

12. M1 Bridge [SP864432] – The reinforced concrete bridge was made from locally quarried sands and gravels, with the concrete from chalk and clay probably quarried and processed not too far away in the Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire Chilterns.

13. Newport Pagnell 'Station' [SP869435] – All that remains of the station area is the post of a railway signal that used to stand in front of the locomotive shed. Beyond this, the long demolished station area is now built over with new houses and shops.

14. Newport Pagnell town centre – Just up the road from the site of the demolished and built over station, many of the town's buildings built from about 1700 to before 1910 (14a) have local limestone in their walls; the most obvious is the Queen Ann town house called 'The Brewery' (14b) in the High Street.



13



12



14a



14b

THE GEOLOGICAL STORY

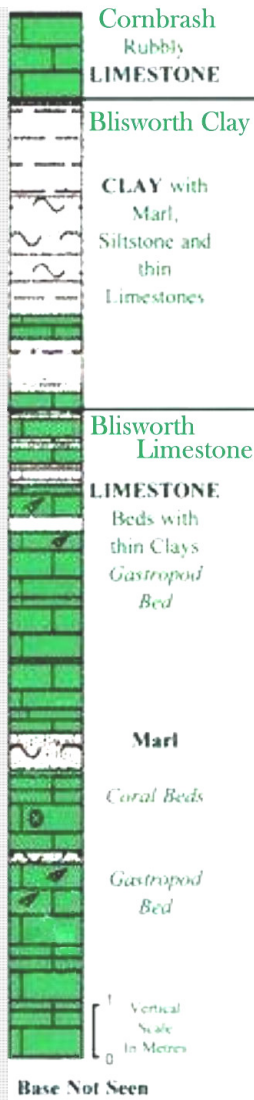
The rocks along the geotrail were laid down in a tropical sea, about 170 million years ago, in an area that looked like today's Bahamas. If we drilled down through them in north Buckinghamshire we would see a series of layers (see right).

Cornbrash - is an old English agricultural name used for loose rubble, or brash, which forms a good soil for growing wheat. It was formed around the edge of a shallow sea. It is packed with oyster shells.

Blisworth Clay - the sea became even shallower so that clay from rivers was brought into the now brackish water. It contains marl, a lime-rich clay, and a fine-grained sandy rock called siltstone.

Blisworth Limestone - gets its name from where it was first described when the Blisworth canal tunnel (opened in 1805) was dug. A shallow tropical sea partially evaporated so that its dissolved lime mud was precipitated as tiny spheres that resemble hard fish roe eggs; so, it is called an oolitic (or egg-like) limestone. It often contains fossil sea shells, especially oysters and sea snails (gastropods), corals; the feeding burrows of shrimps and worms can also be found.

It is mainly a well-bedded limestone with thin bands of clay and marl.



Bradwell to Newport Pagnell



'Nobby', a steam locomotive that pulled the train on the route from the 1950s, seen here with its two 'motor' coaches.

The branch railway line from Wolverton to Newport Pagnell opened to goods traffic in 1866 and passenger traffic in 1867. It closed to passenger traffic in 1964 and freight traffic in 1967. After the rails of the single-track line were lifted, and the station buildings sadly demolished, the route was converted into a cycle track – Redway 6; at least the original bridges and platforms were left behind! In a number of places, the line was visibly cut through Jurassic rocks but these are now mainly overgrown after track maintenance stopped. The rocks were formed, about 170 million years ago, in a gradually shallowing tropical sea. This geotrail shows you where you can see these rocks and gives other information about the geology of the route of the old railway.



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1. Bradwell Railway Cutting [SP832412] – The steep wooded banks are made of Blisworth Limestone and Blisworth Clay, capped by a thin bed of Cornbrash. The trees have all grown since the railway was closed. Mud and vegetation means that the rocks cannot be easily seen. The mass of the windmill above the cutting might just cause the slope to collapse; the concrete revetment stops this from happening.

2. Wylies Lime Works [SP833415] – The modern housing estate above the opposite side of the cutting to the revetment is built over a shallow limestone quarry and limekilns; for a while it was a scrap metal yard – even with some old steam locos! A siding into this branched, just in front of the bridge, off the railway; part of its route can still be just about traced into the housing estate.

3. Bradwell Railway Bridge [SP832413] – Just by the bridge, you can see how tree roots are breaking up a small rock-face of Blisworth Limestone (3a). The bridge has sandstone, probably of Triassic age and quarried in Nottinghamshire, in its arch (3b).

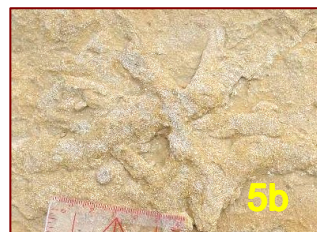


4. Bradwell Railway Station [SP832413] – The platform has brick and local limestone in its plinth, together with concrete slabs for its edging.

5. Bradwell Cemetery field [SP832413] – The blocks of Blisworth Limestone (5a) in the field off the Redway show very good examples of trace fossils – they are shrimp burrows (5b).

6. Great Linford Canal Bridge [SP846423] – The iron bridge has brick pillars capped with a pale buff sandstone, probably, of Upper Carboniferous age and, quarried in Derbyshire.

Leave the Redway, before crossing the bridge, by following the footpath down to look at stops 7 and 8 and then return to it, and cross the canal, to continue.



7. Great Linford Stone Pit [SP849423] – Behind the modern Stone Circle is a small 19th century quarry; both the Circle and quarry show fine examples of the Blisworth Limestone.

8. St. Andrew's church [SP851424] – Built, like the nearby almshouses, from good quality Jurassic limestones brought in from Northamptonshire.

9. Great Linford Ouse viewpoint [SP853425] – Looking over the valley, the flood plain of the River Great Ouse can be seen. Its sands and gravels have been much quarried; if not filled-in these quarries quickly become flooded wildlife refuges.

10. Great Linford Railway Cutting [SP855426] – Near the station bridge is a small 2-3 metre high cliff of thinly bedded Blisworth Limestone.

11. Great Linford Railway Station & Bridge [SP855427] – The bridge has sandstone, probably from quarries in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, in its plinth. The platform uses bricks in its plinth, together with concrete slabs for its edging.

