

ROSCOMMON - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Mid Roscommon Ribbed Moraines
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary
TOWNLAND(S)	Too many to list ... the field covers over two hundred and thirty individual townlands, across an area of 200 km²
NEAREST TOWN	Strokestown, Elphin, Tulsk
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	16, 17, 22, 23, 28, 29, 36
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	190000 282000 (centre of features)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	33, 40 1/2 inch Sheet No. 12

Outline Site Description

This field of ribbed moraine forms part of a small, discrete field of these features, west and northwest of Slieve Bawn. It covers an area of 10 by 20 kilometres, and includes approx. 100 ribbed moraine features.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The ribbed moraines are formed on bedrock which is Lower Carboniferous limestone. The features themselves are Quaternary in age, having been deposited at the base of the ice sheet moving northwest to southeast during the maximum period of the last Ice Age.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

These ribbed moraines each contain many superimposed drumlins on their crests, and the area has traditionally been known as the southwesternmost extreme of the 'Drumlin Belt'. The ribbed moraines can only be seen using digital elevation modelling (DEM) and satellite imagery owing to their size.

This ribbed moraine field is not only unusual in its small size and 'discreteness' (comparatively for these types of landform), but being interspersed with deep peat means the features are quite striking. It forms the perfect 'ribbed' topography.

The features are generally 6km-8km long and 1km or so wide, with individual superimposed drumlins being c. 1km long and 400m-500m wide. They attain a maximum height of about 35m and are usually 25m or so in elevation.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This is one of the finest fields of discrete ribbed moraines in the country.

Management/promotion issues

This is an excellent site in terms of macro-scale Quaternary subglacial geomorphology. The features are too large to undertake any conservation efforts on their part, but the landscape itself is noteworthy and should be promoted as unique amongst landscape elements within the Roscommon County Development Plan and in Landscape Characterisation.



A view across some of the mid Roscommon ribbed moraine from Lisduff, east of Elphin, looking north.

