

## 4.13 *Map 13: Tongue Bay to Caol Raineach*

### 4.13.1 *Map Content Descriptions*

#### 1. *Built Heritage and Archaeology:*

A total of 19 sites were recorded in the area covered by Map 13. All but two sites are Post-Medieval in origin. The two exceptions are classified as being of unknown date. Over one-third of the sites recorded relate to the settlement at Skullomie and its monumental, Estate-built quay (NC 6170 6145; NC 66 SW 7; Gazetteer no 9). Elements of the settlements at Slettell (NC 6320 6335; NMRS Number NC 66 SW 10; Gazetteer no 12) and Strathan Skerray make up the remainder of the sites recorded.

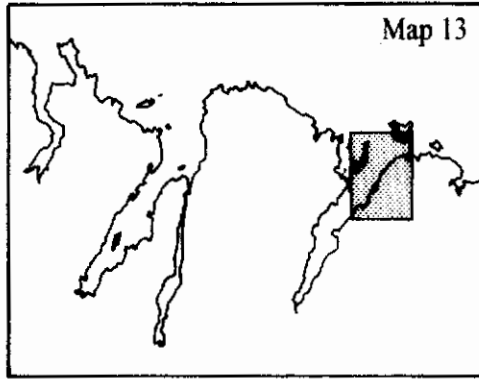
#### 2. *Erosion Class:*

The cliffs of this stretch of the coast sporadically exceed 100 m in height and are essentially stable. The sand filled Bàgh Chalbacaidh is accreting, possibly from the hooked-spit intertidal sand-bar at the NW, with the large climbing dunes obscuring much of the cliff-face behind. The quay at Skullomie, built on to the rock platforms of a small promontory, is being badly eroded by storm conditions. This destruction may have been initiated by the manual removal of dressed blocks to use elsewhere. The only other anomaly noted within the high, stable cliffs was the erosion at the rear of the Port an t-Strathain inlet.

#### 3. *Hinterland Geology and Coastal Geomorphology:*

This area begins with a short stretch of Moinian Quartzite Feldspar Granulite cliffs, which rise to 100m and more before plunging almost vertically to the sea. The hinterland is peat over visible bedrock along almost all of this area. Access to the sea is only easily possible at four points along these cliffs: the steep, climbing dunes of Bàgh Chalbacaidh; the low rock platforms of Skullomie and Sleiteil Rocks; and at the inlet of Port an t-Strathain. The fossil cliff can be traced all along this stretch of the coast. The area around Bàgh Chalbacaidh displays an outcrop of the Old Red Sandstone with the stretch to the N being conglomerates followed by schists.

