

SITE NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON 22 MAY 1996

COUNTY: SOMERSET      SITE NAME: MOON'S HILL QUARRY

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 665460      Area: 3.42 (ha.) 8.45 (ac.)

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

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

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1996      Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

A Geological Conservation Review Site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Moon's Hill Quarry is situated within a Silurian Inlier located approximately 1km south of Stoke St Michael in the eastern Mendip Hills. The locality represents the most southerly known outcrop of Silurian strata in Great Britain and the rocks occupy the core of an anticline with an east-west trending axis and a southerly dipping axial plane.

Quarrying at Moon's Hill has exposed a 300–400m thick sequence of andesites, rhyodacites, tuffs and agglomerates which are sandwiched between tuffaceous shales and mudstones. These clastic and volcanoclastic sediments have yielded a fairly rich, shelly fauna referable to the Lower Wenlock Series (Sheinwoodian Stage). This igneous suite represents the sole example of Wenlock-aged volcanic rocks (other than bentonites) in England. In the British Isles only the Dingle Peninsula in Ireland otherwise affords such excellent exposures of volcanic rocks of Wenlock Age.