

Alderholt Meadows, Fordingbridge

Technical Appendix 9.4: Outline Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) Creation and Management Plan

Prepared on behalf of

Dudsbury Homes (Southern)



ALDERHOLT MEADOWS

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Technical Appendix 9.4: Outline Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) Creation and Management Plan

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Client: Dudson Homes (Southern)

Main Author: Robert Souter BSc (Hons) PhD MCIEEM
[Redacted]

Report Prepared for Issue by:
Robert Souter BSc (Hons) PhD MCIEEM
[Redacted]

Report Approved for Issue by: [Redacted]
Rebecca Brookbank BSc (Hons) PhD MCIEEM



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Technical Appendix 9.4: Outline Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) Creation and Management Plan

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1. INTRODUCTION

Brief

- 1.1 This document, prepared by Ecological Planning & Research Ltd. (EPR) on behalf of Dudsbury Homes (Southern) Ltd., is an Outline Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) Management Plan relating to the Proposed Development of land at Alderholt, in east Dorset (the 'Site'). It presents the principals for providing a SANG, proposals for SANG infrastructure provision and maintenance and prescriptions for habitat creation and management.

Site Location and Context

- 1.2 The Proposed Development is at Alderholt in East Dorset (hereafter the Site) (see **Map1**).
- 1.3 The Site extends to approximately 122ha and is predominantly occupied by farmland.
- 1.4 To the west is Cranborne Common Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a component of both the Dorset Heaths Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Dorset Heathlands Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar.

Outline of the Proposed Development

- 1.5 The Proposed Development description is as follows:

“Outline application for a mixed use development of up to 1700 dwellings including affordable housing and care provision; 10,000sqm of employment space in the form of a business park; village centre with associated retail, commercial, community and health facilities; open space including the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG); biodiversity enhancements; solar array; and new roads, access arrangements and associated infrastructure. (All matters reserved apart from access off Hillbury Road).”

- 1.6 Please refer to **Chapter 3 Background to Development** and **Chapter 5 Development Description** for full details of the Site and the Proposed Development.

Relevant Legislation, Policy, and Guidance

- 1.7 Various articles of legislation, planning policy, and key guidance documents of relevance to biodiversity and nature conservation have been referred to in the preparation of this document.
- 1.8 This includes the following legislation of primary relevance:

- The Environment Act 2021;

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), known as the 'Habitats Regulations';
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000;
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006; and
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

1.9 Planning policy documents of primary relevance to this report include:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021), and in particular Section 15 of this document, which provides national policy on conserving and enhancing the natural environment through the planning process;
- Policies ME1 and ME2 of the adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Core Strategy (2014); and
- Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 Supplementary Planning Document.

1.10 Due regard has also been afforded to draft Policies ENV1, ENV2, and ENV3 of the consultation draft Dorset Council Local Plan (2021).

1.11 In addition to the above, biodiversity objectives detailed in the following documents have been considered:

- Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services; and
- The 25 Year Environment Plan.

Requirement for SANG

1.12 As set out in detail in Technical Appendix 9.2: Information for Habitats Regulations Assessment (IfHRA) accompanying the planning application for the Proposed Development at Alderholt, residential development generates additional population who have recreation needs and this could result in additional recreational pressure on designated nature conservation sites. Legislation and planning policy require this to be addressed, in particular for International Sites (SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites).

1.13 In Dorset the approach is set out in the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 SPD. This includes a requirement for the provision of SANG as a means of providing alternative natural greenspace for new and existing residents to utilise in close proximity to their homes for recreational activities such as walking, dog walking and cycling/running.

1.14 Since the Proposed Development lies in close proximity to the Dorset Heathlands SAC/SPA/Ramsar and New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar and will generate additional recreational demand, it is necessary to provide a sufficient quantum of SANG.

1.15 The Proposed Development has been designed such that it includes areas of SANG as part of the scheme.

1.16 **Map 3** shows the proposed SANG network. These SANG compartments amount to approximately 53 ha in three main areas and are referred to as:

- Cross Roads Plantation (20.2ha), and
- Alderholt Common (23.5ha), both in the western half of the Site; and
- Harbridge Drove (9.7ha), in the south east corner of the Site.

1.17 The remainder of this report provides details of the ecological baseline in these proposed SANG areas and an outline of the intended SANG infrastructure and habitat provision, and its maintenance and management, and the means by which this will be delivered in perpetuity.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL & ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT

Introduction

- 2.1 This section presents a summary of existing environmental and ecological baseline conditions as a means to inform prescriptions for habitat creation and management. Consideration of such contextual information will serve to promote the successful establishment of an assemblage of habitats that is at once naturalistic and sympathetic to the present and historic character of the broader landscape.

Physical Context

Site Description and Present Use

- 2.2 The majority of the Site is in agricultural use, across three farms. There are large fields of arable land and improved grassland surrounded by a network of hedgerows. Full details about the Site are included in **Chapter 3: Background to Development**.

Geology and Soils

- 2.3 With reference to the British Geological Survey website, the solid geology underlying the Site comprises Parkstone Sand Member – Sand, and Broadstone Clay Member – Clay, silty. Superficial deposits are River Terrace Deposit, 6– Sand and gravel, and Head – Clay and silt.
- 2.4 With reference to the Soilscales website, the soils in the centre of the Site (proposed for most of the residential development) are likely to be Soilscale 8: Slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage. Such soils have moderate to high fertility and could support a wide range of pasture and woodland types.
- 2.5 The soils for the western part of residential development and western SANGs are likely to be Soilscale 15: Naturally wet very acid sandy and loamy soils. Such soils have very low fertility and could support mixed dry and wet lowland heath communities. Those across the southern part of the western SANG and much of the eastern SANG are likely to be Soilscale 14: Freely draining very acid sandy and loamy soils. Such soils have very low fertility and could support lowland dry heath communities.

Topography

- 2.6 The Site is gently undulating ranging in height from approximately 60m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at the northern boundary to approximately 50m AOD on the southern and eastern boundaries.

Hydrology

- 2.7 The Site drains to the west (Sleep Brook) which drains into Hamer Brook to the south, and south to a pond which itself drains into Hamer Brook which eventually drains into the River Avon. There are four distinct drainage catchments across the Site. Full details are included in **Chapter 11: Drainage/Flood Risk**.

Landscape Character

- 2.8 The Site is within the Dorset Heaths National Character Area (NCA). The Site is south east of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Landscape History

- 2.9 Reference to the OS One Inch map from 1885-1900 shows how part of the western side of the Site was formerly known as Alderholt Common, which is shown as being contiguous with Cranborne Common further to the west. The eastern boundary of the former Alderholt Common is still represented by a wide boundary hedge and part of the land associated with a private house. Full details are included in **Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Amenity**.

Existing Habitats, Vegetation and Flora

- 2.10 The Site has been subject to a comprehensive ecological assessment programme, reported in the ES Chapter and supporting Technical Appendices. The following is a brief summary of habitats, vegetation and flora across the whole Site.
- 2.11 The majority of the Site is occupied by a series of grassland fields used for cattle and horse grazing. These are improved and species-poor in composition. Under UK Habitats classification (UKHabs) this is best categorised as 'Modified grassland'.
- 2.12 Some other fields are cultivated for the production of cereals.
- 2.13 The important habitats include ponds, rush pasture, broadleaved woodland and hedgerows. These occur in localised areas and on field margins.
- 2.14 **Tables 2.1-2.3** present a summary of baseline habitats in the proposed SANG compartments (see **Map 2**).

