

KILDARE - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	The Curragh		
Other names used for site			
TOWNLAND(S)	Numerous		
NEAREST TOWN	An Droichead Nua (Newbridge)		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	23 & 28		
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	278320 211450 = N 78 11		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	55	1/2 inch Sheet No.	16

Outline Site Description

The core area of the Curragh grasslands.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Quaternary sand and gravel deposits.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Situated 1km south of Newbridge, this area is a unique deposit of fluvio-glacial gravels, which can reach thicknesses of about 70m. This is known as a Proglacial fluvial landscape. The Curragh plains are representative of the surrounding area to the north and south of this site, covering a wide section of Kildare. It is associated with numerous springs that feed Pollardstown Fen to the north. The adjoining gravel pit sites such as Ballysax are outside the protected area of the Curragh, but are within the same geomorphological feature.

Site Importance

Apart from the obvious importance of the Curragh such as the military camp, the racecourse and the Curragh's extensive agricultural use with respect to sheep grazing, the Curragh has an important geomorphological significance. This is one of the best examples of a proglacial fluvial landscape in Ireland, which is often unrecognised compared to the Curragh's other interests.

Management/promotion issues

This site is well managed and already holds an NHA designation for its biodiversity. As parts of the Curragh are used for military exercises, permission should be sought before entering these areas, and caution exercised when red flags are flying (meaning live fire exercises are in progress). The landscape should not be modified by golf course construction or other new ground disturbance within the protected area.



Above: Panorama view of the Curragh looking toward the Curragh Racecourse.

The Curragh

