

MAYO - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Belderg (Copper)
Other names used for site	Geevraun, Belderrig, Horse Island
IGH THEME	IGH15 Economic Geology
TOWNLAND(S)	Geevraun
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Ballycastle
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	5
ITM CO-ORDINATES	498320E 842440N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NO.23	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 6
GIS Code MO008	

Outline Site Description

Mineral vein with copper in section of coastal cliffs.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Copper bearing mineral veins in an intrusive (Carboniferous age?) breccia dyke within thick bedded Dalradian (Grampian) schists of the Broadhaven Formation.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Copper was mined at Geevraun (Horse Island) in the 1850s and 1860s, after which the Copper mine was closed around 1880. Five mine shafts were dug at the site. The copper was extracted from a 3m-7m thick zone of mineralisation.

According to Grenville Cole's Memoir and Map of Localities of Minerals of Economic Importance and Metalliferous Mines in Ireland (Memoirs of the Geological Survey of Ireland, 1922), '(T)his lode... is said to have been worked in 1861; it is marked on Griffith's Map (1856), but is indicated by him as unworked... It must not be confused with the well-known Horse Island copper mine in (Co. Cork). The lode is shown on the 1" Geological Survey map, running N.E. into Horse Island. There seems to be no recorded out-put.'

Site Importance – County Geological Site

The site is important in consideration of mining heritage, and recognition as a County Geological Site will help protect it. Archaeologists suggest that the development of a settlement on a poor, bog-covered agricultural land during the Bronze Age may have been centered on mining of the Geevraun copper-ore deposits, 2km to the north of the Bronze Age settlement.

Management/promotion issues

This coastal site is not considered to be under threat of any development, or significant coastal erosion. Access is difficult, and owing to safety concerns the public should not be encouraged to visit the site. Promotion of the site's mining and cultural heritage could be included in an exhibition feature at the nearby Céide Fields visitor centre.



The land connection between Horse Island (right) and the mainland (left). The copper mines were located on the mainland.
(Source: © Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources 2004)



Location of Copper Mines at Geevraun. Horse Island (right) and the mainland (left).
(Source: © Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources 2004)



Mineral vein at Horse Island / Geevraun Mine, with a small trial working near sea level. This section of the vein was barren.
Photo: Alastair Lings, Galasheils, Scotland (GSI Du Noyer Photo Competition)

