

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This work has demonstrated that the coastal zones of Coll and Tiree are rich in archaeological remains. Sites of almost all periods have been recognised and many have been found to be of high archaeological potential. The average number of sites found per kilometre is comparable to other survey areas, such as Shetland, although a larger amount of sites on Coll and Tiree are of more recent date.

As might be expected on two small islands, most of the sites of pre-modern date were recorded prior to this survey. This is, in part, due to the high visibility of the duns, forts and brochs which make up a good proportion of the prehistoric remains. The early publication of many sites on the islands by Beveridge has ensured that their location, if not their structures, have been preserved. Recent campaigns of artefact collection and publication by Crawford, Holley and others on Coll has further indicated the existence of sites ranging from the Mesolithic periods through to the post-Medieval period amongst the sand hills.

This survey has been able to add several new sites of probable early date to this list, however. On Coll, a probable enclosed settlement at Creag an Fhithich (C89) and two groups of probable early burial mounds at Fiskary Bay and Garbhaird (C94, C97) are of particular interest. These sites were known to their landowners but had not been previously recorded. On Tiree, a possible prehistoric enclosure and field system was noted at Port Snoig (T84), an eroding site of possible prehistoric date was noted at Salum (T20) and two mounds were identified at Salum and Crossapol as possible burial monuments (T18, T75).

Of later date, this survey has added two potentially important sites to the record. These are the possible early church at Port an Duine (C51) on Coll and the remains of a building which may be either a Norse house or an early chapel at Loch Dubh a Gharaidh Fail (T63) on Tiree.

The new sites reported by this survey have been predominantly of 18th - 20th C date. Numerous remains associated with kelp working were recorded on Tiree, where it is known that this industry flourished in the later 1700's when around 500 tons of kelp were produced annually, finally ending in the mid-1800's. (NSA, 216). More recently ware was collected from the shores on a casual basis and when dried was sold for processing on the mainland. This trade has now also come to an end. The numerous remains of drying walls and kilns scattered throughout the island and concentrated on the isle of Soa, amongst other places, bears testament to the scale of an industry that brought much needed income to the island in the past.

On Coll, the remains of isolated farmsteads of probable 18th-19th C date, including a possible black house, were identified on the rugged south eastern coast, which today is completely uninhabited and barely accessible. Beside the houses there are small fields which bear traces of spade cultivation and nearby are the remains of old peat banks. The tenacity of a people constrained to make a living under such harsh conditions is here very apparent. It is not improbable to suppose that these abandoned dwellings may represent the settlements of people who were cleared from the land and forced into emigration to Canada and Australia in the mid 1800's.

A second important finding of this work has been the recognition that, while a high proportion of sites are situated close to the coast edge, few are being actively eroded by the sea. In contrast with the findings of similar surveys carried out in the Northern Isles, only one site on Tiree was found to be eroding out of the coast edge (T20) and no such sites were found on Coll. Wind erosion, and in particular the movement of sand, appears to play a greater role in exposing sites on both

islands. In some cases, remains in sandy areas which had been reported previously were found to be no longer visible, suggesting that they had been covered up again by blown sand. In one case, an extensive multi-period site at Port an tSaoir on Coll (C69) was found in an acute state of degradation due to the removal of sand cover from the area.

The lack of rabbits on Tiree has apparently assisted in maintaining stable conditions amongst the sandy areas. The rabbit population on Coll appears low and has been subject to culling in the past (Dawson, 1999) and this, and low cattle stocking, would appear to be a factor in maintaining a relatively stable environment. but a more detailed study of the problem would be required to assess the impact of rabbit burrowing on the sandy areas and, in particular, the archaeological remains located within them.

Few other pressures on the archaeological sites of both islands could be identified. It would appear that much of the damage caused to the archaeology by human agency has occurred in the past. This was remarked upon in the Statistical Account of 1791-99 and the New Statistical Account of 1845; it was also noted by Beveridge. It appears that many sites were robbed of stone or levelled in favour of agricultural expansion in the period up to the early 20th C. We may forever regret the disposal of probable Viking graves at Cornaigbeg on Tiree and Grishipoll On Coll, the sale 'for a trifle' of a probable prehistoric gold ornament and the disposal of several hoards of Viking silver from the islands (Statistical Account, 402) , but it must be seen that these depredations occurred at a time when both islands were under extreme population pressure and absolute poverty was rife.

