

KERRY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Ardtully Mine
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH15 Economic Geology, IGH6 Mineralogy
TOWNLAND(S)	Ardtully
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Kilgarvan
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	93
ITM CO-ORDINATES	497465E 573225N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	78
GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	21
GIS CODE	KY007

Outline Site Description

Site of an abandoned copper mine with a remaining chimney stack, and two shafts.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The bedrock in the area comprises Upper Devonian Ballinskelligs Sandstone Formation, which consists of purple sandstone and siltstone, and limestone and shale of the Lower Carboniferous (Mississippian) Ballysteen Formation.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Copper deposits were extracted from lodes around Ardtully in the Roughty valley in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Several lodes were recorded on the early GSI six-inch sheet: Ardtully, Trinity, Forger and Slaheny. The lodes occur within the Lower Limestone Shales. The Ardtully and Forge lodes hosted the principal workings in the area.

Historic records note that a Joseph Bacon led mining operations in Ardtully townland between 1722 and 1731. The Kenmare Mining Association, formed in 1839 to operate the mine, sold 77 tons of copper ore in 1840, and 274 tons in 1841. Up to 100 people were employed in the extraction of copper and barite at this time. The mine was most active between 1838 and 1857 when the workings reached a depth of 120 m. The mine was last worked in 1911 - 1912. The only visible mine features on the site are the chimney, part of an engine house with a 36" Harvey & West pumping engine, and the former joiner's workshop (white building by roadside). Tennantite and bornite are reported to be found readily in the spoil near the shafts that are located under tree cover on the south side of the R569. Cole's Memoirs of the GSI published in 1922 note that copper (Cu) mineralization is hosted in both Carboniferous rocks (limestone and shale) and Devonian Old Red Sandstone, whereas lead (Pb) lodes are entirely in Carboniferous limestone.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This is an important County Geological Site because of the historical mining operations that took place in the area.

Management/promotion issues

The chimney is the primary extant mine feature at Ardtully. The lime kiln is also a feature of interest in terms of the processing of local limestone in the production of lime. The site is on farmland and does not require public promotion. The site is of interest primarily in terms of the mining and industrial heritage in this part of County Kerry.



Site of Ardtully Mine. Chimney stack and lime kiln.



Lime kiln at Ardtully.



Ballysteen Formation exposures at lime kiln.



Chimney stack and lime kiln at Ardtully.

