

Big Wood
Open Space Management Plan July 2019

for

Thames Basin Heaths
Special Protection Area (SPS) Mitigation Works

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Thames Basin Heaths SPA

The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) is a network of heathland sites designated to protect the habitat of the internationally important bird species of woodlark, nightjar and Dartford warbler.

Bracknell Forest Council is legally obliged to make sure that no adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA will arise from new development. In response, the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document (hereafter referred to as SPA SPD) has been produced. This identifies measures to avoid and mitigate adverse effects arising from new residential development within 5km of the SPA. The SPA SPD provides an integrated, holistic package of avoidance and mitigation measures, which enable the Council to conclude that there will be no adverse effect upon the integrity of the SPA. These include:

- No net increase in residential development within 400m of the SPA
- Provision or contributions towards the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)
- Contributions towards strategic access management and monitoring (SAMM)

Natural England has agreed that the implementation of this package of measures will ensure that harm to the SPA is avoided. The reasoning behind each of the measures, and their contribution towards avoiding harm to the SPA, is explained within the SPA SPD. This Open Space Management Plan is one of a series of plans which solely deal with the implementation of one of the avoidance measures i.e. provision of SANG through the enhancement of existing open space.

The package of avoidance and mitigation measures will be funded through the collection of financial contributions from new development.

1.2 Open Space Management Plans

This report comprises an open space management plan which outlines the enhancements and ongoing management required for Big Wood. This will also enable avoidance and mitigation measures to be closely linked to contributions from specific developments as detailed in the SPA SPD.

1.3 Identification of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)

The SPA SPD has gone through an extensive process to identify areas of open space as suitable alternatives to the SPA. The first round of SANG sites were identified from visitors surveys carried out by Leisure-net in 2006.

Big Wood has not been a public open space and therefore a visitor count has not been carried out.

Therefore, this report builds upon the information and research presented within the SPA SPD to provide more detailed works and costings on how Big Wood could be brought up to a suitable standard to provide an alternative to the SPA.

1.4 Big Wood as an alternative to the SPA

Natural England agreed to this SANG Management Plan on [date to be inserted once plan is agreed].

The SANG assessment checklist is used in section 5 to demonstrate how Big Wood is suitable as an alternative to the SPA and how enhancements will enable its use as such. Big wood is in part designated as an Ancient Woodland (see Map 4.3), special attention will be given to ensuring that the provision for increased visitor use will include opportunities to protect and enhance the ecological value of the site.

2.0 Site Management Statement

2.1 Description

2.1.1 Location

Big Wood is located in Jennett's Park in the western part Bracknell Forest Borough within the parish of Bracknell Town, with a small portion in Wokingham Borough Council, north of Peacock Lane. OS grid reference to centre of site: SU 839 682.

Area: 10.7 hectares

2.1.2 Adjacent land

The site adjoins Peacock Meadows (bespoke SANG) to the east and south, separated by Peacock Lane. To the west it is bounded by kennels and other private land uses within a continuation of a mainly wooded landscape, and north by the main railway line from Reading to London Waterloo and A329 Berkshire Way. There are two lines of high voltage electricity pylons crossing roughly east-west.

2.1.3 Access

There is no current visitor access to the site. Access will be via pedestrian paths, including links to a public footpath (Binfield FP 15), and other purpose built or mown paths in the Peacock Meadows SANG. The car parking provision will be from additional spaces to be provided in the car park off Swift Fields in Jennett's Park, currently serving Peacock Meadows (see map 4.4 and 4.5).

Maintenance access will be via Peacock Meadows through a field gate near the eastern pylon on to a short length of track surfaced with crushed stone. This track was laid when Network Rail upgraded their sub-station to provide temporary site access. The trackway across the adjacent Peacock Meadows was removed and restored to wildflower meadow, but the section in Big Wood parallel to the pylons was reduced in width and a 3 metre wide section retained to facilitate maintenance access.

2.1.4 Topography

The land is all within $\pm 5\text{m}$ of the 75m contour, rising gently to the south towards the 80m highpoint in Peacock Meadows (outside Big Wood).

2.1.5 Geology & soils

The soil consists of slowly permeable, seasonally wet, slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils (source: MAGIC map). The underlying geology is Claygate Member - Sand, Silt and Clay. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 48 to 56 million years ago in the

Palaeogene Period. A smaller area in the north (near the railway line) consists of Bagshot Formation - Sand. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 48 to 56 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period. (source: British Geological Survey map)

2.1.6 Drainage & flooding

There are functional ditch lines along the northern part of the woodland, north of the line of pylons. The site is not within any Environment Agency Flood Zones, and there are no records of historic flooding within the site. However there is a 100 year flood risk zone approximately east to west in the northern part of the site, parallel to the railway

2.1.7 Landscape & views

The ancient woodland consists of Oaks and other native trees, with an understorey of Hazel and ground level vegetation including Bluebells. The woodland is seen in long views across Peacock Meadows and Peacock Lane from Jennett's Park, as well as from the A329.

2.1.8 Wildlife and biodiversity

The botanical survey of Big Wood (John Wenman Consultancy, 2011) indicates that historical coppice management of Hazel trees is likely to have taken place. However it is not known when this management ceased.

The Scots and Corsican pine dominated area in the south west part of the Big Wood makes it clear that this part of the site has been managed as coniferous plantation. Ground flora such as Bluebell is still present, suggesting that previous woodland habitat was cleared to allow for conifer plantation to be planted, although old enclosure maps (1817) show this area as unplanted and non-forested. There is no evidence of any recent active management of this plantation which has now matured.

The northern part of Big Wood beneath the power lines is periodically cleared by contractors for the National Grid and is characterised by bracken and young trees.

The whole of the site is recorded as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) (Site code: SU86J01) and parts are listed on the Ancient Woodland inventory. The whole site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO 1/1963).

The 2010 Phase 1 Ecological Survey (John Wenman Consultancy) indicates the woodland area consists of an established canopy of broadleaved trees, mainly Pedunculate Oak, with a well-established understory largely dominated by Hazel. Other trees present include Silver Birch and Downy Birch, with occasional Sweet Chestnut, Alder, Ash and Beech. Several mature trees have features such as crevices and splits which are likely to be of value to bats and birds, including Barn Owl, Tawny Owl and woodpeckers. The understorey consists of Bracken where the canopy is more open, and in other areas ferns, grasses and herbaceous plants including Wood-sorrel, Greater Stitchwort, Bugle and Wood False Brome. Between the Power lines the secondary woodland is predominantly composed of Downy Birch, Silver Birch, some Willow species, occasional Hawthorn and Elm. Here ground flora includes Barren Strawberry, Enchanter's Nightshade, Wood-sorrel, Bugle, Honeysuckle and creeping Buttercup. Under the power lines the woodland is cut back at regular intervals by Scottish and Southern Electricity. The wetter and more acidic soils here are indicated by abundant Soft rush and Yorkshire Fog. Herbaceous ground flora includes common centaury, tormentil, greater bird's foot trefoil, St John's wort, marsh thistle, creeping buttercup and common mouse-ear.

