

**Ambarrow Hill and Court
Open Space Management Plan**



**for
Thames Basin Heaths
Special Protection Area (SPA) Mitigation Works**

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1 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. As a result, the SPA Technical Background Document to the Core Strategy (hereafter referred to as SPA TBD) was produced, which identifies measures to avoid and mitigate adverse effects arising from proposed new residential development. The SPA TBD provides an integrated, holistic package of measures which includes both on-site and off-site measures to protect the SPA in addition to making other areas of open space more attractive. A summary of the avoidance and mitigation measures, which will ensure that there will be no adverse effect upon the integrity of the SPA, can be found in section 28 of the Technical Background Document (June 2007). These comprise:

- Bespoke solutions for strategic sites
- Enhancements to existing open space
- Visitor access management on the SPA
- Restrictions on development within 400m
- Education
- No net loss of supporting habitats
- Restrictions on pet ownership where appropriate.

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 TBD. This Open Space Management Plan is one of a series of plans which solely deal with the implementation of one of the specific measures; enhancing an existing area open space.

The package of avoidance and mitigation measures will be funded through the collection of financial contributions from new development. Therefore, a proportion of this contribution will fund the specific works to enhance identified areas of open space in line with the SPA TBD, as set out in the remainder of this document.

1.2 Open Space Management Plans

This report comprises an open space management plan which expands upon the enhancements works required within the SPA TBD. This will also enable avoidance and mitigation measures to be closely linked to Section 106 contributions from specific developments.

1.3 Identification of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS)

The SPA TBD went through an extensive process to identify areas of open space as suitable alternatives to the SPA. Section 20 and Appendix 8 of the SPA TBD provide a rationale for the identification of areas of open space and Appendix 9 makes an appraisal of the necessary quality enhancements.

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

1.4 Ambarrow Hill and Court as an alternative to the SPA

After considering the evidence, the SPA TBD concluded that:

“These sites are semi-natural and provide a good alternative to the SPA, indicated by visitors who visit both sites.”

Natural England has agreed that Ambarrow Hill and Ambarrow Court can be used as a SANGS stating in their letter dated 12th January 2007, that *“this site appears to have potential for improvement.”*

The SANGS assessment checklist is used in section 5 to demonstrate how Ambarrow Hill and Court are suitable as an alternative to the SPA and how enhancements will enable their use as such. As Ambarrow Court is designated as a Wildlife Heritage Site (WHS) special attention will be given to ensuring that the provision for increased visitor use will include opportunities to enhance the ecological value of the site.

2 Site Management Statement

2.1 Description

2.1.1 Introduction

This SANG comprises Ambarrow Court owned by Bracknell Forest Council and managed by the Parks & Countryside Service and Ambarrow Hill which is owned and managed by the National Trust. These are immediately adjacent to each other and have no formal boundary allowing free public access between the two green spaces.

2.1.2 Location

Ambarrow Hill and Ambarrow Court are located in the south west of Bracknell Forest Borough, within the parish of Sandhurst to the west of Sandhurst town.

OS grid reference: SU 824 628.

Area: 13.73 hectares

2.1.3 Adjacent land

The east side of the sites is bounded by the Reading to Gatwick railway line. Adjacent to the south of Ambarrow Court is a small site named Ambarrow Crescent owned and managed by Bracknell Forest Council. Beyond this are the residential houses of Little Sandhurst. The western boundary of the sites is defined by Wokingham Road (A321) linking Sandhurst and Wokingham.

2.1.4 Access

Visitors access both of the sites via a car park off Wokingham Road (A321). There is some informal parking along Ambarrow Corner. Pedestrian accesses are also located at the car park, from the north at Ambarrow Corner, along a Public Right of Way (Sandhurst footpath 9) on the boundary between the two sites and from the south off Wokingham Road, next to Maybrick Close. Ambarrow Court provides an accessible route which enables disabled users (including wheelchairs) to make a circular route around the site.

2.1.5 Geology & soils

Ambarrow Hill forms a prominent hill in the area whilst Ambarrow Court is located on the lower slopes of this feature. Ambarrow Court lies on the Barton Bed deposit on higher ground merging to Bracklesham Beds lower down. The soil has high fertility levels in places which indicates past cultivation of the soil. The area where an Edwardian house was once located contains rubble which is more alkaline in nature in contrast to the underlying soil (see section 2.1.9).

2.1.6 Topography

Ambarrow Court slopes from north to south between 75 m and 60 m. Ambarrow Hill itself rises to above 90m.

2.1.7 Drainage & flooding

Surface water from the railway line is passed down an open ditch towards the stream at the south end of the site where it flows away to the southwest. A cut ditch has been dug to collect this water and bring it into the site, through the internal system of ditches, pools and ponds. Historically, this area was seasonally extremely wet but seems to have dried out in recent times. Some drains left over from the military

occupation remain but exact locations are very difficult to pinpoint (see section 2.1.9.).

