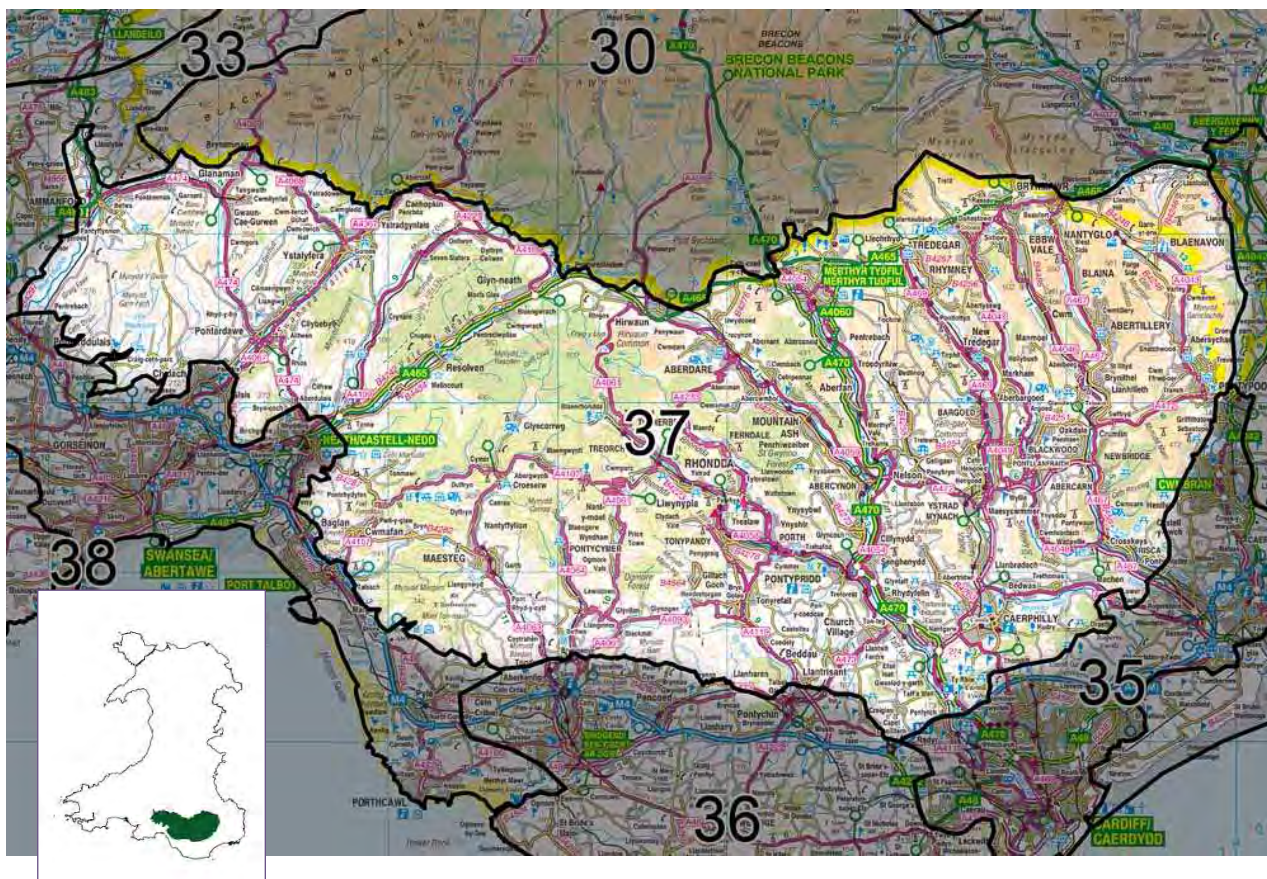




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## Cymoedd y De – disgrifiad cryno

Mae llawer o gymoedd dwfn, trefoledig yn brathu i fynydd-dir eang. Ynghyd â'r etifeddiaeth ddiwydiannol, a hunaniaeth bendant ei phobl, mae ardal Cymoedd y De wedi esgor ar rai o ddelweddau cenedlaethol mwyaf adnabyddus ac eiconig Cymru.

Mae datblygiad strimynnog yn llenwi llawer o waelodion a llethrau isaf y cymoedd. Ochr yn ochr â'u cymeriad trefol a diwydiannol, ceir dir bryniog dramatig, gyda llethrau serth, gweunydd agored neu goedwigoedd. Mae rhwydweithiau o reilffyrdd a ffyrdd yn cydgysylltu pentrefi'r cymoedd. Mae natur y tir yn cyfyngu ar dramwyo rhwng y naill gwm a'r llall, ac nid oes ond ychydig fylchau uchel rhyngddynt. Mae twrw a phrysurdeb llawer o gymoedd yn gwrthgyferbynnu â chymeriad cymharol anghysbell a gwyllt y llwyfandiroedd uchel cyfagos.

Darparodd daeareg a dyddodion mwynol yr ardal yr adnoddau a sbardunodd ymlodiad cyflym datblygu diwydiannol yn y 19eg ganrif. O fedru cludo ar reilffyrdd, creodd y diwydiannau glo, dur a haearn newydd seilwaith eang o adeiladau mawrion, ffwrneisiau, tyrau, simneiau, traphontydd, tomenydd gwastraff a lefelydd. Canlyniad cartrefu'r gweithwyr yw'r rhesi hirion ac eiconig o dai teras sy'n canlyn ochrau'r brynau: ac yn sgîl y gweithwyr, daeth capeli, siopau, ysgolion a chyfleusterau eraill, gan greu cymunedau newydd, trefol eu natur. Canlyniad arall bywyd yno, a'r amgylchedd garw, fu delwedd cymdeithas wydn, radicalaidd ei gwleidyddiaeth, a hoffai chwarae rygbi.

Canlyniad dirywiad diwydiannol ddiwedd yr 20fed ganrif fu cau, symud ymaith, gadael neu ailddatblygu llawer o safleoedd diwydiannol blaenorol. Mae'r newidiadau hyn yn parhau heddiw, fel y mae'r newidiadau cymdeithasol canlyniadol ym mywyd a hunaniaeth y cymunedau. Gwelir yr ardal, bellach, yn rhan o "ranbarth dinas" ehangach a chynyddol ôl-ddiwydiannol, y fwyaf yng Nghymru. Mae delwedd eiconig newydd yn aneglur, ar brydiau, ond y mae gweithgareddau wedi'u seilio ar yr etifeddiaeth, mewn amgylchedd tynerach a gwyrddach, yn dechrau dod i'r amlwg fel rhan o hyn.

## Summary Description

Many deep, urbanised valleys dissect an extensive upland area. Combined with industrial heritage and the distinct identity of its people, the South Wales Valleys provide some of Wales' most widely known and iconic national images.

Extensive ribbon development fills many valley bottoms and lower slopes. Their urban and industrial character is juxtaposed with dramatic upland settings with steep hillsides, open moors or forests. Networks of railways and roads connect valley settlements. Topography constrains passage between valleys, and there are only a limited number of high passes between valleys. The noise and business of many valleys contrast with the relatively remote and wild qualities of adjacent hill plateaux.

Underlying geology and mineral deposits provided the resources that fuelled a rapid spread of industrial development in the C19th. Once rail transport became possible, new coal, steel and iron industries created an extensive infrastructure of large buildings, furnaces, towers, chimneys, viaducts, spoil heaps and levels. Housing for workers resulted in the extensive and iconic rows of terraced houses that run along hillsides. Their needs in turn brought chapels, shops, schools and other facilities to create new settlements with an urban character. The way of life and harsh environment resulted in the image of a tough, rugby playing and radically minded society. But the decline of industries in the late C20th resulted in the closure, removal, abandonment or redevelopment of many former industrial sites. These changes continue today, as do the consequential social changes to the way of life and community identity. The area is now seen as part of a wider, increasingly post-industrial, 'city region', the largest in Wales. A new iconic image is at times unclear, but heritage-based activities set within a softer, greener environment are emerging as part of this.

While greenness is returning to some former industrial landscapes many of the new woodlands are coniferous. Waterways are slowly welcoming back fish, and mammals such as otters. The importance of wildlife conservation being undertaken hand-in-hand with economic regeneration is being recognised as one of the keys to the sustained revitalisation of this most iconic Welsh 'bro', in the Heads of the Valleys and Valleys Regional Park initiatives.

| <b>Key Characteristics</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Extensive Upland plateaux</b> – typically wild and windswept, often with unenclosed tracts, running roughly north-south as ‘fingers’ parallel between intervening deep valleys.                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Numerous steep-sided valleys</b> - typically aligned in parallel, flowing in southerly directions, shaped by southward flowing glaciers, leaving behind distinctive corrie ('cwm') and crag features. Major rivers include the Tawe, Taff and Rhymney.                                                                                      |
| <b>Ribbon urban and industrial areas in valleys</b> – in places extending up valley sides and to valley heads. The area is sometimes regarded as being part of a ‘city region’. Middle and eastern valleys tend to be the most heavily and continuously developed, e.g Rhondda Valley. The uplands by comparison have little or no settlement. |
| <b>Extensive remains of heavy industry</b> – with a mix of derelict, preserved and largely redeveloped areas, notably for coal mining. Preserved as heritage (World heritage Site) at Blaenafon this typically includes old railway alignments, buildings and former tips.                                                                     |
| <b>Contrast of urban valley activity next to quiet uplands</b> – e.g. busy roads, new developments, traffic noise, night lighting, verses the adjacent wilder, remoter, quieter uplands.                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Large blocks of coniferous plantation and deciduous woodland fringes</b> – covering many steep hillsides and hilltops, most notably in the middle to western portion of the area, providing a softer contemporary landscape where there was once industry.                                                                                  |
| <b>Heather, rough grassland and steep bracken slopes</b> – dominate many plateaux and are grazed mainly by sheep. Much is common land.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Improved pastures on some lower valley sides</b> - grazed by sheep and some dairy cattle.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Field boundaries</b> - dry stone walls mark the boundary of common land while fields on lower slopes are bounded by dense hawthorn hedges, interspersed with swathes of broadleaved woodland.                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Transport routes restricted to valleys</b> – the intervening topography makes valley to valley travel difficult, except at heads and bottoms of valleys. Occasionally there are roads that climb steeply over passes with dramatic views and ‘hair pin’ bends.                                                                              |
| <b>Iconic cultural identity</b> – many popular images of a tough, rugby-playing, religious, radically-minded society still remain associated with the South Wales Valleys, however today’s post-industrial, internet-connected reality is somewhat different.                                                                                  |

## Visual and Sensory profile

The South Wales Valleys is one of Wales’ more widely known iconic images, combining the wilder and often inclement upland setting with the heavily industrialised and busy valleys. Active mines and industry are now generally an image of the past, however the legacy remains extensively apparent today and together with the steep topography of the valley sides, has a defining influence on landscape character. Levels and old railway alignments, the generally reclaimed but sometimes still perceptible physical footprints of mine spoil heaps, the often intensively urbanised valley floors with old industrial buildings, and lower valley sides with their distinctive long rows of workers terraces, retain the traditional image.

