

Poyll Vaaish Coast 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**

Re: itys Ellan Vannin



**Isle of Man
Government**
Reliys Eilan Vannin

Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

**POOYL VAAISH COAST
AREA OF SPECIAL
SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**

Designation boundary



Poyll Vaaish Coast

Area: 44.76ha (= 110.6 acres)

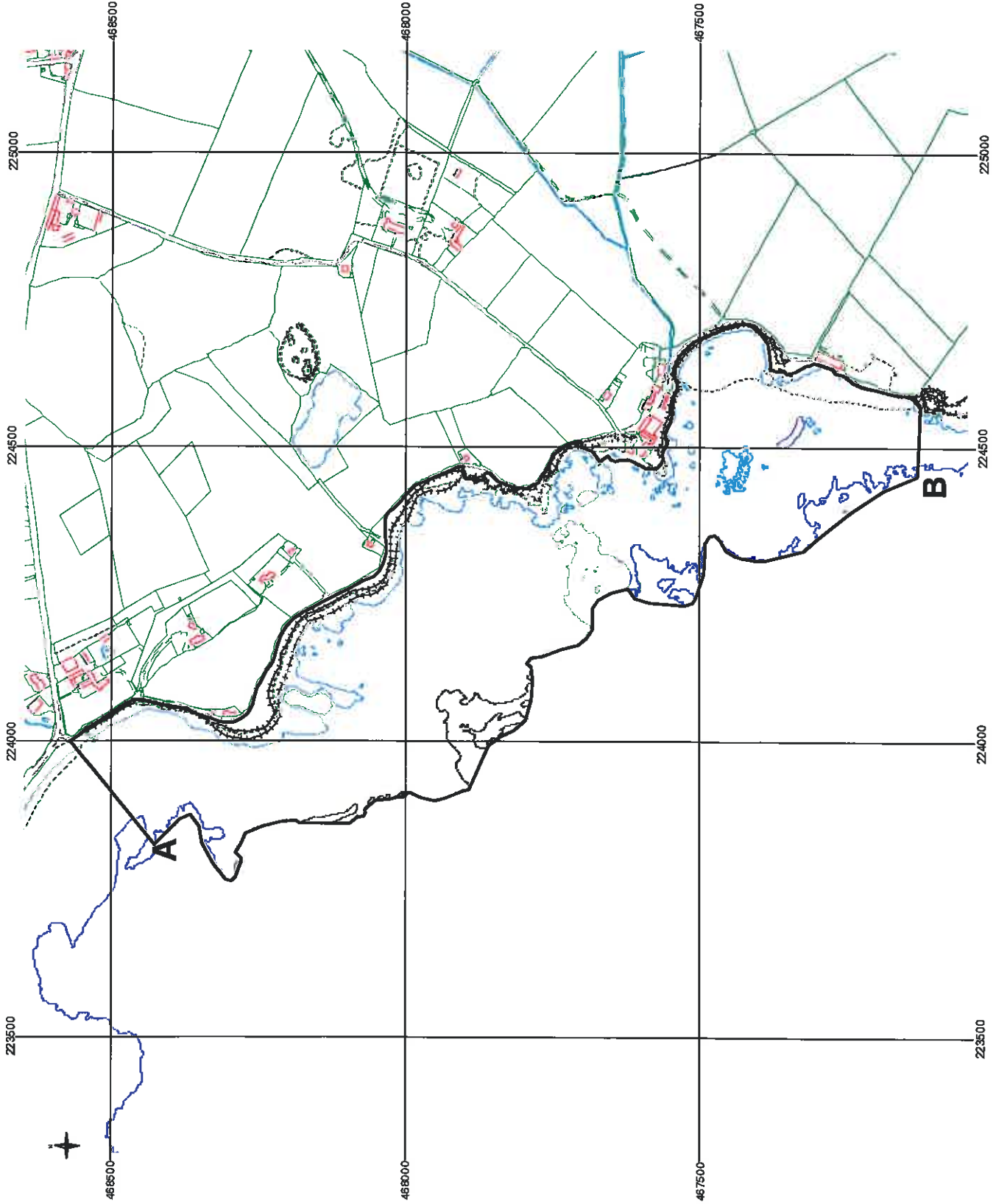
O/S Grid reference: SC242678
(approximate centre of site)

Designated: 19th February 2007
Varied and confirmed: 9th August 2007

*Note: the seaward boundary of the site is defined as the Lowest Astronomical Tide between points A and B on this map.

