

3.5 Badenscallie to Polbain

1. **Hinterland Geology and Coastal Geomorphology:** This section comprises a wide undulating coastal shelf divided by the pronounced headland of Rubha Dùnan into two broad bays; Horse Sound to the south and Badentarbat Bay in the north. A narrow isthmus exists between Badentarbat Bay and Achnahaird Bay to the north, which are almost linked by a series of navigable lochs situated along a geological fault-line. The predominant bedrock throughout this section is Torridonian sandstone, though Lewisian gneiss, conglomerate sandstone and quartzite also outcrop in a number of situations. There are comparatively few rock exposures along the coastal shelf, which is generally covered with extensive raised beach material, deep peat or soil deposits. Rock outcrops are largely restricted to intertidal platforms and low cliffs or shelves on headlands. As a result this wide coastal strip comprises one of the better regions for cultivation in the study area. The foreshore is predominantly composed of shingle, cobble and boulder beaches interspersed with rock platforms. Storm bars have formed across the mouths of small valleys at Achlochan and Badentarbat which have impounded marshy freshwater lochs.

2. **Erosion Class:** This coastal section is generally erosional in nature, though much of the coastline is sheltered from long shore wave activity by an offshore island group (The Summer Isles) situated 2.5km to the west. Two sections in particular (Rubha Dùnan and Port Allt a' Ruistéal; Plate 9) display clear indications of active erosion. The remainder of the section is considered to be only marginally eroding or stable, and the overall rate of coastal regression is probably very low. The presence of substantial shingle storm bars in the widest bays clearly indicates that the coastline does on occasion experience high energy wave activity from the south west. These landforms are no longer actively developing, as indicated by the presence of superimposed 18th / 19th century buildings and structures. In particular the buildings comprising the Achlochan broch complex (NC 00 NW 3, NC 2030 9069 & NC 2028 9068) may assist in dating the period of storm bar formation, through determining which elements pre- or post-date the storm bar. Although superficially the broch appears to be located on the storm bar, it may actually be situated on a pre-existing island or promontory which has been linked to the mainland at a later stage. A detailed archaeological investigation could easily determine this relationship. Extensive parts of the hinterland are low lying, and would be vulnerable to erosion and / or marine inundation in the event of a change in climatic conditions or rise in sea level.

3. **Built Heritage and Archaeology:** This coastal shelf is the most settled district in the study area, and contains the highest number of recorded sites in this study. Most sites are associated with the 18th-19th century townships of Achiltibuie, Polglass and Badenscallie. The extant settlement is scattered along a road located 300-400m east of the shoreline, however several buildings and structures are situated on or close to the coast edge. Most of these sites have a specific coastal or maritime function, such as mills, boat nausts and kelp kilns, though some crofts are located very close to the coast edge. One croft at Badenscallie (NC 00 NW 56) was reputedly built below the HWM in an attempt to avoid eviction from the estate (William Maclean pers. comm. 1996), and was flooded on several occasions during its period of occupation.

Extensive lazy bed cultivation plots are distributed along the coastal strip, though much of the visible evidence for this has been obliterated by later cultivation and subdivision. Typically the rigs survive only on steep grassy slopes immediately above the foreshore, which are generally excluded from the modern field systems. It is highly probable that prehistoric and medieval settlement foci exist along the coastline, however it is hard to distinguish securely dated individual elements on the basis of a rapid field inspection only. Earlier occupation of the coastal strip is demonstrated by Achlochan Broch (NC 00 NW 3), which has also acted as a focus for later settlement. Generally the recorded sites are not at immediate threat from coastal erosion, however one site, a building converted to a sheep dipping complex (NC 2019 9090) is affected by wave activity. Many sites (e.g. NC 00 NW 3) are in highly exposed, low lying locations and would be highly vulnerable to erosion or inundation in the event of a change in climatic conditions or a rise in sea level.

