

<b>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council</b>	
<b><u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.52</u></b>	<b>SINC name: Pottery Road Woods, east of Gelligaer</b>
<b>Grid reference: ST143965</b>	<b>Area (hectares): 10</b>
<b>Survey date: 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2007</b>	<b>Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)</b>
<b>(UDP policy reference: C11.51)</b>	
<b>Summary description</b>	
<p>The SINC supports a mix of broad-leaved woodland, neutral grassland and flush vegetation. The woodland follows the course of the Nant Cylla stream, which flows from north to south through the site. Alders fringe the stream, while the woodland further from the stream supports a relatively young canopy of Sycamore, Oak and Birch. Four horse-grazed fields are present in the east of the SINC. The three most easterly fields support a semi-improved neutral grassland flora with patches of damper, rush-dominated grassland. The grassland flora includes Ragged robin, Tormentil, Betony and Devil's-bit scabious. The field nearest the centre of the SINC (at ST142964) supports diverse marshy grassland and flush vegetation, with a flora including Purple moor-grass, Common cotton-grass, Meadow thistle, Marsh violet and <i>Sphagnum</i> mosses.</p>	
<b>Qualifying features</b>	
Marshy grassland/ flush vegetation with at least 12 indicator species.	
Neutral grassland with at least 8 indicator species.	
Broad-leaved woodland with an assemblage of semi-natural indicators.	
<b>Secondary features</b>	
Stream.	
Hedgerows.	
<b>Potential value/ unconfirmed features</b>	
<p>The stream and Pottery Road (which is closed to traffic) are likely to form good commuting routes/ feeding habitat for bats. The woodland area and the old bridge (at ST143962) are likely to provide roosting opportunities for bats.</p>	
The range of habitats is likely to support a good range of invertebrates and breeding birds.	
The marshy grassland habitat has potential to support Marsh Fritillary butterflies.	
<b>Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)</b>	
<p>Horses graze the fields. The grazing pressure in the three eastern fields appears quite heavy and a slight reduction in stocking density would probably be beneficial for biodiversity. The woodland appears to be unmanaged, although it is heavily disturbed by children. There is evidence of vandalism, shooting, damage to trees and fires in several parts of the site and several off-road cycle ramps have been constructed in the northern part. A disused underground structure (possible shaft or adit) at ST143963 has been partially excavated. This is a currently a potential hazard, but it has potential to be fitted out as a bat-roost and made safe with a grille across the entrance. Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam are present in several places, particularly at the western boundary and near the stream.</p>	

## Access/ community use

Pottery Road forms part of the Rhymney Valley Ridgeway Footpath. Another public footpath crosses the eastern fields. Informal paths cross much of the wooded area.

## Additional information

The habitat of greatest value is the marshy grassland / acid flush. Some of the woodland is relatively young and disturbed and would not meet the SINC selection criteria on its own merit, but has been included as secondary habitat within a habitat mosaic. The SINC could feasibly be extended to include woodland along the stream corridor to the north. However, this area is subject to much greater disturbance and vandalism than the rest of the woodland, and is therefore unlikely to have an equivalent value for biodiversity. The woodland downstream from Pottery Road Bridge has a high proportion of Japanese knotweed and was not included in the SINC at this review. However, the wooded stream corridor extends for over 1km to the south and is likely to serve as suitable habitat and a movement corridor for many species. This corridor could be investigated further at future reviews. The small fields adjoining the north of the SINC appear to have little botanical value, but the close network of hedges is likely to be of value for birds and other fauna.

## 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 and scrub species: *Alnus glutinosa*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Salix caprea*, *Salix cinerea*, *Quercus petraea*, *Betula pubescens*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Corylus avellana*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Hedera helix*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Malus sp.*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Prunus spinosa*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Viburnum opulus*, *Ulex europaeus*.

Woodland ground flora species: *Circaea lutetiana*, *Geum urbanum*, *Aegopodium podagraria*, **Hyacinthoides non-scripta**, *Stellaria holostea*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Ranunculus ficaria*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Solidago virgaurea*, *Chamerion angustifolium*, *Fragaria vesca*, *Conopodium majus*, *Fallopia japonica*, *Impatiens glandulifera*, *Mercurialis perennis*, *Poa trivialis*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Holcus mollis*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Carex remota*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Mnium hornum*, *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Atrichum undulatum*.

Damp, semi-improved neutral grassland/species (combined list for eastern fields - some parts of this could be classified as marshy grassland): *Lotus corniculatus*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Potentilla reptans*, *Bellis perennis*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Ranunculus repens*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Lathyrus pratensis*, *Trifolium repens*, *Conopodium majus*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Rumex acetosa*, *Ranunculus acris*, **Hyacinthoides non-scripta**, *Rumex obtusifolius*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Stachys officinalis*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Alopecurus pratensis*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Lolium perenne*, *Luzula campestris*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus conglomeratus*, *Rhytiadelphus squarrosus*.

