

LAOIS - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Flemings Fireclay Quarries
Other names used for site	Lagan Brick Ltd
IGH THEME	IGH9 Upper Carboniferous and Permian
TOWNLAND(S)	Slatt Lower
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Swan
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	31
ITM CO-ORDINATES	657200E 682020N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	61 GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 15, 16

Outline Site Description

Extensive quarries worked for fireclay since 1935.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The quarries at Swan work the strata around a Double Fireclay within the Coolbaun Coal Formation, part of the Westphalian (Coal Measures of historical usage, or Pennsylvanian in modern terminology) in the Carboniferous Period.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

This series of quarries has been worked as Flemings Fireclays since 1935, but probably local working may have occurred previously. The Double Fireclays are the seat earths of coal seams although here there is no coal seam associated with them. They are interbedded with shales and mudstones. The Double Fireclay Member is widespread throughout the Leinster Coalfield and provided a marker horizon in the stratigraphy in boreholes and coal exploitation in the numerous mines that existed.

Present working is limited to one face and the most northerly section is flooded and largely inaccessible. The fireclay can be used to make refractory bricks but the general quarry output is used to make bricks, chimney liners and tiles etc as the demand requires.

Site Importance – County Geological Site; may be recommended for Geological NHA

This is a site that is a good representative of part of the Westphalian succession of the Leinster coalfield, and as such may be considered as a candidate for NHA status.

Management/promotion issues

The site is a working quarry and unsuitable for promotion, unless there was a specific arrangement with the owners and operators, Lagan Brick Ltd. Whilst faces are obscured by flooding, an upsurge in demand for products could see the water pumped out and working recommenced, so access for geologists could easily be restored in different parts of the quarry.



The main working face in the quarry in 2016, looking east.



The main working face in the quarry in 2016, looking southward.



The northern section of the site, with no pumping of water, and a face that is not being worked in 2016.

