

<b>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council</b>	
<b><u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.92</u></b>	<b>SINC name: Glan-brynar Woodlands, Pentwynmawr</b>
<b>Grid references: S186964</b>	<b>Area (hectares): 9</b>
<b>Survey date: 19<sup>th</sup> July 2007</b>	<b>Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)</b>
<b>(UDP policy reference: C11.72)</b>	
<b>Summary description</b>	
<p>A mix of habitats including three small broad-leaved woodlands, three small fields of damp neutral / marshy grassland, a small area of semi-improved acid grassland and a disused railway-line. The woodlands canopies mainly comprise Oak, Birch, and occasionally Alder, with an understorey of Hazel, Blackthorn and Hawthorn. The ground flora is generally species-poor and indicative of damp conditions, but includes several semi-natural indicator species. The damp fields support a mix of neutral and marshy grassland communities, tending to merge into one another. The most diverse area is a flush area in the heavily horse-grazed field at ST184964. The flora includes Bog pimpernel, Ragged robin, Marsh pennywort, Marsh St John's-wort and Meadow thistle. The fields in the centre of the area were ungrazed during the survey and appear to have become less diverse as the vegetation has grown taller. However, they still support abundant Marsh thistle, Devil's-bit scabious, Betony and Purple moor-grass. The disused railway supports grassland and scrub habitats, bordered on both sides by a wet ditch. It provides a connection between the other parts of the SINC.</p>	
<b>Qualifying features</b>	
Broad-leaved woodland with an assemblage of semi-natural indicators.	
Marshy grassland / flush with at least 12 indicator species.	
<b>Secondary features</b>	
Tree roost for Brown long-eared bats.	
Acid grassland and Bracken	
Disused railway line (with scrub and grassland)	
<b>Potential value/ unconfirmed features</b>	
The woodlands are likely to support Dormice, which are known to occur in the general area.	
Each of the woodlands is likely to provide good foraging and roosting opportunities for bats.	
The drier grasslands are likely to support good numbers of grassland fungi.	
The disused railway is likely to support reptiles and the ditch beside it is a potential breeding site for amphibians.	
<b>Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)</b>	
<p>The woodlands appear largely unmanaged, although some recent woodland management (copping and hedge-laying) has been carried out the eastern area. Bat boxes have been installed in some places on the western woodland and a small pond was been created. Rabbits are very numerous, particularly in the central woodland (ST187964), and evidence of ferreting was noted. The marshy grasslands at ST185964 and ST186963 do not appear to have been grazed for several seasons and have grown tall, decreasing some of their botanical diversity. Reinstating grazing to these fields (preferably light by cattle or horses) is important to enhance biodiversity.</p>	

The species-rich marshy grassland / flush habitats at ST184964 and ST190963 are grazed by horses and the current grazing regime seems to be optimal for maintaining the high diversity of the vegetation. The acid grassland at ST183965 does not appear to be grazed and is becoming encroached upon by Bracken and Gorse. Grazing would be beneficial here, particularly if the area is confirmed as supporting good numbers of grassland fungi. The recently constructed Sirhowy Enterprise Way road scheme runs in a cutting along the south side of the site. It is feasible that the SINC habitats could become drier as a result of this scheme.

#### Access/ community use

A public footpath crosses the SINC near its western end, and a road passes its eastern end. There is no other formal access to the site, but the disused railway is used as an informal footpath.

#### Additional information

The adjacent field to the north at ST182996 supported at least 4 waxcap species in mid-July, and more would be expected to be present later in the year. Further survey may show that this field exceeds the SINC selection criteria for fungi. This should be considered at future SINC review. Aerial photography indicates several other fields of potential marshy grassland to the north and west of the SINC, and these should be considered at future SINC review. Aerial photography shows that the disused railway continues eastwards and is fringed by scrub, heath and Bracken. This should be considered at future SINC review as a potential link with SINC NH 3.91.

#### 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 robur*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Corylus avellana*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Betula pubescens*, *Salix caprea*, *Malus sp.*, *Prunus spinosa*, *Viburnum opulus*, *Hedera helix*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Alnus glutinosa*.

Woodland ground flora species: *Viola riviniana*, *Ajuga reptans*, ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Viola palustris*, *Solanum dulcamara*, *Cardamine hirsuta*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Geum urbanum*, *Ranunculus ficaria*, *Urtica dioica*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Galium palustre*, *Carex remota*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans*, *Mnium hornum*, *Eurhynchium striatum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Thuidium tamariscinum*, *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Atrichum undulatum*.

Damp neutral/ marshy grassland and flush species (combined list as these merge with one another): *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Stellaria graminea*, *Scutellaria minor*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Galium palustre*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Anagallis tenella*, *Pedicularis sylvatica*, *Lythrum portula*, *Hypericum elodes*, *Cirsium dissectum*, *Ranunculus repens*, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Stachys officinalis*, *Galeopsis tetrahit*, *Centaureum erythraea*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Mentha aquatica*, *Potentilla anserina*, *Ranunculus acris*, *Agrostis stolonifera*, *Agrostis canina*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Lolium perenne*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Carex viridula*, *Carex panicea*, *Carex ovalis*, *Carex hirta*, *Carex flacca*, *Isolepis setacea*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus conglomeratus*, *Calliergonella cuspidata*, *Sphagnum subnitens*, *Bryum pseudotriquetrum*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Aulacomnium palustre*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Aneura pinguis*. The waxcap fungi *Hygrocybe chlorophana* and *H.intermedia* were present in the drier parts of the eastern field.