Table 2.1 Cross Roads Plantation SANG and corresponding fields/parcels with existing habitats

Field number	Parcel number	Parcel Name	Key Habitats in Parcel	Existing UK Habitats in Field
A9	7	Land south of Cross Roads Plantation solar farm	Lower value habitats only	Non-cereal crops
A10	5 (part)	Land to the immediate west of Sleepbrook Farmhouse	^Semi-improved grassland, dense bramble and gorse scrub, treelines	^Other neutral grassland
A11	4	Land around Sleepbrook Farmhouse	*Wet woodland, *Mixed semi-natural woodland, treelines, *^Rush pasture, Semi-improved grassland, a *pond, ditches	Wet woodland, Other woodland; mixed Modified grassland (Improved grassland) ^Purple moor grass and rush pastures
A16	5 (part)	Land to the immediate west of	Lower value habitats only	Modified grassland (Improved grassland)

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Field number	Parcel number	Parcel Name	Key Habitats in Parcel	Existing UK Habitats in Field
		Sleepbrook Farmhouse		
A32	1	Land east of Cross Roads Plantation	Semi-improved grassland	Other neutral grassland
A33	20	Cross Roads Plantation	*Broadleaved woodland, ^Semi-improved grassland, 2 Ponds, a *Stream	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland Other neutral grassland
A34	20	Cross Roads Plantation	*Mixed woodland,	Other woodland; mixed
A35	20	Cross Roads Plantation	*Mixed woodland,	Other woodland; mixed

Table 2.2 Alderholt Common SANG and corresponding fields/parcels with existing habitats

Field number	Parcel number	Parcel Name	Key Habitats in Parcel	Existing UK Habitats in Field
A17	18 (part)	Land to southwest of Sleepbrook Farm	*Rush pasture, *Mixed woodland, 2 *hedgerows, 2 ditches	Cereal crops
A18	18 (part)	ditto	ditto	Modified grassland (Improved grassland)
A19	18 (part)	ditto	ditto	Other neutral grassland (Marshy grassland) Other woodland; mixed
A25	18 (part)	ditto	ditto	Modified grassland (Improved grassland)
A26	18 (part)	ditto	ditto	Modified grassland (Improved grassland)
A31	19	Land to southwest of Warren Park Farm	1 of 2 *ponds	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland Cereal crops Ponds

Table 2.3 Harbridge Drove SANG and corresponding fields/parcels with existing habitats

Field number	Parcel number	Parcel Name	Key Habitats in Parcel	Existing UK Habitats in Field
A4	13 (part)	Land around Oaktree Farm and Foxhill Farm	Semi-improved grassland, 5 of 7 *hedgerows and 4 ditches	Modified grassland (Poor semi-improved grassland)

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Field number	Parcel number	Parcel Name	Key Habitats in Parcel	Existing UK Habitats in Field
A5	13 (part)	ditto	ditto	Modified grassland (Poor semi-improved grassland)
A28	14 (part)	Land around Warren Park Farm campsite	^Amenity grassland, *Broadleaved woodland with woodland ride, Hedgerow and Treeline, 4 *ponds	Cereal crops
A29	14 (part)	ditto	ditto	Modified grassland (Amenity grassland)
A30	14 (part)	ditto	ditto	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland Modified grassland (Amenity grassland) Ponds

Fauna

- 2.15 The habitats on Site support a good range of wildlife. This includes an assemblage of bat populations of County importance, an assemblage of breeding birds of Local importance which comprises common woodland species and a Barn Owl roost in one of the derelict barns. Nightjar, one of the bird species associated with the Dorset Heathlands SPA, forage over the western part of the Site. A population of Great Crested Newts of Local importance is centred on several of the ponds in the southern part of the Site. Good populations of Common Lizards and Slow-worms occur in localised areas, with some Grass Snake, and this reptile assemblage is of Local importance. Two Badger clans occupying various setts in two areas of the Site are of importance only Within the Zone of Influence.

Nature Conservation Designations and Biodiversity Policy Context

- 2.16 Although no part of the Site is designated for nature conservation, it is framed to the west by Cranborne Common SSSI, a component of both the Dorset Heaths SAC and the Dorset Heathlands SPA. These designations are collectively referred to as the 'Dorset Heaths' for the purposes of this document.
- 2.17 The SSSI is designated for its complex of heathland and acidic grassland supporting Sand Lizard and Smooth Snake, breeding Dartford Warbler, Heath Grasshopper *Chorthippus vagans* and Large Marsh Grasshopper *Stethophyma grossum*, as well as Bog Bush-cricket *Metroptera brachyptera*, Small Red Damselfly *Ceriagrion tenellum* and Silver-studded Blue *Plebejus argus*.
- 2.18 The Dorset Heaths SAC is designated for the presence of the following habitats listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive and the following Annex II species:
- Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*;
 - European dry heaths;
 - Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion*;

- Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinia caerulea*);
- Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae*;
- Alkaline fens; and
- Old acidophilous oak woods with *Quercus robur* on sandy plains.
- Southern Damselfly *Coenagrion mercuriale*; and
- Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*.

2.19 The Dorset Heathlands SPA is designated for its populations of the following species listed on Annex I of the Birds Directive:

- Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*;
- Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*;
- Woodlark *Lullula arborea*;
- Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*; and
- Merlin *Falco columbarius*.

2.20 In view of its adjacency to the Dorset Heaths, the Site is identified by Dorset Council as falling within a 'Higher Potential Ecological Network'. Such areas are considered to present the greatest opportunity to target the effective delivery of positive outcomes for nature conservation.

Summary of Opportunities and Constraints

2.21 The proposals set out in this document respect the existing character of the Site and its surrounds, incorporating and safeguarding notable features of the landscape including existing areas of semi-natural grassland and hedgerows.

2.22 The proposals have been informed by an extensive ecological assessment programme and take due regard of potentially sensitive ecological receptors, such as the local assemblages of bats, badgers, and breeding birds. Consequently, the Proposed Development presents an opportunity for the delivery of ecological enhancements which are targeted to benefit existing species assemblages within the Site and its surrounds.

2.23 The adjacent Dorset Heaths is a key element of the Site's ecological context. The Proposed Development will establish an expanded, enhanced, and safeguarded landscape buffer to the Dorset Heaths, and will serve to address negative effects arising from the current agricultural management of the Site – such as overgrazing, cultivation, application of agrochemicals, and unsympathetic management of hedgerows and field margins.

Site Vision

2.24 As indicated on the illustrative masterplan which forms the base of **Map 3** SANG Layout, the Proposed Development will consist of three distinct principal elements.

2.25 Residential development will be centred on the southern side of Alderholt, where new residents will have easy access to green infrastructure including SANG.

