



SiteGuide

ISSUE 4 - JULY 2015





SiteGuide

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The IHPA SiteGuide is published by the Irish Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association Ltd for those participating in the sports of Paragliding and Hang Gliding and should only be used as a guide to any sites listed. It is recommended that all pilots first get an on site briefing from experienced pilots before attempting to fly a site for the first time.

***Skill Level: Novice 5-20hrs, Intermediate 20-50hrs, Advanced 50+ hrs**

Lacken

Blessington, Co. Wicklow



A great site that suits all skill levels and is only 50 mins from Dublin City Centre.

Overlooking Blessington Lake and giving spectacular views of the Wicklow Mountains, Lacken is an ideal site for the novice and experienced pilots alike. From the car park there is a commanding view of the midlands to the west allowing you to track the approaching weather and confidently gage wind strength over the lake.

For beginner and novice pilots the western slope (A) is perfect for short hops that perfect all those early take offs, landings and ground handling experiences. Indeed on weather-right days Fred Lahiff can usually be found there putting students through their paces.

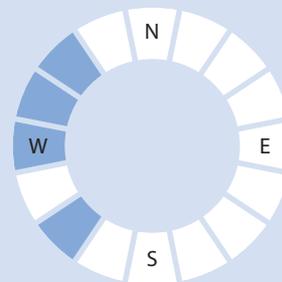
For more experienced pilots Black Hill is where the best flying can be found. A ten minute walk up the path from the car park leads to a large slope area for take off (B). It suits W-NW direction but avoid if wind is any more northerly as rotor can come from Lugnagun, the small hill out in front.

The Landing Zone (C) is the large area in front of the car park but can suffer from venturi, so care is needed on approach. If too strong, fly out and land in basin (D).

While Sorrel Hill (E) takes SW direction it requires strong conditions for soaring which can lead to rotor in the LZ, so best to avoid.



Wind Direction:



General Information:

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES:

Take off: 53° 7'54.07" (53.13169)N;
6°26'33.19" (6.44255)W

Landing: 53° 8'14.15" (53.13726)N;
6°26'29.51"W (6.44153)W

ELEVATION:

Take off: 441 m.

Landing: 276 m.

TAKE OFF:

From Sorrel Hill (SW) or Black Hill (W-NW), depending on wind direction.

LANDING:

Anywhere.

GETTING THERE:

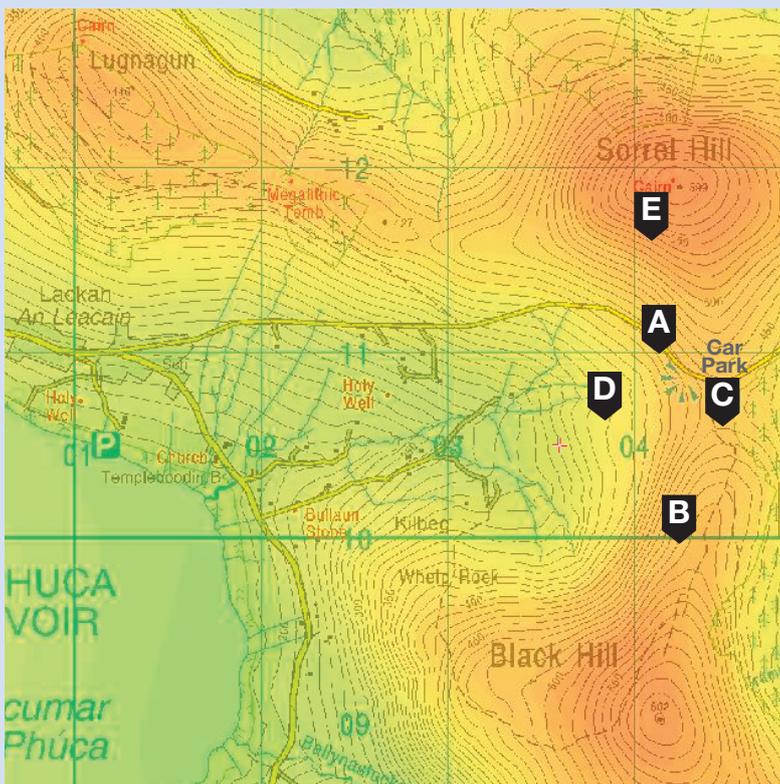
In the village of Lacken, need to turn into the narrow road (next to the shop) and drive about 2 km up to the carpark.

WEATHER HAZARDS:

Mountain area - weather can change quickly.

FLIGHT REGULATION:

Airspace in the area needs to be closed for helicopters - to do so phone 00353 1 4037514 and inform about flying activities.



Lough Bray Glencree, Co. Wicklow



Great views and excellent flying for experienced and novice pilots.

Situated above Glencree and overlooked by the Kippure TV Mast, in an easterly wind Lough Bray is an excellent site to fly from. Although a bit of a hike the spectacular views looking out over the Lough and down to the coast is well worth it. Indeed Lough Bray is a wonderful site to drag family and friends to, they can enjoy the views and fresh air while you enjoy the flying.

Half way between the road (A) and take off is the landing area (B). It is a wide open, soft and safe landing zone and is a very good spot for novice pilots to practice ground handling.