To continue to redress the balance, it is recommended that both islands would benefit from further archaeological investigation and continued site monitoring. While the collection of unstratified artefacts from sites on Coll has usefully provided pointers towards the location and date ranges of sites amongst the sand hills, the practise should be abandoned in favour of more rigorous mapping of exposed remains and, where necessary, the systematic collection of loose finds. Several finds collections held locally on Tiree which have not yet been published, could usefully be brought to the attention of the museum services for analysis and publication. Sharing of information between groups within the community, between communities on both islands and with the national statutory bodies concerned with archaeology and heritage can be of benefit to all.

This type of survey, defined as coastal zone assessment, has been designed as a rapid means of gaining a 'snapshot' in to the built heritage and archaeology of the coastal zone. The results provide a broad indication of the types and number of sites to be found and document their visible condition. What this work cannot claim to provide is an exhaustive list or detailed account of the archaeology. As such, the findings recorded here should be approached as a preliminary statement to be augmented, updated and revised as more information becomes available. It is probable that many more sites of all dates lie within the coastal zone and are yet to be discovered. It seems likely that many sites remain to be found within the sand hills of both islands. For this reason, continued monitoring and reporting of new discoveries is to be encouraged.

It is hoped that this report will be of interest and use to all those with an interest in the rich heritage of these islands and that it will act as a spring board for future investigations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Every site recorded within this survey has been assessed to determine if further investigative work is required. The conclusions are given in outline form in the site gazetteers and site descriptions which form the body of this report. In those sections recommendations are given as one of three types: Survey, Monitor or Nil, in accordance with Historic Scotland guidelines.

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

This section expands upon the specific type of work required where survey or monitoring has been recommended. These sites have been divided into two categories:

Category 1: Assessment required

Category 2: Monitoring required

The main criteria used to categorise sites were the level of vulnerability to destruction, followed by the degree of archaeological potential.

Category 1 sites are likely to be of high archaeological potential.

The monitoring of Category 2 sites 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.

