

Bannister Edge, Meltham



STATUS: Local Geological Site

OTHER DESIGNATIONS:

COUNTY: West Yorkshire

DISTRICT: Kirklees

OS GRID REF. SE 087 093

OS 1:50,000 Landranger 110 Sheffield and Huddersfield

OS 1:25,000 Explorer 288 Bradford and Huddersfield

BGS 1:50 000 SHEET 86 Glossop

FIRST DESIGNATED by West Yorkshire RIGS Group in 1996

DATE OF MOST RECENT SURVEY Site was observed from a distance in February 2009

SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION produced by Ian Chisholm

DESIGNATION SHEET UPDATED August 2009

SITE DESCRIPTION

Extensive exposures of Huddersfield White Rock are revealed in an abandoned moorland quarry.

The 80m long exposure contains a 10m high section of White Rock with underlying shale forming the lower slopes. Beacon Hill Flags are exposed at the base of the quarry, with a coal seam in between the two. Fallen blocks of rock containing plant fossils can be seen on the quarry floor. The site illustrates the relationship between Huddersfield White Rock and the overlying Rough Rock forming West Nab.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS:

A thick bed of ganister was found in the upper part of the Beacon Hill Flags, which was exposed in these quarries and was still being worked in the 1920s, according to the Huddersfield and Halifax memoir (1930) p183 which is referred to below.

Mine plans in Huddersfield Reference Library Archives Section record mining from 1907 – 1937. Older workings for ganister were underground, but there is a note in pencil stating that “old workings under ground were closed in August 1913. Excavations were in the open afterwards.” Records of the Meltham Silica Firebrick Company, who worked the quarries belonging to Whitley Beaumont Estate, were destroyed by fire in 1917, but there are maps of workings from 1917 until the closure of the quarries, probably shortly after 1937. Ganister, stone and coal were extracted and fetched 6d per ton, whereas other minerals and fireclay fetched 4d per ton. This is recorded on a map dated July 1928.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE:

This site is not accessible to the general public.

AESTHETIC CHARACTERISTICS:

The quarry is located on open moorland beneath West Nab with extensive views to the south and west.

ACCESS AND SAFETY:

Access is by footpath from Meltham. Upper slopes of the exposure are vertical and hazardous and there is a large lagoon in the bottom of the quarry. The whole site is fenced and permission must be sought from the owners.