

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.134</u>	SINC name: Cwm Gofapi Woods, Cwmcarn
Grid reference: ST226941	Area (hectares): 45
Survey date: 18th April 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.142)	
Summary description	
<p>A mixed area of woodland on sloping valley-sides, including stands of ancient broadleaved woodland and replanted ancient woodland. The oldest stands are of mature Beech, Sessile oak and Downy birch. Brambles form the main understorey, often with Holly, Hazel or Hawthorn. The site includes some areas of conifer plantation, some of which are replanted on ancient woodland areas and still support semi-natural indicator plants in their ground flora. At several parts of the woodland margins, particularly in the southwest and east of the site, areas of Bracken and developing scrub (with an abundant Bluebell ground flora) merge into developing Sessile oak and Birch scrub woodland. A belt of over-mature Beech lines much of the northern boundary. The eastern part includes several fields of heavily grazed semi-improved acid grassland supporting abundant anthills.</p>	
Qualifying features	
Semi-natural woodland with an assemblage of indicator species.	
Replanted woodland retaining a range of woodland indicators.	
Grassland supporting a high density of anthills.	
Presence of large numbers of Red wood ants.	
Secondary features	
Rock exposures.	
Over-mature trees.	
Bracken.	
Scrub.	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
Likely to provide good foraging and roosting opportunities for bats.	
The area is very likely to be used by reptiles, potentially including Common lizard, Slow worm and Adder.	
The short-grassland with anthills is likely to support good numbers of waxcap fungi.	
Violets are locally abundant and have potential to support fritillary butterflies.	
The habitat appears potentially suitable for Dormice, although this species is not known to occur in this part of the county borough.	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
Much of the area appears to be managed as commercial forestry. Some of the conifer stands are	

very dense and support little wildlife, while others retain a diverse ground flora. It would be beneficial to remove self-sown conifers, particularly the Cypress trees that are self-seeding into areas of rocky ground, reducing the area of heathland habitat at the path-sides, which is favoured by Red wood ants.

Access/ community use

Public footpaths cross several parts of the site and there are a number of informal paths that appear to be in regular use.

Additional information

The area includes a few areas of conifer plantation with relatively low species diversity, but which provide linking woodland cover between areas of high diversity and have therefore been retained within the SINC. There may also be a need to include more of the replanted ancient woodland currently covered by conifers if there is a change in forestry management that encourages the regeneration of native broadleaved species. Consideration should be given to extending the boundary further north to include more of the Bracken-covered slopes, following further survey. The woodland at Craig Llwyfas, adjoining the west of the site and the pond at ST227947 may also meet SINC criteria. There is potential for the field to the east to support good numbers of waxcap fungi, such that it may warrant inclusion in the SINC after collection of further survey data. These areas should all be considered for inclusion/designation at future SINC 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 canopy and shrub species: *Fagus sylvatica*, *Quercus petraea*, *Betula pubescens*, *Betula pendula*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Picea sitchensis*, *Larix sp.*, *Pinus sylvestris*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Corylus avellana*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Salix caprea*, *Cupressus sp.*, *Ulex europaeus*, *Cytisus scoparius*, *Malus sp.*

Ground flora species: ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Conopodium majus*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Geum urbanum*, *Arum maculatum*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Ranunculus ficaria*, *Viola riviniana*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Teucrium scorodonia*, *Lamium galeobdolon*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Jasione montana*, *Luzula pilosa*, *Carex sylvatica*, *Carex remota*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Phyllitis scolopendrium*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Mnium hornum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Plagiothecium undulatum*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans*, *Kindbergia praelonga*.

