



116 years of misplaced management: Portballintrae, Northern Ireland

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Portballintrae has had a protracted history of human interference ranging from small-scale sand removal to hard coastal engineering. A small, horse shoe embayment and a once popular seaside destination on the north coast of Northern Ireland, it has suffered from progressive sediment loss over the last 116 years. From a once sediment abundant system, with a wide sandy beach, it now contains only a limited amount of sand draped over bedrock and/or gravel substrate and a relatively narrow beach. Installation of an obtrusive pier in its western section is thought to have interrupted the natural hydrodynamics and set in motion a progressive longshore transport and re-removal of sand into deeper water. Successive hard engineering 'solutions' prompted through public pressure and engineers keen to do business, have been largely ineffectual, located within a sediment-starved beach system.