In the coniferous plantation woodland there is a dominance of Corsican Pine (*Pinus nigra*) with occasional Oak, Beech and Birch trees. The ground flora is continuous with the rest of the woodland, and includes Bluebell, Bugle, Wood-sorrel, Wood False Brome and Greater Stitchwort.

5 bat species are recorded in Big Wood by Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC). Activity surveys on site found 6 species foraging including Noctule, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Whiskered and/or Brandt's bat, Brown Long-eared and Leisler's bat.

Badger activity has been recorded on site.

Roe deer are found throughout the woodland, and rabbit warrens have been identified.

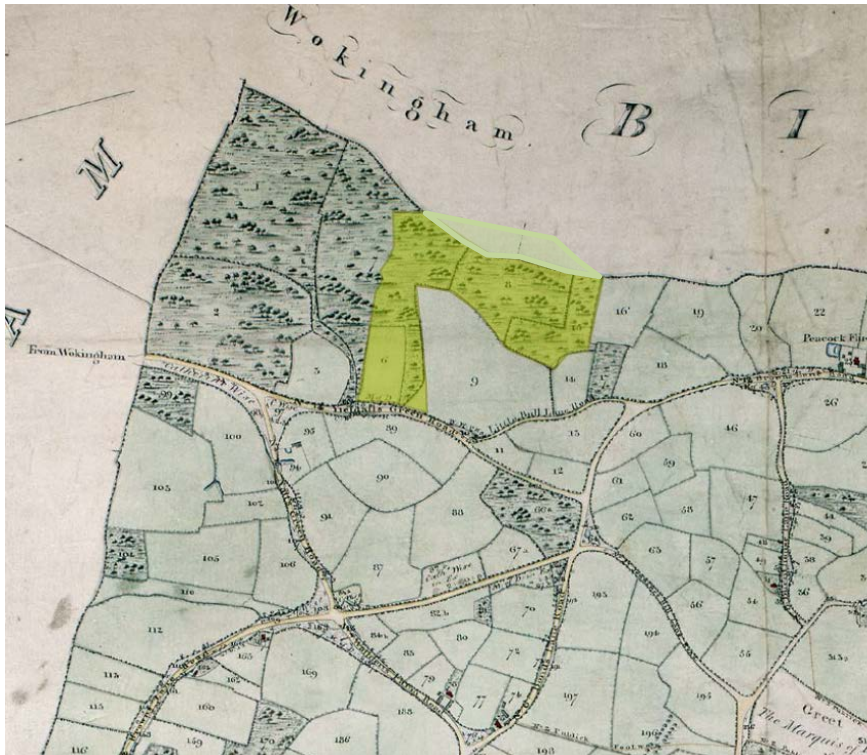
Woodpecker holes have been located in trees. Tawny Owl calls have been heard and Buzzards, Red Kite and Kestrel are regularly seen. Woodcock has been seen.

Surveys that have been undertaken include:

- Phase 1 habitat survey – completed by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy in 2010 on behalf of Bracknell Forest Council
- A botanical survey – completed by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy between June – September 2011
- A bat survey (day time tree inspection and nocturnal activity survey) – completed by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy in June 2011 and between July and August 2011.
- Dormouse nest tube survey and understorey quadrats for signs of dormouse activity were undertaken by Berkshire Mammal Group, BFC rangers and BFC biodiversity officer in 2016 and 2017. This did not reveal any evidence of dormice within Big Wood.
- Walking surveys to decide on footpath route with the least impact were undertaken in 2011, 2012 and 2018 with BSG Ecology and Nike Design Ltd, Natural England and John Wenman Ecological Consultancy together with representatives from BFC:

2.1.9 Archaeology & Heritage

The woodland is part of ancient, semi-rural woodland that covered the whole area, and would have been in continual use for over 400 years.



The extent of the Big Wood Sang overlaid on the 1817 Enclosure Map of the Parish of Easthampstead. The map shows an area free from tree cover which today currently has pine plantation. On old deeds this is recorded as “monastery allotments”.

The site was purchased from Alice Gough Memorial Homes in 2009.

2.1.10 Recreational uses and recreational routes

Big Wood has not been opened for use by the public since it was purchased by Bracknell Forest Council in 2009. Once enhanced as a SANG, the main site uses will be walking and dog walking. The site is located close to Binfield FP15. This links Binfield to the north with Peacock Meadows, and via other public footpaths to Jennett’s Park, Easthampstead Park, Gardeners Green and Great Hollands. Pedestrian and cycle routes set in green corridors in Jennett’s Park link Big Wood via Peacock Meadows to Tarman’s Copse (SANG) and Jennett’s Hill.

2.1.12 Interpretation & events

There is no existing site information or signage provided for Big Wood.

2.2 Legal and Planning Framework

2.2.1 Land ownership

Big Wood is owned by Bracknell Forest Council. The freehold was transferred to the council by Alice Gough Memorial Homes in 2009. See site plan 4.1.

2.2.2 Fences & hedges

The northern boundary consists of chain-link fencing and post and wire fencing along the top of the railway cutting maintained by Network Rail. The western boundary with Oakwood

Kennels consists of post and wire (including barbed wire) and sporadic tree / hedgerow planting. There are a number of access points currently between the Kennels and Big Wood, such as breaks in the fence and a wooden gate. The boundaries with Peacock Meadows consist of temporary post and wire fences to allow natural regeneration of the woodland edge to take place. This may be removed or reviewed when the woodland edge is sufficiently established. Some boundary fencing will remain between Peacock Meadows and Big Wood in order to prevent the formation of multiple desire-line pathways into the woodland, which would have a damaging effect on the ground flora.

2.2.3 Site furniture

There is no existing site furniture

2.2.4 Byelaws

There are no byelaws in force at this site.

2.2.5 Designations

Big Wood is designated in part as Ancient Woodland (Natural England & TVERC survey), and also as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) to reflect its importance for biodiversity at a county level.

There is a Woodland TPO no 1/1963 covering the whole of the site.

2.3 Resource Evaluation

Big Wood is of value for nature conservation as reflected by its designation. The wooded character of the site provides an attractive atmosphere for visitors whilst including some more open areas of bog, scrub and woodland edge habitats.

Accessibility

An assessment of the site's capacity to attract visitors away from the SPA was made based upon the SPA open space standards agreed with Natural England.

2.4 Potential constraints and Issues

- Sensitive visitor management will be required to protect habitats designated as LWS and Ancient Woodland.
- Dog fouling is a common issue at dog walking sites and will require action to educate users and improve behaviour.
- Trip hazards and root zone damage.
- Fires such as camp fires. Risk of spread, damage to trees and to ground flora.
- Tree management for safety in vicinity of path network and outer edges.

- Low risk of some flooding in 100 year storm events.
- Conifer plantation trees all maturing at the same time.
- Noise from adjacent kennels (barking)

2.5 Management Objectives

The following summarises the policy priorities of most relevance for the site. These are in addition to the primary objective of this Open Space Management Plan, which is to enhance alternative green space to divert visitors from using the SPA.

