



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT TULLYARD, CO. ARMAGH. ARTICLE 24 OF THE NATURE CONSERVATION AND AMENITY LANDS (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1985.

The Department of the Environment (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 "Tullyard Area of Special Scientific Interest".

This area is of special scientific interest because of its species-rich dry grassland. This type of grassland tends to occur where traditional farming practices have been maintained. As a result, it is not a widespread habitat in Northern Ireland where species-rich grasslands are often fragmented, consisting of individual fields or parts of fields. In addition, species-rich swards in Northern Ireland tend to be of wetter grassland types. The meadows at Tullyard are an exception to this with a group of two fields composed primarily of a species-rich dry grassland type managed as hay meadows.

Tullyard hay meadows are on a steep, west-facing slope. Soils have developed from sandstone till and are fairly free draining. Minor variations in surface topography and drainage, together with past and current management practices, have influenced the species composition of the site.

The two fields at Tullyard are managed as hay meadows. They contain a range of species typical of dry grasslands that have been managed at low intensity. The grasses Crested Dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Common Bent *Agrostis capillaris*, Red Fescue *Festuca rubra* and Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus* are common throughout. Herbs such as Meadow Vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, Common Knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, Yellow-rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, Greater Bird's-foot Trefoil *Lotus pedunculatus* and Meadow Buttercup *Ranunculus acris* are widespread and in places abundant. Other typical meadow species occurring

less frequently include Bird's-foot Trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, Oxeye Daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare* and Tufted Vetch *Vicia cracca*. The orchids Common Spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and Greater Butterfly Orchid *Platanthera chlorantha* are occasional in the meadows. Where the soils are less freely draining the swards contain a greater proportion of grass species, and herbs such as Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata* are more prominent.

Tullyard is an area of semi-natural grassland managed in a traditional way. As such, it provides valuable feeding and roosting sites for a range of animals, including birds and invertebrates. A range of butterflies including Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina* have been recorded in the area.

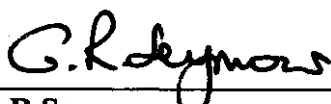
SCHEDULE

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. Any change in the established method or frequency of rolling, mowing or cutting.
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 paragraph 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. Introduction of woodland management, including afforestation and planting.
- 11. Construction of any permanent or temporary structure including building, engineering or other operations.
- 12. Alteration of natural or man-made features.
- 13. The killing or taking of any wild animal except where such killing or taking is treated as an exception in Articles 5, 6, 11, 17, 20, 21 and 22 of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.
- 14. 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.
- 15. Changes in hunting practices.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the
Department of the Environment
hereunto affixed is authenticated
by



G R Seymour
Senior Officer of the
Department of the Environment

Dated the 3 of August 2001

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 give consent, particularly if there is a long history of the operation being undertaken in that precise location.