CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES

CORE MANAGEMENT PLAN
(INCLUDING CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES)

FOR

DROSTRE BANK SAC

Date: **2008** (Minor map edit, February 2013)

Approved by: David Mitchell

More detailed maps of management units can be provided on request. A Welsh version of all or part of this document can be made available on request.

Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru
Countryside Council for Wales

NATURA 2000

Ramsar

Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government
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PREFACE

This document provides the main elements of CCW's management plan for the site named. It sets out what needs to be achieved on the site, the results of monitoring and advice on the action required. This document is made available through CCW's web site and may be revised in response to changing circumstances or new information. This is a technical document that supplements summary information on the web site.

One of the key functions of this document is to provide CCW's statement of the Conservation Objectives for the relevant Natura 2000 site. This is required to implement the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, as amended (Section 4). As a matter of Welsh Assembly Government Policy, the provisions of those regulations are also to be applied to Ramsar sites in Wales.

1. VISION FOR THE SITE

This is a descriptive overview of what needs to be achieved for conservation on the site. It brings together and summarises the Conservation Objectives (part 4) into a single, integrated statement about the site.

Around a third of the site supports marshy grassland, dominated by purple moor-grass and rushes, with a range of typical associated plants. The majority of this habitat is species-rich fen meadow, with plants including meadow thistle, quaking grass, tawny sedge, flea sedge, devil's-bit scabious and marsh valerian. Uncommon plants, such as early marsh orchid and pepper saxifrage, are also present. Purple moor-grass and rushes are not overwhelmingly dominant in the sward. Species indicating disturbance and nutrient enrichment, such as creeping buttercup and white clover, are uncommon, trees and shrubs are absent and bare ground does not exceed 10% within the fen meadow areas.

The field west of the road supports a small patch of marsh dominated by small sedges, common cotton-grass and brown mosses that is fed by a nutrient-rich spring and there is a swampy area dominated by floating sweet-grass nearby.

Around 60 % of the site is wooded, of which a quarter is wet woodland dominated by alder. Associated trees and shrubs in these areas include ash, downy birch, rusty willow and hazel. The ground flora includes a range of typical plants, such as meadowsweet, yellow pimpernel and remote sedge. Plants indicating nutrient enrichment and disturbance, such as stinging nettle and cleavers, are uncommon. The woodland contains glades and the extent of canopy cover fluctuates but there is sufficient regeneration from seed, or suckers, to maintain the canopy cover in the long term.

Woodland on the drier ground is dominated by oak or ash with a shrub layer and ground flora typical of these types of woodland.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Area and Designations Covered by this Plan

Grid reference(s): SO096312

Unitary authority(ies): **Powys** (Brecknock)

Area (hectares): 12.6

Designations covered: **Drostre Bank SSSI and Drostre Bank SAC**

Detailed maps of the designated sites are available through CCW's web site:

http://www.ccw.gov.uk/interactive-maps/protected-areas-map.aspx

2.2 Outline Description

The site includes a large area of species-rich fen meadow, in association with some rush pasture. There is also an important area of alluvial ash and alder woodland, with transitions to drier woodland dominated by ash and oak.

2.3 Outline of Past and Current Management

There is no stock proof boundary between the woodland and grassland so stock have access to both woodland and fen meadow features. The site is open to light grazing and has been used as cattle pasture since at least 1971, and probably consistently for the last 60 years.

Generally the site has tended to be lightly grazed, as stock preferentially graze the adjacent improved pasture when they are able to do so.

Current (2007) stocking rates and other aspects of site management are subject to management agreements. These agreements specify the use of light cattle grazing during the summer months to maintain the vegetation types present. Other management covered by these agreements includes scrub control, maintenance of ditches, and a restriction on the cultivation of the previously arable fields that slope down to the site on the east side.

2.4 Management Units

The plan area has been divided into management units to enable practical communication about features, objectives, and management. In this plan the management units have been based on ownership, but also with reference to land management requirements.

The following table confirms the relationships between the management units and the designations covered:

Unit number	**SAC**	**SSSI**
Drostre Bank		
1	✔	✔
2	✔	✔

3. THE SPECIAL FEATURES

3.1 Confirmation of Special Features

Designated feature	***Relationships, nomenclature etc***	***Conservation Objective in part 4***
SAC features		
Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site: **1. *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*) (EU Habitat Code: 6410),** with associated mineral-rich flush vegetation.	Fen meadow with purple moor-grass, meadow thistle and a variety of other plants (National Vegetation Classification type M24) Generally referred to as '*Eu Molinion* grassland' throughout this document. The flush in unit 2 corresponds to NVC type M10.	1
Annex I habitat present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site: **2. Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion, Alnion incarnae, Salicion albae*) (EU Habitat Code: 91EO)**	Wet woodland dominated by alder birch and willow (NVC type W7). The ground flora consists of a variety of swamp and fen plants including meadowsweet, yellow pimpernel, and remote sedge.	2
SPA features		
Not applicable		
Ramsar features		
Not applicable		
SSSI features		
3. Non-SAC Marshy grassland, with associate swamp vegetation	In addition to the Eu Molinion grassland described above, also present is rush-pasture (NVC type M23), small areas of swamp (NVC type S22) vegetation.	To be completed.
4. Dry Broad-leaved Semi-natural Woodland	In addition to the Alluvial forest described above also present is dry woodland (NVC types W8 and W10).	To be completed.
5. An important population of pepper saxifrage *Silaum silaus.*	This locally rare plant has a very restricted range in South Wales, being confined to the lowland area to the north-east of Brecon.	To be completed.