3.5.1 Hinterland Geology and Coastal Geomorphology

1. BADENSCALLIE BURN

NC 203 906

0.3 km

Mainly shingle & cobble beach

Low edge < 5m

Raised beach

A sheltered bay enclosing a raised beach on the south side of a stream outlet. The foreshore is composed of a shingle and cobble beach isolated between rock platforms. The original drift geological mapping (1912) noted blown sand in this area. With the exception of a minor exposure on the foreshore, no sand landforms were present.

2. BADENSCALLIE (SOUTH)

NC 203 906

0.3 km

Mainly rock platform / boulder

Low edge < 5m

Peat / soil over visible rock

A peat covered shelf above low cliffs and rock platforms.

3. BADENSCALLIE (NORTH)

NC 203 906

0.8 km

Mainly shingle & cobble beach

Low edge < 5m

Peat / soil over visible rock

A sloping soil covered shelf above low grassy banks and a shingle / cobble beach, with occasional rock platforms.

4. LOCH POLL AN DÚNAIN

NC 203 906

0.6 km

Mainly shingle & cobble beach

Storm beach

Raised beach

A substantial storm bar blocks a shallow valley containing a marshy lochan. The foreshore is composed of coarse beach material.

5. RUBHA DÚNAN

NC 201 906

2.0 km

Mainly rock platform / boulder

Low edge < 5m with sections of cliffs (15m)

Peat / soil over visible rock

A steep rocky hill forms a substantial headland along this stretch of coast. The promontory is defined by steep sandstone cliffs on the south side, which are partially protected by a wide cobble / boulder beach towards the east. The north and west sides are characterised by lower angle Lewisian gneiss cliffs, which shelter a raised beach in a small enclosed bay. The hinterland is composed of steep rocky slopes and wide peat shelves.

6. PORT MHAIRE

NC 202 907

0.25 km

Mainly shingle, cobble & boulder beach

Low edge < 5m

Raised beach

A raised beach situated behind a small exposed bay, and sheltered between low headlands.

7. ACHILTIBUIE

NC 202 908

0.5 km

Mainly rock platform / boulder

Low edge < 5m

Peat / soil over visible rock

A rocky shelf covered with thin soil at the top of low cliffs above rock platforms.

8. SGEIR NA H-AIRIGHE

NC 202 908

0.7 km

Mainly cobble / boulder beach

Low edge < 5m

Raised beach

A wide raised beach defined by a short, steep grassy bank. A narrow grassy shelf occurs at the base of this bank, immediately behind a foreshore composed of cobble and boulder beaches and occasional rock platforms.

9. CREAG RUADH

NC 201 909

0.9 km

Mainly shingle, cobble & boulder beach

Low edge < 5m with occasional cliffs(15m)

Peat / soil over visible rock with sections of raised beach

A glacial till and peat covered shelf interspersed with small raised beach deposits defined by low grassy banks and occasional cliffs, above a cobble and boulder foreshore.

10. AN FEALING

NC 201 909

0.4 km

Mainly shingle & cobble beach

Storm beach

Raised beach

A shallow valley containing a freshwater marsh (raised beach, 1912 mapping) blocked by a storm bar (Crofts and Mather 1972). The foreshore is principally composed of cobbles with some sand exposed at low tide.

