

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council

LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.154

SINC name: Mynydd Dimlaith and Cwm-y-bwlch, southeast of Llanbradach

Grid reference: ST156902

Area (hectares): 65

Survey date: 19th June 2007 Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)

(UDP policy reference: C11.126)

Summary description

Mynydd Dimlaith is a hill covered mainly by Bracken and Birch scrub with small pockets of acid grassland. The lower parts of the hillsides support woodland with a canopy of Oak and Downy birch. To the east, the Nant-y-Bwch stream flows through a densely wooded valley supporting a good range of semi-natural woodland indicators. A small Alder dominated woodland and a field of diverse marshy grassland also border the stream. At the western side of the SINC, the land between Pandy Road and the River Rhymney includes broadleaved woodland and an area of flower-rich grassland and scrub with large numbers of orchids. Dormouse records exist in hedgerows in the northern part of the site and this species is likely to occur in other suitable habitat within the SINC.

Qualifying features

Semi-natural woodland with an assemblage of indicator species.

Extensive area of open countryside where semi-natural upland features predominate.

Acid grassland with at least 7 indicator species.

Acid flush / marshy grassland with at least 12 indicator species.

Presence of Dormouse.

Secondary features

Streams.

Bracken.

Rock outcrops.

Potential value/ unconfirmed features

The woodland areas and stream corridor are likely to provide good foraging and roosting opportunities for bats.

The woodland beside the Rhymney is very likely to be used by Otters.

The area of scrub and flower-rich grassland has high potential to support a high diversity of invertebrates, and probably also reptiles.

The marshy grassland area supports abundant Devil's-bit scabious and has potential to support Marsh fritillary butterfly (although it may be too small and isolated from other populations).

Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)

The majority of the woodland and hillside appear ungrazed. Bracken and scrub dominate the hillside and there is limited grazing available for livestock. Bracken and scrub control, and establishment of grazing by cattle or horses, would be beneficial for the biodiversity of the hill and would reduce the fire risk. There are recent signs of extensive fires over most of Mynydd Dimlaith. Sheep and cattle graze the marshy grassland field and this grazing appears to be at an optimal level for a good range of wildlife. The flower-rich grassland and scrub appear to have developed on some form of land reclamation area. The diverse wildlife of this area is likely to be shaded out by scrub within the next few years unless the area is managed through grazing or mowing. Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam are both present in the riverside woodland. The adjacent River Rhymney is a SINC (NH 3.1).

Access/ community use

Mynydd Dimlaith is open access land and is crossed by several formal and informal footpaths. Public paths also follow much of the Nant y Bwch stream. There is no formal public access to the woodland or flower-rich grassland to the west of the SINC, but several informal paths cross this area.

Additional information

The flower-rich grassland at the west of the site is of relatively recent origin and although it is primarily included in the SINC as a linking habitat, it is likely to meet SINC criteria in its own right. A horse-grazed field west of Pandy Road (ST152899) may have potential to support waxcap fungi and should be considered at future SINC review. The Dormouse is likely to occur in adjacent suitable habitats, including hedgerows, scrub and woodland, especially those immediately to the north and east to link with SINC NH 3.118, which should 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*)

Woodland and river/ stream-side tree and shrub species: *Quercus petraea*, *Quercus robur*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Corylus avellana*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Hedera helix*, *Salix caprea*, *Salix cinerea*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Rubus idaeus*, *Rosa arvensis*, *Prunus spinosa*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Acer campestre*.

Woodland ground flora species: *Oxalis acetosella*, *Digitalis purpurea*, ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Conopodium majus*, *Galium saxatile*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Viola riviniana*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Veronica montana*, *Conopodium majus*, *Lamiastrum galeobdolon*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Urtica dioica*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Holcus mollis*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Poa trivialis*, *Carex sylvatica*, *Carex remota*, *Luzula sylvatica*, *Bromopsis ramosa*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Phyllitis scolopendrium*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Mnium hornum*, *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Scleropodium purum*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Thuidium tamariscinum*.