Yet today a new image is gradually but fundamentally changing the old one. Modern road improvements and bypasses bristle with street lighting, spreading the urban influence beyond the old settlement envelopes and altering the character experienced when travelling. In many valleys the legacy of slow travel through the ribbon development continues today, but in some places and notably along the A470 north-south corridor and along the A465 “Heads of the Valleys” east-west corridor road, travel is now much quicker.

For those with cars, the area has become far more easily accessed and the once very separate valleys are now just a few minutes drive apart. The orientation of valleys and the remaining legacy of railways and roads focus travel towards Wales's two largest cities, Cardiff and Swansea, which lie in neighbouring areas to the south, offering the combination of upland valley living and city working. The noise of industry and railways has typically changed to that of road traffic. Many former brownfield sites have been redesigned and redeveloped for new housing, industry and retail. These modern features of the mid and late C20th provide an entirely contemporary character, tending not to style their architecture or pattern of urban design using the traditions established in the C19th. The results tend to lack local distinctiveness, however a 'Valleys' sense of place still remains strong because of the enduring historic and dramatic upland landscape setting.

It is a landscape of contrasts. The valleys contain the extensive ribbon development, which snakes along the valley floors and lower valley sides, and sometimes with settlements precariously extending over intervening slopes and spurs. The windswept upland plateaux that separate the valleys could not be more different. Devoid of settlement, the uplands engender a strong sense of openness and remoteness, although in places compromised by proximity to industry and people, for example reclaimed spoil heaps, fly tipping, abandoned cars, 'horsiculture' and associated ramshackle sheds or allotments, pressure of people accessing the area for recreation in an unmanaged way, and occasional pylon lines, telecommunications masts and occasional wind turbine developments. But the open plateaux afford extensive views across the valleys, southwards to the Severn Estuary and northwards to the Brecon Beacons. At times, views from plateau to plateau conceal the intervening valleys and thus visually connect more with the wider uplands of Wales.

The middle to western valleys are dominated by the extensive coniferous plantations whereas the eastern valleys, although generally smaller, are more intimate. On many valley sides, there are distinctive 'ffridd' and 'rhos pasture' mosaics of small fields, hedgerows, boundary walls, wet flushes and marshland, interspersed with small stands of trees, copses and woodlands. It is the vestige of the former agricultural landscape that once dominated before the expansion of coal mining and the iron industries. The far western valleys, (those west of the Neath Valley) have slightly gentler intervening hills and long, unfenced lanes use the ridges as convenient routes. This affects experience of the area too, as ridgeline routes are uncommon elsewhere.

Many former spoil tips have been reclaimed, with varying degrees of integration into the intrinsic natural topography and upland setting. In some areas much new tree planting results in a landscape today that is much softer and more enclosed than that depicted in historic images. Individual valleys differ markedly in appearance: Neath and Dulais are green and broad by comparison with the cramped settlements of the Swansea and the two Rhonddas; Afan is steep and mountainous, covered in conifers, while the Taff and Ebbw Vales are convoluted in both terrain and settlement.



The new landscape: Trefforest Industrial Estate, occupying the flat land in the valley bottom, and anchored into its setting by maturing woodlands and thick hedgerows. © Luke Maggs



Blaengwynfi, with traditional hillside terraces and new forestry on mountain sides. © Luke Maggs



Urban terraced settlement along valleys and valley sides, with many houses having been individually modified with render, new windows or roofs, extensions and colour. © LUC



Ebbw Vale from the western side of the valley. Contrast of urban, ex-industrial valleys undergoing transition, with the enduring open moors on the adjacent hills. © LUC



From Mynydd Machen, looking towards a prominent hilltop spoil tip. Most spoil tips have been removed, regraded or planted over with trees. © LUC



Heavy industries that once dominated the South Wales Valleys are largely gone, however their iconic remains are now the cultural heritage that informs today's character. Here we see the remains of Ynyscedwyn Ironworks at Ystradgynlais. © Luke Maggs



Pen Pych table top. There may be industrial remains and urban settlement about, but the dramatic topography, open moors and steep wooded valley sides provide many of the kinds of appealing scenic qualities that are more widely known in upland landscapes elsewhere in Wales. © Luke Maggs



Gelli Gaer Common, one of the long, open roads that run along the gentler plateau tops of the area west of the Neath Valley. © Richard Kelly



Terraced houses and old spoil heaps amidst the upland landscape: the traditional image as now preserved at Blaenavon (World Heritage Site). © John Briggs



From near the adjacent Brecon Beacons, looking down one of the upland plateaux that separate the industrialised valleys. Nantyglo is in the valley to the left, Ebbw Vale is in the valley to the right. © John Briggs



Brynmawr, one of the 'heads of the Valleys' settlements, with much C20th housing estate expansion. © John Briggs

## Geological Landscape influences

The South Wales Valleys incorporates a large part of the southern-most uplands in Wales and is framed by the Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains to the north and the lowland vale landscapes to the south, east and west. The deeply incised valleys are a distinctive feature of the landscape. In the eastern sector the area is drained by a series of south and south-eastward flowing rivers including the Ebbw, Sirhowy, Rhymney and Taff, whilst the central region about the Rhondda is drained by the Rhondda Fawr and Rhondda Fach which are confluent with the Taff at Pontypridd. In contrast, drainage in the west is dominated by south-westward flowing rivers, including the Tawe, Neath and Afan. Ground elevations in the upland areas are highly variable, but in the north-east reach up to 581m on Coity Mountain and 574m on Cefn Coch. Farther west the ground reaches a maximum altitude of 600m on Garn Fach and 568m on Werfa at the head of the Ogmore Valley.

The bedrock geology is dominated by a thick sequence of Carboniferous sedimentary rocks. They are preserved in and around the South Wales Coalfield Basin, a structurally complex, WNW-trending trough-shaped structure that extends westwards into Pembrokeshire. The Lower Carboniferous sequence is dominated by a variety of marine,

limestone-dominated formations, together with some mudstones and ironstones, which form a narrow belt around the basin between Thornhill, Rudry, Risca and Pontypool, and north of Merthyr Tydfil, where the strata dip gently towards the south. There is a succeeding Upper Carboniferous sequence including sandstones, and marine mudstones and a succeeding 'Westphalian' sequence dominated by sandstones including the Pennant sandstones. The lower part of the succession forms the South Wales Coal Measures Group, and is dominated by mudstones, siltstones and coals arranged in repeating units.

The gently southward-dipping Pennant sandstones form an erosion-resistant cap to the upland plateaux of the South Wales Valleys, as well as a spectacular escarpment along their northern limit. Within the syncline are numerous minor folds, including the Pontypridd and Maesteg anticlines. Two of the most distinctive structures of the coalfield are the Neath and Swansea Valley disturbances which comprise NE-striking zones of folded and faulted strata that trend into the area from Devonian outcrops to the north and east. Both structures have a strong topographical expression, controlling the course of both the Neath and Swansea valleys, and are believed to root into major fractures in the underlying basement. The coalfield is also transected by a dense network of steep, dominantly NNW-striking cross-faults that frequently caused major problems during the extraction of coal. Some of these faults have a strong topographical influence as, for example, in the case of the Merthyr Church Fault, which controls the orientation of the Afon Taf Fawr in the vicinity of Merthyr Tydfil.

The area has been shaped by glaciation, where ice that accumulated in the Brecon Beacons and adjacent high ground spread southwards through the Pennant Sandstone escarpment and entered the coalfield, where glaciers incised deep U-shaped valleys. This southward advance was locally impeded by topography. For example, when the ice-sheet met the escarpment at Craig-y-Llyn (SN 910 039) it broke into two major lobes, one advancing south into the coalfield through the Cynon and Taff valleys, and the other west-south-west down the Neath Valley. Recessional halt moraines were formed on the valley floors as the ice melted. For example, in the Neath Valley at Tonnau and Cline, an impounded glacial lake stretched up the valley to Cwmgwrach. Throughout the area the principal glacial deposit is till (boulder clay) and most till occurs in the northern parts of the valleys, where it can reach a thickness of up to 30m. It passes down valley into outwash sands and gravels, which formed through the action of melt waters and created important landscape components of some valleys. A good example of a kame terrace is developed in the Afon Valley at Pontrhydyfen. Between about 13,000 and 11,500 years ago, small glaciers re-occupied the upland cirques along the north-facing Pennant Sandstone escarpment. These glaciers formed concentric ridges of moraine, often backed by marshy hollows and small lakes, as in the case of Llyn Fawr and Llyn Fach beneath Craig y Llyn.