- 2.26 Much of the land between the Proposed Development and Cranborne Common to the west will be SANG (comprising Cross Roads Plantation SANG and Alderholt Common SANG compartments).
- 2.27 Cross Roads Plantation SANG compartment is a mosaic of mature woodland and grassland habitats that can meet SANG quality criteria almost immediately with only limited infrastructure.
- 2.28 Alderholt Common SANG compartment will be created across a large swathe of open agricultural land that is divided by mature, species-rich hedgerows. Here, the over-riding objective is to deliver an attractive destination for informal recreation within a countryside setting.
- 2.29 A mosaic of grassland, scrub, trees and woodland will be created across open fields, and existing valued habitats including woodland, hedgerows and wetlands (ponds and ditches) restored to semi-natural habitat for the benefit of biodiversity and public amenity alike.
- 2.30 The two western SANG compartments are intended to provide a more tranquil experience and long walks with the dog off the lead with few restrictions.
- 2.31 Harbridge Drove SANG compartment will be created in the south east corner of the Site, centred on the existing campsite with mature trees over grassland and woodland setting. This SANG compartment will have a less rural character, and landscape proposals will be largely directed by its amenity function, and the objective of screening views of the proposed built form.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

- 3.1 This section considers the aims and objectives of SANG habitat creation and management at Alderholt Meadows. The achievement of these objectives can be monitored as a means to evaluate the efficacy of implementation and management work, and to guide future changes to the Management Plan.

Aims

- 3.2 Across the Site, the principal aim of the habitat creation and management measures prescribed in this document is to protect and enhance, through conservation management, the Site's naturalness, biodiversity, and local character.
- 3.3 A further principal aim, which applies specifically to the area of proposed SANG in the western and eastern parts of the Site, is to provide a convenient and accessible, enjoyable and satisfying recreation experience in a natural environment, so that new and existing residents in the area, who would otherwise travel to Internationally designated sites for a walk, opt to visit the proposed SANG areas as an alternative.

Objectives

- 3.4 These principal aims are supported by a series of more specific objectives:
- 1) To deliver and maintain an accessible greenspace resource in fulfilment of criteria set out in 'Guidelines for the establishment of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG): Quality Standards for the Dorset Heaths';
 - 2) To create new semi-natural habitats in order to achieve biodiversity gains and produce a diverse, naturalistic, and attractive landscape;
 - 3) To restore and enhance existing degraded habitats in order to achieve biodiversity gains and produce a diverse, naturalistic, and attractive landscape;
 - 4) To manage for both amenity value and biodiversity benefit.
- 3.5 The remainder of this section outlines the means by which these objectives - and thus the main aims from which they derive - will be achieved.

Objective 1: *To deliver and maintain an accessible greenspace resource in fulfilment of criteria set out in the Guidelines for the establishment of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG): Quality Standards for the Dorset Heaths*

- 3.6 **Annex 2** of this document relates the specific characteristics of the proposed SANG to criteria prescribed in the SANG Quality Standards.

Objective 2: *To create new semi-natural habitats in order to achieve biodiversity gains and produce a diverse, naturalistic, and attractive landscape*

- 3.7 The following new habitats are proposed for delivery at Alderholt Meadows:

- Extensive new areas of diverse, semi-natural grassland;
- Blocks of native woodland;
- New native species tree and hedgerow planting; and
- New ponds and wetlands.

Objective 3: *To restore existing degraded habitats in order to achieve biodiversity gains and produce a diverse, naturalistic, and attractive landscape*

- 3.8 Habitat restoration and conservation management will be used to improve the condition of existing habitats including:

- Over-grazed and species-poor permanent pasture; and
- Species-poor and degraded agricultural hedgerows.

Objective 4: *To manage for both amenity value and biodiversity benefit*

- 3.9 Ongoing management will be undertaken to promote both amenity and biodiversity value, including such actions as:

- Upkeep of site furniture and infrastructure;
- Aftercare of newly established habitats; and
- Ongoing conservation management of new and existing habitats.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Habitat Creation and Restoration

Enhanced Semi-natural Grassland

- 4.1 The existing resource of degraded permanent pasture within parts of the Site will largely be retained within the SANG, and restored to favourable conservation status through the discontinuation of agricultural use, the adoption of ongoing conservation management, and localised over-seeding to introduce additional forb species and increase overall diversity.
- 4.2 The sward within this area will be cut low in spring (April/May) or autumn (September/October) and it will be overseeded by broadcasting or direct drilling with a suitable proprietary wildflower seed mixture, such as Emorsgate EM7F ('wildflowers for sandy soils').

Created 'Semi-natural' Grassland

- 4.3 An expansive new resource of species-rich grassland will be created in areas currently occupied by farmland. The objective of grassland habitat creation within such areas will be the establishment of a diverse sward that reflects the ecological context of the Site, and provides both visual interest and a naturalistic 'countryside' experience for visitors.
- 4.4 New 'semi-natural' grassland habitat will be created by reseeding with a proprietary meadow grass and wildflower seed mixture, such as Emorsgate EM7 ('meadow mixture for sandy soils').
- 4.5 The initial rate of establishment of finer grasses and wildflowers may be constrained by the Site's history of agricultural improvement, which is likely to favour more vigorous grass and ruderal species. However, the abundance and distribution of desirable species is likely to increase over time, as soil nutrient levels gradually diminish following the discontinuation of fertiliser input and the adoption of an extensive, conservation-led management approach, and this process should be expedited by the effect of the sandy conditions that prevail across the Site.
- 4.6 It should be noted that the objective of this intervention is not to establish areas of lowland heathland within the Site - as this could function as an 'ecological trap' for specialist heathland bird species, potentially encouraging nesting activity in areas where ground-nesting species are at increased risk of disturbance. Rather, the objective is to promote the development of a fine habitat mosaic and increase diversity using local seed sources where possible. This will provide enhanced foraging opportunities for Nightjar and potentially Woodlark beyond adjacent areas of heathland.

Tree, Shrub, and Woodland Planting

- 4.7 Occasional individual trees of standard size will be planted as points of interest within the landscape. These trees will develop increasing biodiversity and landscape value as they mature.
- 4.8 More densely planted blocks of tree and shrub planting will also be provided in pursuance of the following principal objectives:
 - To form dense, continuous landscape screening around the proposed built form;

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- To diversify the otherwise predominantly open character of the proposed SANG with a series of irregularly shaped scrub blocks; and
- To diversify and soften the Site's existing boundary by forming a scalloped, scrubby gradation to what is currently a 'hard' woodland edge.

4.9 Scrub blocks will be created by dense planting of native shrub species transplants in an informal grid, incorporating irregular shapes and scalloped edges in order to maximise the extent and diversity of available edge habitat, thereby enhancing foraging opportunities for bird and bat species, and increasing habitat suitability for reptiles.

4.10 Species selection will be informed by the composition of desirable (native) elements of the existing tree and shrub assemblage within the Site and its surrounds - to promote successful establishment and consistency with the broader landscape. Key species will include Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur*, Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, Goat Willow *Salix caprea*, Gorse *Ulex europaeus* and Broom *Cytisus scoparius*. Naturally invasive species such as Scots Pine and Silver Birch should generally be avoided.

Hedgerows

4.11 Initial restorative management of existing mature hedgerows will be targeted toward the most sparse and discontinuous sections. A proportion of outgrown hedgerow stools will be laid or pollarded, to promote the restoration of a dense, vigorous growth form, and substantial gaps will be filled with new mixed native species transplants, with the ancillary objective of increasing diversification through the introduction of new or poorly represented species such as Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Dog Rose *Rosa canina*, Goat Willow, Holly, and Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*.

4.12 New mixed native species-rich hedgerows will be planted to improve habitat connectivity within the interior of the SANG.

