

# LAOIS - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

|                                   |                               |  |           |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------|
| <b>NAME OF SITE</b>               | <b>Baunreagh Quarry</b>       |  |           |
| Other names used for site         |                               |  |           |
| <b>IGH THEME</b>                  | <b>IGH4 Cambrian-Sliurian</b> |  |           |
| <b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>                | <b>Baunreagh</b>              |  |           |
| <b>NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE</b>       | <b>Mountrath</b>              |  |           |
| <b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>        | <b>11</b>                     |  |           |
| <b>ITM CO-ORDINATES</b>           | <b>628170E 702615N</b>        |  |           |
| <b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b> | <b>54</b>                     | <b>GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.</b> | <b>15</b> |

## **Outline Site Description**

Small roadside quarry in two sections, heavily overgrown with vegetation.

## **Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type**

The siltstone rocks exposed are of the Silurian Capard Formation, found throughout the Slieve Bloom inlier (inlier = older rocks surrounded by younger strata).

## **Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest**

The rocks exposed are of the Silurian Capard Formation, which underlies all of Slieve Bloom. The nature of these rocks and their geological history means that they are very rarely exposed naturally, except in some river beds which can be very difficult to access. So the few man-made exposures are important additions to the understanding and mapping of the rocks, especially as they can provide a much more three dimensional picture of the nature of the rocks. This quarry provides one of the largest exposures available, although it is now much obscured by moss and grass and some saplings.

The rock is a generally uniform siltstone with a poorly developed 'slaty' cleavage, meaning it weathers and breaks into smallish pieces in natural circumstances and does not remain as a rock face. The breakdown of the rock into fragments helps soils form and exposures disappear. A horizontal trace across the quarry face is now obscured but was interpreted as a fault gouge – ground up paste of rock from the movements along a small fault.

The few fossils recovered from these siltstones rocks are of Wenlock age, within the Silurian Period. The occurrence of a particular 'floating' crinoid called *Actinocrinus wynnei* helps indicate that these were deposited in a deep water environment and they are very similar to same age rocks across Slieve Phelim, Knockshigowna, Slieve Arra, and other uplands of Silurian rocks in the south Midlands.

## **Site Importance – County Geological Site**

Baunreagh Quarry is a good representative example of the Silurian rocks which are otherwise very poorly exposed within the large area where they outcrop in Slieve Bloom. It therefore deserves CGS status.

## **Management/promotion issues**

The quarry has previously been the site of some dumping and small pockets of refuse remain on the floor of the quarry which has a coating of tarmacadam chippings from previous use as a road surfacing resource. The creation of a roadside drainage cut and a berm of material has stopped any vehicles pulling up beside the quarry and all of the floor and walls of the quarry are now heavily vegetated with moss, grass and tree saplings. The geological heritage would benefit greatly from a selected vegetation clearance project.



The highly vegetated face of the larger main quarry at Baunreagh.



The main face is largely obscured by moss.



Baunreagh Quarry is easily missed when driving by.



The smaller quarry on the eastern side is small and similarly overgrown.



The higher face is not well exposed due to vegetation growth.

