

LAOIS - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Sluggory Cross Roads
Other names used for site	The Sluggies, Sluggory Swallow Hole
IGH THEME	IGH1 Karst, IGH16 Hydrogeology
TOWNLAND(S)	Ballydavis, Rathbrennan
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Portlaoise
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	13
ITM CO-ORDINATES	650725E 700018N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	54 GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 15

Outline Site Description

This site is a complex active sinkhole (swallow hole) in karstic limestone, northeast of Portlaoise.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The sinkhole, drainage and cave development are probably all post-glacial in age, formed over the last 11,000 years. The karstified pure bedded limestone of the Allenwood Formation is of Lower Carboniferous age.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The site includes two individual stream sinks and the enclosed depression containing them. Two small streams flowing northeastward sink first (during high stream flow only) on the southwestern side of the enclosed depression and then (continuously) at the northern end. There is probably a significant cave beneath the site, though no entrance has currently been found.

The entire sinkhole gets filled with water in times of heavy or prolonged rain and wells up within the base of the enclosed depression.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This is one of a small number of active karst sites in the limestone district around Portlaoise and is of County Geological Site importance.

Management/promotion issues

The input of high volumes of water into active conduits in karstified limestone is recognised as a high-risk issue for groundwater supplies and the site should be protected from pollution of agricultural or road spills, or runoff. It is on private land and is not suitable for promotion. The site can be viewed from the Regional R445 public roadway, as a deep hollow filled with trees and channels entering it with flowing water, even in dry conditions.



The view from the R445 road across the enclosed depression hosting the swallow holes.



Looking eastwards across the enclosed depression.



The stream sinking at the base of the depression.



The steep, tree-lined sides of the enclosed depression.

