



Hell Hole Quarry, Heptonstall

STATUS: Local Geological Site

OTHER DESIGNATIONS:

COUNTY: West Yorkshire

DISTRICT: Calderdale

OS GRID REF. SD 985 278

OS 1:50,000 Landranger 103 Blackburn and Burnley

OS 1:25,000 Explorer OL 21 South Pennines

BGS 1:50,000 Sheet 77 Huddersfield (Solid and Drift)

FIRST DESIGNATED by West Yorkshire RIGS Group in 1996

MOST RECENT SURVEY West Yorkshire Geology Trust October 2007

DESIGNATION SHEET UPDATED August 2009

SITE DESCRIPTION:

A massive outcrop of Lower Kinderscout Grit is exposed in a 20m high quarry face. The site demonstrates cross bedding on an enormous scale, containing foresets dipping at approximately 30° within the bedding planes. There are some finer beds, probably silt, near the top of the quarry, which have been weathered, so that the sandstones above produce an overhang. The site dramatically illustrates the environment of deposition during the Namurian epoch of the Upper Carboniferous period when large scale deltaic channel systems spread across the area.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS:

The quarry is near to the historic weaving settlement of Heptonstall, which also stands on a platform of the Lower Kinderscout Grit.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE:

The site is suitable for sixth form and higher education students. The site contains extensive geological structures, useful for developing interpretive skills. As an immensely impressive quarry face in a fine position, close to an old village, it is a very good site for interpreting geology for the general public.

AESTHETIC CHARACTERISTICS:

Set amongst woodland and heather, the site provides extensive views of the Upper Calder and its over-deepened valley.

ACCESS AND SAFETY:

There is a small car park in Heptonstall village, or park in Hebden Bridge. Approach the site by the footpath from the south of Heptonstall, between estates of new houses. The path descends very steeply down the quarry side, so boots should be worn. The quarry face appears to be stable, but this is a hard hat site. There is a grassy area a short distance from the quarry face where groups can stand to observe the features. There are fallen blocks, including a spectacularly leaning stack, on the grassy area in front of the quarry which allow rock textures to be examined closely.

A footpath runs down to the Calder valley and becomes a flagged quarry track before it reaches Mytholm. None of these paths are suitable for wheelchairs. The public footpaths are part of the Calderdale Way. The site is used for climbing.