
NWHG Ref. 024 — Skiag Bridge

Location, grid reference and photograph

The site extends south-eastwards from the junction of the A 894 with the A 837 at Skiag Bridge, along the north-east side of Loch Assynt, Grid Ref. [NC 234 256]–[NC 240 237].

(Figure 25) Monocraterion and Skolithus burrows in Cambrian Pipe Rock, Skiag Bridge. BGS Photo P524489 — E R Phillips

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

GCR Ref. 901, Moine Block, Vol. 34. Confirmed GCR site, not SSSI notified feature.

Description and geological significance

The site is representative of the Cambro-Ordovician foreland succession, the Sole Thrust of the Moine Thrust Belt and the lowest imbricate systems in the Assynt Culmination. It contains exceptional examples of stratigraphical repetition due to thrusting. The site is internationally important as a teaching site for basic thrust concepts.

Accessibility

There is a layby on the west side of the A 894 and the site is thus accessible to all abilities.

Conservation

Due to the proximity to the road, the high level of importance of the site, the popularity with geology students and the rather restricted and fragile nature of some of the individual exposed rock surfaces, there is a high conservation requirement.

Visibility and “clarity”

The majority of key features are visible from the A 894 road. The Pipe Rock is particularly well displayed. Identification of individual thrust features does, however, require specialist assistance for the general public.

Interpretation and interpretation potential

There is currently no on-site interpretation facility. A new roadside interpretation panel would, however, be of great benefit, interest and value for the public but would need to be sited carefully to avoid creating a hazard. Certainly, the site should be included in a future Geopark guide. The site is frequently visited by geologists and university parties and used to demonstrate typical Pipe Rock characteristics, imbricate thrusting and an introduction to the stratigraphic sequence in the NW Highlands.

Key references

BUTLER, R.W.H. 2009. Skiag Bridge. 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, 273–276.

COWARD, M.P. 1984. The strain and textural history of thin-skinned tectonic zones: examples from the Assynt region of the Moine thrust zone. *Journal of Structural Geology*, 6, 89–99.



(Figure 25) Monocraterion and Skolithus burrows in Cambrian Pipe Rock, Skiag Bridge. BGS Photo P524489 — E R Phillips.