4.13 Hedgerow creation will be undertaken by planting a double row of mixed native species transplants. Where appropriate, new hedgerows will be planted into a simple bank structure, in order to promote microtopographical diversity, and provide habitat niches for hedgebank flora.

Sustainable Drainage System

4.14 As part of an integrated approach to the delivery of green and blue infrastructure, a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) treatment train, chiefly comprising swales and attenuation basins, will be provided. These features will be gently contoured and suitably landscaped so as to contribute to the character and naturalness of their surroundings. They will be sown with a proprietary wetland wildflower meadow seed mixture (such as Emorsgate EM8).

Ponds

4.15 Some new ponds will be created for wildlife and other sacrificial ponds for dog dipping.

Summary of Proposed Habitats

4.16 **Tables 4.1 to 4.3** present summaries of the proposed habitats in each of the proposed SANG compartments. See **Maps 3 and 4**.

Table 4.1 Cross Roads Plantation SANG compartment with existing and proposed habitats

Field number	Parcel number	Parcel Name	Key Habitats in Parcel	Existing UK Habitats in Field	**Proposed Habitats
A9	7	Land south of Cross Roads Plantation solar farm	Lower value habitats only	Non-cereal crops	Wildflower meadow / Open grass / Trees / Woodland
A10	5 (part)	Land to the immediate west of Sleepbrook Farmhouse	^Semi-improved grassland, dense bramble and gorse scrub, treelines	^Other neutral grassland	Swale / Open grass / Trees
A11	4	Land around Sleepbrook Farmhouse	*Wet woodland, *Mixed semi-natural woodland, treelines, ^Rush pasture, Semi-improved grassland, a *pond, ditches	Wet woodland, Other woodland; mixed Modified grassland (Improved grassland) ^Purple moor grass and rush pastures	Wet woodland Other neutral grassland / Other woodland; mixed Purple moor grass and rush pastures
A16	5 (part)	Land to the immediate west of Sleepbrook Farmhouse	Lower value habitats only	Modified grassland (Improved grassland)	Swale / Pond / Wetland / Reedbed / Wildflower meadow / Open grass / Trees / Woodland
A32	1	Land east of Cross Roads Plantation	Semi-improved grassland	Other neutral grassland	Scrub / Wildflower meadow / Open grass / Trees
A33	20	Cross Roads Plantation	*Broadleaved woodland, *Mixed woodland, ^Semi-improved grassland, 2 Ponds, a *Stream	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland Other neutral grassland	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland Other neutral grassland
A34	20	Cross Roads Plantation	*Mixed woodland,	Other woodland; mixed	Other woodland; mixed
A35	20	Cross Roads Plantation	*Mixed woodland,	Other woodland; mixed	Other woodland; mixed

Table 4.2 Alderholt Meadows SANG compartment with existing and proposed habitats

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Field number	Parcel number	Parcel Name	Key Habitats in Parcel	Existing UK Habitats in Field	**Proposed Habitats
A17	18 (part)	Land to southwest of Sleepbrook Farm	*Rush pasture, *Mixed woodland, 2 *hedgerows, 2 ditches	Cereal crops	Wildflower meadow / Open grass / Woodland
A18	18 (part)	ditto	ditto	Modified grassland (Improved grassland)	Swale / Pond / Wetland / Reedbed / Wildflower meadow / Open grass / Trees / Woodland
A19	18 (part)	ditto	ditto	Other neutral grassland (Marshy grassland) Other woodland; mixed	Other neutral grassland (Marshy grassland) / Other woodland; mixed
A25	18 (part)	ditto	ditto	Modified grassland (Improved grassland)	Swale / Ponds / Wetland / Reedbed / Open grass
A26	18 (part)	ditto	ditto	Modified grassland (Improved grassland)	Swale / Ponds / Wetland / Reedbed / Open grass
A31	19	Land to southwest of Warren Park Farm	1 of 2 *ponds	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland Cereal crops Ponds	Swale / Pond / Wetland / Reedbed / Wildflower meadow / Open grass / Woodland Pond / Wildflower meadow / Trees

Table 4.3 Harbridge Drove SANG compartment with existing and proposed habitats

Field number	Parcel number	Parcel Name	Key Habitats in Parcel	Existing UK Habitats in Field	**Proposed Habitats
A4	13 (part)	Land around Oaktree Farm and Foxhill Farm	Semi-improved grassland, 5 of 7 *hedgerows and 4 ditches	Modified grassland (Poor semi-improved grassland)	Swale / Ponds / Wetland / Reedbed / Wildflower meadow / Open grass / Trees / Woodland Wildflower meadow / Trees
A5	13 (part)	ditto	ditto	Modified grassland (Poor semi-improved grassland)	Swale / Ponds / Wetland / Reedbed / Wildflower meadow / Open grass / Trees / Woodland
A28	14 (part)	Land around Warren Park Farm campsite	^Amenity grassland, *Broadleaved woodland with woodland ride, Hedgerow and Treeline, 4 *ponds	Cereal crops	Wildflower meadow / Trees / Woodland
A29	14 (part)	ditto	ditto	Modified grassland (Amenity grassland)	Existing Trees and Hedge / Open grass
A30	14 (part)	ditto	ditto	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland Modified grassland (Amenity grassland) Ponds	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland / Open grass / Ponds

5. SITE FURNITURE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Paths

- 5.1 The proposed SANGs will provide a variety of walking routes through appropriately attractive, distinctive, and naturalistic surroundings,
- 5.2 The main circular path routes will predominantly be surfaced with self-binding gravel or hoggin, to promote convenient year-round and all-ability access. Secondary and linking routes will be provided as simple mown grass paths, which may with time and use revert to lightly vegetated, compacted sand. Through woodland areas the surface will be kept natural, using wood chips or localised gravel. Some boardwalks are proposed in the wetter central area.

Boundary Treatment

- 5.3 Attractiveness to dog-walkers will be an essential attribute of the SANGs. To this end, the SANGs will provide a secure space, enclosed from roads and residential development, within which dogs can be freely and safely exercised off the lead.
- 5.4 The proposed SANG compartments currently comprise fields which are largely enclosed by agricultural hedgerows. These hedgerows will be upgraded and expanded as necessary for safe enclosure.
- 5.5 In keeping with the naturalistic, semi-rural character of the SANG, boundary fencing will be of timber post-and-wire or post-and-rail construction, fitted with stock netting.

Site Furniture

- 5.6 Site furniture will be of predominantly timber construction, in simple, robust designs.
- 5.7 Gates will be all-abilities access gates.
- 5.8 Strategically placed finger post and low-key waymarkers will indicate the routes.
- 5.9 Timber benches will be installed at appropriate intervals and focal points.
- 5.10 Interpretation panels, installed at main access points, will provide information on the habitats and features of the SANG, in addition to maps indicating the range of walks available. Interpretation panels will promote socially responsible recreational activity, including the use of litter and dog waste bins, which will also be provided at access points.

6. ONGOING MANAGEMENT

Introduction

- 6.1 This section provides guidance on aftercare required to ensure the successful establishment of new and enhanced habitats, and ongoing management work that will be undertaken to maintain their amenity and biodiversity value.

