

LOCAL GEOLOGICAL SITES

BRAINTREE DISTRICT



BraG25 White Notley Puddingstone, White Notley

Site location: A boulder of Hertfordshire puddingstone, by a cottage gate on the main road south of White Notley.

Grid Reference: TL 7880 1772

Status: Public/Private – by a gate on the public road.

Summary of the geological interest:

By a cottage gate is a splendid, colourful boulder of Hertfordshire puddingstone (110cm x 65cm x 45cm). This boulder has been referred to in articles and books more often than any other puddingstone in Essex.



Site Assessment. Local Geological Sites (LoGS) in Essex are assessed using criteria based on DEFRA guidance. An assessment form is used which asks key questions under four value categories: scientific, educational, historical and aesthetic. This site has been assessed and qualifies under these criteria.

Scientific interest and site importance:

Puddingstone was formed around 55 million years ago when the climate of Britain was hot and a layer of pebbles beneath the surface of the ground became cemented with quartz. They are thus very resistant to erosion and have survived the rigours of the Ice Age. They originated in rocks now exposed along the Essex - Hertfordshire border, and were probably transported by the River Thames when it flowed north of its present course across Essex.

The formation of silcretes (which includes sarsens and puddingstones) has been the subject of recent scientific debate. Research has compared the conditions under which sarsens and puddingstones may have been formed with the present day climate in the Kalahari Desert and parts of Australia.

Reference: Kenworthy 1887; Smith 1887, Lucy 2003a



White Notley Puddingstone - looking SE (photo D Potts 2023)