

GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Roevehagh M18 Road Cuts
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH8 Lower Carboniferous
TOWNLAND(S)	Ballynastaig (Dunkellin By), Toberbracken, Roevehagh
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Clarinbridge, Kilcolgan
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	95, 103
ITM CO-ORDINATES	544330E 720940N (Toberbracken) 544530E 719650N (Roevehagh) 544710E 717120N (Ballynastaig)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET Nos. 45, 52	GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 14

Outline Site Description

Road cuts excavated through limestone bedrock on the M18 motorway between Junction 17 Kiltiernan and Junction 18 at the M6 interlink.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Bedrock at all three sites is Lower Carboniferous (Mississippian) in age, approximately 359 to 318 Ma. The Toberbracken and Roevehagh sections are cut into pale grey limestones of the Burren Formation. The Ballynastaig section is cut into Tubber Formation bedrock.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The limestone visible in the road cut exposures along this stretch of the M18 motorway provide an insight into the strata and structure of the Carboniferous bedrock in this region of south County Galway. The Toberbracken and Roevehagh sections are located between the Clarin River (north) and the Dunkellin River (south) and are cut into pale grey limestones of the Burren Formation. The southernmost road cut, 700 m south of Dunkellin River, is traversed by a bridge. The exposed faces expose near-horizontal beds of Castlequarter Member (Tubber Formation) limestone and a thin, pale-coloured palaeosol layer.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

These sections are good representative exposures for the Burren Formation and Tubber Formation strata, and they are important County Geological Sites.

Management/promotion issues

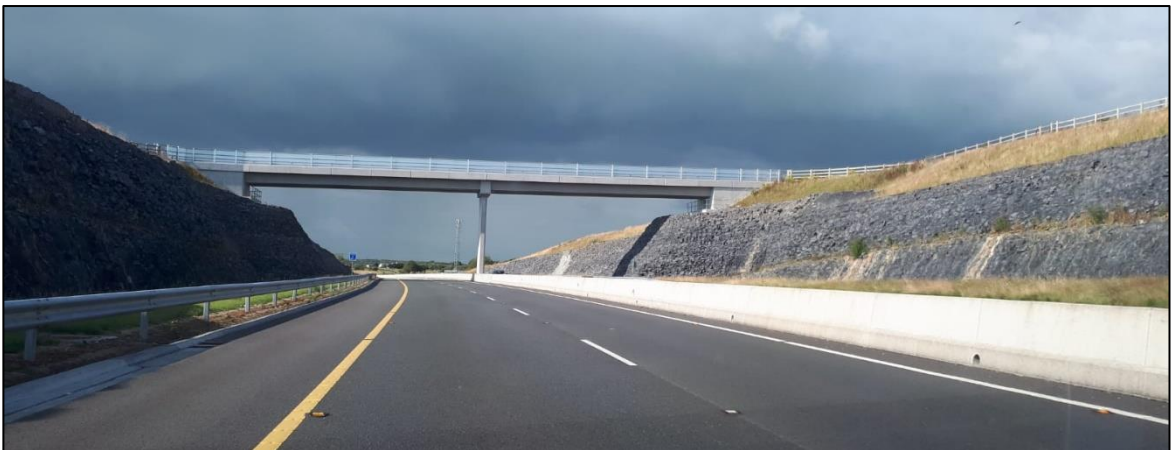
The exposures are on road cuttings on a busy motorway, and are therefore not suitable for general promotion. The exposures provide hundreds of daily passing motorists with a rare 'window' into the limestone strata that underlie this part of County Galway, and the central lowlands of Ireland. Some localised management to keep the rock faces clear of vegetation would preserve this open 'window' into the limestone foundation in this region of County Galway. The minor road bridges traversing the road cuts provide a good perspective of the exposed strata.



M18 road cut at Roevehagh viewed from road bridge looking north.



M18 road cut at Roevehagh viewed from northbound lane.



M18 road cut at Ballynastaig viewed from northbound lane.

