SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: DRUM BRIDGE (LOUGH KEY)

SITE CODE: 001631

This site consists of a shallow inlet of Lough Key and a low lying marshy area about 3km north-east of Boyle. The marshy area is partly derived from cutover bog but mostly occurs on mineral soil. The marsh is dissected by numerous drains. The deeper water of the inlet has stands of Common Club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*) and Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) with Water Dock (*Rumex hydrolapathum*), Branched Bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*), Greater Spearwort (*Ranunculus lingua*) and Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*). Common Meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*) and Great Yellow-cress (*Rorippa amphibia*) have also been recorded in these areas. In slightly more elevated areas Tall Fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) are prominent.

The margins of the bay have stands of rush (*Juncus* spp.) with Marsh Horsetail (*Equisetum palustre*), Marsh Willowherb (*Epilobium palustre*) and Pointed Spear-moss (*Calliergonella cuspidata*) occurring as associated species. Species associated with fen vegetation such as Common Marsh-bedstraw (*Galium palustre*), Fen Bedstraw (*Galium uliginosum*), Long-stalked Yellow-sedge (*Carex lepidocarpa*), Marsh Cinquefoil (*Potentilla palustris*), Marsh Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*), Meadow Thistle (*Cirsium dissectum*) and Knotted Pearlwort (*Sagina nodosa*) have been recorded in the middle area of the site. Some areas are being colonised by willows (*Salix aurita* and *S. cinerea*) and Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*).

This site has been rated as probably the most valuable of the marshes around Lough Key. It is important because of the outstanding diversity of plant species and much of the site is suitable for nesting birds such as Mallard, Coot, Grebes and Water Rail.

24.11.2009