

CLARE - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE

Pol an Ionain

Other names used for site

TOWNLAND(S)

Craggycorrodan

NEAREST TOWN

Lisdoonvarna

SIX INCH MAP NUMBER

8

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE

109800 199750 = R09800 99750

1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER

51 1/2 inch Sheet No. 14

Outline Site Description

Ancient chambered cave with important sediments and a large stalactite.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Situated within Carboniferous limestone.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The cave is an ancient chambered cave, containing varved sediments (alternating layers of light and dark sediment) and a renowned stalactite (known as 'the Great Stalactite'), 6.541m long, which was reputed to be the largest free hanging stalactite in the world. The sediments are potentially of great importance as a record of environmental and climatic changes over the time the cave has existed. As the cave contains the largest single chamber of the Burren caves, this accumulation of sediment is of great potential in analysis of landscape evolution, and Pol an Ionain, as an isolated chamber, has a good sequence of undisturbed deposits. These deposits have not yet been dated but are suspected to be relatively ancient since the chamber is large and unrelated to present day hydrogeological conditions.

Site Importance

The site is of National importance and is proposed for NHA designation under the IGH 1 Karst theme of the GSI's IGH Programme.

Management/promotion issues

Proposed commercialisation as a showcave. Current status is awaiting decision of An Bord Pleanála to appeals against granting of development permission.



Left: the excavation to part completed shaft to access showcave development

Right: a view from road across site.

