

**Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
Interim Strategy Report for Woking**

Woking Borough Council

June 2006



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) was designated on 9 March 2005. It extends over 11 local authorities in Surrey, Berkshire and Hampshire and comprises a network of 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) of predominantly lowland heathland and woodland. The Thames Basin Heaths are designated because of the presence of breeding populations of three bird species: Dartford warblers, woodlarks and nightjars. These birds nest on or near the ground and as a result they are very susceptible to predation (particularly by cats but also foxes, gulls etc) and to disturbance from recreational use, especially dog walking. The SPA is covered by the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994, colloquially known as the "Habitat Regulations". The designated sites within Woking Borough include Horsell Common SSSI, Brookwood Heath, which is part of Ash to Brookwood Heath SSSI, and Sheets Heath, which is part of Colony Bog & Bagshot Heath SSSI. In addition, within 5km of Woking Borough are Chobham Common SSSI and National Nature Reserve, Ockham and Wisley SSSI and Whitmoor Common SSSI. All of these SSSIs are also within the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.
- 1.2 The Habitat Regulations require that before planning permission is granted for development (other than a development directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site) which is likely to have a significant effect on an SPA, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, an appropriate assessment must be made of the implications for the SPA in view of its conservation objectives.

Impact of Housing Development on the SPA

- 1.3 English Nature considers that any new residential development within 5km of the SPA could have a likely significant effect upon it, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, especially because of the potential impact of additional recreational use of the land in the SPA.
- 1.4 English Nature considers that without measures which avoid any additional adverse effect on the SPA, all additional residential development between 400m and 5km from the SPA could cause or contribute to an adverse effect upon the integrity of the SPA due to recreational impacts upon the SPA bird populations and their habitat.
- 1.5 Within 400m of the site English Nature considers that it is not possible to avoid the possibility of adverse effects of residential development on the SPA.
- 1.6 Where it cannot be ascertained that a development will not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA (alone or in combination) Regulations 49 and 53 of the Habitats Regulations provide for development to proceed when it is established that "there being no alternative solutions, the plan or project must be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest", and the Secretary of State secures that any necessary compensatory measures are taken in accordance with Regulation 53. However, it is unlikely in the extreme that any proposed residential development could satisfy these requirements.
- 1.7 The advice of English Nature is, therefore, that proposals for residential development within 5km of the SPA should only be permitted when it can be ascertained that they will neither cause, nor contribute to, any adverse effect on the SPA. In the case of applications within 400m, this means that, other than in quite exceptional circumstances, they should be refused. In the case of proposals for development between 400m and 5km from the SPA, it means that

they need to be accompanied by measures which ensure that any net increase in visits to the SPA is avoided.

- 1.8 Unless in a particular case an application is such that it can securely be judged as not likely to have a significant effect on the SPA, either alone or “in combination”, an Appropriate Assessment¹ will be necessary. This is in line with the advice of Circular 06/05 that decisions as to whether or not an Appropriate Assessment is required should be taken on a precautionary basis.
- 1.9 It is for the decision taker (referred to as the Competent Authority in the Habitats Regulations) to carry out the Appropriate Assessment. In the case of development control decisions this is the Local Planning Authority. The LPA can require all the necessary information from the applicant, at the applicant’s expense, to enable the LPA to carry out the assessment.
- 1.10 For individual planning applications, these requirements could be very onerous because of the need to assess the development “*in combination with other plans or projects*”. A recent decision of the European Court of Justice has made it plain that, in this context, “plans” includes development plans. In addition the European Commissions guidance “*Managing Natura 2000 sites*” requires that the appropriate assessment on the integrity of the site be carried out “*across the whole area, or habitats, complex of habitats and/or populations...*”. As the Thames Basin Heaths SPA covers land in 11 separate Local Authorities, the amount of data required to conduct an assessment is potentially immense. On the other hand, in practice it is likely to be clear at an early stage that, in view of the need to look at possible effects “in combination”, any residential development within 5km of the SPA will inevitably contribute to such a possible adverse effect, unless it incorporates or is matched to measures which avoid any possible adverse effect in its case.
- 1.11 The legal requirements summarised above apply also to non-residential development applications which will need to be considered on their individual merits. This Strategy is, however, directed specifically towards the problems posed by residential proposals, and measures which can be taken to enable them to proceed without harm to the integrity of the SPA.
- 1.12 There is an important distinction between measures of mitigation, which reduce harm, and measures of avoidance, which prevent it altogether. This distinction is applicable here, because the key to the measures identified in the Interim Strategy is that they will avoid harm from particular developments, and so necessarily eliminate the possibility that a development can make any contribution to a harmful effect in combination with other developments. Many documents frequently use the word mitigation as incorporating both the reduction of harm and the avoidance of harm; but this should not distract attention from the importance of the necessary distinction between avoidance and mitigation, which has been strictly observed in this Introduction.

¹ An appropriate assessment is required under Regulations 48 (1) (b) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994.