*The particularly wet Alder wood at ST163905 included *Alnus Glutinosa*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Quercus petraea*, *Galium palustre*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Cardamine hirsuta*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Sanicula europaea*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Oenanthe crocata*, *Viola palustris*, *Apium nodiflorum*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Carex remota*, *Juncus effusus*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Calliargonella cuspidata*, *Plagiomnium undulatum*, *Hookeria lucens*, *Brachythecium rivulare*, *Polytrichum formosum*, *Rhizomnium punctatum*, *Fissidens adianthoides*, *Fontinalis antipyretica*, *Nardia scalaris*, *Lophocolea bidentata*.*

Bracken/ acid grassland species (often patchy and merging with scrub): *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Chamerion angustifolium*, *Rumex acetosella*, *Galium saxatile*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Conopodium majus*, *Pilosella officinarum*, ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta***, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Solidago virgaurea*, *Jasione montana*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Festuca ovina*,

Anthoxanthum odoratum, *Nardus stricta*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Aira praecox*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Carex pilulifera*, *Luzula campestris*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Dicranum scoparium*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Polytrichum piliferum*, *Ceratodon purpureus*, *Diplophyllum albicans*, *Dicranoweissia cirrata*.

Damp neutral/ marshy grassland at ST162905: *Cirsium palustre*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Anagallis tenella*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Leontodon hispidus*, ***Dactylorhiza maculata***, ***Dactylorhiza cf praetermissa***, *Angelica sylvestris*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Galium palustre*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Briza media*, *Agrostis canina*, *Eriophorum angustifolium*, *Carex ovalis*, *Carex panicea*, *Carex echinata*, *Carex pilulifera*, *Luzula campestris*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus articulatus*, *Juncus conglomeratus*.

Grassland species at ST151896: ***Ophrys apifera***, ***Dactylorhiza fuchsii***, ***Dactylorhiza cf praetermissa***, ***Rhinanthus minor***, *Trifolium pratense*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Linum catharticum*, *Trifolium dubium*, *Trifolium campestre*, *Vicia cracca*, *Vicia sativa*, *Hypericum perforatum*, *Lathyrus pratensis*, *Potentilla reptans*, *Ranunculus acris*, *Centaureum erythraea*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Salix repens*, *Festuca ovina*, *Festuca rubra*, *Carex flacca*.