3.2 Special Features and Management Units

This section sets out the relationship between the special features and each management unit. This is intended to provide a clear statement about what each unit should be managed for, taking into account the varied needs of the different special features. All special features are allocated to one of seven classes in each management unit. These classes are:

Key Features
KH - a 'Key Habitat' in the management unit, i.e. the habitat that is the main driver of management and focus of monitoring effort, perhaps because of the dependence of a key species (see KS below). There will usually only be one Key Habitat in a unit but there can be more, especially with large units.
KS – a 'Key Species' in the management unit, often driving both the selection and management of a Key Habitat.
Geo – an earth science feature that is the main driver of management and focus of monitoring effort in a unit.

Other Features
Sym - habitats, species and earth science features that are of importance in a unit but are not the main drivers of management or focus of monitoring. These features will benefit from management for the key feature(s) identified in the unit. These may be classed as 'Sym' features because:
a) they are present in the unit but may be of less conservation importance than the key feature; and/or
b) they are present in the unit but in small areas/numbers, with the bulk of the feature in other units of the site; and/or
c) their requirements are broader than and compatible with the management needs of the key feature(s), e.g. a mobile species that uses large parts of the site and surrounding areas.

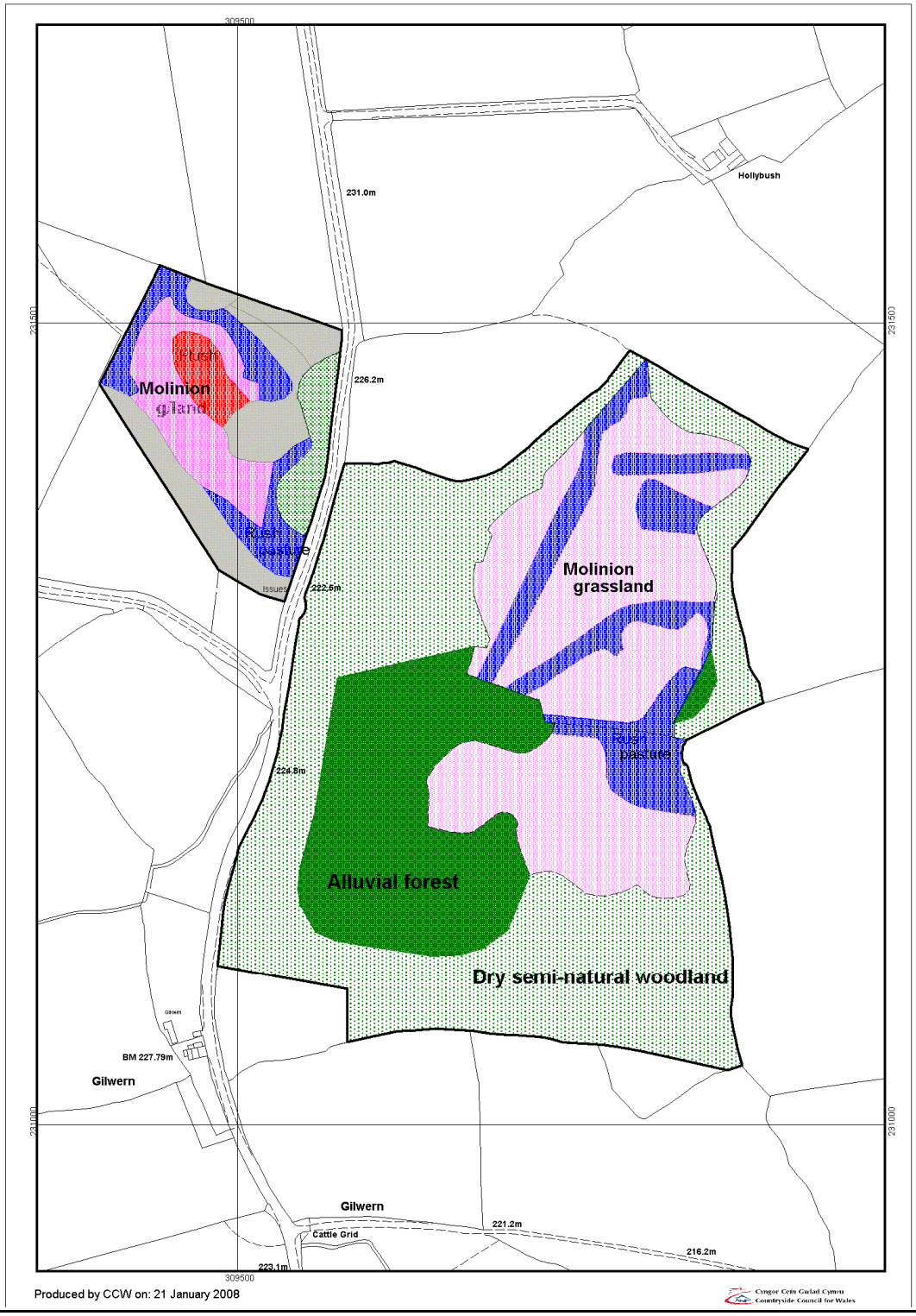
Nm - an infrequently used category where features are at risk of decline within a unit as a result of meeting the management needs of the key feature(s), i.e. under Negative Management. These cases will usually be compensated for by management elsewhere in the plan, and can be used where minor occurrences of a feature would otherwise lead to apparent conflict with another key feature in a unit.
Mn - Management units that are essential for the management of features elsewhere on a site e.g. livestock over-wintering area included within designation boundaries, buffer zones around water bodies, etc.
x – Features not known to be present in the management unit.

