

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.023</u>	SINC name: Coed-y-moeth and Cwmsyfiog Hillside
Grid reference: SO155021	Area (hectares): 103
Survey date: 17th and 22nd August 2007	
Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)	
(UDP policy reference: C11.31)	
Summary description	
<p>This SINC comprises almost 3km of west-facing slope along the Rhymney valley. Much of the upper parts of the slopes and the Common at Comin Coed-y-moeth support a mix of dry heath, Bracken and acid grassland, some of which has developed on former coal workings. To the south of the area, the lower valley-sides support woodland, including some ancient woodland adjacent to the River Rhymney. Oak, Rowan and Downy Birch form younger woodland cover on the west facing slopes. Another small band of ancient woodland is present at Craig Bedw, which has a canopy of Sessile Oak and a ground flora dominated by Wavy hair-grass and mosses. The most northerly part of the SINC includes several small fields with semi-improved acid grassland, scrub and marshy grassland/ flush vegetation. Disused quarries at SO149031, SO155025 and SO153006 support a mix of acid grassland, heath and bare rock communities. The river corridor itself forms a separate SINC (NH 3.001).</p>	
Qualifying features	
Ancient woodland with an assemblage of semi-natural indicators.	
Heath and acid grassland with at least 7 indicator species.	
Marshy grassland/ flush with at least 12 indicator species.	
Presence of bryophytes <i>Jungermannia paroica</i> and <i>Schistidium platyphyllum</i> .	
Secondary features	
Young broad-leaved woodland and riverside woodland.	
River and stream.	
Bracken.	
Semi-improved acid grassland.	
Disused quarry/ rock outcrops.	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
The woodlands are likely to provide good foraging and roosting opportunities for bats.	
The grassland/ scrub margins are likely to support reptiles.	
The semi-improved grassland in the north of the SINC is likely to support waxcap fungi.	
The river may be important for fish, Otter and riparian birds.	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
<p>Sheep graze the majority of the grassland and heathland areas, although cattle and horses are also present in some of the most northerly fields. Many of the areas grazed only by sheep are subject to encroachment by Bracken and this has become very dense in some areas. Bracken</p>	

control or extending the area grazed by horses or cattle would be beneficial to reduce Bracken dominance, which would also help to reduce frequency of fires. Restricting the grazing within the wooded areas, at least excluding sheep during the spring and summer) would also enhance the site for biodiversity. There are local problems with tipping near to houses.

Access/ community use

The majority of the site is classified as open-access land, and contains several roads and paths. There is no formal public access to the grassland habitat in the north of the SINC, or the disused quarry at SO155025. There is a new riverside footpath through the woodland at SO152007.

Additional information

Some of the nearby woodland areas are relatively young, but may have a value as linking habitats, connecting with nearby SINC (e.g. SO149003 and SO155013). The riverside woodland further north is also potentially of SINC value. The small fields adjoining the north of the site (approx SO154028) may have value for grassland fungi and semi-improved acid grassland, and should be considered at future SINC review.

Species list (Dominant species, SINC Criteria, RDB or other notable indicator species)

(LBAP species shown in **bold**, species confirmed by 2007 survey in *italics*)

Woodland canopy species (from wooded slopes in east of site): *Quercus petraea*, *Betula pubescens*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Corylus avellana*, *Ilex aquifolium*.

Woodland ground flora (from wooded slopes in east of site): *Oxalis acetosella*, ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Galium saxatile*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Holcus mollis*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Luzula multiflora*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Mnium hornum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Dicranella heteromalla*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Pleurozium schreberi*.

Woodland canopy species (from riverside woodland): *Alnus glutinosa*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Betula pubescens*, *Quercus petraea*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Rubus idaeus*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Corylus avellana*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Hedera helix*.

Woodland ground flora (from riverside woodland): *Geum urbanum*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Ranunculus repens*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Fallopia japonica*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Holcus mollis*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Carex remota*, *Atrichum undulatum*.

Heath, acid grassland and Bracken (combined list for whole area): *Calluna vulgaris*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Pilosella officinarum*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Galium saxatile*, *Ulex gallii*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Leontodon autumnalis*, *Leontodon hispidus*, *Leontodon autumnalis*, *Campanula rotundifolia*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Veronica chamaedrys*, *Rumex acetosella*, *Viola riviniana*, *Solidago virgaurea*, *Trifolium repens*, *Sagina* sp., *Achillea millefolium*, *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Festuca ovina*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Festuca rubra*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Aira praecox*, *Nardus stricta*, *Carex pilulifera*, *Luzula campestris*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Polytrichum piliferum*, *Scleropodium purum*, *Pleurozium schreberi*, *Cladonia* sp..

The waxcap Hygrocybe flavipes was present at SO151033, and Hygrocybe conica at SO159016.

Marshy grassland and flush (SO150033) (not surveyed thoroughly due to bull in field – but see additional records below): *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Anagallis tenella*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Galium palustre*, *Viola palustris*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Nardus stricta*, *Carex panicea*, *Carex viridula*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Juncus squarrosus*, *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus bulbosus*, *Sphagnum palustre*, *Sphagnum papillosum*, *Sphagnum denticulatum*, *Sphagnum subnitens*, *Aulacomnium palustre*, *Calliergonella cuspidata*.

