

CLARE - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Roadford
Other names used for site	Doolin Phosphate mine
TOWNLAND(S)	Toomullin, Doolin
NEAREST TOWN	Lisdoonvarna
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	8
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	108258 197139 = Q 083 971
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	51 1/2 inch Sheet No.

Outline Site Description

Abandoned mine site with some natural streambank exposures

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Phosphate mines in the basal Namurian strata, overlying the Carboniferous limestone.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

In the river about 500m above Roadford, an outcrop of rock phosphate occurs at the base of the Namurian Clare Shales overlying the Carboniferous limestone. Phosphate mining has taken place here from 1924 to 1947, although there is little now remaining to indicate the works apart from overgrown spoil heaps and some building remains. The phosphate deposits were localised concentrations, that became viable to mine here and opencast at Noughaval, further east, where nothing now remains. Some phosphatic nodules may be found in the shale exposures in the area. Although mining heritage remains are sparse, the unusual nature of this deposit makes it of some importance. In addition the location of Doolin Cave underneath the Aille River has been used in karst text books as an example of the heterogeneity of limestone drainage. However, since the removal of phosphate deposits from the Aille river bed, sinking of the stream into the underlying Doolin Cave has begun, suggesting that the impermeable phosphate layer was actually the controlling factor.

Site Importance

The site is of National importance and may be proposed for NHA designation under the IGH 6 Mineralogy theme, the IGH 9 Upper Carboniferous and Permian theme and the IGH 15 Economic Geology theme of the GSI's IGH Programme.

Management/promotion issues

Local access is usually willingly given, but underground access is impossible due to adit collapse etc.



