

COUNTY: DEVON

SITE NAME: BEER QUARRY AND CAVES

DISTRICT: EAST DEVON

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, East Devon District Council

National Grid Reference: SY 215896 and
SY 215893

Area: 27.8 (ha.) 68.7 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:500,000: 192

1:10,000: SY 76 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1952

Date of Last Revision: 1976

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1987

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

In East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Part in County Structure Plan Coastal Preservation Area; Nature Conservation Zone; Mineral Consultation Area and Area of Mineral Working. Previously named Beer Stone Quarry and Bovey Lane Pit SSSI. Site boundary amended by deletion.

Description:

This site is important for its population of hibernating bats. Eight species are present some of which are very rare. There are also important geological features on the face of the working quarry.

The southern part of the site comprises an extensive series of caves which have been formed by many years of mining for Beer Stone. Regular recording began in 1951 and in recent years there has been c. 70--80 individuals of an unusually wide range of bat species. These include the very rare Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteini* and the greater and lesser horseshoe bats *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* and *R. hipposideros*. Other species present are Brandt's bat *M. brandti*, Daubenton's bat *M. daubentoni*, Natterer's bat *M. nattereri*, brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* and whiskered bat *M. mystacinus*. The northern part of the site is an actively worked quarry and the old tunnels there are also used by bats.

Beer Quarry provides one of the best exposures of a suite of clay-filled chalk pipes in southern England. Such features are important for interpreting solutional processes operating in chalk landscapes but are rarely seen in section.

SITE NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON 22 MAY 1987