

## WEXFORD - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	<b>Caim Mine</b>		
Other names used for site	Ballyhighland		
<b>IGH THEME</b>	<b>IGH15 Economic Geology</b>		
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	<b>Aughathlappa</b>		
<b>NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE</b>	<b>Enniscorthy</b>		
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	<b>19</b>		
<b>ITM CO-ORDINATES</b>	<b>688475E 640942N</b>		
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.</b>	<b>23</b>

### **Outline Site Description**

Disused mine site.

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

The mineralisation is both in veins and stratiform, so it may be as old as the early Ordovician rocks of the Oaklands Formation in which it is hosted, but it could be younger. The historical mining took place in the early and mid-1800s.

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

This historic mine site exploited a quartz vein containing argentiferous (silver bearing) galena with minor sphalerite, chalcopyrite and cerussite. The mine opened around 1815, but was abandoned in the 1820s for a lack of appropriate machinery. The mine was taken over by the Mining Company of Ireland in 1836 and worked until 1845-6. It closed due to a dispute between the landowner and the MCI. Mineral Statistics indicate some 3360 tonnes of galena were extracted during the period 1838-1846.

Two chimneys from steam engines remain on the site, along with a significant spoil heap area. The spoil contains a significant proportion of toxic metals. A joint study by the Geological Survey of Ireland and the Environmental Protection Agency in 2009 measured the contamination and risk. To reduce disturbance from quad bikes the spoil is now fenced off. It was previously extracted on a small scale for local use as sand on gravestones since its toxicity prevented weeds growing on the grave. The full EPA-GSI report is available here: <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/land/mines/#.Vrj6DhwrFMs>

### **Site Importance – County Geological Site**

This is a rare example of historic mining in the county and worth listing as a County Geological Site for that reason. The chimneys are listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (15701912). <http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/niah/search.jsp?type=record&county=WX&regno=15701912>

### **Management/promotion issues**

The area is quite overgrown and the features are not easy to access. The spoil is fenced off completely. There is some rubbish dumping in the woods surrounding the mine site. The site is not suitable for general promotion without a significant investment in safety, access, interpretation and building conservation, if the landowner is identified.



An overview of the site.



The spoil heap at Caim.



One chimney with brick top.

