

<b>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council</b>	
<b><u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.131</u></b>	<b>SINC name: Sychpant Farm, west of Cwmcarn</b>
<b>Grid reference: ST205941</b>	<b>Area (hectares): 15</b>
<b>Survey date: 20<sup>th</sup> April 2007</b>	<b>Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)</b>
<b>(UDP policy reference: C11.138)</b>	
<b>Summary description</b>	
<p>A mix of acid grassland and broadleaved woodland on steeply sloping valley sides. The eastern part of the area is classified as semi-natural ancient woodland. The remainder generally comprises acid grassland with Bracken and scattered trees and scrub, with several rows of over-mature Beech trees marking the positions of old field boundaries. The main area of woodland has a canopy of Sessile oak, Hazel, Beech, Alder and Rowan. There is a relatively grassy ground flora, although a good range of semi-natural indicator species are present. A strip of Ash and Alder dominated woodland follows the line of a small stream along the eastern boundary. The acid grassland is locally interspersed with Bracken, scattered Oak, Hawthorn and Rowan trees, and Western Gorse, and is grazed by sheep. The most southerly limit includes patches of Heather and Bilberry. The most northerly grassland area is a small, south-facing field of acid grassland with a high proportion of anthills.</p>	
<b>Qualifying features</b>	
Semi-natural woodland with an assemblage of indicator species.	
Acid grassland with at least 7 indicator species.	
<b>Secondary features</b>	
Stream and flush.	
Scrub.	
Bracken.	
<b>Potential value/ unconfirmed features</b>	
Likely to provide good foraging and roosting opportunities for bats.	
The sheltered slopes are likely to support heat-loving species, including reptiles and invertebrates.	
Violets are locally abundant in some of the Bracken areas and have potential to support fritillary butterflies.	
Some of the grassland may be suitable for waxcap fungi.	
The habitat appears potentially suitable for Dormice, although this species is not known to occur in this part of the county borough.	
<b>Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)</b>	
Sheep graze the area and there is potential for Bracken to become very dominant. A reduction in grazing density and to horses or cattle instead of sheep may help to reduce this. It would be beneficial for wildlife if the sheep-grazing intensity within the ancient woodland were also reduced.	

Motorcycling is carried out on the upper slopes, although this is generally limited to well-defined tracks and does not appear to be causing a problem at present.

### Access/ community use

There is no formal public access to most of the site, but public footpaths cross the northern, southern and western edges, and the eastern edges border open access land.

### Additional information

Consideration should be given to extending the boundary further north at a future SINC review, to include another small field with numerous anthills and scattered Gorse. The inclusion of broadleaved woodland habitat to the east along the Nant Cochran stream should also be considered, to link with the nearby woodland SINC NH 3.133.

### 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 scrub species: *Quercus petraea*, *Corylus avellana*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Betula pendula*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Salix caprea*, *Ulex gallii*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Ulmus cf procera*.

Woodland ground flora species: ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Conopodium majus*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Ranunculus ficaria*, *Viola riviniana*, *Lamium galeobdolon*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Carex remota*, *Carex pendula*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Mnium hornum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans*, *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Dicranum scoparium*, *Dicranum majus*, *Isoetecium myosuroides*, *Rhynchostegium riparioides*.

