Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council

<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.1</u> SINC name: River Rhymney

Grid references: from ST22508357 (south) to SO10171048 (north)

Area (hectares): 202

Survey date: N/A (information gathered from data search and adjacent SINC survey notes)

Data Collation by: Melanie Sutherland (and information from adjacent SINCs surveyed by Dr

Peter Sturgess, Hyder Consulting Ltd.)

(UDP policy reference: N/A - SINC 197)

Summary description

This SINC comprises the full length of the River Rhymney within the county borough and adjacent semi-natural habitats. This is one of three main watercourses in the county borough and represents a significant linear wildlife corridor. The river and the adjacent semi-natural habitats have been included to incorporate the whole of the river corridor for ecological connectivity purposes. The river corridor includes the river, the riverbanks and the adjacent semi-natural habitats such as woodland, trees, wetland, hedgerows and species-rich grassland, to retain "ecological functionality". The river valley is lined by trees along most of its length, and flows in a largely natural, rocky channel. Japanese knotweed occurs alongside most of the river. Several native wild fish species have been recorded in the river, including Atlantic salmon, Brown/Sea trout, Bullhead, Grayling and Common eel. Salmon and trout are known to spawn in the New Tredegar area, where there is suitable substrate available (ref. Environment Agency report on the New Tredegar Flood Alleviation Scheme). The Otter has been recorded at various locations along the length of the river, including a recent record for the eastern wall of the Blaen Rhymney reservoir north of the Heads of the Valleys road (A465), which highlights the importance of the entire river corridor as a travelling/migratory route for this species within the county borough. There are currently no confirmed breeding records for the Otter along the river, but evidence of sand/moss castles and slides were found within 500m north of Bedwellty Road bridge, Bargoed on 8th August 2001. Rock ledges beside the river adjacent to SINC NH 3.023 Coed-y-Moeth and Cwmsyfiog Hillside are important for two species of Bryophytes. Other areas along the river are also important for rare bryophytes, including Jungermannia exertifolia & Marchantia polymorpha ssp montivagans, which were recorded along the river adjacent to SINC NH 3.86 Victoria Road Slopes (during the review survey of this site by Dr Peter Sturgess, Hyder Consulting Ltd.).

Qualifying features

Waters 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.

Presence of rare bryophytes: Jungermannia exertifolia & Marchantia polymorpha ssp montivagans.

Secondary features

Relatively unpolluted main river with unmodified bed and banks.

Watercourses with exposed sediment/ erosion features (e.g. soft cliffs).

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

Potential value/ unconfirmed features

Breeding sites for the Otter have not been confirmed along the river, although some evidence suggests young / juveniles on the river to the north of Bargoed viaduct. Further survey work is required to confirm breeding along the river.

Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)

The river itself is "unmanaged" as a habitat, but is subject to flood defence, land drainage and sewerage outflow management by Environment Agency, Welsh Water and the local authority as necessary. Individual landowners may manage adjacent terrestrial habitats within the river corridor as included in this SINC, but there is little information on current management for the whole length of the river. Some riverside habitats are managed for recreational use, including footpaths, cycle ways and parks, e.g. Bedwas Riverside Park. Some sections run through built-up areas and adjacent land has been developed up to the riverbank. Japanese knotweed occurs locally alongside the river. Japanese Knotweed occurs locally adjacent to SINC NH 3.23 and any attempts at managing this invasive species at this location using herbicide should only apply with a weed-wiping type application, to avoid killing the rare bryophytes.

Access/ community use

There are several riverside walks, footpaths, footbridges and cycle ways along the river.

Additional information

This SINC includes the former SINC C11.39 Cwmsyfiog River and Meadow. It also includes the river and adjacent habitat alongside SINC NH 3.32 and NH 3.30. The Environment Agency has designated the River Rhymney as an EC salmonid fishery.

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

(LBAP species shown in **bold**, species confirmed by 2007/08 survey in *italics*)

Brown long-eared bat, Common pipistrelle, Daubenton's bat, Greater horseshoe bat, Lesser horseshoe bat, Natterer's bat, Noctule bat, other Myotid bat species, Soprano pipistrelle, Whiskered bat, Whiskered/Brandt's bat, Dormouse, Otter, Polecat, Atlantic salmon, Bullhead, Brown trout, Chubb, Common eel, Grayling, Three-spined stickleback, Sea trout, Stone loach, Common kingfisher, Grey wagtail, Pied flycatcher, Great crested newt, Slow worm, Brimstone (Gonepteryx rhamni), Cinnabar moth, Currant clearwing (Synanthedon tipuliformis), High brown fritillary, Orange tip, Small phoenix, Bombus lapidarius (Large red tailed bumblebee), Common carder bee (Bombus pascuorum), Autographa bractea (Gold spangle), Bluebell, Broadleaf grimmia (Schistidium platyphyllum), Bryum donianum (Don's thread moss), Common liverwort (Marchantia polymorpha montivagans), Cordate flapwort (Jungermannia exsertifolia cordifolia), Heath dog violet, Meadow thistle, Smooth lady's mantle, Wild daffodil

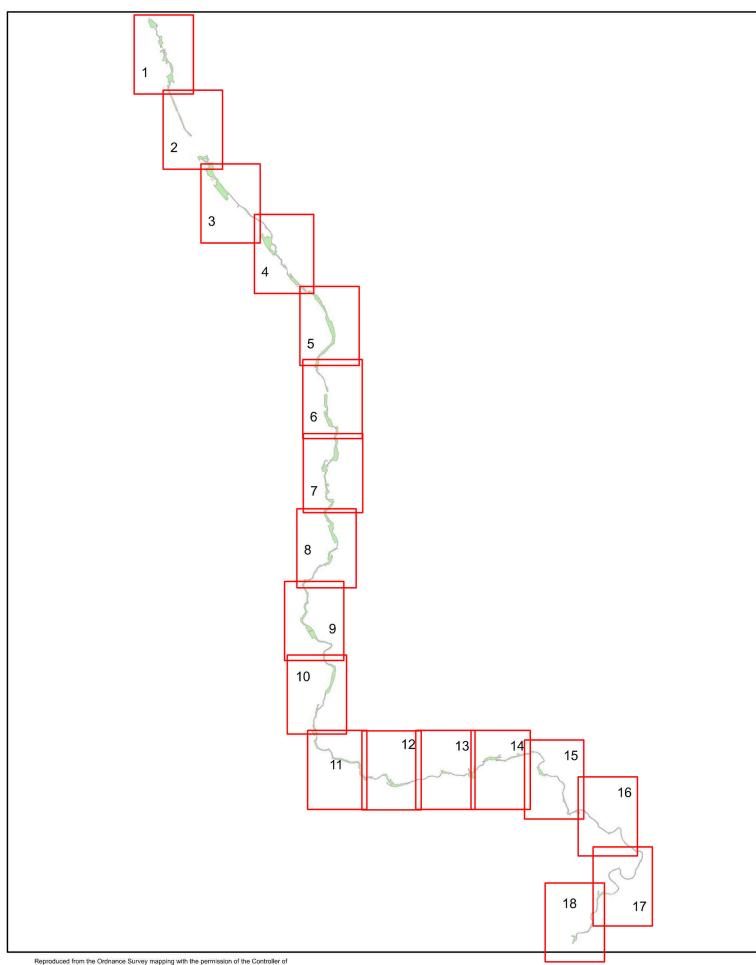
Additional species noted from desk study and consultation:

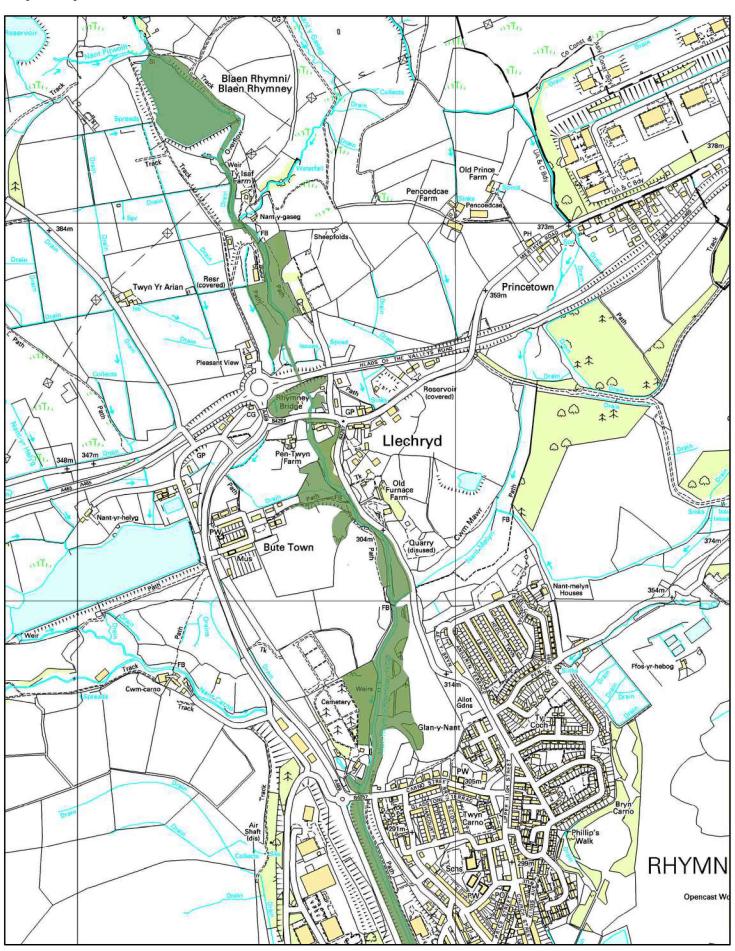
(SEWBReC records within 1km square):

Protected and Priority Species		
Accipiter gentilis	Goshawk	
Accipiter nisus	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	
Alauda arvensis	Skylark	
Anas crecca	Eurasian Teal	
Asio flammeus	Short-eared Owl	
Boloria euphrosyne	Pearl Bordered Fritillary	
Boloria selene	Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary	
Buteo buteo	Buzzard	
Caprimulgus europaeus	European Nightjar	
Carduelis cannabina	Common Linnet	
Chiroptera	Unspecified Bat	

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Circus cyaneus	Hen Harrier
Coccothraustes coccothraustes	Hawfinch
Coenonympha pamphilus	Small Heath
Cuculus canorus	Common Cuckoo
Emberiza citrinella	Yellowhammer
Emberiza schoeniclus	Reed Bunting
Euphydryas aurinia	Marsh Fritillary
Falco peregrinus	Peregrine
Falco subbuteo	Eurasian Hobby
Falco tinnunculus	Common Kestrel
Fringilla montifringilla	Brambling
Grus grus	Common Crane
Hepialus humuli	Ghost Moth
Larus argentatus	Herring Gull
Larus ridibundus	Black-headed Gull
Lasiommata megera	Wall Brown
Lepus europaeus	Brown Hare
Motacilla flava	Yellow Wagtail
Oriolus oriolus	Eurasian Golden Oriole
Passer domesticus	House Sparrow
Passer montanus	Eurasian Tree Sparrow
Perdix perdix	Grey Partridge
Phoenicurus ochruros	Black Redstart
Pipistrellus pipistrellus	Common Pipistrelle
Plectrophenax nivalis	Snow Bunting
Prunella modularis	Dunnock
Pyrrhula pyrrhula	Bullfinch
Satyrium w-album	White-letter Hairstreak
Scotopteryx chenopodiata	Shaded Broad-bar
Streptopelia turtur	European Turtle Dove
Sturnus vulgaris	Common Starling
Turdus iliacus	Redwing
Turdus philomelos	Song Thrush
Turdus pillorileios Turdus pillaris	Fieldfare
Other Species of Conservation Concern	Fleiulale
•	Common Condoiner
Actitis hypoleucos	Common Sandpiper
Aix galericulata	Mandarin
Anas platyrhynchos	Mallard
Anthus pratensis	Meadow Pipit
Brachythecium mildeanum	Sand Feather-moss
Bryum pallescens	Tall-clustered Thread-moss
Columba oenas	Stock Dove
Delichon urbicum	House Martin
Hesperia comma	Silver-spotted Skipper
Hirundo rustica	Barn Swallow
Larus fuscus	Lesser Black-backed Gull
Mergus merganser	Goosander
Phalacrocorax carbo	Cormorant
Regulus regulus	Goldcrest
Riparia riparia	Sand Martin
Turdus viscivorus	Mistle Thrush
Species of Local Conservation Concern	
Aneura maxima	
Apus apus	Common Swift
Ardea cinerea	Grey Heron
Bombus terrestris	Buff-tailed Bumble Bee
Bryum subapiculatum	Lesser Potato Bryum
Calystegia pulchra	Hairy Bindweed
Carduelis carduelis	European Goldfinch

