

SITE NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON THE 27TH MARCH 1987

COUNTY: NOTTINGHAMSHIRE/DERBYSHIRE **SITE NAME:** CRESWELL
CRAGS

DISTRICT: BASSETLAW (NOTTINGHAMSHIRE)/BOLSOVER (DERBYSHIRE)

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

Local Planning Authority: Bassetlaw District Council (Nottinghamshire), Bolsover District Council (Derbyshire)

National Grid Reference: SK 535742 **Area:** 21.3 (ha.) 52.6 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 120 **1:10,000:** SK 57 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1981 **Date of Last Revision:** –

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

Other Information:

The site is a scheduled Ancient Monument.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Creswell Crags is a site of national and international importance for Quaternary studies. It provides exposures and an *in situ* reserve of crucial Pleistocene cave deposits, together with associated subaerial and fluvial sediments filling the open Creswell gorge. The celebrated cave deposits have yielded prolific mammalian remains as well as Palaeolithic artefacts. They are thought to afford a complete stratigraphical record from 'Middle Palaeolithic' to early post-Palaeolithic times, which makes them of considerable importance both to Quaternary geology and to archaeology. The 'working out' of many of the caves by earlier palaeontologists has made the conservation of any remaining unexploited cave earths of critical importance. The associated gorge-fill deposits, although yielding mammalian and molluscan faunas, are as yet poorly researched, but they are certain to be the subject of in-depth studies in an attempt to relate them to the cave sediments. They may provide important information for the evaluation of the Pleistocene record in the Creswell caves and are therefore worthy of conservation as part of the Creswell Crags site.

Creswell Crags is one of the three richest sites in Britain for fossil mammals. Both the sediments in the caves and in the valley slopes below the caves have yielded prolific mammal remains, including spotted hyaena, woolly rhino, reindeer and mammoth. The presence of further *in situ* deposits offers significant potential not only for dating fossil assemblages but also for correlations with lithostratigraphy and other biostratigraphic records. In addition, Creswell Crags provides an unparalleled record of fossil fish and bird faunas.