SLIGO - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	**Serpent Rock**
Other names used for site	Ballyconnell
TOWNLAND(S)	Ballyconnell
NEAREST TOWN	Drumcliff
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	4, 7
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	156400 346400 = G 564 464
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	16 **1/2 inch Sheet No.** 7

Outline Site Description
Rock exposures on a coastal platform.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type
The rocks are limestone, from early in the Carboniferous (Asbian Stage of the Dinantian).

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest
The most complete section of the Carboniferous Glencar Limestone Formation is spectacularly exposed along the coast at Serpent Rock with grey muddy limestone and crinoidal limestone. Excellently preserved fossils are found at this site and include solitary corals, bryozoa, brachiopods, crinoids and foraminifera. These fossils, originally of a carbonate composition, were replaced by quartz and in some cases gold coloured pyrite, early in the rocks history. Quartz and pyrite are more resistant than carbonates and are therefore less easily weathered hence the exceptional preservation of the fossils at this locality.

After a gap in the rock succession there are exposures of the Dartry Limestone Formation, again with abundant fossils including brachiopods, bryozoan and especially the coral *Lithostrotion* sp. Some of the fossils in the Serpent Rock area provide valuable information as to the age of the rocks (they are approximately 339 million years old) as well as the palaeoecology.

Site Importance
The site is of National importance and is proposed for NHA designation under the IGH3 Carboniferous - Pliocene Palaeontology theme of the GSI's IGH Programme.

Management/promotion issues
Damaging factors include unavoidable sea-erosion and the actions of probably commercial fossil collectors who have crudely and visibly removed fossils from this site in the past.

A view of part of Ballyconnell's Serpent Rock left, and some of the typical corals right. Photos: Matthew Parkes

Serpent Rock