

**THAMES BASIN HEATHS
JOINT STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

Date: 12 February 2009

Subject: **Items for Information**

1. **Update on Local Authority strategy Status**
2. **Update on SANG Provision and Capacity**
3. **Update on Recent Appeal Decisions**
4. **Update on the effects of the economic downturn**

Report of: See individual items

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this report.

1. Update on Local Authority Strategy Status

- 1.1 Interim strategies (miniplans) or supplementary planning documents (SPDs) allowing for the provision of SANG are proven to be unlocking housing delivery in those authorities which have adopted such strategies. **Table I** summarises the policies and strategies currently in place across the affected local authorities and proposals for their review / adoption.

Table I.

Authority	Avoidance strategy in place? (Y/N)	Est. date of strategy review or adoption	Notes
Bracknell Forest BC	Yes	Feb-09	
Elmbridge BC	Yes	Dec 09	
Guildford BC	Yes	2010	
Hart DC	Yes	Jan 10	
RBWM	No	2009/10	
Runnymede BC	Yes	2009	
Rushmoor BC	No		
Surrey Heath BC	Yes		<i>Currently suspended</i>
Waverley BC	Yes	Sept 09	
Woking BC	Yes	2011	
Wokingham BC	No	Feb 09	

- 1.2 Consistent, across-the-board, delivery of the key principles set out in the South East Plan and recommended in the Delivery Framework, including the collection of contributions for strategic access management and monitoring,

will require existing miniplans, interim strategies or SPDs to be updated and new strategies to be put in place where none currently exist. Progress towards achieving this will be regularly reported to the Board.

2. Update on SANG Provision and Capacity

- 2.1 There is a need to keep remaining SANG capacity under close review to ensure that SANG continues to be available in advance of housing occupation. **Annex I** - which has been pulled together on the basis of information provided by local authority officers, sets out the information currently available about SANG provision across the affected area.
- 2.2 It should be noted that:
- For those authorities that partially fall within the 5km zone, it has not always been possible to estimate the proportion of the draft South East Plan housing allocation that may be delivered within the 5km zone. The column 'Estimated years SANG supply' therefore assumes that all the allocation is delivered within the 5km zone, which may be unlikely.
 - In some authorities, larger sites will provide their own SANG, and will contribute significantly to the delivery of the authority's housing allocation, however this SANG has sometimes not yet been formally allocated. Therefore, again, the 'Estimated years SANG supply' may be artificially low. Particular examples include Bracknell Forest and Wokingham.
- 2.3 **Annex 2** includes a map, prepared by Wokingham Borough Council, showing SANG coverage across the 5km Zone of Influence. Members should note that the mapping of SANG catchments does not take account of administrative boundaries (ie it assumes that SANG can be shared between authorities, which may not in reality be the case).

3. Update on Recent Appeal Decisions

- 3.1 The Board member sub-group have recommended that the Board retains an overview of recent appeal decisions. In the past the views of Planning Inspectors on matters relating to the Thames Basin Heaths has varied. These regular updates will help highlight any continuing variations in approach.
- 3.2 **Annex 3** therefore sets out a summary of relevant recent appeal decisions.

