

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.125</u>	SINC name: Cwm Pennar, Abercarn
Grid reference: ST209951	Area (hectares): 46
Survey date: 20th April 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.102)	
Summary description	
<p>A mixed area of woodland on sloping valley-sides with blocks of broadleaved trees and some areas of conifers. The northern block comprises mainly Oak, Ash and Hazel with a diverse ground flora including abundant Ramsons, Bluebell and Wood anemone. The eastern area is dominated by Beech with a less diverse ground flora comprising mainly Bramble, Bluebell, mosses and ferns. The western side supports a Larch plantation, although a few old woodland indicator species persist at the margins. The Nant Pennar stream runs through the woodland in a steep-sided rocky channel, locally lined by Alder, Downy birch and luxuriant growth of mosses. At the head of the stream there is an area of marshy grassland supporting a moderate diversity of wetland plants. The site also includes small fields of marshy grassland and semi-improved grassland with scrub at the northwestern side.</p>	
Qualifying features	
<p>Semi-natural woodland with an assemblage of indicator species.</p> <p>Replanted woodland retaining a range of woodland indicator species.</p>	
Secondary features	
<p>Marshy grassland.</p> <p>Semi-improved acid grassland.</p> <p>Mature trees.</p> <p>Rock exposures.</p> <p>Stream.</p>	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
<p>Likely to provide good foraging and roosting opportunities for bats.</p> <p>The marshy grassland is likely to have at least 12 indicator species if surveyed later in the year, which would make it a qualifying feature rather than secondary feature.</p> <p>The marshy grassland areas also have potential to support Violet or Scabious-feeding fritillary butterflies.</p> <p>The semi-improved acid grassland has the potential to support waxcap fungi.</p> <p>The habitat appears potentially suitable for Dormice, although this species is not known to occur in this part of the county borough.</p>	

Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)

Forestry Commission Wales manages the southern part of the area, but there are no signs of recent woodland management. Sheep and horses graze the grassland areas. Fly tipping is a problem along the woodland edge adjoining the road to the north side. Japanese knotweed is present beside the road. Other problems include shooting and motorcycling.

Access/ community use

There are formal footpaths in some parts of the site and most of the woodland area shows signs of public access.

Additional information

The southern boundary of the SINC is defined by land ownership and the extent of ancient woodland. It may be worth considering extending this to link with NH 3.133 at the next SINC review, as the biological character of the woodland to the south is similar. Consideration should also be given to assessing the woodland / plantation to the north of the road in a future review, as the fringe adjoining the road includes a number of old woodland indicator species.

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 canopy and shrub species: *Fagus sylvatica*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Quercus petraea*, *Quercus robur*, *Corylus avellana*, *Betula pubescens*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Salix caprea*, *Ulmus glabra*, *Prunus avium*, *Larix sp.*, *Pinus sylvestris*, *Castanea sativa*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Ulex gallii*, *Ulex europaeus*.

Ground flora species: ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Allium ursinum*, *Geum urbanum*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Mercurialis perennis*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Arum maculatum*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Ranunculus ficaria*, *Viola riviniana*, *Lamium galeobdolon*, *Conopodium majus*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Carex sylvatica*, *Carex remota*, *Luzula pilosa*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Phyllitis scolopendrium*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Mnium hornum*, *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Thuidium tamariscinum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Isoetes myosuroides*, *Rhynchostegium riparioides*, *Ctenidium molluscum*, *Atrichum undulatum*, *Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans*, *Plagiochila sp.*, *Pellia sp.*

Semi-improved acid grassland in north-west fields: *Agrostis capillaris*, *Luzula campestris*, *Festuca rubra*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Nardus stricta*, *Festuca ovina*, *Rumex acetosa*, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Ranunculus acris*, ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Potentilla erecta*, *Conopodium majus*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Viola riviniana*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Carex binervis*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Rhynchospora squarrosus*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*.
Anthills and scattered scrub are also present.