2.5.1 Bracknell Forest Council six strategic themes

- Value for money
- A strong and resilient economy
- People have the life skills and education opportunities they need to thrive
- People live active and healthy lifestyles
- A clean, green, growing and sustainable place
- Strong, safe, supportive and self-reliant communities

2.5.3 Site-based Objectives

Bracknell Forest Council has the following site objectives for Big Wood:

- A. To provide a high quality recreation resource.
- B. To manage and enhance the biodiversity and landscape value of the site.
- C. To manage, protect and enhance ancient woodland

2.6 Management Strategies

These are based on the existing management plan for Big Wood which was part of planning application 12/00993/OUT:

This original management plan was prepared by BSG Ecology for Nike Design Ltd. It should be noted that the SANG provision for residential development at Amen Corner South planned in 2012 has changed. Big Wood is no longer allocated to Amen Corner South and is now proposed as a strategic SANG.

The overall aim stated in the BSG Ecology report was:

- To create green space that is both attractive to public visitors and protects and builds upon the existing biodiversity interest. This will be delivered by meeting a

series of objectives relevant to both SANGs provision and the maintenance / enhancement of biodiversity as indicated in the following sections.

SANGs objectives:

Feature type	Requirements
Access	A series of appropriate access points are required to cater for target visitor type/origin
	Access within the SANG should be largely unrestricted
	Need to have adequate provision for estimated visitor numbers
Car park(s)	Must be safe and easily accessible
	Need clear sign posting
	A choice of routes should be provided
Footpaths	A circular walk of 2.3 to 2.5km should be possible
	At least one circular walk should start from and end at a car park
	Needs to be user-friendly and well maintained but should remain unsurfaced for the majority of their length
	Must be free from unpleasant intrusions (e.g. sewage smells, etc.)
Overall SANGs / signage and advertising	Should be clearly signposted and/or advertised in some way
	Should have leaflets and/or website advertising location to potential users

In addition to the above, as least one 'desirable' feature must be provided (from a checklist of 5 options). Two of these will be provided by the Big Wood SANG:

- A gently undulating topography; and
- Signage indicating the SANG layout and route availability at access points.

Biodiversity objectives:

Biodiversity objectives have been established with reference to:

- The existing ecological interest of Big Wood; and
- Current or historical management practice

Key ecological receptors have been identified with the objectives developed in order to maintain, enhance or reduce their status within the site as appropriate.

Receptor	Objective
Woodland bird species	Maintain and enhance current species diversity and population
Bat species	Maintain and enhance current species diversity and population
Badgers	Maintain availability of foraging habitat and protect from disturbance / interference
Bracken	Reduce current extent and cover in select areas to create more useable open space and increase diversity of ground flora
Woodland ground flora	Maintain current extent and species diversity. Encourage natural regeneration /

	re-establishment in areas currently dominated by bracken
Deadwood habitat	Increase provision of deadwood habitat in appropriate areas to create new habitat for invertebrates and other small fauna and fungi
Semi-natural broadleaved woodland	Maintain current species diversity, encourage healthy ecosystem through natural regeneration and increase structural diversity in key areas
Coniferous plantation habitat	Reduction of dominance of coniferous trees and promote recovery of semi-natural broadleaved woodland habitat

3.0 Site Proposals for SPA Mitigation

The measures within this plan were identified by using the Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) assessment checklist included in section 6 of this plan. This sets out criteria which are both essential and desirable in achieving the primary aim of providing alternative green space to divert visitors from using the SPA. The intention of these SANGs is to avoid and mitigate the impacts of recreation arising from new residential development, by preventing an increase in visitor pressure on the SPA.

As a result, the proposed works are in addition to existing management objectives and general upgrading of the site. The enhancements to these alternative areas of open space aim to replicate features which have been found to draw visitors to the SPA and improve access alongside enhancement of the sites' natural qualities.

The attached spreadsheet in section 7 lists these works and provides a breakdown of the costs of each element. A selection of the main works is also shown on the annotated site map. The proposals are intended to continue the informal nature of Big Wood whilst providing easy access and information. The proposed works are as follows:

3.1 Information and Interpretation

Interpretation panels will be provided at main access points to Big Wood and also at the existing car park in Peacock Meadows. Information will include:

- A map of the SANG area and footpath routes available
- 'You are here' indicator
- Management responsibility and contact details
- Informative details of the ecological interest of the woodlands
- Information on key management techniques, such as coppicing, bracken control or replacing conifers with broadleaved tree species

Entrance signage will be provided to identify the site name and to provide contact details for site management.

Within the SANG itself signage will be minimised to maintain the natural feel of the SANG. Waymarker posts will be used to identify the circular routes available, located at corners, path junctions, start and end, etc. of promoted routes.

3.2 Access

Three new access points will be provided in to Big Wood. The indicative location of these is shown in plans in section 4, these are subject to change depending on onsite practicalities. Each has been selected to link with the existing paths in Peacock Meadows, including Binfield Footpath 15, and to provide a pedestrian route from the Peacock Meadows car park. This connection to Peacock Meadows presents an opportunity to create a large combined and useable open space with a variety of landscape characteristics.

The access to the north east will connect to the existing public footpath near the subway under the A329. Signposts and site maps will be installed to make visitors aware of the links and route options available within and beyond the site.

New footpaths within the woodland will be constructed with a self-binding gravel finish, such as hoggins, using no-dig techniques where possible to avoid damage to root zones of trees. Some short sections of boardwalk may be installed in the wetter areas to the north of the site, and small timber bridges will span ditches where paths cross these. The creation of the footpaths will encourage visitors to the woodland to keep to specific routes and thereby help to reduce potential damage to the woodland habitat, particularly the native ground flora.

Constraints to the footpath layout include features that could be deemed unsightly, e.g. large pylons, or areas close to the road/rail corridor that are likely to be noisy, and also buffer zones required around badger setts or near ancient trees. Routes therefore avoid these features as much as possible, although close proximity to pylons cannot be avoided altogether.

The existing tree belt along the northern boundary with the railway cutting will be strengthened with new native species tree and shrub planting to reduce the visual and noise impact of the railway.

3.3 Furniture

New site furniture will enhance visitors' use of the sites as well as providing a more welcoming and attractive appearance to the area. Specially commissioned carved timber benches will be created to compliment the woodland setting. In addition bins will be installed and a sculpture trail.

3.4 Habitat Management

Proposed management and maintenance of the woodland habitats will lead to enhancement of the woodland through natural regeneration, the reduction of less desirable plant species and by creating increased structural diversity.

1. **Baseline wildlife surveys** to log the impact of increased visitor use, ensure conservation management practices are working well and that there is no adverse impacts from increased footfall and dog walking on site.

2. **Tree management** to ensure safety of users on principal and secondary paths is important. This will include thinning of trees, scalloping woodland edges and rotational coppicing of selected broadleaved trees to open up gaps in the crown cover, encouraging woodland floor and understorey flora to flourish. This will be combined with the retention of standing dead timber where it is safe to do so (monoliths). Tree planting will also be a significant work stream, with boundary edges next to the railway and dog kennels in particular planted, along with planting in the current pine plantation area. Trees to be sourced and grown within the UK and suitable for this mix of woodland. Suitable trees include: Pedunculate Oak, Silver birch, Hazel, Alder, Aspen, Wild Service Tree, Rowan, Hawthorn, Elder and Holly.
3. **Wildlife features** such as log piles, stag beetle loggeries, wildlife friendly boxes or homes to be installed within different areas of the sites to improve opportunities for biodiversity.
4. **Varied habitat improvements** such as creating ponds and wetland scrapes in naturally damp areas and grassland improvements in areas dominated by bracken.

