Condition of Foveran Links by management unit, cycle 3

| *Parcel* | *Unit* | *Geomorphology* | *Sand dunes* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Menie | Footprint of course | Destroyed | Destroyed |
| | Coastal ridge | Unfav?, dec | Unfav?, dec |
| | Rest | Unfav, dec | Unfav, dec |
| | Whole | Part.dest/Fav,dec | Part.dest/Unf, dec |
| Foveran | Fields (x3) | NA | Unfav, dec |
| | Open dune | Fav, main | Fav, dec |
| | Whole | Fav, main | Unfav, dec |
| Drum | Whole | NA | Fav, dec |
| SSSI | Whole | Part.dest/Fav,dec | Part.dest/Unf, dec |

**Comment [MS1]:** "Left largely intact" - Stewart

**Comment [MS2]:** Blow-out corridors along the ridge have been partially stabilised

**Comment [MS3]:** Sue, I think I would like to change this to Unf, dec. How about you? Mike

**Comment [MS4]:** Apparently included in Hansom's proposed GCR but not included in the original GCR or recommended for inclusion post TIGLS

**Comment [MS5]:** Stewart Angus in A1886119. Drums Links "is narrow and constrained inland by agriculture, and lacks any par icular features of interest (presence of a feature does not automatically confer interest). It seems likely that this section was within the SSSI as a link between the nor hern and southern section of he SSSI, a function that is no longer required".

**Comment [MS6]:** Sue, I think I would like to change this to Unf, dec. How about you? I would need to ask Alistair about his. Mike

**Please:** - complete this form electronically, but do not amend the form layout;
- record all required information on this form - not on separate sheets;
- check the form for errors and omissions before forwarding to MSU;
- ensure that the nominated member of staff in your Area has reviewed this damage case.

# Damage & Unconsented Activity Record Form

| | |
|---|---|
| **Date signed off in Area:** | ~~19/2/2013~~ |
| **Date copied to MSU:** | ~~19/2/2013~~ |
| Initials: | ~~Neale Taylor~~ |

- **Please complete this form for all incidents of damage to a site irrespective of whether or not natural features are involved.**
- **Do not use this form to record long-term, chronic damage to a site, such as over-grazing or population decline.**
- **Please also use this form to record any unconsented activities carried out on a SSSI, even if these do not cause any damage.**
- **Email MSU the objective link to your completed form as soon as possible after you become aware of the damage. Do not hold them pending resolution of the incident.**
- **If damage or unconsented activity occurs within an area covered by a management agreement, copy your form to your Area Land Agent immediately.**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Site Name(s):** List all relevant Natura, Ramsar and component SSSI names. | Foveran Links | | **MIDAS Site Code(s):** 659 |
| **Case Title:** (max 6 words, to be used in Annual Report) | Menie Championship Golf Course | | **Casework recording reference** |
| **Designation** (SSSI/SPA/SAC/Ramsar) | SSSI | **Local Authority(ies):** (list all those in which damage occurred) | Aberdeenshire Council |
| **Date of damage or activity** (Actual date or period) | Completed by 10 July 2012 (the opening date of the golf course) | **Date visited:** | 12 September 2012, 24 & 45 June 2013 and 16 August 2016 |
| **Visited by:** | Sue Lawrence, Mike Smedley & Neale Taylor, with David Welch (independent, biological recorder) accompanying | **Name of person completing form** (if different): | Mike Smedley |

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Has the activity caused damage** | **to the SSSI natural features?** | ☑ yes | ☐ no |
| | **to the SPA qualifying interests?** | ☐ yes | ☐ no |
| | **to the SAC qualifying interests?** | ☐ yes | ☐ no |
| | **to Ramsar site features?** | ☐ yes | ☐ no |
| **Was the activity consented by SNH or permitted by a regulatory authority?** | | ☐ yes | ☑ no |
| **Was the activity carried out with planning permission?** | | ☑ yes | ☐ no |

**1. Description of damaging and/or unconsented operations** (include how and when SNH became aware of damage and any witnesses to incident. Include a site map to show areas affected.

Construction of the golf course, involving earthworks and re-profiling the dunes, drainage and dune stabilisation (marram grass planting in combination with chestnut pale fencing and seeding/re-seeding), has affected the natural morphology of the dunes and interfered with natural processes, natural habitat transitions and successions.

The construction has removed the vast majority of the geomorphological interest within the vicinity of the golf course (Alistair Rennie's assessment at A1882825). The Menie ~~main~~ sand sheet, which was the largest and most dynamic sand sheet in Britain, has been stabilised and other areas of mobile sand have reduced dune mobility. 99% of the Menie sand sheet has been lost, along with 90% of the Sandend Burn sheet. The unaffected areas of the Sandend Burn sand sheet remain geomorphological interesting, but the interference in feeder areas reduces the dynamism and interest within these areas. Many of the 'butte dunes' remain within the vicinity of the 13th tee but their previously dynamic surroundings are now stabilised.

The construction of tees, fairways and greens, paths and tracks has led to direct loss of sand dune habitat, including mobile and semi-fixed dunes, dune grassland, dune slacks and dune heath, though outside of the immediate footprint of the development, areas of all of these habitats, and associated rare and characteristic species, still remain. Some compensation was supposed to ha~~s~~ve taken place through translocation of habitats but nothing significant has been seen. ~~It is too early to assess the effectiveness of this translocation.~~ Not all the natural processes required to maintain the habitats and habitat successions still occur.

In 2012/13
~~Increased rabbit control and removal of cattle grazing and has led to~~ a slight increase in rosebay willow herb and willow scrub was noted on Menie, following increased rabbit control and removal of cattle grazing. ~~, though the abundance of thistles in former~~ Former weedy areas with abundant thistles in the NW of ~~the parcel~~Menie appeared to ha~~s~~ve been ~~greatly~~ re~~seed~~duced (no thistles were seen here in 2012 visit).

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**2. If damage was caused by human activities then complete the following:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name of person(s) believed to be responsible (if known)** | Trump International Golf Links Scotland (TIGLS) |

**[1] landowner/ occupier** ☑
**[2] statutory undertaker/utilities** ☐
**[3] other public body** ☐
**[4] third party** ☐
**[5] unknown** ☐

**3. Extent of damage**

| **Feature name(s)** [1] | | **Sand dune** | **Coastal Geomorphology of Scotland** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Designation(s)** (SSSI/SPA/SAC) | | SSSI | SSSI | |
| | **Total Area of site** (as stated in SiteLink, in hectares) | 204.6 | 204.6 | |
| | **Estimated size of feature or population on site** (state relevant unit eg pairs or individuals, hectares or kilometres) | 204.6 | 204.6 | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Extent of damage Caused** | **For habitat/ earth science features: Area affected by damage** - in hectares | 25.1 | ~~25.1~~68 | |
| | **OR** - in square metres (for small areas) | | | |
| | **OR length** - in metres | | | |
| | **For all features: Percentage of feature or population affected [%]** | 12% | ~~33~~12% | |
| | **For habitats/ earth science features: Percentage of site affected [%]** | 12% | ~~12~~33% | |
| **Scale of damage caused** | **Put cross in box if damage affects more than: 0.5 ha of habitat or 100m of linear habitat, or 10% of feature overall.** | X | X | |
| **Likelihood of Recovery** | **spontaneous** [1] short-term [2] [2] long-term [3] [3] not likely [4] unknown | 3 | 3 | |
| | **managed** [1] short-term [2] long-term [3] not likely [4] unknown<br>(enter number 1-4 that applies) | 3 | 3 | |

[1] Use standardised feature names for natural features eg blanket bog. List Natura features separately from SSSI ones where the % of the feature damaged in each designation differs eg 10% of SSSI but 5% of SAC.
[2] Short term is less than 3 years.
[3] Consideration of management intervention may be appropriate.

**4. Main activity or event causing damage**

Put a cross in one box for each feature, to indicate the main damaging activity or event

| **Feature name:** | **Sand dune** | **Coastal Geomorphology of Scotland** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agriculture** | | | |
| **Development** | x | x | |
| **Forestry** | | | |
| **Recreation** | | | |
| **Sporting** | | | |
| **Other activities** | | | |
| **Unknown** | | | |

**5. Legal Aspects**

| | **Feature** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| **Legal status of feature when damage or activity occurred**<br>[1] Notified under 1981/2004 Act<br>[2] Notified under 1949 Act only<br>[3] Not yet notified (pSSSI or proposed extension).<br>[4] SAC/SPA not underpinned by SSSI (if so go straight to section 8)<br>(enter number 1-4 that applies) | 1 | 1 | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Which ORCs listed for this site have been undertaken? (identify ORCs opposite)** | 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 13a, 13b, 15, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27 | 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 13a, 13b, 15, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27 | |

**6. Consents** If the activity was unconsented, go to section 7

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Consented by SNH under s.13 (public bodies) or s.16 (other owners and occupiers) of the 2004 Act.** | | | |
| **Permitted by a regulatory authority under s.15 of the 2004 Act following SNH's advice.** | | | |
| **Permitted by a regulatory authority under s.15 of the 2004 Act - against SNH's advice.** | | | |
| **Planning permission granted on application.** | x | X | |
| **Required by a management agreement with SNH.** | | | |
| **Operation in a public body's management plan agreed with SNH.** | | | |
| **Required by a land management contract** | | | |
| **Other (please give details in section 9)** | | | |

**7. Unconsented Activities on SSSIs– Please complete this section even if the activity has not damaged the SSSI or its natural features.**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Unconsented (no application for consent served). (Including if outwith agreed public body management plan.)** | | | |
| **Outwith the terms of a s.16 consent granted by SNH** | | | |
| **Consent refused (consent refused or deemed refused following 4 months from date of application for consents and no response from SNH)** | | | |
| **Planning permission required but not obtained** | | | |
| **Regulatory authority permission required but not obtained** | | | |
| **Outwith the terms of a s.15 permission granted by a regulatory authority** | | | |
| **Outwith the terms of a s.14. consent granted by SNH (to a public body)** | | | |
| **Public body proceeded without SNH consent, under s.14 of the 2004 Act** | | | |
| **Outwith the terms of a management agreement with SNH and not otherwise consented or permitted.** | | | |
| **In contravention of an Nature Conservation Order, Land Management Order, Restoration Order (please specify)** | | | |
| **Emergency - indicate if SNH was advised as soon as practicable after the need for the operation was realised.** | | | |
| **Other (please give details in section 9)** | | | |

**8. Actions taken by SNH**

What actions has SNH taken in response to the damage or activity?

Please tick the relevant box(es):

| | |
|---|---|
| **Reminder letter sent by SNH** | ☐ |
| **Contact made with owner/occupier(s) [1]** | ☐ |
| **Contact made with owner/occupier's manager [1]** | ☐ |
| **Contact made with third parties (non-owner/occupiers)** | ☐ |
| **Offence reported to Police** | ☐ |
| **Signs erected on site** | ☐ |
| **Other (please give details in section 9)** | ☐ |
| **No action proposed to be taken** | ☑ |

[1] Update contact history in the MIDAS external contacts to show this.

**9. Notes** (Refer to site map: show location and extent of areas affected).

**Extent of interest**

The extent of the geomorphological interest in the SSSI at Foveran Links, including the rationale for the notification, was very extensively looked into ~~while we were involved~~when we ~~in~~ gaivinge advice at ~~a~~the planning inquiry into the golf course development. The decision was made that the geomorphological interest extended throughout the SSSI; indeed, possibly the best part of that interest was present at Menie where the golf course has been constructed.

Method of calculation of extent of development

The area of the footprint of the development was originally ~~has been~~ calculated in 2012 using recent aerial images in combination with TIGLS site plan of July 2009, and information from 2012 ~~the~~ site visit ~~of 12 September 2012~~. Areas ~~have been~~were estimated using Geoview.~~-~~

(see also map at bottom of document). See the 2012 form for further information.

Alistair's assessment uses a new set of aerial photography flown in 2013 and ten landuse types.

The extent of damage for the geomorphological interest recorded above, 68 ha, does not exclude the remnants of geomorphological interest. The extent of damage estimated for the original form (tees, green and fairways, nursery area and dune stabilisation by marram planting) and in Alistair's assessment (golf course, managed grassland, vegetated dunes - manipulated, other man-made feature, roads, tracks and paths, rough, bare sand - manipulated), is the same: 25.1 ha. This is the figure used for the extent of damage to the habitat interest. The two figures thus represent maximum and minimum estimates for the two features.

~~The use of the final course map in paper or preferably digital form would improve the accuracy of estimates.~~

~~Calculations~~

~~It should be noted that only areas where there have been direct impacts have been included in calculations. It is possible there will be indirect impacts in other areas (e.g. drainage, fertilisers).~~

~~Here, TIGLS land refers to land owned by TIGLS within the SSSI. 'Note' below refers to the site visit of 12 September 2012.~~

~~- Area of TIGLS land above MHWS = 68.0 ha~~
~~- Area of TIGLS land with planning permission = 49.5 ha = 73% of TIGLS land (24% of site).~~

~~- Tees, green and fairways, holes 10-18 = 13.4 ha = 20% TIGLS land~~
~~(10: 2.0 ha, 11: 1.7 ha, 12: 1.7 ha, 13: 1.0 ha, 14: 0.9 ha, 15:1.4 ha, 16: 1.3 ha, 17: 2.6 ha, 18: 0.8 ha)~~

~~- Additional modified areas = 11.7 ha = 17% of TIGLS land~~
~~Nursery area = 0.2 ha~~
~~Dune stabilisation by marram planting = 11.5 ha~~
~~Main area of dune stabilisation, as planned = 10.6[4] ha~~
~~(west 1.4 ha, north 2.0 ha, south 7.2 ha)[2]~~
~~Smaller area of dune stabilisation, mapped in field = 0.9a~~

~~Features of the development excluded from the estimates~~
~~Re-seeded area west of hole 11 (see note 13).~~
~~Relatively small sprigged area not indicated in the site plan. A small amount of planting was noted to the SW of the dune slack by hole 18 (see note 1a). This sprigging had also been noted in the final ECoW visit report, in June 2012 (photo 3). This report states that "these sprigs should be removed as soon as possible".~~
~~New access tracks (see e.g. note 2).~~

**Comment [MS1]:** 0.7 ha, 0.3 ha=0.4%

~~[4] 14.0 ha including teas,greens and fairways etc~~
~~[2] Including a planned donor areas (sprigging and slabbing), c 0.7 ha~~

**Planning consent and ORCs**

The following plans form part of the planning consent and anything in these does not require SSSI consent:

- Habitat Management Plan
- Habitat Mitigation and Compensation Plan incorporating Bryophyte plan
- Environmental Management Plan
- Site Water Management Plan
- Waste Management Plan
- Tree Protection Measures
- Bird Disturbance Mitigation Measures

Approved versions available from:
http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/apps/detail.asp?ref_no=APP/2010/1535

**References** with Objective id

1983 SSSI validation: A760804.
Hansom~~.s~~ ~~-~~2007~~-~~ ~~A~~assessment. ~~of the Geomorphological Interests at Foveran Links SSS.~~ A172886.
Site plan, ~~July~~ 2009~~-~~: A277260.
Notes of 2012 visit: A765068.
Note of 2013 visit: A1016226.
Note of 2016 visit: A2127910 and A2066691.
Final ECoW visit report: A737652.
Original damage form, 2012: A816971.
Alistair Rennie's assessment geomorphological interest: A1882825.
Stewart Angus's assessment of ecological interest: A1886119.
Draft NCA citation review and form: A147091 and A147215.
~~Hand drawn map of development showing dune slacks: A754985~~

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**Details of photographs taken:**

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See n~~N~~ote and assessments above~~of 12 September visit and photos in Photolink entitled "TIGLS Monio September 2012"~~.