Map 13



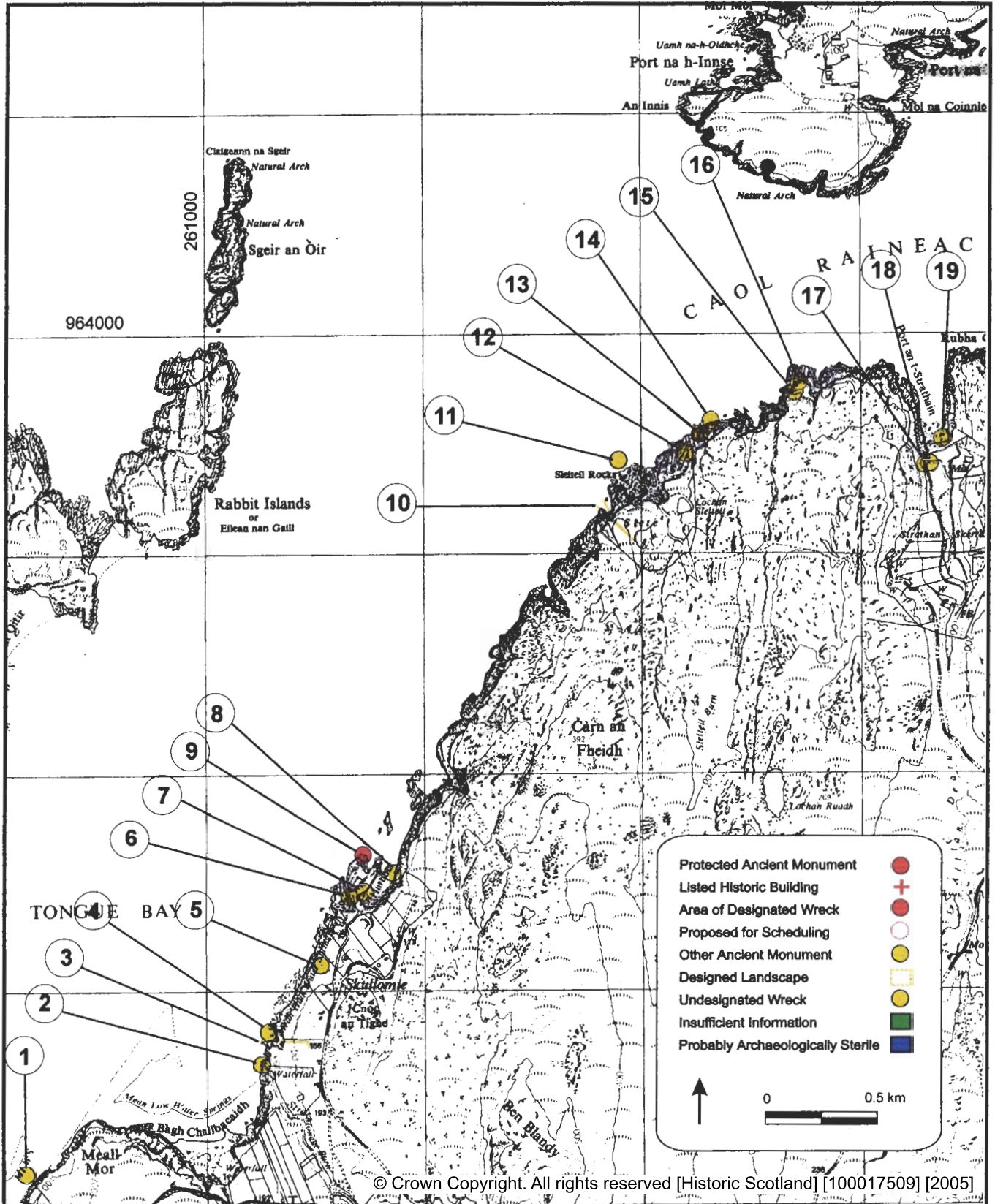
# MAP 13 TONGUE BAY TO CAOL RAINEACH

Built Heritage and Archaeology

NC66/76

Scale 1:25,000

Surveyed November 1997



## Map 13: Tongue Bay to Caol Raineach

### 4.13.2 The Built Heritage and Archaeology: Gazetteer

#### 1. TONGUE BAY (E)

**G/R:** NC 6010 6002  
**Location:** Cliff-edge above HWM and extending c 200 m into Hinterland  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Dyke  
**Date:** Post-Medieval  
**Condition:** Poor  
**Recommendation:** Monitor

#### 2. BÀGH CHALLBACAI DH

**G/R:** NC 6128 6055  
**Location:** Coast-edge above HWM  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Unknown  
**Date:** Unknown  
**Condition:** Fair  
**Recommendation:** Nil

#### 3. SKULLOMIE

**G/R:** NC 6140 6065 (centred)  
**Location:** Cliff-edge above HWM and extending over 100 m into Hinterland  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Drainage  
**Date:** Post-Improvement  
**Condition:** Fair  
**Recommendation:** Nil

#### 4. SKULLOMIE

**G/R:** NC 6130 6070 (centred)  
**Location:** Cliff-edge above HWM and extending over 100 m into Hinterland  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Cultivation  
**Date:** Post-Medieval  
**Condition:** Fair  
**Recommendation:** Nil

#### 5. SKULLOMIE

**G/R:** NC 6155 6100 (settlement: centred); 6154 6113 (cairns)  
**Location:** Hinterland, c 20-170 m from cliff-edge above HWM  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Buildings; dykes; enclosure; cairns  
**Date:** C19th/C20th  
**Condition:** Fair  
**Recommendation:** Survey

#### 6. SKULLOMIE

**G/R:** NC 6172 6135 (N end)  
**Location:** Hinterland, c 20-50 m from cliff-edge above HWM  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Revetment  
**Date:** C19th/C20th  
**Condition:** Poor  
**Recommendation:** Nil

