

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.187</u>	SINC name: Blaengwynlais Meadows, south of Caerphilly
Grid reference: ST145846	Area (hectares): 17
Survey date: 3rd May 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.179)	
Summary description	
<p>A series of small fields supporting damp semi-improved neutral grassland divided by hedges and small blocks of broadleaved woodland and scrub. Devil's Bit scabious, Lesser spearwort and Common knapweed are locally very abundant and most of the fields have a good range of indicator species for neutral and marshy grassland. Beech, Oak and Hazel dominate the woodland blocks and the ground flora supports a good range of semi-natural indicators. The field near the quarry has a semi-improved neutral grassland flora with large numbers of Common spotted-orchids. The grassland at the top edge of the quarry has a high diversity of calcareous grassland species.</p>	
Qualifying features	
<p>Marshy grassland with at least 12 indicator species.</p> <p>Calcareous grassland with more than 8 indicator species.</p> <p>Semi-natural woodland with an assemblage of indicator species.</p> <p>Presence of breeding Peregrine.</p>	
Secondary features	
<p>Semi-improved neutral grassland.</p> <p>Stream.</p> <p>Bracken.</p> <p>Scrub.</p> <p>Rock outcrops and cliffs.</p>	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
<p>The area supports a high diversity of plants and a comprehensive survey would undoubtedly confirm additional species.</p> <p>The area has potential to support important populations of invertebrates, possibly including the Marsh fritillary butterfly.</p> <p>The top of the quarry is very likely to support good numbers of reptiles, including Adder.</p> <p>The woodland areas are likely to support Dormice, as they are known to occur nearby.</p> <p>The site is likely to have high value for foraging bats, and the woodland and quarry may support</p>	

roost sites.

The area may be used by foraging Great crested newts, which are known to occur nearby.

There is also potential for badgers in the woodland and quarry.

Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)

Much of the grassland, and some of the woodland, is grazed by horses and cattle. The ungrazed areas are becoming encroached upon by scrub and Bracken, resulting in a decline in plant diversity. Rabbit grazing maintains the calcareous grassland at the top of the quarry.

Access/ community use

There is no public access to most of the area, although there is a public footpath to the north and eastern sides.

Additional information

The area around the quarry headwall was only viewed briefly due to the presence of breeding birds. It is possible that the rest of the quarry may meet SINC selection criteria for its calcareous grassland flora. The plantation at the southeastern boundary does not appear to meet SINC selection criteria as woodland, but Dormice and bats may use it as a linking habitat. These areas should be considered for inclusion 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*)

Grassland species (marshy grassland grading into semi-improved neutral grassland): *Lotus corniculatus*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Trifolium repens*, *Ranunculus acris*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Galium palustre*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Senecio aquaticus*, *Potentilla anserina*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Mentha aquatica*, ***Dactylorhiza fuchsii***, ***Dactylorhiza maculata***, ***Rhinanthus minor***, *Alchemilla cf filicaulis*, *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, *Odontites vernus*, *Stachys officinalis*, *Serratula tinctoria*, *Euphrasia sp.*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Hieracium sp.*, *Conopodium majus*, *Myosotis secunda*, *Pedicularis sylvatica*, *Veronica scutellata*, *Hypericum maculatum*, *Hypericum tetrapterum*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Festuca rubra*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Poa trivialis*, *Poa pratensis*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Agrostis canina*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Carex ovalis*, *Carex panicea*, *Carex echinata*, *Luzula campestris*, *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Calliergonella cuspidata*.

Calcareous grassland species: *Lotus corniculatus*, *Linum catharticum*, *Pilosella officinarum*, ***Primula veris***, *Origanum vulgare*, *Sanguisorba minor*, *Anthyllis vulneraria*, *Leontodon hispidus*, *Blackstonia perfoliata*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Fragaria vesca*, *Potentilla sterilis*, *Echium vulgare*, *Centaureum erythraea*, *Gentianella cf amarella*, ***Dactylorhiza fuchsii***, *Viola riviniana*, *Viola hirta*, *Hieracium sp.*, *Trifolium dubium*, *Trifolium campestre*, *Polygala vulgaris*, *Hypericum perforatum*, *Cirsium acaule*, *Veronica chamaedrys*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, *Festuca rubra*, *Carex flacca*, *Luzula campestris*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Ctenidium molluscum*, *Scleropodium purum*, *Encalypta streptocarpa*, *Trichostomum crispulum*.

Woodland canopy, hedge and scrub species: *Quercus robur*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Salix caprea*, *Corylus avellana*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Betula pubescens*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Hedera helix*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Prunus spinosa*, *Rosa canina*, *Rosa arvensis*, *Sambucus nigra*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*.

