

Heysham Flat Mussel Inspection 02-08-23

Officers present: MC, GG
Tides LW 06:56 1.2m (Liverpool tides)

Officers inspected the mussel on Heysham Flat to assess if mussel was present and if seed mussel had grown on. Access to the outer skears was not possible across Dallam Dyke due to depth of water and timings.

The significant historic *Sabellaria alveolata* reef extending across the skear from close to Conger Rock (Big stone) to Dallam Dyke was visible in places across the skear, particularly on the Southern edge. The majority of the *Sabellaria sp.* is still smothered by seed mussel and mussel mud, with only a few small sections now visible on the main skear. Officer notes have been mapped in Figure 1.

The extensive seed settlement across the majority of the skear has grown on in size, with the majority 15-25mm. The seed coverage over the entire skear was predominantly 70-80%, with areas over 90%. The seed is putting down mussel mud and most is solid, however some patches are loose.

In the area from Conger Rock to shore, there was significant scour with much less mussel coverage, and only two dense mussel bands remaining at approximately 10m wide across the skear.

The outer skears appeared dark in colouration suggesting mussel still present.

Numerous bird species were present feeding in the area including oystercatchers and gulls.

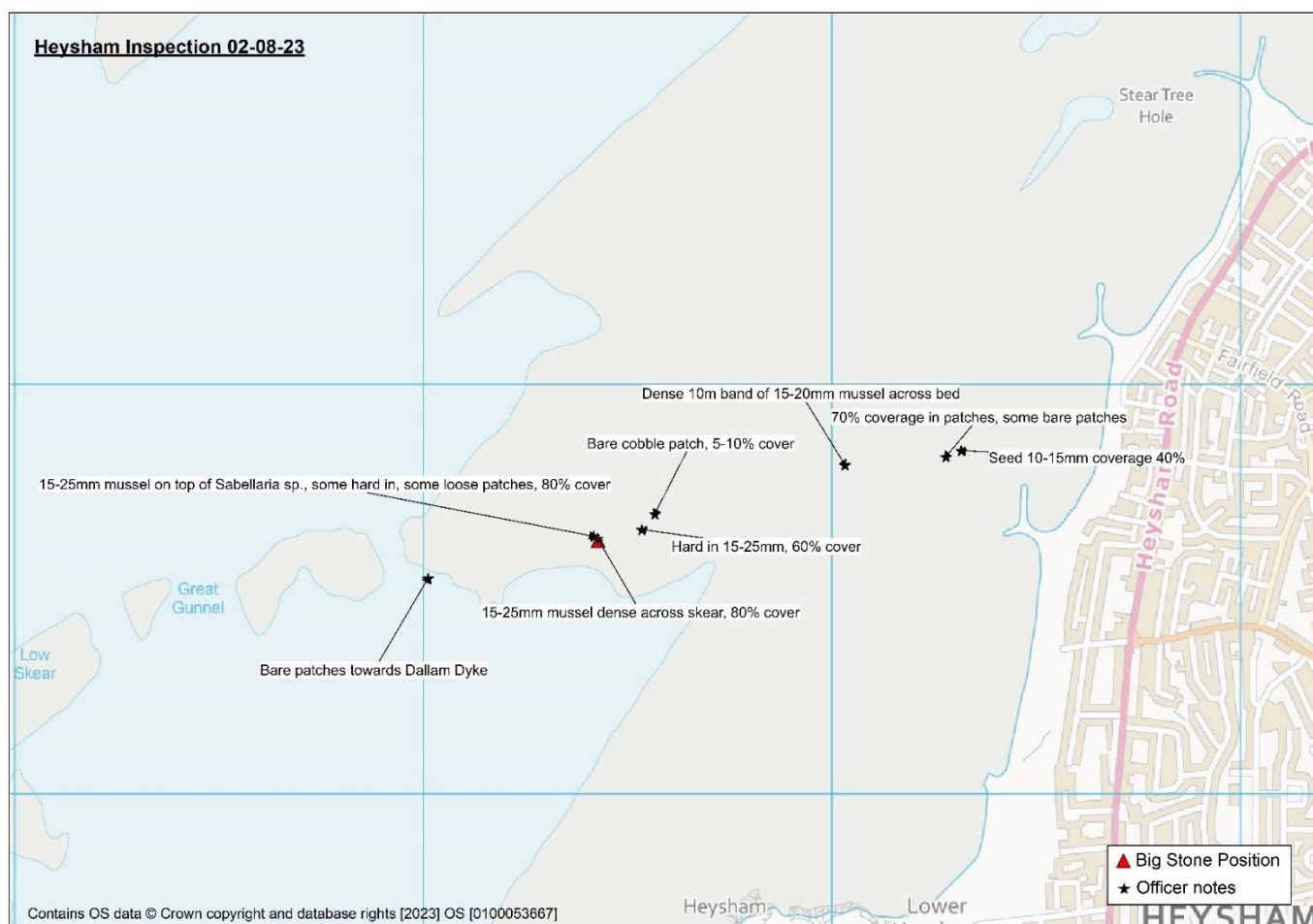


Figure 1. Map showing officer notes on Heysham Flat survey 02-08-23.



Figure 2. Band of mussel across Heysham skear 02-08-23.

