

OFFALY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Creevagh Mushroom Rocks		
Other names used for site	The Piper's Rock		
IGH THEME	IGH1 Karst		
TOWNLAND(S)	Creevagh		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Shannonbridge		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	5		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	699760E 729270N		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	47	GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 Sheet No.	15

Outline Site Description

A complex of Mushroom Rocks – isolated upstanding rocks in grass fields.

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

Creevagh is a complex of mushroom rocks in Offaly adjacent to the Shannon River, with numerous examples in a small area. 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 enlarged 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. The difference in height of undercuts on different stones has been used to argue this case at Creevagh in particular amongst Offaly's mushroom rocks.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

Although multiple large rocks with complex solutional shapes remain upstanding across several fields, there has been past clearance of intervening limestone pavement areas that had some less obvious undercuts and which provided much context. As a result it is recommended as a County Geological Site only, and not as a geological Natural Heritage Area.

Management/promotion issues

The known obvious mushroom rocks are protected by the landowner. However, they are all on private farmland and there is no public access.



Two rocks called 'The Piper's Rock', given as the local name on the Ordnance Survey six inch to the mile map, see bottom of following page.



The 'Piper's Rock' (of the OS map).



One of the Creevagh rocks (Creevagh 5).



A Creevagh rock, with other remnants beyond.

