

3.3 Camas Beag to Geodha Mór

1. **Hinterland Geology and Coastal Geomorphology:** This section of coastline is formed by the termination of the southern slopes of two hinterland mountains, Beanan Beaga (390m) and Ben Mór Coigach (743m), which are separated by a narrow gorge-like valley, Coire Mór. The coastline consists of a series of very steep, rocky slopes and cliffs (> 120m in height), presenting an extremely impressive, rugged facade when viewed from Loch Kanaird (Plate 12). The predominant rock-type throughout this section of coastline is Torridonian sandstone, which outcrops extensively at the coast edge to form this precipitous relief. The foreshore is very narrow and is characterised by continuous boulder strewn rock platforms punctuated by scree fans composed of large sub-angular blocks. Steep sided bays situated at the mouths of occasional hanging valleys contain boulder and cobble beaches. A series of badly drained shelves high above the shoreline have allowed peat deposits to develop adjacent to the coast edge.

2. **Erosion Class:** In general this exposed stretch of coastline was considered to be eroding or stable. The presence of rock platforms and coastal cliffs interspersed with infrequent boulder filled coves indicate that mechanical wave erosion is taking place; however, the steep rocky slopes and scree comprising the hinterland topography are clearly a legacy of glacial processes, currently affected primarily by sub-aerial weathering. Extensive water layer weathering as indicated by honey combing in the sandstone immediately above HWM was also observed. The bedrock is highly resistant and the overall rate of coast edge regression is likely to be very slow. There is no significant low lying land in the hinterland at risk from marine inundation in the event of a rise in relative sea level.

3. **Built Heritage and Archaeology:** Given the rugged and isolated nature of this stretch of coastline, it is unsurprising that it contained the least number and most limited range of archaeological sites in any section of this study. The steepness of the hinterland terrain and coast edge has restricted occupation to a series of isolated peat covered shelves 50-200m from the shoreline. Lazy bed plots, peat cuttings and marker cairns (NC 2099 9011, NC 2095 9011 & NC 2093 9012) were, however, recorded on several smaller shelves immediately adjacent to the coast edge. Occasional buildings and structures were located on larger shelves in the hinterland outside the coastal zone.

This settlement is loosely dated to the late 18th / 19th century and is probably associated with a late expansion of the Coigach townships immediately prior to improvement (cf. Culnacraig; Baldwin 1994, 349-352). It is highly possible that earlier site elements obscured by the later occupation may also exist in this area. These sites are linked with the townships of Culnacraig and Blughasary by a precipitous path, which crosses Garbh Allt via a ford (NC 2082 9026) close to the shore. Traditionally, this path was used in the 19th century for the collection and delivery of mail from Achiltibuie. Given the lack of suitable landing places and the wild, exposed aspect of the coastline, it is considered that there was only limited access by sea to this area. In support of this statement no site elements occurred at the coast edge, and structures with a specific maritime function (e.g. boat nausts or kelp kilns) were absent. Consequently coastal erosion is not a serious concern in this area.

3.3.1 Hinterland Geology and Coastal Geomorphology

1. CREAG DEARG

NC 210 900

1.1 km

Mainly rock platform / boulder

Cliffs (120m)

Peat / soil over visible rock

A series of very high and steep, rocky slopes cliffs directly above narrow rock platforms. Extensive boulder scree slopes and beach fans occur at the base of the cliffs.

2. CREAG AN AIRGID (EAST)

NC 209 901

0.6 km

Mainly rock platform / boulder

Cliffs (50m)

Peat / soil over visible rock

A series of steep cliffs and peat covered shelves directly above narrow rock platforms.

3. CREAG AN AIRGID (WEST)

NC 209 901

0.7 km

Mainly boulder / cobble beach and rock platform

Cliffs (50m)

Peat / soil over visible rock

Two enclosed bays containing boulder/cobble beaches separated by a steep, rocky headland flanked by rock platforms.

4. LEUM AN FHÉIDH

NC 208 901

1.6 km

Mainly rock platform / boulder

Cliffs (50m)

Peat / soil over visible rock

High cliffs at the base of a steep rocky hill. Occasional peat covered shelves occur above narrow rock platforms and occasional boulder fans.

5. GEODHA MÓR

NC 208 902

0.2 km

Mainly cobble beach and rock platform

Low edge < 5m

Peat / soil over visible rock

A small enclosed bay containing a cobble beach in front of a peat covered shelf at the mouth of the Coire Mór valley.

