GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Maumeen
Other names used for site	<i>Mám Éan,</i> Mamean
IGH THEME	IGH5 Precambrian, IGH6 Mineralogy
TOWNLAND(S)	Doire Bhéal an Mháma (Derryvealawauma), Tir na Cille
	Théas (Teernakill South)
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	An Mam (Maam Village), Sraith Salach (Recess)
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	38
ITM CO-ORDINATES	490100E 750300N (Leaba Phádraig)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET No. 37	GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 10

Outline Site Description

A mountain pass in the Maamturk Mountains carrying a path between the Maam Valley and Inagh Valley.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Bedrock comprises Dalradian stratigraphies (Cleggan Boulder Bed, Bennabeola Quartzite Formation, Streamstown Schist Formation, Lakes Marble Formation, Ballynakill Formation) of Neoproterozoic age.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The path leading from the Failmore River (Maam Valley) westward to the Maumeen pass follows a route underlain predominantly by Lakes Marble rocks. The stratigraphically underlying Streamstown Schist Formation bedrock can be observed along the path in the proximity of the stile and gate near the parking area. A Streamstown Schist-Lakes Marble contact can be seen beside the stile and gate further west along the path (ITM 492085E 751575N) where the schists lie 'above' the marbles, demonstrating the complex folding and overturning of strata that is prevalent throughout the Connemara Dalradian region. The Lakes Marble Formation outcrops along the route exhibit spectacular water solution features reminiscent of the karst features of the Burren, Co. Clare. Elsewhere along this east section of the path, the track is cut into thick gravel and boulder glacial deposits. Approaching the pass, changes in the bedrock underfoot are noticeable from the smooth and striated quartzite bedrock and loose blocky quartzite deposits. The natural amphitheatre to the northeast of Leaba Padraig hosts a magnificently exposed fold structure that straddles the major fold that traverses the region from east to west known as the Connemara Antiform. Cleggan Boulder Bed rocks occur close to the path roughly halfway between Leaba Padraig and the parking area at Derryvealawauma (Inagh Valley). The Maumeen area is host to six recorded metallic mineral deposits, one of which (Maumeen-2) was trial worked for wolframite (tungsten).

Site Importance – County Geological Site

An important site that affords easy access to several Dalradian rock formations and the complex folding and faulting features that are characteristic of the Connemara Dalradian terrain. The site is located within the Twelve Bens/Garraun SAC (002031). This is an important County Geological Site.

Management/promotion issues

The Chapel and Holy Well at Leaba Padraig represent an important Christian heritage site, where three annual pilgrimages take place (St. Patrick's Day, Good Friday, 1st Sunday in August). The path over the mountain pass carries part of the 66km long Western Way. The spectacular water solution moulding of the striped grey marbles along the route are of particular interest, as are the glacially smoothed quartzites at the pass. These bedrock features, together with the montane landscape shaped during the Pleistocene glaciations, are ideally suited for inclusion in visitor or walking literature pertaining to the region.



Leaba Padraig, Mám Éan. Crowds standing on glacially striated quartzites at the Good Friday Pilgrimage Day.



Overturned fold Bennabeola Quartzite in ~500m east of Leaba Padraig.



Streamstown Schist outcrops along pathway near parking area/gate at Teernakill South.



Water solution features on Lakes Marble Formation outcrops alongside the pathway at Formation at the pass at Leaba Padraig. Teernakill South.



Pebble beds in the Bennabeola Quartzite

