

OFFALY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Clorhane Mushroom Rocks		
Other names used for site			
IGH THEME	IGH1 Karst		
TOWNLAND(S)	Clorhane		
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Shannonbridge		
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	5		
ITM CO-ORDINATES	598775E 728172N		
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 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

Clorhane is a complex of mushroom rocks in Offaly adjacent to the Shannon River, with three documented 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 and river 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 and 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. However, Clorhane is right on the flank of the River Shannon basin and is almost certainly derived from water solution.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This collection of mushroom rocks is part of the spread of mushroom rocks that are particularly well represented in Offaly on a national basis. It is therefore recommended as a County Geological Site.

Management/promotion issues

The rocks are on private farmland and may not be visited without landowner permission. No promotion of these rocks should be made without full engagement with the landowner.



Clorhane 1 stone on the left, Clorhane 2 in the hedge.



Clorhane 3 stone.



View of Clorhane 1 stone.



Panorama view from Clorhane woods of Clorhane 1 and 2 on the left, with large heaps of cleared rocks seen on the right, and stone 3 beyond them.

