

1 **Foraminifers in the Holkerian Stratotype, regional substage in Britain: key taxa**
2 **for the Viséan subdivision**

3

4 **Pedro Cózar¹, Ian D. Somerville², Mark W. Hounslow³**

5

6 **Author Affiliations.**

7 ¹ Instituto de Geociencias (CSIC-UCM), c/ Severo Ochoa 7, 28040 Madrid, Spain;

8 p.cozar@igeo.ucm-csic.es

9 ² UCD School of Earth Sciences, University College Dublin, Ireland;

10 ian.somerville@ucd.ie

11 ³ Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, Lancaster, UK. LA1 4YW and

12 Earth, Ocean and Ecological Sciences, University of Liverpool, Jane Herdman

13 Building, Liverpool, L69 3GP; mark.w.hounslow@gmail.com

14

15 **Corresponding Author.** Pedro Cózar; Instituto de Geociencias (CSIC-UCM), c/

16 Severo Ochoa 7, 28040 Madrid, Spain; p.cozar@igeo.ucm-csic.es

17

18 **Abstract.** Foraminiferal revision of the Holkerian Stratotype of Britain at Barker Scar,

19 Holker Hall, south Cumbria, UK, allows the subdivision of the section into the Cf4 δ ,

20 Cf5 α and Cf5 β subzones (the latter being further subdivided into a lower Cf5 β 1 and

21 upper Cf5 β 2 intervals). The base of Cf5 α subzone at the base of bed C and base of Cf5 β

22 subzone from the middle part of bed C, occur at 14 m and 10.5 m, respectively, below

23 the traditional basal boundary of the Holkerian at bed K. The lower boundaries of these

24 foraminiferal subzones occur within the main interval affected by dolomitization in the

25 section, which poses problems in defining precisely the bases for these subzones.

26 Nevertheless, in spite of the dolomitization, a more or less continuous foraminiferal
27 record allows a solid correlation of the base of the Cf5 β with the preserved succession
28 in the Livian Substage (defined in Belgium, but also used in France), and it is assumed
29 that the base of this substage should correspond to the base of the Cf5 α subzone. The
30 base of the Cf5 α can be correlated with the base of the Russian Tulian Substage, since it
31 contains many taxa in common with the Holkerian. However, further investigation is
32 needed to establish other levels of correlation (e.g., base of the Cf5 β subzone) higher up
33 in the Holkerian substage.

34 All of these problems suggest that the Holkerian, as it is currently recognised, and
35 the Barker Scar stratotype section, in particular, should be reconsidered, and a new para-
36 stratotype section, ideally devoid of dolomitization, should be located and investigated,
37 in order to corroborate the occurrence of the Cf5 α and Cf5 β foraminiferal subzones
38 compared to those recognised in the Barker Scar Stratotype. These modifications would
39 allow identification of an apparent synchronous faunal event forming the basis of a
40 future subdivision of the Viséan.

41

42 **Keywords.** biostratigraphy; endothyrids; Mississippian; middle Viséan; Cumbria

43

44

45 **1. Introduction**

46 The base of the Holkerian Stratotype was defined by George et al. (1976) at the junction
47 of the Dalton Beds and the Park Limestone at Barker Scar (between beds J and K) (Figs.
48 1, 2), Holker Hall, south Cumbria, UK [SD 3330 7827 British National Grid;
49 Supplementary Fig. S1]. It was defined to coincide with a change from predominant
50 dark grey/brownish limestones into creamy limestones. Johnson et al. (2001) elevated
51 these limestone units to formation status in their analysis of the Ulverston region of
52 south Cumbria (Fig. 1). These authors proposed to define the base of the Park
53 Limestone at the base of bed J, which although of dark grey colour, shows less-
54 conspicuous stratification, more typical of the Park Limestone Formation than the
55 underlying Dalton Formation (Fig. 2). Recently, Waters et al. (in press), have suggested
56 to reposition the base of the Park Limestone at the base of bed P, and considering the
57 new data presented here, moved the base of the Holkerian to an intermediate position
58 within bed C. The Holkerian has been largely used in Britain as one of the stages in the
59 Dinantian, and the International Commission on Stratigraphy ratified its inclusion as a
60 regional subdivision of the Carboniferous, as a substage of the Viséan (Heckel and
61 Clayton 2006), a fact admitted in the British literature (Holliday and Molineux 2006).

62 Since the original definition by George et al. (1976), the validity of the Viséan
63 stratotypes defined in Britain has been questioned by many authors (e.g., Riley 1993;
64 Cossey et al. 2004; Waters 2011), and the Holkerian Barker Scar section is the only
65 Viséan section that has not been revised in detail since the published field guide of
66 Ramsbottom (1981) and the work of Strank (1981). In contrast, the Chadian, Arundian,
67 Asbian and Brigantian stratotypes (Fig. 1) have been revised in more recent times (cf.

68 Simpson and Kalvoda, 1987; Riley 1994; Cózar and Somerville 2004; Aretz and Nudds
69 2005; McLean et al. 2018).

70 Diagnostic macrofauna of the Holkerian include the brachiopods *Davidsonina*
71 *carbonaria* (McCoy), *Composita ficoidea* (Vaughan) and *Linoprotonia*
72 *corrugatohemisphaerica* (Vaughan), the corals *Axophyllum vaughani* (Salée) and
73 *Lithostrotion araneum* (McCoy) (= *Nematophyllum minus* (McCoy)) (Fig. 2), together
74 with the foraminifers *Archaediscus* spp. at concavus stage (cf. Conil et al., 1980) and
75 bilayered palaeotextulariids (George et al. 1976). However, *Composita ficoidea* was
76 recorded from beds E, F and I, in the Arundian part of the section (Fig. 2). Riley (1993)
77 suggested the occurrence of a non-sequence in the succession, due to the apparent
78 absence of the ‘*Cyrtina* (= *Davidsonina*) *carbonaria* beds’ of Garwood (1913), as well
79 as for the absence of precursors of the corals intermediate in character between
80 *Siphonodendron* and *Lithostrotion*. Conil et al. (1980) assigned the Cf5 foraminiferal
81 zone to the Holkerian and correlated it also with the Livian in Belgium. Ramsbottom
82 (1981) and Strank (1981) considered a similar suite of macrofauna in recognizing the
83 Holkerian, but they added the foraminifers *Koskinotextularia*, abundant *Nibelia*
84 (= *Pojarkovella*) *nibelis* (Durkina), *Holkeria* and *Dainella? holkeriana* Conil and
85 Longerstaey as the main guides for the recognition of this substage. However, these are
86 a general list of fauna, and in most cases, their first occurrences do not coincide exactly
87 with the basal beds of the Holkerian. Rose and Dunham (1977) presented a section with
88 limestone beds labelled with letters from bed a up to bed l, later relabelled by
89 Ramsbottom (1981) in capitals letters and including more beds in the upper part of the
90 section, from A to Z (Fig. 2). Nevertheless, the foraminiferal evidence presented by
91 Ramsbottom (1981) was limited to beds A to L. However, looking at the vertical
92 stratigraphic distance from the base of the Holkerian at bed K, some samples labelled as

93 bed L are located up to 30 m above the base of bed L, which corresponds to bed X. The
94 database in Ramsbottom (1981) originated from the work of Strank (1981), where the
95 foraminiferal data and distribution were discussed in more detail. However, Strank
96 (1981) apparently studied three different sets of thin sections, but only one set appears
97 to have been documented in the biostratigraphic table in Ramsbottom (1981, p. 3.5).
98 Strank (1981) in her description of the stratotype section also illustrated samples from
99 ‘Old Park Wood Quarry’ (See Supplementary Fig. S1) covering some 12 m of the Park
100 Limestone Fm- Urwick Limestone Fm boundary, and she illustrated some foraminifers
101 in her thesis that are not included in the stratigraphic distribution of the foraminifers in
102 the region. Thus, the foraminiferal record in the upper part of the Barker Scar section is
103 somewhat confusing. In addition, as highlighted by C3zar et al. (2020), apparently,
104 there are typical Holkerian taxa in the Arundian part of the section, including
105 *Archaeodiscus* at concavus stage, *Lituotubella* and *Omphalotis minima* (Rauzer-
106 Chernousova and Reitlinger). C3zar et al. (2020) considered that the older occurrence of
107 those taxa allowed the subdivision of the Cf5 Zone into a lower Cf5 α subzone (and
108 defined a new suite of foraminifers) and an upper Cf5 β subzone (characterised by the
109 classical markers for the Cf5 *Koskinotextularia-nibelis* Zone recorded in Conil et al.
110 1980).

111 The correlation of the Holkerian with the Livian regional substage in Belgium has
112 been traditionally accepted (Poty and Hance, 2006), although C3zar et al. (2020) only
113 recognized foraminifers of the Cf5 β subzone in the preserved limestones of the Lives
114 Formation in the Lives section. Foraminifers of the Cf5 α subzone were not recognized,
115 and it could be assumed that they should be represented in the basal bentonite and
116 overlying dolomite beds, located in the lower 14 m of the Lives Formation.
117 Furthermore, foraminifers described in Western Europe do not allow a clear correlation

118 with the regional substages in Russia, and the Tullian has been commonly correlated
119 with the Livian or Holkerian in the past (e.g., Conil et al. 1977), and more currently
120 (Alekseev 2009; Davydov et al. 2012; Aretz et al. 2020). However, as demonstrated in
121 Cózar et al. (2020), the likely equivalence of the Tullian and Holkerian needs to be
122 further investigated, whereas, owing to the absence of data at the base of the Livian, this
123 correlation can never be proved nor supported biostratigraphically. The importance of
124 establishing precise correlations between these regional substages is important for the
125 informal subdivision of the Viséan in Western Europe into lower, middle and upper
126 divisions. As numerous authors have claimed (e.g., Poty et al. 2014), the Viséan Stage
127 represents a large time interval (*c.* 17 Myr *sensu* Aretz et al. 2020), and there is a
128 developing trend to formally define much shorter and distinctive time units useful for
129 global correlations. The Holkerian, as representative of the middle Viséan in Western
130 Europe, is included at the base of the upper Viséan in Russia, where the Viséan is
131 informally subdivided only into lower and upper Viséan intervals (e.g., Reitlinger et al.
132 1996). Hence, it is necessary to establish precise correlations between these regional
133 substages to enable possible formal subdivisions, such as the middle Viséan, or base of
134 the upper Viséan to be recognised. Moreover, the stratigraphic interval analysed in this
135 study provides a clear opportunity for potential subdivisions of the Viséan for the
136 future.

