

GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Doon Hill
Other names used for site	<i>Cnoc Dúna</i>
IGH THEME	IGH11 Igneous intrusions
TOWNLAND(S)	Bunowen More
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Ballyconneely
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	48
ITM CO-ORDINATES	459380E 742610N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET No. 44	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 10

Outline Site Description

A prominent hill overlooking Bunowen Bay on the Errismore peninsula.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

A Palaeogene (Tertiary) dolerite volcanic plug dated to approximately 62.5 million years, when the igneous rocks intruded into Lower Palaeozoic rocks.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Doon Hill is a prominent hill situated at the head of Bunowen Bay on the Errismore peninsula in southwest Connemara. At a height of just 67 m OD, the hill towers over the low-lying landscape on Errismore. The olivine-dolerite plug is generally referred to as a 'Tertiary' feature (however the term Palaeogene is now used). Research studies suggest the age of the dolerite at Doon Hill is close to the age of the Lower Basalt Formation of the Antrim Lava Group in northwest Ireland. It is further suggested that intrusions such as that at Doon Hill could represent feeder systems for basaltic flows similar to the Antrim basalts, albeit that they have since been removed by erosion.

Contact metamorphism occurs at the margin of the Lower Palaeozoic country rock and the intrusive Palaeogene dolerites. Whilst Palaeogene dykes are a feature in western Ireland, plug intrusions such as at Doon Hill are much less common.

Site Importance – County Geological Site; recommended for Geological NHA

This site contains good and variably accessible exposures of intrusive igneous rocks on this promontory in western Connemara. Doon Hill is located within the Slyne Head Peninsula SAC and pNHA (002074).

Management/promotion issues

Doon Hill is a prominent landscape feature on the Errismore peninsula. The Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) Discovery Point at Bunowen Bay would be a suitable location for an information sign sharing the geological story of Doon Hill and its place in the wider story of Ireland's Paleogene history and the opening of the North Atlantic Ocean around 60 million years ago. A World War 2 watch post remains in an abandoned state on the summit, as well as a large stone arrangement displaying the number '53'.



View of Doon Hill from Ballyconneely-Aillebrack road, looking SW. Bunowen Castle is to the left of the cottage.



Doon Hill viewed from rocky shore at north end of beach at Bunowen Bay.



Dolerite outcrops on hill summit. WW2 watch post on summit.



Boreholes in dolerites on the western hillside – bored for palaeomagnetic analyses in the past.



Wild Atlantic Way Discovery Point at Bunowen Bay beach. Doon Hill visible to NE.

