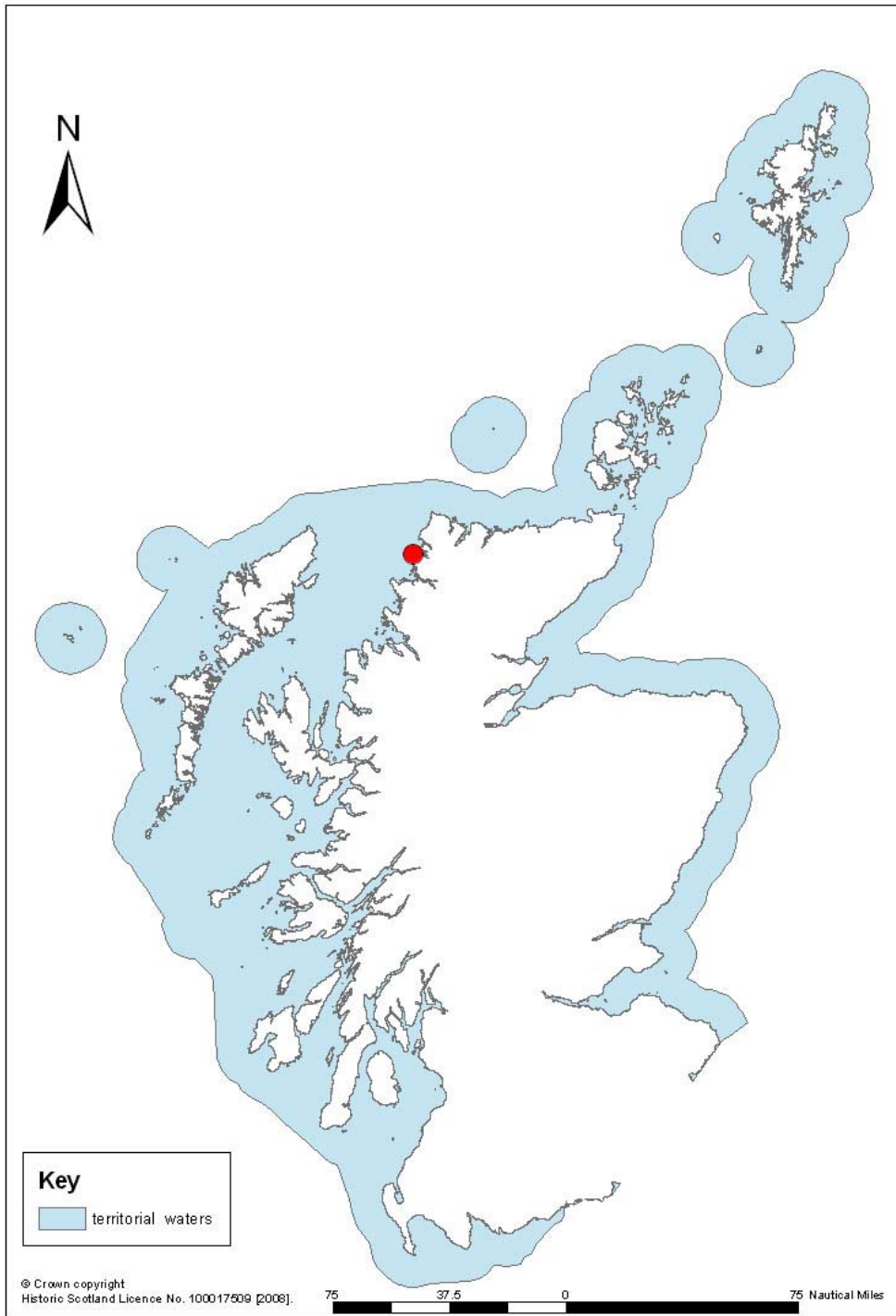


Scotland's designated wreck sites (Protection of Wrecks Act 1973)

Kinlochbervie wreck, Kinlochbervie, Sutherland



8 May 2008

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1. Introduction

1.1. This document provides information relating to an historic wreck that has been afforded statutory protection under Section 1 of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973.

1.2. This wreck has been designated under the 1973 Act on the basis that it is or may prove to be the site of a vessel lying wrecked on or in the sea bed; and (b) on account of the historical, archaeological or artistic importance of the vessel, or of any objects contained or formerly contained in it which may be lying on the sea bed in or near the wreck, the site ought to be protected from unauthorised interference.

1.3. The 'Statutory Instrument' in Annex A identifies the location of this designated wreck site and the extent of the restricted area used to protect the site (see also section 4).

