

THE SURVEY REPORT

This report is the product of both field survey and desk based research. The following notes explain the terminology and short hand descriptions used throughout the report.

Site Description Entries

The gazetteer entries comprise a set of characteristics for each site. The categories are as follows:

Category	Example
Island	Coll
Map	15
Site code	C21
Grid reference	NM 2345 6331
Coll no.	146*
Site type	Site of alleged dun
NMRS no.	NM 26SW12
Status	(only relevant when a site has been designated as scheduled/listed)
HS Index	(for scheduled sites only: Historic Scotland index number for scheduled sites)
Place name	Dun Morbaidh
Location to the coast	On coast edge
Condition	Poor
Recommendation	Monitor
Date range	Unknown

* Coll no. refers to Coll Archaeological Association site number. This entry is not relevant to Tiree because there is no locally held and separately numbered site list.

Site Code

Each site has been given a unique reference code for the purposes of this survey. The letter which begins each code refers to the survey area: eg C= Coll, T= Tiree.

Site Type

While the categories of site types has not been restricted to a predetermined list, some standardisation of descriptions has been made. For example ruinous buildings of 18-20th C date which could be positively identified have been divided into categories such as 'house', 'mill', 'out-building' etc. Where their use was not readily apparent, they have been described as 'structures'. The use of 'croft' or 'farmstead' has been avoided where the designation of the land or association of land with buildings was not readily known.

Prehistoric sites, particularly mounds and eroding middens, were frequently difficult to date and characterise from the visible remains. The identification of mounds as burial monuments or more

recent farm or refuse mounds, for example, was made on the basis of previously recorded information, or where this was not available, the most probable explanation of the visible remains.

Date Range

The date ranges set out for various site types within this report are based on comparison with similar sites in the area which have already been dated or characterised. These ranges represent a general consensus; it must be noted that there is much debate about the date ranges of specific sites (such as brochs, for example). It is also likely that there are many local variations which provide exceptions to the rule. The date ranges used are as follows:

4th-3rd millennium BC

3rd-1st millennium BC

1st millennium BC-1st millennium AD

10th century AD-14th century AD

14th century AD- 18th century AD

18th century AD- 20th century AD

Condition

The condition of each site entry was labelled using the following criteria:

Good: This label was applied where a site exhibited either high potential or had sufficient visible elements surviving to properly characterise it. An archaeological site was considered to be in 'good' condition where it was undisturbed or only slightly disturbed and retained obvious archaeological potential. Further work at such sites could reasonably be expected to provide information regarding date, nature, extent and complexity. Buildings (especially the large category of 18th/20th C structures) were considered 'good' where there were multiple site elements represented and survived in a reasonable enough condition to provide information regarding their construction, development and use.

Fair: This label was applied to sites considered to have some potential or where limited elements remained and the site could be generally characterised. Archaeological sites of this type were generally somewhat disturbed but retained some potential; a sufficient part of the site remains that it could be more fully characterised via excavation. Standing buildings were considered 'fair' when, although ruinous or disturbed, sufficient of the site remained that it could be generally characterised.

Poor: Sites described as 'poor' have visible elements which are very disturbed and offer little potential for further characterisation. This assumption was made on the basis of the evidence available at the time of this survey and it must be noted that, without recourse to full assessment, the true potential of many sites can only be estimated.

Recommendations

Three types of action have been recommended:

Survey: This has been used as a general term covering all forms of further archaeological investigation or site protection. It includes topographical survey, section recording, trial trenching and open area excavation.

Monitor: This is recommended either to keep a site of known potential under surveillance or to check for new exposures on sites currently considered to be of low or unknown potential. This will entail regular site inspections and include cross-checking of known information against new exposures and should be carried out by an archaeologist.

Nil: No action has been recommended where a site is not immediately vulnerable to change, or is of very low potential.

