

# OFFALY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	<b>Ballylin Mushroom Rock</b>
Other names used for site	
<b>IGH THEME</b>	<b>IGH1 Karst</b>
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	<b>Ballylin</b>
<b>NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE</b>	<b>Ferbane</b>
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>ITM CO-ORDINATES</b>	<b>611676E 726581N</b>
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b>	<b>47</b>
	<b>GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 Sheet No. 15</b>

## **Outline Site Description**

A Mushroom Rock – isolated upstanding rock in a wheat field.

## **Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type**

The rock is composed of Carboniferous Limestone but the solutional weathering is post glacial – that is, Holocene in age.

## **Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest**

Ballylin is one of the relatively numerous examples of mushroom rocks in Offaly compared to most counties in Ireland. It is one of the most ‘mushroom’ shaped rocks amongst Offaly’s representatives of this phenomenon. Isolated upstanding rocks with undercut lips and shapes sometimes resembling mushrooms are believed to be the result of former temporary lake levels where the undercut section of the rock was submerged below lake water which was acid enough to dissolve the limestone it was in contact with. Such lakes or expanded river basins were common in the period at the end of the Ice Age when extensive meltwaters could be trapped behind temporary dams of glacial till and remaining ice sheets.

An alternative hypothesis for some mushroom rocks is that they were dissolved below a soil or bog deposit which has subsequently either shrunk or been eroded away to reveal the weathered section of the rock.

## **Site Importance – County Geological Site**

This is one of the spread of mushroom rocks that are particularly well represented in Offaly on a national basis, and deserves to be recognised and protected. Thus it is recommended as a County Geological Site.

## **Management/promotion issues**

The rock is on private farmland and no access or promotion should be considered without the permission of the landowner. It is in a field that has been converted from grassland to arable usage within the last decade or so, but the rock has been left and worked around by tractors and so would seem to be respected locally as a feature of importance.



Ballylin Mushroom Rock.



The mushroom shaped Ballylin Rock.



Ballylin Mushroom Rock has been worked around in planting wheat in the field.



