# North Skye 7:

# Staffin Slipway

*Duntulm Formation strata, part of the Middle Jurassic Great Estuarine Group, at Staffin Slipway is one of the dinosaur trackway localities on Trotternish. In addition, this thin sequence of oyster-dominated marine to brackish lagoonal sediments preserves excellent bioturbation features.*

**Aspects covered:** Middle Jurassic Duntulm Formation strata (Great Estuarine Group); a Paleocene dolerite sill.

**Route:** Staffin Slipway – An Corran (- return Staffin Slipway).

**Distance:** 1 kilometre.

**Time:** 2 hours.

**General comments:** An easily accessed sequence of Middle Jurassic Duntulm Formation estuarine strata exposed on a foreshore, requiring low tide conditions. Emplaced into these strata is one of the many thick Paleocene olivine dolerite sills of the Little Minch Sill Complex that crops out on Trotternish.

Staffin Slipway is located east of Staffin at the end of the minor road that is signposted Staffin Slipway. The slipway is 1.5km (I mile) along this dead-end road. There is parking at the slipway and on the NE side of the road close to **Locality 1**.

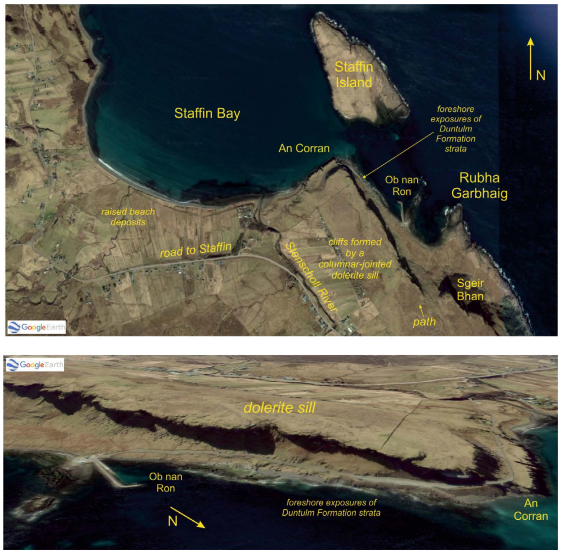


**Figure North Skye 7.1:** Annotated Google Earth® images for the area around Staffin Slipway.

SE of the Slipway, the 17-30m high rock platform, formed in response to Quaternary glacio-isostatic uplift (rebound due to the retreat of ice) and eustatic sea-level changes, is well expressed.

**Figure North Skye 7.2:** The 17-30m high rock platform, SE of the Staffin Slipway.

Access the foreshore NW of the slipway adjacent to the roadside parking.

**Locality 1 [NG 4916 6849]:**

Here, on the foreshore, are excellent exposures of bioturbated Middle Jurassic Duntulm Formation strata of the Great Estuarine Group. Vertical *Rhizocorallium* burrows are common within these estuarine sandstones and siltstones, deposited in (nearshore) brackish water.

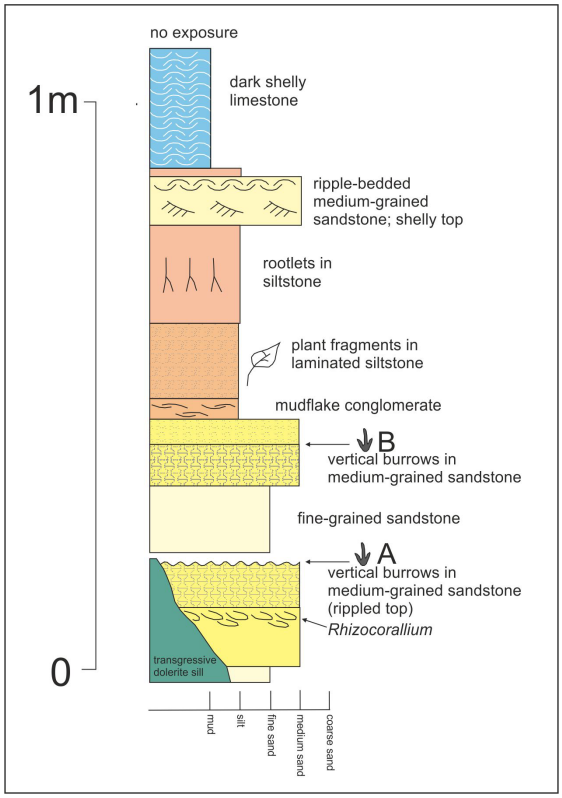


**Figure North Skye 7.3:** Summary lithological log for the Duntulm Formation strata on the coast NW of Staffin Slipway.

**Figure North Skye 7.4:** Duntulm Formation strata, NW of Staffin Slipway. Pole *c.* 1m long.

**Figure North Skye 7.5:** Vertical *Rhizocorallium* burrows within sandstones at the base of the exposed sequence, NW of Staffin Slipway. Ruler for scale.

**Figure North Skye 7.6:** Bioturbated siltstone in the exposed sequence, NW of Staffin Slipway. Ruler for scale.

Evidence for periodic emergence takes the form of a fragment of a dinosaur trackway: a mould of a footprint of a tridactyl (three-toed) bipedal (two-legged) dinosaur, possibly an herbivorous variety.

**Figure North Skye 7.7:** Mould of a footprint of a tridactyl (three-toed) bipedal (two-legged) dinosaur, possibly an herbivorous variety, in the Valtos Sandstone Formation. Part of a trackway on a sandstone surface. Pole *c.* 1m long.

Overlooking the Staffin Slipway foreshore and extending to the SE for several kilometres, is a prismatic-jointed olivine dolerite sill, a member of the Paleocene Little Minch Sill Complex. The rock face is active, with several obvious recent rockfalls and should not be approached.

**Figure North Skye 7.8:** Prismatic-jointed olivine dolerite sill forming the crags above Staffin Slipway.

End of excursion.