

**CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

MONMOUTHSHIRE

CAER LLAN WOOD

Date of Notification: 1981, 1982

National Grid Reference: SO 494080

O.S. Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 162
1:25,000 Sheet number: SO 40

Site Area: 5.3 ha

Description:

The woodlands of the lower Wye Valley form one of the most important areas for woodland nature conservation in Britain, comparable with the Caledonian pinewoods, the oceanic oakwoods of western Britain, the New Forest and the mixed coppices of East Anglia. Unlike most other regions, semi-natural woodland is abundant and virtually continuous along the gorge. The woods are a mixture of many types, some of which are localised, e.g., the lime-sessile oak stands on limestone; beech stands on both acid and alkaline soils in which lime, elm, oak and other species share dominance. Most woods are a rich mixture of stand types, which are believed to be similar in composition to the original natural woods of the valley. Many rare and local species are present, including some of the rarest native tree species (E.G. large-leaved lime, whitebeams), and trees close to the edge of their northern European range, e.g., hornbeam, beech. Furthermore, these woods sit in a matrix of unimproved grassland and other semi-natural habitats which, together with the woods, make the Wye Valley one of the most diverse, rich and attractive areas of southern Britain.

Caer Llan Wood is an area with several woodland types and transitions on Old Red Sandstone Quartz Conglomerate. The upper slopes are dominated by pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* and the lower slopes by wych elm *Ulmus glabra*, both as standards and areas of relict coppice. Examples of this upland pedunculate oak woodland type on acidic soils are rare in the County.

Remarks:

Within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

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