



**Isle of Man  
Government**

*Reiltys Ellan Vannin*

**Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture**

**NOTIFICATION OF CONFIRMATION OF DESIGNATION  
OF AN AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**

**Marine Drive ASSI**

1. The Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture having consulted in accordance with Section 27 of the Wildlife Act 1990 has considered representations received within the prescribed period and has confirmed the area covered by the designation.
2. The Department continues to be of the opinion that the area of land, outlined on the designation map, is of special interest by reason of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features.
3. The Confirmation of Notification consists of this Notice and the attached designation documents (Maps, Citation, Operations requiring DEFA's consent and Views about Management). It has effect immediately and continues in force until rescinded.

**Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Signed:**

Hon Mr G Boot MHK  
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

# Marine Drive ASSI

## Citation

**Site name:** Marine Drive ASSI

**Status:** Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) notified under Section 27 of the Wildlife Act 1990.

**Area:** Isle of Man

**Parish:** Braddan, Douglas and Santon

**Local authority:** Braddan, Douglas and Santon

**Planning Authority:** Department of Environment Food and Agriculture

**Ordnance Survey Sheet:** 1:50,000 OS landranger Map No.95 and 1:10,560 Sheets SC37SE & SC37SW

**Date notified:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**Date confirmed:** 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Date of last revision:** N/A

### Purpose

The purpose of this designation is to formalise the protection of an area which is important for its natural coastal habitats: hard cliffs and slopes, coastal grassland, coastal heath, scrub and breeding bird assemblage of hard coastline. The designation is expected to provide additional benefits to the adjacent marine protected area of Little Ness Marine Nature Reserve.

### Description and reasons for notification:

Marine Drive ASSI encompasses a wide range of natural and semi-natural habitats grading from species-rich coastal grassland to hard cliff and intertidal rocky shore.

The site is renowned for the plants growing on the cliff face including rock samphire *Crithmum maritimum*, thrift *Armeria maritima*, buck's-horn plantain *Plantago coronopus*, sea plantain *Plantago maritima*, spring squill *Scilla verna*, English stonecrop *Sedum anglicum*, sea campion *Silene uniflora*, rock sea-spurrey *Spergularia rupicola*, sea mayweed *Tripleurospermum maritimum*, wild thyme *Thymus polytrichus*, hare's-foot clover *Trifolium arvense*\*\* , kidney vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria*, sheep's-bit *Jasione montana*, hemp-agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*, Portland spurge *Euphorbia portlandica*\*\* , wall speedwell *Veronica arvensis*, navelwort *Umbilicus rupestris*, black spleenwort *Asplenium adiantum-nigrum*, sea spleenwort *Asplenium marinum* and royal fern *Osmunda regalis*. In addition, the cliffs are notable for breeding fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*, peregrine falcon *Falco peregrinus* \*, raven *Corvus corax* and chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*\*, but have a broad assemblage of hard cliff breeding species, including shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*\*, eider duck *Somateria mollissima*, herring gull *Larus argentatus*, great black-backed gull *Larus marinus*, black guillemot *Cephus grille*, rock pipit *Anthus petrosus* and stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*.

There is much cross-over between plants found on the hard cliffs and those found in the coastal grassland. Additional quality indicator species of the grassland include for bluebells *Hyacinthoides*

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*non-scripta*, pignut *Conopodium majus*, common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, wild carrot *Daucus carota*, Lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, dove's-foot Crane's-bill *Geranium molle*, Smith's pepperwort *Lepidium heterophyllum*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, mouse-ear-hawkweed *Pilosella officinarum*, daisy *Bellis perennis*, barren strawberry *Potentilla sterilis*, primrose *Primula vulgaris*, burnet rose *Rosa pimpinellifolia*, sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella*, wood sage *Teucrium scorodonia*, cat's-ear *Hypochaeris radicata*, red clover *Trifolium pratense*, white clover *Trifolium repens*, tufted vetch *Vicia cracca*, common vetch *Vicia sativa*, bush vetch *Vicia sepium*, germander speedwell *Veronica chamaedrys* and common dog-violet *Viola canina*.

