## CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES

## SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

## POWYSHALFWAY QUARRYDate of Notification:1978, 1986National Grid Reference:SN 844323O.S. Maps:1:50,000 Sheet number: 160<br/>1:25,000 Sheet number: SN 83Site Area:1.4 ha

## **Description:**

This site is an important locality for stratigraphy and environments at the base of the lower Old Red Sandstones of Wales. It shows a sequence from Ludlow-age shallow marine sediments (Roman Camp Beds), via the sandstone-rich 'Downtonian' Long Quarry Beds of possible beach/barrier origin, into the basal Red Marls. The nature of the transition from Ludlow marine rocks to continental Red Marls in south-west Wales is controversial, with differing views on whether or not an unconformity exists at the base of the Long Quarry Bed. This is a key exposure showing a full sequence, important for the determination of the environments present, the history of this transition and for defining formal rock-stratigraphic units.

The Ludlow-Downtonian Roman Camp Beds and Long Quarry Beds here contain the plant genera *Thallomia*, *Cooksonia* and *Steganotheca*. The Roman Camp Beds have yielded an axis of either *Cooksonia* or *Steganotheca* bearing *in situ* tracheids; incontrovertible evidence of the earliest vascular land plants. This occurrence is unique in pre-Devonian strata and it marks the site as a palaeobotanical locality of international importance.

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