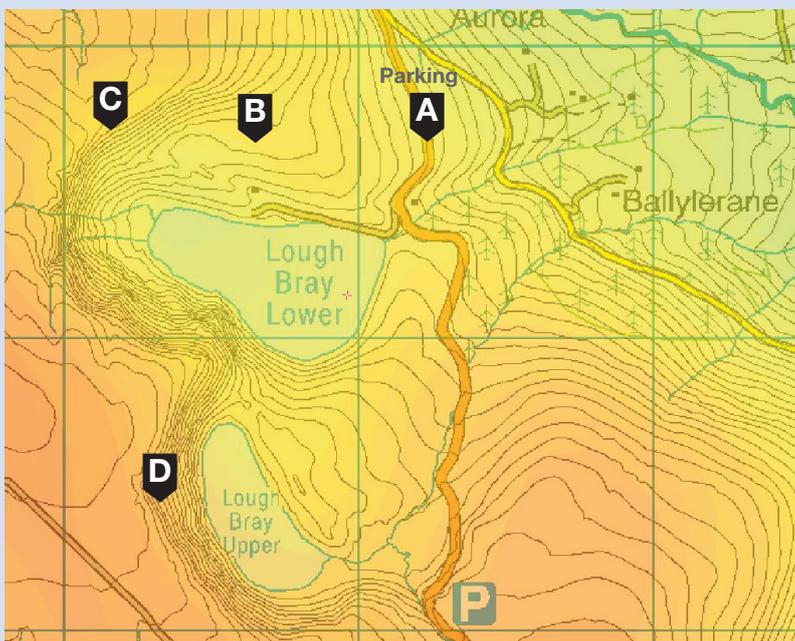
From here to take off (C) is a tougher hike but well worth it. From take off pilots turn right and fly into the bowl and lift band. If you do not gain sufficient height to move above the ridge when in the bowl its advisable to turn back and head to landing zone (A) if unable to gain any height on SE ridge.

Also if wind veers to southerly, rotor from the spur, Eagle Rock, between the two corrie lake bowls will be experienced.

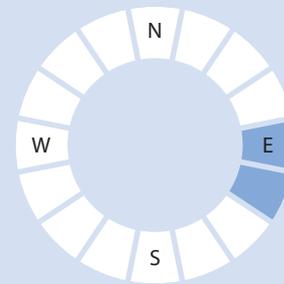
In certain wind conditions it is possible to fly over to Upper Lough (D) which takes a SE wind direction.

SEASONAL FLYING RESTRICTIONS:

Lough Bray is a Special Protection Area (SPA) for peregrine falcons and no flying is allowed during the nesting period (1st March - 31st July) unless otherwise notified by the Wicklow Mountain National Park, land owners of Lough Bray.



Wind Direction:



General Information:

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

Select satellite view and spot the paragliders!

GPS COORDINATES:

Take off: 53°11'19" (53.1888)N;
6°18'34" (6.3097)W

Landing: 53°11'20" (53.1891)N;
6°17'57" (6.2992)W

ELEVATION:

Take off: 534m.

Landing: 427m.

TAKE OFF: You can take off right on top at the hill.

LANDING: You can land in the flat area mid way between take off and the road.

GETTING THERE: Drive from Bray to Enniskerry and take the L1011 to Glencree, turn onto Old Military Road (towards Sally Gap) and drive for about 1km.

WEATHER HAZARDS: Avoid take-off with SE wind - take-off site will experience rotor from the spur between the two corrie lake bowls.

Great Sugar Loaf (west)

Kilmacanoge, Co. Wicklow



Only 35 mins from Dublin and just off the N11, the Great Sugar Loaf is a excellent site to fly in a WSW - SW direction.

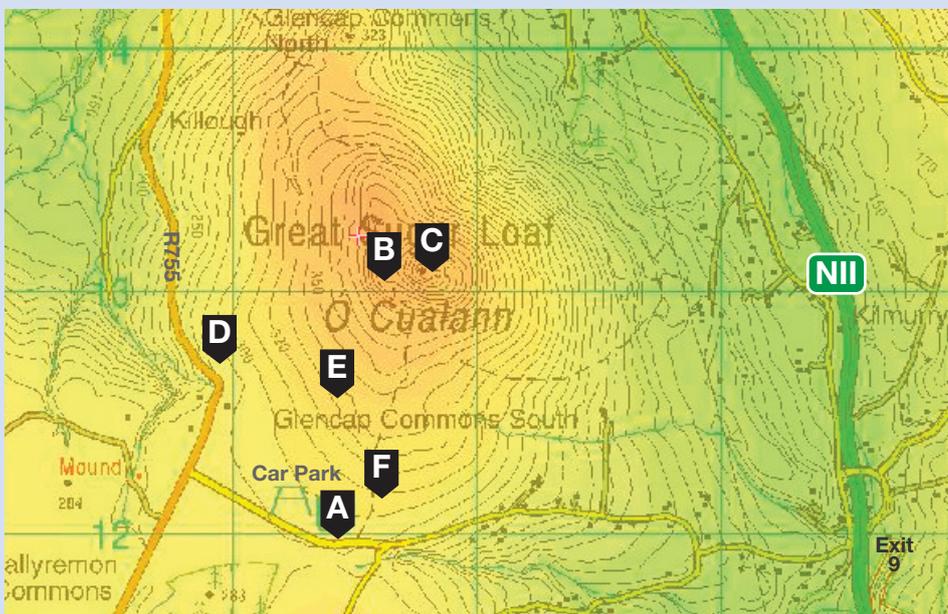
Park in the Sugar Loaf's south car park (A) but be aware of leaving any valuables in your car as they can be broken into.

Take off is on the West Shoulder (B) where the ground is rocky with a light covering of heather and care is needed with lines and footing. Good ground handling skills is advised as ground is unforgiving to gliders that land back down after unsuccessful inflations.