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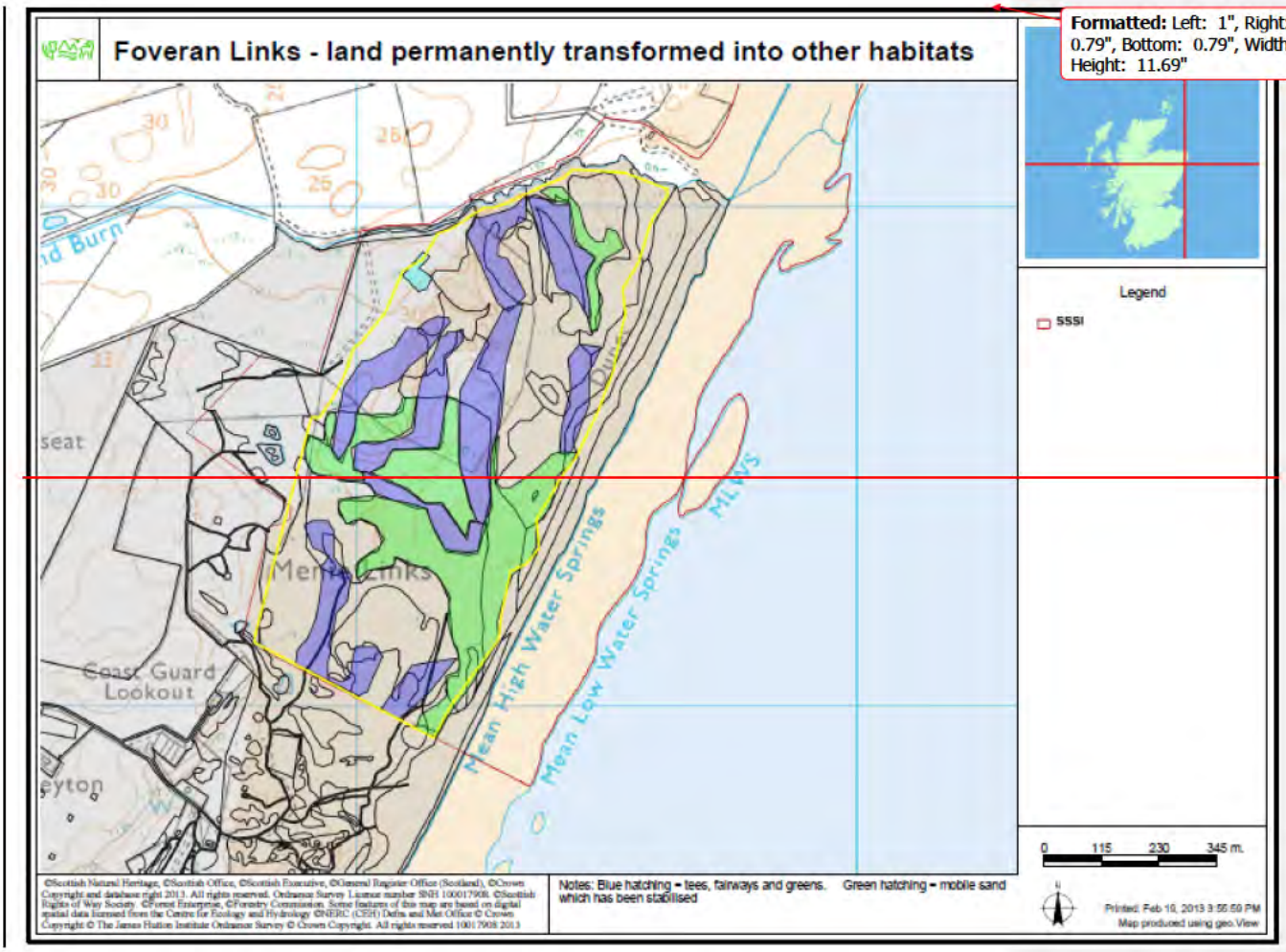
~~(Use site map to indicate points from which photographs taken. Indicate where photographs held.)~~

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**Please:** **- complete this form electronically, but do not amend the form layout;**
**- record all required information on this form - not on separate sheets;**
**- check the form for errors and omissions before forwarding to PPU;**
**- ensure that the nominated member of staff in your Area has reviewed this damage case.**

# Damage & Unconsented Activity Record Form

| | |
|---|---|
| **Date signed off in Area:** | |
| **Date copied to PPU:** | |
| Initials**:** | |

- **Please complete this form for all incidents of damage to a site irrespective of whether or not natural features are involved.**
- **Do not use this form to record long-term, chronic damage to a site, such as over-grazing or population decline.**
- **Please also use this form to record any unconsented activities carried out on a SSSI, even if these do not cause any damage.**
- **Email PPU the objective link to your completed form as soon as possible after you become aware of the damage. Do not hold them pending resolution of the incident.**
- **If damage or unconsented activity occurs within an area covered by a management agreement, copy your form to your Area Rural Surveyor immediately.**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Site Name(s):** List all relevant Natura, Ramsar and component SSSI names. | Foveran Links SSSI | | **MIDAS Site Code(s):** | 659 |
| **Case Title:** (max 6 words, to be used in Annual Report) | Damage caused by unconsented supplementary feeding in middle of three fields in the west of Foveran Links | | **Casework recording reference** | |
| **Designation** (SSSI/SPA/SAC/Ramsar) | SSSI | **Local Authority(ies):** (list all those in which damage occurred) | Aberdeenshire Council | |
| **Date of damage or activity** (Actual date or period) | (2010-)2013 -16 August 2016 | **Date visited:** | 16 August 2016 | |
| **Visited by:** | Mike Smedley and Sue Lawrence | **Name of person completing form** (if different): | | |

**Has the activity caused damage:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **to the SSSI natural features?** | ☑ yes | ☐ no |
| **to the SPA qualifying interests?** | ☐ yes | ☐ no |
| **to the SAC qualifying interests?** | ☐ yes | ☐ no |
| **to Ramsar site features?** | ☐ yes | ☐ no |
| **Was the activity consented by SNH or permitted by a regulatory authority?** | ☐ yes | ☑ no |
| **Was the activity carried out with planning permission?** | ☐ yes | ☐ no |

**1. Description of damaging and/or unconsented operations** (include how and when SNH became aware of damage and any witnesses to incident. Include a site map to show areas affected.

Damage was noted during SiteCheck visit in August 2016 for geomorphological feature and to review the management of the grazed fields in relation to SRDP (file notes and notes at A2127910 and A2066691).

The three fields in ~~this~~ the south–west of the ~~part of~~ Foveran Links section of the SSSI have been affected by overgrazing and supplementary feeding for many years, at least since 1990 but with much increased impacts since then. This has been noted in site surveys for SCM since 1990, as recently noted by Fiona Mutch in a visit in 2010 (A2140642) and in surveys for SCM (see cycle-3 Mgt Note A543969).

Indeed, no consent is required for stock feeding (nor for grazing) as such, only for *changes* in stock feeding (or grazing). But a change in stock feeding (or grazing) management, including an increase in stock feeding (or grazing) would require consent.

It appears that which of the three fields stock feeding occurs in has changed. Stock feeding was noted previously in the southernmost of the fields where there had been a feeding ring or rings (see map). In 2010 Fiona noted stock feeding in the top (northern) field ~~it was occurring in field 10~~. Following this visit, Fiona ~~Mutch~~ wrote to the ~~former~~ manager (father of the current manager) ~~in July 2010~~ noting ~~that~~the supplementary feeding ~~is happening in the fields at the south western end of their ground, that there is currently~~the lack of ~~no~~ consent for stock feeding ~~in this area~~ and asking that any supplementary feeding is undertaken outside the SSSI in future (A416644).

The upper and lower fields are currently managed under an RDC (2012~~3~~–16~~7~~), which precludes supplementary feeding, but the middle field is excluded from the contract. The latest damage is to the middle field (photos 95 and 96).~~:~~

~~The latest damage, to the middle field (photos 95 and 96), appears to be as a consequence of the RDC precluding supplementary feeding from the other two fields.~~

**Comment [FM1]:** To look at grazing/consents following RPID inspection and contact from [redacted]

**Comment [MS2]:** What was the purpose of this visit?

**Comment [SL3]:** Fiona, do you know which field this is?

**Comment [FM4]:** Field 10 is a single field in the 2012-2016 SRDP application. There are fences separating Field 10 into the 3 fields (northern, middle and sou hern) described here. At the time of my visit in 2010 stock feeding was taking place in the top (northern) section.

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**FOR CASES OF NON-DAMAGING UNCONSENTED ACTIVITIES, GO TO SECTION 4**

**2. If damage was caused by human activities then complete the following:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name of person(s) believed to be responsible (if known)** | [redacted] |

**[1] landowner/ occupier**

**[2] statutory undertaker/utilities**

**[3] other public body**

**[4] third party**

**[5] unknown**

[redacted]

**3. Extent of damage**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Feature name(s)** [1] | Sand dunes | | |
| | **Designation(s)** (SSSI/SPA/SAC) | SSSI | | |
| **Extent of damage caused** | **Total Area of site** (as stated in SiteLink, in hectares) | 204.6 | | |
| | **Estimated size of feature or population on site** (state relevant unit eg pairs or individuals, hectares or kilometres) | 204.6 | | |
| | **For habitat/ earth science features: Area affected by damage** - in hectares | | | |
| | **OR** - in square metres (for small areas) | 870 | | |
| | **OR length** - in metres | | | |
| | **For all features: Percentage of feature or population affected [%]** | 0.04 | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **For habitats/ earth science features: Percentage of site affected [%]** | 0.04 | | |
| **Scale of damage caused** | **Put cross in box if damage affects more than: 0.5 ha of habitat or 100m of linear habitat, or 10% of feature overall.** | | | |
| **Likelihood of Recovery** | **spontaneous** [1] short-term (<3 years) [2] long-term [2] [3] not likely [4] unknown | 2? | | |
| | **managed** [1] short-term (<3 years) [2] long-term [3] not likely [4] unknown (enter number 1-4 that applies) | 2 | | |

**Comment [SL5]:** I don't know if the nutrients would leach away and if not, how recovery would be managed. Expect we would ask them to stop feeding there and then monitor annually to see?

[1] Use standardised feature names for natural features eg blanket bog. List Natura features separately from SSSI ones where the % of the feature damaged in each designation differs eg 10% of SSSI but 5% of SAC.
[2] Consideration of management intervention may be appropriate.

**4. Main activity or event causing damage or unconsented activity**

Put a cross in one box for each feature, to indicate the main damaging activity or event

| **Feature name:** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agriculture** | x | | |
| **Development** | | | |
| **Forestry** | | | |
| **Recreation** | | | |
| **Sporting** | | | |
| **Other activities** | | | |
| **Unknown** | | | |

**5. Legal Aspects**

| | | **Feature** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Legal status of feature when damage or activity occurred** | [1] Notified under 1981/2004 Act<br>[2] Notified under 1949 Act only<br>[3] Not yet notified (pSSSI or proposed extension).<br>[4] SAC/SPA not underpinned by SSSI (if so go straight to section 8)<br>(enter number 1-4 that applies) | 1 | | |
| **Which ORCs listed for this site have been undertaken? (identify ORCs opposite)** | | 3 | | |

**6. Consents** If the activity was unconsented, go to section 7

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Consented by SNH under s.13 (public bodies) or s.16 (other owners and occupiers) of the 2004 Act.** | | | |
| **Permitted by a regulatory authority under s.15 of the 2004 Act following SNH's advice.** | | | |
| **Permitted by a regulatory authority under s.15 of the** | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2004 Act - against SNH's advice.** | | | |
| **Planning permission granted on application.** | | | |
| **Required by a management agreement with SNH.** | | | |
| **Operation in a public body's management plan agreed with SNH.** | | | |
| **Required by a land management contract** | | | |
| **Other (please give details in section 9)** | | | |

**7. Unconsented Activities on SSSIs– Please complete this section even if the activity has not damaged the SSSI or its natural features.**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Unconsented (no application for consent served). (Including if outwith agreed public body management plan.)** | x | | |
| **Outwith the terms of a s.16 consent granted by SNH** | | | |
| **Consent refused (consent refused or deemed refused following 4 months from date of application for consents and no response from SNH)** | | | |
| **Planning permission required but not obtained** | | | |
| **Regulatory authority permission required but not obtained** | | | |
| **Outwith the terms of a s.15 permission granted by a regulatory authority** | | | |
| **Outwith the terms of a s.14. consent granted by SNH (to a public body)** | | | |
| **Public body proceeded without SNH consent, under s.14 of the 2004 Act** | | | |
| **Outwith the terms of a management agreement with SNH and not otherwise consented or permitted.** | | | |
| **In contravention of an Nature Conservation Order, Land Management Order, Restoration Order (please specify)** | | | |
| **Emergency - indicate if SNH was advised as soon as practicable after the need for the operation was realised.** | | | |
| **Other (please give details in section 9)** | | | |

**8. Actions taken by SNH**

What actions has SNH taken in response to the damage or activity?

Please tick the relevant box(es):

| | |
|---|---|
| **Reminder letter sent by SNH** | ☐ |
| **Contact made with owner/occupier(s) [1]** | ☑ |
| **Contact made with owner/occupier's manager [1]** | ☐ |
| **Contact made with third parties (non-owner/occupiers)** | ☐ |
| **Offence reported to Police** | ☐ |
| **Signs erected on site** | ☐ |
| **Other (please give details in section 9)** | ☐ |
| **No action proposed to be taken** | ☐ |

[1] Update contact history in the MIDAS external contacts to show this.

**Comment [MS6]:** Fiona Mutch is going to meet he owner...

**9. Notes** (Refer to site map: show location and extent of areas affected).

Direct damage

Stock feeding damage was restricted to the other two fields as descr bed by Fiona following her visit in 2010 (photo), and as also shown in 2011 aerial imagery also on Geoview (see map saved at A2135292 – areas in blue).

No stock feeding damage was noted in the 2013 visit which included the eastern margins of the middle field.

Aerial imagery dated 1 October 2015 on Geoview indicates 700 $m^2$ of damage at the feeding area, which represents 0.03% of the site (areas marked in purple on map). During the 2016 visit very recent damage, not indicated in the 2015 aerial imagery, was evident in the NW corner of the field (photo 96), extending to at least another 170 $m^2$.

Wider effects of supplementary feeding in the middle field

Fiona described this field as well grazed by horses, rabbits and sheep but retaining natural vegetation with some agricultural weeds. The abundance of weeds in the SE corner of the middle field did not appear to be high in 2013 (photos 456 & 457, A1016226). By 2016 the abundance of nitrophilous weeds had increased, e.g. 15% cover of chickweed at NJ99971 23010 in SE corner (note 14, photo 91).

This field represents about 1.1% of the site.

Overgrazing

All three fields also appeared to be in unfavourable condition due to overgrazing (see notes at A2066691).
The three fields together, about 8.2 ha, represent about 10% of the sand dune on the Foveran Links unit and about 4% of the site.

The geomorphological interest is not affected: the GCR does not extend to these fields.

**Details of photographs taken:**

See above

(Use site map to indicate points from which photographs taken. Indicate where photographs held.)

# Feeding stations and associated bare ground in 2011 and 2015 (blue & purple resp.), Foveran

Notes:
Image shown in from 2011 (historical).

Foveran Links

0 50 100m

N

Map centre: 400025.90, 822966.81
geo.View 4.2 - Nov 09, 2016 17:34



Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba

**Foveran Links SSSI – Site Check and management August 2016**

**Visit date:** 16 August 2016
**Present:** Sue Lawrence and Mike Smedley
**Areas visited:** Route that crossed over most of Foveran Links part of the SSSI and into the northern section of Drums links

**Purpose:**

- Site check of the geology feature of the SSSI (coastal geomorphology) and notes were also made of the biology feature during the visit.
- To follow a recommendation in the cycle-2 SCM to review the management of the grazed fields prior to a possible new application for a rural development contract.

**Recreation including vehicle tracks**

A large increase in recreational pressure since the previous visit (2013), was evident from the abundance of foot prints in areas of bare sand. This was particularly pronounced in areas close to the estuary and the golf course car park. In recent years the number of seals hauled out on the north side of the Ythan Estuary, in the NNR, has greatly increased and with it an interest by the public to see the seals. In 2016 the public have been directed to the south side of the estuary as the best location to view seals and this will have resulted in increased visitor pressure on the SSSI. The pressure is also possibly as a result of visitors trying to see humpback whales which had been frequently reported by social media in the preceding weeks. The new, single boardwalk in the north of the site near the golf course was in good condition.

There was little evidence of horse riding in the SSSI, although there were some slight tracks through a single dune slack.(NK0030723640).