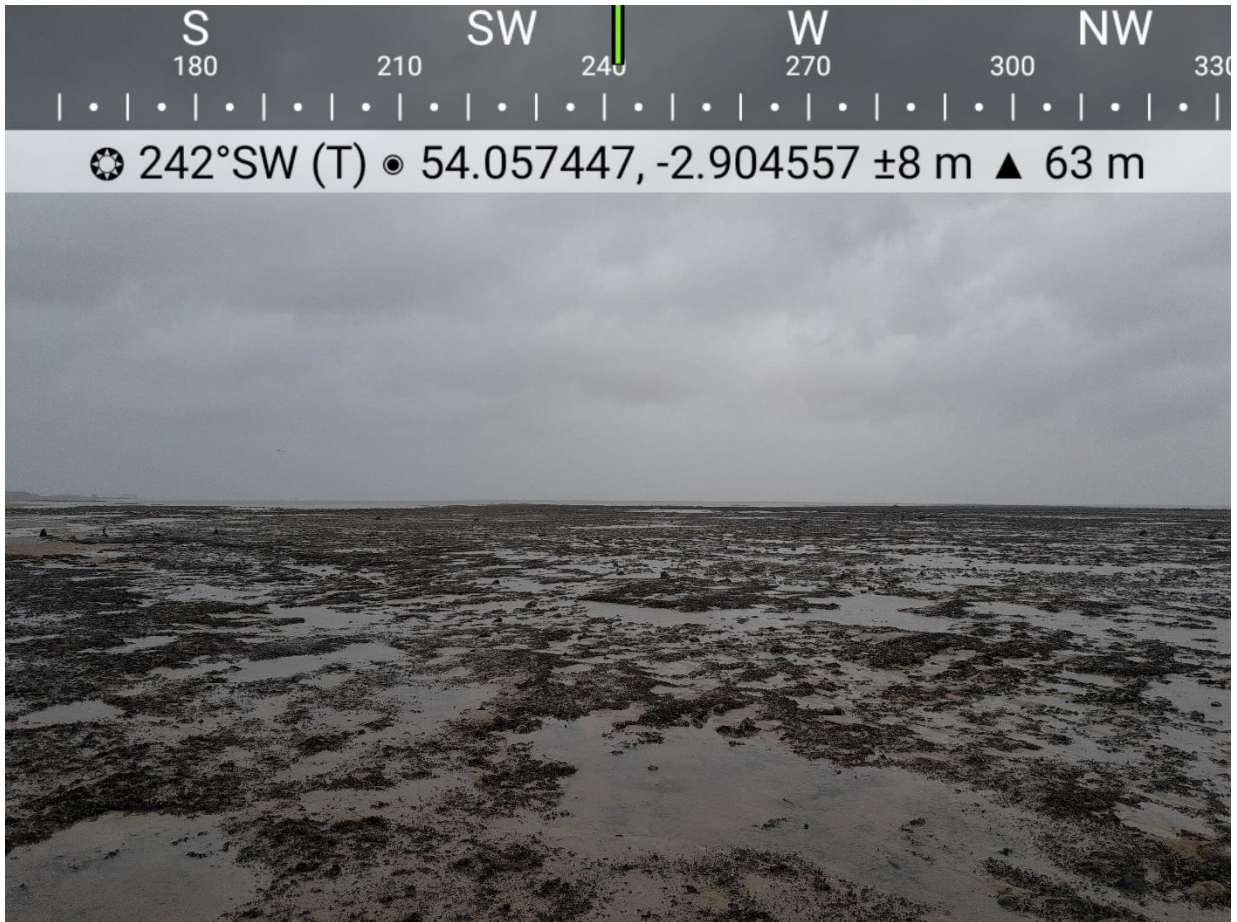


Figure 3. Evidence of scouring on Heysham Flat 02-08-23.

