

FINGAL - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Balscadden Bay		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME:	IGH 8 (Lower Carboniferous)		
TOWNLAND(S)	Howth		
NEAREST TOWN	Howth		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	15, 16		
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	328920 239110 = O 2892 3911		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	50	1/2 inch Sheet No.	16

Outline Site Description

Coastal cliffs within a small bay area.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Lower Carboniferous limestone and Cambrian polymict mélangé (an ill-assorted mixture of various fragmented rock types).

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The coastal exposure along Balscadden Bay shows a faulted contact between the Lower Carboniferous dark muddy limestone of the Ballysteen Formation and the Cambrian polymict mélangé of the Elsinore Formation. The contact between these two rock formations is a large fault zone, which juxtaposes older Cambrian rocks with much younger Lower Carboniferous rocks. This contact can be seen as fault breccia along the beach at Balscadden Bay.

Site Importance

This is a good example of a faulted contact between Lower Carboniferous and Cambrian rocks making this site a good teaching locality and it is therefore recommended as a County Geological Site.

Management/promotion issues

This site already lies within the existing pNHA and SAC of Howth Head (202). Access is by means of a public footpath and steps, which lead down to a small shingle beach. Care should be taken during periods of high tide and rough seas as nearly all the geological interest is along the waterline.



Right: A section along Balscadden Bay displaying fault breccia (a type of altered and fractured rock that is produced along a fault line).

Right: View of the Cambrian coastal exposure of the Elsinore Formation along Balscadden Bay.

Balscadden Bay