COLL - CATEGORY 1: ASSESSMENT REQUIRED

SITE	MAP	NGR GRID REF	SITE TYPE	PLACENAME	DATE
C1	1	NM 27172 63192	Domestic/maritime/agricultural	Sorisdale	18-20th C
C4	2	NM 27137 62353	Other	Bagh na Coille	Unknown
C8	3	NM 25332 59308	Agricultural/pastoral/Domestic	Port an Fhion	18-20th C
C12	1	NM 27394 63678	Agricultural/pastoral	Traigh Tuath (south)	Unknown
C13	1	NM 2721 6384	Domestic	Traigh Tuath, Sorisdale	Unknown
C14	1	NM 26175 63925	Agricultural/pastoral/Domestic	Eileraig	18-20th C
C29	13	NM 19218 59873	Domestic	Grishipoll	3rd-1st mill BC
C34	3	NM 25207 59082	Agricultural/pastoral/Domestic	Port an Fhion	18-20th C
C43	4	NM 22532 58012	Indeterminate	Loch Urbhaig (SW of)	Unknown
C47	9	NM 12610 52676	Agricultural/pastoral/Domestic	Caoles (SE of)	18-20th C
C50	9	NM 12581 52072	Indeterminate	Port an Duine (N of)	Unknown
C51	9	NM 12586 52070	Indeterminate	Port an Duine (N)	Unknown
C53	9	NM 12338 51696	Indeterminate	Port Ban	18-20th C
C56	9	NM 11091 52977	Agricultural/pastoral	Calgary Point (N of)	18-20th C
C57	9	NM 11925 53289	Agricultural/pastoral	Eilean Halum (SW of)	18-20th C
C58	10	NM 12529 53829	Agricultural/pastoral/Indeterm	Traigh Halum	18-20th C
C60	12	NM 17188 57828	Agricultural/pastoral	Traigh Hogh	18-20th C
C61	12	NM 17383 58657	Agricultural/pastoral	Ballyhaugh (W of)	18-20th C
C63	12	NM 18077 58981	Agricultural/pastoral	Clabach (NW of)	18-20th C
C66	11	NM 16022 56853	Agricultural/pastoral	Cnocan Loisgte (W of)	18-20th C
C67	11	NM 15720 56524	Agricultural/pastoral	Dun Beic (N of)	18-20th C
C68	11	NM 15404 55938	Agricultural/pastoral	Creag na Druideige (SW of)	18-20th C
C69	11	NM 14825 54936	Domestic/Industrial	Port an tSaoir	1st mill BC-AD
C71	8	NM 15306 52144	Domestic	Port na Luinge (N of)	3rd -1st mill BC
C79	7	NM 17614 53388	Maritime	Loch Gortan	18-20th C
C80	7	NM 17677 52961	Indeterminate	Dun Ghortain	Unknown
C81	7	NM 17982 53269	Domestic/Agricultural/pastoral	Gortan	14-18th C/18-20th C
C84	7	NM 1898 5378	Domestic/Agricultural/pastoral	Friesland	14-18thC/18-20th C
C89	6	NM 1955 5334	Domestic/Agricultural/pastoral	Creag an Fhitich (SW of)	3rd-1st mill BC
C91	6	NM 19707 53824	Domestic/Agricultural/pastoral	Port na hEathar	18-20th C
C92	6	NM 19966 54144	Domestic/Maritime/Agricultural	Hyne	18-20th C
C93	6	NM 2103 5461	Domestic	Hyne (NE of)	3rd-1st mill BC
C94	5	NM 21091 54905	Funerary	Fiskary ((SW of)	3rd-1st mill BC
C95	5	NM 21091 54905	Agricultural/pastoral/maritime	Fiskary Bay	18-20th C
C96	5	NM 21290 54973	Maritime	Fiskary Bay	18-20th C
C97	5	NM 21729 55397	Funerary/Industrial	Gharbhaird	3rd-1st mill BC/18-20th C

COLL - CATEGORY 2: MONITORING REQUIRED

C5	2	NM 26521 61327	Defensive/Agricultural/pastoral	Dun Dulorichan/Laorachan	1st mill BC-AD
C21	15	NM 2345 6331	Indeterminate	Dun Morbaidh	Unknown
C24	14	NM 21780 61877	Funerary	Killunaig	3rd-1st mill BC
C27	13	NM 20401 61141	Domestic	Rubh'an t-Sean Chaisteil	3rd-1st mill BC
C30	13	NM 1903 5973	Domestic/Agricultural/pastoral	Grishipoll House	18-20th C
C45	9	NM12795 53062	Funerary	Crossapol	14-18th/18-20th C
C46	9	NM 12698 52810	Indeterminate	Caoles (SE of)	Unknown
C49	9	NM 12578 52105	Indeterminate	Caoles (S of)	Unknown
C88	6	NM 19355 53414	Indeterminate	Cnoc Shoirbidh (SE of)	Unknown
C109	1	NM 258 640	Indeterminate	Traigh Bhoud	Unknown
C110	1	NM 273 638	Domestic	Rubha Sgor-innis	4th-3rd mill BC
C114	8	NM 1353 5352	Indeterminate	Port Na Luinge	Unknown
C115	8	NM 1477 5212	Domestic	Glac Shilisteir (S of)	Unknown
C117	12	NM 188 599	Domestic	Grishipoll Bay	3rd-1st mill BC
C118	13	NM 191 598	Funerary	Grishipoll	1st mill BC- AD
C119	15	NM 242 634	Domestic	Cornaigmore	1st mill BC- ADI

