

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol Blaenau Gwent



Site Descriptions

Disgrifiadau Safle

Deposit Local Development Plan

Cynllun Adeneuo Datblygu Lleol

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1.0 SITE DESCRIPTIONS

The following information has been prepared to provide more detail on the allocated and designated sites included in the Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan.

2.0 MIXED USE SITES

MU1-3 Mixed Use Sites

MU1 Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor

Refer to Ebbw Vale Sustainable Regeneration Framework for further information.

The Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment (2011) identified that a site specific Flood Consequence Assessment will be required as part of any planning application. This should include an assessment or appreciation of the on-site ditches and ponds to ensure these are considered within the Masterplanning process.

MU2 'The Works'

This site has outline planning permission for further information refer to the approved Masterplan Design and Access Statement, Design Codes, the Sustainable Energy Strategy and sale of transfer obligations for further information.

MU3 NMC Factory and Bus Depot

The site occupies a large site mid way between Asda and the town centre. The boundaries vary in character; the northern side being opposite residential frontage on Warwick Road and the entrance to Welfare Park; Blaina Road on the east forms a major entrance into the town centre; the Asda development to the south has included boundary landscape and fencing up to the boundary; western edge is defined by a row of conifer trees, but a plot of rough ground forms the interface with Lakeside Housing.

The current large-scale buildings and the conifer tree screens block views across and over the site, but there is potential when cleared to frame key views and change the perception of visual and physical linkage with the town centre.

Surrounding road and pedestrian links are numerous, and a new pedestrian link must be as accessible and visible as possible to encourage use. However, level changes are a major constraint and would need careful consideration.

The embankment with mature trees and scrub should be retained as a green corridor through the site. The land in the south-west corner of the site, identified as a SINC should be retained as open space and buffered. It is recommended that a full ecological assessment including bat and breeding bird survey is undertaken and a plan produced detailing constraints, proposed mitigation enhancements.

A Section 278 Highway Agreement would be required to upgrade access arrangements.

The site lies within 100m of a Listed Building.

3.0 ACTION AREAS

AA1 Action Areas

AA1.1 Southern Gateway, Ebbw Vale

Refer to Ebbw Vale Sustainable Regeneration Framework for further information.

AA1.2 Market Square, Ebbw Vale

Refer to Ebbw Vale Sustainable Regeneration Framework for further information.

4.0 RETAIL

R1 RETAIL ALLOCATIONS

R1.1 Rhyd y Blew Retail Park

In May 2006, planning permission was granted for 8,361 sq m of non-food retail on land to the south west of the existing Focus store in Ebbw Vale. The approval comprises of 13 retail units of varying sizes. Ground works have commenced at the site; however, no 'building' work has taken place thus far.

R1.2 Extension to Festival Shopping Outlet Centre*

The site was granted full planning permission in 2007 to extend the existing Festival Shopping Outlet Centre in Ebbw Vale. Permission was granted for a two storey unit totalling 2,405 sq m gross shopping floorspace to the north of the existing centre, which will form Phase 2 of the Festival Park Scheme.

As of the base date of April 2009, development had not been started.

R1.3 Extension to Tesco Stores, North West Approach, Ebbw Vale*

The site was granted full planning permission in 2008 for a 2,581 sq m extension to the existing Tesco Store at the North West Approach, Ebbw Vale. The extension comprises of 1,704 sq m retail floorspace and 877 sq m storage floorspace and associated car parking and ancillary works which would increase the net sales area of the store to 5,123 sq m.

As of the base date of April 2009, development had not been started on the foodstore site.

R1.4 Market Street, Ebbw Vale

This is a vacant site located within the centre of Ebbw Vale Town Centre. The site is a paved, flat development platform with street bollards along the boundaries of the site. The site is situated in a prime location, north of the primary retail area. The allocation of this site for A1 comparison retailing is in accordance with the retail strategy of the Plan.

There are 2 trees adjacent on the eastern side of the site, which would need to be considered in any development proposal through a BS5837 survey.

5.0 HOUSING

H1 Housing Allocations

Ebbw Vale

H1.1 Willowtown School, Ebbw Vale

0.63 ha 22 Units Brownfield

The site is in the residential area of Willowtown north west of Ebbw Vale Town Centre. It is a triangular area of land which is surrounded by residential properties to the east and north west. The replacement school is to the south-west of the site. The site is cleared with the exception of two buildings, one on the northern corner and another small building in the south west of the site. The larger building is an example of an early 20th century school and is currently used for community purposes. The surrounding wall and railings should be retained where possible.

There is the potential for the site including the building to support protected species such as bats and breeding birds. Therefore it is recommended that a full ecological assessment including bat survey is undertaken and a plan produced detailing constraints, proposed mitigation enhancements.

The site can be accessed from the existing access.

Tredegar

H1.2 Cartref Aneurin Bevan

0.38 ha 13 Units Brownfield

This site is located in the residential settlement of Ashvale north of Tredegar Town Centre. The site is currently occupied by a Care Home, one of four which the 'Living Independently in the 21st Century' Blaenau Gwent Older Peoples Strategy proposes to close as part of plans to move away from standard residential care. The site is relatively flat, surrounded by residential properties with shops adjacent to the north-east boundary. There is an electricity sub-station in the north-east corner of the site.

There is a presence of protected species and mature trees at the front of the site. It is therefore recommended that a full ecological assessment and a plan prepared identifying constraints, mitigation and enhancements for example through the planting of native trees and shrubs around the periphery of the site. Trees at the front of the site should be retained as part of the development and a BS5387 Tree Survey should be undertaken.

Access will be gained from the existing access point to the north east of the site which will need to be widened, upgraded and reconfigured.

The site is crossed by public sewers which may restrict the density of the development proposed.

The Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment (2011) recommends that some further assessments of flooding consequences are undertaken as part of a planning application for the site. In particular such an assessment should concentrate on surface water

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flooding to and from the site in line with the information provided in the Stage 2 assessment report.

H1.3 Greenacres

0.50 ha 18 Units Brownfield

This site is located in the residential settlement of Dukestown north of Tredegar Town Centre. The site is currently occupied by a Care Home, one of four which the 'Living Independently in the 21st Century' Blaenau Gwent Older Peoples Strategy proposes to close as part of plans to move away from standard residential care. The site is bounded to the north and east by residential properties and to the west and south by the Tredegar bypass.

There is a presence of protected species and trees at the site. It is therefore recommended that a full ecological assessment is undertaken and a constraints and enhancement plan prepared. The site should maximise opportunities for biodiversity enhancement through the planting of native trees and shrubs around the periphery of the site. Trees at the front of the site need to be considered in any development proposal through a BS5837 survey.

The existing access from St Luke's Road needs widening.

The site is crossed by public sewers which may restrict the density of the development proposed.

A preliminary risk assessment is required to establish the risk to controlled waters.

The Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment (2011) recommends that some further assessments of flooding consequences are undertaken as part of a planning application for the site. In particular, such an assessment should concentrate on surface water flooding to and from the site, as well as the potential flood risk posed by the small watercourses in line with the information provided in the Stage 2 assessment.

H1.4 Jesmondene Stadium, Cefn Golau

5.26 ha 184 Units Brownfield

This site lies south-west of Tredegar Town Centre and is currently used as a scrap yard. Land to the north of the site is used for grazing, whilst to the east and south of the site are residential properties.

The site has the potential to support protected species including reptiles and nesting birds. A full ecological survey is required together with plan of constraints, mitigation and enhancements to ensure that the southern bank and river is protected.

There is a knotweed infestation along the stream to the south of the site which would need to be considered in developing the site.

The access to the site will need to be improved.

Parts of the public sewerage network suffer from hydraulic overloading. No regulatory improvements are planned under Dwr Cymru Welsh Water's current 5-year Capital Investment Programme. Should this site be developed in advance of any regulatory improvements, the developer may be required to fund the essential improvements. The

site is crossed by public sewers and water mains which may restrict the density of the development proposed.

An archaeological desk-based assessment including field survey plus possible evaluation on specific sites will be required.

H1.5 Business Resource Centre, Tafarnaubach

1.2 ha 42 Units Brownfield

This site is to the east of the residential area of Tafarnaubach, north west of Tredegar Town Centre. It is a flat area of land that is currently occupied by a training centre & council offices. The site is bordered to the north and east by the main access road into the Tafarnaubach Industrial Estate and to the south by new residential properties. To the west of the site is an industrial building. There is an electricity sub-station adjacent to the access road.

There is potential for the site to support protected species – a full ecological assessment including breeding bird and bat survey should be undertaken. A biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan is required and a BS5837 tree survey should be undertaken.

The site can be accessed from the existing access road to the east of the site.

The site is crossed by a public sewer which may restrict the density of the proposed development.

H1.6 Land Adjacent to Chartist Way

2.89 ha 101 Units Brownfield

This site is in the residential area of Sirhowy north east of Tredegar Town Centre. The site has been reclaimed to create a flat platform for development. The site is bordered by residential development to the south and east. A playground is located to the north and to the west are the historic remains of the Sirhowy Iron Works.

An ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required. The broadleaved woodland to the west of the site needs to be protected and buffered as it provides an ecological corridor. A BS5837 tree survey should be undertaken.

The site can be accessed from Chartist Way (eastern boundary) but a Section 278 agreement would be required to enable highway improvements.

A preliminary risk assessment is required to establish the risk to controlled waters.

Archaeological desk-based assessment and evaluation of specific sites may be required prior to planning application. This may limit the density on the site.

Upper Ebbw Fach

H1.7 Garnfach School, Nantyglo

0.81 ha 28 Units Brownfield

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This site is to the east of the main road in Nantyglo. The former school building which occupied three quarters of the site has been demolished. South of the site is a cemetery and to the east, west and north are residential properties.

Part of the site is required for a community scheme.

The site has the potential to support protected species with supporting habitats, although a bat and breeding bird survey found no evidence of these species. A biodiversity enhancement plan will be required for the site. There are trees on the site and a BS5837 survey will be required.

Access to the site will be from the existing access at Ffosmaen Road.

The site is crossed by a public sewer which may restrict the density of the proposed development.

H1.8 Crawshay House, Brynmawr

0.71 ha 25 Units Brownfield

The site is located east of Brynmawr Town Centre and is a residential care home. The site is currently occupied by a Care Home, one of four which the 'Living Independently in the 21st Century' Blaenau Gwent Older Peoples Strategy proposes to close as part of plans to move away from standard residential care. The site is located within a predominantly residential area. The residential care home occupies a third of the site, with the remainder being garden land.

The mature hedge, which borders the north, south and western perimeters of the site, needs to be protected and buffered in the development of the site. A BS5837 tree survey should be undertaken. There is potential for bird and bat within the building therefore a survey will be required and a biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan needs to be produced.

The existing access to the site will need to be upgraded.

Archaeological information on previous reclamation will be required prior to the determination of any application.

H1.9 Infants School & Old Griffin Yard, Brynmawr

1.04 ha 36 Units Brownfield

The site comprises of Brynmawr Infants School, Brynmawr County Primary School and Old Griffin Yard. Old Griffin yard is a run-down area comprising of old garages. The site is located within a predominantly residential area on the northern edge of Brynmawr Town Centre.

During a site visit the presence of protected species were noted and therefore a breeding bird and bat survey should be undertaken and a biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan prepared. A number of mature trees worthy of retention were also noted these would need to be considered in any proposal through a BS5837 tree survey.

A Section 278 will be required to provide a new access to the site.

A preliminary risk assessment is required to assess risk to controlled waters.

The site is crossed by public sewer(s) which may restrict the density of the proposed development.

H1.10 Hafod Dawel Site, Nantyglo# **0.74 ha 44 Units Brownfield**

The site of a former residential care home located in a predominantly residential area, to the east of the town centre of Nantyglo. The site is to be used for a new housing-with-care facility. Since the base date of April 2009 an application has been received for 44 flats.

H1.11 West of the Recreation Ground, Nantyglo **0.42 ha 15 Units Brownfield**

This site is located in the residential area of Nantyglo. It is a rectangular plot of land to the west of a recreation ground (Banna Park). The northern part of the site is currently used for the grazing of horses. The southern half is used for the storing of caravans. The land was previously used as railway sidings.

Hedgerows and mature trees along the northern boundary require protection and buffering. An ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required.

Access can be achieved off Chapel Road, to the east of the site.

A preliminary risk assessment is required to establish risk to controlled waters.

The site is crossed by public sewer(s) which may restrict the density of the proposed development.

H1.12 Land to the East of Blaina Road, Brynmawr **0.72 ha 25 Units Brownfield**

The site was part of the former Dunlop Semtex Factory, Brynmawr. To the north of the site is a former boiler house which is Listed, to the west is the Lakeside Retail Park and to the east is Blaen-y-Cwm School. South of the site is a petrol filling station. The Council approved a planning application for 62 dwellings at this site, subject to the signing of a S106, in December 2007. This application has since been withdrawn.

A BS5837 tree survey is required to ensure trees along the eastern boundary are integrated into the development.

A preliminary risk assessment is required to establish risk to controlled waters.

Access can be gained from the main road to the west.

H1.13 Land to the North of Winchestown, Nantyglo **0.43 ha 15 Units Brownfield**

The site is located south west of Brynmawr in the residential area of Winchestown. The site is rectangular in shape and is surrounded on three sides by residential properties. Three garages are located at the western corner of the site. The site slopes gently upwards to the south and flattens out then falls away at an embankment. The land was

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previously used as a coal tip. There is currently a community link across the site which will need to be taken into consideration in the development of the site.

The site has the potential to support protected species and therefore it is suggested that an ecological assessment is undertaken and a biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan prepared.

The development proposal can be accommodated subject to improvements to the road fronting (north) the site.

A preliminary risk assessment is required to establish risk to controlled waters.

Lower Ebbw Fach

H1.14 Six Bells Colliery Site, Six Bells

1.47 ha 40 Units Brownfield

This site is on the upper platform of the former Six Bells Colliery, south of the residential area of Six Bells. Development of the site should be in accordance with the Development Brief which has been prepared for the site. The design of the site needs to be sympathetic to the adjacent platform which has been developed into a park and tourist destination following the erection of the Guardian monument.

The site is adjacent to a SINC and there is the potential for the site to support protected species a full ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan will be required for the site. The site contains a number of trees and therefore a BS6837 tree survey will be required.

The existing access to the site will need to be upgraded.

H1.15 Warm Turn, Six Bells

0.93 ha 32 Units Greenfield

This site is a flat area of vacant land to the south-west of the residential area of Six Bells. The site has a steep embankment on the east and is screened from Aberbeeg Road by garages and an ambulance station. The site is south of the upper platform created following the reclamation of the former Six Bells Colliery.

The northern part of the site is adjacent to a SINC and there is the potential for the site to support protected species, therefore a full ecological assessment together with a biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required. Trees on the site would need to be considered in any proposal through a BS5837 survey.

Access will be required from Six Bells Road.

H1.16 Roseheyworth Comprehensive, Abertillery

0.95 ha 33 Units Brownfield

This is a vacant site previously occupied by a school and consists of 3 plateaux, at varying levels on the valley side. The site lies north-west of Abertillery Town Centre in a predominantly residential area. To the south-west of the site is the A467. Mature trees separate the platforms and require protection.

There is the potential for this site to support protected species and a number of habitat and wildlife corridors run through the site. An ecological survey and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required. There are also a number of mature trees within the site, which should be protected in any development proposal through a BS5837 tree survey.

A survey of Japanese knotweed and programme for its eradication

The site is to be accessed from Morely Road.

The site is crossed by public sewer(s) which may restrict the density of the proposed development.

H1.17 Former Mount Pleasant Court, Brynithel#

0.52ha 18 Units Brownfield

This site is south of Abertillery Town Centre in the residential settlement of Brynithel. The site is on the periphery of the Mount Pleasant Estate and was formerly the site of flats. To the north of the site is a playing field, to the south a playground, to the east residential properties and to the west open space. Mature trees to the south must be protected with appropriate buffering.

The site may support protected species therefore a full ecological assessment including bird and amphibian surveys and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required. There is a line of mature trees/dense scrub forming a wildlife corridor linking to adjacent broadleaved woodland these should be retained. Trees on the site would need to be considered in any proposal through a BS5837 survey.

A survey of Japanese knotweed and programme for its eradication is required.

Preliminary risk assessment to controlled waters is required.

The site is crossed by water mains which may restrict the density of the proposed development.

H1.18 Hillcrest View, Cwmtillery#

0.83ha 22 Units Brownfield

This site is north of Abertillery Town centre in the residential settlement of Cwmtillery. The land is vacant scrubland which rises to the east but was previously occupied by council properties. Since the base date of this Plan the site has been granted full permission for 22 affordable units.

H1.19 Quarry adjacent to Cwm Farm Road, Six Bells

0.64ha 22 Units Brownfield

This site is a disused quarry west of the residential settlement of Six Bells. It occupies an elevated location to the north is a residential property, to the west a school and allotment gardens to the south. The development of the site should be limited to the area currently occupied by sheds/workshops.

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The site supports protected species and habitats particularly trees and hedgerows, which provide a wildlife corridor, therefore a full ecological survey and BS5837 tree survey are required: and a biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan needs to be prepared.

A visual impact assessment is required.

A new access is required to the site.

A preliminary risk assessment is required to establish risk to controlled waters at the site.

Watercourses should be protected by a 5m buffer zone.

H1.20 Land at Farm Road, Swffryd **3.72ha 130 Units Greenfield**

This site occupies an elevated location east of the settlement of Swffryd. The land is greenfield with part of the site being formally used as a playing pitch. To the east are residential properties and the remainder of the site is surrounded by open space.

The site is known to support species and habitats and part of the site is within a SINC therefore a full ecological assessment and a biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required.

A visual impact assessment is required.

Access to the site will only be permitted via Gordon Avenue subject to local highway improvements. Secondary emergency vehicular access will also be required via Farm Rd.

HC1 Housing Commitments

Ebbw Vale

HC1.1 North of Cwmyrdderch Court Flats, Cwm **1.18 ha 16 Units Greenfield**

The site lies within the village of Cwm, which is to the south of Ebbw Vale. The site is split into two areas by the main access road into Cwm.

The site was granted full planning consent in 2006 for the development of 17 dwellings. The upper portion of the site will accommodate three building plots and the lower portion will accommodate fourteen plots. Site construction is underway.

HC1.2 Letchworth Road **0.93ha 16 Units**

This site is northwest of Ebbw Vale Town center in the residential area of Willowtown. The site is bordered by; Tesco to the northeast, Monwell Hankinson to the southeast, Ebbw Vale cemetery to the north and residential properties to the south.

The site has outline planning permission for 16 dwellings. The site is being developed as self-build plots and construction has started.

HC1.3 Old 45 Yard, Steelworks Road

3.49 ha 82 Units

The site is situated to the east of Steelworks Road and 'The Works' site.

Outline planning permission was granted in 2004. The site is being built in two phases; phase 2 is for 68 dwellings and is nearing completion; and phase 1, which has yet to commence has planning consent for 63 dwellings.

HC1.4 Adjacent Pant-y- Fforest

1.63 ha 21 Units

The site is located north east of Ebbw Vale Town Centre, to the rear of Pant-y-Fforest. The site comprises a sloping grass field with the boundary to the houses to the west formed by semi and mature landscaping.

Outline planning permission was granted in 2006 for 21 detached dwellings. Access is to be gained from Pant-y-Fforest Road. There are geotechnical recommendations which need to be complied with.

An existing right of way which runs through the site will need to be retained or diverted. A development brief is required to ensure the development takes place in a co-ordinated manner.

HC1.5 Heol Elan#

1.2 ha 43 Units

This site is north of Ebbw Vale town centre in the residential area of Rassau. The site is vacant but was once occupied by houses.

Full planning permission has been granted for 43 affordable dwellings. As of April 2009 the development was under construction.

HC1.6 Land at College Road#

1.04 ha 41 Units

This site is to the north of Ebbw Vale town centre off College Road and adjacent to the Ebbw Vale Community Hospital.

Full planning permission was granted in 2008 for 41 extra care apartments and ancillary facilities to provide extra care accommodation for the elderly. As of April 2009 the development was under construction.

HC1.7 Adj Sports Ground, Gwaun Helyg#

2.92 ha 69 Units

This site is to the west of Ebbw Vale town centre in the residential area of Hilltop.

Outline planning permission was granted in 2007 for residential development. An indicative site layout plan was submitted illustrating a development of 69 units. Since this time a full application has been received for 73 affordable units at the site.

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HC1.8 Higgs Yard

0.99 ha 29 Units

This site is to the north east of Ebbw Vale Town Centre.

Full planning permission was granted, subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement, in 2008. The application was to erect 29 dwellings, comprising 2 detached 3-bed dwellings, 26-detached 4-bed dwellings and 1 no. 1-bed flat over garage.

HC1.9 Mountain Road#

0.47 ha 22 Units

This site is north of Ebbw Vale Town Centre south of the residential area of Rassau. The figure of 22 units reflects a density of 35 per hectare.

Outline planning permission was granted in 2007 subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement. Since this time full permission has been granted for 23 units.

HC1.10 Briery Hill, Ebbw Vale#

0.94 ha 33 Units

This site is to the south east of Ebbw Vale town centre in the residential area of Briery Hill.

Full planning permission was granted in 2008, subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement, for 33 affordable dwellings.

Tredegar

HC1.11 Derelict Bus Garage, Woodfield Road#

0.36 ha 11 Units

This site lies to the north of Tredegar town centre and is the site of a former bus garage.

Full permission was granted in 2007 for 18 units, however this was revised to 11 units in 2010.

HC1.12 Former LCR Factory, Charles Street

0.25 ha 14 Units

This site is to the north of Tredegar town Centre. The site is bounded to the north east and south west by highways, to the north west by a dwelling and south east by residential properties. The existing shoe repair and key cutting shop located along the sites south western frontage is excluded from the site.

Outline Planning Permission was granted in 2008 for 14 units.

HC1.13 Former Factory Site, Pochin

0.65 ha 28 Units

This site lies to the south of Tredegar in Pochin.

Reserved Matters was approved in 2008 for 28 units.

HC1.14 Land at Poultry Farm, Queen Victoria Street
0.84 ha 3 Units

The site is south east of Tredegar town centre.

Outline planning permission was granted in 2005 for 14 dwellings. The site has been built on a plot by plot basis. As of April 2009 the site was nearing completion.

HC1.15 Upper Ty Gwyn Farm, Nantybwich
1.44 ha 38 Units

This site is northwest of Tredegar town centre in the residential settlement of Nantybwich.

Outline planning permission was granted in 2005 for 48 dwellings. The site is being developed on a plot by plot basis.

HC1.16 Former LCR Factory, opposite Tredegar Comprehensive School#
0.62 ha 47 Units

This site lies south of Tredegar town centre on the site of a former factory. North of the site is the Historic Park of Bedwellty and to the south is the Tredegar Comprehensive school.

Reserved Matters was granted in 2008 for 47 affordable dwellings. As of April 2009 the site was under construction.

HC1.17 Peacehaven
4.81 ha 147 Units

This site lies south of Tredegar town centre, south of the Pecehaven residential area.

Full permission was granted in 2008, subject to the signing of a S106 agreement, for 147 dwellings, 12 of which are to be affordable.

HC1.18 The Goldmine, Sirhowy
0.17 ha 16 Units

This site lies to the northeast of Tredegar town centre in the residential area of Sirhowy.

Full permission was granted in 2008 for two blocks of flats creating 16 units.

HC1.19 BKF Plastics, Ashvale
1.83 ha 54 Units

This site lies to the northwest of Tredegar town centre in the residential settlement of Ashvale. The site is currently occupied by a factory unit.

Outline planning permission for residential development was granted in 2008, subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement.

HC1.20 Sirhowy Infants School Site#
0.84 ha 23 Units

This site lies to the northeast of Tredegar town centre in the residential settlement of Sirhowy.

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Outline planning permission was granted in 2009, subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement, for 23 affordable units.

HC1.21 Corporation Yard

0.75 ha 23 Units

This site lies north east of Tredegar Town Centre in the residential settlement of Ashvale.

Outline planning permission was granted in 2009 for 23 dwellings.

HC1.22 Park Hill

13.09 ha 160 Units

This site lies south of Tredegar town centre and is a greenfield site.

Full planning permission was granted in 2005 for 160 dwellings. In 2010 planning full permission was granted for 156 dwellings on part of the site and outline permission for an unspecified number of houses on the remainder of the site.

Upper Ebbw Fach

HC1.23 Recticel and Gwalia Former Factory Site, Brynmawr#

0.96 ha 45 Units

This site lies to the east of Brynmawr town centre in a residential area. The site consists of two former factory sites which are now cleared. The outline application reserved all detailed aspects for future approval. The scheme will involve the re-location of the scout hut that is within the main site to the opposite corner.

The 45 unit figure is based on Welsh Assembly Government requirements for the sale of the site.

HC1.24 Land at Clydach Street, Brynmawr

0.64 ha 12 Units

This site lies north of Brynmawr Town Centre.

Full planning permission was granted for 14 units in 2006. The site is currently under construction.

HC1.25 TSA Woodcraft, Noble Square Industrial Estate, Brynmawr

0.72 ha 25 Units

This site lies to the east of Brynmawr town centre.

Full permission was granted in 2007 for 36 dwellings at this former factory site. As of April 2009 the site was partly developed.

HC1.26 Roberto Neckwear, Limestone Road, Nantyglo

0.76 ha 19 Units

This site lies on Limestone Road south east of Brynmawr and north of Nantyglo. To the west of the site is a new housing development, to the east a rugby club, to the south existing housing with vacant industrial land to the north.

Outline planning permission was granted in 2006.

HC1.27 Cwm Farm, Blaina
10.73 ha 78 Units

This site lies to the east of Blaina town centre. It is a large greenfield site which originally had planning permission in 1997. The site has been developed in phases with some phases being self build. The bulk of the remaining dwellings are located in two areas: phase 4 has outline planning permission for 44 dwellings; the other area, known as Glyn Milwr, has full permission for 36 houses.

HC1.28 Salem Chapel, Waun Ebbw Rd & Pond Rd Junction, Nantyglo
0.26 ha 11 Units

This site lies to the west of Nantyglo Comprehensive School.

Full planning permission was granted in 2008 for 11 three and four bedroom houses.

HC1.29 At Cwm Farm Road
0.68 ha 20 Units

This site lies to the east of Abertillery town centre.

Outline planning permission was granted in 2008 for 20 split level dwellings.

HC1.30 Former Swffryd Junior School#
0.41 ha 18 Units

This site is in the centre of Swffryd which is at the southern most tip of the Borough. The site is the former site of the Swffryd Junior School.

Full planning permission was granted for 18 dwellings in 2008, subject to the signing of a S106. Since the base date of the Plan a new application has been granted for 20 dwellings subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement.

HC1.31 Land at Penrhiw Estate, Brynithel
1.02 ha 23 Units

The site is in the south of the Borough in the settlement of Brynithel, south of Abertillery. The site is bordered by residential properties to the north and allotment gardens to the south. The application was supported by an illustrative scheme for 23 detached properties.

Outline planning permission was granted in 2009.

GT1 Gypsy And Traveller Accommodation

GT1 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

This is an extension to the existing gypsy and traveller site at Cwmcraehen. It extends the site in a south westerly direction onto land owned by the Council. A buffer will be retained between the site and the neighbouring employment site.

A BS5837 tree survey should be undertaken and some trees should be retained for screening purposes.

Access to the site is via Blaenant Road which serves as access to various uses, including residential and industrial. Pedestrian footway links are substandard along areas of Blaenant Road and these links would need to be improved. Street lighting provisions would also need to be upgraded.

A ground investigation and risk assessment is required in accordance with guidance.

6.0 TRANSPORT

T1 Cycle Routes

T1.1 HoV Route linking Nine Arches Tredegar to Brynmawr

This route forms part of the developing National Cycle Network Route 46, which when complete will run along the Heads of the Valleys from Neath to Abergavenny and beyond. The Blaenau Gwent stretch runs south of the Heads of the Valleys corridor from Bryn Bach to Clydach Gorge, forming a key part of the National Cycle Network.

T1.2 Link from HoV to Rassau Industrial Estate

A local cycle link from the Heads of the Valleys Road to Rassau Industrial Estate. The route will provide sustainable transport links to employment areas from local communities.

T1.3 HoV to Ebbw Vale and Cwm

Part of a linear route from NCN 46 at the Heads of the Valleys to Crumlin and beyond. This link is between NCN 46, Ebbw Vale, "The Works" and Cwm. This route will improve community access to employment areas, the countryside and the National Cycle Network.

T1.4 Cwm to Aberbeeg

Part of a linear route from NCN 46 at the Heads of the Valleys to Crumlin and beyond. This particular link is between Cwm and Aberbeeg. The route will improve community access links to employment areas, the countryside and the National Cycle Network.

T1.5 Link from HoV to Trefil

A link from NCN 46 from the HoV between Tredegar and Ebbw Vale to Trefil and beyond. This link will improve community access to the countryside and Brecon Beacons National Park for residents of Blaenau Gwent and improve accessibility from Trefil to employment and other services in the borough.

T1.6 Link from HoV to Tafarnaubach Industrial Estate

A local cycle link from the Heads of the Valleys Road to Tafarnaubach Industrial Estate. The route will provide sustainable transport links to employment areas from the local communities of Tredegar and other settlements along the National Cycle Network.

T1.7 Bedwellty Pits, Tredegar to County Boundary

This route forms part of the Sirhowy Valley Cycleway linking the existing cycleway at Bedwellty Pits to Blackwood. The route will provide opportunities for tourism and improved access to the countryside for the local communities together with links to the National Cycle network Route 46 in the north and 47 in the south at Blackwood.

T1.8 Hilltop, Ebbw Vale to Manmoel

This route runs along the mountain ridge between Tredegar and Ebbw Vale and will link both settlements with Manmoel. The route will provide opportunities for tourism and improved access to the countryside for local communities.

T1.9 Brynmawr to Blaenavon

This local cycle link connects Brynmawr to Blaenavon. The route will provide opportunities for tourism and improved access to the countryside for the local communities together with links to the National Cycle Network Route 46.

T1.10 Extension of Ebbw Fach Trail from Abertillery to Aberbeeg and completion of missing section through Blaina

This proposal will complete the route that runs the whole length of the Ebbw Fach Valley. This will benefit local communities improving access and links to employment areas, public transport and local green infrastructure. The route itself will become a tourist attraction.

T1.11 Link to Cwmtillery Lakes

A local cycleway link from Abertillery to Cwmtillery Lakes. The route will provide opportunities for tourism and improved access to the countryside for local communities.

T1.12 Aberbeeg to Royal Oak

A local link which connects the Ebbw Fawr and Ebbw Fach cycle routes with neighbouring authorities of Caerphilly and Torfaen. The route will improve community access and links to the countryside; and provide opportunities to link to the wider developing cycle network and neighbouring authorities.

