

WEXFORD – COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Mulmontry Gorge
Other names used for site	Corock River channel
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary
TOWNLAND(S)	Mulmontry, Dungeer, Ballybeg, Cloghulatagh, Bricketstown, Brownscastle, Harristown Big, Harristown Little, Forest, Ballyhennigan, Oldboley
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Taghmon
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	36
ITM CO-ORDINATES	692160E 622405N (bend in channel, at Quirk's Ford)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	77 GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 23

Outline Site Description

Mulmontry Gorge is a deep gorge which has a major change in course halfway along its length; being oriented generally northeast–southwest around Mulmontry, but northwest-southeast around Brownscastle. The deepest portion of the channel extends for a distance of approx. 4.5 kilometres.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type,

The feature is formed in an area of deep glacial sediments which have a 'scalped' 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 Ordovician and Cambrian Metasediments, which are typically metamorphosed slates, mudstones and schists.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Mulmontry Gorge is up to 40m deep and has a U-shaped profile, typical of meltwater channels. The base of the channel hosts the Corock River, which is a misfit stream as it lies in a valley much greater in size than it could potentially have eroded.

The channel is considered to have formed completely in the late-glacial period. Initially the channel may have been a subglacial channel, formed under the ice, but later carried surface glacial outwash southwestwards to the Celtic Sea. The channel may have been a previous course of the River Slaney, or may have drained water off the melting Irish Sea glacier which inundated Wexford during the last Ice Age. The channel carried large volumes of subglacial meltwater, and this very high energy meltwater flow formed the channel's unusual depth and size.

Much of the sides of the channel are very steep, and are covered in forestry or scrub along most of their length.

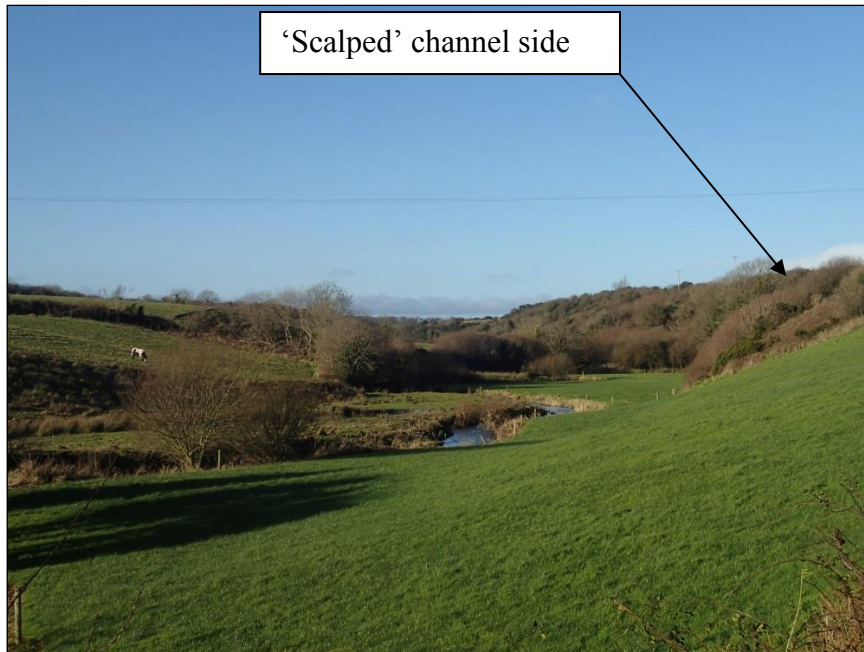
Site Importance – County Geological Site

This is a site with good teaching potential on the process of glacial meltwater erosion, as the feature is accessible and easily viewed from roads.

Management/promotion issues

The roadside location of the channel means that it is fairly accessible. However, there is no parking nearby and it is difficult to stop safely on the roads. Promotion of the feature along these roads is therefore not recommended.

The channel itself and its origins should however be highlighted in any promotion of the geological history or elements of the last Ice Age in the general region.



Mulmontry Gorge, looking northwestwards from Aughnagroagh Bridge.



The gorge viewed from the southwest, looking northeastwards from Mulmontry Bridge.



The steep-sided reaches of the gorge at Mulmontry.



View northeast along the gorge, looking into Cloghulatagh Townland.