137 Owing to these inconsistencies and the potential relevance of this stratigraphic
138 interval, a new sampling campaign from the Barker Scar section was undertaken, in
139 order to clarify the first occurrences of the most important foraminifers, as well as to
140 establish the international correlation of the foraminifers with biozonations in Europe.
141 The main aim of this study is ultimately to assess the validity of Barker Scar as the
142 Holkerian stratotype, and for this, purpose we assesses if the foraminiferal assemblages

143 are representative enough for global correlations, as well as to clarify if the
144 biostratigraphical and lithostratigraphical units can be consistently identified. For this
145 objective, the section has been measured and sampled (at approximately every metre),
146 following a continuous enumeration and metrics from the base of the Dalton Limestone
147 Formation outcrop to Capes Head (Fig. 2), some 800 m south. These samples were
148 primarily collected as part of an ongoing regional palaeomagnetic project, but a sub-
149 sample of each was studied here for determining the biostratigraphy. In total, there are
150 *c.* 86 m of limestones in the section (Fig. 2), including 8 m of limestones above bed Z in
151 the log presented by Ramsbottom (1981). Beds D to K are readily apparent from fig 3.6
152 in Ramsbottom (1981), and C/D, V/W, W/X and Y/Z bed boundaries are still marked on
153 the section. Other beds are estimated from the thickness/description and our log. The
154 bases of beds L to V were determined in our log on the basis of data in Ramsbottom's
155 log on thicknesses and prominent bedding surfaces (Ramsbottom, 1981, p. 3.3). Bed
156 positions A, B and C are revised, based on thicknesses in Rose and Dunham (1977) and
157 major lithological changes we observed. These are documented on photos of the section
158 in supplementary material Fig. S2 and the complete suite of foraminifers recorded are
159 included in supplementary Table S1.

160

161 **2. Foraminiferal assemblages and distribution in Barker Scar**

162 The assemblages in the basal bed and in the overlying bed A are very rich and contain
163 common primitive archaediscids (*Ammarchaediscus*, *Lapparentidiscus*, *Glomodiscus*,
164 *Uralodiscus* and *Conilidiscus*), *Archaediscus* at involutus stage (e.g., *A. eurus* Conil and
165 Longerstaey, *A. vischerensis* Grozdilova and Lebedeva), including also transitional
166 forms between the involutus and concavus stages (e.g. *A. pusillus* Rauzer-
167 Chernousova), and primitive foraminifers ranging from the Tournaisian and lower

168 Viséan (*Brenckleites*, *Eosinopsis*, *Eoparastaffella*, *Dainella*, *Lysella*, *Paralysella* and
169 *Bessiella*). In addition, the assemblages contain numerous specimens of *Omphalotis*,
170 some of the species ranging up from the Tournaisian, but where it is highlighted, the
171 primitive forms are assigned to *Omphalotis* aff. *minima* (this taxon includes small
172 specimens, but with diameters included as the minimum in the original description),
173 recorded from bed A, and in the same levels, *Lituotubella glomospiroides*? Rauzer-
174 Chernousova first occurs (Figs. 2, 3), which is confirmed higher up in sample BS31
175 (bed C). Both species occur at equivalent levels where Strank (1981) also recorded
176 them. These horizons are highlighted by common endothyrans and
177 *Nodosarchaediscus*. The former family is represented by some species of
178 *Plectogyranopsis* (including *P. moraviae* Conil and Longierstaey), *Latiendothyranopsis*
179 (including *L. menneri solida* Conil and Lys), *Cribranopsis fossa* Conil and Longierstaey,
180 as well as the ancestral forms of *Endothyranopsis* aff. *compressa* (Rauzer-Chernousova
181 and Reitlinger) (which includes smaller specimens and with thinner septa than the
182 nominal species). The genus *Nodosarchaediscus* is represented by up to 5 species, as
183 well as many oblique sections, including species with many whorls presenting nodes
184 and occlusion.

185 These assemblages contain most of the taxa considered as markers for the Cf4 δ or
186 MFZ11 γ subzone sensu Cózar et al. (2020), where the only missing taxon is the
187 primitive palaeotextulariid *Consobrinellopsis*, that is recorded from the upper part of
188 bed C (Fig. 2). Significantly, the mention of bilayered palaeotextulariids by George et
189 al. (1976) has to be considered as erroneous, surely they should have indicated
190 monolayered palaeotextulariids, because, as it is well established in Western Europe, the
191 bilayered genera of this family are widespread in the Asbian and younger strata (Conil
192 et al. 1980). *Archaediscus* at concavus stage is recorded from bed C, and transitional

193 forms from bed A (Fig. 3), and thus, the questionable records of some species typically
194 at concavus stage by Strank (1981), e.g. *A. varsanofievae* Grozdilova and Lebedeva,
195 could be attributed to these transitions and not to the true species recorded higher in the
196 section in bed C.

197 This Cf4 δ or MFZ11 γ subzone was assigned to the early Viséan (Cózar et al. 2020),
198 and has been commonly recorded in Arundian rocks of Britain (Conil et al. 1980).

199 Limestone bed B is a thick unit (c. 12.5 m thick), which is greatly affected by
200 dolomitization (Fig. 2). Some of the samples show destructive dolomitization which
201 does not preserve any original texture or fauna. However, many horizons sampled
202 although partly affected by dolomitization, yielded rather impoverished foraminiferal
203 assemblages. In most samples from bed B, the preserved foraminifers do not differ
204 significantly from the underlying beds, apart from their abundance. The foraminifers
205 would suggest that the Cf4 δ /MFZ11 γ subzone could be extended to this bed B. It is
206 noteworthy, that many of the most primitive forms have disappeared at the top of this
207 bed (*Paralysella*, *Glomodiscus*, *Conilidiscus*, *Eoparastaffella* and *Pseudolituotubella*),
208 whereas other ancestral forms disappeared in bed A (*Lysella* and *Uralodiscus*).

209 Bed C, in contrast, is a much thinner limestone (c. 3.5 m thick) with the upper part
210 also affected by destructive dolomitization. The basal sample (BS31) is a well-preserved
211 limestone, and contains a rich assemblage, yielding common *Archaediscus* at involutus
212 stage, transitional forms to the concavus stage and *Nodosarchaediscus*, typical
213 foraminifers from the underlying beds. However, this horizon also contains the first
214 occurrences of *Archaediscus* at concavus stage (including *A. moelleri* Rauzer-
215 Chernousova, *A. krestovnikovi* Rauzer-Chernousova), *Nodosarchaediscus* (*N. pirlleti*
216 (Bozorgnia), *N. tchalussensis* (Bozorgnia)) and an ancestral form of *Koskinotextularia*
217 aff. *cribriformis* Eickhoff (Figs. 2-3). The latter taxon is a much more primitive species,

218 having a few paired chambers and a rather rudimentary cribrate aperture, only
219 composed of two apertures in thin-section. The assemblage is assigned to the Cf5 α or
220 MFZ12 α subzone of C3zar et al. (2020).

221 In higher samples of bed C, the same *Archaediscus* spp. at concavus stage are
222 recorded, as well as *A. convexus* Grozdilova and Lebedeva (another typical species at
223 concavus stage). However, sample BS33 contains common *Pojarkovella* species (Fig.
224 2), including smaller and simpler species such as *P. occidentalis* Vachard and C3zar, *P.*
225 *ketmenica* Simonova and Zub and *P. pura* Simonova, as well as larger *P. honesta*
226 Simonova and *P. nibelis* (Fig. 4). The occurrence, together, of all these species suggests
227 that the smaller and simpler forms should first occur in older levels (as proposed by
228 C3zar et al. 2020), and thus, they should first occur in the Cf5 α subzone. According to
229 most authors (e.g., Conil et al. 1977, 1980, 1991; Strank 1981; Kalvoda 2002; Poty et
230 al. 2006), the occurrence of *P. nibelis* allows us to assign bed C to the typical Cf5 or
231 MFZ12 zones, but identified as Cf5 β or MFZ12 β in C3zar et al. (2020). There is a
232 discrepancy, though, because most of those authors also considered the occurrence of
233 the genus *Koskinotextularia* as a marker of this subzone. However, the species of the
234 genus mentioned and illustrated in the literature are usually more evolved forms, such
235 as *K. cribriformis* and *K. bradyi* (Moeller). However, these well-developed
236 *Koskinotextularia* are only recorded in the younger beds in Barker Scar (top of bed J).

237 The interval between beds D to the top of bed J is another problem in Barker Scar,
238 because samples from these beds are dolomitized or do not contain important
239 foraminiferal assemblages. At the top of bed J, most of the taxa recorded previously
240 also occur, but additionally, it is noteworthy for the first occurrence of typical
241 *Endothyranopsis compressa* (large specimens with thick wall and septa),
242 *Koskinotextularia bradyi*, and *K. cribriformis* (Fig. 2). Those foraminifers are also

243 typical markers of the middle Viséan elsewhere, and act as guides for the classical Cf5
244 zone of Conil et al. (1980) (now Cf5β). It must be highlighted that all the taxa described
245 previously are in beds that were considered as Arundian, because the first macrofauna
246 and microfauna assigned previously to the Holkerian were from bed K.

247 The upper part of bed K is also dolomitized, and taxa previously mentioned in bed J
248 are present, but rare, and even the larger species of *Koskinotextularia* have not been
249 recorded by us. However, Strank (1981) recorded *K. cribriformis* and *P. nibelis* from
250 bed K. Nevertheless, this bed K is noteworthy for the first occurrence of *Holkeria*
251 (another typical marker genus defined in Strank 1981), where *H. avonensis* (Conil and
252 Longerstaey), *H. daggeri* Strank and *H. topleyensis* Strank occur, as well as the first
253 occurrence of *Koskinotextularia obliqua* (Conil and Lys) (Figs. 2, 4).

254 As mentioned previously, there is a problem with the location of the samples in
255 Ramsbottom (1981) and Strank (1981) from bed L upwards. Fortunately, these authors
256 did not record any biostratigraphically significant foraminifers, except for *Archaeodiscus*
257 *karreri* Brady in the uppermost samples, which is a notable latest Asbian to Brigantian
258 species in Britain (Cózar and Somerville 2004). However, it was not illustrated and it
259 could be a misidentification. Strank (1981) illustrated specimens of *Criboospira mira*
260 Rauzer-Chernousova and *Pseudoendothyra* from the upper part of the Park Limestone
261 in the region, although it is not possible to determine the exact horizon within the
262 stratotype section.