Infrastructure Maintenance

- 6.2 Regular maintenance checks will be conducted to identify and remedy damage to items of amenity infrastructure. Periodic vegetation clearance around paths, gates, and benches will be undertaken as required in order to maintain safe and unobstructed public access.
- 6.3 Removal of loose litter and emptying of dog waste and litter bins will be undertaken at appropriate intervals.
- 6.4 In the longer term, items of site furniture and infrastructure will be repaired or replaced as required in order to maintain the safety, accessibility, and general attractiveness of the SANG provision.

Aftercare

Semi-natural Grassland

- 6.5 Newly seeded areas of semi-natural grassland will be mown on up to four occasions during the first growing season, in order to suppress grass growth and remove annual weeds.

Tree, Shrub and Hedgerow Planting

- 6.6 Aftercare of newly planted trees and shrubs will be undertaken during an initial establishment period lasting for approximately 3 years after planting. The planting maintenance programme will include regular weed control to reduce competition for nutrients, water, and light; adjustment of tree ties, guards and staking systems; and formative pruning of new hedgerows and standard trees.

Habitat Management

Semi-natural Grassland

- 6.7 The objective of semi-natural grassland management will be to enhance the botanical and structural diversity, and thereby the visual attractiveness, of the sward, while balancing amenity and biodiversity considerations.
- 6.8 The greater part of the sward will be mown annually in late summer, with arisings removed, to enable forb species to flower and set seed. The precise timing of this cut should be varied from year to year. Early cutting (July to mid-August) will be most effective for nutrient depletion and control of coarse grasses, particularly in parts of the Site with more history of agricultural improvement. Late cutting (mid-August to early September) is generally more appropriate to low nutrient systems on sandy soils; it provides longer enjoyment of flowering plants and allows late

flowering species to set seed. Alternating between earlier and later cuts on an annual basis will promote the development of a diverse and balanced sward.

- 6.9 Following the main annual cut, arisings should be left in situ for up to a week after cutting to encourage seed drop, before being collected and removed.
- 6.10 Supplementary spring or autumn cuts may be undertaken on a discretionary, reactive basis, in order to remove excessive grass growth and expedite nutrient depletion, if required.
- 6.11 Localised areas within the SANGs will be subject to more frequent mowing (e.g. monthly cuts during the growing season) in order to enhance structural diversity, maintain open conditions for informal recreation, and provide safe levels of visibility.
- 6.12 A generous uncut margin of approximately four metres will be maintained around the perimeter of grassland fields and at the interface between open grassland and woodland or scrub in order to establish a transitional habitat structure; provide dense ground-level cover for reptiles and small mammals; and maintain the availability over winter of tussocks, stems, and seedheads for use by birds and invertebrates. Such areas will be cut on rotation every few years or as required to prevent full succession to scrub.

Scrub and Tree Blocks

- 6.13 The objective of ongoing management of scrub and tree blocks will be the promotion of a dense, vigorous condition, and maintaining diversity of age, species, and structure.
- 6.14 Once scrub blocks have become reasonably well established (at least five years after planting), component shrubs should be coppiced or pollarded in small, non-sequential patches on an approximately 15-year rotation.
- 6.15 Bramble should be regarded as a valuable component within mixed scrub, but, where it threatens to become the dominant element, its progress will be checked by periodic cutting or herbicide treatment.

Woodland

- 6.16 The existing woodland will be subject to relatively light touch management and it is anticipated that this will continue post-development.

Hedgerows

- 6.17 Ongoing conservation management of hedgerows will involve a combination of the targeted application of traditional management techniques, such as coppicing and laying outgrown stools, and mechanical trimming undertaken on an approximately triennial rotation to promote vigorous regrowth and a dense structure.
- 6.18 To avoid structural uniformity and the loss of over-wintering invertebrate species, only one side and only certain sections of a hedgerow should be cut in any one year.
- 6.19 Variation in the angle of cutting can be used to promote diversity of structure, by producing hedgerow sections with either an 'A'-shaped profile or straight vertical faces. Where this is consistent with other objectives, standard trees should be allowed to develop within hedgerows

- at irregular intervals of 5-10m, and particularly at field corners – in the interests of structural diversity and as further enhancements for the local bird and bat assemblages.

Wetlands and Ponds

- 6.20 New and existing ponds and wetlands will be managed using appropriate techniques appropriate to their status and function.
- 6.21 Existing ponds and ditches will be managed with a view to their existing fauna, especially the presence of Great Crested Newts.
- 6.22 New SuDS ponds and swales will be managed to ensure they function as intended, and this could include keeping basins regularly cut and swales periodically cleared of large debris.

7. ARRANGEMENTS FOR DELIVERY

Introduction

- 7.1 This section outlines arrangements for the delivery, funding, and future stewardship of the proposed SANG provision at Alderholt Meadows. Full and final details of these arrangements will be the subject of a Section 106 Agreement with Dorset Council.

Delivery

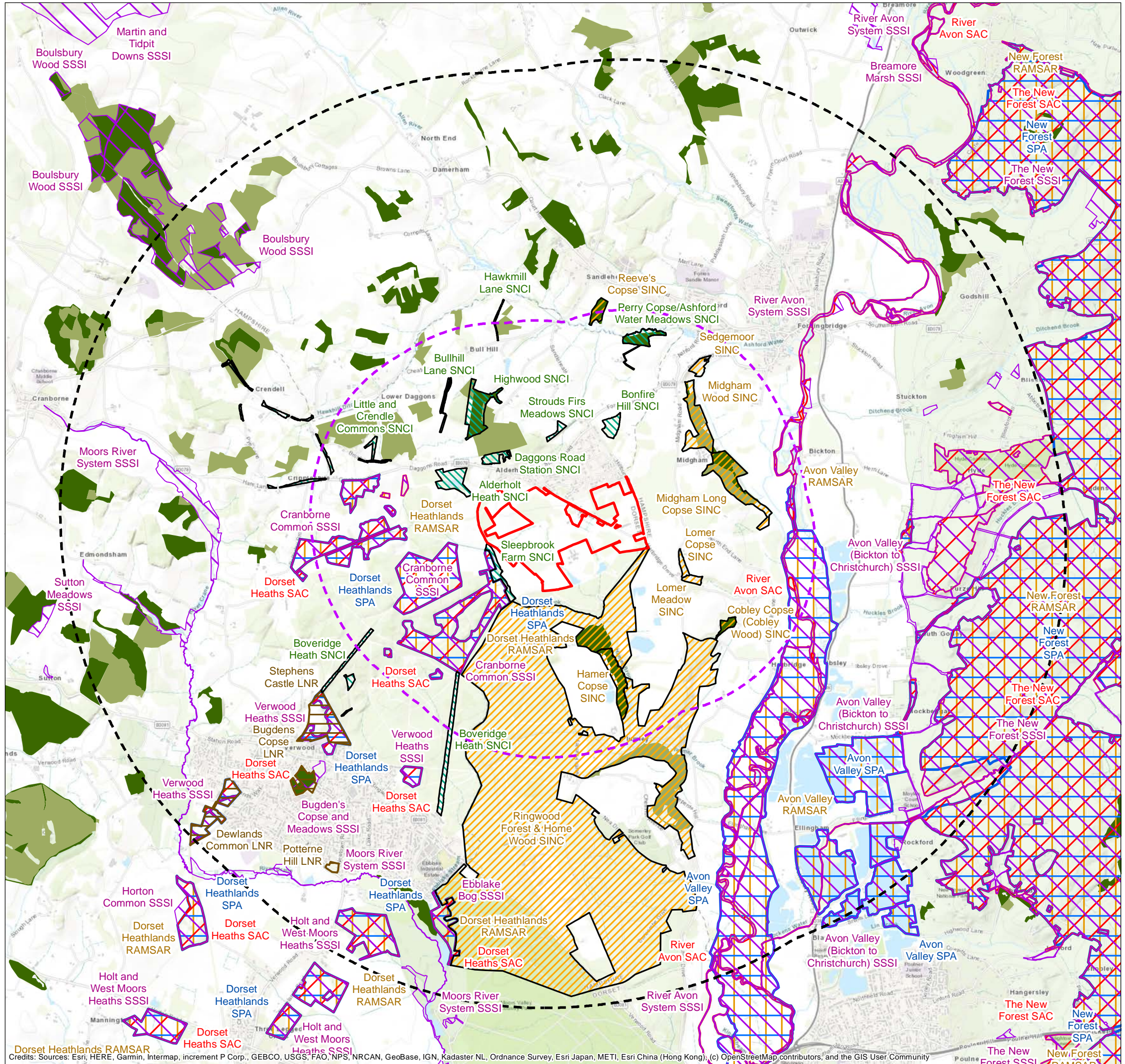
- 7.2 The implementation works described in this plan will be delivered by the developer and their appointed contractors.
- 7.3 The SANG will be delivered in phases, in accordance with the prescriptions set out in **Section 5** above, to tie in with the first occupations of dwellings that rely on it for mitigation. To ensure that the SANG attracts visitors from the point of first occupation, its opening will be publicised via social media resources and provision of promotional leaflets in welcome packs for new residents of the respective development.