2.1.8 Landscape & views

Ambarrow Hill forms a prominent feature in the local landscape. Whilst on the hill, the dense tree cover limits views to the surrounding areas. Ambarrow Court is relatively level and is enclosed by the woodland.

2.1.9 Wildlife and biodiversity

Ambarrow Court is dominated by woodland but contains many habitats including ancient woodland, hazel and birch coppice, marsh, ponds and a meadow. Some notable plants include the bluebells and associated spring woodland flowers, Cuckoo Flower and Yellow Rattle in the meadow and a number of mature specimen trees (Cedar and Douglas Fir).

Much of the site was managed as a Victorian country estate and remnants of this are still visible mainly through the amount of large specimen trees and other plants such as Bamboo.

Ambarrow Hill was previously plantation which has matured and thinned to form open mixed woodland.

Rhododendron, laurel and various other invasive shrubs have expanded their range on the site to the detriment of the native wildlife.

2.1.10 Archaeology & Heritage

The following information was supplied by Babtie (now Jacobs Babtie) using information contained on the Sites and Monuments Record about the sites:

“originally within the large area of heathland that covered the sandy plateau area between Finchampstead and Sunningdale until it was developed in the 19th and 20th centuries for woodland plantations. Ambarrow Hill may be the site of a Bronze Age round barrow, but is probably just a natural gravel hill”.

Much of the Ambarrow Court was once managed as a Victorian country estate, although the original house of 1855, has since been demolished:

"The pleasure grounds and gardens are delightfully laid out, very well timbered with fine specimen trees and shrubs, with Lawns, Rosery, Flower beds and Borders, large Kitchen Garden...

There is some charming woodland, interspersed with winding walks, and the Terrace on the South-West side leads down a flight of stone steps to a small park, comprising rich Grass Land...."

(From auction brochure of "Ambarrow, Crowthorne, Berks", 1932.)

Following this, in 1940 the Air Ministry moved into the Ambarrow Court, and set up its radio research department. On the lower site, a 100ft wooden tower was erected for experiments on radar and radio frequencies.

Over 300 men and women worked at Ambarrow Court during the MOD's occupation of the site. Pioneering work into radio frequencies, stealth technology, LEDs and lasers was carried out at Ambarrow Court. By 1969 the need for an external research

facility had dwindled and the radio department returned to Farnborough, leaving Ambarrow Court empty.

2.1.11 Recreational uses

The sites are used for informal recreation such as walking and they are popular with local people. At Ambarrow Court, the surfaced paths and accessible routes also encourage disabled users and those with very young children to visit.

2.1.12 Recreational routes

There is a main circular route around Ambarrow Court based on the original military paths and added to by the accessible route. Two main footpaths around the combined sites form a length of 1.5 km. Ambarrow Hill has a number of unsurfaced paths of varying widths around and over the hill that form an interlinking network. An orienteering map of Ambarrow Court has been created for use by local groups and during public events. The sites are joined by a Public Right of Way (Sandhurst footpath 9) which also links to the wider area (see Site Plan) and joins the Ramblers route, a 26mile (41.8km) walk around the borough. In addition, the Public Rights of Way (Sandhurst footpaths 10 and 11) to the east of the sites links to Horseshoe Lake, another SANGS. Bracknell Forest Council is also looking into a small land transfer that will create a link from Ambarrow Court to Ambarrow Crescent.

2.1.13 Interpretation & events

The current site information provision for Ambarrow Hill and Court consists of:

- Two site signs at the car park entrance
- General interpretation board and notice board adjacent to the car park
- Two National Trust site signs at northern entrance points
- Two interpretation panels featuring birds and plants
- Joint webpage on the Bracknell Forest Council website at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/parks.

The Parks and Countryside Service uses the Ambarrow Court as a location in which to hold public events such as guided nature walks.

2.2 Legal and Planning Framework

2.2.1 Land ownership

The Ambarrow Court (8.7 ha) is owned by Bracknell Forest Council and Ambarrow Hill (4.96 ha) is owned by the National Trust.

2.2.2 Fences & hedges

Knee rails have been used to define the car parking area. The boundaries of Ambarrow Court are set beyond the military chain link fencing due to the previous area for patrol. Some remnants of old metal estate fencing also exist. Along the eastern side of the sites, the railway land is lined by wire fencing owned and maintained by Network Rail. Ambarrow Hill is bounded by post and rail fencing.