Notable indicator species for heathland vegetation include heath dog-violet *Viola canina*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans*, sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella*, heath milkwort *Polygala serpyllifolia*, heath bedstraw *Galium saxatile* and heath-grass *Danthonia decumbens*.

Coastal scrub dominated by blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and stands of European gorse *Ulex europaeus* provide important nesting habitat for linnet *Linaria cannabina*, common whitethroat *Sylvia communis*, blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* and song thrush *Turdus philomelos*\*. Stunted native self-seeded sessile oaks *Quercus petraea* occur on the cliffs in the vicinity of Port Wallberry.

\*Protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife act 1990

\*\*Protected under Schedule 7 of the Wildlife Act 1990

### Other Information

#### Intertidal

The ASSI is designated to the lowest astronomical tide mark and includes the intertidal. Toothed wrack *Fucus serratus* dominates this area and supports a wide variety of epiphytes. Several mobile herbivores feed on the epiphytes and algal film. Other dominant macrofaunal species found on toothed wrack include *Lacuna pallidula*, *Littorina fabalis*, *Ampithoe rubricata*, *Idotea granulosa* and epiflora include *Rhodomenia palmata* and *Elachista fucicola*. The barnacle, *Semibalanus balanoides*, can dominate areas of the rock in the intertidal rocks. Horned wrack, *Fucus ceranoides*, occurs around freshwater outflows along with *Porphyra purpurea* or *Enteromorpha species*.

#### Offshore

The ASSI designation overlaps with the Little Ness Marine Nature Reserve which contains the most biodiverse marine site yet recorded in Manx waters; of note is the species rich horse mussel *Modiolus modiolus* reef. The Marine Drive area is also well recognised as one of the best sites to observe marine mammals, such as whales, porpoises and dolphins.

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### **Geology**

Marine Drive is frequently used on geological field trips to demonstrate features of the Manx Group (colloquially known as the Manx slate) which are otherwise difficult to access. The exposure of steeply dipping to vertical beds of rock along the roadway allows the nature of the original sediments to be studied, for example providing evidence they were deposited in a deep marine environment.

## Annex 2

### List of operations requiring consultation with DEFA

The operations listed below may damage the features of interest of **Marine Drive ASSI**. Before any of these operations are undertaken you must notify DEFA in writing, following section 27 of the Wildlife Act.

It is usually possible to carry out some of these operations in certain ways, or at specific times of year, or on certain parts of the ASSI, without damaging the features of interest. If you wish to carry out any of these activities please contact a DEFA Biodiversity Officer who will give you advice and, where appropriate, issue consent. Please help us by using the form sent to you with the notification documents to ask us for consent to carry out these operations.

In certain circumstances it will not be possible to consent these operations, because they would damage the features of interest. Where possible a Biodiversity Officer will suggest alternative ways in which you may proceed, which would enable consent to be issued. To proceed without DEFA's consent may constitute an offence. If consent is withheld, or conditions attached to it, which are not acceptable to you, you will be provided with details of how you may appeal to DEFA or agree arbitration.

Ref. No.	Type of Operation
1	Cultivation, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing and re-seeding
2	Grazing and alterations to the grazing regime (including type of stock, intensity or seasonal pattern of grazing)
3	Stock feeding and alterations to stock feeding practice.
4	Mowing or cutting vegetation and alterations to the mowing or cutting regime (such as from haymaking to silage).
5	Application of manure, slurry, silage liquor, fertilisers and lime.
6	Application of pesticides, including fungicides and herbicides (weed killers) whether terrestrial or aquatic, and veterinary products.
7	Dumping, spreading or discharging of any materials.
8	Burning
9	Release into the site of any wild, feral, captive-bred or domestic animal, plant, seed or micro-organism (including genetically modified organisms).
10	Killing, injuring, taking or removal of any wild animal (including dead animals or parts thereof), or their eggs and nests, including pest control and disturbing them in their places of shelter.
11	Destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, fungus, seaweed or plant remains including tree, shrub, herb, hedge, dead or decaying wood, moss, lichen, fungal fruiting body, leaf-mould or turf.
12	Tree and/or woodland management and alterations to tree and/or woodland management (including planting, felling, pruning and tree surgery, thinning, coppicing, changes in species composition, removal of fallen timber)
13	Draining (including the use of mole, tile, tunnel or other artificial drains).
14	Alterations to water levels and tables and water utilisation (including irrigation, storage and abstraction from existing water bodies and through boreholes). Also the modification of current drainage operations.

