



RECORD OF INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE DECISION MADE BY A CABINET MEMBER

Decision Maker	Decision Type	Date
Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Co- operatives and Neighbourhoods	Principal Decision	10 May 2018

REPORT ON UPDATE OF SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

Decision (s)

The report is seeking to de-designate the Royton Moss Site of Biological Importance (SBI). The report outlines detail from a site survey carried out by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU).

Exempt/Confidential Report		No
Key Decision		No

Reasons for the decision(s)

De-designating Royton Moss SBI will reflect information from the GMEU that the site has lost its nature conservation interest.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 – To de-designate the Royton Moss SBI. The advantage of this option is that it will reflect information from the GMEU that the site has lost its nature conservation interest. There are no disadvantages to this option, although unfortunate there may be opportunities in the future to restore some (different) semi-natural habitats.

Option 2 – Not to de-designate the Royton Moss SBI. There are no advantages to this option as the site has lost its nature conservation interest. The disadvantages to this option are that it would not reflect the recommendations of the GMEU to delete the site.



Oldham
Council

Conflict of Interest declared

None

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(Councillor Signature and portfolio)

In consultation with

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. ...', written over a horizontal dotted line.

(Executive Director Signature)

Decision made pursuant to:

- a) **Delegation to Cabinet Member under the Council's scheme of delegation. Contract £100,000 - £400,000 and Key decisions.**

Delegated Cabinet Member Key Decision Report

Decision Maker and Portfolio area:	Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Co-operatives and Neighbourhoods
Date of Decision:	10 May 2018
Subject:	Report on Update of Sites of Biological Importance
Report Author:	Georgina Brownridge
Ward (s):	Royton South

Reason for the decision:

Summary:

The report is seeking to de-designate the Royton Moss Site of Biological Importance (SBI). The report outlines detail from a site survey carried out by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU).

What are the alternative option(s) to be considered? Please give the reason(s) for recommendation(s):

Option 1 – To de-designate the Royton Moss SBI. The advantage of this option is that it will reflect information from the GMEU that the site has lost its nature conservation interest. There are no disadvantages to this option, although unfortunate there may be opportunities in the future to restore some (different) semi-natural habitats as part of the wider area.

Option 2 – Not to de-designate the Royton Moss SBI. There are no advantages to this option as the site has lost its nature conservation interest. The disadvantages to this option are that it would not reflect the recommendations of the GMEU to delete the site.

Recommendation(s):

The preferred option is option 1 – To de-designate the Royton Moss SBI. This will reflect information from the GMEU that the site has lost its nature conservation interest.

Implications:

*What are the **financial** implications?*

De-designation of the SBI should result in no financial implications. The de-designation will mean that any development affecting the SBI will no longer have to take account of it in the future once de-designated.

The Council makes an annual revenue contribution of £11,720 for the Ecology Unit through the Corporate AGMA budget on cost centre 10915. Any cost arising from changes to SBI reported by GMEU will be met from this allocation.

(Sadrul Alam / Chris Curran)

*What are the **procurement** implications?*

None.

*What are the **legal** implications?*

De-designating the site is the consequence of the land no longer having nature conservation interest and means that the policies in the NPPF and the Local Plan relating to SBIs will no longer apply to the site. In accordance with the scheme of delegation for Local Development Framework matters the report can be approved by the Portfolio Member in consultation with the Executive Director. (A Evans)

*What are the **Human Resources** implications?*

None.

***Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment** attached or not required because (please give reason)*

None.

*What are the **property** implications*

There are no property implications in respect of this report. (Peter Wood).

Risks:

None.

Co-operative agenda

The report on the SBI follows the values of the Co-operative Agenda. The council has worked closely with other stakeholders (GMEU) to update on the SBI.

Has the relevant Legal Officer confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with

Yes

the Council's Constitution?

Has the relevant Finance Officer confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget? Yes

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? No

There are no background papers for this report

Report Author Sign-off:	
	<i>G.Brownridge</i>
Date:	30.04.2018

Please list any appendices:-

Appendix number or letter	Description
1	Map of Royton Moss SBI

Background:

GMEU periodically surveys the sites as part of a continuous process, and notifies the council when there are changes, such as boundaries or gradings being changed, or where new sites are identified or existing sites deleted. Royton Moss is one of the sites that has been recently surveyed.

The council is awaiting updates on changes that have occurred to other SBIs within the borough. However due to the high workload pressures GMEU are experiencing in relation to the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) and the Greater Manchester Local Plans this has not yet been received.

As the Royton Moss SBI falls within a proposed strategic allocation within the GMSF (Broadbent Moss) it is viewed that this SBI should be reported on now and a further SBI report will follow when more updates on SBIs have been received.

SBIs are given protection in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in our Local Plan through Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (Joint DPD) Policy 6 'Green Infrastructure' and Policy 21 'Protecting Natural Environmental Assets' to ensure that development does not have adverse impacts on the local biodiversity site. The local policies can be viewed on the council's website at:

http://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1445/development_plan_document-joint_core_strategy_and_development_management_policies

Proposals:

Oldham currently has 39 SBIs, including one SBI which falls within the Peak District National Park.

Royton Moss was a Grade B SBI measuring 2.3 hectares and was originally surveyed in 1986 (see map in Appendix 1) and has since had 5 revisions. The previous survey undertaken in 2007 identified that Royton Moss as an area of former mossland with Lowland Bog, UK Biodiversity Priority Habitat present as well as water horsetail and localised bottle sedge. The undulating topography of the old tipped ground is colonised by a mosaic of neutral and marshy grassland. The drainage channel alongside the railway line provides breeding habitat for stickleback. This survey noted that recent tipping activity to the north outside the SBI had led to some local changes in hydrology.

GMEU surveyed the site in 2017. The SBI deletion form reports that the Royton Moss SBI has now been deleted as the sustained tipping of significant quantities of inert materials over a long period of time and the re-direction of the course of the River Beal, together with consequent changes to landforms and topography has resulted in significant losses to the semi-natural vegetation formerly present.

The report states that there is negligible prospect of restoring the original nature conservation interest of the site. There may be an opportunity to restore some (different) semi-natural habitats on this site through new landscaping, although changes to underlying substrates preclude the restoration of marshland.

It is recommended to formally de-designate the SBI as its nature conservation interest has been lost.

This will result in Oldham having 38 SBIs.

The proposed GMSF Broadbent Moss strategic allocation will present an opportunity to consider the enhancement of biodiversity as part of the wider area.

Conclusions:

To de-designate the Royton Moss SBI. This will reflect information from the GMEU that the site has lost its nature conservation interest.

Signed: (Executive Director/Director)

 Date: 15/5/18