



Bullbrook Countryside Corridor SANG

**(Longhill Park, Lily Hill Park, Clintons Hill, Milman Close, Beswick Gardens
Copse, Bullbrook Drive, Harvest Hill, Whitegrove Copse, Edmunds Green, The
Chestnuts)**

Open Space Enhancement Plan

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

October 2019

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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 Borough 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 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document (SPA SPD) was approved in 2018. The SPA SPD identifies measures to avoid and mitigate adverse effects arising from proposed new residential development. The SPA SPD provides an integrated, holistic package of measures which includes both on-site and off-site measures to make the SPA less attractive 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 3 of the document. These comprise:

- **Provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)** to attract people away from the SPA and hence reduce pressure on it.
- **Access management and monitoring measures** on, and monitoring of, the SPA to reduce the effect of people who visit the SPA; and potential air quality mitigation measures.

Natural England has agreed that the implementation of this package of measures will ensure that harm to the SPA is avoided. The reasoning behind each of the measures, and their contribution towards avoiding harm to the SPA, is explained within the SPA SPD. This Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace Plan (SANG plan) deals solely 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 SPD, as set out in the remainder of this document.

1.2 Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace Super SANG Plan

This document comprises a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace plan that incorporates several existing SANG sites and link sites, to provide a holistic approach to managing SANGs across Bracknell Forest Borough and improve the recreational experience for SANG visitors. It includes information on the suitable sites identified and their key SANG features, as well as a map defining the main SANG route(s). This document has been prepared to demonstrate the suitability of the identified sites as part of a formal recognition of local accessible greenspace network.

1.3 Identification of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)

The SPA SPD went through an extensive process to identify areas of open space as suitable alternatives to the SPA. The sites selected are in close enough proximity to warrant appropriate length walking routes, making each site more accessible as part of the wider greenspace network.

1.4 Site list and purpose for extended SANG network

The sites below were approved by Natural England as suitable for SANGs in 2007 and 2015 respectively and have existing SANG plans that will continue to be used for site management and SANG enhancement objectives, with the exception of the finance SANG spending documents which have been amalgamated into one finance spending table (Table 1). The sites are as follows below and are grouped according to existing Longhill Park group and Bullbrook Countryside Corridor (Edmunds Green group) SANG plans. Following the amalgamation of these two approved plans the newly extended group is to be referred to as 'The Bullbrook Countryside Corridor' as an appropriate explanation of the SANG network whilst mirroring the neighbouring Cut Countryside Corridor SANG group: -

Group 1 sites:

- Longhill Park 9.39 ha
- Milman Close 0.53 ha
- Clintons Hill 4.0 ha
- Beswick Copse 0.54 ha

Group 1 link site:

- Bullbrook Drive 1.33 ha

Group 1 sites and link sites are described in detail in the NE approved Longhill Park SANG plan which can be accessed here:

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/longhill-park-osmp.pdf>.

The sites listed above have been identified by the SPA SPD as demonstrating good potential as alternatives to the SPA, indicated strongly by the existing visitors who use the sites and the SPA for recreation. The predominant users travel a relatively short distance by car to reach sites such as Longhill Park, which *'could be part of a larger area of impact avoidance open space proposed, along with adjacent sites.'*

In a letter dated 12 January 2007, following a site visit, they also agree that the group of sites comprising Longhill Park SANG are appropriate areas of alternative open space. The letter states that *"in addition to improvements on each individual site, attention must be given to enabling use of the sites as part of various round walks that are secure enough for dogs to be off the lead the majority of the walk."*

Group 2 sites:

- Edmund's Green 2.32 ha
- Harvest Hill 2.30 ha (excluding play area)
- The Chestnuts 1.08 ha
- Whitegrove Copse 3.65 ha

Group 2 link sites:

- Bluebell Hill 2.1 ha
- Edmund's Lane (north and south) 0.7 ha
- Chestnuts Lane 0.5 ha

Group 2 sites and link sites are described in detail in the NE approved 'Bullbrook Countryside Corridor (Edmunds Green group) SANG Plan' can be accessed here:

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/the-bullbrook-countryside-corridor-osep.pdf>

Natural England have agreed that the sites that make up the Bullbrook Countryside Corridor can be used as SANGs, stating in a letter, dated 5th March 2015, that '*...the Bullbrook Countryside Corridor could function as future SANG to be used as a part of Bracknell Forest Council's suite.*'

The SANGs assessment checklist used in section 5 of the 'Bullbrook Countryside Corridor (Edmunds green group) SANG Plan' demonstrates how it is suitable as an alternative to the SPA and how enhancements will enable their use as such. As Edmund's Green and Whitegrove Copse are designated as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) 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.