263 From beds L to S, there is no major change in the fauna, but first occurrences of
264 biostratigraphically significant taxa include *Endostaffella* (*E. fucoides* Rozovskaya from
265 bed L), *Vissarionovella* (*V. holkeriana* from bed N), *Criboospira?* (from bed N) and
266 *Klubonibelia* (from bed O) (Fig. 2), all of them also markers of the middle Viséan
267 (Conil et al. 1980, 1991; Cózar and Vachard 2001). As discussed in Cózar and Vachard

268 (2001), *Dainella? holkeriana* was transferred to *Vissarionovella* due to the
269 differentiated tectum. In bed O, typical large and evolved forms of *Omphalotis minima*
270 are recorded.

271 The main change recognised in the Park Limestone Formation is observed from bed
272 T (Fig. 2), where the first occurrence of “*Millerella*” (“*M.*” *excavata* Conil and Lys),
273 several species of *Pseudoendothyra* (*P. struvei* (Moeller), *P. sp. 1* and *P. sp. 5*) are
274 recorded, as well as *Globoendothyra globula* (Eichwald). In bed U, other evolved
275 species of *Pojarkovella* (*P. evolutica* Simonova and Zub), *Endostaffella* (*E. parva*
276 (Moeller)) and *Lituotubella magna* Rauzer-Chernousova are recorded (Figs. 2, 5).

277 Within this cluster of successive new occurrences, it is difficult to confirm if any of
278 them has biostratigraphic implications for the British zonation because, in general, those
279 species have been used only to recognise the middle Viséan, not any particular interval
280 within the middle Viséan (i.e. lower, middle or upper). The most striking feature is the
281 occurrence of the genus *Pseudoendothyra*, which in many Western Europe
282 biozonations, is used as a guide for the upper part of the early Asbian or Cf6 β zone
283 (Conil et al. 1977, 1980, 1991; Poty et al. 2006). However, locally, Strank (1981) and
284 Fewtrell et al. (1981) documented *Pseudoendothyra* from the middle Viséan in Britain
285 and Cózar and Somerville (2020) documented the genus from the preserved top of the
286 Holkerian in the Gower Peninsula (South Wales). The occurrence of *Pseudoendothyra*,
287 with numerous species, is interpreted as an important characteristic at Barker Scar,
288 which surely should be present in other sections of Britain, and which would allow a
289 subdivision of Cf5 β , into a lower Cf5 β 1 interval, characterised by the classical markers
290 of the Cf5 zone, and an upper Cf5 β 2 interval, characterised by the first occurrence of
291 *Pseudoendothyra* (Fig. 2). This possible subdivision needs to be further examined in
292 other sections in Britain. Other first occurrences recorded in similar levels to those of

293 *Pseudoendothyra*, are *Archaediscus* spp. transitional forms between the concavus and
294 angulatus stage, *Lituotubella magna*, *Magnitella porosa* Malakhova, *Spinothyra*
295 *pauciseptata* (Rauzer-Chernousova) and *Globoendothyra globula*, which would need to
296 be further investigated as potential auxiliary markers for defining a possible Cf5 β 2
297 subzone.

298 In spite of the plausible unconformities described by previous authors based on
299 mapping relationships, lithological changes and the apparent absence of some key
300 macrofossils, the foraminiferal succession from the base to top of the Barker Scar
301 section is more or less complete, ranging from the Cf4 δ to the Cf5 β (Cf5 β 2?) subzones,
302 and if any unconformities might be present (i.e., at the base of Bed F), they do not seem
303 to be of biostratigraphic significance. The main shortcoming of the Barker Scar section
304 is the large intervals with dolomitized or partly dolomitized carbonates, lacking fossils
305 or yielding impoverished foraminiferal assemblages (e.g. beds B, D-J).

306

307 **3. Arundian-Holkerian boundary reassessment**

308

309 Utilising the foraminiferal data from this study, the base of the Holkerian, as it is
310 currently understood, should be moved down to a lower horizon, at least to the upper
311 part of bed C (Fig. 2), where prolific *Pojarkovella* species occur, including *P. nibelis*.
312 The lower part of bed C should be equated with the Cf5 α subzone and the upper part of
313 bed C to Cf5 β subzone of Cózar et al. (2020). However, the poor preservation of
314 foraminifers in the extensively dolomitized bed B does not allow to confirm if the Cf5 α
315 subzone could extend further down. Comparatively, the thickness of limestone
316 represented by the Cf5 α subzone is very much thinner than the interval represented by
317 the Cf5 β subzone (c. 4 m versus c. 120 m thick in the region).

318 Riley (1993) proposed the search for a new stratotype section due to the absence of
319 the early Holkerian fauna, up to the occurrence of *Lithostrotion araneum* (=
320 *Nematophyllum minus* subzone sensu Garwood 1913). This 'hiatus' was located at the
321 base of bed I. However, some authors have suggested that this faunal gap in the
322 succession might be a result of dolomitization rather than an actual missing interval
323 (e.g. Cossey et al. 2004). *Lithostrotion araneum* first occurs in bed P, and hence, beds C
324 to O have to be considered as early Holkerian. The dolomitization in beds D-J does not
325 give us detailed foraminiferal records, but the foraminifers recorded do not support the
326 presence of an important hiatus in the succession. In fact, there does not appear to exist
327 any significant biostratigraphic hiatus in the entire section, taking into consideration the
328 more or less continuous foraminiferal record.

329 Thus, dolomitization has had a marked influence in: (i) defining the base of the
330 Cf5 α subzone, due to the poor data in bed B; and (ii) the low number of taxa and
331 individuals from beds C to J. These problems readily suggest that the Holkerian
332 stratotype, apart from some modifications derived from the foraminiferal evidence
333 presented herein, would need a new para-stratotype section to be defined in the region,
334 with better preserved limestones of the Dalton Formation, and more comprehensive
335 foraminiferal records.

336 Several scenarios can be proposed: (i) To relocate the base of the Holkerian to the
337 base of bed C in Barker Scar (column 2 in Fig. 2), to coincide with the base of Cf5 α
338 subzone (sample BS31) to achieve a wider international correlation (although the poorly
339 constrained base of this subzone is a potential problem); (ii) To relocate the base of the
340 Holkerian to the upper part of bed C (sample BS33), to coincide with the Cf5 β subzone
341 (column 1 in Fig. 2) (although the dolomitized bed just above also creates a potential
342 drawback); (iii) to search for a para-stratotype section to confirm the evidence resulting

343 from the lower part of the Barker Scar section; or, (iv) to search for a new stratotype
344 section dominated by limestone, to minimize the effect of dolomitization and to show
345 more continuous micro- and macrofaunal successions. Currently we favour scenarios i
346 and iii.

347

348 **4. International correlation of the Holkerian with European substages**

349

350 A correlation of the Holkerian with the Livian in Belgium was recently suggested by
351 Cózar et al. (2020). There, the guides for the recognition of this substage were proposed
352 earlier by Conil et al. (1977) as *Koskinotextularia* and *Pojarkovella nibelis*, the same as
353 the Cf5 zone. The occurrence of *P. nibelis* was recorded 14.3 m above the base of the
354 Lives Formation, and *Koskinotextularia* much later (Poty and Hance 2006).

355 Unfortunately, this lower 14.3 m of the formation is barren in foraminifers, due to the
356 bentonites of the Banc d'Or de Bachant and completely dolomitized beds, whereas the
357 underlying Neffe Formation contains foraminifers of the Cf4 δ subzone. Thus, although
358 the boundary cannot be precisely recognised due to the absence of data, the Cf5 α
359 subzone can be approximately correlated with the base of the Lives Formation, and the
360 Cf5 β subzone with the non-dolomitized part of the formation, i.e. from 14.3 m upwards
361 (Fig. 6). Nevertheless, the base of the Banc d'Or de Bachant is not a synchronous event,
362 and depending on the section, it also implies parts of the Moliniacian (Poty et al. 2014),
363 a fact corroborated by the absolute ages using zircons by Pointon et al. (2021). The
364 latter authors proposed to search for a new stratotype for the Livian, and thus, owing to
365 the hiatus represented by this bentonite, a precise correlation level with the Cf5 α
366 subzone will be never achieved.

367 In the Moscow Basin, the Tulian is composed of an alternation of shales and
368 limestones, and the latter become more abundant in the upper part. Furthermore, there is
369 an unconformity at the base, and thick basal parts of the succession can be missing
370 (Alekseev 2009). Although numerous studies have been published since the late 1940's
371 with fragmentary records of the Tulian (e.g., Rauzer-Chernousova 1948), the basis for
372 the established foraminiferal guides were summarised by Lipina and Reitlinger (1970),
373 which included this substage within the *Endothyranopsis compressa* Zone. This zone is
374 characterised by the first occurrence of *Endothyranopsis* s.s., *Globoendothyra* s.s.,
375 *Lituotubella*, *Mstinia* (as *Haplophragmella*), *Eostaffella*, *Pseudoendothyra* (as
376 *Parastaffella*), *Vissariotaxis exilis* (Vissarionova), *Archaediscus krestovnikovi*,
377 *Archaediscus moelleri* (both species representative of the concavus stage), primitive
378 *Cribrospira* and *Omphalotis minima*. *Vissariotaxis exilis* in Western Europe first occurs
379 in the Asbian (Conil et al. 1980), and it is difficult to know which is exactly the first
380 *Globoendothyra* s.s., when probably they did not consider the subgenus
381 *Globoendothyra* (*Eogloboendothyra*).

382 Makhlina et al. (1993) also considered as markers for the Tulian: *Palaeotextularia*
383 s.s., *Praeostaffella* (as species of *Endostaffella*), primitive species of *Eostaffellina*,
384 *Magnitella porosa*, *Koskinotextularia*, *Cribrostomum eximium* Moeller and *Eostaffella*
385 *mosquensis* Vissarionova, as well as other species of *Archaediscus* (which are also at
386 concavus stage). Although some of these species and genera first occur much later in
387 Western Europe (*Palaeotextularia* and *Cribrostomum*), the majority of the described
388 taxa are also guides for the Holkerian in Britain. Surprisingly, *Pojarkovella* ex gr.
389 *nibelis* is only recorded from the upper Viséan Mikhailovian Substage (Makhlina et al.
390 1993).

391 Reitlinger et al. (1996) summarised the data mostly from the Moscow Basin and
392 Urals. They considered that in addition to typical markers, the first occurrence of
393 *Lituotubella* from the Bobrikian Substage (Fig. 6), which would coincide with the
394 earlier occurrence in the Dalton Formation in Barker Scar (Fig. 2), and *L. magna* from
395 the Tulian, as well as considering *Archaediscus krestovnikovi*, first occurring rarely
396 from the Bobrikian Substage (as previously considered by Vdovenko et al. 1990), but it
397 is typical of the Tulian Substage. These authors also considered *Globoendothyra*
398 *globula* as a marker.

