

File ref: (L) SD 71/3

County: Lancashire **Site Name:** Hodge Clough

District: Rossendale

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

Local Planning Authority: Rossendale Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SD 785194 **Area:** 2.3 (ha) 5.7 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 109 **1:10,000:** SD 71 NE

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984 **Date of Last Revision:** –

Other Information:

1. This site has been identified as being of international importance in a national review of Geological sites carried out by the N.C.C.
2. This is a new site.

Reasons for Notification:

Hodge Clough is a small tributary of the River Irwell 2 km north of Ramsbottom. The geological interest of the site, in technical terms, may be defined as follows:

The stream exposure in Hodge Clough gives a well exposed section through the upper part of the Namurian Marsdenian Stage. A number of marine bands are present in the shales, with well developed faunas; the Helmshore Grit, hereabouts at its maximum thickness, is well exposed at the base of the section. The site is of particular importance as it has been proposed as the standard section for the upper part of the Marsdenian. A key reference section for the Upper Carboniferous.

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.

The rock outcrops within this site provide important exposures of rock-layers of the Namurian Series formed about 315 million years ago during the Carboniferous Period of geological history. The rocks consist of shales and sandstones and contain a number of important layers rich in the fossil remains of marine animals that inhabited the Carboniferous sea; the fossils in these layers have enabled geologists to accurately date the rocks and compare this locality with rocks of similar age elsewhere in Britain and overseas. Hodge Clough has been proposed as the standard for the upper part of one of the divisions of the Namurian Series, known as the Marsdenian Stage and is thus recognised as an international reference locality.