

County: Dorset **Site Name:** Conegar Road Cutting

District: West Dorset

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

Local Planning Authority: Dorset County Council, West Dorset District Council

National Grid Reference: ST 439028 **Area:** 0.15 (ha)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 193 **1:10,000:** ST 40 SW

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): December 1996

Other Information:

A Geological Conservation Review site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

The site at Conegar Road Cutting comprises a 175 metre long road section located immediately north of Broadwindsor. The steep east and west-facing road sides expose a nationally important sequence through the upper parts of the Bridport Sands and the Lower Inferior Oolite and clearly demonstrate the stratigraphical relationships between these lithologies. The total thickness of the succession is approximately 20 metres.

The Upper Bridport Sands comprise a 15 metre thick sequence of fossiliferous yellow sands and sand-burrs which pass up into thinner sandstones and marls (the Rusty and Brachiopod Beds). Several species of ammonites (*Leioceras* spp., *Pleydellia* sp. and *Canavarella* aff. *toma*) have been recorded from these sediments along with common brachiopods *Terebratula whaddonensis*, *Rhynchonella cynocephala* and belemnites indicating an early Aalenian (*Leioceras opalinum* Zone) age. Overlying rubbly, calcareous sandstones are assigned to the Scissum Beds and above these are thin limestones termed the Ancolloceras and Murchisonae Beds. These sediments contain a bivalve and ammonite fauna, including *Ludwigia* spp., which is typical of the basal part of the *Ludwigia murchisonae* Zone of mid Aalenian age. Above a major discontinuity surface, the top of the succession is marked by a thick limestone which yields perisphinctid ammonites indicating a late Bajocian (*Parkinsonia bomfordi* Subzone) age.