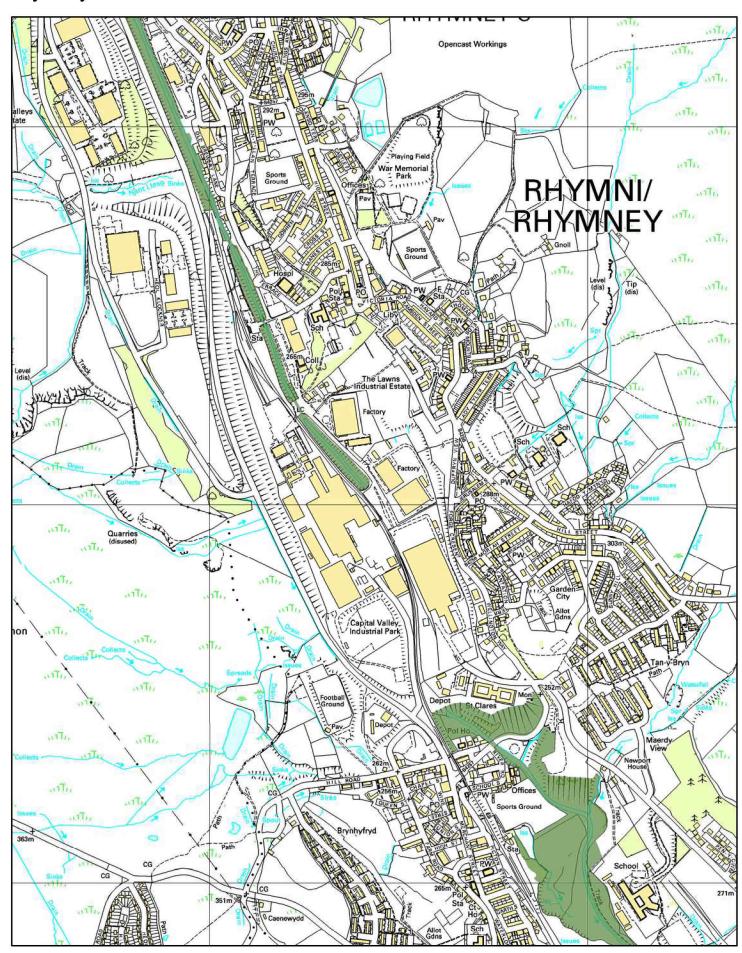
Carduelis spinus	Eurasian Siskin	
Carex strigosa	Thin-spiked Wood-sedge	
Cinclus cinclus	Dipper	
Coenagrion puella	Azure Damselfly	
Cordulegaster boltonii	Golden-ringed Dragonfly	
Ctenidium molluscum sylvaticum		
Ephemerum serratum var. minutissimum		
Epipactis helleborine	Broad-leaved Helleborine	
Fissidens celticus	Welsh Pocket-moss	
Fissidens curnovii	Curnow's Pocket-moss	
Inachis io	Peacock butterfly	
Ischnura pumilio	Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly	
Lejeunea lamacerina	Western Pouncewort	
Libellula depressa	Broad-bodied Chaser	
Libellula quadrimaculata	Four-spotted Chaser	
Mustela nivalis	Weasel	
Oenanthe oenanthe	Northern Wheatear	
Phylloscopus collybita	Chiffchaff	
Podiceps cristatus	Great Crested Grebe	
Pyrrhosoma nymphula	Large Red Damselfly	
Saccogyna viticulosa	Straggling Pouchwort	
Saxicola rubetra	Whinchat	
Schistidium rivulare	River Grimmia	
Sympetrum striolatum	Common Darter	
Turdus merula	Blackbird	
Other species of note:		
Mustela vison	American Mink	

