

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document

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1 Introduction

1.1 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

1.1.1 The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) was designated in March 2005. It is protected from adverse effects under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the Habitats Regulations). The SPA is a network of heathland sites which are designated for their ability to provide a habitat for the internationally important bird species of Woodlark, Nightjar and Dartford Warbler.

1.1.2 The SPA zone of influence spans 11 local authorities across Berkshire, Hampshire and Surrey and is fragmented by urban development and other land uses. It consists of 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) scattered across these counties as shown in appendix 1.

1.1.3 The two areas of the SPA that lie within Bracknell Forest are the Broadmoor to Bagshot Heaths SSSI and the Sandhurst to Owlsmoor Bogs and Heaths (also known as Wildmoor Heath) SSSI. A large proportion of Bracknell Forest lies within 5km of the SPA (see Figure 1).

1.1.4 In 2005 Natural England (NE) conducted research which indicated that the existing level of recreational pressure was having a detrimental effect on the three species of rare ground nesting birds for which the SPA was designated. These ground-nesting birds which breed on the SPA are subject to disturbance from people and their pets using the SPA for recreational purposes and this affects their breeding success.

1.1.5 Due to this information and the level of house-building expected in the Thames Basin Heaths area, NE objected to all planning applications for a net increase in residential development within 5km of the SPA. This affected 11 local authorities in Berkshire, Hampshire and Surrey.

1.1.6 In order to comply with the Habitats Regulations and demonstrate that house building is deliverable without giving rise to an adverse effect on the integrity of the TBH SPA, Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) carries out Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRAs). These documents identify potential effects on the TBH SPA and propose measures which ensure that those effects can be avoided and mitigated.

1.2 Purpose and Scope of the SPD

1.2.1 This SPA SPD provides an updated avoidance and mitigation strategy to show how the adverse effects of development on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA should be avoided and mitigated. It replaces the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document (April 2018).

1.3 Spatial Policy Framework

1.3.1 The following table outlines the elements of the Development Plan that are relevant to this SPD.

Table 1 Spatial Policy Framework

| Adopted Policy | Policy References | Notes |
|---|---|--|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) | Chapter 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) | Para. 195 'The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.' |
| South East Plan (2009) | NRM6 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area | The South East Plan (2009) was partially revoked on 25 March 2013. Policy NRM6, which deals with the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area, remains in place. This sets out the principle of the protection of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA in the South East. |
| Bracknell Forest Local Plan (BFLP) (March 2024) | LP 31 Designated nature conservation and geological sites | This policy relates to international designated conservation sites (of which the SPA is one) and the requirement for assessment and mitigation |
| | LP 32 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area | This sets out the principle of the protection of the SPA in Bracknell Forest. |
| Site Allocations Local Plan (July 2013) | SA4 Land at Broadmoor, Crowthorne SA5 Land at Transport Research Laboratory, Crowthorne SA6 Land at Amen Corner (North), Binfield SA7 Land at Blue Mountain, Binfield SA8 Land at Amen Corner (South), Binfield SA9 Land at Warfield SA10 Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst | These policies set out the SPA avoidance and mitigation requirements for development allocations in Bracknell Forest. |

1.3.2 The above plans and policies are supplemented with the following guidance:

Table 2 Thames Basin Heaths SPA Guidance

| Guidance | Notes |
|---|---|
| Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document (March 2018) (Bracknell Forest Council) | This is an Avoidance Mitigation Strategy to show how the effects of new (and principally) residential developments on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA should be avoided and mitigated in accordance with the Development Plan. This new SPA SPD will replace this guidance. |
| Thames Basin Heaths SPA Delivery Framework (12 February 2009) (Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board) | This Delivery Framework has been endorsed by the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board and is recommended to the local authorities affected by the SPA. The Board encourages local authorities to use the Framework to guide the production or revision of local avoidance and mitigation strategies. |

1.4 Sustainability Appraisal

1.4.1 The Local Plan policies which are referred to within this document were subject to a Sustainability Assessment (SA) process through the BFLP. The Inspectors' report (para. 23) concluded that the BFLP SA is proportionate, objective, underpinned by relevant and up to date evidence, and accords with the relevant legal requirements and national guidance. As such no further SA is required for this document.

1.5 Sub-Regional Working

1.5.1 The SPA principally affects 11 local authorities. These are Waverley BC, Guildford BC, Surrey Heath BC, Woking BC, Bracknell Forest Council, Hart DC, Wokingham BC, Elmbridge BC, Runnymede BC, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Rushmoor BC. In order to be sure of a consistent approach across the whole area, and on the advice of the Technical Advisor at the South East Plan Examination in Public (November/December 2007), the Joint Strategic Partnership Board (JSPB) was set up in 2007 to provide a vehicle for joint working, liaison and exchange of information between local authorities and other organisations affected by the SPA. A Councillor from Bracknell Forest is a member of the JSPB.

1.5.2 In 2009 the JSPB adopted guidelines in the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Delivery Framework (JSPB 12 February 2009). This is available on the Council's website.⁽¹⁾ These guidelines form the basis of the approach adopted in this SPD. The JSPB meets twice a year and oversees matters such as the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) project and the monitoring of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs).

1.5.3 Bracknell Forest Council has been working jointly at a sub-regional level for a number of years to implement avoidance and mitigation measures and will endeavour to continue to do so in the future.

1 <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/spa>

2 Background

2.1 Habitats Regulations

2.1.1 The Habitats Regulations create and protect a national network of sites that have rare or important habitats and species in order to safeguard biodiversity. These sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and are also known as habitats sites. The SPA is a habitats site (as defined in the NPPF 2024) and is therefore subject to protection under the Habitats Regulations.

2.1.2 According to the regulations, competent authorities have a duty to ensure that all the activities they regulate have no adverse effect on the integrity of the habitats sites. The competent authority (in this case Bracknell Forest Council) must assess the possible effects of a plan or project on any such site through a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

2.1.3 The HRA process identifies any likely significant effects on the habitats sites which may arise, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. With appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures it can often be concluded that the plan or project is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on the integrity of the habitats site.

2.1.4 If at the screening stage it is considered that there is likely to be a significant effect, in view of the site’s conservation objectives,⁽²⁾ then the plan or project must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment (AA). Having undertaken the AA, the Competent Authority shall agree to the plan or project only after ascertaining that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site concerned, or where the further tests as described in Regulation 64 can be met.

2.1.5 The decision-maker must consider the likely and reasonably foreseeable effects to ascertain that the proposal will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the habitats site with certainty using the precautionary principle as established in case law in combination with other plans or projects before it may grant permission. The process requires close working with NE to obtain the necessary information, agree the process, outcomes and mitigation proposals, and to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.

2.2 Potential Adverse Effects on the Integrity of the SPA

2.2.1 Bracknell Forest Council has carried out Habitats Regulations Assessments for the SALP (2013) and the BFLP (2024). The potential adverse effects on the integrity of the SPA are as follows:

Table 3 Potential Adverse Effects on the Integrity of the SPA

| Potential Effects | Characteristics Which Could Lead to Adverse Effects |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Loss of functionally linked land | The qualifying bird species are not confined to the boundary of the SPA and can be reliant on areas outside of the SPA for nesting and foraging. Development that would affect areas of rotationally-managed |

2 <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4952859267301376?category=652847166468915>

| Potential Effects | Characteristics Which Could Lead to Adverse Effects |
|---|---|
| | plantation woodland, heathland or acid grassland outside of the SPA boundary could potentially affect nightjar and woodlark. |
| Human disturbance (as a result of urbanisation) | <p>An increase in residential development in the proximity of the SPA is likely to lead to an increase in urbanisation effects such as increased fly-tipping, cat predation and uncontrolled fires.</p> <p>Urbanisation could also present a potential pathway of impact where development on employment sites is located close to the SPA and lead to, for example, fly-tipping.</p> |
| Recreational pressure | <p>An increase in the population of Bracknell Forest has the potential to lead to more visits to the SPA i.e. increased recreational pressure.</p> <p>A net increase in publicly accessible car parking spaces within 400m of the SPA has the potential to lead to more visits to the SPA and increased recreational pressure.</p> <p>Recreational pressure has the potential to lead to disturbance to sensitive species (particularly ground-nesting birds such as woodlark and nightjar), preventing appropriate management or exacerbating existing management difficulties, causing damage through erosion and causing eutrophication as a result of dog fouling.</p> |
| Air pollution | <p>Residential and non-residential development in Bracknell Forest has the potential to lead to an increase in car journeys and this is likely to lead to increased air pollution.</p> <p>Nitrogen deposition from increased traffic flows could lead to adverse effects on the SPA and the potential for in-combination effects.</p> <p>Department for Transport guidance as expressed in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) states that: 'beyond 200m, the contribution of vehicle emissions from the roadside to local pollution levels is not significant'.</p> <p>It has been determined that parts of the SPA are situated within 200m of major roads that may be regularly used by vehicle journeys arising from Bracknell Forest as a result of the increased population.</p> |

2.2.2 Developments that cannot be mitigated by this SPD (e.g. non-residential developments) will be dealt with on a case by case basis. An HRA may be required to address some or all of the above potential effects on the SPA.

3 SPA Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section provides guidance on the measures which will be implemented in Bracknell Forest to avoid likely significant effects on the integrity of the SPA from development.

3.1.2 Any net increase in residential dwellings within 5km of the SPA is likely to have a significant adverse effect on the SPA either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Consequently, every proposal for net additional dwellings must make provision to avoid and mitigate the effect. Large developments within 5-7km of the SPA (with a net increase in dwellings of more than 50) may be required to provide appropriate mitigation. This will be considered on a case by case basis in agreement with NE.

3.1.3 Policy, guidance and case law currently considers a two-pronged approach to avoiding likely significant effect on the SPA is generally appropriate as follows.

Provision of SANG to attract people away from the SPA and hence reduce pressure on it; and

SAMM measures to reduce the effect of people who visit the SPA, promote and monitor SANGs.

3.1.4 Depending on the development, there may be further effects on the SPA to consider such as air quality or loss of functionally linked land.

3.1.5 Habitat management may, theoretically, be taken to be an avoidance measure; however, the focus in the short-term must be improving the quality of the SPA to favourable condition status. This is a duty of SPA landowners which falls outside the planning system and is not the focus of this guidance.

3.1.6 The avoidance and mitigation measures should be provided in order that they can function in perpetuity which is considered to be at least 125 years. An 'in perpetuity' period of 125 years has been applied in this SPD in accordance with the legislation which defines the 'in perpetuity' period (Perpetuities and Accumulations Act 2009).

3.1.7 The option remains for developers to undertake a Habitats Regulations screening assessment and where necessary a full Appropriate Assessment to demonstrate that a proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA. Should any other package of avoidance and mitigation measures be put forward, these must be in accordance with the Habitats Regulations and the local authority must adopt a precautionary approach as established in case law in combination with other plans or projects. Any avoidance and mitigation measures must be agreed in advance with the Council and NE.

3.2 Zones of Influence

3.2.1 There are three Zones of Influence as follows which are shown in Figure 1.

From 0m to 400m straight line distance from the SPA

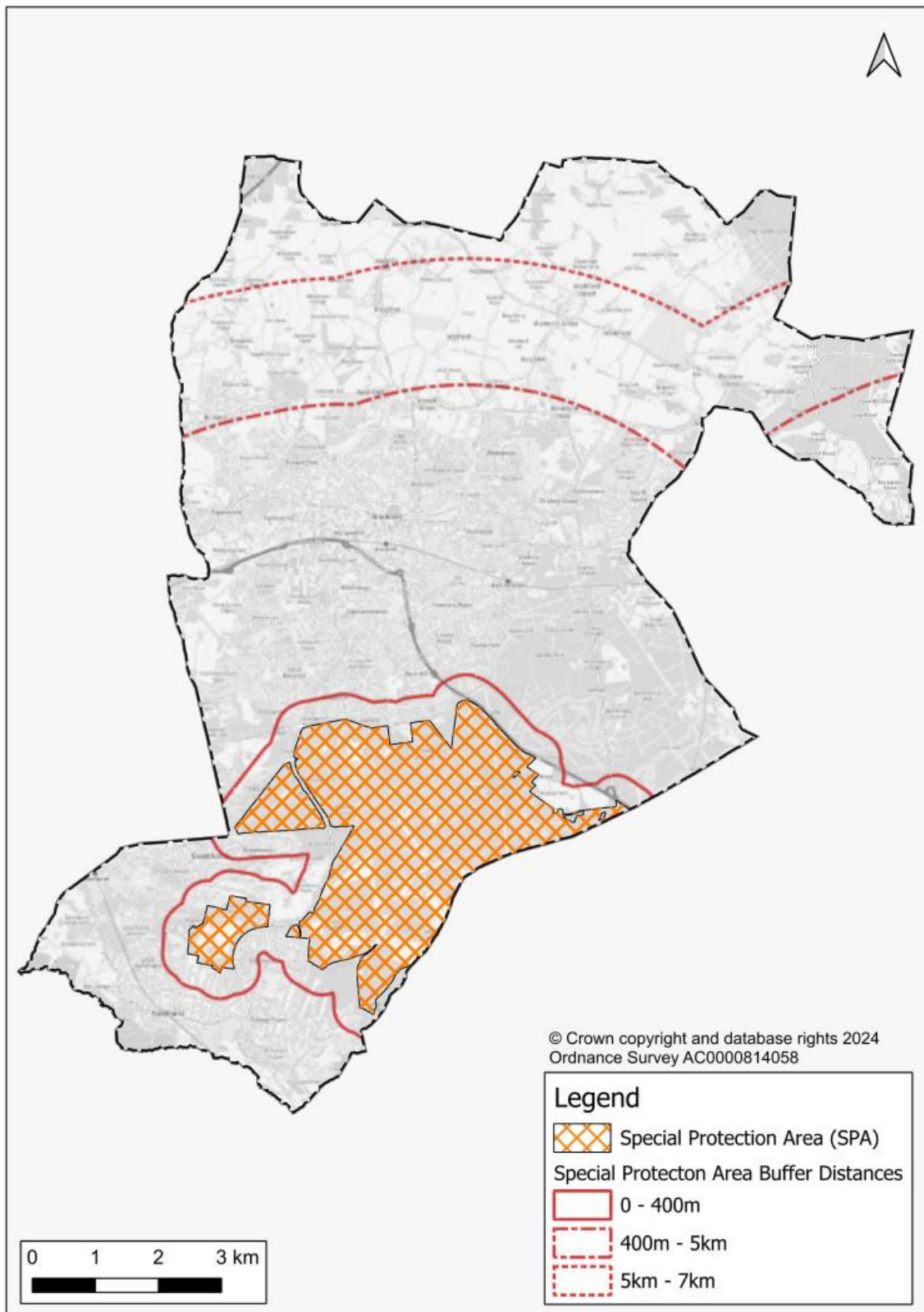
From 400m to 5km straight line distance from the SPA
From 5km to 7km straight line distance from the SPA

3.2.2 There is a presumption against residential development within 400m of the SPA boundary. This is measured as the crow flies from the SPA perimeter to the point of access on the curtilage of the dwellings as recommended by the JSPB and set out in the Thames Basin Heaths SPA Delivery Framework (12 February 2009). Within this zone (the exclusion zone) the effect of new net increases in residential development on the SPA is likely to be such that it is not possible to conclude no adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA. There is therefore a presumption against any net increase in residential development within this zone. A HRA will be needed, and agreed with NE, to demonstrate that any development within this zone will not have an adverse effect on the SPA and/or the acceptability of any avoidance and mitigation measures provided. Applications for non-residential development in this zone will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, in agreement with NE.

3.2.3 From 400m – 5km of the SPA development can be permitted and avoidance and mitigation measures should be applied. The majority of new housing development in Bracknell Forest is located within this zone.

3.2.4 Applications for residential development between 5km - 7km of the SPA will be assessed on a case by case basis, in agreement with NE.

Figure 1 Thames Basin Heaths SPA and SPA Buffer Zones



3.3 Types of Development Covered

3.3.1 The duty to consider the possibility of likely significant effects on the SPA applies to all types of development, not just residential. This strategy largely concerns itself with the effects arising from the developments listed below.

Proposals for 1 or more net new dwelling units falling within Use Class C3 dwellinghouses
Conversion of a E(g)(i) office use to C3 dwellinghouses
Conversion of a building from light industrial use class E(g)(iii) to residential use class C3
A change of use from a C3 dwellinghouse to a C4 house in multiple occupation (HMO)
A change of use from either C3 or C4 uses to a large HMO i.e. 6 or more people sharing (sui generis)
Applications for lawful development certificates and/or relevant certificate of lawfulness for proposed development for use for net additional C3 or C4 HMO dwellings
Proposals for 1 or more net new units of staff residential accommodation
C1 hotels and C2 residential institutions
C2 and C3 care homes

3.3.2 For more information on Use Classes see the Planning Portal.⁽³⁾ Please note that this gives an indication of the types of use which may fall within each use class but this is a guide only and it is for local planning authorities to determine, in the first instance, depending on the individual circumstances of each case, which use class a particular use falls into.

3.3.3 Reserved matters,⁽⁴⁾ discharge of conditions, amendments to existing planning consents and non-residential development will be considered on an individual basis.

3.3.4 Replacement dwellings will not lead to increased recreational pressure, therefore, they will have no likely significant effect on the SPA and will not be required to provide avoidance and mitigation measures.

3.3.5 All projects, applications for planning permission and prior approval applications for developments in the vicinity of the SPA will be screened to assess whether they will have a likely significant effect on the integrity of the SPA (individually or in combination with other plans or projects) and where necessary an Appropriate Assessment will be undertaken.

3.3.6 C2 and C3 Care Homes: In assessing any planning application for a C2 or C3 care or extra care facility these developments will be considered on a case by case basis at the planning application stage in agreement with NE. The Council will take account of whether there is any risk of the residents of the facility causing a likely significant effect upon the integrity of the SPA. If the development is located within 400m of the SPA and the patrons of the facility are truly immobile or unlikely to ever visit the SPA then the only mitigation which may be required are measures to ensure that the car park cannot be made available to the general public wishing to access the SPA. For such developments within 400m - 5km of the SPA, any facilities that house residents that will never or are very unlikely to visit the SPA would not require any mitigation. Where residents in this SPA buffer zone are in self-contained accommodation and

³ <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/change-of-use/use-classes>

⁴ In March 2007, legal advice was received which led the Council and Natural England to the view that Regulations 48 and 49 of the 1994 Habitats Regulations should be applied to applications for approval of reserved matters or variations or renewals, where potential effects on the SPA were not fully considered when an existing permission was granted or where information more recently provided would make for a different assessment of effects. The relevant paragraphs of the updated legislation are Regulations 63 and 64 of the 2017 Habitats Regulations.

can therefore live reasonably independently, even if there is a level of care required, then it is assumed that the residents are of a mobility level that would not preclude them from visiting the SPA. In these cases avoidance and mitigation measures will be required.

3.3.7 Hotels and Guest Houses: For traditional hotels offering short stay accommodation avoidance and mitigation measures will generally not be required. However, for hotels located within 400m of the SPA with a new car park, measures may be required to ensure that the car park cannot be made available to the general public wishing to access the SPA. For hotels offering accommodation for longer periods of time, such as Apart-hotels where the dwelling is to become the full time address for a person, then avoidance and mitigation measures will be required.

3.3.8 Staff Accommodation: Where staff accommodation becomes the permanent full time address for that member of staff then avoidance and mitigation measures will be required.

3.3.9 Mobile Homes: Where the mobile home is a person's permanent address then avoidance and mitigation measures will be required. This includes a presumption against a net increase in residential development within 400m of the SPA.

3.3.10 Permitted Development: Permitted development (such as the conversion of retail, office or light industrial space to residential units) is not exempt from the Habitats Regulations. Avoidance and mitigation measures will be required.