The table below sets out the relationship between the special features and management units identified in this plan:

Drostre Bank	**Management Unit**	
	1	2
NNR/CCW owned		
SAC features		
1. Eu Molinion meadows	KH	Sym
2. Alluvial forest	KH	x
SSSI features		
3. Non SAC Marshy grassland (rush pasture)	Sym	Sym
4. Broad-leaved semi-natural woodland (dry)	Sym	Sym
5. Pepper saxifrage	KS	Sym

Map1 (below) shows the location of these habitats within the site.

Map 1: Habitat Map of Drostre Bank



4. CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

Background to Conservation Objectives:

a. Outline of the legal context and purpose of conservation objectives.

Conservation objectives are required by the 1992 'Habitats' Directive (92/43/EEC). The aim of the Habitats Directives is the maintenance, or where appropriate the restoration of the 'favourable conservation status' of habitats and species features for which SACs and SPAs are designated (see Box 1).

In the broadest terms, 'favourable conservation status' means a feature is in satisfactory condition and all the things needed to keep it that way are in place for the foreseeable future. CCW considers that the concept of favourable conservation status provides a practical and legally robust basis for conservation objectives for Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites.

Box 1
Favourable conservation status as defined in Articles 1(e) and 1(i) of the Habitats Directive

"The conservation status of a natural habitat is the sum of the influences acting on it and its typical species that may affect its long-term natural distribution, structure and functions as well as the long term survival of its typical species. The conservation status of a natural habitat will be taken as favourable when:

- Its natural range and areas it covers within that range are stable or increasing, and
- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- The conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The conservation status of a species is the sum of the influences acting on the species that may affect the long-term distribution and abundance of its populations. The conservation status will be taken as 'favourable' when:

- population dynamics data on the species indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis."

Achieving these objectives requires appropriate management and the control of factors that may cause deterioration of habitats or significant disturbance to species.

As well as the overall function of communication, Conservation objectives have a number of specific roles:

- Conservation planning and management.

  The conservation objectives guide management of sites, to maintain or restore the habitats and species in favourable condition.

- Assessing plans and projects.

  Article 6(3) of the 'Habitats' Directive requires appropriate assessment of proposed plans and projects against a site's conservation objectives. Subject to certain exceptions, plans or projects may not proceed unless it is established that they will not adversely affect the integrity of sites. This role for testing plans and projects also applies to the review of existing decisions and consents.

- Monitoring and reporting.

  The conservation objectives provide the basis for assessing the condition of a feature and the status of factors that affect it. CCW uses 'performance indicators' within the conservation objectives, as the basis for monitoring and reporting. Performance indicators are selected to provide useful information about the condition of a feature and the factors that affect it.

The conservation objectives in this document reflect CCW's current information and understanding of the site and its features and their importance in an international context. The conservation objectives are subject to review by CCW in light of new knowledge.

b. Format of the conservation objectives

There is one conservation objective for each feature listed in part 3. Each conservation objective is a composite statement representing a site-specific description of what is considered to be the favourable conservation status of the feature. These statements apply to a whole feature as it occurs within the whole plan area, although section 3.2 sets out their relevance to individual management units.

Each conservation objective consists of the following two elements:

1. Vision for the feature
2. Performance indicators

As a result of the general practice developed and agreed within the UK Conservation Agencies, conservation objectives include performance indicators, the selection of which should be informed by JNCC guidance on Common Standards Monitoring[1].

