SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: BALLINA BOG

SITE CODE: 000390

Ballina Bog is situated about 8km west of Enfield and just south-west of Moyvalley in an elongated valley in Co. Kildare.

Much of the surface is of good quality and quite wet in spite of the presence of many drains. The drains cross the bog in a north-east to south-west direction and also a few run east-west. The former are shallow and of long standing. Many have been filled in by bog moss (*Sphagnum* spp.) growth but retain moving water towards the edges of the bog. Two much deeper drains were inserted in the early 1980s and may cause more long-term damage to the bog.

The vegetation and structure of the surface is well developed, especially in the southern half. Substantial areas of hummock and hollow topography exist, with pools and active *Sphagnum* growth. Much of the *Sphagnum* is *S. magellanicum*. Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and cottongrasses (*Eriophorum vaginatum* and *E. angustifolium*) are frequent on the surface. A large part of the bog has remained unburned for 20-30 years and contains an abundance of the lichen *Cladonia impexa*.

Marginal peat cutting has been carried out at the northern and eastern ends of the bog.

Despite the presence of many drains, the condition of the vegetation and surface makes this bog of considerable scientific importance. It is one of the most easterly raised bogs which are relatively intact.

5.11.2009