Quad bike tracks were occasional through parts of Foveran dunes. They appear to keep to lower lying areas of bare sand, evident near the pill box, but avoid the raised beach and old war debris (NK0041223970) and NK0041223973). Visitor tracks were visible in the raised beach.

Signs of recreation were not evident in the area of Drums links visited, possibly due to its distance from the estuary and also because it is more heavily vegetated with less bare sand.

**Habitats and botanical interest**

For detailed notes and grid references, see A2066691. Grid references below refer to photos in Site check.

Briefly, *Ophioglossum azoricum* was observed growing near a footpath in Foveran links (NK00470 24266, where previously recorded) with *Viola canina,* and in several other locations*. O. azoricum* grows on both sides of the path, and the path may be beneficial by retaining some open ground.

*Gentianella campestris* growing by well less used path (see NK0038424171).

*Carex maritima* near raised beach where previously recorded but in lower numbers (see NK0031723809). Adjacent to informal path used by walkers and horses.

Movement of bare sand may have deflated the surface to cause new areas of dune slack not recalled from previous visits.

*Pyrola minor* recorded where previously occurred in dune slack (see photo NK0006723148). Scrub cover appears to be increasing in this slack.

**Invasive plants**
Continued growth of *Cham(aen)erion* through all areas of the SSSI visited, including Drums links.

*Acaena novae-zelandiae* was not seen.

Sycamore sapling (see NK0041724106). Mature tree much further south.

Single stand of pampas grass still present where previously recorded (see NK0019723584).

*Rosa rugosa* stand has doubled in area since 2013 (see photo NJ9976722455).

*Senecio jacobaea* occurs widespread across SSSI although absent from some areas.

**Foveran links fields**
For detailed notes and grid references recorded by GPS, see Mike Smedley's filenote A2066691. The grid references below are taken from the SWIFT photos in Site Check and refer to those photos. However, the grid references do not always appear to be accurate.

These are three fields in the SSSI on its western edge, part of Mains of Foveran farm. There is a history of grazing management in these fields. Cycle 1 SCM in 2000 noted a small amount of damage to the fields on the inland edge of Foveran Links caused by grazing (partially consented) and stock feeding, resulting in an increase in weeds and loss of dune slack extent. It noted Semi-improved SD7, abundant Poa annua, many patches of tall nutriphiles, bare soil from stock trampling and rabbit burrowing

The 2010 SCM survey noted evidence of unconsented grazing and winter feeding in the enclosed fields which had resulted in some eroded bare areas, ragwort and nettles. Many of the plant communities in this area were no longer recognisable as dune communities. The level and intensity of grazing and trampling particularly in the northernmost field were noted as sufficient to warrant a loss of extent of the fixed dune in this area.

In 2016, vegetation in the top field was heavily modified with *Lolium perenne* and *Trifolium repens* covering about 40% of the field and nettles circa 20% (see photo NJ9982923218).

North part of field has feeding areas (1 or 2) and little or no sand dune vegetation remains adjacent to these (see NJ9982123198 and NJ9980623215). The southern part of the middle field has very weedy dune grassland with species such as fat hen, chickweed and nettles and with some marram grass still present especially on hillocks.

Bottom field vegetation includes some very short closely grazed areas. Sheep were present at time of visit. Nettles locally abundant in dune slack on edge of *Salix repens* (see NJ9976922585). One area had particularly extensive nettles thistles and ragwort (see NJ9981222787). Former feeding area?

It is difficult to compare the surveys and aerial photographs and determine if the condition of the three fields has deteriorated. My impression from visits that I have made over the years is that this is the case – that the extent of fixed dune and dune slack has decreased and the extent of nutriphiles and bare round increased. However, it is not possible to quantify this.

**Consents**
The ORC list specifies consent is required for changes in the grazing regime and changes in stock feeding practice.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

**Conclusion:**

**Site check of Coastal Geomorphology of Scotland (earth sciences)**

The earth science feature in this part of the SSSI appears to be in favourable condition. Although recreational pressure has increased, it does not appear to be destabilizing the dunes but this should be monitored again in 2 years.

**Site check of sand dunes (biology)**

There are concerns over the impact of grazing management in the three fields in the west of the SSSI. This management is partially unconsented and partially consented by the RDC, due to expire soon.

**Actions**

- Contact [redacted] to discuss management and SSSI consents for the three western fields. Remind that SSSI consent granted by RDC contract to do work in management plans [redacted] Grazing and feeding in the middle field are unconsented.
- Ask [redacted] if gorse control in E12 has taken place.
- Monitor impact of recreation on northern part of Foveran Links SSSI in 2018.

**Notes on visit to Foveran Links on 16 August 2016**

Background

Foveran Links comprises a large area of open (i.e. unenclosed) dunes with several enclosed fields in the SW of the site.

| *SIACS field id* | *Area /ha* | *Field* |
|---|---|---|
| NK/00254/23571 | 35.9 | Open (i.e. unenclosed) dunes |
| NJ/99943/23279 | 0.8 | Top field |
| NJ/99924/23102 | 2.3 | 2nd-top or middle field |
| NJ/99879/22776 | 4.9 | Bottom field |
| NJ/99909/23445 | 4.5 | Beyond top field |

*Sand Dune Survey of Great Britain (SDSGB) and Sand Dune Vegetation Survey of Scotland (SDVSS)*

Foveran Links was mapped by SDSGB in 1990, with additional survey carried out in 1999 for the SDVSS. The 1990 survey report mentions substantial areas of rather acid grassland of the SD12 type along the inland margins of the SSSI and stock feeding in enclosures on Foveran and Drum Links. These enclosed fields were thus originally mapped largely as SD12 (two quadrats, repeated below), in transition with H11 in the middle field, and with two small SD17 dune slacks: in the north of the bottom field and in the middle field. An area with abundant Sxr in the south of the bottom field was mapped as dune grassland but was re-mapped as SD16 in 1999, part of the only areas of SD16 mapped in the SSSI. An area of improvement (0.5 ha, R Ama), was mapped in 1999 to the north of the top field, outside the SSSI and is shown as MG7/SD12 in SDVSS.

| *Field* | *In SSSI?* | *SDSGB, 1990 (quadrats and notes, see below)* | *SDVSS, 1999* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bottom field | Y | SD12a (Q18). | SD12z 70%, SD12/SD16 30% with one small (0.07 ha) SD17 in north and one small (0.13 ha) SD16 in south. |
| 2nd-top or middle field | Y | SD12a/H11a with one small (0.04 ha) SD17/OTHER in middle of field (T37). | *H11b/SD12* with one small (0.04 ha) SD17 in middle of field. |
| Top field | Y | SD12 (Q6), mapped as SD12 dominated by Cha on eastern margin (T13). | SD12b |
| SE corner, beyond top field | N | OTHER (T10) | MG7/SD12=0.5 ha. Beyond corner: SD12y=20% of 1.67 ha; then MG7. |

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The 1990 survey indicates grazing was extensive at Foveran and helped to maintain SD12 in favour of heath and noted that the pasture beyond the landward limit of the SSSI boundary retains heath element, although the greater grazing pressure is reducing the heath vegetation in favour of more grassy swards. The accompanying form records that parts of the site were grazed with sheep and cattle (10 ha ?each) and that this was moderate and moderate to heavy respectively.

In the description of the wider system, the SDVSS notes the presence of acidic dune grassland around agricultural land adjacent but no recent problems with agricultural activity.

*SCM*

For the SCM background to this visit see the cycle-2 documents from 2010-2013: Management Note, field form and report at A543969, A517234 and A517233 resp..

The main cycle-2 failures on Foveran and Drum links were the loss of sand dune vegetation due to localised grazing by cattle (also ~~unconsented~~ supplementary feeding), and the abundance of weeds and scrub, more widely *Cham(aen)erion*, but also locally *Senecio jacobaea*, *Urtica dioica* (in the grazed area). There was evidence of ~~unconsented~~ winter feeding in the enclosed fields which, together with the grazing, had resulted in some eroded bare areas, ragwort and nettles and over-grazing. Many of the plant communities in this area were no longer recognisable as dune communities. This was particularly the case for the SD16 dune slack in the bottom field, which is located about 100 m south of the fence line area mapped in the 1984 consent, was heavily grazed with some large clumps of nettles. The slack appeared impoverished with very few slack species present and the cover of creeping willow, *Salix repens,* was poor. The area affected was measured at around 3-5 ha.

The most recent visit to Foveran Links was on 25th June 2013 (A1016226). This noted disturbed, weedy dune grassland in the bottom field, disturbance in 2nd-top field and apparent re-seeding in the top field prior to 2006 aerials.

Foveran Links is subject to a RDC, which excludes the 2nd-top or middle field (BRC 140888, see e.g. A2096064).

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2016 visit

Foveran Links' open (i.e. unenclosed) dunes and enclosed fields were revisited to look again at the above issues.

*Comments on condition of enclosed fields with reference to SCM targets, 2016*

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| *Habitat* | *SCM target* | *Comments* |
|---|---|---|
| Fixed dunes | No net loss in extent except as part of change to other dune habitats as part of natural processes | No. The extent of sand dune vegetation in the north field appeared to have been reduced by agricultural improvement. |
| | Transition to terrestrial habitat(s) intact. | No. The transition inland had been affected by agricultural improvement. |
| | Bare ground or sand present but no more than 10% of total area. | Bare sand variable, from 5 to 20%. |
| | Flowering and fruiting of dune grassland at least frequent (use DAFOR).<br><br>Stock grazing pressure and timing sufficient to allow flowering and fruiting of dune grassland species to at least frequent level | No, only LF in fields |
| | Rabbit grazing pressure never sufficient to reduce flowering and fruiting of dune grassland species to occasional level | No. Only one rabbit seen but ?former rabbit grazing pressure and stock grazing pressure sufficient to reduce flowering and fruiting of dune grassland species to occasional level over much of the enclosed fields. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Other invasive species absent (includes *Cirsium arvense*, *Cirsium vulgare*, *Urtica dioica*, *Lolium perenne*) List and use DAFOR, target notes if present) | No, LD *Urtica dioica* and *Cirsium arvense*; LA *Lolium perenne* and *Cirsium vulgare*. In addition, *Stellaria media* (Sme) cover 15% over much of 2nd-top or middle field. |
| | Winter feeding impacts (poaching, patches of nitrophiles, spreads of straw and hay) never more than rare | No, nitrophiles LD in several areas and bare ground locally dominant near feeding areas in north of 2nd-top field (photos 95 and 96). |
| | Indicators of local distinctiveness | A couple of notable species were noted: *Viola canina* and Oph.az (photos 89 & 90). |
| Dune slack | No more than one negative indicator species more than frequent, or singly or together the cover of negative indicator species no more than 5%. Negative indicators include: *Senecio jacobaea*, *Cirsium arvense*, *Cirsium vulgare*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Urtica dioica*, *Lolium perenne*, *Arrhenatherum elatius* | *Urtica* cover was 10% over most of the mapped SD16 slack.<br><br>Slack in north of bottom field partially invaded by *Glyceria fluitans* (photo 88).<br><br>Slacks in 2nd-top field all appeared to be dominated by weeds (photos 92 and 93). |

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These fields remain in unfavourable condition. Little or no SSSI interest remains in the top field.

Comment [SL1]: Should this be plural?

Comment [MS2]: No, I am referring to just the one field

An additional concern on the open dunes outside of the fields is the apparent doubling in extent of ~~In addition, *Rosa rugosa* also expanding on open dunes (doubled~~ in the last ~~extent~~ 3 years (note 5 below, photo 79)~~)~~.

**Notes**

Foveran north

1. NK00470 24266. Photo 67: Oph.az by path

2a. Photo 68. NK00510 24198. Gent.camp near path.
2b. NK00513 24154. More Gent.camp near path.

3. NK00420 23822. Cx.mar on E side of path. 150 spikes. 6 x 1 m area. Photo 69. Significantly reduced in extent and number since 2013.

3a. Photo 70. "Hotlips" *Octospora* species fungus.

Comment [MS3]: Or *Scutellinia* (*subhirtella*), as recorded at Forvie last w/e?

Comment [MS4]: Identified by Dave G. NBN G has a 1975 record of hotlips fungus *O. humosa* from NK006260, along the waterside pa h within Forvie NNR – mentioned to Annabel.

Foveran south

4. *Pyrola minor* colony.

Photos 71, 72, 73, 74 & 75: 10 spikes, at NK00167 23159
Photo 76. Another 9 spikes.
Photo 77. Bluish female common blue

Photo 78. View of Foveran Links

5. Photo 79. *Rosa rugosa*. NJ99863 22472, doubled in extendt in 3 years.
Mature bushes 75 $m^2$ – Geoview (October 2015), 78 $m^2$. Extent was estimated at c 40 $m^2$ in 2013. Ongoing invasion (F *R. rugosa*): 60 $m^2$.

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Drum Links

6. Photo 81. NJ99755 22269. Repeat photo of Photo 452.

Foveran Links fields

*Bottom field*

Photo 80. View of bottom field.

7. NJ99832 22496. Photo 82. Dune slack with A Sxr, c 25%, 5 cm. O Ama. F Sj, Viol.riv, Tr.

8. NJ99829 22516. Sand hill with SD8 dune grassland and rabbit holes. Photo 83. Ama 4, Gla.ver 3, Hl, Cer.font 3, Viol.can 2, Ver.off 2, Sj 3, Cxa 5, Luz.camp 2. Rsq 6, Rtriq 2, Ppur, Hcup 2. + Rr. Ht: 1-2 cm, excluding Ama. Flwrg: a few Gal.ver and Cer.font flwrs – occasional throughout, O Viola (tric). Bare sand due to scuffing and around burrows.

8a. Dune hill top with Gsx in SD12.

9. NJ99900 22616. Dune slack with nettles=SD+Ud. F Cxa, Hl, Ud (10%). OLF Ama. Photo 84.

Photo 86 View S to Dune slack with nettles

10. NJ99910 22660. +/- spp-rich dune grassland. F Tprae and Gal.ver fls. O/F Lot.corn fls. O Camp.rot fls. Photo 85. Dark green frit x1.

11. Nutrient-rich weedy area. A/D Ud. OLD Cia. OLA Sj. O large Rumex. F Pm. O Pans. Photo 87: view N from NJ99886 22806. Sue's photo NJ9981222787. Dark green frit x1.

Q18, 1990: NJ999 228. Sxr 7, Cxa 3, Fo 2, Po.prat 2, Luz.camp 3, Ao 4, Hl 4, Tr 4, Hpil 3, Cer.font 2, Gal.ver 1, Rhian 1, Vpal 1, Rtriq 8, Rsq 3, Dic.scop 4, Hyl.sp 4, Brach.rut 1, Clad.fur 4.

12. NJ99899 22947. Pond in bottom field. Pond with Eleeoch.pal and Gly.(flui). Margins of SD(17) with patches of SD16 characterised by Sxr. SD(17) comprising Pans, Rfm and Jar. Photo 88.

13. NJ99899 22970. Dune grassland in north of bottom field. F Gal.ver. O Viol.can. R Oph.azo x1. Photo 89, 90.

*2nd-top or middle field*

14. Weedy dune grassland. F Sme, 15%, Ama, Tr. O Ud. Bare sand 20%. LF Chenopodium sp. Rabbit x1. Photo 91 S of 2nd-top field, NJ99971 23010.

Photo 92 Lower pond in 2nd-top field NJ99948 23079. This corresponds with "small slack" at T37 in 1990, from *NJ9991 2307 as indicated on map:* SD17/Other. Sxr, Po.prat, Ao, Cxa, Hl, Cxn, Je, Fo, Card.prat, Jsq.

Photo 93 Upper ponds in 2nd-top field NJ99969 23210
Photo 95 2nd-top field from N: feeding area. NJ99931 23222
Photo 96 2nd-top field from NW corner. NJ99897 23237.

*Top field*

Q6, 1990: SD12. Recorded on table as NK001234 but *map indicates NJ9993 2327*. Cxa 3, Fo 4, Ama 4, Po.prat 5, Hl 5, Gsx 4, Cer.font 3, Cha 2, Fr 5, Vriv 2. Rsg 5, Pseud.pur 5, Hylo.sp 4, Rtriq 2.

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15. 20% Ud. 40% MG7. 40% SD F Ama. MG7 with A Lp and F/A Tr.