T1.13 Royal Oak to Swfrydd

Part of a linear route that runs through the Ebbw Fach and Fawr from NCN 46 to Crumlin and Pontypool. The route will benefit the local communities providing improved access to employment and tourism opportunities and further access to the local and National Cycle Network.

T2 Rail Network and Station Improvements

T2.1 Extension of rail link from Ebbw Vale Parkway to Ebbw Vale Town

The second Phase of the Ebbw Valley Rail link involves extending the railway line to a point adjacent to the General Office at 'The Works'. It also involves the provision of a new hourly service to Newport.

T2.2 Provision of new station and bus interchange at Ebbw Vale

To service the new rail link there will be a new station and public transport interchange at 'The Works'. This is to be located between the General Offices and the main square. The proposal will provide opportunities for modal shift, particularly for residents living in Ebbw Vale.

T2.3 Provision of new station at Cwm

A new station at Cwm is part of plans to further develop the Ebbw Valley Rail Link. This station would be located on the existing line, at the heart of the settlement, adjacent to the Victoria Arms public house. A station at Cwm could be served by the proposed passenger

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services to Cardiff and Newport. Groundworks for the station were carried out as part of the Cwm Bypass project.

T2.4 Extension of rail link to Abertillery

This proposal involves extending the Ebbw Vale Railway from Aberbeeg to Abertillery along the former disused rail corridor.

T2.5 Provision of new station and Park and Ride at Abertillery

The extension of the rail line to Abertillery would require a new station and would also involve the provision of a park and ride facility. This will provide opportunities for modal shift for residents in the Ebbw Fach valley.

T2.6 Rail freight provision at Marine Colliery

If plans for a new quarry east of Cwm come to fruition there will be an opportunity to develop a new rail freight provision at Marine Colliery. The facility will be located in the north of the Marine Colliery site adjacent to the rail line.

T3 Safeguarding of Disused Railway Infrastructure

The route of the former railway line from Brynmawr to Blaenavon is being protected for future transport use. The Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway Company Limited operates a railway along a short section of the former railway line near Blaenavon and have identified the potential to expand the operating line through Waunavon into Brynmawr. This would serve as a heritage railway and act as a tourist attraction.

T4 Improvements to Bus Services

T4.1 Bus Priority Scheme along the Brynmawr to Newport Bus Corridor

This is a Regional Transport Plan scheme which aims to focus capital investment on bus priority routes. Brynmawr to Newport is identified as one of the priority routes where lane improvement and junction priority will be undertaken with a view to improve end to end journey times and journey experience.

T4.2 Bus Interchange improvement at Brynmawr

This is a Regional Transport Plan scheme to improve the strategic bus interchange facilities in Brynmawr providing links to and from the Heads of the Valleys area. Consultants are currently investigating what works are required to improve the operation and regeneration benefits of this interchange.

T4.3 Bus Interchange improvement at Ebbw Vale

This is a Regional Transport Plan scheme to improve the bus interchange facilities in Ebbw Vale. More information on plans for the bus interchange are identified in the Ebbw Vale Sustainable Regeneration Framework.

T5 New Roads to Facilitate Development

T5.1 Construction of a Peripheral Distributor Road through 'The Works'

This is phase 1 of a two phase scheme identified in the Regional Transport Plan to improve access from southern Ebbw Vale to the Heads of the Valleys Road. As part of the redevelopment of 'The Works' a new Peripheral Distributor Road (PDR) is being

constructed. This will provide a link from the south of 'The Works' (by-passing the town centre) to the north of Ebbw Vale linking into the existing road system. The introduction of the PDR, which will be designated as the new A4046 will have the potential to relieve traffic flow levels within the town centre.

T5.2 Online improvements between the Peripheral Distributor Road and the A465.

This is phase 2 of the road improvement between south Ebbw Vale and the Heads of the Valleys Road. The PDR, redevelopment of 'The Works', dualling of the Heads of the Valleys Road and redevelopment proposals North of Ebbw Vale have the potential to significantly affect traffic flow along the A4046 north of 'The Works'. On line improvements have been identified to ensure the optimal operation of the highway network. These involve: improvements to Cemetery Road Roundabout including an additional roundabout at the college entrance; a roundabout at the A4046/A4047 junction at Rhyd-y-Blew; adaptation of Libanus Road Gyratory to double signilised junction and movement of bus stops to Beaufort Road; and a number of complementary measures.

T6 Regeneration Led Highway Improvements

T6.1 Dualling of the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road (Tredegar to Brynmawr)

The Welsh Assembly Government plans to complete the dualling of the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road by 2020. To date, two sections have been completed, between Merthyr and Tredegar and Abergavenny and Gilwern. The next stage involves completing the stretch between Tredegar and Gilwern. This is to be undertaken in two phases, the Tredegar to Brynmawr section is expected to be completed by 2014 and work on the Brynmawr to Gilwern section is expected to start by 2014 (National Transport Plan, 2009). The Tredegar to Brynmawr section is within Blaenau Gwent. The road is diverted north of Garnlydan and south of Rassau Industrial Estate before it joins back with the old alignment at Tredegar.

T6.2 Online improvements to the A4046 south of Cwm

One of the main transport problems facing the Heads of the Valleys area is the poor standard of vehicular access in a north south direction. The completion of the Cwm by-pass and plans to improve the road north through 'The Works' to the Heads of the Valleys Road will increase accessibility to the north. However, problems still exist south of Cwm to Aberbeeg. In order to facilitate regeneration, and to fully enable the role and function of settlements within the Heads of the Valleys area to be realised, improvements to this corridor will need to be undertaken.

T6.3 Online improvements to the A4048 south of Tredegar

One of the main transport problems facing the Heads of the Valleys area is the poor standard of vehicular access in a north south direction. The completion of the Tredegar by-pass has increased accessibility to the north of Tredegar. However, problems still exist south of Tredegar as the road to Blackwood is substandard. In order to facilitate regeneration, and to fully enable the role and function of settlements within the Heads of the Valleys area to be realised, improvements to this corridor will need to be undertaken.

T6.4 Online improvements to the A467 south of Abertillery.

One of the main transport problems facing the Heads of the Valleys area is the poor standard of vehicular access in a north south direction. The improvements to the A467 north of Abertillery have increased accessibility to the north. However, problems still exist

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on a short stretch south of Abertillery to Aberbeeg. In order to facilitate regeneration, and to fully enable the role and function of settlements within the Heads of the Valleys area to be realised, improvements to this corridor will need to be undertaken.

7.0 EMPLOYMENT

EMP1.1 Employment Allocations

Business Parks

EMP1.1 Land at Festival Park, Ebbw Vale 1.0ha

The site is a flat prepared development platform centrally located within Festival Business Park. Access can be achieved via existing highway infrastructure provided within the business park. Along east and western boundaries, the mature trees and scrub should be retained, therefore the site has an indicative developable area of 0.7 hectares.

An ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required.

As part of a development proposal, an assessment will be required to understand the extent of off-site water mains.

EMP1.2 Land at Tredegar Business Park, Tredegar 3.1ha

This 3.1 hectare site is the remaining vacant land at Tredegar Business Park. The site is a flat development platform which benefits from a constructed access road as a result of the development of the first two phases of the business park. To the east of the site is the river Sirhowy. The site lies partly within a B and C2 flood risk zone, therefore a 7 metre buffer zone should be maintained between the River Sirhowy and any development proposal. A natural buffer runs along the river corridor comprising of a retaining wall, footpath and an area of grassland / scrub. This should be retained and enhanced to form the 7 metre buffer zone. To the south of the site there is an opportunity to provide a footpath to link to the adjacent Bridge Street Industrial Estate and the town centre. These features should be retained and enhanced. Along the Bridge Street Industrial Estate boundary, appropriate native hedgerow / scrub planting should be provided. Taking into account these constraints and opportunities the site has an indicative developable area of 2.1 hectares.

An ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required.

A significant archaeological restraint is identified on the site; namely Tredegar Ironworks. An archaeological desk-based assessment plus possible evaluation on specific sites is required as part of any development proposal. Archaeological remains may remove some areas of the site from development.

Parts of the public sewerage network suffer from hydraulic overloading. No regulatory improvements are planned under Dwr Cymru Welsh Water's current 5 year Capital Investment Programme. Should this site be developed in advance of any regulatory improvements, the developer may be required to fund the essential improvements. The

site is crossed by public sewers and watermains which may restrict the density of the development.

The Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment (2011) recommends that the site is investigated further during preparation of a planning application, which would include confirmation of site levels against potential flood levels at the site, for the present day and taking into account climate change.

EMP1.3 Land at Rising Sun Industrial Estate, Upper Ebbw Fach 3.3ha

The site is reclaimed industrial land located to the north of Rising Sun Industrial Estate. To the east of the site are residential properties and to the north of the site is a new Welsh Primary School. Access to the site is achievable through the new primary school site. The broadleaved woodland to the east should be retained as a natural buffer between the development and residential properties. A buffer should also be created between the development and the school to the north. The broadleaved woodland to the south and western boundaries of the site should also be retained. The presence of watercourses along the eastern and southern boundaries should be protected by a 5 metre buffer zone. This is an employment allocation for B1 use only which has an indicative developable area of 1.6 hectares having taken the above constraints into account.

An ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required.

The Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment (2011) recommends that the conclusions made within the Stage 2 SFCA are addressed via a site specific Flood Consequence Assessment during the Planning applications stage. This would include confirmation of the potential flood risks posed from the small drain located on the site.

Primary Sites

EMP1.4 Rassau Platform A, Ebbw Vale 4.8ha

The site is a vacant platform situated on the north eastern edge of Rassau Industrial Estate. The site benefits from existing highway infrastructure although access roadways will need to be upgraded. The site is split into 2 platforms by the road layout. The northern platform is slightly higher than the southern platform. The platforms offer good views over Ebbw Vale, therefore views into the site will need to be considered.

The site has strong ecological connectivity to adjacent woodland, Carno reservoir and surrounding countryside therefore a biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan will be required. Although the whole 4.8 hectare site is allocated for employment, 1.4 hectare should be protected and enhanced for appropriate screening and buffering, leaving a net area for development of 3.4 hectares.

An ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required.

EMP1.5 Rassau Platform B, Ebbw Vale 8.0ha

The site is located along the eastern boundary of Rassau Industrial Estate. Current access is via a track, which cannot facilitate development. Access to the site can be achieved through the employment allocation to the west of the site (EMP1.5 Rassau Platform A).

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Overhead power lines cross the north east of the site. A public footpath runs alongside the eastern boundary and to the south of the site which should be protected in the layout of any development.

The northern half of the site is a triangular shaped area of grassland. The southern half of the site is woodland, comprising of extensive conifer plantation and wide wet ditches. The site forms part of a wider ecological complex of connected woodland around the Carno Reservoir area which would require an ecological assessment and management plan as part of a development proposal. Although the whole 8.0 hectare site is allocated for employment, the southern half of the site is considered undevelopable, leaving a net area for development of 3.7 hectares.

An ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required.

EMP1.6 Land at Waun-y-Pound, Ebbw Vale 6.3ha

The site is located to the south-east of Waun-y-Pound Industrial Estate. To the north east is the existing Waun-y-Pound Industrial Estate, the remainder of the site is surrounded by woodland. The development site is divided into 2 distinct areas, a northern and southern platform. The southern platform is higher and can be accessed from the industrial access road to the west. It is a flat, grassed platform which contains a number of rushes and there are a number of trees in the southern corner. There are prominent views into the site from the east and care should be taken in the design of the building on this platform. The northern platform is at a lower level and is accessed by the eastern access road within the industrial estate. An access point into this platform has already been provided. Although this platform is lower care should be taken in the design of the roof which will be seen from residential areas to the east.

The site is immediately adjacent to Sirhowy Hill Woodlands and Cardiff Pond Local Nature Reserve and SINC. A full ecological assessment and biodiversity enhancement and constraints and management plan would be required. Along the edge of the woodland boundary a native hedgerow is required with a minimum buffer of 5 metres to provide bolstering to the boundary of the SINC. In order to take into account the biodiversity constraints and provide appropriate buffering, a developable area of 4.6 hectares has been identified.

In terms of infrastructure, there is no public sewerage system in the area. Any new development will require the provision of satisfactory alternative facilities for sewerage disposal.

The Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment (2011) identifies that a FCA would be required as part of any planning applications. This should include an assessment or appreciation of the Waun-y-Pound reservoir and the nearby ditches, as well as potential for TAN 15 best practice in terms of surface water management, it is likely that appropriate mitigation against such surface water flooding would be provided.

EMP 1.7 Marine Colliery, Ebbw Vale 5.3ha

This is a development platform south of Cwm on the former Marine Colliery site. The eastern boundary of the site borders the new rail connection and the western boundary is bordered by the Ebbw River. This development platform sits at the bottom of a steeply

sloping wooded valley. In view of the site's position alongside the railway and scenic setting, development proposals should be of a high design standard. Located on the site is a scheduled ancient monument; the pumping engine. The scheduled ancient monument should be protected and its settings enhanced in any development proposal. The site benefits from an existing access road. There may be an opportunity to develop rail sidings to enable the sustainable transportation of goods.

The site comprises mainly of spoil which is of low biodiversity value although there is strong ecological connectivity to the adjacent plantation of woodlands at Graig y Deri and Graig Fawr and presence of mature trees to the south. Although the whole 5.3 hectare site is allocated for employment use, 1.9 hectares is protected to retain the ecological connectivity across the valley and the mature trees to the south, leaving an indicative developable area of 3.4 hectares.

An ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required.

In terms of infrastructure, a public sewer and watermains cross the site which may restrict the density of the development.

The Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment (2011) identifies that a site specific Flood Consequence Assessment would be required as part of any planning applications. This should include an assessment or appreciation of the local small watercourses and the potential for high ground water levels at the site.

EMP1.8 Crown Business Park Platform A, Tredegar 1.1ha

This is a vacant site situated within Crown Business Park. Access can be achieved from the existing highway infrastructure serving the adjacent employment units to the north. The site is a flat, grassed platform although the land slopes steeply to the east and south where there are ordinary watercourses present. Watercourses should be protected from development from a 5 metre buffer zone. Along the western boundary of the site is a hedgerow which should be protected as part of any development proposal. Taking these site features into account, an indicative developable area of 0.7 hectares has been identified for the site.

An ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required.

In terms of infrastructure, public sewers and watermains cross the site which may restrict the density of the development.

EMP1.9 Crown Business Park Platform B, Sirhowy 2.2ha

This site is a vacant, flat piece of land on the edge of Crown Business Park, which already benefits from an access point and subsequent access to the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road. Nant Melyn Brook crosses through part of the site which should be protected from development by a 5 meter buffer. The presence of a wet ditch along the western boundary, and dense, scattered scrub around the peripheries should also be protected. Taking these site features into account, an indicative developable area of 1.6 hectares has been identified for the site.

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An ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required.

EMP1.10 Land at Roseheyworth Business Park, Lower Ebbw Fach 2.6ha

This is a vacant rectangular site located on the edge of Roseheyworth Business Park and adjacent to Roseheyworth Primary School. Access to the site can be achieved through an extension of the existing access roadway serving Roseheyworth Business Park. A community footpath runs along the southern and eastern boundary of the site, which would have to be protected in the layout of any development. Trees line the western boundary of the site which screen the site from the A467 road, this should be retained to act as a buffer to the road corridor. There is also an area of tree coverage in the south western corner, which should be protected in any development proposal and a BS5837 tree survey should be undertaken. There is also a presence of watercourses along the western and eastern boundaries of the site. Watercourses should be protected from development by a 5 metre buffer zone. Taking these features into account an indicative developable area has been identified of 1.5 hectares.

An ecological assessment and biodiversity constraints and enhancement plan are required.

In terms of infrastructure, an assessment should be made to understand the extent of off site water mains.

8.0 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

ED1 Education Provision

ED1.1 Ysgol Gymraeg Brynmawr

Full planning permission for a replacement Welsh Medium Primary School for Ysgol Gymraeg Brynmawr was secured in September 2008 on land north of Rising Sun Industrial Estate, Nantyglo. The current school premises, the Brynmawr Junior and Infants premises, were built over 100 years ago and cannot provide the standard of facilities that need to support the education of children in the 21st century. Access to the site is from the south, via the Rising Sun Industrial Estate

The site was under construction at 2009 but opened in 2010, the school provides educational opportunities for 330 primary school children.

ED1.2 Lower Plateau Six Bells Colliery Site

This site is flat, vacant reclaimed land, which is the lowest of three plateaux on the former Six Bells Colliery Site. The upper plateau is allocated for residential development and the middle plateau is being developed for recreation and ecology benefits, particularly as a green link. Access to the site is from the west, via Six Bells Road. The junction serving the site at Six Bells Road has poor visibility splays, which would need to be improved. The Ebbw Fach River runs in a culvert under the site. The site lies wholly within flood zone C2, which would require a flood consequences assessment.

The site partly lies within a SINIC, along the western boundary and is adjacent to a proposed LNR. An ecological assessment would be required and a biodiversity constraints

and enhancement plan. The mature trees located along the dismantled railway line on the eastern boundary should be retained as part of any development.

The site is crossed by a public sewer which may restrict the density of the proposed development.

A Stage 3 Flood Consequence Assessment (2011) has been undertaken at this site and recommends that a hydraulic modelling study should be undertaken to determine whether the current flood risk mapping available can be revised and the site can then be allocated within the LDP. The study undertaken to date suggests that such modelling will support allocation. This hydraulic modelling would investigate the likelihood of the culvert becoming exceeded, along with the likely flow routes of any flooding. The FCA arising from the work would also recommend any mitigation measures required to minimise the impact of flooding at the site, if necessary.

CF1 Community Centre

CF1.1 Former Sirhowy Infants School, Tredegar

This is the site of the former Sirhowy Infants School located in the residential settlement of Rhoslan, Tredegar. The site is rectangular in shape and is bounded on all sides by residential properties. The site is accessed by both pedestrian and vehicular means from Rhoslan.

The community centre will host a range of services comprising of early years provision, youth services, youth clubs and after school provision, learning, recreation, community safety, advice and information, community events and carnivals and venue hire.

The site was granted outline planning consent for 23 affordable homes on the northern section of the site and a new community centre on south eastern section of the site in 2009. As of the base date of the 1st April 2009, the site remained undeveloped.

9.0 TOURISM AND LEISURE

TM1 Tourism and Leisure

TM1.1 Eastern Valley Slopes

The Eastern Valleys Slopes consists of 300 acres of Corus owned land above the Steelworks site in Ebbw Vale and stretches to Cwm in the south. There is much potential to develop recreational and tourism opportunities, for example, through promoting mountain biking. The site is important strategically because of its proximity and connection with the steelworks site as well as within the context of the wider Ebbw Fawr valley.

Before any recreational and tourism development can take place it is necessary to establish ownership of the site and carry out engineering works to address drainage issues associated with the site. Funding has been secured from the Heads of the Valleys Programme for engineering works, which are likely to take place in 2010. Once the engineering works have been executed to remedy the drainage issues the project will be fully developed and bids will be made for funding to develop the area.

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As a number of SINCS have been designated on this land due regard must be given to biodiversity and any development should accord with guidance contained within the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

TM1.2 Garden Festival

Following the National Garden Festival in Ebbw Vale in 1992, much of the site was secured as Festival Park with new housing and commercial developments taking place. Alongside these developments are the woodlands, wetlands and ornamental gardens surrounding the Japanese Pavilion and lakes where there is potential to improve the tourism offer.

The Council is the freeholder of the site and leases it to Chester Properties Management Limited who hold a lease for 125 years.

Two SINCS have been designated on this land with another SINC lying adjacent and consequently due regard must be given to biodiversity and any development should accord with guidance contained within the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

TM1.3 Blue Lakes

The Blue Lakes site is off the A4047 between Ebbw Vale and Tredegar about 1km from the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road. It occupies part of an area known as Waun y Pound and is dominated by the three Waun y Pound reservoirs, which used to supply water to the Ebbw Vale steelworks and since 2007 are in the ownership of Ebbw Vale and District Development Trust which is currently progressing plans to redevelop the area as a country park. Waun y Pound, together with the Bevan Stones and the adjoining area known as Bryn Serth form an open space between the communities of Ebbw Vale, Tredegar, Sirhowy and Rassau. The setting for the Blue Lakes site is an exposed upland moor and the gently-sloping hill-top setting provides a natural vantage point with extensive views to the distant open hillsides, valley settlements and industrial estates of the landscape to the west, east and north.

Current access to the site from the A4047 is via a separate landholding on which there is a public car park and a well-known monument known as the Bevan Stones in memory of Aneurin Bevan, the creator of the National Health Service. Access to the site from the east, will depend on the cooperation of the adjacent landowner, Newbridge Construction who have planning approval to construct an access road from Bryn Serth Road to their land. This is fundamentally important as the proposed site for the restaurant/heritage centre is to the north of the middle lake.

The Blue Lakes have the potential to become a valuable local resource for recreational activity and if combined with the adjacent, Aneurin Bevan Memorial Stones, Sirhowy Woodlands and Sirhowy Valley Walk it could become an important tourist destination. The upper ponds are currently used on an irregular basis by fishermen, whilst the third lake is more of a wildlife pond.

As the area has been designated as a SINC due regard must be given to biodiversity and any development should accord with guidance contained within the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

TM1.4 Bedwellty House and Park

Bedwellty House and Park occupies 10.5 ha and is located in the heart of Tredegar to the south of the town centre. It is closed for restoration work to Spring 2011, which will transform it into a high quality conference wedding and visitor centre and make it a major tourist attraction. Funding has been secured for two phases of work. Phase 1 relates to the restoration of the historic element of the park i.e. Bedwellty House (which is a grade II listed building), park features/buildings landscape and introduction of additional park lighting. The second phase refers to the upgrading of the recreational side of the park i.e. the sports facilities, children's play facilities, introduction of a green gym and the establishment of an events area. Bedwellty House and Park has also been designated as a conservation area and this will be taken into account in the development.

TM1.5 Parc Bryn Bach (including a hotel)

Parc Bryn Bach is located off the A465 at the edge of the settlement of Tredegar and the focus of this 340 ha country park is a 36-acre lake. It has been designated as a Local Nature Reserve and is likely to be one of the main park elements of the proposed Valleys Regional Park and could benefit from its close proximity to Brecon Beacons National Park. There is potential to further develop the tourism features at the Park, with possible hotel development to take place near the entrance to the Park. The possibility of locating a hotel at this location is being explored by Leisure Services but it will require private investment. Also, money has already been secured to provide bunkhouse accommodation adjacent to the visitors centre.

As a large part of Parc Bryn Bach is a SINC and LNR due regard must be given to biodiversity and any development should accord with guidance contained within the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

TM1.6 Nantyglo Roundhouse and Towers

This 2.65 ha site is located at the edge of Nantyglo and access is achieved through a lane off Waun Ebbw Road. The Heritage Strategy identifies this site as having huge potential as a heritage centre and educational resource for local people. Nantyglo Roundhouse and Towers are in private ownership but the Council is seeking funding to purchase it in order to preserve this historic site primarily for its own heritage value and also to develop it as a tourist attraction. Both roundhouses and agricultural range at Roundhouse Farm are grade II* listed buildings. The site also includes the remains of historic Ty Mawr mansion, which was previously an ironmasters magnificent residence.

The houses and tower are surrounded by mature trees, which need to be protected. These trees and the buildings may support protected species including breeding birds and bats and therefore ecological surveys may be required in addition to biodiversity constraints and enhancement plans.

TM1.7 Cwmtillery Lakes

Cwmtillery Lakes is a 9.8 hectare site, situated 3km north of Abertillery. This former feeder pond to Cwmtillery Colliery was transformed once the colliery was closed and the area has open access, with benches and picnic tables and a path circulating the lake. Most of the site and surrounding area was created through a land reclamation scheme on an area of former mine workings and it has been designated as a LNR and SINC. Therefore due regard must be given to biodiversity and any development should accord with guidance

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

contained within the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

The majority of the site is owned by the Council, although a small area to the northeast of the site including three ponds is owned and managed by Welsh Water.

This project involves establishing an Outdoor Gateway and Education Centre incorporating a café, lecture/meeting rooms, accommodation and changing rooms. There is sufficient land within the identified area but outside the Flood Risk area to accommodate a new building. An important element of the project is to develop outdoor attractions by facilitating access to the natural environment and developing dedicated mountain biking trails.

L1 Formal Leisure Facilities

L1.1 Chartist Way, Tredegar

This is a 1 ha site, which is vacant apart from an existing play area, and is located in the heart of the residential area of Sirhowy. A kick-about area is to be developed adjacent to the play area whilst the remainder of the land will be used for informal play. A large expanse of land immediately to the south of this site has been allocated for residential development.

10.0 ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS

ENV1 Green Wedges

ENV1.1 Beaufort and Brynmawr

This green wedge prevents the coalescence of the settlements of Beaufort in the west and Brynmawr in the east.

The development of the green wedge would result in the coalescence of two distinct communities and would be detrimental to the character of the area.

ENV1.2 Tredegar and Ebbw Vale

This green wedge prevents the coalescence of the settlements of Tredegar in the west and Ebbw Vale in the east.

The designation will allow the urban form to be managed and prevent further expansion of the urban area, which would result in coalescence of two different towns.

ENV2 Special Landscape Areas

ENV2.1 St Illtyd Plateau and Ebbw Eastern Sides
Primary Landscape Qualities & Features:
<p>St. Illtyd plateau:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-preserved pattern of pre-industrial farmland of small rectangular fields with distinctive stone walls and overgrown beech and holly hedges, centred on, and integral with, early settlement of St. Illtyd, of considerable historic and cultural significance. • Panoramic views especially west and south, to other plateau landscapes. • Remote from busy valleys, with ‘other world’ atmosphere due to obvious pre-industrial character. • Two areas of acid and neutral grassland are cSINCs, also LBAP priority habitats • Old hedges are of considerable biodiversity value as well as historic and visual value.
<p>Ebbw Valley sides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valley sides form attractive backdrop to main valley settlements and routes, due to convoluted topography and a variety of semi-natural vegetation. • Mosaic of native woodland with bracken, dry heath and conifer plantations, plus areas of unimproved acid grassland. • Five areas of upland oak woodland with beech are cSINCs, LBAP priority habitats
The minor side valleys provide recreational links to uplands.
Key Policy & Management Issues:
<p>St. Illtyd plateau:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard rich archaeological, historic and cultural heritage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintain integrity of fieldscape by restoration and maintenance of field boundaries (beech hedges & stone walls) and farm structures ○ Environmental enhancements at St Illtyd • Conserve remoteness and tranquillity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No development that significantly enlarges St. Illtyd or compromises its remoteness. ○ Control of fly tipping, and other neglect • Conserve LBAP priority habitats, including grassland and hedgerows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No development on cSINC sites ○ Long-term management/restoration of hedges and grasslands.
<p>Ebbw Valley sides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance fringes to settlements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Control fly-tipping, etc. ○ Any developments to be sensitive to setting/landscape ○ Improvements to footpaths/recreational access to wider countryside • Conserve habitats and natural qualities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allow natural woodland regeneration on valley sides ○ Control of bracken ○ Management of cSINC woodlands

ENV2.2 Eastern Ridge and Mynydd James
Primary Landscape Qualities & Features:
<p>Open upland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unimproved acid grassland, with areas of bog, bare peat, flush, dry heath. All part of BAP habitat – upland heath in good condition. All the open land is cSINC. • Wealth of archaeological remains representing many phases of human history from prehistoric to recent, including evidence of mining and industry which may relate to activities within Blaenavon Registered Historic Landscape. Eastern parts of the area are within the Blaenavon Registered Historic Landscape (but not the WHS). • Remnants of patches (early opencast coal extraction) on either side of Blaenavon Road. • Remote and bleak in contrast to adjacent valley, with panoramic and distant views, and forming distinctive and remote skylines. • Spectacular but secluded gorge in southernmost forestry.
<p>Valley sides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form varied backdrops for valley settlements and routes throughout. • Bourneville Slip is cSINC for mosaic of habitats, including neutral and acidic grasslands, mire, open water and wet heathland. Also contains dwarf shrub heath, an LBAP habitat. • Part of important gap between Heads of the Valleys and mid valley settlements.
<p>Northern slopes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prominent backdrop and skylines from Brynmawr and Heads of the Valleys road. • Areas of patches and other early workings, of historic value • Remnants of various communication routes between Brynmawr and Clydach Gorge, of historic interest.
Key Policy & Management Issues:
<p>Open upland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance open moorland habitats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ maintain low level of grazing; ○ heathland management, including establishment of heather; ○ control of bracken encroachment. • Safeguard archaeological resource: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ preserve open nature of historic landscape; ○ conserve the archaeological resource; ○ conserve areas of patches. • Conserve ‘unspoilt’ qualities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discourage/control use of motorbikes ○ Resist large-scale development, including tree planting, especially on skylines. ○ Rebuild defining edge stone walls on valley sides.

Valley sides:

- Enhance built/rural interface;
 - Clean up/control tipping and other abuse around edges of settlements;
 - Conserve openness, simplicity, rock features;
 - Recreational access improvements;
 - Integration of new edge developments.
- Conserve/enhance habitats:
 - Manage/conservate Bourneville Slip;
 - Reduce coniferous/increase broadleaf woodland.
 - Manage priority habitats in line with LBAP targets.

Northern slopes:

- Safeguard overall landscape of entrance to Heads of Valleys:
 - Reduce decline of field boundaries, land management etc.
 - Conservation of the patches historic landscape features.
 - Integration of new development around edges.
 - Sensitive design of development on the Ben Ward’s Field site within the SLA

ENV2.3 Cwm Tyleri and Cwm Celyn

Primary Landscape Qualities & Features:

- Strong rural character, with lack of industrial activity evident (except reclaimed tips in Cwm Tyleri).
- Five cSINCs areas of woodland and unimproved grassland - LBAP habitats – beech and yew woodlands, oak woods, wet woodland, purple moorgrass and rush pasture and dwarf shrub heath.
- Nineteenth century reservoir in Cwm Tyleri, now cSINC and cLNR, and attractive focus for recreation.
- Hidden, ‘tucked away’ quality.
- Small fields with stone walls in poor condition and scattered farmhouses

Key Policy & Management Issues:

- Rebuild defining edge stone walls
- Conserve openness, simplicity, rock feature
- Control of bracken
- Maintain and enhance priority habitats, in line with LBAP targets
- Manage cLNR, in line with ecological management plan guidelines

ENV2.4 Mynydd Carn y Cefn and Cefn yr Arail

Primary Landscape Qualities & Features:

North slopes:

- Areas of ‘patches’ (early opencast workings) of historic value.
- Backdrop to Ebbw Vale and Brynmawr

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Open upland ridge:

- Distinctive open skyline seen from valleys on either side
- Panoramic views across to other ridges
- All open land is cSINC with mosaic habitat – heathland, acid grassland, mire and oak woodland, LBAP habitat – purple moor grass and rush pasture, upland oak woodland, beech and yew woodland, dwarf shrub heath and blanket bog

Ebbw Fach sides:

- Varied backdrop to valley settlements, with rock exposures, woodland, open grassland, quarries, etc
- Two small cSINCs, wet woodland and mosaic habitats
- Impressive areas of landslip, fault lines, rifts between West Side and Darren Ddu
- Good views into valley

Ebbw Fawr sides:

- Varied backdrop to valley settlements
- Beech and yew woods, including Cwm Merddog Woodlands SSSI and GWT Reserve at Silent Valley
- cSINCs with acid grassland - LBAP habitats.
- Good views into valley

Southern end:

- Distinctive forked 'stop-end' to ridge
- Well-preserved pattern of pre-industrial farmland of small rectangular fields with distinctive stone walls and overgrown beech hedges, similar to those around St. Illtyd across the valley.
- Steep densely forested sides gives very enclosed character to valley
- Some unimproved grassland habitats on tops, including four cSINC areas of acid grassland, LBAP habitats.