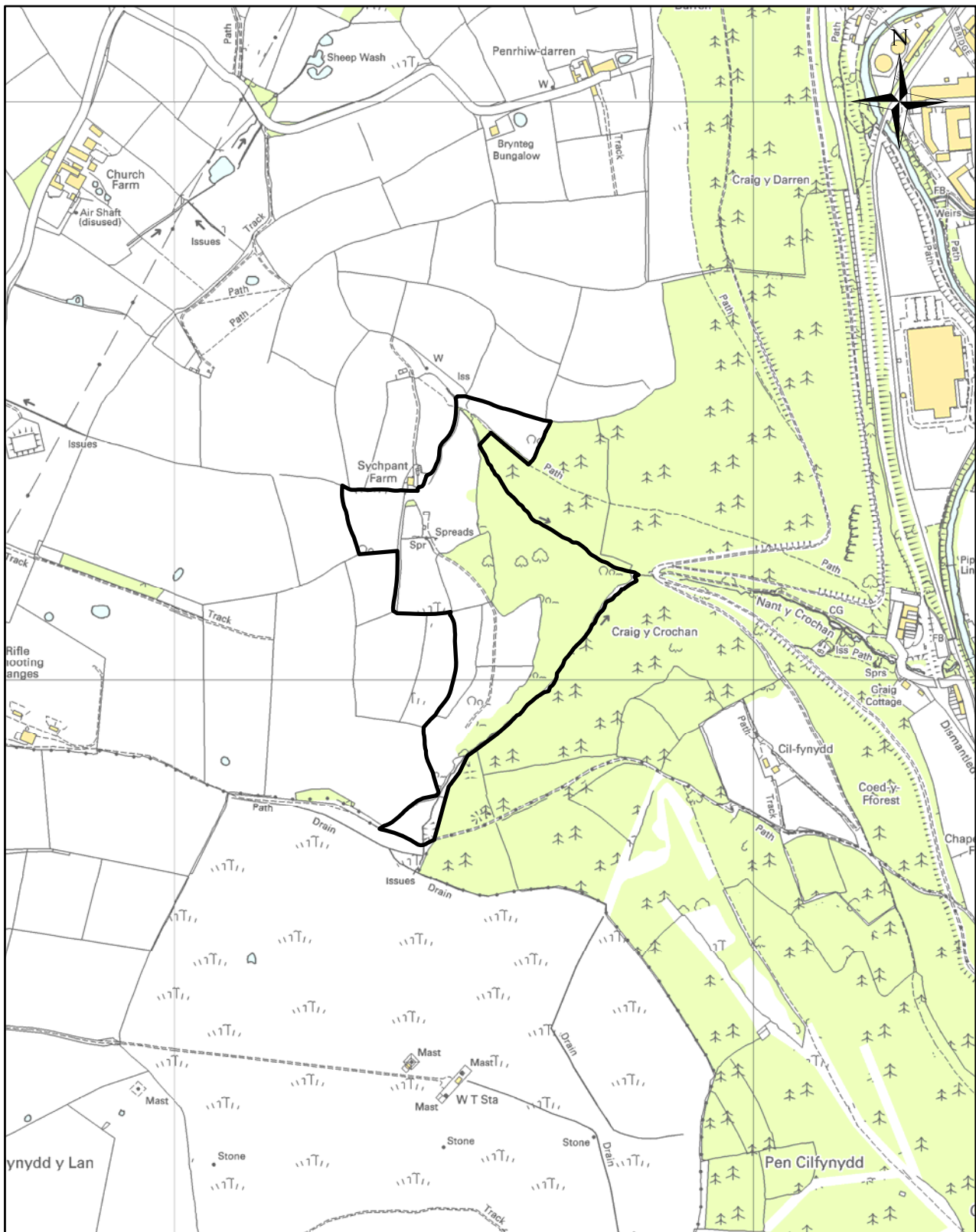
Acid grassland species: *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Luzula campestris*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Festuca ovina*, *Nardus stricta*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Rumex acetosella*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Conopodium majus*, ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Galium saxatile*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Viola riviniana*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Rhynchospora squarrosa*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Pleurozium schreberi*, *Polytrichum commune*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Dicranum scoparium*. *Ulex gallii*, *Calluna vulgaris* and *Vaccinium myrtillus* occur locally on steeper ground. *Callitriche* sp., *Juncus effusus*, *Ranunculus omiophyllus* and *Cardamine hirsuta* were noted in a damp area south of Sychpant Farm.

Fauna observations: **Badger**, Wood Warbler, Willow Warbler, Raven, Nuthatch, Great Tit, Chiffchaff, Jay, Wren, Blackbird, Robin, Holly Blue Butterfly, Speckled Wood Butterfly.

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

Caerphilly County Borough Council  
 Site of Importance for Nature Conservation  
 LDP Policy Ref: NH 3.131 (SINC 138)  
 Sychpant Farm, West of Cwmcarn 15 Ha

1:10,000



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