

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.96</u>	SINC name: Pen-rhiw Bengi Marsh, Oakdale
Grid reference: ST189989	Area (hectares): 2
Survey date: 24th July 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.65)	
Summary description	
<p>At the western side is a small area of mature Beech and Oak woodland, and a narrow lane bordered by old hedges. Several semi-natural woodland indicators are present. The northeastern field supports damp semi-improved acid grassland with a strip of marshy grassland / flush vegetation through its central part. Species present include Water-cress, Marsh pennywort and Bog pimpernel. The field to the southeast supports moderately diverse semi-improved neutral grassland, including Burnet saxifrage, Ox-eye daisy and Devil's-bit scabious. The rest of the area supports a mix of coarser grassland, tall herbs and scrub. This has not been grazed recently but still supports remnants of its former marshy grassland flora.</p>	
Qualifying features	
<p>Species-rich marshy grassland / flush with at least 14 indicator species.</p> <p>Semi-improved neutral grassland with at least 8 indicator species.</p>	
Secondary features	
<p>Mature trees, Hedges, Scrub/ tall herb vegetation</p>	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
<p>The mix of habitats is likely to support a high diversity of invertebrates.</p> <p>The woodland and hedgerows are likely to provide foraging and roosting habitats for bats.</p> <p>The site is likely to support additional grassland fungi species.</p>	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
<p>Cattle graze the two-eastern fields and the remainder of the site appears to be unmanaged. It would be beneficial for biodiversity to restore grazing to the scrubby abandoned fields in the centre of the site to increase diversity and limit the growth of coarse grasses, tall herbs and scrub. There was some evidence of vandalism and littering within the SINC, but not at levels likely to affect its value for nature conservation. This site was recently offered to the council by a developer to meet its planning obligation for informal recreation in order to build houses on a site to the south. Once the Section 106 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) agreement is signed, the site will be transferred to the council and the Countryside and Landscape Service will introduce appropriate management, which will aim to enhance biodiversity.</p>	
Access/ community use	
<p>The lane at the west of the site is a public footpath. A footpath also runs along the south side of the southeastern field. There are also several informal paths through the scrub areas.</p>	

Additional information

The horse-grazed field beyond the southeastern boundary (ST189987) may also support habitat of value for nature conservation 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, hedges and scrub woody species: *Quercus petraea*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Corylus avellana*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Betula pubescens*, *Quercus robur*, *Prunus spinosa*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Salix cinerea*, *Salix aurita*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Rosa arvensis*, *Hedera helix*.

Woodland, hedge and scrub ground flora species: *Stellaria holostea*, ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Moerhingia trinervia*, *Tamus communis*, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Rumex sanguineus*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Veronica montana*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Urtica dioica*, *Viola riviniana*, *Alchemilla cf xanthochlora*, *Holcus mollis*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Polypodium sp.*, *Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans*, *Fissidens bryoides*, *Atrichum undulatum*, *Kindbergia praelonga*.

Marshy grassland and flush (north-east field ST189989): *Galium palustre*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Ranunculus acris*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Oenanthe crocata*, *Stellaria graminea*, *Viola palustris*, *Pedicularis sylvatica*, *Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Anagallis tenella*, *Angelica sylvestris*, *Veronica beccabunga*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Lolium perenne*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Carex panicea*, *Carex viridula*, *Isolepis setacea*, *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus articulatus*, *Juncus conglomeratus*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Juncus bulbosus*, *Calliergonella cuspidata*.

Semi-improved neutral grassland (south east field ST189988): *Trifolium pratense*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Ranunculus acris*, *Ranunculus bulbosus*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Rumex acetosa*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Pimpinella saxifraga*, *Leontodon hispidus*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Leucanthemum vulgare*, *Stellaria graminea*, *Conopodium majus*, ***Rhinanthus minor***, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Poa trivialis*, *Lolium perenne*, *Festuca rubra*, *Agrostis capillaris*.

