MEATH - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE
Painestown Quarry

Other names used for site

IGH THEME:
IGH 8 (Lower Carboniferous)

TOWNLAND(S)
Painestown

NEAREST TOWN
Slane

SIX INCH MAP NUMBER
26

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE
295350 270000 = N 9535 7000

1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER
43
1/2 inch Sheet No. 13

Outline Site Description
A disused quarry now heavily vegetated.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type
Lower Carboniferous (Viséan) thin to medium bedded limestone and shale of the Loughshinny Formation.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest
This disused quarry has cut into thinly bedded limestone and shale, which displays a series of angular, zig-zag folds called chevron folds. These occur when pressure is exerted on thinly bedded sequences of alternating rocks, where one rock type (limestone) is competent and the other (shale) is incompetent. These features are also found in the same rock formation along the coast at Loughshinny.

Site Importance
This is a spectacular and easily accessible example of chevron folds, which could make an excellent teaching locality. It complements the example of coastal geology at Loughshinny. It should become a County Geological Site.

Management/promotion issues
This site is found just off a third class road and is on private agricultural land, which is occasionally used for grazing cattle. Access to the site is through a farm gate along the road. This is not suitable for general promotion without suitable arrangements being made with the landowner. Only one exposed face still remains within the old quarry as the rest of the site has been filled in. It is important to keep this last face exposed and if possible, relatively free of vegetation cover.

Left: Exposed quarry face displaying excellent examples of chevron folding.
Right: A closer look at the zig-zag shaped folds. The limbs of the folds usually form at a 45°- 60° angle, as seen here at Painestown.
Painestown Quarry