Photo 94 Top field from SE corner. NJ99969 23210.
Photo 97 Top field from SW corner
Photo 98 Top field from NW corner. NJ99914 23334
Photo 99 Top field from north
Photo 00 Top field from dunes
Sue's photo NJ9982923218

*SE corner beyond Top field*

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T10, 1990. Semi-improved pasture grazed by cattle, sheep, rabbits and hares. Tr, Po.prat, Hl, Cer.font, Fr, At, Ud. Rtriq. R Ama.

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SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE

# Site Condition Monitoring Management Notes

## Site Details

| | |
|---|---|
| Site | Foveran Links (SSSI) |
| Feature | Coastal Geomorphology of Scotland |
| Report Category | Geomorphology |
| Cycle | 3 |
| Visit Date | 16 August 2016 |
| Site Feature ID | 10836 |

## Additional Visit Dates (list any multiple visits that occurred to make the condition assessment)

26 June 2012 and 24 & 45 June 2013.

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## NOTES:

### Background

This 205 ha site, comprising Menie and Drums Links along with Foveran Links itself, was probably one of the least disturbed and most dynamic sand dune systems in Britain. The 1984 SSSI citation notes its exceptional importance for the study of a wide variety of coastal landforms and processes. These sand landforms included, in particular, the largest and most dynamic sand sheet in Britain (Hansom, 2007).

The Forvie Geological Conservation Review (GCR) site overlaps with the Foveran Links section of the Foveran Links SSSI and the Sands of Forvie and Ythan Estuary SSSI. The geomorphological interest described in the Foveran Links SSSI citation includes the whole of SSSI.

A golf course, constructed on Menie in 2010-11 by TIGLS (the back nine within the SSSI), opened in July 2012.

### Previous SCM assessments and surveys

Cycle-1 SCM was carried out in 2000/01, using as a baseline the report 'Assessment of Landform Change within Forvie and Foveran Links SSSIs' (Wright 2001). The cycle-1 assessment found that the geomorphological feature was in favourable condition but noted concerns regarding possible future use and management of the site, in particular increasing levels of recreational use, including path deepening (at the end of a boardwalk), the use of dune buggies/quad bikes and the lighting of fires. Similar concerns were noted in cycle 2, as described below.

Hansom's 2007 assessment of the site's geomorphological interest (B215440, A172886), has provided a revised baseline for the feature since cycle-2.

Cycle-2 SCM was carried out in August 2007 (data at A117687) and included the Menie section as development works had not begun. The subsequent assessment of the geological feature excluded Menie Links as the development was ongoing. Excluding Menie Links, the condition of the remainder was assessed as Favourable, maintained.

**Current SCM**

The Menie section of the SSSI was visited on 12 September 2012, one and half months after the golf course had opened, by Area staff, and Menie, along with the north of the SSSI, was visited again in June 2013 by Area staff and geomorphology and coastal ecology advisers Alistair Rennie and Stewart Angus. Foveran Links and Drum Links were re-visited by Sue Lawrence and Mike Smedley on 16 August 2016 (Sitecheck and notes at A2127910 and A2066691).

A copy of the cycle-3 CMF, alongside the CMF for cycle 2, is available as a spreadsheet at A2136544.

Pressures

*Golf course development on Menie Links*

Construction of the new golf course involved earthworks, planting of tees, greens and fairways, drainage, irrigation and dune stabilisation (marram grass planting in combination with chestnut pale fencing and seeding/re-seeding). This has affected the natural morphology of Menie's dunes and interfered with natural processes. Most of its important geomorphological features have been lost or reduced to fragments. In particular, the Menie sand sheet has been stabilised, part of the Sandend burn sheet has been lost, and nearby slacks/emerged marine terrace have been reduced to fragments. The coastal dune ridge was not included in the development but blow out corridors along the ridge have been partially stabilised. Much of the 2nd dune ridge also remains, along with some of the mature dunes and butte dunes.

The boundary of the planning permission extended to about 24% of the site and about half of that area (c 25 ha), has been directly affected by the construction of the course and stabilisation of dunes (see Damage & Unconsented Activity Record Form at A2141760, and see Alistair Rennie's 2016 re-assessment of the geomorphological interest of the Foveran Links, A1882825).

Agriculture and Informal recreation are the primary use of the rest of the site.

*Recreation*

Recreation mostly occurs in the northern section by the Ythan Estuary and car park. A boardwalk was constructed in this area by Newburgh community, with SNH support, to reduce erosion associated with walkers. There is a network of paths through the fixed dunes in the north of the site, created by people walking across it, particularly from the dunes to the beach. The area of these paths is small in comparison to the site and has only a minor impact upon it. If recreational pressure were to increase substantially in the future, this could potentially have significant impacts upon the site if not well managed and may require intervention such as the creation of paths.

Only small amounts of litter were observed at the time of the 2010 visit with limited evidence of barbecues towards the south of the site. On 23 June 2012 one or two

were seen in the north of the site. At the most recent visit in 2016 visitor pressure appeared to have increased. This is likely to be the result of visitors to Forvie NNR being diverted to Foveran to view the increasing number of seals in the estuary.

Pony trekking has become a regular activity across the northern section of the SSSI, promoted by the land owner. Pony trekking on the SSSI no longer requires consent from SNH following the introduction of the Land Reform Act Scotland 2003. The trekking appears to keep to a clear route through the dunes and at the edge of some dune slacks, avoiding the raised beaches. Its current extent is not having a negative impact on the SSSI, although should the number of routes increase substantially and encroach on the raised beaches, this could give rise to concern (see comments below under Vehicles).

*Vehicles*

Prior to the golf course development, quad bikes used to cross the Menie section but vehicle use there is now limited to newly constructed tracks. The 2010 sand dune survey of Foveran and Drum Links noted localised quad bike tracks through the fore dune from the beach and throughout the north of the site, where there is greatest recreational pressure, in the mobile and fixed dunes and the dune slack. There were also tracks through the fixed dunes to the south of Drums Links. However, overall the report notes that tracks were 'not exceptionally invasive'. In 2012 Mike Smedley also noted localised vehicle (quad) tracks in the mobile dune expanse in the north of Foveran Links (photo). Any vehicle tracks or hoof prints on the raised shingle beach exposed in the deflation hollows on Foveran Links could be damaging, as these are "relict" areas that cannot be 'repaired' by dynamic processes.

Dune buggies/quad bikes can cause considerable amounts of damage and de-stabilise areas of dune. Ideally, these vehicles should not be used on the SSSI and measures to control this may have to be considered if this becomes a concern in the future.

*Agriculture*

Grazing with livestock combined with supplementary feeding formerly occurred on the inland margins of both Foveran Links and Menie Links but, following the construction of the golf course, is now limited to Foveran Links. This has affected the habitat interest of the three fields in the west of the site (loss and damage form at A2135422) but these are outside the GCR and not significant for the geomorphological interest of the site. Since 2013, most of the open dunes (id NK/00254/23571), corresponding with the GCR, have been managed as habitat mosaic under an RDC (2013-17). The dunes are able to be lightly grazed by up to 200 sheep for up to 20 days, avoiding poaching. No supplementary feeding is allowed.

*Scrub*

Gorse is spreading in the north of Foveran Links but is not currently affecting the visibility of the geomorphological interest. A comparison of aerial photos from 1994 (A691037) with 2008 (A728356) for cycle 2 showed that the gorse in the north of the site had spread and consolidated, increasing in extent to about 0.6 ha, including 0.3 ha in the main stand - more than double that shown in the 1994 aerials - and a small increase is also evident between 2008 and 2011 (current images on Geoview). Some of the gorse to the south of the main stand will be removed under an RDC.

The area of SSSI affected by gorse remains small but it should continue to be monitored and controlled.

*Engineering works*

Some engineering works were carried out within the SSSI in the past (WWII gun emplacement present), but pre-date the site notification. There are no recent engineering works on Foveran or Drum Links.

Summary

In summary, part of the site has been destroyed or damaged by the construction of the golf course on Menie. The remainder of the geomorphological feature on Foveran Links SSSI (including the Forvie GCR site) appears to be in favourable condition.

**Recommendations for future SCM**

Alistair Rennie's re-assessment of the geomorphological interest of Foveran Links (A1882825) has established that the geographic limit of this interest corresponds with the GCR and provides a baseline for subsequent SCM.

The overall condition of the notified feature is: **Partially destroyed/Favourable, maintained**

SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE

# Site Condition Monitoring Management Notes

## Site Details

**Protected Area:** Foveran Links (SSSI)

**Feature Name:** Sand dunes

**Report Category:** Supralittoral sediment (Coast)

**Cycle:** 3

**Visit Date:** 16 August 2016

**Site Feature ID:** 10835

## Additional Visit Dates (list any multiple visits that occurred to make the condition assessment)

26 June, 1-2 July and 12 September 2012, 24 and 25 June 2013.

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## NOTES:

### Background

This 205 ha site, comprising Menie and Drums Links along with Foveran Links itself, was probably one of the least disturbed and most dynamic sand dune systems in Britain. Its remarkable collection of landforms and habitats, reflecting the interaction of active geomorphological and ecological processes, included the largest and most dynamic sand sheet in Britain along with areas of mobile, semi-fixed and fixed dunes, dune slack and dune heath.

The site's sand dune habitats support a number of rare/declining plants. Younger dune slacks habitats are especially interesting with rare species such as *Carex maritima, Ophioglossum azoricum* and *Radiola linoides* and the mobile dunes support *Festuca arenaria.* Other rare/declining/local species found in the dunes include *Carex aquatilis*, *Viola canina, Gentianella campestris*, *Calamagrostis epigejos, Botrychium lunaria* and *Pyrola minor*, along with the rare foliose lichen *Leptogium palmatum*.

Baseline vegetation surveys

A habitat survey was carried out by NCC in 1986. An NVC vegetation survey was carried out by the CSD/JNCC (Doarks, et al 1990), and this was extended beyond the SSSI boundary in 1999 for the Sand Dune Vegetation Survey of Scotland (Dargie, 2001). Tom Dargie carried out further survey in 2006 for the golf course development, with additional mapping carried out by Mike Smedley in 2007 (A146213).

Management

Grazing has traditionally been carried out mainly on the inland margins of the dunes and under the current ORC list (not yet reviewed under the NCA), no consent is required for grazing or stock feeding, as such, only *changes* in grazing or stock feeding. But a change in stock feeding (or grazing) management, including an increase in stock feeding (or grazing) would require consent. A consent (unsigned) for cattle-grazing was issued in 1984 (re-notification) for the three fields in the west of Foveran Links (fence lines now differ). Following the NCA 2004, a deemed consent for Foveran Links, grazing of up to 200 cattle within an electric fence in the open dune, from 1997, is not carried forward. Two of these three fields were included in a RDC (2013-17, BRC 140888, see e.g. A2096064), which precludes supplementary feeding but the middle field is excluded from the RDC.

A new golf course on Menie Links, constructed in 2010-11 by TIGLS (the back nine within the SSSI), opened in July 2012.

**Previous SCM**

- **Cycle-1 SCM, 2000: Favourable, maintained**

The cycle-1 survey for SCM was carried out by Tom Dargie in October 2000 (CMF at A113988, all other documents on CD ). The sand dune habitats were in favourable condition apart from a small amount of damage to the fields on the inland edge of Foveran Links caused by grazing and stock feeding. This resulted in an increase in weeds (photos 173, 174 and 175), and a loss of dune slack extent but was not considered to have affected the integrity of the site as a whole (see A113998, also comments from Stewart Angus at A391923). Other failures recorded by the surveyor were winter feeding of stock on part of Menie, affecting both the fixed dunes (including conversion of heath to weedy dune grassland, photo 178) and the mobile dunes, and, secondly, less than frequent flowering and fruiting of species on the dune grassland, dune slack and dune heath.

In the 2006-07 surveys an abundance of thistles was mapped over more than 3 ha of Menie's dune grassland.

- **Cycle-2, 2010: Favourable, declining**

The cycle-2 SCM survey of the sand dune habitat feature, excluding Menie, was carried out by Janine Morris under contract to SNH. It was not formally signed off because of the construction of the golf course. Two walks were carried out at Foveran, on 19 and 25 May 2010 (field form A517234, report A517233). This survey excluded the Menie Links part of the SSSI (i.e. approximately the southern third of the site), as the new golf course was under development. No assessment was made of dune heath due to its restriction to Menie.

Main pressures in cycle 2

In 2010 the main target failures on Foveran and Drum links were the loss of sand dune vegetation due to localised grazing by cattle (also supplementary feeding), and the abundance of weeds and scrub, more widely *Cham(aen)erion*, but also locally *Senecio jacobaea*, *Urtica dioica* (in the grazed area), and *Ulex* (in the north of the site). Of lesser concern was horse riding and localised vehicle (quad) damage affecting various components, the extent of paths and tracks, and the absence of foredune vegetation including the apparent loss of a strip of foredune mapped in the SDVSS (but refound in cycle 3, see below).

*Agriculture – Foveran Links*

The 2010 survey noted that stock were not present on the main part of the site and that overall there was little grazing, e.g. rabbits. However, grazing was again noted, primarily horses (apparent change to management, therefore unconsented), on the enclosed fields in the fixed dunes in the west of the site. There was further evidence of an increase in winter feeding in these enclosed fields which, together with the grazing, had resulted in some eroded bare areas, ragwort and nettles and over-grazing. Many of the plant communities in this area were no longer recognisable as dune communities. This was particularly the case for the SD16 *Salix repens-Holcus lanatus* dune slack which, according to the surveyor, appeared to be the only example of this community outwith the Menie section of the SSSI. This small slack, which is located at NJ 99873 22604) about 100 m south of the fence line area mapped in the 1984 consent, was heavily grazed with some large clumps of nettles. The slack appeared impoverished with very few slack species present and the cover of creeping willow, *Salix repens,* was poor. The area affected was measured at around 3-5 ha. The areas of SSSI outwith Menie is 115 ha including the beach or 87 ha excluding the beach. At most, approximately 6% of this area was affected and, on this basis, the overall integrity of the site was maintained (Stewart Angus, pers. comm.).

Other cycle-2 comments

*Strand and foredune*

One of the targets for Strand, embryo and mobile dunes in the SCM database is for at least one of the listed species to be at least occasional on strand. However, in the national contract, the target is amended to 'at least one at least frequent and another occasional'. Since only *Leymus* was occasional, this target was not met.

The report states '*As indicated above, the previous NVC survey noted a large strip of SD4 Elymus farctus ssp. boreali-atlanticus foredune community along the shoreline to the north of the site. However, this was not located, nor any great evidence of Elymus farctus throughout the fore dunes. This could be as a result of tidal or sediment changes. However, the whole area of Foveran and Forvie is a very dynamic system, with large habitat and vegetational changes taking place since previous surveys were undertaken. This could be a natural part of the dune system formation, and not a failure in its own right'.*

Advice from Stewart Angus was that the target used in the national contract should be followed, but that while it was not met, it should not lead to the site being in unfavourable condition as this could be a natural part of the dune system formation.

*Dune heath – Menie Links*

Dune heath used to be moderately extensive on Menie (estimate of 2.6 ha by 1986 survey), with small areas also noted on Foveran. This heath was partly obliterated by the natural movement of the Menie main sand sheet and also reduced by overgrazing[1]. The 2006 and 2007 surveys confirmed the much reduced extent of heath remaining on Menie. The only area seen in 2007 was a remnant of a 0.9 ha area mapped in the north of Menie in 1999. In 2007 the extent of heath was about 0.05 ha (other parts were dune pasture and slacks).

**Current SCM**

The Menie links section of the SSSI was visited on 12 September 2012, a month and a half after the golf course had opened, and Menie, along with the north of the SSSI, was visited again in June 2013 by Area staff and coastal ecology and geomorphology advisers, Stewart Angus and Alistair Rennie. The other dates in 2012 correspond with visits by SNH staff to the northern part of the SSSI, in particular to record or control invasives (see below). Foveran Links was visited again on 16 August 2016 (Sitecheck and notes at A2127910 and A2066691).