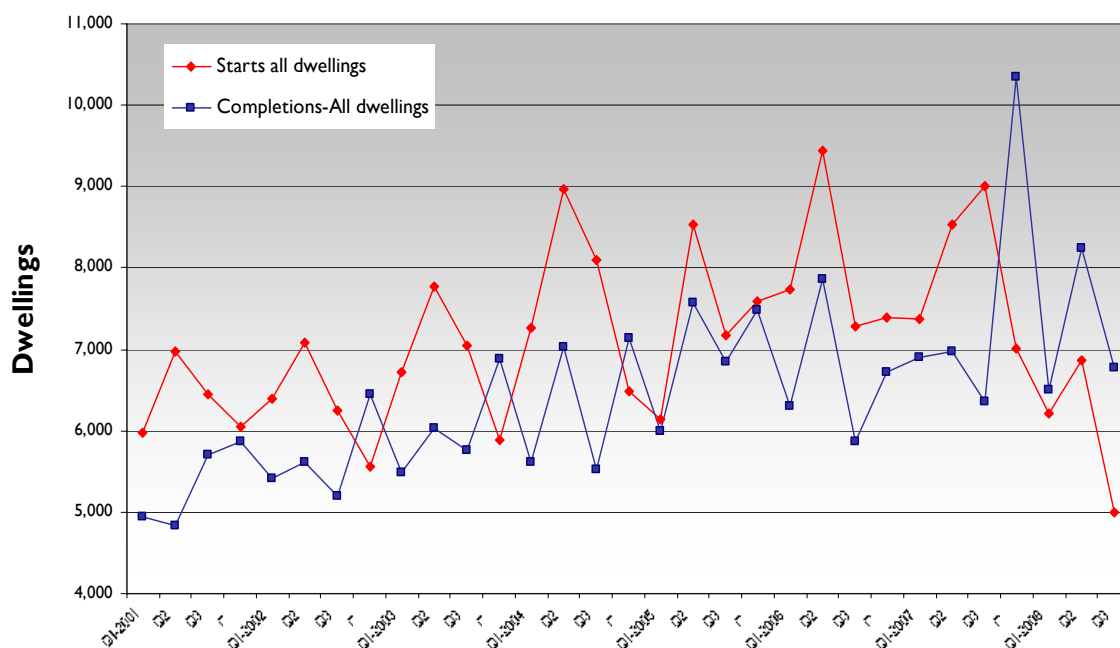
4. Update on the effects of the economic downturn

- 4.1 The member steering group has requested that an item for information be provided to the Board on the impact of the economic downturn on housing provision in the authorities surrounding the Thames Basin Heaths.
- 4.2 The information that follows is based on national data from the Department of Communities and Local Government and anecdotal evidence provided by local planning authorities in the vicinity of the Thames Basin Heaths.

Regional data

- 4.3 As part of the process of monitoring the implementation of the Draft South East Plan, the Regional Assembly collects annual data on housing completions¹ in the South East for each unitary and district council area. The data, which is provided by the local authorities in the form of a joint return to the Assembly and CLG, is recognised as the most robust and comprehensive source on completions. The Assembly is currently collating completions data for the year ending 31 March 2008, which will be available in March 2009.
- 4.4 Although that data will provide the definitive count of housing completions for monitoring purposes, CLG also collect their own data on a quarterly basis. It is not directly comparable with the Assembly's own completions data and does not provide a fully comprehensive count. Nevertheless, the CLG data does provide a useful indication of trends, especially when it is viewed alongside the CLG starts data. Data for the period 2001 to 2008 (Q3)² is set out in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: CLG Starts & Completions Data for the South East, 2001-2008



- 4.5 The down-turn in the housing market does appear to be showing in the latest starts data, which indicates that there has been a decline in starts in 2008:
- In quarters 1-3 in 2006 there were 24,500 starts, and in the same period in 2007, 24,900 starts; however in 2008 this had fallen to 18,000.
 - Completions for Q1-3 in 2006, 2007 were broadly similar at around 20,000 but increased to 21,500 in the first 3 quarters of 2008.
 - The impact of declining starts is likely to become more apparent in completions data for 2009/10.

¹ Housing completions are net and take account of gains and losses arising as a result of conversions and changes of use and of demolitions.

² The period covered by the RPG 9 and the Draft South East Plan.

Local authority evidence

- 4.6 Authorities in Surrey have collated information about the number of planning applications being received in 2008 as compared to 2007 (**figure 2**). Whilst this was an informal exercise (which has not been verified or checked for consistency) it indicates that there has been a marked decline in the number of planning applications being submitted to local authorities. Data from Surrey also indicates a falling number of starts in the county.

