

COUNTY: BERKSHIRE

SITE NAME: COLD ASH QUARRY

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

Local Planning Authorities: Newbury District Council, Berkshire County Council

National Grid Reference: SU500714

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 174 **1:10,000:** SU57 SW, SU47 SE

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984 **Date of Last Revision:** 1990

Area: 0.43 ha 1.05 ac

Description and Reasons for Notification

This locality is unique in Britain for the assemblage of fossil plants and insects which occur in a lens of silt and clay within the Reading Beds. The deposits were laid down in a riverine environment about 60 million years ago, and have been the subject of a number of important research papers which have been published in recent years. The fossil flora consists of well-preserved angiosperm leaves, and within some of these there is evidence of the activity of contemporary leaf-miner insects. This is the only locality in Britain at which fossil leaf-miner activity has been found.