<u>Main pressures</u>

*Construction of new golf course, TIGLS - Menie Links*

Construction of the golf course involved earthworks, drainage, irrigation, dune stabilisation (marram grass planting in combination with chestnut pale fencing and seeding/re-seeding), the construction of tracks and seeding of tees, greens and fairways. This has directly affected about 25 ha of the site (c. half of the area covered by the planning permission), and affected natural processes, transitions and successions over a wider area. Sand mobility has been greatly reduced within the development area, the main sand sheet having been stabilised Areas of vegetated mobile and semi-fixed dunes, dune grassland, dune slacks and dune heath have also been directly affected. Outside of the immediate footprint of the development, reduced areas of all of these component habitats, and associated rare and characteristic species, remain. However, the coastal processes on which they depended have been removed; consequently it is likely that at least some of these habitats will not continue to exist in their current form in the foreseeable future. (For further information, including maps and photos, see Damage & unconsented activity record form, A2141760, and Alistair Rennie's and Stewart Angus's re-assessment of the geomorphological and ecological interest, A1882825 and A1886119 resp.).

Most of the 0.05 ha remnant of dune heath mapped in the north of Menie in 2007 was found to be extant (the largest patch, about 24 m across, mainly comprised *Calluna* and *Empetrum*, the others mainly *Empetrum*). Another small area of heath on Menie Links, mapped in 2006 by Dargie (about 0.1 ha), does not appear to have been affected by the construction of the golf course but has not been re-visited.

[1] Perhaps about 60% was lost to sand and the rest was lost to overgrazing or 'became' dune slack. Larger areas of heath to the south of the SSSI were not affected.

The areas of thistles mapped on Menie in 2006 were removed when the golf course was constructed.

*Agriculture - Foveran Links*

In the 2013 visit disturbance and enrichment associated with grazing and supplementary feeding was evident in the three fields in the west of Foveran Links (photo 454 at NJ99932283 in field id NJ/99879/22776 and photos 456 & 457 of fields NJ/99924/23102 and NJ/99943/23279). *Urtica* remained F/A in the dune slack in the grazed field at the southend of Foveran Links (photo 451, NJ99902262).

Under the 2013-17 Rural Development Contract the two fields in the west of the links are managed as Open grazed grassland for birds and the nearby open dunes (id NK/00254/23571) as habitat mosaic. In these fields grazing is reduced in the spring to benefit birds and the aim is to have a 30% cover of forbs in dune slacks and 30-70% of sward species-rich short turf in fixed dune. The open dunes are able to be lightly grazed by up to 200 sheep for up to 20 days, avoiding poaching, and some of the gorse will be removed at the north of the site (not the main stand as this is outside the boundary of agricultural land). No supplementary feeding is allowed.

The condition of these fields at the visit in August 2016 was very poor. Recent damage from stock feeding was noted in the north of the middle field visit (photos 95 and 96; Loss and damage form A2135422). This appears to be a consequence of the RDC that precludes supplementary feeding from the other two fields. Some of the damage is evident in current aerial imagery (from 2015) on Geoview. This field also had an abundance of nitrophilous weeds such as fat hen and chickweed (photo 91). These fields also appeared to be in unfavourable condition due to overgrazing (see notes at A2066691). The three fields together, about 8.2 ha, represent about 4% of the site and about 10% of the sand dune on the Foveran Links part of the site.

*Recreation including vehicle tracks - Foveran Links*

There is high recreational usage, particularly in the north of the site along the estuary and through the fore dunes to the beach. There is no one set track but an array of connecting tracks causing a higher and more widespread level of erosion. However, there was little litter, fires or other visitor associated damage. This high level of usage was present throughout the dune habitats (fixed dunes, strand embryo and mobile dunes and dune slacks). Tracks tend to be along the perimeter of dune slacks and not normally through the central section, perhaps to avoid the wettest areas. In 2016 visitor pressure appeared to have increased, perhaps as a result of visitors to Forvie NNR being diverted to Foveran to view the increasing number of seals in the estuary.

A single boardwalk in the north of the site near the golf course has been recently been replaced.

Horse tracks are a regular feature in the north and central parts of the site, likely to be from the nearby stables.

The survey in 2010 noted localised quad bike tracks through the fore dune from the beach and throughout the north of the site, where there is greatest recreational pressure, in the mobile and fixed dunes and the dune slack. There were also tracks through the fixed dunes to the south of Drums Links. In 2012 localised vehicle (quad) tracks were noted in the mobile dune expanse in the north of Foveran Links (photo) but none were seen in the visits in 2013 or 2016.

In 2016 no signs of recreation were noted on Drums links, possibly due to its distance from the estuary and also because it is more heavily vegetated with less bare sand.

Overall, while there is clearly recreational pressure, it is not extensive enough to result in failure of the target. However, it is possible that the combined effect of quad bikes, walkers and horse riders could damage and weaken the dune system in future.

*INNS - Foveran Links*

No non-native species were recorded in the 2000 or 2010 surveys for cycle 1 and 2 but it is thought that one invasive species is likely to have been present on the site in cycle 2. On 27 May 2012 a single patch of *Acaena novae-zelandiae* was found by Mike Smedley in SD8 calcareous fixed dune grassland in the north of the site and on 23 June, 26 June and 2 July nine further small patches and a larger area (c 25 $m^2$) were found. The first four patches and the larger area were removed on 23

June and on 2 July Forvie reserve staff sprayed all known patches with glyphosphate (see A738231 and A738004). Twelve new areas were mapped and sprayed on 12 August 2012 (A753171), and a further patch was also noted on 16 September 2012. Additional spraying has been carried out annually. In 2013 control appeared to have been >99% successful and, following further control in 2014 and 2015, none was seen in the visit in August 2016. In 2015 this species was also recorded on Menie 2 km to the south of the SSSI at NJ983191 and SNH recommended to TIGLS that they should control it as it is highly invasive and would spread to the SSSI (further information has been provided to help locate this species).

In 2013 a stand of Japanese rose *Rosa rugosa* (c 40 $m^2$), was noted at NJ9986 2248 at south end of Foveran Links (aerial). By 2016 this appeared to have doubled in extent (photo 79).

Other non-natives noted on Foveran Links in 2013-16 included a single stand of pampas grass *Cortaderia selloana* and a sycamore tree and sapling.

*Other invasive plants - Foveran Links*

Rosebay willowherb *Cham(aen)erion angustifolium* is a native plant but highly competitive. In 2010 it was found to have a high amount of cover throughout the mobile dune, fixed dune and dune slacks at Foveran outside of Menie. Locally dominant willow-herb was noted in 2013 in the south of Foveran Links, by the grazed field (photo 455). This species also appears to be increasing on the undeveloped part of Menie (perhaps as a result of increased rabbit control) and spot treatment is undertaken. Advice from Stewart Angus is that if the willow herb was sufficiently scattered that the ground flora could still get through, then the site should be favourable. It may the case that sites start as favourable but as the willowherb becomes more dense, they become unfavourable. For this reason, Foveran does not fail on this target. In 2016 continued growth of *Cham(aen)erion* was noted on both Foveran (photo 00) and Drums Links.

Morris also found ragwort *Senecio jacobea* to be occasional to frequent throughout the sward in the fore dune area. The cover of this species was not notable in the fixed dunes apart from the grazed fields in the west of site. Here the cover was high. This area also had large patches of nettle *Urtica dioica* which is likely to be a result of nutrient enrichment from stock feeding. In 2016 *Urtica* and *Cirsium arvense* were frequent or abundant in places in the enclosed fields (photos 84, 87, NJ9981222787 and NJ9982923218), and *Senecio jacobaea* was widespread across the north of the SSSI, though absent from some areas. As noted above, the dune grassland in the southern part of the middle field was very weedy (photo 91), associated with stock feeding in the north of this field (photos 95 and 96).

*Scrub*

Willow and gorse are locally abundant in the landward dunes in the northern part of the site, with scattered gorse bushes also occurring through much of the seaward mobile dunes. There is willow scrub in hollows to the south of the SSSI and a large stand of gorse outwith the SSSI boundary which could be a prominent seed-source. In Cycle-2 comparison of aerial photos from 1994 (A691037) with 2008 (A728356) showed that the gorse has spread and consolidated over that period, increasing in extent to about 0.6 ha, including 0.3 ha in the main stand - more than double that shown in the 1994 aerials. A small increase is also evident between 2008 and 2011 (images on Geoview). The area of SSSI affected by gorse remains small but is a sign that the condition of the site could decline and should continue to be monitored and controlled. Willow is also occasional in the dune slack in the north of Menie and appears to be increasing following the removal of cattle grazing from that part of the site.

Other comments

*Foredune:*

*Elymus farctus* was not found in the Cycle-2 survey but was noted by in the foredune in the north and south of the site of the site on the visits on 1 July and 16 September 2012 and 25 June 2013 (photo 453).

Summary

In summary, part of the site has been destroyed or damaged by the construction of the golf course on Menie. The condition of the remainder of the sand dune habitat feature on Foveran Links SSSI is Unfavourable, declining.

**Recommendations**

1. SCM targets are developed that are specific to the site.

2. Recreation pressure should continue to be monitored, especially in the north of the site.

3. In future surveys for SCM, more attention should be given to the SD8 dune grassland where local species such as *Botrychium lunaria* are found and where the *Acaena* colonised. This grassland should be visited each year in the spring or early summer and patches or areas of *Acaena* species should be sprayed and/or removed. The stand of *Rosa rugosa* should be carefully monitored. Any areas of invasives on the adjacent golf courses should also be controlled. Any future development, in particular the proposed Macleod golf course on Menie Links, should include protocols for dealing with invasive species.

4. Consideration should be given to retaining quality indicators for the component sand dune habitats including species such as *Festuca arenaria*, *Carex maritima*, *Ophioglossum azoricum* and *Botrychium lunaria*.

5. A new vegetation survey for any parts of Menie retained within the SSSI boundary would help define a new baseline for subsequent SCM.

6. The management regime of the fields in the west of Foveran Links prior to the RDC should be re-established if possible and the ORC list should be amended to include grazing and stock feeding not just *changes* in these operations.

The overall condition of the notified feature is: **Partially destroyed/Unfavourable, declining**.

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# Site Condition Monitoring Form

**Protected Area:** Foveran Links (SSSI)

**SNH Area:** Tayside & Grampian

**Reporting Category:** Geomorphology

**Feature Name:** Coastal Geomorphology of Scotland

**CURRENT CONDITION ASSESSMENT:** **Partially destroyed/Favourable Maintained**
*(if the feature is partially destroyed a condition assessment will be made for the remaining section of the feature)*

## ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Assessed by: **Mike Smedley** Last site visit date: **28-AUG-2016**

Pressures or activities noted that may impact feature condition

| Pressure or Activity | Influence | Originally Raised From |
|---|---|---|
| Development with planning permission | Negative | Cycle 3 SITECHECK |

Is a review of management recommended? No

Do Off-site Factors influence this feature's condition? No
Comments *(if relevant)*:

Management Note: A254346
*(a visit note with this reference should be attached to this report)*

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# Site Condition Monitoring Form

**The feature, Coastal Geomorphology of Scotland at Foveran Links(SSSI) was assessed against the following targets.**

**Primary Guidance:** SNH Guidance - Earth Science SCM: October 2005
**Attribute Set:** Coastal/ Fluvial/ Cave/ Karst
**Advisor Notes:** SNH SCM guidance should be used for monitoring. JNCC CSM guidance for Earth sciences does not reflect Scotland's monitoring needs and should be used as guidance only.

| Attribute | Standard Target | Site Specific Target | Monitoring Result | Target Met |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Physical Attributes | If there is an appropriate 'favourable condition' baseline: No part of the feature has been damaged, moved or removed (except by natural processes on a temporary basis, through acceptable consented activities, or as part of the natural evolution of active process indicators) since the time of [state baseline survey in full including year and month of site visit]. | Maintain the extent, composition, structure and morphology of the dunes and sand domes within the SSSI as detailed in SNH report, Assessment of the geomorphological interests of Foveran Links SSSI, by Jim Hansom 2007, excepting modification by natural coastal processes. | Construction of the golf course on Menie Links involved earthworks, planting of tees, greens and fairways, drainage, irrigation and dune stabilisation (marram grass planting in combination with chestnut pale fencing and seeding/re-seeding). This has affected the natural morphology of Menie's dunes and interfered with natural processes. Most of its important geomorphological features have been lost or reduced to fragments. In particular, the Menie sand sheet has been stabilised, part of the Sandend burn sheet has been lost, and nearby slacks/emerged marine terrace have been reduced to fragments. The coastal dune ridge was not included in the development but blow out corridors along the ridge have been partially stabilised. Much of the 2nd dune ridge also remains, along with some of the mature dunes and butte dunes. | Target not met |
| Visibility | If there is an appropriate 'favourable condition' baseline: No part of the feature has been partially or wholly covered or otherwise been made inaccessible for viewing (except by natural processes on a temporary basis, or through acceptable consented activities) since the time of [state baseline survey in full | Maintain the visibility (including availability for study and rsearch) of the dunes within the SSSI site as detailed in SNH report, Assessment of the geomorphological interests of Foveran Links SSSI, by Jim Hansom 2007. | Visibility of the Menie sand sheet and other features has not been maintained due to the construction of the golf course. | Target not met |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | including year and month of site visit]. | | | |
| Negative Indicators | All of the other targets are met and there are no activities or changes in the vicinity of the site that might in the future affect one or more of the other mandatory attributes. (Management should be reviewed if current management will not protect the site from the perceived threats.) | - | The construction of the golf course has impacted on Menie Links (as described above). No activities that might affect the features of interest were noted on Foveran or Drum Links, other than localised vehicle use in at one visit. In 2012 (quad) tracks were noted in the mobile dune expanse in the north of Foveran Links but none was seen in 2013 or 2016. In 2016 visitor pressure appeared to have increased in the north of the site. This is likely to be the result of visitors to Forvie NNR being diverted to Foveran to view the increasing number of seals in the estuary. Grazing with livestock combined with supplementary feeding on the inland margins of Foveran Links is located outside the GCR and does not affect the geomorphological interest. | Target not met |
| Process Dynamics | If there is an appropriate 'favourable condition' baseline: The essential natural processes on which the citation is based, and/or the natural processes forming the essential active process indicators on which the citation is based are not further constrained (except through acceptable consented activities) than they were at the time of [state baseline survey in full including year and month of site visit]. | Maintain the essential active processes as detailed in SNH report, Assessment of the geomorphological interests of Foveran Links SSSI, by Jim Hansom 2007. | The construction of the golf course on Menie Links has interfered with natural processes. Natural processes remain active on Foveran Links. | Target not met |

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# Site Condition Monitoring Form

**NOTES:**

**Site Condition Monitoring Methodology**

The condition of site features is assessed against these categories.

Notified features are monitored in accordance with the Common Standards for Monitoring developed for the United Kingdom by JNCC. A full copy of the standards can be found on the JNCC website (www.jncc.gov.uk).

The establishment of common standards does not mean that monitoring has to be undertaken using prescriptive and rigidly-applied procedures. The approach needs to be sufficiently flexible to take into account natural geographical variation across the UK and to accommodate the varying requirements and operational practices of the country agencies. In some instances guidance specific to Scotland has been developed in accordance with common standards monitoring and details of these should be obtained from Scottish Natural Heritage.

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# Site Condition Monitoring Form

**Protected Area:** Foveran Links (SSSI)

**SNH Area:** Tayside & Grampian

**Reporting Category:** Supralittoral sediment (Coast)

**Feature Name:** Sand dunes

**CURRENT CONDITION ASSESSMENT:** **Partially destroyed/Unfavourable declining**
*(if the feature is partially destroyed a condition assessment will be made for the remaining section of the feature)*

## ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Assessed by: **Mike Smedley** Last site visit date: **16-AUG-2016**

Pressures or activities noted that may impact feature condition

| Pressure or Activity | Influence | Originally Raised From |
|---|---|---|
| Development with planning permission | Negative | Cycle 3 SCM |
| Presence/changing extent invasive species - NON NATIVE | Negative but not cause of unfavourable condition | Cycle 3 SCM |
| Recreation/disturbance | Negative but not cause of unfavourable condition | Cycle 3 SCM |

Is a review of management recommended? Yes

Do Off-site Factors influence this feature's condition? Yes
Comments *(if relevant)*:The SSSI is affected by management to the west and south of the site: the golf courses at Menie and by Newburgh (invasives) and the intensively managed farmland.

