
Claxheugh Rock [NZ 362 574]

Natural exposure

Ownership — appears to be freely accessible.

Excellent accessible section to demonstrate the relationship of the Yellow Sands Formation with the overlying formations. This is one of only two significant exposures of the Yellow Sands Formation that is not associated with a working quarry or subject to tides.

Proposed action Consider interpretation, include in geodiversity trail.

Existing designations SSSI GCR

Existing on site interpretation None

Major geodiversity interest The early Permian aeolian Yellow Sands Formation is developed at its thickest (about 58 m) beneath the rock and is overlain by the Marl Slate Formation and succeeding magnesian limestones of the Raisby and Ford formations. The reef facies of the Ford Formation forms the bulk of Claxheugh Rock. Together with the nearby Ford cutting and quarry they represent the type area of the Ford Formation. Exposures of Magnesian Limestone at Claxheugh Rock,

Ford Limestone Quarry and the adjacent, disused railway cutting are of national geological importance whilst areas of associated and seminatural Magnesian Limestone grassland are also significant. The rock exposures here cut through marine limestones of the Magnesian Limestone and are significant in showing facies of the Raisby and Ford formations. These sections allow geologists to study a range of marine Permian carbonate environments, their facies and faunas, and in particular lateral variations in reef and backreef settings.

Biodiversity interest None

Other heritage links None

Additional comment Rock falls occur periodically from the top of the cliff. There is quite a lot of rubbish at the base of the slope and some graffiti on the sandstone faces. The other inland section, Old Quarrington is associated with a working quarry and could be subject to mineral operations in the medium term.

Date of photography 2008

(Photo 4) Claxheugh Rock.

(Plate 1) Yellow Sands beneath the Ford Formation Reef at Claxheugh Rock, Sunderland.

[References](#)



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(Plate 1) Yellow Sands beneath the Ford Formation Reef at Claxheugh Rock, Sunderland.