3.3.11 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs): For planning applications converting traditional C3 housing stock into HMOs, if the facilities have individual lockable rooms, then each room will be treated as a separate one bedroom dwelling and avoidance and mitigation measures will be required.

3.3.12 Applications for Certificates of Lawfulness: Schemes seeking to obtain lawful planning use must comply with policy, guidance and law in respect to ensuring the integrity of the SPA is not harmed. This means that a certificate cannot be issued if there is a net increase in dwellings within 400m of the SPA or mitigation measures are not provided in line with the established standards. Where necessary a s106 Agreement will be required to be entered into prior to the issue of the certificate of lawfulness in order to secure mitigation measures.

3.3.13 Annexes: Schemes seeking to obtain planning permission for an annexe must comply with policy, guidance and law in respect to ensuring the integrity of the SPA is not harmed. This means annexes within 400m of the SPA must include a planning obligation that the annexe cannot be sold or rented separately from the main dwelling. Annexes located between 400m to 5km of the SPA must either include similar non-alienation provision or provide mitigation measures (e.g. SANG and SAMM) to be included in a s106 Agreement.

3.3.14 For other developments which may lead to a net increase in car parking within 400m of the SPA, measures may be required to ensure that the car park cannot be made available to the general public wishing to access the SPA.

4 Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs)

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The provision of alternative recreational land to attract new residents away from the SPA is a key part of avoiding the effects of new residential development on the SPA. There are different types of SANGs.

Strategic SANGs are open spaces in Bracknell Forest which are owned and / or managed by the Council that, in agreement with NE, have been identified as being suitable for bringing up to SANG standard through the application of developer contributions. Developer contributions fund the SANG enhancements and long-term management of these SANGs. These mainly provide mitigation for smaller schemes or urban developments which cannot realistically provide their own land for SANG.

Bespoke SANGs are new open spaces provided mostly by large developments where the developer upgrades part of the development site to SANG status or provides SANG off-site and then often transfers the SANG land to Council ownership with maintenance sums to fund its long term management.

Third Party SANGs are approved through planning permission and developers purchase SANG capacity directly from the land owners by private contract in agreement with the Council. Long term management is sometimes provided by the owner or the land is transferred to Council ownership with maintenance sums to fund its long term management.

4.1.2 The following table sets out the minimum SANG standards for each Zone of Influence.

Table 4 SPA Buffer Zones and SANG Standards

| Zone of Influence | SANG Standard | How this affects residential development |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| From 0m to 400m straight line distance from the SPA | No standard | There is a presumption against any net increase in residential development within this zone. A HRA will be needed, and agreed with NE, to demonstrate that any development within this zone will not have an adverse effect on the SPA and/or the acceptability of any avoidance and mitigation measures provided. |
| From 400m to 5km straight line distance from the SPA | At least 8 hectares per 1,000 persons | This is a minimum SANG standard. Some residential developments may need to provide SANGs that are significantly in excess of 8 hectares per 1000 persons especially those which lie in close proximity to the SPA. |

| Zone of Influence | SANG Standard | How this affects residential development |
|---|---|---|
| Beyond 5km to 7km straight line distance from the SPA | Likely to be at least 2 hectares per 1,000 persons but will be assessed on a case by case basis in agreement with NE. | Only affects developments of over 50 dwellings. |

4.1.3 To ensure that development does not harm the integrity of the SPA, sufficient SANG must be provided and open to the public in advance of dwelling occupation. For strategic SANGs which may already be open to the public this means the Council undertaking the SANG enhancement works in advance of dwelling occupation. The Council is proactive and 'pump primes' these works so that they are completed before dwellings need to be occupied.

4.1.4 All SANGs have catchment areas. This is the area within which a development needs to be located in order to use a particular SANG as an SPA avoidance and mitigation measure. SANG sites are sometimes grouped into SANG networks and comprise more than one site linked by footpaths, bridleways and smaller open spaces. The catchment areas are applied to the SANG networks. The catchment areas are as follows:

A SANG of 2-12ha has a catchment of 2km;

A SANG of 12-20ha has a catchment of 4km;

A SANG of 20ha+ has a catchment of 5km.

4.1.5 These SANG catchment areas cover the entire borough with the exception of a very small north-east section; however this area is predominantly designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and owned by the Crown Estate so development proposals are highly unlikely to come forward in this area.

4.1.6 Developments with a net increase of less than 10 dwellings do not need to be within a specified distance of a SANG to use its SANG capacity.

4.1.7 Levels of existing visitor use on the SANG will need to be discounted to protect current access.

4.1.8 All SANGs must comply with the NE SANG Quality Guidance which can be found on the Council's website at <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/spa> Prospective SANGs will be required to be visited by a NE officer, via NE's Discretionary Advice Service (DAS), to assess their suitability.

4.1.9 The Council will expect wildfire issues to be addressed where relevant in terms of design and planting and seek some biodiversity enhancements on sites which are to be SANGs. Although the main purpose of a SANG is for recreation and dog walking, there may be the potential to bring forward biodiversity units for biodiversity net gain (BNG) on SANGs. However only habitat creation or enhancement that is demonstrably additional, over and above the minimum requirements of the SANG can be attributed to BNG. All SANGs must comply with the NE SANG Quality Guidance which can be found on the Council's website

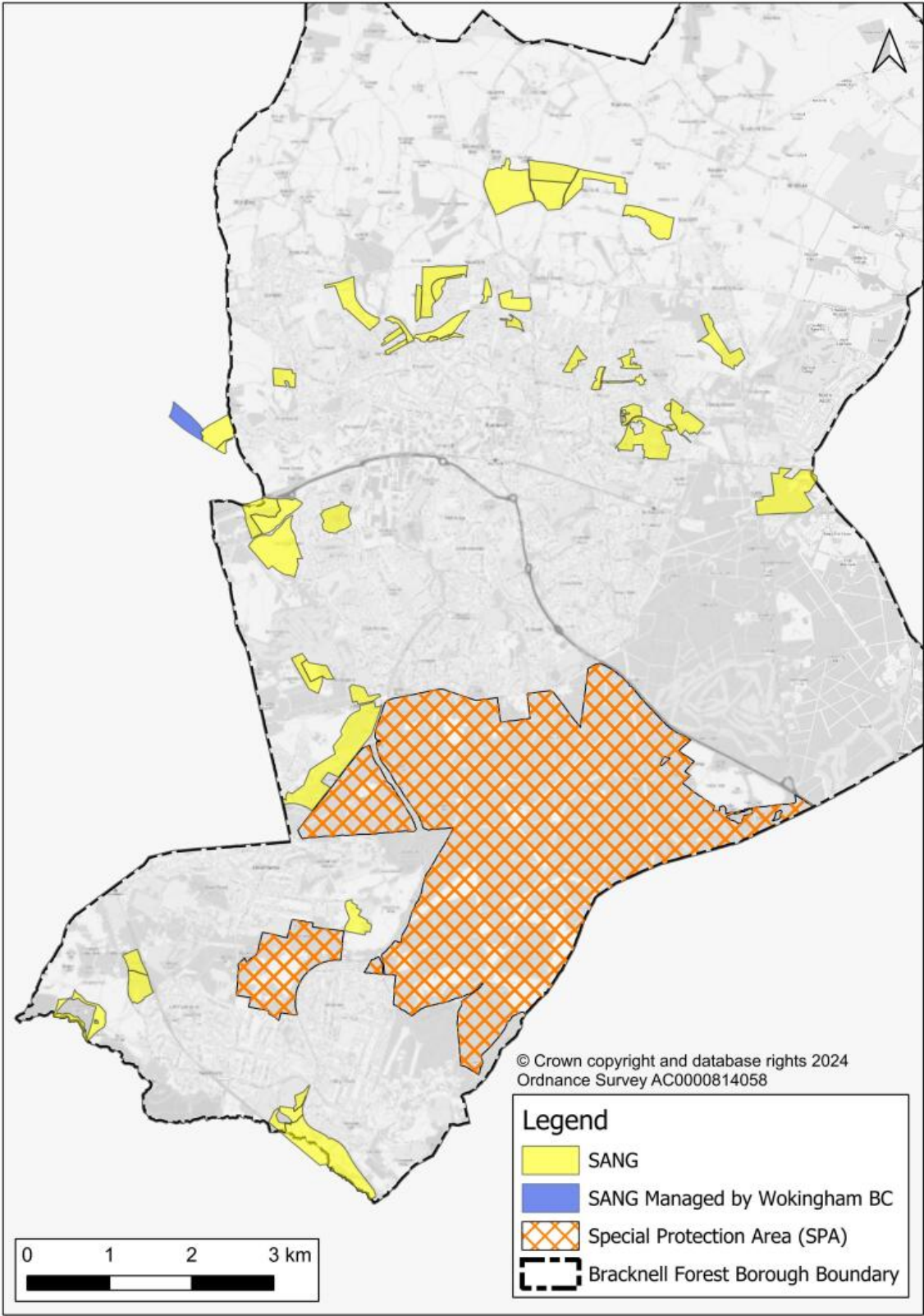
at <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/spa> This also provides advice about BNG on SANGs and Defra has also produced guidance on this.⁽⁵⁾ Should the developer wish to explore or meet BNG requirements on SANG land, it is advised that they have early engagement with NE and BFC. Further advice should be sought from biodiversity guidance on the Council's website.

4.1.10 Appendix 2 shows a table of SANG sites and SANG networks in Bracknell Forest, their catchment areas and the remaining SANG capacity on strategic SANGs. Appendix 4 contains maps showing the location of SANGs and SANG networks in Bracknell Forest and their catchment areas.

4.1.11 The following map provides an overview of all SANGs in Bracknell Forest.

5 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-you-can-count-towards-a-developments-biodiversity-net-gain-bng>

Figure 2 SANGs in Bracknell Forest



4.2 Strategic SANG

4.2.1 Strategic SANGs are Council owned or maintained open spaces and are located throughout the Borough which, with the agreement of NE, are brought up to SANG standard. The key SANG enhancements are to improve accessibility, to provide well-designed circular walks of more than 2.3 – 2.5km and to make semi-natural habitat more attractive in line with research carried out by NE.

4.2.2 Each strategic SANG has a Management Plan which has been agreed with NE and can be viewed on the Council's website.⁽⁶⁾ These plans detail the open space works required to enhance each piece of land to full SANG status and its ongoing management and maintenance. Enhancement works are carried out on an incremental basis and include measures such as new footpaths, planting, signage, interpretation boards and bins.

4.2.3 Developments using strategic SANG as mitigation make financial contributions towards their enhancement and ongoing management and maintenance through a combination of s106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

4.3 Strategic SANG Contributions

4.3.1 It should be noted that the council is under no obligation to provide SANG capacity for any development but it will prioritise its allocation in line with current strategic objectives. Strategic SANG capacity is usually reserved for development with a net increase of between 1 and 108 dwellings. In some cases strategic SANG capacity may be reserved for planned urban developments which cannot realistically provide their own land for SANGs.

4.3.2 Each development cannot be occupied until the relevant enhancement works are provided on the assigned strategic SANG. This means a s106 obligation to restrict occupation is required to be entered into by the developer. The Council does not wait for the CIL receipts to come in but instead 'pump primes' SANG enhancement works the cost of which is then paid back by an equivalent amount from CIL receipts. This means that occupations can take place in a timely manner.

4.3.3 All SANGs have catchment areas as described above. Developments with a net increase of 10 dwellings or more can purchase capacity (subject to Council approval) if they fall within the catchment of a SANG. However developments under 10 dwellings do not need to be within the catchment of a specific SANG and may be allocated SANG capacity from any strategic SANG in the Borough.

4.3.4 Each strategic SANG has a headline SANG capacity in terms of the number of dwellings it can accommodate. The amount of SANG capacity remaining on strategic SANGs is shown in appendix 2. The Council allocates the capacity incrementally until no more capacity is available. Capacity is assigned to relevant allocated sites, pre-applications, applications and planning permissions. In instances where applications are refused or dismissed on appeal or where planning permission lapses, then the relevant allocated SANG capacity is returned for another development to utilise.

6 <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/parks-and-countryside/suitable-alternative-natural-greenspaces>

4.3.5 SANG contributions are in proportion to the proposed development and sufficient to avoid and mitigate adverse effects. The level of the financial contribution depends upon the number of dwellings in the scheme, the number of bedrooms they contain and their distance from the SPA. They cover the following elements:

A. SANG enhancements – these are infrastructure works to upgrade a site to SANG status in accordance with the relevant SANG Management Plan. Such works are paid for from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or S106 as relevant to each individual application. For example, developments which pay a CIL contribution will not be expected to also make provision of the SANG enhancement contributions through additional s106 contributions. However, development which does not make or is likely to be exempt from CIL payments will be required to pay for the SANG enhancements through s106 obligations.

B. In perpetuity maintenance – this ensures the SANG is maintained and managed for an in-perpetuity period (125 years). This does not comprise infrastructure but will be for matters such as repairs, planting, SANG wardens and staff. The contributions will be pooled with all other similar contributions and invested to ensure that the maintenance budget lasts for at least 125 years. They are secured through s106 obligations.

C. Administration and education – this includes production of SANG management plans, project management of SANG enhancement works and promotion of SANGs locally. This is not infrastructure so will be secured through s106 Agreements.

D. Facilitation – this amount is more flexible in terms of where it can be spent but will be used to pump prime SANG enhancement works, operate and review the strategy and to pay Planning and Parks and Countryside service costs. It is secured for the right to use strategic SANG capacity. This is an average of £4,500 per market dwelling and an average of £1,125 per affordable dwelling.

4.3.6 The level of contributions for a net increase in residential dwellings (market housing) is summarised as follows. As estimated occupancy figures are not available for Bracknell Forest, these have been obtained from a number of data sources from local authorities in the region of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.

Table 5 SANG Contributions for Market Housing

| Size of dwelling (bedrooms) | Estimated occupancy | SANG contribution per dwelling ⁽¹⁾ |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---|
| 1 bedroom | 1.4 | £4,739 |
| 2 bedroom | 1.85 | £5,637 |
| 3 bedroom | 2.5 | £6,712 |
| 4 bedroom | 2.85 | £7,522 |
| 5+ bedroom | 3.7 | £8,774 |

1. These are the level of SANG contributions recovered through a s106 agreement. The Council recovers SANG enhancement costs from CIL.

4.3.7 Affordable housing (comprising social rent and intermediate housing) also needs to be mitigated by SANGs but viability concerns and the Council's objective to optimise the provision of more affordable dwellings in the borough is taken into account. Therefore a separate rate for affordable housing will be applied as follows:

Table 6 SANG Contributions for Affordable Housing

| Size of dwelling (bedrooms) | Occupancy | SANG contribution per dwelling ⁽¹⁾ |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---|
| 1 bedroom | 1.4 | £2,114 |
| 2 bedroom | 1.85 | £2,637 |
| 3 bedroom | 2.5 | £3,337 |
| 4 bedroom | 2.85 | £3,772 |
| 5+ bedroom | 3.7 | £4,649 |

1. These are the level of SANG contributions recovered through a s106 agreement. The Council recovers SANG enhancement costs from CIL.

4.3.8 Prior approval developments and some other types of schemes are not exempt from the Habitats Regulations. For prior approval and other relevant applications such as some single dwellings and nil CIL developments using strategic SANG, SANG enhancement costs will be recovered through s106 obligations and the following SANG contributions will apply:

Table 7 SANG Contributions for Prior Approval and other relevant developments

| Size of dwelling (bedrooms) | Occupancy | SANG contribution per dwelling |
|-----------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| 1 bedroom | 1.4 | £4,805 |
| 2 bedroom | 1.85 | £5,724 |
| 3 bedroom | 2.5 | £6,830 |
| 4 bedroom | 2.85 | £7,657 |
| 5+ bedroom | 3.7 | £8,949 |

4.3.9 Where SANG contributions are due as development progresses, index-linking to relevant inflationary indices will be used to ensure the value of the contribution continues to reflect the costs of inflation.

4.4 Bespoke SANG

4.4.1 It is expected that large residential developments will provide bespoke mitigation which provides a combination of benefits, including SANG, biodiversity enhancement and green infrastructure. Where developers propose a bespoke solution, this will be assessed on its own merits under the Habitats Regulations and in agreement with BFC and NE.

4.4.2 Where it is not possible to provide bespoke SANG on the development site, off-site provision may be acceptable, assuming the Council, in agreement with NE, can conclude that the off-site SANG will function as an effective alternative to the SPA.

4.4.3 Due to the practicalities of providing bespoke SANGs which are large enough to be attractive to new residents, it is likely that only larger developments (109 or more dwellings) will be in a position to deliver acceptable bespoke SANGs.⁽⁷⁾ A SANG must be big enough to provide a minimum 2.3km circular walk. Smaller areas of land may be used as SANG provided they physically connect to an existing SANG or other areas of land which are also suitable for SANG.

4.4.4 Bespoke SANGs would need to be provided at a standard of at least 8 hectare per 1,000 population. The minimum SANGs standard may not be sufficient to demonstrate that the requirements of the Habitats Regulations are met. These applications will be dealt with on a case by case basis in agreement with NE.

4.4.5 To mitigate the effect that occupiers of a development will have on the integrity of the SPA, bespoke SANGs must be in place and open to the public before those occupiers move in. Where appropriate therefore, the Council will seek to restrict occupations until related SPA avoidance and mitigation measures and/or works have been completed.

4.4.6 Rather than retain responsibility for maintaining bespoke SANG, a developer may offer the land to BFC (with an in perpetuity maintenance contribution), another public body or set up a management company or community trust (all subject to appropriate ongoing funding). In this case the Council will need assurance that such an organisation has the necessary skills and resources to maintain the open space and that it will remain in existence to achieve this in perpetuity. As a fall back position, the Council will require step in rights on a full cost recovery basis in case the alternative management arrangement does not deliver effective on-going management of the SANG.

4.4.7 Should a developer wish to transfer a bespoke SANG to the Council for in perpetuity maintenance the Council will take a commuted maintenance sum of £80,165 per hectare for this.

4.4.8 The Council will include strong measures in s106 agreements to ensure that once new SANGs are open to the public they will be properly maintained until such time they are transferred to the Council or another body for in perpetuity maintenance in accordance with the SANG Management Plan.

4.4.9 The Council facilitates high density development sites in urban areas which cannot provide SANG land on-site (for example Bracknell town centre sites) by allocating strategic SANG for this purpose where there is strategic SANG capacity available. Developers through agreement with the Council will pay financial contributions to strategic SANGs as described in section 4.3. It should be noted that the Council will consider use of this capacity on a case by case basis and to ensure that allocated sites can be delivered. This means that the Council cannot guarantee all development sites can be accommodated. In the instance where capacity is refused by the Council the developer should look to purchase SANG capacity from third party SANG. See section 4.5 below.

⁷ This is the minimum number of dwellings necessary to generate a requirement for a minimum 2ha SANG (at an average of 2.31 persons per dwelling and a SANG standard of at least 8ha per 1,000 new population). In practice SANGs are much larger since they are required to incorporate a minimum 2.3 - 2.5km walk.

4.4.10 In some circumstances bespoke SANGs may be provided by the Council which have their own costs. These are on a case by case basis. A facilitation cost may be applied to the final figure for the use of Council land.

4.5 Third Party SANG

4.5.1 Third party SANGs are sites which are enhanced to SANG status by a land owner and managed and maintained in perpetuity. The owners of third party SANGs provide capacity for their own developments and/or for other developments.

4.5.2 The Council will work with developers and landowners to bring forward third party SANGs. These sites must be upgraded to SANG status in accordance with the NE SANG Quality Guidance and in agreement with the Council and NE, made publicly accessible at all times and ensure that their in-perpetuity maintenance is guaranteed.

4.5.3 Should a developer wish to transfer a bespoke SANG to the Council for in perpetuity maintenance the Council will take a commuted maintenance sum of £80,165 per hectare for this.