Figure 2: Applications received in Surrey authorities in final quarter of 2008 compared to 2007

	Applications Received 2007	Average per Quarter 2007	Applications Received Oct-Dec 2008	% Reduction*
Elmbridge	2936	734	452	38%
Epsom	1433	358	185	48%
Guildford	2589	647	472	27%
Mole Valley	2112	528	373	29%
Reigate	2092	523	381	27%
Runnymede	1358	340	263	23%
Spelthorne	1133	283	150	47%
Surrey Heath	1264	316	213	33%
Tandridge	2036	509	334	34%
Waverley	2756	689	399	42%
Woking	1381	345	251	27%
Total	21,090	5,272	3,473	34%

* Please note that the '% reduction' figure does not take account of quarterly variation in applications received - experience demonstrates that applications received in the final quarter are historically lower than in other quarters.

- 4.7 This reflects anecdotal evidence from other authorities within the vicinity of the Thames Basin Heaths. There is also anecdotal evidence from some authorities that despite a fall in market housing coming forward, affordable housing numbers are remaining steadier.
- 4.8 There is still considerable uncertainty about the extent and duration of the economic downturn and the affect it is likely to have on the housing market - it is therefore difficult to draw any firm conclusions at this stage, and particularly important that the situation continues to be carefully monitored.
- 4.9 In general terms, a fall in permissions, and fewer developments coming forward, will result in a reduction in the absolute value of s106 contributions being collected – for Thames Basin Heaths avoidance/mitigation measures amongst other things. On the other hand, fewer houses coming forward will mean that there will be less additional pressure on the SPA so the overall requirement for additional avoidance/mitigation measures will also be less (and, for example, the SANG land that has been allocated to date may be 'used up' more slowly), although maintenance and monitoring of existing measures will continue to be needed.
- 4.10 Further data will be provided to future Board meetings.

Contact:

Cath Rose, Regional Planner
South East England Regional Assembly
Tel: 01483 555235 Email: catherinerose@southeast-ra.gov.uk