There is a critical need for clarity over the role of performance indicators within the conservation objectives. **A conservation objective, because it includes the vision for the feature, has meaning and substance independently of the performance indicators, and is more than the sum of the performance indicators**. The performance indicators are simply what make the conservation objectives measurable, and are thus part of, not a substitute for, the conservation objectives. Any feature attribute identified in the performance indicators should be represented in the vision for the feature, but not all elements of the vision for the feature will necessarily have corresponding performance indicators.

As well as describing the aspirations for the condition of the feature, the Vision section of each conservation objective contains a statement that the factors necessary to maintain those desired conditions are under control. Subject to technical, practical and resource constraints, factors which have an important influence on the condition of the feature are identified in the performance indicators.

[1] Available through www.jncc.gov.uk and follow links to Protected Sites and Common Standards Monitoring.

4.1 Conservation Objective for Feature 1: *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*) (EU Habitat Code: 6410)

Vision for feature 1

The vision for this feature is for it to be in a favourable conservation status, where all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- *eu-Molinion* grassland occupies approximately 25% of the total site area.
- The remainder of the site supports other semi-natural habitats including woodland and rush pasture.
- The following plants will be common in the *eu-Molinion* marshy grassland: purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*; meadow thistle *Cirsium dissectum*; devil's bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*; tawny sedge *Carex hostiana*; Flea sedge *Carex pulicaris*; Quaking grass *Briza media*; Marsh Valerian *Valeriana dioica* and Marsh orchids *Dactylorhiza* sp.
- Purple moor-grass and rushes are not completely dominant and there is no significant accumulation of dead vegetation from year to year.
- Species indicative of agricultural modification, such as perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne* and white clover *Trifolium repens* will be largely absent from the *eu-Molinion* marshy grassland.
- Scrub species such as willow *Salix* and birch *Betula* will also be largely absent from the *eu-Molinion* marshy grassland.
- Some bare ground is present but cattle poached areas are not extensive.
- There is no significant input of nutrient-rich water from ditches and surrounding land.
- All factors affecting the achievement of these conditions are under control.

Eu Molinion grassland

Performance indicators for Feature 1

The performance indicators are <u>part of</u> the conservation objective, not a substitute for it. Assessment of plans and projects must be based on the entire conservation objective, not just the performance indicators.

Performance indicators for feature condition		
Attribute	***Attribute rationale and other comments***	***Specified limits***
A1. Extent	Total habitat area within the site must be maintained. Some of the rush pasture may develop into *Eu Molinion* grassland but there should be no loss of wet woodland	*Lower limit:* At least 3 ha *Upper limit:* 4 ha

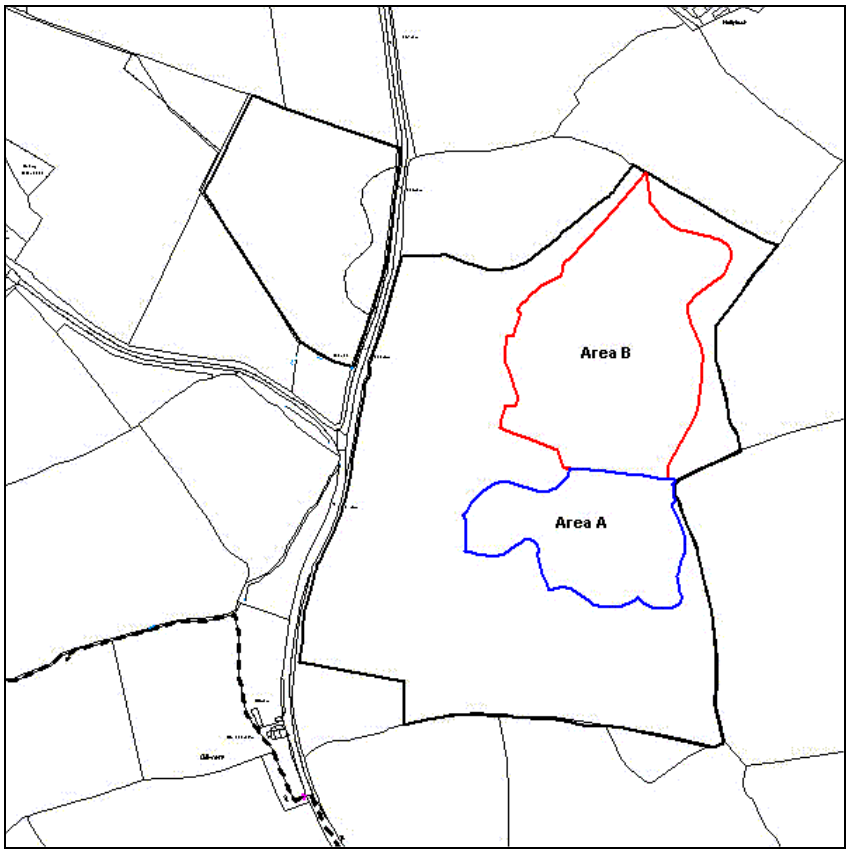
	(see below).	
A2. Location	The distribution of this vegetation type should be broadly the same as that mapped in 1990 (see map 2).	*Lower limit:* Present in both units *Upper limit:* N/A
A3. Habitat quality	Typical indicator plants must present and plants indicating nutrient enrichment and/or under grazing must not be prominent. Limits should be met in at least 70% of habitat areas A and B in unit 1. Habitat diversity is important in unit 2.	*Lower limits:* Within the *Eu Molinion* grassland in area A, vegetation within 50cm radius of a sample point will be referable to 'intact fen meadow' AND: Within the *Eu Molinion* grassland in Area B, vegetation within 100cm radius of a sample point will be referable to 'intact fen meadow' AND: The *Eu Molinion* in unit 2 is associated with an area of spring-fed bog characterised by small sedges and 'brown' mosses. **See Map 3 for locations of areas A and B. The definition of intact fen meadow is given below.**
A4. Habitat structure	Some structural variation is desirable to maintain the maximum level of plant diversity and provide habitat for invertebrates. With appropriate grazing on the site the sward height should be maintained within acceptable limits. Limits should be met in at least 70% of habitat areas A and B in unit 1.	*Lower limit:* 5cm at the end of the growing season. *Upper limit:* 40cm at the end of the growing season.