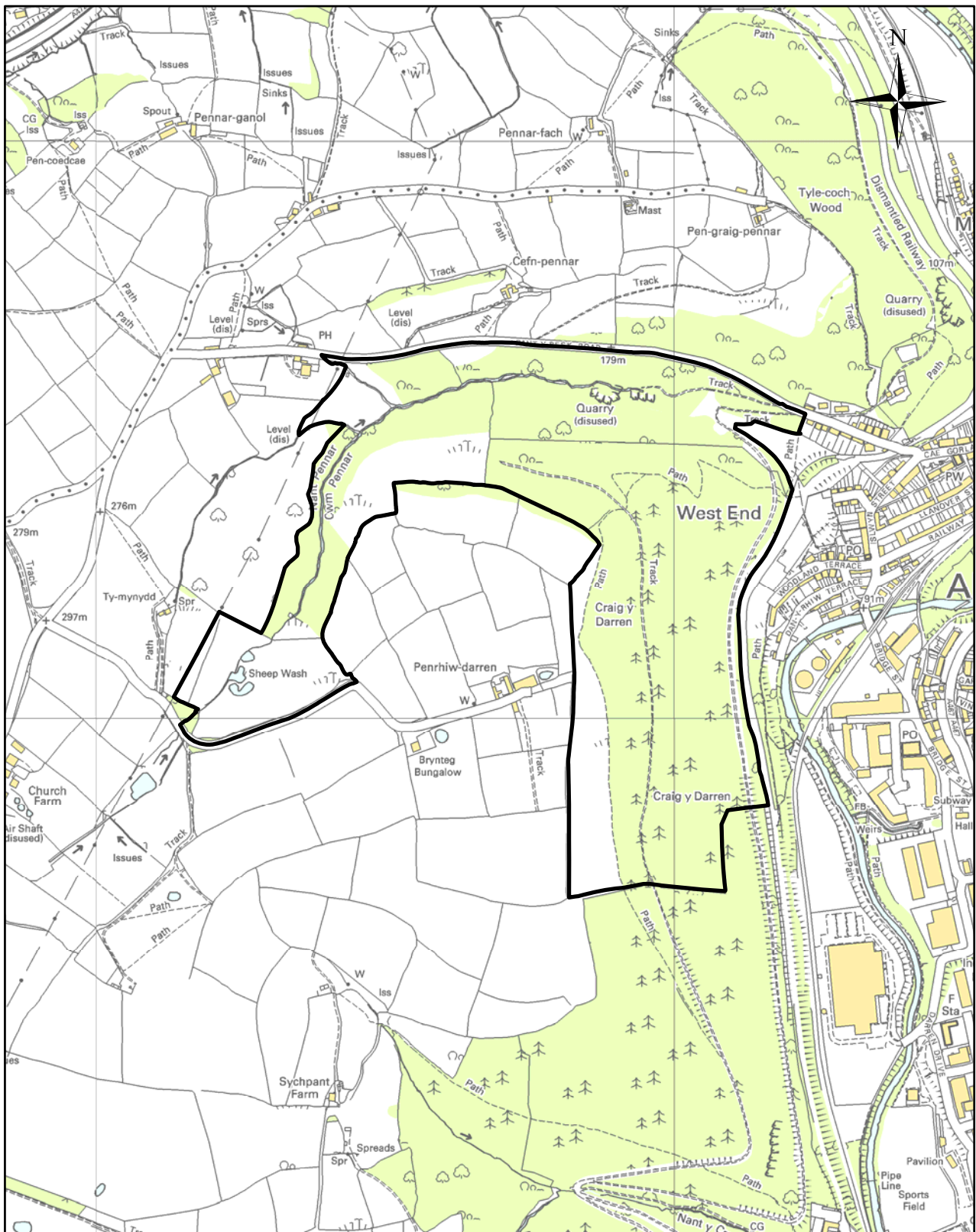
Marshy grassland species in north-west fields: *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Galium palustre*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Pedicularis sylvatica*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Valeriana dioica*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Montia fontana*, *Viola palustris*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Carex caryophylla*, *Carex cf nigra*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Sphagnum sp.*

Fauna observations: **Buzzard**, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Willow Warbler, Nuthatch, Coal Tit, Chiffchaff, Wren, Blackbird, Robin, Blackcap, Holly Blue Butterfly.

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

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Cwm Pennar, Abercarn 46 Ha

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