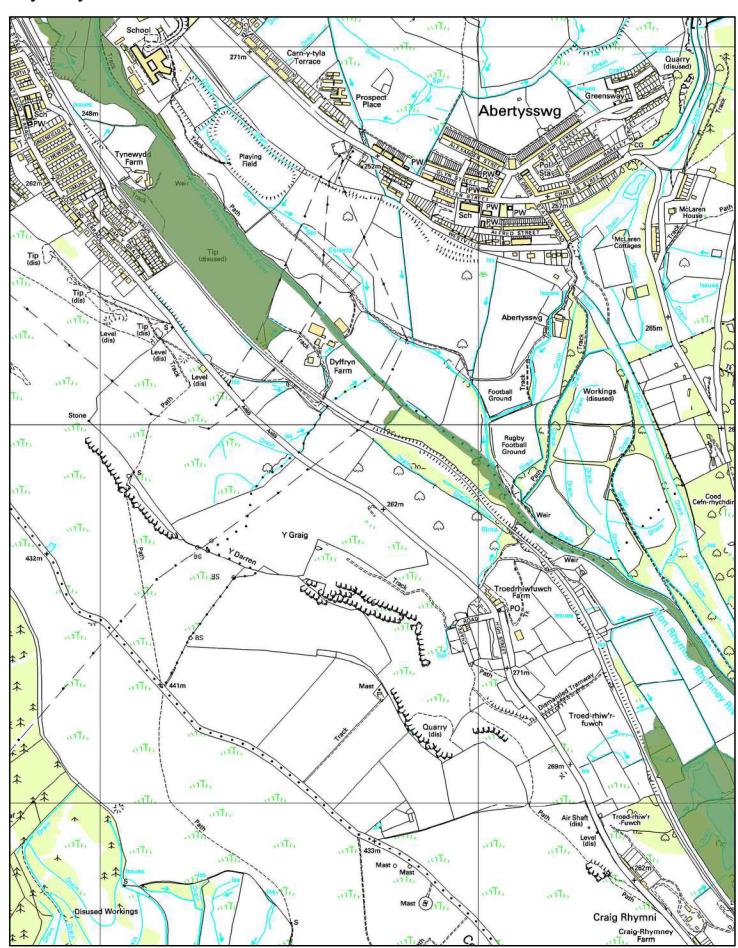




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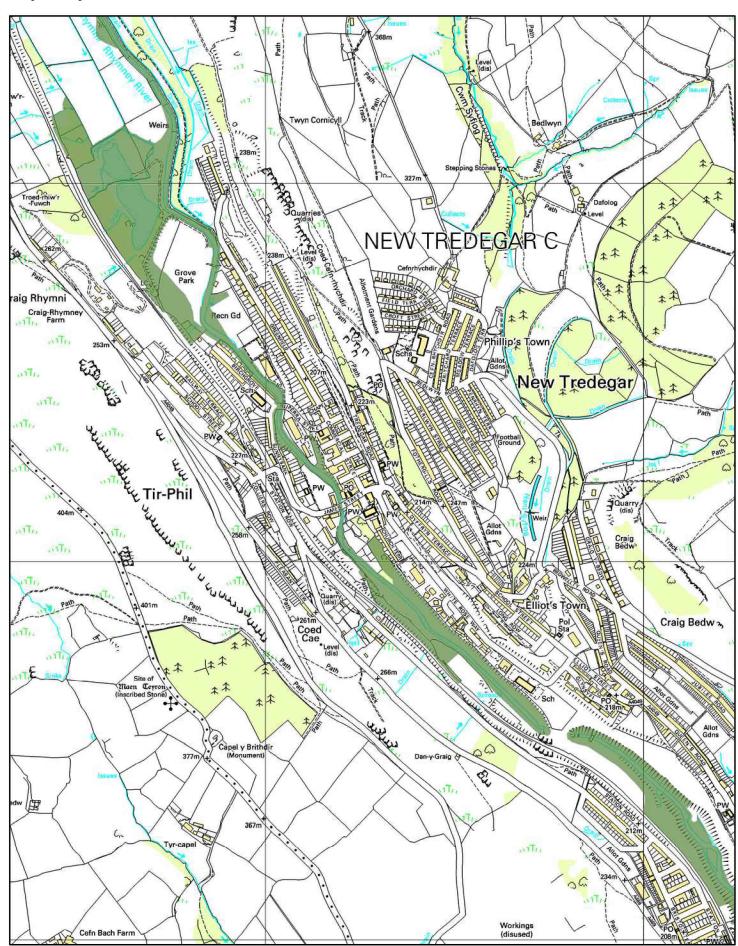
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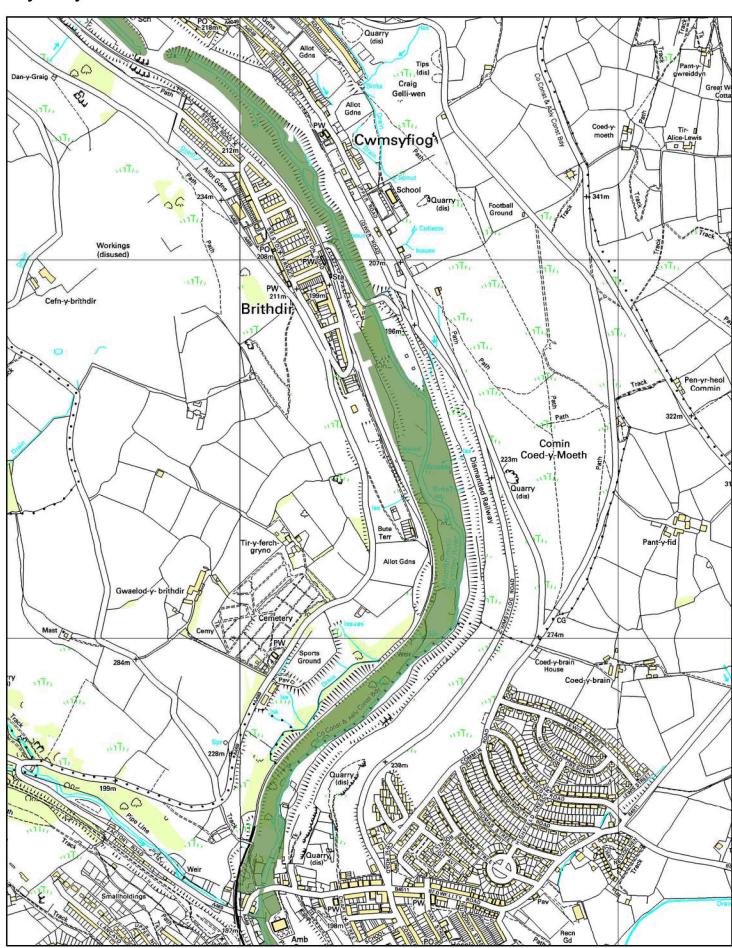