Glacial deposits left on the valley floors have been progressively re-worked and re-deposited as alluvial silts and sands. River terraces occur intermittently, for example along the Taf Fawr, Mellte, Neath and Tawe, whilst alluvial fans have formed where steeply graded tributaries enter the more gently graded main valleys. Landslips form an important component of the landscape throughout the coalfield and occur on the glacially over-steepened flanks of the valleys where thick Pennant sandstones overlie weak and impermeable mudstones and rock masses were subject to failure and collapse. Whilst most mass movement took place during deglaciation, when the support of glacier ice was removed, some major landslips are recent, for example that at Bournville (SO 207 068) was initiated in 1893 and at East Pentwyn (SO 206 075) in 1954.

## Landscape Habitats influences

The Valleys are characterised by upland areas incised by a number of valleys, with contrasting habitat to match. The bedrock geology has given rise to a variety of soil types. Basinal and blanket peats developed throughout the South Wales Valleys and provide an important record of post-glacial vegetation and climatic conditions. Loamy soils with a wet peaty surface characterise the sandstone uplands; well drained loamy soils are found on valley sides; while coarse loams subject to seasonal waterlogging are located on lower slopes and on valley floors.

Each valley has both unique and common features, such as broadly southerly flowing rivers fed by a myriad of smaller, faster flowing tributaries from the surrounding uplands. On the lower slopes of the valleys livestock-grazed, improved grassland bounded by hawthorn rich hedgerows is prevalent, together with linear stands of deciduous woodland – some of considerable ecological value, for example, Cwm Du Woods in the Llynfi Valley and Merddog Woods in the Ebbw Valley, which are SSSIs.

Further up the valley slopes, “fridd” habitat occurs, in which there is a distinctive mosaic of rough grazed fields, bracken, rhos pasture, scattered scrub and small pockets of woodland characterising the transition between the lower slopes and upland areas and important for a considerable number of species. At the tops of the valley slopes there is a gradation to more upland habitats, such as moorland with acid grassland and heath. There is also some contrast along the length of the valleys with their more southerly ends being more lowland in character and the heads of the valleys to the north displaying glacial features such as cirques (cymoedd) and crags, which support valuable communities. Particularly important examples are found in the Rhondda, for example, the rare arctic-alpine habitats at Craig-y-Llyn SSSI.

In between the valleys, areas of extensive plateaux are dominated by moorland vegetation of heather, blanket bog and acidic grassland formed on the wet peaty surface that overlies the generally loamy soils in the area. These moorland areas are largely grassy in nature and are generally grazed by sheep. Large areas of heath-dominated moorland are relatively scarce, but one such area of particular ecological value is The Bloreng, a mountain near Blaenafon.

Also present within the open moorland and hillsides are considerable blocks of coniferous plantation, particularly noticeable and extensive in the uplands to the north of Bridgend and Port Talbot, often of lower ecological importance and much has been planted in the C20th, some over reclaimed industrial workings.

Along the southern edge of the area, the land is lower lying with less steep and deep valleys, with the areas between the valleys being largely dominated by improved grassland. Deciduous woodland areas scattered throughout the area provide some ecological interest, as do the hedgerows that bound the fields. The two most notable woodland areas are associated with the more lowland valley slopes, being the oak woodlands at Park Mill and the beech woodlands just north of Cardiff, both of which are SAC and SSSIs. Some areas of semi-improved and marshy grassland are also present between the valleys, some of which are of considerable ecological value, most notably Llantrisant Common and Aberbargoed Grasslands

## Historic Landscape influences

The Valleys reflect their coal mining and iron extraction and smelting heritage. The iron industry provided the spur for the rapid industrialisation of the whole area from c.1800. The foundation for all of this is the particular geology and land-form that provided all the materials needed for iron making in relatively accessible form. The linked exploitation of these materials and the transport systems leading to and from major works structures shaped the industrial landscape.

Long rows of former 19th century miners' terraces of stone, brick and coloured render are particularly distinctive, extending in some areas up very steep slopes and seen against a backdrop of bracken or conifers higher up the valley sides. Although the terraced house is identified as the most distinctive ingredient of settlement, in practice there is considerable variety in settlement type, including informal 'squatter' developments, planned company settlements, expanded early nuclei (Pontypool) and the developed industrial town built by many agencies but acquiring a coherent social landscape nonetheless (Blaenavon). Settlements developed either directly associated with particular industrial enterprises, or as service towns for a wider hinterland (Pontypridd). These varied histories contribute to considerable variety in present character both between and within valleys.

An often overlooked feature of the enormous manpower and economic energy of 200 years of toil are the canals dug to carry iron ore and coal from inland workings. The most prominent in terms of survival and landscape influence in this area are the Glamorgan from Merthyr to Cardiff, the Neath and Tennant Canals and that in the Swansea Valley.

Blaenavon is designated as a World Heritage Site as being one of the best surviving examples in the region of a valley head industrial community, with features from the C18th iron industry as well as the extensive coal mining activity that took place in the 19th century.

The upland plateaux are largely free from modern development aside from minor roads which cross the open commons. As a result, archaeological evidence of ancient human occupation and activity is often well preserved. Notable examples are Gelli-gaer Common near Ystrad Mynach, and Margam Mountain. The former area contains a rich diversity of archaeological sites, including Bronze Age burial and ritual monuments, a Roman road and military installations, and Capel Gwladys – an early church site. Later features include Mediaeval deserted settlements, an earthwork castle (Twyn Castle), field systems and platform houses. Margam Mountain stands above the east-west Roman road, and is distinguished by not only possessing extensive prehistoric and Mediaeval archaeological remains over a very large area of high hillside and moorland, but also as having been grazing land for the livestock of Margam Abbey.

## Cultural Landscape influences

The Valleys, are internationally recognised for the rich industrial heritage of the C19th. Massive development followed the discovery of steam coal in 1855. This stimulated a so-called 'coal rush' which, for example, turned the Rhondda into the most productive coal mining area in Britain. The population exploded from a sparse agrarian society into a teeming mass of immigrant workers from rural areas, from Ireland, West Wales, Somerset, Gwynedd and the Midlands. From under 1000 in 1851, the population rose to nearly

163,000 by 1921, occupying an almost continuous conurbation for miles – albeit with jealously guarded identities in individually named settlements.

Elsewhere, every valley from the eastern Lwyd and Ebbw Vale to the far west Gwendraeth there sprang up the characteristic images of rows of terraced company houses. The iconic headframes and coal mine winding gear, public buildings, chapels and Working Men's Institutes and other infrastructure, all squeezed into the previously rural landscape of the valleys to house the massive in-migration of workers. This continued through the C20th with extensive post-war council housing estates, and latterly private estates. The Valleys and their Working Men's Institutes produced many radical, self-educated politicians, for example Aneurin Bevan, visionary founder of the National Health Service, and Neil Kinnock of Islwyn. Their radicalism was largely founded on the appalling conditions they had to work and live in.

But the industrial decline of the 1980s, the loss of 'macho' employment, and the psychological devastation of the failure of the year-long Miners' Strike in 1984 have, for many, led to cultural changes that previously would have been hard to imagine by their once-proud communities. The Strike was followed by wholesale unemployment, and although regenerative efforts continue to abound, not all are successful, and not all touch all the people. The iconic coal tips have been systematically flattened following the tragedy of Aberfan, and the once ever-present pithead winding gears have mostly gone. Those that survive best tend to form features of tourist sites, notably with Blaenavon regenerating itself as a World Heritage Site. Despite efforts to find new uses for old buildings, some of which are architecturally magnificent, the majority continue to decay. The same applies to the proliferation of multi-denominational chapels, and the Institutes, originally the social and educational as well as spiritual heart of Valleys communities.

Regeneration and more recent estates, along with new small and large-scale commercial and industrial development tend to be linked to the modern road network. Although there is still an extensive passenger railway branch line network, with plans to improve, regeneration tends to be based around car use and opportunities for much longer distance travel than traditionally. The employment opportunities elsewhere, notably in Cardiff, result in crowded trains and commuting residents clogging up M4 interchanges twice each day.

In recent years, telecommunication masts, pylons and wind turbines have appeared across the plateaux in an upland landscape otherwise devoid of development. A remarkable feature in what are recognized as deprived communities, is the incidence of satellite dishes on the roof tops and gable ends of individual dwellings in workers' terraced housing. A prominent but temporary regeneration event was the Ebbw Vale National Garden Festival in 1992, one of a series across Britain. The site has now become a popular retail centre and in recent times. The derelict Ebbw Vale Steelworks was demolished in late 2005 for the development of socially and economically mixed housing and infrastructure. The Cynon Valley is notable for the plan to create a long, linear riverside park, while much of the historic heart of Merthyr Tydfil has been lost to residential estates of non-vernacular design and materials. Similarly, vacant lots in the linear conurbations of the Ogwr and Rhondda valleys have now been transformed into low-cost housing estates for those who descend the valley roads to the ribbon-development of business and light industrial parks situated close to junctions on the M4. In the mid-west, the dead-end, and once economically and administratively important, valley of Glyncoed is enjoying an economic renaissance as a leisure destination for mountain biking and fishing, with a newly built visitor centre and 'extreme' trails.

