

Upton Cutting

STATUS: Local Geological Site
OTHER DESIGNATIONS: Local Nature Reserve
COUNTY: West Yorkshire
DISTRICT: Wakefield
OS GRID REFERENCE: SE 480 132 to SE 485 133
OS 1:50,000 Landranger 111 Sheffield and Doncaster
OS 1:25,000 Explorer 278 Sheffield and Barnsley
BGS 1:50,000 Sheet 78 Wakefield
FIRST DESIGNATED by West Yorkshire RIGS Group in 1996
DATE OF MOST RECENT SURVEY West Yorkshire Geology Trust December 2009
DESIGNATION SHEET UPDATED June 2010



SITE DESCRIPTION

The cutting exposes Cadeby Formation (Wetherby Member) dolostones unconformably overlying Upper Carboniferous mudstones. The rocks below the Permo-Carboniferous unconformity are severely affected by weathering and the red, yellow and purple discoloration affects sands and clays for a depth of at least 3m below the unconformity. The rocks are generally horizontal, although there is a gentle dip to the south in some sections of the cutting. There is a fault at the west end of the cutting between the Permian dolostones and the Upper Carboniferous rocks to the west.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS:

The line is the Hull and Barnsley Railway which was opened on 20th July 1885. It served the Upton Colliery site until the mine closed in 1964. The stone extracted from the railway cuttings may have been used locally for aggregate.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE:

Upton Cutting is accessible and could be managed for educational use at all levels. The Upton Colliery site has been designated as a Local Nature Reserve and there are opportunities for geological interpretation boards on the site. Upton Primary School is close by and the area is much used for walking by local people. Guided geological walks are undertaken several times a year under the aegis of Wakefield Council.

AESTHETIC CHARACTERISTICS:

Upton Cutting is used frequently by walkers and is an attractive part of the local countryside.

ACCESS AND SAFETY:

Upton Cutting is accessible from the footpath at the western end and is a through footpath on the south side of the Local Nature Reserve. There is parking next to Upton Library and primary school. There are no slopes or steps from the car park next to the library, so the site could become accessible by wheelchairs, although the path is not smooth. There are many faces of exposed rock about 5m high, most of which are accessible from the base. The faces are stable and hard hats would not be needed.