2.2.3 Site furniture

The following features are located around the sites:

- Height barriers at the car park entrance and at Maybrick Close (Wokingham Road) entrance
- Picnic bench
- 3 Litter bins close to site entrances
- 1 small bridge across a ditch
- Disabled access ramp through woodland area
- 2 picnic benches adjacent to the old site of the house
- 5 seats located adjacent to the surfaced path and at opposite ends of the meadow area
- 3 benches on top of Ambarrow Hill

2.2.4 Byelaws

Ambarrow Hill is covered by National Trust byelaws made in 1965 which cover the protection of trees, vegetation, soils, animals and structures. It also prohibits unauthorised fires, litter, noise, driving, bathing and other undesirable activities. Dogs are allowed entry under proper control.

No site specific byelaws are applied at Ambarrow Court.

2.2.5 Designations

Ambarrow Court is designated a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Wildlife Heritage Site (WHS) to reflect its value to biodiversity and local people.

2.3 Resource Evaluation

Ambarrow Court is of value for nature conservation as reflected by its designations. The woodland theme of the sites provides an attractive atmosphere for visitors whilst including meadow and different woodland habitats.

Visitor surveys carried out as part of the Bracknell Forest SPA Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy in 2006 found the following results:

Visitor Usage

- 52% of visitors use the sites for exercising their dogs, followed by 17% walking and 7% jogging.
- 50% of people used the sites for between 30 minutes and 1 hour indicating that most visitors only visit for a short time.
- 100% of visitors felt safe when visiting the sites
- 61% rated the sites as not busy and 83% would continue to use the sites if visitor numbers doubled.

Visitor Numbers

Total visits per year – 32,000 (existing)

Annual visitors – 190 (using current visitor data)

Potential visitor capacity - 900 (rounded down).

Accessibility

- 76% of visitors arrive at the sites by car followed by 22% on foot and 2% by bicycle.
- 81% of visitors travelled less than 5 kilometres to the sites although an unusually high 7% travelled more than 20 kilometres.
- Average journey time for most visitors was less than 10 minutes.

Appendix 8 of the SPA TBD provides a full assessment of the baseline data and an assessment of the sites' potential to attract people from the SPA. An assessment of the sites' capacity to attract visitors away from the SPA was made based upon existing visitor numbers and the SPA open space standards agreed with Natural England. These calculations are described in more detail in Section 20 of the SPA TBD (July 2007), specifically Table 15.

2.4 Constraints and Issues

- Sensitive visitor management will be required to protect habitats designated as LNR and WHS whilst meeting the SANGS criteria.
- National Trust requires Ambarrow Hill to continue fulfilling its role under the National Trust Act 1907 and subsequent legislation.
- Archaeological features at both sites will need to be treated sensitively in relation to implementing any enhancements.

2.5 Management Objectives

The following provide the overarching, existing management objectives for the sites. 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 medium term objectives

2) To keep our parks, open spaces and leisure facilities accessible and attractive

Linking to:

4) To keep Bracknell clean and green

5) To improve health and well-being within the Borough

2.5.2 Bracknell Forest Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2014

- Priority 1a – Opportunities for everyone
- Priority 2a – Sustainable development
- Priority 2b - Protecting the environment
- Priority 2c – Travelling around the Borough
- Priority 3b – Enjoying life
- Priority 3c – Being & feeling safer

2.5.3 National Trust Objectives

In the strategy “Our Future – join in: Our strategy to 2010 and beyond” the National Trust identifies four themes: Culture and connections, Our natural world, a changing climate and food for thought. Most relevant objectives include:

- foster an appreciation of our history, culture and places in the context of time
- press central and local government and public authorities to value heritage more
- inspire people to take care of the natural world, especially the places and wildlife most local to them
- encourage people to get out into the landscape and enjoy nature, and to nurture wildlife in their own gardens
- partner other organisations to foster and encourage our wildlife – both flora and fauna – at a landscape scale
- work with health practitioners and local
- communities to provide access to ‘green infrastructure’ to foster mental and physical well-being.

2.5.4 Site-based Objectives

Bracknell Forest Council has the following site objectives for Ambarrow Court:

- A. To provide a high quality recreation resource.
- B. To manage and enhance the biodiversity and landscape value of the site.
- C. To develop the site’s strategic importance within the context of the developing BFBC Greenspace Strategy and SPA Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (2007).

