

SLIGO - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE

Other names used for site

TOWNLAND(S)**NEAREST TOWN****SIX INCH MAP NUMBER****NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE****1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER****Split Rock or Giant's Rock**

Fionn Mac Cumhail's Stone

Easky

Easky

11

139828 336605 = G 398 366

24

1/2 inch Sheet No.

7

Outline Site Description

Roadside massive boulder exposure.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Ox Mountain Precambrian granodiorite erratic transported northwards by ice sheets.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Split Rock is the largest **erratic** boulder from the central area of the Ox Mountains found strewn across the coastal lowlands north of the mountain range. These blocks of **granodiorite** were carried far from their source area and deposited in their current positions by large sheets of ice during the last glaciation (30,000 – 10,000 years ago). The boulders differ in composition to the rocks in the surrounding area indicating that they have travelled far from their source. As the only nearby rock type with the same composition is found in the Ox Mountains it can be inferred that this must be the source area.

According to Irish folklore the legendary Fionn MacCumhail threw the boulder from the mountains in a fit of rage. Further angered by the fact that he missed the sea he cut the stone in two with his sword producing the large gap seen in the boulder today. In fact the split is a natural fracture in the stone.

Site Importance

The site is of National importance and is likely to be proposed for NHA designation under the IGH7 Quaternary theme of the GSI's IGH Programme.

Management/promotion issues

This site allows visitors to see the rock easily from the road, but the only safe parking is in front of the adjacent house, itself opposite a school. This is a site where a management agreement with the landowner could allow public access by stile over the wall.



Three views of Split Rock
The person in one view is 2 metres tall for scale. Photos: Matthew Parkes

Split Rock or Giant's Rock