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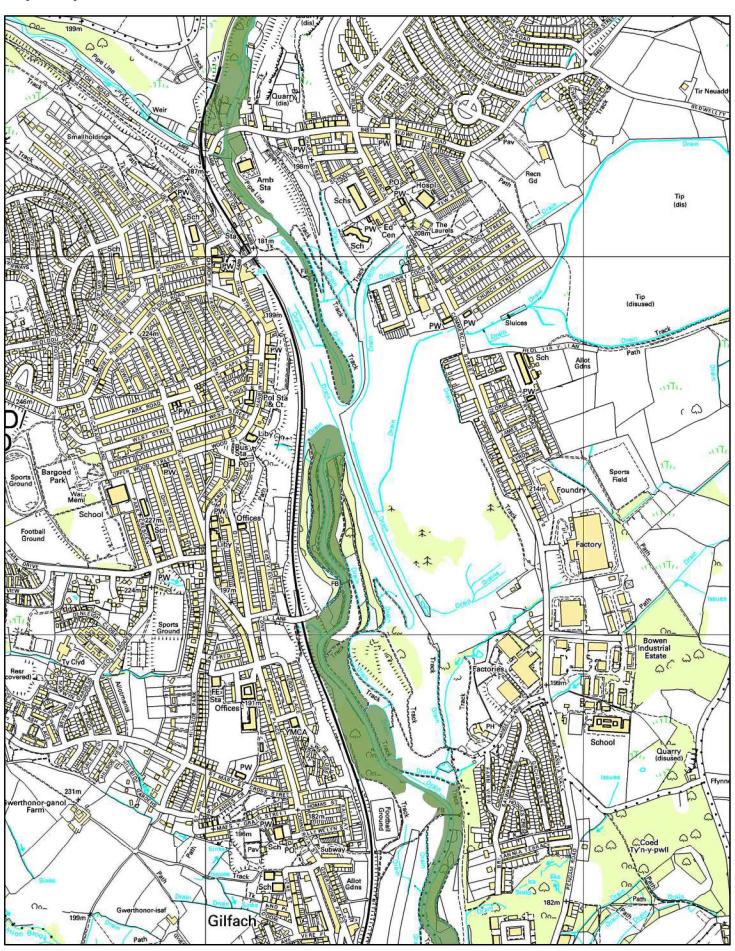
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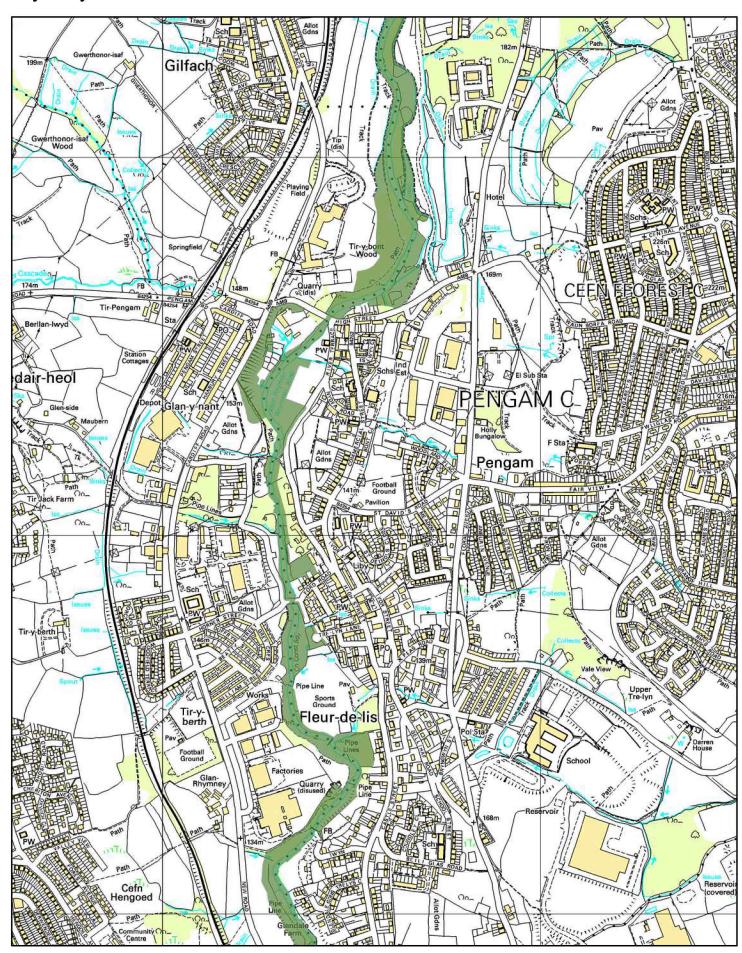
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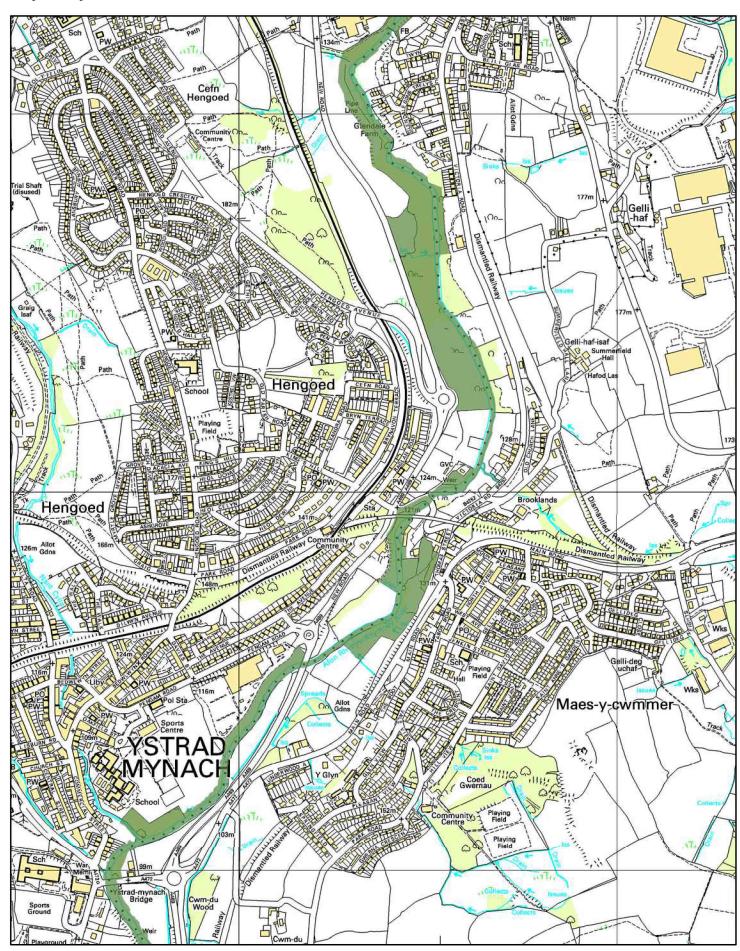
