CLARE - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE  The Tomeens
Other names used for site
TOWNLAND(S)  Milltown, Kiltanon
NEAREST TOWN  Tulla
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER  27, 35
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE  146530 180980 = R465 810
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER  58  1/2 inch Sheet No.  17

Outline Site Description
Unroofed and partially roofed active river cave.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type
River cave developed within Waulsortian limestone.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest
The Tomeens consists of a linear river cave on part of the Tomeens River consisting of roofed, partially roofed and unroofed sections. There are 10 caves in total, each separated by surface collapses (Self 1983). The amount of surface collapse is not surprising owing to the fact that there is rarely more than 2-3m between the ground and the roof in areas where the cave has a width of 10-15m. Also of interest are a number of stream oxbows and dry oxbows, where the part of the river has been abandoned in favour of a more direct route. Many factors including surface collapse, tree roots forcing open joints in the limestone and humic acids (derived from rotting vegetation) dissolving the limestone will see the cave eventually becoming an open canyon with the river downcutting its limestone bed (Self 1993). The site was originally a significant tourist attraction and drew lavish praise in the 18th and 19th centuries e.g. Lloyd (1986).

Site Importance
The site is of National importance and is proposed for NHA designation under the IGH 1 Karst theme and the IGH 8 Lower Carboniferous theme of the GSI's IGH Programme.

Management/promotion issues
No known threats at time of writing. The most convenient access to the Tomeens is from a farmhouse on the Milltown side of the river. Access with the landowners permission is through the farm along an unmade track.
The Tomeens