

LEITRIM - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Keshcarrigan Quarries
Other names used for site	Keshcerrigan Quarry
IGH THEME	IGH8 Lower Carboniferous
TOWNLAND(S)	Carrick
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Keshcarrigan
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	24, 28
ITM CO-ORDINATES	603275E 807425N (centre of main quarry)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER 33	GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 7
GISCODE LM017	

Outline Site Description

This site includes two relatively small, disused quarries cut into pure, bedded limestones.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The bedrock is of Mississippian (Lower Carboniferous) limestone (c. 330 Ma), and is part of the Bricklieve Limestone Formation.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Some steeply-dipping limestone beds, as well as intensely folded and almost vertical beds of limestone, are seen throughout both quarries set into Carrick Hill, at the western end of Keshcarrigan Village. These quarries provide a deep window into the limestone bedrock which is normally only exposed at the surface in a few localities in mid- to south County Leitrim.

Thick and massive beds are visible across the quarries. Some of the western faces in particular, but also faces elsewhere in the quarries, display some karstic solution, with caves, pipes and clay-filled cavities, as well as walls of narrow fissures lined by brown-stained calcite.

The hill was overtopped by ice sheets during the Ice Age, since there are glacial erratics of limestone on top of Carrick Hill at the west of the quarries, and deposits of glacial till in portions of the western faces within the western quarry.

The limestone is very pure and highly fossiliferous, with corals and brachiopods commonly observed. Chert nodules and bands are also commonly seen.

There is a modern interpretation Art Piece of the legend of Fionn Mac Cumghaill erected at the entrance to the old quarry, and etched into a cavity quarried out of the bedded limestone.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

These quarries comprise a good representative site displaying the Carboniferous limestone bedrock geology of mid-Leitrim, with additional features of palaeontological and karstic interest.

Management/promotion issues

Though disused, the quarries are secured by locked gates and are relatively safe, and having been secured do not display the usual array of dumped material and old vehicles commonly scattered across such localities. As the sites are on private land there should be no entry without owner permission.



View westwards across the eastern quarry in Carrick Hill.



Steeply-dipping beds in the southern face of the eastern quarry.



Karstic cavity in the western face of the eastern quarry.



The older, western quarry.

