

LAOIS - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	M8 Road Cut Addergoole		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME	IGH8 Lower Carboniferous		
TOWNLAND(S)	Addergoole		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Rathdowney		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	28		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	633950E 674850N (centre of road cut section)		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	60	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	18

Outline Site Description

An 800m long road cut through limestone bedrock on the M8 Motorway.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Bedrock is Lower Carboniferous (Mississippian) shaly limestone (Durrow Formation).

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Approaching the road cut from the north, the strata are inclined (dip) to the south at an angle of around 30°. The bedrock is exposed along a continuous section on the west side of the motorway, and is almost continuous on the east side, with vegetation covering one northeastern section. Immediately south of this vegetated section the strata can be seen to adopt a more horizontal orientation. The transition from dipping to near horizontal is marked by an obvious south-dipping fault.

Towards the southern end of the road cut, where the motorway is traversed by a bridge (local Rathdowney to Cullahill road), the limestone strata are not as clearly visible and loose rubble dominates the section.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This is a good representative section for the Durrow Formation, and it is of County Geological Site importance.

Management/promotion issues

The site is on a busy motorway, and is therefore not suitable for general promotion. However, the roadside exposures provide hundreds of daily passing motorists with a rare 'window' into the limestone strata that underlie this part of County Laois, and much of the Irish countryside. Over time, the rock faces will become covered with lichen, moss and other vegetation, obscuring the strata. Some localised management of this would preserve this open 'window' into the county's limestone foundation, for example along the northern part of the section where strata are inclined.



M8 Road cut viewed looking south from lay-by.



South-dipping limestone strata on the west side of M8 Road cut (northern part of road cut).



View looking south under bridge carrying local Rathdowney to Cullahill road over M8.

