

KILDARE - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----|
| NAME OF SITE | Ballysax | | |
| Other names used for site | Kilsaran Concrete Ltd. | | |
| TOWNLAND(S) | Ballysaxhills | | |
| NEAREST TOWN | Kilcullen | | |
| SIX INCH MAP NUMBER | 28 | | |
| NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE | 281280 208550 = N 813 086 | | |
| 1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER | 55 | 1/2 inch Sheet No. | 16 |

Outline Site Description

Large working sand and gravel pit

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Quaternary glacial sediments

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

This site is located on the southern margin of the Curragh approximately 3km west of Kilcullen. This working quarry has excavated deep into the surrounding area exposing thick layers, up to 60m in places, of glacial sands and gravel. These sands and gravels were deposited as ice contact subaqueous fans during the last Ice Age. There are several other similar gravel pits in the surrounding townlands, with many of them in operation.

Site Importance

The walls of this gravel pit display a number of interesting sedimentary structures, which are an insight into how the landscape of this area, including the Curragh to the north, were formed. Without the presence of such pits these sedimentary structures would be obscured from sight. This working pit also appears to be a habitat for a large number of sand martins, which nest within the open faces of sand and gravel this quarry has exposed.

Management/promotion issues

Access to this site is by means of a third class road, from which much of the quarry can be observed from a distance. This site is a working quarry, owned by Kilsaran Concrete Ltd., with heavy machinery in operation and therefore is not suitable for general promotion without proper arrangements being made with the operators.



Above: Machinery used to refine the extracted gravel.
Right: Exposed sand and gravel within the hill in the background. Settling pond can be seen in the foreground.

Ballysax

