

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.103</u>	SINC name: Llanerch-isaf Woodland, Crumlin
Grid reference: ST210991	Area (hectares): 14
Survey date: 17th May 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.96)	
Summary description	
<p>An east facing valley-side supporting Bracken, acid grassland and scattered Sessile oak and Birch trees. The lower valley sides support denser broad-leaved woodland, with Oak, Birch, Sycamore and Goat willow. Locally, particularly in the south of the site, the woodland appears semi-natural in character. Near the southern boundary the site includes several rock exposures, and disturbed ground which is developing scrub cover. The north of the site is a sheep-grazed field of semi-improved acid grassland with occasional mature Oak trees. A small pond is present in the field and a stream fringed by Alders flows in a rocky channel beside the northern boundary.</p>	
Qualifying features	
<p>Heathland / acid grassland containing at least 7 indicator species.</p> <p>Semi-natural woodland with a range of woodland indicators.</p> <p>Bracken covered slope with abundant Bluebells.</p>	
Secondary features	
<p>Rock exposures.</p> <p>Scrub.</p> <p>Stream.</p>	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
<p>The woodland areas are likely to provide good foraging and roosting opportunities for bats.</p> <p>There is potential for Violet-feeding fritillary butterflies, especially in the northeastern side where land bordering a former land-reclamation scheme supports Bracken with abundant Violets.</p> <p>The acid grassland, heath and scrub are very likely to be used by reptiles, potentially including Common lizard, Slow worm and Adder.</p> <p>Some of the semi-improved acid grassland is likely to support waxcap fungi.</p>	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
<p>Sheep and horses graze the majority of the site. There does not appear to be any other active management over most of the area. There is evidence of fire in several parts of the Bracken-covered slopes. The Bracken litter in some parts of the site is deep, which limits the ground flora and is a potential fire hazard. Increasing the grazing by horses, to trample more of the litter and bracken-stems, could potentially reduce this risk. Other forms of Bracken control, such as cattle grazing or use of a fern-specific herbicide might also be beneficial.</p>	

Access/ community use

Several well-used public footpaths cross the site. There are also several informal paths.

Additional information

Additional Bracken-covered slopes to the north appear to have similar mix of Bracken and scrub habitats and should be considered at any future SINC review, particularly if they support suitable habitat for Violet-feeding fritillary butterflies. Several fields beyond the western SINC boundary have potential to support good populations of waxcap fungi and should also be considered at future 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*)

Heath, Bracken and acid grassland species (locally grading into woodland/ scrub): *Agrostis capillaris*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Festuca ovina*, *Nardus stricta*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Aira praecox*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Luzula campestris*, *Luzula multiflora*, *Carex pilulifera*, *Galium saxatile*, *Rumex acetosella*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Digitalis purpurea*, **Hyacinthoides non-scripta**, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Conopodium majus*, *Teucrium scorodonia*, *Pilosella officinalis*, *Hypericum pulchrum*, *Fragaria vesca*, *Viola riviniana*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Ulex gallii*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Rhytidadelphus squarrosus*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Scleropodium purum*, *Pleurozium schreberi*.

Woodland canopy and shrub species: *Quercus petraea*, *Betula pubescens*, *Betula pendula*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Corylus avellana*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Salix caprea*, *Ulex gallii*, *Cytisus scoparius*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*.

Woodland and scrub ground flora species: **Hyacinthoides non-scripta**, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Conopodium majus*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Geum urbanum*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Ranunculus ficaria*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Teucrium scorodonia*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Holcus mollis*, *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, *Luzula pilosa*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Mnium hornum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans*, *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Atrichum undulatum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Lepidozia reptans*, *Diplophyllum albicans*.

Species associated with the scrub-covered bank at the southern extent of the site include *Lathyrus nissolia* (several hundred plants), *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Leontodon hispidus*, *Bromus hordeaceus*, *Fragaria vesca*, *Lotus corniculatus*, and *Bryoerythrophyllum recurvirostrum*.

