

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.148</u>	SINC name: Mynydd y Grug, west of Cwmfelinfach
Grid reference: ST172916	Area (hectares): 58
Survey dates: 21st June 2007 & 26th February 2008	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.) and Alison Jones (Caerphilly CBC) (<i>northern section only</i>)
(UDP policy reference: C11.127)	
Summary description	
<p>An area of sheep-grazed common, mainly covered by a mix of Bracken, acid grassland and semi-improved acid grassland. Scattered scrub comprising mainly Gorse is present. Adjacent to the common the SINC also includes two small marshy areas and three ponds. Some of the ponds support breeding Great crested newts. To the north there is a quarry, pond and former workings, which supports developing heath, acid grassland and scrub. There is a breeding population of Great crested newts in the quarry pond.</p>	
Qualifying features	
<p>Extensive area of open countryside where semi-natural upland features predominate.</p> <p>Acid grassland with at least 7 indicator species.</p> <p>Marshy grassland with at least 12 indicator species.</p> <p>Ponds with semi-natural vegetation.</p> <p>Presence of Great Crested Newt.</p>	
Secondary features	
<p>Bracken.</p> <p>Quarry (post-industrial land that has re-vegetated with a diverse range of native and archaeophyte non-woody plant species).</p>	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
<p>The ponds are likely to support amphibians and dragonflies.</p> <p>The mix of acid grassland, Bracken and scrub is likely to be good habitat for reptiles.</p>	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
<p>The area is heavily grazed by sheep, which limits the vegetation diversity and does little to limit the spread of Bracken. In some areas the Bracken has become very dense and constitutes a fire risk, as well as supporting a very limited ground flora. There is evidence of past fires, some of which have also affected the adjacent forestry area. Some form of additional Bracken control is needed to enhance biodiversity over much of the area. Grazing more cattle or horses on the common and reducing the numbers of sheep would help to limit the spread of Bracken and would be beneficial for biodiversity. Motorcycling has been a problem on the common, although it appears to have declined in recent years. The quarry is subject to vandalism and fly tipping, and there is evidence that tin can shooting takes place. The quarry pond contains fish, which may adversely affect the</p>	

viability of the Great crested newt population in the long term.

Access/ community use

The common is an area of public open access and is crossed by several public footpaths. There is no formal public access to the ponds or marshy grassland in the adjacent fields. The quarry is accessible to the public via informal paths.

Additional information

The colliery tips adjacent to the north and southeast of the SINC are developing an acid grassland flora through natural colonisation and are likely to continue to increase in nature conservation value. These should be considered for inclusion within the SINC at future review. Several of the adjacent fields, particularly to the south and west, appear to have potential to support waxcap fungi. This site is adjacent to SINC NH 3.147 to the east and NH 3.118 to the west.

Species list (Dominant species, SINC Criteria, RDB or other notable indicator species)

(LBAP species shown in **bold**, species confirmed by 2007 survey in *italics*)

Tree and shrub species: *Calluna vulgaris*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Ulex gallii*, *Ulex europaeus*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Betula pendula*.

Bracken/ acid grassland species: *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Galium saxatile*, *Veronica officinalis*, *Trifolium repens*, *Pilosella officinarum*, *Rumex acetosella*, *Stellaria graminea*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Potentilla x mixta*, *Polygala sp.*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Festuca ovina*, *Aira praecox*, *Festuca rubra*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Bromus hordeaceus*, *Luzula campestris*, *Luzula multiflora*, *Carex pilulifera*, *Scleropodium purum*, *Rhytidadelphus squarrosus*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*.