Hinterland Geology and Coastal Geomorphology: Gazetteer Entries

The gazetteer entries comprise a set of characteristics for each coastal unit. The categories are as follows:

C a t e g o r y	E x a m p l e
Label - Place name	2. Carnan
Grid Reference (to centre of area)	NM084 494
Length of Unit	1.8km
Foreshore Type	Sandy foreshore
Coast Edge Type	<5m
Hinterland Type	Drift/rock interface not generally visible
Description	Narrow sandy foreshore.....

Erosion Class: Gazetteer Entries

The gazetteer entries comprise a set of characteristics for each coastal unit. The categories are as follows

C a t e g o r y	E x a m p l e
Label - Place name	2. Millton
Grid Reference (to centre of area)	NM096 476
Length of Unit	5.9km
Erosion Class at time of visit	Stable
Description	Gradual transition from previous unit.....

Erosion Classes

The following definitions have been used:

Eroding: Where more than 70% of the coastline is actively eroding.

Eroding to Stable: Where there is both active erosion and stable areas, with 30-70% of either one.

Stable: A section which is more than 70% stable. Usually any erosion is limited and local; any variation is specified in the accompanying text.

Accreting to Stable: Where there are both accreting and stable areas, with 30-70% of either one

Accreting: A section with accretion over more than 70% of its length.

Accreting/Eroding: There are both accreting and eroding processes taking place and may vary from 20% to 80% of each process. The erosion and accretion may not be arranged in a linear fashion along the coastline; there may be erosion of the coastal edge and deposition of sands along the foreshore.

BUILT HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY: ANALYSIS

Total number of Sites

A total of 260 sites were found by this survey. Of these, 73 had been previously recorded and 187 were new discoveries. The percentage of new sites found within the entire survey area is 71.92 %. Broken down, the percentage of new sites found on Coll represents 71.42 % of all sites recorded on that island, while on Tiree the figure is 72.34 %.

	Coll	Tiree	Total
New sites found by this survey	85	102	187
Previously recorded sites	34	39	73
Total	119	141	260

Date Range

The largest number of sites recorded by this survey were ascribed a date within the 18-20th C range. These accounted for 63.46 % of all sites recorded. The second largest group could not be ascribed a date range ('Unknown date'). These sites accounted for 22.69 % of all sites recorded. Sites of 1st millennium BC- 1st millennium AD accounted for 6.92 % of all sites recorded. A total of 5 % of all sites recorded by this survey were ascribed a date in the 3rd-1st millennium BC range. Sites of 14-18th C date amounted to 1.53 % of all the sites recorded while those of 4th-3rd millennium BC accounted for 0.38 %. No sites of 10-14th C were identified within the survey area.

Site Density

Despite having quite different coastlines, the frequency of sites found per kilometre on Coll and Tiree are remarkably similar. On Coll the average number of sites found per kilometre of coastline surveyed was 1.23, on Tiree it was 1.53.

	Coll	Tiree
Length of coastline	96.1km	92km
Total number of sites	119	141
Frequency of sites per km	1.23	1.53

Low site visibility on the rougher coastlines of Coll and the poorer survival of some site types on this island may be a contributing factor to the lower frequency of sites. The large number of agricultural/pastoral remains on Tiree will have contributed significantly to the higher number of sites recorded here.

The frequency of sites per kilometre is comparable to that found during similar coastal surveys carried out on Shetland. The survey areas here comprised both of low lying coasts and higher, rougher terrain. Site visibility and survival also varied greatly throughout the survey area.

Comparison of Survey Areas: Site Density per Km

Coll	1.23 sites per km
Tiree	1.53 sites per km
Northmavine	1.5 sites per km
Westside	1.5 sites per km
Whalsay	1.6 sites per km
Lunnasting	1.7 sites per km
South Mainland	1.3 sites per km
West Burra	1.5 sites per km
East Burra	2.6 sites per km
Trondra	2.4 sites per km

ANALYSIS OF SITES ACCORDING TO DATE AND TYPE

Sites of 4th to 3rd Millennium BC

Only one site of this date range was identified on Coll and no sites were found on Tiree. The site on Coll (C110) is a previously recorded find spot at which tools of possible Mesolithic date were recovered in the past. The true date of these remains is unknown and thus the date range to which the site has been ascribed is at best conjectural.

