

LIMERICK - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Foynes Island
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH9 Upper Carboniferous, IGH3 Carboniferous to Pliocene Palaeontology
TOWNLAND(S)	Foynes Island
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Foynes
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	10
ITM CO-ORDINATES	524750E 652800N (island centre)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER 64	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 17
GIS CODE LK012	

Outline Site Description

Small island with coastal outcrops of Namurian rocks.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Bedrock on the island comprises Upper Carboniferous (Mississippian) Namurian sedimentary rocks of the Clare Shales Formation, Gull Island Formation and Tullig Formations. The rocks are dated to around 320 million years ago, and are part of the group of rocks known in this region as the Shannon Group.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Foynes Island lies around 300m north of Foynes Village, in the tidal waters of the Shannon Estuary. The island is permanently separated from the mainland, and only accessible by boat. Three main bedrock lithological units outcrop on the island.

Dark coloured mudstones of the Clare Shale Formation are found along the eastern side of the island. Gull Island Formation rocks occupy the majority (central) part of the island. The Gull Island Formation comprises grey siltstone and sandstone. Gull Island Formation is succeeded by the Tullig Cyclothem, and the mappable Tullig Sandstone is found at the very west of the island. The island hosts the type localities for two goniatite species; *Reticuloceras subreticulatum* and *Homoceratoides divaricatu*.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

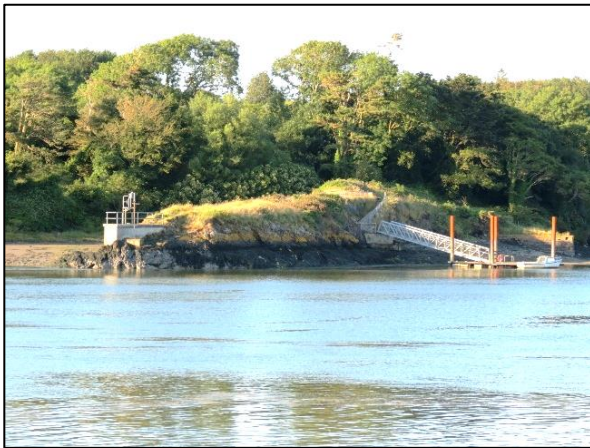
An important County Geological Site in terms the type localities for two goniatite species, and the occurrence of coastal exposures of Namurian lithologies of the Clare Basin (also referred to as the Shannon Trough or Shannon Basin).

Management/promotion issues

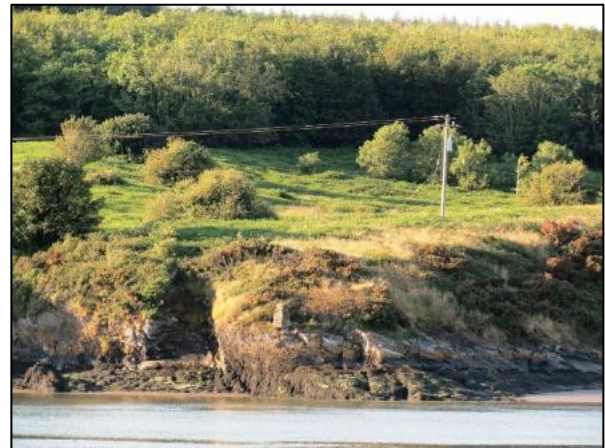
Over the past three decades, Foynes Island has been extensively covered with forestry. The site is not recommended for public promotion, but remains an important location for future research on the Carboniferous geology of the Shannon Basin.



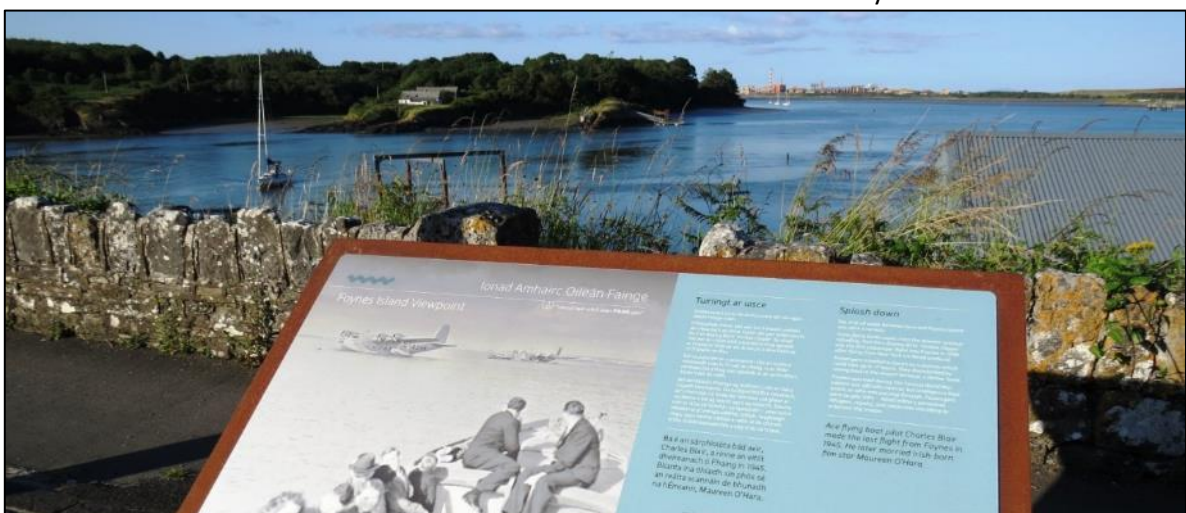
Southwest shore of Foynes Island viewed from Foynes Island Wild Atlantic Way Viewpoint. Good shoreline exposures of Gull Island Formation at low tide.



Gull Island Formation shoreline outcrops at Barneen Point.



Gull Island Formation shoreline outcrops on west side of embayment at Barneen.



Southeast shore of Foynes Island viewed from Foynes Island Wild Atlantic Way Viewpoint, looking towards Gammeral Point. Auginish Alumina visible in distance.