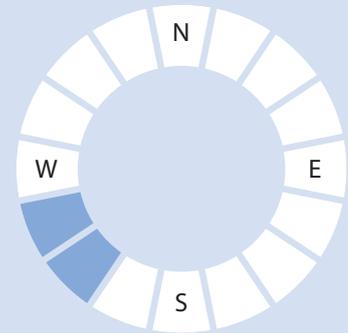
Once in the air gain height in front of the shoulder (approx 50m) before attempting to connect with the upper ridge and summit (C). Also wind either side of the cone can suffer from venturi so take care not to get parked at the edge of the lift band and possibly being pushed back into the lee of the ridge.

Good thermal flying (on the right day) can be found out in front of the ridge but the airspace above a flooded quarry beside the Roundwood Road (R755) to the west (D) can, in certain conditions, be turbulent and may require a lot active flying.

Landing options are good with lots of areas free of gorse out in front of the ridge (E). There are also plenty of fields (F) to choose from but consider some may have livestock or crops in them. Also a lot of the fields are closed off with barbed wire so be careful with your glider when exiting.



Wind Direction:



General Information:

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES:

Take off: 53.153871,
-6.152706

Landing: 53.144683,
-6.154251

ELEVATION:

Take off: 420m.

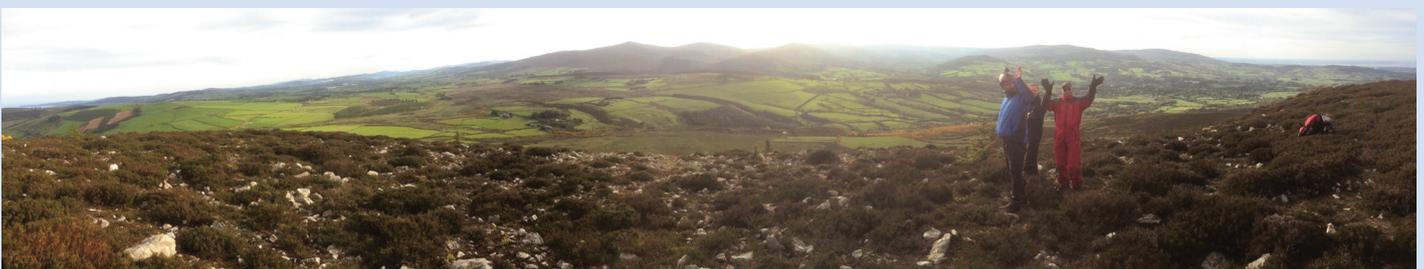
Landing: 320m.

TAKE OFF: You can take off on the West Shoulder.

LANDING: You can land in the flat area anywhere between the base of the ridge and car park.

GETTING THERE: Travel south on N11, take Exit 9 at Glen of the Downs and follow the Red Lane up to the Sugar Loaf's South Car Park.

WEATHER/HAZARDS: Avoid either side of the cone as it can suffer from venturi. Airspace above flooded quarry can, in certain conditions, be turbulent. Possible wave effect on strong days from hills to the west.



Mt. Leinster

Co. Carlow / Co. Wexford



Mt. Leinster, Ireland's premier free flying site, lies at the northern end of the Blackstair Mountains on the border of Co. Carlow and Co. Wexford.

With a tarmacked road leading all the way up to its summit at 2608 feet, Mt. Leinster reaches some 2280 feet above the surrounding plain, offering commanding views of the surrounding countryside. Mt. Leinster is flyable in almost all wind directions except an easterly and, with so many launch sites, offers something for every one from the novice (under supervision) to the top XC comp hound. Cross-country flying is possible in all directions. A simple hop down onto the Blackstairs will take you at least 15km, while, with a leap of faith, you can head 30km+ north to the Wicklow Mountains or east to the coast.

Access to the summit road from the Nine Stones is through a locked gate. The key is available to IHPA members each year when they renew their membership and insurance. Please do not allow non-IHPA or visiting pilots through the gate unless they have received express permission from the IHPA

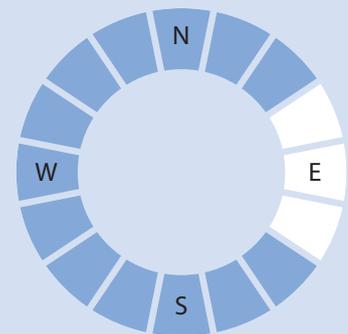
WARNING: Do not fly the SE Bowl site or land in the Diamond field if there is a high pressure inversion layer, even in light conditions. The winds down in the Diamond field can be severe. Extreme wind shear and 180° direction change have been experienced and can be fatal. The winds are funnelled through the Scullogue Gap and are compressed by the inversion to produce a lethal combination of strong gusting eddies. It would be safer to fly over the back and land in the Bonesetters field. If you are not certain that you can do this then don't fly. This site requires that pilots have a minimum of 50 hours airtime, as there is no easy landing field in front of take off and novice pilots will be caught out.

Caution needs to be exercised when flying from the mast in a due south wind. Rotors coming off the Blackstair Mts. can be very dangerous in anything other than a light wind

For details on most popular flying sites around Mt. Leinster see over.



Wind Direction:



General Information:

For details on most popular flying sites around Mt. Leinster see over.

