

MONAGHAN - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Tullyvaragh		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME	IGH1 Karst		
TOWNLAND(S)	Tullyvaragh Upper, Tullyvaragh Lower		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Carrickmacross		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	28		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	684634E 809075N		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	35	GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	8/9

Outline Site Description

This site is a complex active sinkhole in karstic limestone, north of Carrickmacross.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The sinkhole, drainage and cave development are probably all post-glacial in age, formed over the last 11,000 years. The karstified limestone is of Lower Carboniferous age.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The site includes a stream sink, a cave and the enclosed depression containing them. A small stream flowing southward sinks first on the northside of the Dry Bridge that carries a minor road. In time of heavy rainfall the Dry Bridge conducts stream flow further south into the enclosed depression where there are several sinks. On the east side of the depression is a 15m-long cave, Polltullyvaragh, which has been dug by cavers aspiring to connect with a formerly recorded more extensive cave, Poll'd, which lay in a shakehole 70m further to the east. Poll'd was filled by spoil from the construction of the nearby N2 road. The entire sinkhole gets filled with water in times of heavy or prolonged rain and can overflow through a channel to the south.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This is one of a small number of active karst sites in the limestone district around Carrickmacross and is of County Geological Site importance.

Management/promotion issues

The input of high volumes of water into active conduits in karstified limestone is recognised as a high-risk issue for groundwater supplies and the site should be protected from pollution of road spills or runoff. It is on private land and is not suitable for promotion. The site can be viewed from the public roadway on the Dry Bridge, with a dry channel seen except in wet conditions.



Tullyvaragh sink in dry conditions (photo copyright - Alasdair Kennedy 2010).



Left: Stream sink north of the Dry Bridge.

Right: The Dry Bridge viewed from north with an older Dry Bridge structure also visible in the foreground.



Left: Stream channel north of the Dry Bridge.

Right: The Tullyvaragh sink flooded in March 2013; compare with the top photo.