Definition of intact fen meadow:

a) At least 5 of the following species are present: quaking grass, tawny sedge, flea sedge, meadow thistle, devil's-bit scabious, marsh valerian, marsh orchids.
b) None of the following are present at greater than 10% or in combination greater than 20%: Creeping buttercup, common sorrel, white clover, ribwort plantain.
c) The cover of large rushes does not exceed 30%.
d) Scrub/woody species are absent although seedlings up to 10cm will be tolerated.
e) The cover of purple moor-grass is less than 75%.

Performance indicators for factors affecting the feature		
Factor	***Factor rationale and other comments***	***Operational Limits***
F1. Livestock grazing	Without an appropriate grazing regime, the grassland would become rank and eventually turn to scrub and woodland. Light grazing by cattle and ponies between April and November each year is essential in maintaining the marshy grassland communities. Limits apply to both units.	*Lower limits:* The *Eu Molinion* grassland will be subject to light summer grazing by cattle and/or ponies at least 4 in every 5 years. *Upper limits:* No significant grazing outside the growing season or heavy grazing at any time during the summer. **Light summer grazing is defined as - cattle and/or ponies at a rate of 0.4 LSU/ha/year for the period April to October. Heavy grazing is defined as greater than 1 LSU/ha/year (1 LSU is equivalent to a cow/horse, plus calf/foal).**
F2. Extent of litter layer	Litter will build up in the absence of grazing leading to a reduction in the diversity of the vegetation. However, some creatures shelter in dead vegetation. Limits should be met in at least 70% of habitat areas A and B in unit 1.	*Upper limit:* No continuous litter layer. *Lower limit:* Some dead plant material present.
F3. Extent of bare ground	Stock poached areas should not be extensive. Limits should be met in at least 90% of habitat areas A and B in unit 1.	*Upper limit:* No more that 10% bare ground within 100cm radius of a sample point. *Lower limit:* None.
F4. **Drainage**	Hydrology important for maintaining the *Eu Molinion* grassland. New drainage ditches could cause drying out of the site, which would be detrimental to this plant community. Also there should be no input of nutrient enriched water via existing ditches. Localised enrichment likely to favour less desirable/weedy species to the detriment of more sensitive plants.	*Upper limit:* No new drainage ditches to be installed within the open meadow areas of the site. *Lower limit:* No water 'backing-up' into *Eu Molion* grassland as a result of blocked ditches

Map 2: Areas A and B in Unit 2



4.2 Conservation Objective for Feature 2: Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion, Alnion incarnae, Salicion albae*) (EU Habitat Code: 91EO)

Vision for feature 2

The vision for this feature is for it to be in a favourable conservation status, where all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- Approximately 15% of the site supports alluvial forest (this is 25% of the woodland).
- The remainder of the site supports other semi-natural habitats including dry woodland and marshy grassland.
- The tree canopy consists of alder, ash, birch and willow
- Young trees/saplings and/or vegetative regrowth of the above species are present.
- The ground flora consists of a variety of wetland plants, including meadowsweet, yellow pimpernel, and remote sedge.
- Plants indicative of nutrient enrichment or disturbance such as nettle, cleavers, and rosebay willowherb are nowhere extensively dominant.
- Some bare ground is present but it is not extensive.
- There is no significant input of nutrient-rich water from ditches and surrounding land.
- All factors affecting the achievement of these conditions are under control.

Performance indicators for Feature 2

The performance indicators are part of the conservation objective, not a substitute for it. Assessment of plans and projects must be based on the entire conservation objective, not just the performance indicators.

