

## CORK - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	<b>Madranna Slate Quarry</b>		
Other names used for site	Madranna, Modrana		
<b>IGH THEME</b>	<b>IGH15 Economic Geology</b>		
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	<b>Madranna</b>		
<b>NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE</b>	<b>Leap</b>		
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	<b>133</b>		
<b>ITM CO-ORDINATES</b>	<b>523225E 539300N (floor of quarry)</b>		
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>GIS CODE</b>	<b>CK064</b>		

### **Outline Site Description**

Madranna Slate Quarry is a disused quarry approximately 3 km northeast of Leap.

### **Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type**

The slate quarry at Madranna is hosted in flaser-bedded sandstone and mudstone of the Narrow Cove Member of the Kinsale Formation, which is of Lower Carboniferous (Mississippian) age (359-323 million years ago).

### **Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest**

Madranna was one of three pits that formed the famous Rosscarbery Slate Quarries of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These were West Cork's largest slate quarries and gave employment to many people in the nineteenth century - over 200 were working there around 1850. Workable slate deposits were first discovered at Benduff, to the east of Madranna, around 1812, though the Madranna workings and those at nearby Cooladreen are somewhat later in origin.

Unlike the other two Rosscarbery slate localities, the workings at Madranna were primarily underground, in the form of a series of about ten inter-connecting galleries. Access to the galleries was from two large quarry pits, only one of which survives today. Each subsurface gallery measures up to 15 m in plan view, and up to 10 m in height. The pillars between the connecting galleries are punctured by sub-levels, with a ventilation drive at the top of each pillar to provide an exhaust route for blasting fumes.

The slate was worked in "veins"; which were delineated as joint-defined blocks that determined the maximum size of blocks of slate that were to be extracted for splitting and dressing. The first and second galleries here are reasonably accessible today, despite flooding.

### **Site Importance – County Geological Site**

The site is an important part of the industrial heritage of County Cork as it demonstrates the importance of geology to the economic lives of people and of the buildings that form part of society. It is well documented and fully deserves to be protected and recognised as a County Geological Site.

### **Management/promotion issues**

The quarry is set within a deep open pit, which is surrounded on three sides by woodland. The underground workings are partially flooded. The quarry is situated on private land and as such is not accessible without permission. Overall the quarry is not suitable for general promotion without significant interventions.



The one extant Madranna Slate Quarry, viewed from the east.



The entrance to the underground galleries, partially-obscured by scrub.

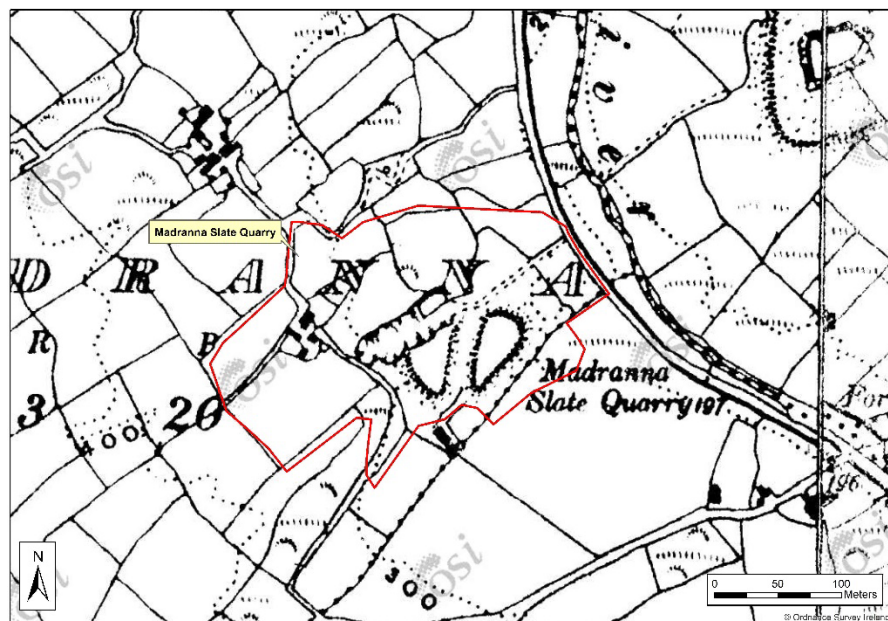
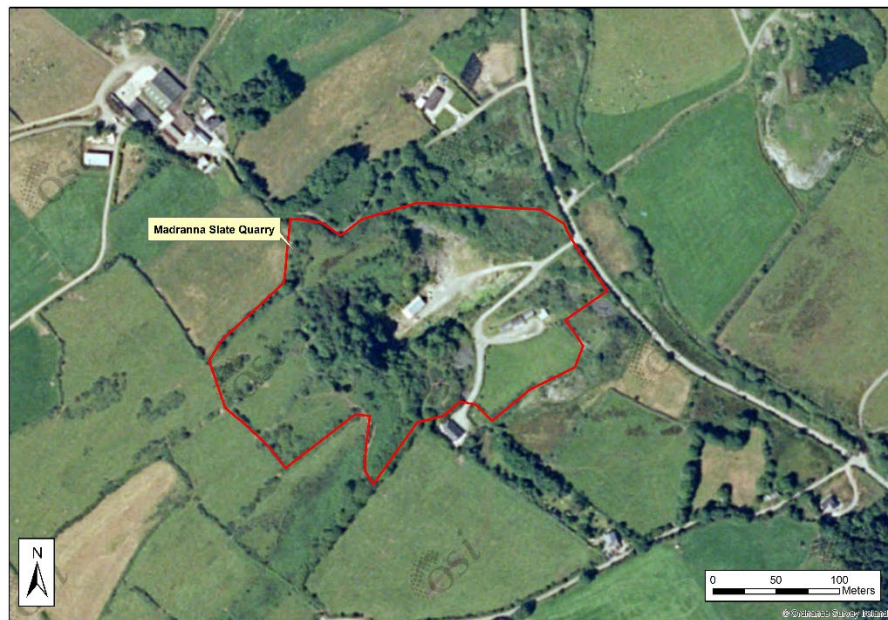


Close-up of the first gallery, partially-flooded.



The flaser-bedded sandstone and siltstone of the Narrow Cove Member that yielded the slate.







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# 100 Years Old AND STILL GOING STRONG !

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Mr. D. S. O'Ceilleacair, Head Master, Bishop Kelly Memorial Technical Institute, writes :—

"I have the pleasure to state that the slates supplied by your Firm, some years since, for the roofing of Skibbereen Technical Institute, have stood the weather excellently, and are giving complete satisfaction.

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"SPECIFY BENDUFF SLATES AND BE SATISFIED. LARGE STOCKS AVAILABLE AT MADRANNA AND BENDUFF. PHONE, WRITE, OR CALL."

## Benduff, Froe & Madranna Slate Quarries,

LEAP, COUNTY CORK

Advertisement from the Southern Star in 1892.



Miners at Madranna Slate Quarry in the early 1900s.