4.5.4 The Council will include strong measures in s106 agreements to ensure that once new SANGs are open to the public they will be properly maintained until such time they are transferred to the Council or another body for in perpetuity maintenance in accordance with the SANG Management Plan.

4.5.5 Developers wishing to use third party SANGs must do so with the agreement of the SANG owner and the Council. The Council will provide advice on the process to secure third party SANG capacity. In this case, developers must agree the cost via a private contractual agreement between themselves and the owner of the SANG. Council approval must be sought to ensure that the development is located within the catchment area of the SANG and that there is sufficient SANG capacity remaining. The purchasing developer must then ensure the mitigation is tied to their development scheme and ensure that SAMM payments are also secured with the Council in a s106 Agreement which contains the following obligations:

Not to occupy the development until the third party SANG capacity has been secured, provided, made publicly available and with guaranteed in-perpetuity maintenance.

To pay the required SAMM contributions.

To pay the Council an administration and monitoring fee.

4.5.6 Prior approval applications are often required to follow this route to secure SANG capacity.

5 Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM)

5.1 SAMM Project

5.1.1 The second element of avoidance and mitigation measures, as set out in paragraph 3.1 above, is SAMM.

5.1.2 The SPA comprises multiple SSSI sites, owned and managed by many different organisations and some private individuals. To ensure that access management implemented in one area does not simply displace visitors onto another part of the SPA, to measure the effects of SANG provision and to monitor visitor and bird numbers, it is necessary to take a strategic approach to visitor access management.

5.1.3 The Thames Basin Heaths Partnership (made up of landowners and managers of the SPA), with support from NE and Hampshire County Council, is implementing a programme of strategic visitor access management measures for the purpose of mitigating the effects of new development on the SPA, funded by developer contributions. Further information can be found on the Thames Basin Heaths Partnership website⁽⁸⁾ These measures have been taken forward into the SAMM project which:

- Promotes SANGs as new recreational opportunities for local people and particularly encourages their use during the breeding bird season
- Provides on-the-ground wardening service to supplement existing wardening efforts
- Provides a SPA-wide education programme
- Creates new volunteering opportunities
- Demonstrates best practice for strategic access management of visitors and visitor infrastructure where the supply of greenspace is heavily dependent on protected areas
- Monitors visitor usage of SANG and SPA
- Monitors the protected birds on the SPA (Nightjar, Dartford Warbler and Woodlark)

5.1.4 The SAMM Project (currently hosted by NE) is tasked with drawing up a work programme which is overseen by the JSPB that includes member representation from Bracknell Forest Council and stakeholders with relevant expertise.

5.2 SAMM Contributions

5.2.1 The SAMM Project is funded by s106 contributions and is funded for in perpetuity. These are not spent by the local authority but passed to Hampshire County Council who administer the scheme on behalf of the JSPB. The level of SAMM contributions are calculated based on guidance issued by NE. These are divided between annual expenditure (30%) and a long-term investment fund (70%).

5.2.2 The JSPB has agreed that SAMM contributions should increase annually in line with inflation. Each year Bracknell Forest Council will apply the new level of developer contributions to planning applications validated from 1 April of that year and publish these on its website.

8 <https://www.tbhpartnership.org.uk/>

5.2.3 For the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 NE advised that for dwellings located within 400m – 5km of the SPA the SAMM tariff for an average dwelling will be £990.17. This equates to £412.57 per person occupancy and is shown in the table below.

Table 8 SAMM contributions (400m - 5km from the SPA) 2025/26

| Dwelling Size | Occupancy (persons) ⁽¹⁾ | SAMM Contribution per dwelling |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 bedroom | 1.40 | £578 |
| 2 bedrooms | 1.85 | £763 |
| 3 bedrooms | 2.50 | £1,031 |
| 4 bedrooms | 2.85 | £1,176 |
| 5+ bedrooms | 3.70 | £1,527 |

1. Regional occupancy rates have been applied.

5.2.4 For the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 , the proportional 5km - 7km tariff for an average 2.4 persons dwelling will be £285.76 (£119.07 per person).

Table 9 SAMM contributions (5km - 7km from the SPA) 2025/26

| Dwelling Size | Occupancy (persons) ⁽¹⁾ | SAMM Contribution per dwelling |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 bedroom | 1.40 | £167 |
| 2 bedrooms | 1.85 | £220 |
| 3 bedrooms | 2.50 | £298 |
| 4 bedrooms | 2.85 | £339 |
| 5+ bedrooms | 3.70 | £441 |

1. Regional occupancy rates have been applied.

5.2.5 Bracknell Forest Council will continue to work collaboratively as part of the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board (JSPB). This includes agreeing and, where required, updating the SAMM tariff.

6 Other Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

6.1 Air Quality

6.1.1 As stated in section 2.2, new residential and non-residential development in Bracknell Forest has the potential to increase the number of car journeys. This is likely to cause a decrease in air quality which could lead to adverse effects on the SPA (and other habitats sites) in-combination with other developments.

6.1.2 An air quality assessment carried out for the BFLP (see document reference LP/Ev/8f).⁽⁹⁾ This concluded that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA as a result of the BFLP (either alone or in-combination) due to changes in air quality.

6.1.3 NE currently advises that developments with a net increase of over 100 dwellings and other developments on a case-by-case basis which are not included in the BFLP Air Quality Assessment will require an air quality assessment in accordance with BFLP policies LP 31 and LP 32.

6.1.4 The results of such an assessment are required to enable the Council to carry out an HRA. The council is unable to provide detailed technical advice on this matter. It is therefore strongly advised that NE is contacted for further advice at the earliest opportunity.

6.1.5 Reference should be made to the assessment advice published by NE.⁽¹⁰⁾ Guidance which has been agreed with NE can be found in this document in appendix 3 however this is updated annually. Further information relating to the transport modelling and any updates to this guidance can be found on the Council's website.⁽¹¹⁾ If such proposals are found to lead to likely significant adverse air quality effects on habitats sites (in agreement with NE) mitigation measures will be agreed at the planning application stage.

6.2 Functionally Linked Land

6.2.1 As described in section 2.2 above, the loss of functionally linked land has the potential to lead to significant effects on the integrity of the SPA

6.2.2 An ecology survey and / or bird breeding survey may be required to ascertain whether the SPA birds are present on a potential development site. Developers should seek advice from NE on this. This will enable the Council to carry out a HRA. Any measures proposed to avoid or mitigate the effects of the loss of functionally linked land on the integrity of the SPA must be agreed with the Council and NE and satisfy the Habitats Regulations.

9 Air Quality Assessment of the Pre-Submission Bracknell Forest Local Plan (March 2021) <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/development-plan/bracknell-forest-local-plan/evidence-base>

10 <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4720542048845824>

11 www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/spa

7 Implementation and Monitoring

7.1 Timing of Mitigation

7.1.1 Any s106 contribution payments to be made to the Council are to be secured by planning obligations and paid no later than the commencement of the development. If the development is likely to be built in major phases, payment by installment will be considered. In some circumstances for smaller development schemes where it is demonstrated that it would help with development viability, the Council will consider phased SANG and SAMM payments. The use of CIL for SANG enhancements will be a matter for the Council to resolve using its internal financial administration processes. All such matters will be published in the Council's CIL report in its annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS).

7.1.2 Where specific measures and/or works (by the developer or, by others who are better placed to provide) are needed to avoid and mitigate the effect that occupiers of a development will have on the SPA, these must be undertaken and in place before those occupiers move in. Consequently in some cases, the Council will, by planning condition or obligations, restrict the occupation of a development until related avoidance and mitigation measures and/or works are complete. Where the Council is undertaking such works on the strategic SANGs it will need a reasonable period of time in which to spend these monies. The Council will continue to pump prime SANG enhancement works to enable early occupation of appropriate schemes.

7.1.3 The use of a Grampian Condition to secure a SANG for a development will only be accepted when there is absolute certainty that a suitable SANG will come forward and there is a mechanism in place to secure funding or contributions. The SANG needs to have been granted planning permission or planning permission is imminent; the SANG must not be subject to legal challenge; the landowner has given written permission for the development to be mitigated by a particular SANG and only final sign off is awaited and this is agreed by the Council. It may also be necessary to provide for financial contributions in addition to the Grampian Condition which should be secured by s106 Agreement at the time of grant of planning permission. It is a fundamental requirement that the securing of mitigation such as necessary SANG capacity is secured at the point the scheme is approved (i.e. planning permission). It is therefore unlawful to defer the securing of the solution to a date after planning permission has been granted.

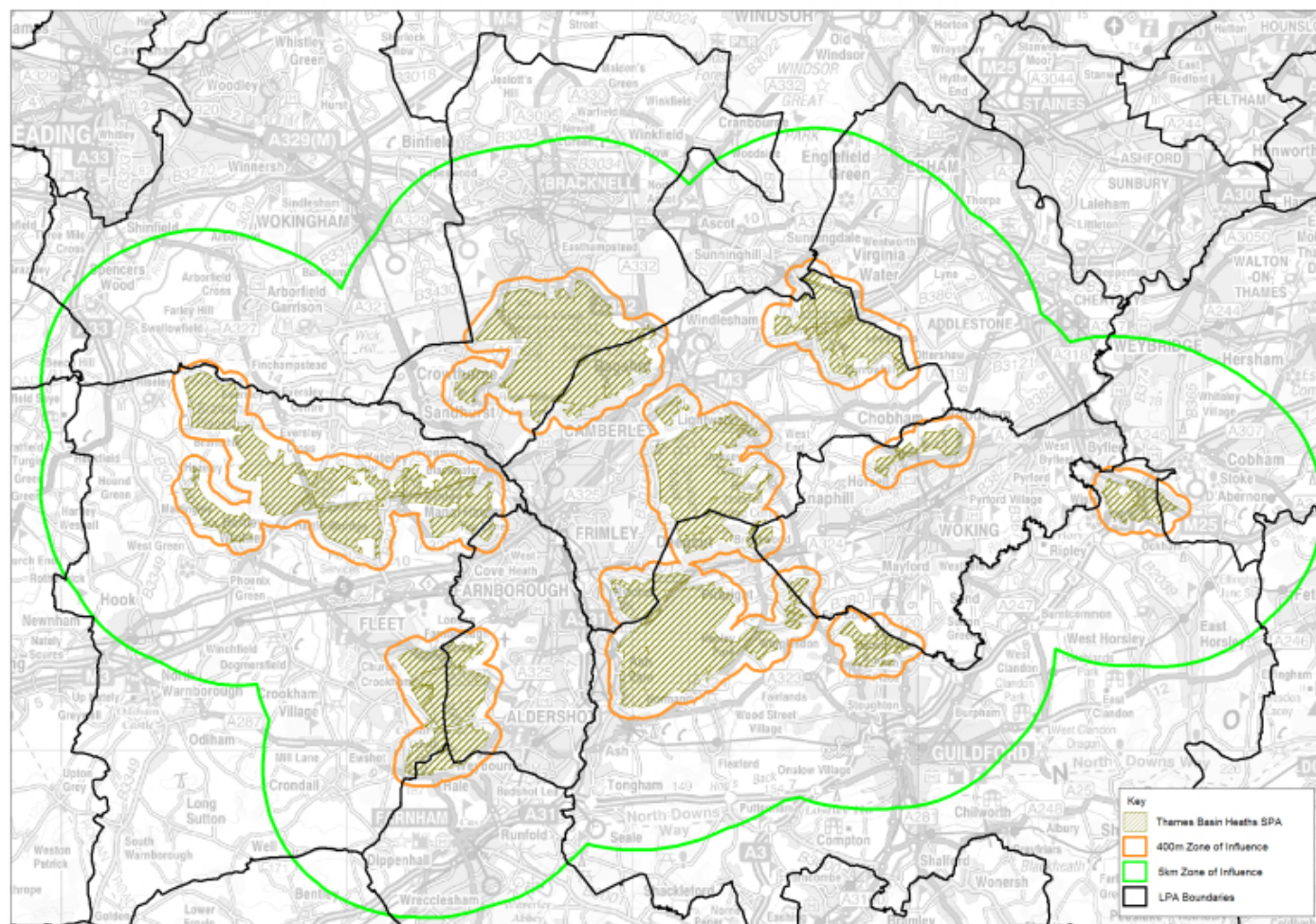
7.2 Monitoring and Review

7.2.1 The Council will report on the implementation of this Strategy through the Annual Monitoring Report that it is required to produce as part of the BFLP.

7.2.2 The Council will also report to NE and, as appropriate, to the JSPB. Continued representation on the JSPB will ensure that the Council remains engaged in the process of identifying and delivering SPA mitigation.

Appendix 1: Thames Basin Heaths SPA

Figure 3 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area



Appendix 2: Overview of SANGs and SANG Networks in Bracknell Forest

Table 10 SANG sites and SANG networks in Bracknell Forest

| SANG Network | SANG Sites | Type of SANG | Area (ha) | SANG Catchment | SANG capacity ⁽¹⁾ / capacity remaining (persons) ⁽²⁾ | Comments |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------|-----------|----------------|--|------------------------|
| Ambarrow SANG | Ambarrow Hill / Court | Strategic | 13.73 | 4km | 1,526 / 178 | Operational since 2007 |
| Broadmoor SANG | Broadmoor Farm Meadows | Bespoke | 8 | 2km | 965 ⁽³⁾ | Operational since 2019 |
| Cut Countryside Corridor SANG | Larks Hill | Strategic | 22.64 | 5km | 2,139 / 183 | Operational since 2008 |
| | Larks Hill replacement SANG Land | Strategic | | | | |
| | Garth Meadows | Strategic | | | | |
| | Jock's Copse , Tinkers Copse and The Cut (sth) | Strategic | | | | |
| | Piggy Wood | Strategic | | | | |
| | Anneforde Place | Strategic | 0.9 | | 86 / 86 | Operational since 2018 |
| | Land at Manor Farm | Bespoke | 0.5 | | 62 | Operational since 2014 |

| SANG Network | SANG Sites | Type of SANG | Area (ha) | SANG Catchment | SANG capacity ⁽¹⁾ / capacity remaining (persons) ⁽²⁾ | Comments |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------|----------------------|----------------|--|--|
| | Cabbage Hill | Bespoke | 13.83 | | 1,610 | Operational since 2016 |
| | Cabbage Hill Surplus Land | Bespoke | 3.59 | | 449 | Operational since 2022 |
| | River Cut | Bespoke | 2 | | - | Subject to agreement of SANG Management Plan |
| | Blue Mountain | Bespoke | 12.99 | | 1,585 | Operational since 2019 |
| Englemere Pond SANG | Englemere Pond | Strategic | 27.53 | 5km | 3,382 / 526 | Operational since 2008 |
| Frost Folly SANG | Frost Folly 1 | Bespoke | 12.57 | 5km | 1,571 | Operational since 2018 |
| | Frost Folly 2 | Third party | 12.1ha | | 1,512 | Operational since 2023 |
| | Frost Folly 3 | Third party | 10.98 | | 1,372 | Under construction |
| | Windmill Meadows | Third party | 12.09 | | 1,511 | Operational since 2021 |
| | Moss End | Third party | 25.5 | | 3,187 | Commenced |
| Horseshoe Lake SANG | Horseshoe Lake | Strategic | 10.07 ⁽⁴⁾ | 4km | 1,080 / 238 | Operational since 2007 |
| Bullbrook SANG | Longhill Park | Strategic | 12.53 | 5km | 1,566 / 288 | Operational since 2006 |
| | Milman Close | Strategic | | | | |
| | Beswick Gardens Copse | Strategic | | | | |

| SANG Network | SANG Sites | Type of SANG | Area (ha) | SANG Catchment | SANG capacity ⁽¹⁾ / capacity remaining (persons) ⁽²⁾ | Comments |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------|---|----------------|--|--|
| | Clintons Hill | Strategic | | | | |
| | Lily Hill Park | Strategic | 18.65 | | 2,331 / 1,513 | Operational since 2017 |
| | Whitegrove Copse | Strategic | 3.65 | | 458 / 373 | Operational since 2018 |
| | Harvest Hill | Strategic | 2.3 | | | |
| | Edmunds Green | Strategic | 2.32 | | | |
| | The Chestnuts | Strategic | 1.08 | | | |
| Shepherd Meadows SANG | Shepherd Meadows | Strategic | 33.74 | 5km | 3,682 / 1,736 | In operation since 2009. ⁽⁵⁾ |
| | Shepherd Meadows North | Strategic | 8.5 | | 1,036 / 0 | Operational since 2023 |
| | Seeby's Meadow | Strategic | | | | |
| | Seeby's Copse | Strategic | | | | |
| Buckler's SANG | Buckler's Forest | Bespoke | 42.5 | 5km | 5,312 | Operational since 2018 |
| | Beaufort Park | Bespoke | 10.74 (5.54 which is publicly accessible and 5.2 which is a | | 692 | Planning permission granted subject to s106 agreement. Includes a biodiversity safeguard area of 5.2ha which is not publicly accessible. |

| SANG Network | SANG Sites | Type of SANG | Area (ha) | SANG Catchment | SANG capacity ⁽¹⁾ / capacity remaining (persons) ⁽²⁾ | Comments |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------------|------------------------------|----------------|--|---|
| | | | biodiveristy sfegurard area) | | | |
| | Great Hollands Recreation Ground Woodland | Strategic | 4.78 | | 484 / 264 | Operational since 2018 |
| West Binfield SANG ⁽⁶⁾ | Piglittle Field | Bespoke | 9.9 | 5km | 1,237 | Operational since 2018 |
| | Piglittle Field extension | Bespoke | 1.18 | | 147 | Planning permission granted subject to s106 agreement. |
| | Popes Meadow | Strategic | 5.2 | | 525 / 222 | Operational since 2018 |
| West Bracknell SANG | Peacock Meadows | Bespoke | 35.57 | 5km | 1,056 / 176 | Operational since 2007 |
| | Tarman's Copse | Strategic | 9.68 | | 1,090 / 130 | Subject to agreement of SANG Management Plan |
| | Bigwood | Strategic | 10.7 | | 1,337 / 480 | Operational since 2018 |
| Warfield Park SANG | Warfield Park | Bespoke | 11.2 | 400m | tbc | If car park provided residual capacity can be used for developments up to 2km away. |

1. Based on 8ha/1,000 population. Some sites may require a higher level of mitigation than this.

2. Remaining SANG capacity shown for strategic SANGs only and based on November 2024 figures. Bespoke SANGs may have excess SANG capacity which can be allocated to developments in their catchment areas in addition to those for which they were originally constructed. This needs to be carried out with the permission of the landowner of the SANG and agreed with the Council and NE.
3. SE corner of site removed from SANG before transfer to the Council as it is contaminated and not suitable for SANG. This reduced the SANG capacity by 0.28ha (35 persons).
4. 19.44ha including lake
5. SANG capacity equivalent to 500 persons is not available to Bracknell Forest developments as BFC has agreed with Surrey Heath BC that developments in Surrey Heath can be mitigated by this SANG where suitable.
6. This SANG network also includes Keephatch Meadows SANG which lies adjacent to Piglittle Field in Wokingham Borough. See appendix 4.

There have been discussions about further SANGs in the borough that could come forward in the future. These are Silverdene Woodland (next to Ambarrow Hill), Cabbage Hill West, an extension to Broadmoor SANG and smaller areas of land that will form link sites between SANGs.