Performance indicators for feature condition		
Attribute	***Attribute rationale and other comments***	***Specified limits***
A1. Extent	The extent of wet woodland should be maintained, but not increased at the expense of the *Eu molinion* grassland.	*Lower limit:* At least 1.6 ha *Upper limit:* 2 ha?
A2. Location	The distribution of the wet and dry woodland is determined by hydrology. Wet woodland is confined to unit 1.	*Lower limit:* Present in unit 1. *Upper limit:* N/A
A3. Canopy cover	Cover should be sufficient to maintain the presence of shade tolerant plants but there should also be enough open areas to support light demanding plants and encourage tree and shrub re-generation. Canopy cover should be assessed across the entire alluvial forest area indicated on map 2.	*Upper limit:* 90% *Lower limit:* 50% AND: There should be a varying pattern of canopy breaks over time.

A4. Canopy composition	The canopy should consist of locally native trees that a re typical of wet woodland. Limit should be met in at least 70% of habitat area in unit 1 (see map 2).	*Lower limit:* Alder is present within 20m radius of a sampling point. *Upper limit:* N/A AND: The canopy should consist entirely of locally native trees, such as ash, alder and downy birch.
A5. Regeneration	There should be signs of regeneration throughout the wet woodland area. Limit should be met in at least 70% of habitat area in unit 1.	*Lower limit:* At least one viable locally native young tree/sapling or vegetative re-growth over 1.5m high within 20m radius of a sampling point. *Upper limit:* N/A
A6. Understory and ground flora	A shrub layer and ground flora, typical of the alluvial forest plant community (W7) should be present. There should be no extensive cover of 'weedy' plants, which are indicative of disturbance and nutrient enrichment. Limit should be met in at least 70% of habitat area in unit 1, shown on map 2.	*Lower limit:* Within the alluvial forest in unit 1, vegetation within a 20m radius of a sample point will be in 'good condition'.

Definition of Alluvial Forest in good condition:

a) At least one of the following shrubs is present: hazel; hawthorn; rusty willow; guelder-rose.
b) The ground flora includes at least one of the following: meadowsweet; yellow pimpernel; remote sedge; common valerian; enchanter's nightshade.
c) The cover of any of the following alone or in combination does not exceed 10%: nettle; rosebay willowherb; cleavers

Performance indicators for factors affecting the feature

Factor	***Factor rationale and other comments***	***Operational Limits***
F1. Livestock grazing	The woodland is managed with the adjoining habitat of marshy grassland and is therefore subject to the same grazing prescription.	See limits in 4.1 above.
F2. Drainage	Hydrology is important in maintaining wet woodland. New drainage ditches could cause drying out of the site, leading to a loss of alluvial forest in favour of drier woodland types.	*Upper limit:* No new drainage ditches to be installed within the the woodland in unit 1.
F3. Bare ground	Some bare ground is likely to be present in alluvial forest. In addition, this wood is stock grazed which will cause some poaching, but the extent of bare ground should be limited. Limit should be met in at least 70% of habitat area in unit 1, shown on map 2.	*Upper limit:* No more that 30% bare ground within 20m radius of a sample point. *Lower limit:* N/A.

5. ASSESSMENT OF CONSERVATION STATUS AND MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

This part of the document provides:

- A summary of the assessment of the conservation status of each feature.
- A summary of the management issues that need to be addressed to maintain or restore each feature.

5.1 Conservation Status and Management Requirements of Feature 1: *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*) (EU Habitat Code: 6410)

Conservation Status of Feature 1

The conservation status of this feature within the site is considered to be **Favourable** (2006).

The results of monitoring carried out in June 2006 show that the proportion of samples from this habitat in good condition to be below the 70% target. The majority of samples failed because they had too few positive indicator species and too much rush. Changes in the grazing regime and measures taken to reduce nutrient run-off entering the site indicate that this habitat is recovering.

The monitoring has shown that the targets set in the performance indicators have not been met and the feature condition at Drostre Bank SAC is considered to be **unfavourable: recovering.**
[Draft Monitoring Report by K Wilkinson 2006]

Management Requirements of Feature 1 – *Eu Molinion* Grassland

Grazing

In the open wetland areas, grazing in spring, summer and autumn prevents domination by rushes and purple moor-grass, maintains the diversity of plant species and prevents the spread of scrub. Heavier grazing is likely to eliminate sensitive species and could cause localized physical damage to the sward leading to invasion by "weedy" species.

Past usage as cattle pasture has been important in maintaining the habitat and the current regime of cattle grazing should be continued. Cattle are heavy enough to break down leaf litter and young scrub, and their feeding action results in wet grassland being grazed more evenly than with other livestock. Sheep concentrate their grazing on more palatable vegetation, avoiding tussocky purple moor-grass and rushes, and creating a very short sward elsewhere. Therefore, grazing with sheep alone is not ideal. Stocking densities should be aimed towards achieving a short sward, less than 4 inches (10 cm) high over most of the pasture for at least part of each year.

Drainage

The *Eu Molinion* grasslands occur in areas of impeded drainage or around natural springs. Existing old ditches in these areas require careful maintenance to prevent the fen meadow becoming too wet, but they should not be deepened, and no new drainage should be installed.