#### 7. SKULLOMIE

**G/R:** NC 6174 6135  
**Location:** Hinterland, c 50 m from HWM  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Clearance-cairns  
**Date:** Post-Medieval  
**Condition:** Fair  
**Recommendation:** Nil

#### 8. SKULLOMIE

**G/R:** NC 6195 6149  
**Location:** Hinterland, c 30 m from cliff-edge above HWM  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Dykes; clearance-cairns  
**Date:** Post-Medieval  
**Condition:** Poor  
**Recommendation:** Survey

#### 9. SKULLOMIE

**G/R:** NC 6170 6145  
**Location:** Intertidal zone  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Harbour; quay; sea-wall  
**Date:** C19th  
**NMRS Number:** NC 66 SW 7  
**Listed - B**  
**Condition:** Fair  
**Recommendation:** Survey/Protection

#### 10. SLEITEIL

**G/R:** NC 6285 6309 (boundary)  
**Location:** Cliff-edge above HWM and extending up to 300 m into Hinterland  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Dykes  
**Date:** Post-Medieval  
**NMRS Number:** NC 66 SW 10 (settlement)  
**Condition:** Poor  
**Recommendation:** Survey

#### 11. SLEITEIL ROCKS

**G/R:** NC 6293 6333  
**Location:** Intertidal zone  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Slipway  
**Date:** Post-Medieval  
**NMRS Number:** NC 66 SW 10 (settlement)  
**Condition:** Poor  
**Recommendation:** Survey

#### 12. SLETTELL

**G/R:** NC 6320 6335 (centred)  
**Location:** Cliff-edge above HWM and extending 30 m into Hinterland  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Cultivation  
**Date:** ?Post-Medieval  
**NMRS Number:** NC 66 SW 10 (settlement)  
**Condition:** Fair  
**Recommendation:** Survey

#### 13. CAOL RAINEACH

**G/R:** NC 6329 6343  
**Location:** Hinterland, c 60 m from cliff-edge above HWM  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Cairn  
**Date:** Modern  
**Condition:** Good  
**Recommendation:** Nil



**14. CAOL RAINEACH**

**G/R:** NC 6335 6346 (centred)  
**Location:** Cliff-edge above HWM and extending c 70-100 m into Hinterland  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Drainage-channel  
**Date:** Post-Medieval  
**Condition:** Good  
**Recommendation:** Survey

**15. CAOL RAINEACH**

**G/R:** NC 6370 6362  
**Location:** Hinterland, 70 m from cliff-edge above HWM  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Cairn  
**Date:** Modern  
**Condition:** Good  
**Recommendation:** Nil

**16. CAOL RAINEACH**

**G/R:** NC 6375 6367  
**Location:** Hinterland, 60 m from cliff-edge above HWM  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Cairn  
**Date:** Modern  
**Condition:** Good  
**Recommendation:** Nil

**17. STRATHAN SKERRAY**

**G/R:** NC 6433 6328  
**Location:** Hinterland, 200 m from HWM  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Clearance-cairns  
**Date:** ?Post-Medieval  
**Condition:** Fair  
**Recommendation:** Survey

**18. STRATHAN SKERRAY**

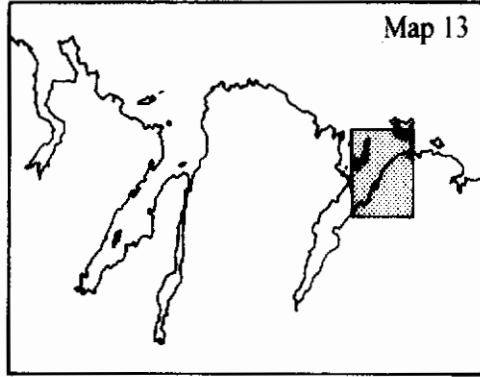
**G/R:** NC 6435 6329  
**Location:** Hinterland, 200 m from HWM  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Cairn  
**Date:** Unknown  
**Condition:** Fair  
**Recommendation:** Monitor

**19. STRATHAN**

**G/R:** NC 6440 6340  
**Location:** Hinterland, 90 m from HWM  
**1:10 560 Map:** NC 66 SW  
**Site Type:** Dyke  
**Date:** ?Post-Medieval  
**Condition:** Fair  
**Recommendation:** Survey