Key Policies & Management:

North slopes:

- Conserve areas of patches and tips for historic value.
- Conserve open character of area

Open upland ridge:

- Conserve and enhance open moorland habitats:
 - maintain low level of grazing;
 - heathland management, including establishment of heather;
 - control of bracken encroachment.
- Safeguard archaeological resource:
 - preserve open nature of historic landscape;
 - conserve the archaeological resource;
- Conserve 'unspoilt' qualities:
 - Discourage/control use of motorbikes;
 - Resist large-scale development, including tree planting, especially on skylines.

Ebbw Fach sides:

- Conserve and enhance variety of habitats:
 - Manage/conserv e grassland BAP habitats in line with LBAP targets;
- Conserve geological interest:
 - Sensitive stabilisation at West Side
 - Conserve exposures, etc.

Ebbw Fawr sides:

- Enhance built/rural interface;
 - Clean up/control tipping and other abuse around edges of settlements;
 - Conserve allotments, smallholdings, etc on edges of Ebbw Vale and Cwm
 - Conserve openness, simplicity, rock features;
 - Integration of Silent Valley landfill
- Conserve/enhance habitats:
 - Manage/conserv e grassland and woodland BAP habitats, in line with LBAP targets;
 - Management of Cwm Merddog SSSI.

Southern end:

- Safeguard rich archaeological, historic and cultural heritage:
 - Maintain integrity of fieldscape by restoration and maintenance of field boundaries (beech hedges & stone walls) and farm structures
- Conserve and enhance habitats:
 - Manage/conserv e grassland habitats;
 - Reduce coniferous/increase broadleaf woodland in forestry areas.
- Conserve remoteness and tranquillity:
 - Discourage vehicular access;
 - Limit damage caused by re-working of tip.

ENV2.4 Mynydd Bedwellty, Rhymney Hill and Sirhowy Sides

Primary Landscape Qualities & Features:

Open upland ridge:

- Distinctive open skyline, including cairn and Cefn Golau cemetery, seen from valleys on either side
- Panoramic views across to other ridges to west, and north to Brecon Beacons, & into valley from Cefn Golau.
- Minor road along ridge, only example in Blaenau Gwent, probably old ridge-top route, affords good views.
- Large cSINC, all of open upland. Mainly acid grassland, with purple moorgrass and rush pasture and upland dwarf shrub heath LBAP habitats. Also smaller area of acid grassland cSINC on Tredegar Patches.
- Cefn Golau cholera cemetery – Scheduled Monument

Sirhowy sides:

- Varied backdrop to valley and A4048, with rock outcrops, quarries, woodland, grassland.
- Significant areas of pre-industrial fields.
- Areas of acid grassland cSINC, LBAP habitat
- Beech woods, including Darren Ddu cSINC
- Extensive length of valley side with no development

Cwm Tysswg:

- Secluded farmland, undisturbed by industrialisation
- Pleasant views into Rhymney valley

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Key Policies & Management:
Open upland ridge: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conserve and enhance open moorland habitats:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ maintain low level of grazing;○ heathland management, including establishment of heather;○ control of bracken encroachment.• Safeguard archaeological and historic resource:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ preserve open nature of historic landscape;○ conserve/restore cholera cemetery and surrounds;○ conserve the archaeological resource, including prehistoric cairns;○ conserve areas of patches in north.• Conserve 'unspoilt' qualities:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Discourage/control use of motorbikes○ Resist large-scale development, including tree planting, especially on skylines.○ Sensitive roadside improvements along ridge
Sirhowy sides: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conserve and enhance variety of habitats:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Management and natural regeneration of native woodlands○ Low level of grazing, including restriction of grazing in wooded areas;○ Control spread of bracken;○ No drainage 'improvements' in acid grassland habitats.○ Managing priority habitats, in line with LBAP targets• Safeguard historic resource:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Retain field patterns and stone walls;○ Conserve inclines, quarries and other relicts of extractive industry.• Conserve open qualities:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Retain as undeveloped gap between heads of valleys and mid valleys settlements;○ Enhance roadsides.
Cwm Tysswg: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued use as farmland.

ENV2.5 Cefn Manmoel
Primary Landscape Qualities & Features:
Open upland ridge: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distinctive open skyline seen from valleys on either side• Panoramic views across to other ridges and Brecon Beacons• Extensive area of mosaic habitats, cSINC, mainly acid grassland, with purple moorgrass and upland heath BAP habitats.• Possible pre-historic cairns.

Sirhowy sides:

- Varied backdrop to Tredegar
- Areas of acid grassland and wet woodland around Troedrhiw-gwair are cSINCs
- Good views into valley and across heads of the valleys
- Historic/cultural interest of reduced settlement of Troedrhiw-gwair
- Forestry with good access and fishing
- Sirhowy Hill Woodlands is cLNR and developing into attractive recreation area

Ebbw Fawr sides:

- Varied backdrop to valley settlements
- Extensive area of cSINC around Garden City, for mosaic habitats including dwarf shrub heath and mesotrophic lakes, LBAP habitats.
- Rich archaeological remains of industry, including tips, levels, inclines, quarries.
- Includes stretches of river where not culverted.
- Enclosed quality of steep forested sides in south

Manmoel plateau:

- Part of wider historic pattern of fields around ancient settlement of Manmoel (in Caerphilly) of considerable historic and cultural value.
- Distinctive beech hedges
- Some unimproved grassland habitats

Key Policies & Management:

Open upland ridge:

- Conserve and enhance open moorland habitats:
 - maintain low level of grazing;
 - heathland management, including establishment of heather;
 - control of bracken encroachment.
- Safeguard archaeological resource:
 - preserve open nature of historic landscape;
 - conserve the archaeological resource;
- Conserve 'unspoilt' qualities:
 - Discourage/control use of motorbikes;
 - Improve roadside environment at Hilltop
 - Resist large-scale development, including tree planting, especially on skylines.
 - Rebuild defining edge stone walls on Sirhowy valley sides.

Sirhowy sides:

- Conserve and enhance variety of habitats:
 - Manage/conservate grassland and woodland priority habitats, in line with LBAP targets;
 - Manage Sirhowy Hill Woodlands in line with LNR guidelines
 - Reduce coniferous/increase broadleaf woodland in Coed y Rhyd forestry area.
- Conserve historic and archaeological interest:
 - Conserve field and enclosure patterns, buildings, etc around Troedrhiw-gwair;
 - Conserve viability of small-scale farming.
- Enhance urban edges:
 - Reduce/control fly-tipping;
 - Manage/improve pedestrian access to open areas, including Sirhowy Hill Woodlands

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Ebbw Fawr sides:

- Enhance built/rural interface;
 - Clean up/control tipping and other abuse around edges of settlements;
 - Conserve openness, simplicity , rock features;
 - Recreational access improvements;
 - Riverside improvements at Cwm
- Conserve/enhance habitats:
 - Manage/conserv e grassland and woodland priority habitats, in line with LBAP targets;
 - Reduce coniferous/increase broadleaf woodland in Graig Fawr forestry area.

Manmoel plateau:

- Safeguard rich archaeological, historic and cultural heritage:
 - Maintain integrity of fieldscape by restoration and maintenance of field boundaries (beech hedges & stone walls) and farm structures
- Conserve remoteness and tranquillity:

ENV2.6 Trefil and Garnlydan Surrounds

Primary Landscape Qualities & Features:

Throughout:

- Margins of Brecon Beacon National Park, forming important buffer zone with Heads of Valleys.
- Highly visible, both close-up and distance, from A465 and therefore important for overall perception of region by travellers.
- Fringes of coalfield industrial activity with well-preserved (un-reclaimed or re-developed) industrial remains.

Open upland:

- Essentially part of the Brecon Beacons landscape
- Fine contrasting panoramic views, north to Pen-y-Fan, south across Heads of Valleys
- Remote, large-scale, bleak and generally tranquil
- Marshy grassland, with unimproved acid grassland, dry acid heath, plus calcareous grassland in the disused quarry, are all LBAP habitats
- Some prehistoric cairns and stone circle
- Industrial archaeological interest in early quarries and tramway
- Millstone Grit and Limestone landscapes are potential RIGS
- Increasingly popular for leisure and recreational access into BBNP.

Valley:

- Margins and links to Brecon Beacons, both visually and for access
- Pattern of small irregular fields typical of gradual encroachment onto open land
- Nant-y-Bwlch or 'Nine Arches' viaduct and Sirhowy below form an attractive landmark on A465
- Several areas of unimproved marshy grassland are cSINCs
- Disused tramways and railway, including Nine Arches fine example of viaduct of historic interest
- Use of boulders for wall building – not found elsewhere in county

<p>Eastern part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garnlydan reservoir and surrounds is cSINC, and areas to north (in BBNP) are SAC • Fine wide views of Heads of Valleys and south from Llangynidr road • Upland heathland and grassland BAP habitats
<p>Key Policy & Management Issues:</p>
<p>Open upland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance open moorland and other habitats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ maintain low level of sheep grazing; ○ heathland management for variety of habitats; ○ manage calcareous grassland habitat of disused quarry; ○ maintain water table; ○ Manage priority habitats, in line with LBAP targets • Safeguard archaeological resource: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ preserve open nature of historic landscape; ○ conserve the archaeological resource of prehistoric monuments and industrial tramways and quarry features; • Conserve 'unspoilt' qualities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discourage/control use of motorbikes within quarry areas; ○ Control fly-tipping, especially alongside road beyond Trefil; ○ Rebuild defining edge stone walls on valley sides. • Retain key sections of quarry exposures and other features relating to RIGS designations • Manage expansion of quarry and use of former quarry to conserve and enhance habitats, provide new landscape uses and features, control abuse.
<p>Valley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy to conserve valley as access to open countryside, biodiversity interest, tramways and railways, especially in relation to re-routing of A465 • Conserve wet grassland habitats – no land drainage, in line with LBAP targets
<p>Eastern part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain present grazing to conserve habitats • Integrate forestry with more broadleaves and improved edges • Manage Garnlydan reservoir for habitats and recreation • Sensitive integration of re-routed A465

<p>ENV2.7 Beaufort Common</p>
<p>Primary Landscape Qualities & Features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical area of undeveloped heads of the valleys land between main settlements, with mix of run-down marginal farmland and woodland and recreation on reclaimed/reprofiled land. • Northern half of area is prominent from A465 • South eastern part is backdrop to Brynmawr • Panoramic views from high points, across heads of the valleys, down Clydach Gorge and to Brecon Beacons. • Two mosaic habitat cSINCs cover more than half the area, with Beaufort Hill Ponds and Woodlands also a cLNR • Lowland meadow and upland heathland BAP habitats are present. • Attractive secluded Beaufort Hill ponds.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Key Policies & Management:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce decline in general condition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Restoration of stone walls and hedges ○ Control of fly-tipping and other abuse ○ Ensure viability of farming and small holding uses • Retain open landscape character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No major development on skylines • Manage habitats to improve biodiversity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continued management of Beaufort Hill Ponds and Woodlands for habitat development and low key recreation, in line with ecological plan guidelines; ○ Management of priority habitats, in line with LBAP targets ○ Protection of lapwing habitats; ○ No drainage 'improvements' to grasslands

ENV3 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

ENV3.1 Beaufort Hill Ponds and Woodland
Grid reference: SO175120
Size: 62.24ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: This site covers a large area situated between Beaufort to the south and the A465 to the north. Previously an area of mining, more recently it has been landscaped under a land reclamation scheme. The habitats include acid grassland, neutral grassland, grass-heath, rush pasture, wet heath, mire, swamp and open water. The two former reservoirs, known as Upper Boat and Lower Boat ponds, and the mire and swamp communities surrounding them are of greatest ecological interest. The wet heath community in the north-east of the site is also of interest and includes cross-leaved heath (*Erica tetralix*), ling heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), bog asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), lousewort (*Pedicularis sylvatica*) and heath milkwort (*Polygala serpyllifolia*). The mire communities include purple moor-grass (*Molinea caerulea*), star sedge (*Carex echinata*) and bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*). Part of the site also includes Mynydd Llangattock Common which supports mainly acid and neutral grasslands. The site as a whole is of high ecological value with a mosaic of habitats. It is also popular for fishing, birdwatching and other informal recreation. A large area in the south of the site has recently been planted with broadleaved trees during the development of a community woodland. This area has been retained within the SINC boundary, as some of the underlying habitats are of interest (particularly dry heathland), but may need to be excluded in the future if the features of interest are lost.

Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) and skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) breed on the open common, along with a good range of dragonflies in the ponds and grayling butterfly (*Hipparchia semele*).

ENV3.2 Bryn Serth
Grid reference: SO149109
Size: 37.17ha
Survey date: September 2001 & 2007

Site Description: Bryn Serth is located on the A4047, 2 Miles west of Beaufort and is adjacent to the site at Waun-y-pound.

The site is an important breeding site for lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) and brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*), all of which are UK BAP species. A total of ten lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) nests and several pairs of skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) were found in 2007 and located in area 4. There are also records for snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*), jack snipe (*Lymnocyptes minimus*), barn owl (*Tyto alba*), wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*), goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*), stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*), kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), buzzard (*Buteo buteo*), merlin (*Falco columbarius*), carrion crow (*Corvus corone*), raven (*Corvus corax*), wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*), magpie (*Pica pica*), linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*), meadow pipit (*Anthus pratensis*) and reed bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*) at Bryn Serth.

The site has a range of communities some in a mosaic with others.

M25 *Molinia caerulea*-*Potentilla erecta* mire is found in area 1, within which, there are patches of *Calluna vulgaris* (ling). The area is dominated by *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) other species include *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Juncus squarrosus* (heath rush), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass), *Nardus stricta* (mat-grass), *Carex binervis* (green-ribbed sedge) and *Serratula tinctoria* (saw-wort).

M23 *Juncus effusus/acutiflorus*-*Galium palustre* rush-pasture is found mainly in area 6. There is a diverse range of species including *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* (southern marsh orchid), *Carex flacca* (glaucous sedge), *Carex viridula* (sedge), *Carex panicea* (carnation sedge), *Lychnis flos-cuculi* (ragged robin) and *Filipendula ulmaria* (meadow sweet) and where it becomes drier, there are patches of *Calluna vulgaris* (ling) and acid grassland.

H12 *Calluna vulgaris*-*Vaccinium myrtillus* heath is represented mainly in area 7 and as a mosaic with **U4** and **M25** in area 2. Area 7 is purely dominated by *Calluna vulgaris* (ling) with an abundance of lichens. The area 2 to the north east of the site is the most diverse area of heath where species found include *Calluna vulgaris* (ling), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), *Empetrum nigrum* (crowberry), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Hypochoeris radicata* (common cat's ear), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair-grass), *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass) and *Nardus stricta* (mat grass).

The areas of pure **U4 *Festuca ovina*-*Agrostis capillaris*-*Galium saxatile* grassland** at the site are of value because they have a close association with the H12 community, mapped as a mosaic community. Species here include *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Hypochoeris radicata* (common cat's-ear) and *Euphrasia officinalis* (eyebright). Area 5 is not a typical U4, but has a diversity of species including *Alchemilla* sp and *Centaureum erythraea* (common centaury).

Area 4, described as 'other grassland' is partially colonised shale giving a grassland cover of approximately 50%. This is the area where lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) and brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*) are breeding.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

ENV3.3 Bwlch y Garn North
Grid reference: SO179097
Size: 3.16 ha
Survey date: 11-07-07

Site Description: Large, flat to moderately sloping field with a westerly aspect. The majority of the field comprises damp rush pasture. Species present include locally frequent/abundant *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) locally frequent *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), *Nardus stricta* (mat grass), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass), *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Agrostis stolonifera* (creeping bent), *Poa trivialis* (rough meadow grass), *Polygala serpyllifolia* (heath milkwort), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) and rarely occurring *Serratula tinctoria* (saw-wort).

In the north-east corner of the field there is an area of boulders and a raised rocky bank, comprising locally frequent *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Nardus stricta*, *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Deschampsia flexuosa* and locally occasional *Juncus squarrosus* (heath rush) and *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry).

The field boundaries comprise stone walls to the north, east and west, post and wire fencing to the south. The surrounding land use is open hill/rough grazing to north and east which forms part of West Monmouth Golf Course, improved grassland to south and a disused quarry to the east. Fauna recorded includes meadow pipit (*Anthus pratensis*) and stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*).

ENV3.4 Bwlch-y-garn South
Grid reference: 179073
Size: 0.94ha
Survey date: 11 th July 2007

Site Description: Long, irregularly shaped field supporting species-rich acid grassland (U4), lying over uneven ground with outlying stones and surrounded by drystone walls. A variety of grasses are constant including *Agrostis tenuis* (common bent), *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass) and *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue). *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) is frequent and locally abundant and *Luzula campestris* (field wood rush) occasional/frequent. *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) is occasionally distributed and *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw) is locally occurring. The sward is richest over the northern half. The steep bank that flanks the western edge of the field, towards the south of the site, also supports good frequencies of acid grassland indicators.

Marshy areas are distributed mid way down the field and include *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), *Juncus squarrosus* (heath rush), *Potentilla erecta*, *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) and *Deschampsia cespitosa* (tufted hair grass) and *Carex sp.* (sedge species).

Two open pools at the south are lined with *Juncus effusus* and add to the diversity of habitats on site. Dragonflies were seen hunting over the pools. A strip of poorer grassland is situated to the west of these pools at the base of the raised bank associated with the pools. The field is bordered by open moorland to the east and the buildings/yard of Bwlch-y-garn Farm to the west. It is separated from an improved field to the north west by a defunct drystone wall.

N.B. Further enclosed SI acid grassland lies to the northern tip of the site, forming a link with Bwlch-y-garn North candidate Local Wildlife Site. This linking sward is a tightly horse cropped acid sward, rather herb poor and damp and is not included within the Local Wildlife Site boundary. Grasses dominate with *Festuca ovina* and *Nardus stricta* (mat grass) typical (some affinity to U5). *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog) and *Trifolium repens* (white clover) are occasional and *Rumex acetosa* (common sorrel), *Deschampsia cespitosa* and *Juncus effusus* are locally occasional.

ENV3.5 Castell-Coryn Grassland
Grid reference: 177095
Size: 2.66ha
Survey date: 11 th July 2007

Site Description: Large undulating field enclosed by drystone walls, with a moderate westerly aspect. The field has frequent scattered areas of loose stones/rocks and supports a dry grass dominated sward, with herbs and lichens scattered throughout. Herbs typically include *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw) and *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil).

Deschampsia flexuosa (wavy hair grass), *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal), *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue) are frequent. Other species include *Agrostis tenuis* (common bent), *Nardus stricta* (mat grass), *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog), *Luzula campestris* (field wood rush) and *Hypochoeris radicata* (common catsear). *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass) and *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel) are locally frequent on the scattered drier, stonier ground. Small marshy areas scattered within the field add to the site's diversity and include *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), *Deschampsia cespitosa* (tufted hair grass), *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass), *Carex flava* agg. (yellow sedge agg.), and *Juncus squarrosus* (heath rush).

The field has an open 'upland feel' and is currently unmanaged. Tightly horse cropped, semi-improved acid grassland is situated to the south of the site and further acid grassland lies to the north and west. 4 pylons are situated in the field.

ENV3.6 Craig y Deri Pond SO1903/085
Grid reference: SO19550395
Size: 0.23ha
Survey date: August 2005

Site Description: The pond is located 2km south east of Cwm on the hillside above the woodland at Craig y Deri at an altitude of 390m. It is on enclosed land within the ownership of Hafod-y-dafal and is 300m north west from the pond group of Hafod-y-dafal. The surrounding land is semi-improved grassland and coniferous woodland.

The pond is sparsely vegetated, approximately 90% of the pond is open water. The vegetation is confined to the outer edges of the pond and is referable to **S22 *Glyceria fluitans* water-margin vegetation**, other species include *Juncus bulbosus*, *Juncus effusus*, *Agrostis stolonifera*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 11 species were recorded.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

A 10m buffer zone of semi-improved grassland is included around this pond.

ENV3.7 Species-rich meadow off Eastville Road
Grid reference: SO176085
Size: 0.23ha
Survey date

: 13-07-07

Site Description: Species-rich acid grassland, with a strong neutral influence, on a moderate to gentle west-facing slope. The grassland is characterised by a high herb:grass ratio and frequent ant hills. Species present include frequent *Hypochoeris radicata* (common catsear) *Leontodon hispidus* (rough hawkbit), *Pilosella officinarum* (mouse ear hawkweed), *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass), *Deschampsia cespitosa* (tufted hair grass), *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog) and *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain), locally frequent *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Rumex acetosa* (common sorrel), *Holcus mollis* (creeping soft grass), occasional *Hieracium* sp. (hawkweed sp.), *Veronica officinalis* (heath speedwell), *Achillea millefolium* (yarrow) and *Stellaria graminea* (lesser stichwort)

There are three mature sessile oaks (*Quercus petraea*) at the top of the slope, in the north-east of the field. The original boundaries of the field are now severely encroached by bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and a new post and wire fence boundary has been erected in the remaining part of the field.

ENV3.8 Festival Lake SO1706/001
Grid reference: SO177064
Size: 1.79ha
Survey date: August 2005

Site Description: The lake is located within the festival park site south of Ebbw Vale at an altitude of 240m. It is within an area of free public access and there are paths around the lake. The surrounding land is parkland and the pond sites SO 1706007 and SO1706/009 are 300m to the west.

The lake is largely open water which has approximately 20% of the submerged species *Elodea canadensis*.

There are patches of emergent and floating vegetation near the banks of the lake. The banks are manmade.

S4 *Phragmites australis* swamp is found at intervals around the lake the largest area being on the eastern side. There are several areas dominated by *Nuphar* sp., a water lily species, and there is a stand of **S12 *Typha latifolia* swamp** to the south of the lake. Other species found include a local abundance of *Butomus umbellatus*, *Ranunculus lingua* and *Juncus effusus*. *Carex pendula*, *Iris pseudacorus*, and *Lythrum salicaria* are found occasionally.

Three areas were sampled for invertebrates, 13 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone is included around this lake.

ENV3.9 Slopes west of Mynydd Carn-y-cefn (part1)
Grid reference: 181083
Size: 15.01ha
Survey date: 18 th July 2007

Site Description: Extensive area of semi improved acid grassland (U4) with marshy areas over a moderate, easterly facing slope on the western side of Mynydd Carn-cefn. The area has an open ‘upland feel’ and is enclosed by drystone walls and fences. Defunct drystone walls and field banks are scattered throughout the area, marking the smaller enclosures of the past. The quality of the sward is variable throughout these former units, however the site’s current position as a single management unit, and the overall number and frequency of acid grasslands indicators, justifies consideration of the whole site as a Local Wildlife Site (WS).

The east of the site (upper part of the slope) (area 1) supports a rich mix of SI acid grassland and fairly extensive marshy areas (M23) situated next to the stream/s running down hillside. The sward is characterised by *Festuca ovina* (sheep’s fescue), *Agrostis tenuis* (common bent), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) and *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw). *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) is occasional/locally frequent. *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass) *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass) and *Nardus stricta* (mat grass), *Pilosella officinarum* (mouseear hawkweed), *Luzula campestris* (field wood rush) are occasional to locally frequent. The sward also includes *Achillea millefolium* (yarrow), *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal), *Lotus corniculatus* (birds foot trefoil) and *Viola riviniana* (common dog violet). In places *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) becomes more dominant with tendencies towards a heathland sward. It is particularly associated with the old banks and stone walls and assumes increased abundance towards the east of the site. Limited *Calluna vulgaris* (heather) is also present. The marshy grassland supports a variety of species associated with the constant *Juncus effusus* (soft rush) and *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog). These include frequent *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort), occasional *Agrostis stolonifera* (creeping bent), *Deschampsia cespitosa* (tufted hair grass), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) and *Lotus uliginosus* (greater birds foot trefoil) and locally occasional *Valeriana officinalis* (common valerian). Other occasional herbs include *Filipendula ulmaria* (meadowsweet) and *Pulicaria dystenterica* (fleabane). Some wetter regions are flush like in character with *Anagalis tenella* (bog pimpernel) and *Juncus bulbosus* (bulbous rush) occurring locally and *Ranunculus omiophyllus* (crowfoot), *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) and *Viola palustris* (marsh violet) (at west) also present. Areas of the sward are more mesotrophic and some poaching and improved ground is present near old buildings. Some waxcap fungi were present and the site may be of potential interest for grassland fungi. The northern most part (two fields) of the site is closely cropped and was only examined from outside of the field due to presence of a large bull.

To the north, a smaller separate field (area 2) warrants inclusion within the WS, supporting acid grassland and an area of marshy grassland/acidic flush lying adjacent to a large pool. Species present include *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* (marsh pennywort), *Anagalis tenella* and *Scutellaria minor* (lesser skullcap). The wider field is ungrazed, lying over undulating ground with outcropped stone, extensive scattered bracken and some gorse. The tall

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

grassland is dominated by the grasses; *Agrostis tenuis*, *Festuca ovina* and *Holcus mollis* (creeping soft grass).

Area 3 supports a mosaic of marshy grassland, bracken, open acid grassland and herb poor grassland. The site is horse grazed and some swathes are closely cropped and rather species poor. Rising springs and wet areas add to the site's diversity and include localised *Sphagnum sp.* (moss) The south in particular supports a mosaic of *Juncus effusus* and *Holcus lanatus* frequented wet vegetation and short grassland.

Fauna: Stonechat, meadow pipit, buzzard.

ENV3.10 Garden City
Grid reference: SO168075
Size: 42.83ha
Survey date: 3/2/97

Site Description: The Garden City site has been reclaimed since the coal mining industry. It is located circa 2km south of Ebbw Vale, around the village of Garden City, and has an easterly aspect. A mosaic of habitats are present, including acid grassland, heathland, mire communities, bracken communities and open water. Most of the site has been planted with a mixture of tree species including *Fagus sylvatica* (beech), *Larix kaempferi* (Japanese larch) and *Pinus sylvestris* (Scots pine).

The mire communities and dry heathland represent the most botanical interest. Heathland is found over a large part of the site and occurs in a mosaic with acid grassland in many places. Species include frequent *Calluna vulgaris* (heather), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), and *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) and *Festuca ovina* (sheep's-fescue). Base poor mires are found throughout the site generally dominated by *Juncus effusus* (soft-rush) but with other typical species including *Narthecium ossifragum* (bog asphodel) and *Eriophorum angustifolium* (common cottongrass). Together with the site's acid grassland these habitats are all of Local Wildlife Site quality. Two ponds support floating and emergent vegetation that includes *Apium nodiflorum* (fool's water-cress), *Glyceria fluitans* (floating sweet-grass), and *Iris pseudacorus* (yellow iris).

Areas of species-poor neutral grassland and bracken/acid grassland mosaic adjoin these habitats and are not separated by physical boundaries. They are included in the Local Wildlife Site boundary in accordance with H20 (Mosaic Habitats) of *The Guidelines for the Selection of Wildlife Sites in South Wales*. The site also provides potentially valuable habitat for birds and invertebrates.

ENV3.11 Garden City Pond SO1607/023
Grid reference: SO16960770
Size: 0.41ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: The pond is located south of Garden City, 2km south of Ebbw Vale, at an altitude of 340m. The surrounding land includes woodland, acid grassland and dry heath.

Approximately 50% of the pond is open water, the remainder of the pond is mainly dominated by *Equisetum fluviatile*, referred to as **S10 *Equisetum fluviatile* swamp**. On

the southern edge of the pond there is a small stand of **S19 *Eleocharis palustris* swamp**. Other species found within the pond include *Juncus effusus*, *Iris pseudacorus*, *Nymphaea alba*, *Ranunculus flammula* and *Galium palustre*.

Two areas were sampled for invertebrates, 8 species were recorded.

The banks are steep and approximately 90% artificial, a 10m buffer zone is included around this pond.

ENV3.12 Garn Cam Isaf
Grid reference: SO182063
Size: 8.05ha
Survey date: 24/07/03

Site Description: Most of the site is woodland, part grazed by horses, grading to bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and acidic grassland at western end. It is of variable age, but generally exhibiting good regeneration and a moderate to rich ground flora.

Fencing is generally good, with most grazing controlled by horse owners. The beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) stand (W15 and mire) is unfenced and grazed by sheep.

The site slopes moderately to the east with several rills giving locally damp microhabitats, especially towards the southern end.

Altitude is c 275-325m and the site is surrounded by grasslands, with bracken (*P. aquilinum*) to north west and some acid heath to the north east.

Access can be gained from grasslands to the north, through horse paddocks and gate to the east or from road to landfill site from the south.

ENV3.13 Garnlydan
Grid reference: SO175130
Size: 52.54ha
Survey date: October '99 & June 2000

Site Description: The site lies between Powys County boundary to the north, the A465 Heads of the Valley road to the south, the B4560 to the west, and the Brecon Beacons National Park boundary to the east. Much of the land is reclaimed following open cast coal mining, and is relatively flat.

The site comprises a large expanse of open water surrounded by a range of interesting habitats. To the north-west of the reservoir is a rich mosaic of mire communities, acid grassland and wet heath. Land to the east of the reservoir also supports a mix of mire, wet heath and acid grassland. The north edge of the reservoir consists of a mosaic of mire, wet heath and acid grassland. Here, the plant shoreweed (*Littorella uniflora*) which is of local importance was found. The area is visited by snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*) and common sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*). Little ringed plover (*Charadrius dubius*) and curlew (*Numenius arquata*) have both been recorded on this site.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Areas of species-poor acid grassland, plantation and gorse to the south of the reservoir are not included within the Local Wildlife Site boundary due to their low conservation value.