3.5 Implementation

3.5.1 Funding

Funding for the proposed works as costed in section 7 will come from new residential development in Bracknell Forest borough in order to avoid harm to the SPA, as set out in the SPA SPD. This determines the contributions required from development in order to avoid adverse impacts. A proportion of the total amount payable under legal agreement will go towards open space enhancement measures and ongoing management associated with these measures as detailed within this plan. These measures will ensure the site is suitable as an alternative to the SPA and will attract new residents away from the SPA.

3.5.2 Prioritising Works

Implementation of the proposed works will be prioritised in the following order (unless deemed inappropriate due to other site works going on at that time):

1. Baseline wildlife surveys and path route construction and provision of links to access points, including waymarking and removal of Corsican Pine to allow path installation.
2. Tree and site safety works
3. Information and interpretation provision
4. Other works (including habitat management and bracken control)

The timing of works will relate to planning approvals and the payment of contributions.

3.5.3 Monitoring

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that planning obligations are implemented or enforced in an efficient and transparent way, in order to ensure that contributions are spent on their intended purpose and that the associated development contributes to the sustainability of the area. This will require monitoring by local planning authorities through the use of standardised systems to ensure that information on the implementation of planning obligations is readily available to the local authority, developer

and members of the public. Regular reports on the monitoring information will also be provided to Natural England.

To meet these requirements, monitoring will demonstrate how the spending of contributions on enhancements to an open space site link to specific developments within its catchment area. This will also ensure the capacity of the open space, as calculated in the SPA SPD, is not exceeded and the enhancement works are effective in attracting new visitors from the SPA.

A proportion of the funding obtained through S106 agreements will provide additional staffing and long term maintenance of the SANGs (see SPA SPD). In addition, resources will be provided to ensure the full package of avoidance and mitigation measures are monitored to ensure their continued effectiveness.

3.6 Consultation

This plan has been developed in consultation with Natural England. Work has been led by the Bracknell Forest Council Parks & Countryside Service including the Biodiversity Officer and Site Ranger.

3.7 Conclusion

The measures within this plan were identified by using the SANG assessment checklist (see section 6) as being necessary to attract existing users from the SPA and encourage new residents to visit the enhanced area of open space in preference to the SPA. These works are in addition to existing management objectives and general upgrading of the sites.

The works will enhance Big Wood promoting it as an open space that provides a range of conditions for visitors of all abilities. The site will be promoted to local residents and new residents through targeted publicity as an attractive alternative to the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.

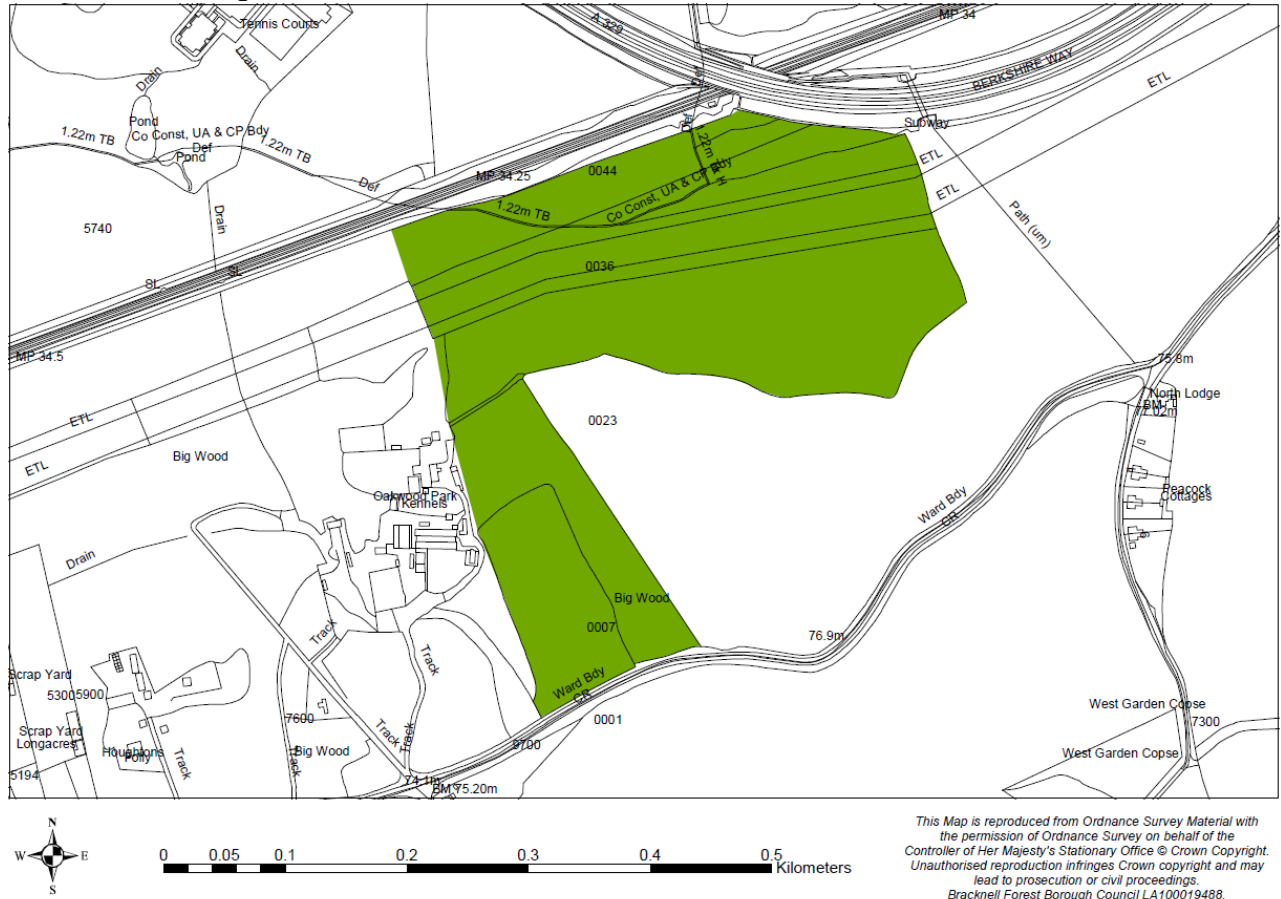
Alongside the capital programme, day to day management is needed to sustain these improvements and ensure that any increased use of the sites continues to be attractive to visitors.

As a component of a wider package of measures the works detailed within this plan will avoid the adverse impacts of recreation arising from new residential development in Bracknell Forest on the SPA and enable sustainable development within the Borough.