2.0 The Solution

Long term solution: Thames Basin Heaths Delivery Plan

- 2.1 English Nature, in conjunction with Local Planning Authorities, is formulating a solution to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations for the SPA through a “Delivery Plan”, which will:
- Identify those areas where housing development would need to be accompanied by measures sufficient to avoid any adverse effects upon the SPA;
 - Identify those areas where such avoidance measures would not be feasible or reliable and where housing development should therefore not take place;
 - Provide guidance on the implementation of avoidance measures;
 - Set out a suite of additional measures including an access management strategy to complement the measures to control built development.
- 2.2 The Delivery Plan has identified three zones around the SPA:
- Zone A up to 400m from the SPA where the avoidance of all impacts from new housing development is considered not to be feasible and therefore housing would not normally be permitted.
 - Zone B at 400m-2km from the SPA where housing development would in itself, be most likely to have or to contribute to an effect on the SPA, but where this could be avoided by the provision of suitable alternative or improved open space to attract recreational users away from the SPA.
 - Zone C at 2-5km from the SPA where measures of avoidance would also be required but at a lower level than for Zone B.
- 2.3 Due to the location of sites that make up the SPA, to the north, east and south-west of Woking Borough all new residential developments resulting in a net increase in dwellings that fall within 5km of the SPA will need avoidance measures to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations (1994). The requirement for new open space in Zones B and C will be determined using formulae that relate to the number and type of new dwellings and the proximity of the development site to the SPA and to the existing amount and quality of open space in the area.
- 2.4 The approach taken by the Delivery Plan is to avoid potential impacts by including avoidance measures within a strategic plan. Such measures will be in the form of new or significantly improved alternative semi-natural open space, which will attract a proportion of dog walkers and others who may otherwise visit the SPA. In the opinion of English Nature application of the provisions of the “Delivery Plan”, by bringing forward additional or improved alternative open space that can be matched to residential development, will enable such development to be adjudged to have no likely significant effect on the SPA either alone or in combination, and therefore will obviate the need for an Appropriate Assessment of every residential development within the Borough.

Woking Local Development Framework

- 2.5 The Delivery Plan and planning issues affecting the SPA are being integrated into the Woking Local Development Framework (LDF). The Core Strategy Preferred Option (January 2006) contains Policy ENV1 “National and International Nature Conservation Designations” which states that development will not be permitted within or affecting the Thames Basin Heaths SPA unless it meets the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. In the light of an ECJ judgement² all local authorities are likely to be required to carry out an Appropriate Assessment of their Local Development Documents to ensure they meet the legal requirements of the Habitat Regulations referred to in Section 1 of this Interim Strategy.
- 2.6 It is intended that the Delivery Plan will be incorporated into the LDF as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) linked to a policy in the Core Strategy. Woking’s Local Development Scheme indicates a forecast adoption date of October 2007, although depending on progress by English Nature on the SPD this date could be brought forward.
- 2.7 Clearly this results in a vacuum for a period which could exceed eighteen months. As a result Woking Borough Council is working with English Nature to produce its own medium term solution.

Medium Term Solution – Woking’s Interim Strategy

- 2.8 The Council has produced this Interim Strategy to identify how new residential development within the Borough can avoid potential effects upon the SPA, through financial contributions to provide either new open space or improved access to existing open space. When agreed this, along with a legal agreement between English Nature and the Borough Council, is capable of providing an acceptable solution pending the adoption of the SPD.
- 2.9 It must however be recognised that the Interim Strategy does not address possible effects on the SPA other than those resulting from recreational visits arising from residential development. Therefore any development not directly connected with or necessary for the conservation management of the SPA, which could have other (non-recreational) likely significant effects upon the SPA may still require an Appropriate Assessment
- 2.10 The details of avoidance measures within the Interim Strategy will be tied to development in a particular area of the Borough. The avoidance measures required, location, programme of works, timetable and funding will therefore be known on submission of a planning application, and relevant residential development will therefore only be permitted if it conforms to the agreed Interim Strategy.
- 2.11 The Council may also receive offers of land and avoidance measures accompanying a development proposal separate to those identified in this plan, which meet English Nature’s standards for Suitable Accessible Natural Green Spaces (SANGS). In such cases the Council will consult English Nature as soon as potential avoidance measures are offered. If it is agreed that development fully avoids all potential effects upon the SPA the Council can

² European Court of Justice judgement (C-6/04) of the 20th October 2005 makes it clear that the Habitats Directive requires an appropriate assessment of the implications of all plans or projects including development plans (conditional on there being a probability or a risk that it will have a significant effect on the site concerned).

conclude no likely significant effect (since there will be no effect) and an Appropriate Assessment is not required.

- 2.12 Planning applications for residential development should be submitted as normal and avoidance measures should be identified using the schedule of improvement works set out in the Interim Strategy, or applicants can propose their own schedule of avoidance works using an alternative site. A S.106 agreement to provide or contribute towards the cost of the avoidance measures will be drawn up and signed in accordance with the Interim Strategy prior to the decision notice being issued.
- 2.13 In addition to this payment, it is proposed to require an additional payment from the developer to reflect the fact that, in the case of two of the sites, the land identified is owned by the Council. This requirement is based on the fact that by making available land in its ownership the value of the development land is increased.
- 2.14 In order to give prospective applicants certainty it is proposed that the contribution to the Council as landowner should be set at 35% of the basic payment. In special circumstances, if the Head of Property Services considers that this figure under-represents the value to the developer or landowner of the availability of the Council's land, then a higher figure may be sought based on a financial appraisal of the proposed development. This payment will be evidenced by a contractual arrangement with the applicant. Similar consideration will need to be given to any future sites identified in the Interim Strategy where the Council is not the land owner.

3.0 Methodology

- 3.1 The Interim Strategy has been produced using the following steps:

Step 1: Identification of Appropriate Sites for Avoidance Measures

- 3.2 The Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Audit of 2005 helped to provide a basis for the potential natural and semi-natural sites which could be used as alternatives to the Thames Basin Heaths for recreational purposes. The sites, which are not considered to be of highest quality and value in the audit, have the potential for improvement and therefore financial contributions for work on such sites can be accepted as avoidance measures.
- 3.3 Other sites within the Council's ownership that may be brought forward for environmental enhancement were also considered. In addition a number of third parties have entered into discussions over the potential for land they own to be secured as Suitable Accessible Natural Green Spaces (SANGS). If these third party SANGS can only be secured as part of a planning permission then they have not been included within the Interim Strategy at this stage as this could prejudice the planning decision.

Step 2: Identification of a Programme of Works

- 3.4 The results of the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Audit assessments of the sites provided a starting point for considering required areas of improvement, while the local knowledge of the Council's Countryside Development Officer helped to identify the specific improvements that are needed. The costs of each improvement have been estimated to allow a calculation of an average cost per hectare.