399 More recent studies in the Urals (e.g. Kulagina and Klimenko 2014), contain some
400 of the above-listed taxa for the recognition of the Tulian, but also noteworthy is the
401 occurrence of *Pojarkovella nibelis* from younger beds. These authors also considered
402 *Archaediscus koktjubensis* Rauzer-Chernousova as a marker of the Tulian (Klimenko et
403 al. 2018; Kulagina et al. 2019). In the Urals, there are more continuous carbonate
404 successions, but unfortunately, the foraminiferal assemblages in the Tulian Substage are
405 not as rich as in the Moscow Basin.

406 The basal boundary of other local substages in Europe do not coincide
407 approximately with the above described substages (e.g., in Ukraine; Poletaev et al.
408 1990), and with the available data, it is not possible to propose a correlation.

409 Owing to the fragmentary record of the Tulian in the Moscow Basin and the scarcer
410 data from the Urals, it is not feasible to make a detailed correlation of the Cf5 α and
411 Cf5 β subzones with the stratigraphic record in Russia. However, the base of the Tulian
412 can be confidently correlated with the base of the Cf5 α (Fig. 6) due to the first
413 occurrence of *Koskinotextularia*, *Endothyranopsis* s.s., *Consobrinellopsis* and some
414 species of *Archaediscus* (at concavus stage). The occurrence of species of *Lituotubella*,
415 and *Omphalotis* might be additional potential markers of levels immediately below the

416 base of the Holkerian and Tullian. In contrast, there is no obvious horizon that could be
417 correlated with the Cf5 β subzone. Further investigation should be necessary to establish
418 if there is any other potential level of correlation based on the successive first
419 occurrences of the guides for this interval in Russia, Belgium/France and Britain.

420 In summary, if the Holkerian Substage should have international counterparts, this
421 substage in Britain should be reconsidered, the Cf5 α subzone should be the level to
422 redefine the Holkerian Substage, instead of the use of the Cf5 β subzone to mark the
423 base. These substantial differences in the definition of the British substages compared to
424 the international chronostratigraphical units are not new, and it has been already
425 demonstrated at other levels (Cózar and Somerville, 2014). As a secondary
426 consideration, due to the poor preservation in bed B at Barker Scar, this section should
427 be supplemented with data from a para-stratotype, to confirm any possible extension of
428 the Cf5 α subzone as the base of the Holkerian.

429

430 **5. Conclusions**

431

432 Foraminiferal revision of the Holkerian Stratotype of Britain at Barker Scar, Holker
433 Hall, south Cumbria, shows much richer assemblages than previously known. These
434 allow the subdivision of the section into the Cf4 δ , the Cf5 α and the Cf5 β subzones (the
435 latter being subdivided into a lower Cf5 β 1 and upper Cf5 β 2 intervals). The occurrence
436 in bed C of the Cf5 α subzone is c. 14 m below the traditional basal boundary of the
437 Holkerian at bed K, whereas the Cf5 β subzone from the upper part of bed C is more
438 than 10 m below the current boundary. The boundaries of the foraminiferal subzones
439 coincide with the main interval affected by dolomitization in the section, which poses
440 problems in defining the precise bases for these subzones.

441 In spite of the dolomitization, a more or less continuous foraminiferal record allows
442 a correlation of the base of the Cf5 β with the preserved succession in the Livian
443 Substage (defined in Belgium, but also used in France), and it is assumed that the base
444 of this substage should correspond in part to the base of the Cf5 α subzone, although it
445 also includes in some sections, part of the Cf4 δ subzone. Compared to the Russian
446 Tulian Substage, the base of the Cf5 α subzone can be correlated with the base of the
447 Tulian, and although it contains many taxa in common with the Holkerian, further
448 investigation is needed to establish other levels of correlation higher up in the substage.

449 All these problems suggest that the Holkerian, as it is currently recognised, and the
450 Barker Scar section should be reconsidered, and at least, a para-stratotype section
451 devoid of dolomitization should be investigated, and to re-locate the base of the
452 Holkerian established on the base of the Cf5 α foraminiferal subzone (column 2 in Fig.
453 2). These modifications would allow an apparent synchronous faunal event which
454 would form the basis of a future subdivision of the Viséan.

455

456 **6. Acknowledgements**

457 We would like to thank D. Vachard and C. N. Waters for their constructive comments.
458 PC is grateful to the financial support by the project CGL2016-78738 of the Spanish
459 Ministry of Research and Innovation. MWH was funded by NERC (grant
460 NE/P00170X/1). Vassil Karloukovski, Tereza Kamenikova, David Mindham and
461 Courtney Sprain helped collect the samples. Holker Hall Estate, and Natural England
462 allowed access and permits to collect samples from Barker Scar.

463

464 **References**

465 Alekseev, A.S., 2009. Geological setting and Carboniferous stratigraphy of Moscow
466 Basin. In: Alekseev, A.S. Goreva, N.N. (Eds.), Type and reference Carboniferous
467 sections in the south part of the Moscow Basin. Field Trip Guidebook of
468 International Field Meeting of the I.U.G.S. Subcommittee on Carboniferous
469 Stratigraphy. Borissiak Paleontological Institute of Russian Academy of Sciences,
470 Moscow, p. 5-12.

471 Aretz, M., Nudds, J.R., 2005. The coral fauna of the Holkerian/Asbian boundary
472 stratotype section (Carboniferous) at Little Asby Scar (Cumbria, England) and its
473 implications for the boundary. *Stratigraphy* 2, 167-190.

474 Aretz, M., Herbig, H.G. and Wang, X.D. 2020. The Carboniferous Period. In:
475 Gradstein, F.M., Ogg, J.G., Schmitz, M.D., Ogg, G.M. (Eds.), *Geologic Time Scale*
476 2020. Elsevier, p. 811-874.

477 Conil, R., Groessens, E., Pirlet, H., 1977. Nouvelle charte stratigraphique du Dinantien
478 type de la Belgique. *Annales de la Société Géologique du Nord* 96, 363-371.

479 Conil, R., Longerstaey, P.J., Ramsbottom, W.H.C., 1980. Matériaux pour l'étude
480 micropaléontologique du Dinantien de Grande-Bretagne. *Mémoires de l'Institut de*
481 *Géologie de l'Université de Louvain* 30, 1-187 (imprinted 1979).

482 Conil, R., Groessens, E., Laloux, M., Poty, E., Tourneur, F., 1991. Carboniferous guide
483 foraminifera, corals and conodonts in the Franco-Belgian and Campine basins.
484 Their potential for widespread correlation. *Courier Forschungsinstitut Senckenberg*
485 130, 15-30.

486 Cossey, P.J, Adams. A.E, Purnell, M.A, Whiteley, M.J., Whyte, M.A., Wright, V.P.,
487 2004. *British Lower Carboniferous Stratigraphy*. Geological Conservation Review
488 Series 29. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, 636 p.

489 Cózar, P., Somerville, I.D., 2004. New algal and foraminiferal assemblages and
490 evidence for recognition of the Asbian–Brigantian boundary in northern England.
491 Proceedings of the Yorkshire Geological Society 55, 43-65.

492 Cózar, P., Somerville, I.D. 2014. Latest Viséan-Early Namurian (Carboniferous)
493 foraminifers from Britain: implications for biostratigraphic and glacioeustatic
494 correlations. Newsletters on Stratigraphy 47, 355-367.

495 Cózar, P., Somerville, I.D. 2020. Foraminifers in upper Viséan–lower Serpukhovian
496 limestones (Mississippian) from South Wales: regional correlation and implications
497 for British foraminiferal zonal schemes. Proceedings of the Yorkshire Geological
498 society 63, pygs2020-009.

499 Cózar, P., Vachard, D., 2001. Dainellinae Subfam. Nov. (Foraminiferida du Carbonifère
500 inférieur), révision et nouveaux taxons. Geobios 34, 505-526.

501 Cózar, P., Vachard, D., Somerville, I.D., Izart, A., Coronado, I., 2020. Lower-Middle
502 Viséan boundary interval in the Palaeotethys: refinements for the foraminiferal
503 zonal schemes. Geological Magazine 157, 513-526.

504 Davydov, V.I., Korn, D., Schmitz, M.D., Gradstein, F.M., Hammer, O., 2012. Chapter
505 23: the Carboniferous Period. In: Gradstein, F.M., Ogg, J.G., Schmitz, M.D., Ogg,
506 G.M. (Eds), The Geologic Time Scale 2012, Elsevier, p. 603-651.

507 Fewtrell, M.D., Ramsbottom, W.H.C., Strank, A.R.E., 1981. Carboniferous. In: Jenkins,
508 D.G., Murray, J.W. (Eds.), Stratigraphical atlas of fossil Foraminifera. British
509 Micropalaeontological Society Series, Ellis Horwood, Chichester, p. 13-69.

510 Garwood, E.J., 1913. The Lower Carboniferous succession in the north-west of
511 England. Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society of London 68, 449-572.

512 Garwood E.J. 1916. The faunal succession in the Lower Carboniferous rocks of
513 Westmorland and north Lancashire. Proceeding of the Geologists Association, 27,
514 1-43.

515 George, T.N., Johnson, G.A.L., Mitchell, M., Prentice, J.E., Ramsbottom, W.H.C.,
516 Sevastopulo, G.D., Wilson, R.B., 1976. A correlation of Dinantian rocks in the
517 British Isles. Geological Society, London, Special Report 7, 87 p.

518 Heckel , P.H., Clayton, G., 2006. The Carboniferous System. Use of the new official
519 names for the subsystems, series and stages. *Geologica Acta* 4, 403-407.

520 Holliday, D.W., Molyneux, S.G., 2006. Editorial statement: new official names for the
521 subsystems, series and stages of the Carboniferous System – some guidance for
522 contributors to the Proceedings. *Proceedings of the Yorkshire Geological Society*
523 56, 57-58.

524 IGS, 1979. Geological map of the United Kingdom South at 1:625.000-scale. 3rd edn.
525 Institute of Geological Sciences, Ordnance Survey, Southampton.

526 Johnson, E.W., Soper, N.J., Burgess, I.C., 2001. Geology of the country around
527 Ulverston. Memoir of the British Geological Survey, Sheet 48 (England and
528 Wales). HMSO, London, 129 p.

529 Kalvoda, J., 2002. Late Devonian-Early Carboniferous foraminiferal fauna: zonation,
530 evolutionary events, paleobiogeography and tectonic implications. *Folia Facultatis*
531 *scientiarum naturalium Universitatis Masarykianae Brunensis*, *Geologia* 39, 1-213.

