Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council

<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.156</u> SINC name: Nant yr Aber

Grid references: from ST16308852 (south) to ST12228916 (north)

Area (hectares): 13 Survey date: N/A (information gathered from data search)

Data Collation by: Melanie Sutherland

(UDP policy reference: N/A - SINC 200)

Summary description

This SINC comprises almost the full length of the Nant yr Aber within the county borough and adjacent semi-natural habitats. This is just one of several tributaries that feed into the River Rhymney SINC (NH 3.1). The stream starts just to the north of Abertridwr, but the SINC starts at the bridge at Abertridwr Road before it becomes the Nant Cwm Parc. The Nant yr Aber runs down through the Aber Valley towards the southwestern side of Caerphilly town. It passes immediately adjacent to the Cwm y Aber SINC (NH 3.159) where it flows over a rocky bed with banks lined by Alders. The water quality appears to be good and Trout were noted during the survey. The stream then continues through Trecenydd, Morgan Jones Park, Churchill Park, past ASDA in Pontygwindy and meets the River Rhymney behind the Crossways Industrial Estate. The stream and the adjacent semi-natural habitats have been included to incorporate the whole of the stream corridor for ecological connectivity purposes. The stream corridor includes the stream channel, the stream banks and the adjacent semi-natural habitats such as woodland, trees, wetland, hedgerows and species-rich grassland, to retain "ecological functionality", apart from where it passes through NH3.159.

Qualifying features

Watercourse with resident populations of Bullhead and Brown trout.

Watercourses used as regular migratory routes by anadromous species including Atlantic salmon and Sea trout.

Probable breeding Otter, plus areas for foraging, laying up and territorial use.

Secondary features

Watercourse with exposed sediment/ erosion features.

Adjacent semi-natural wetland, grassland and woodland habitats as part of the wider stream corridor.

Potential value/ unconfirmed features

The Otter is known to occur on the stream, but there are no confirmed breeding sites. Further survey work is required to confirm breeding along the stream.

Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)

Mostly low or no-maintenance management. The stream itself is "unmanaged" as a habitat, but is subject to land drainage and sewerage outflow management by Environment Agency, Welsh Water and the local authority as necessary. Individual landowners may manage adjacent terrestrial habitats adjacent to and along the stream corridor as included in this SINC, but there is little information on current management for the whole length of the stream. Some streamside habitats are managed for recreational use, including footpaths, cycle ways and parks, and there are some

sections that run through built-up areas, for example through Caerphilly town and past the ASDA superstore. A Keep Wales Tidy river care group was set up in Abertridwr, which comprised volunteers from the local area, to undertake clean ups and remove fly tipped rubbish and other items from the stream. There are ongoing problems with fly tipping and other rubbish accumulating in the stream. Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam occur locally alongside the stream.

Access/ community use

Sections of the river are accessible via riverside walks, footpaths, cycleways, footbridges, etc. There is a cycleway alongside the part of the stream that runs through the Cwm yr Aber SINC between Abertridwr to Hendredenny and Penyrheol, Caerphilly.

Additional information

Although this SINC has been designated mainly through a data collation exercise, Dr Peter Sturgess carried out a survey for SINC NH3.159 Cwm yr Aber, which previously included the stream, on 7th and 8th June 2007. Brown trout were observed to be present in the stream during this survey.

Species list (Dominant species, SINC Criteria, RDB or other notable indicator species)

(LBAP species shown in **bold**, species confirmed by 2007 survey in *italics*)

<u>Faunal observations made by Dr Peter Sturgess:</u> **Brown trout**, Fox, Mole, **Green Woodpecker**, Blackcap, Chaffinch, Robin, Wren, Coal Tit, Chiffchaff, Meadow Pipit, Blackbird, Meadow Brown Butterfly, Small Tortoiseshell Butterfly, Common Blue Butterfly, Large Skipper Butterfly, Cinnabar Moth, Burnet Companion Moth.

