

DORSET LOCAL GEOLOGICAL SITES SURVEY

Site number G ST71/11

Site name Todber quarries, Birds Quarry

Summary description

Jurassic, Corallian Group, Todber Freestone and Clavellata Beds

Birds quarry is the westernmost of a complex which constitutes the type section of the Todber Freestone. It shows a 3.5m section.

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Birds Quarry has been used as a premix depot by Hansons for some years, and has been kept clear of vegetation by volunteers from the OUGS, DGAG and DIGS.

The section which remains clear is the most easily accessible of the complex of quarries that constitute the type section of the Todber Freestone. There is a 3.5m section of current bedded, fine grained oosparite limestone containing scattered bivalve and coral fragments. The face runs east/west. The rock is false bedded, consisting of one massive unit with cross-bedding dipping to the north east. The Todber Freestone has been used for building over a wide area of North Dorset, though much of the historic building stone came from Marnhull. Close to Marnhull the stone is paler in colour, containing less iron than the same beds in Gannets' and other quarries near Todber crossroads.

Above the Todber Freestone, in apparently horizontal beds giving the appearance of a disconformity, is the lowest part of the Trigonia Clavellata Beds. These beds contain many bivalve fossils, and are therefore less suitable for building.

The section at Bird's quarry was illustrated by Blake and Hudleston in 1877.

Published references:

Blake JF & Hudleston WH, 1877: On the Corallian rocks of England. *Q.J. geol.soc.Lond.*, 33, 260-405.

Gutmann K 1970: The Corallian Beds at Todber and Whiteway Hill in North Dorset. *Dorset Proceedings*, vol 91, 123-33.

Wright, J.K., 1981, The Corallian rocks of North Dorset. *Proceedings of the Geologists' Association*, vol. 92, 17-32.