

County: Greater London **Site Name:** Hornchurch Cutting

District: Havering

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

Local Planning Authority: London Borough of Havering

National Grid Reference: TQ 547874 **Area:** 0.8 (ha) 2.0 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 177 **1: 10 000** TQ 58 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): - **Date of Last Revision:** -

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1988 **Date of Last Revision:** -

Other Information:

A new site and a Geological Conservation Review site.

Reasons for Notification:

Hornchurch Cutting provides unique sections through a series of deposits which are of great stratigraphical importance for studies of the Pleistocene. In particular the site is of considerable significance for correlating the formation of the Thames terrace sequence with the glacial stratigraphy of southern Britain.

The sections revealed by the cutting show a channel cut into the London Clay and infilled with a glacial till - the Hornchurch Till - laid down at the southern extremity of the Anglian ice sheet. This till is overlain by gravel normally attributed to the Boyn Hill Terrace of the Thames. Hornchurch is the only area where glacial deposits are known to come into contact with the Lower Thames Terrace gravels. This relationship, first demonstrated when the railway cutting was excavated in the last century, indicates that the highest terrace in the Hornchurch area is more recent than the most extensive glaciation of Eastern England. However, further research is urgently required to clarify this picture. The Hornchurch Cutting is thus clearly a site of prime stratigraphic and also historical importance.