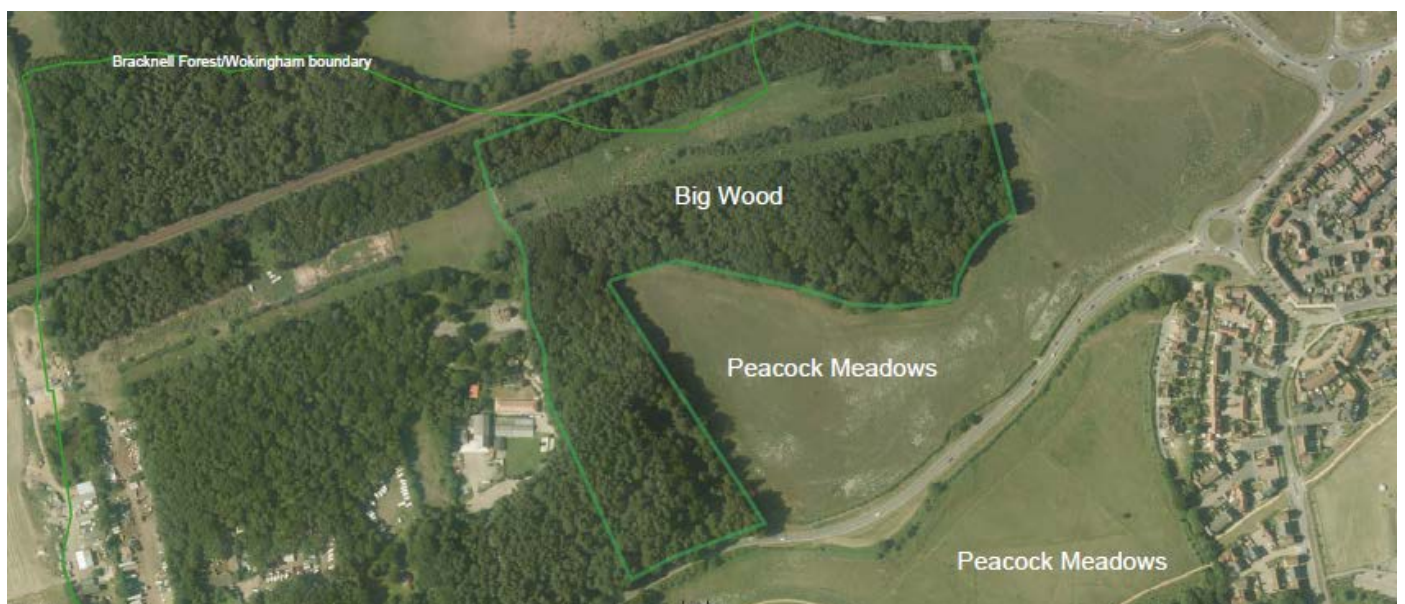
4.0 Site Plans:

4.1 Site Plan – Big Wood (land ownership)

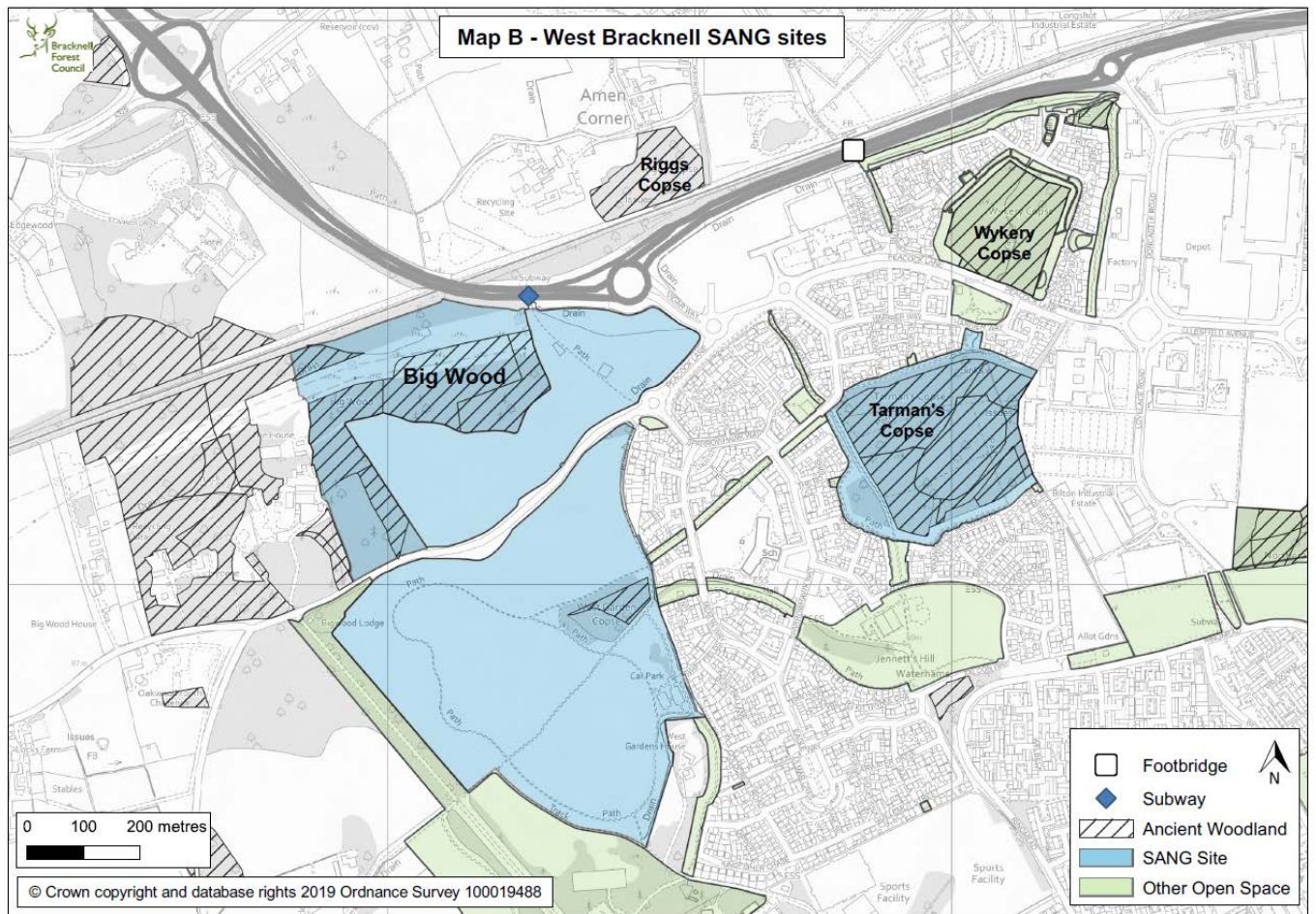
The area shaded green shows land transferred to Bracknell Forest Council in 2009.