2.6 Management Strategies

These are based on the existing management plan for Ambarrow Court only:

2.6.1 Site Maintenance

- A1 To maintain and improve the nature conservation value and interest of the grassland areas.
- A2 To maintain and improve the age and species diversity of the woodland.
- A3 To control any invasive species
- A4 To manage the wetland areas
- A5 Maintain the character of the site by correct management

2.6.2 Visitor Management

- B1 Aim to provide an area open to the public for informal recreation.
- B2 Ensure all access points are usable.
- B3 Ensure all paths are up to the standard set for this site
- B4 Ensure public safety
- B5 Provide related furniture on site where needed
- B6 Provide a site leaflet in conjunction with other BFC leaflets

2.6.3 Education

- C1 Provide an educational resource for schools and colleges
- C2 Provide information and education relating to the sites for the general public

3 Site Proposals for SPA Mitigation

The measures within this plan were identified by using the Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) assessment checklist included in section 5 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 sites. 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 6 lists these works and provides a breakdown of the costs of each element. A selection of the main works are also shown on the annotated site map. The proposals are intended to continue the informal nature of Ambarrow Hill whilst providing easy access and information at Ambarrow Court. The proposed works are as follows:

3.1 Information and Interpretation

- **Small site signs** will be installed at key pedestrian entrances to identify the sites.
- **New site noticeboard and interpretive panel:** to be provided at the main site entrance including a new combined site map of the two sites with a range of routes marked.
- **Fingerposts and waymarkers** linking the two sites and providing a clearly marked route within the more informal areas of Ambarrow Hill and Court. This would need to take into account the potential for underground archaeological features. Fingerposts will also link the SANG with adjacent areas and long distance walks such as the Ramblers Route.
- **SANGS leaflet to promote all sites in the borough and a Site leaflet** to promote use of Ambarrow Hill and Court together and raise awareness of their suitability for visitors including those with dogs. This will also highlight disabled access, biodiversity and archaeological aspects of the sites. Distribution through libraries, the Look Out Discovery Centre and on the website will ensure a wide audience whilst marketing through estate agents will target new residents.

3.2 Access

- At Ambarrow Hill, **archaeological mapping** will be undertaken to identify where features that require protection are located and this will inform the exact location of the circular path at this site.
- **Main entrance:** removal of invasive laurel adjacent to the car park will help improve views into the car park and provide a more welcoming entrance.

- **Existing pedestrian entrances: Vegetation and scrub** clearance around pedestrian entrances to improve visibility into the sites.
- **Paths:** A main circular route of 1.5km will be created and way-marked to join Ambarrow Hill and Court. The current site plan shows an indicative layout which will be agreed with National Trust on site depending on the location of archaeological features.
- **Raise level of southern access entrance (Maybrick Close)** to prevent flooding and direct water into the adjacent ditch.

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.

- New **picnic benches** will be provided at the bird feeding area and within the existing picnic area at Ambarrow Court.
- New **seating** will be provided at strategic points around the sites, to allow visitors to enjoy the visual amenity of the sites and also where rest points may be required. In particular, a bench will be replaced on top of Ambarrow Hill and benches at various points around Ambarrow Court.
- New **bins** will be installed at entrances to Ambarrow Court. These will be combined litter and dog-waste bins in line with the Bracknell Forest practice of using combined bins. Designs will be chosen so as to be in-keeping with the natural theme of the SANG.
- A new **field gate** will be provided at Ambarrow Hill in the north to limit access of vehicles.
- New **accessible kissing gate** will replace the existing gate at the southern pedestrian entrance to improve access for all.
- A **chicane entrance** will be installed at the Public Right of Way entrance to create a sense of entrance.
- **Renewal of accessible ramp** will provide a more stable and well graded route for users through the woodland.
- **Replacement of bridges** over the small ditches within Ambarrow Court will improve access and attractiveness of the sites.
- A new **cycle rack** will be provided at the car park to allow more visitors to arrive by bicycle.

3.5 Habitat Management

Work will be carried out in order to enhance the nature conservation interest of the sites by creating a variety of vegetated areas and habitats for different species.

Vegetation clearance and management will also increase the safety and security of the sites for users.

- **Wildflower planting** within the meadow area will increase biodiversity and aesthetic value of this habitat.
- **Slope restoration** to reduce erosion of Ambarrow Hill and direct users onto key paths whilst protecting the archaeological value of banks and ditches at the site.
- **Tree management** to ensure safety of users on principal and secondary paths.
- **Pond restoration** to excavate a boggy area that previously formed a pond supporting wetland flora that would provide an additional feature in the sites.
- **Invasive plant removal** such as laurel, rhododendron and bamboo that reduce biodiversity value and limit some views within the sites. Some supplementary planting of native tree and shrubs may be required in newly cleared areas to enhance natural regeneration.
- **Wildlife features** such as bat boxes and bird boxes to be installed within different areas of the sites to improve opportunities for biodiversity.

3.6 Implementation

3.6.1 Funding

Funding for the proposed works as costed in section 6 will come from new residential development within the Borough which is likely to have an adverse effect on the SPA, as set out in Chapter 11 of Limiting the Impact of Development Supplementary Planning Document, July 2007 (LID). This states that legal obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act will be entered into before a planning application is determined. A proportion of the total amount payable under this 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 sites are suitable as an alternative to the SPA and will attract new residents away from the SPA.