11. MOL A' BHLAIR

NC 200 909

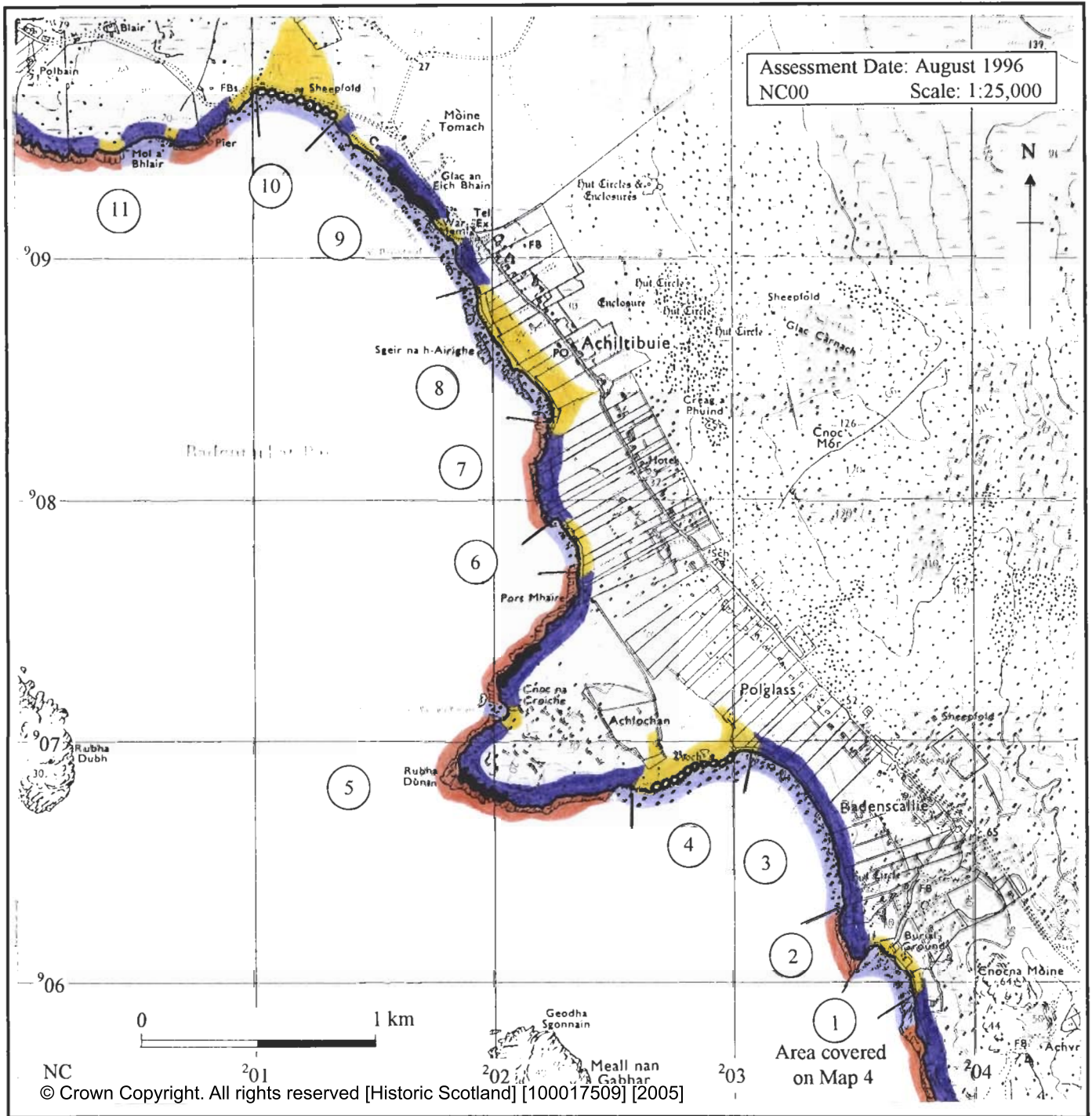
1.1 km

Mainly rock platform / boulder

Low edge < 5m

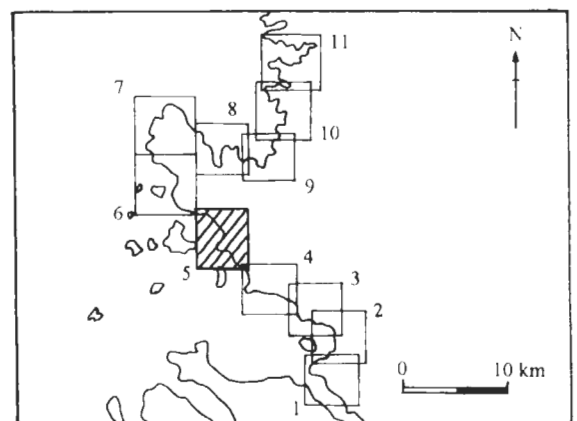
Peat / soil over visible rock with sections of raised beach

A peat covered shelf at the top of low rocky banks, interspersed with small raised beaches above rock platforms and occasional cobble and boulder beaches.



