

MEATH - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Rathmolyon Esker
Other names used for site	Rathmolyon Esker (NPWS)
IGH THEME:	IGH 7 (Quaternary)
TOWNLAND(S)	Tromman, Cherryvalley, Rathmolyon, Glebe
NEAREST TOWN	Trim
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	42
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	280060 249470 = N 800 470
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	49 1/2 inch Sheet No. 13

Outline Site Description

Remnant face in former sand & gravel quarry.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Quaternary deposits predominantly of clay, sand and gravel.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The full Rathmolyon Esker, comprising 8 short beads, extending almost 2 km in length, was deposited in a tunnel feeding into the Summerhill (Galtrim) Delta Moraine. The portion of the esker considered here comprises one segment of a complex beaded esker, oriented northwest to southeast and bisected by a cul-de-sac roadway. Only the SE portion of the esker has been designated as a pNHA (Rathmolyon Esker - 0557). This wooded tip of the esker extends onto adjacent land.

Site Importance

The Rathmolyon Esker was one of the type-sites for Francis Syngé's theory of esker bead formation as fans. However, as most of the feature has been quarried out, leaving only the 3 faces topped by mature broadleaf woodland at the SE extreme, the status of the site has been downgraded from its original NHA recommendation under the IGH7 Quaternary Theme, to County Geological Site importance only. All eight segments are now deemed to be of CGS status only.

Management/promotion issues

Much of the major bead of the esker has been quarried away. The segments in Rathmolyon village are not currently under threat as houses have been built on them and these are well preserved. However, future quarrying on this feature should be prohibited. In the SE designated portion, three remaining faces along the final 80m of the pit provide a 3-dimensional section through the esker. Glynn Williams (WPE), on behalf of the quarry owner, has agreed with GSI (2009) a restoration and promotion plan to preserve the faces and help promote the esker locally. Only the part adjacent to the GAA pitch will be infilled with material. A nature walk from the gated access to the esker faces, fencing and bio/geodiversity signage, will be provided. A stereoscope and aerial photos of the site should also be considered for access by schools in Trim Library.



Left: One of the esker faces to be preserved at the SE extreme of the esker pit. (Photo: R. Meehan, February 2009).
Right: Full extent of the Rathmolyon Esker. (R. Meehan, 2007)

Rathmolyon Esker