Map 13





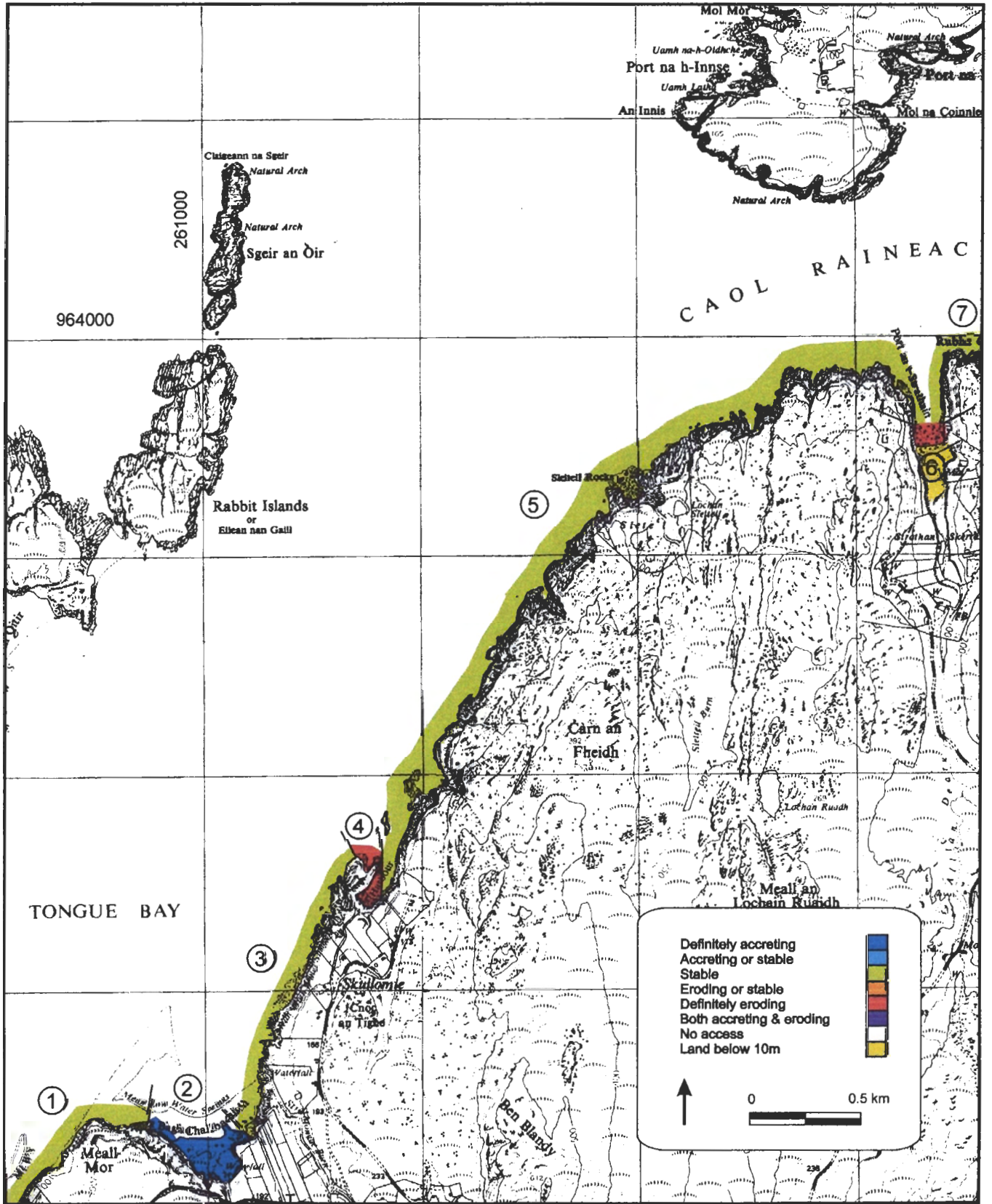
# MAP 13 TONGUE BAY TO CAOL RAINEACH

Erosion Class

NC66/76

Scale 1:25,000

Surveyed November 1997



## Map 13: Tongue Bay to Caol Raineach

### 4.13.3 Erosion Class: Gazetteer

#### 1. MEALL MOR

NC 260 960

1 km

Stable

The rock cliffs at the mouth of the Kyle are stable with no current evidence of either active erosion or accretion.