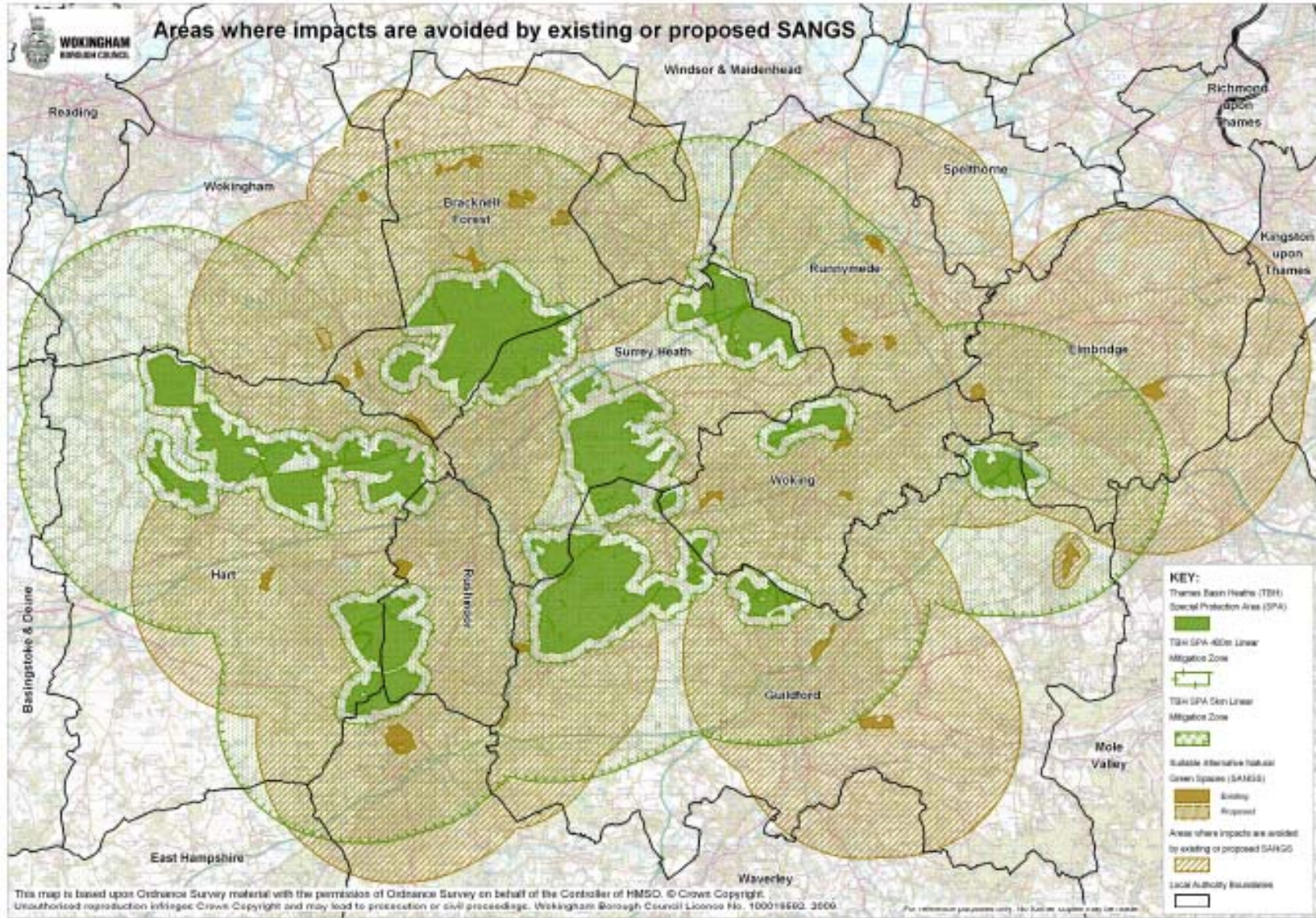
SANG Provision and Capacity

SANG identified			SANG allocated				Overall provision		Notes
Name of SANG site	Total discounted SANG area (ha)	Total SANG capacity (dw)	Dwellings allocated to SANG to date* (dw)	Amount of SANG allocated (ha)	Remaining unallocated SANG area (ha)	Remaining unallocated capacity (dw)	Draft SE Plan allocation** (dpa)	Est years SANG supply	
Bracknell Forest Borough Council									
Longhill Park	9	325	140	3.88	5.12	185			BFBC currently implements a 12ha per 1000 new resident SANG standard, all calculations are based on this standard. SANG capacity is allocated on receipt of pre-app or application, and should the application be refused, is not relinquished until 6 months after the decision. This means that we have a lot of allocated SANG land, which is not shown here, as this shows those only allocations with planning permission. BFBC strategy provides for a number of large sites to come forward with bespoke SANGS - these total 5275 dwellings.
Horseshoe Lake	8.76	316	40	1.11	7.65	276			
Englemere Pond	26.4	952	201	5.58	20.82	751			
The Cut Cluster	12	432	173	4.81	7.19	259			
Shepherd Meadows	27	974	0	0	27	974			
Silver Jubilee Field	2.4	86	0	0	2.4	86			
South Hill Park	12.6	454	0	0	12.6	454			
Ambarrow Court/Hill	10.8	389	0	0	10.8	389			
Total	108.96	3928	554	15.38	93.58	3374	539	6.3	
Elmbridge Borough Council									
Brooklands Community Park	22								
Esher Common	20	2100	177	2.5	39.5				
Total	42	2100	177	2.5	39.5	1923	61^^	31.5	^^ allocation within 5km zone, not whole district
Guildford Borough Council									
Riverside Park, Guildford	14.7		683	13.19	1.51				Assumes 2 bed units at - 100 dwellings / ha.
Chantry Woods,	38		359	7.81	30.19				This means that the number of