3.6.2 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. Site entrance and visual works
2. Path and access improvements
3. Information and interpretation provision
4. Other works (including habitat management)

The timing of works will relate to planning approvals and the availability of Section 106 funding. Bracknell Forest Council will seek a lease or annual licence to take on management of Ambarrow Court in agreement with the National Trust.

3.6.3 Monitoring

ODPM Circular 05/2005 on Planning Obligations 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 the requirements of the Circular, 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 TBD, is not exceeded and the enhancement works are effective in attracting new visitors from the SPA.

A proportion of the funding obtained through the S106 agreement will provide additional staffing and long term maintenance of the SANGS (see chapter 11 of LID). In addition, resources will be provided to ensure the full package of avoidance and mitigation measures are monitored to ensure their continued effectiveness. Details of the monitoring and review of the SPA TBD are outlined in Section 29 of the document.

3.7 Consultation

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

3.8 Conclusion

The measures within this plan were identified by using the SANGS assessment checklist (see section 5) 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 Ambarrow Hill and Court promoting them as a single open space that provides a range of conditions for visitors of all abilities. The sites 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.

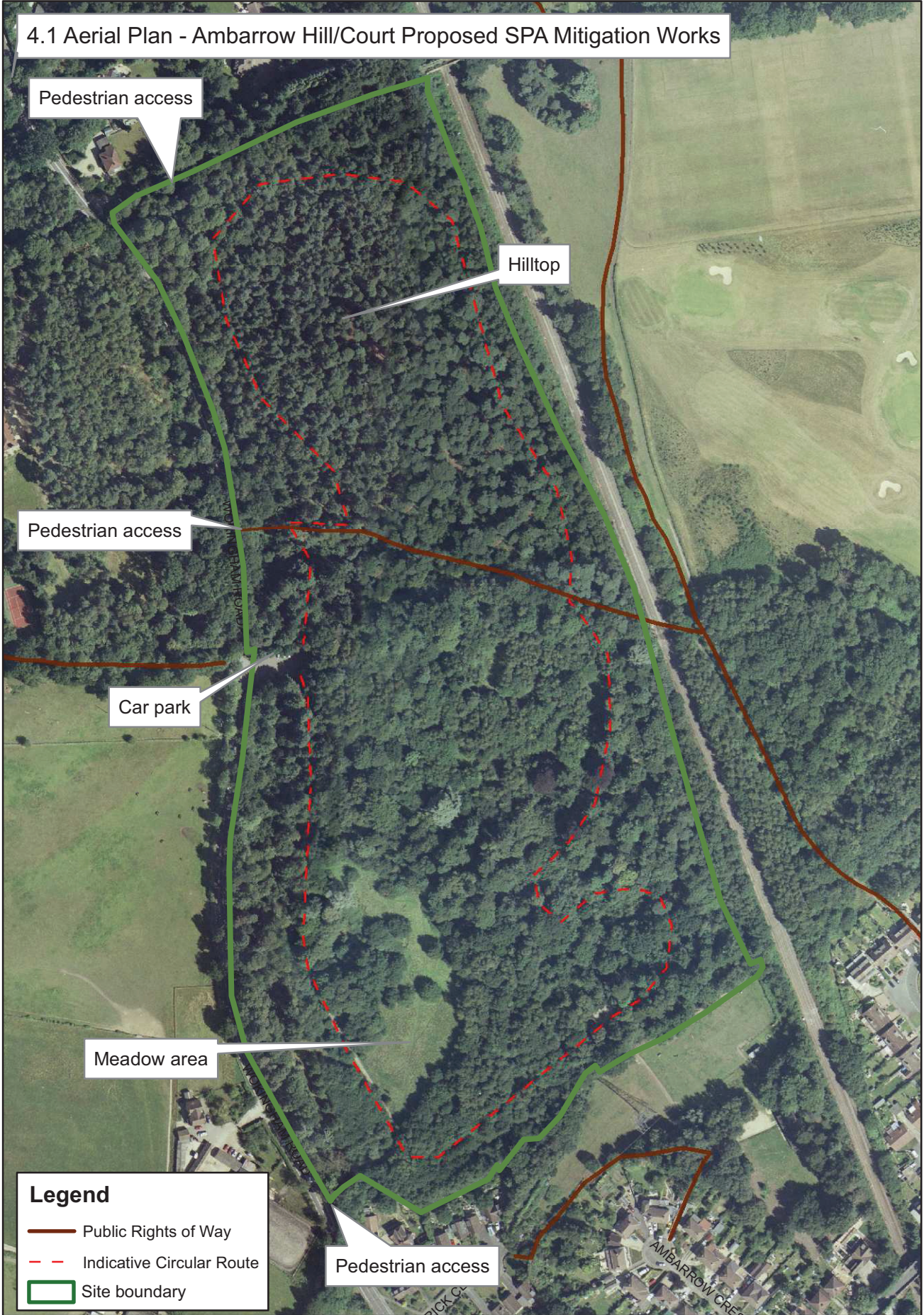
As a component of a wider package of measures the works detailed within this plan will avoid the adverse impacts of recreation arising from new residential development on the SPA and enable sustainable development within the Borough.

