

GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Killimor Esker
Other names used for site	Killimor-Birr-Fivealley-Kilcormac Esker system
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary
TOWNLAND(S)	Ahanduff More, Ahanduff Beg, Conorspark, Ardane, Moneenaveena, Hearnesebrooke Demesne, Kilmore, Rusheeny, Killimor and Boleybeg, Garrynasillagh, Garryad and Garryduff, Lissaniska South, Muingbaun, Cloonaghmore, Woodfield, Deerpark, Kilquain, Ballinlug, Longford, Tiranascragh
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Killimor
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	107, 117, 118
ITM CO-ORDINATES	581900E 712280N (central portion of feature)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET No. 53	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 15

Outline Site Description

The Killimor Esker includes a moderate-sized ridge comprised of esker sands and gravels, deposited under the ice sheet as the ice withdrew westwards across southeastern Galway and the general western Midlands area at the end of the last Ice Age.

The esker forms part of the larger Killimor-Birr-Fivealley-Kilcormac Esker system, which extends from Galway across into eastern Offaly.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The Killimor Esker is formed entirely on Lower Carboniferous limestone rocks, across the lowlands of southeast Galway. The esker itself is Quaternary in age, having been deposited either under or at the edge of the westward-retreating ice sheet during deglaciation, approximately 14,000 years ago.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The esker ridge is formed from a number of segments, which are striking features, standing proud of the flat landscape of till (boulder clay) upon which they were deposited. On occasion the esker segments have been surrounded by post-glacial alluvium or peat deposits in the Holocene, since the Ice Age. This is especially impressive in Muingbaun and Lissaniska South to the east of Killimor Village, and at the eastern extremity of the feature in Tiranascragh. In and around Killimor Village itself, the esker grades from a singular ridge of coarse gravels into a number of discrete, individual ridges, displaying a more haphazard, hummocky topography.

The esker feature is important in that it records faithfully the ice movement across this area of Galway during the final phase of deglaciation. The sands and gravels within the esker are comprised chiefly of limestone clasts.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

The feature is a high, striking example of a dry sand and gravel ridge, and stands proud of the surrounding landscape. This is part of one of the longest esker systems in the country and is an excellent example of a relict subglacial conduit system.

Management/promotion issues

The extraction of esker sand and gravel for development continues on many eskers throughout the Irish Midlands. The Killimor Esker is relatively unique in that there are no major sand and gravel pits cut into it, nor have there been historically. The preservation of the integrity of this effectively pristine esker landform should be considered in light of any future new quarrying sites. A signboard along the wide roadside near the old church and cemetery, just to the west of Killimor Village and where the esker passes, might be a suitable location for information.



A high, partially wooded segment of the Killimor Esker in Tiranascragh, just west of the River Shannon at the eastern end of the portion of the esker system in Galway.



A high, steep-sided esker ridge to the west of, but approaching, Killimor Village.



A small segment of the low, hummocky esker in Hearnesebrooke Demesne.



The cemetery and ruined church on the esker in Killimor and Boleybeg Townland.

