

LEITRIM - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	County River Natural Bridge
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH1 Karst
TOWNLAND(S)	Gortnaderrary
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Kiltyclogher
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	5
ITM CO-ORDINATES	596710E 846395N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER 17	GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 7
GIS CODE LM007	

Outline Site Description

Narrow outcrop of karstified limestone spanning small, tree-lined river.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Mudbank limestone of the Mississippian (Lower Carboniferous) Knockmore Limestone Member of the Dartry Limestone Formation (c. 330 Ma).

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The County River Natural Bridge is a relatively rare feature that developed in response to karstification of the fine-grained limestone bedrock. Dissolution of bedrock led to the formation of an underground void or cave that formed part of the river channel. Continued dissolution followed by almost complete collapse of the walls and roof of the cave has resulted in the small remaining part of the roof forming a natural bridge over the river. In the immediate vicinity of the bridge, near-vertical limestone cliffs are the remains of the walls of the cave. The bridge is c. 5m wide and has a span of over 10m. The bridge is the only natural crossing point of the river between Lough Melvin and Lough Macnean.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

Inland natural bridges are relatively rare phenomena, and the County River Natural Bridge is thus a significant geological feature in County Leitrim. The bedrock is part of the same formation that hosts the Marble Arch Caves near Enniskillen.

Management/promotion issues

The bridge straddles the County River, which forms the boundary between Counties Leitrim and Fermanagh. Access to the site from the nearest road on the Leitrim side is across private farmland and through thick forestry, over a distance of almost 1km. The best approach is across a field (owner's permission required) beside the Kilcoo road in Fermanagh where it passes within 100m of the bridge. The site is not within any protected or designated area.



View downstream of bridge from location 5m upstream of bridge, on Leitrim side of river.



View across top of bridge towards Fermanagh side of river.



View upstream from location 70m downstream of bridge – wall of limestone gorge visible.



View across top of bridge towards Leitrim side of river.



