

MAYO - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Doo Lough Valley
Other names used for site	Doolough, Dhulough, Dúloch, Dubh Loch
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary, IGH14 Fluvial and Lacustrine Geomorphology
TOWNLAND(S)	Srahroosky, Glencullin, Clashcame, Glenummera, Teevnabinnia
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Louisburgh
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	106
ITM CO-ORDINATES	482970E 769420N (centre of feature)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NO. 37	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 10
GIS Code MO045	

Outline Site Description

Doo Lough Valley is a U-shaped glacial valley which separates the Mweelrea Mountains (west) and the Sheeffry Hills (east) in southwest County Mayo. The valley is approximately 4.5km long (north-south), and up to 2.5km wide between the >700m mountain summits that overlook the valley to the east and west. Doo Lough occupies the floor of the valley.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Bedrock geology is part of the Murrisk Succession (Ordovician), and comprises mainly deep marine sedimentary rocks (sandstones, mudstones, conglomerates) from the Derrylea, Sheeffry, Glenummera and Mweelrea formations. The glaciated landscape is Quaternary, and the kame terraces most likely late-Midlandian (18,000-14,000 years ago).

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Doo Lough Valley is a very impressive deep U-shaped valley, and is a classic example of a glaciated valley, with hanging corrie valleys, an elongated lake on the valley floor, high mountains sides bounding the valley, kame terraces and glacial striations on bedrock. Landforms of interest include a long (~1km), narrow, delta (kame) terrace at Teevnabinnia, at the southeast end of Doo Lough. At the northwest end of the U-shaped valley, Sruhancullinmore stream drains from the deep corrie of Glencullen (Mweelrea Mountains) NE into Glencullin Lough. Glencullin Lough drains SE into Doo Lough via a short 300m stream. Ponding (damming up) of the valley at the southeastern end was due to glaciers; but it is also suggested that ponding may have been the result of high relative sea levels at the time that arose from glacioisostatic depression (sinking of the Earth's crust due to the weight of the ice sheet). The valley records features of proglacial glaciolacustrine and glaciofluvial deposition at the margins of an ice sheet while a large glacier retreated southeastwards up the Doo Lough valley at the end of the last glacial episode. Doo Lough drains via the Owengarr River south to Killary Harbour.

Site Importance - County Geological Site; recommended for Geological NHA

This large site is important as it is an excellent example of a glaciated U-shaped valley, with associated glacial landforms. The site is within the Mweelrea/Sheeffry/Erriff Complex NHA/SAC. This County Geological Site is recommended for geological NHA designation.

Management/promotion issues

Access to the site is easy along the R335 road. Access to Glencullin corrie requires trekking across bog and hilly land. Though much of the overall site is potentially under-promoted, the absence of established pathways and signage may help to protect the site in its natural state as a classic glacial valley. No immediate threats are identified at the site, however quarrying of the gravels in the extraction pits at Teevnabinnia should be managed and restricted to the current extraction site, as intensive extraction is a major threat to the important kame terrace deposits. Quarrying has however revealed excellent examples of glacial striations.



Doo Lough Valley viewed from the roadside famine memorial monument at the northern end of valley – looking southeast. Doo Lough and Glencullin Lough (right) are visible. Ben Creggan (693m) is visible in the middle distance.



N-S trending glacial striations on bedrock exposed high up in roadside extraction pit at south end of Doo Lough Valley, looking NW.



Glencullen corrie valley viewed from famine memorial monument at north end of Doo Lough Valley – looking SW.



South end of Doo Lough Valley, looking south towards Delphi.



View looking west into Doo Lough Valley from Glenummera river valley.