532 Klimenko, T.V., Kulagina E., Gorozhanina, E.N., Kochetova, N.N., Zhernovkova, T.V.,
533 2018. Upper Itkulovo Subformation of the Viséan Stage of the Carboniferous in the
534 South Urals: lithological and paleontological characteristics. In: Puchkov, V.N.
535 (Ed.), *Geologiya, poleznyye iskopayemyye i problemy geologii Bashkortostana*,

536 Urala i sopredel'nykh territoriy. 12-ya Mezhhregionalnaya nauchno-prakticheskaya
537 konferentsiya. Ufa, Russian Federation, p. 105-115 (in Russian).

538 Kulagina, E.I., Klimenko, T.V., 2014. Upper Viséan Foraminiferal assemblages of the
539 Sikaza River on the western Slope of the Southern Urals. In: Geologicheskikh
540 Sbornik Institut Geologii, Ufimski Nauchno Tsentr, 11 Yubileinyi vyp., Ufa,
541 DizainPoligrafServis, p. 48-56 (in Russian).

542 Kulagina, E.I., Gorozhanina, E.N., Gorozhanin, V.M., Filimonova, T.V., 2019. Upper
543 Viséan and Serpukhovian biostratigraphy and lithofacies of the southeast of the
544 East European Platform. *Stratigraphy and Geological Correlation* 27, 613-637.

545 Lipina, O.A., Reitlinger, E.A., 1970. Stratigraphie zonale et paléozoogéographie du
546 Carbonifère inférieur d'après les foraminifères. In: *Compte Rendu VI Congrès*
547 *International de Stratigraphie et Géologie du Carbonifère*, Sheffield, vol. 3, p. 1101-
548 1112.

549 Makhlina, M.Kh., Vdovenko, M.V., Alekseev, A.S., Byvsheva, T.V., Donakova, L.M.,
550 Zhulitova, V.E., Kononova, L.I., Umnova, N.I., Chik, E.M., 1993. Nizhnii Karbon
551 Moskovskoi sineklizy i Voronezhskoi anteklizy (Early Carboniferous of the
552 Moscow Synclise and Voronezh anteklise). *Rossiiskaya Akademiya Nauk, P*
553 *Moskovskoe Obshchestvo Ispytatelei Pridory, Komitet po Geologii i*
554 *Ispolzonalniyu Nedr Pri Pravitelstve Rossiikoi Federalii, Moskva "Nauka", 223 p.*
555 (in Russian).

556 McLean, D., Owens, B., Bodman, D. J., McLean, F. D. (2018). Miospores from the
557 Brigantian stratotype section at Janny Wood, Cumbria. *Proceedings of the*
558 *Yorkshire Geological Society* 62, 89-100.

559 Pointon, M. A., Chew, D. M., Ovtcharova, M., Delcambre, B., Sevastopulo, G. D.,
560 2021. Uranium-lead dates from Livian (middle Viséan) bentonites of the Namur-
561 Dinant Basin, Belgium. *Newsletters on Stratigraphy*. DOI: 10.1127/nos/2021/0622

562 Poletaev, V.I., Brazhnikova, N.E., Vasilyuk, N.P, Vdovenko, M.V., 1990. Local zones
563 and major Lower Carboniferous biostratigraphic boundaries of the Donets Basin
564 (Donbass), Ukraine, U.S.S.R. *Courier Forchungs-institut Senckenberg* 130, 47-59

565 Poty, E., Hance, L., 2006. Livian. *Geologica Belgica* 9, 133-138.

566 Poty, E., Devuyst, F.-X., Hance, L., 2006. Upper Devonian and Mississippian
567 foraminiferal and rugose coral zonations of Belgium and Northern France: a tool for
568 Eurasian correlations. *Geological Magazine* 143, 829-857.

569 Poty, E., Aretz, M., Hance, L., 2014. Belgian substages as a basis for an international
570 chronostratigraphic division of the Tournaisian and Viséan. *Geological Magazine*
571 151, 229-243.

572 Ramsbottom, W.H.C., 1981. Field guide to the boundary stratotypes of the
573 Carboniferous stages in Britain. Biennial Meeting of the Subcommittee of
574 Carboniferous Stratigraphy, Leeds, 110 p.

575 Rauzer-Chernousova, D.M., 1948. Foraminifera and stratigraphy of Viséan and
576 Namurian stages of central part of Russian Platform and Cis-Urals. *Akademiya*
577 *Nauk SSSR, Trudy Instituta Geologicheskikh Nauk*, 62, geologicheskaya seriya 19,
578 102-142 (in Russian).

579 Reitlinger, E.A., Vdovenko, M.V., Gubareva, V.S., Shcherbakov, O.A., 1996. European
580 part of the USSR: Lower Carboniferous. In: Wagner, R.H., Winkler Prins, C.F.,
581 Granados, L.F. (Eds.), *The Carboniferous of the World III, The former USSR,*
582 *Mongolia, Middle Eastern Platform, Afghanistan and Iran.* IUGS Publication No.

583 33. Instituto Geológico y Minero de España/Nationaal Natuurhistorisch Museum,
584 Madrid, p. 23-54.

585 Riley, N.J., 1993. Dinantian (Lower Carboniferous) biostratigraphy and
586 chronostratigraphy in the British Isles. *Journal of the Geological Society of*
587 *London*, 150, 427-446.

588 Riley, N.J., 1994. Foraminiferal Biostratigraphy of the Chadian Stage stratotype
589 (Dinantian), Chatburn, Northwest England. *Bulletin de la Société belge de*
590 *Géologie* 103, 13-49.

591 Rose, W.C.C., Dunham, K.C., 1977. Geology and Hematite deposits of South Cumbria.
592 Economic Memoir of the Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheets 58 and part of
593 48. HMSO, London, 170 p.

594 Simpson, J., Kalvoda, J., 1987. Sedimentology and foraminiferal biostratigraphy of the
595 Arundian (Dinantian) stratotype. In: Hart, M.B. (Ed.), *Micropalaeontology of*
596 *Carbonate Environments*. British Micropalaeontological Society series. Ellis
597 Horward Ltd, Chichester, p. 226-237.

598 Strank, A.R.E., 1981. Foraminiferal biostratigraphy of the Holkerian, Asbian and
599 Brigantian stages of the British Lower Carboniferous. Ph.D. Thesis, University of
600 Manchester, Manchester, 391 p. (unpublished).

601 Vdovenko, M.V., Aisenverg, D.Ye., Nemirovskaya, T.I., Poletaev, V.I., 1990. An
602 overview of Lower Carboniferous biozones of the Russian Platform. *Journal of*
603 *Foraminiferal Research* 20, 184-194.

604 Waters, C. N., 2011. Chapter 2. Definitions of chronostratigraphic subdivisions:
605 geochronology and event stratigraphy. In: Waters, C.N., Somerville, I.D., Jones,
606 N.S., et al. (Eds.), *A revised correlation of Carboniferous rocks in the British Isles*.
607 The Geological Society, London, Special Report 26, p. 3-10.

608 Waters, C. N., Burgess, I. C., Cózar, P., Holliday, D. W., Somerville, I. D., in press.
609 Reappraisal of Arundian–Asbian successions of the Great Scar Limestone Group
610 across northern England. Proceedings of the Yorkshire Geological Society.
611

612

613

614 **Captions**

615

616 **Fig. 1.** Tournaisian-Viséan sketch-map of Northern England with the location of the
617 Chadian (Chatburn), Holkerian (Barker Scar), Asbian (Little Asby) and Brigantian
618 (Janny Wood) stratotypes. Adapted from IGS (1979).

619

620 **Fig. 2.** Log of Barker Scar section showing first occurrences of selected foraminifers
621 and macrofauna (in blue). Letters for the beds according to Ramsbottom (1981).
622 Column 1 (bottom right) is the amended position of the base of the Holkerian as it is
623 currently understood (dashed line below red arrow tip), based on the foraminifers
624 proposed by Ramsbottom (1981), representative of the Cf5 β subzone. Column 2 is the
625 position proposed herein for the base of the Holkerian, based on the Cf5 α subzone
626 (solid line below blue arrow tip). Column 3 is the correlation with the lower-middle
627 (Moliniacian/Livian) Viséan boundary in Western Europe. Abbreviations: C mud =
628 calcareous mudstone, M = mudstone, W = wackestone, P = packstone, G = grainstone,
629 SST = sandstone, R & D beds = Rose and Dunham (1977) beds.

630

631 **Fig. 3.** Selected foraminifers representative of the top Cf4 δ and Cf5 α subzones. Scale
632 bar = 400 microns except for fig. 1 = 800 microns. **1)** *Lituotubella glomospiroides?*
633 Rauzer-Chernousova (oblique section), BS11. **2, 3)** *Endothyranopsis* aff. *compressa*
634 (Rauzer-Chernousova and Reitlinger), BS16, BS15. **4)** *Omphalotis* aff. *minima* (Rauzer-
635 Chernousova and Reitlinger), BS11. **5, 6)** *Koskinotextularia* aff. *cribriformis* Eickhoff,
636 BS31, BS40. **7, 8)** *Archaediscus moelleri* Rauzer-Chernousova (concavus stage),

637 BS31, BS57. **9)** *Archaediscus operosus* Shlykova (involutus transitional to concavus
638 stage), BS40. **10, 11)** *Archaediscus krestovnikovi* Rauzer-Chernousova (concavus
639 stage), BS40, BS31. **12, 13)** *Archaediscus* sp. at concavus stage, BS32. **14)**
640 *Archaediscus* aff. *krestovnikovi* (involutus transitional to concavus stage), BS24. **15)**
641 *Archaediscus pusillus* Rauzer-Chernousova (involutus transitional to concavus stage),
642 BS14.

643

644 **Fig. 4.** Selected foraminifers from the lower part of the Cf5 β subzone. Scale bar = 400
645 microns except for fig. 8 = 800 microns. **1, 2)** *Pojarkovella pura* Simonova, BS33,
646 BS42. **3, 4)** *Pojarkovella ketmenica* Simonova and Zub, BS33. **5, 6)** *Pojarkovella*
647 *nibelis* (Durkina), BS33. **7)** *Pojarkovella honesta* Simonova, BS33. **8)** *Holkeria daggeri*
648 Strank, BS42. **9)** *Endothyranopsis compressa* (Rauzer-Chernousova and Reitlinger),
649 BS40. **10)** *Koskinotextularia obliqua* (Conil and Lys), BS42. **11)** *Koskinotextularia*
650 *bradyi* (Moeller), BS40. **12)** *Koskinotextularia cribriformis* Eickhoff, BS40. **13)**
651 *Archaediscus* aff. *chernousovensis* Mamet (concavus stage), BS41. **14)** *Holkeria*
652 *avonensis* Conil and Longerstaey, BS42. **15)** *Holkeria topleyensis* Strank, BS42.

