

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP policy Ref. NH 3.146</u>	SINC name: Pontgam Terrace Meadows, Wyllie
Grid reference: ST176937, ST177935, ST178933, ST179933 & ST180939	
Area (hectares): 15 (4, 1, 2,1 & 7 by grid references above)	
Survey date: 27th June 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.134)	
Summary description	
<p>This SINC is adjacent to the River Sirhowy and comprises woodland, several areas of grassland and Bracken, locally becoming encroached by scrub. Oak, Sycamore, Hazel and Beech dominate the woodland canopy and the ground flora has a number of semi-natural indicator species, including Bluebell, Wood anemone, Wood melick and Dog's mercury. The grasslands are very variable with some dominated by tall, coarse grasses, some with heavily grazed swards and others largely dominated by Bracken. The largest grassland area (ST180940) supports acid grassland, heath and semi-improved acid grassland, and includes areas with waxcap fungi and large anthills. Further south (ST178934) the grassland includes neutral with waxcap fungi, and local marshy grassland.</p>	
Qualifying features	
Semi-natural woodland with an assemblage of indicator species.	
Acid grassland and semi-improved acid grassland with at least 7 indicator species.	
Marshy grassland with at least 12 indicator species.	
Grassland with a high density of anthills.	
Secondary features	
Bracken.	
Hedges.	
Scrub.	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
Further botanical survey would undoubtedly confirm the presence of additional species. In particular, the site has potential to support uncommon wetland plants and bryophytes.	
The woodland areas are likely to provide good foraging and roosting habitat for bats.	
The grazed grassland areas have potential to support additional species of grassland fungi.	
The area is likely to support reptiles, particularly in heathland and field edges.	
The well-connected woodlands and hedges have the potential to support Dormice.	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
There is no evidence of recent management in the woodland areas. Some of the grasslands have also been unmanaged for several years and are undergoing a succession towards coarse grassland, Bracken and scrub. The slopes at ST179931 have been planted with broadleaved trees	

and now support very little grassland flora. Horses graze the fields at ST180940 and ST178934. The grazing appears to be at an optimal intensity in most areas, but the southern field would benefit from a slight reduction in grazing intensity to enhance biodiversity. It would be beneficial if grazing could be resumed at ST177935 and ST176937, where Bracken and tall herbs are becoming dominant. Japanese knotweed is present in several sections of the riverbank.

Access/ community use

A public footpath crosses the northeastern fields. A footpath also crosses the river at a footbridge at ST176942. Two roads pass through the SINC (the A4048 and Mount Pleasant/ Pontgam Terrace). There is no other formal public access to the SINC, but several informal paths exist, particularly beside the river.

Additional information

The River Sirhowy itself is a separate SINC (NH 3.11) and is therefore not included in this site. The slopes at ST179931 have been planted with broadleaved trees and now support very little grassland flora, but they have been retained within the SINC, as they are likely to develop a woodland ground flora (the adjacent old hedge already supports several semi-natural woodland indicators). The slope west of the river at ST176937 has become dominated by Bracken and Alder and Willow scrub, but has been retained within the SINC as it has the possibility of recovery given appropriate management or it could develop into a valuable woodland habitat. The western boundary generally follows the boundary of the woodland. The northern and southern boundaries have been drawn arbitrarily to convenient mapping boundaries, but these are not readily visible on the ground. They could be extended further upstream and downstream the river. A site at ST176934 should be considered for inclusion as SINC 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*)

Woodland and scrub tree and shrub species (combined list): *Fagus sylvatica*, *Quercus petraea*, *Quercus robur*, *Corylus avellana*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Betula pubescens*, *Hedera helix*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Prunus spinosa*, *Rosa arvensis*, *Prunus avium*, *Salix cinerea*, *Salix caprea*, *Rubus idaeus*, *Sambucus nigra*, *Ulex europaeus*, *Ulex gallii*, *Viburnum opulus*, *Ulmus glabra*.

Woodland and hedge ground flora (combined list): ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Lamium galeobdolon*, *Viola riviniana*, *Viola palustris*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Valeriana officinalis*, *Fallopia japonica*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Conopodium majus*, *Hypericum pulchrum*, *Mercurialis perennis*, *Teucrium scorodonia*, *Solidago virgaurea*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Holcus mollis*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Melica uniflora*, *Bromopsis ramosa*, *Carex remota*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Dryopteris affinis*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Phyllitis scolopendrium*, *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Mnium hornum*, *Atrichum undulatum*.

Acid grassland / heath & semi-improved acid grassland (ST180940): *Potentilla erecta*, *Galium saxatile*, *Veronica officinalis*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Trifolium repens*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Pilosella officinarum*, *Rumex acetosella*, *Stellaria graminea*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Viola riviniana*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Polygala sp.*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Festuca rubra*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Festuca ovina*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Carex pilulifera*, *Luzula campestris*, *Luzula multiflora*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Scleropodium purum*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Pleurozium schreberi*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Dicranum scoparium*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*. Several grassland fungi including the waxcap *Hygrocybe intermedia* and *H. glutinipes* were noted in the areas of shorter grass.

Semi-improved neutral grassland (ST178934): *Centaurea nigra*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Trifolium repens*, *Conopodium majus*, *Rumex acetosa*, *Leucanthemum vulgare*, *Hypericum maculatum*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Veronica chamaedrys*, *Euphrasia* sp., *Succisa pratensis*, *Pedicularis sylvatica*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Luzula campestris*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Scleropodium purum*.