Nine Stones Car Park

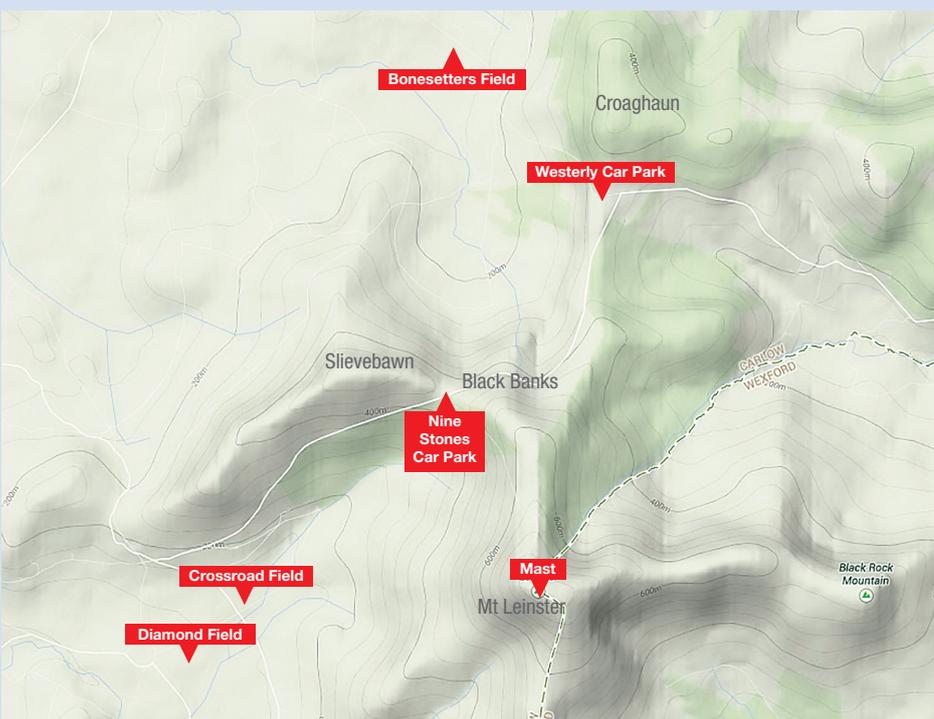
GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES

Car Park: 52.636843, -6.793677

ELEVATION: 400m.

The Nine Stones Car Park, opposite the gate to the summit, is the main assembly point for pilots to meet up as it affords easy access to both Slievebawn and Black Banks ridges. It also allows pilots park their cars and continue up to the summit in pooled transport as parking is limited on top.





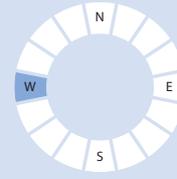
Westerly Car Park

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

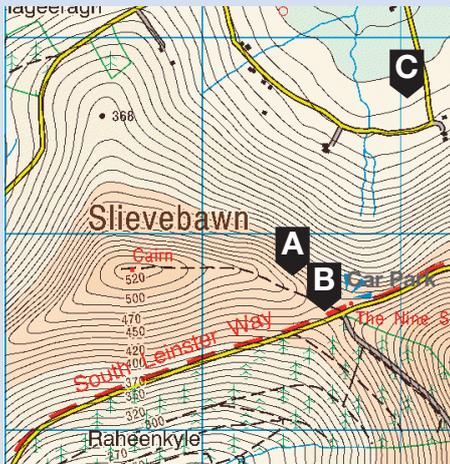
GPS COORDINATES

Take Off: 52.655618, -6.770784, AMSL 350m.

Landing: 52.655807, -6.775003, AMSL 190m



In a westerly wind the Westerly Car Park (WCP) is the best place to fly at Mt Leinster. If wind is strong it's recommended to move down the slop to launch (A). Fly close to ridge to stay in lift and gain height and when sufficiently high (approx 50m above take off) you can move over the forest on western side of Croaghnaun (B), but always making sure you have enough height to fly out and away from trees. Paragliders can land in field below ridge (C) but be aware it has a steep slope. Hang Gliders land in the Bone Setters Field (F) ([Google Maps](#)). Top landing should only be attempted in area south of the ridge (E).



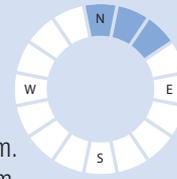
Slievebawn

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

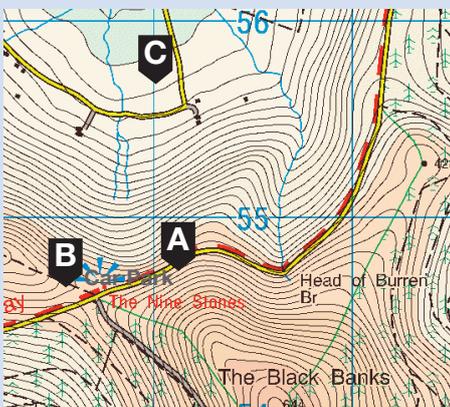
GPS COORDINATES

Take Off: 52.638340, -6.796259, AMSL 430m.

Landing: 52.637325, -6.795168 AMSL 400m



Slievebawn, or Nine Stones Ridge, is ideal for flying N - NE winds. Depending on wind strength, launch from the slope opposite the car park (A) and work your way along and up the ridge. If conditions are right you can hop over to Black Banks and back again but always taking extra care with the power cables separating both ridges. With a NE direction the lift band area can be a reduced and become congested. Top landing is in the area in between the car park and ridge (B) but can suffer from venturi so care is needed on approach. If conditions rule out a top landing then head for the Northern Landing Field (C) while being aware that direction and strength maybe different from conditions on the ridge.



