COUNTY: PEAK DISTRICT, DERBYSHIRE SITE NAME: UPPER LATHKILL

DISTRICT: DERBYSHIRE DALES SITE REF: 15 WLJ

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 143677, SK 149677 Area: 26.2 (ha.) 64.7 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 119 1:10,000: SK 16 NW

Date Notified (Under 19)49 Act): – Date of Last Revision: –

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

Other Information:
New site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:
The Upper Lathkill geological site lies just to the north west of Monyash in the centre of the Derbyshire limestone massif. The caves at this site relate to those in Lathkill Dale, each site covering areas of known cave passages which are, in turn, just fragments of more extensive ancient systems. These are the only known caves of significant size beneath the central limestone plateau of Derbyshire and they therefore provide key evidence of landscape evolution in this part of the Pennines. Most limestone caves are formed by streams which arise off the limestone and, flowing over impermeable rocks overlying the limestone, disappear underground to form caves where they meet the limestone. However, those at Lathkill are unique in Britain, having formed without this external water supply but solely through percolation and collection of rainfall from the plateau.

The rocks exposed in Monyash quarry afford a section through an outstanding example of a shelf developed reef, a limestone structure composed of and formed by marine organisms. It is of great importance in the interpretation of the geological history of the Derbyshire area during early Carboniferous times, some 340 million years ago.