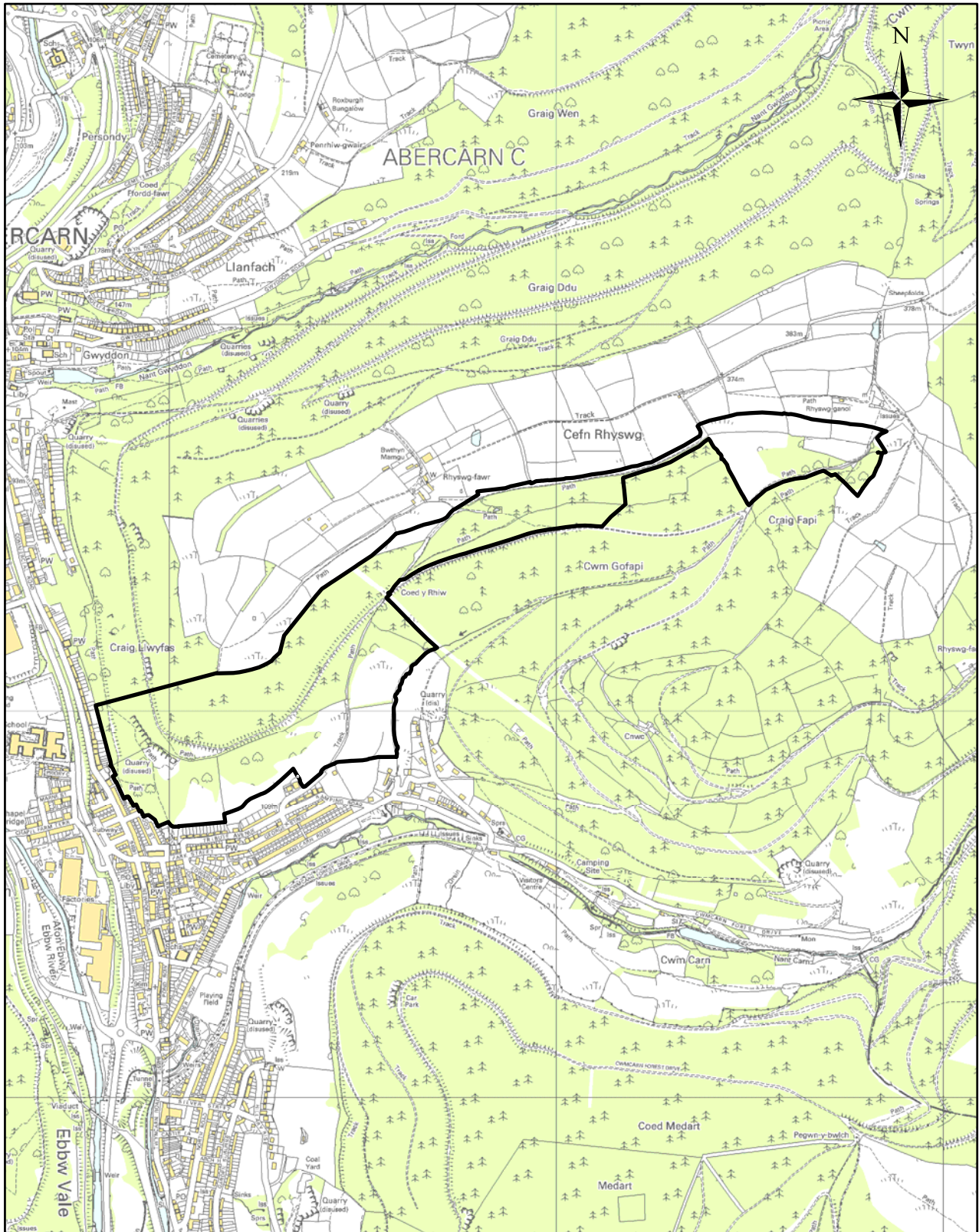
Semi-improved acid grassland (often grading into Bracken covered slopes): *Agrostis capillaris*, *Luzula campestris*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Festuca ovina*, *Nardus stricta*, *Galium saxatile*, *Rumex acetosella*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Conopodium majus*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Carex pilulifera*, *Rhytidadelphus squarrosus*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Scleropodium purum*, *Pleurozium schreberi*.

Fauna observations: **Buzzard**, **Song Thrush**, *Great Spotted Woodpecker*, *Nuthatch*, *Willow Warbler*, *Raven*, *Great Tit*, *Coal Tit*, *Chiffchaff*, *Jay*, *Wren*, *Blackbird*, *Robin*, *Blackcap*, **Red Wood Ant**, **Badger**, *Grey Squirrel*, *Speckled Wood Butterfly*.

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

Caerphilly County Borough Council
Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
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Cwm Gofapi Woods, Cwmcarn 45 Ha

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