

GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Annaghbeg Bog
Other names used for site	Addergoole Bog
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary, IGH16 Hydrogeology
TOWNLAND(S)	Addergoole West, Addergoole North, Ballyeighter, Annaghbeg, Gortbrackmoor, Ballyglass, Cool, Eglish
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Ahascragh
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	74
ITM CO-ORDINATES	581875E 737040N (centre of bog)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET No. 47	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 15

Outline Site Description

Annaghbeg Bog comprises an extensive area of peatland in a bowl-shaped, low-lying hollow, approximately 4 kilometres southeast of Ahascragh.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Annaghbeg Bog is situated within an area dominated by bedrock of Lower Carboniferous limestone. The bog peat is Quaternary in age, having formed in marshy conditions as an extensive envelope of the landscape in the area since deglaciation, and mostly approximately 7,000-10,000 years ago.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

While today a generally flat and open landscape, the locality of Annaghbeg Bog was covered by bog, marsh, quicksand and ponds thousands of years ago as the bog formed. The site today comprises a high, domed, raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover bog, and a significant proportion of the bog area is relatively intact.

This raised bog was originally part of an extensive system of bogs that, with the exception of Annaghbeg, have now been cutover. Although Annaghbeg Bog has no pools, it is wet and quaking in places with hummocks throughout the high bog. Cutover is also found all around the high bog, which has been reclaimed as agricultural grassland; however small areas in the east and northwest have patches of gorse scrub.

The bog itself comprises partially decomposed vegetation, which sank into marshland within the wide, wet basin. This material was laid layer upon layer for thousands of years, as the fibrous peat formed and eventually decayed into amorphous organic material over time.

The locality was therefore gradually covered by the rising bogland, which formed a dome-shaped, 'raised' bog. Other features of peat interest are included within the site boundary, such as intact and drained peat, peat cut by locals, wetlands and recovering peat.

Site Importance – County Geological Site; may be recommended for Geological NHA

Annaghbeg Bog has been designated an NHA (site code 002344), as the various forms of peat are all accessible within a small locality. As the bog exists due to the geological and hydrogeological process of peat growth, the locality is ranked as a County Geological Site, which may prove worthy of designation as a Geological NHA as this bog has a much higher proportion of intact peat than many others across the western Midlands.

Management/promotion issues

Damaging activities associated with land use across Annaghbeg Bog include drainage throughout the site and burning of the high bog. All these activities have resulted in the loss of habitat, damage to the hydrological status of the site, and pose a continuing threat to its viability. The preservation of as much of the intact portion of the bog dome as possible should be encouraged.



Main dome of Annaghbeg Bog, surrounded by a low narrow strip of reclaimed grassland.



Peat cutting on the northern side of the bog exposes faces into the peat strata.



Some recovering bog at the western edge of the feature.



Hummocks on the intact bog surface, dominated by *Sphagnum* moss 'cushions'.

