

CAVAN - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Cormeen Quarry
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH2 Precambrian to Devonian Palaeontology
TOWNLAND(S)	Cormeen
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Stradone
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	26
ITM CO-ORDINATES	653000E 803744N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	35 GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 8/9

Outline Site Description

This site is a small quarry, intermittently used for farm materials, and some rock faces that have been more recently excavated behind a gun club premises.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The rocks are part of the Ordovician Carrickatee Formation, and some Silurian Lough Avaghon Formation sediments are juxtaposed by faults.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

This site is the best known current representative in Ireland of the 'Moffat Shale' graptolitic horizons which are widespread throughout the Longford-Down inlier. These horizons are composed of black shales that in places contain deep-sea planktonic fossils such as graptolites. The fossils are seen as thin serrated grey and white stripes in various forms. The Moffat shales are commonly found at the major bounding faults between large blocks of rock sequences, or 'tectonic tracts'. These tracts are displaced slices of former sea floor, which have been stacked almost vertically like cards. The shales form relatively weak horizons along which large blocks of rock, sometimes many tens of kilometres in width, were easily displaced. The name "Moffat" comes from the Southern Uplands of Scotland where the geological continuation of the Longford Down rocks was first properly studied and understood. The fossils at Cormeen quarry give an age for the rocks and help explain the regional geological structures.

Site Importance – County Geological Site, recommended for Geological NHA

This site is the best known representative in Ireland of the 'Moffat Shale' graptolitic horizons which are widespread throughout the Longford-Down inlier, and the new faces excavated in recent years add to the value of the site.

Management/promotion issues

The continued small scale excavation of rock for use locally as fill will maintain fresh rock exposures and prevent vegetation, but details of precise features to be seen in sections will change through time. It is important to prevent any subsequent dumping of other material so that rock faces remain accessible. The quarry and the new exposures in the gun club range are on private land and are not suitable for promotion, unless by explicit arrangement with the landowner.



A view from roadside gate of older quarry at Cormeen.



A view of the new exposures behind Cliffrina Gun Club shelters and farm silage bales.



Looking northeast along new exposures. The older quarry viewed from the ford on west side.