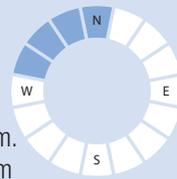
Black Banks

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

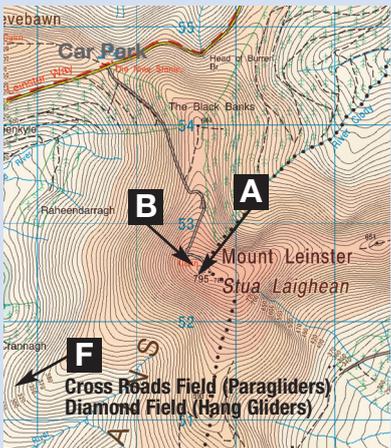
GPS COORDINATES

Take Off: 52.637420, -6.787872, AMSL 419m.

Landing: 52.637325, -6.795168 AMSL 400m



When wind is N - NW Black Banks is a great place to fly. If conditions are right you can launch about 20m -30m above the road (A) and then work your way up the ridge. Be careful not to go to far back above the ridge and always check forward motion as wind can pick up at higher levels. Landing is the same as Slievebawn, in the Nine Stones Landing zone (B) , but you can also land in the few flat areas below the road or head for the Northern Landing Field (C).



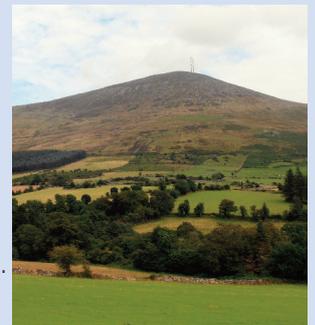
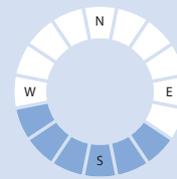
Mast

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES

Take Off: 52.618455, -6.781516, AMSL 790m.

Landing: 52.618624, -6.781043 AMSL 790m.



Easily the most challenging site, the Mast at Mount Leinster commands spectacular views over the surrounding counties and spectacular flying (A). If conditions are right a flight from the Mast can lead to some great XC flying. Top landing (B) is possible but great care is needed with mast and it's associated support cables as well as the rough landing conditions with rock, boulders, bog holes and heather. If unable to top land then head for landing fields (F); Cross Roads Field for Paragliders ([Google Maps](#)) or Diamond Field for Hang Gliders ([Google Maps](#)).

Croagh Patrick Co. Mayo



Famous the world over as one of Ireland's Holy Mountains it is also one of the main flying sites in the West of Ireland.

Situated a short drive from Westport along the south shore of Clew Bay it offers amazing views in all directions. Requires a solid 20 -30 minute hike to launch but rewards with beautiful soaring and, to the south, interesting XC potential.

Being a solitary 764m mountain right on the Atlantic coastline the influence of the sea is never far away which can make it difficult to predict conditions until on the hill. It also keeps base lower than further inland but, if you are lucky enough to be there with a Northerly and high enough base you may be able to make the jump to the Sheffries to the South which opens up the high ground that stretches all the way to Galway Bay.

Three launch directions:

North - leave your car in the main car park (C) to the north of the mountain and hike to the shoulder at point A. Depending on how far the wind is off to the NW be careful of flying too far into the bowl as it can be turbulent.

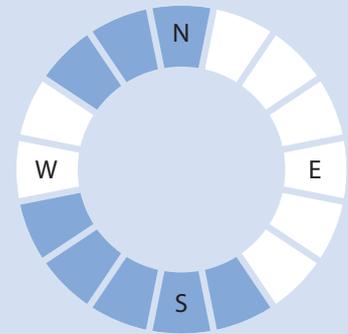
Plenty of landing options - a gentle slope landing above and to the south of the car park or alternatively in the fields to the north of the road. Best to avoid the most obvious field however due to issues with the land owner. This is the one just to the east of the field with the Ship monument.

Note: there is a time limit in the car park so if you think you are going to be longer it may be better to park along the road instead.

South - take the road up to the Mountain Rescue station (D) and follow the track to point A. The first half of the track is over boggy land and can be quite wet but it is a shorter hike than from the North as the parking spot is further up the hill. Abundant landing options - best not to land too far east of the main peak to avoid a difficult walkout through forested terrain.

West - take the road that leads up between the west flank of Croagh Patrick (Ben Goram) and the small knoll (Cuilleán) and park the car where you can (E). Stiff hike to a relatively small, steep launch spot (B) so you need to be confident with your launch technique. When in the air be careful not to drift back low over the spine as it will rotor. Plenty of landing options by the road where you parked.

Wind Direction:



General Information:

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES:

Shoulder (A):

53.761588, -9.639639

find a suitable launch site in this area.

Launch West (B):

53.763008, -9.698733

find a suitable launch site in this area

Parking North (C):

53.779593, -9.640390 – car park

Parking South (D):

