

County: Dorset **Site Name:** Poxwell

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: West Dorset District Council

National Grid Reference: SY 740835 **Area:** 0.79 (ha)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 194 **1:10,000:** SY 78 SW

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 11 November 1998

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

A new site. A Geological Conservation Review (GCR) site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This site consists of a small disused quarry 500 metres south of the village of Poxwell and 1.5 kilometres east-north-east of Osmington.

This small exposure in the Lower Purbeck Beds has yielded a fauna of earliest Cretaceous (early Berriasian) insects. The insects are preserved in a micrite (fine grained limestone) with halite and gypsum pseudomorphs assigned to the Worbarrow Tout Member, Lulworth Formation.

The insect fauna includes over twenty species assigned to the orders *Odonata*, *Blattoidea*, *Hemiptera*, *Coleoptera*, *Diptera*, *Trichoptera*, *Orthoptera* and *Neuroptera*. These include forms not previously known from other Purbeck localities.

Such faunas are extremely rare; Poxwell is therefore a key locality for research into Cretaceous insect taxonomy and evolution.