CLARE - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE Other names used for site TOWNLAND(S) NEAREST TOWN SIX INCH MAP NUMBER NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE 1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER

Turkenagh

Turkenagh Corofin 10 133870 192460 = R3387 9246 51 **1/2 inch Sheet No.** 14

Outline Site Description

Mushroom rocks – isolated wave worn stones in limestone pavement area, adjacent to turlough

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

Although the limestone is of Carboniferous age, the probable development of the undercut lips and mushroom shapes is a postglacial development.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The Turkenagh stones in question are an example of a phenomenon classed as mushroom stones. These are thought to have formed when lakes existed for periods long enough for water to dissolve the limestone below the lake level. Emergent limestone above the lake level was not dissolved. These lakes are thought to have probably existed from around the end of the Ice Age when water levels were much higher. In some cases the present day lakes probably had a wider extent, but in others the lake has entirely disappeared. At Turkenagh it appears that the lake is actively still forming mushroom stones at high water levels by dissolution of limestone pavement. They may in fact represent what many other sites were like at an early stage in their development, with residual mushrooms being an advanced state. The prevalence of 'stump' like smoothed boulders at other sites such as Coad and Ballykinnacorra supports this idea.

Site Importance

The site is of County Geological Site importance under the IGH 1 Karst theme of the GSI's IGH Programme. The Turkenagh stones comprise an unusual example of only about 63 mushroom stones known in the country as a whole, in that they are dissected bedrock pavement, rather than possibly erratic boulders.

Management/promotion issues

As the stones are outside the Burren National Park, they are still vulnerable to damage or loss although their situation on a regularly flooding lakeshore environment is unlikely to attract development.



Turkenagh pavement (Photo: Louise Dunne)

