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## **NWHG Ref. 008 — Durness**

### **Location, grid reference and photograph**

This extensive site covers parts of the shore of the Kyle of Durness, Balnakeil Bay and the area to the south and east of Durness, Grid Ref. [NC 358 687], [NC 361 630], [NC 389 657].

(Figure 13) Basal Sangomore Formation, Durness Group. Kyle of Durness, BGS Photo P 537289 — M T Dean.

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

GCR Ref. 1009, Cambrian Block, Vol. 18. Notified feature of Durness SSSI.

### **Description and geological significance**

A key stratigraphical locality of international significance with implications for its bearing on continental drift and correlations. It shows most completely the Cambrian and Ordovician strata of a fragment of the Laurentian (North American) Plate and was historically one of the first examples of such a displaced fragment to be recognised on faunal grounds. It is mainly underlain by dolostones of the Durness Group.

### **Accessibility**

The site is extensive, covering parts of the shore of the Kyle of Durness, Balnakeil Bay and the area to the south and east of Durness, much of which is accessible by car with minimum of walking required. Partly accessible to all abilities.

### **Conservation**

Low conservation requirement due to scale and location of site area. Some risk of over-sampling and over-hammering.

### **Visibility and “clarity”**

Visibility of key features good for specialists rather than lay-public. Interpretation and interpretation potential

The area is commonly used by geologists and university parties to study these important Cambrian and Ordovician strata within the context of continental drift. There are currently no interpretation panels. Inclusion in a future Geopark guide recommended. An important educational resource for geology students and researchers.

### **Key references**

Geological Conservation Review Series, Volume 18: British Cambrian To Ordovician Stratigraphy, site description page 296.

PRIGMORE, J.K. & RUSHTON, A.W.A. 1999. Scotland: Cambrian and Ordovician of the Hebridean Terrane. In Rushton, A. W. A., Owen, A. W., Owens, R. M. & Prigmore, J. K. (eds) British Cambrian to Ordovician Stratigraphy. Geological Conservation Review Series, 18, Chapman & Hall, 295–315.

RAINE, R.J. 2006. The Durness Group of NW Scotland: A stratigraphical and sedimentological study of a Cambro-Ordovician passive margin succession. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Birmingham.



*(Figure 13) Basal Sangomore Formation, Durness Group. Kyle of Durness, BGS Photo P 537289 — M T Dean.*