

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.147</u>	SINC name: Craig y Prisiad Woodlands, Ynysddu
Grid Reference ST172928	Area (hectares): 43
Survey date: 26th June 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.130)	
Summary description	
<p>The northern and southern parts of this SINC comprise replanted, former ancient woodland, which still includes semi-natural indicator species. The canopy species include Sessile oak, Hazel, Ash and Holly, and the ground flora supports Bluebell, Greater stitchwort, Pignut and localised Bracken. Several open areas within the woodland are dominated by Bracken. The older Oak trees are broad and spreading suggesting that the woodland was formerly much more open. The southern woodland includes a small stream and is damper with areas of Ash and Alder, and the remains of several disused buildings. The fields along the western side support a sward of semi-improved acid grassland with locally abundant anthills and patchy Bracken. Mature Beech trees are prominent features of most of the field boundaries and several veteran Beech trees are present in the southern woodland.</p>	
Qualifying features	
<p>Broadleaved woodland with an assemblage of semi-natural ground flora indicator species.</p> <p>Semi-improved acid grassland with at least 7 indicator species.</p> <p>Presence of veteran Beech trees.</p> <p>Grassland with a high density of anthills.</p>	
Secondary features	
<p>Bracken.</p> <p>Scrub.</p> <p>Mature standard trees.</p> <p>Ditches.</p>	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
<p>The woodland habitat is likely to be used by roosting and foraging bats.</p> <p>The woodland areas appear potentially suitable for Dormice.</p> <p>The woodland and Bracken margins are likely to support reptiles.</p> <p>Semi-improved acid grassland in the west of the site is likely to support grassland fungi.</p>	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
<p>There were no signs of recent woodland management. A key recommendation for enhancing the biodiversity of the woodland would be to remove at least some of the conifers from the former area of ancient woodland and replant the area to restore continuous broadleaved woodland, to connect along the valley, for example by reconnecting the few remnants of broadleaved trees or providing a wider margin of broadleaved trees plantation. The western fields are managed by sheep, and possibly horse, grazing and there are few signs of recent agricultural improvement. The existing</p>	

management appears likely to be very beneficial for grassland fungi. A slight reduction in grazing pressure may help to enhance the grassland diversity. This could also potentially be achieved by controlling the Bracken without altering the stocking density.

Access/ community use

Public footpaths pass the northern woodland and fields. A footpath passes through the southern woodland.

Additional information

The disused railway and adjacent wooded slopes beside the eastern side of the SINC and adjoining the nearby Sirhowy River are also likely to have value for wildlife.

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 (combined list): *Quercus petraea*, *Betula pubescens*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Corylus avellana*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Quercus robur*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Salix caprea*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Corylus avellana*, *Frangula alnus*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Hedera helix*, *Ribes nigrum*, *Ribes uva-crispa*, *Rosa arvensis*, *Rosa canina*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Acer campestre*, *Larix* sp.

Woodland ground flora species (combined list): ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Chamerion angustifolium*, *Lamium galeobdolon*, *Geum urbanum*, *Hypericum pulchrum*, *Viola riviniana*, *Hypericum humifusum*, *Urtica dioica*, *Mercurialis perennis*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Ranunculus repens*, *Corydalis claviculata*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Conopodium majus*, *Holcus mollis*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Carex remota*, *Luzula sylvatica*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Atrichum undulatum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Mnium hornum*, *Brachythecium rivulare*, *Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans*, *Isoetes macrospora*.

Semi-improved acid grassland / Bracken at western boundary (combined list): *Rumex acetosella*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Galium saxatile*, *Pilosella officinarum*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Conopodium majus*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Veronica officinalis*, *Hieracium* sp., *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Ranunculus acris*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Festuca rubra*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Festuca ovina*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Poa annua*, *Aira praecox*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Luzula campestris*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Dicranum scoparium*, *Scleropodium purum*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*. An *Entoloma* sp. fungus was fruiting during the survey, and other grassland fungi are also likely to be recorded if surveyed at a more suitable time of year.

