

WICKLOW - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Glendasan - Hero		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME	IGH15 Economic Geology		
TOWNLAND(S)	Sevenchurches or Camaderry		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Laragh		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	23		
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	709819E 698162N		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	56	GSI Bedrock 1:100,000 Sheet No.	16

Outline Site Description

The site, in two parts, is in the centre of the Glendasan Valley, on the south bank of the Glenealo River. Both parts are sloping, spoil-covered areas within moorland largely used for sheep pasture and hill walking.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The bedrock is Lugnaquilla Granodiorite, part of the Lugnaquilla Pluton, one of the five plutons that comprise the late-Caledonian (405 Ma) Leinster Granite batholith. The granite is cut by slightly younger quartz veins containing lead and zinc mineralization.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The larger, northwestern part of the site is the 2.5 ha Old Hero site which acted as a central processing area during the 19th century for various mines in Glendasan. The upper floor of the site contains the ruins of a number of buildings. The most substantial are those of the cobbing house or yard, where waste material was removed from lumps of ore by hand using hammers ("cobbing"). Two buildings beside this were presumably offices or stores. The walls of the crusher house are still standing and, beside them, the wheel pit for the water wheel. An area of gravel waste in front of the crusher house is apparently a residue of the material produced by the crusher. On the lower floor of the site, the iron-oxide coated mortar stones of the stamps (photo, left) are present above the buddle area. The outlines of the buddles are still visible. Buddles were circular tanks in which water was used to separate the lighter impurities from the heavier ore. Immediately beside the river is an accumulation of slimes (finely ground material produced during ore processing) in what was presumably once the location of a slime pit. Vertical wooden poles in the spoil on the southern edge of the site are supports for a former ramp that led down to the Old Hero adit from which ore was raised. The extensive underground workings on Old Hero lode lie mainly below the western part of the site. Several shafts are marked on old maps but none are visible today. There is one opening where a stope has broken through to the surface.

Less than 200 m downslope from Old Hero is the Moll Doyle site, a smaller site comprising an adit on the Moll Doyle lode, a dressing floor and associated mine waste. The adit is one of the most accessible in the district.

Site Importance – County Geological Site; may be recommended for Geological NHA

The Hero processing site is one of the best preserved and studied 19th-century ore processing sites in the country and warrants consideration as an NHA, perhaps in the wider context of Glendasan mining area.

Management/promotion issues

The processing site is well known and popular with visitors as it is immediately adjacent to a lay-by that is the first stopping area on the Wicklow Gap when travelling west from Laragh. The entire site is within the Wicklow Mountains National Park. Wicklow County Council currently has plans to install an information panel at the site.



View of Old Hero processing site from north.



Dressing floor where ore was 'cobbed' prior to crushing by stamps.



Iron base of stamps with exposed timbering of frame.