653

654 **Fig. 5.** Selected foraminifers from the upper part of the Cf5 β subzone. Scale bar = 400
655 microns except for figs 11, 14, 16 = 800 microns. **1)** *Cribrospira?* sp., BS49. **2)**
656 *Vissarionovella holkeriana* Conil and Longerstaey, BS49. **3)** *Kublonibelia immanis*
657 Conil, BS51. **4)** *Pseudoendothyra struvei* (Moeller), BS68. **5)** *Pseudoendothyra* sp. 2,
658 BS69. **6)** *Pseudoendothyra* cf. *illustria* (Vissarionova), BS76x. **7)** *Rhodesinella pansa*
659 (Conil and Lys), BS78. **8)** “*Millerella*” *excavata* Conil and Lys, BS62. **9)**
660 *Pseudoendothyra* sp. 1 (*P.* aff. *struvei* (Moeller)), BS62. **10)** *Omphalotis minima*
661 (Rauzer-Chernousova and Reitlinger), BS76. **11)** *Globoendothyra globula* (Eichwald),

662 BS75. **12)** *Magnitella porosa* Malakhova, BS77. **13)** *Endothyranopsis compressa*
663 Rauzer-Chernousova and Reitlinger transitional to *E. crassa* (Brady), BS83. **14)**
664 *Lituotubella magna* Rauzer-Chernousova, BS69. **15)** *Pojarkovella evolutica* Simonova
665 and Zub, BS62. **16)** *Koskinotextularia eximiformis* (Lipina), BS78. **17)**
666 *Nodosarchaediscus pirleti* (Bozorgnia), BS73. **18, 19)** *Archaediscus krestovnikovi*
667 Rauzer-Chernousova morphotype 2 (transitional to the angulatus stage), BS84. **20)**
668 *Eostaffellina? accepta* (Ganelina), BS89.

669

670 **Fig. 6.** Correlation of the main substages equivalent to the Holkerian in Europe.
671 Absolute ages are based on Aretz et al. (2020). Diagonal striped lines correspond to the
672 hiatus at the base of the Livian and in the early Asbian in the south Cumbria
673 stratigraphical column (Formations). Arrows mark the necessary movement down in the
674 Holkerian stratotype section to coincide with the base of the Livian and Tulian. Dashed
675 line of correlation at the base of the upper Viséan has never been studied in detail. The
676 base of the Park Limestone Formation is considered at the base of bed J of Fig. 2.
677 Abbreviation Ur = Urswick Limestone Formation.

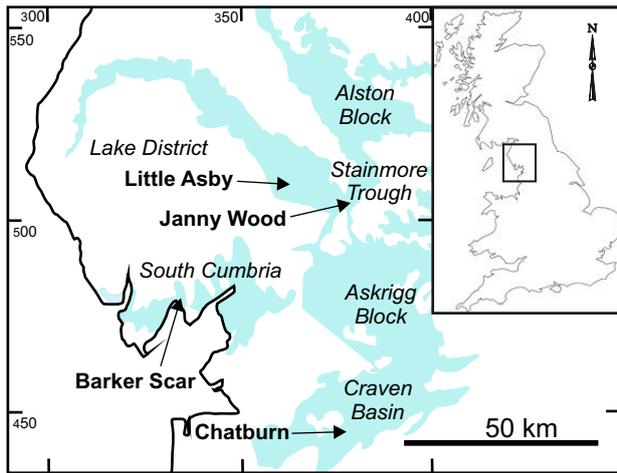
678

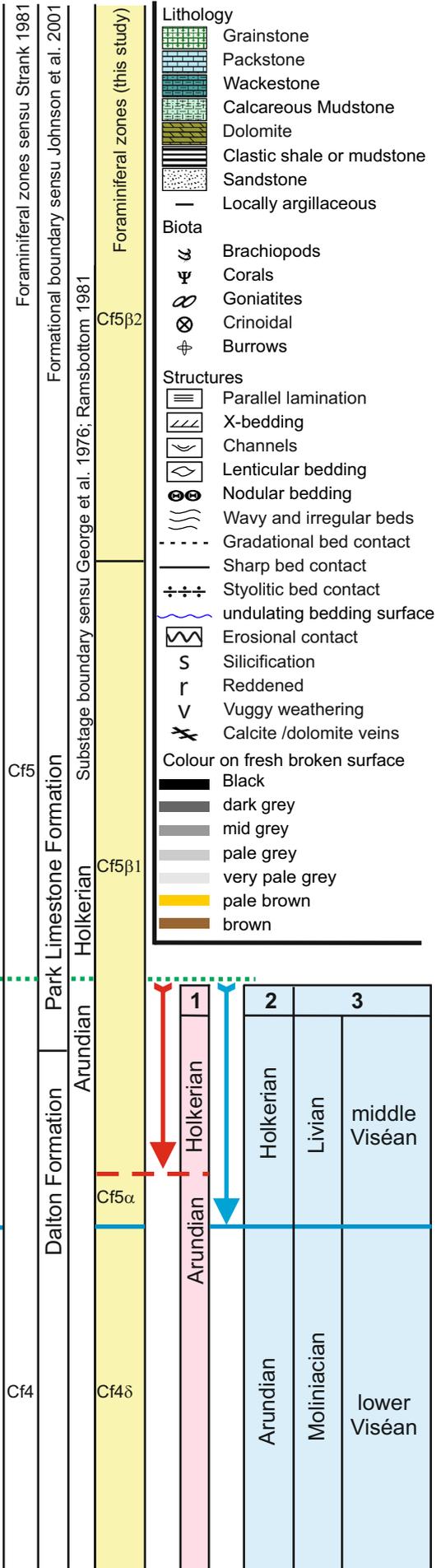
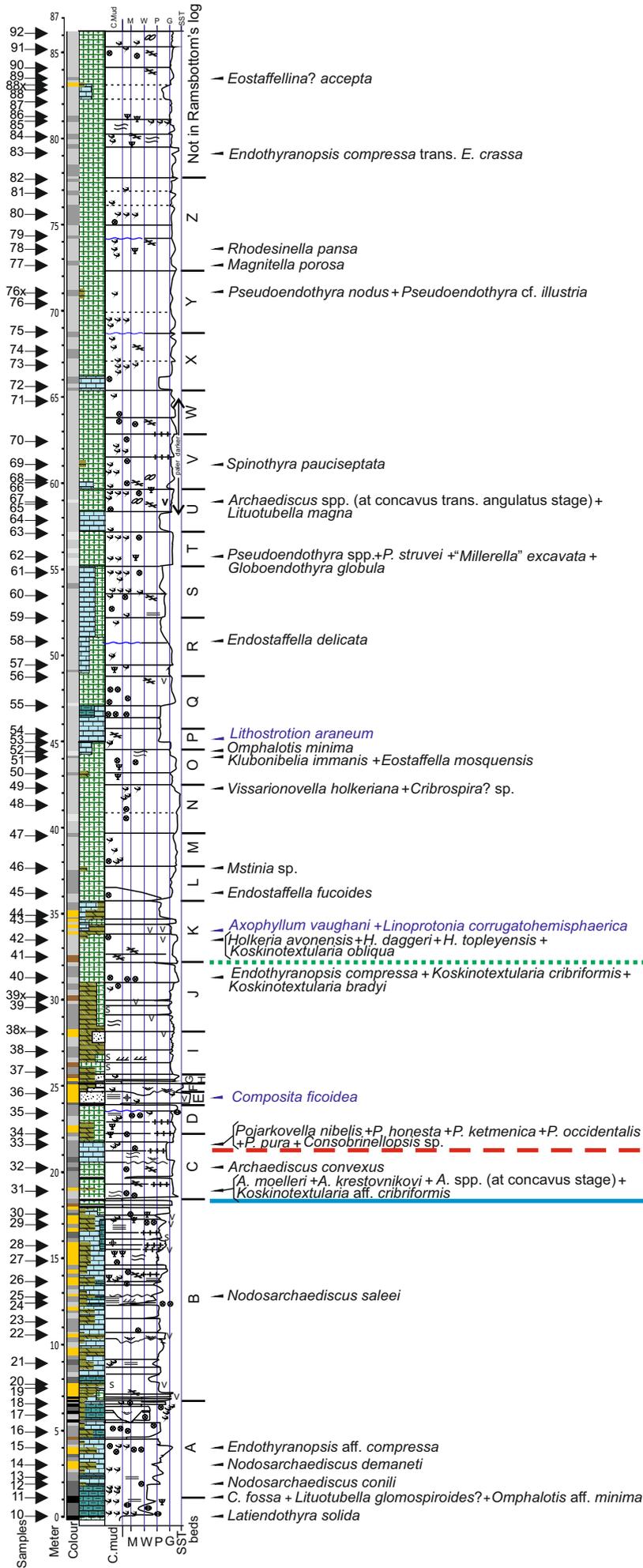
679 **Supplementary material:**

680 **Table S1.** Foraminiferal distribution in Barker Scar.

681 **Table S2**

682 **Figures S1 to S4.** Photos of the Barker Scar section with bed boundaries shown.





