

Ballaugh Curragh Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)

Designation Documents

Please note:

- Notification as an ASSI confers no public right of entry to any land without the permission of the landowner.
- The citations and lists of operations requiring the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture's consent may be subject to minor editorial changes and should not be assumed to be an exact facsimile of the original legal document.

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**Isle of Man
Government**

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Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

BALLAUGH CURRAGH AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST



and PROPOSED
RAMSAR SITE

Area: 193.4ha (= 477.9 acres)

Designated: 14th March 2005

Confirmed and varied:
9th September 2005

Ballaugh Curragh ASSI

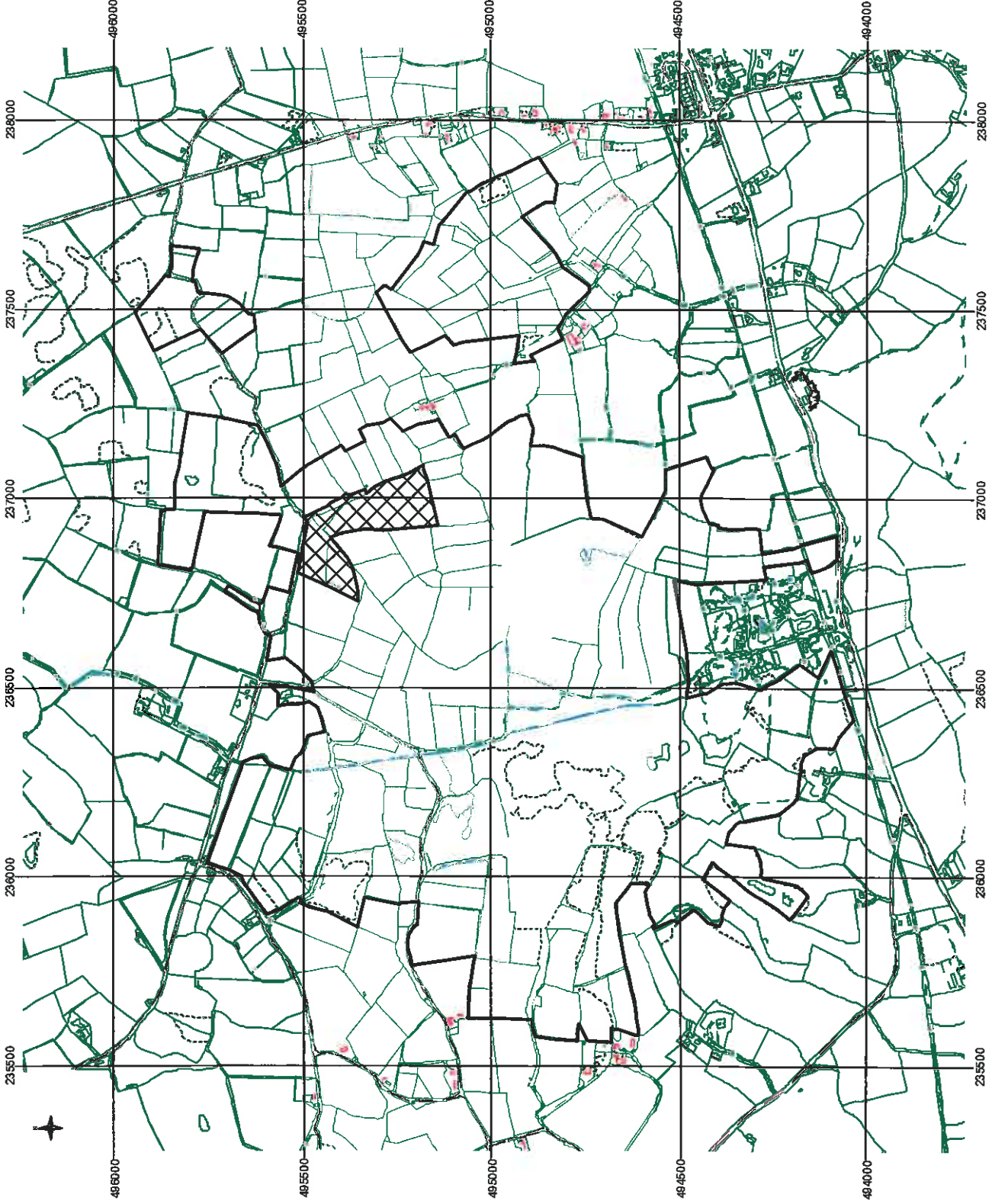
-  Designation boundary
-  Excluded area

The grid lines on this map form
part of the National Grid,
and are spaced at 500m intervals

0 100 Meters



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NOTIFICATION OF AN AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Appendix I

Area: Isle of Man

Parishes: Ballaugh and Lezayre

Site name: BALLAUGH CURRAGH

Status: Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) notified under Section 27 of the Wildlife Act 1990.
Designated as a Ramsar Site on 6th September 2006.

Planning Authority: Department of Local Government and the Environment

Local authority: Ballaugh Commissioners and Lezayre Commissioners

National Grid Reference: SC 367950 (approx. centroid) **Area:** 193.4 ha. (= 477.9 acres)

Ordnance Survey Sheet: 1:50,000 OS Landranger Map No.95
1:10,560 OS sheets SC 39SE and SC39NE

Date notified: 14th March 2005

Varied and confirmed: 9th September 2005

Date of last revision: 6th September 2006

Purpose

The purpose of this designation is to formalise the protection of an area which is important for its fauna, flora, geology, geomorphology and landscape.

