NWHG Ref. 011 — Loch Laxford

Location, grid reference and photograph

The site is located at the head of Loch Laxford, near Laxford Bridge, Grid Ref. [NC 230 480].

(Figure 16) Lewisian gneiss with mafic rocks and granite intrusions. Layby on the A838, north of Loch Laxford. BGS Photo P524837. — M Krabbendam.

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

Non GCR site. Notified feature of Loch Laxford SSSI.

Description and geological significance

The site displays a transition from the older Scourian-age gneisses to the slightly younger Laxfordian-age gneisses, all of which form part of the Lewisian Gneiss Complex. These rocks contain intrusions of granitic sheets.

Accessibility

Access to most of the site is good with several laybys conveniently located on the A 838, permitting easy viewing of the adjacent roadside rock-faces and cuttings The site is thus accessible to all abilities.

Conservation

There is generally a low conservation requirement due to the scale, location and disparate nature of most of the exposures.

Visibility and “clarity”

Excellent visibility from the A 838 and the various features are clear and easily identified. Visual impact of these dramatic exposures is very high and, for specialists, they are inspirational.

Interpretation and interpretation potential

At one particular location on the A 838 towards the north end, the layby is one of the recommended Rock Route stopping places (the “Multicoloured Rock-Stop”) with excellent exposures in the high rock-face across on the eastern side of the road. This attracts visits by the general public as well as geological specialists, and is widely regarded as one of the best Rock Route interpretation panels within the Geopark. The exposures are visually attractive as well as important in an earth science context. No additional on-site interpretation facilities are required. Nonetheless, the site should clearly be included in a future Geopark guide and it is of high educational value and potential which could be further developed.

Key references

BEACH, A., COWARD, M.P. & GRAHAM, R.H. 1974. An interpretation of the structural evolution of the Laxford front. Scottish Journal of Geology, 9, 297–308.

GOODENOUGH, K.M., PARK, R.G., KRABBENDAM, M., MYERS, J.S., WHEELER, J., LOUGHLIN, S.C., CROWLEY, Q.G., L, F.C.R., BEACH, A., KINNY, P.D. & GRAHAM, R.H. 2010. The Laxford Front: an end-Archaean terrane boundary? In Law, R., Butler, R. W. H., Holdsworth, R. E., Krabbendam, M. & Strachan, R. A. (eds) Continental

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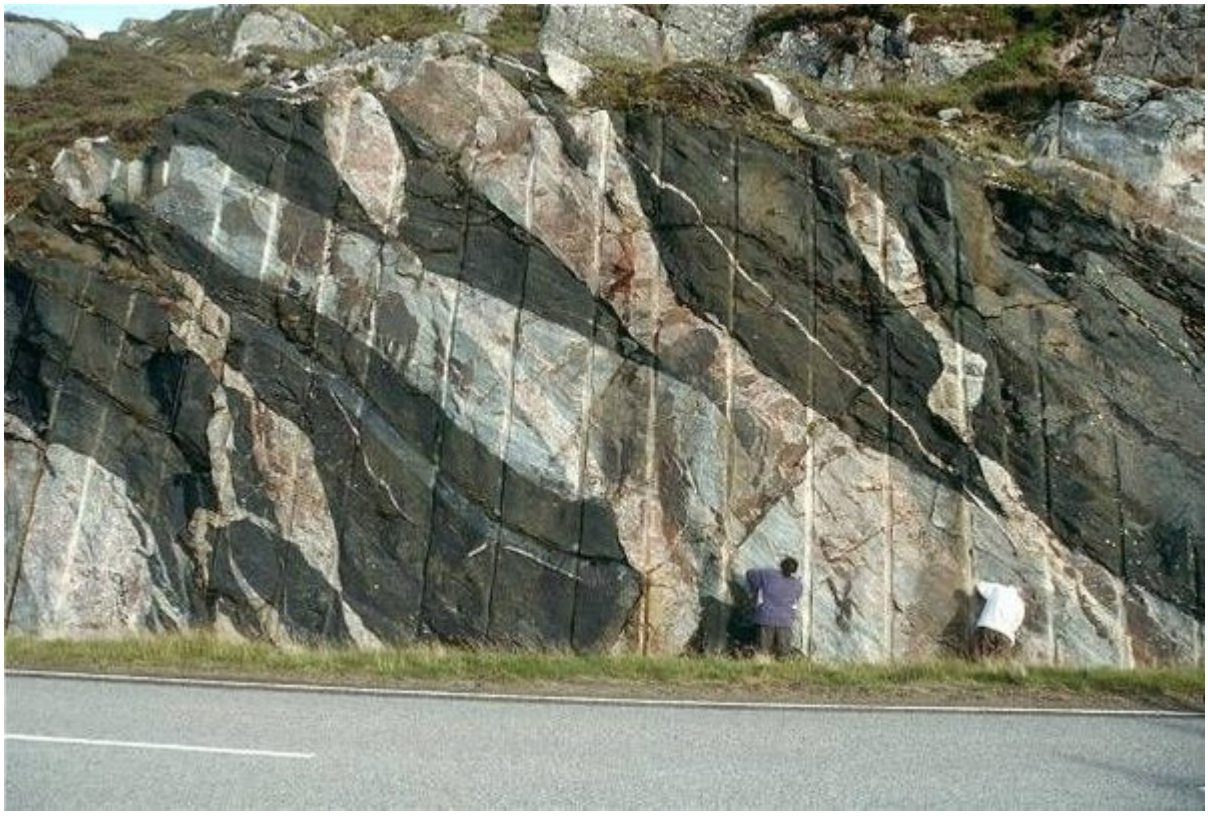

(Figure 16) Lewisian gneiss with mafic rocks and granite intrusions. Layby on the A838, north of Loch Laxford. BGS Photo P524837. — M Krabbendam.