

CORK - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Coom Mine		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME	IGH15 Economic Geology, IGH6 Mineralogy		
TOWNLAND(S)	Caminches		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Allihies		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	114		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	459730E 545580N		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	84	GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	24
GIS CODE	CK036		

Outline Site Description

An upland site in an area of extensive rock exposure.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Mineralized quartz veins cutting Upper Devonian red and green sandstone and siltstone of the Cahah Mountain Formation.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Coom Mine is the easternmost mine in the Allihies Copper Mining district and was one of the last to be worked. It was opened in 1870 but production was small, only 70 or 80 tonnes, and it never made significant profits. The workings were correspondingly of limited extent and depth, with Bewley's shaft, the main engine shaft, reaching 90 m. The site today is dominated by Coom engine house, erected in 1872, which is sited on a small hill, forming a prominent landmark. There are three extant open shafts, all fenced, as well as several large waste heaps. A small adit discharges a small amount of mine drainage at the base of the hill. A deep depression to the east of the engine house was filled with water at the time of the audit, although it was dry during previous visits, and may have served as a reservoir during mining.

Coom engine house is a classic Cornish engine house with a bob wall adjacent to the engine (Bewley's) shaft and a chimney comprising a lower stone section topped by red brick. It is one of only three remaining engine houses in the district, along with the restored Man Engine House and Puxley's Engine House, displaying such construction. Unfortunately it has suffered serious deterioration in the past 15 years. In 2008, when the HMS-IRC survey was carried out, the chimney rose to a height of c. 60 bricks. Today it is just 44 bricks high, a loss of more than 25 % of the refractory portion of the chimney. At least some of the metal scaffolding poles observed in 2008 supporting the base of the house have disappeared, raising questions about the stability of this iconic landmark.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

Coom Mine is one of the mine sites in the Allihies district that contains relatively well-preserved and readily accessible mine features. Its engine house is a prominent landmark and one of three classic Cornish engine houses in the district.

Management/promotion issues

The site is readily accessible on foot by the gravel road leading from Caminches Mine. The engine house is now in a serious state of disrepair, with significant loss of brickwork from the chimney, and the disappearance of metal supports from its base raise questions about its overall stability. The site is part of the original Allihies Copper Mine Trail, as testified to by a metal signboard beside the road below the engine house, and is described on the Copper Mine Museum map and website. It does not require further promotion.



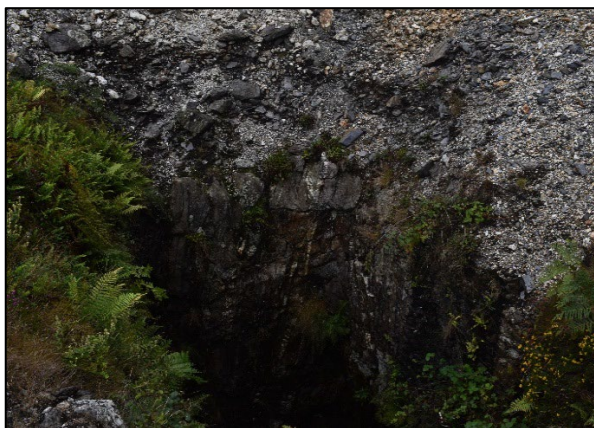
Coom engine house, view from south. The bob wall is visible and overlooks the engine shaft (out of shot, to the left), known as Bewley's Shaft.



Base of Coom engine house chimney, showing accumulation of bricks that have fallen from chimney.



Coom engine house in 2008 – note greater height of chimney compared to recent photo (above). Steel support apparent in 2008 (red circle) now absent.



Coom engine house (Bewley's) shaft.



Winze shaft southeast of the engine house and engine house shaft.