ENV3.14 Hillside with acidic flushes
Grid reference: SO177088
Size: 3.16ha
Survey date: 13-07-07

Site Description: Grazed, semi-improved, species-rich acid grassland with scattered *Ulex gallii* (western gorse) and *Pteridium aquilinum* (bracken) on a steep west-facing slope. Small streams are frequent and there are occasional acidic flushes present on flatter parts of the hillside.

Species include frequent *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass), *Nardus stricta* (mat grass), *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Pilosella officinarum* (mouse ear hawkweed), *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel), locally frequent *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass), *Ranunculus repens* (creeping buttercup), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry).

In wetter regions *Juncus articulatus* (jointed rush), and *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* (marsh pennywort) were joined by locally occasional *Myosotis secunda* (creeping forget-me-not), *Viola palustris* (marsh violet), *Veronica officinalis* (heath speedwell), *Polygala serpyllifolia* (heath milkwort), *Cirsium palustre* (marsh thistle), *Carex echinata* (star sedge), *Carex flava* agg. (yellow sedge agg.), *Carex ovalis* (oval sedge), *Carex nigra* (common sedge), rarely occurring *Scutellaria minor* (lesser skullcap), *Carex demissa* (common yellow sedge). *Ranunculus omniphyllus* (water crowfoot) and *Juncus bulbosus* (bulbous rush) were locally occasional in small areas of standing water.

Polytrichum sp. (moss) and *Cladonia* sp. (lichen) was frequent/occasional throughout. Ferns including *Dryopteris felix-mas* (male fern), *Athyrium felix-femina* (lady fern) and *Blechnum spicant* (hard fern) were locally frequent at stream edges. On the lower part of the slope red waxcap fungi were locally occasional.

ENV3.15 Land surrounding wetland centre
Grid reference: 173063
Size: 5ha
Survey date: 29 th September 2008

Site Description: 5 ha of land surrounding the wetlands building (gym) at Garden Festival, Ebbw Vale. The eastern boundary is flanked by a road, and the western boundary by a tall industrial metal fence and road to a large house. A small section of hawthorn hedgerow is located along the northern part of this boundary. The southern boundary is fenced. Rough grassland lies to the south and a recently fenced new house and garden to the north.

A large lake is the main feature of the site, with broadleaved woodland/plantation to the east, (and extending northwards), and unmanaged semi improved neutral/poor grassland, scrub and strip of alder and willow to the west. Most of the site has a gentle east facing slope and small streams run across the site via the lake. Within the eastern woodland the

stream flows through a small rocky gully, the edges of which support ferns. Footpaths run down through the woodland and circle the lake.

The site includes some mature trees and in particular a group of mature ash, beech and a fern leaved beech create a high canopy near the woodland path in the east of the site. At the south east of the site a denser area of mixed plantation is present, with a developing understorey. Species include silver birch, rowan, oak, ash, field maple, pine, larch, poplar and sycamore. The northern part of the site lies over very steeply sloping ground and supports field maple, rowan, silver birch, oak, hawthorn together with some rhododendron, bramble, fern, larch and pine.

The streams and ditches connected with the lake, together with its margins support a reasonable variety of plant species. The grassland over the west of the site is semi improved neutral/ semi improved poor and includes some scattered ant hills. This is unmanaged, damp and tussocky with frequent grasses; and localised rushes and sedges especially where the stream intersects the grassland. Herbs are scattered through the site, although more frequent in the south. Bramble and willow scrub is developing over the area, and a dense strip runs through the middle of the grassland. Towards the north (near a wooden cabin) vegetation is sparser, with some bare ground but includes *Odonites verna* (red bartsia), *Nardus stricta* (mat grass), *Linum catharticum* (fairy flax). Of particular note here is *Echium vulgare* (viper's bugloss) and *Poa compressa* (compressed meadow grass).

ENV3.16 Gorse-bank Field
Grid reference: 176087
Size: 0.62ha
Survey date: 10-07-07

Site Description: This field comprises U4 acid grassland and includes a steeply sloping bank with frequent *Ulex europaea* (gorse), *Pteridium aquilinum* (bracken), *Rubus fruticosus* (bramble) and *Juncus effusus* (soft rush).

This field had been recently cut and spread with manure at the time of survey. From the remnant cut vegetation, the following species were identified: locally frequent *Leontodon hispidus* (rough hawkbit) *Lotus pedunculatus* (greater birds foot trefoil), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Juncus inflexus* (hard rush), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Trifolium repens* (white clover), *Prunella vulgaris* (self heal), *Cerastium fontanum* (common mouse ear), *Cirsium arvense* (creeping thistle), *Viola canina* (heath dog violet), *Pilosella officinarum* (mouse ear hawkweed), *Juncus effusus*, *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain), *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort). *Succisa pratensis* (devils bit scabious) was locally occasional on the eastern edge of the field by the track.

A stream bordered by locally frequent *Juncus effusus* (soft rush) flows from east to west across the north of the site.

A public footpath runs diagonally across the field. The steep damp ground is poached in places.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

ENV3.17 'Meadowbank' Field
Grid reference: SO177073
Size: 0.89 ha
Survey date: 09-07-07

Site Description: Large field comprising species-rich neutral grassland with locally frequent ant hills. The field is moderately sloping to the west and a low bank forms the western edge. A small brook flows along the northern edge of the field.

Species present include frequent *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain), *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal), *Trifolium pratense* (red clover) *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Agrostis stolonifera* (creeping bent), *Prunella vulgaris* (selfheal), *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog), locally frequent *Pilosella officinarum* (mouse ear hawkweed), *Linum catharticum* (fairy flax), *Hypochoeris radicata* (common catsear), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) *Leontodon autumnalis* (autumn hawkbit), *Lotus corniculatus* (birds foot trefoil), *Lolium perenne* (perennial rye grass), *Trifolium campestre* (hop trefoil), occasional *Cerastium fontanum* (common mouseear), *Leontodon hispidus* (rough hawkbit), *Luzula campestris* (field wood rush), *Stellaria graminea* (lesser stichowrt), *Senecio jacobea* (ragwort) and *Sagina procumbens* (procumbent pearlwort).

Adjacent to the brook, *Cirsium palustre* (marsh thistle), *Galium palustre* (marsh bedstraw), *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), *Lotus pedunculatus* (greater birds foot trefoil), *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort) and *Carex panicea* (carnation sedge) are locally frequent and *Cardamine pratense* (cuckoo flower) is locally occasional.

There is an area of locally frequent bracken within the central/eastern part of the field, on higher ground. There is an electricity pylon in the south-west corner of the field.

ENV3.18 Bwlch y Garn Pond
Grid reference: SO 1724809456
Size: 150m ²
Survey date: 23.9.2008 to 15.10.2008

Site Description: A small pond situated at Bwlch y Garn Farm, near Newtown, Ebbw Vale, at a height of approximately 1000ft A.O.D. on the eastern slopes of Mynydd Carn y Cefn. Much of the surrounding improved grassland is subject to heavy sheep grazing, but areas of semi-improved grassland and purple moor-grass and rush pasture are less intensively grazed. Several acidic wet flushes occur in the area. Each of the ponds is surrounded by extensive margins of *Juncus effuses*.

ENV3.19 Land to the rear of Glyndwr Road, Rassau
Grid reference: 152 116
Size: 1ha
Survey date: 2/06/09

Site Description: Two horsed grazed enclosures lying to the west of the residential area of Rassau and north of the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road and situated over a gentle

south facing slope. An access track and plantation woodland flanks the north of the site and a former quarry lies to the west.

The northern field supports a species-rich neutral sward lying over a thin stony soil and is enclosed by dry-stone walls and fencing. Overall herb diversity is good, particularly over the middle part of the slope and south west of the site with frequent bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), common cat's ear (*Hypochoeris radicata*), tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*) and field wood rush (*Luzula campestris*). Quaking grass (*Briza media*) and spring sedge (*Carex caryophyllea*) are also locally part of the sward in the south west. Sward structure and height is variable; the lower, southern part of the site supports a shorter herb rich sward. Taller, more grass dominated regions occur towards the margins. Some dry areas of an acid nature are also evident towards the east of the field. A dry ditch lines the east of the field.

To the south is a long, semi-improved neutral horse grazed field. It's enclosed by fenced stone wall with the exception of a post and rail fence at the southern margin. The northern boundary has a few aged elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and some large hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) bushes are situated within the field. The northern boundary is not complete and as a result the two fields form a single management unit. The sward is patchily grazed, however despite its poor appearance, a moderate variety of herbs are still identifiable locally, especially in the southern half.

ENV3.20 Mynydd Carn-Y-Cefn & Cefn-Yr-Arial
Grid reference: SO190070
Size: 441.50ha
Survey date: April 2000

Site Description: Mynydd Carn-y-Cefn and Carn-yr-Arial is a valley ridge separating the Ebbw Fach and Ebbw Fawr valleys. The main part of the ridge is characterised by steep slopes to the east and west with locally extensive faulting over the plateau. Heathland is the main vegetation community over the survey area dominated by *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) with *Empeterum nigrum* (crowberry), *Calluna vulgaris* (ling) and *Pleurozium shreberi* (a moss). There are also areas of wet heath, and following the spring lines mire communities are found with *Carex echinata* (star sedge) and *Carex lepidocarpa* (long-stalked yellow sedge) .

Large areas of bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) dominate the lower slopes creating a mosaic with acid grassland and scattered trees. In the acid grassland, species include: *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Luzula campestris* (field woodrush) and *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry). There are also areas of woodland, upland sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*) and beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) (both HAPs for Blaenau Gwent) found on the steeper slopes of the main ridge. The large areas of heathland appear in a favourable condition. The mosaic of habitats support a diverse range of wildlife.

The site lies adjacent to Cwm Merddog Woodlands SSSI.

ENV3.21 Species-rich grassland at Waun-Lwyd
Grid reference: SO179070
Size: 1.41ha
Survey date: 03-07-07

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Site Description: Unmanaged, tussocky grassland on a series of old spoil mounds, colonised by herb-rich acid grassland, with frequent ant hills. Acidic indicators included *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Rumex acetosa* (common sorrel), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy-hair grass), *Luzula multiflora* (heath woodrush), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry). The grassland also supports more typically calcareous species including *Linum catharticum* (fairy flax), *Trisetum flavescens* (yellow oat-grass) reflecting a base-rich influence associated with the spoil.

The species-rich grassland starts along the southern edge of this area, next to a ditch adjacent to a gravel track. To the north scattered bracken and bramble scrub become more frequent. Along the eastern edge of the spoil, a fenced ridge marks the boundary between the old quarry area and slope covered in dense bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). To the west, the species-rich grassland grades into species-poor, semi-improved neutral grassland on flatter lower lying ground.

Invertebrates were frequent, including crickets, and small skipper and ringlet butterflies. A species of fritillary butterfly was also observed from a distance.

The following grassland fungi were observed 30 October 2007: *Hygrocybe pratensis* (meadow waxcap), *Hygrocybe chlorophana* (golden waxcap), *Hygrocybe psittacina* (parrot waxcap), *Clavulinopsis helvola* (yellow club), *Rickinella fibula*. (R Price, GWT & Halcrow Ecologist).

ENV3.22 Waun y Pound
Grid reference: SO155107
Size: 11.51ha
Survey date: October 2000

Site Description: Located on the A4047, 2 miles west of Beaufort, the site is situated close to an industrial estate.

The site contains a mosaic of important habitats which include a large area of M25 acid grassland and dry heath. Indicator species include *Serratula tinctoria* (saw-wort) and *Erica tetralix* (cross-leaved heath). This habitat mosaic surrounds a relatively large reservoir that has some emergent and bankside vegetation. To its east there is a mosaic of swamp, rush pasture and grassland. Species rich mire and heath, and open water is present and represents an important complex of habitats.

ENV3.23 Pond Group 1, Beaufort Hill
Grid reference: 1798012263/1795812081/1808512180
Size: ha300m2/11250m2/9375m2
Survey date: 23.9.2008 to 15.10.2008

Site Description: A network of two large ponds with man-made embankments along the southern edge, together with two smaller permanent ponds, two seasonal ponds and wet flushes.

The area is situated at a height of approximately 1300 ft A.O.D., to the north of Beaufort Hill. Surrounding the network of ponds is an area of improved and semi-improved

grassland, some of which is marshy and rush-covered. A semi-mature coniferous plantation is present on the north-east of the site.

Between the ponds are areas of colliery spoil, partly colonised with Western Gorse (*Ulex gallii*) whilst the ponds are linked by streams. There are also some acid wet flushes in the area. An interesting area containing Devil's-bit Scabious (*Succisa pratensis*) occurs to the east of pond 165

Pond 165 has the largest area of open water. Pond 164 is dominated by *Typha*, whilst pond 166 has significant areas of *Potamogeton polygonifolius*. The edges of all the ponds are fringed by *Juncus effuses* and *Juncus bulbosus* is present in pond 166.

Public rights of way run adjacent to and through the site.

ENV3.24 Pond Group 3, Hafod Y Dafal Farm, near Cwm
Grid reference: Ponds 1901/094, 1903/086, 087, 088, 089, 090, 091, 092, 093, 2002/081 plus one seasonal pond:- all in area of SO20080365
Size: various
Survey date: 23.9.2008 to 15.10.2008

Site Description: A series of man-made ponds situated at Hafod y Dafal Farm on the mountain plateau between Cwm and Abertillery at a height of approximately 1200 ft A.O.D. The network consists of 5 separate ponds to the east of the track leading to the farm, together with a complex of 5 permanent and one seasonal pond to the west of the farm track. The ponds are inter-connected by man-made streams, but are also supplied by natural drainage. A mature coniferous plantation lies to the north-west, whilst much of the area is improved grassland heavily grazed by sheep. There are also areas of semi-improved grassland, hedgerows and standard broadleaved trees (mainly beech) at the location. All of the ponds have matured well and mainly show oligotrophic characteristics. The small pond adjacent to the farm however, (1903/090) shows signs of eutrophication. A public right of way runs through the site and the colliery spoil tips to the east of the farm are being reclaimed for coal.

Most of the ponds are surrounded by a margin of *Juncus effusus*. Beds of *Typha latifolia* occur in some of the ponds, with the surface covered with *Potamogeton polygonifolius*. Other aquatic plants recorded include *Glyceria fluitans*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Sparganium erectum*, *Juncus bulbosus*, *Equisetum fluviatile*, *Iris*

ENV3.25 Pond Group 5, near Ty Llwyn, Ebbw Vale
Grid reference: 1772008957/1782208820/1782208782/1790080431
Size: various
Survey date: 23.9.2008 to 15.10.2008

Site Description: A linear group of two small ponds to the north, leading into a very large pond, with a small pond at the southern end. The ponds are situated to the west of Ty Llwyn, Ebbw Vale, on the lower slopes of Mynydd Carn y Cefn at a height of approximately 800 ft. above A.O.D. The ponds appear to be oligotrophic in nature, although the presence of barley straw bales in the large pond 032 indicates that growths of blue-green algae may occur. The ponds were formerly used as feeders for the Ebbw Vale steel works and a system of sluices and pipework is still in place. The ponds are fed by streams, by natural

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run-off from the mountain and by inlet pipes which presumably tap into spring sources further up the slopes. Some wet flushes occur in the area. The surrounding area comprises mainly of semi-improved grassland, with considerable bracken encroachment, improved grassland and areas of purple moorgrass and rush pasture. Some of the semi-improved grassland has significant numbers of the mounds of Yellow Meadow Ants (*Lasius flavus*), which provides a good foraging area for Green Woodpeckers. The ponds themselves have the following features:-

030-Shallow pond with small area of open water covered with *Potamogeton poygonifolius*. The rest of the pond is filled with *Juncus effusus* and *Sphagnum*.

031-Shallow pond with large area of open water containing *Potamogeton polygonifolius*. The whole pond is fringed with *Juncus effusus*, with the southern end containing *Sphagnum* and *Glyceria fluitans*.

032-Very large deep pond. Most of the eastern side of the pond is fringed by *Juncus effusus*, *Glyceria fluitans* and *Carex remota*. The western side, which consists of a man-made embankment is fringed by *Salix* and *Juncus effusus*. There are several extensive beds of *Typha latifolia* and several areas covered by *Potamogeton polygonifolius*. Other species present include *Myosotis scorpioides*, *Ranunculus flammula* and *Eupatorium cannabinum*.

033-Shallow pond with some open water. The pond is fringed by *Juncus effusus*, with *Molinia caerulea* interspersed. A bed of *Typha latifolia* is present at the southern end.

ENV3.26 Rassau Pond SO1512/198
Grid reference: SO15901241
Size: 0.10ha
Survey date: July 2007

Site Description: The pond is located 100m north of Rassau on land adjacent to the Rassau Industrial estate, at an altitude of 380m.

The surrounding land is unimproved grassland, woodland and heath.

The pond has a range of aquatic, floating and emergent vegetation. To the middle of the pond, where the water is deeper, there is 50% open water and 50% *Potamogeton polygonifolius*. The remaining pond area is emergent swamp vegetation, the western half is referable to **S19 *Eleocharis palustris* swamp**, the eastern half is dominated by *Carex riparia* with an abundance of *Eleocharis palustris* and *Juncus effusus*, this has been referred to as **S6 *Carex riparia* swamp**. Other species found include *Lemna minor*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Galium palustre* and *Juncus acutiflorus*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 12 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone which includes unimproved grassland is included around this pond.

ENV3.27 Rhyd y blew
Grid reference: 154113
Size: 26ha
Survey date: 29 th September 2008

Site Description: c.26 ha lying to the south of the Heads of the Valleys Road and north west of Ebbw Vale. The site is bounded by a large supermarket development to the east, Bryn-Serth Road to the south and west and housing (Rassau) and plantation to the north. A public footpath runs along this eastern edge and informal paths exist around the edge of the site, with evidence of use by horse riders. The site is of historical important for its breeding lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), which continue to breed on site.

The site is enclosed mainly by post and wire fencing, although at the north a small section of hawthorn hedgerow divides the site from the residential area of Rassau, and at the far north west tip a short section of 'feature' drystone wall is present. The west of the site is separated from the road by a fenced strip of planted trees/shrubs. The site was formerly an open cast coal mine with 4 large terraces. These were levelled in 1999/2000 to create one large plateau and seeded with grass seed. The whole site has been levelled, although a step exists down to the eastern and lowest lying part of the site. A further bank drops down to the neighbouring retail development. An embankment surrounds the site on the west and northern sides. A footpath runs along its top.

Drainage channels exist throughout the site. These vary in build form, flow and vegetation. At the east a large, deep channel consists of large stone blocks and cement and is poorly vegetated. Ditches are generally poorly vegetated, however some support rushes together with *Cardamine pratensis* (cuckoo flower), *Epilobium spp.* (willowherb sp.), *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort), *Veronica beccabunga* (brooklime) and mosses.

The central main plateau constitutes 65% of the site consisting dry and damp grassland and rushes. A raised embankment encloses the plateau at its west and north. This comprises dry grassland with planted trees & shrubs. The lower, eastern part of the site comprises a mosaic of damp and dry grassland, rushes, significant areas of planted trees and a number of shallow pools and wet areas. At the north of the site, stretching westwards past the foot of the embankment and alongside the site's boundary with Rassau is tall tussocky SI poor grassland.

ENV3.28 Ebbw (fawr) River North and South
Grid reference: SO 1606 1341(start) ST 2179 9955 (finish)
Size: 12.4km
Survey date: Desk based: December 2008

Site Description: The River Ebbw (Fawr) flows 20 miles from its source at Mynydd Llangynidr, via Carno reservoir and links with the Ebbw Fach at Aberbeeg forming the main Ebbw River before joining the Severn Estuary at the mouth of the River Usk.

For the most part the river is flanked extensively by major roads and housing/urban development, as it flows through the urban areas of Carmeltown and Ebbw Vale. Large sections of the watercourse have been modified, with banks artificially strengthened and raised, canalised sections and culverts (esp. below roads). In particular on the site of the

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former steelworks at Ebbw Vale, a large stretch of the River is much altered and disappears below ground from view for approx. c.1.5km. Near Aberbeeg the river is flanked by steep valley sides supporting the coniferous and mixed woodland of Craig y Deri and Criag Fawr.

Major improvements have taken place in water quality in the last 30 years, following the closure of collieries and then Ebbw Vale steelworks along with improvement work on the Western Valley trunk sewer.

ENV3.29 Slopes west of Mynydd carn-y-cefn (part 2)
Grid reference: 181079
Size: 4..22ha
Survey date: 18 th July 2007

Site Description: A moderate west facing, unmanaged field, which supports semi-improved acid grassland of variable type. Former field banks are visible within the current field unit, which is newly fenced at the north alongside ditch. The site is enclosed by a mixture of stone walls and fences. Bracken covered slope lies to the west, species-poor acid grassland to the south and the open bilberry heath of Mynydd carn-y-cefn to the east. The candidate Local Wildlife Site ‘Slopes to the west of Mynydd carn-y-cefn (part 1)’ lies to the north.

North east of site: The richest part of the field is associated with the slope at the north east where the sward shows affinity to U4/U2 and is characterised by frequent *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass) and frequent/locally abundant *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) in association with frequent *Agrostis tenuis* (common bent), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) and *Holcus mollis* (creeping soft grass). *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw) and *Nardus stricta* (mat grass) are occasional.

The wider field is characterised by a dry tall sward characterised by *Agrostis* (bent grass) and *Festuca ovina* (sheep’s fescue) together with *Deschampsia flexuosa*, and *Holcus mollis*. *Nardus stricta*, *Potentilla erecta* and *Deschampsia cespitosa* (tufted hair grass) are also present, and *Rumex acetosella* (sheep’s sorrel) and *Galium saxatile* are scattered locally.

South east of site: is heavily covered by *Pteridium aquilinum* (bracken) with little sign of an understorey sward.

South west of site: The bracken appears to have extended across the south west of the site in the past and there are signs of control through burning. This south west quarter of the site is rather grass dominated, characterised by dominant *Agrostis tenuis* together with *Holcus mollis* and *Festuca ovina*. *Nardus stricta*, *Deschampsia flexuosa* and *Deschampsia cespitosa* occur locally. *Rumex acetosella* and *Potentilla erecta* are scattered locally.

Scattered marshy areas in the south west of the field support *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog), *Cirsium palustre* (marsh thistle) and *Carex flava* agg.(yellow sedge agg.) Bracken lines the ditch at the western margin. There are signs of past scraping/ploughing (?) with ruts and a disturbed sward at the very north of the field.

Though the quality and richness of the acidic grassland sward is inconsistent through the field, overall sufficient acid indicators are present to warrant consideration as a WS. The site's value is further bolstered by its location next to the candidate Local Wildlife Site: 'Slopes to the west of Mynydd carn-y-cefn (part 1)'.

ENV3.30 Tarren y Trwyn Pond SO1807/025
Grid reference: SO18070742
Size: 2358m ²
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: The pond is located 3km south east of Ebbw Vale, and 200m west of the Silent Valley tip, at an altitude of 400m. The surrounding land is acid grassland and colonising spoil and the Long Feeder Pond Group is 600m to the north.

The pond has a diverse range of aquatic, emergent and floating stands of vegetation.

The pond is largely open water, and is vegetated mainly to the north with **A9 *Potamogeton natans* community** with **S12 *Typha latifolia* swamp** near the banks. Near the southern bank there is a stand of **S10 *Equisetum fluviatile* swamp**. Other species found within the pond include *Juncus effusus*, *Oenanthe crocata*, *Equisetum palustre* and *Mentha aquatica*.

Two areas were sampled for invertebrates, 10 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone which includes acid grassland and *Salix sp.* is included around this pond.

ENV3.31 Ty Llwyn Pond SO1708/029
Grid reference: SO17600886
Size: 0.23ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: The pond is located 1.5km south east of Ebbw Vale on the hillside east of the old steelworks site, at an altitude of 340m. It lies beside a footpath and the Long Feeder Pond Group are 150m to the east. The surrounding land is acid grassland and mire communities, the banks of the pond are mainly man-made.

The pond is largely open water with approximately 5% cover of the submerged species *Elodea canadensis*. Around the southern outlet there is a small area of **S12 *Typha latifolia* swamp**. Other species found include *Angelica sylvestris*, *Juncus effusus*, *Lotus pedunculatus* and *Sparganium erectum*. *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* is found on the bank to the south of the pond.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 3 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone is included around this pond.

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ENV3.32 Land at Park View, Beaufort
Grid reference: 164 117
Size: 1ha
Survey date: 5/6/09

Site Description: The site lies to the north west of Beaufort and comprises one large horse grazed field which is bordered by residential properties to the south and the River Ebbw to the west. Semi-improved neutral grassland lies to the north and a track to the east.

The field has an overall slight west facing slope and drops away sharply at the far west, down to the steep scrub and wooded banks of the River Ebbw. The field is enclosed by old fencing and a steep embankment flanks the field to the north, east and south. The banks are quite rank, in parts disturbed and support well established scattered scrub dominated by hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). Parts of the southern embankment support a locally open species-rich neutral sward.

A drainage channel runs along the east and south of the field, which has been partially excavated. The south of the field supports a marshy community with a variety of species, including frequent soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), occasional ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*), greater bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus uliginosus*), lesser spearwort (*Ranunculus flammula*) and jointed rush (*Juncus articulatus*). Sedges (*Carex spp.*) are also part of the sward. Away from the wettest regions over the central part of the field plant diversity declines however common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), common cat's ear (*Hypochoeris radicata*) all remain locally frequent. The north east quarter of the field is more improved with a rather lush appearance with areas of poaching, and frequent creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*).

The sloping ground at the east of the field supports a dry herb rich community with some acid character. Species include frequent pignut (*Conopodium majus*), bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), field wood rush (*Luzula campestris*) and common knapweed. Heath bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*) is locally frequent.

ENV3.33 Land off Parkhill Crescent
Grid reference: 174 111
Size: 1.75ha
Survey date: 15/07/09

Site Description: Situated to the south of Beaufort the large single enclosure lies over a steep south west facing slope, becoming more level in the east of the site. Farmed land lies to the south, a horse grazed field and housing to the north and planted woodland to the east. The site is enclosed by fencing and a track runs along the southern edge of the site. This southern margin is lined with scrub, including bramble.

The majority of the post industrial site is well vegetated and supports a mosaic of dry tall semi-improved acid grassland, developing heathland and dense and scattered scrub lying over the undulating ground of the steep west facing slope. Areas of dense gorse (*Ulex sp.*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) scrub are especially evident in the southern part of the site. Areas of exposed spoil are present across the steep north west part of the site.

The undulating ground also creates small hollows of soft rush (*Juncus effusus*) dominated vegetation. A small bank of exposed stone/rock is present in the south east, lightly vegetated with lichens and ferns. Near the eastern boundary small areas of standing water are vegetated with soft rush, tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), and ling heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) vegetates a steep bank of exposed spoil.

The mosaic of dry tall grassland, heather, scrub and marshy hollows continues over the steepest part of the slope at the western edge of the site. In places the sward is more mesotrophic with frequent crested dog's tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*), Yorkshire fog, common bent (*Agrostis tenuis*) and sweet vernal (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*) and a high herb cover that includes frequent bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), common cat's ear (*Hypochoeris radicata*), mouse-ear hawkweed (*Pilosella officinarum*) and red clover (*Trifolium pratense*). More unusually kidney vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria*) is also locally frequent.

ENV3.34 Adjacent to Drysiog Farm
Grid reference: 165085
Size: 0.5 ha
Survey date: 7/08/09

Site Description: The site is delineated by the remains of a dry-stone wall, however its defunct nature means the site is now in essence an extension of the open land (Mynydd Manmoel candidate SINC) which lies to its east. The site is bordered to the east by a large fenced enclosure used for the exercise of race horses. The area is lightly sheep grazed.

The site lies over a steep east facing slope and supports a semi-improved acid sward, characterised by frequent/occasional common bent (*Agrostis tenuis*), sheep's fescue (*Festuca rubra*), sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*), heath bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*) and locally occasional tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*). Ant hills occur locally and a series of lovely mature hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) trees are scattered over the slope. A small flush in the northern half of the enclosure includes soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), together with marsh bedstraw (*Galium palustre*), mosses and sedges (including star sedge (*Carex echinata*) and common yellow sedge (*Carex flava* agg.)).

ENV3.35 Rear of New Cwm Terrace, Cwm
Grid reference: SO 18633 05534
Size: 1.3ha
Survey date: 3/8/09

Site Description: The site is located to the rear of New Cwm and Cendl Terraces and to the west of Mynydd Carn-y-Cefn and Cefn-y-Arail candidate SINC. The south west boundary abuts residential garages and the broadleaved woodland of Coedcae Cendl borders the site to the east. The Nant Merddog marks the northern limit of the site, whilst a smaller interlinking stream runs near the south west edge of the site. The site is largely fenced with the exception of the eastern boundary which is delineated by a pylon line.

The southern tip of the site is separately fenced from the remainder of the site and lies to the west of the smaller stream and north of a public footpath. Semi-improved poor

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grassland lies beneath scattered high canopy trees; including silver birch, goat willow together with some mature oaks.

The larger northern part of the site has an overall west facing slope of variable gradient and is entered via a trackway. It is partially fenced and grazed by a couple of horses. It supports a mosaic of native broadleaved woodland, marshy grassland, semi-improved acid grassland, neutral grassland and scattered trees and scrub. A number of mature trees are scattered through the site, including a group of mature oak and birch centrally on site and maiden oaks along the track which runs north-south through part of the site. A steep bank vegetated with mature birch, rowan and hawthorn lies to the east of this track. Here, water drainage down the slope results in a damp, sparse ground flora. The far north of the site adjacent to Cendl Terrace contains a very steep gully down to the Nant Merddog. Mature broadleaved woodland cloaks the gully frequented by ash, oak and silver birch together with hazel, hawthorn and beech. This woodland continues to the north of the stream (outside of the site).

Small open areas amongst the trees in the north of site support locally frequent ant hills and a semi-improved acid grassland sward that includes tormentil, heath bedstraw and heath speedwell. Semi-improved marshy grassland is located in the south of the site. Typical species include soft rush, marsh thistle, jointed rush, greater bird's foot trefoil, dock, cuckoo flower, Yorkshire fog together with lesser spearwort, marsh bedstraw and tormentil. Mature willow and bramble is scattered across the marshy area.

The south west edge of the site includes old sheds, barns and garages and small fenced gardens, divided from the main part of the site by the stream. Mature trees and ferns line the stream and reside in some gardens. Species include beech, field maple, sycamore, silver birch, hazel and willow.

