

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.86</u>	SINC name: Victoria Road Slopes, Fleur-De-Lis
Grid reference: ST158949	Area (hectares): 22
Survey date: 6th July 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.86)	
Summary description	
<p>The western part of this SINC lies adjacent to the River Rhymney and includes the associated riverside woodlands, although the river itself is a separate SINC (NH 3.1). The eastern part of the SINC follows the line of a dismantled railway and includes the adjacent woodland, scrub and several fields of semi-improved grassland. The southern part of the SINC comprises several fields of semi-improved neutral grassland and damp areas supporting elements of marshy grassland. The easternmost field includes a small pond at ST162949.</p>	
Qualifying features	
<p>Broadleaved woodland with an assemblage of semi-natural indicator species.</p> <p>Semi-improved neutral grassland with at least 8 indicators.</p> <p>Marshy grassland/ pond with at least 12 indicator species.</p>	
Secondary features	
<p>Scrub/ hedges.</p>	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
<p>Potential breeding habitat for Otter.</p> <p>Potential habitat for Dormouse.</p> <p>Likely to provide good foraging habitat, flight lines and potential roost sites for bats.</p> <p>Likely high value for breeding birds, possibly including Dipper, Grey Wagtail and Kingfisher.</p> <p>The horse-grazed field at the north of the site is likely to support grassland fungi.</p>	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
<p>Much of the wooded area currently receives minimal management, although the land at ST156958 is being managed to develop its woodland character, with tree planting and installation of bird and Dormouse nest boxes. Several of the fields in the centre of the site are also unmanaged and developing cover by scrub. It would be beneficial to reinstate grazing to these fields to enhance biodiversity. Horses graze the fields at ST156960 and ST158949, but would both probably benefit from a reduction in grazing pressure. Cattle graze the semi-improved grassland fields in the southeast of the SINC. The eastern field may have been subject to recent drainage works (possibly at the same time as the formation of the pond at ST162949). Much of the river is fringed by Japanese knotweed, and its control with benefit biodiversity. Any herbicide treatment should be carried out using methods that would not affect rare bryophytes (e.g. weed-wipe application).</p>	
Access/ community use	
<p>There is no formal public access to most of the fields, but some have footpaths. There is a network of informal footpaths, mainly along the disused railway line, but also by the river.</p>	

Additional information

Some of the fields would benefit from the re-introduction of management, ideally grazing, to enhance the biodiversity of the site, particularly in the centre and the northern field. The scrub developing in some old fields in the centre of the SINC is still of value as part of a wider habitat mosaic, particularly as it effectively extends the woodland cover beside the river.

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 and scrub tree and shrub species (combined list for whole site): *Quercus robur*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Betula pubescens*, *Salix cinerea*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Prunus padus* (several places in riverside woodland), *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Prunus spinosa*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Corylus avellana*, *Rosa arvensis*, *Rosa canina*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Ulex europaeus*, *Malus* sp., *Viburnum opulus*, *Quercus petraea*, *Cytisus scoparius*.

Woodland and scrub ground flora species (combined list for whole site): *Circaea lutetiana*, **Hyacinthoides non-scripta**, *Aegopodium podagraria*, *Geum urbanum*, *Lamiastrum galeobdolon*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Melampyrum pratense*, *Mercurialis perennis*, *Viola riviniana*, *Sanicula europaea*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Fallopia japonica*, *Solidago virgaurea*, *Holcus mollis*, *Agrostis stolonifera*, *Festuca gigantea*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Festuca ovina*, *Carex remota*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Polystichum aculeatum*, *Polystichum setiferum*, *Phyllitis scolopendrium*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Dryopteris affinis*, *Pteridium aquilinum* *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Eurhynchium striatum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Atrichum undulatum*, *Mnium hornum*, *Plagiomnium undulatum*, *Pellia* sp., *Conocephalum conicum*, *Diplophyllum albicans*.

Additional species in grassy parts of the scrub-lined disused railways include: *Fragaria vesca*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Teucrium scorodonia*, *Eupatorium cannabinum*, *Vicia cracca*, *Euphrasia* sp., *Pimpinella saxifraga*, *Leontodon hispidus*, *Lathyrus pratensis*, *Ononis repens*, *Knautia arvensis*, *Hieracium* sp., *Hypericum maculatum*, *Trifolium pratense*, **Rhinanthus minor**, *Stellaria holostea*, *Sanguisorba officinalis*, *Arrhenatherum elatius*, *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, *Aira caryophylla*.

Semi-improved neutral grassland species in central fields (ST156955): *Ranunculus acris*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Rumex acetosa*, *Ranunculus repens*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Trifolium repens*, *Sanguisorba officinalis*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Poa trivialis*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Cynosurus cristatus*.

Semi-improved neutral grassland species in northern field (ST156959): *Ranunculus acris*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Rumex obtusifolius*, *Ranunculus repens*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Trifolium repens*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Poa trivialis*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Poa pratensis*.

Semi-improved neutral grassland species in southern field (ST158949): **Rhinanthus minor**, *Ononis repens*, *Knautia arvensis*, *Stellaria graminea*, *Lathyrus pratensis*, *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Pimpinella saxifraga*, *Euphrasia* sp., *Lotus corniculatus*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Ranunculus acris*, *Festuca rubra*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Arrhenatherum elatius*, *Briza media*, *Pteridium aquilinum*.

Semi-improved neutral grassland species in eastern fields (approx ST160948): *Centaurea nigra*, *Conopodium majus*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Polygala* sp., *Ulex europaeus*, *Leontodon hispidus*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Cardamine pratense*, *Lotus corniculatus*, **Rhinanthus minor**, *Myosotis* cf *secunda*, *Cirsium dissectum*, *Lolium perenne*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Poa trivialis*, *Dactylis glomerata*, *Carex viridula*, *Carex panicea*.