Lily Hill Park

Lily Hill Park has been identified as a key part of this SANG group. However, works at Lily Hill Park have recently been completed through a Heritage Lottery Funded landscape restoration project and Lily Hill Park's role as SPA mitigation will therefore predominantly be dealt with in a separate NE approved plan, which can be found here:

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/lily-hill-park-sang.pdf>

This plan still makes reference to Lily Hill Park as part of this SANG group and links between sites (see figure 1), but finance spending remains separate, as part of the 'Lily Hill Park SANG Plan'.

The increased number of sites that are to be incorporated into this SANG plan will enable visitors to access a greater number of sites with ease, with the provision of signage, interpretation and access work to improve site connectivity and accessibility.

2 Site Management Statement

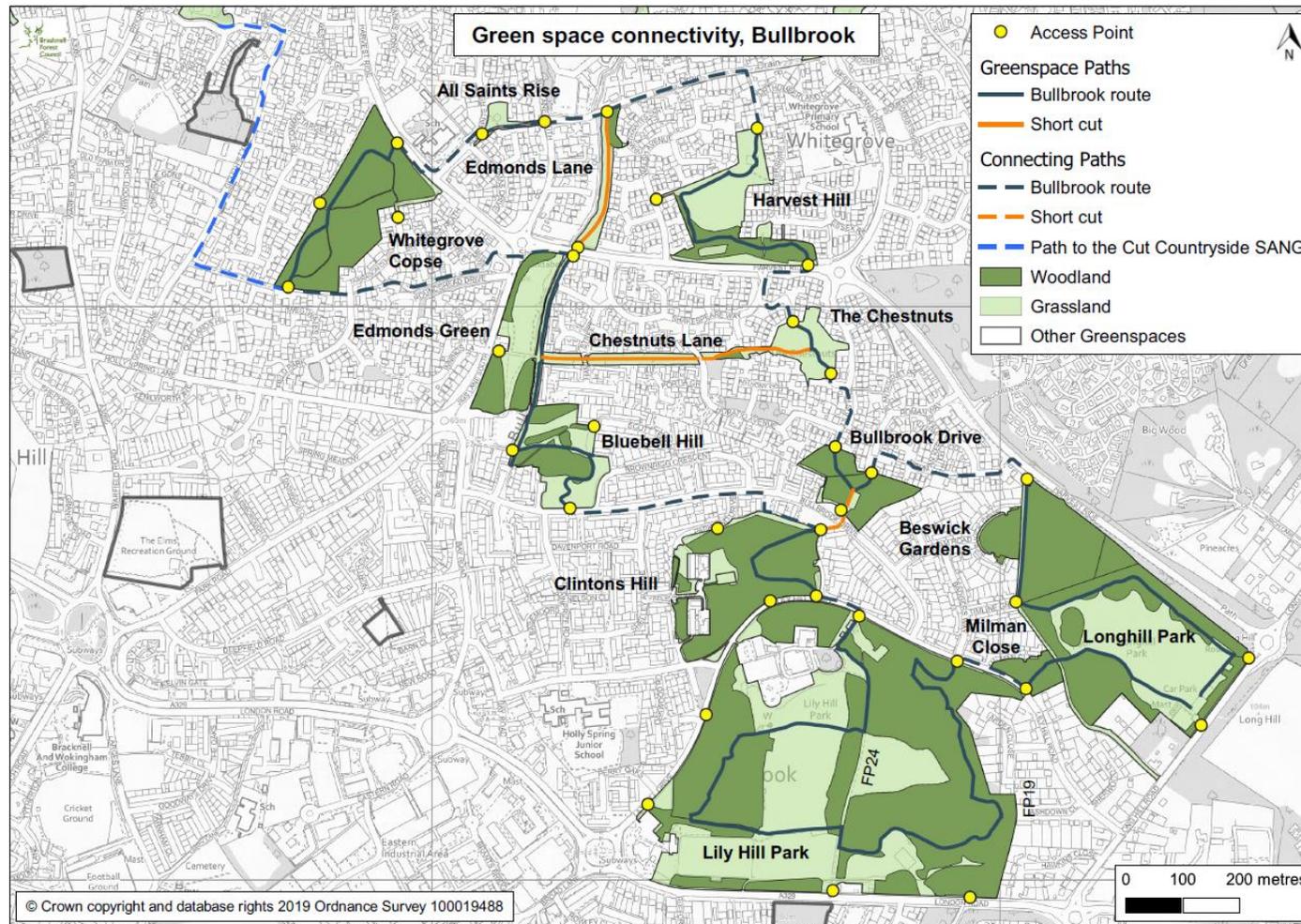
Full site details can be found in the supplementary supporting documents for each SANG designation.

