

CORK - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Pass of Keimaneigh		
Other names used for site	<i>Céim an Fhia</i>		
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary		
TOWNLAND(S)	An Currach Glas (<i>Curraglas</i>), An Inse Bheag (<i>Inchibeg</i>), Doirin Dún Aodha (<i>Derreendonee</i>)		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh (<i>Ballingeary</i>)		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	80		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	510340E 563960N		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	85	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	24
GIS CODE	CK071		

Outline Site Description

A mountain pass in Shehy Mountains, between the Upper Lee and Kealkill valleys. The R584 road between Bantry and Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh runs through the pass.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The Pass of Keimaneigh is of Quaternary age and formed during deglaciation events during the closing stages of the last glaciation at the end of the Pleistocene Epoch. The bedrock forming the sides of the pass comprises Upper Devonian purple and green siltstone and sandstone of the Caha Mountain Formation and green sandstone and red siltstone of the Gortanimill Formation. The pass occupies a major north-south oriented fault, the length of which has been mapped at over c. 10 km.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The Pass of Keimaneigh is c. 2.5 km long glacial meltwater channel (spillway) that forms a steep north-south gorge between the mountains of Diúchoill (Doughill Mountain, 471 m) and Fail an Stuaicín (Foilastokeen, 500 m). The channel was formed by meltwaters at the end of the last glaciation, escaping from ice emponded lakes situated to the southwest around Kealkill and Bantry Bay and emptying into the Upper Lee Valley. The pass descends steeply towards the floor of the Upper Lee Valley, just east of Gougane Barra. The steep rock walls rise 60 – 70 m in places and are rugged where rock exposure is visible. Coniferous forestry and scrubby vegetation obscure much of the surface along of the pass. It has been suggested that the channel must have carried an enormous flow of water for a comparatively short time.

Site Importance – County Geological Site; recommended for Geological NHA

The glacial meltwater channel at Keimaneigh is a major deglacial landform in the mountains along the Cork-Kerry county boundary. An important County Geological Site, the channel provides clues to deglacial processes in the region, and to the remaining ice sheets and glacial lakes during the closing stages of the last glaciation around 14,000 years ago.

Management/promotion issues

The R584 between Bantry and Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh runs through the pass, and the steep gorge-like landscape is very noticeable. Thick coniferous forestry and scrub growth obscure much of the rock exposure on the steep sides of the pass. Parking is available at the lay-by at the top of the pass, where the steep channel form can be viewed.



Pass of Keimaneigh – view downhill (north) towards Gougane Barra from lay-by and commemoration plaque.



Pass of Keimaneigh – view uphill (south) towards the Kealkill Valley and the top of the pass.

