

WICKLOW - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Avoca - Connary		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME	IGH15 Economic Geology		
TOWNLAND(S)	Connary Upper, Sroughmore		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Avoca		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	35		
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	721046E 683885N		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	62	GSI Bedrock 1:100,000 Sheet No.	16

Outline Site Description

Connary mine site is on high ground surrounded by rolling farmland and private dwellings, located immediately beside Connary village. The site comprises a number of distinct areas each surrounded by a chain-link fence. The ground is covered by hummocky spoil heaps that are typically around 1m thick.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The bedrock is part of the c. 455 Ma Ordovician Avoca Volcanic Formation which comprises an interbedded sequence of strongly deformed and altered volcanic and sedimentary rocks. Massive, disseminated and vein-hosted sulphide mineralization (chalcopyrite, pyrite, galena and sphalerite) is found mainly within distinctive chloritic tuffs.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Mining last took place in Connary in the 19th Century; subsequently, open shafts were capped, possibly in the 1940s by Mianraí Teoranta. Two engine houses, Connary and Waggon Shaft, operated on the site but the only remains of these are the Waggon Shaft Engine House chimney and part of the furnace house belonging to Connary Engine House. The chimney is in some disrepair and lacks a lightening conductor. The walls of the furnace house have been raised in modern time and a roof has been added – it is now in use as a barn. A concrete support base for the aerial ropeway that ran northwest from the site lies within the site (see Sroughmore site report). The low walls of a small concrete water tank beside Connary Engine House shaft and trace remains of a reservoir near the site of Waggon shaft are the only other remains of mine buildings at Connary.

Numerous shafts are marked on old maps and various depressions in the ground may mark the site of many of these. However, only six shafts have been identified with certainty: Connary Engine (concrete cap), Barry's (concrete cap), Vale's (collapsed), Reed's (concrete cap) and two unnamed shafts (collapsed) within the fenced areas at the crossroads. One of these is the vent shaft for Kilmacoo North adit.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

The Connary site is, unusually among the various sites at Avoca, largely unaffected by modern, i.e. 20th century, mining and is notable for the number of shafts present on site, surface expressions of an apparently largely intact 19th-century underground mine. The chimney is a prominent local landmark.

Management/promotion issues

The site's owner, DCENR, is in the process of recapping several shafts. The Waggon Shaft Engine House chimney is in urgent need of attention - alone among the engine-house chimneys at Avoca it has not benefited from conservation efforts in recent years.



Waggon Engine House chimney on Connary mine site, surrounded by extensive waste heaps.



Furnace house for Connary Engine House, now used as a barn.



Reservoir, used for storing water used in Connary Engine House.



