

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.135</u>	SINC name: Cwmcarn Slopes, Cwmcarn
Grid reference: ST223932	Area (hectares): 60
Survey date: 18th April 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.143)	
Summary description	
<p>A mix of acid grassland, heath, scrub and woodland habitats on a steep valley side. The management is varied with some areas of short horse-grazed grassland and some ungrazed areas that are undergoing a succession through heath and Bracken communities to Birch and Oak scrub woodland. The main woodland areas, primarily at Coed Medart, are classified as replanted ancient woodland and retain a number of semi-natural woodland indicator species. The canopy is generally mixed and includes Beech, Silver birch, Sessile oak, Larch and Scots pine. Alder, Willow and Sycamore dominate the wet woodland areas beside the stream at the northwestern part of the site. Two former quarries in the western part of the site are mainly dominated by scrub.</p>	
Qualifying features	
<p>Heathland / acid grassland containing at least 7 indicator species.</p> <p>Replanted woodland retaining a range of woodland indicator species.</p>	
Secondary features	
<p>Rock exposures.</p> <p>Bracken.</p> <p>Scrub.</p> <p>Grassland with anthills.</p> <p>Stream.</p>	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
<p>Likely to provide good foraging and roosting opportunities for bats.</p> <p>The acid grassland, heath and scrub are very likely to be used by reptiles, potentially including Common lizard, Slow worm and Adder.</p> <p>Some of the horse-grazed acid grassland is likely to support waxcap fungi.</p>	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
<p>Some of the area lies within the Cwmcarn Forest Drive, the management of which includes biodiversity objectives. Reducing the proportion of conifers in the canopy is likely to be beneficial to most native woodland wildlife. Horses graze the field at the southern end of the site. The ungrazed heath and scrub areas are likely to progress through natural succession to scrub. It may be possible to slow this process and enhance biodiversity by restoring grazing to some of these areas. Motorcycling activity and vandalism was noted in the west of the area, though this did not appear to be at levels that would create serious problems for wildlife.</p>	

Access/ community use

A high proportion of the site is open access land and forms part of the Cwmcarn Forest Drive. Public footpaths cross several parts of the site.

Additional information

There may be a need to include adjacent areas of replanted ancient woodland if there is a change in forestry management that encourages the regeneration of native species. Additional areas of acid grassland and scrub with the Cwmcarn Forest Drive may also meet the SINC criteria if subject to further survey. These areas should therefore be considered 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*)

Heath and acid grassland species (locally grading into Bracken and scrub): *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Festuca ovina*, *Nardus stricta*, *Luzula campestris*, *Luzula multiflora*, *Galium saxatile*, *Rumex acetosella*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Teucrium scorodonia*, *Pilosella officinalis*, *Hypericum pulchrum*, *Polygala sp.*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Scleropodium purum*, *Pleurozium schreberi*.

Woodland canopy and shrub species: *Fagus sylvatica*, *Quercus petraea*, *Betula pubescens*, *Betula pendula*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Larix sp.*, *Picea sitchensis*, *Pinus sylvestris*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Corylus avellana*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Salix caprea*, *Ulex europaeus*, *Cytisus scoparius*, *Rubus idaeus*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*.