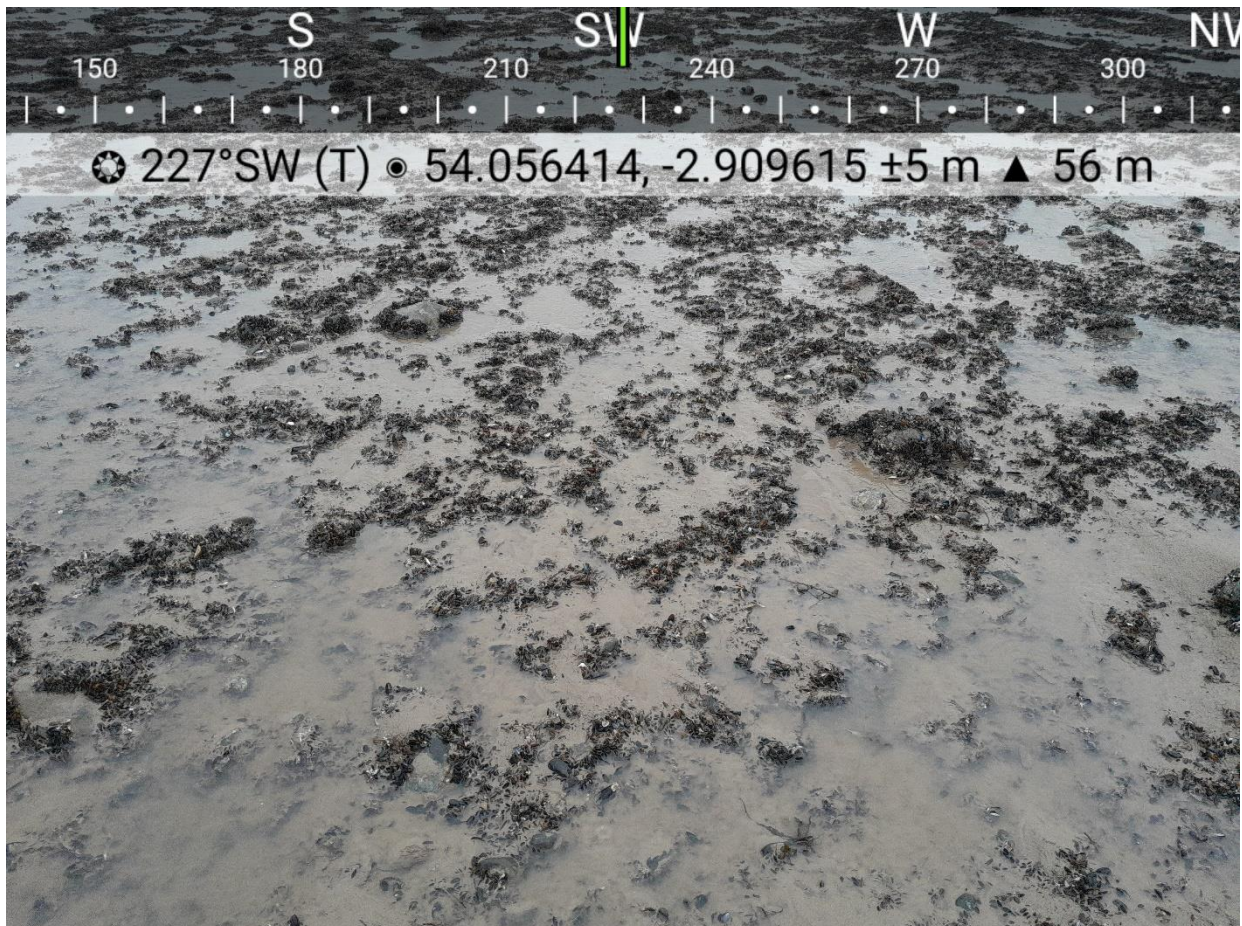


Figure 4. Evidence of scouring on Heysham Flat 02-08-23