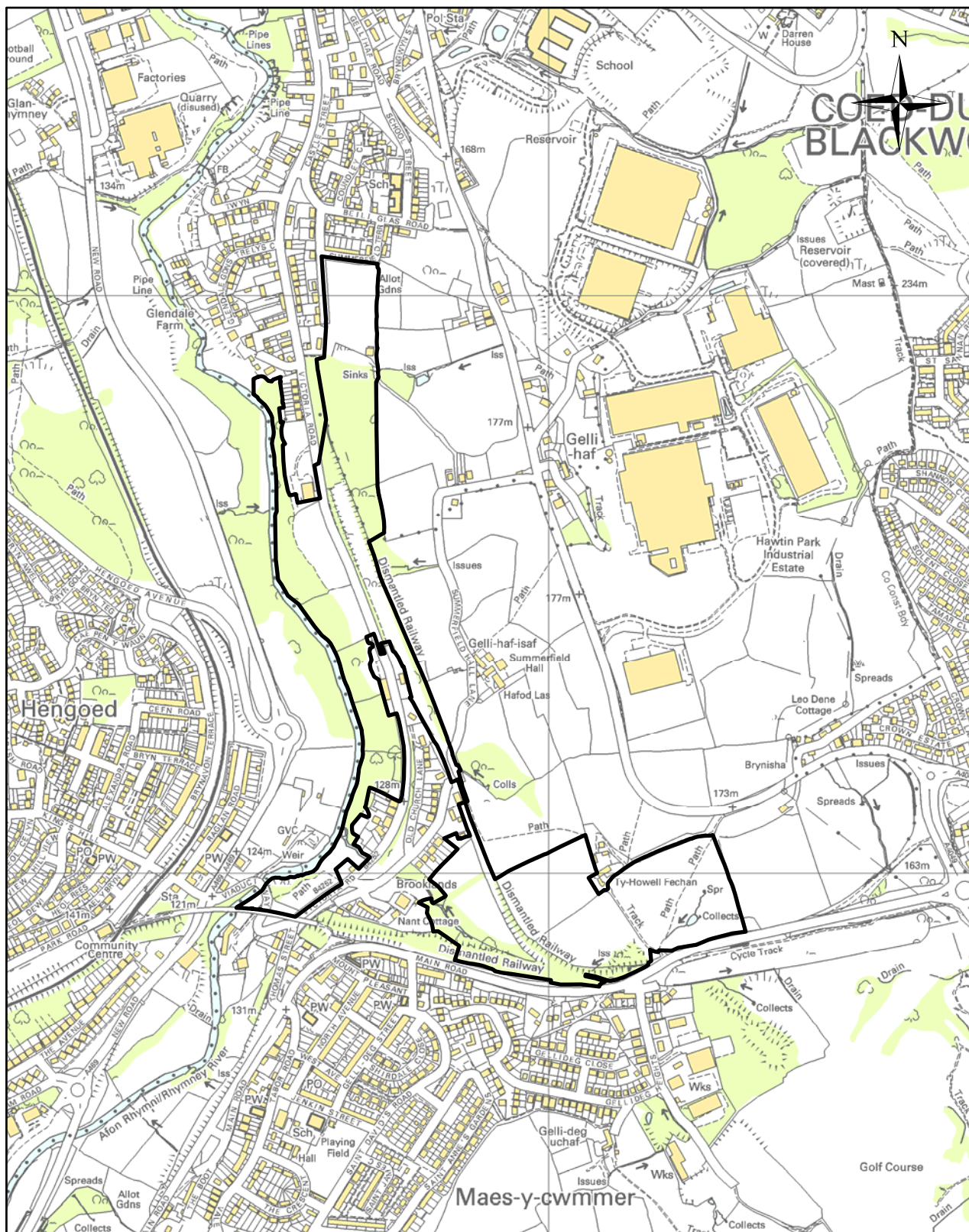
Pond species at ST162949: *Typha latifolia*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Galium palustre*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Alisma plantago-aquatica*, *Mentha aquatica*, *Elodea* sp., *Nymphoides peltata*, *Potamogeton polygonifolius*, *Filipendula ulmaria*, *Agrostis stolonifera*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Carex ovalis*, *Carex viridula*, *Eleocharis palustris*, *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Juncus bulbosus*, *Calliergonella cuspidata*.

Fauna observations: **Buzzard**, **Grey Wagtail**, **Kingfisher**, *Robin*, *Blue Tit*, *Wren*, *Great Tit*, *Nuthatch*, *Blackcap*, *Chiffchaff*, *Ringlet Butterfly*, *Meadow Brown Butterfly*.

Additional species noted from desk study: **Otter**, **Badger**, **Salmon**, **Stone Loach**, **Eel**, *Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary Butterfly*, *Dingy Skipper Butterfly*, *Campanula rotundifolia*, *Carex paniculata*, *Trifolium arvense*, *Carex caryophylla*. **Great Crested Newt**, **Palmate Newt**, **Frog**, **Toad** (recent records close to north-eastern boundary).

Caerphilly County Borough Council
Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
LDP Policy Ref: NH 3.86 (SINC 086)
Victoria Road Slopes, Fleur De Lys 22 Ha

1:10,000



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Caerphilly County Borough Council, 100025372, 2008.

Atgynhychwyd o fapiad yr Arolwng Ordnans gyda chaniatod rheolwr Llyfrfa ei Mawrhydi hawlfraint y Goron. Mae atgynhychu heb awdurdod yn torri hawlfraint y Goron.
Gall hyn arwain at erlyniad neu achos sifil. Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili, 100025372, 2008.