

KILKENNY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Deerpark Mine		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME:	IGH 15 (Economic Geology)		
TOWNLAND(S)	Deerpark		
NEAREST TOWN	Castlecomer		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	5		
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	253394 175692 = S 533 756		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	61	1/2 inch Sheet No.	19

Outline Site Description

Disused coal mine and old mine buildings.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Upper Carboniferous (Westphalian) shale and coal of the Coolbaun Formation.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Thin seams of coal, which were mined up until the late 1960's, are found within the more dominant shale and sandstone of the Coolbaun Formation. The formation of this coal is a result of the decomposition of organic material during a period called the Upper Carboniferous, about 300 million years ago. The area where the largest and most economic coal seams are found is known as the Castlecomer Coalfield. It occurs mostly in Kilkenny but also in counties Carlow and Laois. This consists of three major coal seams. Anthracite, a hard, black, lustrous coal can be found in these seams, and is the highest grade of coal that can be formed.

Site Importance

Deerpark Mine was opened in 1928 for the extraction of coal. It was the primary working mine along the Castlecomer Coalfield and in January 1969 was closed down. Remnants of the mining structures still remain on this site, consisting of a number of processing buildings, washrooms for the miners and a dam to the north. These buildings are listed as Protected Structures in the Kilkenny County Development Plan. This site represents a very important part in Kilkenny's local history. For both its cultural and geological importance Deerpark is proposed as a County Geological Site.

Management/promotion issues

The lands on which the mine and its associated buildings are located belong to the Ward family. This site is primarily used for agriculture (mainly livestock). The existing mining structures, although many in ruins, are very well maintained by the owners. The main mine adit is bricked up so access to the mine itself is not possible. This site is not suitable for general promotion without direct involvement of the owner, Mr. John Ward, who is actively involved in the local mining heritage community.



Left: The bricked up mine adit that once brought men and boys into the Deerpark Mine.
Right: An artificial dam to the north of the main mining area, constructed to channel water for the purpose of processing materials extracted from the mine.

Deer Park Mine