1.4. The 1973 Act controls activities by a licensing regime, so that these important historic wrecks are not put at risk from undisciplined activities or investigation. It is a criminal offence to do any of the following in a designated area without a licence issued by Scottish Ministers:

- tamper with, damage or remove any part of a vessel lying wrecked on or in the seabed or any object formerly contained in such a vessel;
- carry out diving or salvage operations directed to the exploration of any wreck or to removing objects from it or from the seabed, or use of equipment constructed or adapted for any purpose of diving or salvage operations. This includes deployment of remotely operated vehicles;
- deposit anything including anchors and fishing gear which, if it were to fall on the site, would obliterate, obstruct access to, or damage any part of the site; and
- to cause or permit any of the above activities to be carried out by others, without a licence, in a restricted area.

1.5. Where a person is authorised by a licence, it is an offence for any other person to obstruct them, or cause or permit them to be obstructed, in doing anything which is authorised by the licence.

1.6. Bathing, angling and navigation are permitted within a restricted area provided there is no likelihood of, or intention to, damage the wreck or obstruct work on it. Anchoring on the site is only permitted for licensed activities or in cases of maritime distress.

2. Further guidance

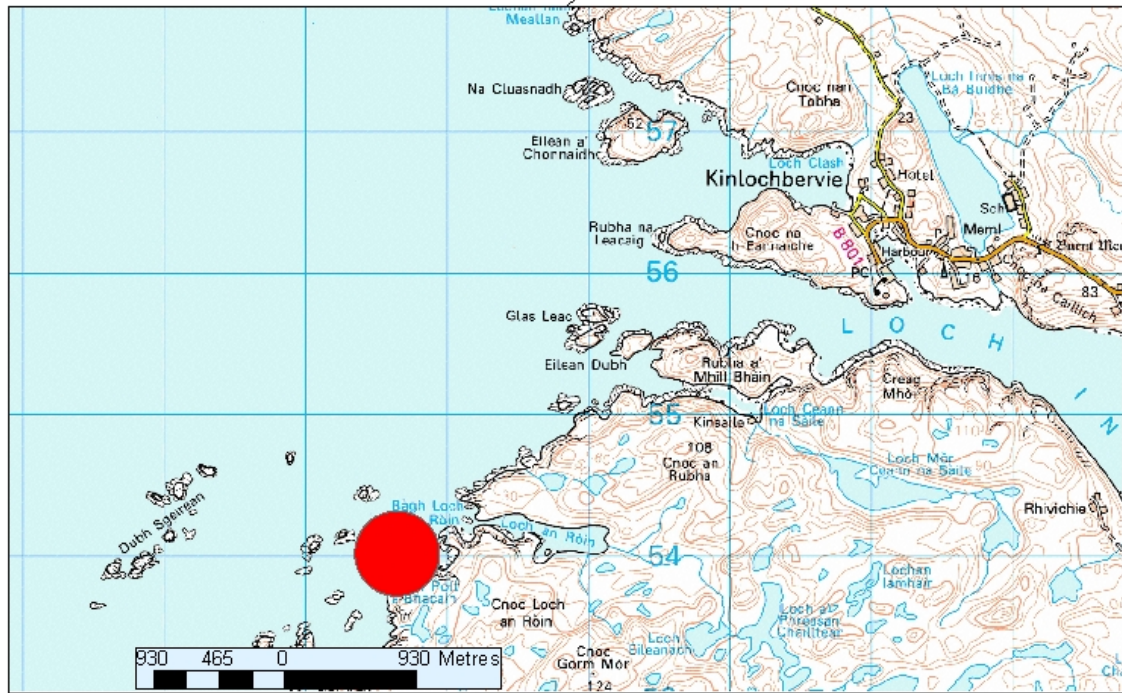
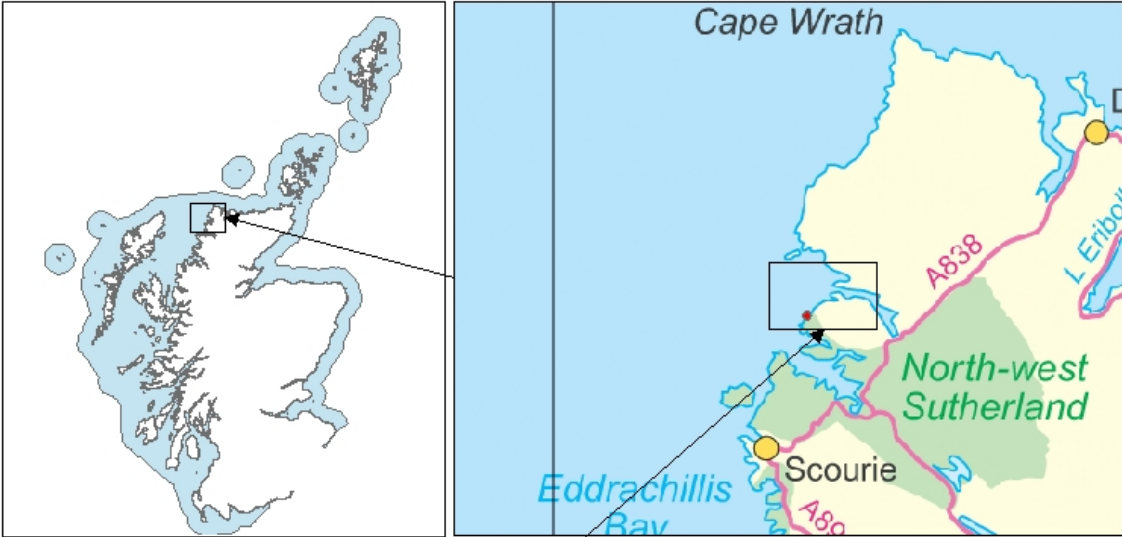
2.1. Licence application forms and guidance for divers and archaeologists in relation to the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 are available online at <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/heritage/wrecksites.htm>

