
NWHG Ref. 005 — Sango Bay

Location, grid reference

The Sango Bay site lies on the north coast of mainland Scotland at Durness, Grid Ref. [NC 406 681]–[NC 412 676].

GCR site reference, block, volume and notified feature of SSSI?

GCR Ref. N/A, Moine Block, Vol.34. Notification proposed for Durness SSSI.

Description and geological significance

The site displays exceptional examples of post-Caledonian normal faults which have downthrown Moine Thrust Belt mylonites of the Faraid Head klippe. There is a particularly well-displayed example of a normal fault scarp at the eastern end of the bay. The site also contains excellent examples of 'Oystershell rock', gneiss rocks sheared within the Moine Thrust Belt.

Accessibility

The area is accessible by car with good parking facilities overlooking the bay close to the Visitor Information Centre. It is necessary to walk down onto the beach in order to be able to see the outcrops clearly in detail, although a general overview can be obtained when seen from the car park. Due to the steep slope above the beach, there is no provision for all abilities access.

Conservation

Low conservation requirement due to the scale and location of the site.

Visibility and “clarity”

Visibility of most of the bay is good from the car park and excellent once the beach is reached. Specific geological features are inspiring to geological specialists, especially the dramatic fault scarp at the eastern end of the beach.

Interpretation and interpretation potential

The bay is very popular with the general public as well as geology students and researchers. There is a sealife interpretation panel at the car park but no geological interpretation panel either at the car park or on the beach. Within the Visitor Information Centre, where the Highland Council Ranger has an office, there is an excellent display of geological maps, samples and some interpretation material. There is considerable scope for the siting of a new geological interpretation panel at the car park overlooking the bay, as a facility for the general public. The site should certainly be included in a future Geopark guide. An important educational resource for geology students and researchers.

Key references

BUTLER, R.W.H. 2009. Sango Bay. In Mendum, J. R., Barber, A. J., Butler, R. W. H., Flinn, D., Goodenough, K. M., Krabbendam, M., Park, R. G. & Stewart, A. D. (eds) Lewisian, Torridonian and Moine rocks of Scotland. Geological Conservation Review Series, 34, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, 257–261.