#### 2. BÀGH CHALLBACAIDH

NC 261 960

0.5 km

*Definitely accreting*

Coldbackie beach is one used by the tourist population in their visits to the area. It has a lay-by for parking and, as a result, the path down to the beach is suffering from erosion. Large areas of dune, through which the paths pass, are devoid of vegetation which allows the wind to remove the sand, and deposit it elsewhere. Most of the erosion is caused by trampling and grazing pressure. There are also large banks of sand in front of the cliffs, some in the form of climbing dunes, others detached from the cliff-face. Where they are detached from the cliff-face, access can be gained to caves. It is entirely possible that the climbing dunes, which cover much of the Moinian Quartzite Feldspar Granulite cliffs, have engulfed similar caves. On the beach, a new line of vegetation is beginning to develop, creating small embryo dunes in front of the existing yellow, or fore dunes. The new sediment, allowing the new accumulation of sand, may be coming from the definitive Coldbackie 'hooked spit', which is the distinctive intertidal sand-bar evident on the OS maps, and in Ritchie and Mather (1969) where it appears to be reducing in length and prominence. This could be due to changes in circulation caused by the causeway, but that is merely speculation. Ritchie and Mather (1969) state that "the great sand-spit and beach form a coastal entity created by the interplay of strong ebb-tide currents flowing north-eastwards out of the Kyle" further noting that "the beach, cliffs and caves have an intrinsic attractiveness".

#### 3. SKULLOMIE

NC 261 961

1.3 km

Stable

The steep rock cliffs of Skullomie are stable with no current evidence of either active erosion or accretion.

#### 4. SKULLOMIE HARBOUR

NC 261 961

0.15 km

*Definitely eroding*

Skullomie harbour is a particularly good example of a natural harbour which has been enhanced by engineering on a spectacular scale, without the use of modern equipment. The facing- and paving-stones are enormous (many are larger than 1.5 x 0.7 x 0.4m). It is for this reason, coupled with its sheltered location, that the poor state of this impressive structure was initially a puzzle. Erosion, probably due to the full force of the Atlantic breakers, exists at the northern end of the harbour. However, the real surprise is the erosion at the S end, where the harbour wall between the solid rock on either side was placed.

Much of the 'fill material' below these enormous stones has been washed out. However, there is no evidence for the current location of these missing blocks. It is therefore assumed that they have been removed, probably for construction uses elsewhere. Removal of just a few of these would allow the waves to remove the fill material from below, which in turn would undermine the neighbouring 'load bearing' blocks, producing a vicious circle. It would be difficult to preserve this structure in its current state, as it will continue to be damaged on a storm-by-storm basis. Restoration would be a large, but possibly worthwhile task. There is evidence of more recent filling behind the capstones of the flat western section of the harbour wall. This is in the form of gravel, as opposed to the original large stones. Therefore, when waves overtop the structure, they may remove the gravel fill, thus weakening the main structure, making further deterioration likely.

#### 5. SKULLOMIE-PORT AN T-STRATHAIN

NC 262 962

3.75 km

Stable

The rock cliffs between Skullomie Harbour and Port an t-Strathain are steep with no access to the sea except at the area around Sleiteil Rocks. This whole stretch is stable with no evidence of either active erosion or accretion.

#### 6. PORT AN T-STRATHAIN

NC 264 963

0.125 km

*Definitely eroding*

The small inlet at Strathan is subject to wave erosion from the sea. This is only likely to be a problem in storm conditions with high seas pushing the shingle back on to the hinterland. The rock cliffs at either side of the inlet appear stable and Eilean Nan Ròn may shelter this area from the worst effects of storms.