ENV3.36 Nant-y-Croft, Rassau
Grid reference: 147 116
Size: 0.75ha
Survey date: 2/06/09

Site Description: The site consists a single field lying to the north of Rassau Road and the A465 Heads of the Valleys road. It is bordered by a strip of planted conifers and scrub lies to the west and semi improved poor/improved fields to the north and east. A small bank of scrub at the south divides the site from Rassau/Bryn Serth Road.

Despite being tightly grazed by horses the sward is still identifiable as semi-improved neutral grassland, with a reasonable variety of herbs which includes pignut (*Conopodium majus*), bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), bulbous buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus*) and common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*). Sward height is variable, with enriched areas of ranker vegetation and short grazed regions. Feeding and dunging areas at the margins introduce poached ground and areas of more improved vegetation. A drain runs adjacent to the eastern margin.

The field is enclosed by a dry-stone wall at the north, fence to the west and a fenced stone wall to the east. The eastern boundary is straddled by hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) scrub. Some small patches of bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) reside at the margins.

ENV3.37 Cwm Slopes, Festival Park, Ebbw Vale
Grid reference: 17866 06170
Size: 2.63ha
Survey date: 3/08/09

Site Description: Located on the southern edge of the Ebbw Vale Festival Site, the site comprises post industrial land with a steep south facing slope which levels out at the south of the site. The land is fenced with the exception of the northern boundary which is demarked by a track/road, and the western boundary which is unmarked. The railway lies to the east and mixed deciduous woodland to the west. A playing field and the settlement of Cwm lie to the south. The east and west edges of the site are flanked by deciduous scrub. A well used zig zagging gravel footpath runs through the site and provides access to the festival site from Cwm.

Open grassland has developed over the steep undulating post industrial ground. Vegetation height and species composition is variable over the site. The steepest parts of the slope support a colourful herb rich sward, together with areas of bare/lightly vegetated ground. Herbs include locally frequent field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*) and small scabious (*Scabiosa columbaria*), viper's bugloss (*Echium vulgare*), wild carrot (*Daucus carota*), fairy flax (*Linum catharticum*) and marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*). Elsewhere a tall, grass dominated sward is more typical with herbs more commonly represented by ragwort (*Senecio jacobea*) and common knapweed (*Centurea nigra*). Ditches/drains lie adjacent to the zig zag path and part of the southern boundary. These are typically vegetated with willow, bramble, thistles and common nettle (*Urtica dioica*). Localised damp areas including hard rush (*Juncus inflexus*), and hairy sedge (*Carex hirta*) occur in the south. Some ant hills occur locally on the slope.

The very north of the site supports deciduous woodland frequented by even aged alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and silver birch (*Betula pendula*) with a bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) sapling and common nettle understory. Other species include rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), cherry (*Prunus sp.*), willow (*Salix sp.*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*).

Grass vetchling (*Lathyrus nissolia*) was recorded in north east and west of the site, a contributory species within *Section S7) Vascular Plants* of the Mid Valleys SINC criteria.

ENV3.38 Old Allotments
Grid reference: 176086
Size: 0.69ha
Survey date: 13-07-07

Site Description: Marshy and neutral species-rich grassland and dense willow scrub characterise this site, which was at one time allotment plots. The grassland is characterised by a high herb:grass ratio. The south-east corner of the site grassland is the most diverse, comprising locally abundant/frequent *Sanguisorba officinalis* (greater burnet), *Trifolium pratense* (red clover), *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Hypochoeris radicata* (common cats ear), *Lotus corniculatus* (birds foot trefoil), *Lotus pedunculatus* (greater birds foot trefoil), *Leontodon autumnalis* (autumn hawkbit), *Carex panicea* (carnation sedge), *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Rumex acetosa* (common sorrel), *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal), *Cynosurus*

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cristatus (crested dogs tail), *Prunella vulgaris* (self heal), *Cirsium palustre* (marsh thistle), occasional *Lychnis flos-cuculi* (ragged robin), *Galium palustre* (marsh bedstraw), *Vicia sativa* (common vetch), *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel) and *Digitalis purpurea* (foxglove).

A species-rich flush with frequent *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* (southern marsh orchid), *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* (marsh pennywort), *Juncus articulatus* (jointed rush), *Filipendula ulmaria* (meadowsweet), *Epilobium parviflorum* (hoary willowherb), *Cirsium palustre* (marsh thistle), *Carex nigra* (common sedge), *Carex echinata* (star sedge), *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort) and *Epilobium hirsutum* (great willowherb) runs from east to west adjacent to a line of willow (*Salix sp.*) scrub that may have been an old hedgeline.

Other parts of the site comprise overgrown, neglected neutral grassland with frequent bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and scrub patches at the field centre and invading from the edges. Here species such as *Trifolium pratense*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Vicia cracca* (tufted vetch), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Trifolium medium* (zig zag clover) and *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog) are locally frequent. Meadow brown and small skipper butterflies were seen here.

Scattered broadleaved woodland and scrub including locally frequent willow, hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) oak (*Quercus sp.*), Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and privet (*Ligustrum sp.*) cover much of the north-west of the site. An old hawthorn hedgerow in the south-west corner is approximately 2-3m away from the existing field boundary. Beyond this the stream opens out into a swamp area with frequent *Typha latifolia* (reedmace), *Caltha palustris* (marsh marigold), *Epilobium hirsutum*, *Juncus articulatus* and *Lotus pedunculatus*.

ENV3.39 East of Penrhiwgwngi
Grid reference: SO186038
Size: 2.58ha
Survey date: 22/07/03

Site Description: A steeply sloping acidic woodland facing east, with a minor road running north to site. The upper sector also exhibits the line of a conveyor (for carrying mining waste).

Fencing is largely absent. However, with minimal ground flora, grazing is probably minimal. Some grazing may occur around the conveyor line and rock outcrops above.

The woodland is essentially oak (*Quercus spp.*) and acidic, but is locally dominated by big, old beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), with locally deep leaf litter, especially below the road – from which access is open.

A small seepage is present high up and some acid grass/bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) below the road.

ENV3.40 Mynydd Manmoel
Grid reference: SO164070
Size: 215.53ha
Survey date: March 2002

Site Description: Mynydd Manmoel rises between the Ebbw and Sirhowy valleys. The northern area comprises of a mosaic of acid grassland, wet heath and mire communities. Heath communities can be found in the central area.

NVC type H12 heathland is represented over higher slopes and often occurs patchily amongst other habitats. Species present include *Empeterum nigrum* (crowberry), *Erica tetralix* (cross-leaved heath) and *Calluna vulgaris* (ling). NVC type H18 heathland can also be found over higher ground with a well developed bryophyte layer.

Small areas of wet heath can be found throughout with *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass), *Carex echinata* (star sedge) and *Narthecium ossifragum* (bog asphodel) (Area 23). Mire communities have species that include *Galium palustre* (marsh bedstraw), *Carex panicea* (carnation grass) and *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) and are mainly found in the north of the site with M6c communities found typically as flushes following stream and spring lines. Acid grassland can be found within the heathland referable to U4 and U5.

The reprofiled spoil in Area 53 is species poor and has not been included within the Local Wildlife Site boundary. The site supports a rich mosaic of habitats of great value to wildlife.

ENV3.41 Sirhowy Hill Woodland and Cardiff Pond
Grid reference: SO152101
Size: 84.48ha
Survey date: February 2007 (report)

Site Description: The site is located approximately 1.5 miles south of Rassau, off the heads of the valleys road (A465). The site is divided into two separate areas by the Man Moel Road. The area north of the road (c.28 ha) which is managed by BGCBC, is known as the 'Sirhowy Hill Woodlands North' whilst the southern area (c.50ha) is managed by Tredegar Development Trust, is known as 'Sirhowy Hill Woodlands South'. There is an extensive network of maintained paths extending throughout the site, and the whole of the site is open to public access. The majority of the site was historically worked for coal, whilst the remainder of the site was used as a depository for steel industry waste, together with a household refuse tip. The tips were closed in the early 1970s and a series of tree planting schemes have occurred on the site since.

Large areas are dominated by tree planting of various sizes with approximately half of the woodland being coniferous. Under storey development is very variable but generally patchy, and the ground flora varies between neutral grassland, acid grassland and heathland or grass-heath mosaic all of which are of Local Wildlife Site quality. The damp acid grassland and marshy grasslands for example supports 4 plant species considered local in the region, and 17 species considered indicative of species-rich marshy grasslands in the *Guidelines for the Selection of Wildlife Sites in South Wales*. The site also contains ponds identified as a key habitat for conservation in the Blaenau Gwent LBAP. The site contains one large permanent pond (Cardiff Pond) and two smaller ponds. The site also contains open rock habitat in the form of cliff faces, scree and small rocks. No nationally rare or scarce species were recorded by the present survey. However, eleven species were recorded which are regarded as being local or uncommon in the Gwent region. These include southern marsh-orchid (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*), yellow sedge (*Carex viridula* ssp *oedocarpa*), bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), heath milkwort (*Polygala*

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serpyllifolia), and crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*). The latter is listed as a contributory species within the *Guidelines for the Selection of Wildlife Sites in South Wales*.

ENV3.42 Garn-ddu Meadow
Grid reference: SO132115
Size: 0.90ha
Survey date: 27/6/06

Site Description: A damp neutral meadow on a moderately steep, southerly facing slope, containing a mosaic of marshy grassland (M23 *Juncus effusus* /*acutiflorus* (soft/sharp flowered rush) - *Galium palustre* (marsh bedstraw) pasture and M24 *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) – *Cirsium dissectum* (meadow thistle) fen meadow) and improved/semi-improved poor grassland, with a small localised area of acidic grassland at the northern edge.

The species-rich site contains a number of interesting species including *Cirsium dissectum* (meadow thistle), *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* (common spotted orchid), *Lathyrus montanus* (bitter vetch) and *Sanguisorba officinalis* (great burnet).

The site is bordered by a mixture of fences and fenced dry stone walls and hedgerows. A track lies to the north, a small improved field to the west, a bracken/herb covered slope to the east and a semi improved poor field with localised species richness lies to the south.

ENV3.43 Hirgan Fields Grassland
Grid reference: SO141113
Size: 21.87ha
Survey date: 2005/2006

Site Description: The complex of enclosed fields located between Hirgan-fach farm and Hirgan and The Wells Farms supports a combination of horse grazed acid grassland and acid grassland/dry heath, and neutral grassland managed for hay/silage. The area is situated to the north of the A465 heads of the valleys road, with open moorland to the north, and has a moderate/slight south easterly facing slope. The fields are divided by fenced dry stone walls with some accompanying scattered hawthorn. Ditches run alongside the walls in places.

Fields 1 and 5 at the north of the site support a mosaic of acid grassland and dry heath. The heathland communities are degraded and very heavily grazed by horses/ponies, however the fields support a good variety of indicator species including *Calluna vulgaris* (heather), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) and *Pilosella officinalis* (mouse-ear hawkweed). *Melampyrum pratense* (common cow wheat) was also recorded. Similarly, field 6, though heavily grazed retains a reasonable variety of acid indicators. Field 7 supports a mix of acid, neutral and marshy species but qualifies under the acid grassland criteria.

Field 9 provides the best example of neutral grassland and could stand alone as a cWS. The area to the north of the ditch is of most interest with an MG 5 community including frequent *Conopodium majus* (pignut), *Hypochoeris radicata* (cat's-ear) and *Centaurea nigra* (common knapweed), accompanied in places by *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot trefoil) and *Luzula campestris* (field wood-rush). The grasses are fine and the sward

relatively open. Towards the west, small pockets with a more acidic nature include *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) and *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel). Indicators are fewer to the south of the ditch. Near to and extending out from the ditch a marshy sward includes *Juncus* species (rush species), *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass), *Rumex acetosa* (common sorrel) and *Holcus mollis* (creeping soft grass). The banks of the ditch are locally herb rich.

The remainder of the site consists largely of neutral grassland enclosures, many exhibiting a degree of agricultural improvement with *Ranunculus repens* (creeping buttercup) and *Trifolium repens* (white clover) a part of the sward. Overall, these fields support a reasonable variety of herbs. Despite the frequency and distribution of individual species being rather patchy, the indicator species threshold is reached/nearly reached in most cases. Many of the fields have marshy areas adding to diversity. The fields have two 'looks' – fields 3,4, and 11 (under the ownership of Horgan farm) are cropped with a damp feel and species such as *Achillea ptarmica* (sneezewort), *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort), *Caltha palustris* (marsh marigold) are locally frequent. *Cirsium dissectum* (meadow thistle) was also locally recorded. Field 8 is species-poor. Fields towards the west, and managed by the Wells Farm (fields 10, 12 and 13) support taller, drier, grassier swards. Areas of marshy grassland are found on wetter ground near ditches and where drainage is poor. Here species include *Lychnis flos-cuculi* (ragged robin), *Caltha palustris* (marsh marigold), *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* (marsh pennywort) and *Galium palustre* (marsh bedstraw). Marshy grassland at the south of field 12 includes over 100 *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* (southern marsh orchid). Fields 2, 3, 8, 10 and 12 are below the indicator threshold, however most retain a mix of neutral, acid and marshy indicators and are included in the cWS, constituting part of a definable management block.

The site in its entirety warrants consideration as a cWS due to the good variety of species it supports collectively and the comparative rarity of lowland neutral grasslands in this part of the North Sirhowy Valley. Whilst the indicator thresholds for individual grassland types is not confidently reached in all fields, the combined diversity of neutral, acid and marshy indicators in these borderline fields is sufficient to warrant inclusion in the candidate Local Wildlife Site.

ENV3.44 Industrial Estate Grasslands
Grid reference: SO149096
Size: 3.72ha
Survey date: 21.07.06

Site Description: An area of reclaimed land located on the eastern edge of Tredegar, 1.5 km west of the village of Mountain Air. The MG1 is characterised by constant *Arrhenatherum elatius* (false oatgrass) with a range of acidic and neutral species including *Festuca rubra* (red fescue), *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel), *Nardus stricta* (mat-grass), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog), *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot-trefoil), *Trifolium pratense* (red clover), *Cynosurus cristatus* (crested dog's-tail), *Ranunculus acris* (meadow buttercup), *Danthonia decumbens* (heath-grass) and *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain).

Carex hirta (hairy sedge) is abundant, and a wetter area in the north-west part of the site contains cotton grass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*). Other common species are hoary willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), *Senecio jacobea* (common ragwort) and *Cirsium*

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arvensis (creeping thistle). Willow (*Salix* sp.), hawthorn (*Crataegus mongyna*) and gorse (*Ulex* sp.) scrub are scattered throughout the site.

ENV3.45 Lower Farm Field
Grid reference: SO157057
Size: 0.66ha
Survey date: 13/7/06

Site Description: A long field lying to the western edge of the Bedwellty Pits dismantled railway, with a moderate-steep east facing slope containing a species-rich grassland sward with an acidic nature.

Acid grassland indicator species are particularly associated with the ant hills that are scattered over the north of the site. These include *Pilosella officinarum* (mouse-ear hawkweed), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) and *Veronica officinalis* (heath speedwell).

Lotus corniculatus (common bird's-foot trefoil) is frequent across the site and moving south the sward has a more neutral feel with frequent *Centaurea nigra* (common knapweed), *Hypochoeris radicata* (common cat's-ear), *Achillea millefolium* (yarrow) together with occasional *Luzula campestris* (field wood-rush) and *Stellaria graminea* (lesser stitchwort). Despite the site's acid tendencies at the north in terms of number of indicator species it qualifies as a candidate Local Wildlife Site under the Neutral Grasslands criteria.

Moving further south, near the farm barns, the vegetation is less interesting and rather grass dominated. A hollow contains alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and scrub. At the far south of the site near Lower Farm house a small formerly separate field contains a lush more improved sward with abundant *Trifolium repens* (white clover) and *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain). *Lolium perenne* (perennial rye-grass) and *Ranunculus repens* (creeping buttercup) are also frequent.

Physical remains of the site's industrial past include stone drainage channels which run down the slope, in the site's northern half. A small area of grazed deciduous woodland lies to the north, with some species-rich areas, elsewhere improved grassland is the dominant adjacent habitat.

ENV3.46 Lower Troedrihwgair Grasslands
Grid reference: SO155067
Size: 7.02ha
Survey date: 11.07.06

Site Description: An extensive rock and scree covered, south-west facing slope, with dry acidic grassland and situated south of the centre of Tredegar, adjacent to the Coed-y-Rhyd forest. The site is enclosed by stone walls and grazed by sheep which have unrestricted access.

The grassland occurs above the hamlet of Troedrihwgair. The community is characteristic of (U4) with *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal-grass), *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (Bilberry), *Nardus stricta* (Mat-grass), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (Wavy

hair-grass) and *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel) and localised parched areas containing *Festuca ovina* (sheep's-fescue), *Aira praecox* (early hair-grass), *Pilosella officinarum* (mouse-ear hawkweed) together with lichens and mosses.

ENV3.47 Parc Bryn Bach
Grid reference: SO127096
Size: 111ha
Survey date: 18th and 19th August 2008

Site Description: Parc Bryn Bach LNR is situated approximately 18 km south of the Brecon Beacons National Park on the outskirts of the town of Tredegar. It covers an area of 110 hectares (ha) on land reclaimed from former mine-workings. Parc Bryn Bach has been managed by the Leisure Department of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council for the past seven years. Over this time management of the site has focused on day-to-day maintenance and encouraging visitors to the site by hosting sporting and educational events and activities as well as providing facilities such as a café, visitor centre, family cycle track, conference rooms, an adventure playground and 'green gym' equipment. The surrounding countryside comprises scattered villages, towns and agricultural land interspersed with many semi-natural habitats providing corridors and dispersal routes for plants and animals.

The area within the LNR boundary is owned by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and managed by the Leisure Department. Parts of the park have also been leased to tenants (the Model Boat Club leases part of the lake; Tmobile leases a small area (outside the proposed LNR boundary) for a telephone mast; tenant farmers lease central and south eastern fields for grazing; and the Model Aeroplane Club leases a small field for use as a model runway). Tenants are responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of these plots of land. Parts of the wider area of Parc Bryn Bach, such as the golf course, are on land, which is owned by Caerphilly County Council.

Parc Bryn Bach is largely open to the public and is regularly visited by members of the local community and visitors for informal recreation. The area surrounding the lake is more heavily used for recreational activities and includes a number of facilities, whereas south eastern parts of the site receive fewer visitors. A network of public footpaths and other public rights of way connects this site to the wider countryside.

ENV3.48 Trefil Las Pond SO1213/208
Grid reference: SO12861325
Size: 0.12ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: The pond is located on the common land, 1km west of Trefil, at an altitude of 470m. The pond is found amidst the upland communities of acid grassland, dwarf shrub heath and mire.

The middle area of the pond is open water, this is fringed with a floating carpet of *Sphagnum sp.*, *Eriophorum angustifolium* and *Juncus effusus*. Other species found include *Polytrichum sp.*, *Molinea caerulea* and *Calluna vulgaris*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 5 species were recorded.

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A 10m buffer zone of blanket mire and mire communities is included around this pond.

ENV3.49 St James' Reservoir
Grid reference: SO155079
Size: 1.71ha
Survey date: August 1998

Site Description: St James' Reservoir is situated 2km south-east of Tredegar, on a plateau to the east of Georgetown. Previously a deep coal mining area, the reservoir became disused in 1973 and a land reclamation scheme was completed. Coniferous plantations surround the site except to the west which has an open aspect.

The site contains open water supporting some interesting emergent and bankside plant communities, which includes *Nymphaea alba* (white water-lily). At the southern edge of the site a mosaic of habitats includes a transitional area with some water margin vegetation, heath/grassland (acidic) and wet woodland. A mixture of pine plantation and species rich grassland stretches along the eastern edge of the reservoir. A small area of marshy grassland is present at the northern edge of the reservoir.

A strip of neutral/acid grassland mosaic at the western side of the reservoir along with area of plantation is excluded from the Local Wildlife Site boundary, being rather species poor. Smaller examples of these habitats are included with the boundary, acting as corridors between the richer habitats.

ENV3.50 Mynydd Bedwellte
Grid reference: SO145060
Size: 416.61ha
Survey date: September 2003

Site Description: Mynydd Bedwellte comprises a large area of upland common land situated between the valleys of Sirhowy and the Rhymney. Dry heath communities are represented on Mynydd Bedwellte at the higher altitudes and steeper flanks with a small area of wet heath to the north that includes *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass), *Erica tetralix* (cross-leaved heath) and *Calluna vulgaris* (ling). Mire communities are found throughout especially to the north and include species such as *Juncus squarrosus* (heath rush), *Carex echinata* (star sedge), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) and *Narthecium ossifragum* (bog asphodel) that represent M25 and M6c mire and which line the springs and flushed areas. Acid grassland can also be found represented by a U4 NVC community, often occurring in a mosaic with the heathland. The H12 heathland was found to be in favourable condition but the H18 was in unfavourable condition.

Overall the site is a rich mosaic of habitats of great value to a variety of wildlife.

ENV3.51 Nine Arches Grassland
Grid reference: SO134108
Size: 5.54ha
Survey date: 5/5/05

Site Description: A mosaic of species-rich neutral grassland and marshy grassland lying on the slopes to either side of the River Sirhowy and the flatter plain adjacent to the river itself, located to the north of the A465.

To the east of the river a tapering strip of land (next to the A465) holds the most interest, supporting a mix of neutral grassland with damp/marshy areas. Species include frequent-abundant *Succisa pratensis* (devil's bit scabious) and *Centaurea nigra* (common knapweed), *Leontodon hispidus* (rough hawkbit) and *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot-trefoil). *Plantago media* (hoary plantain) was also recorded (Contributory Species in Guidelines for the Selection of Wildlife Sites in South Wales). A patch of locally frequent orchids (possible *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* (southern marsh orchid) together with *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort) and *Carex* (sedge) spp. lies near the southern end of a ditch which runs through the site. Other small marshy grassland patches include *Juncus* (rush), *Galium palustre* (marsh bedstraw), *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort). A small area of acid grassland lies to the south of the site on a bank adjacent to the A465. To the west of the river the slopes supports a drier neutral sward that includes *Trifolium medium* (zigzag clover). Scattered scrub is also located on the slopes and a strip of willow scrub lies next to the river.

An old viaduct crosses over the site, linking the valley sides. Below the viaduct and to its north west a further patch of marshy grassland includes *Lathyrus pratensis* (meadow vetchling), *Achillea ptarmica* (sneezewort), *Juncus* (rush) spp and *Angelica sylvestris* (wild angelica). This is fenced off from an otherwise improved field.

A further field to the west of the river (cut at time of survey in 2005) was revisited in 2006. The field supports a mosaic of marshy and neutral grassland dominated by rushes and tall grasses. A reasonable localised herb diversity is present.

The site is bordered by a mixture of land use including houses, cemetery, bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and woodland.

ENV3.52 North Pen-y-Lan Grassland
Grid reference: SO119131
Size: 0.48ha
Survey date: 27.6.06

Site Description: The site comprises a roughly oblong enclosed field on a moderate west facing slope on the northern edge of the village of Trefil, approximately 4km north of Tredegar. The field is enclosed primarily by post and wire fencing with a length of unstockproof hedge. The shallow soils are free-draining and derived from the underlying limestone bedrock. The lower southern end has a rolling topography, the result of past excavation.

Much of the species-rich grassland occurs on disturbed ground and contains a range of herbs and grasses found in the CG10 community while elsewhere there is a more neutral MG5 flora which has been agriculturally modified in places to MG6. Grass species vary in abundance but are typified by *Festuca rubra* (red fescue), *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal grass) and *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog) with *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Trisetum flavescens* (yellow oat-grass), *Briza media* (quaking grass), *Aira caryophyllea* (early hair grass) and *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass) more common on the more

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disturbed ground. *Thymus polytrichus* (wild thyme) is constant throughout the disturbed area with *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot trefoil), *Euphrasia officinalis* (eyebright), *Carex caryophylla* (spring sedge), *Linum catharticum* (fairy flax), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Galium verum* (lady's bedstraw), *Alchemilla filicaulis* agg. (hairy lady's mantle agg.), *Polygala vulgaris* (common milkwort) and *Leontodon hispidus* (rough hawkbit) all well represented throughout. Other notable species recorded on the neutral grassland included *Centaurea nigra* (common kapweed), *Listera ovata* (common twayblade), *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* (southern marsh orchid), *Leucanthemum vulgare* (Oxeye daisy) and *Lathyrus pratensis* (meadow vetchling).

ENV3.53 Milgatw Farm Grassland
Grid reference: SO134119
Size: 10.72ha
Survey date: 3/8/05

Site Description: A large field with a moderate west/south west facing slope, lying to the north east of Milgatw Farm, and with a stream at its base. Derelict stone walls run through the field and a narrow ditch runs east – west centrally through the site. The upper slope supports species-rich acid grassland (particularly on steepest part of slope and plateau in south east quarter of field) with frequent *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass), *Nardus stricta* (mat grass), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Euphrasia officinalis* (eyebright) and *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw). *Polygala serpyllifolia* (heath milkwort) and *Campanula rotundiflora* (harebell) are occasional.

Patches of relatively species-rich marshy grassland exist in the south east quarter of the site. The rest of the field (particularly to the south of the ditch) is characterized by frequent *Juncus effusus* (soft rush) with scattered patches of shorter vegetation including wet moss and sedge (*Carex* spp.) patches, and short acid grassland. Areas are tightly grazed in places.

Towards the north of the site the slope continues to exhibit a good frequency of acid indicators which continues westwards towards the stream. Scattered hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and gorse (*Ulex* spp.) are also present on the slope. The acid grassland has sufficient indicator species to qualify as a candidate Local Wildlife Site in its own right and the whole site qualifies under the Mosaic habitat guidelines.

The site is bordered by unenclosed moorland to the east and north, semi improved poor grassland to the west and a small unit of semi improved neutral grassland to the south.

ENV3.54 Fairview Field
Grid reference: SO130113
Size: 0.72ha
Survey date: 28/6/06

Site Description: A large damp meadow with a topography that gives a somewhat 3 terraced appearance and with a net decrease in height moving west to east. The site supports a mix of neutral and marshy grassland communities and is fenced on all boundaries with a broken hedgerow at the southern most boundary.

The lower wetter ground at the east holds the most botanical interest, supporting a mosaic of *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), *Juncus articulatus/acutiflorus* (jointed rush/ sharp-flowered rush) and *Carex* (sedge) spp. (inc frequent *Carex ovalis* (oval sedge) and locally frequent *Carex echinata* (star sedge) and *Carex nigra* (common sedge)). Frequent herbs include *Lotus uliginosus* (greater bird's-foot trefoil), *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort), *Ranunculus acris* (meadow buttercup) and locally frequent species include *Galium palustre* (marsh bedstraw), *Lychnis flos-cuculi* (ragged robin), *Cardamine pratensis* (cuckoo flower) and *Senecio aquaticus* (marsh ragwort). Shorter patches of vegetation are characterized by frequent *Carex* (sedge), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), mosses and *Juncus squarrosus* (heath rush) together with locally occasional *Succisa pratensis* (devil's-bit scabious) and *Pedicularis sylvatica* (lousewort). Moving west, a strip of *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor-grass) and *Deschampsia caespitosa* (tufted hair grass) with locally frequent *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) and *Lotus uliginosus* (greater bird's-foot trefoil) is associated with a bank through the field.

Further west on the highest ground on the site scattered *Juncus effusus* (soft rush) and *Juncus articulatus/acutiflorus* (jointed rush/ sharp-flowered rush) is infiltrated by a grassier sward in places. The south of the site supports a grass dominated, more improved drier sward. Semi improved poor/improved grassland lies in fields adjacent to the site.

ENV3.55 Pine Tree House Grassland
Grid reference: SO118128
Size: 0.69ha
Survey date: 27.6.06

Site Description: The site comprises a roughly rectangular field on a gently east-facing slope on the western edge of the village of Trefil, approximately 4km north of Tredegar. The land lies between 400 and 420m. The field is enclosed by dry stone walls with internal post and wire fencing with a dry ditch along the eastern edge.

The grassland is lightly grazed with some poaching and is grazed by sheep and contains a range of herbs and grasses found in the U4 community. Grass species vary in abundance but are typified by *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Festuca rubra* (red fescue), *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal grass) and *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog) with *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass), *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) and *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass). Typical herbs include *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Hypochoeris radicata* (cat's-ear), *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel), *Polygala vulgaris* (common milkwort). *Juncus squarrosus* (heath rush) is also frequent, and bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) has encroached on the field from the south side.

ENV3.56 River Sirhowy
Grid reference: SO 1100 1195 (start) SO 1646 0424 (finish)
Size: 11.3km
Survey date: Desk based: December 2008

Site Description: The River Sirhowy has its source on the slopes of Cefn Pyllau-duon above Tredegar. After flowing through Shon Sheffrey's Reservoir it turns south through Tredegar and then into Caerphilly via Blackwood and Pontllanfraith. It turns eastwards near Cwmfelinfach and joins the River Ebbw near Crosskeys.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

In the vicinity of Tredegar the river is flanked for large sections by the A4048, housing and urban development. Further south, near Bedwellty Pits the river flows through a more open landscape, with sheep grazed anthill frequented grassland aligning the river to the north and south. Here the river displays greater physical naturalness with small meanders, riffles and exposed river sediment.

Extensive mining in the Sirhowy Valley, for metals and coal led to considerable pollution of the river in the past. However water quality is now much improved.

ENV3.57 Sheepfold Grasslands
Grid reference: SO140078
Size: 12.36ha
Survey date: 11.07.06

Site Description: A large enclosed area of mixed grassland on the western flank of the Sirhowy valley adjacent to Tredegar recreation ground and west of Tredegar town centre. The grassland slopes moderately to the east and is crossed by a network of wet and dry ditches some lined by old hedgerows. The upper slopes contain closely grazed species poor semi-improved grassland (MG6) that grades into semi-improved acidic grassland with unimproved areas of U4 below the main ditch.

The unimproved grassland contains *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Succisa pratensis* (devil's-bit scabious), *Carex panicea* (carnation sedge), *Carex caryophyllea* (spring sedge), *Centaurea nigra* (common knapweed), *Nardus stricta* (mat-grass), *Briza media* (quaking grass), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair-grass), *Danthonia decumbens* (heath-grass) and *Festuca ovina* (sheep's-fescue). *Juncus* (rush) dominated grassland types occur throughout the field with MG10 characterised by the constant *Deschampsia cespitosa* (tufted hair-grass) and M23 characterised by *Cirsium palustre* (marsh thistle) and *Galium palustre* (marsh bedstraw).

ENV3.58 Shon-Sheffrey's Reservoir Banks
Grid reference: SO127117
Size: 4.39ha
Survey date: 11/8/06

Site Description: The banks of the Shon Sheffrey's Reservoir support a mosaic of neutral and marshy grassland communities. The surrounding land is dominated by semi-improved poor/improved agricultural grassland.