Appendix 3 Assessment of Air Quality Effects on Habitats Sites

The following guidance has been agreed with NE. This is updated annually and includes attachments of information relating to transport modelling. Please refer to the Council's website for the full and latest information at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/spa

1. For developments with a net increase of over 100 dwellings and other developments on a case by case basis where they have the potential to impact air quality, an Air Quality Assessment should be provided to the Council to enable it to carry out a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to establish the likely significant air quality effects on the integrity of habitats sites arising from the development in combination with other plans and projects.
2. The assessment should fulfil the requirements of Natural England's (NE) guidance 'Natural England's approach to advising competent authorities on the assessment of road traffic emissions under the Habitats Regulations (NEA001)'⁽¹²⁾ issued in 2018. The application of the NE guidance to developments within Bracknell Forest has been discussed and agreed with NE and is set out in this guidance note.
3. The Air Quality Assessment should consider the air quality effects in combination with other plans and programmes, including development plans which are adopted or have been submitted to the Secretary of State.
4. In order to establish the in-combination traffic flows, the Council's strategic transport model should be used.⁽¹³⁾ Several versions of the strategic transport model have been developed and are available from the Bracknell Forest Transport Team - these are listed below. Models (d) and (e) will need to be used for the Air Quality Assessment as the Bracknell Forest Local Plan (BFLP) has now been adopted.
 - a. 2019 base year
 - b. 2026 model (includes former Core Strategy and projected build out to 2026 of Site Allocation Local Plan sites)
 - c. 2037 model (includes 2026 former Core Strategy and projected build out to 2037 of Site Allocation Local Plan sites, plus committed network improvements and background growth to 2037)
 - d. 2037 model (including the new BFLP sites)
 - e. 2037 model (including the new BFLP sites and mitigation schemes)
5. The Air Quality Assessment should commence with a screening and scoping stage to establish:
 - a. Any areas where potential air quality effects at habitats sites (both within the local authority's administrative area and within the wider area) 'in-combination' with other plans and projects can be screened out as insignificant; and
 - b. Roads and/or habitats sites (both within the local authority's administrative area and within the wider area) that require further assessment to determine the likely effects of the development on habitats sites 'in-combination' with other plans and projects.

¹² <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4720542048845824>

¹³ Please see appendices 1 and 2 to the Air Quality Guidance on the Council's website at <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/spa>

6. The screening and scoping stage may initially be limited to consideration of the in combination Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT). If the results cannot be screened out as insignificant, or are marginal, further air quality assessment should be undertaken to consider changes of both the relevant air quality critical loads and critical levels; this is likely to require air quality modelling.
7. When applying the assessment to the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), NE has advised that the assessment should focus on the dwarf shrub heath (a critical load of 10-20 kg N/ha/yr) for which the site is classified.
8. When applying the assessment to all other habitat sites (including the Windsor Forest and Great Park Special Area of Conservation (SAC)), NE has advised that all the relevant APIS critical loads for N deposition should be applied.

Appendix 4 SANG Maps and Catchment Areas

The following maps show the SANGs in Bracknell Forest as set out in appendix 2. There is a detailed map of each SANG site and SANG network. A map of the catchment area of each SANG is also included. SANG networks are linked by footpaths, bridleways and sometimes by smaller open spaces. This detail is not shown on the following maps but can be found in the SANG Management Plans.