Key:

Hinterland Geology	
Peat / soil over visible bedrock	[Blue pattern]
Raised beach and marine deposits	[Yellow pattern]
Blown sand	[Orange pattern]
Alluvial deposits	[Green pattern]
Coast Edge	
Low edge (<5m)	[White pattern]
Cliff (>5m)	[Black pattern]
Man made barrier	[White pattern with vertical lines]
Storm beach	[White pattern with circles]
Human disturbance	[White pattern with zig-zag lines]
Coastal Geomorphology	
Mainly rock platform/boulders	[Red pattern]
Mainly shingle/cobbles/boulders	[Purple pattern]
Mainly sand	[Light blue pattern]
Marsh	[Green pattern]



3.5.2 Erosion Class

1. BADENSCALLIE BURN

NC 203 906

0.3 km

Stable

A sheltered bay between rocky headlands, backed by low angle grassy banks. Currently there are no indications of either active erosion or accretion.

2. BADENSCALLIE

NC 203 906

0.3 km

Eroding or stable

Low cliffs occur around a small headland, which are eroding slowly.

3. LOCH POLL AN DÚNAIN

NC 203 906

1.0 km

Stable

A wide bay defined by short grassy banks and a substantial storm bar. Parts of this section are very low lying and exposed, and would be highly susceptible to flooding / erosion. Currently there are no indications of either active erosion or accretion.

4. ACHLOCHAN (EAST)

NC 202 906

0.35 km

Eroding or stable

A cobble beach situated in front of a fossil cliff line, formed of steep grassy banks. These banks may be slowly eroding, mainly as a result of sub-aerial processes, and the subsequent removal of material through longshore drift.

5. ACHLOCHAN (WEST)

NC 202 906

0.6 km

Definitely eroding

Steep cliffs composed of friable conglomerate sandstone on the south side of this exposed headland are actively eroding through mechanical wave activity, as indicated by the steep profile, wide rock platforms, fresh rock exposures and rockfall. The rate of regression is, however, likely to be very slow.

6. RUBHA DÚNAN

NC 201 906

1.1 km

Eroding or stable

The exposed north side of a headland characterised by low angle cliffs and sloping rock platforms. The coast edge is marginally eroding, though highly resistant due to the rock type (Lewisian gneiss).

7. ACHILTIBUIE

NC 202 907

1.7 km

Eroding or stable

A series of short, grassy banks and low angle cliffs around an exposed bay. The hinterland deposits are primarily composed of raised beach material, and are probably eroding slowly.

8. PORT ALLT A' RUISTEAL

NC 201 908

0.1 km

Definitely eroding

A steep bank on the south side of a stream outlet. The presence of fresh, vertical soil exposures indicates that this section is actively eroding, probably caused by a combination of wave action and stream erosion. A 19th century structure (NC 2019 9090) is being undercut by wave action.

9. CREAG RUADH

NC 201 909

0.4 km

Eroding or stable

A series of short, grassy banks and low angle cliffs around an exposed bay. The hinterland deposits are primarily composed of raised beach material, and are probably eroding slowly. Minor eroding soil exposures were noted at the south end of the section.

10. AN FEALING

NC 201 909

0.8 km

Stable

A wide bay surrounded by short grassy banks and a storm beach. Currently there are no indications of either active erosion or accretion.

11. BADENTARBAT PIER

NC 200 909

0.3 km

Eroding or stable

A series of short, grassy banks and cliffs above rock platforms are probably eroding slowly.

12. MOL A' BHLAIR

NC 200 909

0.2 km

Stable

An exposed bay between rocky headlands, backed by steep grassy banks. Currently there are no indications of either active erosion or accretion.

