

COUNTY: DEVON

SITE NAME: POTTERS WOOD

DISTRICT: TEIGNBRIDGE, SOUTH HAMS

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, Teignbridge District Council, South Hams District Council

National Grid Reference: SX 735652

Area: 17.6 (ha.) 435 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 202

1:10,000: SX 76 NW, SX 76 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

A new site. Site previously known as Bunkers Hole.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

The caves are of national importance geologically and provide an important bat roosting site.

This is one of three networks of cave passages in separate limestone outcrops around Buckfastleigh. Detailed study has shown that the three networks developed over the same time-span during the late Pleistocene period of geological history, about 150,000 years ago. Furthermore, stages in the development of the cave can be related to stages in the development of the valley of the River Dart. Accumulations of debris washed into the caves during their formation contain important fossil remains which give an indication of the age of the caves. The caves also contain important and spectacular mineral deposits. The wide range of important features found within these caves makes this a most valuable site for the study of late Pleistocene cave formation.

Greater Horseshoe, and perhaps other species of bat roost in the caves. Trees around the entrance provide shelter and are used as staging posts by bats entering and leaving the caves.

Site Notified to Secretary of State on 22 May 1986