

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.130</u>	SINC name: Mynydd y Lan, west of Cwmcarn
Grid reference: ST207927	Area (hectares): 153
Survey date: 29th June 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.137)	
Summary description	
<p>An area of sheep grazed upland common, supporting a mix of Bracken, acid grassland and heath. The top of the plateau area supports heathland comprising mainly Bilberry and Heather in the southern part of the SINC, while the more heavily grazed northern half supports a mix of Purple moor-grass and Soft rush. Bracken dominates most of the hillsides, especially close to the adjacent woodlands. Young trees of Downy birch occur in a few places, generally in association with Bracken. Two ponds and a number of dry ditches are also present. At the south of the site a disused quarry includes rock outcrops and acid grassland.</p>	
Qualifying features	
<p>Extensive area of open countryside where semi-natural upland features predominate.</p> <p>Acid grassland / heath with at least 7 indicator species.</p>	
Secondary features	
<p>Bracken.</p> <p>Ponds.</p> <p>Rock outcrops (quarry on southern slope).</p>	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
<p>The presence of a displaying Lapwing near to the northern pond in June may indicate that this species is breeding on the site.</p> <p>The heath and acid grassland habitats are likely to support reptiles, particularly on the south-facing slope at the south of the site.</p> <p>The ponds are likely to support dragonflies and amphibians.</p>	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
<p>Sheep graze the area and Bracken is locally dominant, particularly on the valley sides, which limits the vegetation diversity and constitutes a fire risk (there is evidence of past fires). Bracken appears to be encroaching into the areas of Bilberry heath and its control would help to maintain the areas of valuable habitat and limit the potential fire risk. Fire may also potentially affect heathland.</p>	
Access/ community use	
<p>The common is open access land, but there are few paths over it and no signs of recent use by members of the public.</p>	

Additional information

The SINC boundary has generally been taken as the boundary of the common land, although several parts of it currently support species-poor Bracken of only limited value for nature conservation, it forms part of a whole management unit.

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*, *Erica cinerea*, *Betula pubescens*, *Ulex gallii*, *Ulex europaeus*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Larix sp.*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Rubus fruticosus*.

Heathland species: *Calluna vulgaris*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Erica cinerea*, *Galium saxatile*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Festuca ovina*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Agrostis canina*, *Carex binervis*, *Carex pilulifera*, *Luzula multiflora*, *Pleurozium schreberi*, *Dicranum scoparium*, *Polytrichum piliferum*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Scleropodium purum*, *Cladonia spp.*

Damp acid grassland species (north of site): *Molinia caerulea*, *Juncus effusus*, *Galium palustre*, *Galium saxatile*, *Nardus stricta*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Juncus bulbosus*, *Juncus squarrosus*, *Eriophorum vaginatum*, *Agrostis canina*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Dryopteris carthusiana*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Oreopteris limbosperma*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Polytrichum commune*.

Bracken/ acid grassland species: *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Rumex acetosella*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Galium saxatile*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Polygala sp.*, *Chamerion angustifolium*, *Festuca ovina*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Festuca rubra*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Festuca ovina*, *Aira praecox*, *Holcus mollis*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Nardus stricta*, *Luzula campestris*, *Luzula multiflora*, *Juncus squarrosus*, *Carex binervis*, *Carex pilulifera*, *Scleropodium purum*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Polytrichum commune*.