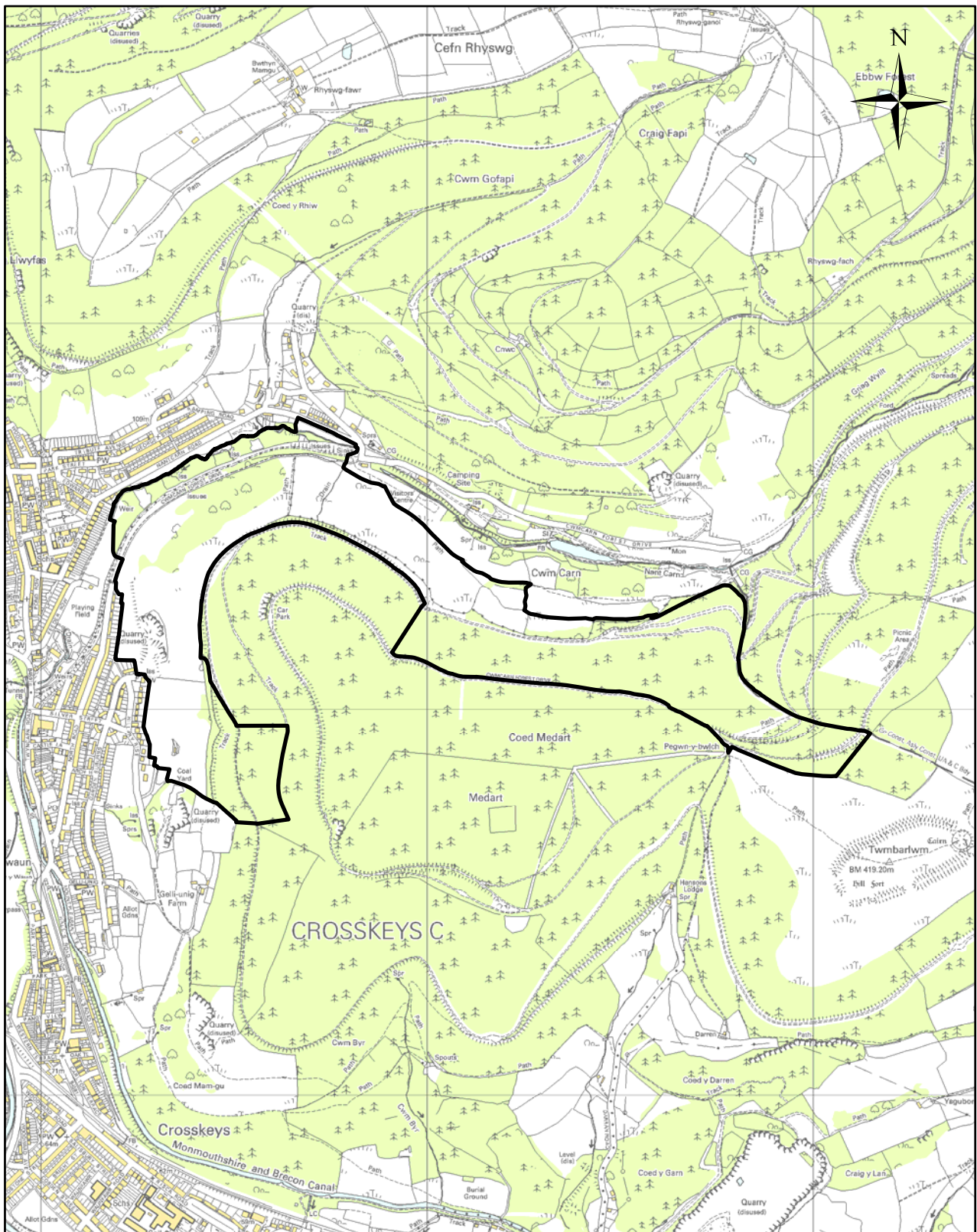
Woodland and scrub ground flora species: ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Conopodium majus*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Geum urbanum*, *Arum maculatum*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Ranunculus ficaria*, *Viola riviniana*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Teucrium scorodonia*, *Lamium galeobdolon*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Holcus mollis*, *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*, *Atrichum undulatum*. (*Sphagnum subnitens* very local in shaded flush habitat.)

Fauna observations: **Common Lizard**, **Buzzard**, **Song Thrush**, **Green Woodpecker**, *Crossbill*, *Goldcrest*, *Great Spotted Woodpecker*, *Nuthatch*, *Willow Warbler*, *Chiffchaff*, *Raven*, *Great Tit*, *Coal Tit*, *Jay*, *Wren*, *Blackbird*, *Robin*, *Blackcap*, **Red Wood Ant**, *Grey Squirrel*, *Brimstone Butterfly*, *Large White Butterfly*, *Peacock Butterfly*, *Speckled Wood Butterfly*, **Kestrel**

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

Caerphilly County Borough Council
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LDP Policy Ref: NH 3.135 (SINC 143)
Cwmcarn Slopes, Cwmcarn 60 Ha

1:15,000



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Mae atgynhychu heb awddurdod yn torri hawlfraint y Goron.
Gall hyn arwain at erlyniad neu achos sifil. Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili, 100025372, 2008.