

KILKENNY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Ballykeefe Quarry
Other names used for site	Ballykeefe Amphitheatre
IGH THEME:	IGH 8 (Lower Carboniferous)
TOWNLAND(S)	Kilmanagh
NEAREST TOWN	Ballykeefe
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	22
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	240720 151000 = S 4072 5100
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	67 1/2 inch Sheet No. 18

Outline Site Description

A disused quarry used as an outdoor amphitheatre and rock climbing venue.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Lower Carboniferous Limestone of the Ballyadams Formation

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

This quarry 12km from Kilkenny shows a well exposed section of fossiliferous Lower Carboniferous limestone within the Lower Carboniferous Ballyadams Formation. Fossils found at this location mostly comprise of a selection of corals and brachiopods. Karst weathering features can also be observed in the upper sections of the quarry walls.

Site Importance

This is a good example of well exposed Lower Carboniferous Limestone, set in a disused quarry. The shape of the quarry has been used to create a natural amphitheatre and the vertical quarry walls have been utilized for rock climbing. As well as its scientific and educational significance, Ballykeefe Quarry represents a cross over between geology and modern Irish culture and is definitely of great local importance to the county and therefore is recommended for County Geological Site status. It provides a good example for other local authorities of imaginative end usage for the benefit of the community whilst retaining the geological interest.

Management/promotion issues

This site lies on the edge of an existing National Nature Reserve on Ballykeefe Hill, along the R695 from Kilkenny. The quarry has been developed into an amphitheatre by the local community supported by Barrow, Nore, Suir Rural Development (Under the Leader Programme) and the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism and is well maintained. It is consequently suitable for general promotion. Geological explanation on site and educational use for earth science in the curriculum could both be expanded with support from GSI or the National Museum of Ireland.



Left: Staging area set up at Ballykeefe with the quarry walls as the backdrop.
Right: Epikarst found along the top sections of the quarry walls. These uppermost beds are the most weathered layers of the limestone.

Ballykeefe Quarry