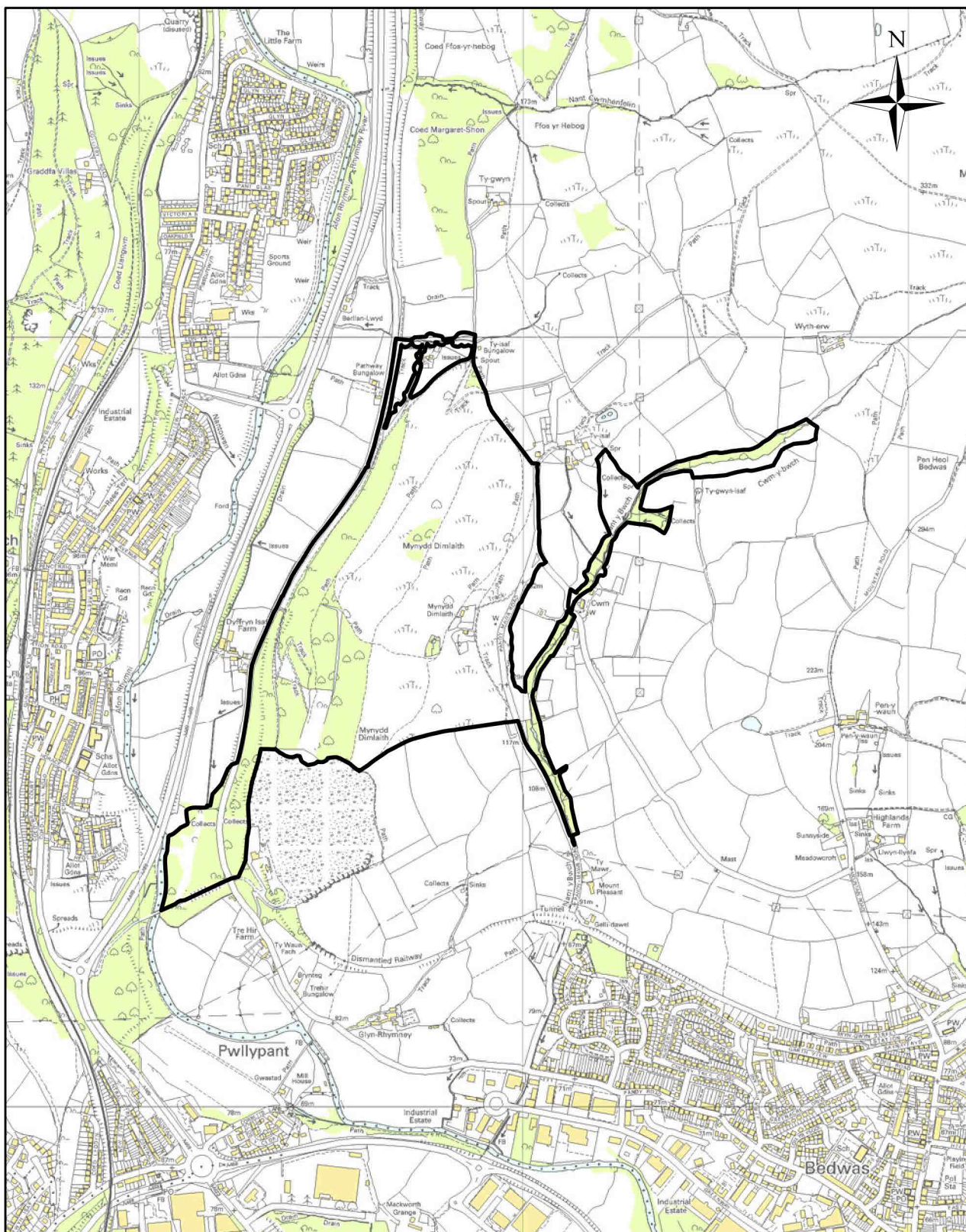
Fauna observations: *Grey Squirrel*, *Fox*, ***Common Frog***, ***Buzzard***, ***Green Woodpecker***, ***Yellowhammer***, ***Linnet***, ***Song Thrush***, ***Bullfinch***, *Meadow Pipit*, *Redstart*, *Nuthatch*, *Willow Warbler*, *Chiffchaff*, *Garden Warbler*, ***Dipper***, *Goldfinch*, *Stonechat*, *Chaffinch*, *Blackbird*, *Blackcap*, *Burnet Companion Moth*, ***Golden-ringed Dragonfly***.

Additional species noted from desk study: ***Skylark***, *Silver-washed Fritillary Butterfly*, *Dryopteris carthusiana*, *Epipactis palustris*, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, *Oreopteris limbosperma*, *Pimpinella saxifraga*, *Adoxa moschatellina*. *Ring Ouzel* (within 1km), ***Salmon***, ***Sea Trout***, ***Bullhead and Stone Loach*** (from River Rhymney).

Dormouse record from Caerphilly County Borough Council database.

Caerphilly County Borough Council
Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
LDP Policy Ref: NH 3.154 (SINC 126)
Mynydd Dimlaith and Cwm-y-Bwch, South East of Llanbradach 65 Ha

1:15,000



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Caerphilly County Borough Council, 100025372, 2008.

Atgynhychwyd o fapiad yr Arolwg Ordnans gyda chaniatad rheolwr Llyfrfa ei Mawrhydi hawffraint y Goron. Mae atgynhychu heb awdurdod yn torri hawffraint y Goron.
Gall hyn arwain at erlyniad neu achos sifil. Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili, 100025372, 2008.