Soil Fertility

The open wetland habitat is influenced by ground water that is moderately nutrient-rich but not excessively so. The application of agricultural fertilisers or manure on site will upset the natural nutrient balance and have a detrimental effect on the vegetation.

Surface water entering the site from the surrounding fields or road drains will have much higher concentrations of nitrates and phosphates, arising from agricultural fertiliser application. Such water should be diverted away from the site. A restriction in arable operations on the sloping fields above the site reduces the potential for nutrient-rich water and soil washing down.

Stock feeding on the grassland would lead to damage from localised nutrient enrichment and should be avoided.

5.2 Conservation Status and Management Requirements of Feature 2: Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion, Alnion incarnae, Salicion albae*) (EU Habitat Code: 91EO)

Conservation Status of Feature 2

The conservation status of this feature within the site is considered to be **Favourable** (2006).

Monitoring carried out in 2003, using the majority of the performance indicators shown in section 4.2, concluded that the condition of the feature was **favourable: maintained.**

Management Requirements of Feature 2

Grazing

In the wet woodland areas, light grazing prevents domination by rushes and purple moor-grass, maintains the diversity of plant species and preserves the open glades. Increased grazing would eliminate the more sensitive woodland species and prevent tree and shrub regeneration. The grazing practice and woodland regeneration will be kept under continued review.

If appropriate grazing levels are maintained, natural regeneration of trees and shrubs should be sufficient to preserve the woodland cover whilst retaining some open glades.

Woodland management

With the current grazing in place, woodland management is not desirable, other than to remove saplings of non-native species, such as beech, which may have a detrimental effect on the native flora. Standing and fallen dead timber provides important habitat for beetles and fungi and should be retained.

Drainage

The wet woodland occupies an area of impeded drainage in the eastern part of the site. The water comes from old ditches originating in the fen meadow. These ditches, and the outfall stream within the woodland, may be maintained, but they should not be deepened or new drainage installed.

Nutrient enrichment

The woodland soil is richer than that of the fen meadow because nutrients accumulate here as a result of down-slope water movement and leaf-fall. However, further enrichment from agricultural run-off or stock feeding would promote dominance by weed species, such as nettles.

Surface water from the surrounding fields or road drains should be diverted away from the site whilst a restriction on the arable operations in the sloping fields above the site reduces the potential for nutrient-rich water and soil washing down.

6. ACTION PLAN: SUMMARY

This section takes the management requirements outlined in Section 5 a stage further, assessing the specific management actions required on each management unit. This information is a summary of that held in CCW's Actions Database for sites, and the database will be used by CCW and partner organisations to plan future work to meet the Wales Environment Strategy targets for sites.

Unit Number	CCW Database Number	Unit Name	Summary of Conservation Management Issues	Action needed?
001	000437	Lower Drostre		No
002	000438	Twynrodyn	Blocked ditches running along boundary of the site require clearing out to prevent run-off from adjacent land/road onto the site.	Yes

7. GLOSSARY

This glossary defines the some of the terms used in this **Core Management Plan**. Some of the definitions are based on definitions contained in other documents, including legislation and other publications of CCW and the UK nature conservation agencies. None of these definitions is legally definitive.

Action A recognisable and individually described act, undertaking or **project** of any kind, specified in section 6 of a **Core Management Plan** or **Management Plan**, as being required for the **conservation management** of a site.

Attribute A quantifiable and monitorable characteristic of a **feature** that, in combination with other such attributes, describes its **condition**.

Common Standards Monitoring A set of principles developed jointly by the UK conservation agencies to help ensure a consistent approach to **monitoring** and reporting on the **features** of sites designated for nature conservation, supported by guidance on identification of **attributes** and monitoring methodologies.

Condition A description of the state of a feature in terms of qualities or **attributes** that are relevant in a nature conservation context. For example the condition of a habitat usually includes its extent and species composition and might also include aspects of its ecological functioning, spatial distribution and so on. The condition of a species population usually includes its total size and might also include its age structure, productivity, relationship to other populations and spatial distribution. Aspects of the habitat(s) on which a species population depends may also be considered as attributes of its condition.

Condition assessment The process of characterising the **condition** of a **feature** with particular reference to whether the aspirations for its condition, as expressed in its **conservation objective**, are being met.

Condition categories The **condition** of **feature** can be categorised, following **condition assessment** as one of the following[2]:

[2] See JNCC guidance on Common Standards Monitoring http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-2272

Favourable: maintained;
Favourable: recovered;
Favourable: un-classified
Unfavourable: recovering;
Unfavourable: no change;
Unfavourable: declining;
Unfavourable: un-classified
Partially destroyed;
Destroyed.

Conservation management Acts or undertaking of all kinds, including but not necessarily limited to **actions,** taken with the aim of achieving the **conservation objectives** of a site. Conservation management includes the taking of statutory and non-statutory measures, it can include the acts of any party and it may take place outside site boundaries as well as within sites. Conservation management may also be embedded within other frameworks for land/sea management carried out for purposes other than achieving the conservation objectives.

