

ROSCOMMON - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Cloonburren Fan
Other names used for site	The Pilgrims Road, The Eiscir Riada,
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary
TOWNLAND(S)	Cornaveagh, Cloonburren
NEAREST TOWN	Shannonbridge
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	56
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	196300 228570 (centre of feature)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	47 1/2 inch Sheet No. 15

Outline Site Description

This is a wide, hummocky feature comprised of sand and gravel which partially smothers the Ballinasloe-Split Hill-Clonmacnoise-Clara Esker System at Cloonburren, in southernmost County Roscommon, adjacent to the Shannon River.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The fan is formed on bedrock which is Lower Carboniferous limestone. The feature itself is Quaternary in age, having been deposited at the edge of the westward-retreating ice sheet during deglaciation after the last Ice Age.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The fan feature is a fine example of the type of associated deglacial feature that often forms adjacent to eskers. The ridge may be comprised of several fans, which coalesce to form one large fan-shaped feature at Cloonburren.

The esker is comprised chiefly of limestone clasts which have been derived from the bedrock around the site within the Irish Midlands. These were carried by ice, released into the meltwater conduit on top of or within the ice, and then deposited at the ice margin as the river left the ice and flowed off eastwards subaerially.

An old quarry cut into the southern side of the feature exposes sand and pebble gravel cross-beds, which comprise the internal structure of the feature and record when the sediments were deposited by water flowing off the glacier as it retreated across the area.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This fan is an excellent example of a deglacial, ice marginal, meltwater-deposited feature. This is a superb feature and it should be considered for inclusion within the boundary of the Geological NHA of the Ballinasloe-Split Hill-Clonmacnoise-Clara Esker System.

Management/promotion issues

Cloonburren Fan has the one disused quarry noted above which shows the sediments but no new quarrying should be permitted to preserve the integrity of the landforms.



The face of the disused quarry in the south face of Cloonburren Fan.



The southern edge of Cloonburren Fan from the motte at the eastern end of the fan.



Close up detail of the sand and gravel beds in the disused pit.