The southern bank supports a mixture of neutral communities with a damp feel in places especially towards the west where a tall sward includes *Filipendula ulmaria* (meadowsweet), *Valeriana officinalis* (common valerian) and *Sanguisorba officinalis* (great burnet). Towards the east the sward is drier with patches of abundant *Lathyrus pratensis* (meadow vetchling). A small area with acidic tendencies is also present. At the southern most point on the bank a small area of low lying ground with some standing water contains a localised marshy grassland community with *Sagina nodosa* (knotted pearlwort) recorded (Contributory Species in Guidelines for the Selection of Wildlife Sites in South Wales).

The western bank is dominated by *Filipendula ulmaria* (meadowsweet) and tall grasses. A good diversity of scattered herbs includes *Stachys sylvatica* (hedge woundwort) and *Achillea ptarmica* (sneezewort). The northern bank by comparison has more localised herb diversity and is dominated by tall *Juncus effusus* (soft-rush), *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) and *Arrhenatherum elatius* (false oat grass). Small streams/ditches run through the vegetation into the reservoir.

At the east of the reservoir a steep east-south east facing slope leads down from the reservoir wall. This is home to a rich MG5 neutral grassland community that includes frequent *Centaurea nigra* (common knapweed), *Leontodon hispidus* (rough hawkbit), *Stellaria graminea* (lesser stitchwort) and *Euphrasia officinalis* (eyebright).

ENV3.59 South Pen-y-Lan Grassland
Grid reference: SO119130
Size: 0.45 ha
Survey date: 27.6.06

Site Description: The site comprises an enclosed field on a moderate west facing slope on the northern edge of the village of Trefil, approximately 4km north of Tredegar. The field is enclosed primarily by post and wire fencing with a length of un-stockproof hedgerow. The shallow soils are free-draining and derived from the underlying limestone bedrock. The site has a rolling topography the result of past excavation. Much of the species-rich grassland occurs on disturbed ground and contains a range of herbs and grasses found in the CG10 community while elsewhere there is a more neutral flora which has been agriculturally modified to MG6.

Grass species vary in abundance but are typified by *Festuca rubra* (red fescue), *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal grass) and *Holcus lanatus* (yorkshire fog) with *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Trisetum flavescens* (yellow oat grass), *Briza media* (quaking grass), *Aira caryophylla* (silver hair grass) and *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass) more common on the more disturbed ground. *Thymus polytrichus* (wild thyme) is constant throughout the disturbed area with *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot trefoil), *Euphrasia officinalis* (eyebright), *Carex caryophylla* (spring sedge), *Linum catharticum* (fairy flax), *Alchemilla filicaulis* agg. (hairy lady's mantle agg.), *Polygala serpyllifolia* (heath milkwort) and *Leontodon hispidus* (rough hawkbit) all well represented throughout. The lower lying ground has more improved grassland with frequent *Lolium perenne* (perennial ryegrass), *Trifolium repens* (white clover) and *Cirsium arvensis* (creeping thistle).

ENV3.60 The Fountain Inn Meadows
Grid reference: SO0157065
Size: 4.31ha
Survey date: 11/07/06

Site Description: Two hay meadows lying to the east and west of the public footpath to Bedwellty Pits with apparently good herb diversity across the fields. The fields appear to be characterised by abundant *Euphrasia officinalis* (eyebright) and frequent *Trifolium pratense* (red clover), *Lathyrus pratensis* (meadow vetchling), *Centaurea nigra* (common knapweed), *Rhinanthus minor* (yellow rattle) and *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain). *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot trefoil) and *Conopodium majus* (pignut) are also part of the sward.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Western most meadow has a damper community at its western corner with *Filipendula ulmaria* (meadowsweet) frequent together with *Juncus effusus* (soft rush) and *Juncus articulatus* (jointed rush). Locally frequent *Sanguisorba officinalis* (great burnet).

Deciduous woodland lies to the east, the Sirhowy river and associated neutral grassland to the south, and deciduous woodland/semi-improved poor pasture to the west/north.

ENV3.61 Tredegar Leisure Centre Grasslands
Grid reference: SO145076
Size: 8.65ha
Survey date: 11.07.06

Site Description: A steep east facing slope situated south of the centre of Tredegar. The site is enclosed by unstockproof post and rail fences and grazed by sheep which have unrestricted access throughout the site. The grassland comprises semi-improved acidic grassland consistent with U1 with constant *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal grass), *Cynosurus cristatus* (crested dog's-tail), *Festuca rubra* (red fescue), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw) and *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel).

Several of the northern most fields contain parched open acidic grassland with frequent moss and lichen and short patchy tussocky grasses especially *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue) and the low growing herb *Pilosella officinarum* (mouse-ear hawkweed). The lower slopes especially at the southern end are flushed and contain several *Juncus* (rush) species with sedges especially *Carex panicea* (carnation sedge) and *Cirsium palustre* (marsh thistle). Beyond the northern end of the site there has been much tree and shrub planting which retains vestiges of a dwarf shrub community with *Calluna vulgaris* (heather) and *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) well represented. The upper edges of the site abut against playing fields and a footpath occurs together with MG1 community occurs.

ENV3.62 Bedwellty Pits Field
Grid reference: SO154062
Size: 0.68ha
Survey date: 11/7/06

Site Description: Horse grazed field containing acid grassland over a moderate (in places steep) easterly slope, down to a ditch at the eastern margin. The site contains manmade constructions that exist as a remnant of the site's past industrial use. These 'remnants' include two large rectangular pools at the eastern edge. These are frequented by *Equisetum sp.* (horsetail) and *Iris pseudacorus* (yellow iris).

Grassland species include *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Pilosella officinarum* (mouse-ear hawkweed), *Hypochoeris radicata* (cat's ear) and *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain) which are frequent over most of the site. Acid indicators are particularly frequent on the slope (especially on the steepest area at the north of the site). Here these include *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Veronica officinalis* (heath speedwell), *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair-grass). *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) and *Calluna vulgaris* (heather) are also locally frequent. Trees and scrub are scattered in places on the slope along with ant hills.

On flatter ground at the east (in the vicinity of the pools and industrial remnants) the sward has a damper feel and acid indicators are fewer. Typical species here include *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort), *Carex sp.* (sedge), *Juncus sp.* (rush) and *Succisa pratensis* (devil's-bit scabious).

Disturbed grassland lies immediately to the east on reclaimed spoil. A bank supporting a rich acid community separates the two fields. A small heavily horse grazed rectangular field lies to the south, and semi improved poor pasture (on reclaimed spoil) lies at the north and east.

ENV3.63 Bryn – Bach School
Grid reference: SO130105
Size: 0.57ha
Survey date: July 2000

Site Description: Two separate areas within the grounds of Bryn Bach School constitute the Local Wildlife Site. Area A is the largest with a mixture of neutral, acid and wet grassland with some scrub and scattered trees. Grassland species include *Succisa pratensis* (devil's-bit scabious), *Calluna vulgaris* (ling), *Lychnis flos-cuculi* (ragged robin) and *Serratula tinctoria* (saw-wort) and the whole area is botanically diverse.

Since survey, part of Area A has been planted up with trees creating a more wooded area.

Area B lies to the east of the school with a stream running through it and a bank with species-rich grassland including *Leucanthemum vulgare* (ox-eye daisy), *Lathyrus pratensis* (meadow vetchling) and *Rhinanthus minor* (yellow rattle). Although small it is a botanically rich area with the mosaic of several habitats adding to its value for wildlife.

ENV3.64 Cefyn Pyllau-duon Pond SO1012/222
Grid reference: SO10031196
Size: 0.11ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: The pond is located on the common land, 2km south west of Trefil, at an altitude of 490m. The pond is found amidst the upland communities of acid grassland, dwarf shrub heath and mire. The pond site SO1012/223 is found 200m to the west.

The pond is largely open water with a fringe of vegetation around the outer edge, referable to **S22 *Glyceria fluitans* water-margin vegetation**. *Glyceria fluitans* (floating sweet-grass) is co-dominant with *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), other species include *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort).

Two areas were sampled for invertebrates, 6 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone which includes heath, mire and acid grassland communities is included around this pond.

ENV3.65 Nant Trefil Pond SO1113/215
Grid reference: SO11571341
Size: 0.08 ha
Survey date: August 2007

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Site Description: The pond is located on the common land, 1km north of Trefil, at an altitude of 420m. The pond is found amidst the upland communities of acid grassland, dwarf shrub heath and mire.

The middle area of the pond is dominated by a floating carpet of *Sphagnum sp.* with a small amount of open water. This is surrounded by a mire community dominated by *Juncus effusus* with *Sphagnum sp.* and *Polytrichum sp.*, this is part of a more extensive mire community.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 1 species was recorded.

A 10m buffer zone which includes heath and mire communities is included around this pond.

ENV3.66 Chapel House Field
Grid reference: SO160048
Size: 4.12ha
Survey date: 13/7/06

Site Description: A long field to the east of the A4048, grazed by horses and fenced at all margins. The field has a moderate easterly slope and at its southern end is partially divided by a ditch, lined by scrub, trees and ferns. A large area of reclaimed spoil lies to the east of the site. The south of the site exhibits the greatest botanical interest. Here acid grassland resides on the steep bank and ground to either side of the ditch. Typical species include *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Veronica officinalis* (heath speedwell), *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot trefoil), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw) and *Pilosella officinarum* (mouse-ear hawkweed).

To the east of the ditch a flat damp area supports a short, rather herb poor sward. Sedges and rushes are scattered and some drier patches support limited *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot trefoil), *Prunella vulgaris* (selfheal), *Stellaria graminea* (lesser stitchwort) and *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain). To the west of the ditch small areas of mature oak (*Quercus*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) dominated woodland/scrub occur together with a shaded, species poor ground sward. In the vicinity of the ditch small damp areas support a limited number of marshy species that include *Juncus articulatus* (jointed rush) and *Galium palustre* (marsh bedstraw). Poaching occurs in places here.

Moving northwards the grassland vegetation becomes more neutral in character. Ant hills are scattered at the west with typical species including *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot trefoil), *Centaurea nigra* (common knapweed), *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain), *Hypochoeris radicata* (cat's-ear) and *Achillea millefolium* (yarrow).

The northern most area of the field is more improved, thistles are frequent and grasses dominate. A wonderful veteran beech resides here. Reclaimed spoil lies to the east of the site and improved grassland to the north. Residential houses and the disused industrial buildings of Pochin Houses lie to the south.

ENV3.67 Darren Ddu
Grid reference: SO156048
Size: 7.57ha
Survey date: 2003

Site Description: This is a classical hanging sessile oak wood grading up from acid grassland to bracken below, partly developed on spoil or tallus. Much of the oak wood is closed canopy over acidic shrubs and bryophytes etc, but it grades out to bilberry heath above, especially in the north western corner, and to a small area of mature beech near and over the south western boundary.

The site is very steep, but with a wall in good condition running centrally in anorth west to south western direction for much of the length. The lower boundary is also walled with fencing.

Below is enclosed pasture, in part heavily *Juncus* (Rush sp.) infested. Below is open moorland, also rich areas of bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) nearby.

The woodland appears fully open to grazing sheep (+shelter) from above and natural woodland regeneration is very limited for the most part, and the ground floor is impoverished in parts.

ENV3.68 Trefil Ddu Pond 1 SO1113/217
Grid reference: SO11161318
Size: 0.06ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description:

The pond is located on the common land, 1km north west of Trefil, at an altitude of 480m. The pond is found in a sink hole amidst the upland communities of acid grassland, dwarf shrub heath and mire. The pond sites SO1013/218 and SO1013/220 are found within 500m.

The middle area of the pond is dominated by a floating carpet of *Sphagnum sp.* with a small amount of open water. The outer area of the pond is dominated by *Juncus effusus* and *Sphagnum sp.*

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 4 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone which includes heath and acid grassland communities is included around this pond.

ENV3.69 Trefil Ddu Pond 2 SO1013/218
Grid reference: SO10961300
Size: 0.11ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: The pond is located on the common land, 1.5km north west of Trefil, at an altitude of 480m. The pond is found amidst the upland communities of acid grassland,

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

dwarf shrub heath and mire. The pond sites SO1013/220, SO1013/221, SO1113/217 are found within 500m.

The pond is largely open water, surrounded by a marginal fringe of *Juncus effusus* and *Sphagnum sp.*

Two areas were sampled for invertebrates, 7 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone which includes heath and acid grassland communities is included around this pond.

ENV3.70 Trefil Ddu Pond 3 SO1013/220
Grid reference: SO10841278
Size: 0.12ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: The pond is located on the common land, 1.5km west of Trefil, at an altitude of 490m. The pond is found amidst the upland communities of acid grassland, dwarf shrub heath and mire. The pond sites SO1013/218, SO1013/221, SO1113/217 are found within 500m.

The pond area is heavily vegetated with *Juncus effusus* and *Sphagnum sp.* To the centre of the pond there is a bog pool community where there is a floating carpet of *Sphagnum*, this is surrounded by a mire community dominated by *Juncus effusus* with *Sphagnum sp.*, *Polytrichum sp.* Other species include *Molinea caerulea*, *Eriophorum angustifolium* and *Eriophorum vaginatum*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 1 species was recorded.

A 10m buffer zone which includes heath and acid grassland communities is included around this pond.

ENV3.71 Trefil Ddu Pond 4 SO1013/221
Grid reference: SO10651274
Size: 0.07ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: The pond is located on the common land, 1.5km west of Trefil, at an altitude of 495m. The pond is found in a sink hole amidst the upland communities of acid grassland, dwarf shrub heath and mire. The pond sites SO1013/218 and SO1013/220 are found within 500m.

The middle area of the pond is dominated by a floating carpet of *Sphagnum sp.* with a small amount of open water. The outer area of the pond is dominated by *Juncus effusus*, *Polytrichum sp.* and *Sphagnum sp.*

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 3 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone which includes heath and acid grassland communities is included around this pond.

ENV3.72 Trefil Village Grasslands
Grid reference: SO120131
Size: 6.03 ha
Survey date: 27.6.06

Site Description: The site comprises a block of unenclosed grassland within the village of Trefil, approximately 4km north of Tredegar. The land lies between 400 and 420m, generally with a southerly aspect. The shallow soils are free-draining and derived from the underlying limestone bedrock. Much of the grassland occurs on disturbed ground as a result of quarrying activities.

The grassland is closely cropped due to heavy sheep grazing and contains a range of herbs and grasses found in the CG10 community. Grass species vary in abundance but are typified by *Festuca rubra* (red fescue), *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal grass) and *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog) with *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Trisetum flavescens* (yellow oat grass), *Briza media* (quaking grass), *Aira caryophyllea* (silver hair-grass) and *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass) more common on the more disturbed ground. *Thymus polytrichus* (wild thyme) is constant throughout with *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot trefoil), *Euphrasia officinalis* (eyebright), *Carex caryophyllea* (spring sedge), *Linum catharticum* (fairy flax), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Polygala vulgaris* (common milkwort) and *Leontodon hispidus* (rough hawkbit) are well represented throughout. Other notable species recorded included *Trigonella foenum-graceum* (fenugreek), *Cirsium acaule* (dwarf thistle), *Carlina vulgaris* (carline thistle) and *Campanula rotundiflora* (harebell).

ENV3.73 Pyllau-duon Pond SO1012/223
Grid reference: SO09831181
Size: 0.07 ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: The pond is located on the common land, 2.5km south west of Trefil, at an altitude of 490m. The pond is found amidst the upland communities of acid grassland, dwarf shrub heath and mire. The pond site SO1012/222 is 200m to the east.

The pond has a small amount of open water and is heavily vegetated with *Juncus effusus* tussocks. Other species include *Sphagnum* sp., *Eriophorum angustifolium*, *Molinea caerulea*, *Juncus bulbosus* and *Polytrichum* sp..

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 6 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone which includes heath, mire and acid grassland communities is included around this pond.

ENV3.74 Upper Troedrihwgwaer Grasslands
Grid reference: SO164066
Size: 3.38 ha
Survey date: 11.07.06

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Site Description: A moderately steep south facing slope with dry semi-improved acidic grassland situated above the hamlet of Troeddrhiwgwair and south-east of the Coed-y-Rhyd forest. The site is enclosed by stone walls and grazed by sheep. The lowest part of the field is encroached on by bracken.

The sward is closely cropped and is characteristic of (U4) with *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal-grass), *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Lotus corniculatus* (common Bird's-foot trefoil), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) and *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel). The presence of *Cynosurus cristatus* (crested dog's-tail) and *Trifolium repens* (white clover) is indicative of some agricultural improvement.

ENV3.75 Scotch Peter's Pond SO1509/037
Grid reference: SO15620909
Size: 0.29ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: The pond is located 2km west of Ebbw Vale, within the forestry block of Scotch Peter's Reservoir, at an altitude of 415m. The surrounding land is acid grassland, dry heath and rush pasture, Scotch Peter's Reservoir is 100m to the south west.

Approximately 85% of the pond area is open water, there is a local abundance of *Potamogeton natans* referable to the **A9 *Potamogeton natans* community**. The outer margins of the pond are fringed with *Juncus effusus*, other species include *Ranunculus flammula*, *Ranunculus omniophyllus*, *Glyceria fluitans* and *Typha latifolia*.

Fishing is popular at this pond, several species of fish have been noted.

Two areas were sampled for invertebrates, 7 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone which includes acid grassland and dry heath is included around this pond.

ENV3.76 South of Troeddrhiwgwair
Grid reference: SO160063
Size: 9.82ha
Survey date: 15.07.03

Site Description: The site lies c.250-335m in altitude, and occurs entirely on the valley slope from valley floor to moorland edge. Emergent springs are also present.

The site is part fenced, but open to moor above which is grazed by sheep. The site is entirely surrounded by grazed land, including a block of sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*) above. The adjacent land is mostly rough hill grazing, but valley floor flood plain below, with meanders and fen nearby. Access is obtained from 'dead end' road at the northern tip or by foot across river.

The areas of oak-birch woodland and beech woodland comprise open stands. There are also closed canopy stands with associated local mires, especially in the north western and

south eastern corners. The open stands are very grassy, and the closed stands are associated with sparse ground flora.

There are signs of relic mining activity – adit with emergent stream.

ENV3.77 Highlands Grassland
Grid reference: SO150068
Size: 3.31ha
Survey date: 11.07.06

Site Description: An enclosed area of acid grassland on the lowest edge of the western flank of the Sirhowy valley adjacent to the main Tredegar Road. The grassland slopes moderately to the east, and supports semi-improved acidic grassland bordered by hedgerow and fence.

The semi-improved acidic grassland supports locally occasional *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), *Nardus stricta* (mat-grass), *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Danthonia decumbens* (heath-grass), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair-grass) and *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel) especially towards the higher ground.

Some signs of agricultural improvement are evident including the presence of *Cynosurus cristatus* (crested dog's tail) and *Ranunculus repens* (creeping buttercup) and a general dominance of grasses, *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal grass), *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog) and *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent) over herbs. However herbs are present in sufficient frequencies to warrant consideration as a Local Wildlife Site.

ENV3.78 The Ducky / The Small ducky
Grid reference: SO155073
Size: 0.37ha
Survey date: 21.08.07

Site Description: The pond site at Peacehaven is located south of the village to the west of the road to Troedrhwi-gwair. It comprises of two ponds named 'The Ducky' and 'The Small Ducky'. The ponds are linked by a small stream, the whole site including the banks, forming an important wildlife corridor and buffer zone.

'The Ducky' is the larger pond with approximately 80% open water, within which there is approximately 10% cover of green filamentous algae. The other 20% of the pond is mainly referable to **S22 *Glyceria fluitans* water-margin vegetation** where there is an abundance of *Glyceria fluitans* (floating sweet-grass). Other species include *Typha latifolia* (common reedmace), *Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum* (water-cress), *Iris pseudacorus* (yellow iris), *Equisetum fluviatile* (water horsetail), *Filipendula ulmaria* (meadowsweet), *Lotus pedunculatus* (greater bird's-foot-trefoil), *Epilobium palustre* (marsh willowherb), *E. hirsutum* (great willowherb) and *Juncus inflexus* (hard rush). There are also algae within the **S22**.

'The Small Ducky' is dominated by a mixed emergent vegetation, the wetter area is referable to **S12b *Typha latifolia* swamp *Mentha aquatica* sub-community**. Dominated

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by *Typha latifolia* (common reedmace), other species include *Mentha aquatica* (water mint), *Iris pseudacorus* (yellow flag iris), *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort), *Epilobium hirsutum* (great willowherb), *Lotus pedunculatus* (greater bird's-foot-trefoil), *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* (water pennywort) and *Callitriche stagnalis* (common water-starwort). Species found in the drier areas of the pond (mixed marshy vegetation) include *Carex hirta* (hairy sedge), *Filipendula ulmaria* (meadowsweet), *Deschampsia cespitosa* (tufted hair-grass), *Agrostis stolonifera* (creeping bent) and *Valeriana officinalis* (common valerian).

The ponds are fed by a small stream which is running clear, species found within the stream include *Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum* (water-cress), *Glyceria fuitans* (floating sweet-grass), *Iris pseudacorus* (yellow flag iris) and *Lemna minor* (common duckweed). The area around the watercourse, mainly around 'The Small Ducky' supports a marshy grassland vegetation, **MG10 *Holcus lanatus*-*Juncus effusus* rush-pasture**. Species found include *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog), *Agrostis stolonifera* (creeping bent), *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), *Iris pseudacorus* (yellow flag iris), *Mentha aquatica* (water mint) and *Carex remota* (remote sedge).

The banks of the pond support a mosaic of grassland vegetation, with patches of *Rubus fruticosus* (bramble) and *Ulex europaeus* (gorse) scrub and scattered individual trees. The grassland does not 'fit' an NVC and is described as **MG1/MG10/MG5** mosaic. Dominant grasses are *Agrostis capillaris* (common bent), *Festuca rubra* (red fescue), *Dactylis glomerata* (cocksfoot), *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog), *Arrhenatherum elatius* (false oat-grass), *Cynosorus cristatus* (crested dog's-tail) and *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal grass). Other species include *Luzula campestris* (field woodrush), *Lotus corniculatus* (bird's-foot trefoil) and *Achillea millefolium* (yarrow), *Cirsium arvense* (creeping thistle) and *Filipendula ulmaria* (meadowsweet).

ENV3.79 Tredegar Patch Grassland
Grid reference: SO135096
Size: 3.32ha
Survey date: 18.07.06

Site Description: Two large fields that slope gently to the south-west, situated south of Bryn Bach Park and east of Rhymney Hill. The sites are enclosed by un-stockproof fences and grazed by sheep and cattle which have unrestricted access throughout the sites.

The grassland comprises primarily unimproved acidic grassland consistent with U4 with *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel), *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair-grass), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot trefoil), *Deschampsia cespitosa* (tufted hair-grass) and *Juncus squarrosus* (heath rush). The southern most field shows some signs of agricultural improvement and an increase in the presence of *Cynosurus cristatus* (crested dog's-tail) and *Trifolium repens* (white clover).

ENV3.80 Adjacent to Blaen-y-cwm School
Grid reference: 192114
Size: 1.5ha
Survey date: 22 nd September 2008

Site Description: c.1.5 hectares lying over fairly flat ground, neighboured by Blaen-y-cwm school to the west, but otherwise enclosed by the B4248 and A467. The site is used by dog walkers and well trodden routes are visible across the site. The site is surrounded by fences, with the exception of the western boundary which is open to the adjacent school access road.

The site supports a semi improved neutral grassland community, with wetter areas adding to the site's diversity. A small area of open water is edged by *Typha latifolia* (reedmace) and extends into an area of marshy grassland with frequent *Eleocharis palustris* (common spike rush). An east-west aligned ditch intersects part of the site.

Overall botanical species diversity is good, although the distribution of some species is rather restricted. Locally occurring herbs include *Lotus corniculatus* (bird's foot trefoil), *Centaurea nigra* (common knapweed), *Leucanthemum vulgare* (oxeye daisy) and *Lathyrus pratensis* (meadow vetchling) and unconfirmed *Dactylorhiza fuchsia* (common spotted orchid) and *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* (southern marsh orchid).

Due to lack of management the site has a rank appearance with frequent coarse grasses and scattered scrub developing across the site. Scrub is particularly associated with the southern half of the site and includes hawthorn, bramble, birch, crab apple and willow (particularly in wetter areas). The tussocky grassland and associated structural diversity is likely of some value to invertebrates. Incidental invertebrate records included dragonflies and common blue and small heath butterflies.

The site is located as a fairly discrete ecological unit in an otherwise built local environment. It's north and east boundaries are flanked by deciduous hedgerow/scrub, shielding the site from the A467. This hedgerow/scrub line continues southwards alongside the A465, albeit only for 150m. The site's wildlife interest, combined with its vicinity to the school could make it of potential value as an educational resource/outdoor classroom.

ENV3.81 Blaenafon Road Pond SO2011/063
Grid reference: SO20291113
Size: 0.15ha
Survey date: August 2004

Site Description: The pond site is located on the lower slopes of Mulfran, 2 km south east of Brynmawr, at an altitude of 420m. The pond area is surrounded by upland communities of dry heath and acid grassland.

The pond is heavily vegetated with *Juncus effusus* other species found include *Callitriche stagnalis*, *Juncus bulbosus*, *Sphagnum sp.*, *Potamogeton polygonifolius*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Eleocharis palustris*, *Equisetum fluviatile*, *Galium palustre*, *Glyceria fluitans* and *Ranunculus flammula*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 5 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone is included around this pond.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

ENV3.82 Blaenafon Road Pond SO2011/064
Grid reference: SO20231130
Size: 0.07ha
Survey date: August 2004

Site Description: The pond site is located on the lower slopes of Mulfran, 2 km south east of Brynmawr, at an altitude of 420m. The pond area is surrounded by upland communities of dry heath and acid grassland.

The pond has two distinct stands of vegetation: the shallow, outer area of the pond is dominated by *Juncus effusus* and *Sphagnum* spp., the middle of the pond is dominated by *Juncus bulbosus* and is referable to **A24 *Juncus bulbosus* community**.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 4 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone is included around this pond.

ENV3.83 Bourneville Slip
Grid reference: SO205071
Size: 23.22ha
Survey date: September 1998

Site Description: The site is situated to the south-east of Blaina, following a west-facing slope. Most of the site is unenclosed and includes an area of rock fall. The lower slopes contain areas of reclaimed colliery spoil, where trees have been planted. The site contains a rich mosaic of habitats including neutral grassland, acid grassland and mire communities. The mire communities are scattered throughout the site and include species such as *Scutellaria minor* (lesser skullcap) and *Narthecium ossifragum* (bog asphodel). An area of boulder scree and rocks is present with fern species including *Dryopteris filix-mas* (common male-fern) and *Blechnum spicant* (hard fern).

Small areas of wet heath are dominated by *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor-grass) with *Erica tetralix* (cross-leaved heath), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) and *Sphagnum* sp (peat moss sp.). The western side of Area 1 is excluded from the Local Wildlife Site boundary as it contains poor-quality grassland with tree planting.

Wahlenbergia hederacea (ivy-leaved bellflower) is also present on the site.

ENV3.84 Bryn Farm, Brynmawr
Grid reference: SO183125
Size: 19.37ha
Survey date: August 2007

Site Description: This site comprises mainly heathland, acid grassland, mire and ponds; many of these habitats have developed in former quarries and on old mine spoil. The site is located south of the A465 Heads of the Valleys road at Brynmawr. The area is botanically diverse with the greatest interest found in the heathland, acid grassland and open water communities. The old quarries and spoil mounds support unimproved acid

grassland dominated by wavy hair-grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*) and heathland dominated by ling heather (*Calluna vulgaris*); these areas have minimal grazing and support many species indicative of good-quality acid grassland habitats.

The site has several different management regimes in operation including some grazed areas and some acid grasslands cut for hay. Several ponds are present and add to the site's value for wildlife.

Blunt-leaved pondweed (*Potamogeton obtusifolius*), a regionally rare plant, has been recorded from one of the ponds. Other species of interest include crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) and grayling butterfly (*Hipparchia semele*), which is abundant in the old quarries.

The site is located immediately to the east of Beaufort Hill SINC

ENV3.85 Brynawelon Pond SO1810/129
Grid reference: SO18301065
Size: 0.07ha
Survey date: August 2004

Site Description: The pond site is located on enclosed land north of the West Monmouthshire Golf Course, near Nantyglo, at an altitude of 400m. The surrounding land is improved and unimproved acid grassland. The pond SO1810/126 is 300m to the south west, the pond SO1710/127 is 300m to the west, there are also pond sites to the north at Waunheulog.

The pond is small and vegetated with stands of emergent vegetation and only a small amount of open water.

The middle of the pond where the water is deeper, has a mix of the two communities **S22 *Glyceria fluitans* water-margin vegetation** and **S14 *Sparganium erectum* swamp**, the outer margins are dominated by a fringe of *Juncus effusus*.

Other species found within the whole pond include *Callitriche stagnalis*, *Lemna minor*, *Potamogeton natans*, *Potamogeton polygonifolius*, *Epilobium palustre*, *Narthecium ossifragum* and *Ranunculus flammula*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 3 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone is included around this pond.

ENV3.86 Pen y waun Pond SO1710/127
Grid reference: SO17921048
Size: 0.15ha
Survey date: August 2004

Site Description: The pond site is located on post industrial land west of the West Monmouthshire Golf Course, near Nantyglo, at an altitude of 415m. The surrounding land is colonised spoil supporting acid grassland, the boundary of the golf course is very close and the pond site SO1810/126 is 200m to the south east.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

The pond has a diverse range of aquatic and emergent vegetation, with small areas of open water.

The middle area of the pond where the water is deeper is **A9 *Potamogeton natans* community**, this has approximately 90% cover of *Potamogeton natans* and 10% open water. Fringing this there are 3 small stands of emergent vegetation: **S22 *Glyceria fluitans* water-margin vegetation**, **S14 *Sparganium erectum* swamp** and **S19 *Eleocharis palustris* swamp**. The outer margin of the pond is dominated by *Juncus effusus* with up to 60% of *Sphagnum sp.*

Other species found within the whole pond include *Potamogeton polygonifolius*, *Typha latifolia*, *Lemna minor*, *Juncus bulbosus*, *Cardamine pratensis* and *Carex nigra*.

Two areas were sampled for invertebrates, 9 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone is included around this pond which includes acid grassland.

ENV3.87 Semtex Pond
Grid reference: 187112
Size: 8 ha
Survey date: 24/09/07

Site Description: Semtex Pond is located between the towns of Brynmawr and Nantyglo, south of the Brecon Beacons National Park. It is a post-industrial site dominated by a large waterbody, which was originally created as a reservoir for the Nantyglo Ironworks.

The site is owned and managed by members of the local community, who are assisted in their work by the council and volunteers.

