COUNTY: AVON SITE NAME: CATTYBROOK BRICKPIT

DISTRICT: NORTHAVON

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended

Local Planning Authority: AVON COUNTY COUNCIL, Northavon District Council

National Grid Reference: ST 594835, 592832 Area: 2.2 (ha.) 5.5 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 172 1:10,000: ST 58 SE

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1989 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:
New Site.
Geological Conservation Review Site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:
This site comprises two localities of geological importance, one at the southern end and one at the northern end of Cattybrook Brickpit, exposing rocks of Westphalian (Upper Carboniferous) age. The rocks here are a highly distorted sequence of floodplain deposits with important fossil plant remains. These rocks, particularly well exposed in the southern locality, represent part of a very thin sequence, right at the edge of the main Bristol and Somerset Basin, and provide valuable information on the development of the western margin of the coalfield. This is the only exposure of such marginal deposits. Only during the late Westphalian D did sedimentation extend continuously from Bristol and Somerset to South Wales, covering the area of the brickpit. The site is thus of considerable importance for understanding the geological evolution of the south-western part of Britain during the late Carboniferous. The northern locality has yielded a diverse assemblage of over 20 species of Middle Carboniferous plant fossils. Common elements include *Karinopteris acuta* (Brongniart), *Neuropteris loshii* Brongniart, *Paripteris pseudogigantea* and *Lonchopteris rugosa* Brongniart, and is a typical upper *Lyginopteris hoeninghausii/Neuralathopteris schlehanii* Biozone assemblage (indicating late Westphalian A). Of particular interest are unusually complete examples of *Karinopteris, Sphenophyllum* and *Lonchopteris* in the crevasse-splay sandstones, providing important information on the form and habitat of these plants. It is the best known locality for yielding this flora in Britain.