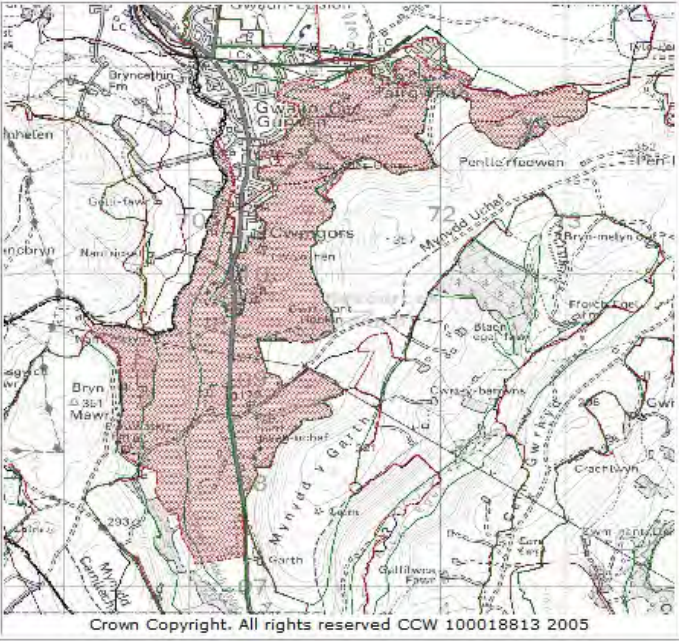
The linking of these new ventures with the rich synthesis of history and culture that permeates the area's landscapes and the promotion of much that remains untouched and attractive, is an important aspect in the regeneration this large and remarkable area.



Blaenavon, traditional terraces. © John Briggs

Visual and Sensory

|                             |                                                                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aspect Area Name            | Cwm Gors                                                             |
| Aspect Area Classification  | Upland/Upland Valleys/Open/Wooded Mosaic<br>Upland Valleys (Level 3) |
| Aspect Area Code            | NPTVS575                                                             |
| Date Of Survey : 29/10/2003 |                                                                      |



Description

|                                                  |                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Physical Form And Elements: Topographic Form?    | Hills/Valleys                                                                                                                             |
| Physical Form And Elements: Landcover Pattern?   | Mixture                                                                                                                                   |
| Aesthetic Qualities: Scale?                      | Small                                                                                                                                     |
| Aesthetic Qualities: Sense of Enclosure?         | Enclosed                                                                                                                                  |
| Aesthetic Qualities: Diversity?                  | Diverse                                                                                                                                   |
| Aesthetic Qualities: Texture?                    | Medium                                                                                                                                    |
| Aesthetic Qualities: Lines?                      | Angular                                                                                                                                   |
| Aesthetic Qualities: Colour?                     | Muted                                                                                                                                     |
| Aesthetic Qualities: Balance?                    | Discordant                                                                                                                                |
| Aesthetic Qualities: Unity?                      | Neutral                                                                                                                                   |
| Aesthetic Qualities: Pattern?                    | Organised                                                                                                                                 |
| Aesthetic Qualities: Seasonal Interest?          | None                                                                                                                                      |
| Other Factors: Level of Human Access?            | Frequent                                                                                                                                  |
| Other Factors: Night Time Light Pollution?       | Moderate                                                                                                                                  |
| Other Factors: Use of Construction Materials?    | Generally Inappropriate                                                                                                                   |
| What materials? Give Details:                    | fencing and elements around land fill and commercial developments                                                                         |
| There are attractive views...                    | ....out (to surrounding valley sides and upland)                                                                                          |
| There are detractive views...                    | ...into (disturbed land and commercial units)                                                                                             |
| Perceptual and Other Sensory Qualities           | Sheltered                                                                                                                                 |
| What is the sense of place/local distinctiveness | Weak (Enclosed upland, pastoral valley, significantly wooded, which has been degraded by significant disturbance along the valley floor.) |

Evaluation

|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Value:     | Moderate (The scenic quality of this enclosed valley is significantly reduced by areas of disturbance, reducing the integrity of the area, yet much of the disturbance is screened from view. From the road the character is of a heavily treed upland valley but many of the fields are in poor condition..) |
| Condition: | Fair (extensive areas of disturbance and significant encroachment of scrub)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Trend:     | Improving (evidence of management)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

Recommendations

|                                                    |                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Define the key qualities that should be conserved: | enclosure                                                |
| Define the key qualities that should be enhanced:  | settled character                                        |
| Define the key qualities that should be changed:   | na                                                       |
| Define the key elements that should be conserved:  | riparian vegetation                                      |
| Define the key elements that should be enhanced:   | field boundaries                                         |
| Define the key elements that should be changed:    | landfill, bracken and scrub                              |
| Principal management recommendation:               | maintain upland grazing and prevent bracken encroachment |

Tolerance To Change

|                                                                                                                        |           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Are there any significant threats to the current integrity and condition of the visual & sensory features of the area? | Not known |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|

Aspect Area Boundary

|                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| To what level was this information site-surveyed?                           | Level 3                                                                                                                                          |
| At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?               | Most                                                                                                                                             |
| What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping? | OS Raster                                                                                                                                        |
| If OS Data was used, what was the scale?                                    | 1:10,000 and 1:25,000                                                                                                                            |
| What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?                   | To east edge of common land ; north built form of settlements; west county boundary and open common land; south edge of landfill/disturbed land. |

Bibliography

|                                               |  |
|-----------------------------------------------|--|
| List the key sources used for this assessment |  |
| Assessment                                    |  |
| Additional Assessments                        |  |
| Additional Comments                           |  |

|                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evaluation Matrix                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation                                 | Moderate (predominantly moderate evaluations throughout)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Justification of overall evaluation                                     | The scenic quality of this enclosed valley is significantly reduced by areas of disturbance, reducing the integrity of the area, yet much of the disturbance is screened from view. From the road the character is of a heavily treed upland valley but many of the fields are in poor condition..                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Evaluation Criteria: Scenic quality                                     | Moderate (significant landscape features create an at times pleasing pattern)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Evaluation Criteria: Integrity                                          | Low (visually intrusive development and land use)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Evaluation Criteria: Character                                          | Moderate (strong sense of place common to much of th area)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Evaluation Criteria: Rarity                                             | Moderate (infrequent withinthe borough)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Description                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Summary Description                                                     | Upland valley ranging from approx 250m AOD above Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen down to approx 100m AOD on the valley floor. The valley is predominantly grazed, much with apparently minimal management input, with dense riparian vegetation along valley floor and deciduous woodland on lower reaches of valley. There are extensive areas of disturbance on the valley floor - old workings, landfill and commercial developments. The scattering of settlements are primarily located along the A474 which runs through the length of the area - a number of secondary roads branch out from here. Views are generally contained within the valley, by both the topography and tree cover, the latter of which screens developments. There is significant encroachment of scrub on unmanaged valley floor and coarse grasses on grazed land. |
| Physical form and elements: Settlement pattern                          | Scattered Rural/Farm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Physical form and elements: Boundary type                               | Hedge With Trees                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Recommendations                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Guideline                                                               | Immediate (clear scrub)<br>Medium Term (screen commercial development and works better integrate into landscape)<br>Medium Term (maintain grazing regime)<br>Immediate (enhance field pattern by laying and planting gaps)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Existing management                                                     | Generally Appropriate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Existing management remarks:                                            | upland grazing plus reclamation of landfill site                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Monitoring                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Has the information ever been verified in the field?                    | Yes (1:10000)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area? | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Date of monitoring?                                                     | 2015-02-06                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Monitoring undertaken by                                                | Stages 1, 2 and 3 change detection, field verification and amendment completed by Bronwen Thomas, in conjunction with the planning authority.Quality Assurance completed by White Consultants.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Has this record been updated following monitoring work?                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## Landscape Habitats

### Aspect Area Name

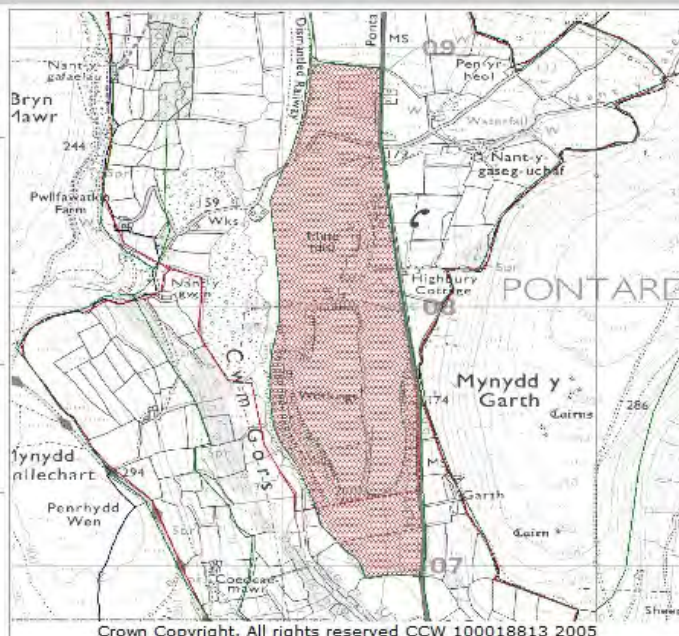
### Aspect Area Classification

Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats/Grassland & Marsh/Mosaic (Level 3)

### Aspect Area Code

NPTLH007

Date Of Survey : 26/02/2004



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## Monitoring

Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area?

No

What is the total land area within the boundary (in hectares)?

## Description

What are the dominant soil types? (specify up to 3 types)

Surface-water gley soils

What Phase 1 habitat types are present? Only select the five most dominant types and, for each of these, specify below what percentage of the Aspect Area is made up of these.

Planted Broadleaved Woodland  
Semi-improved Acid Grassland  
Improved Grassland  
Buildings

Does the area contain habitats of international importance?

No

Does the area contain BAP habitats?

No

Does the area contain protected sites?

Yes (Local Wildlife Site(11.96ha))

If yes, which ones?

Local wildlife site

Approximately what proportion of the Aspect Area is within the protected site?

11-20% (16.74%)

Does the area support important species?

