

DUBLIN CITY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	River Poddle
Other names used for site	'An Póitéal', also referenced by the 'Dark Pool' and 'Dubh Linn'. Also known as 'The Dirty River', or 'An t-Abhainn Salach', or 'The Sáile'
IGH THEME	IGH14 Fluvial and Lacustrine Geomorphology
TOWNLAND(S)	Kimmage, Terenure, Harolds Cross West, Larkfield, Tonguefield, Argos, Mount Jerome, Cherry Orchard, St. Catherines, St. Lukes, St. Nicholas, St. Audoons
NEAREST TOWN	Dublin
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	18
ITM CO-ORDINATES	715058E 733662N (where runs under Patrick Street)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	50 GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 16

Outline Site Description

This site comprises a river which flows northwards through Dublin City and into the Liffey; most of its course has been diverted underground.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The river flows across low permeability glacial till along its course, having formed in post-glacial times over the last 11,000 years.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The river is interesting in that the majority of its course within the city is underground. After flowing through Kimmage and Mount Jerome, the river is split at "The Tongue" at Mount Argus monastery in Harold's Cross, with one third of the flow forming the second section of the City Watercourse, heading for Crumlin Road and Dolphin's Barn, and two thirds continuing along a form of the original river bed. In the 1990s, changes were made in the Kimmage area, including the addition of a large fountain to the river.

The line of the two Poddle flows later recombine and pass under much of the south city centre in a culvert. The final stages of the river's flow are complex, with related waters separating and joining. Linked flows include the Tenter Water, and the river is joined by the Commons Water from the Coombe, and ultimately Crumlin. The present main course is itself a diversion, the Abbey Stream, of the original course, which ran further east. Nowadays, much of the lower course of the Poddle is in a large brick tunnel under the city streets and Dublin Castle, and while access is restricted, it is walkable. The confluence of the Poddle and the Liffey is visible at low tide at a grated opening in the Liffey walls at Wellington Quay.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This is a site that is important historically in not only the subsurface channelisation, making it very unusual in Ireland, but also in the derivation of the Dublin placename, and in the lore associated with the Poddle. A large, dark pool once existed at the confluence of the rivers Poddle and Liffey; this pool was described in Irish as *dubh linn*, which means *dark pool* or *black pool*. The city name, Dublin, is an anglicisation of this Irish phrase. This historic pool existed under the present site of the Coach House and Castle Gardens of Dublin Castle. During the ninth century, Vikings established themselves as Kings of Dublin, and based their settlement around the confluence of the two rivers.

Management/promotion issues

The grating along the Liffey is very worn and dirty and would be well served to be replaced with a modern, stainless steel grate. The name 'Poddle' could also be spelled out in stainless steel letters above this along the walls of Wellington Quay, and a signboard provided along the north side of the river opposite this.



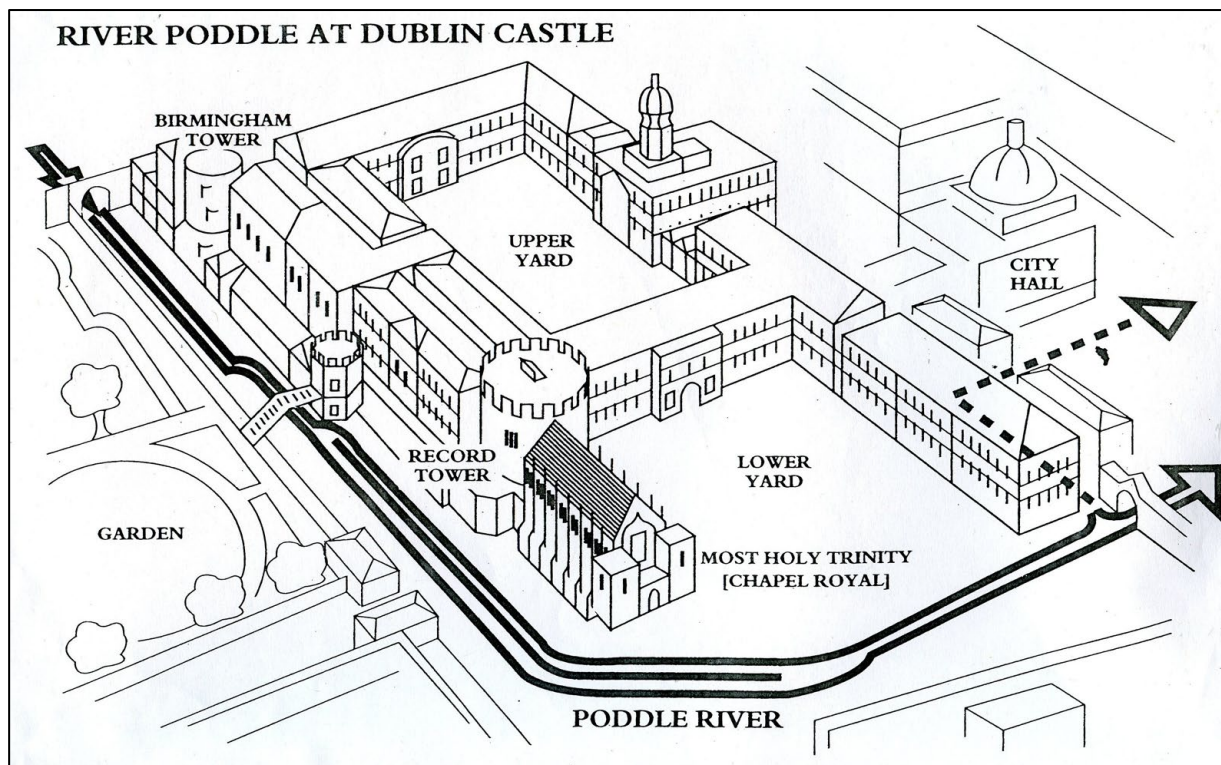
The Poddle adjacent to Kimmage Cross Roads.



Two views at Gandon Close. Looking up the culvert to the Close (L) and the river disappearing from surface, underground (R).



The main culvert under Dublin Castle.



Schematic showing the Poddle at Dublin Castle (Source: Dublin City Council).



The grate where the Poddle flows into the Liffey, at low tide, at Wellington Quay.