Guildford									dwellings still to allocate is NOT the difference between the number of units already with permission and the number of units possible if all units were 2 bed units. ^allocation within whole district not 5km zone
Lakeside Park, Ash Vale	3.6		100	2.96	0.64				
Effingham Common, East Horsley	34		5	0.11	33.89				
Total	90.3		1147	24.07	66.23		422^		
Hart Borough Council									
Hitches Lane Country Park	24	1250	300	6.08	17.92	950			Interim Avoidance Strategy includes an occupancy rate tariff therefore the figures provided in the table are estimates based on an average occupancy of 2.4 persons per dwelling. Only 1/3 (approx 300 dwellings) of the SANG will be released to begin with - release of further capacity will be addressed through the LDF
Total	24	1250	300	6.08	17.92	950	200	4.75	
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead									
None									
Total							281		
Runnymede Borough Council									
St Anns Hill Chertsey	5.25								SE Plan housing allocation does not include the DERA allocation as this is seen as separate from district's yearly allocation. The DERA site will need to provide a bespoke solution to the TBH and as such will not use up the current SANG allocation.
Hare Hill	3.37								
Three Linked Sites	16.4								
Queens Wood	4.3								
Total	29.32	600	199	9.72	19.6	401	161	2.5	
Rushmoor Borough Council									
Southwood Woodlands	32.53	1698	1674	32.07	0.46	24			
Total	32.53	1698	1674	32.07	0.46	24	310^	0.08	^310pa includes AUE
Surrey Heath Borough Council									

Land at Chobham Place Woods, Chobham	5.39	280							
Land at Nottcutts Nursery, Bagshot	7.45	194							
Total	12.84	474							
Waverley Borough Council									
Farnham Park	10.9	567	277	5.3	5.6	290			^^ data as of 31 Jan. The East Street development was granted permission (239 dwellings) on 1 October 2008. Decision notice not issued as waiting for legal agreement to be signed. Therefore remaining capacity is only 51 dwellings.
Total	10.9	567	277	5.3	5.6	290^^	230	1.26	
Woking Borough Council									
Horsell Common	20	1036	1189.7	23.0	-3.0	-153.4			Includes outline permissions and those awaiting legal agreements
Hoe Valley White Rose Lane	8.2	425	362.3	7.0	1.2	62.6			
Brookwood Country park	20	1036	493.0	9.5	10.5	543.3			
Total	48.2	2497.4	2045	39.4	8.7	452.4	242	1.89	
Wokingham Borough Council									
Keephatch Woods, Wokingham extension	3.19	156	150	3.19	0	0			Associated with application F/2007/2517
Simons Wood, Wellingtonia Ave, Crowthorne	20	980	0	10	10	490			National Trust has confirmed site is available, seeking to resolve outstanding legal and financial issues. Council has made joint RIF application with Hart DC. RIF application assumes capacity shared jointly with Hart DC
Total	23.19	1136	150	13.19	10	490	523	0.93	

* Not Proposed Changes ** Permissions



Recent Appeal Decisions

PINS Ref	Site Address	Proposal	Decision	Summary of Inspectors Views
Bracknell Forest Borough Council				
APP/R0335/A/08/208 0986	2A Woodridge Close and 6A The Ridgeway, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 9QY	Erection of 14no. 2 bedroom flats with associated car parking (some serving 2A Woodridge Close) accessed from Woodridge Close following demolition of 6a The Ridgeway.	Dismissed	No completed Unilateral Undertaking or S106 before the Inspector, therefore mitigation is not secured and an adverse impact on the integrity of the SPA would occur if permission were granted.
APP/R0335/A/08/207 9066	Whitegates, Brownlow Drive, Bracknell, Berks RG42 2LL	Outline application for erection of 2no. dwellings following the demolition of existing dwelling with access and layout under consideration.	Dismissed	Appellant's evidence was late and therefore not accepted. No indication that scheme would offset its impact on the SPA, therefore must be dismissed.
Elmbridge Borough Council				
None where TBH a deciding factor				
Guildford Borough Council				
Hart District Council				
None where TBH a deciding factor				
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead				
APP/T0355/A/08/206 9617	Meadow Court, London Road, Ascot. SL5 7EQ	Demolition of existing detached dwelling and erection of two pairs of semi-detached dwellings, single garages and access drives	Dismissed	The appeal site is 3.7km (linear distance) from Chobham Common. No mitigation measures are proposed as part of the scheme and it relies on Ascot Heath, Windsor Great Park and Swinley Park to provide alternatives to the SPA. Not all these areas are open at all times. Inspector considered that the mere presence of these areas is insufficient to fully mitigate the "in combination" effects on the SPA.
APP/T0355/A/08/206 7279	Ashish Niva, Sunning Avenue, Sunningdale. SL5 9PW	Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of 13 residential units with access, parking and communal space	Dismissed	Appeal site is approx 2.2km (linear distance) from the nearest part of Chobham Common. No mitigation measures are proposed as of the scheme and it relies on opens space areas such as Ascot Heath, Windsor Great Park, Swinley Forest, Kings Ride, Buttersteep and Englemere Pond SSSI. Unilateral obligation submitted by

