

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.43</u>	SINC name: Gwerthnor-Isaf Wood, south of Bargoed
Grid reference: ST148980	Area (hectares): 11
Survey date: 22nd May 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.48)	
Summary description	
<p>The site includes two small streams both fringed by belts of woodland, some of which is classified as semi-natural ancient woodland. The tree canopy is mainly formed by Sessile oak, Ash and Sycamore. Holly, Hazel and Bramble form a dense understorey through most of the area and there is a good number of semi-natural indicator species in the ground flora. Alders dominate some of the wetter woodland areas. Several areas of marshy grassland border the woodland, the most diverse being in the southeast (ST150977). Purple moor-grass and rushes mainly dominate the marshy grassland, with associated species including Devil's-bit scabious, Meadow thistle, Ragged robin and Marsh pennywort.</p>	
Qualifying features	
Semi-natural ancient woodland.	
Broad-leaved woodland with an assemblage of semi-natural indicator species.	
Species-rich marshy grassland with at least 12 indicator species.	
Secondary features	
Streams.	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
<p>The marshy grassland has potential to support Marsh fritillary and/ or Small pearl-bordered fritillary butterflies (one fritillary was briefly observed at ST150977 in flight at a distance but not confirmed to species).</p> <p>The woodland could provide suitable habitat for Dormouse.</p> <p>The woodland is likely to provide good foraging and roosting habitat for bats. There are two disused culverts that could provide potential roost sites.</p> <p>The marshy grassland habitats are likely to be used by reptiles.</p>	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
<p>The woodland did not show any sign of recent woodland management. Horses lightly grazed the marshy grassland areas at the time of the survey. Scrub encroachment may become a problem in some of the marshy grassland. Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement could include tree planting to thicken some of the hedges connecting the two arms of the site to provide increased habitat connectivity and selective removal of dense understorey to vary woodland structure and encourage ground flora diversity.</p>	

Access/ community use

A public footpath follows the southern arm of the site and another crosses it from north to south. There are also signs of informal accesses in the southern end of the site.

Additional information

The field at ST147981 does not support vegetation of uniform quality and only the southern half has been included in the SINC. Aerial photography suggests that the field at ST151978 is not improved and may be worth surveying at future SINC review. There may also be habitats of SINC quality further west along the Nant y Cascade stream, which should be considered at future 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 tree and shrub species: *Quercus petraea*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Corylus avellana*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Betula pubescens*, *Salix cinerea*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Malus sylvestris*, *Hedera helix*, *Salix caprea*, *Salix aurita*.

Woodland ground flora species: *Geum urbanum*, ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Stellaria holostea*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Veronica montana*, *Viola riviniana*, *Lamium galeobdolon*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Conopodium majus*, *Scrophularia nodosa*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Ranunculus ficaria*, *Viola palustris*, *Cardamine hirsuta*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Holcus mollis*, *Poa trivialis*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Carex remota*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Dryopteris affinis*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Mnium hornum*, *Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans*, *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Eurhynchium striatum*, *Atrichum undulatum*.

