Doncaster Geodiversity Assessment Volumes 1&2

Doncaster Geodiversity Assessment Volume 1 – Report

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Geology and Landscape South Programme Commissioned Report CR/07/025N

Keywords Geodiversity; Doncaster.

Front cover Permian Bryozoan reef, North Cliff Quarry, Doncaster

Bibliographical reference Engering, S & Barron, H F. 2007. Doncaster Geodiversity Assessment. British Geological Survey Commissioned Report, CR/07/025N. 139pp.

Foreword

Increasing pressure on land and the environment demands a greater awareness and understanding of the dynamics of our natural world in order to deliver a sustainable environment for the future. Biodiversity and the need for the Government to recognise, audit and plan for habitat and ecology is widely accepted and enshrined in UK legislation. However, the importance of the complementary concept of Geodiversity is only now gaining recognition, despite providing the foundations for habitats and species.

Geodiversity has a vital role in all aspects of the natural heritage and impacts on many sectors in economic development and historical and cultural heritage. For example, in the development of sustainable eco or geo-tourism (UNESCO Global Geoparks), Strategic Environmental Assessment, local authority structure and mineral plans, building stone resources, education and art.

Nationally important geological sites have been assessed and are protected by statutory measures, but other than Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) in some areas, there is little systematic inventory and evaluation of local sites or development of management measures for these sites. The introduction of Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9): Biodiversity and Geological Conservation has elevated the importance of geodiversity to a new level in England and Wales.

This report produced by the British Geological Survey seeks to address the aims of PPS9 and provides a foundation for developing a Doncaster Geodiversity Action Plan.

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to express their thanks to Helen McCluskie, Steve Butler, Colin Howes and Elaine Ward of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council for support and advice throughout the project and to Tony Gibbs of the Derbyshire Caving Association for information on the cave systems.

Also thank you to the workshop attendees Cllr Yvonne Woodcock, Melissa Massarella, Donna Halliday, Roy Sykes, Tim Kohler, Mick Oliver, Rachel Overfield and David Edwards for their contributions.

The field work could not have taken place without the co-operation of the various landowners and quarry operators; their permission is gratefully acknowledged.

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A9 D4 Watchley Crags

A10 D15 Melton Park

A11 D133 Hooton Pagnell

A12 D13 North Cliff Quarry

A13 D5 Hooton Pagnell Village Pound

A14 D20–D22 Cadeby Cliff/Constitution Hill

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Summary

This report describes a resurvey of Doncaster's RIGS (Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites) commissioned by Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC). It updates and expands the 1997 South Yorkshire RIGS Group survey of geologically important areas in Doncaster Barnsley and Rotherham.

Since 1997 the concept of geodiversity has moved up the planning agenda. The recent Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS9), which places equal weight on biodiversity and geodiversity is a key driver in this process. The report will allow DMBC to develop a Doncaster Geodiversity Action Plan and incorporate this within the Local Development Framework.

RIGS resurvey work took place between January and March 2007. Site assessment data was collected using the UKRIG Site Assessment Form and entered into the UKRIGS GeoConservation database. Problems were encountered in using this database, especially importing and exporting data and the translation into a user-friendly report format. The database entries have been exported and appended to ESRI shape files for use in Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Of the 28 sites listed in 1997, 23 are recommended for continued designation as RIGS, while five sites are proposed for removal from the list. Six new sites were surveyed and are recommended for designation as RIGS, bringing the total RIGS in Doncaster to 29. The new sites are:

- DR1-Denaby Woods–Mexborough Oxbow Lake
- DR2-Harlington Railway Cutting
- DR3-Cadeby Waste Water Works
- DR4-Nearcliff Wood Quarries
- DR5-Levitt Hagg Wood
- DR6-Barnburgh Cliff