

<b>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council</b>	
<b><u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.95</u></b>	<b>SINC name: Valentec Nature Reserve, north of Croespenmaen</b>
<b>Grid reference: ST195995</b>	<b>Area (hectares): 3</b>
<b>Survey date: 27<sup>th</sup> July 2007</b>	<b>Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)</b>
<b>(UDP policy reference: C11.61)</b>	
<b>Summary description</b>	
<p>An area of neutral grassland, marshy grassland, scrub and a pond within the Pen-y-fan Industrial Estate. The grasslands are very variable in character; a high proportion is on waterlogged ground and supports an abundance of rushes and wetland herbs, including Southern marsh-orchid, Gypsywort and Greater bird's-foot trefoil. Other areas are drier with more coarse grasses, tall ruderal herbs and Bramble. The pond is heavily vegetated by Bulrush and White water lily, but parts of the northern and eastern sides support open water fringed by emergent vegetation including Flag iris, Branched bur-reed, Marsh pennywort, Common spike-rush and Marsh speedwell. Willow scrub occurs patchily through the site, but mainly around the pond area. Willows and a range of broad-leaved shrubs have been planted around the site perimeter, screening the site from the adjacent roads.</p>	
<b>Qualifying features</b>	
Species-rich marshy grassland with at least 14 indicator species.	
Semi-improved neutral grassland with at least 8 indicator species.	
Pond with diverse wetland vegetation.	
<b>Secondary features</b>	
Scrub	
<b>Potential value/ unconfirmed features</b>	
The mix of habitats is likely to support a high diversity of invertebrates, particularly damselflies and dragonflies.	
The scrub, pond and tall grassland habitats could potentially support uncommon breeding birds.	
The area is likely to provide good foraging habitat for bats.	
The pond has potential to support Great crested newts.	
The area is likely to support reptiles, potentially including Grass snakes.	
The wetland area could potentially support Water voles (though none are known from the surrounding area).	
<b>Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)</b>	
<p>The majority of the area appears to be left undisturbed, with minimal management, but the pond is managed to maintain areas of open water (the remains of water plants raked from the pond were noted at the eastern margin). The area seems to be in a good condition for a wide range of wildlife, but as the vegetation develops some scrub control and cutting of tall grass areas may be beneficial to help maintain a balance of more open habitats. Grass cuttings and pond-rakings could be</p>	

heaped up to provide egg-laying sites for Grass snakes, which may be present.

### Access/ community use

There are no public footpaths through the area, but several informal paths are present. The area is available for informal use by local people and school groups.

### Additional information

Several other nearby areas within the industrial estate also appear likely to have value for nature conservation, including a heath-covered bank at ST197998 and ponds (visible by aerial photography) at ST198998 and SO201000. These areas should be considered for inclusion 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*)

Tree and shrub species (including species planted at roadside): *Salix cinerea*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Betula pendula*, *Cornus cf sanguineus*, *Viburnum opulus*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Populus tremula*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Betula pubescens*, *Prunus avium*, *Pinus sp.*, *Ulex europaeus*, *Rosa canina*, *Cytisus scoparius*.

Grassland species (NB the different grassland types merge gradually with one other): Drier areas support *Trifolium pratense*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Ranunculus acris*, *Torilis japonica*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Anaphalis margaritacea*, *Centaureum erythraea*, *Lathyrus pratensis*, ***Rhinanthus minor***, *Stellaria graminea*, *Cirsium arvense*, *Solidago canadensis*, *Hieracium sp.*, *Hypericum maculatum*, *Vicia hirsuta*, *Heracleum sphondylium*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Arrhenatherum elatius*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Dactylis glomerata*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Festuca rubra*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Lolium perenne*, *Poa trivialis*, *Equisetum arvense*, *Rhytidadelphus squarrosus*.

Wetter areas support: *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Galium palustre*, *Ranunculus acris*, *Angelica sylvestris*, *Ranunculus flammula*, ***Dactylorhiza praetermissa***, *Valeriana officinalis*, *Mentha aquatica*, *Pulicaria dysenterica*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Lycopus europaeus*, *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, *Filipendula ulmaria*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Myosotis laxa*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Agrostis stolonifera*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Carex otrubae*, *Carex nigra*, *Carex hirta*, *Carex flacca*, *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus inflexus*, *Juncus articulatus*, *Juncus conglomeratus*, *Luzula multiflora*, *Polytrichum commune*, *Calliergonella cuspidata*.

Wetland plants in and around the pond: *Nymphaea alba*, *Typha latifolia*, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Iris pseudacorus*, *Veronica scutellata*, *Sparganium erectum*, *Eleocharis palustris*

Fauna observations: *Grey Heron*, *Moorhen*, ***Common Toad***, *Green-veined White Butterfly*, *Meadow Brown Butterfly*, *Gatekeeper Butterfly*, *Burnet Moth*, ***Common Blue Damselfly***, ***Azure Damselfly***, ***Emperor Dragonfly***, ***Blue-tailed Damselfly***.

