COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER SITE NAME: ROCKHALL QUARRY

DISTRICT: LEOMINSTER SITE REF: 15 WS8

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

Local Planning Authority: HEREFORD & WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL, Leominster District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 423655 Area: 1.6 (ha.) 3.9 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 149 1:10,000: SO 46 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1969 Date of Last Revision: 1979

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1989 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Description and Reasons for Notification:
Rockhall Quarry, the type locality for the Aymestrey Limestone Group, displays rocks belonging to the Upper Bringewood and Lower Leintwardine Formations of the Ludlow Series of the Upper Silurian (approximately 400 million years old). The quarry faces show a lateral transition within the Upper Bringewood Formation, from silty limestones in the east to calcareous siltstones in the west. This locality is of particular historical, as well as stratigraphical interest because this was one of the first sites where lateral change and diachroneity of facies was described. Diachroneity of facies is a term used to describe lateral variation of rock type through time.

The site is also the type and only known locality for *Inopinatella lawsonii* Elliott, a Silurian alga believed to be a primitive non-calcareous dasycladacean, a form of blue-green alga. As one of only two fully described non-calcareous algae of Silurian age, it is of international importance for its contribution to the understanding of the evolution of the non-vascular plants. The site also yields distinctive brachiopod assemblages, typical of the Upper Bringewood and Leintwardine Formations.