

SITE NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON 28 FEBRUARY 1995

COUNTY: SOMERSET SITE NAME: MAESBURY RAILWAY CUTTING

DISTRICT: MENDIP

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

Local Planning Authority: SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL, Mendip District Council

National Grid Reference: ST 606475 Area: 2.03 (ha.) 5.02 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 183 1:10,000: ST 64 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): – Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1995 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:
A new site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

The section at Maesbury Railway Cutting exposes approximately 135 metres of strata representing the middle and upper Lower Limestone Shales and the basal Black Rock Limestone. Both formations are of early Carboniferous (Courceyan) age. The lower 20m of the Lower Limestone Shales comprise shaly and silty tidal deposits including algal limestones. These are overlain by 40m of limestones and terrigenous sediments which exhibit bedding features consistent with their deposition in a storm-induced environment. Above these sediments are 25m of channelled sandstones and limestones which pass up into lenticular and well-bedded coarse-grained limestones assigned to the Black Rock Group. These sedimentological features, taken as a whole, are consistent with the deepening and coarsening-up phases in the early development of a carbonate ramp.

The sequence at Maesbury Railway Cutting represents one of the best known exposures of the middle and upper Lower Limestone Shales in the Mendip region; coeval beds are not exposed in the Weston district.