



Welton-le-Wold

Location and Access

OS: 114 • **GR:** TF 284884 •
1.90 hectares (4.80acres) • Freehold,
2001

Habitat type: Geological

The reserve is situated in the Lincolnshire Wolds about 3.5 miles (5.6 km) west of Louth. The entrance is approximately 1.5 km north-east of Welton-le-Wold village, on the road that runs between the A157 and A631.

Description and Management

This former sand and gravel quarry became the Trust's first geological reserve when it was purchased in 2001 with grant aid including landfill tax credit. It is part of a wider Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which extends to the west of the road (this section is in private ownership). It is also designated a Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS).

The sand and gravel quarry at Welton-le-Wold ceased to operate in the mid 1970s after nearly a century of excavations. The deposits at Welton-le-Wold are of critical significance in understanding the glacial history of Lincolnshire. It is important because it contains an unusually complete sequence of deposits that were laid down during the late Quaternary Period (over the last half million years). The Quaternary, also known as the Ice Age, was a time of extraordinary changes in the global environment. Periods of widespread glaciation were interspersed by more temperate climatic conditions similar to that of today and at times warmer. During the cold glacial periods woolly mammoth, woolly rhinoceros and reindeer roamed over southern England but in the warmer interglacials animals such as elephants, hippopotamus and lions were present. Animal fossils found at Welton-le-Wold include a tusk and teeth of straight-tusked elephant and remains of deer, horse and bison. Prehistoric flint tools

have also been discovered, and geologists and archaeologists have been seeking to determine whether Stone Age man and the animals occupied the Wolds at the same time.

Work has been carried out to re-expose sections of the quarry face that had become hidden by weathered and slumped material, and vegetation, since the extraction of sand and gravel ceased.

