



Dixon Scar, Sowerby

STATUS: Local Geological Site

OTHER DESIGNATIONS:

COUNTY: West Yorkshire

DISTRICT: Calderdale

OS GRID REF. SE 052 238

OS 1:50,000 Landranger 104 Leeds and Bradford

OS 1:25,000 Explorer OL 21 South Pennines

BGS 1:50,000 Sheet 77 Huddersfield (Solid and Drift)

FIRST DESIGNATED by West Yorkshire RIGS Group in 1996

MOST RECENT SURVEY by West Yorkshire Geology Trust October 2007

DESIGNATION SHEET UPDATED August 2009

SITE DESCRIPTION:

Exposures of Upper Carboniferous East Carlton Grit (Scotland Flags) are revealed in two quarry faces overlooking the Calder Valley. The characteristic flaggy bedding of the strata is seen towards the top of the exposure, with sand bodies and deformation features forming the lower areas of the site. A complete cross bedding set is visible near the top of one of the quarry faces. Two types of plant fossils can be found in blocks of fallen rock.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS:

In the Huddersfield and Halifax memoir 1930 the quarry is recorded as exposing 45 feet of medium-grained massive sandstone, which suggests that it was still working at that time.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE:

This is a good site for higher level students to study and interpret channel sand bodies and soft sediment deformational features. It is described in Wignall and Maynard (reference below, p138) as an excellent exposure of the central 15m of the Scotland Flags developed in a river sand body.

The relationship between the underlying strata and topography is revealed in the stepped valley sides of this part of Calderdale

AESTHETIC CHARACTERISTICS:

The quarry is in woodland, which does not obscure the rock faces, but the views to the north across the Calder valley are limited. In some places the base of the quarry is covered with debris thrown over from the cemetery above.

ACCESS AND SAFETY:

There is a small car park at the entrance to the cemetery. Access to the site is along the tarmac path to the east of the cemetery, which curves to the west into a wide footpath through the woods, which could be used by wheelchairs. The quarry faces are at the top of the slope, so do not take the footpaths which lead down to the valley floor. The site can also be reached by a footpath from the valley floor.

The slopes surrounding the site are steep and slippery and care is required. The site is overgrown in places but the rock faces are accessible. Hard hats should be worn if the face is approached, though there are plenty of fallen blocks in front of the face which are available for close study.