

DONEGAL - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Gleann na mBuachaill
Other names used for site	Glenaboghil, Fintown
IGH THEME	IGH15 Economic Geology
TOWNLAND(S)	Fintown
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Fintown
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	58
ITM CO-ORDINATE	592307E, 903667N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER: 11	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NOS. 3, 4
GIS Code DL016	

Outline Site Description

The site is on low moorland bordering a flat valley floor immediately upstream of a small lake.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The rocks at this site are calcareous schist, marble and quartzite of the Dalradian Upper Falcarragh Pelite Formation.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Glenaboghil is an abandoned mine that is marked on the Ordnance Survey six-inch sheet as “Silver Mines (disused)”. According to Cole, the mine was worked prior to 1826 by English miners while the GSI Memoir (sheet 15) suggests it was worked as late as 1850 for manganese and iron and that transport difficulties led to its abandonment. The small scale of the extant workings does suggest a very short lifespan. Immediately southwest of Glenaboghil Lough, a 2–3m-wide cut or trench leads southwest to a shallow, flooded excavation. The excavation is clogged with rubbish and it is not clear if the excavation extends to any significant extent below the water surface. The ground then rises by around 3m and leads to what remains of an excavation, now filled to within 0.5m of the roof. It is not clear if this is an adit or simply a short excavation into the rock face.

Mineralization observed includes galena (lead sulphide) and sphalerite (zinc sulphide) as well as blue patches containing oxidized copper. In many 19th century silver mines the silver was extracted from silver-bearing galena. The mineralization occurs in veins in the various lithologies of the Upper Falcarragh Pelite Formation within 500m of the contact with the Main Donegal Granite. Very minor occurrences of molybdenite, chalcopyrite and pyrite have also been recorded. Other than in the bedrock around the excavations, mineralization can also be observed in two solid waste heaps that lie to the north of the trench close to the lake.

Site Importance: County Geological Site

The mine was apparently not a significant operation. The site lacks any extant mine buildings or other mine infrastructure. In a national mine heritage context it is of only minor importance but it does have some mining significance in a county context given the limited mine heritage preserved in Donegal. The exposure of mineralized bedrock is also of some interest at the site.

Management/promotion issues

The Glenaboghil site is located on private property, around 300m west along a farm track from the minor road at Glenaboghil, within an area used for grazing animals. It is likely to be of interest mainly to those interested in mine heritage and mineralization within the Dalradian sequences. As such, it does not warrant general promotion.



Glenaboghil mine, view to southwest showing upper and lower excavations.



Flooded lower excavation (left) and entrance to upper excavation (right).



Mineralized bedrock (blue: oxidized copper) (left) and spoil heap with excavations in background (right).