#### 7. RUBHA GEAL

NC 264 963

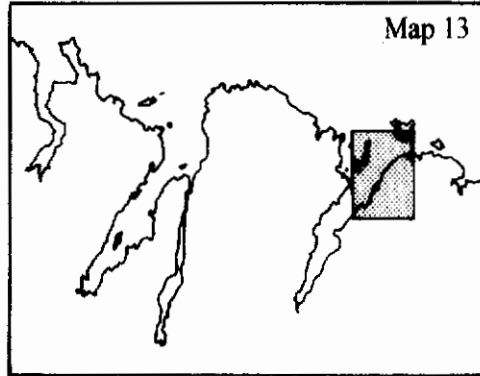
0.475 km

Stable

The epidiorite and hornblende schist rock cliffs of this stretch of the coast are steep and stable with no sign of either active erosion or accretion.



Map 13



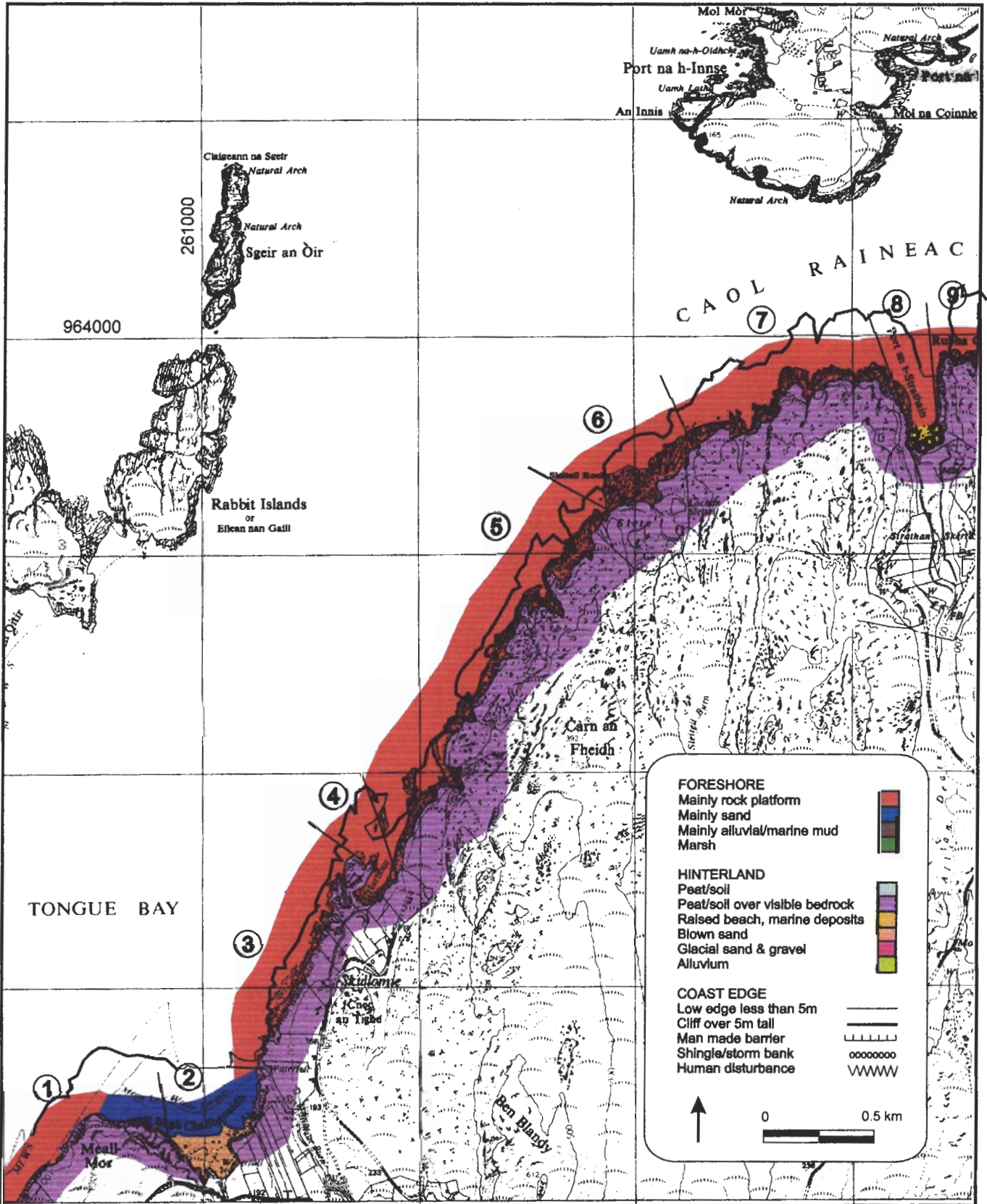
# MAP 13 TONGUE BAY TO CAOL RAINEACH

Hinterland Geology and Coastal Geomorphology

NC66/76

Scale 1:25,000

Surveyed November 1997



## Map 13: Tongue Bay to Caol Raineach

### 4.13.4 Hinterland Geology and Coastal Geomorphology: Gazetteer

#### 1. MEALL MOR

NC 260 960

0.6 km

Mainly rock platform

Cliff > 5 m

Peat/soil over visible rock

A continuation of the area described in no 7 of Map 11 (4.11.4 above). This short stretch of Moinian Quartzite Feldspar Granulite cliffs, which rise to 100 m and more, plunge almost vertically to the sea. The hinterland is peat over visible bedrock.

#### 2. BÀGH CHALLBACAIDH

NC 261 960

0.75 km

Mainly sand

Low edge < 5 m; cliffs > 5 m tall

Blown sand

The sand-filled bay lies between c 50 m high cliffs at the W and E. The foreshore itself is of sand into which the cliffs fall almost vertically, with the result that the coast-edges at the W and E are high cliff-faces topped with peat/soil in the hinterland. In the central area of the bay there is a low coast-edge immediately behind the MHWS, but the hinterland is then dominated by very large and steep sand-banks. Some of these banks are climbing dunes which obscure much of the Moinian Quartzite Feldspar Granulite cliffs, whilst others are detached from the cliff-faces.

#### 3. SKULLOMIE

NC 261 961

1.125 km

Mainly rock platform

Cliff > 5 m tall

Peat/soil over visible rock

The near-vertical cliffs in front of the township of Skullomie reach heights of 70-80 m and plunge straight into the sea below, with only some isolated low-level rock platforms evident. The hinterland is steeply gradiated peat/soil with some visible outcropping.

#### 4. SKULLOMIE HARBOUR

NC 261 961

0.25 km

Mainly rock platform

Low edge < 5 m

Peat/soil over visible rock