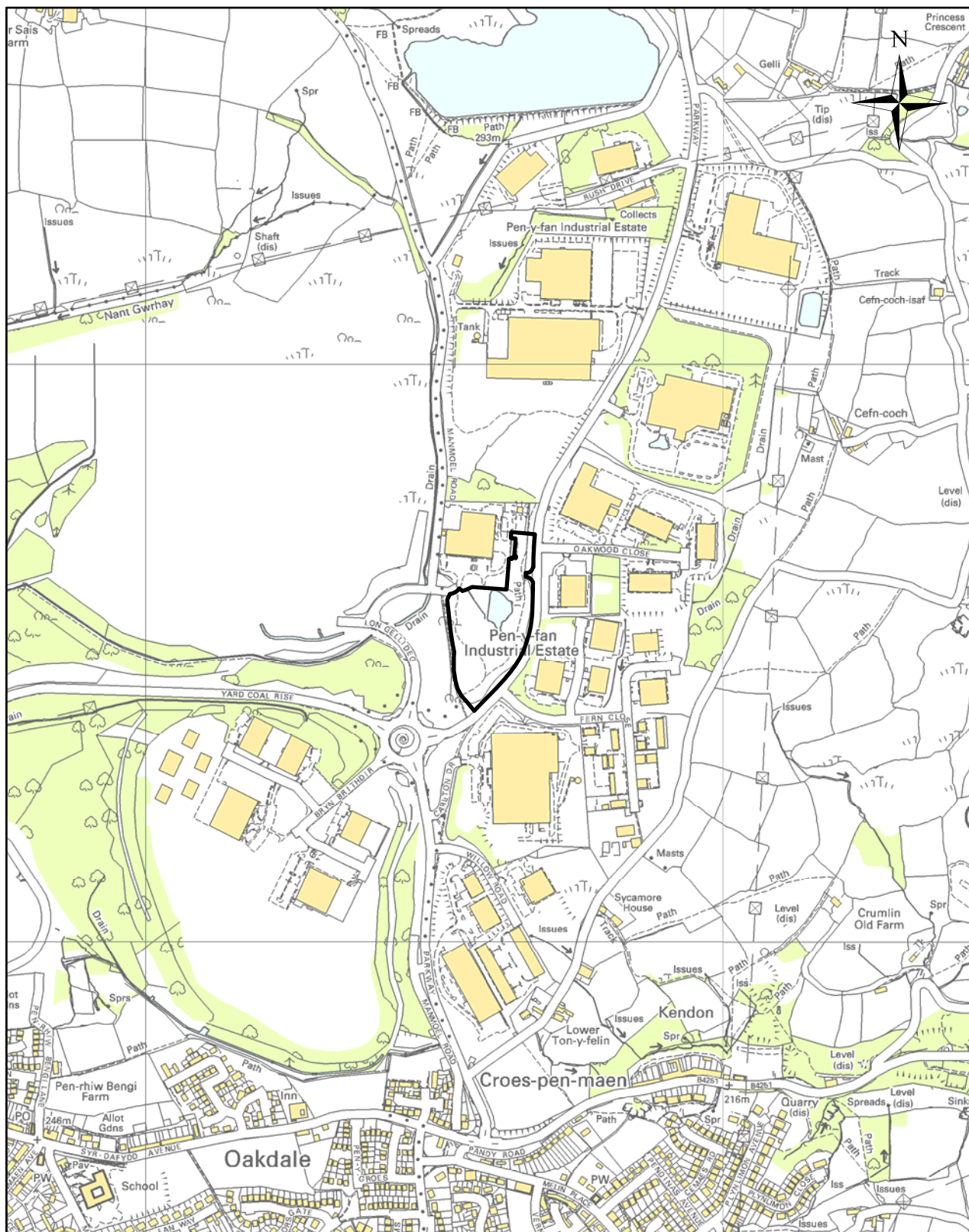
Additional species noted from desk study and consultation: ***Common Frog***, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Elodea canadensis*, *Hypericum perforatum*, *Leontodon autumnalis*, *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Potamogeton natans*, *Carex panicea*, *Luzula campestris*, *Ononis repens*, *Primula vulgaris*, *Scrophularia nodosa*, *Veronica beccabunga*, *Viola riviniana*.

The pond is reported to be good for dragonflies (though no supporting data has been provided).

Caerphilly County Borough Council  
Site of Importance for Nature Conservation  
LDP Policy Ref: NH 3.95 (SINC 061)

1:10,000

Valentec Nature Reserve, North of Croespenmaen 3 Ha



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