

MAYO - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Sheeffry Mine
Other names used for site	Tanwyncrower, Sheefry, Sheffry
IGH THEME	IGH6 Mineralogy
TOWNLAND(S)	Tawncrower
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Tourmakeady
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	107c
ITM CO-ORDINATES	505470E 761720N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NO. 37	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 10
GIS Code MO093	

Outline Site Description

An abandoned lead-silver mine site on a mountainside, 11km south of Croagh Patrick, and 600m SW of Sheeffry Bridge (over the Glenlaur River).

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Mineralization is found in low-grade meta-sedimentary green-grey grits and gritty slates of Lower Llanvirn, Ordovician (c. 465 million years old) age. Dipping steeply to the north, these rocks belong to the Derrylea Formation, a c. 1700m thick sequence of massive greywacke turbidites and green-grey slates.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

A survey was conducted in 1952, which located five adit levels driven southward into the hillside following the band/zone of mineralization. It was worked in the nineteenth century, and is understood to have consisted of a series of 5 small adits on the hillside. Due to the small quantities of mine workings, mining is not thought to have been very productive. Primary ore minerals include galena, chalcopyrite, millerite in calcite, and minor quartz. Secondary minerals include annabergite, erythrite, and gypsum. Anglesite, linarite and wroewolfeite have been identified in decomposed mineral vein material. The mine faces NE from the hillside into the Glenlaur Valley. The site is some 600m SW of Sheeffry Bridge, over the Glenlaur River, and some 200m from the roadway up the hillside. There is space for parking by the road.

Site Importance – County Geological Site, may be recommended for Geological NHA

Sheeffry Mine is the only known mine location in Ireland where the mineral Millerite (nickel sulphide), is found in more than trace amounts (trace amounts are found in Tynagh, Co. Galway and Ballinalack, Co. Westmeath). Annabergite and wroewolfeite are minerals discovered in Ireland for the first time. The site is located within the Mweelrea/Sheeffry/Erriff Complex SAC (01932). This is an important County Geological Site.

Management/promotion issues

The mine site is not under any immediate threat, owing partly to its elevated and remote location, and also because the mine is underground and inaccessible. Promotion of the mining and industrial history would be possible in the form of an information panel near by the roadside or near Sheeffry Bridge, which itself is a feature of interest. At least one adit remains open, and therefore the site poses obvious safety concerns.



Sheeffry Mine adit.



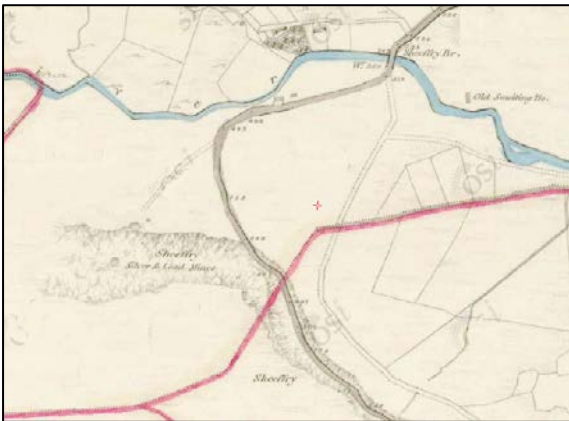
Ice split boulder at Sheeffry Mine, looking east.



Entrance to mine. Adit turns c. 90° to left, 4m from mouth of adit.



Grey green grits with quartz mineralization.



GSI Six-Inch scale (First Edition c. 1860) showing location of 'Sheeffry Silver and Lead Mines'.



View of the mine dressings - downhill from mine adit (in upper centre of photo, not visible).

