
NWHG Ref. 001 — Ben Hutig

Location, grid reference and photograph

The Ben Hutig site lies 3 km south of the north coast of the mainland at the north-east corner of the NWHG, some 2.5 km north-west of the community of West Strathan and 5km north of the A 838, Grid Ref. [NC 540 652].

(Figure 7) Rodded and locally flattened dominantly quartz pebbles in pebbly and conglomeratic psammities of the A'Mhoine Psammite Formation. Ben Hutig, BGS Photo P552316. J R Mendum

GCR site reference, block, volume and notified feature of SSSI?

GCR Ref. 1024, Moine Block, Vol. 34. Notified feature of Ben Hutig SSSI.

Description and geological significance

The Ben Hutig site area represents the most north-westerly exposure of the Moine succession on the Scottish mainland, with the Moine Thrust Belt lying only about 1 km further to the west. The key geological features are the excellent examples of coarse-grained "psammities" (conglomeratic and gritty beds, showing cross-bedding), interleaved with finer-grained "pelitic" and "semipelitic" schists. These metasedimentary rocks of the Moine represent periods of rapid deposition of coarser sands and pebble beds, followed by periods of quieter mud and silt accumulation, probably in a shallow-marine or fluvial environment. There are also quartz veins of two distinct ages and two phases of deformation have been recognised. The proximity of the Ben Hutig site to the Moine Thrust Belt allows comparison of the deformation, folding and metamorphic patterns within the Moine Nappe and those of the nearby thrust belt. The Ben Hutig area is recognised as one of national importance and valuable for teaching and research purposes.

Accessibility

The site area is in a remote location, requiring a 2.5 km walk over rough and frequently boggy terrain, north-westwards from the unclassified road terminating at West Strathan. It is not, therefore accessible to all abilities.

Conservation

Low conservation requirement due to the scale and location of the site.

Visibility and "clarity"

The general feature of Ben Hutig is visible from the nearest road, looking north-westwards. Once the actual site is reached, exposures are clear and easily picked out by the trained geological eye.

Interpretation and interpretation potential

The site is visited by geology students and researchers but interpretation is not available to the general public without specialist assistance. There is no interpretation panel due to the specialised interest and the remoteness and difficulty of access. The Ben Hutig area is of considerable importance as a teaching resource for students and is an area suitable for further research. Consideration could be given to including it in a future Geopark guide and its potential as an educational resource/teaching aid for students should be developed.

Key references

MENDUM, J.R. 2009. Ben Hutig. In Mendum, J. R., Barber, A. J., Butler, R. W. H., Flinn, D., Goodenough, K. M., Krabbendam, M., Park, R. G. & Stewart, A. D. (eds) Lewisian, Torridonian and Moine rocks of Scotland. Geological Conservation Review Series, 34, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, 367–372.

WILSON, G. 1953. Mullions and rodding structures in the Moine Series of Scotland. Proceedings of the Geologists' Association, 64, 118–151.



(Figure 7) Rodded and locally flattened dominantly quartz pebbles in pebbly and conglomeratic psammites of the A'Mhoine Psammite Formation. Ben Hutig, BGS Photo P552316. J R Mendum.