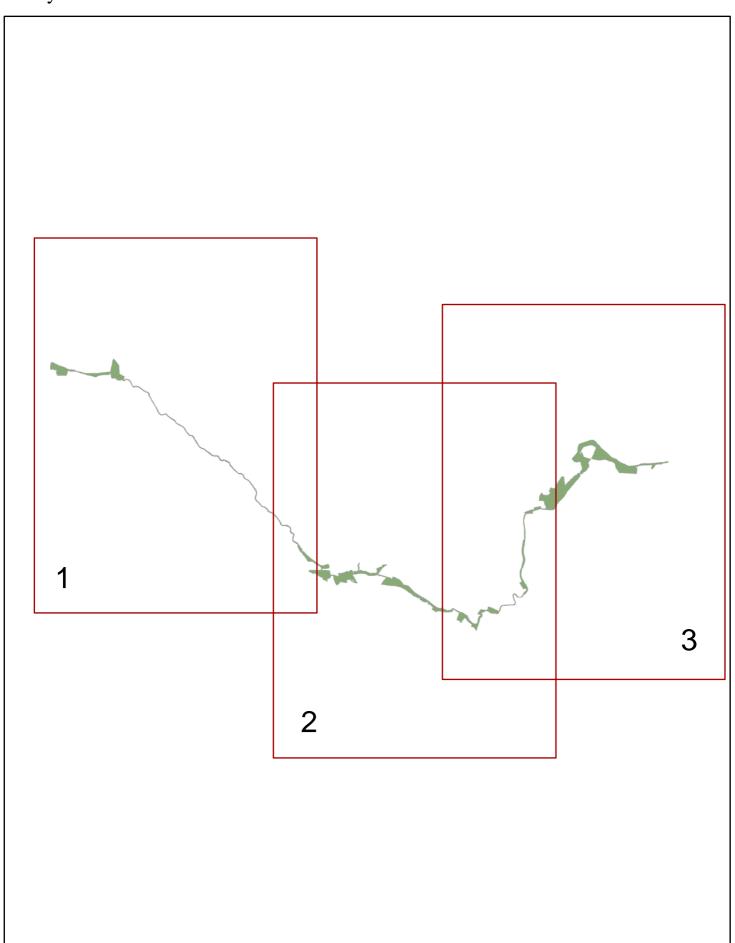
Additional species noted from desk study and consultation:

Common eel, Bullhead, Atlantic salmon, Stone loach, Grayling, Otter, Brown long-eared bat, Common pipistrelle bat, Daubenton's bat, other Myotis bat species.

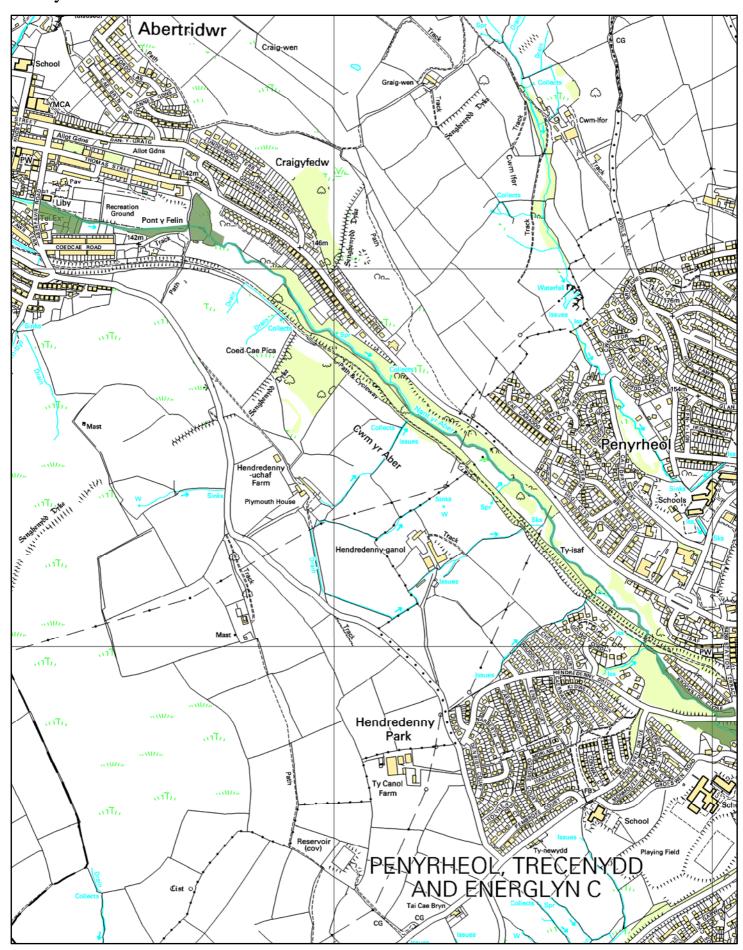
SEWBReC records (within 1km square):