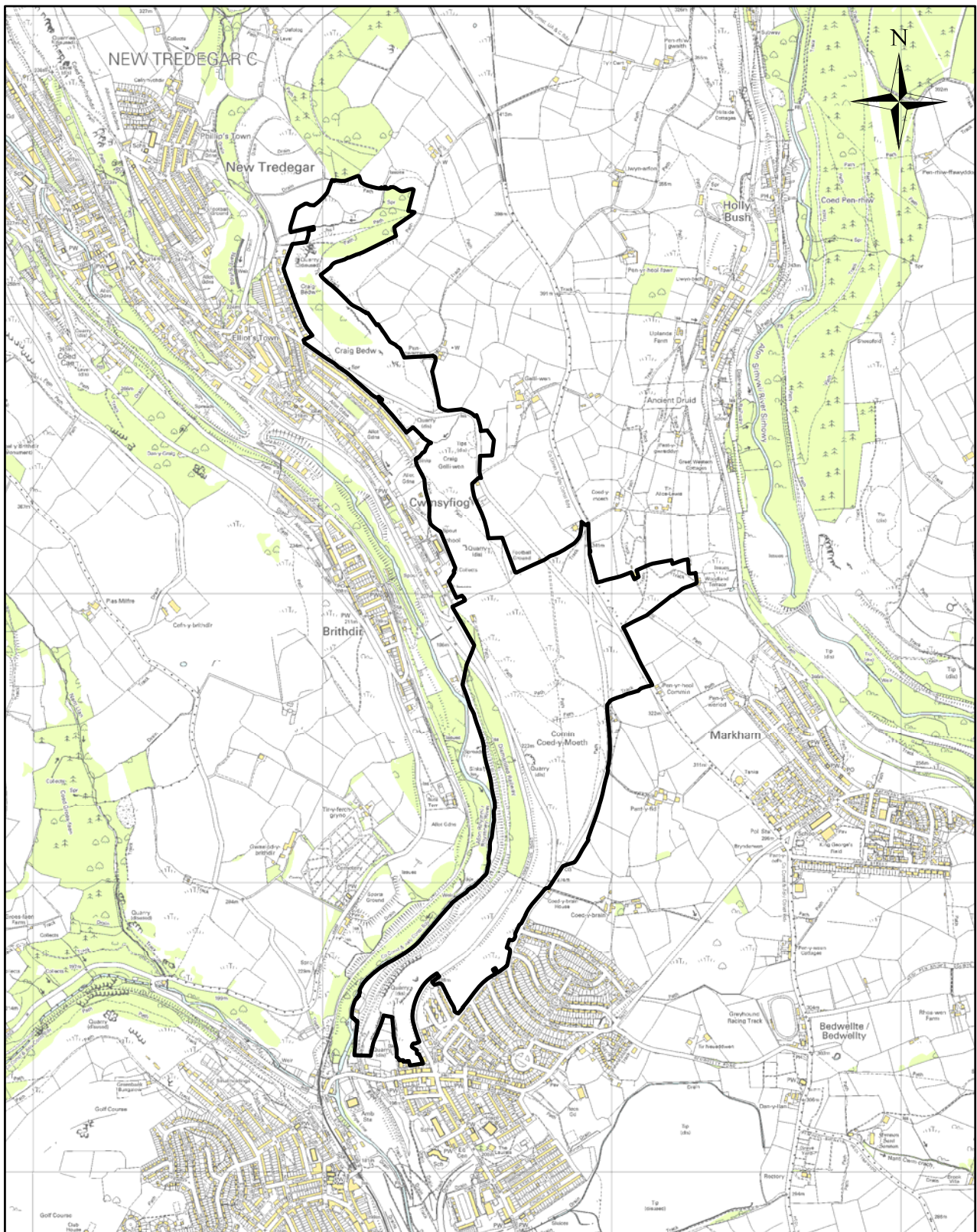
Fauna observations: **Buzzard**, **Linnet**, Willow Warbler, Stonechat, Meadow Pipit, Raven, Robin, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Wren, Speckled Wood Butterfly, Meadow Brown Butterfly, Grayling Butterfly, Gatekeeper Butterfly, Small Heath Butterfly.

Additional records from desk study: **Otter**, **Bullfinch**, **Eel**, **Stoneloach**, **Salmon**, **Sea Trout**, **Brown Trout**, *Schistidium platyphyllum*, *Jungermannia parvica*.

Existing records from the marshy grassland in the north of the SINC include *Succisa pratensis*, *Pedicularis sylvatica*, *Narthecium ossifragum*, *Eriophorum angustifolium*, *Dactylorhiza maculata*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Carex echinata*.

Caerphilly County Borough Council
Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
LDP Policy Ref: NH 3.23 (SINC 031)
Coed-y-Moeth and Cwmsyfiog Hillside, Cwmsyfiog 103 Ha

1:20,000



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Caerphilly County Borough Council, 100025372, 2008.

Atgynhychwyd o fapiad yr Arolwng Ordnans gyda chaniatod rheolwr Llyfrfa ei Mawrhydi hawlfraint y Goron.
Mae atgynhychu heb awdurdod yn torri hawlfraint y Goron.
Gall hyn arwain at erlyniad neu achos sifil. Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili, 100025372, 2008.