Step 3: Calculation of the Number of Dwellings & Avoidance Works

- 3.5 The total amount of alternative open space can be converted to an equivalent number of people and applying standard formulae enables a calculation of the number of dwellings which the SANGS provide for. The calculation for new open space is derived from the English Nature Delivery Plan (now incorporated in a template SPD) which proposes that a standard of 16ha of open space/1000 population is required in Zone B (400m-2km from the SPA) and 8ha/1000 population in Zone C (2-5km from the SPA). Visitor surveys undertaken by English Nature³ show that use of the SPA is linked to the distance people live from the SPA. In drafting open space standards English Nature therefore concludes that different levels of SANGS would be required depending on the distance of a development from the SPA.
- 3.6 These standards are aimed at new open space, but for upgraded sites the existing users must be taken into account and both for upgrades and new open space there is a limit the sites capacity for people. For upgraded sites with minimal use and substantial improvement programmes the whole site can potentially be counted towards the SANG area, however for sites which are used more frequently the additional number of people who can be accommodated is limited.

Step 4: Calculation of a Tariff for Financial Contributions

- 3.7 A tariff based approach will enable developers to calculate the financial contribution that will be required for their proposed development.
- 3.8 As English Nature's open space provision standards relate to the increase in population that may arise from new residential dwellings it is considered appropriate to base the tariff on average household sizes according to the number of bedrooms per dwelling. This is instead of using the general average household size in Woking Borough, of 2.41 people (Census 2001), as the number of one bedroom flats and people living alone is increasing in the borough. Data from the Census 2001 was therefore used to find out the average household size of dwellings from one bedroom to 4+ bedrooms. Calculations can be found in Appendix 1. Should monitoring of the Interim Strategy identify a significant shift from these household size calculations, developer contributions and green space calculations will be modified accordingly.
- 3.9 The cost of new and improved open space at the sites was then totalled to enable a calculation of the cost per hectare of these works. English Nature's draft proposed standards for each SPA zone were then applied.
- 3.10 Tariffs have been calculated for each SPA zone according to the size of proposed dwellings.

4.0 The Interim Strategy

- 4.1 The Interim Strategy takes effect on the 12th June 2006. A Legal Agreement between Woking Borough Council and English Nature will accompany this Interim Strategy to ensure that if the Council did not meet the delivery programme of the interim plan it would not continue (or start) to grant planning permissions on the basis of it. In addition this agreement will ensure the delivery of avoidance measures in the longer term.

³ Liley, D., Jackson D & Underhill-Day J. (In Press) Visitor access patterns on the Thames Basin Heaths, English Nature Research Report,

Step 1: Identification of Appropriate Sites for Avoidance Measures

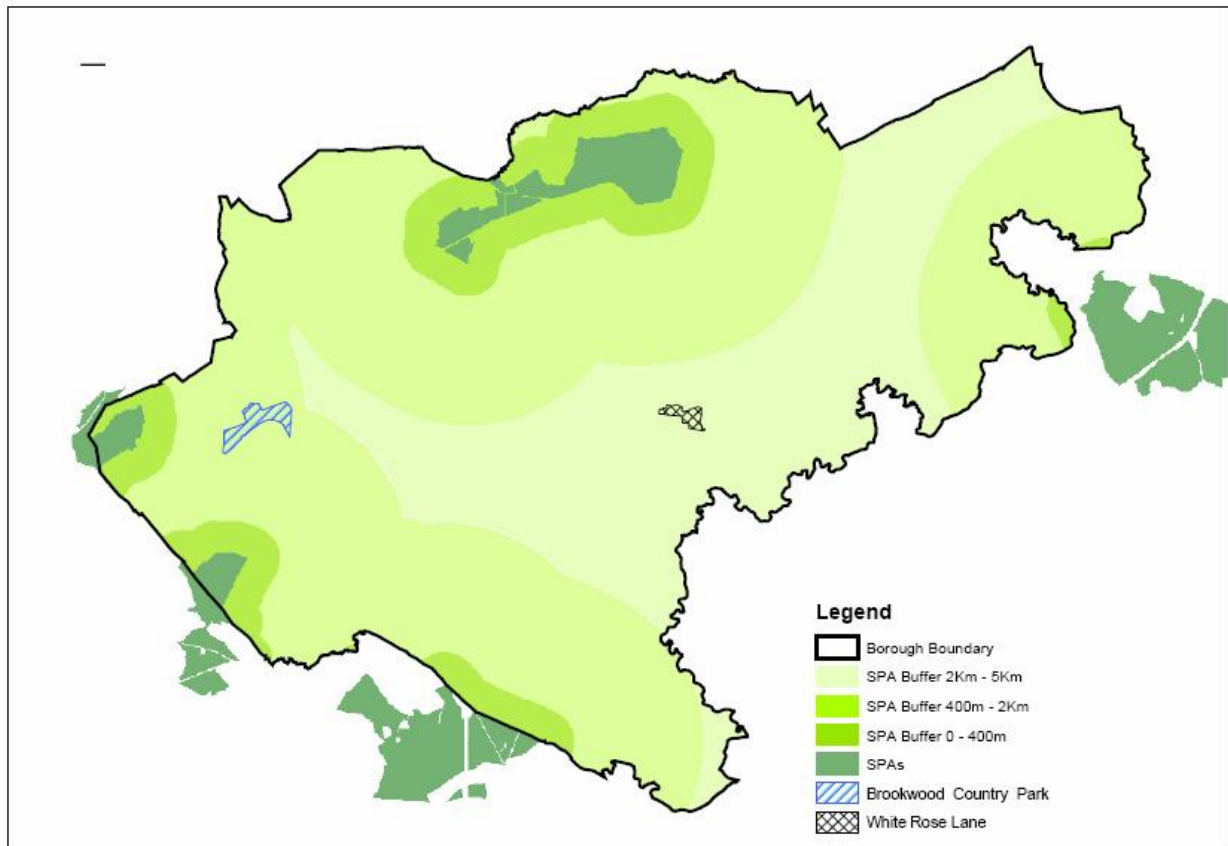
- 4.2 On submission of a planning application, if an applicant cannot avoid effects upon the SPA of their development through their own scheme they will need to make financial contributions to the provision or improvement of open space identified in this Interim Strategy in order to avoid effects upon the SPA.
- 4.3 The Council identified sites from the Open Space, Sports and Recreation Audit and also considered other alternative sites in the Council's ownership which are likely to come forward for future enhancement. However, because avoidance measures need to demonstrate a clear link to specific developments only sites with a planned schedule of works can be included in this Interim Strategy.
- 4.4 In considering other sites within the Council's ownership the Westfield Tip site is seen as a potential possible SANG. However, as there is no schedule of works for the site it may be included when sites are reviewed and should then be part of the Delivery Plan SPD. In addition a number of third party owned potential SANGS have not been included within the Strategy as they must await the determination of outstanding applications.
- 4.5 The Interim Strategy identifies two SANG sites to the west of and central to the Borough. They are as follows:

Site	Size (ha)
Brookwood Country Park	20
Hoe Valley White Rose Lane	8.2

- 4.6 *Brookwood Country Park* - This site, to the west of the Borough, is currently semi-natural open space and was identified in the Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Audit. It provides a catchment for development located within 5km.
- 4.7 *Hoe Valley White Rose Lane* - This site is owned by the Council and is part Local Nature Reserve. The car park is located in an adjacent site and upgrades will provide clear links to the site.
- 4.8 Both these sites are relatively little used at present, and substantial improvement programmes are proposed. As a result the Council has concluded that the whole site can be counted towards the provision of alternative open space.
- 4.9 By mapping these sites and their catchments developers will be able to determine which site will provide avoidance measures for their development and therefore where financial contributions should be made.
- 4.10 The Council is also in negotiation with Horsell Common Preservation Society to deliver a substantial programme of improvements to a little-used area of the common which is not designated as SPA. This will provide coverage of the central and eastern part of the Borough. This is not shown on the maps that follow at present, and no detailed programme of works

shown, but indicative figures are shown in the tabulations. The Interim Strategy will be amended to include this land subject to the conclusion of the negotiations.

Map 1: The location of the SANG sites within Woking Borough in relation to the SPA



Step 2: Identification of a Programme of Works

- 4.11 Advice from English Nature is that, in order to meet the Habitats Regulations tests planning proposals must be linked to specific works on a timetable, and there must be certainty that the identified avoidance measures will be taken.
- 4.12 The Council considers that it is difficult in this Interim Strategy to estimate what specific improvement works may need to be carried out for the duration of the draft South East Plan (20 years). Instead this Strategy includes estimates of site improvements for the next five years. Necessary works will be reviewed when the SPD is adopted (current forecasts for adoption are 2007). The work programmes included within the Interim Strategy include the cost of maintenance and management over ten years to ensure the SANGS site can be maintained in the longer term.
- 4.13 The site assessments from the Council's Open space, Sport and Recreation Audit were reviewed to consider where improvements can be made to encourage users. The Council's Countryside Development Officer has set out a programme of works for each site, which will be necessary over the next five years. Each programme identifies the work to be undertaken,

specific costs of the work and a timescale for when it needs to be undertaken. However, it should be noted that the timetable set out in these work programmes are dependent on funding from new development coming forward and are therefore indicative.

- 4.14 The work programmes also include some non-ecological work to ensure people are attracted to these alternative sites. For example, the promotion of sites through leaflets sent to occupants of new dwellings to ensure they are aware that they have a quality open space to use close by.
- 4.15 In addition a visitor survey before and after completion of work will be undertaken to show current use of the site and to monitor the impacts of improvements, or new provision.
- 4.16 The Thames Basin Heaths Visitor Survey showed parking was important in attracting visitors to the SPA and also to other alternative sites therefore the Council has considered parking issues at each site.
- *Brookwood Country Park* – there is existing parking on this site.
 - *Hoe Valley White Rose Lane* – parking already exists at Woking Park, which is a short walk along the Hoe Stream to the site at White Rose Lane. Clear linkages will be made between the car park and the open space, e.g. by improved signage.
- 4.17 The maintenance and management of the sites has also been considered and a breakdown of the costs of maintenance and replacement of assets for each site is included. Calculations are based on an estimate that assets will need to be replaced every ten years.
- 4.18 Contributions from smaller scale developments can be used to fund partial implementation of certain elements of the work programmes, for example, the installation of individual bins, benches or phases of marginal planting and woodland management.

Brookwood Country Park Works Programme

Item	Quantity	Unit cost	Total cost	Indicative Programme
Design of scheme, tender preparation & contract supervision fee			£25,825	2006
Visitor surveys			£3,500	2006
Picnic tables	3 no.	£1,000	£3,000	2006
Benches	3no.	£500	£1,500	2006
Litter bins	4	£500	£2,000	2006
Dog bins	4	£400	£1,600	2006
Dipping platform	20m.		£15,000	2007
Boardwalk	35m.		£10,000	2007
Marginal planting			£15,000	2007
Creation of hoggin footpaths	2400m	£40/m.	£96,000	2007
Structure planting			£50,000	2006/2007
Signage and waymarkers			£5,000	2007
Interpretation			£7,500	2007
Site promotion – leaflet design, printing and distribution			£7,000	2007
Visitor surveys			£3,500	2007/2008
Total establishment costs			£246,425	

- Maintenance per annum = £5000
- Replacement of assets over 10 years (£/yr) = £20,660.00
- Total annual maintenance and management costs = £25,660.00
- Costs commuted over 10 years = £256,600.00

- **Total of establishment cost and commuted maintenance and asset management costs = £503,025.00**