Conservation objective The expression of the desired **conservation status** of a **feature,** expressed as a **vision for the feature** and a series of **performance indicators**. The conservation objective for a feature is thus a composite statement, and each feature has one conservation objective.

Conservation status A description of the state of a **feature** that comprises both its **condition** and the state of the **factors** affecting or likely to affect it. Conservation status is thus a characterisation of both the current state of a feature and its future prospects.

Conservation status assessment The process of characterising the **conservation status** of a **feature** with particular reference to whether the aspirations for it, as expressed in its **conservation objective**, are being met. The results of conservation status assessment can be summarised either as 'favourable' (i.e. conservation objectives are met) or unfavourable (i.e. conservation objectives are not met). However the value of conservation status assessment in terms of supporting decisions about **conservation management**, lies mainly in the details of the assessment of feature **condition**, **factors** and trend information derived from comparisons between current and previous conservation status assessments and condition assessments.

Core Management Plan A CCW document containing the conservation objectives for a site and a summary of other information contained in a full site **Management Plan**.

Factor Anything that has influenced, is influencing or may influence the **condition** of a **feature**. Factors can be natural processes, human activities or effects arising from natural process or human activities, They can be positive or negative in terms of their influence on features, and they can arise within a site or from outside the site.

Physical, socio-economic or legal constraints on **conservation management** can also be considered as factors.

Favourable condition See **condition** and **condition assessment**

Favourable conservation status See **conservation status** and **conservation status assessment.**[3]

Feature **The species population, habitat type or other entity for which a site is designated. The ecological or geological interest which justifies the designation of a site and which is the focus of conservation management.**

Integrity See **site integrity**

Key Feature The habitat or species population within a **management unit** that is the primary focus of **conservation management** and **monitoring** in that unit.

Management Plan The full expression of a designated site's legal status, **vision**, **features**, **conservation objectives**, **performance indicators** and management requirements. A complete management plan may not reside in a single document, but may be contained in a number of documents (including in particular **the Core Management Plan**) and sets of electronically stored information.

Management Unit An area within a site, defined according to one or more of a range of criteria, such as topography, location of **features**, tenure, patterns of land/sea use. The key characteristic of management units is to reflect the spatial scale at which **conservation management** and **monitoring** can be most effectively organised. They are used as the primary basis for differentiating priorities for conservation management and monitoring in different parts of a site, and for facilitating communication with those responsible for management of different parts of a site.

Monitoring An intermittent (regular or irregular) series of observations in time, carried out to show the extent of compliance with a formulated standard or degree of deviation from an expected norm. In **Common Standards Monitoring**, the formulated standard is the quantified expression of favourable **condition** based on **attributes**.

Operational limits The levels or values within which a **factor** is considered to be acceptable in terms of its influence on a **feature**. A factor may have both upper and lower operational limits, or only an upper limit or lower limit. For some factors an upper limit may be zero.

Performance indicators The **attributes** and their associated **specified limits**, together with **factors** and their associated **operational limits,** which provide the standard against which information from **monitoring** and other sources is used to determine the degree to which the **conservation objectives** for a **feature** are being met. Performance indicators are part of, not the same as, conservation objectives. See also **vision for the feature**.

[3] A full definition of favourable conservation status is given in Section 4.

Plan or project **Project:** Any form of construction work, installation, development or other intervention in the environment, the carrying out or continuance of which is subject to a decision by any public body or statutory undertaker.
Plan: a document prepared or adopted by a public body or statutory undertaker, intended to influence decisions on the carrying out of **projects.** Decisions on plans and projects which affect Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites are subject to specific legal and policy procedures.

Site integrity The coherence of a site's ecological structure and function, across its whole area, that enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it is designated.

Site Management Statement (SMS) The document containing CCW's views about the management of a site issued as part of the legal notification of an SSSI under section 28(4) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as substituted.

Special Feature See **feature**.

Specified limit The levels or values for an **attribute** which define the degree to which the attribute can fluctuate without creating cause for concern about the **condition** of the **feature**. The range within the limits corresponds to favourable, the range outside the limits corresponds to unfavourable. Attributes may have lower specified limits, upper specified limits, or both.

Unit See **management unit.**

Vision for the feature The expression, within a **conservation objective**, of the aspirations for the **feature** concerned. See also **performance indicators.**

Vision Statement The statement conveying an impression of the whole site in the state that is intended to be the product of its **conservation management.** A 'pen portrait' outlining the **conditions** that should prevail when all the **conservation objectives** are met. A description of the site as it would be when all the **features** are in **favourable condition**.

8. REFERENCES AND ANNEXES

References

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). 2004a. Guidance on Common Standards Monitoring (CSM): Lowland Grassland, Version February 2004. JNCC Report, JNCC, Peterborough.
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