

MONAGHAN - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Aphuca Cave
Other names used for site	Fin McCool's Cave
IGH THEME	IGH1 Karst
TOWNLAND(S)	Cloghvalley Lower
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Carrickmacross
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	31
ITM CO-ORDINATES	683180E 806027N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	35 GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 8

Outline Site Description

Aphuca Cave is a twin-entranced cave passage approximately 450m in length. It is visible from the R180 Carrickmacross to Ballybay road.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The cave is formed within Lower Carboniferous limestone of the Mullaghfin Formation, which crops out around and northeast of Carrickmacross.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Two large entrances in a roadside cliff combine inside the cave, with the left or west entrance taking a stream. There are dry, small passages to the west of the entrance, sometimes called the Priest's Cave, since the cave was important during penal times, when mass was probably celebrated in the flat area in front of the cave. The cave was the site of a documented massacre of Catholics by Cromwellian forces in 1652.

The interior of the cave is very wet after the first 50 m or so and has largely been explored by cave divers.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

The cave is of County Geological Site importance as a part of the complex of karstic features in the Carrickmacross area.

Management/promotion issues

Although a visible and known local landmark Aphuca Cave is in a private garden and promotion could only be considered with the co-operation of the landowner. Due to the dangers and fragility of the cave environment, underground exploration is not recommended for anyone, except in the company of experienced and equipped cavers.



The west entrance to Aphuca Cave.



The east entrance to Aphuca Cave.



Looking out from the west entrance.



Just inside the east entrance.