Hoe Valley White Rose Lane Works Programme

Item	Quantity	Unit cost	Total cost	Indicative Programme
Visitor site surveys			£2,500	2006
Design of scheme, tender preparation & contract supervision fee			£15,500	2006
Site surveys (flora and fauna) and monitoring			£4,000	2006 onwards
Picnic tables	2 no.	£1,000	£1,000	2007
Benches	4	£500	£2,000	2007
Litter bins	4	£500	£2,000	2007
Dog bins	3	£400	£1,600	2007
Signage and waymarkers			£3,000	2007
Creation of hoggin footpaths	1400m.	£40/m.	£56,000	2007
Boardwalk and sleeper bridges over ditches			£12,000	2007
Woodland Management work			£15,000	2006/2007/2008
Interpretation and educational guide			£15,000	2007
Restoration of small pond and enhancement of wet ditches			£12,000	2006/2007
Marginal planting			£5,000	2007
Site promotion – leaflet design, printing and distribution			£7,000	2007/2008
Visitor site surveys			£2,500	2006
Total establishment costs			£156,100	

- Maintenance per annum = £5000
- Replacement of assets over 10 years (£/yr) = £12,860
- Total annual maintenance and management costs = £17,860
- Costs commuted over 10 years = £178,600

- **Total of establishment cost and commuted maintenance and asset management costs = £334,700**

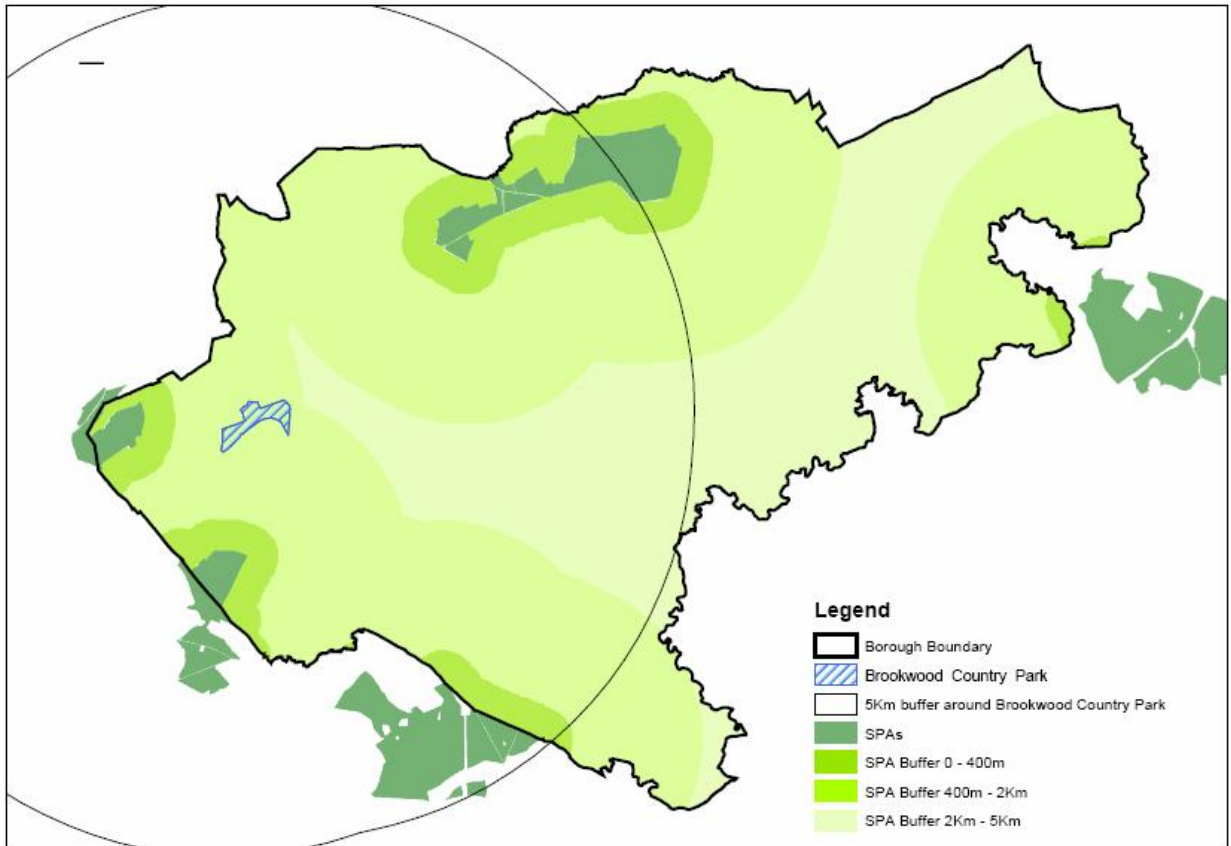
Step 3: Calculation of the Number of Dwellings & Avoidance Works

- 4.19 The following maps show each of the SANG sites and the extent of their catchments across the Borough. It should be noted that these maps are for illustrative purposes only and applicants should contact the Council about which SPA zone their development would lie in and how to address their development proposal using this interim strategy.
- 4.20 Some areas of the Borough are served by both sites and Map 4 shows how the catchment zones overlap. This means that proposals for residential developments located in any of the overlapping catchment zones can be addressed through financial contributions to works at any of the sites. The S.106 agreement for each application will set out which SANG site is being used. The catchment zones are shown to extend beyond the Borough boundary into neighbouring local authorities.
- 4.21 The extent of catchment zones from the sites allows proposals for residential development to be located in either Zone B or C in the majority of the Borough.
- 4.22 It is not expected that areas to the east of the Borough can be served by these two sites and the Council is currently investigating its options for providing SANGS in this area. To ensure adequate funds are obtained for SANGS in the interim period the tariff set out in this Interim Strategy takes account of the need for a third SANG site to be found to cover this part of the Borough. The tariff includes an assumption of the costs of proposed upgrades at a third site.
- 4.23 In terms of the number of people who can be served by the SANGS in this Interim Strategy the Council considers that these sites are currently under-utilised and the upgrades are effectively new open space. This allows for the entire area of SANG to be used at the standards within the template SPD.
- 4.24 Linking Housing Provision to SANGS Provision
- 4.25 Woking is responsible for meeting housing targets as set by Government in the draft South East Plan. The forecast for Woking sees 242 dwellings built per year and all of these dwellings will require measures to avoid effect upon the SPA.
- 4.26 Woking's Core Strategy estimates that approximately 60% of the housing will be located in and around Woking town centre and these will be as one and two bedroom apartments. The remaining 40% will be family houses located around the rest of the Borough (except within 400m of the SPA). An estimate of the proportion of these areas which lie in Zones B and C have enabled a calculation of the number of dwellings expected in each Zone and the required amount of SANG sites as a result, shown in Table 2. (Calculations can be found in Appendix 1 and 2.)
- 4.27 The calculations show that over the next five years approximately 30.2ha of alternative open space is required to meet the SPD SANGS requirement for potential housing as set out in South East Plan forecasts.
- 4.28 The Council will monitor the sites to ensure that sufficient SANGS area can be provided. This will include monitoring of the dwelling type and occupancy rate.