Dustracted and Dujavity Charica		
Protected and Priority Species Accipiter nisus	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	
Anas acuta	Northern Pintail	
Anas crecca	Eurasian Teal	
Anser anser	Greylag Goose	
Anthus trivialis	Tree Pipit	
Bucephala clangula	Common Goldeneye	
Chlidonias niger	Black Tern	
Cuculus canorus	Common Cuckoo	
Cygnus columbianus	Bewick's Swan	
Euphydryas aurinia	Marsh Fritillary	
Hipparchia semele	Grayling	
Larus argentatus	Herring Gull	
Larus melanocephalus	Mediterranean Gull	
Larus ridibundus	Black-headed Gull	
Motacilla flava	Yellow Wagtail	
Mustela putorius	Polecat	
Natrix natrix	Grass Snake	
Passer domesticus	House Sparrow	
Phoenicurus ochruros	Black Redstart	
Prunella modularis	Dunnock	
Sturnus vulgaris	Common Starling	
Turdus iliacus	Redwing	
Turdus philomelos	Song Thrush	

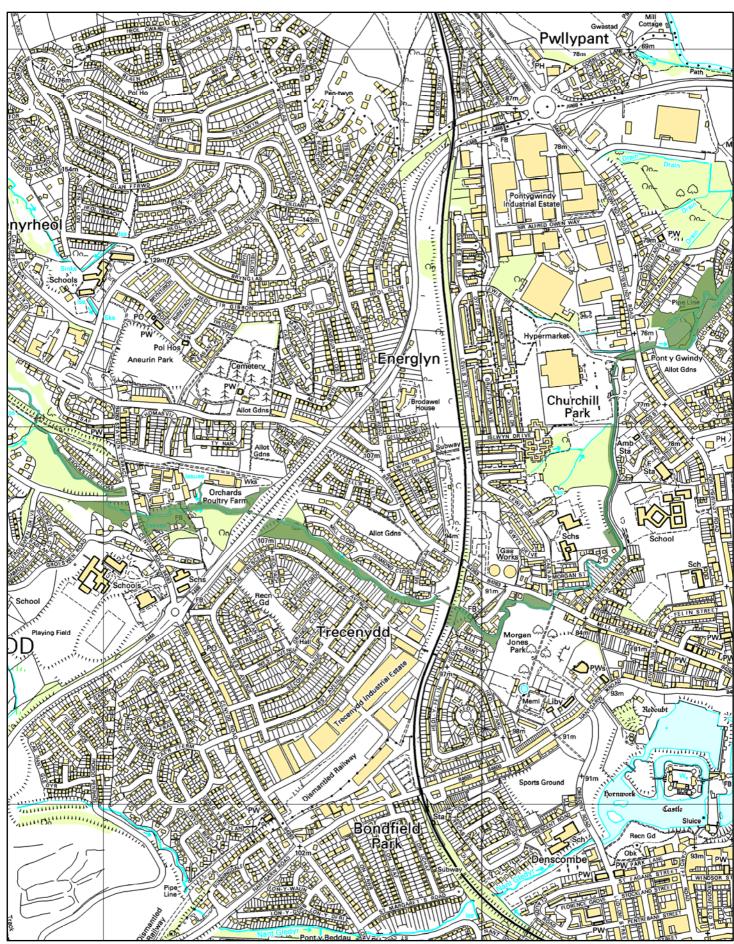
Turdus philomelos	Song Thrush	
Turdus pilaris	Fieldfare	
Turdus torquatus	Ring Ouzel	
Tyria jacobaeae	Cinnabar	
Tyto alba	Barn Owl	
Other Species of Conservation Concern		
Actitis hypoleucos	Common Sandpiper	
Aix galericulata	Mandarin	
Anas platyrhynchos	Mallard	
Anser caerulescens	Snow Goose	
Aythya ferina	Common Pochard	
Aythya fuligula	Tufted Duck	
Branta canadensis	Canada Goose	
Branta leucopsis	Barnacle Goose	
Gallinago gallinago	Common Snipe	
Gallinula chloropus	Common Moorhen	
Larus argentatus michahellis	Yellow-legged Gull	
Larus canus	Common Gull	
Larus fuscus	Lesser Black-backed Gull	
Mergus merganser	Goosander	
Mergus serrator	Red-breasted Merganser	
Motacilla cinerea	Grey Wagtail	
Phalacrocorax carbo	Cormorant	
Rallus aquaticus	Water Rail	
Regulus regulus	Goldcrest	
Riparia riparia	Sand Martin	
Rissa tridactyla	Black-legged Kittiwake	
Sterna hirundo	Common Tern	
Turdus viscivorus	Mistle Thrush	
Species of Local Conservation Concern		
Apus apus	Common Swift	
Cinclus cinclus	Dipper	
Mergellus albellus	Smew	
Oenanthe oenanthe	Northern Wheatear	
Podiceps cristatus	Great Crested Grebe	
Saxicola rubetra	Whinchat	
Turdus merula	Blackbird	
Anax imperator	Emperor Dragonfly	
Calopteryx virgo	Beautiful Demoiselle	
Celastrina argiolus	Holly Blue	
Coenagrion puella	Azure Damselfly	
Inachis io	Peacock butterfly	
Ischnura elegans	Blue-tailed Damselfly	
Libellula depressa	Broad-bodied Chaser	
Libellula quadrimaculata	Four-spotted Chaser	
Synanthedon tipuliformis	Currant Clearwing	



