NAME OF SITE
Balscadden Bay

IGH THEME:
IGH 8 (Lower Carboniferous)

TOWNLAND(S)
Howth

NEAREST TOWN
Howth

SIX INCH MAP NUMBER
15, 16

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE
328920 239110 = O 2892 3911

1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER
50 1/2 inch Sheet No. 16

Outline Site Description
Coastal cliffs within a small bay area.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type
Lower Carboniferous limestone and Cambrian polymict mélange (an ill-assorted mixture of various fragmented rock types).

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest
The coastal exposure along Balscadden Bay shows a faulted contact between the Lower Carboniferous dark muddy limestone of the Ballysteen Formation and the Cambrian polymict mélange of the Elsinore Formation. The contact between these two rock formations is a large fault zone, which juxtaposes older Cambrian rocks with much younger Lower Carboniferous rocks. This contact can be seen as fault breccia along the beach at Balscadden Bay.

Site Importance
This is a good example of a faulted contact between Lower Carboniferous and Cambrian rocks making this site a good teaching locality and it is therefore is recommended as a County Geological Site.

Management/promotion issues
This site already lies within the existing pNHA and SAC of Howth Head (202). Access is by means of a public footpath and steps, which lead down to a small shingle beach. Care should be taken during periods of high tide and rough seas as nearly all the geological interest is along the waterline.

Right: A section along Balscadden Bay displaying fault breccia (a type of altered and fractured rock that is produced along a fault line).
Right: View of the Cambrian coastal exposure of the Elsinore Formation along Balscadden Bay.
Balscadden Bay