
Halesowen Road Cutting

Highlights

Halesowen Road Cutting is the best exposure of the Halesowen Formation in its type area (Figure 7.12).

Introduction

This cutting [SO 971 836] on the west side of the Bromsgrove Road (A459) in Halesowen shows sandstones of the Halesowen Formation. There is no published description of the geology here, although the site is mentioned by Whitehead and Eastwood (1927).

Description

This exposure shows about a 3 m thick sequence of coarse, buff sandstones. They probably belong to the basal part of the Halesowen Formation; although the contact with the underlying Etruria Formation cannot be seen here. Some cross-bedding can be seen and, following Besly (1988), the unit probably represents alluvial channel deposits. There is no biostratigraphical control at this site, but evidence from elsewhere in the area (reviewed by Cleal, 1987) indicates that they belong to the *Dicksonites plueckenetii* plant subzone (upper Westphalian D).

Interpretation

The Halesowen Formation represents an interval of upper Westphalian D sandstones, most typically developed in the southern part of the South Staffordshire Coalfield. They correlate with the Forest of Dean Pennant Formation in the southern Midlands (Cleal, 1986a), and were the product of increased erosion of the hinterland due to Leonian tectonic activity. According to Besly (1988), the Halesowen Formation includes two major facies, an overbank facies including thin coals and seat earths, and an alluvial channel facies consisting of major units of sandstone. The latter is by far the dominant facies in the formation, and is that represented in this road cutting. The field relations of the sandstones seen at this locality suggest that they are part of the basal unit of the formation (although the contact with the underlying beds cannot be seen) and thus represent the first flood of sands to spread out over the area following the Leonian tectonic movement.

There are several other exposures of this formation in the South Staffordshire Coalfield. However, this is the most extensive and most easily accessible exposure, allowing details of the petrography and of the sedimentology to be investigated.

Conclusions

Halesowen Road Cutting is the best exposure in its type area of a unit of sandstone known as the Halesowen Formation. These sandstones, which are about 306 million years old, are the result of increased erosional activity caused by earth movements at this time.

[References](#)



(Figure 7.12) Halesowen Road Cutting GCR site. Halesowen Formation exposed in type area. (Photo: C.J. Cleal.)