Management Note: A543969
*(a visit note with this reference should be attached to this report)*

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# Site Condition Monitoring Form

**The feature, Sand dunes at Foveran Links(SSSI) was assessed against the following targets.**

**Primary Guidance:** SNH Guidance - Dunes SCM: August 2004 (updated April 2017)
**Attribute Set:** Fixed Dunes-(Old Version)
**Advisor Notes:** -

| Attribute | Standard Target | Site Specific Target | Monitoring Result | Target Met |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Extent of feature | No net loss in extent except as part of change to other dune habitats as part of natural processes (e.g. losses to bare sand, mobile dune, slack or dune heath are all acceptable forms of loss). | | Construction of the golf course involved earthworks, drainage, irrigation, dune stabilisation (marram grass planting in combination with chestnut pale fencing and seeding/re-seeding), construction of tracks and seeding of tees, greens and fairways. This has directly affected about 25 ha of the site (c. half of the area covered by the planning permission). Outside this 25 ha, extent has been maintained. | Target not met |
| Vegetation structure: range of zones and integrity of transitions | Transition inland from beach to fixed dune foredune (and around large blowouts) intact over 95% or more of frontage (interchange between the two types is allowable - a natural process). | | Transition from beach to foredune intact at Foveran, Drum and Menie Links (beach and coastal ridge were excluded from the golf course development). | Target met |
| | Maintain existing sequences from calcareous to acidic dune grasslands (interchange between the two types is allowable - a natural process). | | Combination of calcareous and acidic dune maintained in north and south of Foverans Links but only acidic dune found at Menie. | Target met |
| Vegetation structure: bare ground | Bare ground or sand present but no more than 10% of total area. | | Not assessed. | Not Assessed |
| Vegetation structure: sward height | 30-70% of sward comprises species-rich short turf, 2-10cm tall. | | Not assessed. | Not Assessed |
| Vegetation structure: flowering/fruiting | Flowering and fruiting of dune grassland at least frequent (use DAFOR) | | Good flowering and fruiting noted - target probably met. | Target met |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vegetation composition: typical species | Forbs always more than occasional. | | Forbs occasional to frequent. | Target met |
| | Bryophytes always more than occasional. | | Mosses frequent | Target met |
| | If calcareous dune grasslands (SD7, SD8, SD9, SD19), at least eight of the following present at more than occasional level: Galium verum, Aira praecox, Arrhenatherum elatius (SD9 only), Astragalus danicus, Luzula campestris, Carex arenaria, Carex flacca, Sedum acre, Plantago lanceolata, Trifolium repens, Lotus corniculatus, Thymus praecox, Cerastium fontanum, Prunella vulgaris, Pilosella officinarum, Veronica chamaedrys, Hypochoeris radicata, Festuca rubra, Ononis repens, Geranium molle, Erodium cicutarium, Euphrasia officinalis, Rhinanthus minor, Viola canina, Viola tricolor, Viola riviniana, Crepis capillaris, Odontites verna, Hypnum cupressiforme, Peltigera sp., Cladonia sp., Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus, Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus, Tortula muralis, Linum catharticum. | | Not formally assessed. | Not Assessed |
| | If acidic dune grasslands (SD12), at least six of the following present at more than rare level: Galium saxatile, Carex arenaria, Carex pilulifera, Plantago lanceolata, Trifolium repens, Lotus corniculatus, Festuca ovina, Thymus praecox, Potentilla erecta, Luzula campestris, Pilosella officinarum, Hypochoeris radicata, Astragalus danicus, Deschampsia flexuosa, Cladonia spp., Viola canina, Veronica chamaedrys, Aira praecox, Polygala serpyllifolia, Pleurozium schreberi, Scleropodium purum, Dicranum scoparium, Hylocomium splendens. | | Not formally assessed. | Not Assessed |
| Vegetation composition: | Chamaerion angustifolium patches never more than occasional. | | Chamaerion continues to be widespread and locally abundant with continued growth noted | Target not met |

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| negative indicator species | | | on both Foveran and Drums Links in 2016. This species also appears to be increasing on the undeveloped part of Menie (perhaps as a result of increased rabbit control) and spot treatment is undertaken. | |
| | Senecio jacobaea no more than frequent in sward. | | Sj widespread on parts of Foveran Links particularly in the north and west. | Target not met |
| | Hippophae rhamnoides no more than rare. | | Hr not present. Other non-natives recorded included:- - Acaena novae-zelandiae. Thirteen patches were found in the north of Foveran Links in 2012, but these have been controlled and none were seen during the visit in August 2016. - Rosa rugosa. One a stand of c 40 m2, was noted in 2013 at south end of Foveran Links, apparently doubled in extent By 2016 (photo 79). - Pampas grass. Single patch on Foveran Links - Sycamore. Single tree and sapling on Foveran Links. | Target met |
| | Other invasive species absent (includes Cirsium arvense, Cirsium vulgare, Urtica dioica, Lolium perenne). | | In 2016 Urtica and Cirsium arvense were frequent or abundant in places in the enclosed fields Area of thistles mapped on Menie in 2006 was removed when the golf course was constructed. | Target not met |
| | Scrub (except Juniperus communis) never more than occasional as an invading component. | | Willow and gorse are locally abundant in the landward dunes in the northern part of the site. The area remains small but a small increase is evident in recent aerial imagery. Willow is occasional in the dune slack in the north of Menie and appears to be increasing, following the removal of cattle grazing from that part of the site. | Target not met |
| | Tree invasion from adjacent plantations absent or rare. | | None noted. | Target met |
| Other negative indicators | Sand or shingle extraction absent. | | Construction of the golf course involved extensive earthworks. Outside of the areas directly affected by this construction, no | Target not met |

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| | | | extraction or earthworks were noted. | |
| | Improved or amenity grassland never more than rare. | | 9 holes of 18-hole golf course constructed on Menie. This involved the seeding of paths, tees, greens and fairways. | Target not met |
| | Agricultural ploughing of fixed dunes absent. | | None noted but see above. | Target met |
| | Vehicle damage absent or rare. | | Localised vehicle (quad) tracks noted in 2012 in the mobile dune expanse in the north of Foveran Links but none in fixed dune. | Target met |
| | Visitor damage (trampling, digging, jumping, fires, litter) absent or only rare/occasional. | | Visitor pressure by the Ythan Estuary appeared to have increased, possibly as the result of visitors to Forvie NNR being diverted to Foveran to view the increasing number of seals in the estuary. No visitor damage was noted on Menie. | Target met |
| | Continuous lengths of bare sand paths >0.5 m wide absent or never more than rare (check slack edges) | | Not assessed. | Not Assessed |
| | Maintained paths (e.g. boardwalk) always in good condition (leave blank if absent). | | Single boardwalk in the north of the site near the golf course has recently been replaced. Infrastructure on new golf course in good condition. | Target met |
| | Recent dune restoration work (last 5 years) never more than rare. | | Marram grass planting in combination with chestnut pale fencing and seeding/re-seeding undertaken on Menie to stabilise the mobile dunes but none carried out in the fixed dunes. | Target met |
| | Stock grazing pressure and timing sufficient to allow flowering and fruiting of dune grassland species to at least frequent level. | | Grazing pressure from stock in combination high enough in and around the field in the west of Foveran links to reduce flowering and fruiting to occasional levels. Stock are no longer present on Menie. | Target not met |
| | Winter feeding impacts (poaching, patches of nitrophiles, spreads of straw and hay) never more than rare. | | Recent damage from stock feeding was noted in the north of the middle field visit ( Loss and damage form A2135422). This appears to be a consequence of an RDC that | Target not met |

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| | | | precludes supplementary feeding from two other fields in the SSSI. Some of the damage is evident in current aerial imagery (from 2015) on Geoview. This field also had an abundance of nitrophilous weeds such as fat hen and chickweed (see photo). | |
| | Rabbit grazing pressure never sufficient to reduce flowering and fruiting of dune grassland species to ocassional level. | | Rabbit grazing pressure high enough on parts of Foveran links to reduce flowering and fruiting to occasional levels. Low on Menie - rabbits controlled. | Target not met |
| Indicators of local distinctiveness | Maintain distinctive elements at current extent/levels and/or in current locations (e.g. maintain existing populations of notable plant or animal species or transitions between habitats). | | Viola canina noted at several localities in calcareous dune grassland on Foveran Links during visit in 2013. Gentianella campestris found in north of Foveran Links in 2016 visit. Leptogium palmatum refound by David Welch during 2012 visit. | Target met |
| | Transition to terrestrial habitat(s) intact. | | Some scrub present in SSSI but terrestrial habitats not well developed within the SSSI boundary. Landward transitions towards terrestrial habitats curtailed by the development of the golf course on Menie and to a lesser degree by agricultural activity in the fields in the west of Foveran Links. | Target not met |

**Primary Guidance:** SNH Guidance - Dunes SCM: August 2004 (updated April 2017)
**Attribute Set:** Dry Dune Heath
**Advisor Notes:** -

| Attribute | Standard Target | Site Specific Target | Monitoring Result | Target Met |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No net loss in extent except as part of change to other dune habitats as part of natural processes (e.g. losses to bare sand, mobile dune, fixed dune or slack are all acceptable forms of loss - but see integrity/grazing below). | | Dune heath was formerly more extensive on Menie (estimate of 2.6 ha by 1986 survey), but most of this habitat was obliterated by the natural movement of the Menie main sand sheet and much of the remainder was affected by overgrazing. By 2007 the only area seen was a 0.05 ha remnant | Target not met | |

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| | | in the north of Menie. Some of this small area of heath was lost to a new track on the golf course but the rest remains, on either side of the track (the largest patch, about 24 m across, mainly comprised Calluna and Empetrum, the others mainly Empetrum). Another small area of heath on Menie Links, mapped in 2006 by Dargie (about 0.1 ha), does not appear to have been affected by the construction of the golf course but was not visited in 2007, 2012, 2013 or 2016. Target recorded as not met due to the construction of the new track affecting the heath. | | |
| Vegetation structure: range of zones | Existing sequences from mobile dune (SD10), dune lichen heath (SD11) and dry dune heath (H11, occasionally H10) maintained (interchange between the three types is allowable - a natural process). | | At the single location for dune heath in the north of Menie the sequences from dune slack to dry dune heath appeared to be maintained. | Target met |
| Vegetation structure: patches | Patch structure present and frequent, with varied dwarf shrub age structure (i.e. uniform old and senescent swards no more than occasional). | | Not assessed | Not Assessed |
| | Small bare sand patches ( | | Not assessed | Not Assessed |
| Vegetation strucutre: composition | Bryophytes always more than occasional. | | High abundance recorded in 2007 survey almost certainly maintained. | Target met |
| | Dwarf shrub cover (Calluna vulgaris, Erica cinerea, Empetrum nigrum) always more than frequent. | | Abundant Empetrum and LA Calluna in remaining small area of dune heath. | Target met |
| | If dry dune heath components (SD10, SD11, H11 or H10) are recorded in NVC, at least four of the following | | Not assessed | Target met |

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| | present at more than rare level:Rumex acetosella, Carex arenaria, Festuca ovina, Cornicularia aculeata, Cladonia spp., Ammophila arenaria, Aira praec. | | | |
| Negative indicator: species | Arrhenatherum elatius and/or Dactylis glomerata no more than occasional. | | Neither noted | Target met |
| | Chamaerion angustifolium patches never more than occasional. | | Cha not noted | Target met |
| | Senecio jacobaea no more than frequent in sward. | | Sj not noted | Target met |
| | Self-sown trees rare or absent. | | Increase in Sx.cinerea noted in dune slack with patches of dune heath (5% cover), but not directly affecting the dune heath. | Target met |
| | Improved or amenity grassland never more than rare. | | Not noted in the small area of dune heath. | Target met |
| | Invasive alien species absent. | | None seen in dune heath. | Target met |
| Stock grazing pressure and timing sufficient to allow flowering and fruiting of dune grassland species to at least frequent level. | | No stock on Menie. | Target met | |
| Winter feeding impacts (poaching, patches of nitrophiles, spreads of straw and hay) never more than rare. | | No longer any stock on Menie. | Target met | |
| Rabbit grazing pressure never sufficient to reduce flowering and fruiting of dry dune heath species to occasional level. | | Rabbits controlled on golf course at Menie, pressure low. | Target met | |
| Sediment extraction absent. | | None in dune heath. | Target met | |
| Vehicle damage absent or rare. | | None seen in dune heath. | Target met | |
| Visitor damage (trampling, digging, jumping, fires, litter) absent or only rare/occasional. | | None seen in dune heath. | Target met | |
| Continuous lengths of bare sand paths >0.5 m wide absent or never more than | | None seen in dune heath. | Target met | |

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| rare (check slack edges) | | | | |
| Maintained paths (e.g. boardwalk) always in good condition (leave blank if absent). | | Infrastructure on new golf course in good condition including new track by patches of heath. | Target met | |
| Recent dune restoration work (last 5 years) never more than rare. | | NA | For reference only | |
| Scrub (except Juniperus communis) never more than occasional as an invading component. | | Increase in Sx.cinerea (5% cover) noted in the dune slack that has patches of dune heath, but not (yet) directly affecting the dune heath. | Target met | |
| Tree invasion from adjacent plantations absent or rare. | | None seen in dune heath. | Target met | |
| Transition to other habitat(s) intact. | | At the single location for dune heath in the north of Menie the immediate sequence from dune slack to dry dune heath appeared to be maintained. | Target met | |
| Maintain distinctive elements at current extent/levels and/or in current locations (e.g. maintain existing populations of notable plant or animal species or transitions between habitats). | | None noted. | For reference only | |

**Primary Guidance:** SNH Guidance - Dunes SCM: August 2004 (updated April 2017)
**Attribute Set:** Dune Slacks
**Advisor Notes:** -

| Attribute | Standard Target | Site Specific Target | Monitoring Result | Target Met |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No net loss in extent except as part of change to other dune habitats as part of natural processes (e.g. losses to bare sand, mobile dune, fixed dune or dry dune heath are all acceptable forms of loss as long as new areas of slack are continuing to be produced elsewhere). | | Many of Menie's slacks have been affected by the construction of the golf course. | Target not met | |
| Physical structure: functionality | Natural conditions for initiating new | | Natural conditions for initiating new | Target met |

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| | slacks (blowout deflation to level of watertable, progradation) still occurring. | | slacks still occurring on Foveran Links but not generally on Menie except perhaps in the coastal ridge and locally in the Sandend Burn area. | |
| All dune slack communities should be present ¿ from embryonic dune slacks with a high percentage of bare ground to those with more closed vegetation. Early dune slack successional stages at least occasional. | | Range of dune slacks communities probably maintained, for the time being, | Target met | |
| Vegetation structure: condition of Salix repens | Salix repens at least frequent and 5-30cm tall. | | Target probably met | Target met |
| Varied patch structure present and frequent if age of slack floor and floor microtopography allow. | | Target probably met. | Target met | |
| If SD14, SD15 or SD16 vegetation mapped in NVC survey, shrub cover (Salix repens) always more than frequent. | | Target probably met. | Target met | |
| Slack bryophytes always more than occasional (e.g. Calliergon cuspidatum, Campylium stellatum). | | Target probably met. | Target met | |
| Combined cover of broad-leaved grasses (Holcus spp., Dactylis glomerata, Arrhenatherum elatius) <10%. | | Target probably met. | Target met | |
| For humid dune slacks, the sward should contain >30% cover of forbs and | | Not assessed. | Not Assessed | |
| Cover of Salix repens no greater than 33%. | | Not assessed. | Not Assessed | |
| If wet dune heath components (M15, M16) are recorded in NVC survey, at least one of the following present at more than Rare level: Erica tetralix, | | NA. | For reference only | |

