

KERRY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Barry's Glyn
Other names used for site	Barrys Glen, Ballydeenlea
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary, IGH9 Upper Carboniferous, IGH3 Carboniferous to Pliocene Palaeontology
TOWNLAND(S)	Drumadeesirt, Coolbaun, Coollick
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Farranfore
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	58
ITM CO-ORDINATES	495365E 597820N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	78
GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	21
GIS CODE	KY018

Outline Site Description

A wooded, steep-sided rocky channel, almost 1.5 km long and up to 40 m deep.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The glacial meltwater channel is a Quaternary age feature, formed towards the end of the last Ice Age. The bedrock is mid-Carboniferous (Pennsylvanian or Namurian, 326-315 million years old) shale and greywacke. An area of Cretaceous (145 – 66 million years old) chalk breccia (Ballydeenlea Formation) occurs nearby.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Barry's Glyn is a spectacular glacial spillway that resulted from the bursting of a proglacial lake that occupied the area east of it in central Kerry, at the end of the last Ice Age. The water burst into the Gweestin River Valley to the west, and eventually into Dingle Bay, forming a steep-sided, rocky channel, almost 1.5 km long and up to 40 m deep. The River Gweestin meanders westward from Doneen Bridge along the floor of the wooded valley. The river then passes under the N22 road and flows northwest along the valley, passing the location recorded as Barry's Glyn on historic Ordnance Survey maps. Ordnance Survey maps record the location of a lime kiln beside the main road in Coolbaun. Local Cretaceous chalk deposits were most likely used to produce lime.

The Pennsylvanian (Namurian) rocks at Barry's Glyn comprise cherty shale, carbonaceous shale, pyritic shale and greywacke. Goniatites (marine molluscs) have been identified in the shale at Barry's Glyn. Goniatites in similar shale units such as at Ballahacommane, east of Killarney, have been dated to c. 318 million years old. The present terrain is thickly vegetated, and bedrock exposure is limited and mostly inaccessible. However, a section of Pennsylvanian (Namurian) bedrock is exposed on the east side of the road in Coolbaun.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

The County Geological Site is a spectacular example of a glacial spillway. The valley formed as a glaciofluvial meltwater channel.

Management/promotion issues

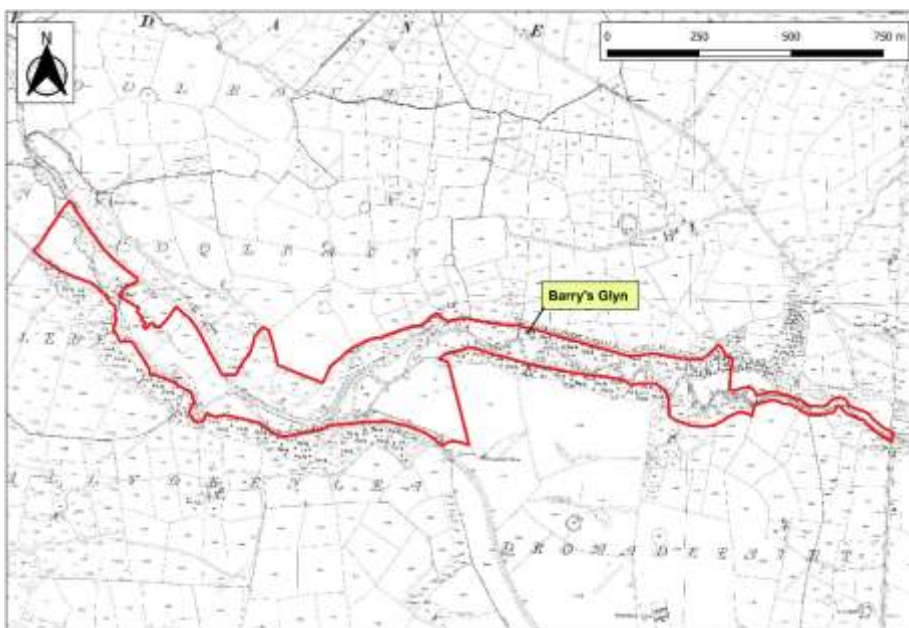
The Gweestin Valley (Barry's Glyn) was previously listed as an Area of Scientific Interest in 1972. The valley is heavily vegetated, and the steep sided channel is not easily observable from public roadways, and is thus not considered suitable for promotion. A photograph (*M5546 Barry's Glen*) captured in 1975 by Dr. Daphne Pochin Mold (Daphne Pochin Mold Collection, Trustees of Muckross House, Killarney) available in the public domain online, beautifully captures the channel incision cutting a landscape of otherwise consistent elevation. The site is within Castlemaine Harbour SAC (site code 000343).



The upper portion of Barry's Glyn, viewed from the east.



Namurian shale outcrops on east side of N22 at Coolbaun townland. View northwest in the direction of Farranfore.





The heavily wooded strip in the centre of the photograph is Barry's Glyn. Photograph taken by Dr. Daphne Pochin Mold in 1975.