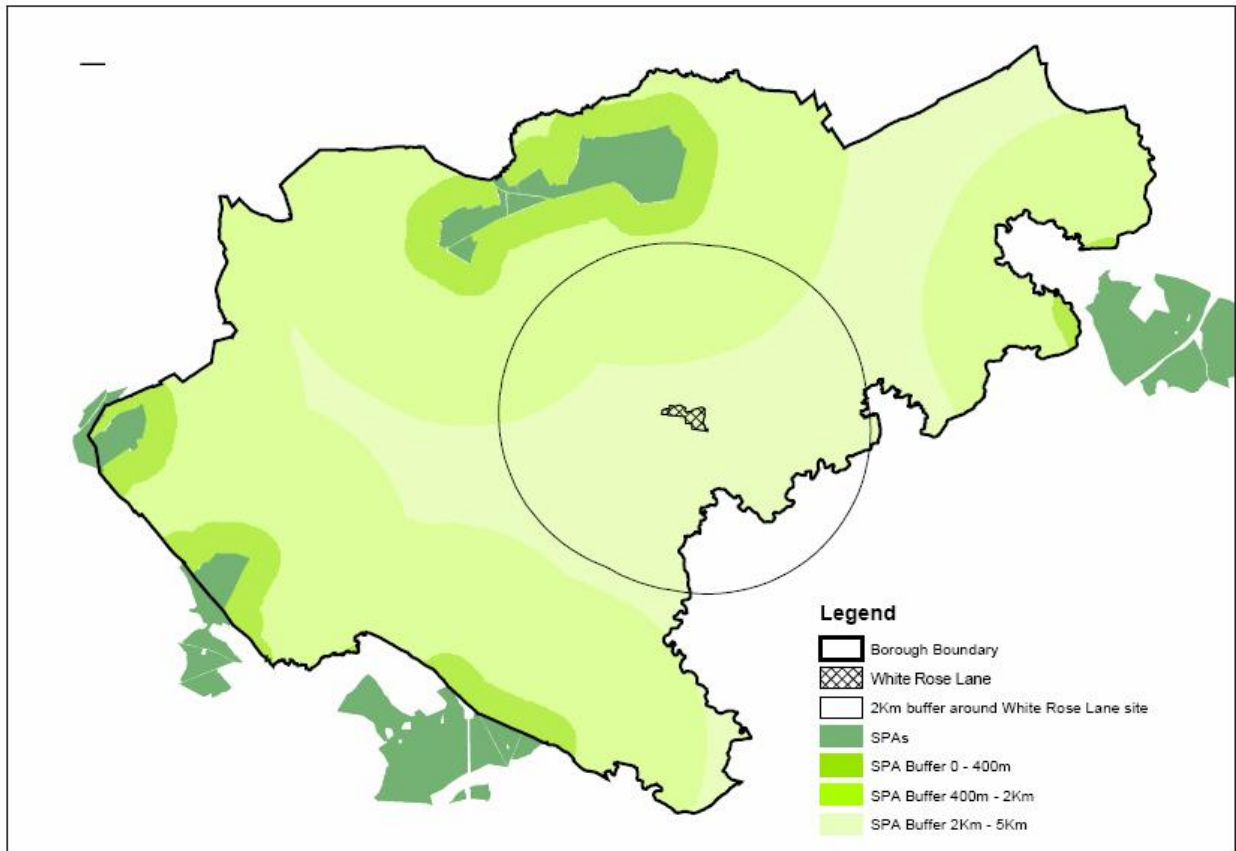
Table 2: Predicted amount of SANGS required by the South East Plan

Location of development	Proportion of all developments	No. of dwellings in 5 years per SPA Zone	Amount of SANGS required in 5 years (ha)
In and around Woking Town Centre	60%	Zone B – 534	13.7
		Zone C – 192	2.5
Rest of the Borough	40%	Zone B – 313	11
		Zone C – 171	3
Total		1210	30.2

