

# CORK - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	Crookhaven Mine		
Other names used for site			
<b>IGH THEME</b>	IGH15 Economic Geology, IGH6 Mineralogy		
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	Crookhaven		
<b>NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE</b>	Crookhaven		
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	147		
<b>ITM CO-ORDINATES</b>	481050E 525570N (engine house)		
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b>	88	<b>GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.</b>	24
<b>GIS CODE</b>	CK040		

## Outline Site Description

Narrow hilly peninsula of rocky outcrops, rough pasture and private dwellings.

## Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Mineralized quartz veins cutting Upper Devonian purple mudstone and siltstone of the Castlehaven Formation.

## Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Crookhaven Mine was never a profitable operation, with little ore being raised throughout its lifetime (1840s to 1863), despite a large capital investment, including construction of a pumping engine house. The ore is hosted in three parallel quartz veins but the mine workings, which reached over 70 m below surface, never intersected hoped-for rich mineralization. The main ore mineral was chalcopyrite.

The surface of the mine site contains several mine buildings, shafts, mine waste heaps and the remains of a dressing floor. Two largely intact round powder houses (magazines), one on the south side and one on the north side of the peninsula, have an ornate design that appears to be unique in Ireland. The southern one has arched recesses that were apparently designed to resemble windows – traces of blue paint can be seen on their surfaces. Inside, recessed storage shelves are visible. Both powder houses have long been in use as animal shelters. The base of a chimney and low walls are all that remain of the engine house. Beside it, the main engine shaft is securely fenced and capped by a concrete slab. Several small shafts on the southern side of the site previously provided access to two small stopes that comprise the remains of the underground workings but these too have been capped. An adit leads from these stopes to the cliff face. The former dressing floor was in use as cattle pasture at the time of the site visit.

## Site Importance – County Geological Site

Crookhaven Mine is significant for its well-preserved and architecturally unique powder houses. Over 1 % of copper (Cu) has been recorded in the mine waste and the waste heaps are a potential source of mineral specimens.

## Management/promotion issues

Access to the site is via the paved road running east from Crookhaven village. A sign on the gate pillars at the entrance indicates the site is private and forbids trespassing. Crookhaven Mine was surveyed as part of the HMS-IRC project in 2007. Since then, the shafts have been securely capped and the dressing floor adjacent the engine house appears to have undergone clearance – piles of large boulders are scattered around the site. The powder houses remain but are in need of conservation. Somewhat surprisingly, there is no obvious publicity about the mine site in the area, in contrast to the Ballycummisk and Cappagh Mine sites, both of which have fewer traces of mining. The powder house on the northern side of the peninsula is immediately beside the public road and so readily accessible – consideration could be given to erecting a signboard at this location to provide a short, illustrated history of the mine site.



Powder house (magazine) on south side of mine site, view to east (Photo taken 2007).



Area of former processing floor, in use now as pasture and storage area. Chimney and engine shaft visible in background.



Remains of the engine house and chimney and, in foreground, the capped engine shaft.



Powder house (magazine) on north side of mine site, view to east (Photo taken 2007).



Mine waste heaps on south side of site (Photo taken 2007).