Not known

Are there any significant threat species present in abundance? (Field visit required)

Not known

Are any of these features in a very good condition? (Field visit required)

Are any of these features in a poor condition? (Field visit required)

What are the main land management activities taking place in the area? (Field visit required)

Other (industrial activities; mining in past)

Do any of the above appear to have an appreciable positive impact on biodiversity? (Field visit required)

None

Do any of the above appear to have an appreciable negative impact on biodiversity? (Field visit required)

Some (area is very disturbed and degraded)

Is the biodiversity in the area in any way threatened?

Not known

Are there clear opportunities to improve the biodiversity aspect of this area?

Summarise the key features that define this area's biodiversity character

A level area dominated by grassland habitats, interspersed by scrub and corridors from deciduous trees.

## Evaluation

Value

Low (highly modified and disturbed area)

Condition

Poor (likely to be poor; industrial area)

Trend

Constant (low level of interest, unlikely to be changing significantly)

## Recommendations

Existing management

Generally Inappropriate

Principal management recommendations

look at possibilities for improvement and restoration

Guideline

## Monitoring

Has the information ever been verified in the field?

No

## Aspect Area Boundary

To what level was this information site-surveyed?

Level 3

At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?

Most

What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping?

OS Landline

If OS Data was used, what was the scale?

1:10,000 and 1:25,000

What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?

Plane land between a river corridor and Mynydd y Garth. The boundaries are formed by woodland associated with the river corridor and the A474 separating the plane area from the western slopes of Mynydd y Garth.

## Bibliography

List the key sources used for this assessment

Phase 1 survey; Nigel Ajax-Lewis pers comm Wildlife Site/SINC data used within this project were collated by Local Environmental Records Centres Wales on behalf of the various Local Authorities and Wildlife Trusts involved in the site designation process.

Assessment

Additional Assessments

Additional Comments

Evaluation Matrix

|                                                             |                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evaluation Criteria: Priority Habitats                      | Low (no BAP habitats; mostly modified and disturbed)                                |
| Evaluation Criteria: Significance                           | Low (local)                                                                         |
| Evaluation Criteria: Opportunity                            | Moderate (may be opportunities for restoration and enhancement in the future)       |
| Evaluation Criteria: Expansion rates                        | Low (unlikely to be declining further)                                              |
| Evaluation Criteria: Sensitivity                            | Low (area of low interest; no known wildlife features of significance under threat) |
| Evaluation Criteria: Connectivity/Cohesion                  | Low (area of low interest; no known wildlife features of significance to fragment)  |
| Evaluation Criteria: Habitat Evaluation                     | Low (industrial area; highly modified and disturbed)                                |
| Evaluation Criteria: Importance for key species             | Low (no known species of interest; occurrence unlikely)                             |
| Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation Habitat and Species | Low (low level of significance and value)                                           |

Description

If yes, which species? (for each of the species, also note the source of information)

Evaluation Matrix

|                                     |                                                           |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Justification of overall evaluation | industrial area of high disturbance and degraded habitats |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|

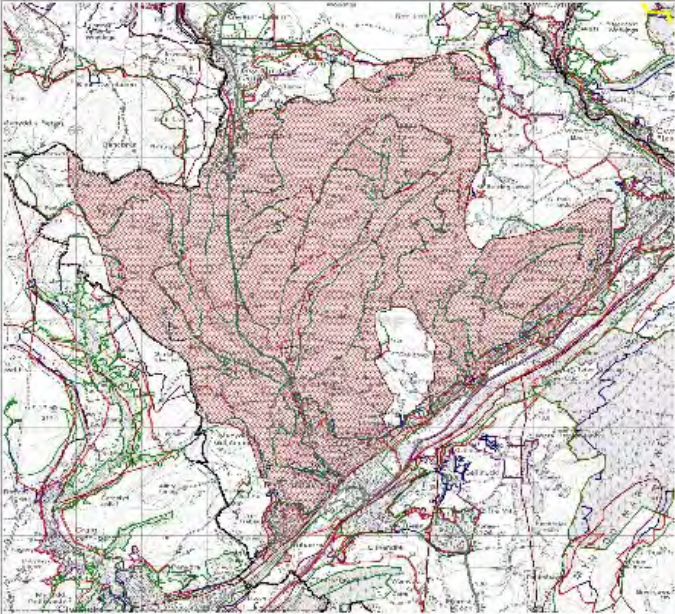
Recommendations

|                              |                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Existing management remarks: | area under industrial uses; few opportunities for wildlife; existing habitats degraded and disturbed |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Monitoring

|                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Date of monitoring?                                     | 2016-03-10                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Monitoring undertaken by                                | Stages 1, 2 and 3 change detection, field verification and amendment completed by Environment Systems in conjunction with the local planning authority. Quality Assurance completed by TACP |
| Has this record been updated following monitoring work? | This record has been updated following monitoring work as more up to date information is available                                                                                          |
| Change indicated by                                     | OS Data, Aerial Photographs                                                                                                                                                                 |
| What has changed?                                       | Phase 1 Habitat Survey & Seasonal Change Maps                                                                                                                                               |

## Geological Landscape

|                                   |                                                                                                     |                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Aspect Area Name</b>           | Upper Clydach valley                                                                                |  |
| <b>Aspect Area Classification</b> | Mountain and upland valley/Undulating upland terrain and dissected plateau/Upland plateau (Level 3) |                                                                                   |
| <b>Aspect Area Code</b>           | NPTGL010                                                                                            |                                                                                   |
| <b>Date Of Survey</b>             | 28/01/2004                                                                                          |                                                                                   |

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## Description

|                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>What is the geographical and topographical character of this area?</b>                                           | Upland plateau in S-dipping sandstone dominated South Wales Pennant Formation (Lower Pennant Measures) and underlying mudstone dominated Productive Coal Formation dissected by S draining Upper Clydach and tributary Egel valley and Cwm Du valley. Steep valley slopes covered with boulder clay in lower parts. Valley floors broad, with alluvium in channels. N-S and NNW-SSE faults; Cwm Du valley partly fault controlled. Mines in Clydach valley (Cwm Gors) and Cwm Du valley. Landslips below sandstones on valley slopes; large landslips at Pant y ffynnon, Pantteg, and Craig Trebanos in Tawe valley. |
| <b>What is the characteristic Level 3 component of the area?</b>                                                    | Upland plateau                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Which of the following is a significant contributor to the geological character of the area?</b>                 | Stratigraphic formation(s) (Westphalian Productive Coal Formation - South Wales Pennant Formation - Brithdir Beds.)<br>Superficial deposits (Boulder clay, alluvium, head, peat, terrace gravels)<br>Structural features (N-S - NNW-SSE faults)<br>Active processes (Fluvial)<br>Past processes (Glacial, periglacial, mass movement)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>What additional subsidiary Level 3 components are notable?</b>                                                   | Glacial mountain valley<br>Mass movement<br>Mineral workings<br>Other (Tectonically controlled topography)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>What Level 4 components are notable in this area?</b>                                                            | Landslip (ancient)<br>Opencast mine, gravel or sand pit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>What active geological and geomorphological processes are significant in this area?</b>                          | Fluvial                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Are there components of significant hydrological importance?</b>                                                 | Yes (Clydach, Cwm Du)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Are there any pedological processes that are significant in the area or have had a landscape forming effect?</b> | Yes (Low to high permeability soils)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Is there current mineral extraction?</b>                                                                         | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Has there been mineral extraction in the past?</b>                                                               | Yes (Coal mines)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Are there SSSI/GCR sites here?</b>                                                                               | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Are there geological SINC, 2nd tier, or RIGS sites in the area?</b>                                              | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

## Evaluation

|                  |                                                                                                                      |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Value</b>     | High (Productive Coal Fm - South Wales Pennant Fm succession with large landslips at base of sandstones; coal mines) |
| <b>Condition</b> | Good                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Trend</b>     | Constant                                                                                                             |

## Recommendations

|                                             |                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Existing management</b>                  | Generally Appropriate                                    |
| <b>Principal management recommendations</b> | Conserve as existing                                     |
| <b>Guideline</b>                            | Long Term (Conserve large periglacial landslip settings) |

## Tolerance To Change

|                                                                                                                             |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Are there any significant threats to the current integrity and condition of the Earth Heritage features of the area?</b> | Not known |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|

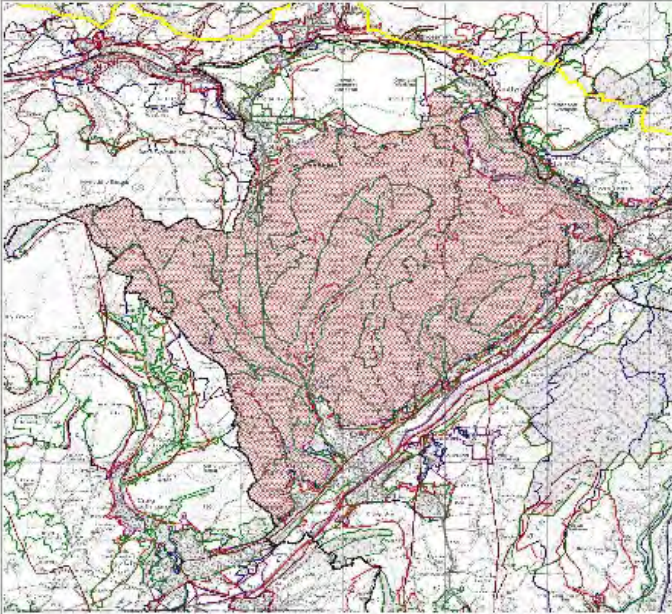
## Aspect Area Boundary

|                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>To what level was this information site-surveyed?</b>                           | Level 3                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?</b>               | None                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping?</b> | Other (1:25 000 OS Explorer Map Sheets; 1:50 000 BGS Geological Map Sheets; Digital Terrain Model compiled from OS panorama digital terrain data (50m resolution)) |
| <b>If OS Data was used, what was the scale?</b>                                    | 1:25,000                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?</b>                   | NNW-SSE fault to W, Tawe to S, Upper Cwmgorse marine band to N (Near top of mudstones dominated Coal Measures Group)                                               |