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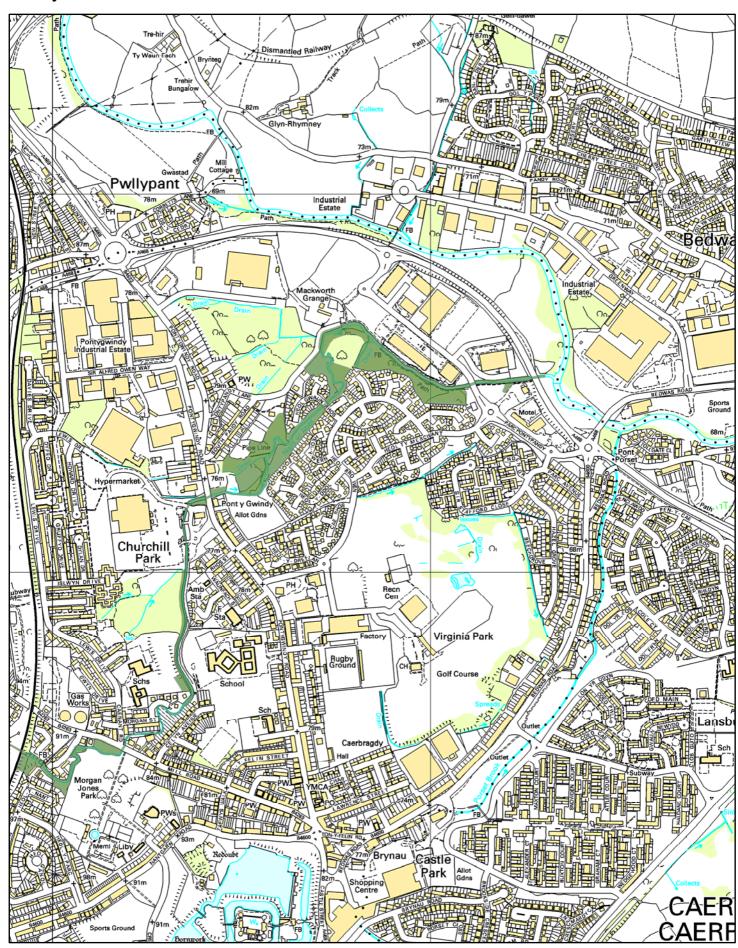


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