

Cahir GWB: Summary of Initial Characterisation.

Hydrometric Area Local Authority	Associated surface water bodies	Associated terrestrial ecosystems	Area (km ²)
16 – Suir S. Tipperary Co Co	Shanbally, Burncourt, Tar, Thonoge, Suir.	None listed	34.5
Topography	This groundwater body lies at the eastern foot of the Galty Mountains. Elevations range from 200m to 50m OD. The topography of the land surface is at times tightly incised by mountain river valleys.		
Geology and Aquifers	Aquifer type(s)	Rf: Regionally Important Fractured Aquifer.	
	Main aquifer lithologies	KT : Kiltorcan Formation – Yellow & red sandstone & green mudstone	
	Key structures.	The rocks have undergone at least one major phase of structural deformation. The Kiltorcan sandstone has in other parts of South Tipperary reacted in a brittle manner to the deformation, allowing the development of a denser network of fracturing and fractures permeability than in the shalier sandstones elsewhere in the aquifer. Although major faults may not be mapped it is most likely that they exist on a smaller scale.	
	Key properties	Results of aquifer testing undertaken in the aquifer are very variable. Daly (1985) reports estimates of 5 m ² /day to 1850 m ² /day, and suggests that the highest values are likely to be associated with low-lying areas close to anticlines or faults. Daly suggests that sandstone permeabilities are in the order of 0.5 to 20 m/day, increasing up to 80m/day in localised areas. Transmissivity will be reduced at depth, where the Kiltorcan Formation is thinner in the centre of the synclines and fractures are closed by the deep burial.	
Thickness	Geophysical borehole logging data suggest that significant water movements occur at depths of over 60m where the aquifer is not confined by overlying shaly limestones. Where confined, active groundwater circulation is expected to be much more limited, but some deep flow has been inferred from mineral exploration boreholes at depths of over 200m (Daly, 1985). Kiltorcan Formation is thinner in the centre of the synclines and permeability is reduced by the deep burial		
Overlying Strata	Lithologies	The overlying deposits are not described (in the GWPS), but are assumed to be Old Red Sandstone derived tills.	
	Thickness	Over most of the Galtees rock is close to the surface; there will be some thickening of subsoil at the outer area of the groundwater body.	
	% area aquifer near surface	Rock is close to the surface over the surface of this aquifer.	
	Vulnerability	Vulnerability is mostly EXTREME. There may be some areas of LOW vulnerability southwest of Caher.	
Recharge	Main recharge mechanisms	Because of the large area of rock close to surface and the overlying impermeable rock, most recharge may be point. There is likely to be orographic rainfall to the south of the mountains and therefore more recharge in the south.	
	Est. recharge rates	[Recharge estimates will be added at a later date]	
Discharge	Springs and large known abstractions	Kilcoran	
	Main discharge mechanisms	There is no obvious discharge zone for groundwater moving at depth in this aquifer, but it probably flows via large faults and complex pathways into shallower groundwaters and from there to surface water bodies where outcrop areas are the lowest elevations.	
	Hydrochemical Signature	Waters are ‘soft’ to ‘moderately hard’ in the sandstones. The hydrochemical signature varies between calcium bicarbonate and calcium-magnesium bicarbonate. Daly suggests that the signature depends on the thickness of overlying subsoil, with calcium magnesium waters being associated with areas of thicker subsoil. The bedrock strata of this aquifer are Siliceous , but there may be some localities where there are calcareous beds in the top layers of the formation.	
Groundwater Flow Paths	Substantial artesian flows have been recorded in this aquifer due to the pressure of the water table in the elevated outcrop area. Evidence from drilling in the Kiltorcan Formation shows that the largest well yields are obtained at relatively low elevations, close to major structural features and where at least 40 m of the upper part of the Kiltorcan is penetrated.		
Groundwater and Surface water interactions	The balance of abstraction with recharge will require careful attention, particularly if considering portions of the aquifer which are confined and/or which occur as isolated faulted blocks. The rivers have relatively high specific baseflows.		
Conceptual model	The Kiltorcan Formation and the boundary of the SERBD to the west define the extent of this groundwater body. A conceptual analogy has been drawn to the Kiltorcan Sandstone of the Carrick-on-Suir syncline. This has been done because there has been more study on the latter and both appear similar in physiographic nature. This groundwater body must be viewed in three dimensions. The rocks in question extend underground underneath the Galty Mountains. The aquifer becomes progressively more confined by an increase in thickness of the overlying beds. The aquifer has not been greatly exploited by public supply abstraction.		

Attachments	
Instrumentation	Stream gauge: None ? Borehole Hydrograph: none EPA Representative Monitoring boreholes: Kilcoran GWS (borehole) (#28 - R983217)
Information Sources	Daly, D., Keegan, M., & Wright, G., (2001) Co. Tipperary (South Riding) Groundwater Protection Scheme. Daly, E.P. (1985). Groundwater Resources of the Nore River Basin: Hydrogeology of the Kiltorcan Aquifer System. Unpublished internal GSI report.
Disclaimer	Note that all calculations and interpretations presented in this report represent estimations based on the information sources described above and established hydrogeological formulae