

Notification of Regionally Important Geodiversity Site

To: Rochdale MBC

File no:	TE03
Site name:	Rocher Vale
Grid Reference:	SD 945 026
Parish:	Leesfield and St Mark with Christ Church, Glodwick
District:	Tameside (minor part in Oldham)
County:	Greater Manchester
Date of approval by RIGS committee: 2019	

Brief site description

The site is located wholly within the valley of the River Medlock and consists of a steeply incised gorge to the south, running for approximately 400m and around 250m of more expansive fluvial valley and floodplain to the north comprising slopes of gentler gradient. The footpath, which runs through the gorge, forms a part of the Oldham Way Public Footpath. The site includes both the east and the western sides of the valley to a nominal distance of 10m from the crest of the valley slopes or the land ownership boundary, whichever is a smaller distance, in the incised gorge section and to the crest of the valley slope in the open section. The underlying bedrock is the Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation formed of alternating beds of mudstone, siltstone and sandstone, all exposed in the cliffs within the gorge. Surface sediments of Devensian Glacial Till are seen at the crests of the valley slopes on the eastern side and alluvium covers the valley floor.

Summary of site value and importance

This site hosts a wide array of geomorphological features resulting from fluvial, mass movement and anthropogenic processes, both relict and active. The following are noted:

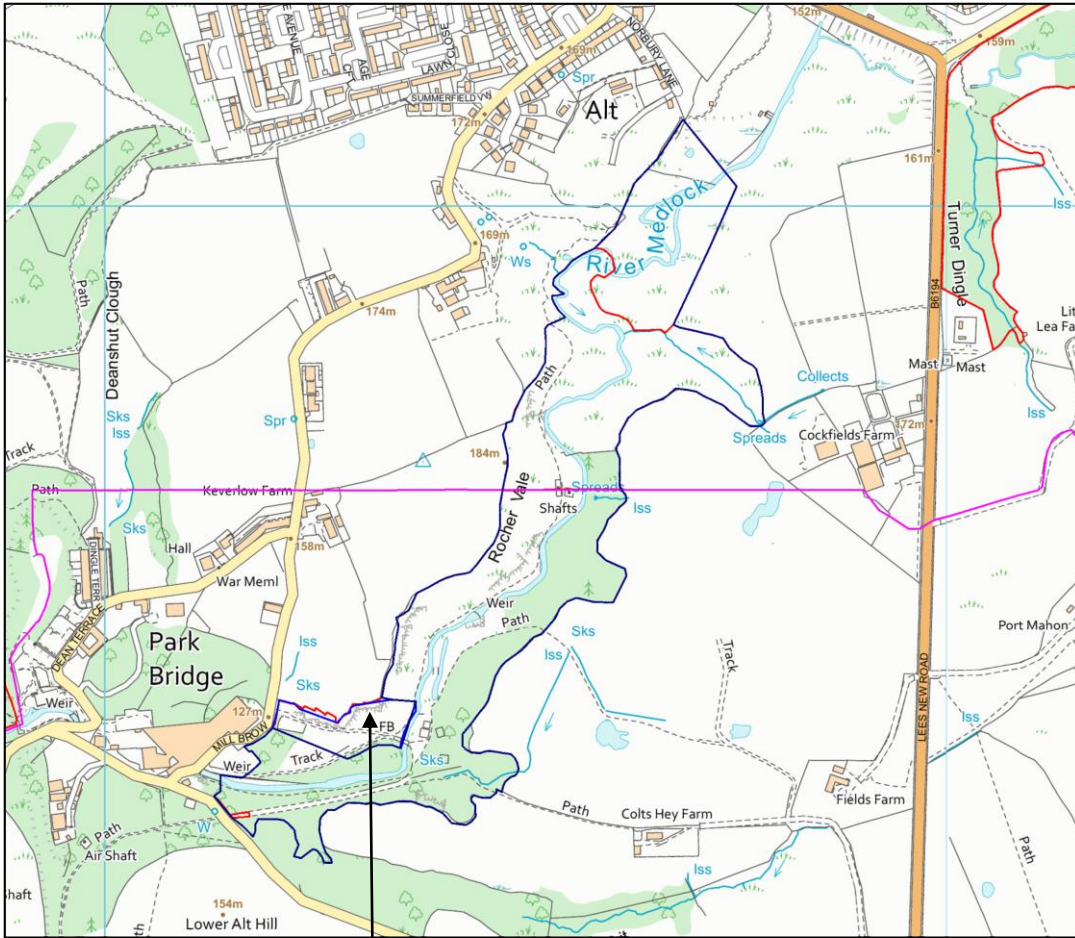
1. An incised fluvial gorge understood to have formed during a period of fluvial rejuvenation, the formation of the valley's shape and alignment may have been influenced by the underlying geology.
2. Possible minor tributary valley.
3. Fluvially derived spurs.
4. Fluvial meanders and terraces (of multiple levels), aggradational point bars and river cliffs readily identified in the 'open' northern section of the valley.
5. Possible river scroll (visible on aerial photography and in-field).
6. Anthropogenic modification of the River Medlock in the form of channelisation and flow modification (weir).
7. Differential weathering of exposed outcrops of sedimentary rocks.
8. Easily accessible outcrops of Pennine Lower Coal Measures exhibiting siderite nodule inclusions and the Blenfire Rock Sandstone.
9. Mass movement processes including slope terracing and shallow translational slides.
10. Differential plant colonisation and stabilisation.
11. Possible modification of the landscape and associated links to historical coal extraction in nearby Park Bridge.

There is great potential to contribute to a geological/historical trail as this site abuts Park Bridge Iron Works & Heritage Centre (including the existing Park Bridge Quarry RIGS) and the Oldham Way passes alongside both sites.

In the event of a consultation which relates to this site or its immediate surrounds please contact:
 Dr Christine Arkwright: The Secretary, GMRIGS: 28 Highgale Gardens, Lostock Hall, Preston PR5 5YT
 email: gmrigs@hotmail.com tel: 01772 335316

Site Location

Rocher Vale SD 945 026



Oldham MBC
Tameside MBC

RIGS TE02 Park Bridge Quarry

GRRIGS