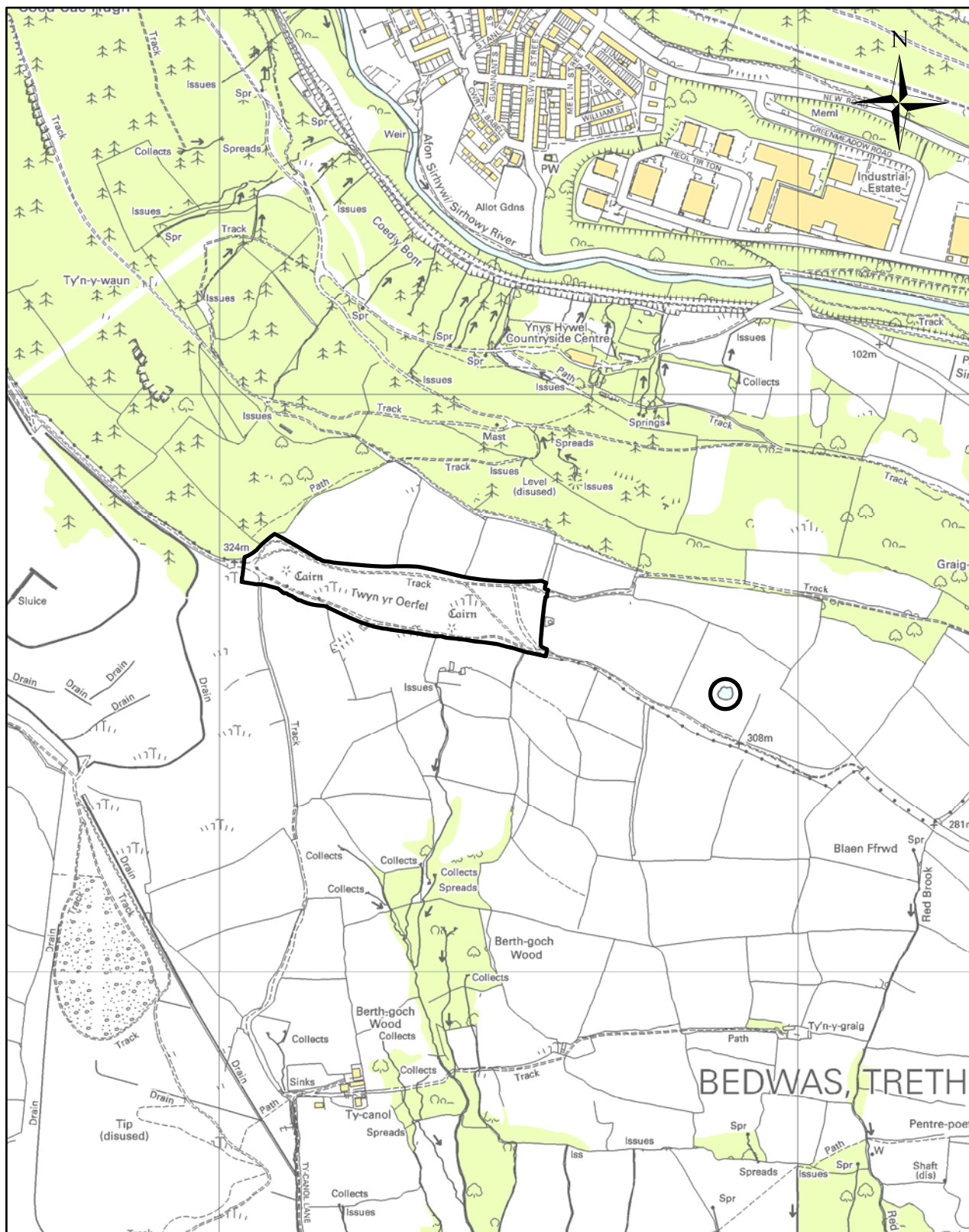
Marshy grassland/ pond species: *Ranunculus flammula*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Myosotis secunda*, *Montia fontana*, *Epilobium hirsutum*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Potamogeton polygonifolius*, *Potamogeton cf natans*, *Lemna minor*, *Lythrum portula*, *Ranunculus omiophyllus*, *Persicaria hydropiper*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Sparganium erectum*, *Typha latifolia*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Eriophorum angustifolium*, *Carex ovalis*, *Carex echinata*, *Eleocharis palustris*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus bulbosus*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Dryopteris carthusiana*, *Aulacomnium palustre*, *Polytrichum commune*, *Sphagnum fallax*, *Sphagnum subnitens*, *Sphagnum fimbriatum*, *Calliergon cordifolium*, *Cratoneuron filicinum*.

Fauna observations: *Fox*, **Skylark**, *Meadow Pipit*, *Stonechat*, *Wheatear*, **Linnet**, *Pied Wagtail*, *Great Spotted Woodpecker*, and *Dunnock*.

Additional species noted from desk study: **Badger**, **Great Crested Newt** (Caerphilly County Borough Council records) and **Smooth Newt**, **Green Woodpecker** and **Yellowhammer** (within 500m).

Caerphilly County Borough Council
 Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
 LDP Policy Ref: NH 3.149 (SINC 128)
 Twyn yr Oerfel, South of Cwmfelinfach 5 Ha

1:10,000



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