4 Site Plan

4.1 Site Plan – Ambarrow Hill and Court (aerial)

4.2 Site Plan – Ambarrow Hill and Court Proposed SPA Mitigation Works

4.1 Aerial Plan - Ambarrow Hill/Court Proposed SPA Mitigation Works

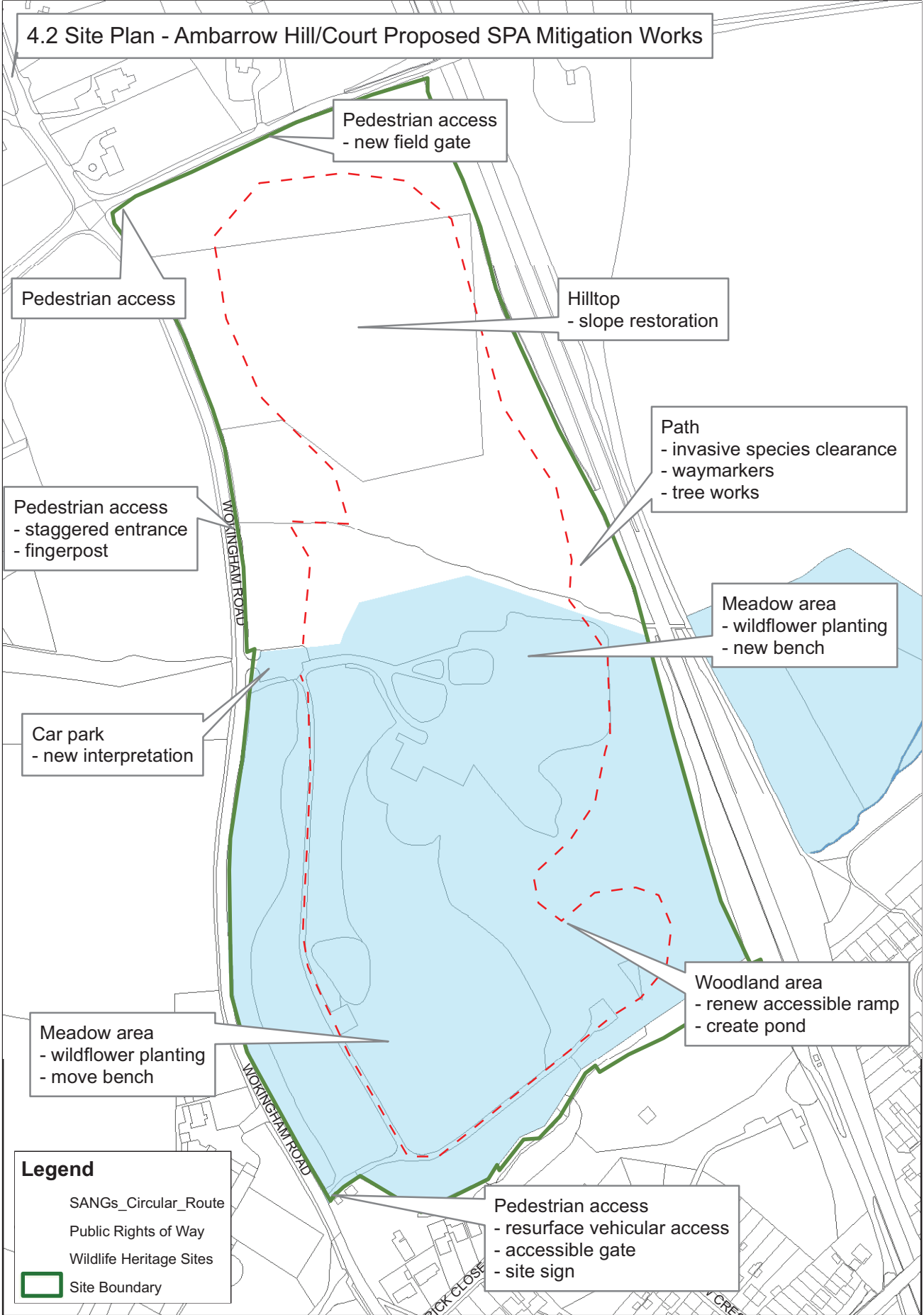


Please note this site plan shows only a selection of the proposed works, refer to section 3 Site Proposals for full details.

