

DUN LAOGHAIRE - RATHDOWN – COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Dalkey Hill
Other names used for site	Dalkey Quarry
IGH THEME	IGH 11 Igneous intrusions, IGH 15 Economic Geology
TOWNLAND(S)	Dalkey, Dalkey Commons
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Dalkey
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	23
ITM CO-ORDINATES	726342E 726110N (centre of quarry)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	50 GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO: 16

Outline Site Description

This is a large, disused granite quarry.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The granite quarried here is part of the Northern Pluton of the Leinster Granite. It is approximately 405 million years old.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

This large quarry is one of the best places to examine large faces and areas of the granite. The granite is part of the Northern Pluton (classified by geologists as Type 2p microcline phenocryst). This is the most northerly of three large plutons or batholiths that together comprise the Leinster Granite. It is approximately 405 million years old.

The granite was quarried in the early 1800's and the bulk of the rock went into local building use, but most notably for the construction of the major harbour piers of Dun Laoghaire. A railway system carried rock from the quarry down to the harbour on a route known today as the Metals, which while outside the quarry site, is an important component of the industrial heritage of this site. The ridge of rock dividing the lower floor of the quarry into two main sections was left as an inclined plane in order to carry rock on a series of truckways down the 4km or so to Dun Laoghaire harbour.

Small outcrops on the top of the hill behind the quarry walls are ice sculpted roches moutonnées.

Site Importance - County Geological Site

As a significant quarry in the history of Dublin, and the creation of the deep harbour of Dun Laoghaire (or Kingstown as it was called), it deserves the recognition of CGS.

Management/promotion issues

The quarry and surrounding hill are largely open parkland managed by Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. There are some signboards at entrance points to the hill with interesting accounts of the quarrying and the Metals.

The quarry area is widely used by walkers and especially by rock climbers as it is possibly the best climbing venue in the country. The encroachment of gorse and other scrub vegetation on rock faces is a problem for access to some of the geology where faces are not regularly climbed.



An aerial photograph of the quarry, with two levels apparent and the central inclined ramp that supported the metals – the rails of a rail system for transporting rock to Dun Laoghaire.



A panorama view into the quarry from the top of the quarry. The inclined plane went down the central spur of rock visible in the centre.



A view into the quarry from mid-level.



Looking into the quarry from the top.

