



Criteria for Assessing the Geological & Geomorphological Value of Sites as Examples of Local Geology

Guidelines for standardised recording, assessing, evaluating and notification procedures for RIGS sites whilst having regard to similar systems developed in other areas of Geoconservation and Bioconservation, and standards and audit requirements of support and funding agencies. [UKRIGS Development Strategy, Objective 4.1].

Four related Assessments are covered, each with their own criteria, relating to the value of a site. This should provide a snapshot of what attributes the site has, the value of those attributes to potential users and a summary of the worthiness of the site for designation as a RIGS.

- A. Access and Safety
- B. Value of the Geology and Geomorphology for Education and Science.
- C. Potential for public awareness - Culture, Heritage and Economic Criteria
- D. Geodiversity Value - importance to the local geodiversity network.

A scoring system of 0 to 10 is used, with 5 given to a feature having worthwhile value. A single site is unlikely to score highly on every criterion.

A Access and Safety

- 1 Road access and parking
- 2 Safety of Access to Site
- 3 Safety of Use of Exposure
- 4 Permission to visit by large parties
- 5 Current condition of Exposure
- 6 Current conflicting activities
- 7 Restricting conditions
- 8 Nature of Exposure
- 9 Multiple Exposure Site or Prospect of Trail Site

B Value of the Geology and Geomorphology of a site for Education and Science.

1. Surface processes
- 2 Geomorphology
- 3 Sedimentary rocks
- 4 Fossils
- 5 Igneous rocks
- 6 Metamorphic rock
- 7 Tectonic (structural) features
- 8 Mineralisation
- 9 Stratigraphy (geological history)

C. Culture, Heritage and Economic Criteria - the potential for public awareness

- 1 Historical, archaeological or literary associations
- 2 Aesthetic landscape
- 3 History of Earth science
- 4 Economic geology

D. Geodiversity Value

Key sites in the Geodiversity network may represent unique or outstanding features or exceptional preservation and should be designated as a RIGS and protected for their specific scientific value.

Such sites may have been considered for designation as SSSIs, but not fully met the requirements. Most sites of high specific scientific value will also have high assessed ratings for education and science and for cultural, heritage and economic aspects, but there may be exceptions.

Geodiversity Value can be considered as an assessment of the importance of the site to the local network. The assessment of the value of the geology and geomorphology for education and science is separate.