2.1 Site Descriptions

Group 1 sites are in the parish of Winkfield, situated on the eastern side of Bracknell Town between Long Hill Road and Harvest Ride. Bullbrook Drive is urban woodland situated on the parish border of Bracknell Town and Warfield to the north east of Clintons Hill.

Group 2 and Lily Hill Park sites are situated on the north of Bracknell within the parishes of Warfield and Bracknell Town.

figure 1 – SANG connectivity route



2.1.2 Adjacent Land

These sites are key green spaces on the north-eastern urban fringe of Bracknell. The sites are bordered with roads and residential housing estates.

A section of the Northern Distributor Road (Harvest Ride) adjoins the North East boundary of Longhill Park. The verges on the Northern Distributor Road have been planted with wildflower mix and are left uncut as part of the Bracknell Forest Biodiversity Action Plan, allowing rare wildflowers, such as orchids, to flourish and provide food for a variety of insects which may lead to designation as roadside verge nature reserves. A badger tunnel leads under the road and deer/badger proof fencing is found along the highway boundary.

2.1.3 Access (pedestrians, cycles, cars, disabled)

Access to these sites is generally permissive, with limited or no physical restrictions within the green spaces. There is a sufficient existing network of pedestrian footpaths and cycleways to connect all SANG sites and link sites to form a wider circular route. There are several secondary roads to cross to complete this circular walk. In addition to this wider network circular route, there are several circular SANG routes identified in the existing Bullbrook CC, Longhill Park and Lily Hill Park SANG plans, forming a network of paths suitable for walking and popular with local dog walkers.

Car parks for these SANGs are located at Longhill Park, Lily Hill Park, as well as a vehicular access point to Clintons Hill from a car park at the play area managed by Bracknell Town Council. Additional unrestricted parking is available in residential areas adjacent to all sites.

The majority of the identified Bullbrook Countryside Corridor SANG link route is accessible for wheelchairs or people with walking difficulties. Where route diversions are required there is scope to highlight alternatives using on-site interpretation.

2.1.4 Wildlife / Biodiversity

The larger SANG supports a wide range of habitats from unimproved grassland meadows, scrubland, mature woodland, hedgerows, and open water bodies which supports a typical range of associated wildlife.

2.1.5 Recreational Uses

Longhill Park, Clintons Hill, Lily Hill Park are popular areas for local dog walkers.

Bullbrook Drive and Clintons Hill have play areas, which are managed by Bracknell Town Council and Bracknell Forest Council, respectively. Clintons Hill is also popular with local children for informal play, in addition to dog walkers. Longhill Park and Harvest Hill also have play area facilities, with the former site also housing a large skate park adjacent to the car park. Smaller sites are used by local residents for walking and links to larger sites enable access to a greater range of recreation activities.

2.2 Legal and Planning Framework

2.2.1 Land ownership

Land ownership has already been identified in the individual SANG plans, with the amendment of Bullbrook Drive, which is currently owned by Bracknell Forest Council and managed by Bracknell Town Council.

Bracknell Forest Council Highways and Environmental Services departments are currently responsible for maintenance, health and safety aspects relating to link roads, cycleways and public footpath links adjacent to Highways.

3 Site Proposals

Individual site mitigation proposals are outlined in the relevant SANG plans referred to in this document. Further to these details, specific requirements are needed to ensure appropriate information and interpretation work will be carried out to highlight to site users how to access the SANG route.

3.1 Information and Interpretation

- Roadside signs to guide visitors to site from nearby roads and junctions.
- Site entrance signs at major and secondary site entrances to welcome visitors and aid users in finding the site and its formal access points.
- Site interpretation panels and noticeboards: Located on existing SANG sites throughout the larger network, the panels will be strategically placed and display maps to indicate the SANG link route.
- Fingerposts or markers at strategic points (primarily site entrances and path junctions) will enable visitors to navigate around the sites and from one to another, thereby maximising use of the green space and path network. These will form the signage for a suggested route around the sites (including Lily Hill Park), to be detailed in other site information provision.
- Bespoke Bracknell plaques to be manufactured and used to guide users around the larger SANG network.