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Please note this site plan shows only a selection of the proposed works, refer to section 3 Site Proposals for full details.

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5 SANGS Criteria Assessment

It must be noted that the primary aim of enhancement is to encourage further visitor access. Works should facilitate this by providing management for all weather access, stiles where necessary, site safety in terms of crossing between units and allowing dogs to run off the lead, plus interpretation, route marking, promotion etc. All enhancements must be undertaken prior to inhabitants moving into the dwellings to ensure that people do not develop a habit of visiting other sites, such as the SPA.

The following provides a list of relevant factors in considering a site's suitability to meet SANGS criteria.

	Criteria	Must, Should, Desirable	Current	Future
1	For all the sites larger than 4Ha there must be adequate parking for visitors. The amount of car parking space being determined by the anticipated use of the site and reflecting the visitor catchments of both SANGS and the SPA.	M	One car park at Ambarrow Court with 16 spaces.	Improved visibility at car park and links from car park into and around site. Anticipated usage still allows for 16 spaces.
2	SANGS must be clearly signposted or advertised in some way.	S	Site entrance signs. Site webpage for Ambarrow Court.	New combined site interpretive panel; directional fingerposts around site and way-marked; new site leaflet and combined webpage.
3	Car parks must be easily and safely accessible by car and should be clearly signposted.	S	Highway sign and main site entrance signs.	Site entrance signs shall be maintained and visibility improved through vegetation clearance.
4	The accessibility of the site must include access points appropriate for the particular visitor use the SANGS intend to absorb.	M	Main vehicular entrance point and five pedestrian entrance points.	All entrance points to be cleared and finger-posted or signed to improve access and attractiveness.
5	The SANGS must have a safe route of access on foot from the nearest car park and/or footpath/s.	M	Choice of routes around site from car park and entrance	Improved links between sites and way-marked route around

			points.	the sites. In addition, links to the wider countryside and Horseshoe Lake SANGS will be provided.
6	It would be desirable for an owner to be able to take dogs from the car park to SANGS safely off the lead.	D	Car park adjacent to links around site.	Improved links and signage from car park into site.
7	All SANGS with car parks must have a circular walk which starts and finishes at the car park.	M	Car park located at the centre of site allows a choice of routes around site.	Improved links, signage and information on routes from car park into and around site. New circular route starts and finishes at car park.
8	SANGS larger than 12Ha must be designed to supply a choice of routes, from 0.5Km to more than 3.5Km in length.	M	Choice of routes around site depending on ability.	Improved signage around and site, with the new circular walk (1.5km) and further secondary paths and links to 41km Ramblers route.
9	SANGS must be designed so that they are perceived to be safe by the users.	M	Car park central to site.	Vegetation clearance to enhance views to car park and within the site. Ranger patrols will increase.
10	SANGS should have tree and scrub cover along parts of the walking route.	S	Areas of woodland and meadow around site.	Circular route takes in a range of habitat including new features such as the enhanced meadow and pond.
11	Paths must be easily used and well maintained, but most should remain unsurfaced to avoid the site becoming too urban in feel.	M	Mix of surfaced and unsurfaced paths.	Circular route will provide some surfaced and unsurfaced paths on a clearly marked route.
12	SANGS must be perceived as semi-natural spaces with little intrusion of artificial structures, except in the immediate vicinity of car parks. Visually-sensitive way-markers and some benches are acceptable.	M	Minimal site furniture.	Some benches and signage to be added to enhance visitor experience but remain in-keeping with environment.
13	It is desirable that access points make clear the layout	D	Some site interpretation for	New interpretive panels,

	of the SANGS, and the routes available to visitors, by means of interpretation panels or other means.		Ambarrow Court. No leaflet.	directional fingerposts and waymarkers around site. New leaflet including a circular route.
14	It is desirable that SANGS provide the naturalistic space with areas of open (non-wooded) countryside and areas of dense and scattered trees and shrubs. The provision of open water on part, but not the majority, of sites is desirable.	D	The site provides areas of ancient woodland and meadow.	Habitat enhancement works to improve wildlife and landscape value. A new pond will be created as a site feature.
15	All SANGS larger than 12Ha must aim to provide a variety of habitats for users to experience.	M	The site provides areas of ancient woodland and meadow.	Experiences will be enhanced through interpretive material and habitat enhancements.
16	Where possible it is desirable to choose sites with a gently undulating topography for SANGS.	D	The hill forms a landscape feature in the area whilst Ambarrow Court provides some gentle slopes.	The hill forms a landscape feature in the area whilst Ambarrow Court provides some gentle slopes.
17	Access within the SANGS must be largely unrestricted with plenty of space provided where it is possible for dogs to exercise freely and safely.	M	Most paths are largely unhindered as designed in the accessible route.	Access will be further improved and there are no restrictions on dogs.
18	Where possible it is desirable to have a focal point such as a view point, monument etc. within SANGS.	D	Ambarrow Hill forms the focal point but no interpretive material exists.	The hill will have interpretive material to enhance visitors experience whilst protecting archaeological features.
19	SANGS must be free from unpleasant intrusions (e.g. sewage treatment works, smells etc.).	M	The road and railway are screened from the site by vegetation.	The road and railway are screened from the site by vegetation.
20	SANGS should have leaflets or/and websites advertising their location to potential users. It would be desirable for leaflets to be distributed to new homes in the area and at entrance points and car parks.	S	Site webpage for Ambarrow Court.	Webpage updated with site information and news. New site leaflet printed, distributed and available online.

