

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT BRAADE, COUNTY FERMANAGH. 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 delineated and described on the attached map (the area) is of special scientific interest by reason of the flora and accordingly needs to be specially protected, hereby declares the area to be an area of special scientific interest to be known as the 'Braade area of special scientific interest'.

The area is of special scientific interest because of its rare plants. The moss Orthodontium gracile has recently been recorded here at its only known Irish site. This rare plant of sandstone rocks has suffered a severe decline in the last 150 years and has only been seen recently at nine sites in Britain. In addition, Braade is the only known site in Northern Ireland for the arctic-alpine species, Holly-fern Polystichum lonchitis. This fern is scarce and apparently decreasing in Ireland, with only 9 recent recorded occurrences. As the majority of these are on the west coast, the Braade site is the most easterly location for the species. In the British Isles as a whole, its distribution is predominantly northern, with its headquarters in the central Scottish Highlands.

The fern grows on a small, vegetated scarp strewn with large boulders, on the Carboniferous sandstone. Heather Calluna vulgaris and Bilberry Vaccinium myrtillus are dominant along the top of the scarp, with occasional Cowberry Vaccinium vitis-idaea. Below this on the cliff itself, Great Wood-rush Luzula sylvatica and Bracken Pteridium aquilinum are the main components of the vegetation, with species such as Goldenrod Solidago virgaurea and a wide range of other ferns, including the locally distributed Brittle Bladder-fern Cystopteris fragilis, Hay-scented Buckler-fern Dryopteris aemula and Green Spleenwort Asplenium trichomanes-ramosum. The vegetation at the base of the slope is typical of acid fens and is characterised by the presence of Ragged Robin Lychnis flos-cuculi, Bottle Sedge Carex rostrata and Marsh Cinquefoil Potentilla palustris, over a mat of Sphagnum bog-mosses.

SCHEDULE

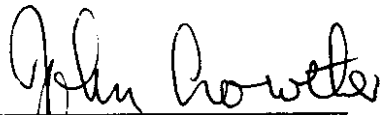
The following operations and activities appear to the Department to be likely to damage the flora of the area:

1. Grazing
2. The disturbance or modification of the vegetation, land surface, sub-surface, water levels or water courses, whether by peat cutting, engineering works, drainage works, the application, spreading or storage of any material whatsoever on or to the vegetation or land surface, or by other means.
3. Burning

4. 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 (NI) Order 1977.
5. The introduction or release into the area of any wild, feral or domestic animal, plant or seed. "Animal" includes any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish or invertebrate; "Plant" includes seed, fruit or spore.
6. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains.
7. Use of vehicles or craft likely to damage the vegetation.
8. The following activities undertaken in a manner likely to damage the vegetation of the area:
 - (i) Educational activities
 - (ii) Research activities
 - (iii) Recreational activities
9. Afforestation.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the
Department of the Environment for
Northern Ireland on 28 MARCH 1996

R. Hutchinson
Civil Servant in Charge
Council Belfast


J Crowther
Assistant Secretary

FOOTNOTES

- (a) Please note that the consent by the Department to any of the above operations or activities 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 (NI) 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 above 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