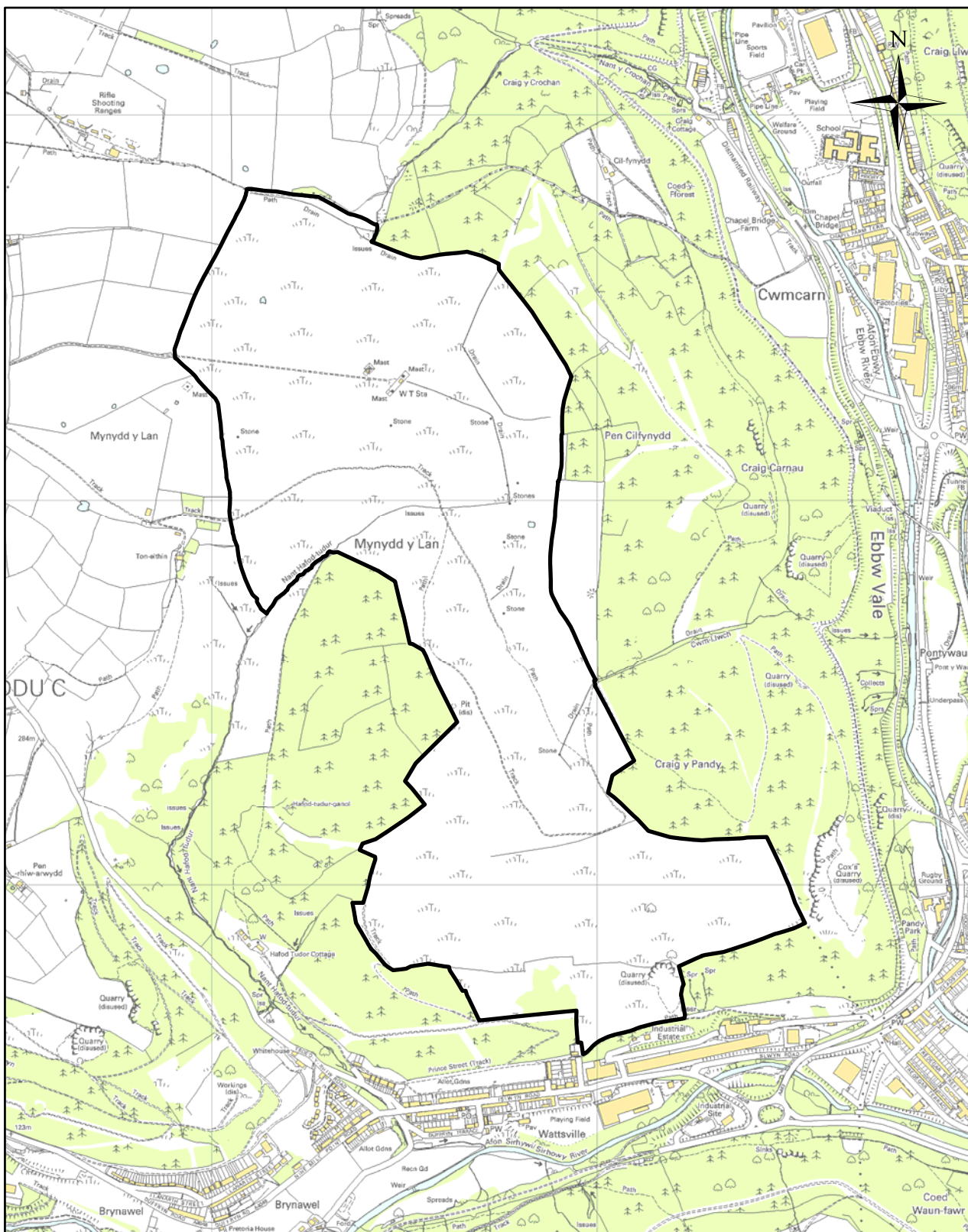
Species around pond margins: *Juncus effusus*, *Lythrum portula*, *Juncus bulbosus*. (No aquatic vegetation.)

Fauna observations: **Lapwing**, **Buzzard**, **Skylark**, *Meadow Pipit*, *Raven*, *Grey Heron*, *Stonechat*, **Linnet**, *Blackbird*, **Azure Damselfly**. 2 juvenile *Tawny Owls* and a **Song Thrush** in *Beech woodland close to west of boundary*.

Additional species noted from desk study: **Bat** records from nearby urban areas. **High Brown Fritillary** and **Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary** (within 1km).

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Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
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Mynydd y Lan, West of Cwmcarn 153 Ha

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