Description and reasons for notification:

The Ballaugh Curragh consists of a diverse mosaic of interrelated wetland habitats which has evolved over a long period of time in response to the gradual colonisation of the site of the ancient lake known as Lake Andreas. The whole area has been the subject of traditional farming and fishing practices since the earliest human settlements on the Island, and the grassland and ditch system ecology reflects this long history. Habitats present include the largest area of wet modified bog on the Isle of Man, the best species-rich ditch system on peat soil, the largest area of continuous wet scrub (curragh), and good examples of wet mesotrophic grassland and traditional hay meadows, wet woodland, fen meadows and bog pools.

The area has long been noted for its diversity of bird life, with at least 39 breeding species. These include RSPB Red List birds such as lapwing *Vanellus vanellus** and corncrake *Crex crex**. The area also supports wintering birds, notably one of the largest wintering hen harrier *Circus cyaneus** roosts in Europe. Other fauna of note include aquatic invertebrates in the bog, pools and drainage ditches, fish including eel *Anguilla anguilla*, and a thriving common frog *Rana temporaria*** population.

The majority of the core Curragh area is dominated by grey sallow *Salix cinerea* scrub, with an understorey of wet woodland groundflora and, in more open areas, wet modified bog with occasional pools of standing water. Further out from the central core of the wetland is a series of traditionally-managed grasslands and hay meadows. Plants of note include good populations of spotted orchids *Dactylorhiza spp**** and greater butterfly orchid *Platanthera chlorantha****, lesser tussock-sedge *Carex diandra****, bog myrtle *Myrica gale*, hare's-tail cotton-grass *Eriophorum vaginatum*, bog asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum*, whorled caraway *Carum verticillatum* and royal fern *Osmunda regalis*. Many rare and locally occurring plants have been recorded in the area in the past, for which new research is required to confirm their continuing presence on the site; these include pillwort *Pilularia globulifera****, bladderwort *Utricularia vulgaris****, greater spearwort *Ranunculus lingua****, whorled water-milfoil *Myriophyllum verticillatum* and blunt-leaved pondweed *Potamogeton obtusifolius****.

* listed in Schedule 1 of Wildlife Act 1990

** listed in Schedule 5 of Wildlife Act 1990

*** listed in Schedule 7 of Wildlife Act 1990

Other information:

The central core of the Ballaugh Curragh wetland was acquired by the Government in 1963 by means of an Act of Tynwald, the Curraghs Acquisition Act. Much of this area has since passed to the Manx Museum, and is managed not just for its ecological importance but also as a unique cultural and archaeological resource.

This area forms a cohesive ecological unit which is important for its terrestrial ecology and meets the criteria for designation as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.

Full species lists are available from the Biological Records Centre, Manx Museum, Douglas.

NOTIFICATION OF AN AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Appendix II

Site Name: BALLAUGH CURRAGH

Operations likely to damage the special interest of the site

Type of operation

1. Cultivation including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing and reseeded;
2. Introduction of grazing and changes in grazing regime (including type of stock or intensity or seasonal pattern of grazing and cessation of grazing) or continuation of grazing known to be damaging;
3. Supplementary stock feeding, where already damaging, or the introduction of supplementary stock feeding and changes in stock feeding practice;
4. Mowing or other methods of cutting where they are already damaging, changes in mowing or cutting regime (including conversion from hay making to silage or cessation of mowing);
5. Changes in the application of manure, fertilisers and lime (including introduction of a new regime, and changing existing amounts and timing of application), or continuation of applications which are known to be damaging;
6. Application of pesticides, including herbicides (weedkillers);
7. Dumping, spreading or discharge of any materials;
8. Burning, and lighting of fires;
9. The release into the site of any wild, feral or domestic animals *, plant or seed (excluding domestic dogs);
10. The killing or removal of any wild animal * (excluding recognised game species in season);
11. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant or plant remains, including herbs, dead or decaying wood, peat, moss, lichen, fungus, leaf mould or turf, (excluding accepted management, i.e. hay cuts and control of statutory injurious weeds by non-chemical methods);
12. The introduction of tree and /or scrub management and changes in tree and/ or scrub management, including new planting;
13. Drainage (including moor-gripping, the use of mole, tile, tunnel or other artificial drains);
14. Modification of the structure of watercourses, including beds and banks, e.g. by re-alignment, re-grading, and dredging;
15. Management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes (also see 11);
16. The changing of water levels and tables and water utilisation (including irrigation, increased discharges into ditches and watercourses on the site, storage, and abstraction);
17. Infilling or other deliberate modification of the structure of watercourses, ditches, dykes, drains, ponds, pools, marshes or pits;
18. Extraction of minerals including peat, sand and gravel, topsoil and subsoil;
19. Construction, removal or destruction of roads, tracks, walls, fences, hardstands, banks, ditches or other earthworks, or the laying, maintenance or removal of pipelines and cables, above or below ground;
20. Storage of materials;
21. Erection of permanent or temporary structures, or the undertaking of engineering works;
22. Removal of geological specimens, including rock and soil samples, minerals and fossils.
23. Use of vehicles which are likely to damage or disturb features of interest;
24. Recreational or other activities likely to damage features of interest.

* "animal" here includes any mammal, reptile, bird, fish or invertebrate.