

County: Devon

Site name: Babbacombe Cliffs

District: Torquay

Site ref:

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

Local Planning Authority: Devon County Council, Torbay Borough Council

**National grid reference: SX 928662
to 930655**

Area: 13.5 (ha) 33.4 (ac)

Ordnance survey sheet: 1:50,000:202

1:10,000: SX 96 NW

Date notified (Under 1949 Act): 1976 (part)

Date of last revision: 1976

Date notified (under 1981 Act): 1986

Date of last revision: -

Other information:

Boundary amended from previous Babbacombe Bay Cliffs SSSI by extension and deletion.

Description and reasons for notification:

In the northern part of the site, the Oddicombe Breccias of Permian age are faulted against the Devonian limestones of Petit Tor. The breccias are poorly sorted sediments and are arranged in crude sheet-like spreads of sediment (in fining-upwards units), which were deposited by ephemeral floods. The shape and arrangement of particles in some finer units indicates fluvial transport towards the east. The site also includes a cavity and fissure system cut into the limestone and filled by Permian sandstones and siltstones.

Devonian rocks in the southern part of the site include the type section of the Babbacombe Shales, which have yielded a rich goniatite fauna of early Frasnian age. The cliff section is inverted; it displays interesting structural features and the best accessible section through the richly fossiliferous Barton Limestone. This section is of great interest in demonstrating the marked facies change from a high-energy reef environment of the Barton Limestone to deeper water conditions represented by the Babbacombe Shales.