3. Summary

Site name		Kinlochbervie wreck	
RCAHMS Reference number		NC15SE 8001	
General information			
<i>Location</i>	<i>Year of discovery</i>	<i>Discovered by</i>	<i>Date of sinking</i>
Kinlochbervie, Sutherland,	1997	RAF Lossiemouth Sub Aqua Club	Early 17 th century
<p>Description of wreck site The remains of a wreck of a merchant vessel, probably from the Iberian peninsula. A diverse collection of ceramics including decorative Italian 'maiolica' has been dated by art historians and suggests that the wreck occurred during the 1590s or perhaps even after 1600. Large iron artefacts include cast iron guns and four anchors. The wreck was investigated from 2000-2003 and a wide range of artefacts recovered and recorded. These finds have been conserved and stored by the National Museums of Scotland in Edinburgh.</p> <p>Description of site environment The upper part of the site is a shallow lagoon (4m -14m depth) which drops off a steep underwater cliff, to a flattish seabed at c.30m depth with boulders, interspersed with gravels. The wreck is located on an exposed Atlantic shore, amidst numerous offshore reefs and skerries.</p> <p>Designation summary (see annex for Statutory Instrument)</p>			
<i>Designation order</i>	<i>Latitude (OSGB 36 datum)</i>	<i>Longitude (OSGB 36 datum)</i>	
The Protection of Wrecks (Designation) (Scotland) Order 2001	58 26.213 N	05 06.430W	
<i>Site marker(s)</i>	<i>Date designated</i>	<i>Exclusion zone radius (m)</i>	
None	29 June 2001	300	
<p>Further information <i>Published references</i> Brown, D H and Curnow, C, 2004, 'A ceramic assemblage from the seabed near Kinlochbervie, Scotland, UK', <i>International Journal of Nautical Archaeology</i> (IJNA) 33.1, 29. Robertson, P, 2004, 'A shipwreck near Kinlochbervie, Sutherland, Scotland, UK,' <i>IJNA</i> 33.1, 14.</p>			

4. Location and extent of protected area

Kinlochbervie wreck, Kinlochbervie, Sutherland



<p>Key</p> 	<p>Extent of protected area as defined in the Statutory Instrument</p>	<p>N</p> 	<p>This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Historic Scotland Licence No. 100017509 [2008].</p>
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5. Statement of significance

Period

The Italian maiolica pottery recovered was probably manufactured between 1570 and 1610. This and other ceramic material seen on the site suggests that the wrecking event took place during the 1590s or perhaps even after 1600.

Rarity

Wrecks of the late 16th or early 17th century are rare in the UK and very rare in Scotland. It is likely that this was a merchant vessel. Scientific analysis of the ceramic and brick assemblage strongly suggests an origin from the Iberian peninsula.

Documentation

There is no known historical account relating to this wreck but surveys and excavations on the site have now been published in the *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology*.

Group Value

The dating of the Italian maiolica confirms that this wreck was not a part of the Spanish Armada invasion of 1588. It is more likely to be associated with developing Iberian trade at the time, using a north-about route round Scotland to avoid the English Channel.

