

## WATERFORD - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	<b>Ross Slate Quarry</b>
Other names used for site	
<b>IGH THEME</b>	<b>IGH15 Economic Geology, IGH 4 Cambrian-Silurian</b>
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	<b>Ross</b>
<b>NEAREST TOWN</b>	<b>Kilmacthomas</b>
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	<b>Waterford 16</b>
<b>NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE</b>	<b>245655 108668</b>
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b>	<b>82                      1/2 inch Sheet No.    22</b>

### **Outline Site Description**

This is a disused slate quarry, with associated spoil heaps and a water powered mill building.

### **Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type**

The quarry is cut in the Ross Member of the Campile Formation, which is an Ordovician rock.

### **Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest**

The quarry was a major local producer of slate, based on the volume of the now flooded pit and the scale of the spoil heaps, which comprise the waste rock found to be unsuitable for purpose. In scale and interest, this matches the historical slate quarrying operations at Ahenny and many of the old quarries around Portroe, both in Tipperary. A waterwheel pit adjoins a building shell, which presumably housed machinery to pump water out of the quarry, but which may also have powered hoists or slate saws. The waterwheel pit is largely in good condition but has been slightly modified with concrete at the eastern end.

The Ross Member is the name given by geologists to the slates occurring only in this area, which are part of the Campile Formation. This formation extends from east Wicklow through County Wexford and through east Waterford. It comprises mostly volcanic rocks and associated sediments, but the Ross slate is a thick mud deposit that has been pressured enough by tectonic forces to create a well cleaved slate, in a narrow belt east of Kilmacthomas.

### **Site Importance**

The site is of County Geological Site importance.

### **Management/promotion issues**

This site is not suitable for public promotion due to being on private property (landowner is unknown to audit) and also has safety concerns. Loose rock faces in the spoil heaps show signs of being dug out occasionally and they are steep and potentially dangerous. The main quarry is flooded, is probably very deep, and difficult to exit from if anyone fell in. The mill building is still largely intact, but shows some signs of risk of damage, especially in the wall opening facing the west.

Remedial conservation works to stabilise this building would be desirable if funds and owner agreement can be found. No leats (constructed wooden or stone channels to bring water to the wheel) or other evidence was seen as to whether this was an undershot or overshot water wheel, but the carrying out of a more expert assessment is also advisable, e.g. by the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland or the Mills and Millers Association.



The Ross Slate Quarry main face, viewed from the west.



View north across one of the spoil heaps (showing more recent excavation).



View of the Ross Slate Quarry road entrance, viewed from the southwest.



The wheelpit.



The water mill from the south.



The water mill from the north.



