

## DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

### DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT GREENAN, COUNTY DOWN. ARTICLE 24 OF THE NATURE CONSERVATION AND AMENITY LANDS (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1985.

The Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland (the Department), having consulted the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside and being satisfied that the area described and delineated on the attached map (the area) is of special scientific interest by reason of the flora and fauna and accordingly needs to be specially protected, hereby declares the area to be an area of special scientific interest to be known as the 'Greenan Area of Special Scientific Interest'.

The area is of special scientific interest because of its wetland flora and fauna. Greenan is a basin fen, that lies in a shallow depression within rocky countryside. Although small, there is a range of vegetation types, including some notable fen communities and species.

The centre of the area is a mosaic of open water and swamp, with pockets of more diverse wetland vegetation and acid fen. The swamp is dominated by Bottle Sedge *Carex rostrata* with frequent Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata*, Water Horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile*, Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* and Greater Bladderwort *Utricularia vulgaris*. Within the swamp, there are floating mats dominated by mosses such as *Sphagnum squarrosum*, *S. subnitens* and *Pseudoscleropodium purum*. These support abundant grassy tussocks with a range of species, including Creeping Bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, Velvet Bent *A. canina* and Sweet Vernal Grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*.

To the north, there is an unusual fen community dominated by Water Horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile* and Ragged-Robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* growing over a variable bryophyte (moss) layer in which the brown moss *Calliergon cuspidatum* is the most prominent species. This community is one of the most diverse in the area, with a range of grassy species including Velvet Bent *Agrostis canina* and Sweet Vernal Grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and sedges such as White Sedge *Carex curta*, Carnation Sedge *C. panicea*, Star Sedge *C. echinata* and Common Cottongrass *Eriophorum angustifolium*. Typical flowering plants associated with this community include Wild Angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis*, Marsh Cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris* and Common Marsh-bedstraw *Galium palustre*.

To the south and east of the area, the fen grades into wet pasture, with pockets of grassland dominated by Soft-rush *Juncus effusus* and Creeping Bent *Agrostis stolonifera*. This is interspersed in places by more sedge-rich areas, with such species as Carnation Sedge *Carex panicea*, Common Sedge *C. nigra* and Yellow-sedge *C. viridula*. Small pockets of scrub have developed, particularly along the north and western periphery of the site. These grassland and scrub communities add to the diversity of the area.

Greenan contains a number of vascular plants with a restricted distribution in the British Isles, including Greater Bladderwort *Utricularia vulgaris*, Floating Club-rush *Eleogiton fluitans*, and Marsh St John's-wort *Hypericum elodes*. Notable bryophytes include *Sphagnum squarrosum*.

Greenan also provides valuable habitat for a range of wetland animals, including birds and invertebrates.

## SCHEDULE

**The following operations and activities appear to the Department to be likely to damage the flora and fauna of the area:**

1. Any activity or operation which involves the damage or disturbance by any means of the surface and subsurface of the land, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing, reclamation and extraction of minerals, including sand, gravel and peat.
2. Any change in the present annual pattern and intensity of grazing, including any change in the type of livestock used or in supplementary feeding practice.
3. Introduction of mowing or other methods of cutting vegetation.
4. The application of manure, slurry or artificial fertiliser.
5. The application of herbicides, fungicides or other chemicals deployed to kill any form of wild plant, other than plants listed as being noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.
6. The storage or dumping, spreading or discharge of any material not specified under paragraphs 4 or 5 above.
7. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains, other than for plants listed as noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.
8. The release into the area of any animal (other than in connection with normal grazing practice) or plant. 'Animal' includes birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates; 'Plant' includes seed, fruit or spore.
9. Burning.