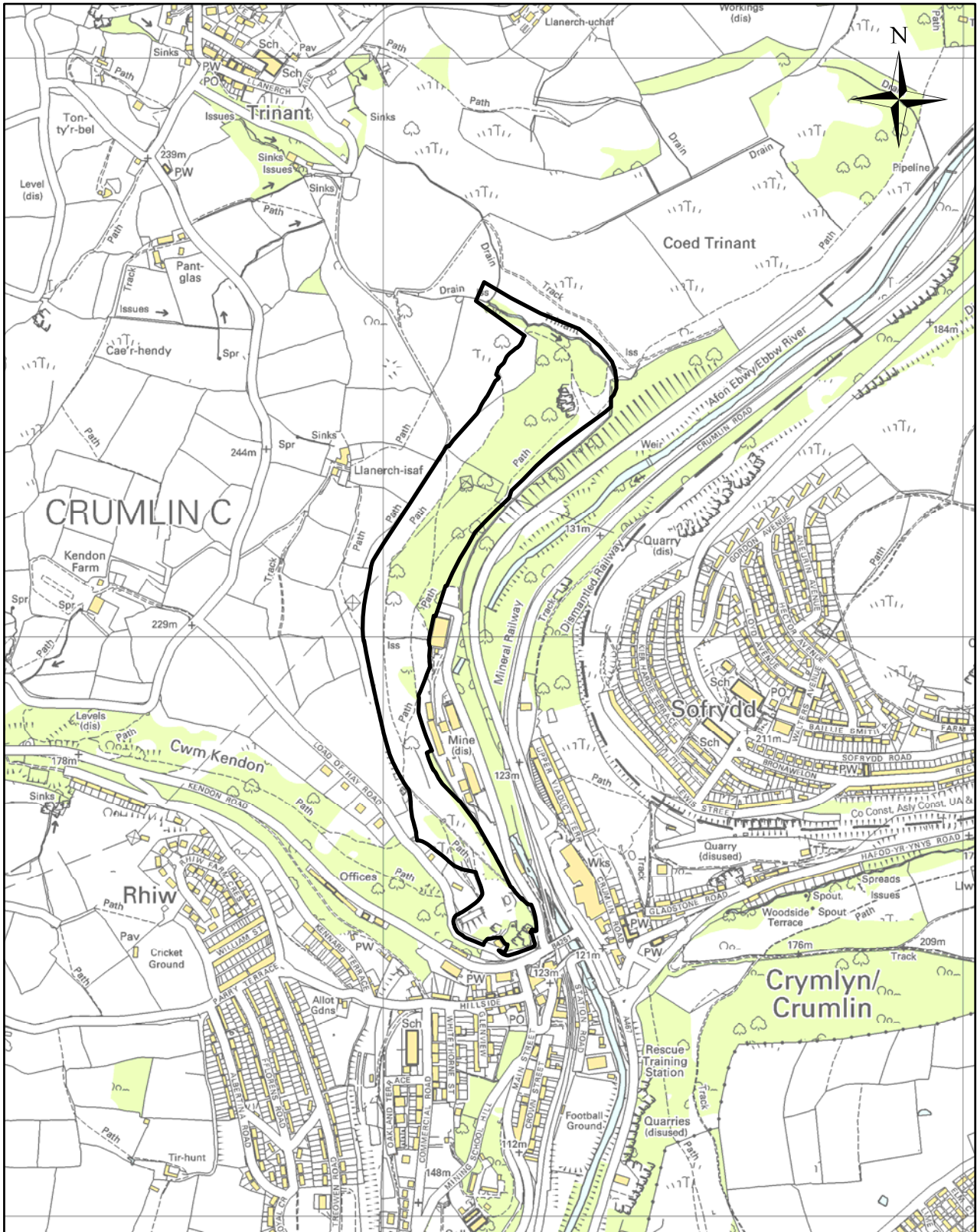
Fauna observations: Grey Squirrel, **Buzzard**, Redstart, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Chiffchaff, Wren, Chaffinch, **Broad-bodied Chaser Dragonfly** (2 beside pond), Green-veined White Butterfly, Small Copper Butterfly, Speckled Wood Butterfly, Holly Blue Butterfly, Peacock Butterfly.

Additional records from desk study: Brimstone Butterfly. **Bat** records from nearby urban areas.

High Brown Fritillary, Dark Green Fritillary and **Pearl-bordered Fritillary** recorded within 1km of SINC.

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Llanerch-Isaf Woodland, Crumlin 14 Ha

1:10,000



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