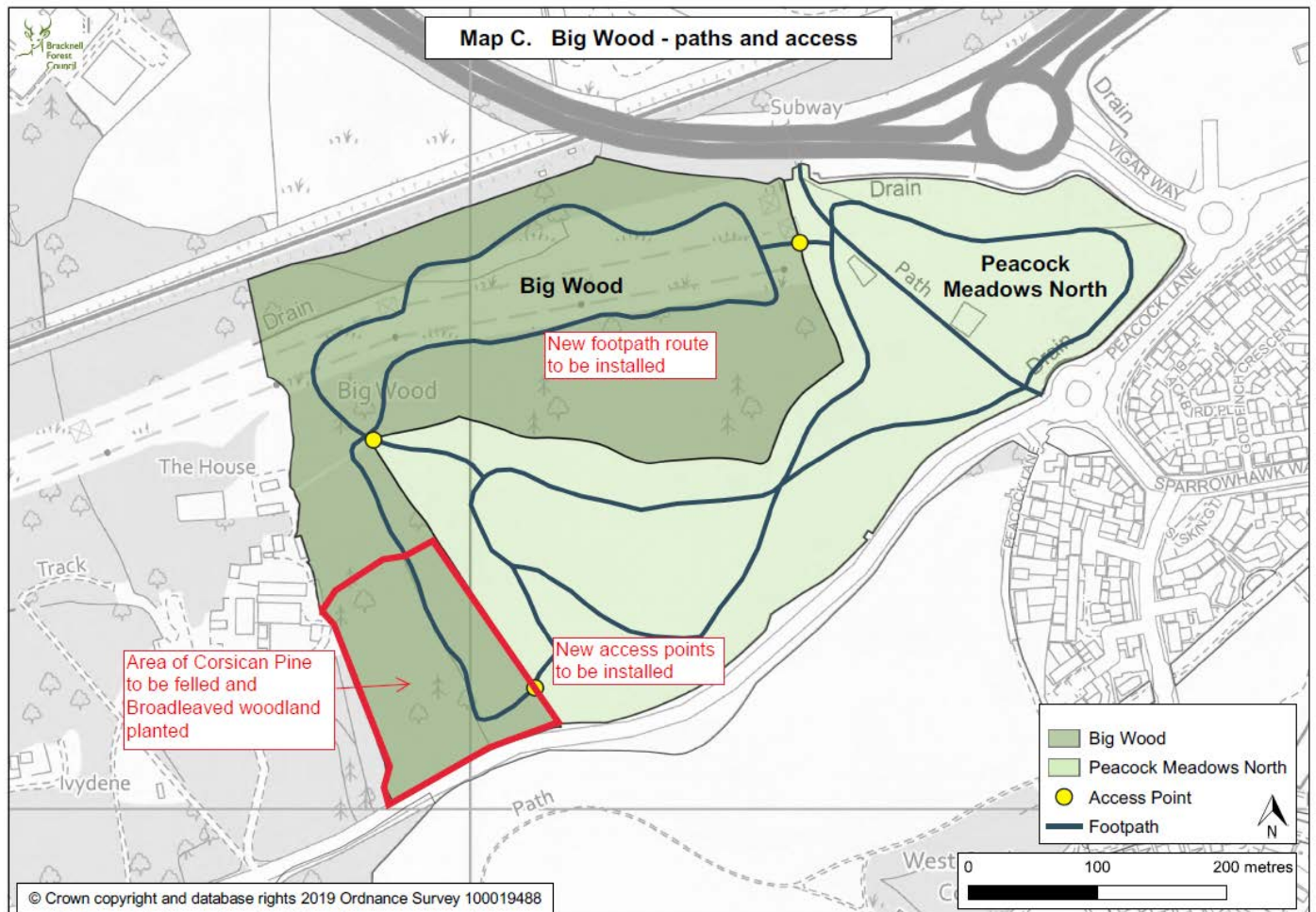
4.2 Aerial photograph of Big Wood



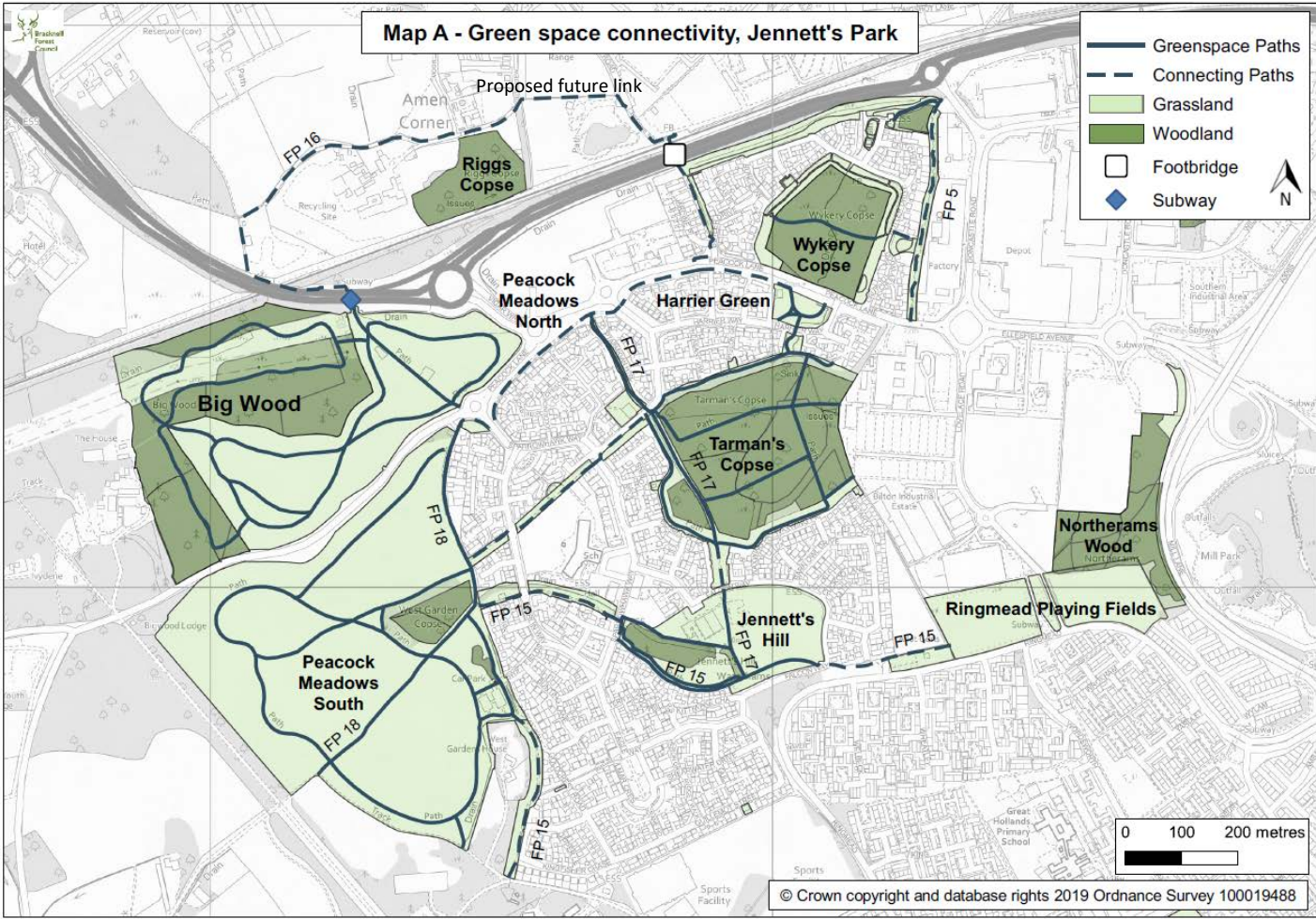
4.3 Site Map - West Bracknell SANG's



4.4 Site Plan – Big Wood Proposed SPA Mitigation Works



4.5 SANG linking paths plan



5.0 MONITORING PROGRAMME

Ref	Management and maintenance operations	Frequency / timing
1	Biodiversity surveys and monitoring	
	Initial baseline surveys will be undertaken	Relevant timing for species / habitat
2	Existing Woodland	
	Dead, diseased and dangerous wood to be made safe from at least 5m to both sides of footpaths in order to protect the public from falling branches and/or trees.	Safety works: Ongoing.
	Selective pruning of branches of trees that overhang the paths. Overhead clearance to be 2.4m above ground level.	Ongoing
	Where appropriate and without compromising safety, existing dead stems shall be left in situ to provide wildlife habitat.	Ongoing
	Cut deadwood logs should be used to create log habitat piles. Stag beetle loggeries should also be created by setting groups of logs vertically, partly buried in the ground.	Ongoing
	Haloing / thinning of trees around veteran oaks to allow long term viability, gently encourage more light.	Autumn / Winter
	Scalping of woodland edge – to increase shelter, warmth and variety of edge habitat for invertebrates.	Autumn / Winter
	Conifer plantation is all of a similar age and will, in the near future become a large maintenance and safety concern for site users and passing traffic. The plantation is also less beneficial to wildlife than native broadleaved woodland. Felling of the pine plantation of around 90-100% is proposed, retaining existing broadleaved trees where possible and replanting with native broadleaved tree whips. A felling licence and TPO application are required. Bracken and holly control will need to be implemented once pine has been felled.	Autumn / Winter
3	Existing ground flora	
	Condition of ground flora to be monitored and action taken to avoid damage and decline. Actions could include using dead-hedging to create barriers to discourage development of desire-line paths, for example through stands of Bluebells. Regeneration	Ongoing

	should be encouraged where the canopy is opened up as a result of coppicing operations.	
4	Hazel coppice	
	Hazel will be coppiced on rotation with monitoring of re-growth from deer browsing. If an initial trial is unsuccessful. Review if this is suitable. Hazel coppice products were traditionally used for wattles, binders for hedgelaying, and potential economic uses should be found for the timber produced.	Autumn / Winter Monitor coppice stools for grazing damage to new shoots and provide protection as necessary.
5	Clearance of ditches	
	Ditches and existing and new culverts to be cleared out and de-silted as necessary. Repair erosion to sides of ditches following storm events if necessary.	Site inspection should identify work required, to be undertaken within 1 year.
6	Woodland edge planting and regeneration zone	
	<p>Woodland edge planting in buffer/regeneration zones on Peacock Meadows boundary and close to the railway line and dog kennels. Monitor growth of native planting. Replace failed plants in autumn/early winter planting season where density of remaining plants will be insufficient.</p> <p>A fruit tree trail will be planted to encourage fruit both for wildlife and people to enjoy.</p> <p>After year five, assess if establishing plants need to be thinned to reduce crown competition and allow trees/shrubs to achieve a healthy natural growth form.</p> <p>Carry out selective pruning to remove dead/damaged/diseased material, and carry out formative pruning to achieve desired height range, and prevent excessive growth overhanging paths.</p> <p>Control of bracken is proposed to increase accessibility of site and increase floral diversity. This will also be required around newly planted trees within the pine plantation.</p>	<p>Autumn / Winter</p> <p>In accordance with Natural England guidelines. July onwards.</p>
7	Site furniture	
	Any vandalised or accidentally damaged furniture will be replaced as soon as possible.	Work undertaken within 6 months of notification.
	Site furniture to be checked for structural issues and health and safety requirements and made good as necessary.	Annual site inspections. Repair/replacement undertaken within 6 months of notification. Unsafe furniture to be made safe or decommissioned within 14 working days of notification.
