

## GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	<b>Ballymaglancy Cave</b>
Other names used for site	Pollwalter
<b>IGH THEME</b>	<b>IGH1 Karst</b>
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	<b>Baile Fearainn (Ballymaglancy)</b>
<b>NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE</b>	<b>An Fhairche</b>
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>ITM CO-ORDINATES</b>	<b>511282E 754942N</b>
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NO. 38</b>	<b>GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 11</b>

### **Outline Site Description**

Ballymaglancy Cave is an excellent and fairly extensive cave passage, approximately 500m in length.

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

The cave is formed within Lower Carboniferous limestone of the Cong Canal Formation, which crops out in a relatively narrow band between An Fhairche and Conga. The cave itself is likely to be much younger, potentially Tertiary in age.

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

This cave occurs where a stream flowing on the Silurian and Dinantian sandstones to the west first encounters Carboniferous limestone. The drainage into the cave is independent of the Lough Mask sinks, but the water has been proven by dye tracing to flow eastwards to also rise in the Ellechrissaun Springs near Conga.

The cave has been surveyed and documented by numerous geologists in the past, the first as early as 1955. The cave contains fine speleothems, mudbank sediments and a variety of passage morphologies. The cave entrance is approximately 2 m high and 3 m wide, but inside the cave widens and the first 50 m offers several possible routes that eventually converge to form one passage. Near the entrance there is a good example of Carboniferous colonial coral in the floor, next to a roof collapse covered in gour pools. The stream then descends in steps and the passageway is well-decorated with stalactites, curtains and other speleothems.

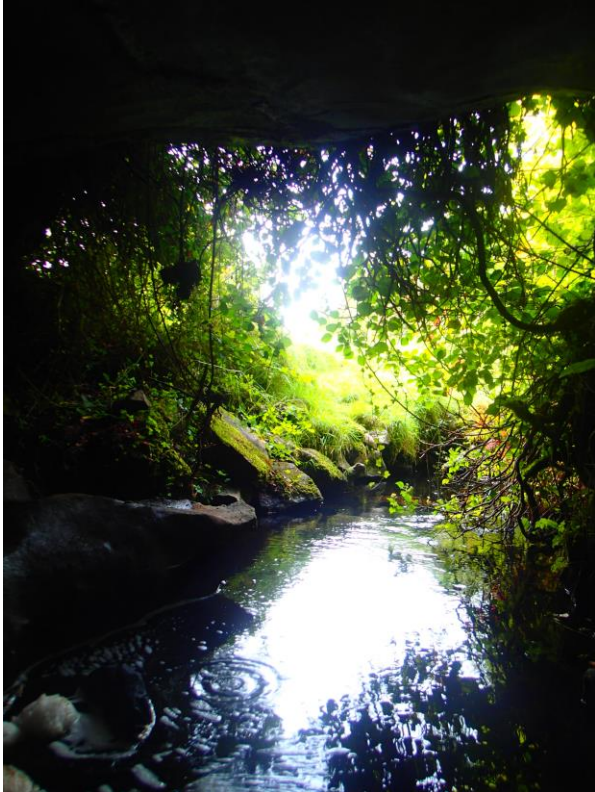
Ballymaglancy Cave was once a Victorian showcave, and occasional remnant platform timbers can be seen in the deeper water. The sump at the northeastern limit of the cave is very close to the surface, and the water rises in a doline beside the road, and almost immediately sinks again. The site is extended across the road where another discrete cave is present.

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

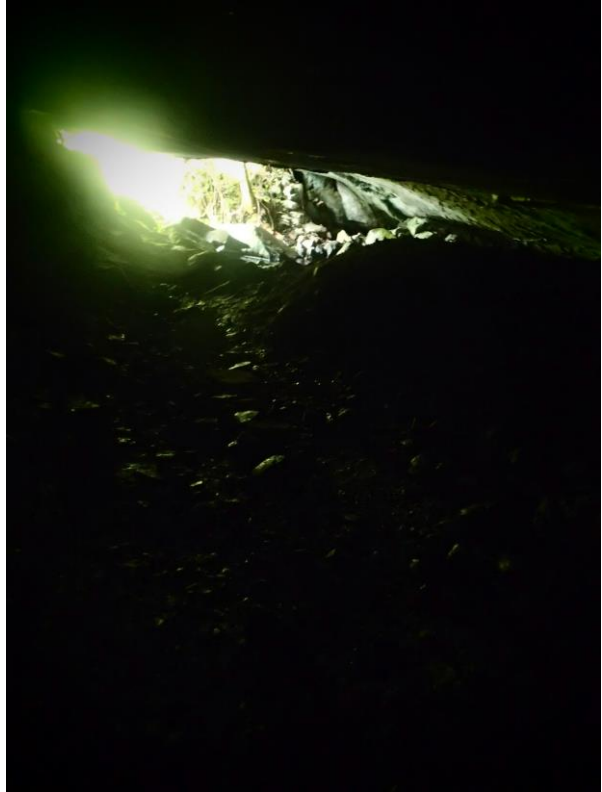
The cave is of County Geological Site importance as a part of the complex of karstic features in the Clonbur and Cong area. The site is already an important SAC, designated as such as a population of Lesser Horseshoe bats roost there.

### **Management/promotion issues**

Although a visible and known local landmark Ballymaglancy Cave is on private land and promotion could only be considered with the co-operation of the landowner. Due to the dangers and fragility of the cave environment, underground exploration is not recommended for anyone, except in the company of experienced and equipped cavers.



View from within through entrance of Ballymaglancy Cave.



View towards entrance from within the cave.



The cave's situation within the landscape.



The cave entrance.



Stream sinking inside the cave.



View of speleothems within the cave.