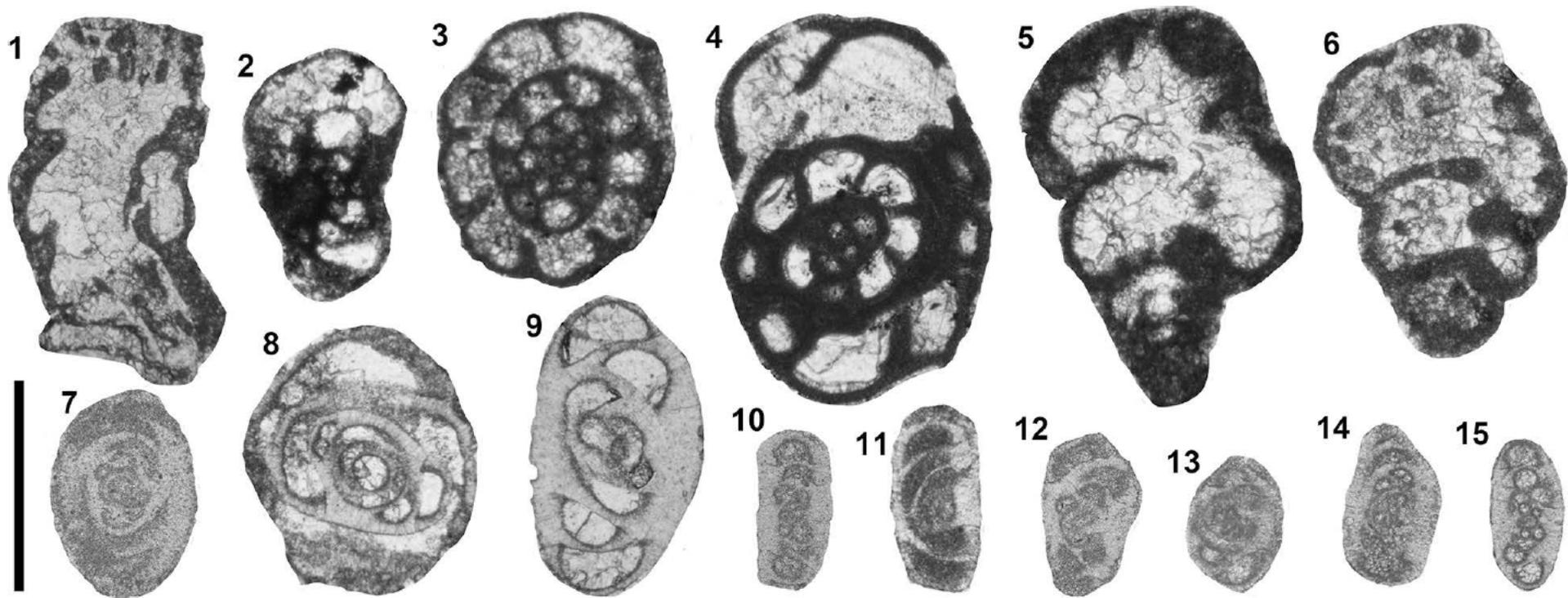


Fig. 3. Selected foraminifers representative of the top Cf4 δ and Cf5 α subzones. Scale bar = 400 microns except for fig. 1 = 800 microns. **1)** *Lituotubella glomspiroides?* Rauzer-Chernousova (oblique section), BS11. **2, 3)** *Endothyranopsis* aff. *compressa* (Rauzer-Chernousova and Reitlinger), BS16, BS15. **4)** *Omphalotis* aff. *minima* (Rauzer-Chernousova and Reitlinger), BS11. **5, 6)** *Koskinotextularia* aff. *cribriformis* Eickhoff, BS31, BS40. **7, 8)** *Archaediscus moelleri* Rauzer-Chernousova (concavus stage), BS31, BS57. **9)** *Archaediscus operosus* Shlykova (involutus transitional to concavus stage), BS40. **10, 11)** *Archaediscus krestovnikovi* Rauzer-Chernousova (concavus stage), BS40, BS31. **12, 13)** *Archaediscus* sp. at concavus stage, BS32. **14)** *Archaediscus* aff. *krestovnikovi* (involutus transitional to concavus stage), BS24. **15)** *Archaediscus pusillus* Rauzer-Chernousova (involutus transitional to concavus stage), BS14.

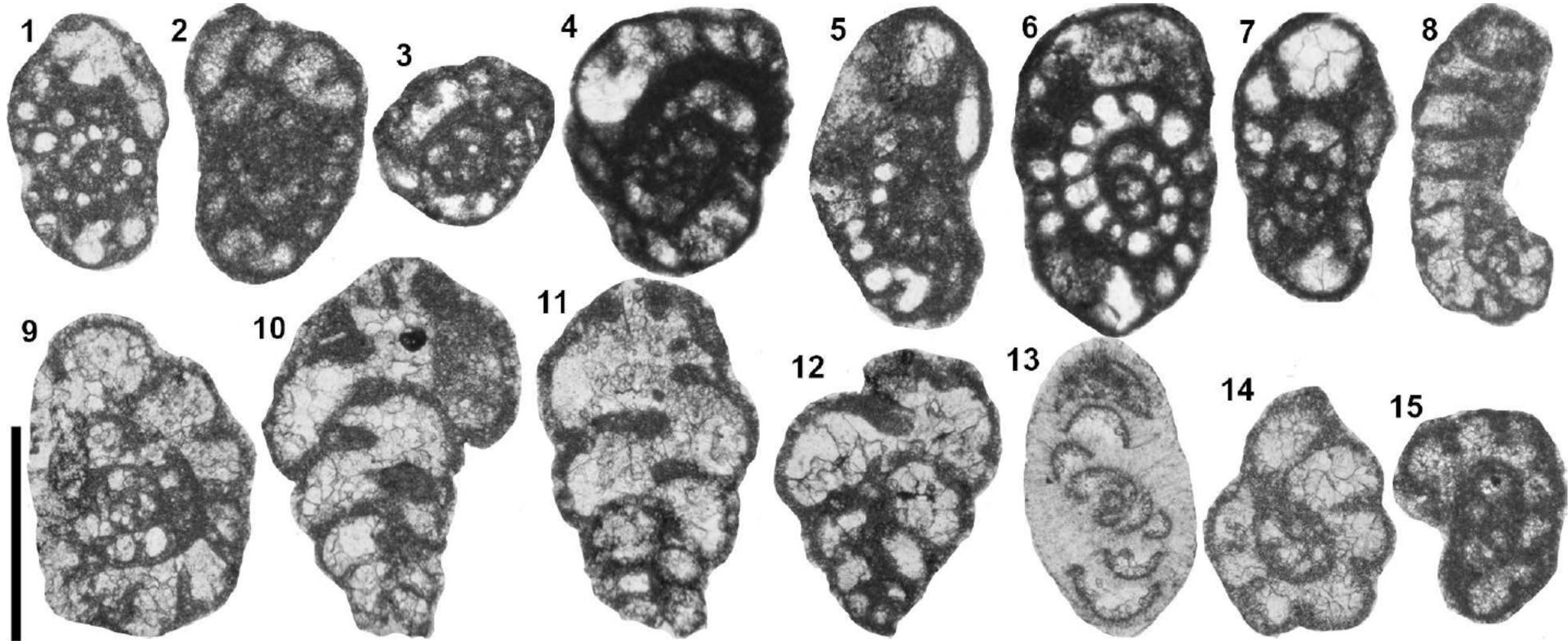


Fig. 4. Selected foraminifera from the lower part of the Cf5 β subzone. Scale bar = 400 microns except for fig. 8 = 800 microns. **1, 2)** *Pojarkovella pura* Simonova, BS33, BS42. **3, 4)** *Pojarkovella ketmenica* Simonova and Zub, BS33. **5, 6)** *Pojarkovella nibelis* (Durkina), BS33. **7)** *Pojarkovella honesta* Simonova, BS33. **8)** *Holkeria daggeri* Strank, BS42. **9)** *Endothyranopsis compressa* (Rauzer-Chernousova and Reitlinger), BS40. **10)** *Koskinotextularia obliqua* (Conil and Lys), BS42. **11)** *Koskinotextularia bradyi* (Moeller), BS40. **12)** *Koskinotextularia cribriformis* Eickhoff, BS40. **13)** *Archaediscus* aff. *chernousovensis* Mamet (concavus stage), BS41. **14)** *Holkeria avonensis* Conil and Longerstaey, BS42. **15)** *Holkeria topleyensis* Strank, BS42.

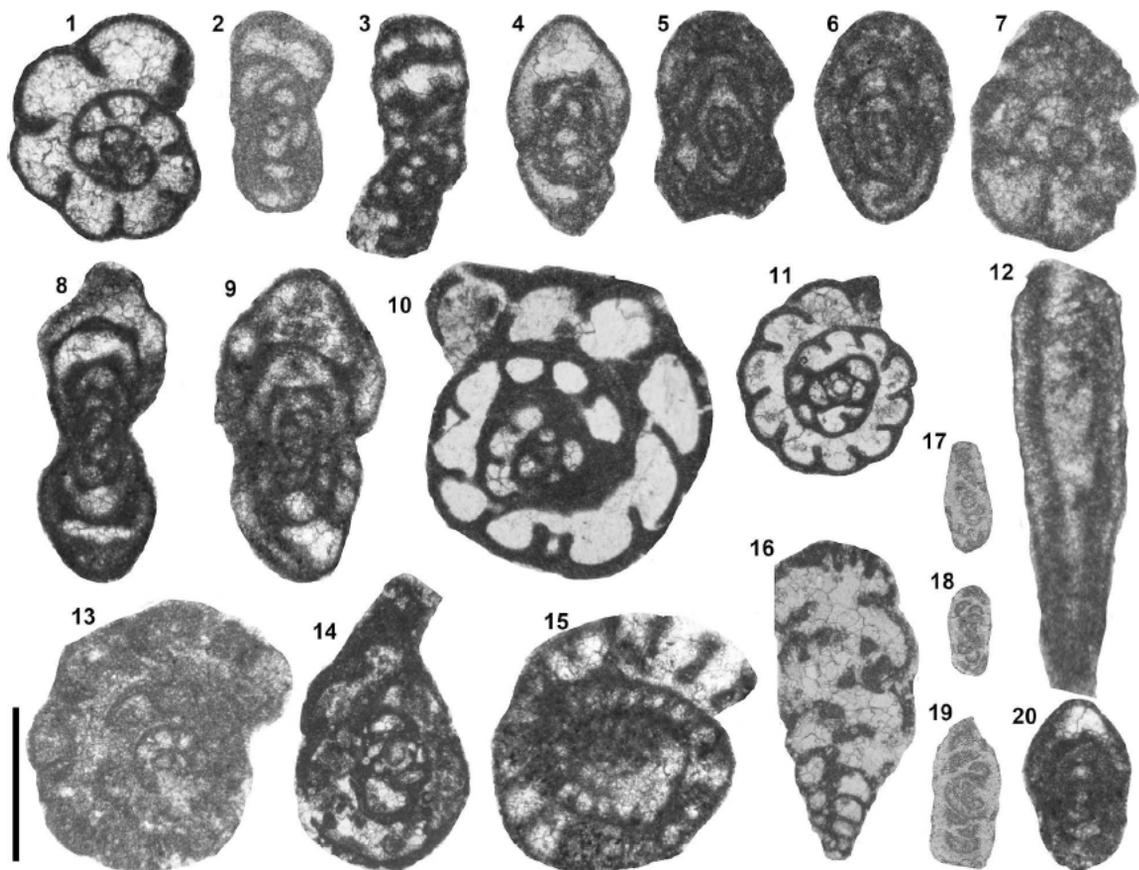
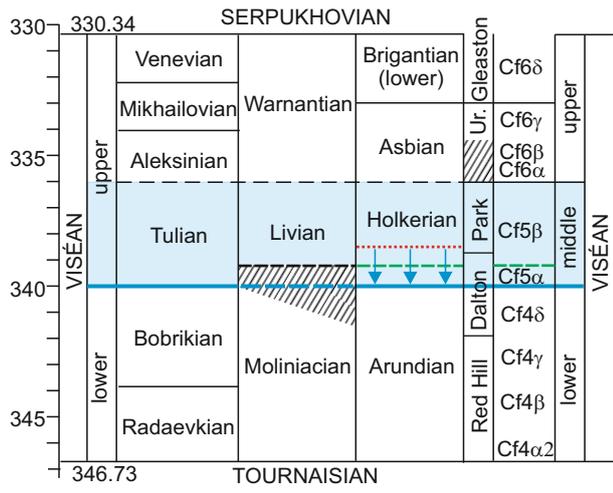