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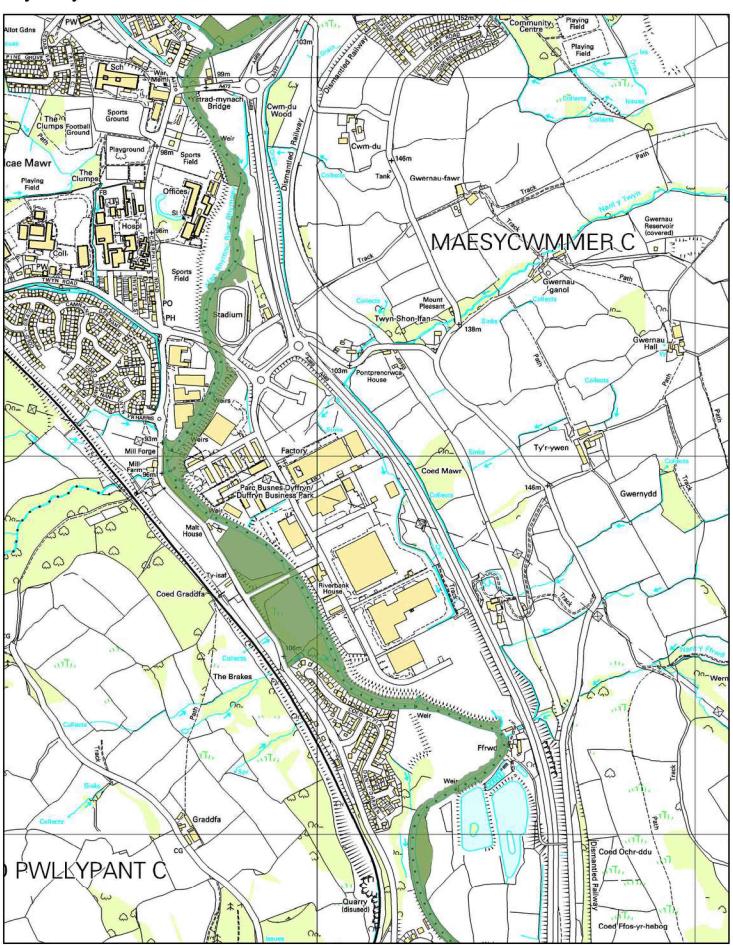
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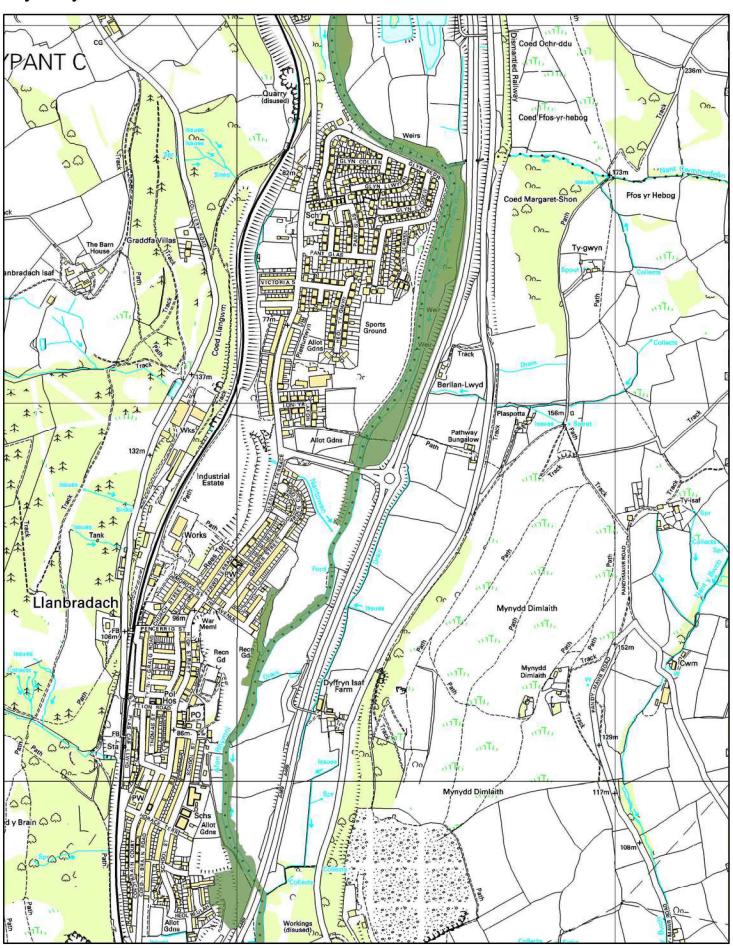
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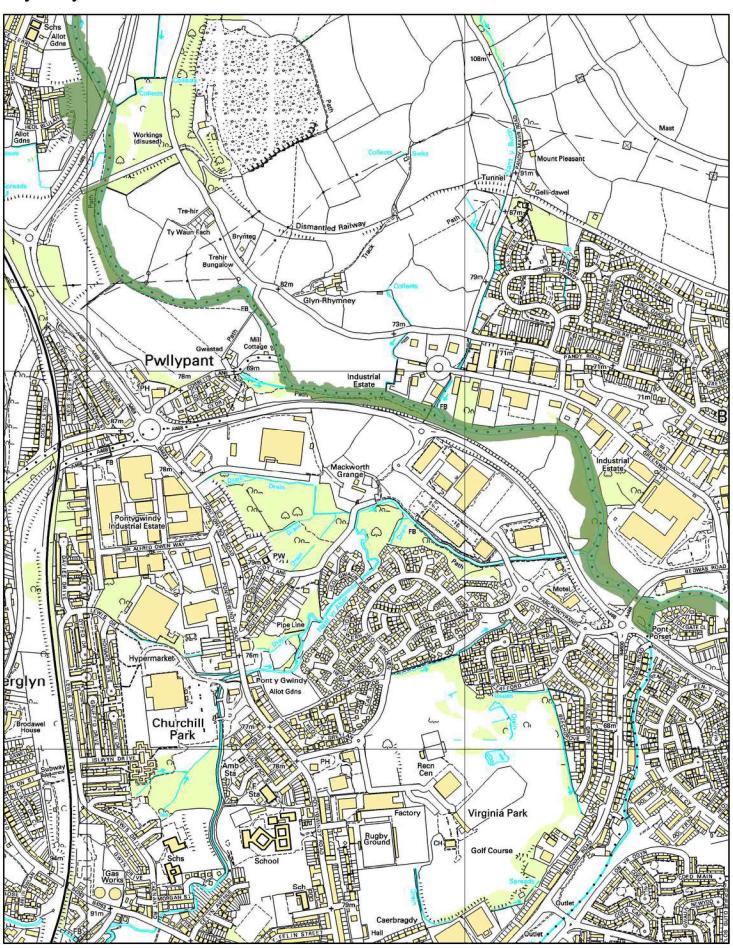