13. POLBAIN

NC 200 909

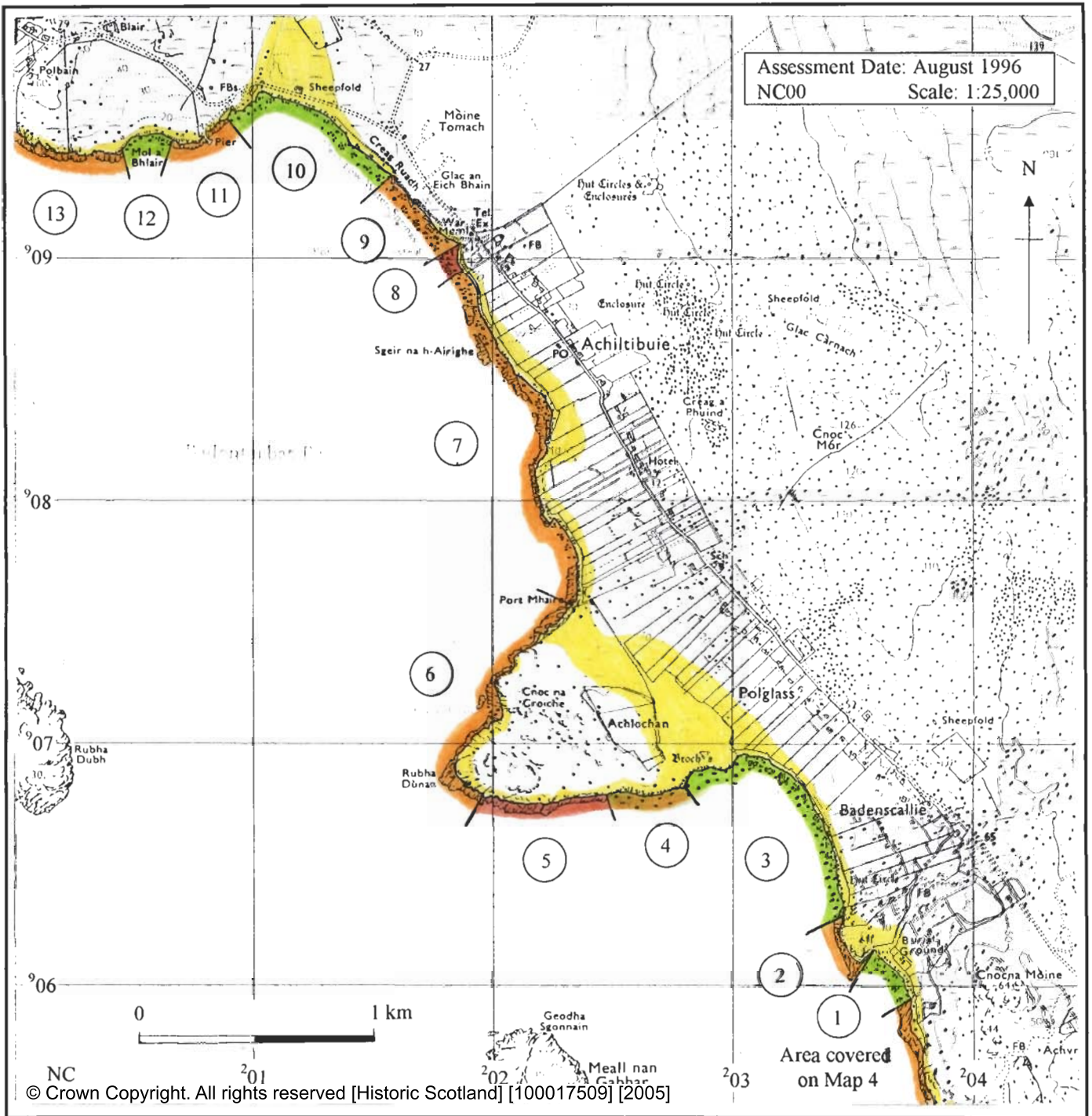
0.5 km

Eroding or stable

A series of short, grassy banks and cliffs above rock platforms are probably eroding slowly.