## Evaluation Matrix

|                                                 |                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Evaluation Criteria: Research Value</b>      | High (Large landslips at base of sandstone succession)                                                               |
| <b>Evaluation Criteria: Educational Value</b>   | High                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Evaluation Criteria: Historical Value</b>    | Moderate                                                                                                             |
| <b>Evaluation Criteria: Rarity / Uniqueness</b> | Moderate                                                                                                             |
| <b>Evaluation Criteria: Classic Example</b>     | High                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation</b>  | High (Productive Coal Fm - South Wales Pennant Fm succession with large landslips at base of sandstones; coal mines) |
| <b>Justification of overall evaluation</b>      | Productive Coal Fm - South Wales Pennant Fm succession with large landslips at base of sandstones; coal              |

|                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bibliography                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| List the key sources used for this assessment                           | 1:50 000 BGS Geological Map Sheet E230 Ammanford (S&D) 1977; Digital Terrain Model compiled from OS panorama digital terrain data (50m resolution);1:625 000 Geological Map of the UK: Quaternary Geology, S sheet, 1977; 1:100 000 Groundwater Vulnerability Map, Environment Agency, Sheet 35 West Glamorgan, 1990; Archer, A.A. 1968. Geology of the South Wales coalfield. The upper Carboniferous and later formations of the Gwendraeth Valley and adjoining areas British Geological Survey, Special Memoir for sheet E229 & pts E230, E246, HMSO [for the] Institute of Geological Sciences, London. 216pp.; Conway, B.W., Forster, A., Northmore, K.J. and Barclay, W.J., 1980. South Wales Coalfield Landslip Survey. Report of Engineering Dept of Institute of Geological Sciences, No. EG80/4; Conway, B.W. 1985 South Wales coalfield landslip survey. British Geological Survey.; Strahan, A., et al. 1907. The geology of the South Wales coalfield. Part 7, The country around Ammanford. Memoir of the British Geological Survey, Sheet 230, London, HMSO; 1:25 000 Explorer Map Sheet 164 Gower, 2001; 1:25 000 Explorer Map Sheet 165 Swansea, Neath & Port Talbot, 1998; Siddle, H.J., Bromhead, E.N. and Bassett, M.G., eds, 2000. Landslides and landslide management in South Wales. National Museums and Galleries of Wales, Cardiff, Geological Series 18, 116pp |
| Assessment                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Additional Assessments                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Additional Comments                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Monitoring                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Has the information ever been verified in the field?                    | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area? | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Description                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| If Classification is "Other", specify here                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Recommendations                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Existing management remarks:                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

| Cultural Landscape                                                                                                                               |                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aspect Area Name                                                                                                                                 | Western High Ridge: Mynydd y Garth, Cefn                          |
| Aspect Area Classification                                                                                                                       | Associations/Notional Expressions/Places/Sense of Place (Level 4) |
| Aspect Area Code                                                                                                                                 | NPTCL044                                                          |
| Date Of Survey : 06/12/2003                                                                                                                      |                                                                   |
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## Monitoring

|                                                                         |                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Has the information ever been verified in the field?                    | Yes (1:10000)                                                                                                                               |
| Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area? | Yes (NPTCL039, NPTCL042; NPTCL043 - High relict moorland between Swansea Valley communities and those on the northern rim of the coalfield) |

## Description

|                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The classification at level 3 describes the dominant cultural context, but which other contexts are important to the cultural landscape of this area? | Rural Places                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Which level 4 classes are particularly significant to the cultural landscape character of this area - Influences?                                     | Agricultural<br>Forestry<br>Rural Settlement<br>Tourism                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| To what extent do the context and level 4 details selected contribute to the cultural identity, local distinctiveness or sense of place of the area?  | Strong (the Level 4 attributes combine to give this high moorland a special identity as a relict agricultural and socially important landscape)                                                                                                              |
| To what extent is the cultural information widely recognised or appreciated?                                                                          | Locally (Confined almost exclusively to local people)                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Are there any artistic expressions that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?                                                   | Not known                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Are there any people / movements / institutions that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?                                      | Not known                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Is there any folklore or are there legends that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?                                           | Yes (Gwrhyd Road - variously translated from Welsh as "battle", "miracle" or "valour" - has a local dialect meaning of "The Long Man", possibly a reference to a prehistoric burial site)                                                                    |
| Are there any events/traditions that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?                                                      | Not known                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Are there any technical / scientific discoveries that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?                                     | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| What are the attributes of the cultural elements in the Aspect Area?                                                                                  | Mixed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| What chronological periods are culturally dominant in the area?                                                                                       | Post 1950<br>Inter War<br>Victorian & Edwardian<br>Pre-Roman                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Are there certain place-names in the area that are particularly significant?                                                                          | Yes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Summary Description: (no more than 150 words)                                                                                                         | The landscape bears evidence of evolution over millennia; prehistoric cairns, ancient field systems, trackways, humps and bumps of industrial spoil heaps, afforestation in pockets combining to evoke a timeless quality of great scenic and cultural value |

## Tolerance To Change

|                                                                                                                          |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Are there any significant threats to the current integrity and condition of the Cultural Landscape features of the area? | Not known |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|

## Description

|                                                                 |                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| If yes, give examples of the place-names and their significance | Gwrhyd road and ridge = battle or valour or miracle (origin unknown), or - in the local dialect, "The Long Man" |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Aspect Area Boundary

|                                                                             |                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| To what level was this information site-surveyed?                           | Level 4                                   |
| At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?               | Most                                      |
| What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping? | OS Landline                               |
| If OS Data was used, what was the scale?                                    | 1:10,000                                  |
| What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?                   | Boundaries fixed by adjacent Aspect Areas |

## Bibliography

|                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| List the key sources used for this assessment | Welsh Place Names and Their Meanings, by Dewi Davies; printed by Cambrian Printers, Aberystwyth; Cefn Gwrhyd SSSI designation, Countryside Council for Wales, 1983; Y Geiriadur Mawr/The Complete Welsh-English/English-Welsh Dictionary; Christopher Davies/A Gwasg Gomer, 1958, revised 1989 |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Assessment

|                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| Additional Assessments | none |
| Additional Comments    | none |

## Evaluation Matrix

|                                               |                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation       | High                                                                                                                                       |
| Justification of overall evaluation           | High for the beauty of the surrounding moors and valleys and for the extensive SSSI of the Gwrhyd Meadows                                  |
| Evaluation Criteria: Recognition/transparency | Local recognition (Not widely known or appreciated)                                                                                        |
| Evaluation Criteria: Period                   | Very apparent (High because of multi-period evidence)                                                                                      |
| Evaluation Criteria: Rarity (Culture)         | Representative (There are many similar landscapes in the Unitary Authority area)                                                           |
| Evaluation Criteria: Documentation            | Unassessed                                                                                                                                 |
| Evaluation Criteria: Group Value              | Considerable (High if combined with NPTCL045, NPTCL046 similar upland landscapes, even though their cultural attributes may be dissimilar) |
| Evaluation Criteria: Survival                 | N/A (High because of lack of exploitation of the landscape)                                                                                |
| Evaluation Criteria: Vulnerability            | Unassessed                                                                                                                                 |
| Evaluation Criteria: Diversity                | Complex (High diversity of evidence of human occupation)                                                                                   |
| Evaluation Criteria: Potential (Culture)      | Unrecognised (Limited to promotion of leisure access)                                                                                      |

Description

|                                                                                                                     |                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Which level 4 classes are particularly significant to the cultural landscape character of this area - Associations? | Sense of Place<br>Leisure/Recreation<br>Language<br>Places & Place Names |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Evaluation

|            |                                                                             |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Condition: | Fair (Largely given over to sheep grazing, and therefore in fair condition) |
| Value:     | High                                                                        |
| Trend:     | Unassessed                                                                  |

Recommendations

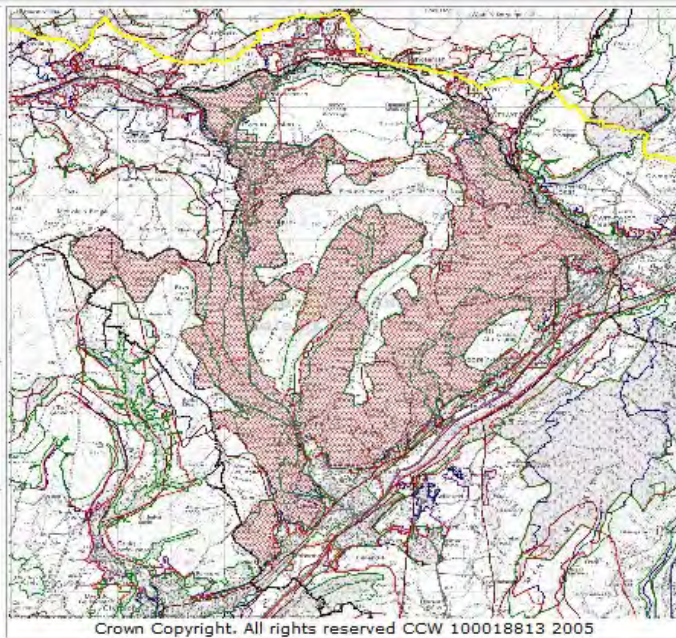
|                                      |                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Existing management:                 | Generally Appropriate                                                                                                                                                     |
| Existing management remarks:         | The apparent policy of non-intervention is notable                                                                                                                        |
| Principal management recommendations | Preserve the essence of the landscape                                                                                                                                     |
| Guideline                            | Long Term (Prevent development other than small-scale near to existing settlements/farms)<br>Long Term (Promote as a low key leisure destination, especially for walkers) |

