

CORK - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Carrigcleena		
Other names used for site	Carraigcliona, Carrig-Cleena Rock		
IGH THEME	IGH10 Devonian		
TOWNLAND(S)	Carrigcleena More		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Bweeng		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	41		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	552550E 590280N		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	80	GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	21
GIS CODE	CK030		

Outline Site Description

Small, fenced outcrop on top of quarry face, preserved as folklore site.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Devonian volcanic rocks of Carrigcleenamore Volcanics unit, of the Ballytrasna Formation.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Carrigcleena Rock is an outcrop of the Carrigcleenamore Volcanics unit of the Ballytrasna Formation. It is a significant folklore site, described in the past as a “huge rampart” of rocks with a rath (fort) and souterrain. The rock was believed to mark the entrance to the underground residence of Clíodhna, the Fairy Queen.

The Carrigcleenamore Volcanics unit has a very restricted occurrence, its mapped extent essentially confined to a small area around the footprint of the original outcrop as defined by 19th century GSI mapping. The townland, Carrigcleena More, takes its name from the rock outcrop. The volcanic rocks were preserved as an outlier (younger rocks surrounded by older rocks) at the highest point in the area. Quarrying on three sides has reduced the site to a relatively small outcrop that sits on a short spur above the south face of Bweeng Quarry (see Bweeng Quarry CGS), currently operated by Lagan Cement. The quarry is mainly within the purple and green Old Red Sandstones of the Ballytrasna Formation that underlie the volcanic rocks but tuffs of the volcanic unit are exposed on the upper part of the quarry face and were previously quarried. The Carrigcleenamore Volcanics unit consists of pyroclastic material extruded during the sedimentation of the Ballytrasna Formation. The unit comprises a cleaved pyroclastic rock with particle layers of rock-fragments, commonly pumice, lapilli and occasionally vesicular bombs. Layers of large angular rock fragments are well displayed on the southern face of the outcrop while finer grained cleaved green material forms its base.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This site appears to be the only extant outcrop of this minor volcanic rock unit within the Old Red Sandstones succession and, as such, is of geological importance and merits designations as a county geological site.

Management/promotion issues

The site is located at the end of a narrow spur that extends north from the southern wall of the quarry. The outcrop has been partially protected from quarrying over the years, presumably in recognition of its folkloric significance. A metal gate leads to a narrow, fenced path that extends from the roadway to the outcrop, which sits on top of the quarry wall. Only the southern side of the outcrop is accessible, with the rest behind the fence. The gate is bolted but unlocked. A sign at the gate reads “Carrig Cleena Rock - Queen of Fairies”. Ribbons on the gate and flowering plants at the base of the outcrop indicate that the site is actively maintained, presumably by the local community. The site is likely to be of interest mainly to professional and academic geologists and does not warrant further promotion.



Carrigcleena Rock outcrop, viewed from the south.



Sign for "Carrig-Cleena Rock" at entrance to site.



Close-up of texture of volcanic rock.



Layers of coarse lithic fragments on south side of outcrop.

