

WEXFORD - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Cahore Polders and Dunes
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH13 Coastal geomorphology
TOWNLAND(S)	Cahore, Bog and Warren, Newtown, Oldtown, Templederry, Fodagh, Ballinoulart
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Cahore
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	17, 22
ITM CO-ORDINATES	720900E 645030N (centre of features)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	69 GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 19

Outline Site Description

The Cahore Polders and Dunes are located just south of Cahore Point, 10 kilometres south of Courtown. The site comprises a sand dune system that extends along the coast for over 4 kilometres, backed by areas of polder grassland, wetland and drainage channels.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The features have been forming in the Holocene Period following the last glaciation, and the dunes themselves comprises sand sediment continually blown and recycled onto them during that time. The adjacent, reclaimed polders are also Holocene in age.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

A ridge comprising many individual sand dunes forms the eastern boundary of the site. The dunes are highest in the north (up to 18m high) and gradually become lower towards the south. The dunes display a well-developed zonation of fixed dunes grading eastwards to marram-dominated dunes, embryo dunes and, at the northern end of the beach, drift line vegetation.

The dunes grade westwards to polder grassland. This area was formerly a wetland, which has been drained and reclaimed to provide improved grassland for grazing animals. Numerous drainage channels traverse the polders; these are lagoonal in character and contain brackish water. The presence of the brackish water in these channels is the result of inefficiencies in flap valves which have allowed seawater to enter.

Several artificial ponds with more or less fresh water occur near the southern end of the site, in Ballinoulart.

Site Importance - County Geological Site

The site is a textbook locality for the recognition of a dynamic coastal depositional environment. The site is already a proposed NHA (pNHA 000700, Cahore Polders and Dunes), SPA and SAC for biodiversity reasons and the geodiversity of this active sedimentation system should be highlighted in promotion of this.

Management/promotion issues

The location of the features means they is easily accessible, and Ballinoulart beach and the adjacent dunes are popular recreational features. Information boards which explain the features geological formation, and the geomorphological processes taking place within the site, would be worthy additions and this information could also be highlighted in future on literature produced on the polders and dunes.



View southwest from the dune ridge across the polders (flooded, early January 2016).



One of the freshwater lakes in Ballinoulart.



One of the brackish ponds in Oldtown.



Some of the highest, fixed dunes at Cahore.