Sites of 3rd to 1st Millennium BC

Date Range

A total of 13 sites of estimated 3-1st millennium date were identified by this survey.

3rd-1st millennium BC Sites

	Previously Known	New	Total
Coll	5	6	11
Tiree	0	2	2
Total	5	8	13

A total of eleven sites of this date range were identified on Coll. Of these five sites had been recorded previously and six sites were identified by this survey. On Tiree, two sites were identified by this survey; none had been recorded previously. In total, the new sites of this date range represent an increase of 61.53 %. Sites of this date range represent 5 % of all sites recorded by this survey.

Site Types (3rd-1st millenium BC)

Two types of sites were represented within this date range: settlement remains and burials. A higher number of sites are known on Coll than on Tiree due to the fact that more fieldwork has been carried out there. Many of the sites lie with sandy areas and are prone to erosion.

Site types: 3rd-1st millennium BC	Coll	Tiree	Total
Burial	5	2	7
Settlement	6	0	6
Total	11	2	13

A campaign of artefact collection from such areas has been carried out in recent years on Coll (Crawford, 1999) and it is from this work that most of our knowledge of sites of this period is based. Unstratified artefact collections provide a coarse indication of site location but provide no contextual information. Many of the sites recorded within this date range have been categorised as settlements on the basis that pottery and midden-type deposits have been identified there in the past. This must be regarded as an extremely provisional interpretation since the presence of such materials is not restricted to settlement contexts and, furthermore, there is presently no reason to suppose that some or all of the material is in a primary context. At best, these locations may provide a good starting point for any future investigation.

Sites of 1st Millennium BC to 1st Millennium AD

Date Range

A total of eighteen sites found during the survey were ascribed a date within this range.

1st millennium BC- 1st millennium AD Sites

	Previously Known	New	Total
Coll	5	0	5
Tiree	12	1	13
Total	17	1	18

Sites of 1st millennium BC- 1st millennium AD accounted for 6.92 % of all sites recorded. Five sites were recorded on Coll, all of which had been recorded previously. Thirteen sites were recorded on Tiree, of which all but one had been recorded previously.

Site Types

Site types: 1st millennium BC-1st millennium AD

	Coll	Tiree	Total
Dun	2	8	10
Broch	0	3	3
Settlement	1	1	2
Church	0	1	1
Burial	1	0	1
Find	1	0	1
Total	5	13	18

The duns and broch of Tiree have been commented on at length by previous archaeological commentators. Despite the depredations to their fabric described by Beveridge (1903), they remain as visible monuments within the landscape. The same cannot be said for Coll. The lack of almost any archaeological remains at many of the alleged dun sites has led to their classification within this report as sites of unknown date. If it were not for the fact that they had been recorded previously, it is doubtful if any such sites would have been included within this survey.

The burial site noted on Coll was reported previously and appears to have been of Viking date. There is no longer any visible archaeological remains at the site.

Sites of 10th to 14th C AD

No sites of this date range were identified by the survey on Coll or Tiree. It is possible that sites of this period do exist within the coastal zone but that they are not readily datable from their surface remains alone. It is also probable that site types such as pre-Reformation chapels may incorporate elements of this period within their fabric. Two sites which have been classified as being of unknown date (C51 and T63) may in fact belong to this period, although this could not be ascertained from the visible remains. C51 may be the remains of a chapel, while T63 may be either the remains of a Norse house or of a chapel and burial ground.

Sites of 14th to 18th C AD

Date Range

Four sites were ascribed a date within the 14th-18th C date range. Sites of this period represent 1.53 % of all the sites recorded during this survey.