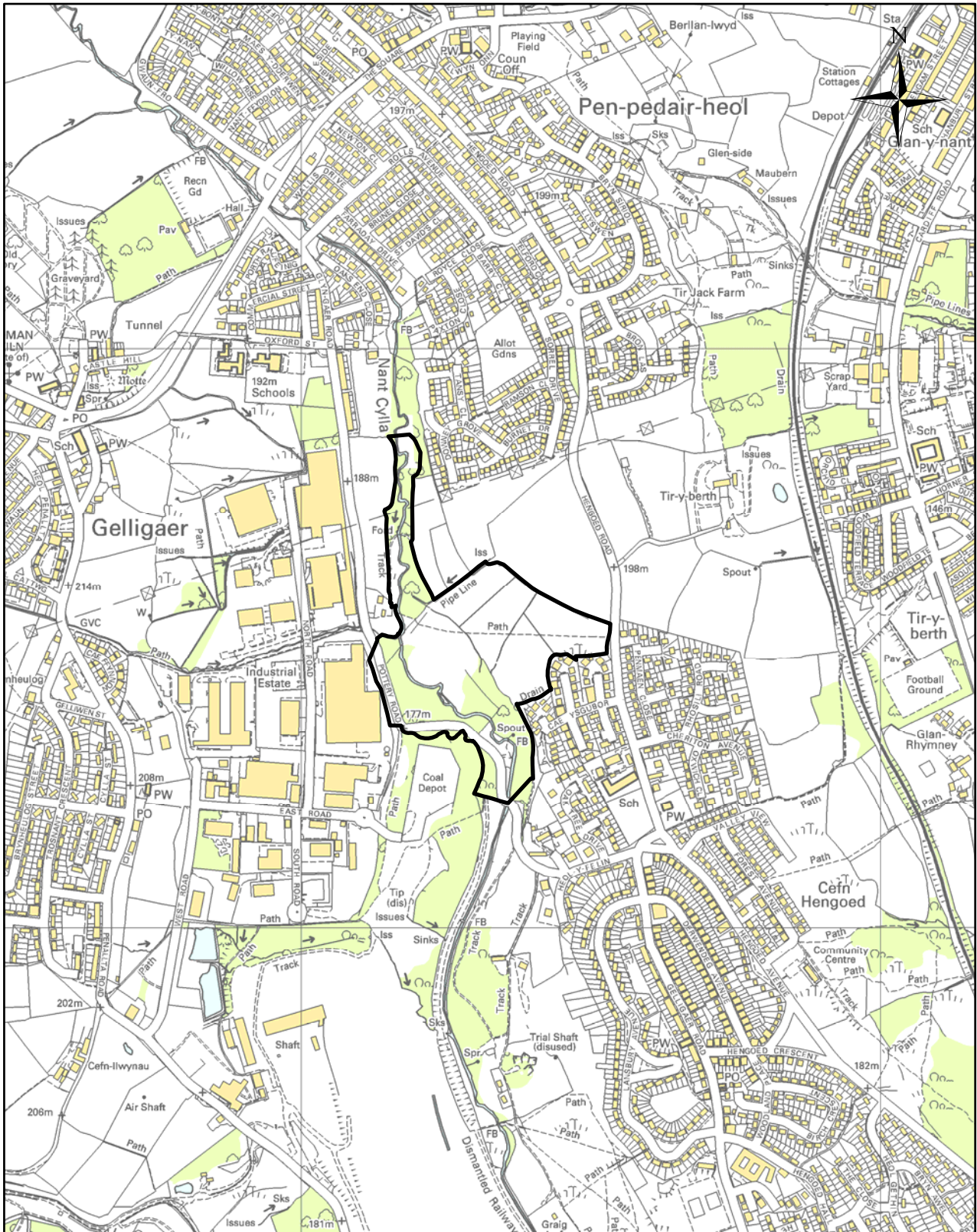
Marshy grassland flush vegetation (ST142964): *Viola palustris*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Cirsium dissectum*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Stachys officinalis*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, **Dactylorhiza maculata**, *Pedicularis sylvatica*, *Mentha aquatica*, *Myosotis secunda*, *Conopodium majus*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Carex echinata*, *Carex panicea*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Juncus bulbosus*, *Sphagnum subnitens*, *Sphagnum cf denticulatum*.

Fauna observations: *Mole*, *Grey Squirrel*, **Buzzard**, **Song Thrush**, **House Sparrow**, *Wren*, *Willow Warbler*, *Long-tailed Tit*, *Blackbird*, *Robin*, *Greenfinch*, *Blackcap*, **Brown Trout**, *Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary Butterfly* (2 at marshy grassland/ flush area), *Common Blue Butterfly*, *Speckled Wood Butterfly*, *Green-veined White Butterfly*, *Orange-tip Butterfly*, *Holly Blue Butterfly*, *Brimstone Butterfly*.

Additional species noted from desk study and consultation: *Hedgehog*, **Green Woodpecker**, **Bullhead**, **Stone Loach**, **Sea Trout**, *Grayling Butterfly*, **Rhinanthus minor**, *Vicia orobus*, *Galium odoratum*, *Luzula pilosa*, *Plantago media*, *Viola canina*, *Campanula rotundifolia*, *Carex caryophylla*, *Frangula alnus*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Erica cinerea*, *Genista anglica*, *Erica tetralix*, *Serratula tinctoria*. Bat records from nearby urban areas.

Caerphilly County Borough Council  
Site of Importance for Nature Conservation  
LDP Policy Ref: NH 3.52 (SINC 051)  
Pottery Road Slopes, East of Gelligaer 10 Ha

1:10,000



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