SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: LOUGHSHINNY COAST

SITE CODE: 002000

This site is situated midway between Loughshinny and Skerries. The south boundary of the site extends to the clay cliffs, which are overgrown with Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and Ivy (*Hedera helix*), while the north end is bounded by a stream. This coastal area is noted for its geological interests, the rocks being conglomerates, limestones and shales.

The main habitat of the site is coastal grass, which merges into a shingle/rocky shore with some patches of saltmarsh.

The site is a station for the Green-winged Orchid (*Orchis morio*), a species legally protected under the Flora Protection Order 1987.

Species occurring in association with the orchid include Cowslip (*Primula veris*), Common Bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Burnet-saxifrage (*Pimpinella saxifraga*), Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and buttercups (*Ranunculus acris*, *R. bulbosus*). A diverse fungal flora is present in autumn.

Of particular interest is a small seepage area at the northern end of the site, which is dominated by Black Bog-rush (*Schoenus nigricans*) and rushes (*Juncus* spp.). Bryophytes are present along with Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*). This flush occurs almost directly above the high tide mark.

The grassy area is a roost for Curlew and Oystercatcher.

The coastal grass shows signs of improvement and grazing. Further improvement and heavier grazing is a threat to the site.

8.12.2009