

# KILKENNY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	<b>Earlsrath M9 Cutting</b>
Other names used for site	
<b>IGH THEME</b>	<b>IGH 10 Devonian</b>
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	<b>Earlsrath</b>
<b>NEAREST TOWN</b>	<b>Mullinavat</b>
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	<b>Kilkenny 36</b>
<b>NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE</b>	<b>256410 126886 to 256382 126998</b>
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b>	<b>75                      1/2 inch Sheet No.    19</b>

## **Outline Site Description**

Road cutting in the M9 motorway, approximately midway between junction 10 and the Grannagh Roundabout near Waterford, as a short low cliff of rock. The cutting occurs on the side of a rest area on the western carriageway only (for northbound traffic).

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

The rocks are of Devonian age (approximately 390 million years).

## **Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest**

This short cutting displays the Carrigmaclea Formation. This comprises red and purple and brown/grey sandstones of Devonian age. They were formed in river (fluvial) environments rather than in the sea. They show features such as cross bedding (internal laminations in the sandstone) which are suggestive of the river environment, as well as larger scale but poorly developed channel forms in the beds.

## **Site Importance**

The site is of County Geological Site importance. It is useful as a representative section of the Carrigmaclea Formation which is not well exposed across the southeast region.

## **Management/promotion issues**

The site is on a motorway but is fortunately accessible for visitors since there is a pull in lay-by isolating it for safe rest stops by drivers. Although the rock exposure is limited in extent it is accessible, and therefore this site is worth adding to the County Geological Site list.

Unfortunately the nature of the rock at this site means that the cuttings will generally weather, degrade and vegetate quicker than similar cuttings in Carboniferous limestone. It could be managed with very occasional clearing of loose rock and removal of scrub.

If any signboard was developed for this site it could also preview all the new cuttings for northbound travellers who stopped here at this rest area.



This cutting shows a modest rock section.



The rocks are safely accessible as there is a motorway rest area alongside.

