

LAOIS - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Killeany Quarry		
Other names used for site	Kerwins Quarry		
IGH THEME	IGH8 Lower Carboniferous		
TOWNLAND(S)	Killeany		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Abbeyleix		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	23		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	637200E 686200N (centre of quarry)		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	60	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	15

Outline Site Description

A relatively small quarry cut into a small, but prominent, steep-sided limestone hill.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Bedrock comprises Lower Carboniferous (Courseyan-Chadian) fossil-rich Waulsortian Limestone, deposited as a mudbank in open marine conditions.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The Waulsortian Limestone rocks are typically fossiliferous, pale grey, massive, unbedded wackestones, deposited below storm wave base in water more than 200m deep. The limestone in Killeany Quarry is heavily dolomitised, meaning dolomite has formed when magnesium ions replaced the calcium ions in the calcite within the rock. The dolomite is a brownish rock, with a sugary texture that weathers to fine sand.

The uppermost few metres of the quarry seem to have a well-developed layer of epikarst – enlarged fractures from dissolution of the limestone. Evidence of karstic cavities is also present in the lower part of the quarry. Folded beds can be seen in the northern face of the quarry.

This site has hosted a quarry since 2002 only, but a lime kiln has been present on the hill for over 100 years.

The quarry has produced stone for aggregates, chippings, railway ballast, lime dust, screenings, and drainage stone. Limestones of the Waulsortian Limestone are worked for aggregate in several quarries in the region.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This County Geological Site is an important representative site exhibiting fresh and extensive exposures of Waulsortian Limestone.

Management/promotion issues

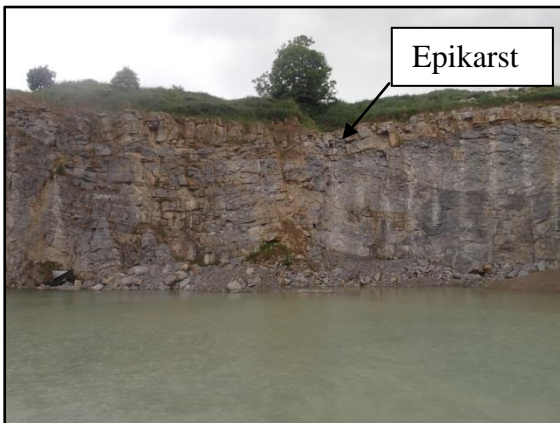
As a working quarry, the listing as a County Geological Site has no implications for the normal operation of the quarry, subject to standard permissions and conditions under planning and environmental legislation. In the event of any future changes in quarrying operations, it would be desirable to consider retaining representative faces for geological purposes. As an operating quarry, the site is not suitable for any general promotion. Any correspondence can be made to the owner and operator Kerwin Quarries, Killeany, Kilbricken, Mountrath, County Laois.



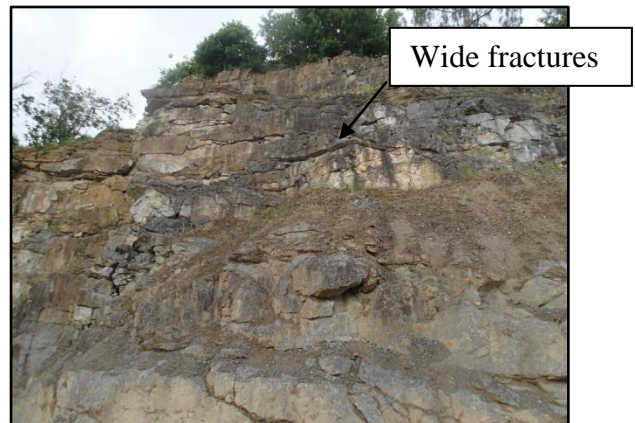
The back face of Killeany Quarry.



A fold within steeply dipping beds in Killeany Quarry.



Epikarst in the uppermost portion of the exposed limestone.



Wide, dissolved fractures and karstic cavities at depth within the rock face.

