

Tiree

Map 8: Balephuill Bay to Aird Mor

From the E end of Traigh Bhi at the head of Balephuill Bay, this map section extends around the headland of Ceanna Mhara and along the W coast of the island almost as far as Port Bharrapol. The coastal zone within this section varies from broad sandy beaches at Traigh Bhi and Traigh nan Gilean to high rocky ground around Ceanna Mhara. Modern settlement in the area is limited the cluster at West Hynish. The hinterland comprises of stable vegetated dunes through which several rough tracks run along the coast.

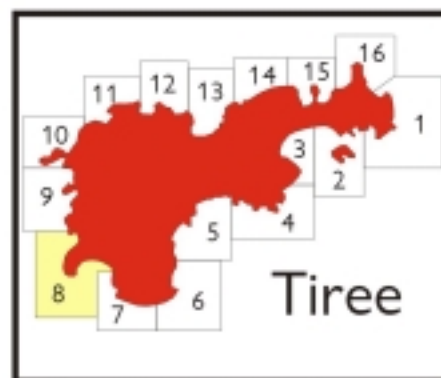
There is some erosion at the east and west ends of Traigh Bhi but the coast edge to the centre of this beach appears largely stable. From the west side of Balephuill Bay, around Ceann a Mhara and as far as Traigh nan Gilean, the coast edge is formed from rock platform and is stable. At Traigh nan Gilean the coast edge appears to be accreting with a small area of erosion noted at the centre of the beach. This accretion may be seasonal in nature but there is no indication that the coast edge in this area is other than generally stable.

A concentration of kelp working remains dating to the 18-20th C period were noted at SW corner of Balephuill Bay (T27, 28). Both walls and kilns survive and indicate this area as a former centre of kelp production. At the tip of Ceanna Mhara, the ruins of St. Patricks Chapel, possibly dating to the 7th C AD, are surrounded by an enclosure wall inside of which there are also traces of structures though to be monastic cells (T29). Two cross slabs and the remains of an alter survive with the chapel. The site is designated as a scheduled ancient monument. This stretch of high rocky coastline has also been the location for three fortified sites which have been recorded as duns. Two of these sites lie on naturally defensible promontories separated from the mainland by rock chasms (T31, 132), while the third (T32) is situated on a tidal islet. Whilst none of these sites was examined in detail, it is suggested that the possibility that Dun nan Gall (T31) at least, might be a monastic foundation rather than a fort.

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| <p>T27 NM 94189 40774 Balephuill Bay (W side) Enclosure, land boundary and kelp walls 18-20th C Fair Nil</p> | <p>T32 (NL94SW7) NL 9360 4116 An Dun, Eilean Dubh Dun/enclosed settlement Unknown Fair Survey</p> |
| <p>T28 NL94SW13 NL 94189 40774 Balephuill Bay (W side) Kelp working area: walls and kilns 18-20th C Fair Survey</p> | <p>T132 NL94SW6 NL 9336 4006 Eilean na Ba Fortified site/dun Unknown Fair/poor Monitor</p> |
| <p>T29 (NL94SW2) NL 93791 40119 St. Patrick's Chapel Church, enclosure, structural remains, cross- incised slabs 1st mill BC/1st mill AD Fair/poor Monitor</p> | <p>T141 (NL94SE15) NL 950 405 Traigh Bheidhe Midden deposits Unknown Poor Monitor</p> |
| <p>T30 NL 93611 40099 St. Patrick's chapel (W of) Enclosure Unknown Fair Survey</p> | |
| <p>T31 (NL94SW8) NL 9350 4086 Dun nan Gall Dun/enclosed settlement or possible monastic site Unknown Fair Survey</p> | |



- Built Heritage & Archaeology
- Protected Ancient Monument or area of Designated Wreck
 - Monument formally proposed by Historic Scotland for scheduling or wreck for designation
 - + Listed Historic Building
 - Undesignated wreck
 - Known ancient monument
 - Site found by this survey
 - Site complex



1. Balephuill Bay

NL 949 406

1.8 Km

Sandy foreshore

Coast edge <5m

Drift/rock interface not visible

A wide sandy bay which slopes gently towards the sea. Hinterland is an extensive dune system. A relict storm beach is exposed in a large blowout at NL 94951 40854.

3. Traigh nan Gilean

NL 939 418

1.2 Km

Sandy foreshore

Coast edge <5m

Drift/rock interface not visible

A sandy bay which slopes gently towards the sea, punctuated by occasional rock outcrops. Extensive dune system in hinterland.

2. Ceann a Mhara

NL 933 404

4.2 Km

Rock platform, cobble and boulder cover

Coast edge >5m

Drift/rock interface occasionally visible

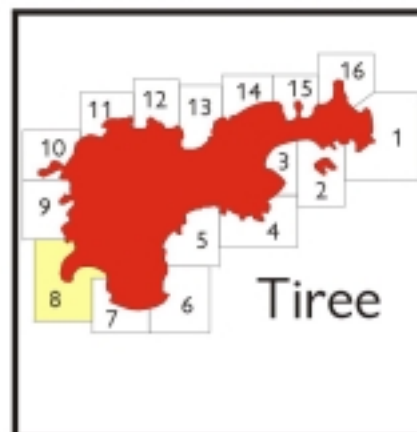
A rocky coast edge which rises to over 5m in height from Rinn Chircnis westwards. There are storm beaches in coves. The hinterland is rough grazing; imperfectly to poorly drained. Some new fencing in process of being erected on west side of Ceann a Mhara at time of visit.



- Foreshore**
- Rock platform
 - Mainly sand
 - Mainly alluvial/marine mud
 - Marsh

- Modifiers**
- Low edge <5m
 - Cliff >5m
 - Man made barrier
 - Shingle/storm bank
 - Human disturbance

- Hinterland**
- Drift
 - Drift on visible rock
 - Raised beach etc.
 - Blown sand
 - Glacial sand/gravel
 - Alluvium



1. Traigh Bhi

NL 949 406

1.8 Km

Eroding to stable

Coast edge formed by dunes, which appear to be eroding to stable in general but noticeably eroding at either end of Balephuill Bay. There are blowouts in the dunes behind coast edge, most small, <15m in diameter but some large, c.20-40m in diameter.

2. Ceann a Mhara

NL 933 404

4.2 Km

Stable

A high rocky coast edge with no signs of recent erosion.

3. Traigh nan Gilean

NL 939 418

1.2 Km

Eroding and accreting

The coast edge in this bay appears to be stable or accreting at either end while eroding in the middle. At the centre of the bay the coast edge is vertical and there are two medium sized blowouts in the hinterland. Fence lines have been moved back from the coast edge, apparently because the old ones have become buried by sand.



- Erosion Class
- Definitely Accreting
 - Accreting or Stable
 - Stable
 - Eroding or Stable
 - Definitely Eroding
 - Accreting and Eroding
 - No access
 - Land below 10m

