

CORK CITY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Shandon Tower
Other names used for site	Church of St Anne
IGH THEME	IGH 15 Economic Geology, IGH 8 Lower Carboniferous, IGH 10 Devonian
TOWNLAND(S)	
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	In Cork City
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	74-1
ITM CO-ORDINATES	567245E 572455N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	87 GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO: 25

Outline Site Description

A striking church in the centre of the city, which showcases the city's two main lithologies.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The church was built between 1722 and 1726, likely using stone from local quarries. There are both limestones and red sandstones used in the construction of this church, likely representing the Lower Carboniferous and Upper Devonian respectively.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The north and east walls of St Anne's Church tower are built using red sandstone, and the south and west walls are made of limestone. There are many historical quarries within Cork, which produced building stone used in structures across the city, such as Beaumont Quarry for Carboniferous limestone, and Brickfield Quarry for Devonian sandstone. Whilst it is extremely likely that two such local quarries were the source for the building stone in St Anne's Church, unfortunately the precise provenances of the stones are unknown. The tower of St Anne's Church is an easily recognisable landmark within Cork City, housing the iconic Shandon Bells, the "four-faced liar" clock, and a salmon representing Cork's fishing history. The view from the top of the Shandon Bells tower highlights how fluvial processes, underlying bedrock, and faults all contribute to the geomorphology of Cork City.

Site Importance - County Geological Site

St Anne's Church is a particularly striking structure, which juxtaposes the two main lithologies of the area. An imposing figure on the city skyline, it is also a culturally and historically significant site.

Management/promotion issues

Access to the church is permitted within their opening hours, and there is already a small geological interpretation board within the church grounds, which also gives a brief description of the surrounding Cork City geology.



The north side (left) of the tower, made of red sandstone, and the west side (right), built from limestone.



The east side (right) of the tower, made of red sandstone, and the south side (left), built from limestone. The rest of the church body is sandstone, with limestone finishings around windows and the corners of the building.