14th - 18th C AD Sites	Previously Known	New	Total
Coll	2	1	3
Tiree	0	1	1
Total	2	2	4

Site Types (14th to 18th C AD)

The site types represented are burial and settlement remains. The settlements on Coll include an abandoned township and a probable black house and associated field system. The burial site is represented by the graveyard at Crossapol which contains sculptured stones and is the site of an early church. The settlement remains on Tiree are represented by a probable house platform and associated old cultivations. It is probable that some of the settlement and agricultural /pastoral sites recorded on both islands incorporate or are built on the foundations of buildings which predate the 18th C. It was not possible to discern where this was the case without more detailed examination both of the structures and of the documentary and cartographic records.

Site types: 14th - 18th C AD	Coll	Tiree	Total
Settlement	2	1	3
Burial	1	0	1
Total	3	1	4

Sites of 18th to 20th C AD

Date Range

One hundred and sixty five sites of 18th-20th C date were recorded by this survey. Of these, some one hundred and forty six sites, or 88.48 %, are recorded here for the first time.

18th - 20th C AD Sites	Previously Known	New	Total
Coll	8	76	84
Tiree	11	70	81
Total	19	146	165

These sites make up 63.46 % of all sites recorded, the largest single group found by this survey. The large numbers of new sites of this period can be accounted for by the fact that previous surveys tended not to record all sites of this period and generally did not record agricultural/pastoral remains. In contrast, the remit of this survey was to record sites of all types and dates within the coastal zone. In some cases, boundaries and enclosures recorded here are also shown on OS maps but have not been ascribed an entry within the National Monuments Survey Record.

Site Types (18th to 20th C AD)

The largest type of site within this category were agricultural/pastoral remains. These include land and field boundaries, sheep folds, enclosures and old cultivated ground. Kelp kilns and kelp drying

walls account for 19.45 % of sites within this date range. This category includes remains thought to date from the 1700's and early 1800's as well as several kelp drying walls of more modern date. Abandoned settlements, both isolated houses and townships, account for some 17.29 % of all sites of 18th-20th C date. Maritime sites, including slipways, jetties, harbours and boat noosts, account for a similar percentage of sites within this date range. Within the 'other' category are included WWII remains, mounds and indeterminate structural remains.

Site types: 18th - 20th C AD	Coll	Tiree	Total
Settlement	15	17	32
Agricultural/pastoral	44	27	71
Maritime	22	10	32
Kelp Industry	1	35	36
Other	2	12	14
Total	84	101	185

Sites of Unknown Date

Date Range

The second largest group of sites identified by this survey could not be ascribed a date range. In total, sixty sites of unknown date were recorded. Of these, 49.15 % had been recorded previously and 50.84 % represent new sites. These sites accounted for 22.69 % of all sites recorded.

Sites of Unknown Date	Previously Known	New	Total
Coll	10	8	18
Tiree	19	22	41
Total	29	30	59

Site Types (unknown date)

Included within this category are those sites for which a date range could not be ascribed. In some cases, the remains were too poorly preserved to determine their nature or date, in others the site type could be determined. The largest single group within this category is represented by mounds and cairns which formed 18.46 % of all sites within this category. Some of these sites may be burial monuments or the remains of prehistoric structures, alternatively, they may be clearance cairns or refuse heaps of recent date. The rock cut basins form a distinct group within this category. Generally they are cut into rocks close to the shore and occasionally below water level. The number of sites represented here is likely to be but a small percentage of the total number of sites which exist on both islands. The function and date of these features is unknown, although it has been hypothesised that they may either be carvings of prehistoric origin or that they are of more recent date and were used as mortars for grinding bait.

