

KERRY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Killeen
Other names used for site	Lough Guitane Rhyolites
IGH THEME	IGH 11 Igneous Intrusions, IGH10 Devonian
TOWNLAND(S)	Killeen, Clonkeen, Carrigveema, Coolcurtogo
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Glenflesk
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	76
ITM CO-ORDINATES	511000E 582500N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	79
GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	21
GIS CODE	KY056

Outline Site Description

Hilly terrain on the north side of the Clydagh river valley.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The bedrock comprises Upper Devonian rhyolite lava and tuffs, part of the Lough Guitane Volcanic Complex, a collective name for the volcanic rocks in this region of Kerry. The tuffs at Killeen have been dated as c. 384 million years old.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The volcanic rocks at Killeen are part of a centre of Upper Devonian rhyolite lavas and volcanoclastic rocks (tuffs) that extends for around 15 km westwards, *via* Bennaunmore, to Horse's Glen. The rhyolite lava comprises pale-white to pale-pink, finely crystalline rocks that have a glassy sheen. The tuffs consist of mixtures of volcanic and terrigenous (non-volcanic) sediments. The volcanics occur within the Upper Devonian Old Red Sandstone of the Glenflesk Chloritic Sandstone Formation. The tuffs at Killeen have been dated as c. 384 million years old, whereas those in Horse's Glen have yielded ages of c. 378 million years old.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This is an important County Geological Site, as the Lough Guitane Volcanic Complex represents a rare episode of volcanic activity in southwest Ireland during Upper Devonian times. The timing of this episode of volcanic activity has been determined by radiometric dating of minerals in the volcanoclastic rocks.

Management/promotion issues

The site is suitable for research groups and natural heritage interest groups. The Duhallow leg of the Blackwater Way walking route begins at Clonkeen and leads 70 km eastwards to Bweeng in County Cork. Exposures such as at Our Lady of the Wayside Church, Clonkeen, and by the N22 road cut near the Unicorn Monument could be kept clear of vegetation to ensure access to the volcanic rocks is preserved. Information relating to the volcanic history of this part of Kerry would be a valuable inclusion in any published promotion literature, or information-panel signage erected in the locality. The site is within Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC and pNHA (site code 000365).



Rhyolite exposure at roadside (N22) cut east of Unicorn Monument, Clonkeen.



Detail of rhyolite at roadside (N22) cut east of Unicorn Monument, Clonkeen.



Lough Guitane Volcaniclastics exposed by N22 Killarney-Macroom road, opposite L11205 junction.



Detail of rhyolite in grounds of Our Lady of the Wayside Church, Clonkeen.



Rhyolite outcrops at Our Lady of the Wayside Church, Clonkeen.