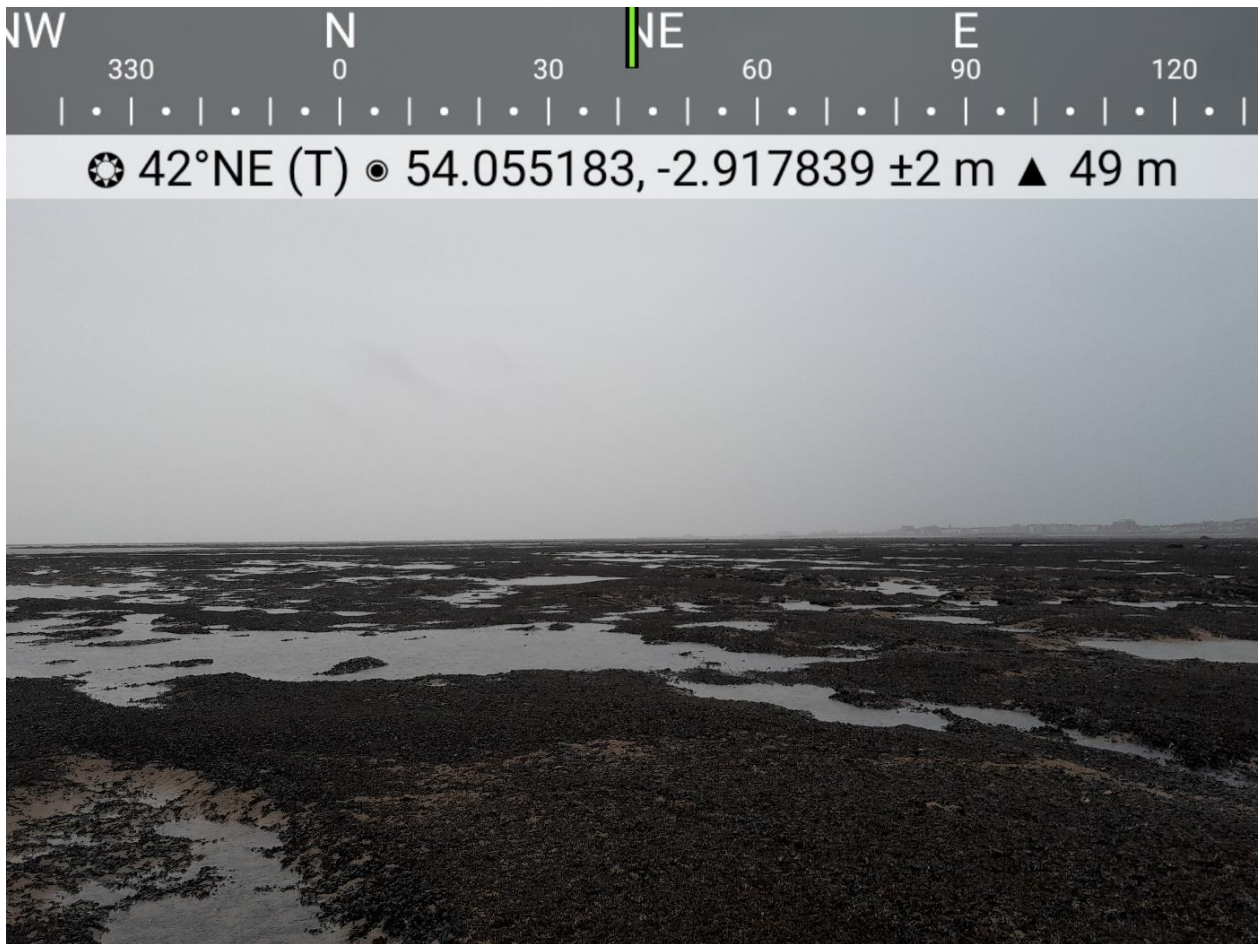


Figure 5. Mussel on Heysham skewer 02-08-23.