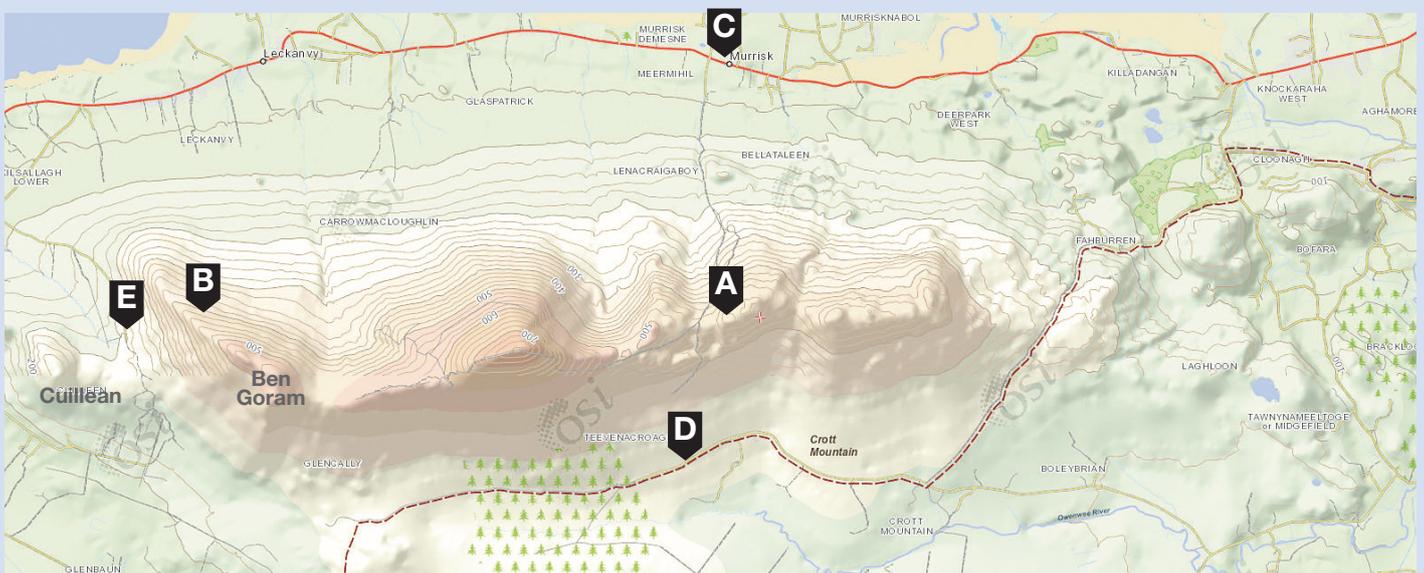
53.753634, -9.638909

small car park

Parking West (E):

53.763871, -9.705643

side of the road



Sky Road Clifden, Co. Galway



Coastal soaring site to the west of Clifden on the Atlantic coastline.

A short drive west of Clifden along Sky Road with a view over the bay and Slyne Head in the distance. Park your car in the small car park along the road at point A (GPS: 53.500679, -10.096485) and launch is just over the low wall.



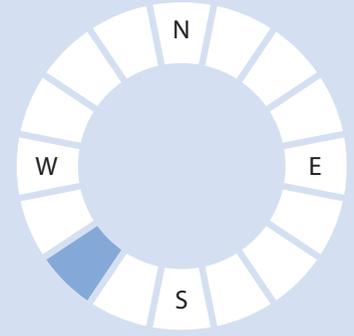
This site takes pretty much just a SW. However at just 100m AGL it has the advantage of being flyable when the more inland sites are blown out or clagged in.

Plenty of bottom landing options at B if needed. Preferable to top land by launch though it is small and uneven, with the car park behind and a large pond to avoid. Be careful also of compression on the top to avoid being dragged back over the wall/fence.

If conditions are right you could try the short out-and-return to Clifden, a little less than 5 km to the east. You will need a constant SW and follow the ridge line.

Note: the ridge quickly drops back and gets shallow with landing options becoming small and uneven with power lines and stone walls to navigate. Good scratching technique required. Be careful if you find yourself getting lower and pushing out - there are NO bottom landing options by the sea line.

Wind Direction:



General Information:

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES:

Car Park - A

53.500679, -10.096485

Take off is just over the low wall.

Landing - B

53.497611, -10.097667

Lots of landing options but without a lift back, a long walk by road or hard climb back up the ridge is on the cards.



Maumturks

Inagh Valley, Co. Galway



Situated in the heart of Connemara, the Inagh Valley runs from NW to SE between the 12 Bens and the Maumturks. One of the most beautiful free flying sites in the West of Ireland.

The Maumturks are a range of mountains running along the NE side of the Inagh Valley. The more famous Twelve Bens line the SW side. Although not very high they are steep and rocky and provide wonderful soaring with small gaps to navigate between each of the 5 main peaks (Binnmore, Binn Chaónaigh, Barrslievenaroy, Barrlugrevagh, Letterbreckaun. Excellent XC potential with high ground stretching to the N and NW as far as The Sheffries and Maumtrasna.

Launch is from Binn Chaónaigh:

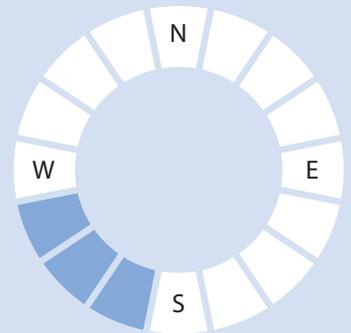
Park in the small car park at the start of the path to Maumean (the saddle between Binnmore and Binn Chaónaigh). Walk up the path to the saddle then cut to the left up the hill. Launch is from about half way up where it flattens out a little. Plenty of bottom landing options all along the valley and top landing possible near launch. However, it is rocky with ledges and can be rough so you need to be careful.

Once in the air you can run the 5km to Letterbreckaun or if the wind is a little to the S then you can push out and try to round corner of Binnmore to the more southerly facing slope. A lot of potential to go XC but be careful to have enough height before going over the back to avoid the inevitable turbulence caused by such steep, rocky slopes.



Although sheltered somewhat from the effects of the sea by the Twelve Bens to the SW keep an eye on the approaching weather as it can change quickly and if you are not careful you can find yourself quite suddenly in thick orographic cloud below the peaks. Not a good place to be.

Wind Direction:



General Information:

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES:

Car Park - A

53.483924, -9.669807

Take Off - B

53.493261, -9.661877 (approx)

Follow the trail to the saddle then cut up left and find a suitable launch spot.