	Interpretation boards and directional signage: Replace damaged/vandalised boards as soon as possible. Offensive graffiti should be removed within	Replace damaged boards and signs as soon as possible. Remove offensive

	5 working days of being reported. Interpretation boards should be reviewed every five years to ensure information and presentation is up to date.	graffiti within 14 working days of reporting. Five year review of information on boards and signage/waymarkers.
8	Footpaths	
	Undertake survey for most appropriate route through the woodland. Apply for allowances to thin trees both for TPO (BFC) and a thinning licence to the Forestry Commission.	Prior to footpath installation
	Thin trees and stump treat for footpath and utilise timber either for habitat or for income generation	Autumn / Winter
	Hoggin paths to be constructed through the woodland.	Autumn
	Damage to path surfaces and edgings to be checked and made good as soon as possible.	Annual inspection. Work undertaken within 14 working days or area made safe if health and safety issue, otherwise repairs undertaken within 6 months of notification.
	Boardwalks/timber bridges. Carry out repairs to keep boardwalks and bridges safe for use. Check surfaces for slipperiness and r	Annual inspection. Carry out repairs
9	Litter picking, bins and fly-tipping	
	Clean litter from site. Monitor level of littering to determine appropriate frequency of litter picks. Picking should be targeted more frequently around pathways, entrances and outer boundaries.	Frequency to be determined following monitoring of litter levels and review arrangements 6 monthly.
	Litter bins should be emptied weekly, and immediate surroundings litter picked. Performance specification should be that bins will never be more than 75% full.	At least weekly, but more often if monitoring shows bins are filled more quickly.
	Dog fouling should be monitored to check if specific clearing operations are needed, in conjunction with educational information and appropriate signage. Consider one-off operations to spray fouling with biodegradable paint as part of educational initiative followed by clean-up and further monitoring.	Response and frequency to be agreed following monitoring. Review arrangements 6 monthly.
	Fly-tipping should be removed as soon as possible. Evidence of source should be gathered if possible during clean-up operation. Cordon off prior to removal if necessary for health and safety reasons.	Removal should be within 14 working days of notification.

6.0 Site quality checklist

This checklist is intended to help identify what is already present on the site and what needs to be developed for the SANGS to be suitable.

Must/should have – these criteria are essential for all SANGS			
	Criteria	Current	Future
1	Parking on all sites larger than 4ha (unless the site is intended for use within 400m only)	None	Improved links and signage from the car park at Peacock Meadows
2	Circular walk of 2.3-2.5km	None	The circular walk from the car park in Peacock Meadows to Big Wood is 2.9km. A main circular route within Big Wood and part of Peacock Meadows of 1.5 km will be promoted and waymarked to enjoy all the main features of the site. Secondary circuits will also be waymarked, together with longer walks to other nearby SANGs and public open spaces. For example, walking from Tarman's Copse to Bigwood and back on a different route gives a walking route of approx. 4.3 km.
3	Car parks easily and safely accessible by car and clearly sign posted	Not currently provided	Parking to be provided at Peacock Meadows as part of West Bracknell Super SANG and clearly signposted.
4	Access points appropriate for particular visitor use the SANGS is intended to cater for	None	All principal and secondary entrance points to be signed and upgraded to allow disabled access where applicable. Paths within woodland to be surfaced. Approach paths are on mown grass (including public footpath across Peacock Meadows).
5	Safe access route on foot from nearest car park and/or footpath	No existing public access	Improved links and signage from car park to site and routes around network of sites including using existing underpass under A329, foot/cycle paths and green corridors.
6	Circular walk which starts and finishes at the car park	Not currently provided.	Improved links and signage from car parks to site and routes around network of sites.

