

SITE NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON 22 JANUARY 1999

DISTRICT: NORTH SOMERSET

SITE NAME: BLEADON HILL

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

Local Planning Authority: NORTH SOMERSET DISTRICT COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: ST 351574

Area: 13.52 (ha.) 33.41 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 182

1:10,000: ST 35 NE

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1999

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

This is a Geological Conservation Review Site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This site shows a low ridge of calcite-cemented Pleistocene sand and gravel on the southern side of Bleadon Hill, separated from the main hillslope by a dry valley. The sands show laminae and ripple marks typical of a waterlain environment. Various marine or glacial origins have been postulated for the sediments and it has even been suggested (as the sediments contain Jurassic foraminifers) that this is a Mesozoic beach conglomerate. The origin of these sands and gravels, however, still remains equivocal as their occurrence at 82m OD is likely to be too high for either an ancient river or beach deposit. On the basis of the sedimentology, it is most likely that these sediments accumulated during the Quaternary Era when an ice sheet rested against Bleadon Hill. Meltwater from this ice sheet deposited sands and gravels across the area the remnants of which form the deposits on the side of Bleadon Hill. This site is important for delineating the southern margins of the Quaternary glaciation, although further research is still needed to fully understand this enigmatic site.