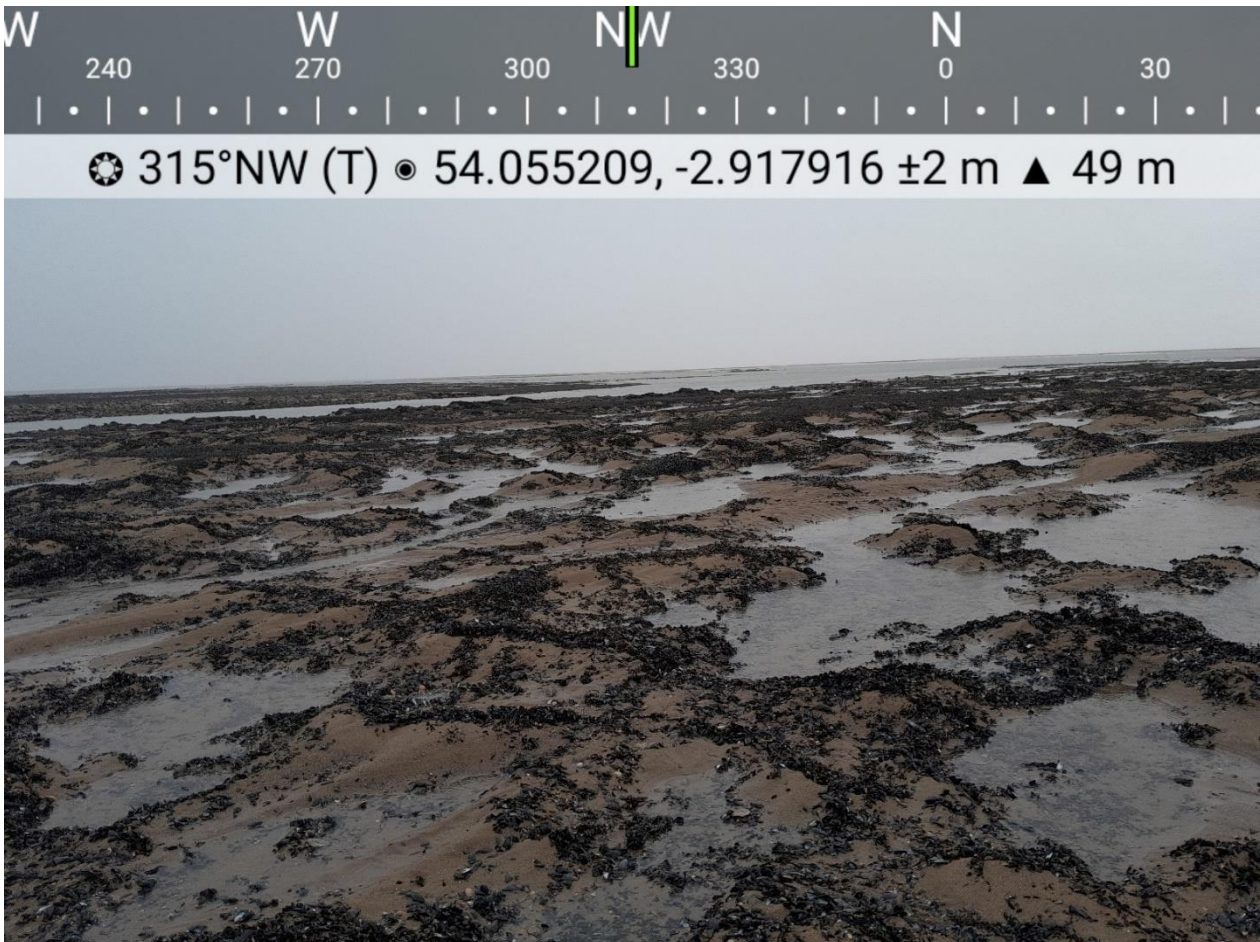


Figure 6. Evidence of scour close to Dallam Dyke 02-08-23.

