

WICKLOW - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Manger - Saundersgrove		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary		
TOWNLAND(S)	Manger, Stratford, Saundersgrove		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Stratford, Baltinglass		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	21		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	688170E 692680N (centre of southernmost feature)		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	62	GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	19

Outline Site Description

The Manger-Saundersgrove site includes a number of elevated fields under pasture, on the northwestern side of the N81 road, just north of Baltinglass town.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The fields comprise a 'delta' feature, which is composed of deep glaciofluvial and glaciolacustrine sediments. Bedrock is at depth throughout the area of the features. The bedrock is of Ordovician age, and comprises greywackes and schists.

The 'delta' is Quaternary in age, having been deposited at the edge of the northward-retreating ice sheet during deglaciation after the last Ice Age.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The delta is a striking feature, a large sand and gravel accumulation deposited into a lake in the locality by meltwaters flowing from glacier ice on the western side of the Wicklow Mountains, at the end of the last ice age. The delta was built out into a lake, the surface of which was at about 170m above present sea level. The delta surface at this level can be clearly viewed from the N81 road just north of Manger Bridge.

The delta is about 2 kilometres long and up to 0.5 kilometres wide. The sands and gravels are comprised largely of granite from the Wicklow Mountains to the east (deposited on top of a different type of bedrock at the site). The sediments are arranged in the typical delta sequence: topset gravels composed of up to 2m depth of horizontally bedded gravels on top; foreset gravels which are steeply dipping and well bedded, deposited at the front of the delta; and bottomset, finer sediments of sands and silts, usually underlying the foresets and representing sediment that was originally deposited beyond the steep delta front on the lake floor.

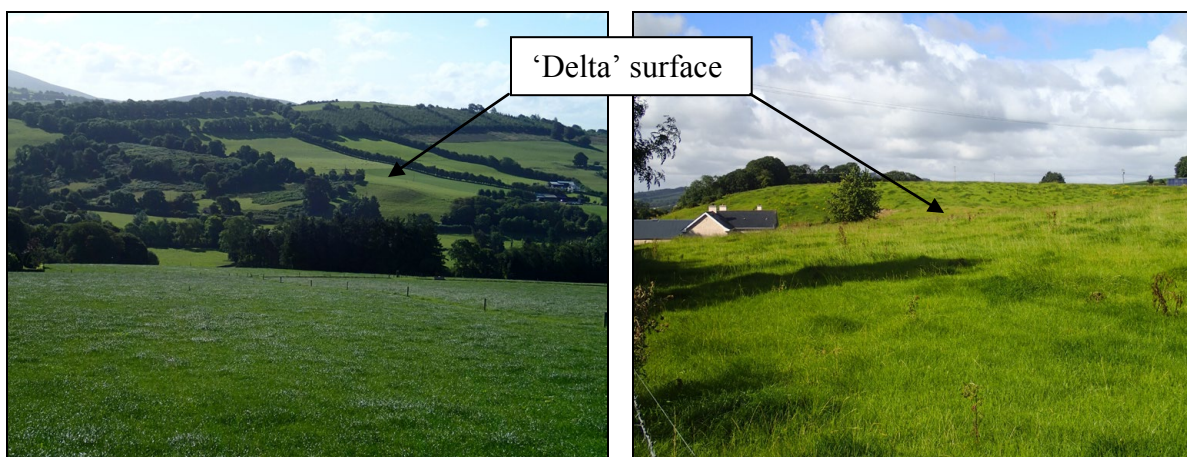
The delta feature has been dissected by the River Slaney, and is hence seen on both sides of the valley.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

The feature is a high, striking example of dry sand and gravel ridges, and stands proud of the surrounding landscape. This is an excellent example of a deglacial, ice marginal, meltwater-deposited feature.

Management/promotion issues

Some of the delta has been removed by quarrying, and access to any pits is by permission of the owners or operators and safety protocols must be followed. As it is difficult to stop on the N81 road, and as the delta is on private farmland, it is not suitable for general promotion.



Two views over the Manger – Saundersgrove delta; the first shows the southernmost feature, east of the Slaney; the second the northern feature, to the west of the river.



Foreset beds in a sand pit in the northern feature.



The northern delta feature at Manger; photo at left shows a view looking across the surface from the top of a sand pit; the right photo shows the flat-topped feature in the distance, across the River Slaney.