			There will be a circular route to the Big Wood SANG from Peacock Meadows car park with the option of a different return route.
7	Perceived as safe – no tree and scrub cover along part of walking routes	The site is predominantly woodland	Paths in buffer zones and green corridors provide a more open alternative to walking through woodland. Woodland management works to enhance safety and security for users.
8	Paths easily used and well maintained but mostly unsurfaced	A network of surfaced paths in hoggin or comparable self-binding gravel	Informal surfaced paths provide good access in all seasons.
9	Perceived as semi-natural with little intrusion of artificial structures	From some parts of the site, electricity pylons are visible.	Benches, bins and signage to be added to enhance visitor experience but remain in-keeping with environment.
10	If larger than 12 ha then a range of habitats should be present	N/A (10.92 ha)	N/A
11	Access unrestricted – plenty of space for dogs to exercise freely and safely off the lead	No access currently	Access unrestricted other than by density of trees. Some clearings and more open areas.
12	No unpleasant intrusions (e.g. sewage treatment smells etc.)	Existing electricity pylons (visual), main line railway (noise) and nearby dog kennels (potential noise)	Promoted circular routes to avoid intrusion of pylons in views where possible. Planting to be thickened up along northern boundary with railway land embankment, and also along western boundary with kennel business.
13	Clearly sign posted or advertised in some way	Not currently promoted	Entrance name boards and interpretation boards, plus waymarked routes from Peacock Meadows, from public footpaths and from green corridors in Jennett's Park paths crossing the A329 and railway.
14	Leaflets or website advertising their location to potential users (distributed to homes and made available at entrance points and car parks)	None currently	New BFC and Thames Basin Heaths Partnership webpages for all sites. New site leaflet(s) to be provided to all residents served by the SANG.

Desirable features			
	Criteria	Current	Future
15	Can dog owners take dogs from the car park to the SANGS safely off the lead	No car parking provision	Walking from car parking provision will involve one road crossing between parking and Big Wood, and depending on route taken, walking along a length of public footpath on a private road, so not suitable for dogs off lead.
16	Gently undulating topography	The land is all within $\pm 5\text{m}$ of the 75m contour, rising gently to the south towards the 80m highpoint in Peacock Meadows (outside Big Wood).	Being mainly wooded, the gentle slope is not obvious, and the site feels relatively flat.
17	Access points with signage outlining the layout of the SANGS and routes available to visitors	None currently	Interpretation panels with maps of the site for orientation will be provided at main entrances. Routes within the site and longer walking routes between sites in the West Bracknell Super-SANG will be provided.
18	Naturalistic space with areas of open (non-wooded) countryside and areas of dense and scattered trees and shrubs. Provision of open water is desirable	Site is predominantly woodland, with scrub/bracken under line of pylons. No open water, although there are seasonally wet ditches.	Wooded site linked to paths through Peacock Meadows so that the combination of sites provides variety of more open landscapes and a range of characteristics.
19	Focal point such as a view point or monument within the SANGS	No focal point currently	No focal point within Big Wood, but adjacent Peacock Meadows will have public art on high point. Potential to extend Green Man trail from Tarman's Copse SANG.

7.0 Costings

	Quantity	Description	Cost per item	Total Cost
Information and interpretation				
Interpretation boards, including at a link site (Peacock Meadows South)	3	Design, printing, delivery & installation	£5480	£15,840
Site name signs	3	Mix of standard and large P&C signs at pedestrian entrances + installation	£350	£1050
Site directional signage (e.g. way markers, fingerposts, roadside)	Allowance	Design, production & installation		£6000
Webpage & leaflet design and production	Allowance	SANG walk leaflet and webpage creation		£2000
Access				
Boundary and habitat security		Measures to ensure boundaries are adequately secure for public enjoyment. Measures to ensure vulnerable habitats are adequately protected from disturbance. Examples of type of works include fencing, dead hedging, tree/shrub planting	£20/m	£32,000
Entrance works	6 days	Create pedestrian and vehicular entrance points, clear vegetation	£300/day	£1800
Pedestrian access	Approx. 1,600 linear metres	Examples include new paths, boardwalk or bridges. Circular route – approx. 1,600 linear metres of hoggin surfaced path, mainly no dig (£35/lin m)	£35/lin m + extra for bridges etc.	£61,000

Furniture				
Bespoke seating	3	Creation, delivery and installation	£1890.00	£5670
Bins	1	Bin, delivery & installation	£400 + installation	£500
Sculpture trail	Allowance	Design, create and install a sculpture trail		£8000
Habitat management				
Species / habitat surveys	Allowance	Baseline species and habitat surveys		£5000
Woodland management, general	Allowance	Examples of work include pine removal, haloing, scalloping, tree safety works		£27,000
Tree / shrub planting	Allowance			£13,800
Meadow creation / enhancement	Allowance	Improve grassland areas currently dominated by bracken		£3000
Invasive and non-native species control (including bracken)	Allowance			£10,000
Wetland creation and improvements (e.g. pond creation, scrapes, ditch works)				£4000
Installation (e.g. loggeries, log piles, wildlife boxes)				£3000
Total				£199,660
Inflation allowance		In order to accommodate inflation for enhancement work carried out over 15 years, an inflation calculator is incorporated. Please refer to table below on page 26 for detail.		£214,699.45

All costing excluding VAT

Inflation Rate	1.9%	May 2019 CPI																	
Initial Cost	199660																		
	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15			
Project Completion Rate		40.00%	30.00%	2.31%	2.31%	2.31%	2.31%	2.31%	2.31%	2.31%	2.31%	2.31%	2.31%	2.31%	2.31%	2.28%			
Annual Cost (excl Inflation)		79,864.00	59,898.00	4,612.15	4,612.15	4,612.15	4,612.15	4,612.15	4,612.15	4,612.15	4,612.15	4,612.15	4,612.15	4,612.15	4,612.15	4,552.25			199,660.00
Annual Cost Incl Inflation		81,381.42	£62,195.75	£4,880.06	£4,972.79	£5,067.27	£5,163.55	£5,261.65	£5,361.63	£5,463.50	£5,567.30	£5,673.08	£5,780.87	£5,890.71	£6,002.63	£6,037.24			214,699.45

8.0 Glossary

Core Strategy DPD	Document within the Local Development Framework which sets out strategic development proposals until 2026.
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
SANG	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace. (plural SANGs)
SPA	Special Protection Area. Designated under the EU Directive 79/409 of the Conservation of Wild Birds.
SPA SPD	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document.
TPO	Tree Preservation Order

9.0 References

Bracknell Forest Borough Council (2018) Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Supplementary Planning Document (SPA SPD). *

Bracknell Forest Borough Council (2011) Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment - Site Allocations Development Plan Document Draft Submission. *

Bracknell Forest Borough Council (2006) Core Strategy Development Plan Document.*

*Documents available to download from www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk.