

Date Notified: 29 January 1987

File ref: (L) SD 74/2

County: Lancashire **Site Name:** Clitheroe Knoll Reefs

District: Ribble Valley

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

Local Planning Authority: Ribble Valley Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SD 778435 **Area:** 115.3 (ha) 284.9 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 103 **1:10,000:** SD 74 NE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1959 **Date of Last Revision:** 1979

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1987 **Date of Last Revision:** 1987

Other Information:

The site boundary has been modified by a major deletion and three small extensions at this revision.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This geological site near Clitheroe is comprised of a roadcutting and a series of small hills running east-west between the villages of Worston and Downham.

The hills are important examples of early Carboniferous “knoll-reefs”. In conjunction with other well-exposed Clitheroe sites this site shows the best examples of such reefs which developed during the Chadian Stage in the Craven Basin. The nature and origins of the reefs have always been matters of controversy. This locality provides a unique opportunity to examine such carbonate build-ups, here expressed as actual knolls in the topography of the present day.

To the north of the knolls a cutting on the A59 road has exposed a seventy metre thick section of the Carboniferous Limestone, represented by the Horrocksford Beds and overlying Bankfield Beds. This important section includes the proposed boundary stratotype for the Chadian Stage, which is placed on the junction of these two rock units. The site has been sampled for foraminifera, which have been used as stratigraphic indicators, including the genus *Eoparastafella* which makes its appearance a few metres above the boundary. This is a key locality for stratigraphic studies in the Lower Carboniferous.