10. Changes in tree or woodland management, including afforestation, planting, clearing, selective felling and coppicing.
11. Construction, removal or disturbance of any permanent or temporary structure including building, engineering or other operations.
12. Alteration of natural or man-made features, the clearance of boulders or large stones and grading of rock faces.
13. Operations or activities which would affect wetlands (including marsh, fen, bog, rivers, streams and open water), e.g.
  - (i) change in the methods or frequency of routine drainage maintenance;
  - (ii) modification of the structure of any watercourse;
  - (iii) lowering of the water-table, permanently or temporarily;
  - (iv) change in the management of bank-side vegetation.
14. The killing or taking of any wild animal except where such killing or taking is treated as an exception in Articles 5, 6, 11, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21 and 22 of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.
15. The following activities undertaken in a manner likely to damage or disturb the wildlife of the area:
  - (i) Educational activities;
  - (ii) Research activities;
  - (iii) Recreational activities;
  - (iv) Exercising of animals.
16. Changes in game, waterfowl or fisheries management or fishing or hunting practices.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the  
Department of the Environment for  
Northern Ireland on 19 December 1997



---

**ROBERT C MARTIN**  
Assistant Secretary

## FOOTNOTES

- (a) Please note that consent by the Department to any of the operations or activities listed in the Schedule does not constitute planning permission. Where required, planning permission must be applied for in the usual manner to the Department under Part IV of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. Operations or activities covered by planning permission are not normally covered in the list of Notifiable Operations.
- (b) Also note that many of the operations and activities listed in the Schedule are capable of being carried out either on a large scale or in a very small way. While it is impossible to define exactly what is large and what is small, the Department would intend to approach each case in a common sense and practical way. It is very unlikely that small scale operations would give rise for concern and if this was the case the Department would normally give consent, particularly if there is a long history of the operation being undertaken in that precise location.

# GREENAN

## Views About Management The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 Article 28(2)

### A statement of Environment and Heritage Service's views about the management of Greenan Area of Special Scientific Interest ("the ASSI")

This statement represents the views of Environment and Heritage Service about the management of the ASSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the area's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. Environment and Heritage Service has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of the ASSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the ASSI and there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest. It is also very important to recognise that management may need to change with time.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation or activity. The written consent of Environment and Heritage Service is still required before carrying out any operation or activity likely to damage the features of special interest (see the Schedule on pages 2 and 3 of the attached Document B for a list of these operations and activities). Environment and Heritage Service welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the ASSI to ensure that the management of this area maintains and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

### MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Fens are an important habitat for wildlife. Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the fen, through the conservation of its associated native plants and animals.

Fen vegetation requires water levels to be at, or just below, the surface all year round. In addition, increases in the nutrient status of the water and underlying peat soils can lead to the dominance of species such as Bulrush at the expense of other valuable plant communities.

Fen communities are susceptible to successional change and generally need some management to retain their interest. Although occasional small patches of scrub can be valuable in providing additional habitat niches for birds and invertebrates, in the absence of management, coarse grasses such as Common Reed can quickly take over



and ultimately woody species may become dominant. Over a period of time, these species may shade out valuable plant communities and cause the fen to dry out.

Low intensity summer grazing by cattle (or ponies) that are more adaptable to wet conditions is the most effective way of controlling the growth of more vigorous species and helping to maintain species-rich fen vegetation and a diverse sward structure. In the absence of grazing, cutting and removal of the vegetation to create open areas and reduce the dominance of coarse grasses is desirable.

Specific objectives include:

Where appropriate, Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the blocking of drains to prevent the fen from drying out.

Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the maintenance of good water quality through the control of pollution and artificial enrichment.

Ensure that disturbance to the site and its wildlife is minimised.

Where feasible, Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the grazing of fen, although overgrazing should be avoided as the wet soils are particularly susceptible to poaching. Where grazing is not possible, other management practices such as cutting may be used.

In general, the control of scrub can be achieved through the appropriate grazing regime. In some cases, additional scrub control may be required.

Discourage non-native species, especially those that tend to spread at the expense of native wildlife.

Maintain the diversity and quality of habitats associated with the fen, such as grassland and scrub through sensitive management. These adjoining habitats can often be very important for wildlife.