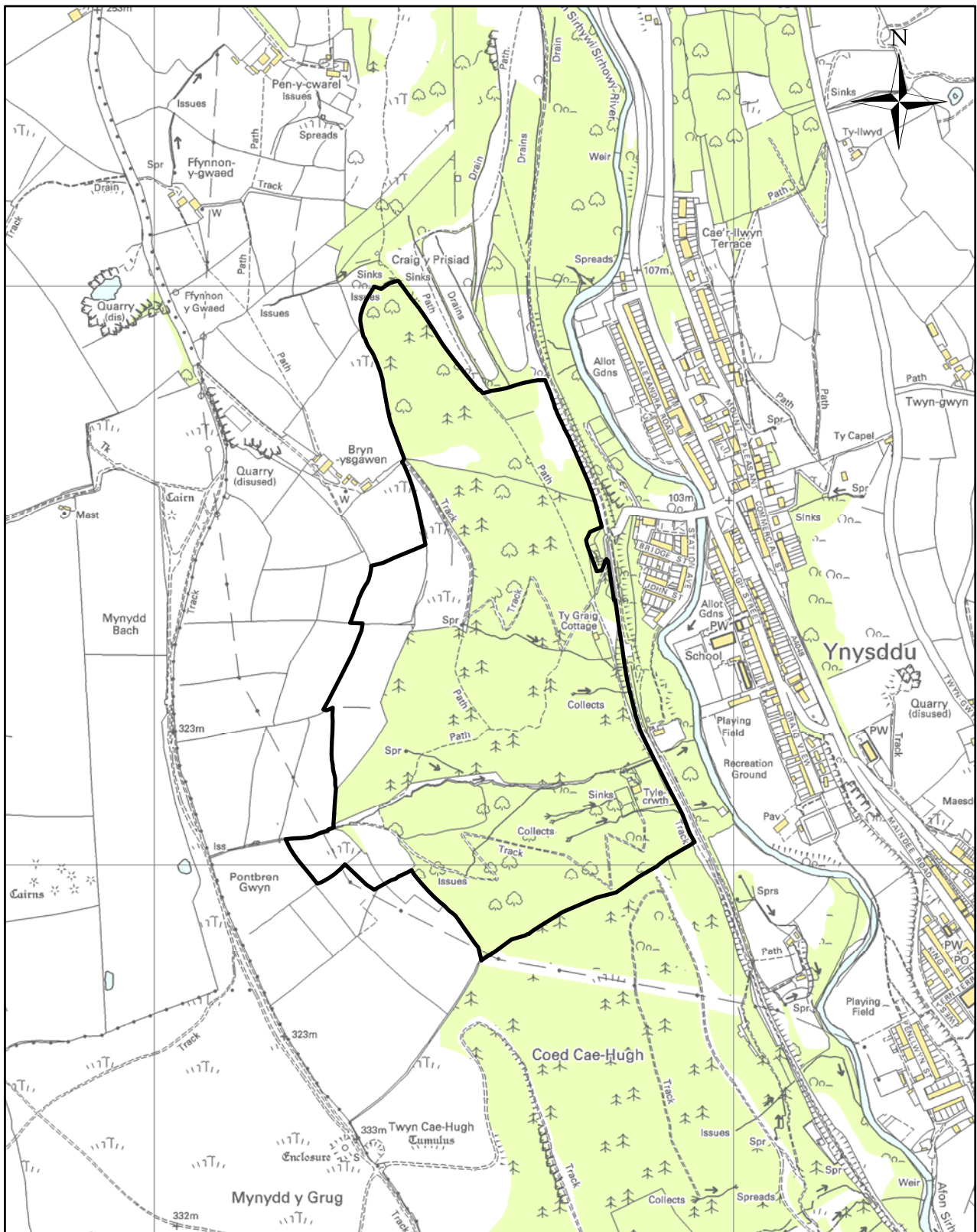
Fauna observations: **Badger**, **Buzzard**, **Song Thrush**, *Chiffchaff*, *Blackbird*, *Blue Tit*, *Robin*, *Willow Warbler*, *Redstart*, *Wren*, *Goldcrest*, **Common Frog**, *Meadow Brown Butterfly*.

Additional records from desk study: *Malus sylvestris*, *Ulmus glabra*, *Ranunculus ficaria*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Luzula multiflora*, *Veronica montana*, *Filipendula ulmaria*, *Viburnum opulus*, *Salix aurita*, *Oenanthe crocata*.

Great Crested Newt has been recorded within 400m of the western boundary.

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Craig y Prisiad Woodlands, Ynysddu 43 Ha

1:10,000



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