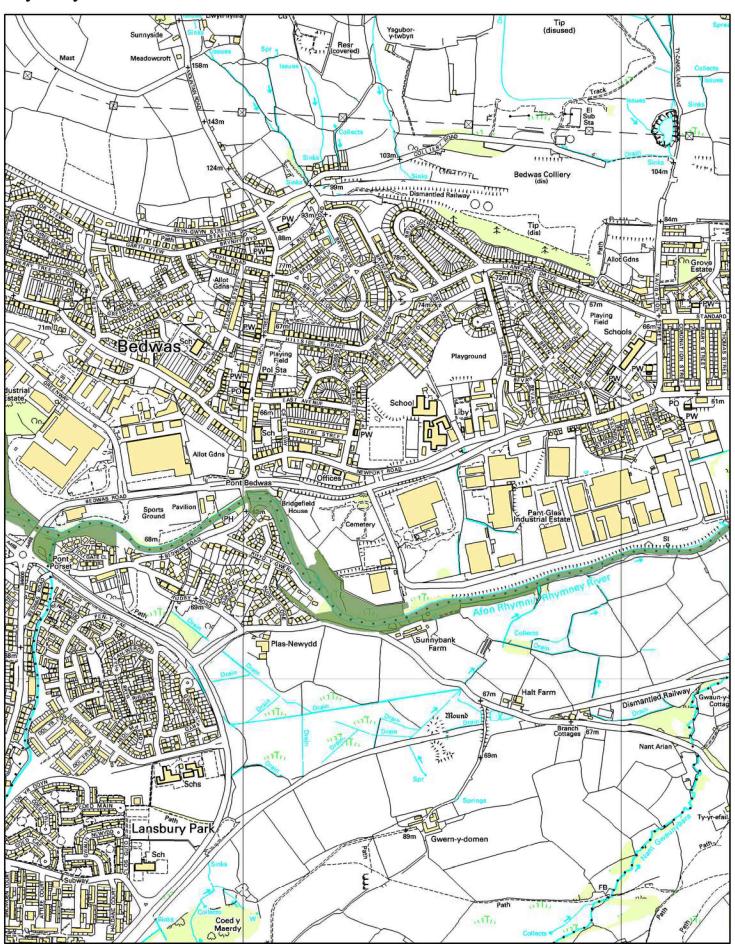


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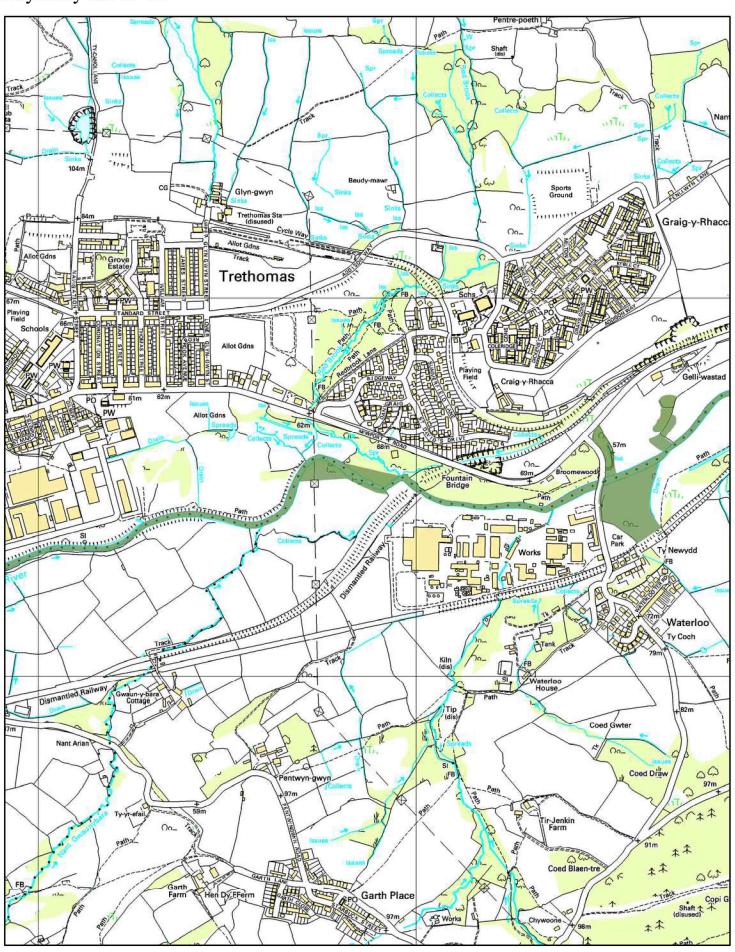


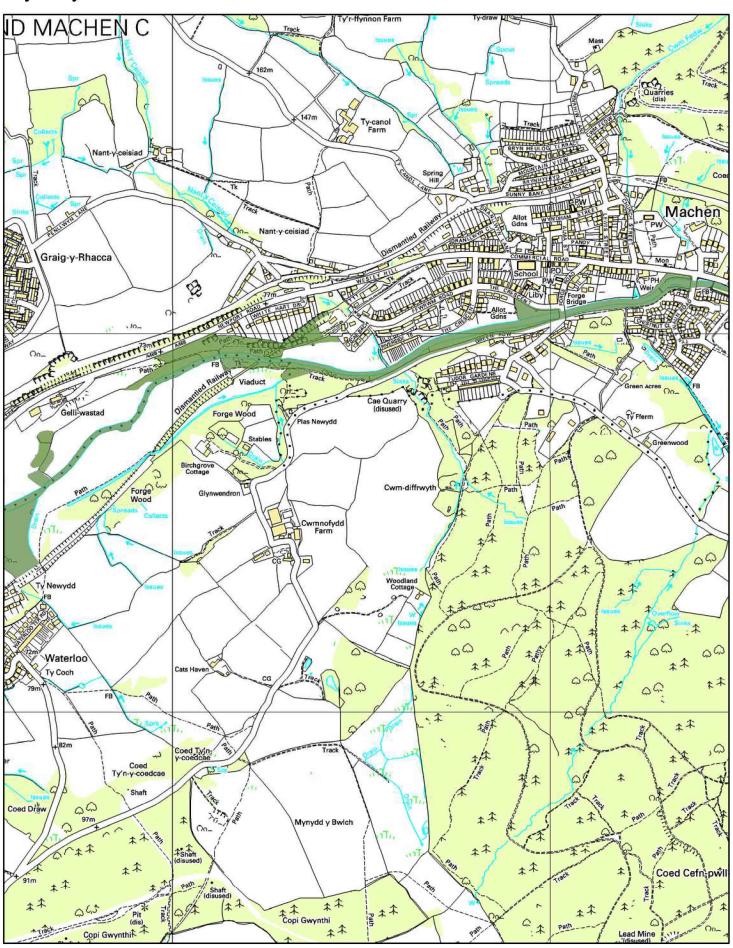


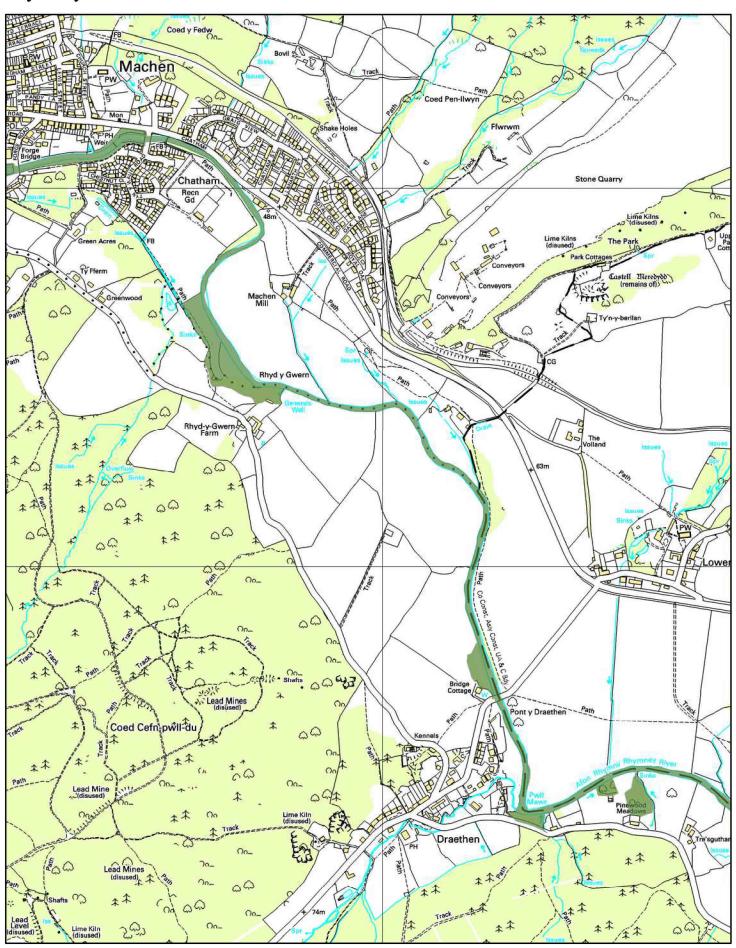
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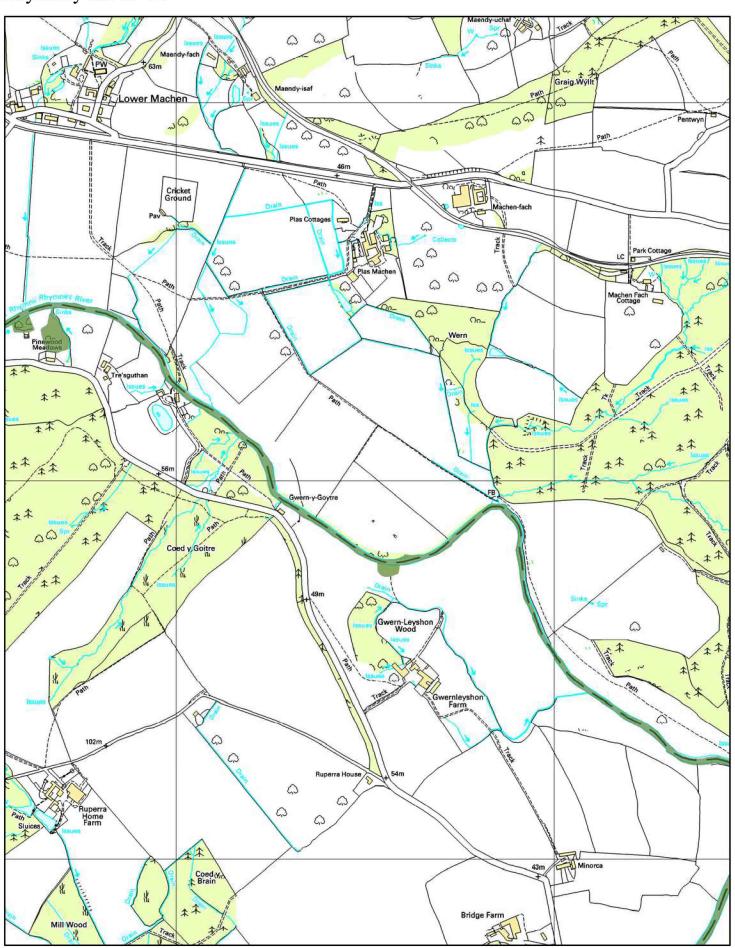




