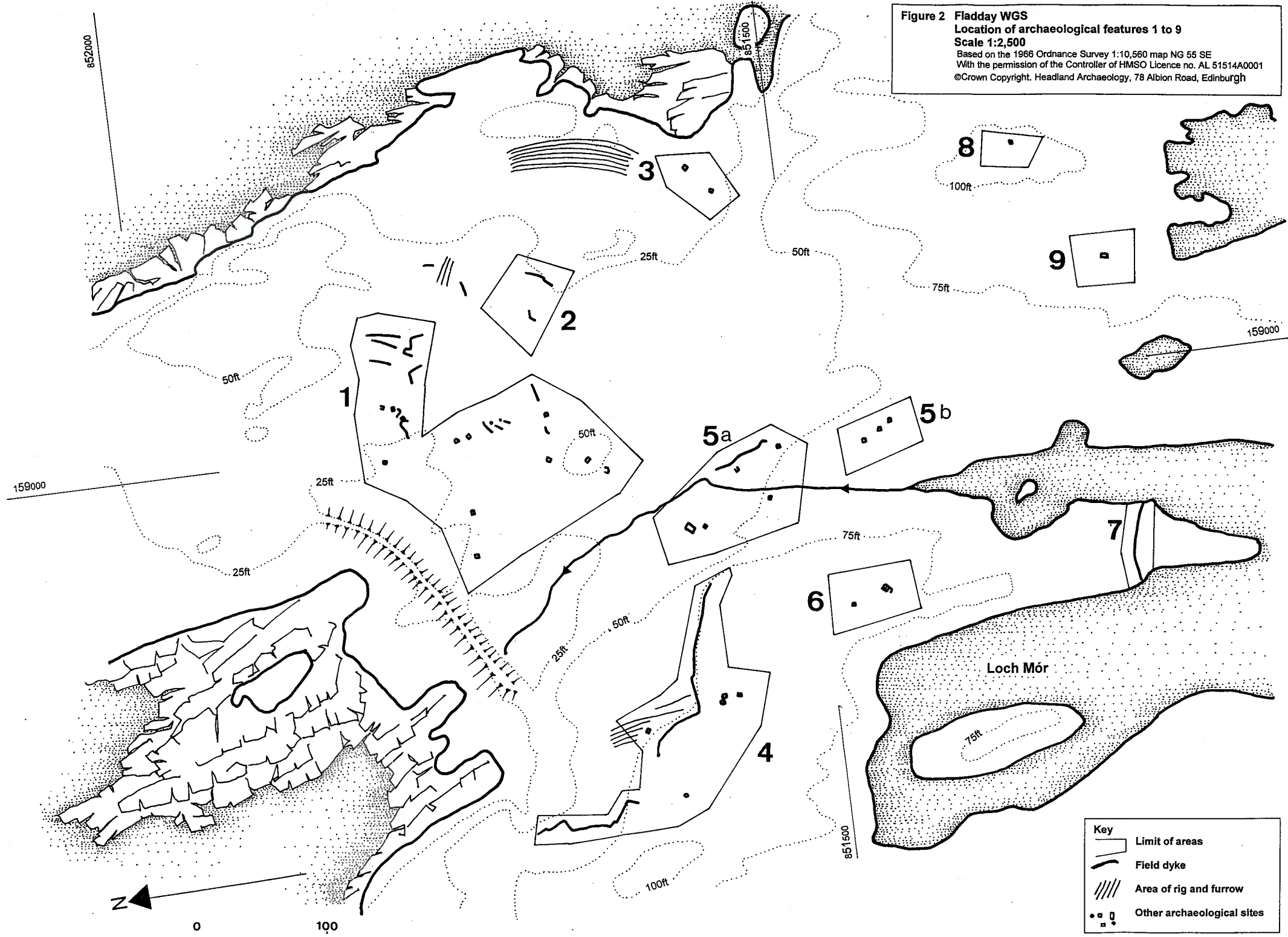
Class: Structures, dykes and cultivation remains

Land use: Rough grazing

The site is located at the south tip of the island. It comprises two small stone buildings built up against small east-facing crags. The remains of two stone and turf dykes enclose an area roughly 70 by 120 m making use of the crags. At the south-west corner of this area is a small patch of preserved rig and furrow.