Ownership & Management













- 7.4 W H White Ltd will retain ownership of the SANG and manage it via a management company, in perpetuity.
- 7.5 Step-in rights will be offered to the Council as a mechanism to ensure the continued implementation of this Plan.
- 7.6 Sufficient funding to cover the management of the SANG in perpetuity will be provided in the form of a commuted sum or alternative financial arrangement, secured through a Section 106 Agreement or other enforceable legal agreement.

Maps



- Map 1** Site Location and Nature Conservation Designations
- Map 2** Baseline Habitats
- Map 3** Proposed SANG Network
- Map 4** SANG Features



MAP 1 Site Location & Nature Conservation Designations

- KEY**
-  Site boundary
 -  2km linear distance from site boundary
 -  5km linear distance from site boundary
- Non-Statutory Sites**
-  Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI)
 -  Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
 -  Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
 -  Ancient Replanted Woodland
- Statutory Sites**
-  Special Protection Areas (SPA)
 -  Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
 -  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 -  Ramsar
 -  Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

SCALE: 1:45,000 at A3


CLIENT: Dudsbury Homes (Southern)
 PROJECT: Alderholt Meadows, Fordingbridge
 DATE: 29 November 2022

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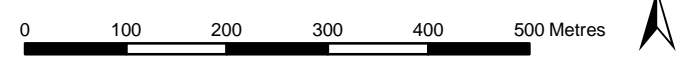
MAP 2 Baseline Habitats



KEY

- Site boundary
- Ditches
- Fences
- Hedge Ornamental Non Native
- Line of Trees - Associated with bank or ditch
- Line of Trees (Ecologically Valuable)
- Line of Trees (Ecologically Valuable) - with Bank or Ditch
- Native Hedgerow
- Native Species Rich Hedgerow
- Native Species Rich Hedgerow - Associated with bank or ditch
- Native Species Rich Hedgerow with trees
- Native Species Rich Hedgerow with trees - Associated with bank or ditch
- Temporary grass and clover leys
- Cereal crops
- Non-cereal crops
- Purple moor grass and rush pastures
- Other neutral grassland
- Modified grassland (Amenity grassland)
- Modified grassland (Improved grassland)
- Modified grassland (Poor semi-improved grassland)
- Bramble scrub
- Ruderal/Ephemeral
- Ponds (Priority Habitat)
- Ponds (Non- Priority Habitat)
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Vacant/derelict land/ bareground
- Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
- Other woodland; mixed
- Wet woodland

SCALE: 1:7,500 at A3



CLIENT: Dudsbury Homes (Southern)

PROJECT: Alderholt Meadows, Fordingbridge

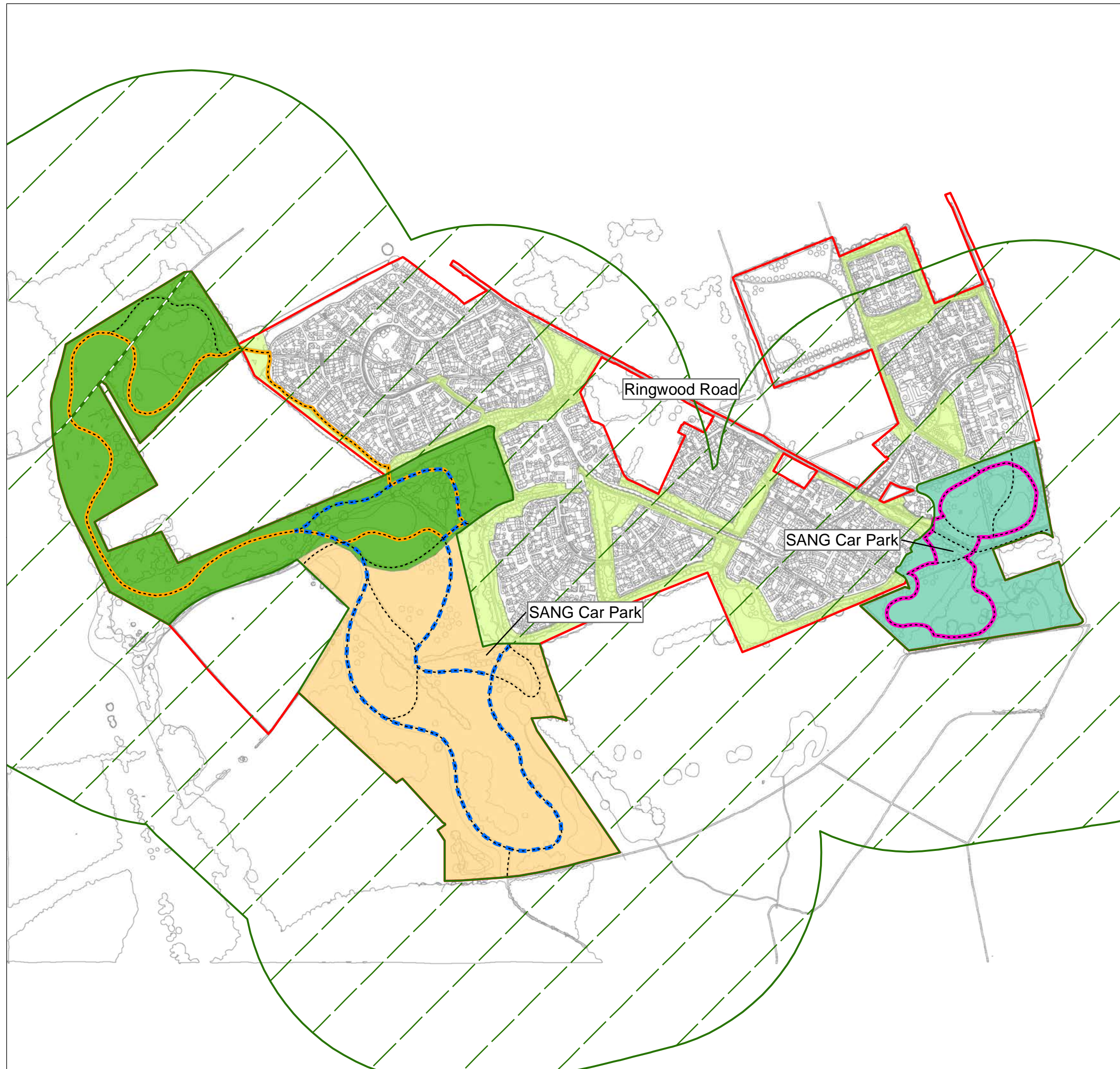
DATE: 29 November 2022

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Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