Marshy grassland species (ST178934): *Ranunculus flammula*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Euphrasia* sp., *Stellaria alsine*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Filipendula ulmaria*, *Anagallis tenella*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Viola palustris*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Carex nigra*, *Carex viridula*, *Carex panicea*, *Carex ovalis*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Equisetum sylvaticum*, *Calliergonella cuspidata*.

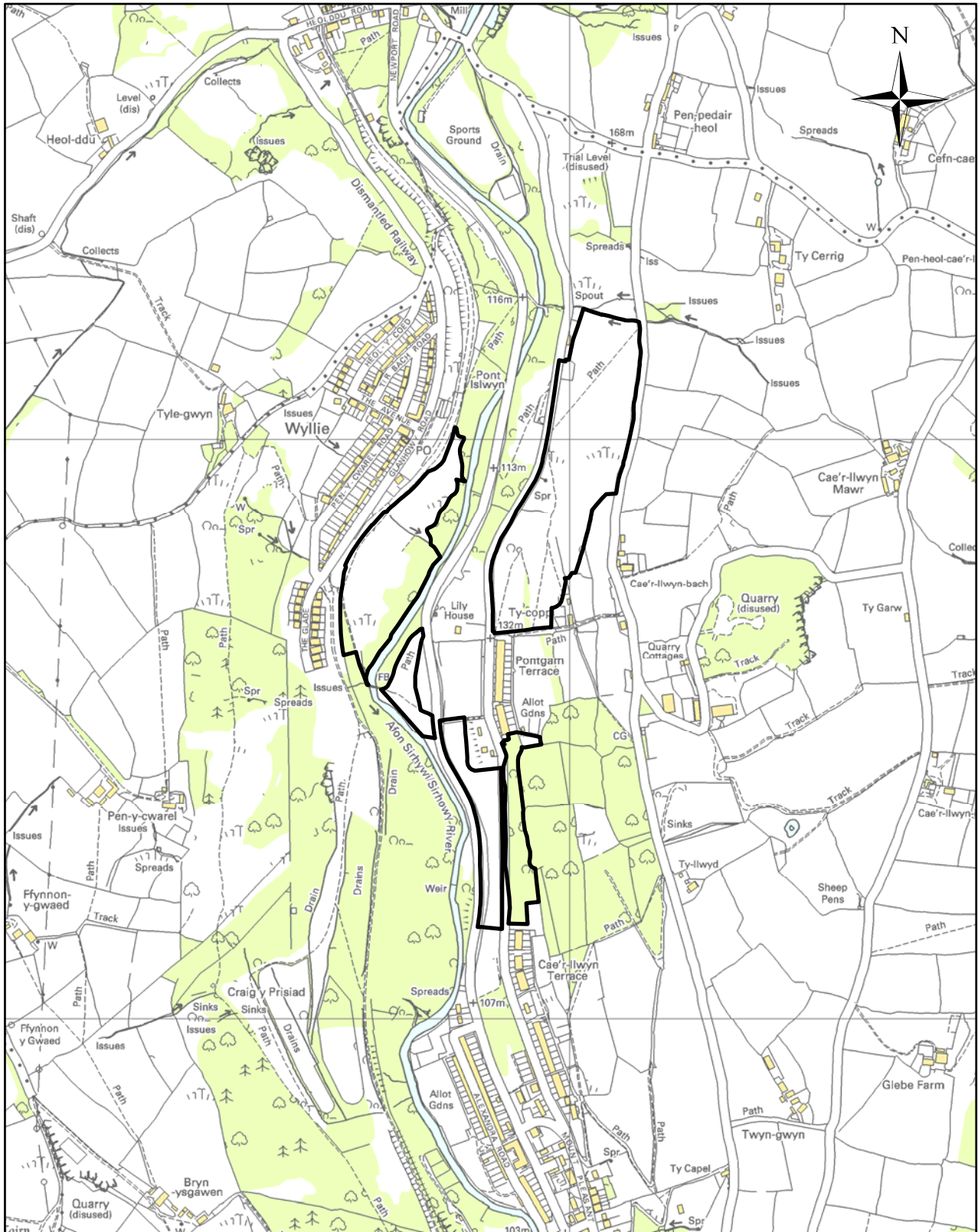
Overgrown riverside meadow (ST177935): *Eupatorium cannabinum*, *Galium palustre*, *Stachys officinalis*, ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Cirsium arvense*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Conopodium majus*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Stellaria graminea*, *Oenanthe crocata*, *Rubus idaeus*, *Arrhenatherum elatius*, *Festuca rubra*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Alopecurus pratensis*.

Fauna observations: Grey Squirrel, Rabbit, **Bullfinch**, **Song Thrush**, **Dipper**, Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Meadow Brown Butterfly.

Additional species noted from desk study: **Otter**, *Frangula alnus*, *Alchemilla* sp., *Mentha aquatica*, *Angelica sylvestris*, *Vicia sativa*, *Epilobium tetragonum*. Dingy Skipper and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary Butterflies recorded within 1km grid square.

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Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
LDP Policy Ref: NH 3.146 (SINC 134)
Pontgam Terrace Meadows, Wyllie 15 Ha

1:10,000



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