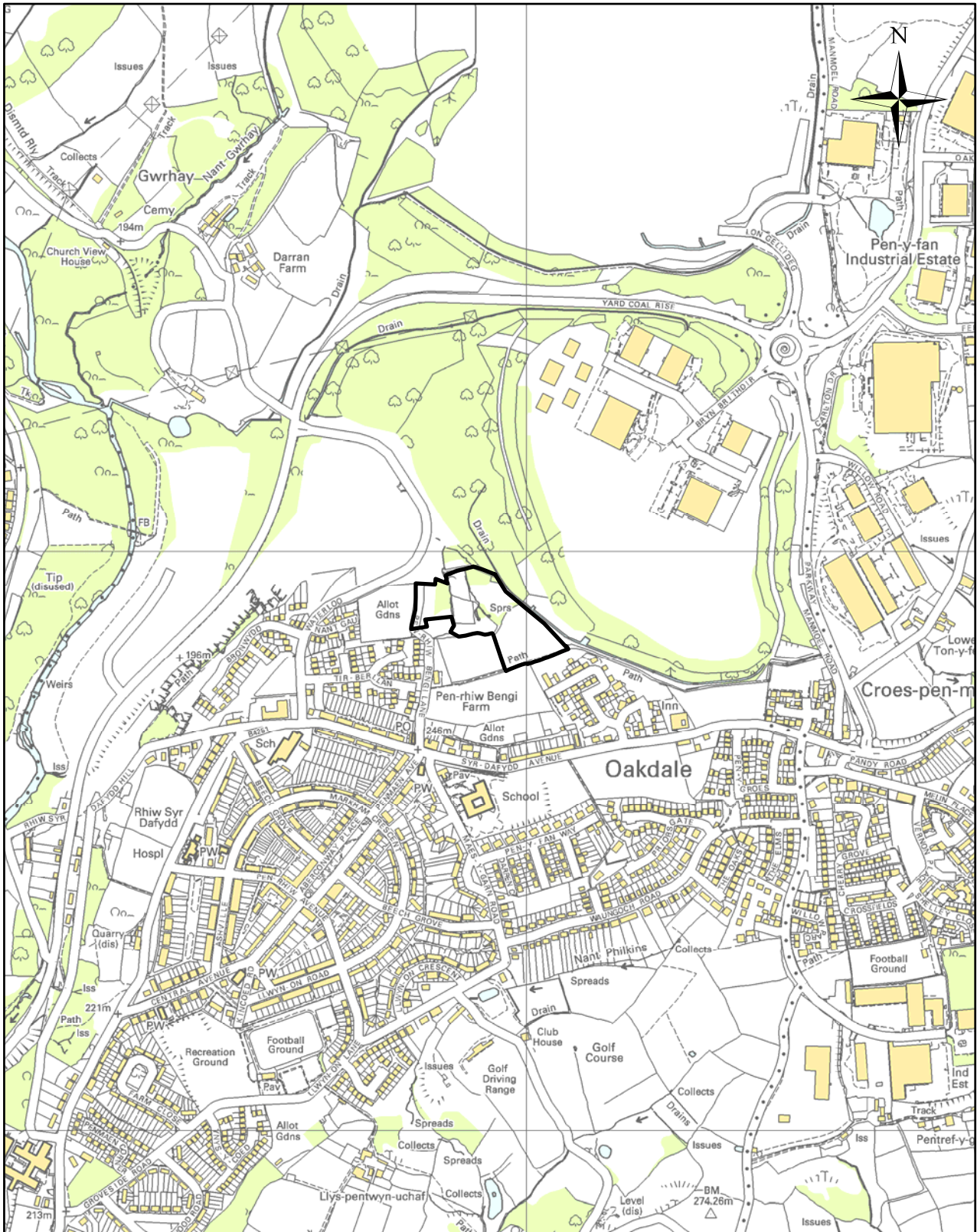
At the time of the survey approx 50 Hygrocybe chlorophana var. aurantiaca were fruiting in the southern part of the field.

Fauna observations: *Chaffinch*, *Wren*, *Green-veined White Butterfly*, *Small Skipper Butterfly*, *Comma Butterfly*, *Gatekeeper Butterfly*.

Additional species noted from desk study and consultation: ***Dactylorhiza praetermissa***, ***Dactylorhiza fuchsii***, *Ulmus glabra*, *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, **Butterfly** (within 1km), *Carex otrubae*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Euphrasia sp.*, *Luzula campestris*, *Serratula tinctoria*, *Pimpinella saxifraga*, *Stachys officinalis*, *Carex caryophyllea*, *Anagallis tenella*, *Silaum silaus*.

Caerphilly County Borough Council
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Pen-Rhiw Bengi Marsh, Oakdale 2 Ha

1:10,000



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