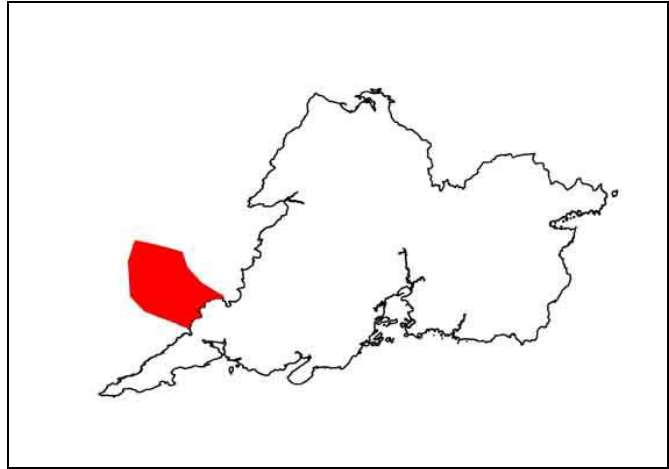


AREA 7: BALLARD BAY AND DONEGAL POINT



Key Characteristics

- Strong coastal influence, the coastline is open and windswept, with no trees or hedgerows.
- Forts and holy wells are scattered along the coast.
- Long distance views to higher grounds in the east.
- Network of telegraph poles prominent due to flat land.
- Walls built from beach shingle.
- Coosheen is widely known as a traditional Kelp village.

Typical Photograph: Coastal bay



Landscape Character types and habitat types

LCTs	HLTs	HLT codes	HT	HT codes
Coastal Plain and Dunes	Dunes	D	Marram dunes	CD2
	Coastal Intertidal	CI	Shingle and gravel shores	LS1
	Enclosed Land 2	EL2	Sea walls	CC1
	Enclosed Land 3	EL3		
	Rough Ground 2	RG2		

Seascape Character Area Extent

This SCA extends from Ballard Bay to George's Head and encompasses areas such as Donegal Point and Farihy Bay.

Geology and Landform

The area is underlain by Namurian sandstone and shale, with bedrock derived till the dominant geology. The coastline is composed of flat rocky headlands and bays with long broad beaches of bright yellow sand.

Coastal Ecology

Large dune systems with high dunes are very prominent within this seascape. These are largely covered with marram grass, as well as other specialised plant communities. A kelp forest is present along the beach at Farihy Bay.

Farrihy Lough is situated 5km north of Kilkee on the coast, this is a small brackish lake surrounded by a marshy floodplain. The site is an important bird habitat; complete freezing of the lake is prevented in winter due to the brackish nature of the lake, and therefore large numbers of wading birds and swans flock to the lake during harsh weather conditions.

Donegal Point and Farrihy Bay offer spectacular underwater marine flora and fauna, and archaeology (shipwreck,s i.e. the Quebec and the Fulmer) for marine and sub aqua enthusiasts.

Historic Seascapes and Human Influence

Unlike SCA6, the promontory forts in this area are rarely intervisible except for Donegal Point, which has clear views south to Castle Point and Illaunadoon. The cashel at Caherlean looks north to Mutton Island. In the 1800s Farrihy Bay played an important role in Clare's fishing industry.

Condition and Sensitivity

This seascape area is degraded in parts, particularly in areas susceptible to erosion, though the more isolated bays remain unspoilt. Coastal plain is vulnerable to change as it is open and changes will be highly visible.

Forces for Change

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- Visually sensitive coastal plain
 - Degradation of coastal plain by modern housing
 - Network of telegraph poles detractive due to the flat nature of the landscape
 - Open areas sensitive to change due to high visibility
 - Dune systems which are delicate ecological habitats and landscape features, and highly susceptible to change
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Principles for Seascape management

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- Protect views to open areas
 - Infrastructural developments including road widening along the coastline should consider local landscape character
 - Linear development along the coastline should be avoided and all other development should be screened appropriately
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