Notable habitats present at the site include mesotrophic standing water (i.e. the pond), unimproved neutral grassland and hedge fragments; all of these habitats appear on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Mesotrophic standing water host a diversity of aquatic macrophytes: Semtex Pond contains examples of **A15 *Elodea canadensis* community** and **A16a *Callitriche stagnalis* community, *Callitriche* spp. sub-community**; recent records of the Nationally Scarce charophyte *Nitella flexilis* (Smooth Stonewort) are also known from the site. Other habitats include swamp vegetation, scrub, new plantation woodland, sown & rough grassland, tall-herb vegetation and small streams. In total 240 vascular plants were recorded at Semtex Pond during the site visit. Bryophyte and lichen records are limited to incidental records as no full bryophyte or lichen survey has been undertaken.

ENV3.88 Ebbw Fach River
Grid reference: SO 1989 0799 (start) SO 20950186 (finish)
Length: 7.6km
Survey date: Desk based: December 2008

Site Description: The Ebbw Fach River SINC runs from the vicinity of West Side (c 2.5km south of Nantyglo) southwards to link with the Ebbw Fawr River at Aberbeeg, forming the main Ebbw River which joins the Severn Estuary at the mouth of the River Usk.

The river runs to the eastward side of Mynydd Carn-y-cefn and Cefn yr Arail and west of Abertillery and Blaina. Near Abertillery sections of the river run very close (and flow beneath) the A467 and other adjacent residential roads in a number of places. Here the river is flanked by steep embankment and lies adjacent to houses/urban development.

Moving north a less urban landscape is encountered. At its northern extreme water appears to drain through a network of ditches and streams down the slopes of Cefn yr Arail towards the Ebbw Fach River. The source is difficult to determine by OS map alone.

ENV3.89 Parc Nant-y-Waun
Grid reference: 180115
Size: 22 ha
Survey date: 23/08/06 and 12/09/06

Site Description: Parc Nant-y-Waun is situated between the towns of Brynmawr and Beaufort. The site is managed by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council in partnership with volunteers from the local community group, Friends of Parc Nant-y-Waun. The majority of the site is dominated by grassland with considerable areas of unimproved acid and neutral grassland. The remaining area of the site consists of mire and swamp vegetation, tall-ruderals, scrub and young broad-leaved plantation woodland. A large reservoir, known as the Machine Pond and smaller pond, known as the Mustard Pond with open water habitat, adds further to the ecological interest of the site. These wetland areas are fed by several small streams (possibly spring-fed) and ditches. There are also small areas of species-rich ephemeral / short perennial vegetation which has developed over disturbed man-made ground, including along the former tramway track which supports a lichen-rich variant of **U1 *Festuca ovina-Agrostis capillaris-Rumex acetosella* grassland**. This range of vegetation types supports a variety of plant, animal, bird and invertebrate assemblages. In total 132 vascular plants were recorded in Parc Nant-y-Waun during the site visit. *Menyanthes trifoliata* (bogbean) is a particularly notable vascular plant species that was recorded during the site visit and is listed as a Key Species on the Blaenau Gwent BAP. Bryophyte and lichen records are limited to incidental records as no full bryophyte or lichen survey has been undertaken. A total of 38 bird species were recorded with 19 species probably breeding in the park. Of the 38 species, one (kingfisher) is protected under *Schedule 1* of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981*. The site is managed to increase public interest in, and understanding of, wildlife and for recreational enjoyment.

ENV3.90 Troestre Pond SO1908/028a
Grid reference: SO19310895
Size: 144 m ²
Survey date: August 2004

Site Description: The pond site is located on enclosed land 2 km north of Blaina, at an altitude of 350m.

The pond has shallow natural banks and is largely dominated by *Glyceria fluitans* (S22), there is very little open water habitat. *Juncus effusus* dominates the edges of the pond. Other species found include *Juncus bulbosus*, *Sphagnum* sp., *Nymphaea alba*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Galium palustre*, *Mimulus guttatus*, *Ranunculus flammula* and *Sparganium erectum*.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Two areas were sampled for invertebrates, a total of 9 species were recorded. A 10m buffer zone is included around this pond.

ENV3.91 Pond Group 2, Brynmawr/Beaufort Hill
Grid reference: SO 1829412844/ SO 1826812794/ SO 1824212744
Size: 180m ² /300m ² /800m ²
Survey date: 23.9.2008 to 15.10.2008

Site Description: Three small ponds situated just south of the A465 Heads of the Valleys Trunk Road, between Brynmawr and Beaufort Hill. The area is situated at a height of approximately 1300 ft A.O.D. Surrounding the ponds is an area of improved and semi-improved grassland, some of which is marshy and rush-covered. Much of the area consists of re-vegetated landscaped spoil created by opencast mining. A semi-mature coniferous plantation is present on the south of the site, whilst a small plantation of non-native broadleaved trees screens the ponds from the A465.

The ponds were created as a result of landscaping work and are fed by natural drainage and by concrete channels. The ponds have matured well and are all surrounded by wide margins of *Juncus effusus*. Ponds 178 and 180 are covered by *Potamogeton polygonifolius* and all three ponds contain beds of *Typha latifolia*. Paths and tracks used as public footpaths run to the south and west of the site.

ENV3.92 Nantyglo Meadow
Grid reference: 197104
Size: 1.75ha
Survey date: 14 th August 2008

Site Description: An odd shaped enclosure with a moderate west facing slope, enclosed by post and wire fencing. The field supports a SI improved meadow (MG5/6) which was uncut at the time of survey. Over the slope in the southern half of the site the sward is species-rich with a good herb: grass ratio. The flowery sward includes *Rhinanthus minor* (yellow rattle), *Trifolium pratense* (red clover), *Hypochoeris radicata* (common cat's ear) and *Centaurea nigra* (common knapweed), *Lotus corniculatus* (bird's foot trefoil) and *Stellaria graminea* (lesser stichwort), which are all occasional/frequent. *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) and *Euphrasia officinalis* (eyebright) are also locally present. *Hypericum* sp. (hawkweed species) and *Sanguisorba officinalis* (great burnet) and *Dactylorhiza* sp. (orchid species) were recorded though rare. The flatter, top of the field (in east) is more improved and grass dominated. *Juncus effusus* (soft rush) is scattered and herbs are few and limited to *Rumex acetosa* (common sorrel) *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain) and *Ranunculus repens* (creeping buttercup). Localised marshy areas are present.

The northern part of the field supports a mosaic of wet and dry grassland supporting a good diversity of plants. The drier regions are grass dominated with scattered herbs. Wetter regions are located towards the base of the slope (characterised by sedges & rushes) and stretching out from central drainage channels. Local herbs include *Viola palustris* (marsh violet), *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort) and *Caltha palustris* (marsh marigold). A ditch at the bottom of the field is bordered by steep banks supporting an acid sward.

Incidental Fauna: Swallows, bumblebees, common frog, green veined white butterfly, common field grasshoppers

ENV3.93 Adjacent to Noble Square
Grid reference: 197116
Size: 0.75ha
Survey date: 28 th August 2008

Site Description: A narrow strip of fenced land including an old embankment (associated with old railway?) situated alongside Noble Street Industrial Estate and adjacent to a track. The strip provides an access corridor to the wider common land to the north and is unfenced at its junction with the common. Interest is mainly associated with the steep side and top of the western bank, where a good variety of herbs were recorded, associated with the stony, nutrient poor spoil. *Centaurea nigra* (common knapweed), *Tussilago farfara* (colt's foot), *Lotus corniculatus*, composites, clovers and *Linum catharticum* (fairy flax) are all fairly constant herbs over the bank, with more locally frequent (red bartsia), *Euphrasia officinalis* (eyebright), *Pimpinella saxifraga* (burnet saxifrage) and *Centaureum erythraea* (common centaur). *Dactylorhiza sp.* (common/heath spotted orchid), *Tragopogon pratensis* (goat's beard), *Campanula rotundiflora* (harebell) and *Solidago virgaurea* (goldenrod) were also recorded.

The base of the slope is characterised by tall grassy vegetation, with thistles and others ruderals. The wide track and associated flatter ground is itself poorly vegetated, with little interest. A drainage ditch runs alongside the eastern edge of the track.

Waxcaps were locally frequent including *Hygrocybe nigrescens* (blackening waxcap).

Incidental Fauna: Peacock butterfly, bumblebee

ENV3.94 River Clydach
Grid reference: SO1782 1330 (start) SO1960 1217 (finish)
Size:
Survey date: Desk based: December 2008

Site Description: The River Clydach is a short, steep and fast-flowing river. It is around 10km / 6 miles in length. The river rises on the southern slopes of [Mynydd Llangatwg](#) then heads south-east through Clydach Dingle past [Brynmawr](#). It then enters the spectacular [Clydach Gorge](#) dropping about 300m / 1000ft to [Gilwern](#) and its confluence with the [River Usk](#).

The river's waters fall rapidly as they travel down the narrow and steep-sided and wooded Clydach Valley to the Usk, parts of which are of SSSI and SAC quality.

The majority of the watercourse lies within the Brecon Beacon's national park, however at its eastern extent, north of Brynmawr the river marks the border between BBNP and BGCBC administration area. This is the section of watercourse to which this SINC notification refers. Here the river flows adjacent to the A645 Heads of the Valleys Road, and Clydach Dingle.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

ENV3.95 Coalbrookvale
Grid reference: SO195093
Size: 12.82ha
Survey date: Oct 1999/June 2000

Site Description: The site consists of valley floor reclamation areas bisected by the A467 road, with steeper valley sides towards the west of the site. Almost the whole area has been worked for coal and much of it is mining spoil that has since been landscaped. The site is a mosaic of habitats with some areas of particular interest such as the mire and grassland communities. Area 8 and the northern part of Area 9 comprises U4 grassland with stands rich in lichens and bryophytes and including *Calluna vulgaris* (ling). Areas of M23 mire are also present.

Other wetland communities can be found in Area 1 with species such as *Veronica beccabunga* (brooklime), *Carex echinata* (star sedge) and *Stellaria alsine* (bog stitchwort) present. Surrounding areas of grassland have patches of native and non-native tree species present, including some mature individuals.

The whole site is used by local people for walking. Much of the site is unmanaged but some paddocks such as in Area 1 are pony grazed. Area 10 urgently need grazing before the grassland develops into a ranker, species- poor one.

ENV3.96 Coed Trostre
Grid reference: SO192087
Size: 3.64ha
Survey date: June 2003

Site Description: This is an undulating area of conifer and mostly very open oak/birch woodland grading into open acid grassland, (locally abundant *Nardus stricta* (mat-grass) - rich U5). In the wetter, northern parts the ground flora is locally rich, including *Sphagnum* tussocks, with some willow scrub.

An old tramway track cuts north to south through the site, now used for tractors etc.

The site is part fenced but appears to be open to grazing.

A restored pond and new fencing/gates is present to the North, with pasture and scattered trees around.

Access is by defined tracks starting from Coalbrookvale off the A467.

Parts of the site have been designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW).

ENV3.97 Cwm Celyn East
Grid reference: SO210095
Size: 1.69ha
Survey date: 2003

Site Description: This is a narrow strip of mature beech wood running north to south, with some edge trees stunted by exposure and signs of coppicing at the southern end. The wood occurs high on the valley side, which is locally steep, and reaches to the head-dyke above near the southern end.

Currently open to grazing by sheep and horses, the ground flora is very restricted and with low levels of natural regeneration. Some birch (*Betula* spp.) is present and occasional oaks (*Quercus* spp.) at the southern end where the wood is open, grassy and with a small mire area.

Access is from the valley track across fields, or from the farm at the valley head (but the farmer was absent at time of survey).

ENV3.98 Brynmawr Pond SO1812/175
Grid reference: SO186124
Size: 493 m ²
Survey date: August 2004

Site Description: The pond site is located on enclosed land north of the Brynmawr cemetery, at an altitude of 430m.

The pond is heavily vegetated with emergent stands of vegetation with very little open water. The banks rise up steeply and support a dry heath community.

The pond is largely dominated by *Equisetum fluviatile* (S10), with a marginal fringe of *Juncus effusus* and a few stands of *Typha latifolia* (S12). Other species found include *Caltha palustris*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Iemna minor* and *Sparganium erectum*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, a total of 8 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone is included around this pond.

ENV3.99 Cwmcelyn West
Grid reference: SO208091
Size: 5.92ha
Survey date: 2003

Site Description: This is a diverse site that occurs on sloping valley side down to and including a significant stream. It varies from open bilberry heath through valley side mires and wet woodland, down to mature beech stands. The site is largely enclosed by walls with some fencing but the main area of heath open to grazing from above.

ENV3.100 Edge of the Mulfran
Grid reference: 200107
Size: 1.5 ha
Survey date: 27 th August 2008

Site Description: Small enclosure lying next to the unenclosed land of the Mulfran. The field's eastern boundary is now derelict. A bank marks the former boundary. The site supports acid grassland/heathland comprising a mosaic of tall wet and dry vegetation.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Drains intersect the slightly undulating field and are accompanied by wet flush vegetation. Dry acid grassland heathland community on higher ground includes occasional/frequent *Calluna vulgaris* (heather), *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), *Agrostis tenuis* (common bent), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil). *Empetrum nigrum* (crowberry) was also recorded.

Wet vegetation near the drains/streams and within hollows in the north includes locally frequent *Polytrichum* and *Sphagnum* species (mosses), ferns, *Viola palustris* (marsh violet), *Carex echinata* (star sedge), *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) and *Juncus effusus* (soft rush).

The site borders with a further enclosure at its southern tip. This elongated west facing field is enclosed by a fence and also supports a mosaic of dry acid grassland and heath, marshy grassland/wet flush. Some of the wetter regions are frequented by *Juncus effusus*, whilst at the north in particular open flush supports *Molinia caerulea*, *Polytrichum* sp. (moss) *Carex* spp. (sedge species) and herbs including *Viola palustris* (marsh violet), *Scutellaria minor* (lesser skullcap) and *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort).

The south of the site includes post industrial spoil with developing acid grassland/heath that includes *Vaccinium myrtillus*. Particularly dry, short sparse regions include *Nardus stricta* (mat grass), *Cladonia* sp. (lichen), *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's fescue), *Galium saxatile* and *Lotus corniculatus* (bird's foot trefoil) is developing in places.

Incidental Fauna: Common Frog

ENV3.101 Embankment Grassland
Grid reference: 197107
Size: 1.5ha
Survey date: 21 st August 2008

Site Description: Large area consisting of a flat central area, enclosed by steep embankments, which characterise this post industrial site. The central area supports a damp neutral/marshy grassland and series of small pools. The ponds include *Glyceria fluitans* (floating sweet grass) and *Potamogeton* (pondweed species) and *Callitriche* (water starwort species) and marshy vegetation is characterised by frequent *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog) and *Agrostis tenuis* (common bent) together with *Prunella vulgaris* (self heal), *Ranunculus acris* (meadow buttercup) and *Rumex acetosa* (common sorrel) interspersed with local patches of *Lotus corniculatus* (bird's foot trefoil) and *Calluna vulgaris* (heather). A ditch runs around the central marshy vegetation, alongside the bottom of the embankment.

The embankment supports a dry sparse grassland community and is variable in species composition with some regions characterised by *Ranunculus acris*, *Trifolium repens* (white clover) and *Holcus lanatus*, while elsewhere plant diversity is greater, for example *Rhinanthus minor* (yellow rattle) and *Centaureum erythraea* (common centaury) on northern bank and *Calluna vulgaris*, *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), *Lotus corniculatus* and *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) on the western bank. Scrub, including *Salix* sp. (willow sp.) and *Ulex* sp. (gorse) is invading parts of the banks.

Beyond a stream at the north of the site a small area of marshy grassland including *Deschampsia cespitosa* (tufted hair grass), *Juncus effusus*, *Centaurea nigra* (common knapweed), *Lotus uliginosus* (greater bird's foot trefoil), *Holcus lanatus* and *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain).

The site is linked via a fenced corridor to acid grassland to the south.

ENV3.102 Golf Course Pond SO1810/126
Grid reference: SO18141033
Size: 0.16 ha
Survey date: August 2004

Site Description: The pond site is located on the West Monmouthshire Golf Course, near Nantyglo, at an altitude of 420m. The surrounding land is improved and unimproved grassland.

The pond has a diverse range of aquatic and emergent vegetation, with large areas of open water.

A9 *Potamogeton natans* community dominates the main area of the pond, with a varying percentage cover. There is an area where *Juncus bulbosus* becomes dominant this is referable to **A24 *Juncus bulbosus* community**, and an area where *Nymphaea alba* is dominant, referable to **A7 *Nymphaea alba* community**. Stands of *Menyanthes trifoliata* and *Iris psedacorus* are found, other species include *Carex viridula*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Eleocharis palustris* and *Juncus articulatus*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 5 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone is included around this pond.

ENV3.103 Llwydcoed Pond SO1811/149
Grid reference: SO18051107
Size: 0.10ha
Survey date: August 2004

Site Description: The pond site is located near the owners cottage, west of Winchestown and less than 500m south of the lake and SINC site at Parc Nant-y-Waun. The altitude is 390 m and the surrounding land is dry heath and acid grassland.

Approximately 75% of the pond area is open water, with *Glyceria fluitans* (S22) found throughout. The outer margins of the pond are dominated by *Juncus effusus*, with a few small areas that are poached by horses. Other species found include *Juncus bulbosus*, *Polytrichum sp.* and *Carex nigra*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 9 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone is included around this pond.

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ENV3.104 Land East of Pant-View Houses, Coed Cae
Grid reference: 20206 09363
Size: 2ha
Survey date: 29/05/09

Site Description: The site is located to the east of the residential street; Pant View. The horse grazed site is largely enclosed by dry stone walls (accompanied by fencing) with the remains of internal dry stone wall divisions evident. The west of the site is enclosed by a new metal fence. The site lies immediately adjacent to the unenclosed land of the Mulfran (part of Mulfran, Mynydd Coity, Mynydd James and Gwastad candidate SINC). The site comprises 3 former fields which due to defunct boundaries now form 1 management unit. For ease of description these former field units are still referred to below.

The northern most field (field 1) has a moderate to steep west facing slope which undulates slightly across the field. A dry acid grassland/heath mosaic is present with frequent swathes of bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*). Patches of thick gorse (*Ulex sp.*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) are present over the western half of this field, along with some rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*). Sward height is variable with shorter grazed lawns and some poaching.

Moving south (field 2) a more evenly grazed semi-improved acid grassland is present with common bent (*Agrostis tenuis*), heath bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*), tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) the main constants. A patch of improved vegetation is evident stretching down the slope in the centre of the site with frequent white clover together with greater plantain. Scattered soft rush is present along the western edge of the field.

A short semi-improved acid sward continues in the southern most of the field units (field 3), intermingled with locally improved areas. Native bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) are present in the south east corner. The bottom of the slope is more enriched with frequent dock and some bare ground. Chickens are present here.

Parts of the field margins contain enriched, rank areas. Some scattered old farm machinery is located by field boundaries in addition to a collapsed old corrugated shed and associated hard standing. The corrugated sheets may represent suitable basking areas for reptiles, although none were seen during the site visit. Lichens lightly vegetate the stone wall margins and former internal boundaries and scattered exposed stone which lies within the fields.

ENV3.105 Arail Farm Slopes North
Grid reference: C215031
Size: 3.5ha
Survey date: 29 th July 2007

Site Description: Collection of sheep grazed acid grassland enclosures. The southern most and largest field supports a reasonably species-rich sward over a moderate southerly slope, with scattered raised hummocks and ant hills. The sward is characterised by *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Agrostis tenuis* (common bent), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass) and *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw). *Pilosella officinarum* (mouseear hawkweed), *Nardus stricta* (mat grass), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil) and *Rumex acetosella*

(sheep's sorrel) occur locally, most typically at south and east of site near undulating ground and a small spoil mound. *Lotus corniculatus* (birds foot trefoil) is locally occasional at the south.. The banks of the raised spoil mound include *Pilosella officinarum*, *Vulpia bromoides* (squirrel tail fescue), *Rumex acetosella* and *Aira praecox* (early hair grass). Limited scattered *Ulex europaeus* (gorse) is also present.

The site was formerly two fields, and at the east in particular, some agricultural improvement is evident with *Trifolium repens* (white clover) constant and *Cirsium spp.* (thistle species) frequent. Other occasional species include *Prunella vulgaris* (self heal), *Aira praecox*, *Luzula campestris* (field wood rush) and *Cerastium holosteoides* (common mouseear). Mosses form an occasional part of the sward.

The field is enclosed by fences with the exception of the southern side where the grassland is open to a steep slope characterised by scattered bracken, which becomes continuous further south and merges into an area of broadleaved woodland. The field is grazed by sheep and has a low sward.

Two adjacent fields to the north support tightly sheep grazed acidic grassland. These are rather herb poor, with the presence of *Trifolium repens*, *Cirsium* species and other mesotrophic species reflecting a degree of agricultural modification. However *Agrostis tenuis*, *Festuca ovina* and *Galium saxatile* are constant and the sward retains an acidic nature. The fields do not qualify individually; however forming part of a comprehensive acid grassland management unit, they warrant consideration for inclusion within the Local Wildlife Site. Site boundaries consist of a mixture of fences and remnant hedge banks dominated by mature beech.

ENV3.106 Arail Farm Slopes South
Grid reference: C212028
Size: 6.13ha
Survey date: 2 nd July 2007

Site Description: The main interest is associated with a large moderately sloping, east facing field (field 1) south of the Arail Farm buildings and intersected by a track to the farm. The field is enclosed by fences and remnant hedgerows and is lightly sheep grazed with frequent scattered ant hills. The rich sward is characterised by frequent *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), occasional *Luzula campestris* (field wood rush) and *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil). The major herbs are *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Rumex acetosella* (sheep's sorrel) and *Pilosella officinarum* (mouse-ear hawkweed), which are frequent and well distributed. Some agricultural modification is evident but species diversity and distribution across the site is good.

Further acid grassland lies to the south west within two formerly separate units (field 2 & 3). The former field boundary is marked with a defunct hedgerow. Small ant hills are scattered over the moderate south east facing slope. Herbaceous constants include *Galium saxatile* and *Lotus corniculatus* (birds foot trefoil) with associates *Rumex acetosella* and *Pilosella officinarum*. *Pteridium aquilinum* (bracken) is locally frequent at the base of the slope. Some agricultural modification is evident with constant *Trifolium repens* (white clover) in the northern part of the enclosures. The area is tightly sheep grazed. Species richness is greatest in the eastern most part of field 2, towards the base of the slope (formerly a separate field). The whole site warrants Local Wildlife Site status. The site is

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enclosed by fences. Coniferous woodland lies to the east and semi improved poor/improved pasture lies at the top of the slope to the west. An unfenced bank separates the site from this improved field to the west.

ENV3.107 Arail Pond SO2103/078
Grid reference: SO21180322
Size: 0.15ha
Survey date: August 2005

Site Description: The pond is located approximately 1 km west of Abertillery at an altitude of 365m. It is on enclosed land within the ownership of Arial Farm, the surrounding land is unimproved and semi-improved acid grassland. The pond is enjoyed by the owner, there are goldfish and some non-native pink water-lilys and a variegated reed in the pond.

The pond has a range of aquatic, emergent and floating stands of vegetation.

Approximately 40% of the pond area is open water. The outer margins of the pond are solely dominated by *Juncus effusus*. There is a small stand of **S4 *Phragmites australis* swamp**, one floating stand of **A8 *Nuphar lutea* community** and two floating stands of a pink water-lily.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 4 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone is included around this pond, which includes unimproved acid grassland.

ENV3.108 Blaentillery Farm North
Grid reference: SO222084
Size: 10.54ha
Survey date: 19/7/05

Site Description: Lying to the north of Blaentillery Farm a mosaic of species rich acidic flush, marshy grassland and acid grassland is situated within a wider area of semi improved/improved vegetation, some of which is included within the cW's boundary which is delineated by physical boundaries. Towards the south of the site an area of species-rich acidic flush includes *Anagalis tenella* (bog pimpernel), *Viola palustris* (marsh violet) and locally frequent *Narthecium ossifragum* (bog asphodel). This grades into marshy grassland with a *Juncus acutiflorus* (sharp-flowered rush) - *Galium palustre* (marsh-bedstraw) characterised sward which extends south into field 2. A steep bank of N/W facing acid grassland is located at the south side of field 2 with *Danthonia decumbens* (heath-grass), *Nardus stricta* (mat-grass), *Deschampsia caespitosa* (tufted hair-grass), *Agrostis tenuis* (common bent) and *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw). A similar slope and community is present to the east in field 3.

At the north of the site a steep S/W facing slope supports acid grassland of variable structure with areas characterized by frequent *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) and *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw) and elsewhere a drier grass dominated sward. A small patch of acid flush at the west edge of the site is associated with the River Tyleri with *Cirsium dissectum* (meadow thistle) and *Wahlenbergia hederacea* (ivy-leaved bellflower).

A strip of moderate quality acid grassland links the north and south habitats described above. This strip is located on a moderate slope in the eastern half of field 4, the remainder of which is rather species poor. Field 4 in its entirety is included within the cWS boundary as an important linkage habitat. The whole site qualifies under the Mosaic Habitat Guidelines. The site is bordered by a mixture of unenclosed land, bracken slope and improved/semi improved poor pasture.

ENV3.109 North of Hendre Gwyndwr
Grid reference: SO222078
Size: 9.01ha
Survey date: August 2003

Site Description: The site occupies both sides of a north - south lying stream, (piped in the past to the reservoir below); slopes therefore face east and west primarily. But the northern woodland stand slopes to the North, and parts occupy a valley floor position.

Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), (of two distinct ages in many areas), occupies the main woodland areas, with localised sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*) and a small area of streamside alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) (W7).

The western side and main valley floor area are grass or bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) covered, with localised marshy grassland below emergent groundwater flows.

Relic fences are locally present, but sheep access is uncontrolled. However, the ground flora of the beech woodland is minimal and the woodland may be more important for shelter than for grazing.

Access is from the track (above the site) to Blaentillery Farm.

Adjacent land is mostly pasture, some clearly 'improved', but there is also a conifer plantation to the east of the access track.

ENV3.110 River Tyleri
Grid reference: SO2200 0828 (start) SO 2175 0608 (finish)
Size: 2.4km
Survey date: Desk based: December 2008

Site Description: Located to the north of the settlement of Cwmtillery the Afon Tyleri flows for approx. 3 km in the valley between Mynydd James and Blaentillery Farm and Coety Mountain. At its northern extreme a number of small streams, springs into the watercourse. The source is difficult to ascertain from OS map alone.

The Afon Tyleri flows through open countryside/farmland before entering Cwmtillery Reservoir and further south a series of ponds. The watercourses exhibit good physical naturalness.

ENV3.111 Six Bells Colliery Site
Grid reference: SO218027
Size: 5.45ha
Survey date: September 2007

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Site Description: The site is located on the former Six Bells colliery which closed in 1988. It is located south of Abertillery and follows the valley bottom along the Afon Ebbw Fach. It consists of steep west facing slopes rising from the former site workings and buildings.

The site consists of a range of habitats including woodland, grassland and scrub interspersed with areas of spoil. At the south-east end of the site lies a river with an important riparian woodland community (W7,W16). North of the woodland are areas of acid grassland (U1) following the south east facing banks and gorse (W23c) scrub on the steep bank. This area of gorse scrub (*Ulex* sp) supports a diverse habitat and is particularly important for linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*) and stonechat (*Saxicola torquat*). Otters (*Lutra lutra*) are also known to move through the site.

ENV3.112 Swffryd Wood
Grid reference: ST223990
Size: 6.89ha
Survey date: 22/07/03

Site Description: The main block is primarily oak (*Quercus* spp.) woodland facing south, but the site includes a minor north-south valley running towards the farm above. High levels of natural woodland regeneration, despite some grazing, with locally dense thickets of young birch (*Betula* spp.) and beech (*Fagus sylvatica*).

Ground flora is generally quite rich, but locally very grassy – wavy hair grass in parts and acidic pasture in the minor valley. Two old quarries are present; the one towards the east supporting U1-type communities and gorse (*Ulex* spp.) scrub on quarry waste. Boundaries are fenced, but not kept in good repair. The adjacent land includes pastures above the site, and housing and road below the site.

ENV3.113 Blaentillery Farm South
Grid reference: SO224081
Size: 4.01ha
Survey date: 15/07/05

Site Description: Species-rich site to the east of Blaentillery farm supporting a mosaic of semi improved acid grassland, marshy grassland and acidic flush at the north of the site, and extensive acid grassland on a moderate west/southwest facing slope at the south of the site.

A stream system, small gully and 'non-natural' pond lie at the heart of the acidic flush. The flush is species-rich and includes *Anagalis tenella* (bog pimpernel), *Scutellaria minor* (lesser skullcap), *Viola palustris* (marsh violet), *Sphagnum* spp. and *Carex* (sedge) spp. (including *Carex echinata* (star sedge) and *C. pulicaris* (flea sedge)) locally frequent (with taller swathes of *Juncus articulatus* (jointed rush), *J. acutiflorus* (sharp-flowered rush) and *Galium palustre* (marsh bedstraw)). The flush grades into marshy grassland in places. The ground is uneven and undulating at the far north of the site.

The slope supports relatively species-rich acid grassland with characteristic species including *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Nardus stricta* (mat-grass), *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass) and *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy-hair

grass) (all frequent-occasional). However the slope is quite heavily sheep grazed and indicators are patchily distributed at the base of the slope.

Beech woodland (candidate SINC) adjoins the site at its southern edge. Semi improved/improved sheep pasture and unenclosed grassland neighbours the site elsewhere. The boundaries are a mixture of fenced dry stone walls and fences.

ENV3.114 Swffryd Fach
Grid reference: ST225998
Size: 14.43ha
Survey date: 23/5/03

Site Description: The site is located at the southern corner of Blaenau Gwent in the lowland enclosed area of Llanhilleth. It comprises of 11 fields of species-rich grassland, grazed lightly by cattle or cut for hay. Species include *Succisa pratensis* (devil's-bit scabious), *Centaurea nigra* (black knapweed), *Pedicularis sylvatica* (lousewort), *Conopodium majus* (pignut) and *Leucanthemum vulgare* (ox-eye daisy). To the north of the site there is an area of spoil with several pools and wet flushes with scrub adjacent to a patch of broadleaved woodland. Species present include *Calluna vulgaris* (ling), *Pedicularis sylvatica* (lousewort) and *Succisa pratensis* (devil's-bit scabious). It is also rich in fauna with several dragonfly and damselfly species seen as well as several amphibians too. There is a small pond along the northern boundary of field 6. Surrounding fields are more improved and to the west the hill steeply slopes with broadleaved woodland and scrub covering. A small patch of woodland lines the western edge of fields 9 and 10

ENV3.115 Cefn Bach
Grid reference: 204044
Size: ha
Survey date: 5 th July 2007

Site Description: Large open hill top area supporting a mosaic of semi improved acid grassland and dry and wet shrub heath. Species present included frequent/abundant *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), frequent *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass), occasional *Luzula multiflora* (heath wood rush), *Juncus squarrosus* (heath rush) and *Nardus stricta* (mat grass) and locally frequent *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw).

