

WICKLOW – COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Hollywood Glen
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary
TOWNLAND(S)	Athgreany, Drumreagh, Conlans, Woodenboley, Mullycagh, Kilbaylet
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Hollywood
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	15
ITM CO-ORDINATES	693060E 701650N (centre of channel)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	56 GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 16

Outline Site Description

Hollywood Glen comprises a deep channel that was formed by meltwater erosion on the northwestern flank of the Wicklow Mountains. The channel is oriented generally north–south, and extends for a distance of approximately 2.5 kilometres.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type,

The feature is formed in an area of bedrock outcrop and subcrop and bedrock outcrops along the majority of the channel sides, giving the feature its ‘carved out’ appearance. The feature was etched out by meltwater during deglaciation at the end of the last Ice Age, about 12,000 years ago.

The bedrock in the locality is dominated by schists and quartzites of Ordovician age.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Hollywood Glen is up to 60m deep and has a U-shaped profile, typical of meltwater channels. The base of the channel is dry, although a shallow drainage ditch has been dug along much of the southern portion to channel excess surface water during heavy rainfall.

Hollywood Glen is considered to have formed completely in the late-glacial Period. Initially the glen was a subglacial channel, formed under the ice, but later carried surface glacial outwash from Glacial Lake Enniskerry southwards. As well as this, the channel carried huge amounts of subglacial meltwater draining the ice sheet which also covered the Irish Midlands. This very high energy meltwater flow resulted in Hollywood Glen’s unusual depth and size.

Much of the sides of the channel are very steep, and littered with (sometime huge) boulders, some in quite precarious positions above the third class road which passes through the feature. The glen is very narrow and has an irregular long profile, which means that meltwater was under huge pressure from ice above, thus proving that the channel was initially subglacial in origin.

Site Importance – County Geological Site; may be recommended for Geological NHA

This is a site with good teaching potential on glacial meltwater erosion, as the feature is accessible, quite spectacular, and easily viewed from roads. The northern portion of the channel forms the Hollywood Glen proposed NHA (Site Code 002053).

Management/promotion issues

The location of the channel with a road passing through it means it is easily accessible, although the flanks are located presumably in private ownership or in commonage. However, there is no parking in the centre of the channel and it is difficult to stop safely on the road; the only parking is near the southern end at the entrance to a Coillte forest walk. Good views can be had from the western slopes of Church Mountain and the western slopes of Slievecorrach.



Hollywood Glen, viewed from the north.



Two views of Hollywood Glen from the northern side, looking south.