MAP 3 Proposed SANG Network

KEY

- Site boundary
- Proposed SANG network**
- Cross Roads Plantation SANG - 20.2ha
- Alderholt Common SANG - 23.5ha
- Harbridge Drove SANG - 9.7ha
- 400m linear distance from Proposed SANGs
- Green infrastructure corridors
- Public right of way
- SANG paths
- Circular walk 1 - 2.5km
- Circular walk 2 - 2.3km
- Circular walk 3 - 1.2km



SCALE: 1:7,500 at A3



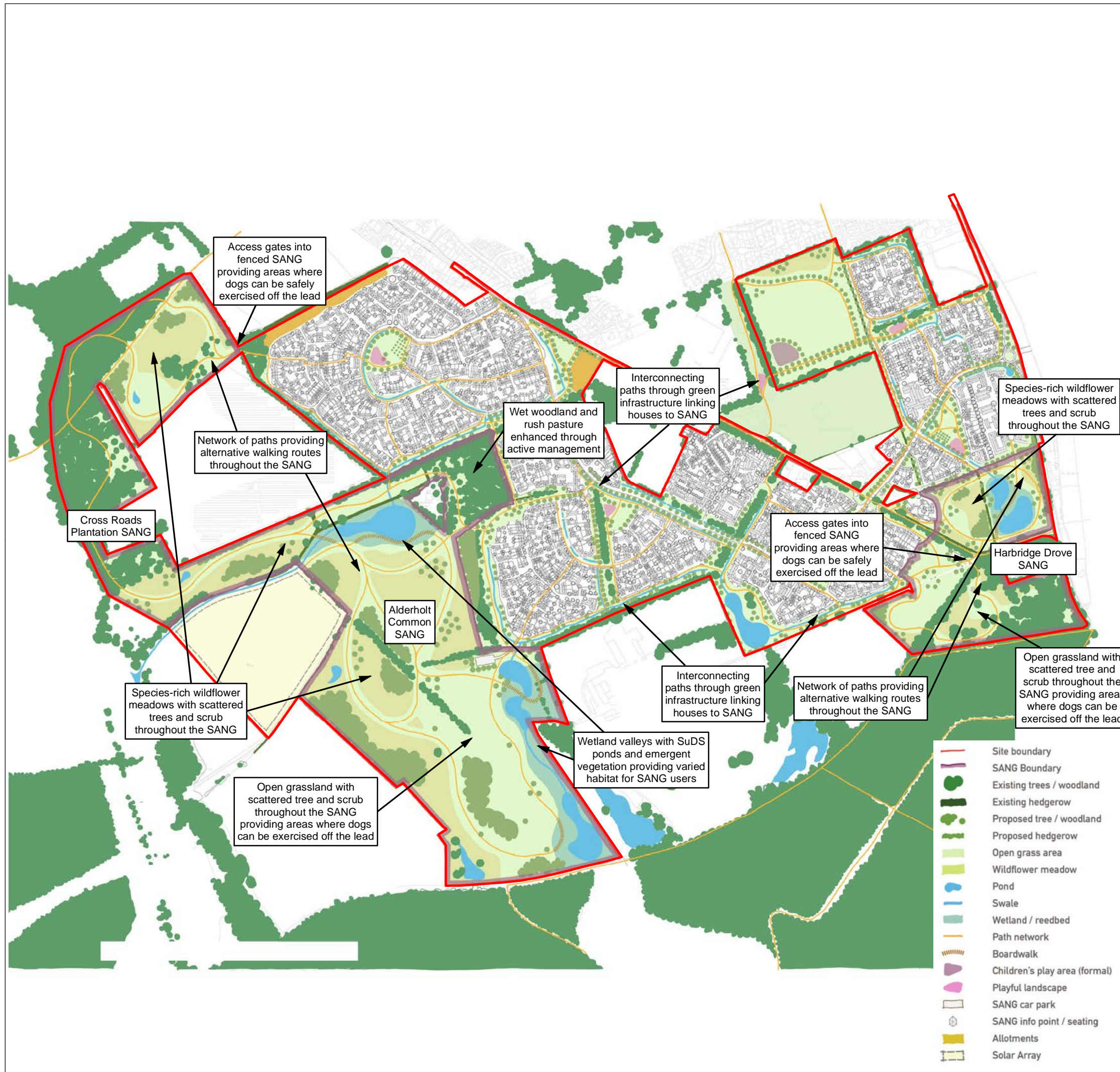
CLIENT: Dudsbury Homes (Southern)

PROJECT: Alderholt Meadows, Fordingbridge

DATE: 29 November 2022

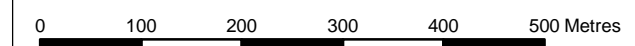
KEY

 Site boundary



-  Site boundary
-  SANG Boundary
-  Existing trees / woodland
-  Existing hedgerow
-  Proposed tree / woodland
-  Proposed hedgerow
-  Open grass area
-  Wildflower meadow
-  Pond
-  Swale
-  Wetland / reedbed
-  Path network
-  Boardwalk
-  Children's play area (formal)
-  Playful landscape
-  SANG car park
-  SANG info point / seating
-  Allotments
-  Solar Array

SCALE: 1:7,500 at A3



CLIENT: Dudsbury Homes (Southern)

PROJECT: Alderholt Meadows, Fordingbridge

DATE: 30 November 2022

Annex 1

Relation of the proposed characteristics of the SANG against Dorset Heathlands 2020-2025 SPD Quality Criteria

