NAME OF SITE
Carran enclosed depression
Other names used for site

TOWNLAND(S)
Castletown, Ballyconry

NEAREST TOWN
Corofin/Ballyvaghan

SIX INCH MAP NUMBER
6, 10

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE
128000 198000 (sink) = R28000 98000

1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER
51 1/2 inch Sheet No. 14

Outline Site Description
Large enclosed depression

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type
Large internally draining basin with inlet springs and outlet via a swallow hole (or sink) developed within Carboniferous limestone.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest
The Carran depression is the largest karstic enclosed depression in Ireland and Britain. It is approximately 4.5km² in area and 40m deep, implying a considerable length of time for development. The depression is divided into sub-enclosed basins and is ringed by moderate to steep slopes. Water enters the hollow via springs and exits via the Castletown sink in the south. The waters re-emerge at the Fergus River Cave and other Fergus valley springs. Under wet conditions much of the floor of the depression becomes flooded even though the ‘watertable’ is some 120m below the floor of the feature. The structure and hydrology of this depression resembles both an uvala (large and complex dolines) and a polje (closed depression in a karst area).

Site Importance
The site is of National importance and is proposed for NHA designation under the IGH 1 Karst theme of the GSI's IGH Programme.

Management/promotion issues
None apparent, but the site deserves some explanation in the form of an interpretive panel by the pub in Carran, which provides a good viewpoint.

The Carran depression at the Castletown River sinks in autumn, looking east

The Carran depression in winter looking northeast