The northern most area is dominated by bracken continuous/scattered with tracks/rides mown in places. Some bracken control effort is evident. An acid grassland sward survives beneath the canopy in places.

Swathes of the western half of the area are typified by frequent *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) in association with *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), *Juncus squarrosus*, *Calluna vulgaris* (heather), *Carex nigra* (common sedge), *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Festuca ovina*, *Galium saxatile* and *Luzula multiflora*.

At the far south and east a drier heathland sward is present. *Vaccinium myrtillus* increases significantly in frequency with *Molinia caerulea* becoming infrequent. The sward is characterised by frequent/abundant *Vaccinium myrtillus*, frequent *Festuca ovina*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, locally frequent *Galium saxatile*, *Aira praecox* (early hair grass),

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Agrostis stolonifera (creeping bent), occasional *Luzula multiflora*, *Juncus squarrosus* and *Nardus stricta*. Locally frequent mosses, include *Polytrichum* sp., *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Mnium hornum*, and *Scleropodium purum*.

ENV3.116
Coed y Gilfach
Grid reference: SO231035
Size: 9.57ha
Survey date: September 2003

Site Description: The site is located within the Cwm Nant y Groes valley and on steep north west facing ground, open to and heavily grazed by sheep and horses.

Primarily a beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) wood, with some signs of old pollarding and charcoal platforms and oak (*Quercus*), birch (*Betula* spp.) and rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) also present.

Ground flora is sparse, but with a typical range of acid loving forbs and bryophytes. Natural regeneration of trees is minimal. The south western area is essentially acidic grassland and bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) with limited species diversity.

A public rights of way runs diagonally north east to south west and can take small 4x4 vehicles. Adjacent ground is also grazed with open grassland/bilberry heath below, pastures above and moorland to the north east.

Altitude is c290-360m. No surface water present except seasonal rills.

Part of this site has been designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW).

ENV3.117 Craig Swffryd
Grid reference: ST222998
Size: 6.80ha
Survey date: 22 July 2003

Site Description: The site occurs on steep north-west facing ground and bisected by minor road that runs north east to south west. Above the road is rich oakwood, with old beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) stands along the upper edge with high levels of natural regeneration. Upper boundary includes an old track/tramway, with gully/earthwork as shown on map. The remaining upper boundary is secured by a fenceline. Roadbank communities are rich in forbs, ferns, etc.

Below the road secondary woodland and colonising scrub has recently developed. There are also a few old beech (*F. sylvatica*) and oak (*Quercus* spp.) trees, and a rich variety of shrubs and forbs but ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) may dominate in medium term. Adjacent land includes pastures, roads, scrub, and housing.

ENV3.118 Tirpentwys Cut
Grid reference: 233015/ SO 23348 01497
Size: 21ha
Survey date: 7 th October 2008/24.7.2008 to 11.11.2008

Site Description: An isolated site, lying 2 km away from the nearest main settlement of Llanhilleth. The site is dominated by coniferous plantation woodland and includes a disused opencast site with steep quarry faces, steep spoil slopes and pools. Other habitats include flat lying bare ground and tracks. The site extends eastwards across the unitary boundary authority into Torfaen.

The site is partially fenced, with old stock fencing in evidence along the southern boundary with the road. Two tracks run east-west through the wooded part of the site. The roadside entrances to these have been covered with brash/fallen trees probably with the intention to limit fly tipping which is an obvious problem.

Plantation woodland is the most extensive vegetation type across the site. Lodgepole Pine (*Pinus contorta*), is closely planted with little ground vegetation beneath, with the exception of bryophyte cover which is high in many places.

A large deep pool sites fills the former quarry. The steep south facing quarry face at the north of the site supports lodgepole pine, goat willow (*Salix caprea*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*), male fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*) and gorse within its ledges and cracks. Some ledges appear to support an acid grassland/heath community, although this was not examined closely. The ledges and cracks and small cliff face seepages may potentially support interesting plants and ferns (no access possible for closer survey).

A steep spoil slope on the southern side of the floor of the cut supports a pioneer acid grassland community, with areas of bare loose spoil, large stones. Mosses are a fairly consistent feature as well as localised lichens. A single orange waxcap was recorded here.

Through the floor of the cut a track links the site entrance with a large, deep pool. Vegetation cover and height is patchy. In the vicinity of the track poorly draining areas support shallow patches of standing water and marshy vegetation; aquatic species include pondweed, water-starwort and water-crowfoot species.

An underground spring feeds two linked pools lying within a steep sided hollow at the sites' southern perimeter. Marshy/flush vegetation borders and extends out from these pools with *Juncus effusus* (soft rush) and *Glyceria fluitans* (floating sweet grass) frequent. *Sphagnum sp.* is also locally extensive, which together with other bryophytes (inc *Polytrichum sp.*) creates damp cushions of moss at the edges of the northern pool.

Bryophytes were frequently encountered across the site and gill fungi were locally frequent alongside the woodland paths.

Ponds in Tirpentwys Cut, St Illtyd's, Mynydd Llanhilleth, near Brynithel

Two small ponds and one large pond situated in an extensive canyon created by former opencast operations. The two small ponds and approximately two thirds of the large pond are situated within Blaenau-Gwent, whilst the remaining third of the large pond is within Torfaen. The canyon is surrounded by coniferous plantation, consisting mainly of Lodgepole Pine. Within the canyon itself are cliffs and wet flushes.

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ENV3.119 Cwm Farm Pond SO2299/100
Grid reference: SO22819955
Size: 0.06ha
Survey date: August 2005

Site Description: The pond is located on the hill above Cwm Llwynau 1km north of Hafodyrynys at an altitude of 290m. The surrounding land is enclosed semi-improved and unimproved grassland.

Approximately 25% of the pond is open water with small amounts *Calitriche stagnalis* and *Lemna minor*. The remaining outer area of the pond is referable to **S22 *Glyceria fluitans* water-margin vegetation**. Other species found include *Juncus bulbosus*, *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus bufonis* and *Ranunculus omniophyllus*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 5 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone of unimproved and semi-improved grassland is included around this pond.

ENV3.120 Coedcae Coch, Aberbeeg
Grid reference: SO218023
Size: 7.19ha
Survey date: Sept 2003

Site Description: Primarily oak (*Quercus*) wood on north west facing slopes with a central water channel and a few large beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) trees and some old birch (*Betula* spp.).

Ground flora is very variable from bare ground and *Holcus* (yorkshire fog) dominated stands to patches of bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and willowherb (*Epilobium* spp.).

Largely unfenced, effectively, with some sheep grazing, but high levels of natural regeneration of beech (*F. sylvatica*). Access to site from A467 below. Altitude is c270-350m.

Adjacent land use includes pastures and bracken/scrub, with A467 road below site, and some conifers at northern end.

ENV3.121 Land to the east of Bournville Road, Blaina
Grid reference: 203 064
Size: 1 ha
Survey date: 4/08/09

Site Description: The large field is situated to the east of Bournville and forms part of a collection of grazed enclosures, with private residences bordering the site to the west, open land to the north, a farmhouse and outbuildings to the east and a farm access track to the south.

The field has a slight west facing slope and is enclosed by fencing and a line of native trees/shrubs line the western edge. Botanical interest is centred on the south west section of the field where a series of small streams flow down the site. Here a good variety of plants are associated with the marshy grassland, and small areas of acidic flush are present. The south west of the field undulates slightly across the slope and the degree of wetness is variable with drier regions occurring in a mosaic with marshy vegetation. Flushed vegetation in close vicinity to the stream includes locally frequent bog pimpernel, marsh pennywort, mosses and sedges. Devil's bit scabious and quaking grass was recorded locally.

The rest of the marshy vegetation is more characterised by a taller sward with greater bird's foot trefoil, soft rush, jointed rush, together with marsh thistle, Yorkshire fog, lesser spearwort, oval sedge, marsh bedstraw and sedge species.

The remainder of the field is less interesting. To the north the ground becomes drier and a semi-improved poor sward resides. To the east of the marshy area a former field boundary is delineated by a bank, which is frequented by a thick band of bracken. Beyond this, the eastern part of the field is heavily horse grazed and supports a semi-improved poor sward.

ENV3.122 Cwmtillery Lakes
Grid reference: SO220065
Size: 9.8ha
Survey date: 16/07/07, 22/10/07 & 14/04/08

Site Description: Cwmtillery Lakes is a post-industrial colliery site located about 6 km south of the Brecon Beacons National Park and 3 km North of Abertillery. The surrounding countryside comprises scattered villages and agricultural land interspersed with many semi-natural habitats providing corridors and dispersal routes for plants and animals. The whole site is approximately 9.8 hectares (ha) and managed by a local group called CLEAN who are supported by Communities First. Notable habitats present on the site include mesotrophic standing water (*i.e.* one lake and three settlement pools), species rich acid grassland and dwarf shrub heath, all of these habitats appear on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. In addition, there is woodland, scrub, rush pasture, mesotrophic grassland and water margin vegetation, which form a complex mosaic of habitats enhancing the overall ecological value of the site. Collectively these habitats contribute towards the UK Priority Biodiversity Action Plan - Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land. The lake and settlement pools are interconnected by a series of drainage channels and streams. The largest of these is approximately 1 ha in area and is situated to the south of the site. The three settlement pools are found to the north of the site, and cover approximately 0.5 ha.

A juvenile and adult common lizard was recorded on the site. No other protected vertebrates were recorded during the site visit, but the site supports habitat suitable for amphibians and possibly for Otter, as well as foraging habitat for Badger and bats. A total of 20 bird species were recorded during the site visit and include five Species of Conservation Concern (two Red List species and three Amber List species), two of which are subject of UK Biodiversity Action Plans.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

ENV3.123 East of Gwastad Farm
Grid reference: SO221061
Size: 6.54ha
Survey date: July 2003

Site Description: A west-facing slope supporting stands of oak (*Quercus* spp.) and beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) within grazed acidic grassland. A small alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) stand is also present, as well as a small quarry area and mire, (some notably species-rich).

The adjacent land includes housing to the west, woodlands to south and west, acidic grassland to east and trees/heath above wall.

Access is obtained from heath and above, or from road/housing below (south east corner).

Springs generating rills flow from higher ground to east and generate rich mires within and above the site boundary. Scattered hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) is present within grassland.

Fences and walls are present, but no effective boundary on upper (east) side, although wall separates land from heath above.

ENV3.124 Hafod-y-dafal Acid Grassland
Grid reference: 199047
Size: 10.04ha
Survey date: 5 th July 2007

Site Description: Extensive area of semi improved acid grassland over relatively level ground, low grazed by sheep. Species include frequent/occasional *Agrostis tenuis* (common bent), *Festuca ovina* (sheeps fescue), *Nardus stricta* (mat grass), *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw), and *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil). More local associates include *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), *Rumex acetosella* (sheeps sorrel), *Rumex acetosa* (common sorrel), *Ranunculus repens* (creeping buttercup), *Achillea millefolium* (yarrow), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) and *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass).

Unfortunately the site is significantly disturbed by a variety of intersecting tracks and trenches, associated with the recent use of the site for paint balling/quad biking. The site is surrounded by old drystone walls and fences. Bracken is scattered on the banks of a gully at the eastern field margin.

The site affords an open aspect on high ground adjacent to the unenclosed land of Cefn yr Arail and Cefn Bach. The enclosed improved sheep pasture of Hafod-y-dafal farm borders the site to its south and a extensive bracken covered enclosure lies to the east.

Skylarks (*Alauda arvensis*) and raven (*Corvus corax*) were heard overhead.

ENV3.125 Mulfran, Mynydd Coity, Mynydd James & Gwastad
Grid reference: SO230070
Size: 963.96 ha
Survey date: July/August 2001

Site Description: The site comprises of a large area of upland common land between the valleys of Ebbw Fach and the Afon Llwyd.

Dry heath communities are extensive throughout the survey area and represent H12 and H18 NVC communities. Wet heath is found on the common north of Gwastad with blanket mire also predominantly found to the north.

Mulfran has a high frequency of *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor-grass) with flushing throughout and the south is dominated by *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) with small areas of *Erica tetralix* (cross-leaved heath) and *Calluna vulgaris* (ling).

Mynydd Coity and Mynydd James is the largest common in this survey. To the north at Waun Afon is a large area of blanket mire. Mynydd James is largely *V.myrtillus* (bilberry) dominated dry heath. Mynydd Coity is similar but with a notable wet influence. The lower eastern slopes are mire communities and to the east spoil has been colonised by acid grassland with some wet heath. Gwastad is almost completely covered with heather and some bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) on the edges.

This is the only known breeding site in Britain for the Silurian moth (*Eriopygodes imbecilla*) (a Section 42 species).

ENV3.126 Cwm Big North
Grid reference: SO202040
Size: 5.46ha
Survey date: August 2003

Site Description: This woodland is the northernmost extension of a coniferous woodland block and occupies the east-facing slope of a valley, almost to its emergence on the plateau.

To the West are improved pastures, with moorland on the east side of the valley. Conifers continue the woodland block southwards.

The upper boundary comprises a relic beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) hedge, but fencing of the adjacent pastures does not keep sheep out; much of the ground flora is 'grassy'.

There is a farm track along the western boundary. Its origin is uncertain, but probably from the A4040 (Cwm to Aberbeeg) road.

ENV3.127 Swyffryd Ganol Pond SO2299/098
Grid reference: ST22319940
Size: 0.06ha
Survey date: August 2005

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Site Description: The pond is located 1km north west of Hafodyrynys at an altitude of 270m. It is on enclosed land, the old farm, Swyffryd Ganol is nearby.

The surrounding land is semi-improved and unimproved grassland, trees and overgrown hedges.

The pond is sparsely vegetated, approximately 85% of the pond is open water. The vegetation is confined to the outer edges of the pond and is referable to **S22 *Glyceria fluitans* water-margin vegetation**, other species include *Juncus effusus* and *Lemna minor*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 7 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone which includes semi-improved grassland and trees and shrubs is included around this pond.

ENV3.128 Coetgae Pond SO2103/082
Grid reference: SO21030346
Size: 0.20ha
Survey date: August 2005

Site Description: The pond is located approximately 1km west of Abertillery on the hillside above the woodland at Craig yr Arial at an altitude of 400m. It is on post industrial land amidst colonising spoil tips and is 250m north west of the pond at Arial, SO2103/078.

The pond is largely open water, the vegetation is confined to the outer edges of the pond and is dominated by *Juncus effusus*. Within the open water there is approximately 75% of the submerged species *Elodea canadensis*. There is a small stand of **S12 *Typha latifolia* swamp**. Other species found in the pond include *Juncus bulbosus*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Cardamine pratensis* and *Lemna minor*.

One area was sampled for invertebrates, 5 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone of acid grassland colonising spoil is included around this pond

ENV3.129 West of Blaentillery Farm
Grid reference: SO220083
Size: 3.74ha
Survey date: August 2003

Site Description: The site comprises a mix of woodland stands and associated mires/seepages within a matrix of acid grassland and bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), together with rock outcrops and a stream.

Most of the site slopes east to the stream, with an altitudinal range of c 420-450m.

Above, to the west, is moorland, but with improved pastures to the N and NE and acid grassland to the S. Fences and walls enclose the site, but sheep grazing occurs through gaps in the western side wall (at least).

ENV3.130 Cefn Bach
Grid reference: 204044
Size: 8.6 ha
Survey date: 5 th July 2007

Site Description: Large open hill top area supporting a mosaic of semi improved acid grassland and dry and wet shrub heath. Species present included frequent/abundant *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), frequent *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass), occasional *Luzula multiflora* (heath wood rush), *Juncus squarrosus* (heath rush) and *Nardus stricta* (mat grass) and locally frequent *Galium saxatile* (heath bedstraw).

The northern most area is dominated by bracken continuous/scattered with tracks/rides mown in places. Some bracken control effort is evident. An acid grassland sward survives beneath the canopy in places.

Swathes of the western half of the area are typified by frequent *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) in association with *Potentilla erecta* (tormentil), *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry), *Juncus squarrosus*, *Calluna vulgaris* (heather), *Carex nigra* (common sedge), *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Festuca ovina*, *Galium saxatile* and *Luzula multiflora*.

At the far south and east a drier heathland sward is present. *Vaccinium myrtillus* increases significantly in frequency with *Molinia caerulea* becoming infrequent. The sward is characterised by frequent/abundant *Vaccinium myrtillus*, frequent *Festuca ovina*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, locally frequent *Galium saxatile*, *Aira praecox* (early hair grass), *Agrostis stolonifera* (creeping bent), occasional *Luzula multiflora*, *Juncus squarrosus* and *Nardus stricta*. Locally frequent mosses, include *Polytrichum* sp., *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Mnium hornum*, and *Scleropodium purum*.

ENV3.131 Quarry at Gilfach Wen Farm, Six Bells
Grid reference: SO 22455 03130
Size: 0.7 ha
Survey date: 5/08/09

Site Description: The site is situated on the east edge of Six Bells and is enclosed by fences. It contains a disused quarry with some areas of exposed rock face and vegetated undulating ground of the old workings. The site has an overall north facing slope becoming very steep to the north of a track which runs through the site. The western boundary marked on the LDP site map is not comparable with any physical boundary on the ground. Terraced houses, and dense trees and scrub (with pockets of semi-improved acid grassland) border the site to the north, and a semi-improved field (with frequent ant hills) and open land supporting a semi-improved acid grassland/heathland mosaic lie to the south.

A compartment to the north of the track supports mixed trees and scrub including pine, ash, sycamore, rowan, birch and bramble with pockets of semi-improved acid grassland/heath evident. Species include bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), ling heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), heath bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*) and sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*).

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

To the south of the track the major part of the site supports a semi-improved dry acid grassland/heath mosaic. This is accompanied by scattered mature scrub frequented by rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and pine (*Pinus sp.*). Dense scrub on the top of the quarry face includes bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) and willow (*Salix sp.*). Rowan and birch are especially frequent over the bank in the northern part of the site, grading into denser scrub and deciduous trees. In the west of the site, mature trees lie alongside the northern boundary; this includes 3 large sycamores (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) (one standing dead) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). A lovely mature rowan and beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) reside in the vicinity of the western boundary as marked on the LDP site map.

The site is grazed by a pony and a small shelter is located to the south of the track. A collapsed corrugated shelter and pile of stone lie in the central part of the site. Waxcap fungi were observed locally in the south of the site.

ENV3.132 Green Meadow Farm
Grid reference: SO222050
Size: 42.26ha
Survey date: September 1998

Site Description: Green Meadow Farm is located on the hillside to the east of Cwmtillery. The aspect is mainly to the west with local aspects to the north and south. The buildings of the farm are derelict with one barn remaining. Previously the site was an area of coal mining with colliery tips. More recently the tips have been reprofiled under a land reclamation scheme, seeded with a grassland mix and some areas planted with trees.

A variety of habitats can be found on the site which include acid grassland, woodland, heathland and mire. The acid grassland is variable in species richness with some areas having *Campanula rotundifolia* (harebell), *Polygala vulgaris* (common milkwort) and *Leontodon autumnalis* (autumn hawkbit). In the areas of heathland (Areas 22, 25, 27 and 28) *Empetrium nigrum* (crowberry), *Calluna vulgaris* (ling) and *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) can be found. In the mire communities *Ranunculus flammula* (lesser spearwort), *Carex spp.* (sedges) and *Galium palustre* (Marsh bedstraw) are present. The woodlands include oak (*Quercus sp.*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) with scrub and heathland grading into them. Small quarries can also be found.

As a whole the site supports a rich mosaic of habitats of great value for wildlife.

ENV3.133 Cwmtillery Reservoir SO2007/068
Grid reference: ST22819955
Size: 45,285m ²
Survey date: August 2005

Site Description: Cwmtillery reservoir is located 1km north of Cwmtillery on the Afon Tyleri at an altitude of 350m. The surrounding land is woodland, mire and acid grassland, and the pond sites in the Cwmtillery LNR are 200m to the south.

The reservoir is largely open water, with the vegetation being restricted to small areas on the margins, particularly at the inflow from the Afon Tyleri.

Juncus effusus tussocks are found along the eastern edge. The area to the north, around the inflow of Afon Tyleri, there is a stand of *Juncus effusus*. Near this inflow there is a stand of **S19 *Eleocharis palustris* swamp** and an stand of **S10 *Equisetum fluviatile* swamp**. There is an area of **S22 *Glyceria fluitans* water margin vegetation** to the south west and on the southern corner of the dam another stand of **S19 *Eleocharis palustris* swamp**.

Other species found within the margins of the reservoir are *Elodea canadensis*, *Angelica sylvestris*, *Filipendula ulmaria* and *Oenanthe crocata*.

Three areas were sampled for invertebrates, 11 species were recorded.

A 10m buffer zone is included around this lake which includes trees and acid grassland.

ENV3.134 Llanerch Padarn West
Grid reference: SO215066
Size: 6.69ha
Survey date: July 2003

Site Description: A mix of acid woodland types bisected by a generally dry stream valley. The lower parts are largely sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*) dominated, but the upper/core areas include beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and thin out to semi-improved acid grassland/bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) or open bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) heath.

The west side of the woodland is on a steep slope, but the east side is on gentler slope. The slopes are generally east – south facing.

The ground flora is generally sparse low down but with abundant bilberry (*V. myrtillus*) higher up.

The site is newly fenced below, but is open to moorland/heathland above.

Reseeded colliery waste lies to the site's east and south. Grazed moorland lies to the north and west.

ENV3.135 Roseheyworth Community Woodlands
Grid reference: SO207060
Size: ~18.75ha
Survey date: Autumn 2001

Site Description: The site is located on the east side of the Ebbw Fach Valley to the south of Blaina, and comprises of a patchwork of intergrading woodland types and associated areas of grassland, mire and heath all under the influence of the sites hydrological patterns.

Many public footpaths cross the site and sheep graze it freely in most areas. The sites upper part has been mined for coal, but old walls and a barn also implies a lengthy period of stock keeping on the site.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Areas of the site are of particular ecological interest and include the oak and beech woodland and wet woodland areas. With the exception of the beech woods, most of the stands are relatively rich in plant species. The grasslands are relatively rich botanically and several are rich in anthills. Scattered throughout the site are several rich mires with *Drosera rotundifolia* (round-leaved sundew), *Wahlenbergia hederacea* (ivy-leaved bellflower) and *Anagallis tenella* (bog pimpernel) found. Small pearl-bordered fritillary (*Boloria selene*) (a Section 42 species) has been recorded on the southern section next to housing.

Mixed in with the forementioned are areas of dwarf shrub heath and colliery spoil with diverse species and heathland beginning to colonise.

ENV3.136 Llanerch Padern East
Grid reference: SO217067
Size: 2.12ha
Survey date: July 2003

Site Description: A small, unfenced open woodland with a mix of beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), oak (*Quercus* spp.) and birch (*Betula* sp.) trees and generally grassy ground flora.

The site includes colonised colliery waste, but also an old quarry into sandstone bedrock. No surface water features are visible.

Surrounding land is grazed, much of it is relatively recently vegetated and landscaped colliery waste.

A small area of acidic grassland is present above the quarry, grading towards heath.

ENV3.137 Coed Argoed
Grid reference: SO213022
Size: 10.94ha
Survey date: 1997 & September 2003

Site Description: On steep west to north facing ground above Aberbeeg. The stands are essentially of sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*), but with dense ground flora including bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), bramble (*Rubus* spp.) and locally wavy hair grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*), suggesting some soil enrichment. High levels of natural regeneration with locally abundant saplings (especially along roadside embankments) but fewer seedlings, probably reflecting the abundant ground and field layer plants.

Locally fenced from housing it is otherwise open without signs of grazing.

11.0 LAND RECLAMATION ALLOCATIONS

ENV4 Land Reclamation Schemes

ENV4.1 Pennant Street, Phase 2, Ebbw Vale

This one hectare site comprises mainly of a thin strip of woodland on the edge of a built up residential area in Ebbw Vale. The land immediately to the north and west consists of more open space.

A BS5837 Survey is required as part of a planning application for any development and the surrounding semi natural habitats should be retained and enhanced.

ENV4.2 Parc Bryn Bach, Tredegar

Parc Bryn Bach was created from an extensive area of coal mining in the early 1980s and has since been transformed into a major tourist attraction. It is located off the A465 at the edge of the settlement of Tredegar and the focus of this 340 ha country park is a large lake. The proposed reclamation works comprise draining 7 hectares of the lake and developing it into a wetland.

ENV4.3 Cwmcraehen, Brynmawr

This is a vacant site located to the south of a scrap yard at Cwmcraehen. The land lies adjacent to residential properties to the north west and backs onto factories in the South. The site is split into two platforms by a road, which is currently blocked by earthworks debris. The platforms are grassed areas, which contain some trees and brambles. The platform to the east of the road is the larger of the two platforms. The land is relatively flat although slopes downwards to the north west and slopes upwards to the east where an embankment contains trees which should be retained. Along the southern and western boundary of the platforms are watercourses. The site is also allocated for employment.

ENV4.4 Llanhilleth Pithead Baths, Llanhilleth

This majority of this site is occupied by a building, which previously served the former Llanhilleth Colliery and has since fallen into a state of disrepair. The site was granted outline planning permission in 2006 for residential development and in 2008 it was granted outline planning permission for the demolition of the building.

12.0 CEMETERY ALLOCATIONS

ENV5 Cemeteries

ENV5.1 Cefn Golau Cemetery, Tredegar

The greatest priority is required in Cefn Golau, with only an estimated life of cemetery of 0.3 months. Planning permission was approved in December 2007 to extend the existing cemetery which will provide 394 spaces and extend the life span of the cemetery by approximately ten years. A rectangular site located on the north eastern boundary of the existing cemetery has been identified to accommodate a 0.44 extension. The extension of the Cefn Golau cemetery was complete in November 2010.

ENV5.2 Dukestown Cemetery, Tredegar

In 10 years, Dukestown Cemetery will require additional land outside of the existing cemetery. 1.4 hectares of land has been identified to the north of the existing cemetery.

ENV5.3 Blaina Cemetery, Upper Ebbw Fach

Priority work is required in Blaina as the existing cemetery has only an estimated life of 4 years. Planning permission was approved in April 2009 for 0.05ha extension located to the east of the existing cemetery. The extension of the Blaina cemetery was complete in November 2010.

13.0 MINERAL SITES

M4 Preferred Areas

M4.1 Adjacent Trefil Quarry, Tredegar

This area of land is to the north-east of the present Trefil Quarry, north of Tredegar. It covers an area of approximately 38 hectares. The land is currently used for grazing of livestock. The topography is gently rising to the northeast away from the existing quarry site. The extension would join the existing Gryphon Quarry by a length of 130m existing quarry face. The site extends to 100m from the Brecon Beacons National Park Boundary. If the site is developed it will be accessed from the existing quarry access.

The Environment Agency commented that any planning application would require a water feature survey and a hydrogeological risk assessment. The site is sensitive as it is located on SPZ and major aquifer. A discharge consent is in place, any development may have an impact on the suitability of this consent.

CCW commented that the site runs into Mynydd Llangynidr a (GCR) site adjacent to Mynydd Llangatwg, 1 of 4 of the Usk Bat Sites SAC. The extension could affect hibernation sites for Lesser Horseshoe Bats thus having a detrimental impact on their Favourable Conservation Status.

The site is also known to support other protected species and habitats.

The Glamorgan and Gwent Archaeological Society noted that west of the area is a scheduled ancient monument. Little field survey of the area has been undertaken. They advise that an Archaeological desk-based assessment including field survey plus possible evaluation of specific sites will be required prior to determination of planning application.

M4.2 Tir Pentwys Tip, Llanhilleth

The site is in an isolated location at a considerable distance from the main settlement of Llanhilleth. It is predominantly forest but was the site of an opencast coal recovery operation. The area covers nearly 22 hectares. If it is to be developed it will be accessed from Torfaen County Borough Council. The operation will involve coal and secondary aggregate recovery.

The Countryside Council for Wales noted that the site includes an acid/neutral flush/spring with an adjoining standing water body and that there was a record of protected species on the site. The site is identified as a SINC.

The EA noted that the site lies on a minor aquifer and as the site was previously opencast, there is potential for contamination. The EA require a water feature survey and method statement. They are concerned with the loss of spoil which has a high biodiversity value.

They requested that the watercourse be protected from development by a 7m buffer strip. Also the possible contamination of historic operations will have to be investigated.

The Gwent Archaeological Society noted a restraint - Post-medieval farm of Blaen-cwnc. They advise that an archaeological evaluation on specific sites will be required prior to determination of planning application.

M4.3 Land South East of Cwm, Ebbw Vale

This site is located on the top of Cefn yr Arail south east of Cwm. It covers an area of approximately 23 hectares. The site is in a dip on top of the mountain and is not visible from the urban areas of Blaenau Gwent.

14.0 WASTE ALLOCATIONS

W1 Land for Waste Management

W1.1 Land south of Waun-y-Pound, Tredegar (6.31ha);

This area of land is south-east of the existing Waun-y-Pound Industrial Estate, approximately 1 km north of Ebbw Vale. It is surrounded by forestry on all sides other than where it abuts the employment site. There are two development platforms, the lower platform can be served from an existing access. The upper platform will require a new access from the existing access road which serves the adjacent factory.

The Environment Agency recommend that a minimum, preliminary risk assessment be undertaken to establish risk to controlled waters at the site.

There is no public sewerage system in this area. Any new development will require the provision of satisfactory alternative facilities for sewage disposal.

The site is crossed by watermain(s). Protective measures or a diversion of these assets may be required.

The Coal Authority noted that there were possible/ known shallow mine workings.

W1.2 Silent Valley, Ebbw Vale (3.8ha)

This site is located within the active Silent Valley Landfill site at the northern end and comprises a levelled area of disturbed/made up ground resulting from past steelworks activities. The site is situated on the eastern side of the Ebbw Fach Valley approximately 700m from Waunllwyd residential area.

The Silent Valley Local Nature Reserve, Cwm Merddog Woodlands SSSI lie to the east and south of the Landfill site.

Access would be from the existing Landfill site access.

Countryside Council for Wales are concerned about the possible implications on the SSSI.

The Environment Agency commented that for further waste (deposition) the required information should include a Hydrogeological Risk Assessment for landfilling. Any new development would need to be agreed with the site's PPC permit.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Welsh Water commented that there are no public assets in this area. Any new development will require the provision of satisfactory alternative facilities for sewage disposal and water supply.

For further information please contact:

Planning Policy Team
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
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