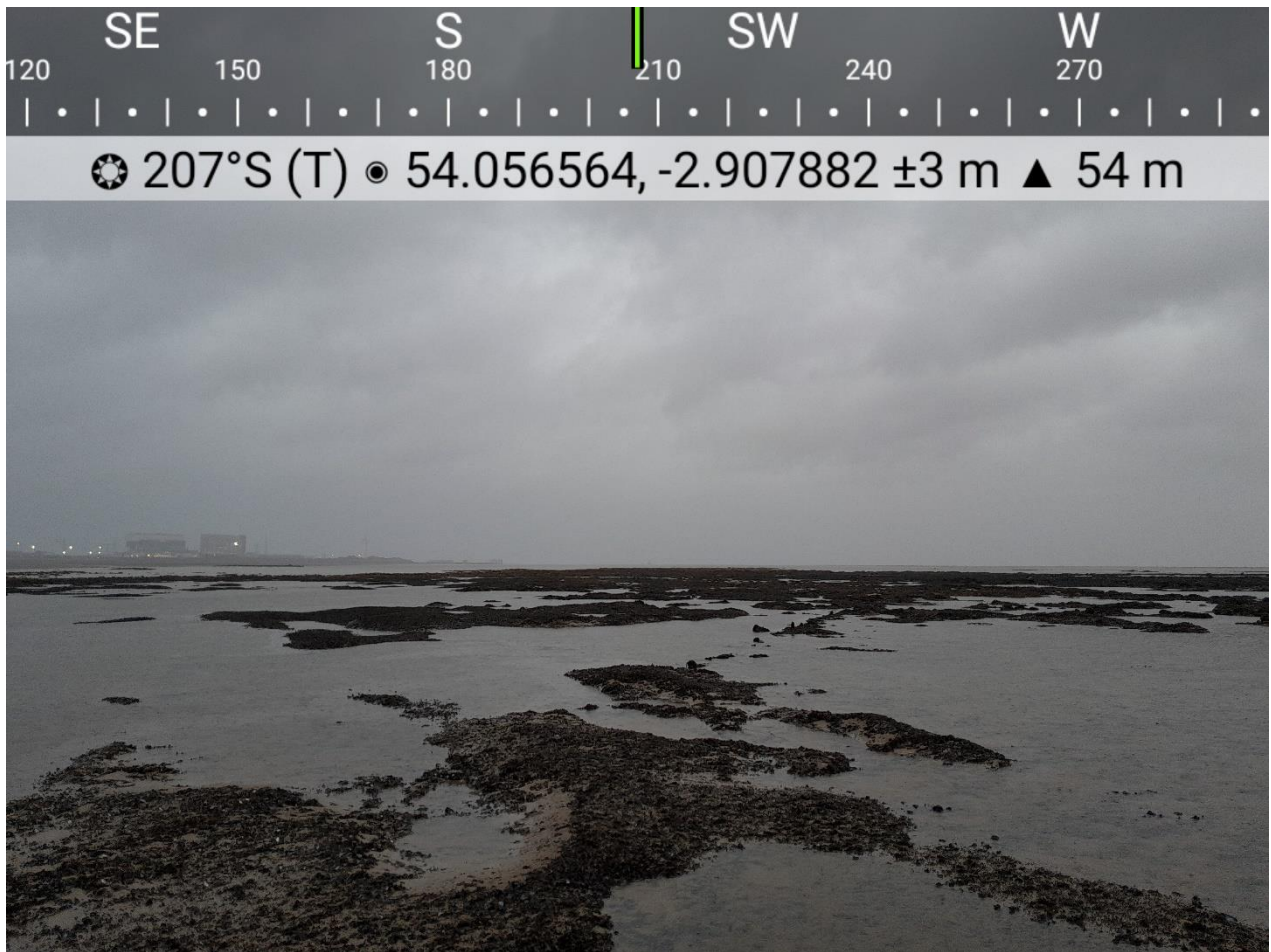


Figure 7. Scoured mussel on Heysham Flat 02-08-23.