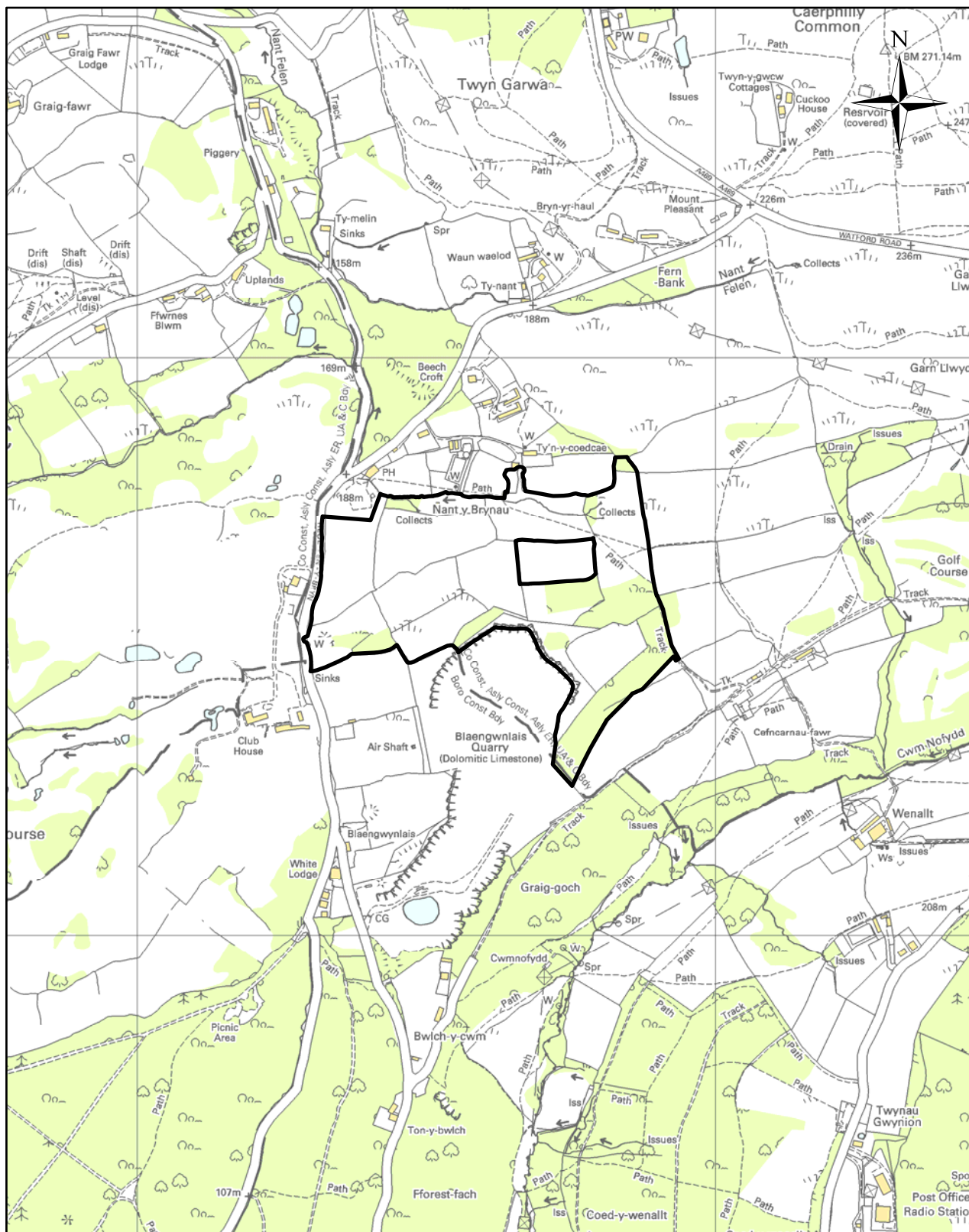
Woodland and scrub ground flora species: **Hyacinthoides non-scripta**, *Allium ursinum*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Mercurialis perennis*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Viola riviniana*, *Lamium galeobdolon*, *Veronica montana*, *Geum urbanum*, *Valeriana officinalis*, *Sanicula europaea*, *Conopodium majus*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Primula vulgaris*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Rumex sanguineus*, *Geranium robertianum*, *Tamus communis*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Carex remota*, *Carex pendula*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Phyllitis scolopendrium*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Mnium hornum*, *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Ctenidium molluscum*, *Thuidium tamariscinum*, *Isoetes macrospora*, *Eurhynchium striatum*, *Atrichum undulatum*, *Fissidens bryoides*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*.

Fauna observations: **Badger**, *Rabbit*, *Fox*, **Peregrine**, **Bullfinch**, **Song Thrush**, *Sparrowhawk*, *Great Spotted Woodpecker*, *Nuthatch*, *Pied Wagtail*, *Chiffchaff*, *Willow Warbler*, *Blue Tit*, *Long-tailed Tit*, *Wren*, *Chaffinch*, *Blackbird* and possible *Six-belted Clearwing Moth*.

Additional records from desk study: **Dormouse** (within approx 100m), **Great Crested Newt** (within 400m), **Buzzard**, *Cirsium dissectum*, *Carex caryophylla*, *Viola palustris*, *Sphagnum* sp.

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Blaengwynlais Meadows 17 Ha

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