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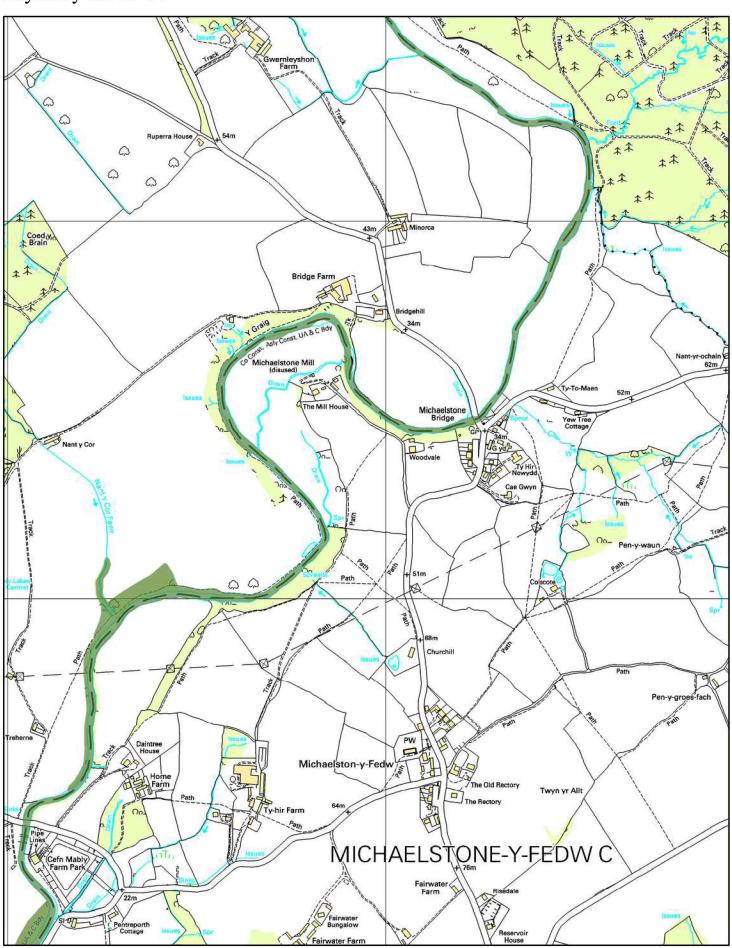
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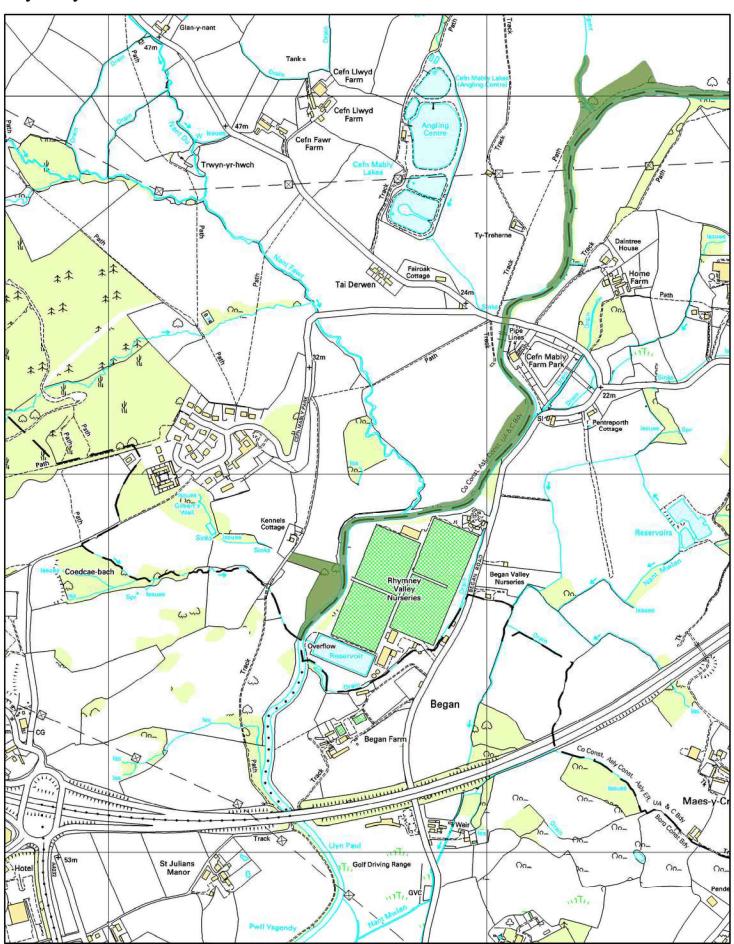
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