Table A2.1: Summary of Proposed SANG compartments against SPD quality criteria

SPD Quality Criteria		Proposals by SANG compartment		
		Cross Roads Plantation (20.2ha)	Alderholt Common (23.5ha)	Harbridge Drove (9.7ha)
Access				
1	Sites must have adequate parking for visitors, unless the site is intended for local pedestrian use only, i.e. within easy walking distance (400m as a straight line) of the developments linked to it.	This compartment is located on the PROW that connects Alderholt with Cranborne Common. A 2022 baseline visitor count estimates at least 4,380 visits/year currently made to Cranborne Common via this route. This SANG compartment is ideally located to divert a proportion of these baseline visits. It will also draw residents on foot from the northwest residential parcel. Access to this compartment will therefore be for local pedestrian use, so parking is not proposed.	This largest and centrally located SANG compartment is intended to be the principal focus for informal recreation on site. A car park is therefore proposed on the eastern edge of the SANG, accessible via the central residential parcels. The car park will provide 35-40 spaces in total, so the majority of the car parking requirement for the SANG network (at a provision rate of 1 space/ha). Parking provision will be phased to cater for the increasing pace of demand, with the initial number of spaces provided at first occupation to be agreed with Natural England and DC.	This smaller SANG compartment is intended to serve as a doorstep SANG for the eastern residential parcels. Although access will be primarily for local pedestrian use, its location immediately adjacent to Ringwood Road makes it a desirable location for quick access by car. Therefore a second car park is proposed, to accommodate the remainder of the parking requirement for the SANG network – approximately 15 to 20 spaces, again with phased provision.
2	Car parks must be easily and safely accessible by car, be of an open nature and be clearly sign posted.	No car park proposed.	The car park will be easily accessible and clearly sign posted from Ringwood Road and through the new central residential parcels.	The car park will be easily accessible and clearly sign posted from Ringwood Road.
3	There should be easy access between the car park or housing and the SANG with the facility to take dogs safely from the car park to the SANG off the lead.	Access from the northwest residential parcel will be direct via the northwestern green infrastructure corridor. Access for the existing residents of Alderholt will be via the PROW.	The car park is located on the eastern edge of the SANG, enabling visitors arriving by car to take dogs safely off the lead straight into the SANG. Access to the SANG on foot will be possible via multiple green infrastructure corridors.	The car park is located on the western edge of the SANG to the south of Ringwood Road, enabling visitors arriving by car to take dogs safely off the lead straight into the SANG. Access to the SANG on foot will be possible via multiple green infrastructure corridors.
4	Access points should have signage showing the SANGs layout and the routes	Signage showing the SANG layout and routes will be provided at access points.		

SPD Quality Criteria		Proposals by SANG compartment		
		Cross Roads Plantation (20.2ha)	Alderholt Common (23.5ha)	Harbridge Drove (9.7ha)
Paths, Tracks & Infrastructure				
5	Paths must be easily used and well maintained but most should remain unsurfaced to avoid the site becoming too urban in feel.	To be sympathetic to the existing semi-natural habitats within this compartment (described further below), paths within the woodland will remain unsurfaced and paths within the grassland will be mown. Should areas within the woodland become muddy during the winter, short sections could be stabilised with woodchip. The short section around the larger southern SuDS pond in this compartment will be boardwalked, providing further interest.	To maintain an appropriately rural feel whilst ensuring year-round all-abilities access, the primary circular route will be finished in bound gravel or hoggin. Secondary and linking routes will be provided as simple mown grass paths. Short sections through wetland areas will be boardwalked, providing further interest and to protect the existing area of rush pasture by the northeast woodland.	To maintain an appropriately rural feel whilst ensuring year-round all-abilities access, the primary circular route will be finished in bound gravel or hoggin. Secondary and linking routes will be provided as simple mown grass paths. The short section between the north-central pond/wetland area will be boardwalked, providing further interest.
6	Most paths should be suitable for use in all weathers and all year around. Boardwalks may be required in wet sections.			
7	SANGs with car parks must have a circular walk which starts and finishes at the car park.	No car park proposed.	The main circular route will start and finish at the car park.	The main circular route will start and finish at the car park.
8	A circular walk of 2.3-2.5km around the SANGs is available - for larger SANGs a variety of circular walks created	This compartment is likely to be delivered as the first SANG phase. A 2.5km circular walk will be possible, with part of the walk taking advantage of the northwestern green infrastructure corridor to complete the loop.	This SANG compartment will follow as a second phase, expanding the area of accessible routes from that delivered within the Cross Roads Plantation SANG. A 2.3km circular walk will be possible within this central area, with loops of varying lengths passing through different habitats possible.	This compartment will accommodate a 1.2km circular walk as a convenient doorstep loop, but with longer walks possible within the wider SANG and green infrastructure network.
9	It must be designed so that visitors are not deterred by safety concerns	The SANGs have been designed and will be managed to promote their safe enjoyment by visitors. Areas of existing woodland will be managed to ensure long sight lines within open woodland rides.	The SANGs have been designed and will be managed to promote their safe enjoyment by visitors. This compartment will provide wide open paths and expansive views.	The SANGs have been designed and will be managed to promote their safe enjoyment by visitors. The future scheme will alter the existing flow of traffic along Ringwood Road, making it access only, with limited traffic flows. Crossing between the northern and southern sections of this SANG compartment will therefore feel

SPD Quality Criteria		Proposals by SANG compartment		
		Cross Roads Plantation (20.2ha)	Alderholt Common (23.5ha)	Harbridge Drove (9.7ha)
				safe, like crossing a countryside lane.
10	Good green infrastructure links with nearby development to encourage use of SANG	The SANG network will be easily accessible to new and existing residents via a multitude of wide semi-natural green infrastructure corridors.		
Advertising & Marketing Checklist				
11	It should be clearly sign-posted and advertised	The new SANGs will be clearly sign-posted at access points and advertised by leaflets posted to existing local residents at the point of opening.		
12	Leaflets and/or websites advertising their location to potential visitors should be produced and provided at the sales office of the new development and to the new homeowners	The new SANGs will be publicised online and through provision of information to new homeowners within welcome packs.		
Landscape & Vegetation				
13	They must be perceived as natural spaces without intrusive artificial structures, except in the immediate vicinity of car parks. Visually-sensitive way-markers and some benches are acceptable	The SANGs have been design to complement the existing rural setting, providing new open space for recreation in a countryside setting. The existing habitats within the SANGs, namely woodland and hedgerows, act to provide immediate visual containment. In order to avoid any urbanising feel, all site furniture will be low-key and minimalistic; seating, waymarkers and interpretation boards will be of timber construction and 'rustic' design.		
14	They must aim to provide a variety of habitats for visitors to experience (e.g. some of woodland, scrub, grassland, heathland, wetland, open water)	This compartment will retain and enhance the existing broadleaved and mixed woodland, and the area of neutral grassland. The grassland will be diversified, with central and peripheral areas managed as wildflower meadow. Two new ponds and a large SuDS basin will also be created, providing wetland interest and opportunities for dog dipping.	The biodiversity poor intensively farmed arable and improved grassland in this large compartment will be enhanced to create a diverse open parkland landscape. Habitats will include wildflower grassland, with central areas managed as tall meadows, new woodland scrub and standard trees, large SuDS basins set in a	The species-poor grassland in this compartment will be diversified to provide visual interest, and existing woodland will be expanded to tie in with the wooded landscape of Ringwood Forest to the south. In the northern section, two large SuDS basins will be created to provide surface water drainage, but also a central focus for the circular walking route.

SPD Quality Criteria		Proposals by SANG compartment		
		Cross Roads Plantation (20.2ha)	Alderholt Common (23.5ha)	Harbridge Drove (9.7ha)
			wetland complex and a smaller pond suitable for dog dipping.	
15	Access within the SANGs must be largely unrestricted with plenty of space provided where it is possible for dogs to exercise freely and safely off lead but under control so as not to deter others.	The SANGs will provide unrestricted open space that will be enclosed to allow the safe exercise of dogs off lead.		
16	They must avoid where possible unpleasant visual and auditory intrusions (e.g. derelict buildings, intrusive adjoining buildings, dumped materials, loud intermittent or continuous noise from traffic, industry, sewage treatment works, waste disposal facilities).	The proposed SANG occupies a countryside setting that is largely free from urban intrusion.		

