

LAOIS - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Glenbarrow		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME	IGH10 Devonian, IGH7 Quaternary, IGH14 Fluvial and Lacustrine Geomorphology		
TOWNLAND(S)	Glenbarrow, Tinnahinch		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Mountmellick		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	7		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	636250E 707933N (centre of valley)		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	54	GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	15

Outline Site Description

A long section in the bed and banks of the river in Glenbarrow.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The primary rocks are Devonian sandstones, but there are also landslides in glacial till of Quaternary age.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

This is a good section exposing a variety of sandstones and mudstones of Devonian age in the bed and banks of the gorge of the Glenbarrow River. Large exposures of sandstone beds are seen in the river bed, and in some sections waterfalls over particularly thick beds have produced cliffs with good sections through the strata.

On the northern bank there is a long section of exposures in glacial till, where landslides occur periodically which get removed by the river, thus creating further instability and further landslides. These tills have been studied previously, and are comprised of units of both basal tills and melt-out tills. They are dominated by limestone, but erratics of Galway granite have also been found within them.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This is a good representative site in Laois to see the Devonian rocks of Slieve Bloom which are otherwise quite poorly exposed.

Management/promotion issues

There is a public path in the woods surrounding the river, which follows its course through the site, and has signposts as part of the excellent walking route infrastructure in Laois and Offaly. There is no significant mention of geology in the signboards and trail leaflets available, and this could be remedied.



The waterfall in Glenbarrow, with mudstones exposed in the cliff beneath the thick sandstone bed which has caused the waterfall and plunge pool.



Cross bedding and channels are visible.



Large expanses of bedding planes are seen.



Glacial till with landslips on north bank.



Some signage at the car park.