Fig. 5. Selected foraminifera from the upper part of the Cf5 β subzone. Scale bar = 400 microns except for 11, 14, 16 = 800 microns. 1) *Cribrospira?* sp., BS49. 2) *Vissarionovella holkeriana* Conil and Longerstaey, BS49. 3) *Kublonibelia immanis* Conil, BS51. 4) *Pseudoendothyra struvei* (Moeller), BS68. 5) *Pseudoendothyra* sp. 2, BS69. 6) *Pseudoendothyra* cf. *illustria* (Vissarionova), BS76x. 7) *Rhodesinella pansa* (Conil and Lys), BS78. 8) "*Millerella*" *excavata* Conil and Lys, BS62. 9) *Pseudoendothyra* sp. 1 (*P.* aff. *struvei* (Moeller)), BS62. 10) *Omphalotis minima* (Rauzer-Chernousova and Reitlinger), BS76. 11) *Globoendothyra globula* (Eichwald), BS75. 12) *Magnitella porosa* Malakhova, BS77. 13) *Endothyranopsis compressa* Rauzer-Chernousova and Reitlinger transitional to *E. crassa* (Brady), BS83. 14) *Lituotubella magna* Rauzer-Chernousova, BS69. 15) *Pojarkovella evolutica* Simonova and Zub, BS62. 16) *Koskinotextularia eximiformis* (Lipina), BS78. 17) *Nodosarchaediscus pirlleti* (Bozorgnia), BS73. 18, 19) *Archaediscus krestovnikovii* Rauzer-Chernousova morphotype 2 (transitional to the *angulatus* stage), BS84. 20) *Eostaffellina?* *accepta* (Ganelina), BS89.



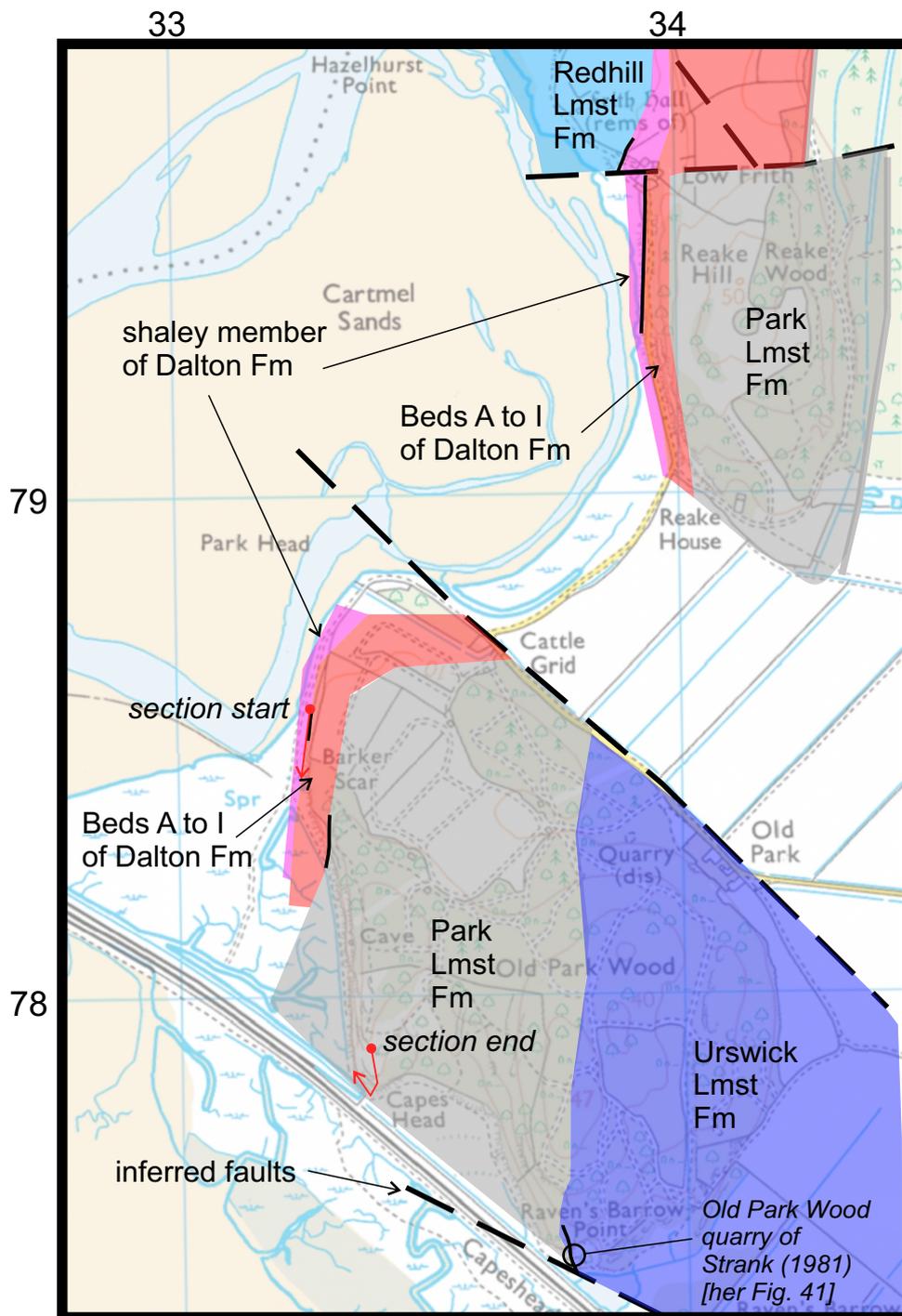


Fig. S1. Simplified geological map of the area around the Barker Scar section (none coloured areas are drift covered). On base topographic map from bing.co.uk. Grid squares are 1 km. Modified from Johnson et al. (2001).

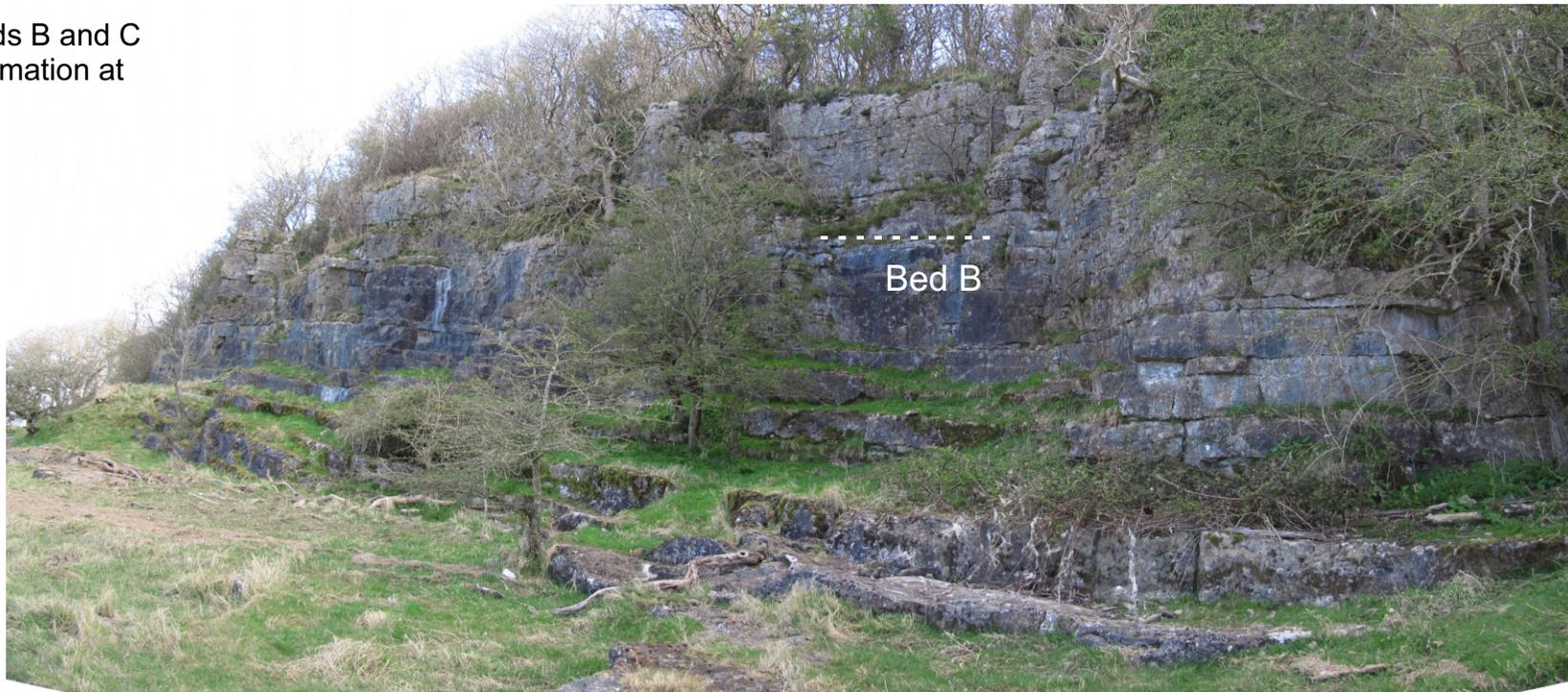


Fig. S2a. Beds A and B of Dalton Formation at Barker Scar.



Most of Bed B in this outcrop

Fig. S2b. Beds B and C of Dalton Formation at Barker Scar.



Top of
Bed B





Fig. S2c. Beds B through to bed I of the Dalton Formation, and lowest part of the Park Limestone Formation at Barker Scar.



Fig. S2d. Beds L through to Bed W of the Park Limestone Formation at Barker Scar.



Fig. S2e. Beds from the upper part of the Park Limestone Formation exposure at Barker Scar. Above Bed Z the limestone is rather better bedded- a feature typical of the mid parts of the Park Limestone.



