



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT CARROWCARLIN, 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 'Carrowcarlin Area of Special Scientific Interest'.

The area is of special scientific interest because of its wetland flora and fauna. Carrowcarlin is a basin wetland which supports a range of plant communities, including species-rich types of fen that are rare in Northern Ireland. In addition, the area supports a number of scarce plants and a diverse range of invertebrates, particularly spiders.

The fen is dominated by Bottle Sedge *Carex rostrata*, Sharp-flowered Rush *Juncus acutiflorus*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus* and Water Mint *Mentha aquatica*, growing over the brown moss *Calliergon cuspidatum*. Associated species include Creeping Bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, Carnation Sedge *Carex panicea*, Sweet Vernal Grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, Water Horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile*, Marsh Cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris* and Lesser Spearwort *Ranunculus flammula*. A number of additional species occur which give the vegetation a distinctive character. Notably, these include Slender Sedge *Carex lasiocarpa*, Lesser Tussock-sedge *C. diandra*, Black Bog-rush *Schoenus nigricans* and Blunt-flowered Rush *Juncus subnodulosus*. These fen communities are characteristic of the more undisturbed wetlands in south-east Down, and are very rare in the rest of Northern Ireland.

Other parts of the area are dominated by Common Reed *Phragmites australis*, with a sparse understorey of Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata*, Marsh Cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*, Bottle Sedge *Carex rostrata* and Common Marsh-bedstraw *Galium palustre*. Patches of scrub dominated by Grey Willow *Salix cinerea* also occur. On the northern and western margins of the area, there are mosaics of fen, acid grassland dominated by Purple Moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*, and Gorse *Ulex europaeus* scrub.

The fen contains a number of vascular plants with a restricted distribution in the British Isles, including Lesser Tussock-sedge *Carex diandra*, Slender Sedge *Carex lasiocarpa*, Greater Tussock-sedge *Carex paniculata*, Great Fen-sedge *Cladium mariscus*, Many-stalked Spike-rush *Eleocharis multicaulis*, Blunt-flowered Rush *Juncus subnodulosus* and Black Bog-rush

Schoenus nigricans. Notable bryophytes (mosses) include *Calliergon cordifolium* and *Calliergon giganteum*.

The wetland communities at Carrowcarlin provide suitable habitats for a diverse range of invertebrate groups including 18 species of aquatic Coleoptera (water beetles), eight species of Carabidae or ground beetles and 21 species of Arachnida (spiders). There are a number of notable water beetles, especially around the small pond and where the mossy fen zone is intact and remains wet throughout the year. These include *Cercyon ustulatus* and *Hydaticus seminiger*. In addition, two notable species of spider, *Clubiona stagnatilis* and *Floronia bucculenta*, have been recorded. The latter species has only been recorded in Ireland once before. Records for other insect groups include the notable pond skater *Gerris lateralis*.

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:
 - (i) plants listed as noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977;
 - (ii) normal cutting or mowing regimes for which a consent is not required under paragraph 3 above.
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, 11, 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 2 June 1998



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.