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| Empetrum nigrum, Sphagnum spp. | | | | |
| If other mire, tall-herb fen and swamp vegetation recorded in NVC survey, still present and in good condition. | | Patches of fen and swamp vegetation still present, e.g. along Sandend and Drum Burns. | Target met | |
| For other vegetation (except SAC Category Dunes with Salix repens) at least four of the following at least frequent and an additional two occasional: Salix repens, Mentha aquatica, Carex flacca, Carex arenaria, Ononis repens, Lotus corniculatus, Ranunculus flammula, Potentilla anserina, Hydrocotyle vulgaris, Calliergon cuspidatum, Galium palustre, Campylium stellatum, Equisetum variegatum, Prunella vulgaris, Anagallis tenella. | | Not assessed. | Not Assessed | |
| Vegetation structure: typical species (SAC dunes with Salix repens only) | Two or more of the following at least frequent and two or more others at least occasional: Festuca rubra, Carex flacca, Carex arenaria, Ononis repens, Lotus corniculatus, Pilosella officinarum, Euphrasia officinalis. | | Not assessed | Not Assessed |
| Non-native species no more than rare. No more than one other negative indicator species more than frequent, or singly or together the cover of negative indicator species no more than 5%. Negative indicators include: Senecio jacobaea, Cirsium arvense, Cirsium vulgare, Cirsium palustre, Urtica dioica, Lolium perenne, Arrhenatherum elatius. | | No non-native species noted in slacks. In 2013/16 Urtica remained F/A in the dune slack in the grazed field at the southend of Foveran Links (NJ99902262, see photo). | Target not met | |
| Sand or shingle extraction absent. | | See result for extent, above. | Not Assessed | |
| Slack drainage on agricultural, military or golf course land absent. | | Young dune slack west of hole 18 on Menie: new drain noted along eastern | Target not met | |

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| | | margin of slack, along edge of new fairway. No slack drainage noted on Foveran Links | | |
| Vehicle damage absent. | | No vehicle damage to dune slacks noted | Target met | |
| Continuous lengths of bare sand paths >0.5 m wide absent or never more than rare (check slack edges) | | Not assessed. | Not Assessed | |
| Maintained paths (e.g. boardwalk) always in good condition (leave blank if absent). | | Infrastructure on new golf course in good condition, including tracks through slacks. No maintained paths through Foveran Links' slacks. | Target met | |
| Areas with tall Salix repens and species-poor understorey never dominant or abundant. | | Not assessed. | Not Assessed | |
| Tree invasion from adjacent plantations absent or rare. | | None noted. | Target met | |
| Scrub (except Juniperus communis) never more than occasional as an invading component. | | Increase in Sx.cinerea (5% cover) noted in dune slack with patches of dune heath on Menie. Willow locally dominant in hollows in north of Foveran Links and apparently increasing in south. | Target met | |
| Stock grazing pressure and timing sufficient to allow flowering and fruiting of dune grassland species to at least frequent level. | | In field in west of Foveran Links grazing pressure is too high to allow flowering and fruiting of dune grassland species to at least frequent level. | Target not met | |
| Winter feeding impacts (poaching, patches of nitrophiles, spreads of straw and hay) never more than rare. | | Slacks in the fields in the west of Foveran Links not longer directly affected by winter feeding but one slack indirectly affected in the middle field by current feeding in the north of this field. Winter feeding impacts from previous winter feeding still evident in | Target not met | |

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| | | slacks in adjacent fields, e.g. Urtica still F/A in slack in the southern field (NJ99902262, see photo). | | |
| Rabbit grazing pressure never sufficient to reduce flowering and fruiting of dune grassland species to ocassional level. | | Rabbit grazing pressure high enough on parts of Foveran links to reduce flowering and fruiting to occasional levels. Low on Menie - rabbits controlled. | Target not met | |
| Slack pond excavation no more than small in extent and rare in frequency. | | Slack pond created E of hole 18, formerly young dune slack (see photos) | Target not met | |
| Maintain distinctive elements at current extent/levels and/or in current locations (e.g. maintain existing populations of notable plant or animal species or transitions between habitats). | | Two +/- vigorous stands of Carex maritima noted at two localities, one in a slack remnant on Menie and the other, a new population, in a rather bare hollow towards the north of Foveran Links. Ophioglossum azoricum noted at four localities, two on Menie and two on Foveran. Radiola linaria, Botrychium lunaria and Viola canina were noted on Menie. Carex aquatilis, Pyrola minor and Calamagrostis epigejos found on Foveran Links. | Target met | |
| Transition to other habitat(s) intact. | | Patches of fen and willow scrub still present in hollows in the north of Foveran Links and willow colonization evident elsewhere in slacks on Foveran and on Menie. | Target met | |

**Primary Guidance:** SNH Guidance - Dunes SCM: August 2004 (updated April 2017)
**Attribute Set:** Strand, Embryo and Mobile Dunes
**Advisor Notes:** -

| Attribute | Standard Target | Site Specific Target | Monitoring Result | Target Met |
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| Area maintained. The only acceptable | | Areas of mobile dune retained at | Target not met | |

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| form of loss is that due to natural coastal erosion. | | Foveran Links and along the coastal dune ridge at Menie, though blow-out corridors along the ridge at Menie have been partially stabilised. More inland areas of mobile dune at Menie have largely been fixed, as have the associated sand sheets. | | |
| Area increased. | | See above. | Not Assessed | |
| Physical structure: functionality and sediment supply | Coastal defences absent. | | No new coastal defences within the SSSI (new defences by the Blairton Burn are south of the SSSI). | Target met |
| | No anthropogenic increase in factors leading to the decrease of natural mobility in the system. Natural circulation of sand and organic matter retained. | | Natural circulation of sand retained at Foveran and to some degree in the coastal strip but not any longer inland at Menie. | Target not met |
| Maintain strand and embryo dune transitions to saltmarsh were present in the SSSI in earlier NVC survey. | | NA | Not Assessed | |
| Zonation from beach to fixed dune should be intact over at least 95 % of coastal frontage. | | Zonation from fixed to foredune intact. | Target met | |
| Healthy Ammophila arenaria and/or Leymus arenarius with flowering heads frequent. | | Not assessed. | Not Assessed | |
| At least one of the following species at least occasional on strand. Cakile maritima, Honckenya peploides, Atriplex sp, Salsola kali, Polygonum oxyspermum, Mertensia maritima, Galium aparine, Tripleurospermum maritimum, Potentilla anserina, Catabrosa aquatica, Leymus arenarius, Elytrigia repens. | | NA | Not Assessed | |
| Elytrigia juncea present on embryo | | Elymus farctus noted in the foredune | Target met | |

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| dunes or mixed with Ammophila arenaria and/or Leymus arenarius in mobile dune zone. | | in the north and south of the site on visits on 1 July and 16 September 2012 and 25 June 2013 (see photo). | | |
| Ammophila arenaria and/or Leymus arenarius at least abundant in foredunes. | | Target met | Target met | |
| Ammophila arenaria at least frequent in large blowouts and mobile dunes devevloped in the dune interior. | | Areas of inland mobile dune have been maintained at Foveran but areas at Menie have largely been fixed. | Target not met | |
| Hippophae rhamnoides absent. | | Not present. | Target met | |
| Other non-native species no more than rare. | | Target met. | Target met | |
| Any one of the following no more than frequent throughout sward, or singly or together the cover no more than 5%: Senecio jacobaea, Cirsium arvense, Cirsium vulgare, Urtica dioica, Lolium perenne, Arrhenatherum elatius. | | Target met. | Target met | |
| Mechanical beach cleaning absent. | | None noted. | Target met | |
| Sand or shingle extraction absent. | | See results for extent, above. | Not Assessed | |
| Agricultural ploughing of mobile dunes absent. | | Not present. | Target met | |
| Vehicle damage absent or rare. | | Localised vehicle (quad) tracks noted in 2012 in the mobile dune expanse in the north of Foveran Links but none elsewhere since cycle 2. | Target met | |
| Visitor damage (trampling, digging, jumping, fires, litter) absent or only rare/occasional. | | Visitor pressure by the Ythan Estuary appeared to have increased, possibly as the result of visitors to Forvie NNR being diverted to Foveran to view the increasing number of seals in the estuary. No visitor damage was noted on Menie. | Target met | |
| Continuous lengths of bare sand paths >0.5 m wide absent or never more than | | See comments on visitor damage above. | Not Assessed | |

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| rare (check slack edges) | | | | |
| If present, maintained paths (e.g. boardwalk) always in good condition (leave blank if absent). | | No maintained paths in extent areas of mobile dune. | Not Assessed | |
| Recent dune restoration work (last 5 years) never more than rare. | | None noted at Foveran or Drum Links. Marram grass planting in combination with chestnut pale fencing and seeding/re-seeding undertaken on Menie to stabilise the mobile dunes. | Target not met | |
| Stock damage (including horse or pony) to outer dunes rare or absent. | | No stock damage recorded to outer dunes. No longer any stock on Menie Links and the open dunes on Foveran can be lightly grazed by up to 200 sheep for up to 20 days (RDC). | Target met | |
| Winter feeding of stock absent from mobile dune zone. | | No longer any winter feeding on Menie nor on the open dune at Foveran Links. | Target met | |
| Ammophila or Leymus able to set seed. | | Not assessed | Not Assessed | |
| Maintain distinctive elements at current extent/levels and/or in current locations (e.g. maintain existing populations of notable plant or animal species or transitions to non-dune habitats). | | In 2012 Festuca arenaria was re-found on dune hills near hole 14. In 2013 Salsola kali was noted on the beach just north of the Drum Burn. | Target met | |

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# Site Condition Monitoring Form

**NOTES:**

**Site Condition Monitoring Methodology**

The condition of site features is assessed against these categories.

Notified features are monitored in accordance with the Common Standards for Monitoring developed for the United Kingdom by JNCC. A full copy of the standards can be found on the JNCC website (www.jncc.gov.uk).

The establishment of common standards does not mean that monitoring has to be undertaken using prescriptive and rigidly-applied procedures. The approach needs to be sufficiently flexible to take into account natural geographical variation across the UK and to accommodate the varying requirements and operational practices of the country agencies. In some instances guidance specific to Scotland has been developed in accordance with common standards monitoring and details of these should be obtained from Scottish Natural Heritage.

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|---|---|
| **From:** | Denise Reed |
| **To:** | [redacted]@gov.scot"; [redacted] |
| **Cc:** | Nick Halfhide; John Kerr; Neale Taylor; SNHGOVERNMENT_RELATIONS |
| **Subject:** | TIGLs Menie Golf course - briefing on de-notificaiton process |
| **Date:** | 13 November 2017 11:40:00 |
| **Attachments:** | Briefing for SG regarding SNH review of Foveran Links SSSI boundary DRAFT 101117 (A2458217).pdf<br>image001.jpg |

[redacted]

As requested, here is a briefing regarding the NCA process for Foveran Links SSSI and the Menie golf course.

Happy to clarify any points raised.

Denise

***Denise Reed***
***Area Manager – Tayside & Grampian Area***
***denise.reed@snh.gov.uk***
***01738 458582***

**Briefing for SG regarding SNH review of Foveran Links SSSI boundary – Trump International Golf Links (TIGLS) – Menie**

**Nature Conservation Act Review**

- The introduction of the 2004 Nature Conservation Act (NCA) enabled SNH to carry out amendments to SSSI site boundaries. Prior to this there was no legislative mechanism to allow the (part) denotification of an SSSI notified under the 1981 Act.
- House-keeping – In March 2012 SNH completed a review of site boundaries and associated Citation, Consents and ORC lists, for all 1437 SSSIs previously (re)notified as SSSIs between 1981 and 2003, except for 7 outstanding sites, including Foveran Links, which are still being considered for possible partial/complete de-notification.
- As a result of this review, another 38 sites have already been wholly or partially de-notified. These include 3 sites damaged as a result of development activity. Two, Gallowflats Claypits and High Smithstone Quarry were as a result of in-fill and quarrying, and the third, Carlingnose, due to losses from housing developments. Another 3 are still to be taken forward for partial de-notification, including [redacted]
- We decided to carry out the review of Foveran Links SSSI once the golf course construction was finished and so when it was reasonable to assess the effectiveness of the mitigation measures.

**Golf course construction and PLI**

- At the 2008 PLI SNH advised "*if the development proceeded, the impacted part of the SSSI would be permanently Unfavourable, to the extent that de-notification of the affected section would have to be considered"*.
- The golf course was constructed in the southern section of the SSSI. The course and its surrounds comprise approximately 1/3$^{rd}$ of the 204ha SSSI.
- The golf course was completed in 2012.
- TIGLS was advised by SNH in 2012 that de-notification of the Menie section was a likely outcome and we also undertook to advise them when the assessment was to be made public.

**SNH Review of Foveran Links SSSI Boundary and de-notification**

- SNH will consider partial or full de-notification of SSSIs if the natural features have declined, been lost, or damaged beyond reasonable expectations of recovery.
- In 2015/16 specialist SNH staff undertook site visits, Site Condition Monitoring and a geomorphological and habitat assessments to consider what interests remain within various parts of the SSSI, confirm whether the damage and loss was as SNH had advised at PLI and thus whether all or part of the Menie golf course warranted de-notification.
- The boundary review process is underway, a site visit is programmed and the review will be completed shortly.

**Briefing**
**Nick Halfhide visit to Foveran Links SSSI and meeting with [redacted]**
**of Trump International Golf Links Scotland (TIGLS)**
**20/11/17**

**Foveran Links SSSI**

- Qualifying features are biological and coastal geomorphological interests of sand dunes and associated habitats. A highly dynamic site where geomorphological processes are inextricably linked to much of the biological interest.
- Comprises three links systems: Foveran (north), Drums (middle) and Menie (south). Menie comprises approximately 1/3 of the area of the site.
- Geological Conservation Review site is only in the northern part of SSSI but it was established during PLI that geomorphology of Menie Links was at least of national interest.
- Landforms included the vast Menie sand sheet, up to 600m by 400, which as it moved created deflation surfaces (ie area with no sand). These were then colonised by young dune slack vegetation. Menie contained high proportion of UK resource of this habitat.

**Effect of back nine holes (construction 2010-2012) on Foveran Links SSSI**

- Earthworks and re-profiling the dunes, drainage and dune stabilisation, and construction of golf course infrastructure have affected the natural morphology of the dunes, led to direct loss of sand dune habitat, and interfered with natural processes, natural habitat transitions and successions.
- Nearly all of the Menie sand sheet has been stabilised, and the smaller Sandend Burn sand sheet (also in Menie links) partially stabilised. No geomorphological SSSI interests remain south of the Forvie GCR, with partial fragments within the Sandend Burn sand sheet.
- The area of natural habitat within the Menie section of the SSSI has dropped from 92% to 42%. Remaining habitats include some scattered young dune slack although it is unlikely that the majority of these will survive in the medium term in the absence of the geomorphological processes that formed them.
- We last visited in June 2013 and damage to the SSSI was as predicted. The anticipated influences of irrigation and fertiliser weren't obvious, possibly reflecting care taken by TIGLS in their targeted use or the recent establishment of the course.

**Mitigation**

- Following PLI in 2008 no conditions were required that limited damage to the SSSI. Reporters accepted SNH evidence (provided by independent witness Paul Rooney) that mitigation unlikely to work, but required mitigation as a condition of consent (Habitat Mitigation and Compensation Plan, Environmental Management Plan).
- We commented on the mitigation proposals but have not been advised what habitat translocation and management has taken place. Neither we nor Aberdeenshire Council have received the monitoring reports that were due to be submitted from years 1-10 once the course was completed.

**Menie Environmental Management Advisory Group (MEMAG)**

- TIGLS have applied to Aberdeenshire Council to cease MEMAG which last met in 2013.
- We have advised the council to establish what monitoring has taken place so far and ensure that there is suitable monitoring for 10 years as originally agreed. To date, this has not been forthcoming.

**SCM**

- Sign off with assessments of 'partially destroyed' is proposed for both SSSI features once a decision reached on how any boundary changes should be resolved. The SCM results will then be in the public domain. T&G staff agreed to give TIGLS notice of the assessment before it appears on SNH's website.

**Options for boundary changes**

- Four options are being considered (i) do not amend the boundary; (2) exclude all altered and intensively managed land; (3) retain some of the less modified habitats if they are high value/could be viable in the long term; or (4) exclude the whole of the Menie Estate section of the SSSI.
- [redacted]
- Nature Conservation Act review of Foveran Links SSSI was due by March 2012 and will be completed once boundary change decided. Review will consider if it is necessary to unify the remaining areas of the SSSI to the Sands of Forvie SSSI, immediately to the north, to meet the selection criteria.

