

File ref:

County: Essex **Site Name:** The Naze
District: Tendring
Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Local Planning Authority: Tendring District Council

National Grid Reference: TM 266237 **Area:** 22.0 (ha) 54.4 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 169 **1: 10 000:** TM 22 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1959 **Date of Last Revision:** 1975

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986 **Date of Last Revision:** -

Other Information:

Description and Reasons for Notification:

The main interest of this site is in the excellent cliff exposures of the earliest (Waltonian) sub-division of the Pleistocene Red Crag, which is here rich in marine Mollusca and other invertebrate fossils. This overlies older Tertiary sediment. This is the type of site for the earliest recognised stage of the British Pleistocene sequence, the Waltonian. The site provides unrivalled sections in the Waltonian Crag essential to studies of Pleistocene stratigraphy, particularly with relevance to the lower limit of that period.

The site yields abundant plant material from the Tertiary London Clay. Sections here in the A1 and A2 divisions of the formation offer a unique opportunity to study the flora in situ. This is the only locality to yield angiosperms preserved as carbonaceous compressions, invaluable for the study of small seed fossils. A key Tertiary palaeobotanical locality.

An exceptional site where a diverse bird fauna has been preserved in small pockets within the London Clay along with other Lower Eocene plant and animal debris. An avifauna thought to be of a similar age has been recorded from the Mo Clay of Denmark. A small parrot (*Psittaciformes*) and a tiny raptor (*Falconiformes*) have been identified, but material indicates the presence of several other species including members of the orders Procellariiformes, Gruiformes, Charadriiformes and Cuculiformes. Eocene Procellariiformes and Charadriiformes have not been recorded outside Great Britain. The site is of considerable importance in the study of bird evolution.