

County:	Lancashire	Site Name:	Little Mearley Clough
District:	Ribble Valley		
Status:	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.		
Local Planning Authority:	Ribble Valley Borough Council		
National Grid Reference:	SD 783412	Area:	6.0 (ha) 14.8 (ac)
Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50 000	103	1:10 000	SD 74 SE
Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):	1959	Date of Last Revision:	1979
Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):	1986	Date of Last Revision:	1986

Other Information:

1. This site falls within the Forest of Bowland AONB.
2. The site boundary has been modified by extension and partial deletion at this revision.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Little Mearley Clough lies on the steeply-sloping western side of Pendle Hill, approximately 3 km east of Clitheroe. The stream draining the clough has cut down through the rock strata to reveal features of considerable geological interest. In technical terms the interest of this site may be defined as follows:

Little Mearley Clough displays the lowest part of the Namurian, lying conformably on rocks of the Lower Carboniferous. The sequence seen covers the whole of the basal Namurian stage, named after Pendle Hill on which the section occurs, including the *Cravenoceras leion* goniatite horizon. The site is of premier stratigraphic significance for its recognition as the reference section for the Pendleian Stage.

In layman's terms, the interest of this site may be expressed more simply, and such a statement is provided below. This should not be taken as definitive and further information as to details of the interest can be obtained from the Nature Conservancy Council.

Little Mearley Clough provides excellent exposure of rock layers originally laid down during the Namurian period of geological history about 320 million years ago. The sequence spans the entire duration of the oldest subdivision of the Namurian, named the Pendleian Stage after Pendle Hill on which this section occurs. In recognition of the importance of this section, Little Mearley Clough has

been proposed as the standard for this interval of geological time. It is thus a site of national geological importance.