

COUNTY: DERBYSHIRE
BAGSHAW CAVERN

SITE NAME: BRADWELL DALE AND

DISTRICT: DERBYSHIRE DALES

SITE REF: 15 WJY

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

Local Planning Authority: PEAK PARK JOINT PLANNING BOARD, Derbyshire Dales District Council

National Grid Reference: SK 170800 Area: 90.6 (ha.) 223.8 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 110 1:10,000: SK 17 NE, SK 18 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1964 Date of Last Revision: 1972

Date Notified. (Under 1981 Act): 1987 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Site boundary alteration (extension & reduction). Site formerly known as Bradwell Dale.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

The site consists of two elements which to some extent overlap. These are Bradwell Dale and, below ground, the cave system of Bagshaw Cavern. The Dale and its upstream continuation Stanlow Dale, are two deeply incised limestone gorges. They are located close to an interface between shale and limestone and owe their position to projecting 'reef-knolls' within the limestone which forced a constriction of the river and so formed the gorges. Previously the river had been migrating down the slope of the limestone beds at their junction with the shale, a process known as uniclinal shift which is unique to the Derbyshire limestone outcrop. Bradwell Dale is the best example of the effect of this process. The gorges are now completely dry, since all the water is taken underground through 'sinks' and drains through 3000 metres of cave passages known as Bagshaw Cavern. A number of 'feeder sinks' taking the water underground are located at Quarters Farm, Grindlow and Great Hucklow. The form of these passages is strongly controlled by the thinly-bedded limestone and there are fine examples of tabular roof collapse. The cave also contains the finest straw stalactites in Derbyshire.