TIREE - CATEGORY 1: ASSESSMENT REQUIRED

SITE	MAP	NGR GRID REF	SITE TYPE	PLACENAME	DATE
T20	15	NM 06656 48842	Indeterminate	Salum	Unknown
T25	7	NL 95688 40119	Domestic	Balephuill Bay (E side of)	18-20th C
T26	7	NL 95618 40138	Defensive/Domestic	Dunan Nighean	1st mill BC- AD
T28	8	NL 94189 40774	Maritime/Industrial	Balephuill Bay (W side)	18-20th C
T30	8	NL 93611 40099	Indeterminate	St. Patrick's chapel (W of)	Unknown
T31	8	NL 9350 4086	Defensive/Domestic	Dun nan Gall	Unknown
T32	8	NL 9360 4116	Defensive	An Dun, Eilean Dubh	Unknown
T45	1	NM 08743 47430	Domestic/Agricultural/pastoral	Milton	18-20th C
T48	2	NM 07688 47102	Defensive/Domestic	Dun Sgibinis	1st mill BC- AD
T57	14	NM 03875 49111	Agricultural/pastoral/Domestic	Loch an Fhaing (W of)	14-18th C
T61	14	NM 01687 48114	Agricultural/pastoral	Loch Aulaig	18-20th C
T62	14	NM 02696 48679	Indeterminate	Ringing Stone	Unknown
T63	14	NM 02756 48591	Indeterminate	Loch Dubh a Gharraidh Fail	Unknown
T84	7	NL 97107 38815	Agricultural/pastoral/Domestic	Port Snoig	Unknown

TIREE - CATEGORY 2: MONITORING REQUIRED

T3	3	NM 04227 46756	Indeterminate	Gott (N of)	Unknown
T4	3	NM 04761 47306	Indeterminate	Kirkapol	Unknown
T5	2	NM 05893 47575	Indeterminate	Kirkapol	Unknown
T6	3	NM 05517 47514	Indeterminate	Silversands, Kirkapol	Unknown
T13	16	NM 07537 49690	Indeterminate	Miodar (S of)	Unknown
T18	16	NM 06707 49040	Funerary	Salum Bay (N end of)	3-1st mill BC
T19	15	NM 06564 49032	Maritime	Salum Bay (N end of)	Unknown
T22	3	NM 04228 45914	Agricultural/pastoral	Gott (N of)	Unknown
T29	8	NL 93791 40119	Church	St. Patrick's Chapel	1st mill BC-AD
T36	13	NM 01357 48029	Defensive	Balephetrish, An Dun	1st mill BC-AD
T49	2	NM 07059 47157	Indeterminate	Ruaig (SE of)	Unknown
T64	13	NM 01866 48120	Indeterminate	Loch Aulaig	Unknown
T75	5	NL 99548 42990	Funerary	Crossapol (SW of)	3-1st mill BC
T80	6	NL 98672 39095	Defensive/Domestic	Dun Hynish	1st mill BC- AD
T83	7	NL 97431 38523	Defensive	Dun na Cleite	1st mill BC-AD
T85	7	NL 96421 38882	Defensive/Domestic	Dun Shiadair	1st mill BC- AD
T90	9	NL 93811 44881	Indeterminate	Traigh Thodhrasdail	Unknown
T91	9	NL 93293 45455	Domestic/Defensive	Dun Hanais	1st mill BC-AD
T105	11	NL 94955 47555	Defensive/Domestic	Dun Boraige Beag	1st mill BC- AD
T107	11	NL 94700 47557	Domestic/Defensive	Dun Boraige Moire	1st mill BC-AD
T116	4	NM 03913 43370	Defensive/Domestic	Dun Heanish	1st mill BC-AD
T129	15	NM 0423 4927	Domestic/Defensive	Dun Mor Vault	1st mill BC- AD
T130	15	NM 0463 4926	Defensive/Domestic	Dun Beag, Vault	1st mill BC- AD
T132	8	NL 9336 4006	Defensive/Domestic	Eilean na Ba	Unknown
T139	7	NL 972 386	Indeterminate	Port Snoig	Unknown
T141	8	NL 950 405	Domestic	Traigh Bheidhe	Unknown