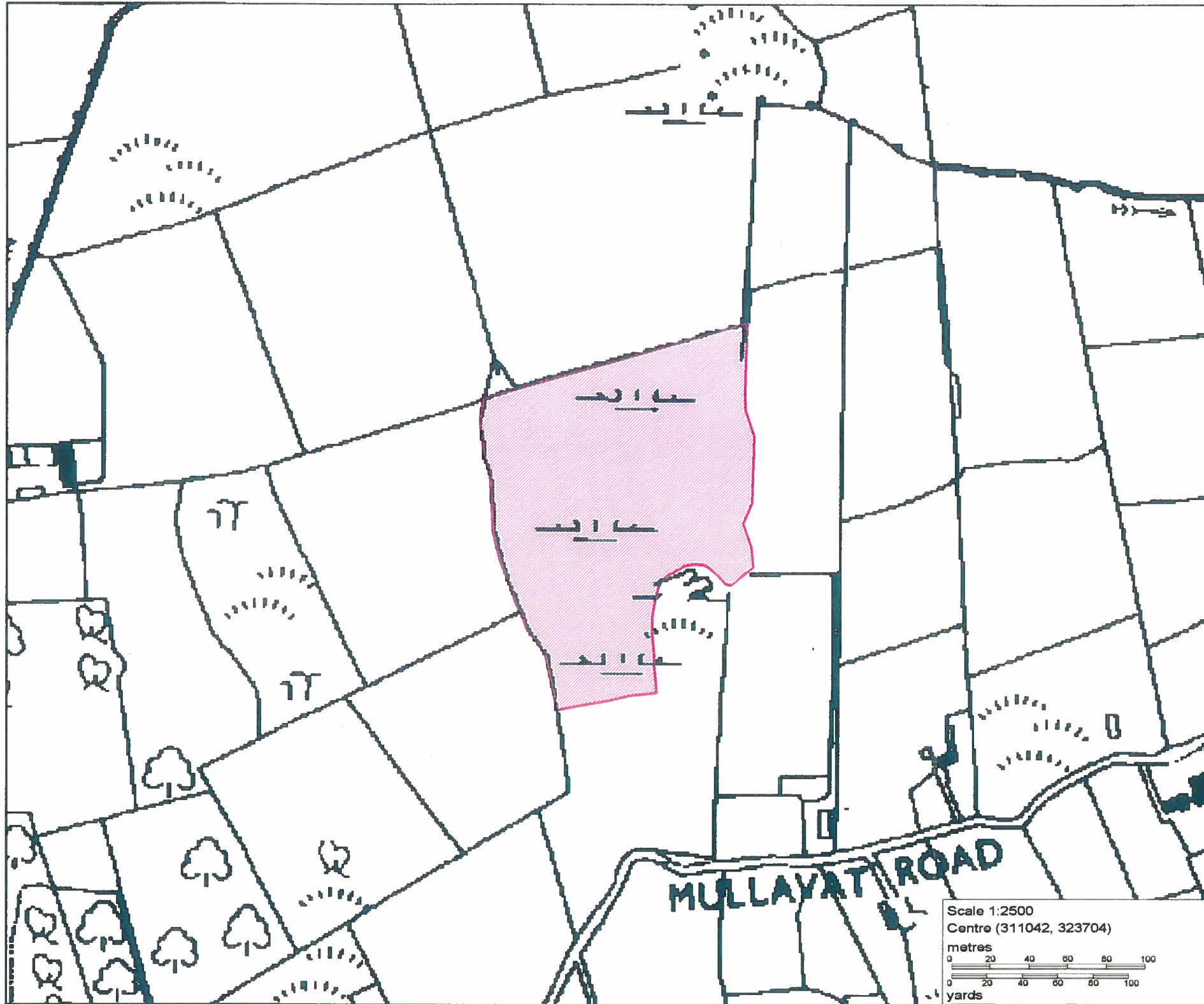
**Conor McParland**  
Authorised Officer

Dated the 15 of MARCH 2007





# GREENAN ASSI



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND  
GREENAN AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

Map referred to in the Declaration dated: 19 December 1997

SITE BOUNDARY: The Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) includes all the lands highlighted within the solid coloured line.

AREA OF SITE: 1.89 hectares

OS MAPS 1:50,000: Sheet No.29  
1:10,000: Sheet No.266

IRISH GRID REFERENCE: J 110237

COUNCIL AREA: NEWRY AND MOURNE

COUNTY: DOWN

ROBERT C MARTIN  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE SERVICE