Semi-improved acid grassland at ST grassland species at ST183965: *Viola riviniana*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Rumex acetosa*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Ulex europaeus*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Veronica officinalis*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Leontodon hispidus*, *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Festuca rubra*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Luzula campestris*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*. Several *Hygrocybe intermedia* fungi were present.

The adjacent field at ST182996 also supported grassland fungi including *Hygrocybe citrinovirens*,

*H.glutinipes*, *H.intermedia* and *H.chlorophana*.

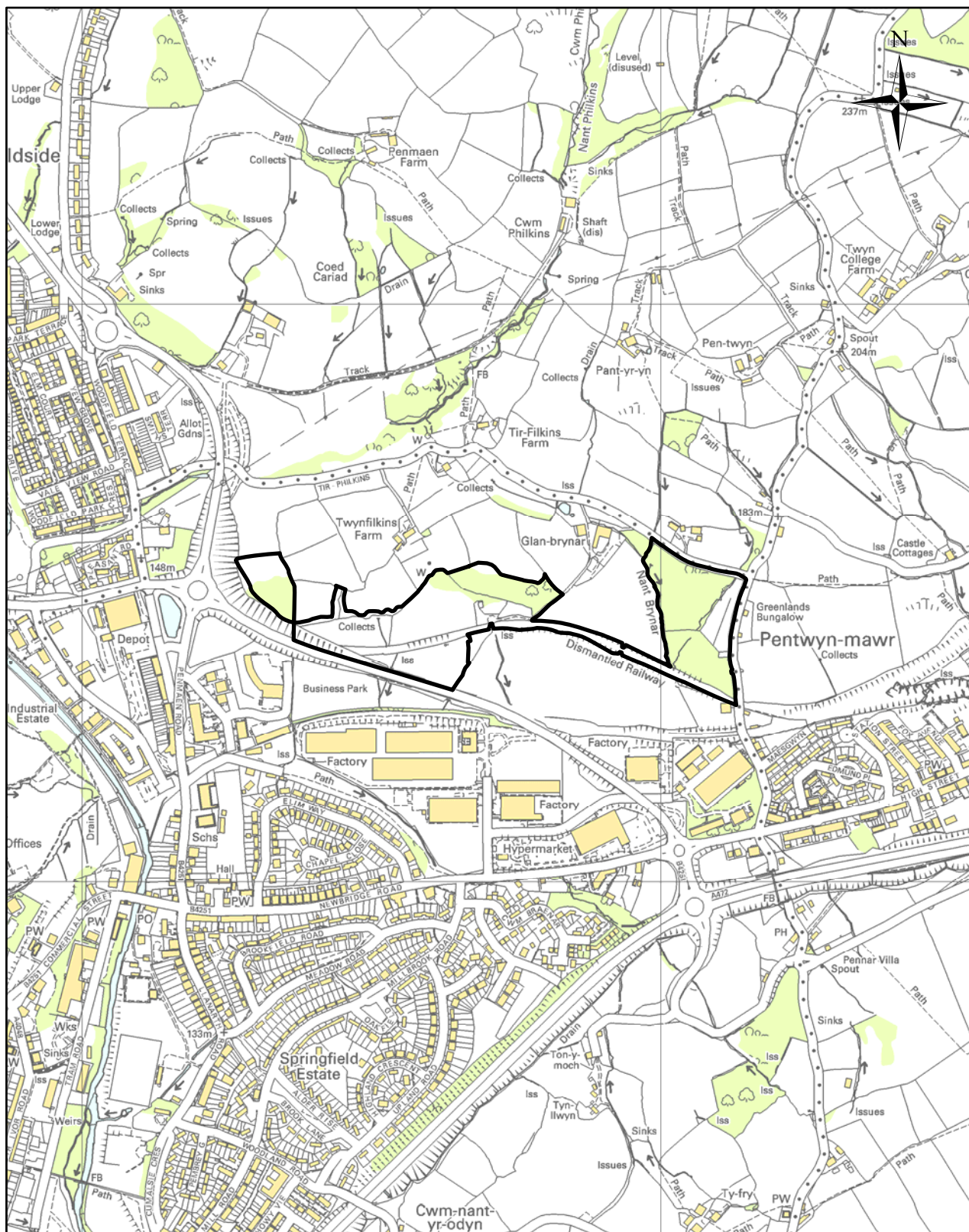
Disused railway line: *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Betula pubescens*, *Betula pendula*, *Quercus robur*, *Ulex europaeus*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Prunus padus*, *Chamerion angustifolium*, *Fragaria vesca*, *Potentilla reptans*, *Scrophularia nodosa*, *Eupatorium cannabinum*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Festuca rubra*, *Arrhenatherum elatius*.

Fauna observations (all areas combined): Rabbit, Grey Squirrel, **Green Woodpecker**, **Buzzard**, **House Sparrow**, Nuthatch, Blackbird, Goldfinch, Treecreeper, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Wren, Meadow Brown Butterfly, Gatekeeper Butterfly, Comma Butterfly, Speckled Wood Butterfly, Burnet Moth, **Common Darter Dragonfly**.

Additional records from desk study: Eastern woodland: **Orchis mascula**, *Caltha palustris*, *Conopodium majus*. **Noctule** and **Natterer's Bat** (foraging near Pennar Lane approx 300m east of SINC boundary). Central woodland: *Caltha palustris*, *Sanicula europaea*, **Common Frog**, Woodcock, *Hypericum tetrapterum*. Western woodland: **Daubenton's Bat**.

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