

# WESTMEATH - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	<b>Deerpark Quarry</b>
Other names used for site	Castlepollard Quarry, Clarke's Quarry (formerly), Lagan Quarries Castlepollard (currently)
<b>IGH THEME</b>	<b>IGH8 Lower Carboniferous, IGH15 Economic Geology</b>
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	<b>Deerpark</b>
<b>NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE</b>	<b>Castlepollard</b>
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>ITM CO-ORDINATES</b>	<b>647700E 644775N (centre of quarry)</b>
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b>	<b>41 GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 12</b>

## **Outline Site Description**

Deerpark Quarry is a deep, impressive, working quarry, set into a high crag-and-tail ridge, just 2 kilometres southeast of Castlepollard.

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

The quarry extracts cherty limestone from the Derravaragh Cherts (Lucan Formation) of Lower Carboniferous age.

## **Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest**

This site is a working quarry, for quarry run rock, as well as for stone cappings and clause 804 stone for road workings. The rock splits with difficulty into various grades, and the rock is tough and hard compared to many of the 'softer' limestones elsewhere in the Midlands. Hand working of the past has been superseded by mechanical diggers, but the rock must be blasted for extraction. Faces into the quarry show relatively massive cherty limestones, which are dark grey and mostly unfossiliferous, with thinly-bedded wackestones and calcisiltites with thin shales forming the detailed lithologies.

The bedrock in the sections is highly silicified (chert) in places, and the chert can be seen both as nodules as well as in thin seams and bands. Pyrite is common, locally, within the quarry. Sedimentary structures show occasional evidence of slumping and weak lamination and bedding, set within the bedrock faces, but there are few other structures readily visible.

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

This is a good County Geological Site, but may be considered for an NHA in the future to represent the Derravaragh Chert (Lucan Formation), due to the relative scarcity of exposure of these rocks in the region.

## **Management/promotion issues**

The geological heritage interest relies on continued working of the quarry as a place to see the strata that is exposes. Access to geologists is important but it is not suitable for promotion to the public as it is a company business and a hazardous working environment. Should the quarry cease to operate in the future, then some negotiated access to the site should be sought.



A view of Deerpark Quarry, from the entrance at the north.



Weakly bedded / laminated units within the massive Derravaragh Chert exposure at Deerpark Quarry.