Figure 4 Ambarrow Court/ Hill SANG

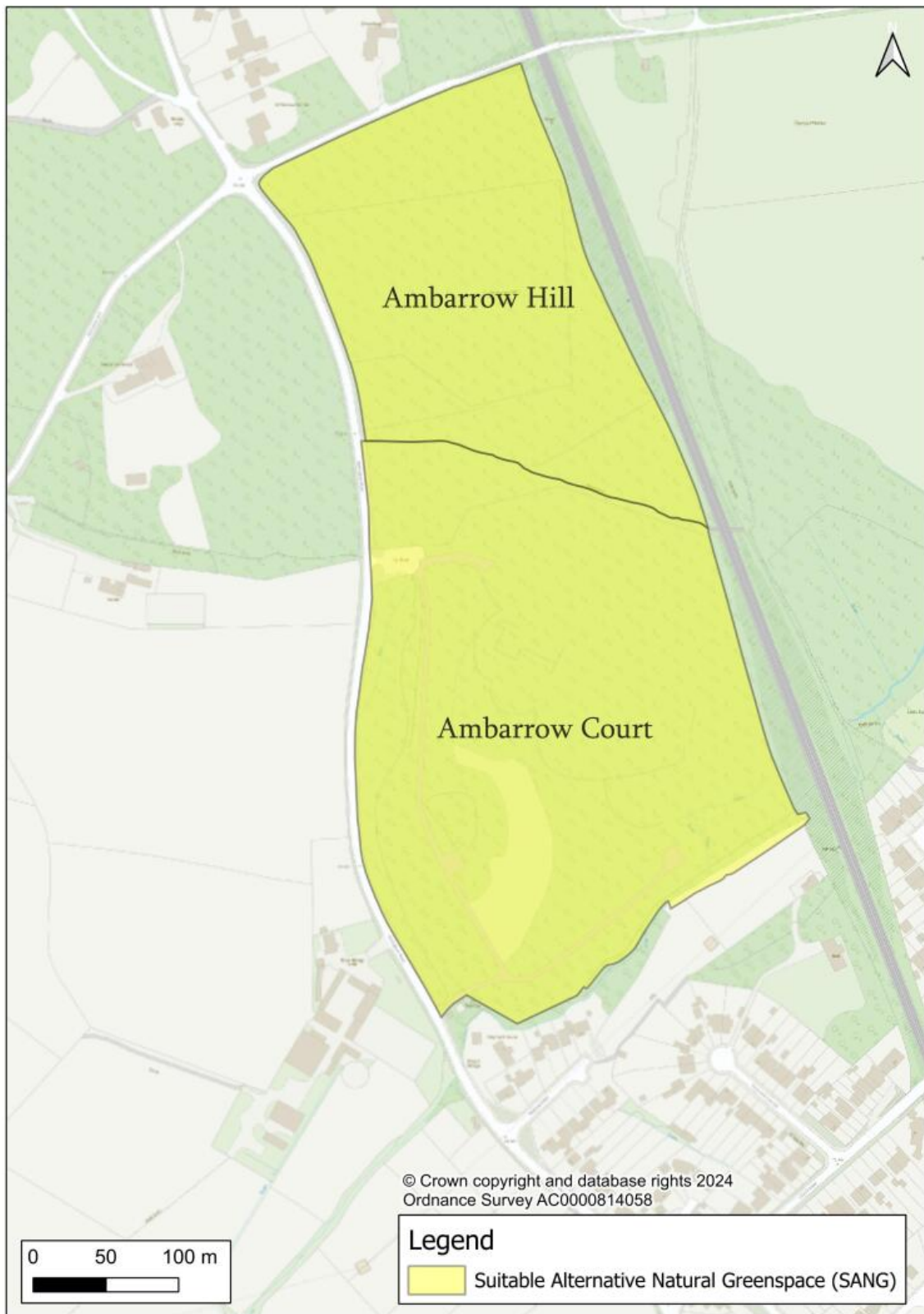


Figure 5 Ambarrow Court / Hill SANG 4km Catchment

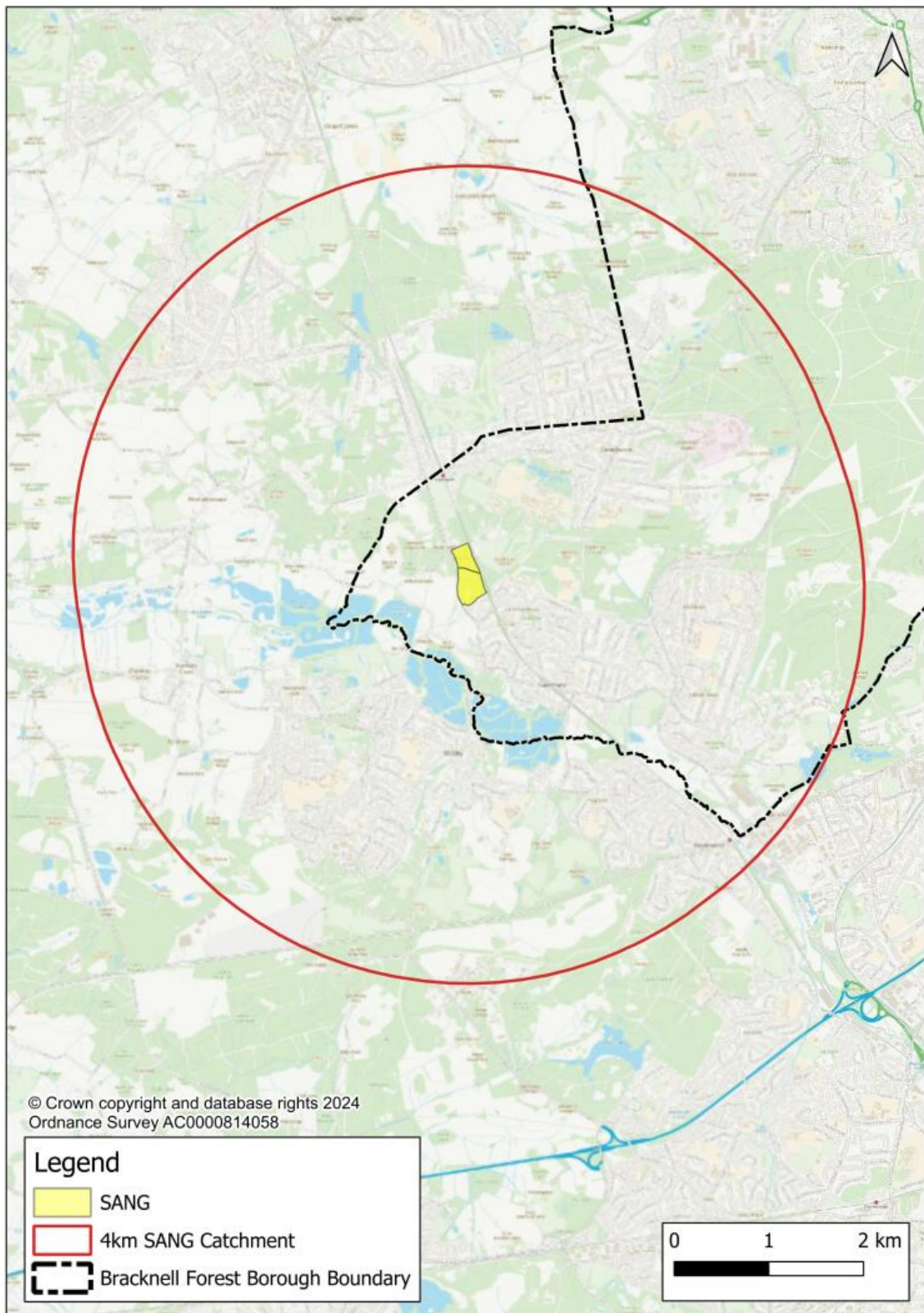


Figure 6 Broadmoor SANG

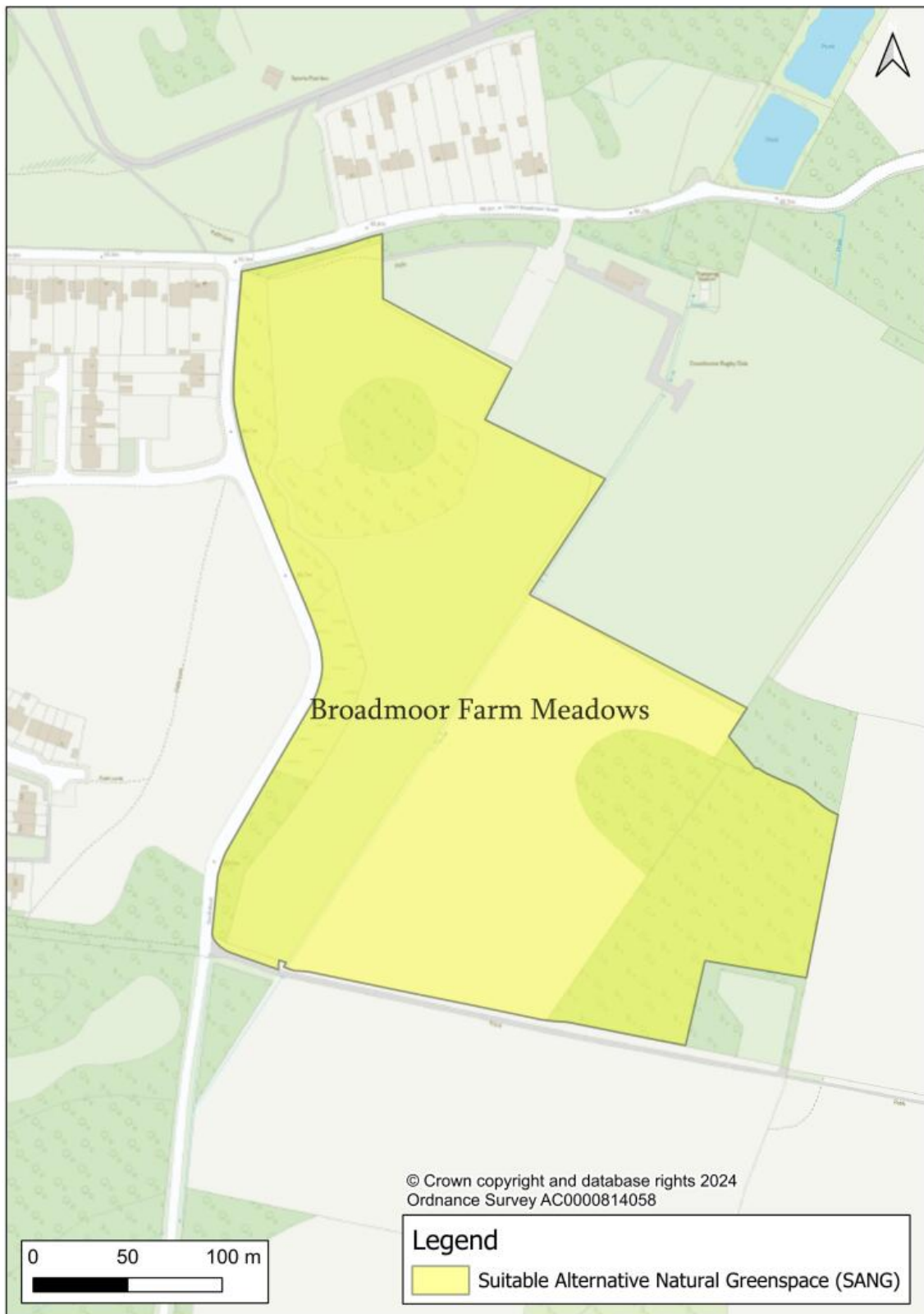


Figure 7 Broadmoor SANG 2km Catchment

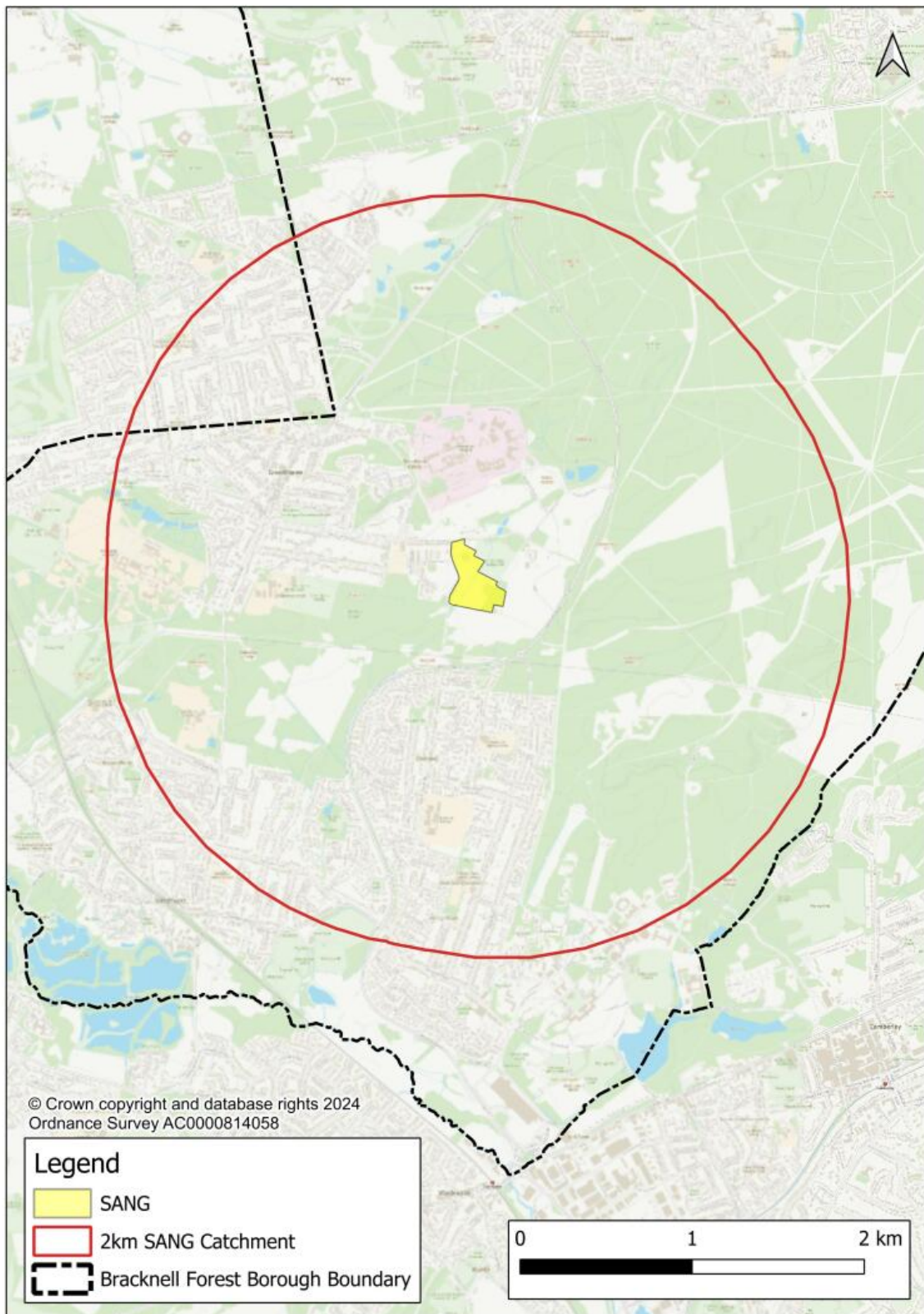


Figure 8 Cut Countryside Corridor SANG Network

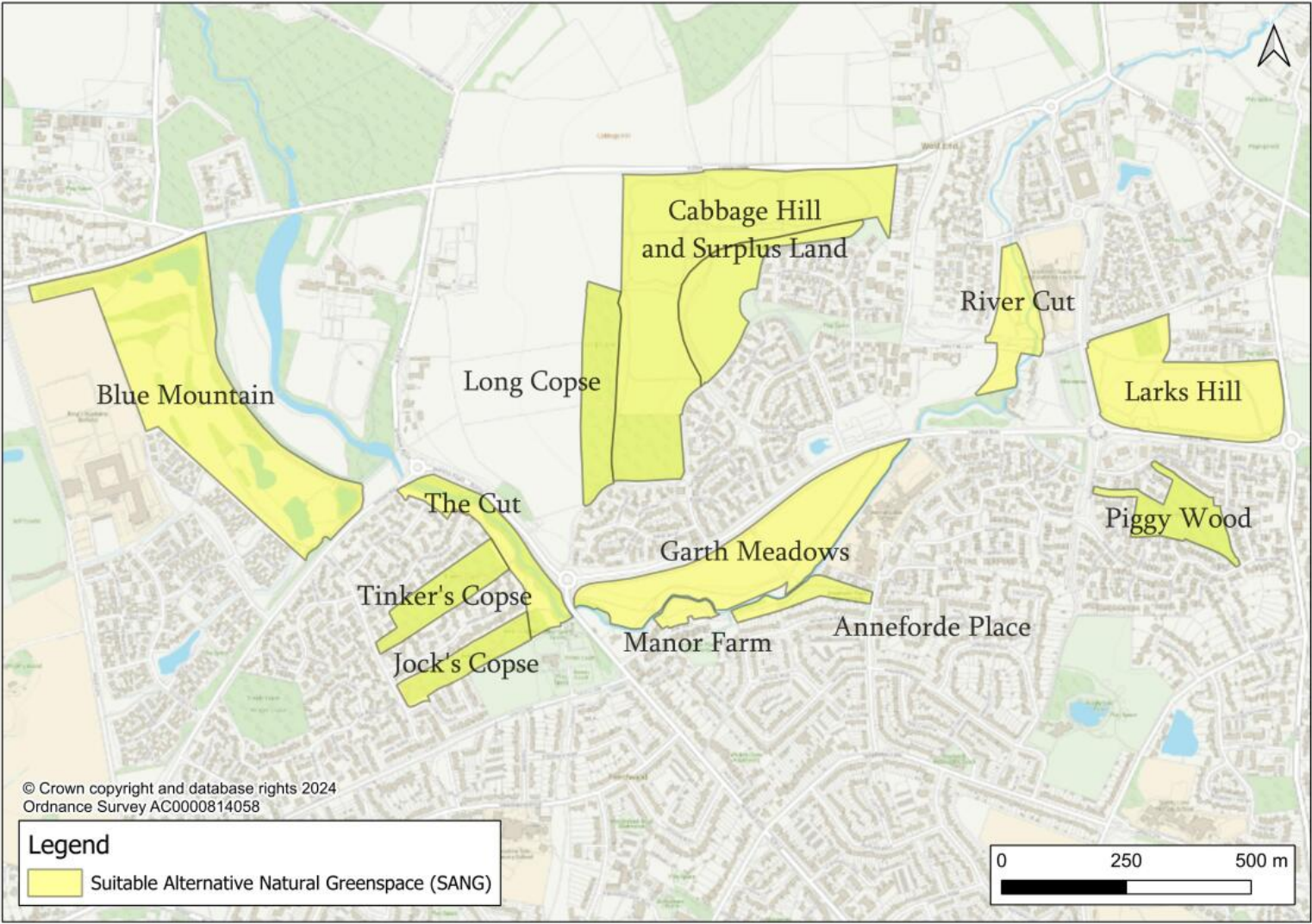


Figure 9 Cut Countryside Corridor SANG Network 5km Catchment

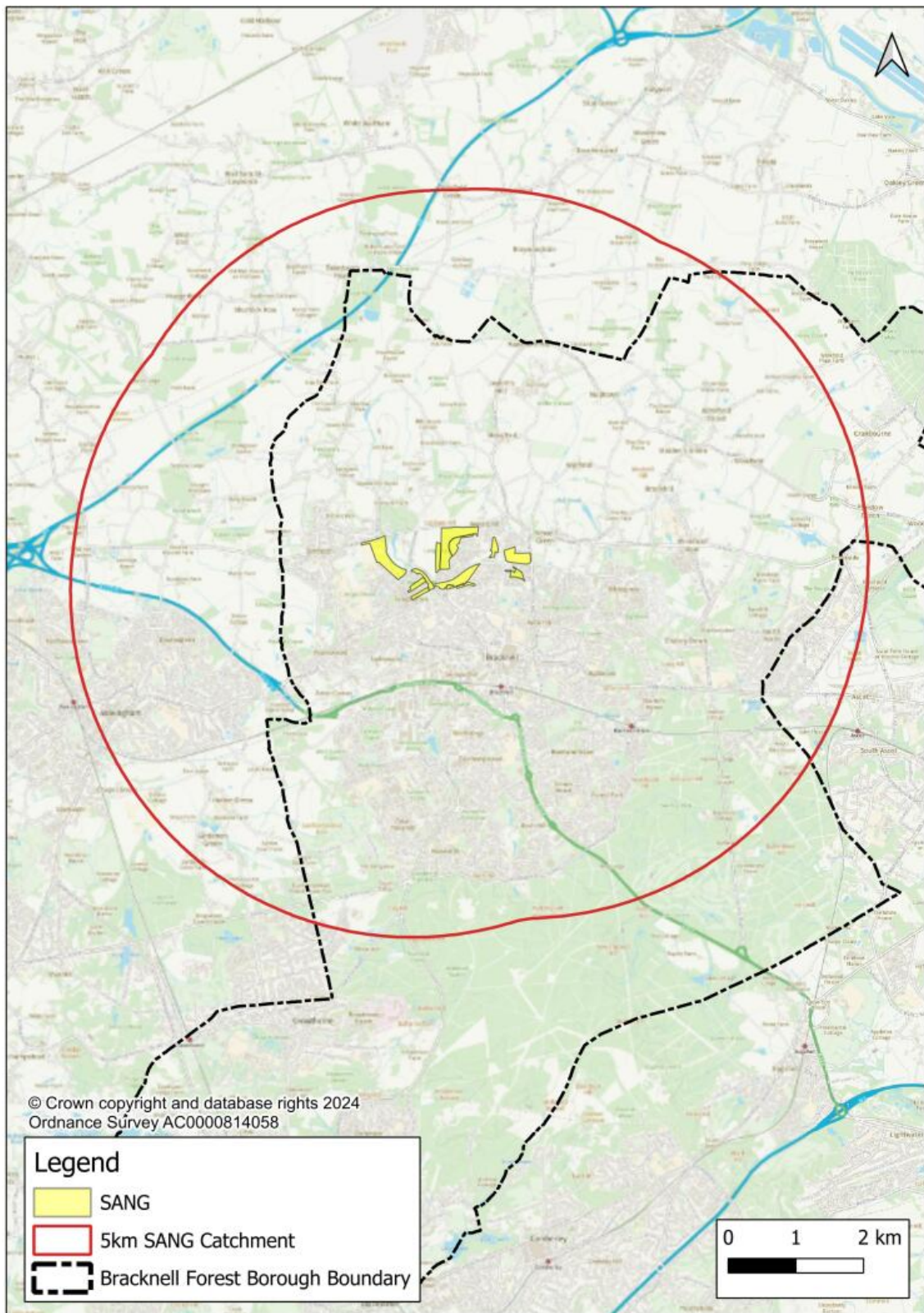


Figure 10 Englemere Pond SANG

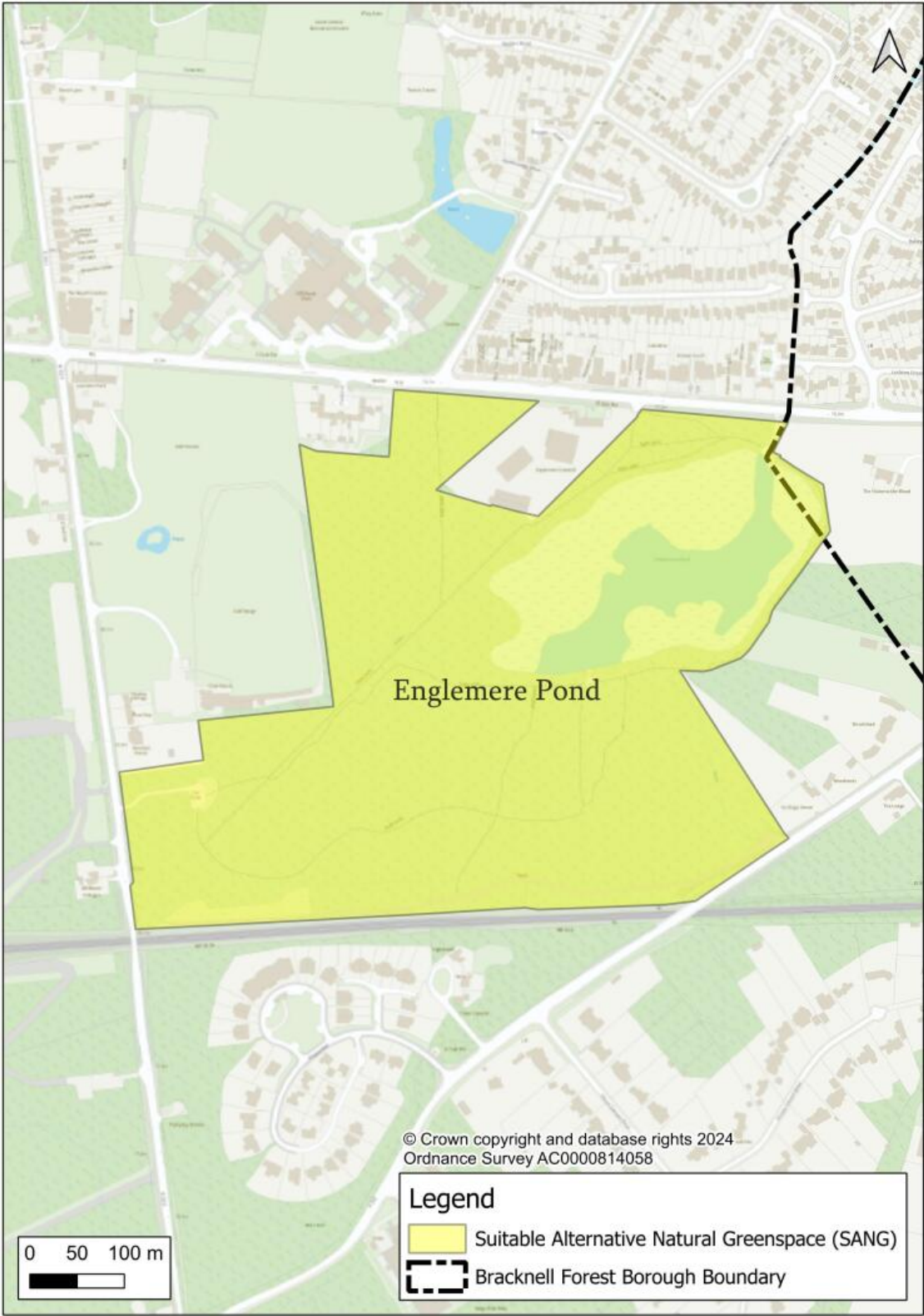


Figure 11 Englemere Pond SANG 5km Catchment

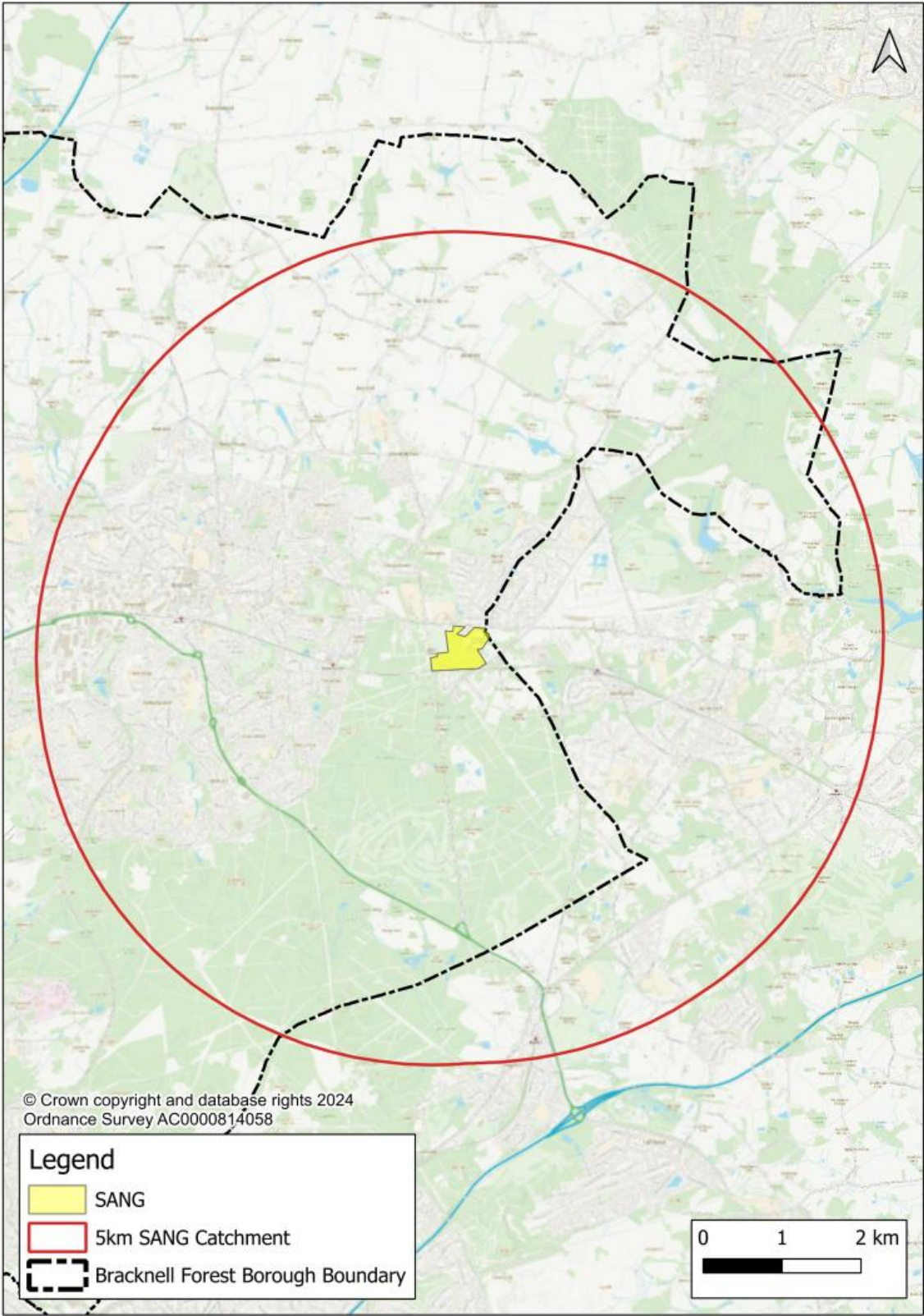


Figure 12 Frost Folly SANG Network

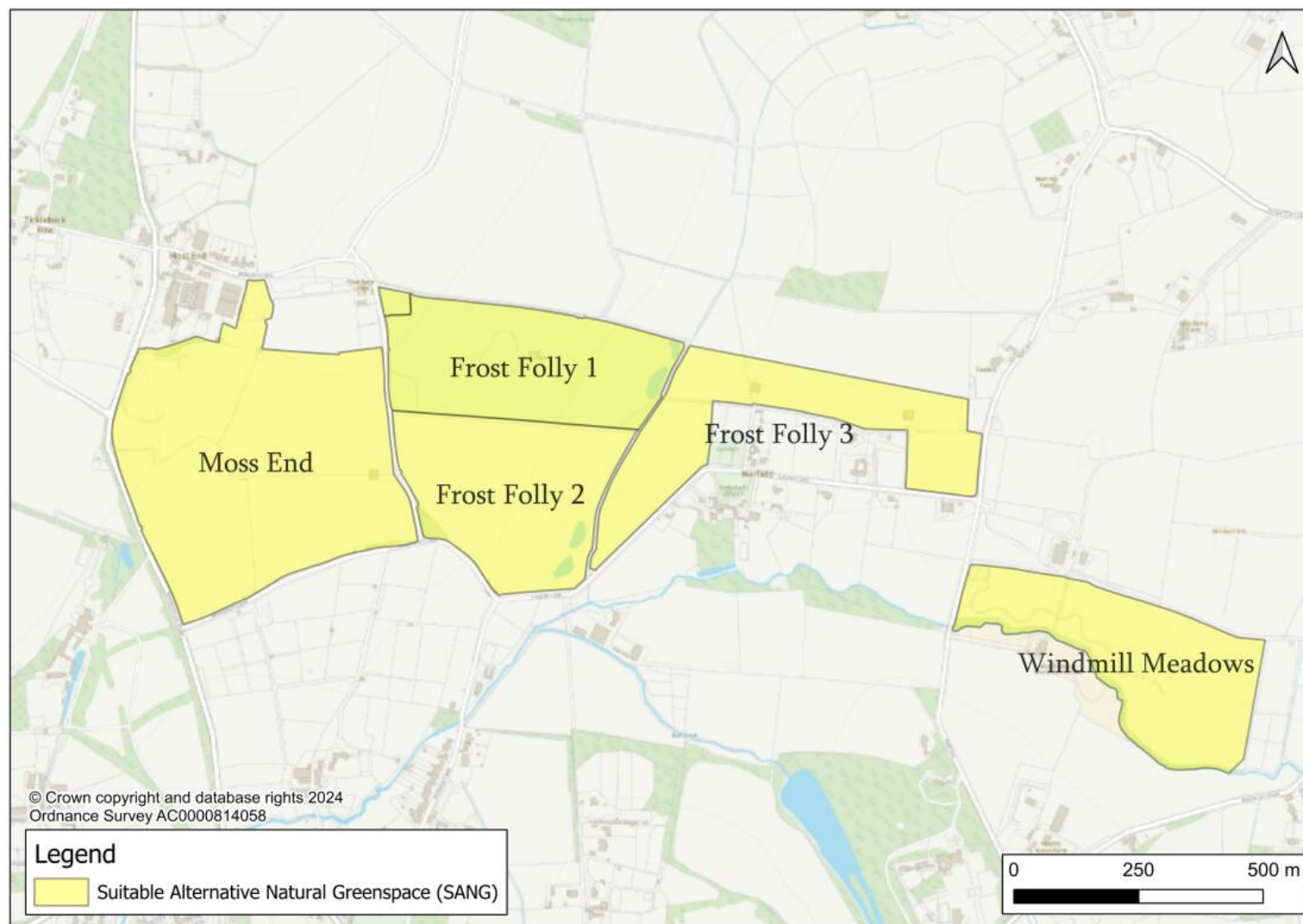


Figure 13 Frost Folly SANG Network 5km Catchment

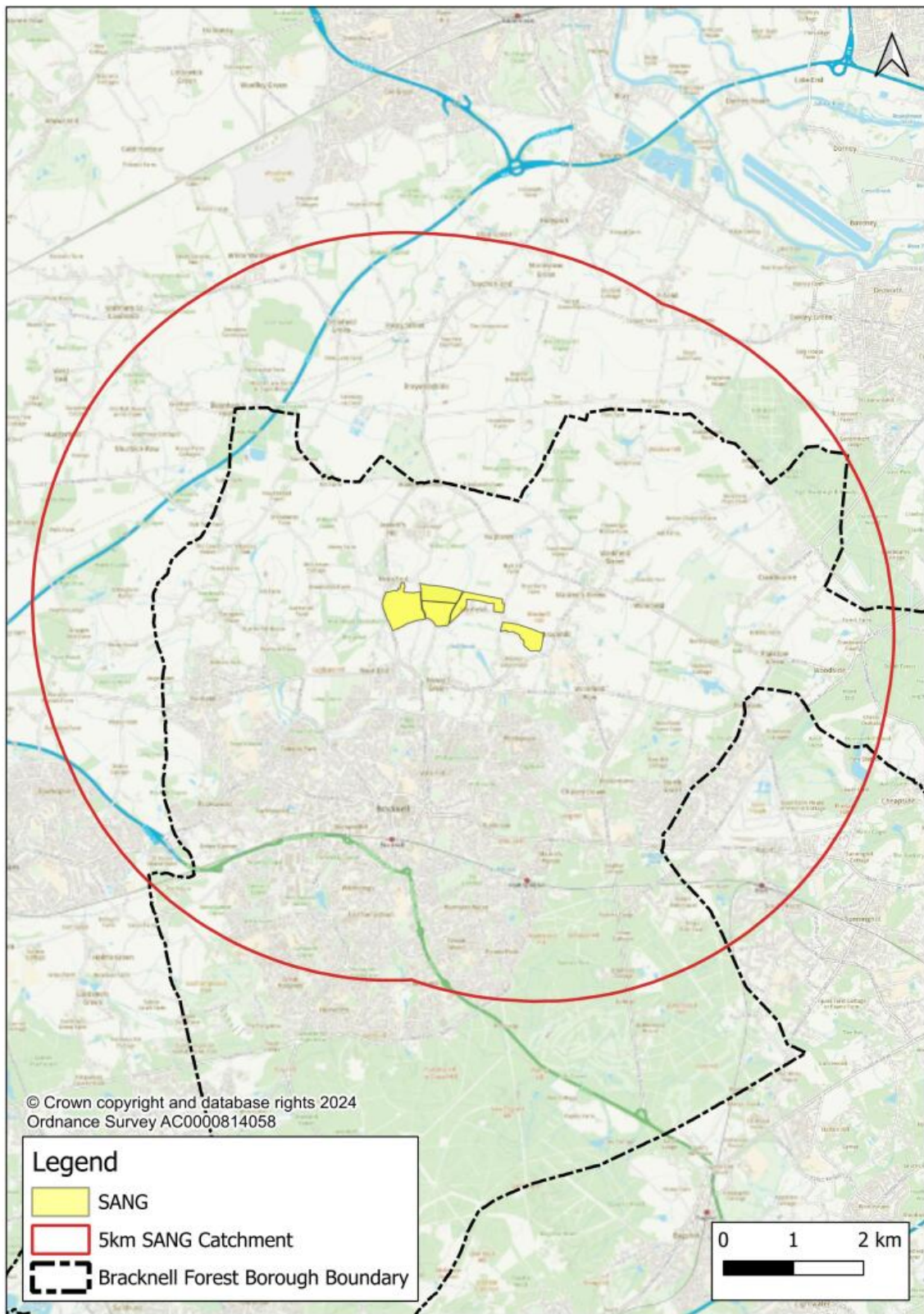


Figure 14 Horseshoe Lake SANG

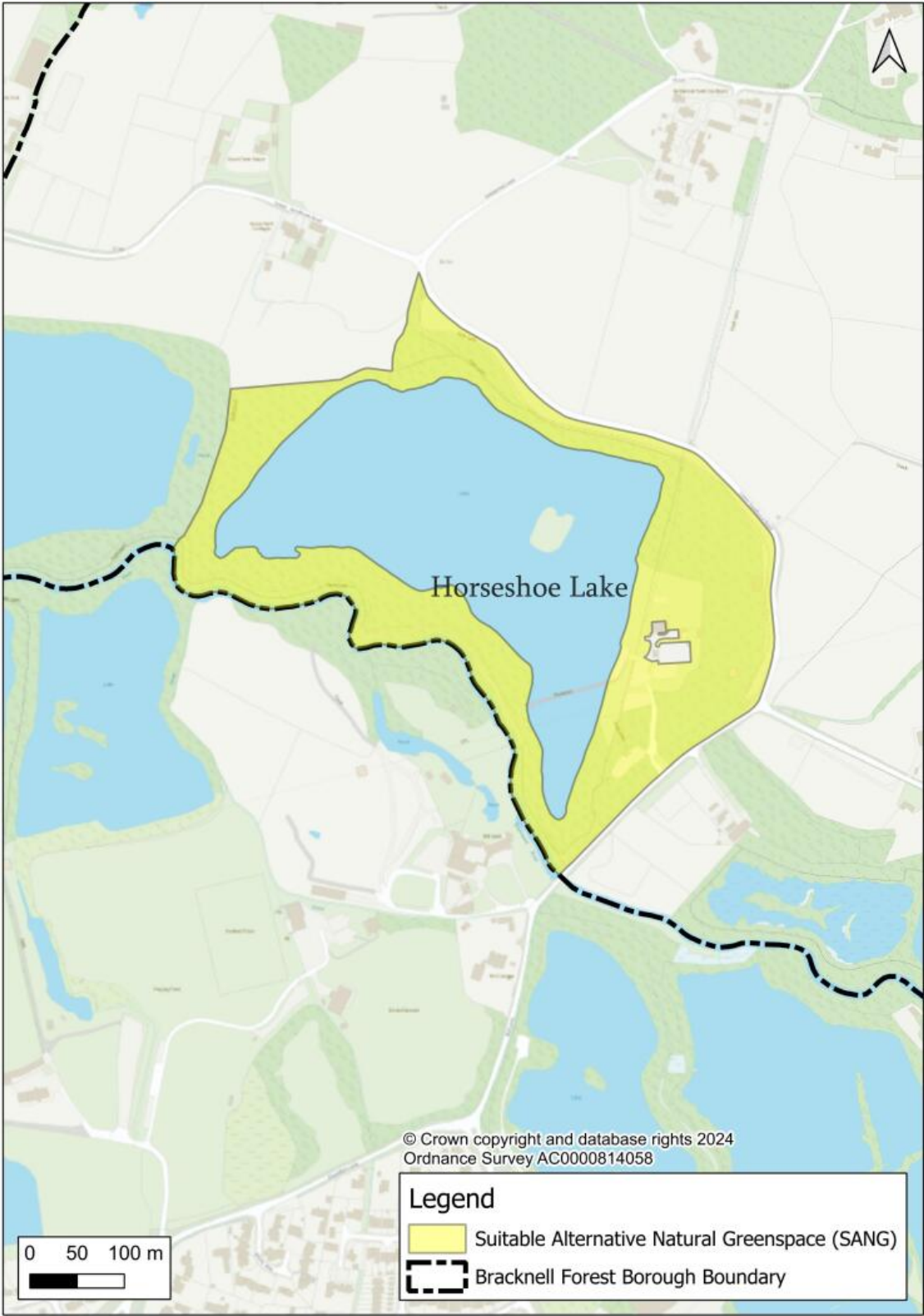


Figure 15 Horseshoe Lake SANG 4km Catchment

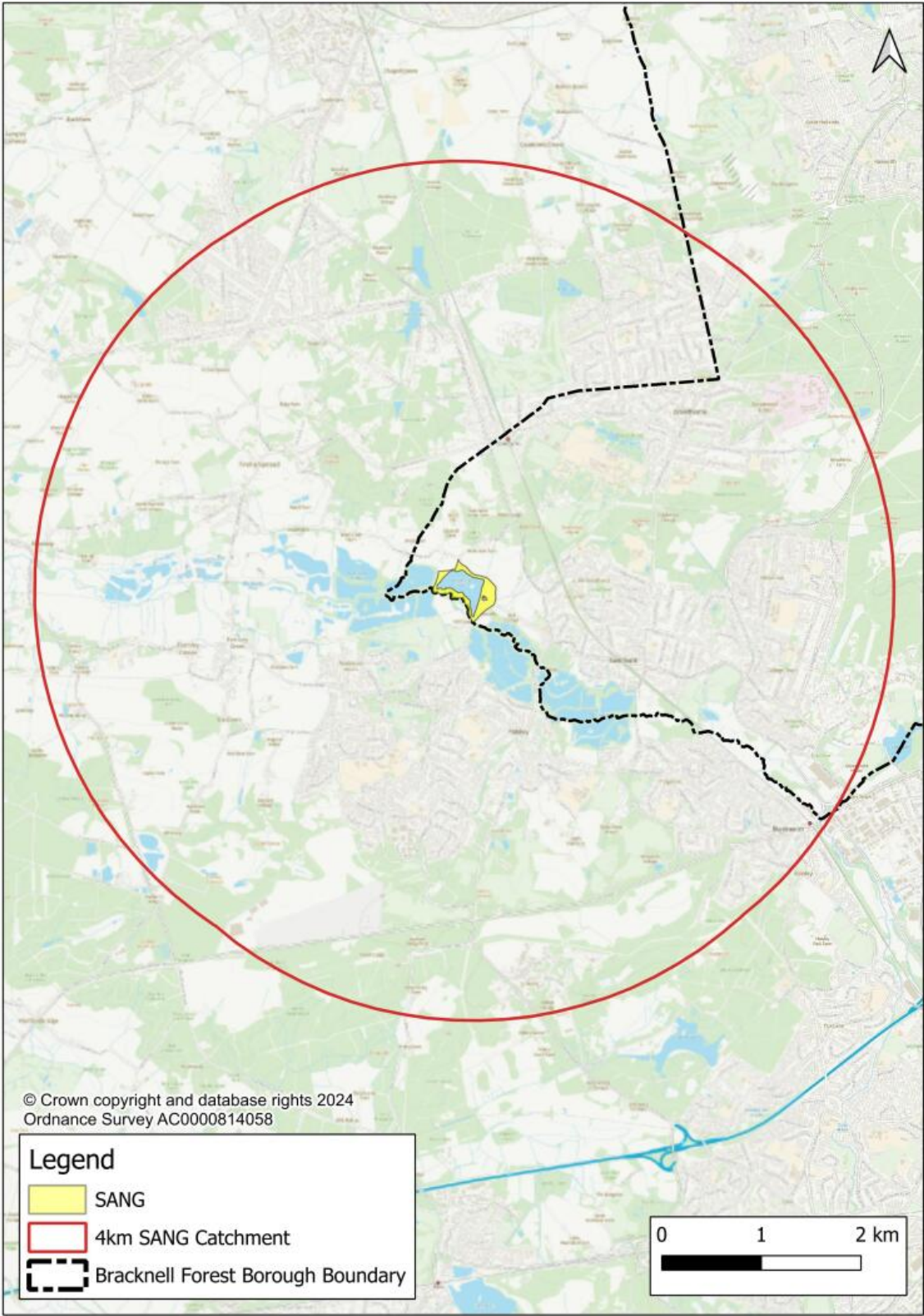


Figure 16 Bullbrook SANG Network

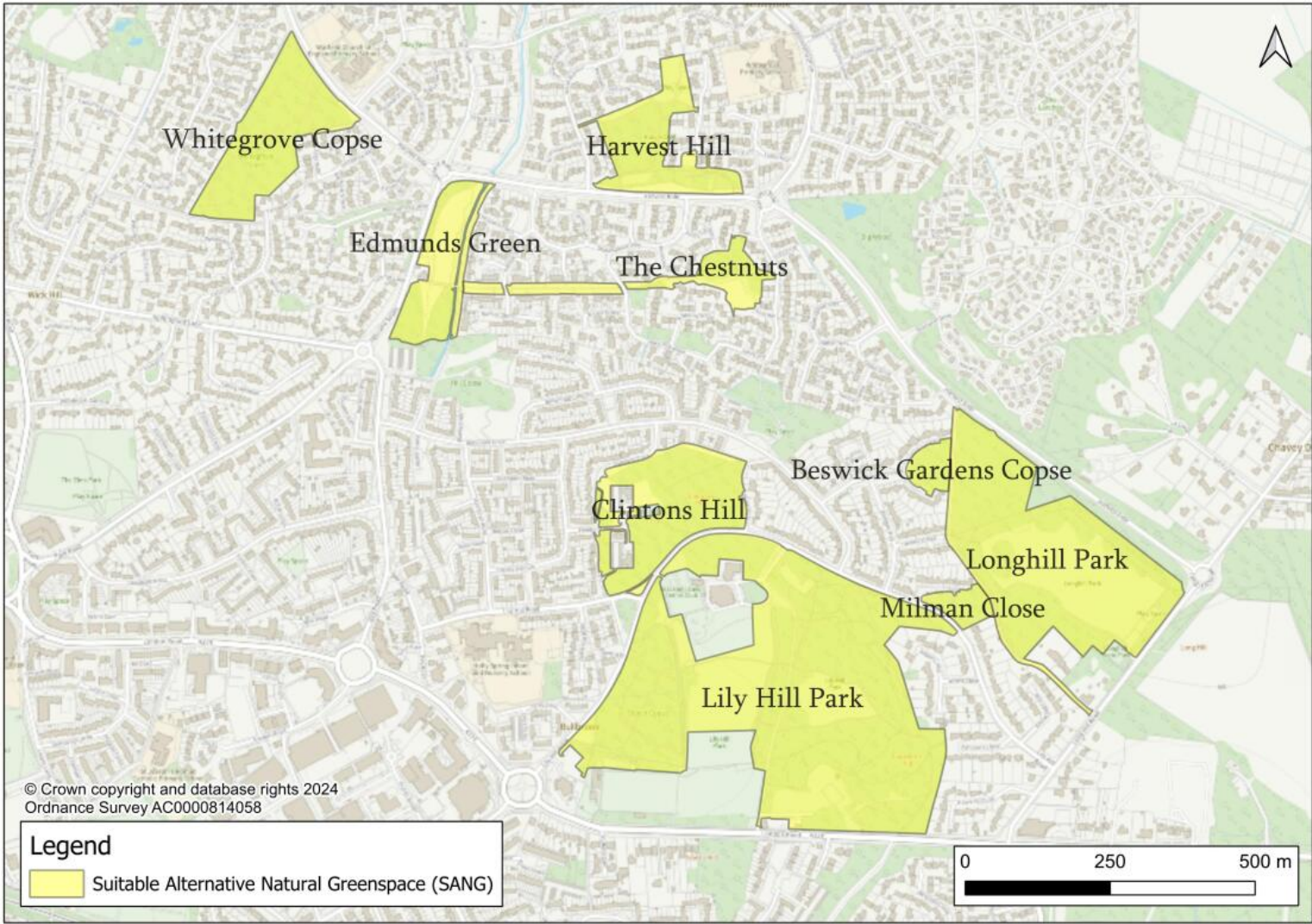


Figure 17 Bullbrook SANG Network 5km Catchment

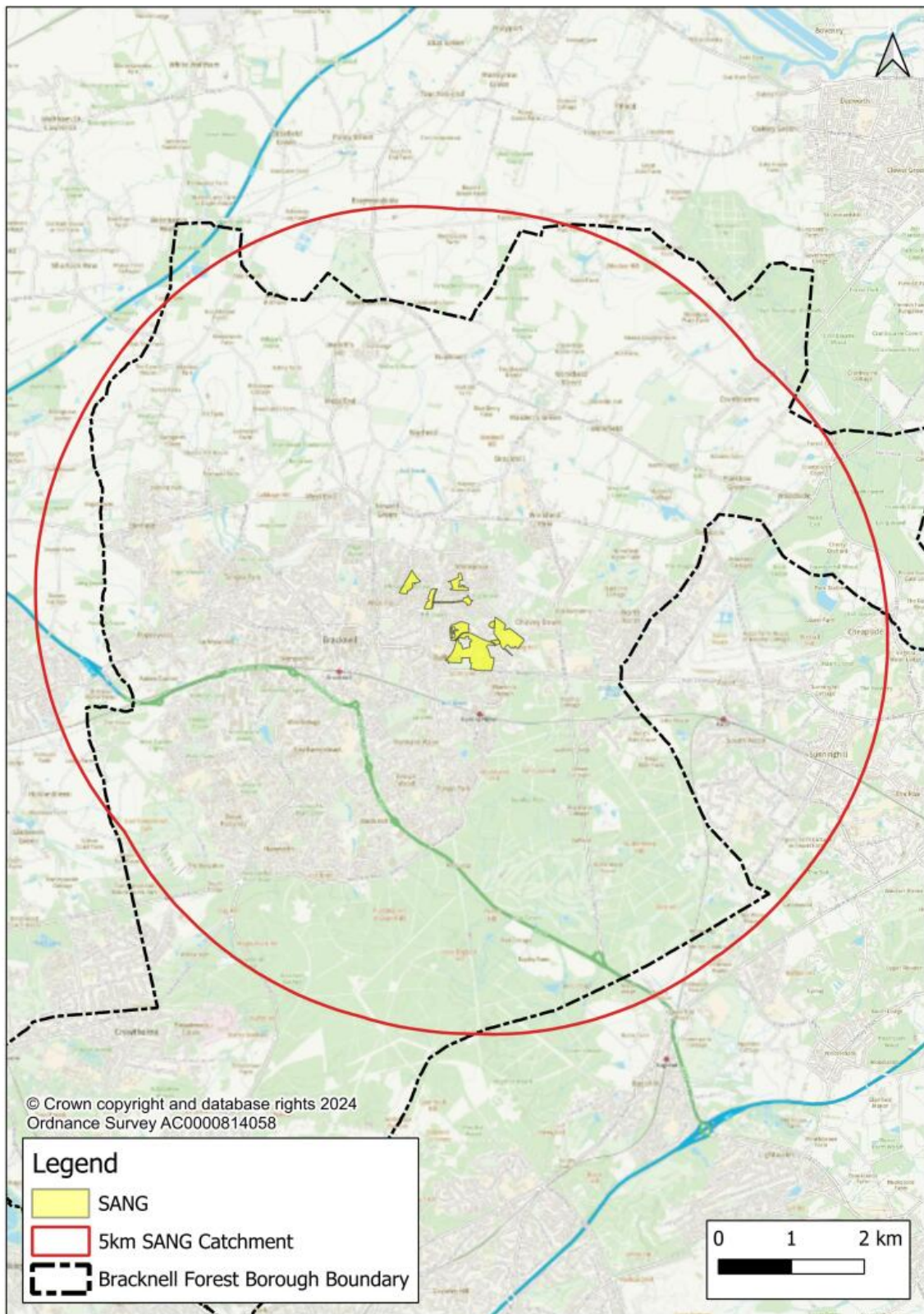


Figure 18 West Bracknell SANG Network

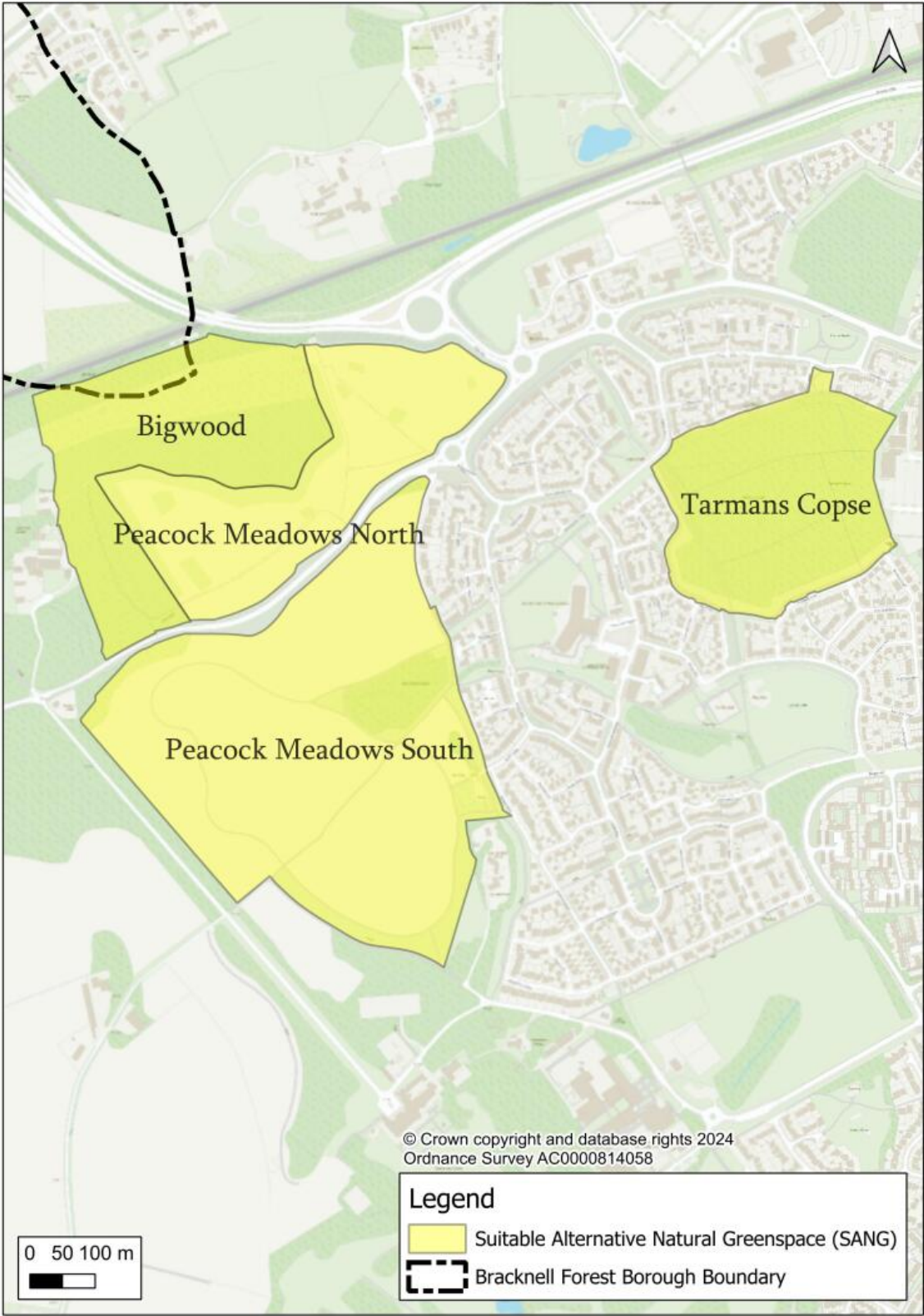


Figure 19 West Bracknell SANG Network 5km Catchment

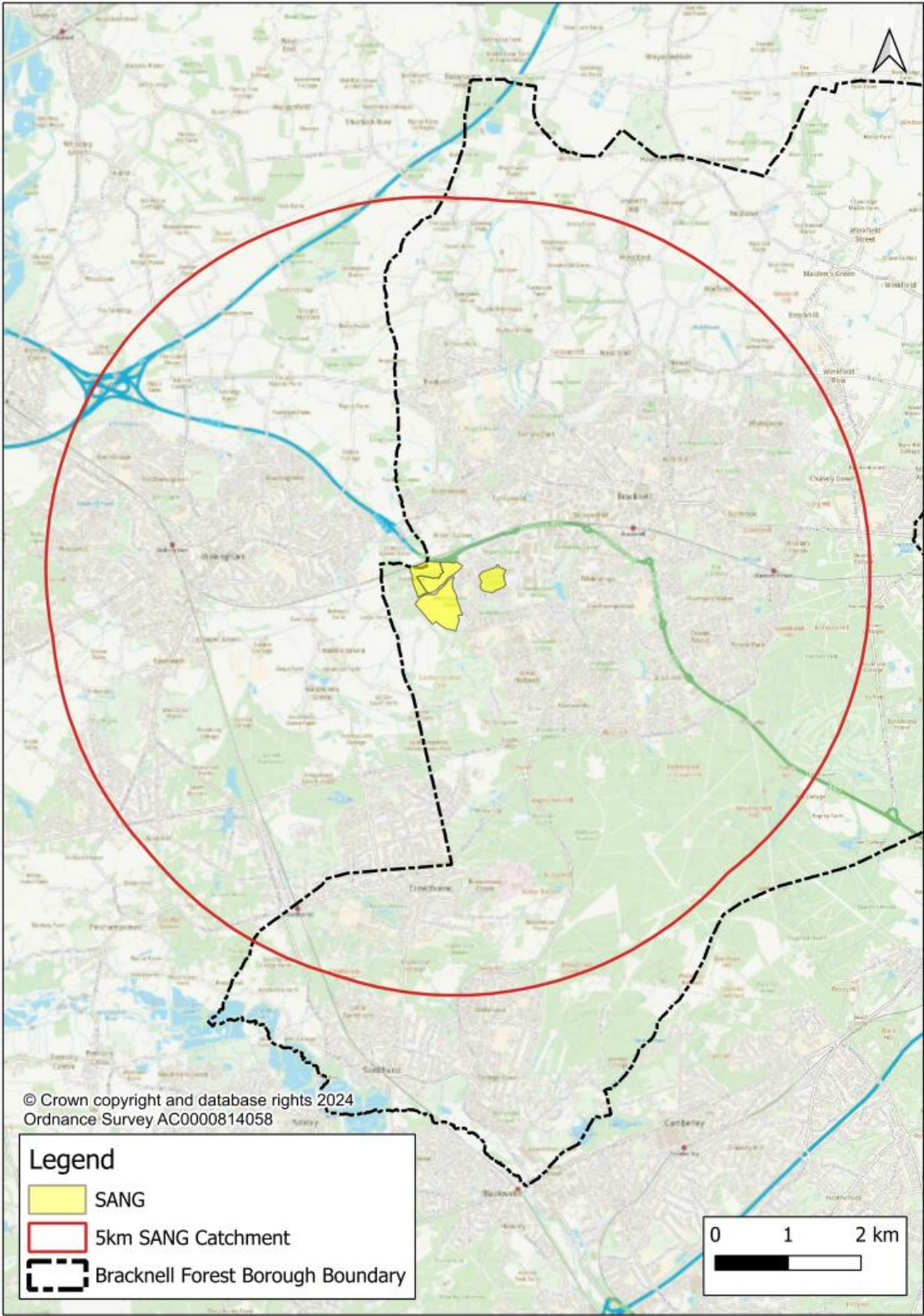


Figure 20 Shepherd Meadows SANG

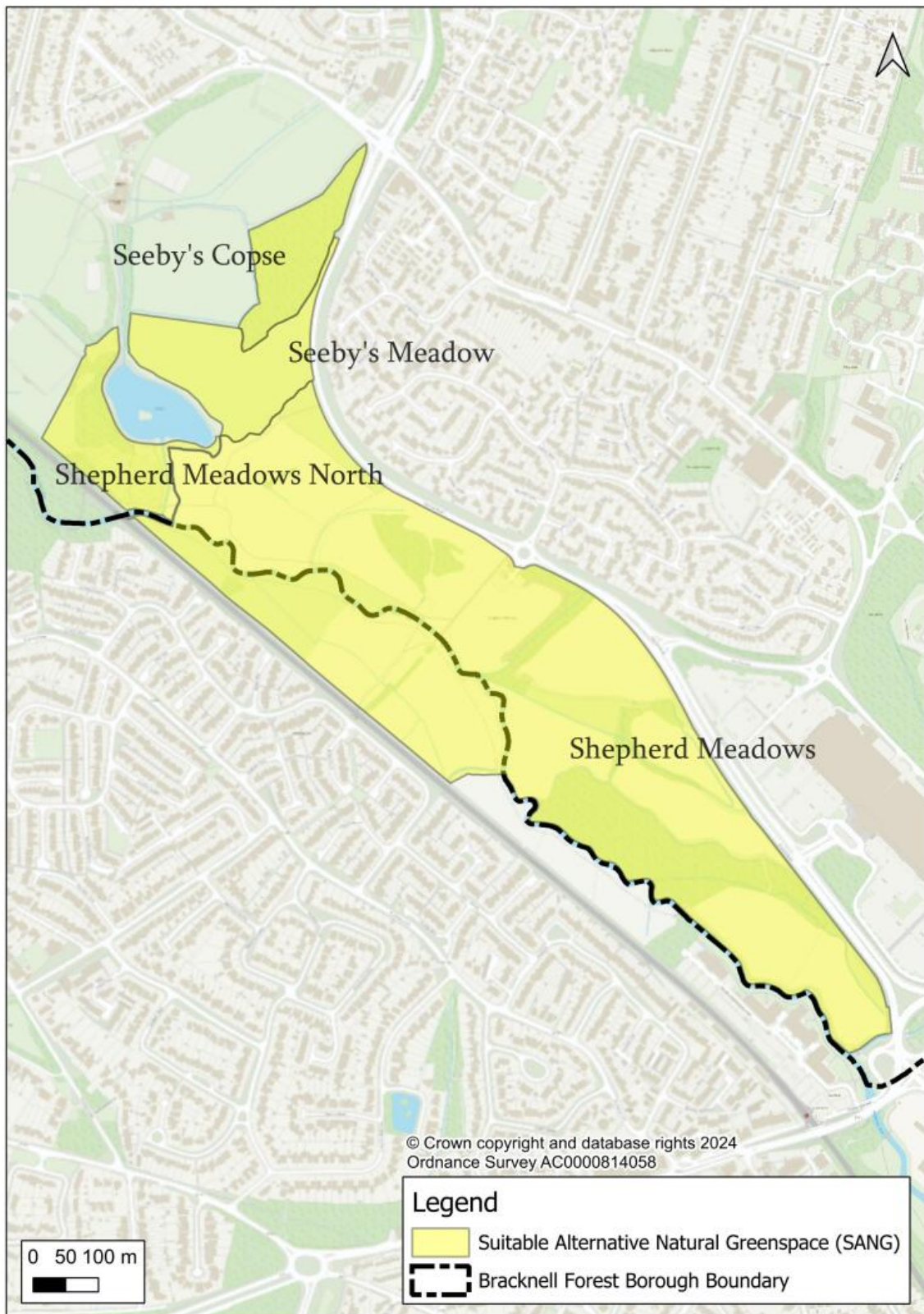


Figure 21 Shepherd Meadows SANG 5km Catchment

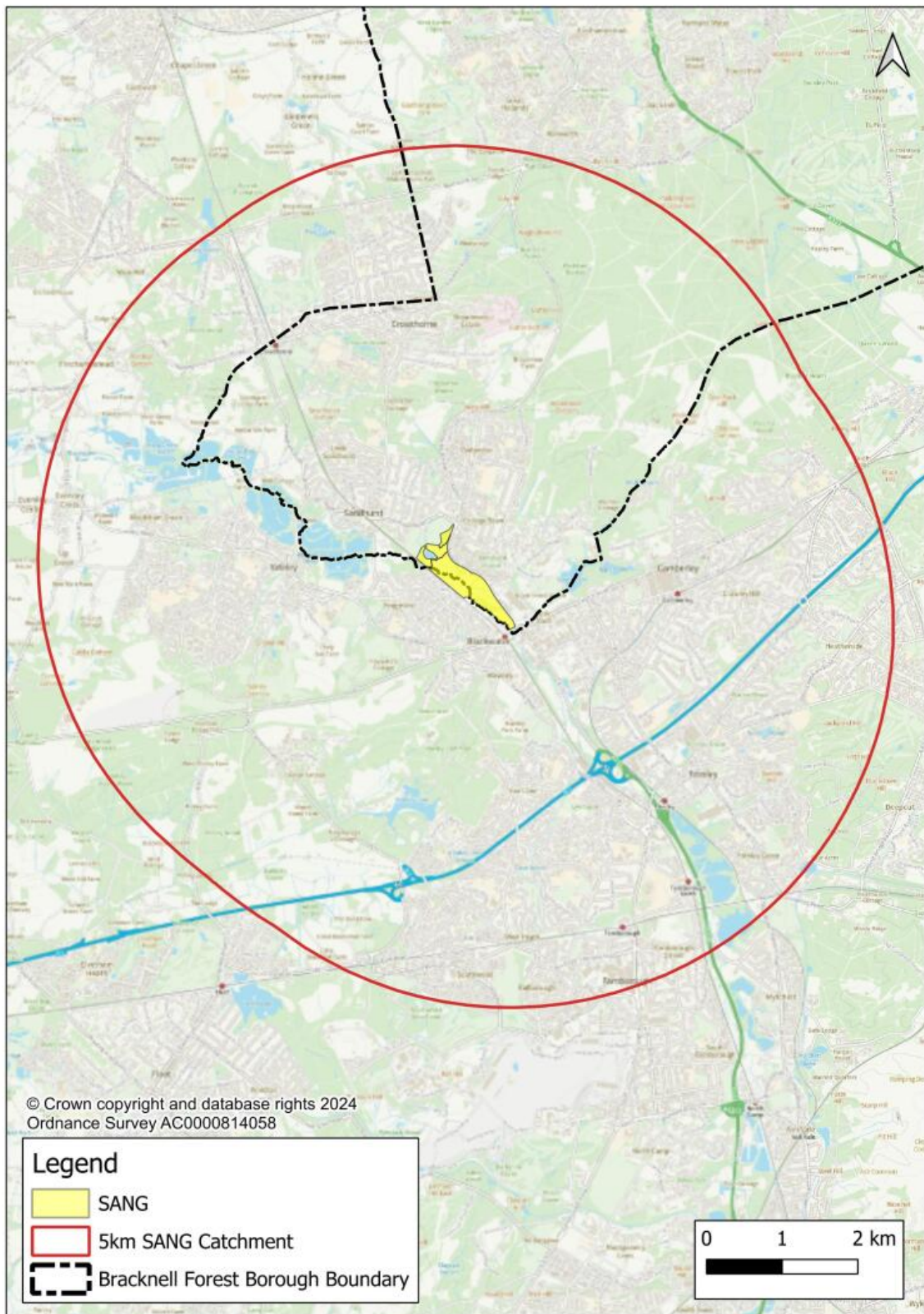


Figure 22 Buckler's SANG Network

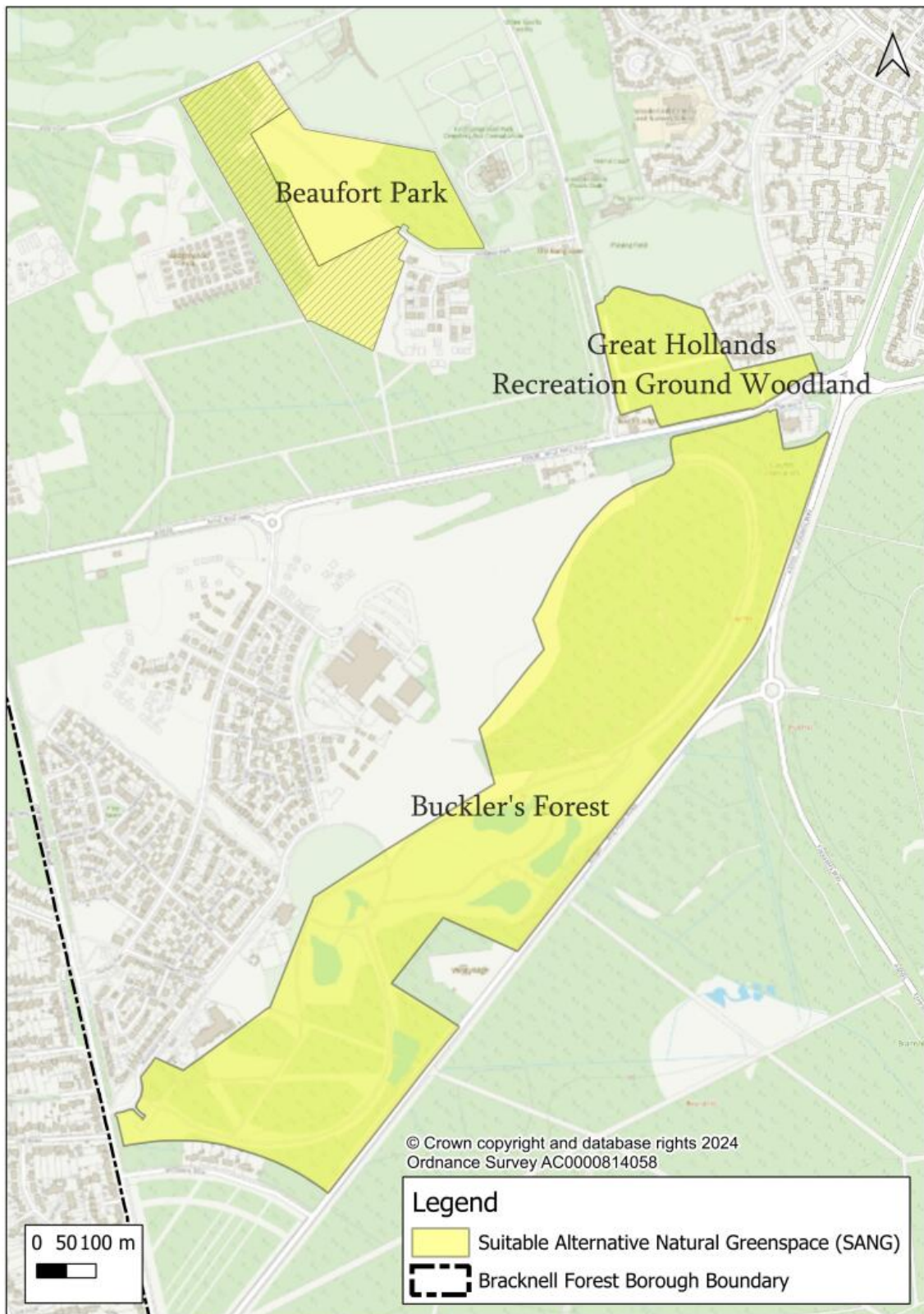


Figure 23 Buckler's SANG Network 5km Catchment

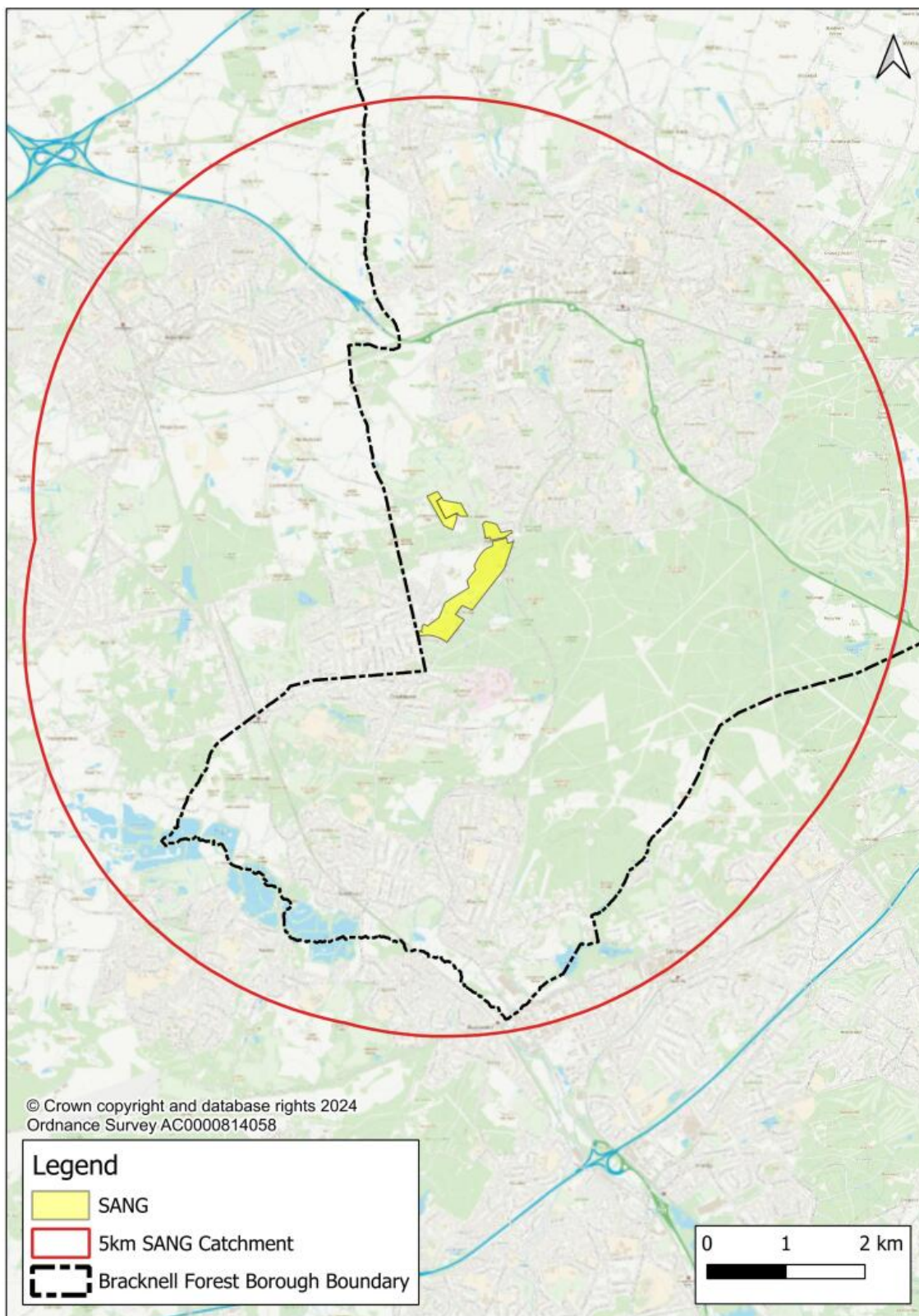


Figure 24 Warfield Park SANG

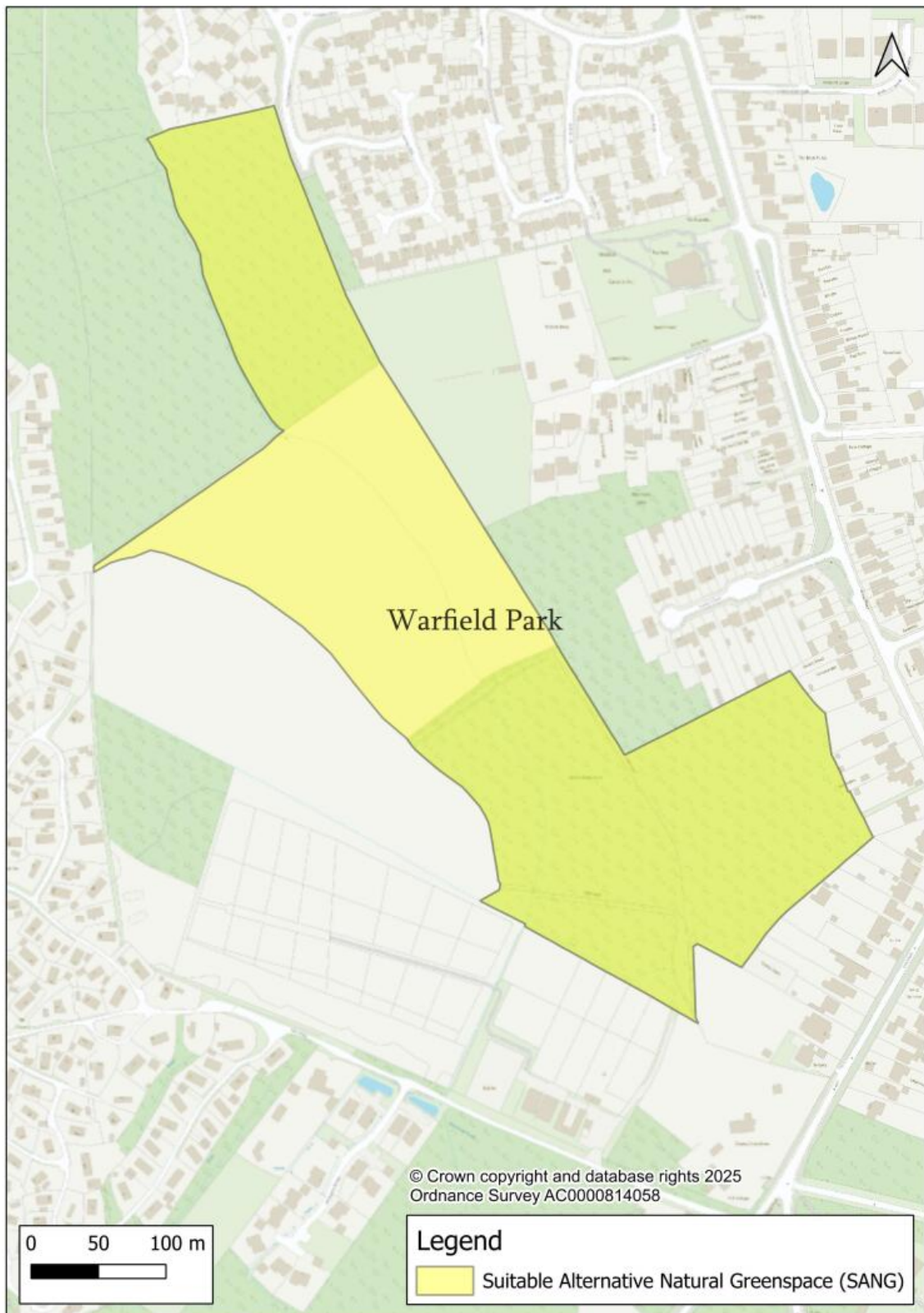


Figure 25 Warfield Park SANG 400m Catchment

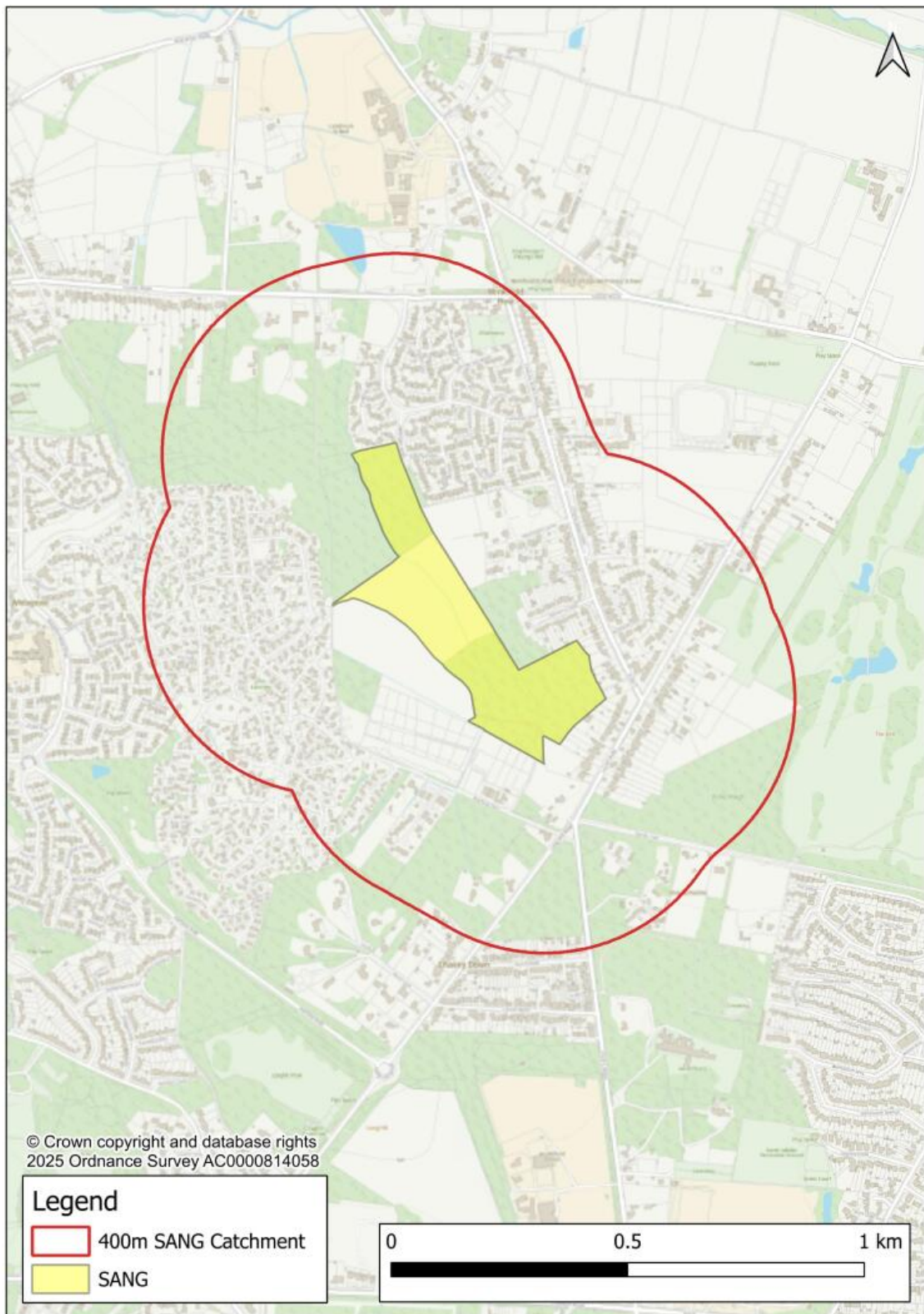


Figure 26 West Binfield SANG Network

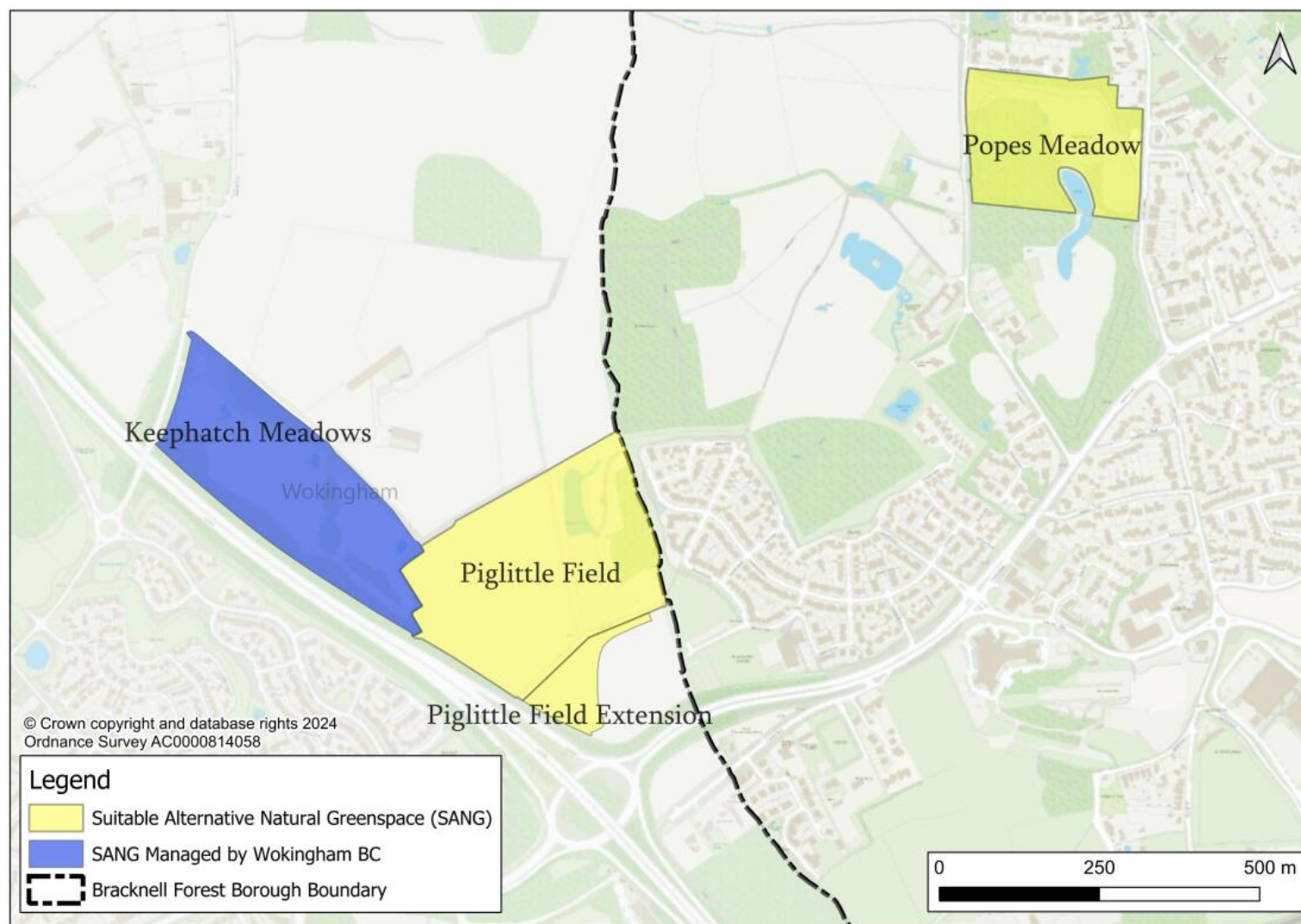
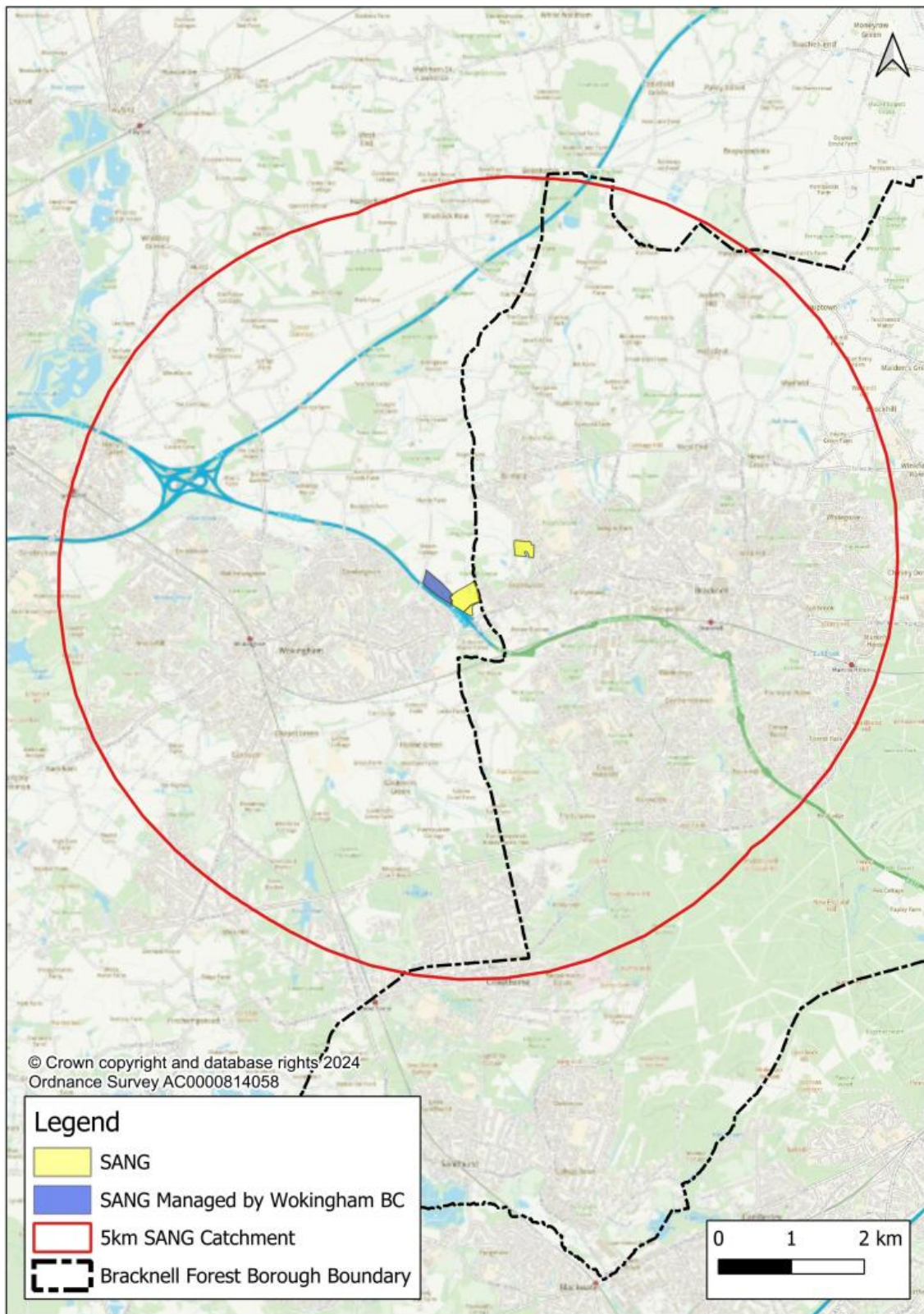