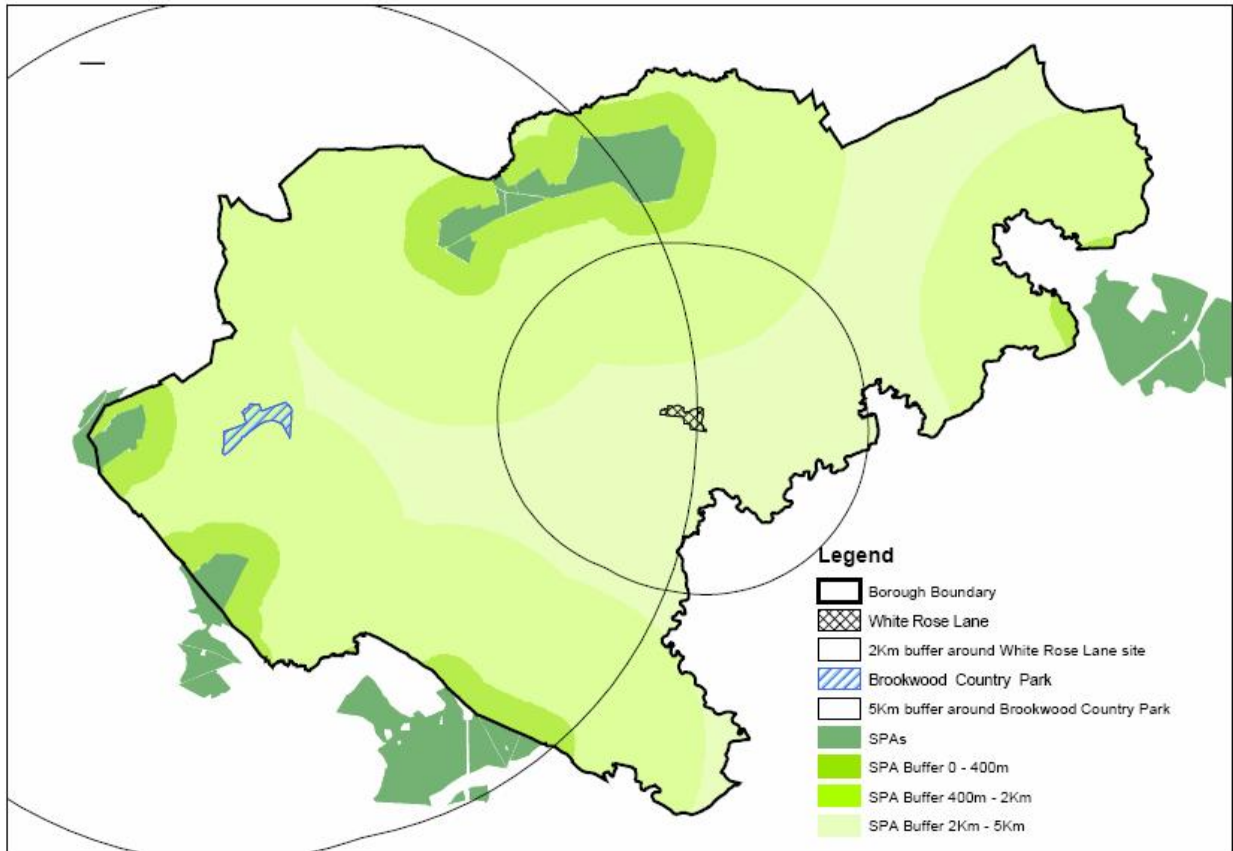
Map 2: The location of Brookwood Country Park and the 5km catchment it serves shown in relation to the SPA



Map 3: The location of the Hoe Valley White Rose Lane site and the 2km catchment it serves shown in relation to the SPA



Map 4: The location of the SANG sites and catchment zones shown in relation to the SPA



Step 4: Calculation of a Tariff for Financial Contributions

4.29 The total amount of costs for the two SANGS sites listed above and the estimates for the third SANGS required for the Eastern part of the Borough including maintenance and replacement of assets has been considered when attaching a tariff to the size of dwellings and English Nature’s open space standards. The costs are as follows:

Site	Size	Cost
Brookwood Country Park	20 ha	£503,025
Hoe Valley - White Rose Lane	8.2 ha	£334,700
Horsell Common (<i>estimate</i>)	28 ha	£731,000
Total	56.2 ha	£1,568,725
Cost per hectare		£28,000

4.30 This translates into a tariff for the different zones and dwelling sizes as follows.

Zone A (within 400m of SPA)	No tariff applied. All development providing additional residential units will require an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitat Regulations
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Zone B (400m to 2 km from SPA)	SPD standard = 16ha per 1000 population Cost: £28,000 per hectare				
No. of beds	Average no. of occupants	Open space required (ha)	Cost of required SANGS if site were new open space	Landowner payment at 35%	TOTAL
Studio flat	1.3	0.0208	£580	£200	£780
1	1.4	0.0224	£630	£220	£850
2	1.9	0.0304	£850	£300	£1150
3	2.5	0.04	£1,120	£400	£1,520
4+	2.9	0.0464	£1,300	£450	£1,750

Zone C (2 km to 5km from SPA)	SPD standard = 8ha per 1000 population Cost: £28,000 per hectare				
No. of beds	Average no. of occupants	Open space required (ha)	Cost of required SANGS if site were new open space	Landowner payment at 35%	TOTAL
Studio flat	1.3	0.0104	£290	£100	£390
1	1.4	0.0112	£315	£110	£425
2	1.9	0.0152	£425	£150	£575
3	2.5	0.02	£560	£200	£760
4+	2.9	0.0232	£650	£225	£875

4.29 An applicant should apply these tariffs when considering measures to avoid effects upon the SPA.

4.30 The tariff set out within this Interim Strategy will be subject to annual review in line with the Retail Price Index.

5.0 Implementing the Interim Strategy

- 5.1 When submitting an application for residential development the applicant needs to consider how they can avoid effects upon the SPA from their development. If a developer is not proposing their own schedule of avoidance works at English Nature's standards, they will be expected to apply the tariffs in this Interim Strategy.
- 5.2 Applicants should identify, in the S.106 agreement, how they will financially contribute to specific works at each site to ensure that suitable avoidance measures are being undertaken and to enable a conclusion of no likely significant effect on the SPA.
- 5.3 The Interim Strategy should be used through discussion with the Council's Development Control Officer following these steps:
- Step 1: Check which SPA zone the development proposal lies in. Residential developments within 400m of the SPA will not normally be permitted.
 - Step 2: Ensure that the development is within the catchment zone of either of the SANGs.
 - Step 3: Apply the appropriate tariff, according to SPA zone, the number of dwellings and dwelling sizes to calculate the financial contribution to be made.
 - Step 4: Link contributions to specific works. The Council will hold a list of all works to be carried out and the total amount of financial contributions that have been collected for each work element. This will ensure that monies are not collected by different applicants for the same works.
- 5.4 A S.106 agreement to provide or contribute towards the cost of avoidance measures will be drawn up and signed by the applicant in accordance with the Interim Strategy prior to the decision notice being issued.
- 5.5 The provision of the additional consideration to the Council as landowner will be the subject of a separate agreement.

