

FINGAL - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Shenick's Island		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME:	IGH 4 (Cambrian - Silurian)		
TOWNLAND(S)			
NEAREST TOWN	Skerries		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	5		
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	326971 259738 = O269 5973		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	43	1/2 inch Sheet No.	13

Outline Site Description

Coastal exposures around an island.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Ordovician andesite, tuffs, shales with an undated red breccia.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

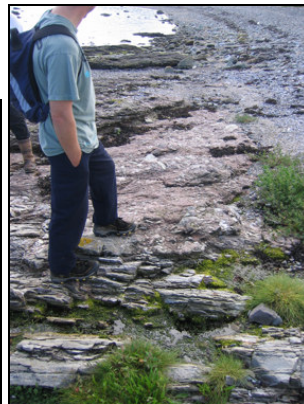
This island displays an inverted (upside-down) succession of volcanic rocks and sediments which are inferred to be Ordovician in age. Although no fossils have yet been found in them to provide confirmation, the tuffs (volcanic ash fall material) and andesite with shales are closely related to similar rocks north of Balbriggan. There is an unconformable breccia of local tuff clasts in a red matrix at the south-eastern end of the island, termed the Smuggler's Cave Formation. This is probably of early Carboniferous age, by comparison with similar deposits on the east coast. Ice Age boulder clay covers the centre of the island with a good section exposed below the Martello Tower on the west side.

Site Importance

This island is a good example within Fingal of the late Ordovician volcanic successions of Leinster. Easily observed from beach access, the locality should be recognised as a County Geological Site.

Management/promotion issues

The island is part of the Skerries Islands pNHA (1218) and SPA (4122) and is a robust site. Although the geology is interesting, it is not particularly visually exciting for the general public and no special promotion is recommended. Geology should be included if any signboards or local guides are to be created, but as a component of the total natural and cultural heritage. For the general public, the unconformity between the red breccia and the older rocks representing a time gap of over 200 million years is the most obvious feature of interest.



Left: A view of the island from the sand bar connection to Skerries, at low tide.
Middle: The unconformable red breccia at the south-eastern end of the island.
Right: A view of the typical shoreline exposures of Ordovician volcanics and shales of Shenick's Island.

Shenick's Island

