

# LONGFORD - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	<b>Cleenrah</b>
Other names used for site	Cleenrah Mine
<b>IGH THEME</b>	<b>IGH15 Economic Geology</b>
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	<b>Cleenrah</b>
<b>NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE</b>	<b>Aghnacliff</b>
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE</b>	<b>625600E 790550N (shaft entrance)</b>
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.</b>	<b>12</b>

## Outline Site Description

The site is located in farmland surrounded by drumlins and crag-and-tails. The land is almost exclusively grassland to the west, south and east, but forestry has recently been planted to the north of the site.

## Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The area is underlain by shales, greywackes and volcanoclastics of the Ordovician Corn Hill Formation, part of the Lower Palaeozoic Longford-Down Inlier.

## Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Cleenrah Mine was apparently operated from the early 16<sup>th</sup> century up to the 1870s, when haematitic-manganese shale associated with mafic volcanics was mined. The Geological Survey Memoir of the mid-nineteenth century describes the site as having 'three wide beds of a good dark brown haematite'. The mine had been worked before that time by a 'Dr. Ritchie', who would initially cart the ore to Crossdoney Station, but when that was found to be too costly, it was carted only to Lough Gowna and then transported by boat to the main Cavan-Dublin railway at the east of the lake.

It is not known how extensive the underground workings are, but a large, 10m deep chasm has been cut out of the steep hillside leading into the main mine area. This can be seen both today in the field and on the historical six-inch maps. The chasm appears to follow the line of a fault. Traces of mineralisation observed in boulders in field walls include haematite and manganese-dominated shale. There are a few spoil heaps around the site which are almost entirely vegetated over.

The area around the site now consists of pasture, and is accessed via a long, cul-de-sac laneway. Cottages on the way into the site may be old mine buildings/offices.

## Site Importance – County Geological Site

The main interest in the site, apart from the deep chasm in the landscape where the entrance to the mine lies, is the geotechnical issue of potential subsidence along the line of old mine workings. The mine itself is probably one of the oldest mines in the north Midlands region. For this reason, it is worth designation as a CGS.

## Management/promotion issues

There is the possibility of erecting a signboard in the vicinity to mark the site (potentially in Aghnacliff Village, where there is a small heritage park), given its historical importance.



The Cleenrah Mine site, looking northwest.



Looking south-southwestwards along the deep chasm cut into the hillside, where the mine entrance lies.



Haematite boulders can be seen throughout the site; here in the stream exiting the main mine cavity.



The cottages along the entrance are of unusual construction, and may be old mine buildings or offices.