GETTING THERE:

Travel the N59 from Galway to Clifden. Approx 11.8km after Maums Cross turn right and follow the sign posts to Maumean Trail car park (3.6km)



Achill Island

Co Mayo

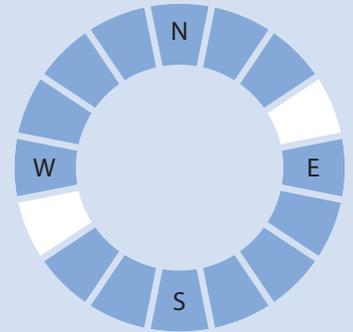


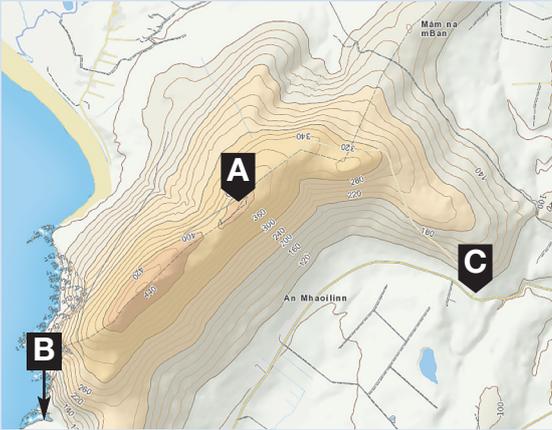
Achill Island has a long tradition of free flying in Ireland going right back to the very beginning

An island off the west coast, it is connected to the mainland by a short bridge at Achill Sound. A great place to go if you want to get away from it all for a few days and, for the free flyer, it caters for nearly every wind direction. Flat peat land and the enormous Keel beach provide ample bottom landings and relatively easy top landing on the main site (Minaun)

For details on the most popular flying sites around Achill Island see over.

Wind Direction:





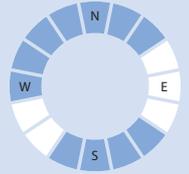
Minaun Heights

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES

Take Off: 53.957373, -10.026432, AMSL 396m.

One of the oldest free flying sites in Ireland due to the tarred road to RTE Transmitter Station at the top (A) with ample launch and top landing opportunities. When top landing keep well clear of the Mast and the line of power lines that run along the road. The main 3 mile long ridge is NW / SE facing but a series of spurs at the N end ensure the site is soarable in most wind directions. The west facing cliffs (B), south of Minaun Heights, are flyable in a WNW-W if you are prepared to take-off in a cross wind from the NW launch at the masts - a spectacular run all the way down to the headland and a hidden beach. Definitely for experienced pilots only - there are no bottom landing options. The road to the top of Minaun Heights (C) is from the south side of the hill.



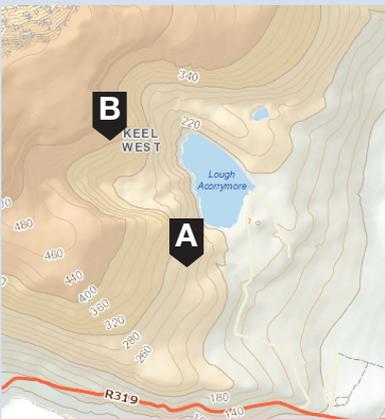
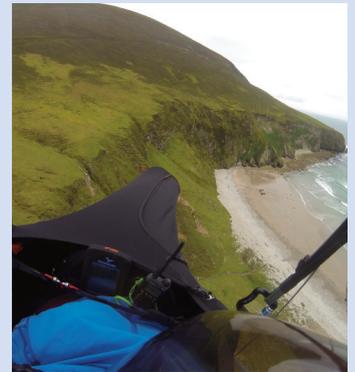
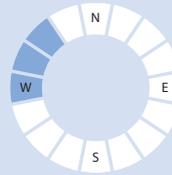
Minaun Lower Cliffs

GOOGLE MAPS: [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES

Parking: 53.960185, -10.045186

On the road to Keel Beach, turn left at the Church (approx 2.7km from Keel) and follow the lane to the sea. Take a short hike up along the rising ground leading to the cliffs to find a suitable launch spot (A). The lower cliffs can be flyable when it is blown out on top though care needs to be taken to avoid being blown too far back up the slope.



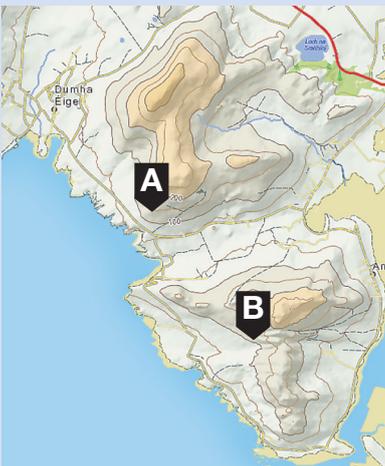
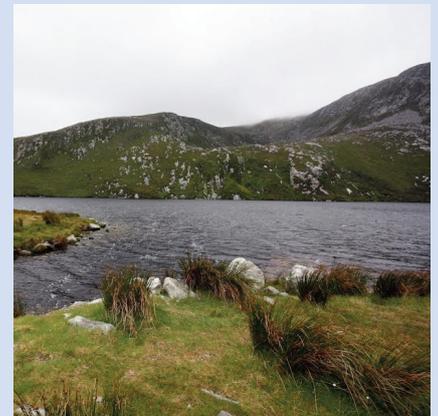
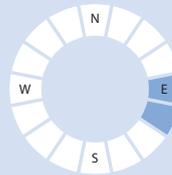
Keel West (Lough Accorrmore)