Condition: The buildings stand to a height of over 1 m. The dykes are fragmentary but clearly visible. The rigs are covered in bracken but are otherwise apparently stable.

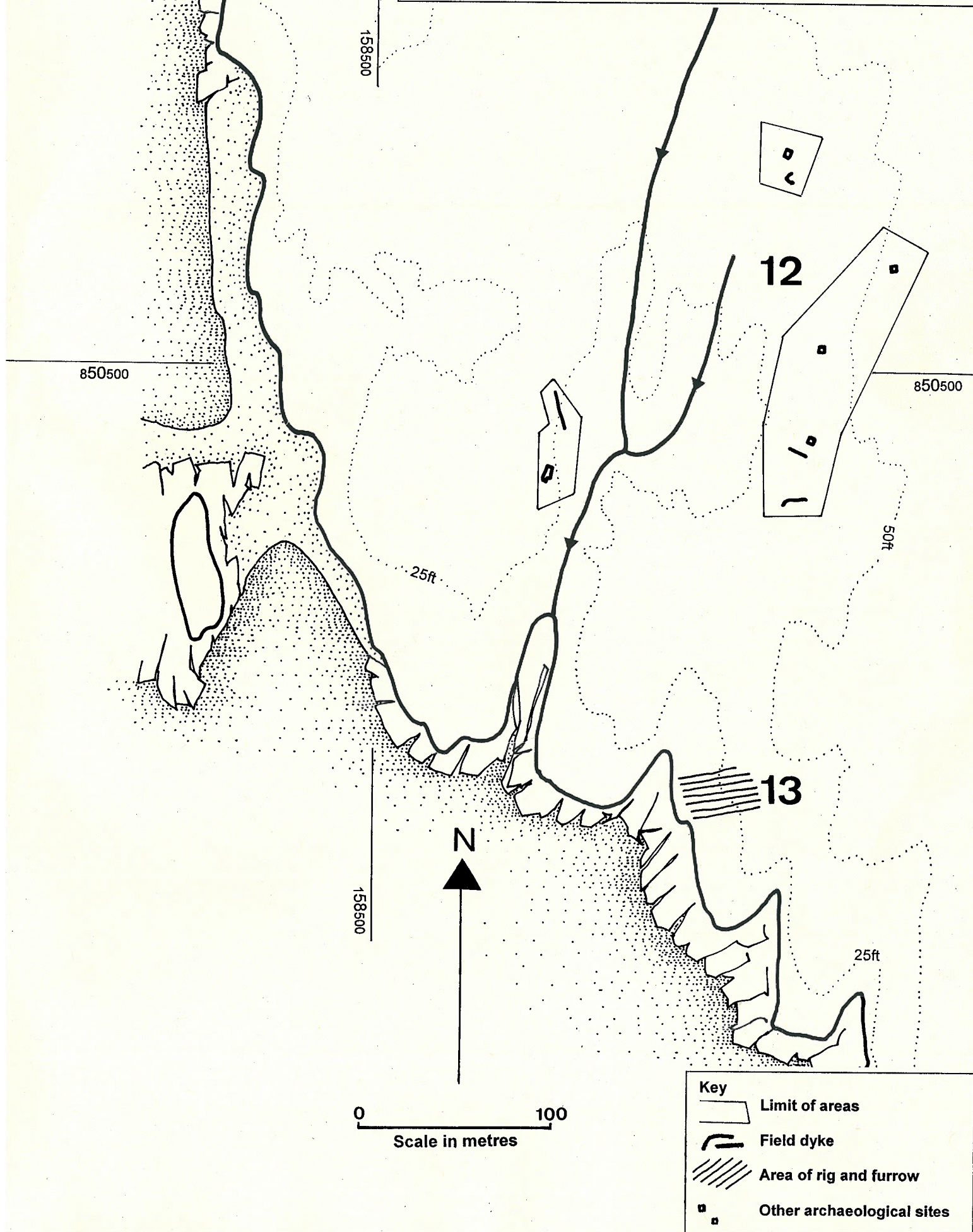
Figure 2 Fladday WGS
Location of archaeological features 1 to 9
Scale 1:2,500
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Key	
	Limit of areas
	Field dyke
	Area of rig and furrow
	Other archaeological sites

Figure 3 Fladday WGS
Location of archaeological features 12 & 13
Scale 1:2,500

Based on the 1966 Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 map NG 55 SE
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