

Visit to Sharpstone Quarry

We visited Sharpstone Quarry, Bayston Hill on May 26th 2004; in the Western Longmyndian Greywacke formation of Precambrian age ca.575 mya, formed from secondary erosion and subsequent downfolding of post Uriconian sandstones rocks. Its hard arenaceous lithology made a fine durable roadstone of such economic importance that plans were now in place for a Euro rail-link in two years.

Some beds presented excellent in-situ clasts derived from feldspathic clays originally from the breakdown of the Uriconian Volcanics ; close by were exemplary muddy 'pats' and depressions in the quarry roadway already set for a

future cycle of lithification!

A good attendance of members was shown, with new members boosting the turnout. We all enjoyed a good evening with our expert members 'filling-in' on the petrological details. The return walk from the depths of the big hole, reputedly below sea-level, was surprisingly easy!

We thank the quarry management of Tarmac for providing access to the site.

J.E. Halliburton



An awesome hole, now down to sea level; all dug in recent times!



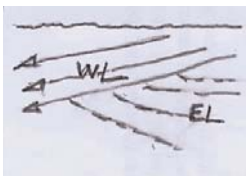
Attempting to magnify inclusions. Was this erythrite, a pink cobalt mineral?



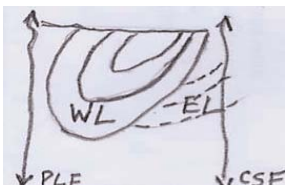
Uriconian clasts



New clasts in the making, from above and in section!



At 575mya the Western Longmyndian was deposited as turbidites off a continental shelf . Soon after, tectonic movements gave deeply faulted crustal folds within extreme pressures, so



creating the right geothermal state for rocks of high silica content to bond into a super-3D structure to form the substance of the hard Greywacke rock we excavate today.