				appellant preventing occupiers of scheme from owning cats or dogs. Inspector concluded that the presence of these other recreational areas without positive measures to attract people away from the SPA would be unlikely to prevent visits to the SPA from the appeal development. Concluded that the in combination impact of other developments could effect the integrity of the SPA.
APP/T0355/A/08/208 1592	Rustlings & Kingsland, London Road, Ascot. SL5 7EQ	Demolition of existing dwellings and construction of two blocks of 8x 2 bed apartments.	Dismissed	Appeal not dismissed on SPA grounds. The appeal site is 3.7km (linear distance) from Chobham Common. Obligation offered by appellants to preclude cat and dog ownership by occupiers of the proposed apartments. The distance by road from the appeal site to the nearest carpark serving the SPA is greater than 5km and the route passes through urban areas which suffer from car congestion. The route is not straight forward and the Inspector felt that this would be a consideration for those deciding whether to visit the SPA instead of other non SPA areas which are located closer to the appeal site. The Inspector considered that the visits to the SPA by occupiers of the appeal development would be so low (either alone or in combination with other developments) that the appeal proposal would be unlikely to have a significant effect on the SPA.
APP/T0355/A/08/207 0628	Land adjoining The Coach House, Wells Lane, Ascot. SL5 7DY	Construction of a new infill dwelling	Dismissed	The appeal site is located 3.6km (linear distance) from the nearest part of the SPA. The Inspector considered that the presence of alternatives to the SPA could reduce the likelihood of visits to the SPA by residents of the appeal development, however he felt that given the relative convenience and ease of access to car parking the SPA that it would be likely to remain attractive to the prospective residents. He also concluded that whilst the impact of a single dwelling would be small this would need to be considered in combination with other plans or proposals. Together the impact could be

				significant.
APP/T0355/A/08/208 2478	Red Gables, St Georges Lane, Ascot. SL5 7ES	Amendment to consent issued under 05/02690 for the construction of 9x two bedroom apartments and 2x one bedroom apartments	Allowed	Proposal revises the details of an application itself granted at appeal in August 2007. The appellant for the current appeal has submitted a unilateral undertaking that would prevent future residents from keeping dogs
Runnymede Borough Council				
Rushmoor Borough Council				
Surrey Heath Borough Council				
APP/D3640/A/08/207 6522	Land adjoining 38 Hillsborough Park, Camberley GU15 1HG	Erection of a four bedroom detached two storey dwelling house with integral garage.	Dismissed	The new dwelling would be an incongruous feature at the road end and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. In respect of the SPA in the absence at the time of the hearing of an Interim avoidance Strategy, Inspector concludes that, applying the in combination test, it cannot be ascertained that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA
Waverley Borough Council				
APP/R3650/A/ 08/2069530	9 Wellington Lane, Farnham	Erection of a detached dwelling (revision of WA/2007/1285).	Dismissed	S106 provided during appeal which achieved contributions to SANGS. Detrimental effect the development would harm the character and appearance of the area and on living conditions of residents.
APP/R3650/A/ 08/2070555	51 Dene Lane, Farnham	Erection of a detached dwelling.	Allowed	S106 provided at appeal. Development would not harm the character and appearance of the area (additional conditions imposed). Not been provided with any information or explanation why an SPA contribution is justified. No indication in the absence of a contribution would harm the SPA. An obligation is now in place and is an appropriate way of dealing with the matter so not considered further. Did not consider there was evidence the development would harm nature conservation