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Ref. No.	Type of Operation
15	Infilling or digging of ditches, dykes, drains, ponds, pools, marshes or pits.
16	Extraction of minerals including hard rock, sand and gravel, topsoil, subsoil, peat and spoil.
17	Destruction, construction, removal, re-routing or re-grading of roads, tracks, walls, fences, hardstands, banks, ditches or other earthworks, including soil and soft rock exposures or the laying, maintenance or removal of pipelines and cables, above or below ground.
18	Storage of materials.
19	Erection of permanent or temporary structures or the undertaking of engineering works, including drilling.
20	Use of vehicles or crafts
21	Recreational or other activities likely to damage or disturb the interest features of special interest.
22	Game and waterfowl management and hunting practices and alterations to game and waterfowl management and hunting practice.
23	Coastal fishing or fisheries management and seafood or marine life collection, where already damaging, the introduction of coastal fishing and changes in coastal fishing practices or fisheries management and seafood or marine life collection, including the use of traps and fish cages.
24	Reclamation of land from sea, estuary or marsh.
25	Erection of sea defences or coastal protection works, including cliff or land-slip drainage or stabilisation measures.
26	Modification of natural or man-made features (including cave entrances), clearance of boulders, large stones, loose rock or scree and bettering, buttressing or grading rock faces and cuttings, in-filling of pits, and quarries.
27	Removal of geological specimens, including rock samples, minerals and fossils.
28	Modification of existing illuminations or new illuminations

### Notes:

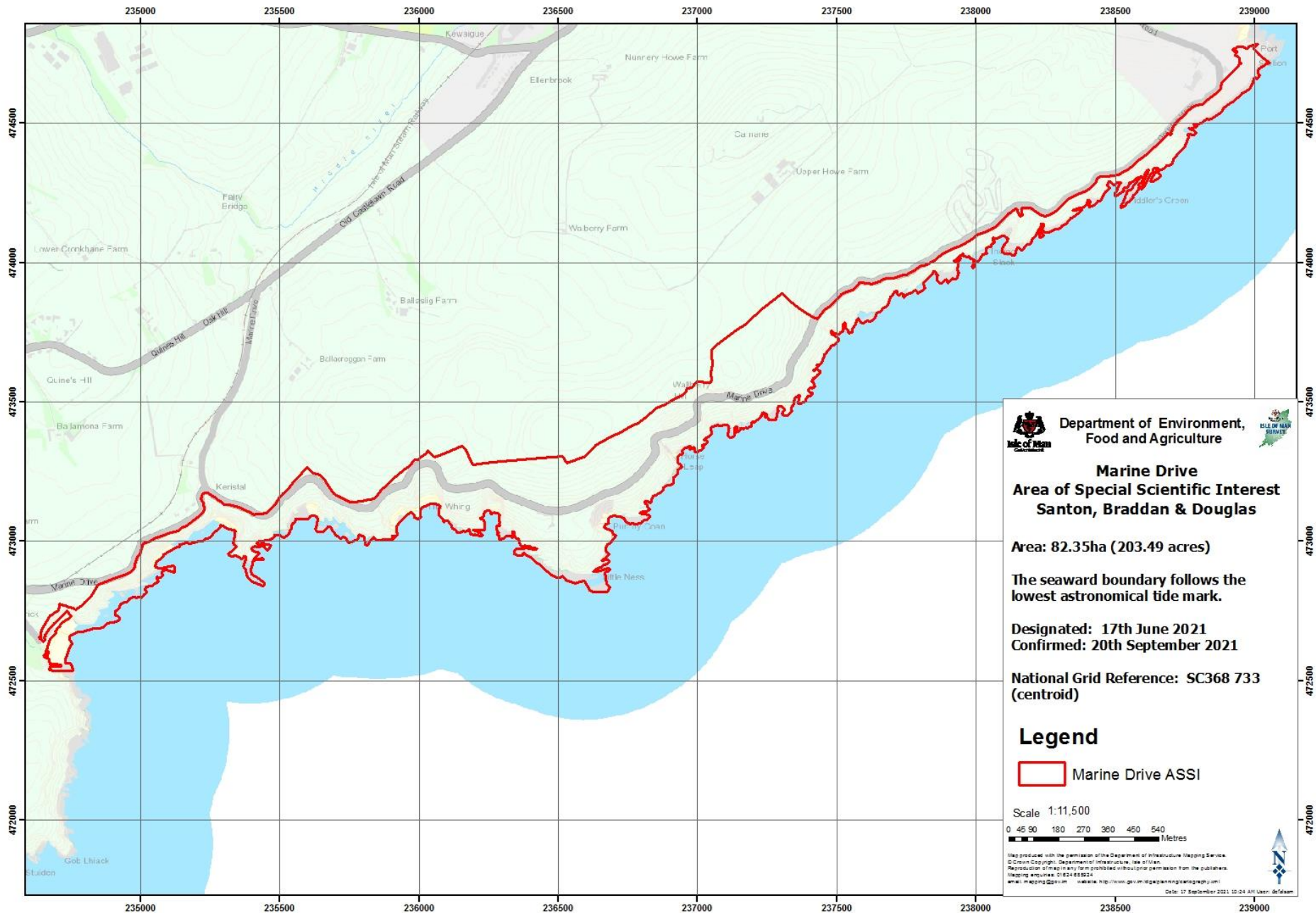
1. This is a list of operations appearing to DEFA to be likely to damage the special features of this ASSI, as required under Section 27 of the Wildlife Act 1990.
2. Any reference to 'animal' in this list shall be taken to include any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish or invertebrate.

