ROSCOMMON - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	**Garranlahan Esker System**
Other names used for site	Cloonfad Esker, Slieve Dart Esker
IGH THEME	**IGH7 Quaternary**
TOWNLAND(S)	**Grange, Pollanea Upper, Pollanea Lower, Garraunlahan More, Ballybane Upper, Glenties, Moanvane, Stonepark South, Cloonfineen, Rathleena, Coolcam, Glenmore, Clogher Lower, Milltown, Ballybane, Coosaun, Meelick, Cloonlea, Coolatinny, Clydagh Lower, Cashel, Lisnagroob, Kiltullagh**
NEAREST TOWN	**Cloonfad**
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	**25, 32**
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	**156350 273720 (centre of features)**
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	**39 1/2 inch Sheet No. 11**

Outline Site Description
This is a long, beaded, often high, sinuous esker ridge system that traverses a lateral distance of over 100 kilometres across the west Central Midlands, including the counties of Mayo, Galway and Roscommon.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type
The esker is formed on bedrock which is Lower Carboniferous limestone. The feature itself is Quaternary in age, having been deposited at the base of the ice sheet moving northwest to southeast during early deglaciation after the last Ice Age.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest
The esker system is one of the finest examples of a long, wide tunnel-deposited esker in the country. The ridge also has many associated fan, delta, and sandur features associated with it. This ridge is the westernmost of the three major conduit systems that subglacially drained the melting ice sheet in the Irish Midlands. It crosses Roscommon between the N69 at Scregg and the northeastern edge of Slieve Dart, and 'wraps itself' around Slieve Dart. It is generally oriented in a north-south direction and has many small and large pits, both currently in use and disused, cut into it. In interfingering with many flanking fans and deltas, the system has a pronounced kame-kettle topography in places.

The esker is comprised chiefly of limestone clasts which have been derived from the bedrock around the site within the Irish Midlands. These were carried by ice, released into the meltwater conduit at the base of the ice, and rounded in a subglacial river before being left upstanding as the esker when the ice melted.

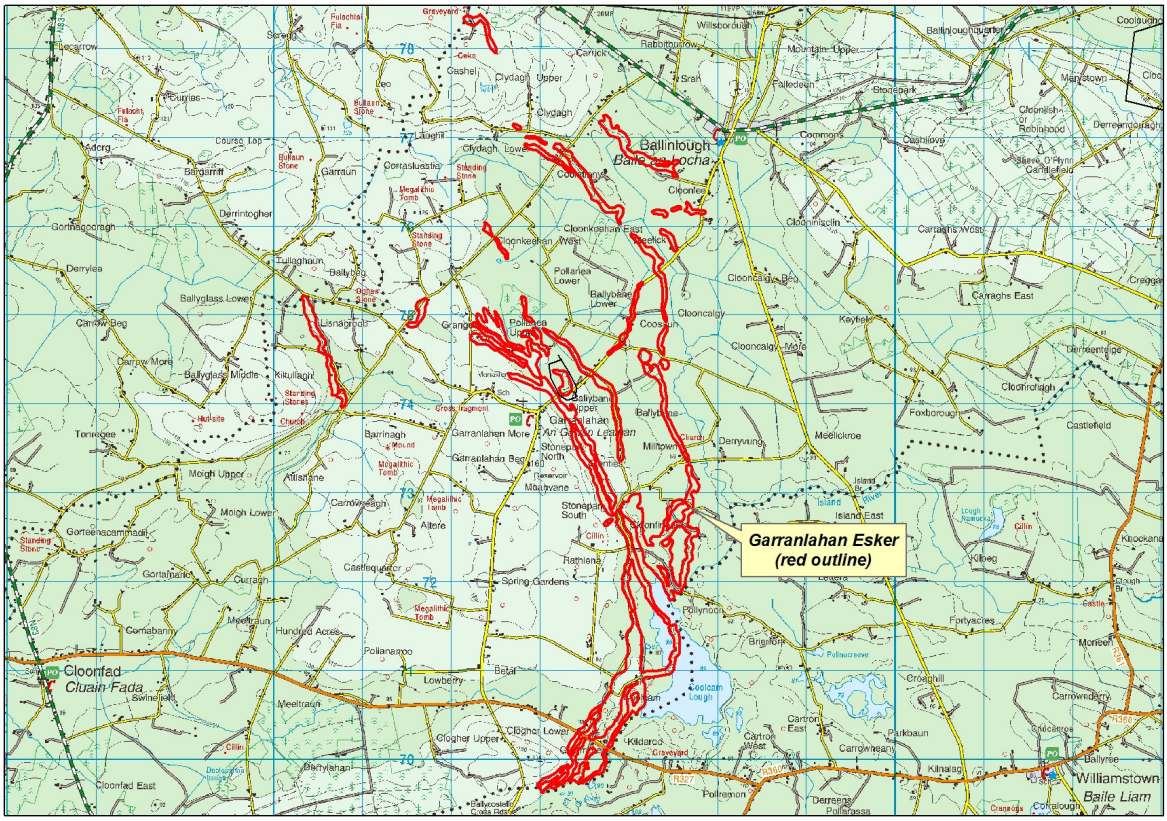
Site Importance – County Geological Site; may be recommended for Geological NHA
The esker is one of Ireland's best examples of a tunnel-deposited esker.

Management/promotion issues
This is a superb feature and should be designated as a geological NHA. Signage along the roadside along the R69 and R327 roads, especially along the Slieve Dart ridge, might help in the promotion of the feature. A colour leaflet on 'The Eskers of County Roscommon' could also be produced.

View along the steep-sided esker towards a disused gravel pit.

A small bead flanking the main esker ridge.

Scrub vegetation and dry grassland on high-sided beads of the Garranlahan Esker.


Garranlahan Esker
(red outline)
Ballintlough
Baile na Locha
Cloonfad
Cluain Fada
Williamstown
Baile Liam