

# WEXFORD - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Kiltrea
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH2 Precambrian to Devonian Palaeontology, IGH4 Cambrian-Silurian
TOWNLAND(S)	Kiltrea
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Enniscorthy
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	19
ITM CO-ORDINATES	691868E 640487N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	68
GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	23

## Outline Site Description

Inactive roadside quarry.

## Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The rocks are early Ordovician slates of the Oaklands Formation.

## Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Small quarries worked intermittently over a long period near Kiltrea House, 6 kilometres west of Enniscorthy, have yielded a sparse collection of graptolites, a crustacean *Caryocaris wrightii* and a diverse assemblage of trace fossils. The rocks are part of the Oaklands Formation, considered to be the youngest part of the Ribband Group in southeast Ireland. Although other localities in the Leinster area have yielded fossils of graptolites and trace fossils, the Kiltrea site is considered as one of the most important, because of the relative richness of the site, and because it has been critical in understanding the biostratigraphy of the Leinster region.

In 1967 the graptolite *Trichograptus fragilis* was identified from Kiltrea, which indicated the rocks were of Llanvirn age (middle Ordovician). This carried significant implications for the timing of deformation events in the Leinster terrane, as the overlying Duncannon Group is unconformable on the Ribband Group. However, a 1996 reappraisal of the specimen as *T. dilaceratus*, correlated it with much better understood graptolite sequences elsewhere. This indicates that the rocks are actually early Arenig in age (lower Ordovician), which makes much better sense in the interpretation of the regional geology of Leinster, and of Irish Ordovician successions.

The older quarries at Kiltrea are now extremely overgrown and virtually inaccessible, but the small intermittently worked quarry has also yielded a *Caryocaris wrightii* tailpiece and with detailed examination would probably provide new graptolite material.

## Site Importance – County Geological Site; recommended for Geological NHA

This site has significance in understanding the entire stratigraphy of the Ordovician of Wexford and southeast Ireland.

## Management/promotion issues

Actual designation of the site as an NHA would probably increase the recovery of material otherwise lost to landfill, and protect the site against the possibility of use as a dump. Occasional working for fill would provide fresh material to examine for fossils, otherwise vegetation will very quickly further obscure the exposures of rock.



The quarry face at Kiltrea, viewed from the western end.



The entrance gate to Kiltrea quarry.



Piles of rock material on the quarry floor.



The view of the quarry at Kiltrea from the eastern end.