- Site leaflet: to include information relating to the wider SANG network. Some of the leaflets may be site-specific but can include relevant information linking to alternative sites.
- Promotion of SANGs via the TBH Partnership website.

3.2 Access

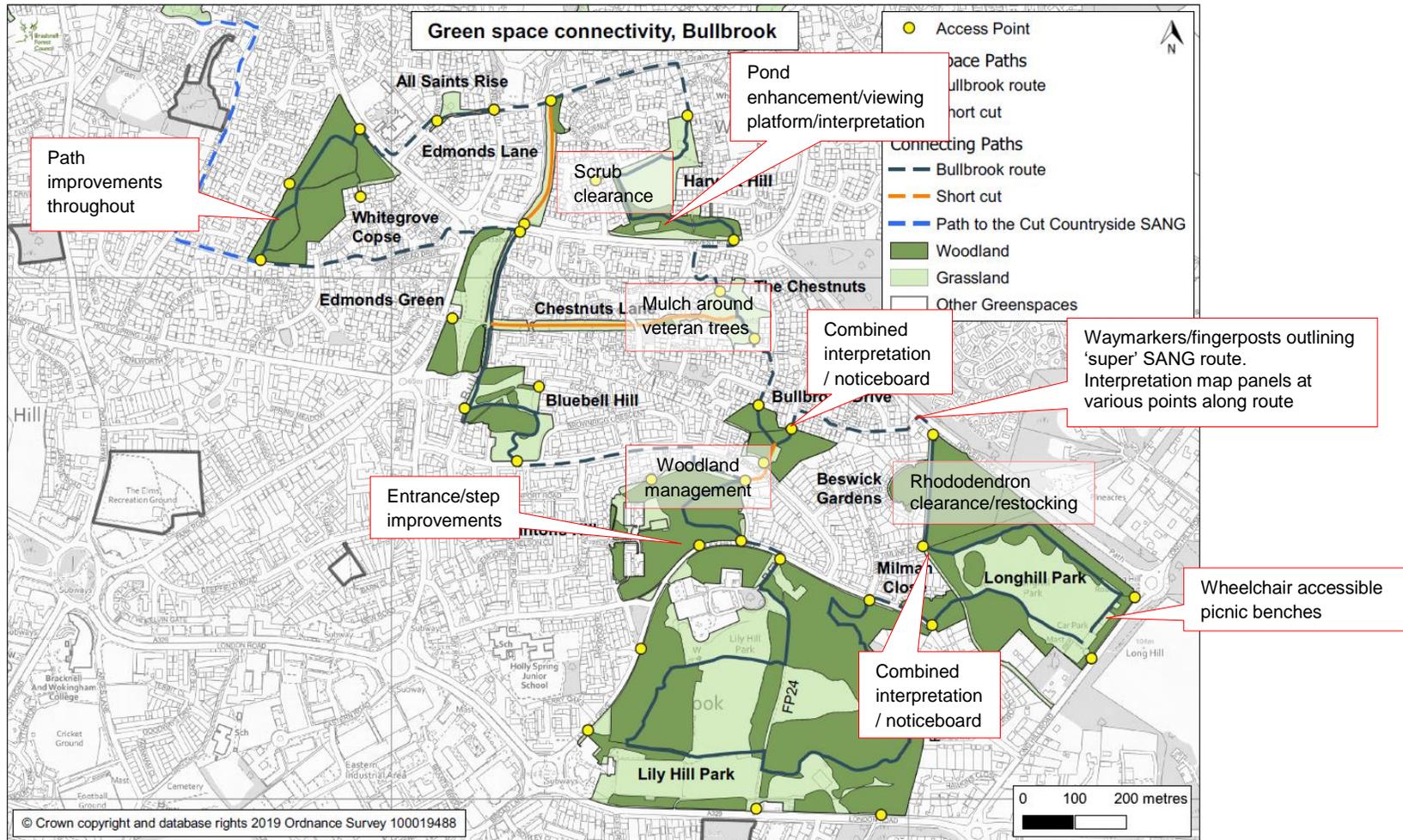
- Links between sites will also be improved, to include markers along cycleways/footpaths/highways.

3.3 Furniture

- To be located within existing SANG sites along the route, ensuring adequate provision across the site network.