GOOGLE MAPS: [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES

Take Off: 53.977618, -10.1708746

Situated on the road to Keem Beach, Keel West is the ridge and bowl above Lough Accorrmore and is a site you can fly in an Easterly. Take off (A) is on the ridge south of the Lough where you gain height before moving over to the bowl (B). When flying in the bowl be careful not to get blown over the back – **next stop Canada.**



Knockmore and Atlantic Drive

GOOGLE MAPS

Knockmore: [CLICK HERE](#)

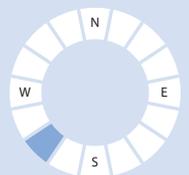
Atlantic Drive: [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES

Knockmore: 53.977618, -10.170874

Atlantic Drive: 53.879717, -9.966301

These sites are flyable in a SW when Minaun is no longer soarable. Knockmore (A) is the higher and smoother of the 2 sites but requires a longer hike to launch. Atlantic Drive (B) is a series of rocky outcrops that run for about 2 miles, getting higher and steeper as you move further SE. Plenty of landing options before the road but be careful not to overshoot as the sea is not far beyond.



Rossbeigh Co. Kerry



Rossbeigh (or Rossbehy) is a coastal site overlooking the village of Glenbeigh with beautiful views of Rossbeigh beach and Inch beach across the inlet.

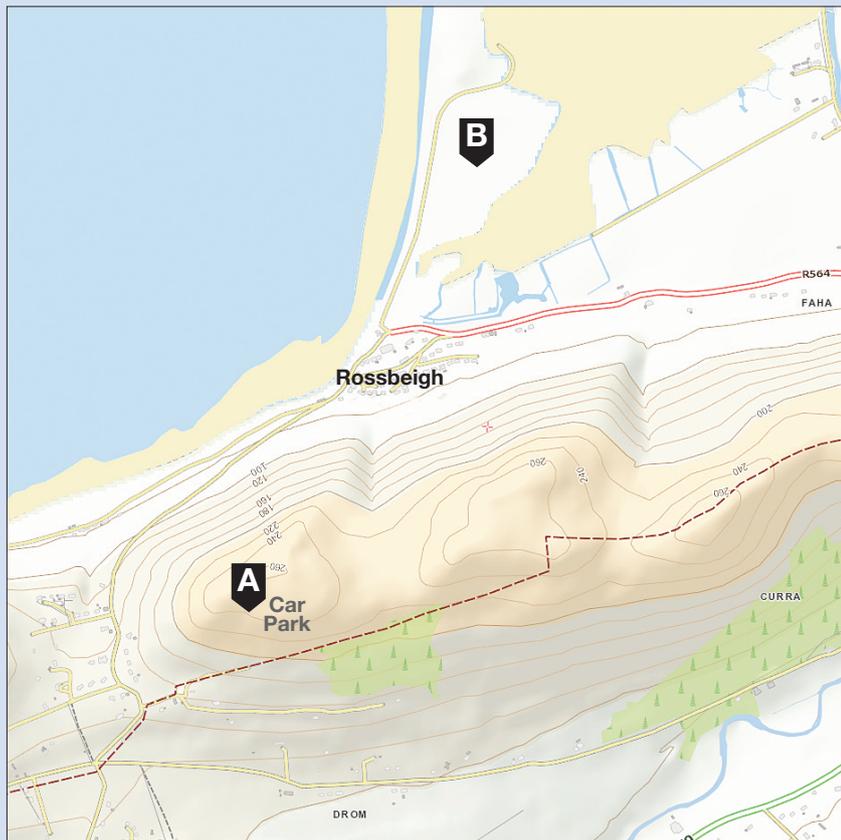
Access is by road to the west, to a car park at the top, which was provided by the local Community Council specifically for hang gliders and paragliders and repaired by Munster Kestral Members and the IHPA in 2015.

This is a good coastal soaring site with a long steep ridge and excellent rigging and launch area. It is not, however, suitable for top landing. Bottom-landing is on a huge beach area with a public car park at the rear of it. This site offers good XC potential.

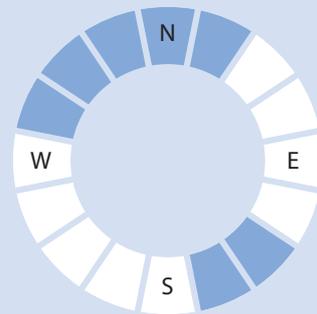
Take off is above the beach at 250m in front of the car parking area (A). There is a second take off 50metres below the top for when the wind is more than 20km/hour.

Landing is in the football field (B), East of the road that goes behind the beach. No obstructions for 1km, except the childrens playground near the road.

In a westerly wind the dunes at Rossbeigh are flyable and are a 5 min walk along beach from main landing field.



Wind Direction:



General Information:

GOOGLE MAPS [CLICK HERE](#)

GPS COORDINATES:

Take off: 52°2'50" (52.0475)N;
9°58'48" (9.9802)W

Landing: 52°3'18" (52.0552)N;
9°58'28" (9.9745)W

ELEVATION: Take off: 255 m.
Landing: 1 m.

GETTING From Killarney take the "Ring of Kerry" road (N72) west to KILLORGLIN.

Then the N70 road southwest to Glenbeigh.

Finally take the local road to the beach, 2km on the R564 from Glenbeigh.

WEATHER
HAZARDS

Wind at the top launch area is prone to compression and can show be up to 10km/hr more than the actual wind. For a lighter wind launch go 50 meters below the top take off (below the wire) where there is an area which has been cleared for launching 2-3 gliders. Wind speed here is often more indicative of the actual wind speed. However, use your own discretion.