
NWHG Ref. 027 — Traligill Burn

Location, grid reference and photograph

The site lies within the course of the Traligill Burn, 2km east-south-east of Inchnadamph, Grid Ref. [NC 265 213]–[NC 271 209].

(Figure 28) The Traligill Thrust Plane at Traligill Burn. BGS Photo P530634.

GCR site reference, block, volume and notified feature of SSSI?

GCR Ref. 1308, Moine Block, Vol. 34. Notified feature of Ben More Assynt SSSI.

Description and geological significance

The site is representative of thrusting within the Sole Thrust Sheet in the Assynt Culmination. The seasonally-dry river bed has revealed an exceptional exposure of an actual thrust plane within the lower imbricate zone of the central Assynt area. This is one of the best-known localities within the Moine Thrust Belt. The site is also famous for its karst geomorphology and the course of the Traligill Burn runs underground for 400m.

Accessibility

This section of the Traligill valley is accessed via a rough track/path from Inchnadamph, running along the north bank of the Burn. It is not suitable for all abilities.

Conservation

Low to moderate conservation requirement due to the scale and location of the site area.

Visibility and “clarity”

The thrust plane is highly visible once the site location is reached and is very easily recognised with specialist assistance. The exposure of the thrust surface is very dramatic and inspirational to students of geology.

Interpretation and interpretation potential

This is one of the most frequently visited localities within the Moine Thrust Belt and is commonly used by geologists and university parties to demonstrate the nature and geometry of a thrust surface. It is also included in a guided walk undertaken by the Highland Council Rangers to demonstrate the disappearance of the Burn and the reasons for its underground flow beneath the limestone surface. There is currently no interpretation panel, and consideration could now be given to erecting one. Traligill valley features as a walk in the guidebook “Exploring the landscape of Assynt” The site should certainly be included in a future Geopark guide and its potential as a teaching aid for students and educational resource for the wider public should be developed.

Key references

BUTLER, R.W.H. 2009. Traligill Burn. In Mendum, J. R., Barber, A. J., Butler, R. W. H., Flinn, D., Goodenough, K. M., Krabbendam, M., Park, R. G. & Stewart, A. D. (eds) *Lewisian, Torridonian and Moine rocks of Scotland*. Geological Conservation Review Series, 34, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, 279–280.

KRABBENDAM, M. & LESLIE, A.G. 2010. Lateral variations and linkages in thrust geometry: the Traligill Transverse Zone, Assynt Culmination, Moine Thrust Belt, NW Scotland. In Law, R., Butler, R. W. H., Holdsworth, R. E., Krabbendam, M. & Strachan, R. A. (eds) *Continental Tectonics and Mountain Building: The Legacy of Peach and Horne*. Geological Society. London, Special Publication, 333–356.



(Figure 28) The Traligill Thrust Plane at Traligill Burn. BGS Photo P530634.