Figure 27 West Binfield SANG Network 5km Catchment



Glossary and Abbreviations

Table 11 Glossary and Abbreviations

| Term | Explanation |
|--|--|
| Appropriate Assessment (AA) | Part of a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). Required under the Habitats Directive if a plan or project is judged as likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site. |
| BFC | Bracknell Forest Council |
| BFLP | Bracknell Forest Local Plan (March 2024) |
| Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) | A tariff allowing councils to raise funds from the owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area. |
| Competent Authority | The decision maker under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the Habitats Regulations: often the local authority, but could be a planning inspector or other body responsible for assessing a plan or project. |
| Development Plan | A set of documents, currently comprising the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan (March 2024), the Site Allocations Local Plan, any adopted neighbourhood plans in the Bracknell borough area, the Berkshire Waste and Minerals Plan, and the saved policies in the South East Plan. Section 54A of the Town and County Planning Act 1990 requires that planning applications and appeals be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. |
| Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) | An assessment, required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the Habitats Regulations), if a plan or project is judged as likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site. |
| JSPB | Joint Strategic Partnership Board. Partnership of Thames Basin Heaths-affected Local Authorities, Natural England and key stakeholders, which oversees the implementation of the Thames Basin Heaths avoidance and mitigation strategy. |
| Local Plan | A Local Plan forms part of the development plan system set out in the Town and County Planning Act 1990. Local Plans set out a vision and a framework for the future development of an area, addressing housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure, the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design. Local Plans (together with any adopted neighbourhood plans) are the starting-point for considering whether planning applications can be approved. |

| Term | Explanation |
|---|--|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | A document that sets out the governments planning policies for England. It guides planning decisions and sets the framework for the production of planning documents at the local level. |
| Habitats sites | An ecological network of sites (SPAs and SACs) established under the Habitats Regulations to provide a strong protection for these wildlife areas. |
| Natural England (NE) | A non-departmental public body that advises the government about the natural environment for England. NE is responsible for ensuring that England's natural environment, including its land, flora and fauna, freshwater and marine environments, geology and soils, are protected and improved. It also has a responsibility to help people enjoy, understand and access the natural environment. |
| NE SANG Quality Guidance | A document published by NE which describes the features that have been found to draw visitors to the SPA, which should be replicated in SANG. |
| SALP | Site Allocations Local Plan |
| Section 106 agreement | A legal agreement between planning authorities and developers, described at section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). S106 agreements secure planning obligations (such as financial contributions or infrastructure) that are required to make a development acceptable in planning terms. |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | A conservation designation, the SSSI designation provides statutory protection for the best examples of the UK's flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features. It also underpins other nature conservation designations, such as national nature reserves, SPAs and SACs. |
