

GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Pollaloughabo
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH1 Karst
TOWNLAND(S)	Carrowkilleen
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Gort, Kinvara
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	113
ITM CO-ORDINATES	536805E 708040N (entrance)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET No. 52	GSI BEDROCK 1: 100,000 SHEET NO. 14

Outline Site Description

Pollaloughabo is a large collapse, giving access to a spacious cavern in cherty limestone.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The karstic features are developed in Carboniferous Limestone, but are post glacial or older. The size of some of the underground water filled passages suggest that a degree of Pliocene landscape development may be inherited.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Pollaloughabo is a large collapse, giving access to a spacious cavern (in cherty limestones containing large fossil corals), at the lowest point of which is the river cave, presumed to be a part of the main underground Gort to Kinvara drainage. The collapse into the underground river has taken place between two major east to west joints some 12 m apart. The cave dimensions are 12 m square with a floor of collapse blocks and silt, some blocks overlying silt and some underlying it, indicating the alternation of collapse and aggradation within the cave. The river cave has been connected with Pollbehan 1 km to the west (downstream) by cave divers and dived for several hundreds of metres to the west (upstream) in very large, deep passages. The cave waters are subject to tidal fluctuations. There are many shallow, saucer - shaped dolines in the vicinity of the cave which are presumably related to solutional cavities beneath. A significant 'karst window' feature, Pollaloughabo is the largest cavern accessed from a collapse doline in the area and an important part of the underground main drainage system.

Site Importance – County Geological Site; recommended for Geological NHA

This is one of numerous sites within the Gort-Kinvara lowlands which make up a complex of international importance. The site is recommended to NPWS for designation as a geological NHA, comprising one of 15 critical sites within the Gort-Kinvara lowland karst, which is one of the best studied lowland karst areas of the World.

Management/promotion issues

Only experienced cave divers could access any part of this cave and it is not suitable for general promotion. It is on private farmland and landowner permission should be sought to access the site.



View of Pollaloughabo entrance showing the permanent intersection with the water table.



View of Pollaloughabo, right of the entrance.