Survival/condition

The site is located on a very exposed Atlantic shore. There is no evidence for survival of organic materials or hull structure but, at the base of the cliff, the pottery has survived in remarkably good condition. The sediment overlying bedrock is shallow in depth but it is likely that more ceramic material and isolated finds will remain buried beneath the sediments in that area. In the shallow lagoon, only large iron and metal finds appear to have survived. Corrosion analysis of the guns and anchors suggests that any remaining iron is unstable and corroding actively.

Fragility/vulnerability

Much of the exposed pottery has been recovered but it is possible that more ceramics may be contained within unexcavated sediment deposits at the foot of the cliff, where they remain vulnerable to casual pilfering. The seabed environment appears to be chemically challenging to the large iron artefacts with many in the final stages of decay. Any remaining finds in the shallow lagoon will be vulnerable to wave action.

Diversity

The diverse pottery assemblage includes brick and tile, possible Beauvais stoneware, Seville coarseware, Iberian Red Micaceous ware, and five or more types of Italian maiolica (e.g Grottesque; Montelupo; Ligurian berettino; Faenza; Deruta). The guns were probably manufactured in England or the Baltic countries during the late 16th or early 17th centuries while the anchors appear to be of two different sizes, and of a design common at the time.

Potential

The cast iron guns and the anchors remain on the seabed and there may still be fragments of pottery embedded within thin sediment layers between the rock boulders at the foot of the sea cliff, with the potential to add knowledge. Moreover, interpretation of the evidence suggests that the recorded assemblage may only be a part of the remains of the wreck. One of the numerous offshore reefs may have caught the vessel as she was driven landwards leaving a debris trail. Alternatively, the major break-up may have occurred on the reef but with only a portion settling in deeper water.

Summary and conclusions

The Kinlochbervie wreck is worthy of protection under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 because it is of very significant historical and archaeological importance. The site has produced the largest group of Italian Renaissance pottery ever recovered from an archaeological site in Scotland, and the largest group of grotesque maiolica ever recovered from an archaeological site in Britain. Whatever the ship's purpose, ports of origin and destination, its presence at the northernmost tip of Scotland may illustrate the extent of Iberian maritime trade in northern Europe, amidst the political uncertainties at the end of the 16th centuries. While there is considerable archaeological evidence of Spanish naval activity, particularly the 1588 Armada, little evidence of trade with Spain or Mediterranean countries in the early 17th century has been investigated systematically from northern waters.

Annex – Statutory Instrument

SCOTTISH STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2001 No. 242

PROTECTION OF WRECKS

The Protection of Wrecks (Designation) (Scotland) Order 2001

Made 19th June 2001

Laid before the Scottish Parliament 21st June 2001

Coming into force 29th June 2001

The Scottish Ministers, being satisfied that the site identified in article 2 of this Order is, or may prove to be, the site of a vessel lying wrecked on or in the seabed and that on account of the historical and archaeological importance of the vessel and objects contained or formerly contained within it which may be lying on the sea bed in or near the wreck, the site ought to be protected from unauthorised interference and having consulted with such persons as they consider appropriate in accordance with section 1(4) of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973(a), in exercise of the powers conferred by section 1(1) and (2) of that Act and all other powers enabling them in that behalf, hereby make the following Order:

Citation, commencement and extent

1.—(1) This Order may be cited as the Protection of Wrecks (Designation) (Scotland) Order 2001 and shall come into force on 29th June 2001.

(2) This Order extends to Scotland only.

Identification of Site and Designation of Restricted Area

2.—(1) The site where a vessel lies, or is supposed to lie, wrecked on or in the sea bed is in position Latitude 58° 26.213' North, Longitude 05° 06.430' West.

(2) The area within a distance of 300 metres of the site identified in paragraph (1) above (but excluding any area above high water mark of ordinary spring tides) is designated as a restricted area.

ALLAN WILSON

Authorised to sign by the Scottish Ministers

St Andrew's House,
Edinburgh
19th June 2001

(a) 1973 c.33. The functions of the Secretary of State were transferred to the Scottish Ministers by virtue of section 53 of the Scotland Act 1998 (c.46).

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order identifies the site in Loch Inchar, near Kinlochbervie, Sutherland of what is thought to be a wreck of a vessel and on account of the historical and archaeological importance of the vessel and its cargo the Order designates an area 300 metres around the site as a restricted area so as to protect the site from unauthorised interference.

The position given by the co-ordinates in article 2(1) of the Order is the position for use on Admiralty Charts 733, 734, 735 and 736 based on datum OSGB 36. The restricted area does not include any part of the designated area which is above the high water mark of ordinary spring tides.