6. GARBH CHOIREACHAN

NC 207 902

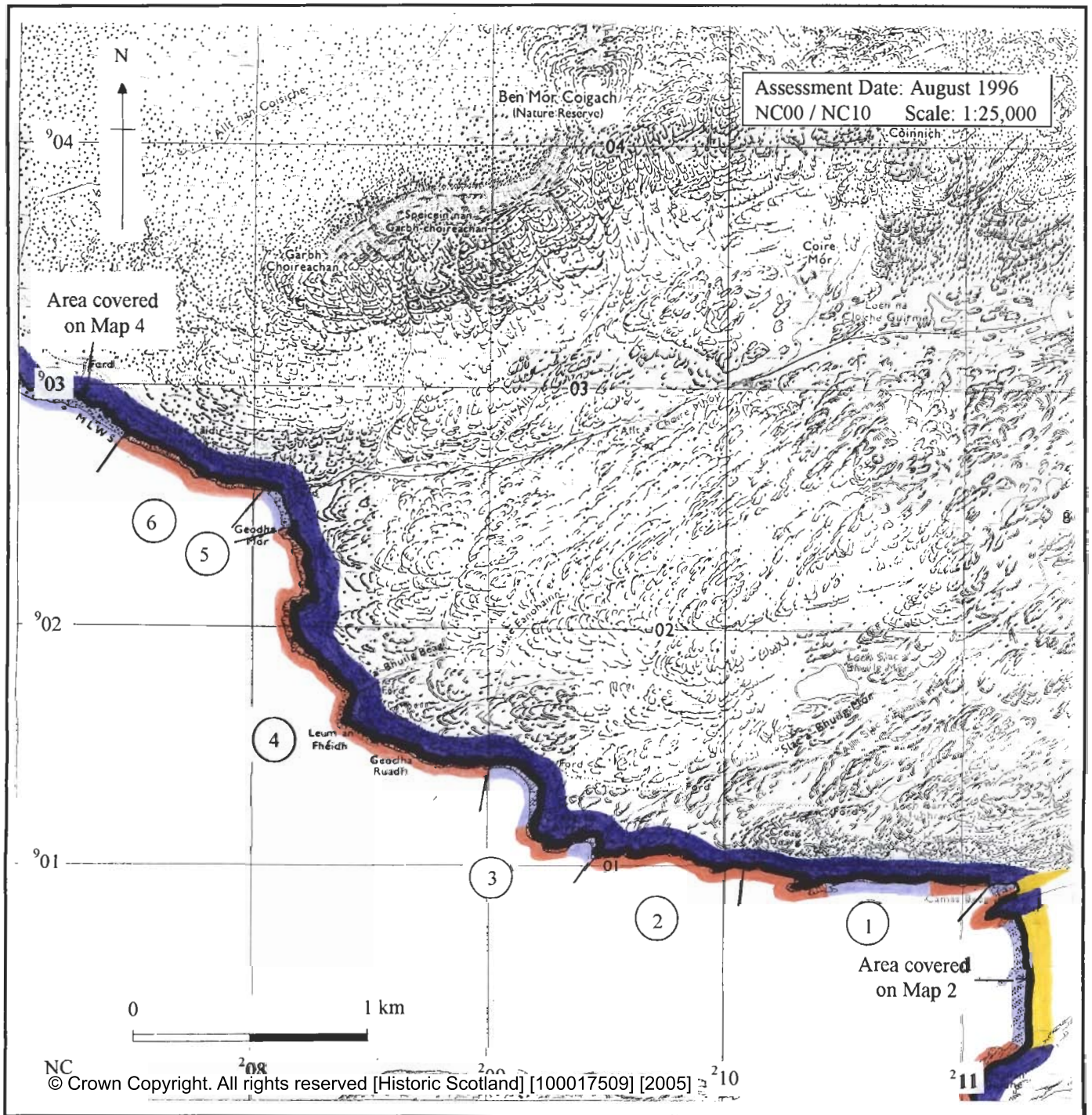
0.7 km

Mainly rock platform / boulder

Cliffs (100m)

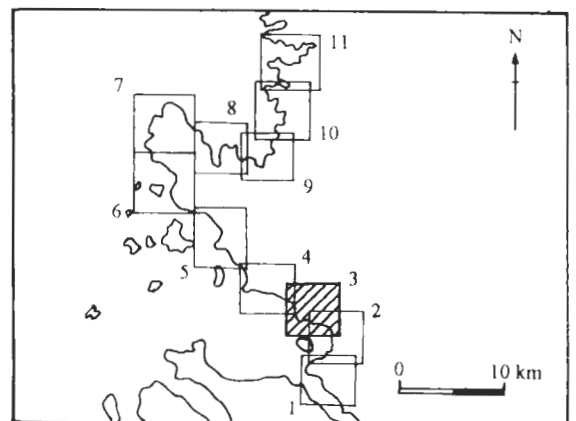
Peat / soil over visible rock

Very steep rocky scree slopes at the base of a wooded mountain slope above narrow rock platforms and boulder fans.



Key:

Hinterland Geology	
Peat / soil over visible bedrock	
Raised beach and marine deposits	
Blown sand	
Alluvial deposits	
Coast Edge	
Low edge (<5m)	
Cliff (>5m)	
Man made barrier	
Storm beach	
Human disturbance	
Coastal Geomorphology	
Mainly rock platform/boulders	
Mainly shingle/cobbles/boulders	
Mainly sand	
Marsh	



3.3.2 Erosion Class

1. CREAG DEARG

NC 210 900

1.1 km

Eroding or stable

Rock platforms and boulders derived from rock fall at the base of very high, steep cliffs, indicate that slow, but active erosion is occurring along this exposed section of coast. Weathering is dominated by sub-aerial processes,

with mechanical wave activity and water layer weathering restricted to a narrow zone at the base of the slopes

2. LEUM AN FHÉIDH

NC 208 901

4.0 km

Eroding or stable

Rock platforms and boulders derived from rock fall at base of

steep cliffs, interspersed with cobble beaches in enclosed bays. This indicates that slow, but active erosion is occurring along this exposed section of coast. Weathering is dominated by sub-aerial processes, with mechanical wave activity and water layer weathering restricted to a narrow zone at the base of the slopes

3.3.3 Built Heritage and Archaeology

1. CREAG DEARG Cultivation NC 2099 9011 18th-19th Century Fair Nil	NC 2095 9011 18th-19th Century Fair Nil	Fair Nil
2. CREAG AN AIRGID (EAST) Cultivation	3. CREAG AN AIRGID (WEST) Buildings, cultivation NC 2093 9012 18th-19th Century	4. GEODHA MÓR Ford NC 2082 9026 18th-20th Century Fair Nil