The high cliffs at the N and S fall away in this area to low-edge rock platforms with access from the peat/soil hinterland. This small natural harbour has been modified dramatically with the addition of a monumental pier and slipway.

#### 5. SKULLOMIE HARBOUR-SLEITEIL ROCKS

NC 262 962

2.125 km

Mainly rock platform

Cliffs > 5 m tall

Peat/soil over visible rock

At the N of Skullomie Harbour, the cliffs rise almost immediately to upwards of 70 m, a height that they maintain and occasionally exceed all the way to Sleiteil rocks. The cliff-faces are near-vertical to the sea with only occasional low-lying rock platforms evident below. The hinterland is rugged and peat-covered.

#### 6. SLEITEIL ROCKS

NC 263 963

0.5 km

Mainly rock platforms

Low edge < 5 m

Peat/soil over visible rock

The cliffs noted to the S are reduced in this area to low-edge rock platforms which slope into the sea. This has produced a very small natural harbour. The hinterland is low-lying and slopes up gradually to the E; it is covered by the peat/soil of the deserted township of Sleiteil.

#### 7. SLEITEIL ROCKS-PORT AN T-STRATHAIN

NC 263 963

1.375 km

Mainly rock platform

Cliff > 5 m

Peat/soil over visible rock

N of Sleiteil, the terrain is very similar to that described in Gazetteer no 5 above as the almost sheer cliffs climb to over 50 m in height above rock platforms at the sea. The hinterland is peat/soil over visible outcrops of the rock-shelf.

#### 8. PORT AN T-STRATHAIN

NC 264 963

0.150 km

Mainly rock platform

Low edge < 5 m; shingle beach

Raised beach; alluvium

The small inlet of Port an t-Strathain is bounded by high cliffs at the W and E. The rear of the inlet has a shingle beach which leads on to the low-lying, raised beach hinterland in a glacial valley.

#### 9. RUBHA GEAL

NC 264 963

0.475 km

Mainly rock platform

Cliff > 5 m tall

Peat/soil over visible rock

The cliffs at the E of Port an t-Strathain climb quickly to over 20 m and the hinterland geology and coastal geomorphology is the same as that described in nos 5 and 7 above.