

## WICKLOW - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	Lough Ouler
Other names used for site	
<b>IGH THEME</b>	IGH7 Quaternary
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	Laragh
<b>NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE</b>	Laragh
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	17
<b>NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE</b>	709030E 702270N (centre of lake)
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b>	56      GSI Bedrock 1:100,000 Sheet No.      16

### Outline Site Description

Lough Ouler rests within a deep glacial corrie, situated in the central portion of the Wicklow Mountains, 7.5 kilometres northwest of Laragh and west of the Military Road.

### Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The feature was formed during the Quaternary (Ice Age), by glacier ice scouring out a deep, armchair-shaped hollow at the edge of Tonelagee and Stoney Top Mountains.

The majority of the feature therefore comprises ice-scoured bedrock, which is porphyritic granite at the northern edge of the corrie, and slate and schists of the Lower Palaeozoic Maulin Formation along the southern edge. The granite is part of the Lugnaquilla Pluton which is one of the five plutons that comprise the late-Caledonian (405 Ma) Leinster Granite batholith. The contact between the granite and schist/slate runs through the site, evident as a vertical divide between dark coloured rocks on the left of the cliff and light coloured granite on the right, with vegetational colour differences also.

### Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

This corrie has an almost-vertical backwall up to 210m in height. A tarn (glacial lake) floors the feature and the corrie and lake are bounded on their eastern side by a moraine, which has been dissected by a Holocene (post-glacial) river draining the lake. The moraine comprises well-drained, bouldery material, and the area around and east of Lough Ouler is littered with large erratic boulders up to 15m across. Many of these erratics weigh several hundred tonnes and bear testament to the power of the ice sheet which transported them.

On the connecting ridge between Tonelagee and Stoney Top, much of the covering blanket peat has been eroded, and distinct peat hags are strewn across the ridge. Fine views can be had from here of the Upper Reservoir at Turlough Hill, to the southwest, as well as the central portion of the Wicklow Mountains.

### Site Importance – County Geological Site

This is a fine example of a corrie, with bounding moraine feature.

### Management/promotion issues

The corrie has no real pathway up to it, and little promotional signage in the general area. Though the feature is potentially under-promoted, the absence of a cut/built path and signs, in fact helps to protect the locality as a pristine portion of montane terrain. The site is already part of the Wicklow Mountains SAC and proposed NHA (Site Number 002122), as well as being within the National Park.



The corrie at Lough Ouler, viewed from the south on the flanks of Tonelagee.



Some of the peat hags on the ridge between Tonelagee and Stoney Top.



The moraine at the eastern end of the lake.



View east across Scarr and Kanturk from the southern side of the corrie.