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

Base Map is
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NOTIFICATION OF AN AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Appendix I

Site name: Poyll Vaaish Coast

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

Area: Isle of Man

Parishes: Arbory and Malew

Planning Authority: Department of Local Government and the Environment

Local authority: Arbory Commissioners, Malew Commissioners

Ordnance Survey Sheet: 1:50,000 OS Landranger Map No.95 and 1:10,560 sheets SC 26NW

National Grid Reference (centroid): SC242678 **Area:** 44.76ha (110.6 acres) –
based on position of Lowest
AstronomicalTide boundary – see Map

Date notified: 19th February 2007

Date confirmed: 9th August 2007

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 breeding and visiting birds and its intertidal, saltmarsh, vegetated strandline, vegetated shingle and coastal grassland habitats.

Description and reasons for notification:

Poyll Vaaish Coast ASSI consists of low, rocky, carboniferous limestone coastline with coarse shingle, saltmarsh and a series of small bays and pools. The aspect is predominantly south-facing, and this factor, coupled with the varied nature of the terrain, has led to ideal conditions for a mix of sun- and shelter-loving plants and invertebrates alongside species which can tolerate very exposed coastal conditions. The combination of limestone geology and varied terrain make this an important and irreplaceable location for Manx coastal biodiversity.

The area has a very varied patchwork of vegetation communities including vegetated shingle, vegetated strandline, saltmarsh and coastal grassland. Overall the site is rich in plant biodiversity, as it not only contains many coastal terrestrial plants but also a good range of seaweeds in its intertidal zone. The saltmarsh is ungrazed, and varies from lower saltmarsh with muddy ground washed by the tide, to middle and upper saltmarsh which merges with the adjacent habitats of vegetated shingle and coastal grassland. Upper saltmarsh is usually limited to scattered patches, whereas the lower, wetter vegetation forms one of the largest continuous patches of saltmarsh on the Island. Species present include frequent glasswort *Salicornia spp.*, with red fescue *Festuca rubra* and common saltmarsh grass *Puccinellia maritima*. Notable plants include sea purslane *Atriplex portulacoides***, a rarity on the Island which here forms patches of shrubby saltmarsh vegetation with other saltmarsh plants such as sea aster *Aster tripolium*, sea plantain *Plantago maritimum*, annual sea-blite *Suaeda maritima*, greater sea-spurrey *Spergularia media*, lesser sea-spurrey *Spergularia marina*, and spear-leaved orache *Atriplex prostrata*.

The soft ground and tidal pools of the saltmarsh attract an important assemblage of breeding and wintering coastal birds. These include chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax**, breeding eider *Somateria mollissima**, breeding Ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula**, and breeding Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna**. Birds attracted to the site are not limited to typically coastal species; in total, 95 species have been recorded feeding and/or breeding on the saltmarsh, shingle, rocks and grassland in the last five years, including songbirds, waders, wildfowl and birds of prey. Of these, 35 are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Act 1990, making this an important site for rare and vulnerable birds on the Island.

Other notable species known to breed on and/or visit Poyll Vaaish include Skylark *Alauda arvensis**, Black redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros**, Reed bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus**, Song thrush *Turdus philomelos**, Twite *Carduelis flavirostris**, Curlew *Numenius arquata**, Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus**, Golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria**, Black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa*, Teal *Anas crecca*, Shoveler *Anas clypeata*, Whooper swan *Cygnus cygnus**, Hen harrier *Circus cyaneus**, Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus**,

Long-eared owl *Asio otus** and Barn owl *Tyto alba**. Eight of the species recorded on the area are on the RSPB Red List of Birds of Conservation Concern, and 47 of the remaining species are on the Amber List, hence this is an important site for birds which are threatened in the wider geographical context.

Whilst the seaward side of Poyll Vaaish Coast grades into a species-rich inter-tidal zone, the upper edge grades from vegetated shingle into coastal grassland. The vegetated shingle is exceptionally diverse, with a colourful array of ruderal and coastal plants such as sea mayweed *Tripleurospermum maritimum*, sea kale *Crambe maritima*, smooth sowthistle *Sonchus oleraceus*, sea spurge *Euphorbia paralias*, common poppy *Papaver rhoeas*, rock samphire *Crithmum maritimum*, sea sandwort *Honckenya peploides*, common scurvy-grass *Cochlearia officinalis*, sea beet *Beta vulgaris ssp. maritima*, sea radish *Raphanus raphanistrum ssp. maritimus*, low-growing blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, pellitory-of-the-wall *Parietaria judaica*, creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, common orache *Atriplex patula* and Babington's orache *Atriplex glabriuscula*. Many of these plants produce abundant seed and attract insects, both of which provide valuable food for birds, including flocks of linnet *Carduelis cannabina*, starlings *Sternus vulgaris** and house sparrows *Passer domesticus**.

