

GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Streamstown Peat
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary
TOWNLAND(S)	Letternnoosh, Letterdean
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Clifden
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	22, 35
ITM CO-ORDINATES	464600E 752620N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET No. 37	GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 10

Outline Site Description

A shallow, sheltered mud-flat and blanket peat coastal site at the head of Streamstown Bay.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The peats are Holocene (post glacial) in age, and were formed roughly 4,000 years ago. Bedrock (exposed further inland) is Neoproterozoic Streamstown Schist Formation, part of the Connemara Dalradian suite of rocks.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

At the head of Streamstown Bay, where shallow muds and shingles are exposed at low tide, shoreline peat hags are undergoing wave erosion. The site is notable for the partially submerged peat that provides evidence of late post-glacial sea-level change. Peat bores have been acquired at the site, to depths of over 3 m below the high-water mark.

Partially submerged peat is a common intertidal feature along the north Galway Bay shoreline, west of Galway City. In western Connemara, eroded peat hags such as are visible at this site are a feature at the head of several bays and sheltered inlets. Dates acquired from these organic deposits suggest lower sea levels at c. 4000 years ago, when freshwater terrestrial organic deposits accumulated, but where today saline conditions prevail.

Underlain by Dalradian schist, the topography at the head of the bay is influenced by the Clifden-Murvey Fault, a major NNW-SSE fault traversing the western Connemara landscape from Cleggan to Dog's Bay.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

The site provides valuable evidence on late- and post-glacial vegetative and environmental changes in western Ireland in the Holocene, and is an important County Geological Site. The standing stone (National Monuments Service code GA035-54) was the subject of studies of megalithic features published over one hundred years ago.

Management/promotion issues

The site is accessible from the Sky Road, off the N59 Clifden-Letterfrack road. The site is the location of a well-preserved granite standing stone measuring 1.6 m in height. The shoreline peats and peat hags are susceptible to natural wave erosion. However, the several metres depth of submerged peats are not subject to any significant natural erosive threat. Shingle, mud or peat extraction should not be permitted.



View looking northeast over Streamstown Bay submerged peat site, from Sky Road.



Low tide, view to west towards Streamstown Bay and eroded peat shoreline sections.



Standing stone in pasture at site.



Eroded peat at site, looking west. Peat deposits below mudflats and shingle.

