

File ref: (L) SD 30/3

County: Lancashire **Site Name:** Downholland Moss

District: West Lancashire

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

Local Planning Authority: West Lancashire District Council

National Grid Reference: SD 324084 **Area:** 21.2 (ha) 52.4 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 108 **1:10,000:** SD 30 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): – **Date of Last Revision:** –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1990 **Date of Last Revision:** –

Other Information:

1. This is a new site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Downholland Moss is situated approximately 2 km east of Formby, at a height of about 3 m OD and consists of an arable field and a small birch woodland. It is a key reference site for establishing relative sea level changes in north-west England during the period from about 8000–4000 yrs B.P.

Alternating organic and inorganic deposits represent a sequence of changing tidal flat, lagoonal and perimarine palaeoenvironments. These have been the subject of detailed stratigraphic, micro- and macro-palaeontological analyses supported by radiocarbon dating. The results have provided a detailed record of transgressive and regressive overlaps in northern England, a partial chronology of tendencies of sea-level movement in north-west England and sea-level index points. Downholland Moss is also noted for its surface microtopography which demonstrates roddons, sandbanks and tidal creek features.