

SITE NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON 18 DECEMBER 1986

CITATION

COUNTY: ISLES OF SCILLY SITE NAME: RUSHY BAY AND HEATHY HILL
(BRYHER)

DISTRICT:

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended

Local Planning Authority: COUNCIL OF THE ISLES OF SCILLY

National Grid Reference: SV 874142 Area: 12.2 (ha.) 30.1 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 203 1:10,000: SV 81 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1971 Date of Last Revision: 1976

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

The site lies within the Isles of Scilly Heritage Coast and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Renotification covers land above Mean High Water Mark. Site boundary amended by extension.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Rushy Bay and Heathy Hill are located on the south side of the island of Bryher on the north eastern margins of the Isles of Scilly archipelago. The site comprises a low exposed granite hill, only rising to some 10 metres above sea level, backed by a small sand dune and dune grassland system overlying a storm boulder beach. The site supports a number of nationally rare plant species.

The areas of dune grassland between Rushy Bay and Great Porth are particularly important for the occurrence of the very rare Dwarf Pansy *Viola kitaibeliana*, a plant which grows on Scilly and nowhere else in Great Britain. The species rich dune grassland has abundant Sand Sedge *Carex arenaria*, Sheep's Sorrel *Rumex acetosella*, Buck's-horn Plantain *Plantago coronopus*, Sea Stork's-bill *Erodium maritimum*, Red Fescue *Festuca rubra* and Thrift *Armeria maritima*. The nationally scarce Sea Spurge *Euphorbia paralias*, Portland Spurge *E. portlandica* and Western Clover *Trifolium occidentale* also occur here. Sea Beet *Beta maritima* is more abundant on the edges of the dune grassland where it merges into low dunes dominated by Marram *Ammophila arenaria* with Sea-holly *Eryngium maritimum*. In addition Sea Kale *Crambe maritima* grows on the boulder and cobble strandline at the back of Stony Porth.

The exposed summit of Heathy Hill supports a small area of low, wind pruned heathland dominated by Heather *Calluna vulgaris*, Bell Heather *Erica cinerea* and Western Gorge *Ulex gallii*. The nationally rare Orange Bird's-foot *Ornithopus pinnatus* is present here

together with the Small Adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum azoricum* and Autumn's Lady's-tresses *Spiranthes spiralis*.

The deeper soils on the hillside support Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, with Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*, and Bramble *Rubus fruticosus*. Maritime grassland with abundant Thrift, Sea Beet and Buck's-horn Plantain occurs around the coastal margins of the hill and out towards Droppy Nose Point.