4 Site Plan

4.1 Site Plan – Bullbrook proposed SANG enhancement works



4.2 Site Plan – Bullbrook Group (aerial)



5 Costs

Works	Location	Unit Cost	Quantity	New budget from 2019 onwards
Information & Interpretation				
Site signs				
- Main entrances	Longhill Park - Long Hill Road	£426	1	£426.00
	Clintons Hill - Lily Hill Road	£567.24	1	£567.24
- Secondary entrances	Longhill Park - Harvest Ride	£162	2	£324.00
	Milman Close	£139.66	2	£279.32
	Clintons Hill	£137.80	3	£413.40
	Harvest Hill, Whitegrove Copse	n/a	n/a	£810.42
	Bullbrook Drive	£275		275
Site noticeboards				
- Site noticeboards with combined interpretive panel	Longhill Park, Clintons Hill, Bullbrook Drive	£2,500	3	£6,917.65
	Harvest Hill, Whitegrove Copse	£2,500	4	£5,000
- Single interpretation boards	The Chestnuts, Harvest Hill, Bluebell Hill	£1667	3	£5,000
	Longhill Park x2, Milman Close, Clintons Hill, Bullbrook Drive	£1,500	5	£2,260.00
	Clintons Hill, Bullbrook Drive, Milman Close	£1500	3	£4,500
Directional signage				
- Fingerposts, waymarkers and plaques, incl.design	Around network of sites	£150	50	£11,028.00
Ice house restoration	The Chestnuts			£1,000
Sculptures	Harvest Hill, The Chestnuts	£2000	2	£4,000
QR code on main signs or website development				£500
Site Leaflet	n/a	n/a	20,000	£3,046

Installation costs	(as above)	n/a	n/a	£1,405
Subtotals				£47,752
Access				
Pedestrian entrance improvements	All entrances	£300 / day	5	£1,500
Path surfacing	Longhill, Clinton's Hill	n/a	n/a	£47,066
	Harvest Hill, The Chestnuts, Whitegrove Copse	n/a	n/a	£12,755
	Clintons Hill	£35 / m	60	3300
Pond viewing platform	Harvest Hill	n/a	n/a	£7,900
Ditch crossings	Whitegrove Copse	£75	1	£75
Boardwalk replacement & extension *	Longhill Park *	n/a	n/a	10310
Removal of unnecessary fencing	Longhill Park / Milman Close	n/a	n/a	2480
Steps	Clintons Hill			£2300
Subtotals				£87,686
Furniture				
Picnic benches	Longhill Park, Harvest Hill, Whitegrove Copse, The Chestnuts	£555	2	3610
Sculpture seating area	Bullbrook Drive	£1,000	1	£1,000.00
Bins (incl. installation)	All sites	£232	12	£2,786.00
Accessible gates (incl. installation)	All sites	£180	5	£804.15
Height barrier	Longhill Park	n/a	n/a	Work carried out using alternative funding source
Fencing replacement and enhancement	All sites	£30 / m	160 m	£4,600.00
Subtotals				£12,800
Habitat Management *				
Fencing	Long Hill Road	£25 / m	70	£4,121
	Milman Close	£25 / m	60	£680
	Longhill Park / Beswick Gardens Copse	£25 / m	180	£637.52
	Clintons Hill	£20 / m	150	£3,000

Scrub / woodland / vegetation management *	All sites	£300 per day	33	£16,098.00
Invasive species/holly and rhododendron control *	All sites			£4,500
Marginal pond planting	Harvest Hill			£500
Wildflower seeding *	Longhill Park	n/a	n/a	£5,000.00
Pond enhancement and ditch work *	Harvest Hill, Whitegrove Copse			£4,000.00
Tree planting *	Clintons Hill			£875
Wildlife boxes (birds/bats/etc)	Clintons Hill, Bullbrook Drive, Harvest Hill, Edmunds Green, Whitegrove Copse			£576
Subtotals				£39,987.80
Total cost				£188,226
Total including inflation allowance	In order to accommodate inflation for enhancement work an inflation calculator is incorporated based on anticipated life of the project, spending profile and rates of inflation			£213,335.77

N.B. All costs based on combination of published catalogue prices, actual costs for work already completed & recent estimates.

* seasonal work

6 Glossary

Core Strategy DPD	Document within the Local Development Framework which sets out strategic development proposals until 2026.
SANG	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPA SPD	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document (SPA SPD). Available to download from https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/thames-basin-heaths-spa-supplementary-planning-document.pdf
Core Strategy DPD	Document within the Local Development Framework which sets out strategic development proposals until 2026.