				interests on or immediately adjacent to the site.
APP/R3650/A/ 07/2057334	5 Lea Close, Badshot Lea, Farnham	Erection of an attached dwelling(as amended and amplified by letter dated 07/09/07 and plan received 07/09/07).	Allowed	S106 provided prior to appeal. Distance to SANGS raised by neighbours. Precautionary approach taken but policy had been complied with. Development would have no adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area.
APP/R3650/A/ 07/2057094	41 Frensham Road, Farnham	Outline application for the erection of a building to provide 10 2 bedroom flats with associated outbuildings, parking and landscaping following demolition of existing dwellings.	Dismissed	No S106. Proposal would appear over intensive and out of character with the surroundings. Seriously and unacceptably detract from the character and appearance of the street and locality. Being 6.4 km the site falls outside the 5.2km travel distance and 5 km linear boundary, there are larger open space areas closer to the site. Unlikely this on its own or in combination with other developments to have significant effect on the TBHSPA. Undertaking only required if appeal allowed so concerns not addressed.
APP/R3650/A/ 07/2056390	6A & 8 Wrecclesham Road, Farnham	Outline application for a mixed use scheme comprising 45 new dwellings and a 41 bed nursing home together with associated parking and landscaping.	Allowed	S106 provided prior to appeal. The proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area. The result of the travelling distance to the SPA, the measures in the miniplan and its relative inaccessibility compared to more convenient recreational facilities the proposal is unlikely, alone or cumulatively, to have an adverse effect on the SPA (9 paragraphs over almost 2 pages relate to the SPA).
APP/R3650/A/ 07/2055287	54 Waverley Lane, Farnham	Erection of a building to provide 13 apartments, together with associated works, following demolition of existing dwelling	Allowed	S106 provided during appeal. Provided that the necessary financial contribution towards the provision or enhancement of SANGS is provided, the proposals would not lead to a significant number of additional visits to the TBHSPA.
APP/R3650/A/ 07/2051044	54 Waverley Lane, Farnham	Erection of a building to provide 15 apartments following demolition of existing dwelling together with associated works (revision of WA/2006/0308)	Allowed	As above.
APP/R3650/A/ 07/2060131	24 & 26 Pottery Lane, Farnham	Erection of 10 new dwellings following demolition of existing dwellings.	Allowed	S106 adequate contribution to SANGS and meets the objection raised by NE over pressure

				on the TBHSPA. Scheme does not conflict with Policy issues raised.
APP/R3650/A/ 07/2057475	48 & 50 Shortheath Road, Farnham	Erection of 9 new dwellings and associated parking following demolition of existing buildings	Allowed	S106 provided at appeal. The financial contribution mitigates the effects on the TBHSPA. The scheme achieves a balance and does not conflict with policy.
APP/R3650/A/ 07/2063002	Tattingstone, Frensham Road, Farnham	Erection of a building to provide 10 flats together with associated car parking, bin and cycle stores.	Dismissed	S106 provided at appeal. The proposal would not have significant effect on the SPA and no assessment required. The development would harm the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of adjoining occupiers.
Woking Borough Council				
Wokingham Borough Council				
APP/X0360/A/08/207 6819	74 Ellis Road, Crowthorne	Proposed erection of one new dwelling	Dismissed	Site is 716m from SPA. Whilst extant permission for ancillary residential accommodation, there would be an increase in SPA use from this scheme. Appellant suggested a condition could be imposed requiring a contribution to Bracknell Forest Borough's improvements, but Inspector considered this was unacceptable.
APP/X0360/A/08/208 0549	25 Denton Road, Wokingham	Proposed erection of 9 residential flats with associated parking and access. Demolition of existing dwelling.	Dismissed	The availability of alternative open space sites together with the restriction on dog ownership will address impacts.