

KILDARE - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Louisa Bridge Warm Spring		
Other names used for site	Louisa Bridge Spa		
TOWNLAND(S)	Leixlip		
NEAREST TOWN	Leixlip		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	11		
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	299470 2367500 = N9947 3675		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	50	1/2 inch Sheet No.	16

Outline Site Description

A warm spring formerly used as a spa.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The spring is presumably derived from Carboniferous Limestone bedrock at depth.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Louisa Bridge warm spring is located close to the Royal Canal and was uncovered during canal construction in 1794. By the end of the 18th century the site had been developed as a spa but by the late 19th century the site was failing to attract visitors and fell into disrepair. Development of this spring as a spa involved the construction of an elongated oval stone well chamber with a series of steps descending towards the centre and this structure remains relatively intact today. The chamber is approximately 0.7 m deep at the centre and is fed from a single point inflow towards one end. The substratum in the chamber was primarily highly organic sulphurous black mud. Water levels in the chamber fluctuate during the year, however the surface area remained relatively constant, measuring approximately 50 m². Heavy pollution has been a problem at this site and domestic refuse dumping and general neglect, which has resulted in severe degradation in both water and general ecological quality.

Site Importance

As part of the Louisa Bridge spring complex and spa it is certainly worthy of CGS status.

Management/promotion issues

The site has been significantly cleared up after major abuse when used as a halting site, including cars reportedly dumped into the structure. However, it is still subject to abuse by local residents using it as a drinking place and throwing their rubbish in. Some local boys present at time of visit reported that the rubbish present was thrown there since it was cleaned out a few weeks previously. On the assumption that it is on Kildare County Council land, it is clearly an ongoing problem to maintain the site in a reasonable state. Alternatively if it is a local group clearing it up, CGS recognition and Council support may be effective in keeping the site clean.