[redacted]

- [redacted]

**Pirri pirri bur**

- Presence of this invasive plant was reported to SNH by the public on southern part of Menie estate (blue dot on map below).
- We contacted TIGLS and offered to meet with them to discuss means of control. We are unaware if this has been carried out.

**Map of Foveran Links SSSI (red cross hatch) and GCR site (orange brown cross hatch); pirri-pirri bur – blue spot**




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| | |
|---|---|
| **From:** | Mike Smedley |
| **To:** | Neale Taylor; Alistair Rennie |
| **Subject:** | FW: Visit to Menie |
| **Date:** | 28 November 2017 16:12:34 |
| **Attachments:** | Visit to Menie on 20 November 2017 - Mike"s notes and photos etc - Foverans Links SSSI.obr<br>Visit to Menie, Foveran Links, 20 November 2017 - map showing location of notes.obr |

Neale,

I'll send this to Stewart and Alistair too, for their info.

Mike

---

**From:** Mike Smedley
**Sent:** 21 November 2017 18:05
**To:** Neale Taylor
**Cc:** Denise Reed
**Subject:** FW: Visit to Menie

Neale,

See attached.

Mike

PS. This includes the following older photos comparisons.

15th: 1276, cf 2007

18th: 1266, cf 2007.

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Can you have a look at this? Please add to it, using TC.

Thanks,

Mike

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Sent: 21 November 2017 09:54
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Cc: Sue Lawrence
Subject: RE: Visit to Menie

Mike

You may already be intending to do this, but could you possibly write up a note of what we found on the ground at the various points we stopped at concentrating on any changes (or not) which we perceived since the visit in 2013. Plus anything gleaned from discussions etc with the groundsman and the adviser who was going to turn up.

Thanks

Neale

From: Nick Halfhide
Sent: 20 November 2017 18:43
To: Sue Lawrence; Mike Smedley
Cc: Denise Reed; Neale Taylor
Subject: Visit to Menie

Sue and Mike

A quick thank you for all your support and advice during my visit today. I found the visit very helpful and feel much better informed, thanks largely to your expertise.

As a follow up, I'd like to e-mail [redacted] and [redacted]. Do you have their addresses?

Thanks again

Nick

Nick Halfhide
Director of Operations
Scottish Natural Heritage
01463 725224 or [redacted]

**Visit to Menie Estate, TIGLS, Foveran Links SSSI, on 20 November 2017**

**New areas visited**

- Slacks between 18 and 10 (note 2)
- Dune heath west of 10 (notes 1a-b)
- Slack between 12 and 16 (note 3)

**Summary of changes**

1. Vegetation in location of former sand sheet now well established. In some locations difficult to differentiate between natural areas and those landscaped and sprigged with marram.
2. Edges of fairways softer than previously. Playing surfaces less bright green than in 2013, reflecting target use of fertilisers.
3. Rabbit grazing pressure increased (attracted to grasses of playing surfaces), with lichen-dominated communities noted along some trackside locations. Increase in roe deer (4 or 5 seen on day).
4. Abundance of gorse has increased, especially in the reseeded area by the nursery but also more widely, e.g. to the north of 16 (cf photos 1278 and 431*)*. Present on fixed dunes and edges of slacks. Willow also continues to increase.
5. Abundance of *Empetrum* has increased in and around slacks. Area of dune heath mapped by Tom Dargie (2006) for TIGLS to west of hole remains extant and may have increased – more survey would be required to confirm.
6. Dunes generally appeared more 'fixed' with less bare sand and greater grass cover, but not confirmed or quantified.
7. *Juncus effusus* has increased in some slacks (e.g. note 11), but not known whether this is ongoing.
8. Three rare target species, *Carex maritima, Ophioglossum azoricum* and *Radiola linoides*, re-found at one location each. This is a decline in number of locations found but may reflect time of year. 10 spikes of *C. maritima* counted by 15th (note 7) but appears to be in decline – more detailed in-season survey would be required to confirm and quantify.
9. No increase in abundance of competitive ruderals apparent. Rosebay willow herb not observed, result of treatment carried out.

**Discussion with** [redacted], along with and [redacted] <surname not known> [redacted]

[redacted]: a "limited" amount of translocation was undertaken. All vegetation was reused. Prior to translocation a walk over the site was made with the Ecological Clerk of Works to agree a suitable recipient site. Most such sites were to the south of the SSSI. Dune slack translocation was mostly avoided and where necessary, was scraped up and spread over recipient site.

Great care was taken with the levels of hole 10 to safeguard the wetland to the east.

[redacted]

Do not manage dune slacks (some fenced, e.g. S of 15), and would appreciate SNH advice on appropriate management. Discussion was held about possibly clearing very small scrapes in slack by 15th hole, e.g. by hand with spade, which *C. maritima* may colonise.

Discussion was also held on which areas of gorse to remove/contain. MS/SL recommended [redacted] develop a plan for which areas he wishes to allow gorse to spread in and which to keep free of gorse. Recommended removing gorse from the SSSI.

**AP**: SL to check management plan to see whether gorse control is covered or a SSSI consent is required.

[redacted] would check for presence of pirri pirri bur and arrange control, avoiding chemicals if possible.

**AP:** SL to provide information on location and control.

**Comment [MS1]:** In retrospect, may be better to carry out experimental work in the slack by the 18th. This could include creating bare areas 25-100 m² in area with or without translocation. One or two 0.5-1m² turves with Cx.mar could be transplanted from by the 15th.

**Comment [SL2]:** Have checked Environmental Management plan, Habitat Mitigation and Compensation Plan and Habitat Management Plan. These only refer to gorse removal in specific areas and did not anticipate the spread of gorse so would require consent.

**Notes and photos** (see map at A2471548)

1a. Dune heath and dune grassland on face of sand hill. NJ98861 21099. 1269. A En, 40%. F At. O Cv, Ama.

1b. Dune heath on top of of sand hill. NJ98838 21126. 1270, 71. A/D En, 50%. F Ama, O Ec.

*Mapped by Dargie (2006) as H11 dune heath.*

2. Dune heath in N of wetland. NJ9902 2116. 1272.

*Mapped by Dargie (2006) as SD13 young dune slack.*

3. Heath in slack between 12 and 16. NJ99210 21728. 1273. 35% En, F Jsq, Jcong.

*Mapped by Dargie (2006) as SD16 dune slack.*

4. Nursery and reseeded area - with extensive gorse invasion. NJ9913 2183. 1274.

*Was formerly weedy SD12 dune grassland.*

5. Heath and dune slack and dune grassland (and willow and gorse) by 16th. NJ99314 21936. 1275.

*Was mapped by Dargie (2006) as SD16 dune slack and by Smedley (2007, A146213) as dune slack and dune heath.*

*More grass and more willow now than in 2012, 122*

- 15th hole. 1276. Cf photo from 2007.

- 15th fairway. 1277.

*Harder edge to fairway in 2013, photo 430*

- 15th and 16th from NJ99434 22015. 1278.

*Less gorse north of 16 in 2012, photo 431.*

6. Slack by 15th – West. NJ99393 21871. 1279, 80. A En , 20-50%. F Clad, Hl, Prun.vulg

*Vegetation cover has increased here since 2012 but still lowers than in other slacks (cf photos 125, 134).*

7. Slack by 15th – South. NJ99448 21780. Cx.mar x12 over 10 m stretch. 1281, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87 & 88.

*Mapped by Dargie (2006) as SD13 young dune slack.*

*Carex maritima appears to be in decline with >100 spikes per $m^2$ noted in places in June 2013, photos 420, 426 427 & 428. Ophioglossum azoricum was also noted here that year. The Juncus does not appear to have expanded much since 2012 (photos 419, 425),, after rapidly colonising following the development (see Geoview).*

8. Slack between 14 and 17th fairways. NJ99383 21627. 1289, 90, 91. O Oph.az. P : Radiola.lin. LO Jsq. R Ec.

   *Mapped by Dargie (2006) as SD13 young dune slack.*

   *No obvious change from 2012 (14 x* Oph.az*).*

9. 14th from tee. Small slack below. 1265, 1292, 93.

   *Slightly harder edges to greens in 2012, photo 415.*

10. Slack north of 18th. NJ99184 21178. A En, F Hyp.rad, Hl, Cxa. P Prun.vulg. 1266, 94, 67 & 68. 1295 from NJ99149 21186.

    *Mapped by Dargie (2006) as SD13 young dune slack. Cf photo from 2007.*

    *En has increased since 2012 (was 25%,* 117*). Cx.mar not seen here since before development.*

11. Slack E of 18th. NJ99138 21006. 1296. A Call.cusp, O Jeff, Jcon, Cxa.

    *On edge of SD13 mapped by Dargie (2006) as young dune slack.*

# Visit to Menie, Foveran Links, 20 November 2017 – map with notes




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| | |
|---|---|
| **From:** | Neale Taylor |
| **To:** | Mike Smedley |
| **Cc:** | Sue Lawrence |
| **Subject:** | RE: Visit to Menie |
| **Date:** | 28 November 2017 17:09:00 |

Good idea. A good comprehensive note, thanks to you and Sue. I've added one small change – which I think is right.

Neale

---

**From:** Mike Smedley
**Sent:** 28 November 2017 16:13
**To:** Neale Taylor; Alistair Rennie
**Subject:** FW: Visit to Menie

Neale,

I'll send this to Stewart and Alistair too, for their info.

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Sue and Mike

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As a follow up, I'd like to e-mail [redacted] and [redacted] [redacted]. Do you have their addresses?

Thanks again

Nick

Nick Halfhide
Director of Operations
Scottish Natural Heritage
01463 725224 or [redacted]

**From:** Denise Reed
**To:** Neale Taylor
**Subject:** FW: Menie
**Date:** 16 January 2018 11:10:14

---

Neale,

Not sure whether we have headed this one off at the pass or not.

Denise

---

**From:** [redacted]@rspb.org.uk]
**Sent:** 16 January 2018 09:37
**To:** Denise Reed
**Subject:** RE: Menie

OK – thanks for the update Denise. Pirr-pirri bur advances inexorably….!
Cheers
[redacted]

---

**From:** Denise Reed [mailto:Denise.Reed@snh.gov.uk]
**Sent:** 15 January 2018 16:37
**To:** [redacted]@rspb.org.uk>
**Subject:** RE: Menie

[redacted],

You asked about a date by when RSPB might hear about a decision on possible de-notification of the Menie part of Foveran SSSI.

We are still conducting our review of Menie and have decided that as we are also currently reviewing a number of other SSSI designations across Scotland, that we are best to package the assessments together later in the year. So no firm date yet.

In the meantime we have met with the Menie golf course staff and I thought you would like to know that we explained about the presence of the highly invasive non-native plant pirri-pirri bur which is present on the proposed site of the second golf course and they were on the case to ensure they eradicate it.

Regards,

Denise

---

**From:** [redacted]@rspb.org.uk]
**Sent:** 10 January 2018 10:47
**To:** Denise Reed
**Subject:** Menie

Hi Denise,

I wonder if you could give a date by when we might expect a decision or announcement by SNH

on whether any part of the SSSI at Foveran on Menie Estate is going to be denotified? You'll appreciate that this is all very topical right now….

Many thanks

[redacted]



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**From:** Denise Reed
**To:** Sue Lawrence
**Cc:** Neale Taylor; Mike Smedley
**Subject:** RE: Foveran Links SSSI - Menie - phone call from [redacted]
**Date:** 05 February 2018 16:33:19

---

Yes please. See you Wednesday.

Denise

---

**From:** Sue Lawrence
**Sent:** 05 February 2018 15:44
**To:** Denise Reed
**Cc:** Neale Taylor; Mike Smedley
**Subject:** Foveran Links SSSI - Menie - phone call from [redacted]

Hello Denise
Cc Neale and Mike

[redacted] called me as a follow up to our meeting last year. At that meeting she had offered a report from [redacted] on the monitoring that was undertaken. [redacted] has been in contact with Ironside Farrah who had contacted [redacted] Their conclusion was that they did not have any meaningful data to send us.

[redacted] suggested that to help us with our review of the SSSI we have a meeting which would be attended by [redacted], [redacted] Ironside Farrah and possibly [redacted] their planning agent. We could then gain a better understanding of what work had been done and agree what monitoring should be carried out. I said it may not be essential for the SSSI review, which wasn't going to complete early this year, but it could still be helpful for our understanding of habitats and translocation techniques.

I told [redacted] I would check with the team and get back to her about a meeting. If so, I recommended Ann Ramsay from Aberdeenshire Council should be invited too.

Would you like to talk about this on Wednesday morning when you are in the office?

Thanks

Sue

Sue Lawrence | Operations Officer - Tayside and Grampian Area | Scottish Natural Heritage | Inverdee House | Baxter Street |Torry |Aberdeen AB11 9QA | Tel: 01224 266500 |Direct Dial: 01224 266517/ [redacted]

**From:** Sue Lawrence
**To:** Neale Taylor; Mike Smedley
**Subject:** FW: Agenda for Menie meeting 7th March
**Date:** 26 February 2018 10:19:15
**Attachments:** image001.png
image003.jpg
image004.jpg
image005.jpg
image006.png
image007.png
image008.png
TIGLS & SNH 2018.docx
image002.png

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Neale and Mike

This is the agenda for the meeting on 7th March. Do you agree it would be useful if all three of us attend?

Thanks

Sue

---

**From:** [redacted]@trumpgolfscotland.com]
**Sent:** 23 February 2018 10:32
**To:** Sue Lawrence
**Cc:** [redacted] Admin
**Subject:** March 7, 2018 Meeting

Good morning, Sue,

Thank you for your call earlier this week. Please find attached the proposed agenda.

We are hoping to have [redacted] with us that week. I think it would be extremely beneficial to have him join us.

If you could provide details of how many of your colleagues will be attending that would be appreciated. We will aim to meet in the private North View room in the clubhouse, on March 7 at 11.30am.

With best wishes,

[redacted]

[redacted]
**Trump International Golf Links, Scotland**
Menie Park Lodge | Menie Estate, Balmedie
Aberdeenshire, AB23 8YE
**T**: +44(0)1358 743300
www.trumpgolfscotland.com

**TRUMP INTERNATIONAL GOLF LINKS, SCOTLAND**
**& SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE MEETING**
Clubhouse, Trump Estate

**March 7, 2018, 11.30am**

**AGENDA**

1. **SSSI Review Process**
2. **Purpose of SSSI Review & Outcomes**
3. **Findings of SNH Site Visit 2017**
4. **Recommendations from SNH**
5. **TIGLS Ongoing Environmental Management**
6. **AOCB**

**Meeting to discuss review of Foveran Links SSSI**
**TIGLS and SNH on 7 March 2018**
**Clubhouse, Menie Links**

**Present:**

[redacted] - TIGLS
[redacted] - golf course architects
[redacted] of CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro - TIGLS planning agent
[redacted] of Ironside Farrah – TIGLS consultant
Short-hand secretary for TIGLS.
Neale Taylor, Mike Smedley, Sue Lawrence - SNH

**Notes:**

SCM

NT said that cycles 2 & 3 SCM were completed and will be published in due course. Result is 'Partially destroyed', which as advised in prior meeting, is standard wording where part of a site has no prospect of recovery. If supplying a copy of the report, SNH would be obliged to provide it to all the SSSI owners. The SCM results will become public later in the year and may include a summary document. Later in the meeting NT confirmed that SNH would let TIGLS know when the assessment was going live on the external database.

SSSI review

NT explained that SNH reviews SSSIs in certain circumstances and Foveran Links is not the only SSSI currently being reviewed. There are three main options for the SSSI: do nothing, partial change, or remove the Menie section; subject to practical considerations of where to draw the boundary. This meeting represented an informal consultation, and TIGLS were asked to indicate its views on the options.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

NT advised that SNH intends to complete the review by the end of the year and would take into account the comments received in this meeting. The information provided to the Director who would decide which review option to pursue, would fully represent the situation. [redacted]

[redacted] Once a decision about the future of the SSSI has been made, there may be some time before this is implemented. It would require a 3 month public consultation. SNH would take account of any comments/objections received and must confirm the decision within 12 months. Land owners comments have more weight than general public comments.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Next meeting:

A holding date of 18 April.