

# KILKENNY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

|                                   |                              |                           |    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|----|
| <b>NAME OF SITE</b>               | <b>Dunmore Cave</b>          |                           |    |
| Other names used for site         |                              |                           |    |
| <b>IGH THEME:</b>                 | IGH 1, 7 (Karst, Quaternary) |                           |    |
| <b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>                | Mohil                        |                           |    |
| <b>NEAREST TOWN</b>               | Ballyfoyle                   |                           |    |
| <b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>        | 14                           |                           |    |
| <b>NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE</b>    | 250900 165000 = S 509 650    |                           |    |
| <b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b> | 60                           | <b>1/2 inch Sheet No.</b> | 18 |

## Outline Site Description

A large show cave.

## Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Lower Carboniferous (Viséan) limestone of the Clogrenan Formation.

## Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The formation of the cave at Dunmore is thought to be associated with the introduction of glacial meltwater to the permeable Lower Carboniferous limestone of the area. The waters chemically dissolved the limestone producing a large cave system. In an area of the cave known as the Rabbits Burrow glaciofluvial sediments, comprising clays, sands and gravel are found deposited within limestone passageways. Impressive dripstone formations are found throughout this cave system, including numerous stalactites and stalagmites ranging from a few millimetres to several metres in size.

## Site Importance

Already a National Monument and designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) this is the largest and most impressive cave in the county, with broad and dry passageways making most regions of this cave accessible to the public. Geologically it is a rare Irish example of a cave that has been formed directly by glacial meltwaters, rather than solution caused by the presence of groundwater.

## Management/promotion issues

This site is managed and owned by the Office of Public Works (OPW). Adjacent to the cave entrance is a visitor centre, which holds a small museum and coffee shop. The outside of the Dunmore Cave visitor centre is being renovated (summer 2007), which includes the addition of a sculpture depicting the ages of Irish geology. It is important to note that the NHA boundary for Dunmore Cave only covers the cave entrance. It is recommended that the boundary should cover the **whole** known extent of the cave, which runs approximately 300 metres in a due north-south direction.



Left: Dripstone formations found on both the ceiling and floor of the cave.

Right: Glaciofluvial sediments found in an area of Dunmore Cave known as the Rabbits Burrow.

# Dunmore Cave