The upper edge of the site abuts the coastal path, and has a mixture of weedy plants on shingle, and established coastal grassland. Species which are typical of unimproved meadow grassland occur here, such as lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, lesser hawkbit *Leontodon saxatilis*, common cat's-ear *Hypochoeris radicata*, common bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, wild carrot *Daucus carota*, dandelion *Taraxacum agg.*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, common milkwort *Polygala vulgaris*, cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, common ragwort (cushag) *Senecio jacobaea*, common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, field scabious *Knautia arvensis*, wild thyme *Thymus polytrichus*, and yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, in conjunction with salt-tolerant plants including buckshorn plantain *Plantago coronopus*, thrift *Armeria maritima*, rock sea-spurrey *Spergularia rupicola*, spring squill *Scilla verna*, sea mouseear *Cerastium diffusum*, and sea campion *Silene uniflora*. Unimproved grassland of this level of diversity is a rare and vulnerable habitat on the Isle of Man, hence this site is of importance for the conservation of these species, which form a distinctive element of the Manx landscape and support a wide range of associated birds and invertebrates.

* = Protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Act 1990

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

Other information:

Geology

Poyll Vaaish Coast is part of the well-known and significant Carboniferous sequence between Langness and Port St Mary. The rocks here are rich in well-preserved fossils.

Rocks here form part of the important sequence of Carboniferous age features which are exposed along the length of the coast between Langness and Port St Mary, and include the disruptive marine volcanic structures of Scarlett and the basal conglomerate within Langness ASSI. Within the Poyllvaaish Coast ASSI boundary the strata are mostly fine-grained limestones of the Balladoole Formation to the north west of Poyllvaaish Farm and, around Poyll Ritchie, fine-grained, irregularly bedded carbonate mudstones of the Knockrushen Formation. Both formations are rich in fossils, such as crinoids, brachiopods, corals and ammonoids and, because fossiliferous rocks are so restricted in the Isle of Man, have considerable educational value.

Boundary

The boundary of the site has been set at Lowest Astronomical Tide.

NOTIFICATION OF AN AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Appendix II

Site Name: Poyll Vaaish Coast

Operations likely to damage the special interest of the site

<u>Standard reference number†</u>	<u>Type of operation</u>
1	Cultivation including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing and reseeded
2	Grazing where already damaging, the introduction of grazing and changes in grazing regime (including type of stock or intensity or seasonal pattern of grazing and cessation of grazing).
3	Stock feeding, where already damaging, the introduction of 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	Application of manure, fertilisers and lime.
6	Application of pesticides, including herbicides (weedkillers).
7	Dumping, spreading or discharge of any materials.
8	Burning, lighting of fires and changes in frequency or pattern of burning, where applicable.
9	The release into the site of any wild, feral or domestic animals *, plant or seed.
10	The killing or removal of any wild animal *, including pest control
11	The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant or plant remains, including herb, dead or decaying wood, moss, lichen, fungus, leaf mould or turf.
12	The introduction of tree and /or woodland management and changes in tree and/ or woodland management.
13	Drainage (including moor-gripping, the use of mole, tile, tunnel or other artificial drains).
14	The changing of water levels and tables and water utilisation (including irrigation, storage and abstraction from existing water bodies and through boreholes).
15	Infilling of ditches, dykes, drains, ponds, pools, marshes or pits.
16	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.
17	Reclamation of land from sea, estuary or marsh.
18	Bait digging on inter-tidal areas.
19	Erection of sea defences or coastal protection works, including cliff or land-slip drainage or stabilisation measures.
20	Extraction of minerals including peat, shingle, sand and gravel, topsoil, subsoil, chalk, lime, limestone pavement, shells and spoil.
21	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.
22	Storage of materials.

23	Erection of permanent or temporary structures, or the undertaking of engineering works, including drilling.
24	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.
25	Removal of geological specimens, including rock samples, minerals and fossils.
26	Use of vehicles or craft likely to damage or disturb features of interest,
27	Recreational or other activities likely to damage features of interest or soil, fauna and flora (excluding walking, with or without dogs).
28	Introduction of game or waterfowl management and changes in game or waterfowl management and hunting practices.

† Note: each type of operation has a standard reference number; for each site, only those operations which are relevant to the site will be listed, hence there may be gaps in the numbering for some sites.

* “animal” includes any mammal, reptile, bird, fish or invertebrate.