

DONEGAL - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Seascann an Róin - Suíomh 2
Other names used for site	Sheskinarone Site 2
IGH THEME	IGH6 Mineralogy, IGH15 Economic Geology, IGH11 Igneous Intrusions
TOWNLAND(S)	Sheskinarone
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Dunglow
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	49
ITM CO-ORDINATES	576183E, 914344N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER: 6	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NOS. 3, 4
GIS Code DL038	

Outline Site Description

The site consists of an extensive outcrop of Rosses Granite beside a minor road in an area of blanket bog.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The Caledonian Rosses Granite, part of the Donegal Granite batholith, is here host to pegmatitic quartz veins and greisen zones containing the mineral beryl.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Beryl is a mineral rarely reported in Ireland and this occurrence is within the area of the largest beryl deposit recorded in either Ireland or Britain.

The beryl occurs in a well-exposed approximately 6m² zone of quartz-muscovite-beryl greisen within the Rosses Granite (G3 granite close to its contact with the G2 granite). A mass of white quartz containing small amounts of beryl occurs between the greisen and the G3-G2 contact, with thin quartz veins above and below this quartz mass containing beryl and feldspar. Elsewhere in the area small beryl veins have been described in the G2 granite. Drilling and trenching in the area in 1962 led to an estimate of about 50 tonnes of beryl in the greisen zone.

Site Importance: County Geological Site; recommended as Geological NHA

This is the most important of the few known sites in Ireland where beryl has been recorded in the field. Inevitably, a balance needs to be struck between promotion and protection of sensitive sites such as this.

Management/promotion issues

The site is privately owned but unfenced. A relatively new house stands immediately adjacent to the main greisen zone and there are three recently-built houses to the south of the minor road that divides the site. There is a very small extraction face (quarry) on the site and construction material has been dumped in front of it. There is a potential threat to the site of future housing development as the area is close to Dunglow. Regrettably, the main beryl-bearing quartz and pegmatite occurrences have been extensively damaged (including by blasting), apparently by irresponsible collectors. Only one location with large beryl crystals was noted during this audit, although there may be more. The location of the site is described in various previous publications. It is desirable to consider ways of conserving what remains of the beryl occurrences on the site and general promotion is not recommended. However, greater local awareness of the significance of the site should be encouraged as local guardianship usually provides the most effective protection.



General view of site, looking north from southern part, with minor road in mid-distance.



Main (north) greisen zone with beryl-bearing quartz (left) and close-up of quartz in greisenized granite (right).



Beryl (green) in quartz-feldspar (left) (base of hammer handle approx. 50 mm wide); quartz-feldspar-muscovite-tourmaline vein extensively damaged by hammering, presumably by mineral collectors (right).