Site types: Unknown date	Coll	Tiree	Total
Rock cut basins	4	5	9
Cairn/mound	5	7	12
Indeterminate remains	4	7	11
Settlement	3	6	9
Structural remains	4	7	11
Agricultural/pastoral	0	8	8
Maritime	0	2	2

Other	0	1	1
Find spot	1	1	2
Total	21	44	65

Site Location in Relation to the Coast

The largest group of sites recorded lay on the coast edge (28.07 %). These included sites with strong coastal affinities, such as kelp workings, jetties and slipways, as well as sites without particular coastal affinities, such as houses and settlement and burial sites. The second largest group lay within 10m of the coast edge (23.07 %) and included a wide range of sites both with and without strong coastal affinities. The low numbers of sites found less than 100m from the coast reflects the fact that this survey was primarily concerned with examining the 50m coastal strip, although sites behind this point were recorded either where they were clearly visible or where they were associated with remains lying within the 50m strip. Very few sites (3.07) were recorded in the area beyond 100m from the coast because, strictly speaking, this area lay outside of the remit of this survey. The sites recorded in this zone either formed very visible features in the landscape or were found on journeys into or out from the coastal zone.

	Coll	Tiree	Total
On coast	28	45	73
<10m	20	40	60
<20m	18	26	44
<50m	29	20	49
<100m	9	8	17
>100m	8	0	8
Tidal/maritime zone	7	2	9
Total	119	141	260

Site Designation

In the survey area there are four sites which have been scheduled as ancient monuments and one site has been listed. The number of designated sites within the survey area amounts to 1.92 % of all sites within this area and 6.8 % of all sites which had been recorded prior to this survey.

Designation	Coll	Tiree	Total
Scheduled & Listed	0	0	0
Scheduled	0	4	4
Listed	1	0	1
Total	1	4	5

Site Condition

The most common condition in which sites were found to survive was described as 'fair' (63.46 %). The sites within this category were considered to retain some archaeological potential and generally to be capable of being characterised, though in most cases further characterisation is likely to require invasive assessment at a minimum and, in some cases, more extensive excavation. With regard to standing buildings, this description indicates that the remains, though incomplete, are sufficiently well preserved to permit a general characterisation of the remains to be made.

	Coll	Tiree	Total
Good	9	13	22
Good/fair	1	3	4
Fair	86	79	165
Fair/poor	10	26	36
Poor	13	20	33
Total	119	141	260

A total of 13.84 % of the sites within the survey area were thought to be in fair/poor condition. This description indicates that while it is possible that the site retains some archaeological potential, the extent of this may be low. In such cases some further assessment may be warranted but it is unlikely that more extensive archaeological work would be justified.

Sites described as good (8.46 %) or good/fair (1.53 %) retain sufficient visible elements to characterise or generally characterise the remains. In many cases, such sites may be considered to be of high or medium archaeological potential and further work could reasonably be expected to generate new information about the site and its environs. In some cases, sites under this description have already been partially excavated or, in the case of standing buildings, conserved or renovated. In such cases the sites can be readily characterised but there may be no justification for further work.

Sites described as being in poor condition (12.6 %) have few surviving visible elements and, from an inspection of the surface remains, do not appear to hold out much or any archaeological potential. In some cases it may be worthwhile monitoring such sites since the most visible element may be also the most badly preserved and new exposures may require the site condition to be reassessed.

Recommendations

The largest group (64.6 %) of sites within the survey area are considered to require no further attention. It may be worthwhile monitoring such sites on an occasional basis to check for any new exposures, however.

	Coll	Tiree	Total
Survey	36	14	50
Monitor	16	26	42
Nil	67	101	168

Survey, in the form of field mapping, remote sensing or invasive archaeological assessment or excavation has been recommended on a total of 19.23 % of the sites within the survey area. Within this group, a greater amount of sites on Coll are thought to require such attention than on Tiree.

Monitoring has been recommended on a total of 16.15 % of sites within the survey area. In the case of sites located on the coast edge, within sandy areas or within the tidal and marine zones, it may be appropriate to carry out regular monitoring of the remains and particularly following storms. For sites set back from the coast edge, site monitoring under different conditions, for example when vegetation is low or when there has been snow or drought, may be useful since hitherto unrecorded features may then be revealed. Sites on farmed land or in areas of high animal or human traffic should be monitored to check for damage to the remains.