SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: QUARRYFORD BRIDGE

SITE CODE: 001526

Quarryford Bridge is a small area of lowland, unimproved grassland located 6km south of Cashel, Co. Tipperary. This unspoiled area lies in the heart of intensive agricultural land where unimproved grassland is becoming increasingly rare.

The site harbours several plant species of interest. Over 500 plants of Green-winged Orchid (*Orchis morio*), a legally protected species (Flora Protection Order, 1987), were recorded here. This plant was once locally abundant in central and eastern Ireland, but has declined in recent years due to land reclamation and fertilisation of old pastures. Cowslip (*Primula veris*), a species which is listed in the Irish Red Data Book but no longer threatened, is also abundant. Cowslip is frequent in central Ireland but rather rare elsewhere.

The site is remarkably undisturbed and should be conserved as a good example of this threatened habitat which supports two plants species of conservation interest. The periodic removal of Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) bushes may be required to maintain conditions favourable for grassland species.

23.11.2009