6. Costings - Ambarrow Hill and Court proposed SPA mitigation works

Works	Location	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
Information & Interpretation				
Site entrance sign	Main entrance	£250	2	£500
Small site entrance sign	Secondary entrance	£150	1	£150
Roadside directional sign	Wokingham Road	£1,000	1	£1,000
Site noticeboard with combined interpretive panel	Main entrance	£2,500	2	£5,000
Bespoke entrance sign	Ambarrow Hill entrance	allowance	allowance	£1,000
Fingerposts	Around site	£400	4	£1,600
Waymarkers	Around circular route	£100	10	£1,000
SANGS leaflet	n/a	allowance	10,000	£3,000
Site Leaflet	n/a	allowance	5,000	£2,500
Installation costs	(as above)	allowance	allowance	£5,000
				£20,750
Access				
Archaeological mapping	Ambarrow Hill	allowance	(m)	
Path and entrance clearance	All entrances, sightlines to car park	£300/day	allowance	£5,000
Accessible route ramp	Woodland area, Ambarrow Court	allowance	5	£1,500
Path surfacing (hoggin)	Woodland area, Ambarrow Court	£30 / m	allowance	£20,000
Road surfacing	Southern entrance	allowance	1000	£30,000
Installation costs		allowance	allowance	£10,000
				£5,000
				£71,500
Furniture				
Bins (incl. installation)	Site entrances	£570	3	£1,710
Accessible gates (incl. installation)	Southern entrance	£180	1	£180
Seating - benches (incl. installation)	Around sites	£680	6	£4,080
Staggered post and rail entrance	Public Right of Way	allowance	allowance	£500
Field gate	Northern entrance, Ambarrow Hill	£200	1	£200
Picnic benches	In open areas	£1,585	3	£4,755
Cycle rack	Car park area	allowance	allowance	£500
Bridges	Across ditch, woodland area	£5,000	1	£5,000
Installation costs		allowance	allowance	£10,000
				£26,925
Habitat Management				
Wildflower seeding/planting	Meadow area	allowance	allowance	£1,000
Pond restoration (clearance, excavation)	Adjacent to meadow	allowance	allowance	£2,000
Slope restoration repairs	Ambarrow Hill	allowance	allowance	£20,000
Ditch clearance	Ambarrow Hill	£30 / m	100	£3,000
Removal of invasive species	Various including car park	£300 per day	10	£3,000
Wildlife features (bird boxes, bat boxes, etc)	Cleared site	allowance	allowance	£500
Native woodland planting	Cleared areas	£200 / day	5	£1,000
Tree and scrub management	Adjacent to paths, site entrances	£300 per day	10	£3,000
Installation costs				£5,000
				£38,500
TOTAL COST				£157,675

N.B. All costs based on a combination of published catalogue prices, actual current costs & recent estimates.

7 Glossary

Core Strategy DPD	Document within the Local Development Framework which sets out strategic development proposals until 2026.
LID	Limiting the Impact of Development, a Supplementary Planning Document relating to planning obligations.
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
SANGS	Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space.
SPA	Special Protection Area. Designated under the EU Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds.
SPA TBD	SPA Technical Background Document to the Core Strategy.
WHS	Wildlife Heritage Site

8 References

Bracknell Forest Borough Council (2007) Medium Term Objectives. Available to download from www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk.

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Bracknell Forest Borough Council (2007) Limiting the Impact of Development (LID). Available to download from www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk.

Bracknell Forest Borough Council (2006) Core Strategy Development Plan Document. Available to download from www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk.

Bracknell Forest Partnership (2005) Bracknell Forest Sustainable Community Plan. Available to download from www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk.

National Trust Byelaws 1965 (<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/print/w-byelaws-1965.pdf>)

National Trust (2007) Our Future – join in: Our Strategy to 2010 and Beyond. Available to download from www.nationaltrust.org.uk.