Description

If Classification is "Other", specify here

## Historic Landscape

|                             |                                                            |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aspect Area Name            | Clydach Cwm Du                                             |
| Aspect Area Classification  | Rural environment/Agricultural/Other fieldscapes (Level 3) |
| Aspect Area Code            | NPTHL041                                                   |
| Date Of Survey : 29/01/2004 |                                                            |



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## Description

|                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| If working at level 3, the classification describes the dominant historic pattern, but which other patterns are important to the historical pattern of this area? (Tick all that apply) | <input type="checkbox"/> Irregular Fieldscapes<br><input type="checkbox"/> Regular Fieldscapes<br><input type="checkbox"/> Horticulture<br><input type="checkbox"/> Woodland<br><input type="checkbox"/> Water & Wetland<br><input type="checkbox"/> Nucleated Settlement<br><input type="checkbox"/> Extractive<br><input type="checkbox"/> Processing/Manufacturing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Communications |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Monitoring

|                                                                         |                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Has the information ever been verified in the field?                    | Yes (Level 3/1:10,000 and 1:25,000) |
| Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area? | No                                  |

## Description

|                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Which traditional boundary types prevail in the area? (Tick all that apply)                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Hedgerow<br><input type="checkbox"/> Hedgerow With Trees<br><input type="checkbox"/> Dry Stone Walls<br><input type="checkbox"/> Mortared Wall<br><input type="checkbox"/> Cloddiau Variants/Stone & Earth Banks<br><input type="checkbox"/> Post & Wire Fence |
| What is the nature of any significant archaeological interest in the area? (Tick all that apply) | <input type="checkbox"/> Buried-dry<br><input type="checkbox"/> Relict-Earthworks<br><input type="checkbox"/> Relict-Stone Monuments<br><input type="checkbox"/> Buildings & Structures<br><input type="checkbox"/> Documentary<br><input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Archaeology      |
| Which chronological period is dominant in the area?                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Recent<br><input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric<br><input type="checkbox"/> Medieval (to 1536)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Post Medieval (1536+)                                                                         |
| Has a Historic Landscape Characterisation been undertaken here?                                  | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Are there SMR sites here?                                                                        | Yes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Are there SAMs here?                                                                             | Yes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Are there Listed Buildings here?                                                                 | Yes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Are there Registered Historic Parks and Gardens here?                                            | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Are there Conservation Areas here?                                                               | Yes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Are there World Heritage Sites here?                                                             | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Is the area within a Registered Landscape of Historic Interest?                                  | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## Aspect Area Boundary

|                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| To what level was this information site-surveyed?                           | Level 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?               | All                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping? | OS Landline                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| If OS Data was used, what was the scale?                                    | 1:10,000 and 1:25,000                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?                   | A predominantly rural aspect area of both regular and irregular fieldscapes, with limited zones of ancient and semi-natural woodland... The aspect area is quite extensive, with some urban growth around modern industry to the far north at Gwaun cae gurwen... The aspect area is characterised by broad valleys, generally aligned north-south, that is interrupted by a block of upland (HL29)... Cwm Gors is the most westerly and heavily industrialised of the valleys; following, in part, the course of the Upper Clydach River this aspect area links Rhyd y fro, through a system of dismantled railways and extant roads, to Gwaun cae Gurwen... The central section of the valley is characterised by disused mines and opencast workings; the periphery is defined by an irregular fieldscape clinging to the lower slopes of Mynydd y Garth and Mynydd Uchaf to the east and Mynydd Gellionnen, Mynydd Carnllechart and Bryn Mawr to the west (all HL29)... To the far northwest of the aspect area the Cwm Gors bears away to the west following the Nant Melyn into an almost discrete valley of elevated irregular shaped fields centred on the Hafod Wennol Farm; the name may reflect the former use of this area as seasonal upland pasture... |

## Bibliography

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Barrie, DSM, 1980, A Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain... Vol... 12: South Wales... Narin... Davies, J, 1994, A History of Wales... Penguin Books, London... George, N, 1970, South Wales British Regional Geology (Third Edition)... London: HMSO Hughes, S, 1995, Industrial Structures, in Newman, J, The Buildings of Wales: Glamorgan... University of Wales Press, Penguin Books, London... Hughes, S, and Reynolds, P, 1989, A Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of the Swansea Region... RCAHMW, Aberystwyth... Hughes, S, et al, 1992... Collieries of Wales Engineering & Architecture... RCAHMW, Mid |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| List the key sources used for this assessment | Wales Litho Limited, Pontypool... Jones, PN, 1969, Colliery settlement in the South Wales Coalfield, 1850 to 1926... Hull... Locock, M, 2001, Deserted Rural Settlements in Glamorgan and Gwent: a condition survey... GGAT Report No... 2001/016, Swansea... Newman, J, 1995, The Buildings of Wales: Glamorgan... University of Wales Press, Penguin Books, London... Ordnance Survey, 1998, Rhondda and Merthyr Tydfil... 1:25000, Explorer 166... Southampton... Ordnance Survey, 1998, Swansea-Neath and Port Talbot... 1:25000, Explorer OL12... Southampton... Ordnance Survey, 2002, Brecon Beacons National Park, West and Central Areas... 1:25000, Explorer OL12... Southampton... Ordnance Survey First Edition 6" Maps 1884/5 Ordnance Survey Second Edition 6" Maps 1900/1 Ordnance Survey Third Edition 6" Maps 1921 RCAHMW 1976b, An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Glamorgan... Vol I: Pre-Norman, Part II, The Iron Age and Roman Occupation... Cardiff (HMSO)... RCAHMW 1976c, An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Glamorgan... Vol I: Pre-Norman, Part III, The Early Christian Period... Cardiff (HMSO)... RCAHMW 1981, An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Glamorgan... Vol IV: Domestic Architecture from the Reformation to the Industrial Revolution, Part I, The Greater Houses... Cardiff (HMSO)... RCAHMW 1982, An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Glamorgan... Vol III: Medieval Secul |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Assessment

Additional Assessments

Additional Comments

## Evaluation Matrix

|                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation | High                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Justification of overall evaluation     | This aspect area has been assessed as high, representing a well-preserved, extensive upland valley fieldscape of medieval/post-medieval origin with evidence of prehistoric ritual/funerary activity, medieval/early post-medieval upland settlement and 19th-early 20th century industrial extractive activity and associated settlement. |

## Evaluation

|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Condition: | Unassessed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Value:     | High (This aspect area has been assessed as high, representing a well-preserved, extensive upland valley fieldscape of medieval/post-medieval origin with evidence of prehistoric ritual/funerary activity, medieval/early post-medieval upland settlement and 19th-early 20th century industrial extractive activity and associated settlement.) |
| Trend:     | Constant                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

## Recommendations

|                                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Existing management                  | Unassessed |
| Existing management remarks:         |            |
| Principal management recommendations |            |
| Guideline                            |            |

## Description

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Summary Description / Key Patterns and Elements | A quite extensive and predominantly rural aspect area of both regular and irregular fieldscapes, with limited zones of ancient and semi-natural woodland, with some urban growth around modern industry to the far north at Gwaun cae gurwen... The aspect area is characterised by broad valleys, generally aligned north-south, that is interrupted by a block of upland (HL029)... Cwm Gors is the most westerly and heavily industrialised of the valleys; following, in part, the course of the Upper Clydach River this aspect area links Rhyd y fro, through a system of dismantled railways and extant roads, to Gwaun cae Gurwen... The central section of the valley is characterised by disused mines and opencast workings; the periphery is defined by an irregular fieldscape clinging to the lower slopes of Mynydd y Garth and Mynydd Uchaf to the east and Mynydd Gellionnen, Mynydd Carnllechart and Bryn Mawr to the west (all HL029)... To the far northwest of the aspect area the Cwm Gors bears away to the west |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