6.0 Reviewing the Interim Strategy

- 6.1 This Interim Strategy will only be used until English Nature's Delivery Plan is ready to be adopted by the Council as SPD. SANGS will be reviewed and work programmes set out to ensure sufficient SANGS are available to enable future housing requirements can be achieved.
- 6.2 A third SANG will be identified for the Eastern part of the Borough not covered by the two SANGS currently set out in this Interim Strategy. Though every effort has been made to make allowance for this SANG in the existing tariffs, any changes to the tariffs necessitated by this third SANG will be incorporated as soon as possible.
- 6.3 When reviewing the SANGS sites the Council will also review the tariff for financial contributions to ensure it is sufficient for contributing to work at future alternative sites.

- 6.4 The Council will monitor the provision of the avoidance measures against the completion of developments to ensure that they provided within a reasonable time. If necessary the Council will reconsider the mechanism for which contributions should be received.
- 6.5 It is likely that the Westfield Tip site will be brought forward in the sites review. The Westfield Tip site is close to the Borough's high density areas and would therefore help to serve a large population. Due to the complexity of works at Westfield Tip it is likely that the tariff will increase to ensure the site is brought to the same character and quality as SPA sites.

APPENDIX 1: Dwelling Occupancy

This data was taken from the Census 2001.

1 bed dwelling		
Average household size	7532/5217 = 1.4	
No. Of Occupants	No. Of households	Total occupants
1	3518	3518
2	1367	2734
3	166	498
4	95	380
5	40	200
6	20	120
7	6	42
8	5	40
Total	5217	7532

2 bed dwelling		
Average household size	11493/6138 = 1.9	
No. Of Occupants	No. Of households	Total occupants
1	2523	2523
2	2462	4924
3	731	2193
4	318	1272
5	70	350
6	16	96
7	9	63
8	9	72
Total	6138	11493

3 bed dwelling		
Average household size	21512/8612 = 2.5	
No. Of Occupants	No. Of households	Total occupants
1	2088	2088
2	2971	5942
3	1586	4758
4	1350	5400
5	455	2275
6	107	642
7	33	231
8	22	176
Total	8612	21512

4+ bed dwellings					
Ave household size	48482/16975 = 2.9				
	4 bed	5 bed	6bed	Total 4+beds	Total 4+beds
No. Of Occupants	No. Of households	No. Of households	No. Of households	Total occupants 4+ beds	Total occupants
1	1256	527	538	2321	2321
2	2279	1392	2255	5926	11852
3	1204	761	1246	3211	9633
4	1172	828	1685	3685	14740
5	363	277	658	1298	6490
6	112	60	195	367	2202
7	33	16	43	92	644
8	33	18	24	75	600
Total	6452	3879	6644	16975	48482

APPENDIX 2: South East Plan housing forecast requirements

Location "in and around WTC"	Area (ha)		
	Total	Zone B	Zone C
Woking Town Centre (WTC)	72.58	43.82	28.76
High Density Residential Area (HDRA)	66.14	8.02	58.12
Total	138.72	101.94	36.78
%		73	27
Dwellings per year (South East Plan)	242		
60% of dev in WTC&HDRA (No. of dwellings)	145.2		
No. of people	232.3		
	Zone B	Zone C	
Population	171	62	
Average population of 1.5 bed dwelling	1.6	1.6	
No. of dwellings required per year	107	38	
No. of dwellings required in 5 years	534	192	
Open space provision required per year (ha)	2.7	0.49	
Open space provision required in 5 years (ha)	13.7	2.5	

"Rest of Borough"	Area (ha)	%
Zone B	3133.5	65
Zone C	1713.2	35
Total	4846.7	
Dwellings per year (South East Plan)	242	
40% of dev in "Rest of Borough" (No. of dwellings)	96.8	
No. of people	212.96	
	Zone B	Zone C
Population	137.7	75.3
Average population of 2.5 bed dwelling	2.2	2.2
No. of dwellings required per year	62.58	34.22
No. of dwellings required in 5 years	312.91	171.08
Open space provision required per year (ha)	2.20	0.60
Open space provision required in 5 years (ha)	11.01	3.01

Glossary

Appropriate Assessment: An assessment under Regulation 48 (1)(b) of the Habitats Regulations 1994 of the implications of a development proposal on the SPA.

Delivery Plan: English Nature's strategy that aims to safeguard the SPA through developing and establishing a strategic, sub-regional approach to avoidance and mitigation of the impact of housing developments across the 15 local planning authority areas around the Thames Basin Heaths SPA consistent with the law and planning policies. The Delivery Plan will become a Supplementary Planning Document that Councils are expected to adopt.

Habitats Regulations: The legal instrument that translates the obligations of the European Directives into UK law. Plans or projects, including planning applications that may adversely affect a European Site must pass a series of tests under the Habitats Regulations before they can proceed.

Interim Strategy: Woking Borough Council's strategy that identifies how new residential development within the borough can avoid potential effects upon the SPA, through financial contributions to provide either new open space or improvements to existing open space. This strategy will be used until English Nature's Supplementary Planning Document can be adopted.

Local Development Framework (LDF): A portfolio of documents that provides the framework for delivering the spatial strategy of the area. The LDF will replace the existing Local Plan.

Local Development Scheme (LDS): Three-year project plan for the production of Local Development Documents.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): An area of land or water notified by statutory conservation agency under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as being of national importance for nature or geological conservation.

South East Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy that replaces Regional Planning Guidance. It is part of the development plan.

Special Protection Area (SPA): A statutory protected habitat for wild birds under EC Regulations.

Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspaces (SANGS): land that is accessible for public recreation and meets the requirements of visitors who would use the SPA.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): To replace Supplementary Planning Guidance. Non-statutory documents that expand upon policies and proposals in the Local Development Framework. English Nature's Delivery Plan will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document by the Council.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area: It covers an area of some 8400ha, consisting of 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) scattered from Hampshire in the West, to Berkshire in the North through to Surrey,