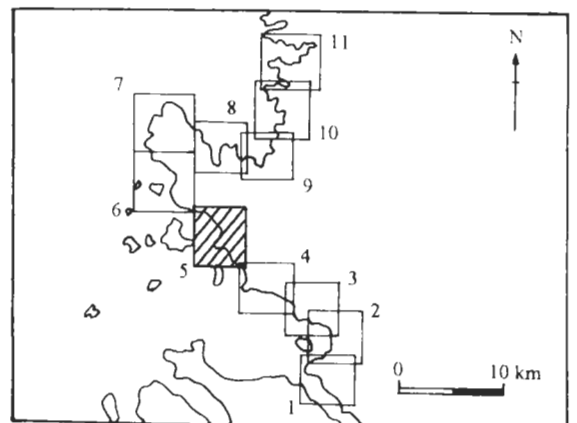
MAP 5 BADENSCALLIE TO POLBAIN

Erosion Class



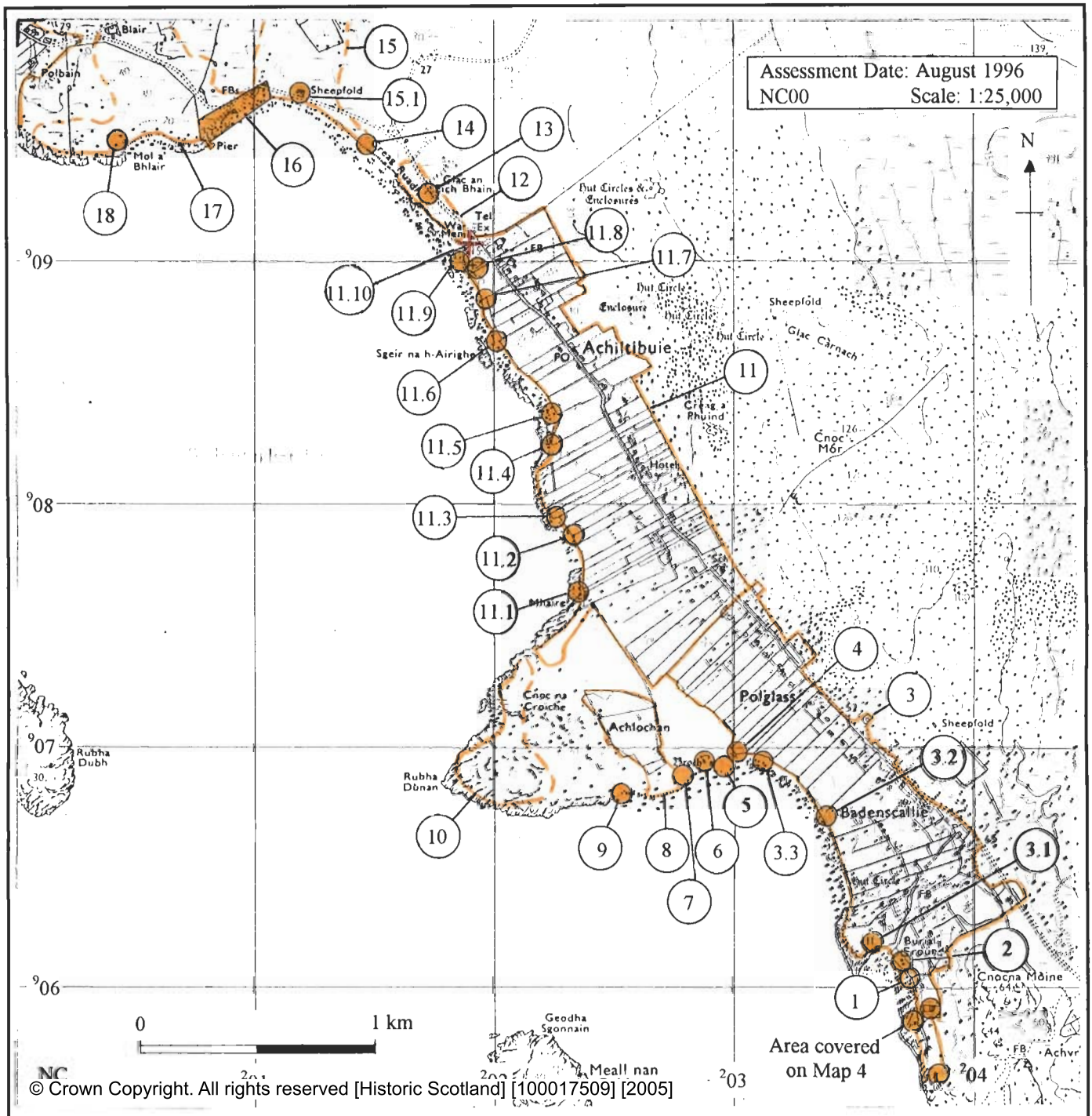
Key:

Erosion Class	
Definitely accreting	
Accreting or stable	
Stable	
Eroding or stable	
Definitely eroding	
Both accreting and eroding	
Land below 10m	



3.5.3 Built Heritage and Archaeology

1. BADENSCALLIE Boat nausts, hulks NC 2037 9060 19th-20th Century Fair Nil	18th-20th Century Fair Nil	Monitor
2. BADENSCALLIE Burial ground NC 00 NW 1 18th-20th Century Good Nil	8. ACHLOCHAN Field systems, cultivation NC 2027 9068 16th-19th Century Fair Nil	12. CREAG RUADH Peat cuttings 2017 9092 19th-20th Century Fair Nil
3. BADENSCALLIE-POLGLASS Township, field systems, slipway NC 2036 9067 3.1 Buildings NC 00 NW 56 3.2 Building NC 2034 9067 3.3 Structures, boat naust (?), slipway NC 2031 9070 18th-20th Century Fair Nil	9. ACHLOCHAN Structures NC 2025 9068 19th-20th Century Fair Nil	13. AILTE NA H'UARDIGHEAN Meeting place NC 00 NW 5 18th-19th Century Fair Nil
4. LOCH POLL AN DÙNAIN Footbridge NC 2030 9080 16th-19th Century Good Nil	10. RUBHA DUNAN Peat cuttings, cultivation NC 2020 9071 16th-20th Century Fair Nil	14. BADENTARBAT Structures NC 2015 9095 16th-19th Century Fair Nil
5. LOCH POLL AN DÙNAIN Kelp kilns NC 2030 9069 18th-19th Century Fair Nil	11. ACHILTIBUIE Township, field systems NC 2022 9081 11.1 Boat naust, slipway, hulk fragment NC 2024 9076 11.2 Track, historic midden NC 2023 9078 11.3 Boat nausts, slipway NC 2022 9079 11.4 Structure, rectilinear kelp kiln NC 2022 9082 11.5 Boat nausts, slipway NC 2023 9084 11.6 Boat nausts NC 2020 9086 11.7 Mill NC 2019 9090 11.8 Free Church of Coigach NC 00 NW 50 11.9 Buildings NC 2019 9090 11.10mill NC 00 NW 27 Listed Building 18th-20th Century Fair	15. BADENTARBAT Field systems NC 2013 9096 15.1 Sheepfold NC 2012 9097 16th-20th Century Fair Nil
6. ACHLOCHAN Broch, later buildings, boat naust NC 00 NW 3 1st-19th Century Fair Nil		16. BADENTARBAT Salmon fishing station NC 2010 9097 18th-20th Century Good Nil
7. ACHLOCHAN Kelp kilns, hut, enclosure NC 2028 9068		17. MOL A' BHLAIR Cultivation, field systems NC 2006 9095 16th-19th Century Fair Nil
		18. MOL A' BHLAIR Buildings NC 2004 9095 16th-19th Century Fair Nil



Key:

Protected Ancient Monument	
Listed Historic Building	
Other known Ancient Monument	
Undesignated wreck	
Site complex	
Undetermined boundary	