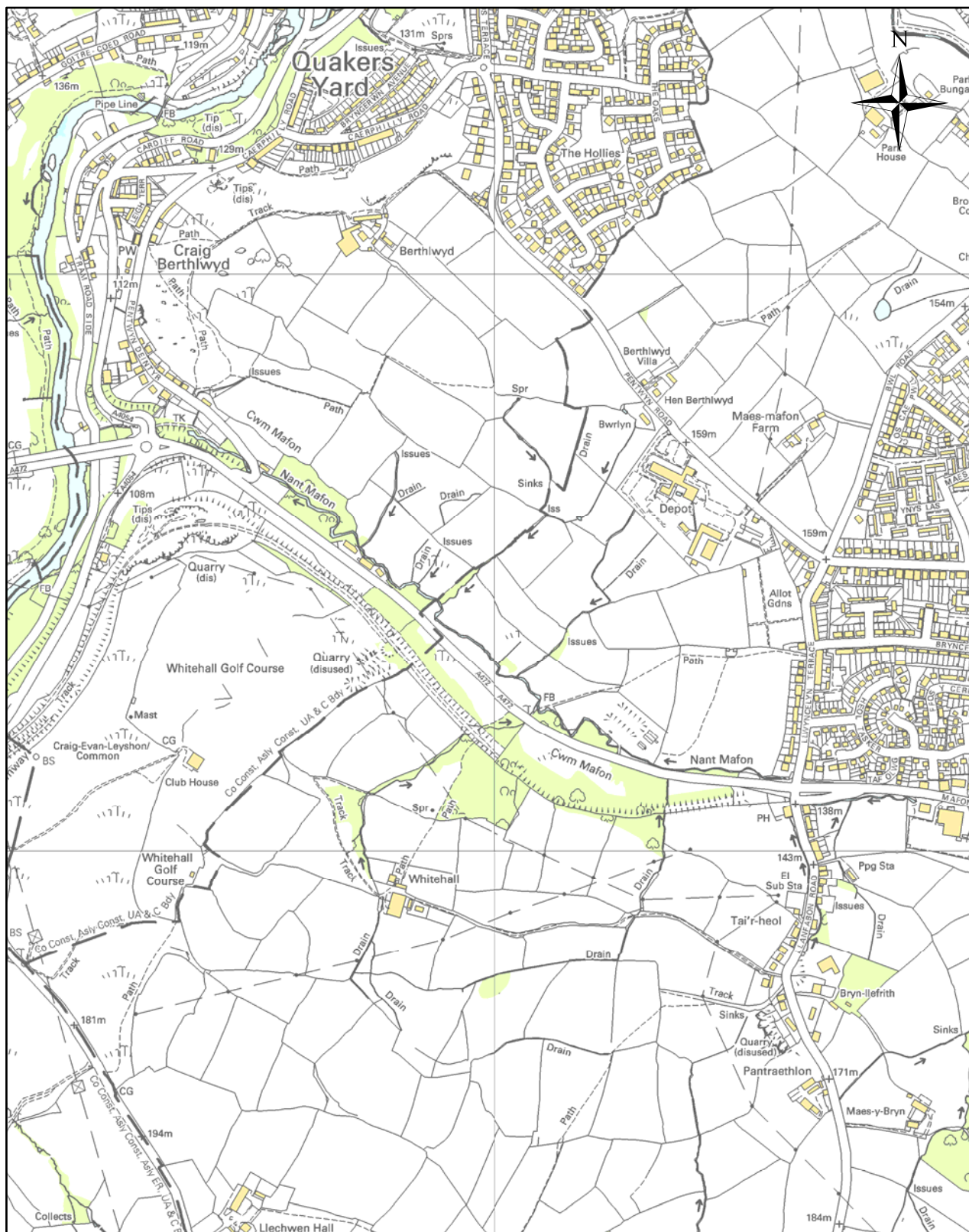
Marshy grassland species (all areas combined): *Succisa pratensis*, *Cirsium dissectum*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Viola palustris*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Hypericum tetrapterum*, *Galium palustre*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Ajuga reptans*, *Eupatorium cannabinum*, *Oenanthe crocata*, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Angelica sylvestris*, *Myosotis secunda*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Carex ovalis*, *Carex viridula*, *Eriophorum angustifolium*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Juncus effusus*.

Fauna observations: **Badger**, Mole, grey Squirrel, **Buzzard**, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Tree Creeper, Wren, Fritillary Butterfly (species not confirmed), Common Blue Butterfly.

Additional species noted from desk study and consultation: Bat records from nearby areas. **Green Woodpecker**, **Tree Sparrow** and **House Sparrow** (all within 120m). Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (within 1km grid square). *Pedicularis sylvatica*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Sphagnum* sp.

Caerphilly County Borough Council
Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
LDP Policy Ref: NH 3.43 (SINC 048)
Gwerthnor-Isaf Wood, South of Bargoed 11 Ha

1:10,000



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Gall hyn arwain at erlyniad neu achos sifil. Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili, 100025372, 2008.