**Date notified:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021

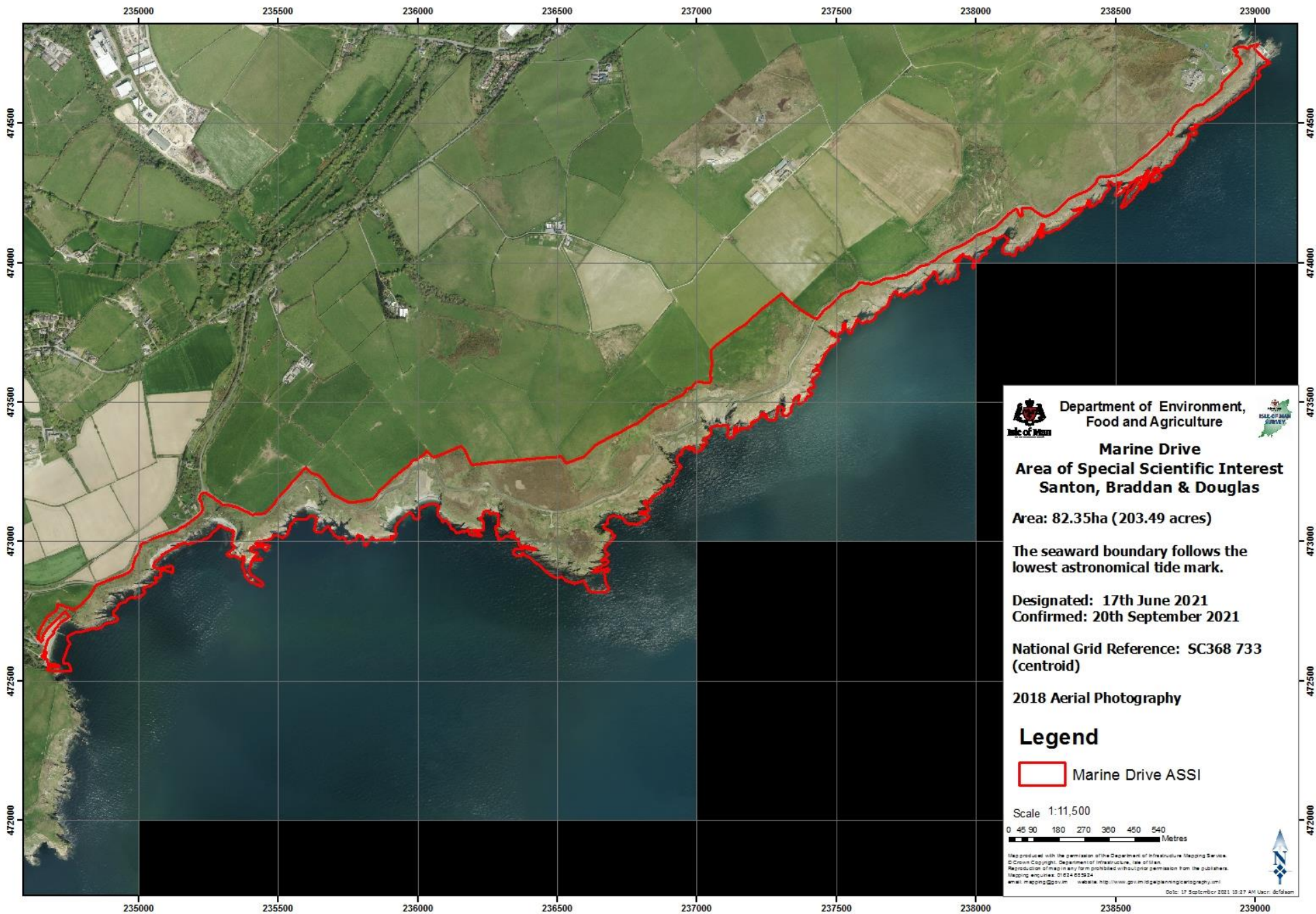
**Date confirmed:** 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021

