

WICKLOW - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Mottee Stone
Other names used for site	Motto Stone
IGH THEME	IGH 7 Quaternary
TOWNLAND(S)	Cronebane
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Rathdrum
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	35
ITM CO-ORDINATES	72082E 683289N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	62
GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO: 16	

Outline Site Description

The Mottee Stone is a large erratic boulder, perched at approximately 250m above sea level on a prominent hill.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

An erratic from the Ice Age, of Devonian-age granite, sitting on Ordovician volcanic rocks.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The bedrock in the site comprises Ordovician volcanic rocks and associated sediments, which host the adjacent volcanic massive sulphide minerals mined in the immediate vicinity and district.

The Mottee Stone itself is made of granite, and is 13 km away from the nearest likely source around Glenmalure. Striae in the locality indicate that ice passed from northwest to southeast from the mountain ice cap, down Glenmalure and the Avonbeg Valley, and swept out into the Irish Sea Basin. The Mottee Stone was deposited in this fashion by glacier ice.

There are spectacular views from Cronebane Hill; views can be had up the Avonbeg Valley into Glenmalure, and Lugnaquilla is seen west of this. Croghan Mountain is visible to the southwest, with the Vale of Avoca and Goldmines River valley in between. From this site, while looking around the panorama of the landscape, the magnitude of ice cover during the ice Age can be well understood. Within the view, only the top of Lugnaquilla poked up above the ice sheet.

Site Importance - County Geological Site

It is an important site in terms of imagining the power of glaciation, and for the elegant and obvious demonstration of the power of ice to carry large rocks for considerable distances.

Management/promotion issues

The Mottee Stone is easily accessible by paths across the heath, and was a tourist attraction. There are superb views from here in most directions. Signage to the Mottee Stone has disappeared in recent years from the nearby roads. The car park that once existed for visitors has had to be blocked off in response to anti-social behaviour and abuse. What could be a really good landmark and a tourist attraction has a very shabby surrounding. It seems to be an opportunity wasted, but is part of a spectrum of issues in the area, and so is not easy to improve without a more integrated approach.



The Mottee Stone. Note the ladder stapled into the side to allow visitors to climb it.



The blocked off car park for visitors to the Mottee Stone.



