

OFFALY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Drinagh Mushroom Rock		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME	IGH1 Karst		
TOWNLAND(S)	Drinagh		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Banagher		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	22		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	610560E 715868N		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	53	GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 Sheet No.	15

Outline Site Description

A Mushroom Rock – isolated upstanding rock in a grass 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

Drinagh is one of the relatively numerous examples of mushroom rocks in Offaly compared to most counties in Ireland. 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 a good example of a mushroom rock and merits recommendation for County Geological Site status as part of a suite of excellent representatives in Offaly.

Management/promotion issues

The site is at risk from being overwhelmed by vegetation, as the trees have grown extensively in the area in the last 15 years, and some are now in close proximity, compared with when it was situated in open grass fields. Any change in landowner may place the rock at risk from a lack of awareness, especially with the potential for agricultural field clearances.



Drinagh Mushroom Rock.



Drinagh Mushroom Rock with a second mushroom rock in the foreground.