# Marine Drive ASSI

## Annex 3 Maps showing the land that is notified



# Marine Drive ASSI





## Annex 4

### Views about Management

#### **A statement of DEFA's views about the management of Marine Drive Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)**

This statement represents DEFA's views 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. DEFA does not have a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of ASSI of its views about the management of the land, but DEFA has determined that this would be good practice with ASSI designations.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the ASSI. Also, there may be other activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest.

This statement does not constitute consent for any of the 'operations likely to damage the special interest'. Notice to DEFA is required before carrying out any of those operations, as set out in section 27 of the Wildlife Act. DEFA welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the ASSI to ensure that the management of this site conserves and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

#### **Management principles**

##### Enclosed Semi-improved grassland

The grassland should be managed using sympathetic and generally traditional methods. Applications of lime, artificial fertilisers, herbicides and fungicides should be avoided (except in exceptional circumstances and with consent). Grazing with sheep or cattle maintains the grassland and without such management the sward will become progressively dominated by heathland shrubs. Supplementary feeding should be avoided, if required it should be provided in an adjacent field (not designated an ASSI) and where this is not possible restrict to one area of the field. Sedimentation, eutrophication and pollution could all impact on the adjacent Marine Nature Reserve and such potential impacts must be taken into consideration in all management decisions.

##### Coastal grassland, heathland and hard cliff

The thin soils and rabbit grazing are currently maintaining these habitats and no additional management such as livestock grazing is required or practical.

##### Enclosed Heathland (including mosaics of coastal heathland and grassland)

Maintain through light sheep or cattle grazing: supplementary feeding should be avoided, if required it should be provided in an adjacent field (not designated an ASSI) and where this is not possible restrict to one area of the field. Applications of lime, artificial fertilisers, herbicides and

fungicides should be avoided (except in exceptional circumstances and after consultation). If required areas of heathland can be cut or burnt on a long cycle (generally longer than 8 years) to maintain the current extent and species diversity of the habitat. Sedimentation, eutrophication and pollution could all impact on the adjacent Marine Nature Reserve and these impacts must be taken into consideration in all management decisions.

### Recreation and Environmental Education

The highway provides good public access for mixed abilities from which the ASSI can be viewed and is within close proximity to Douglas, the Island's largest residential area. Marine Drive is a primary recording site for Manx Whale and Dolphin watch. It is also frequently used on geological field trips to demonstrate features of the Manx Group (colloquially known as the Manx slate) which are otherwise difficult to access. The exposure of steeply dipping to vertical beds of rock along the roadway allows the nature of the original sediments to be studied, for example providing evidence they were deposited in a deep marine environment. A pair of breeding peregrine are located at the toll gate and are tolerant of a high level of attention from bird watchers and photographers; disturbance of breeding birds should be monitored going forward and where evidenced should be prohibited.

**Date notified:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021

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This document can be provided in large print or audio tape on request.



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