

ROSCOMMON - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE**Moyvannan Mushroom rocks**

Other names used for site

Cornaseer mushroom stones

IGH THEME**IGH1 Karst,****IGH14 Fluvial and lacustrine Geomorphology****TOWNLAND(S)****Cornaseer****NEAREST TOWN****Athlone****SIX INCH MAP NUMBER****49****NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE****199583 247136****1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER****47****1/2 inch Sheet No. 12****Outline Site Description**

This site comprises seven different limestone rocks in close proximity which exhibit a mushroom shape or which show dissolution with marked overhanging lips or shelves.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

These rocks are of Carboniferous limestone, but the solution is believed to be post-glacial (Holocene) from short lived submergence in temporary lakes or higher-level river floodplains than presently exist.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Throughout Ireland only around 70 of these mushroom stones are known, in several discrete areas. These stones and the associated cluster at Carrowmurragh a kilometre north are indicative of much higher former levels of Lough Ree. This prolonged exposure of the undercut portions of the stone probably took place in the period immediately after glaciation ended when there was both extensive meltwater and many temporary barriers of glacial sediment or remnant ice, which dammed back water until new overflow channels and breaches were formed.

The primary stone at Moyvannan is considered to be the classic form, with a full mushroom shape, and also with three lips on the underside indicating three separate former lake levels.

Site Importance – County Geological Site; recommended for Geological NHA

The primary stone is perhaps the 'best' example of a mushroom stone in the country and has been promoted by GSI for designation by NPWS as a geological NHA.

Management/promotion issues

The rocks are inaccessible and any kind of promotion of them as visitor sites would require some investment as well as landowner agreement and co-operation. It would be desirable to bring them into the public domain and make them accessible, with interpretation. They could be linked with the Carrowmurragh stones in some kind of trail. They are also vulnerable to obscurity and damage from the growth of unwanted vegetation like ivy, gorse and brambles. They are currently within Lough Ree SAC and pNHA (Site Number 000440), and SPA (004064).



Stylised image of Moyvannan Mushroom rocks from Geological Survey of Ireland Memoir of 1865.



Moyvannan 1 mushroom rock.



Moyvannan 1 mushroom rock viewed from distance showing how vegetation is swallowing up the rock.