| Special Area of Conservation (SAC) | Nature conservation site designated under the Habitats Regulations for its habitat or species interest. |
| Special Protection Area (SPA) | Nature conservation site designated under the Habitats Regulations for its bird interest. |
| Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM)Project | Overseen by Natural England and Hampshire County Council, implements standard messages, additional wardening and education across the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. |
| Strategic SANGs | Strategic SANGs are open spaces in Bracknell Forest which, in agreement with NE, have been identified as being suitable for bringing up to SANGs standard through the application of developer contributions. |

| Term | Explanation |
|---|--|
| Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) | Open space, meeting guidelines on quantity and quality, for the purpose of providing recreational alternatives to the SPA. |
| Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) | A planning document produced at the local level to build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on local plan policies. |
| Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Delivery Framework | Produced by the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership, the Delivery Framework guides the production and revision of local authorities' Thames Basin Heaths SPA Strategies. |

Copies of this booklet may be obtained in large print, Braille, on audio cassette or in other languages. To obtain a copy in an alternative format please telephone 01344 352000

Nepali

यस प्रचारको सक्षेपं वा सार निचोड चाहिं दिइने छ ठूलो अक्षरमा, ब्रेल वा क्यासेट सून्नको लागी । अरु भाषाको नक्कल पनि हासिल गर्न सकिने छ । कृपया सम्पर्क गर्नुहोला ०१३४४ ३५२००० ।

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