WATERFORD - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	**Knockalahara Sink**		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME	**IGH1 Karst**		
TOWNLAND(S)	**Knockalahara**		
NEAREST TOWN	**Dungarvan**		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	**Waterford 30**		
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	**214724 95842**		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	82	**1/2 inch Sheet No.**	22

Outline Site Description
At Knockalahara, a small stream sinks into a wooded enclosed depression with a sometimes active cave passage continuing underground.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type
The cave is probably of Holocene (post-glacial) age, developed in Carboniferous Limestone.

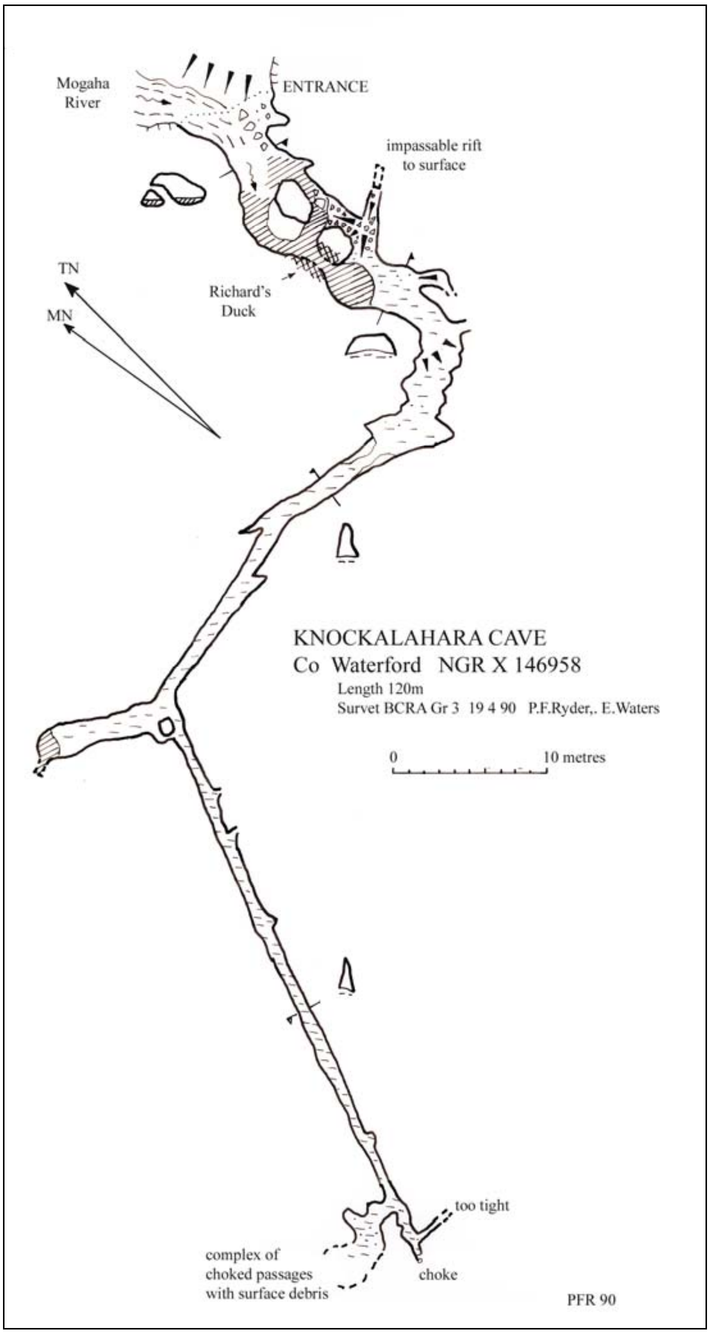
Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest
This is one of very few active caves in Waterford, where flowing water is still developing the feature. It is unclear from the exploration reports and from the site visit how active the cave is, and it may only be active with heavy stream flow in winter or after heavy rainfall episodes.

The feeder stream is unusual in that it appears to be a distributary branch off the Maghaha River. It leaves the river only a few hundred metres before it joins the larger Finisk River, and may only flow in winter or in times of flood flow. It flows only a few hundred metres in length before it sinks at Knockalahara. Local reports suggest the flow is not regular, and during a summer visit in 2011 there was no flow, only damp ground in the channel. However, local reports also suggest sluggera development on the route of the cave flow and occasional flooding in the low lying fields adjacent to the sink at Knockalahara. Unconfirmed suggestions of dye tracing indicate flow from the sink to the Finisk River, which is entirely plausible.

The cave passage entered during low water conditions in 1990 consists of 120m of narrow linear passage ending in a choked area that may have corresponded to a surface collapse or sluggera at the time. Sluggera collapses have occurred in recent memory in the field under which the cave passage lies, but they have apparently been filled in by the farmer/landowner, as no trace is now seen in the arable field.

Site Importance
The site is important as a County Geological Site representing the rare occurrence of active cave development and a stream sinking into a cave, not seen in almost all other Waterford caves. It is also part of the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC 002170.

Management/promotion issues
The site is unsuitable for general access or promotion lying in private farmland and difficult to access safely. Any intervention such as drainage works or channelisation for example, in the Finisk River, in the vicinity of the distributary branch, may interfere with the input of water to Knockalahara and should be carefully considered before any works are undertaken.

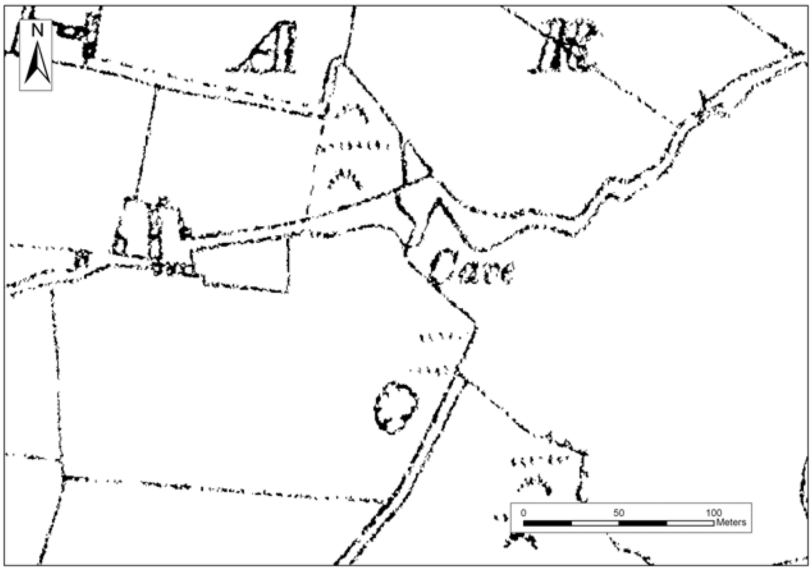


Knockalahara Sink.

The low arch of Knockalahara Sink.


CAPPOQUIN
Ceapach Choinn
Knockalahara Sink
Knockalahara
Blackwater
Mountrivers
Affane
Springfield
Quarter
Bewley
Coolanheen
Drumroe
Sheskin
Sluggara
Kildermeen
Sunlawn
Carrigeen
Lefanta
Ballyhane
Clashnagoneen
Boheraswillin
Rockfield
Ballyard
Nicholastown
Monyvroe
Clashnadarriv
Kilmolash
Tourin Demesne
N72
R669
R671
10
11
12
13
14
15
16


N
Knockalahara Sink
Site Extent
Mapped cave extent
0
50
100
Meters


N
Cave
0
50
100
Meters