If Classification is "Other", specify here

## Evaluation Matrix

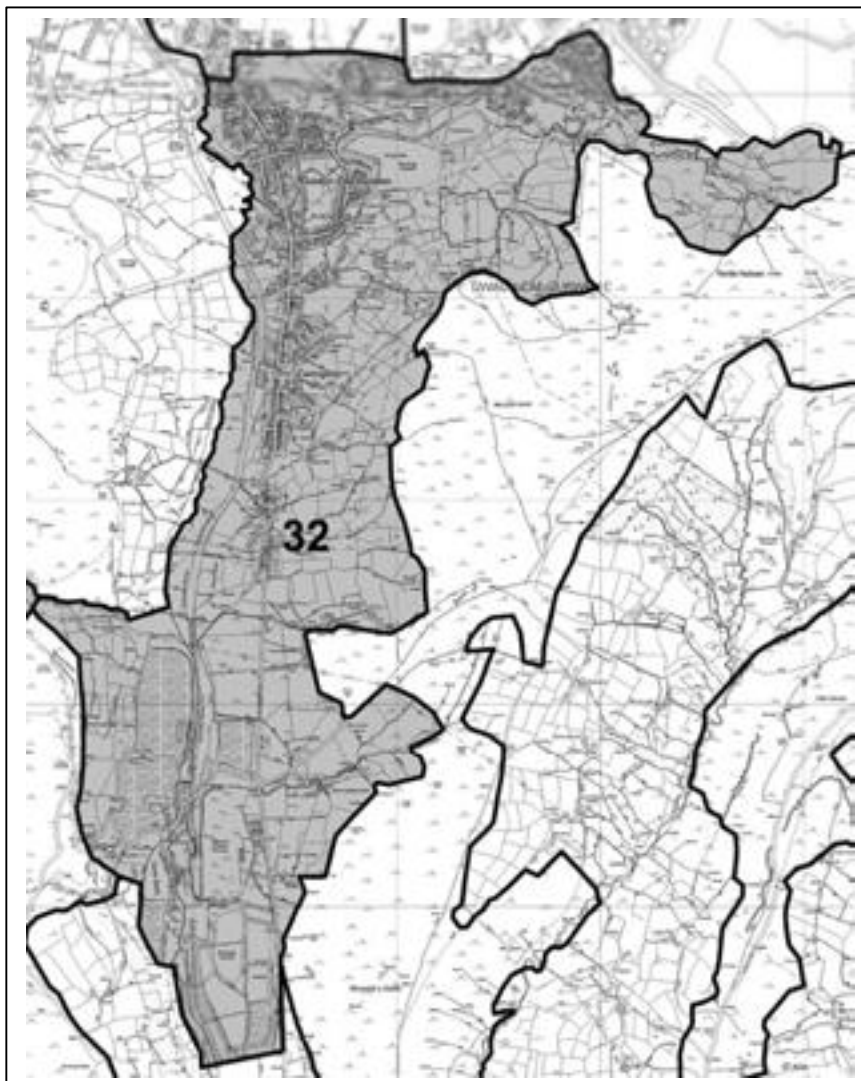
|                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evaluation Criteria: Integrity | High (The dominant character of this aspect area, characterised as an extensive, rural area of upland valley fieldscape with elements of regular and irregular enclosure interspersed with tracts of ancient and semi-natural woodland, has remained largely unchanged since the early 20th century, although there has been some limited disturbance to the field boundaries as a result of modern opencast mining and refuse tips, mostly in the northern part of the aspect area, near Cwmgors and Gwauncaegurwen. The settlement pattern shown on the OS 2nd edition map of 1900 has also remained essentially intact, largely characterised by dispersed, isolated farmsteads with no discernable settlement focus, excepting the northernmost part of the aspect area, where the planned, linear settlements of Cwmgors, Gwauncaegurwen, Gwaun-leison and Bryn-neuadd developed as mining villages during the mid to late 19th century.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Evaluation Criteria: Potential | High (This area has not been covered by a detailed historic landscape characterisation; consequently, there is significant potential for further investigation of the origins and development of this complex, extensive fieldscape and its associated pattern of settlement, both in terms of desk-based research (study of documentary sources, aerial reconnaissance) and field survey. The numerous isolated farmsteads have been briefly surveyed (RCAHMW, 1986) but there is potential for an up-to-date, detailed assessment (including documentary study, recording of specific buildings etc) to determine whether some of them may, in fact, be medieval in origin. The derelict farmsteads in this area (e.g. Pant, Pistyll Gwyn) offer particularly significant potential for further investigation. The extensive remains of 19th-early 20th century industrial activity would also merit further investigation; in particular, the Gwauncaegurwen Railway (1837) offers significant potential for further detailed recording.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Evaluation Criteria: Rarity    | Moderate (This area has similar characteristics to HL048 (Dulais Valley) as an extensive area of upland valley fieldscape with significant evidence of 19th-early 20th century industrial activity.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Evaluation Criteria: Survival  | High (This extensive upland valley fieldscape with elements of irregular and regular enclosure depicted on the OS 1st edition map, defined by a mixture of hedgerows, hedgebanks and drystone walls, has remained largely intact and probably dates from the medieval/post-medieval period. The archaeological record for this area is reasonably diverse. Several groups of prehistoric ritual/funerary monuments are located just outside the boundaries of the aspect area at Bryn-chwyth, Mynydd Uchaf and Cefn Gwrhyd, while a round cairn recorded near the Abernant Colliery in 1962 appears to have subsequently been destroyed. Evidence of medieval activity is represented by the isolated parish church of St Ciwg at Llangwig (GGAT PRN 00493w) in the southern part of the aspect area, which was repaired in the early 19th century; the irregular fieldscape surrounding the church is probably also of medieval origin. Isolated farmsteads are broadly distributed across this predominantly rural landscape; the fabric of these buildings appears to be largely of post-medieval date, although some sites may well be of medieval origin. Most remain in occupation, although some are in a derelict, ruinous state (e.g. Pant, Pistyll-gwyn). Extensive evidence of 19th-early 20th century industrial extractive activity is visible within the northern and central parts of the aspect area, mostly focused along the Cwmgors Valley and the Upper Clydach Valley, extending N-S from Gwauncaegurwen towards Rhyd-y-fro and Pontardawe and represented by numerous disused coal levels and quarries and associated features such as the remains of the dismantled Gwauncaegurwen Railway of 1837 and various minor tramroad alignments. The settlements of Gwauncaegurwen, Cwmgors and Gwaun-leison have retained their character as mining villages, characterised by terraced workers' housing and Nonconformist chapels, although the collieries which gave rise to the growth of these settlements have been largely cleared and reclaimed and the ) |
| Evaluation Criteria: Condition | Moderate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

## Monitoring

|                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Date of monitoring?                                     | 2017-03-15                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Monitoring undertaken by                                | Historic Landscape change detection work completed by the relevant Welsh Archaeological Trust for this area, the planning authority have been included. Quality Assurance of change detection work was completed by Trysor. |
| Has this record been updated following monitoring work? |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

## CHARACTER AREA 32

### Cwm Gors / Gwaun Cae Gurwen / Abernant



#### *Location, Context and Physical Characteristics*



This upland valley lies in the north west of the County Borough. It is defined to the east by the open common land of Mynydd Uchaf/Mynydd y Garth and to the west by the County Borough boundary. It ranges from an elevation of approx 250m AOD above East Pit to 150m AOD in the lower valley.

The valley cuts through an underlying geology is of south dipping sandstone of South Wales pennant formation (Lower Pennant Measures) which underlies mudstone dominated Productive Coal formation. There is significant disruption through mining within the valley, and landslips are evident on the valley slopes.

#### *Visual and Sensory Characteristics*

The valley is predominantly grazed, with the presence of invasive bracken, scrub and coarse grasses signifying reduced management input, enclosed by outgrown hedges. Deciduous woodland is a dominant landscape element along riparian corridors and on the lower reaches of the valley sides. There are extensive areas of disturbance on the valley floor with old workings, landfill and commercial developments all acting as localised detractors.

The settlement of Cwmgors stretch along the A474, Taigrwaith lies on the fringe of the opencast works, while sitting between the two Gwaun Cae Gurwen is more nucleated in character. The cores of these settlements are difficult to define and have a limited number of commercial enterprises and with newer residential areas extending around the core. The few original buildings are a mix of stone, brick and render with slate roofs while newer buildings tend to be render and pebbledash.

Views are generally contained within the valley, by both the topography and tree cover, the latter of which screens developments. Yet from adjacent high ground the detracts are highly visible.

### *Vegetation and Habitat Characteristics*

A rural semi-upland character prevails at higher reaches of the valley, this constitutes part of a more extensive area, which continues to the south. This landscape conforms to the current concept of 'ffridd habitats' and mainly comprises rhos pastures. It contains numerous BAP habitats including purple moor grass & rush pasture and upland heath. The latter habitat type generally being considered of international importance. These habitats support a wide range of rhos pasture plants, associated invertebrates and the barn owl (LBAP).

Running through the valley is the river corridor. This contains extensive areas of broadleaved woodland, including oakwood (BAP habitat) on some of the steep valley sections, areas of marshy neutral habitats (e.g. rush-pastures etc) along the watercourse and on drier areas, acid grasslands.

The southern extent of the area is dominated by an area of disturbed industrial development on former mine workings and spoil. Although this disturbance has deleterious impact on habitats, it has also resulted in the creation of secondary habitats, which are themselves of value. Many plant species, including a number of orchid species, are now to be found on old spoil sites, often in large numbers.

### *Historic Characteristics*

Disused mineral tramroads, levels and quarries characterise the north around Gwaun cae Gurwen and Cwmllynfell. Roger Hopkins leased some 700 acres (280 ha) of coal at Gwaun cae Gurwen in 1837 and the following year made a start on the construction of a railway from his colliery (at Taigrwaith) to the Swansea Canal at Pontardawe. Only the first mile was completed before Hopkins realised that the Llanelli Railway would better serve his interests, then in the process of building a line up the Amman Valley. Work on the canal-linked railway was abandoned and Hopkins extended the Llanelli line to his colliery in 1840 (Hughes and Reynolds 1989, 38). Much of the industry was abandoned during the last century, the and significant areas reverted to its former rural character.

### *Cultural Associations*

To the north of Gwaun Cae Gurwen, the overriding cultural distinctiveness is the presence of the enormous acreage of opencast mining that has encroached nearer to the local communities, and that (according to local people) is blighting their environment and the value of their houses. A social phenomenon is the conflict between wishing to earn a decent living close to home while still enjoying a decent environment.

The settlement of Taigrwaith also possesses evidence of how mining communities entertained themselves, with the trotting track on the edge of the moor, run as a business.

The community has a strong spirit of enterprise, focused through the efforts of Amman Valley Enterprises resource centre at Gwaun cae Gurwen. The area has a high percentage of Welsh speakers at 70%.

### *Key Characteristics*

- Upland valley ranging from 250m AOD to 150m AOD.
- Predominantly grazed, with invasive bracken, scrub and coarse grasses.
- River corridor runs through the valley with significant riparian vegetation.

- High percentage of Welsh speakers.
- Disused mineral tramroads, levels and quarries and former colliery.
- Settlements of Gwaun Cae Gurwen and Cwmgors stretch along the A474 .

### *Evaluation*

| No | Character area  | Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas | Geological Landscape Aspect Areas | Landscape Habitats Aspect Areas | Historic Landscape Aspect Areas | Cultural Landscape Aspect Areas |
|----|-----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 32 | <b>Cwm Gors</b> | 33 - m<br>42 - m                | 10 - h<br>13 - m                  | 07<br>09<br>13<br>76            | 41                              | 43 - h<br>44 - h                |