

OFFALY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Endrim Mushroom Rock		
Other names used for site	The Fairy Stone		
IGH THEME	IGH1 Karst		
TOWNLAND(S)	Endrim		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Ferbane		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	6		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	608900E 728785N		
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	47	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

Endrim 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. Endrim mushroom rock is on the flanks of Endrim Hill and may once have been submerged on the edge of a much larger Shannon Basin.

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

Offaly has a high concentration of mushroom rocks, which are rare on a national basis, and therefore this site is recommended for County Geological Site status that form part of the county's suite.

Management/promotion issues

The rock needs to be protected from inadvertent removal or damage as part of field 'improvements'; when it might be seen simply as a rock in the way of machinery. However, as it sits within a field of grass which must have been reseeded, compared to adjacent fields, it would appear that it was recognised as important to leave undamaged. As it is on private farmland it should only be promoted with the landowner's permission and engagement regarding any such effort.



Endrim Mushroom Rock is one isolated rock in the middle of a field.



Endrim has the classic features of a mushroom rock.



Endrim Mushroom Rock.



Endrim Mushroom Rock is more complex on one side, with extensive undercutting.



Endrim Mushroom Rock viewed from grass level.

