

SANG Capacity Explanatory Note

1. ENV008 - Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy Position

- 1.1 The Council provided a summary of its SANG capacity to support the submission of the Local Plan in August 2023. This was set out in the Thames Basin Heath (TBH) Special Protection Area (SPA) Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy, dated May 2022 [ENV008]. The SANG capacity presented in ENV008 is calculated taking into account all planning permissions, schemes under construction and completions requiring SANG mitigation according to the approach adopted in the TBH SPA Joint Strategic Partnership Board [JSPB] Delivery Framework published and adopted in Jan. 2009 to a base date of 31 March 2022.
- 1.2 The capacity position presented in ENV008 identifies a remaining capacity of 267 units (ENV008, table 4), equating to 641 persons (calculated using 2.4 persons per dwelling – the occupancy rate agreed at paragraph 5.9 of the TBH SPA JSPB Delivery Framework) and 5 ha (calculated using a ratio of 8 ha per 1,000 population, again the level of provision agreed at paragraph 5.9 of the TBH SPA JSPB Delivery Framework).
- 1.3 The remaining capacity calculation takes into account all extant planning permissions located within the 400 m – 5 km and 5 km – 7 km TBH SPA mitigation zone since the adoption of the TBH SPA JSPB Delivery Framework in January 2009, using an occupancy rate of 2.4 persons per dwelling and a provision rate of 8 ha over 1,000 population in accordance with the TBH SPA JSPB Delivery Framework.
- 1.4 The full detailed list of extant planning permissions, schemes under construction and completions taken into account in the Council's SANG capacity calculation are set out in the 'Completions', 'Under-construction' and 'Planning permissions' worksheets of the Council's SANG Capacity Calculations - ENV008 Position - 31 March 2022 Excel file [ENV008a] and the remaining capacity calculation is set out in the 'Remaining Capacity' worksheet.
- 1.5 ENV008 goes on to set out the SANG capacity required to mitigate the quantum of development proposed in the Local Plan, identifying 607 units proposed in the 400 m – 5 km mitigation zone requiring mitigation and 445 units in the 5 km – 7 km TBH SPA mitigation zone requiring mitigation (ENV008, table 6). The identified SANG capacity required to mitigate this quantum of development proposed in the Local Plan was calculated to equate to 1,212 persons in the 400 m – 5 km mitigation zone requiring mitigation and 143 persons in the 5 km – 7 km TBH SPA mitigation zone

requiring mitigation (ENV008, table 6). This required capacity was then broken down into 5-year periods (ENV008, table 7).

- 1.6 To calculate the persons requiring mitigation as a result of the Local Plan site allocations, the Council used a more detailed occupancy rate than the standard 2.4 occupancy rate, which assumes that the allocations will be delivered with a housing mix compliant with the mix identified in the Local Housing Need Assessment (LHNA) [HOU005]. This occupancy model includes an assumed policy compliant split of market and affordable homes and is an approach that is in accordance with the TBH SPA JSPB Delivery Framework, which states at paragraph 5.9 that an occupancy rate of 2.4 should be used unless robust local evidence demonstrates otherwise.
- 1.7 A windfall allowance of 140 units within the 400 m – 5 km mitigation zone, equating to 336 persons is then added to the site allocations requiring mitigation. The windfall allowance rate methodology is set out in table 5 and paragraph 4.25 of ENV008. It uses the standard 2.4 persons per dwelling occupancy rate to generate the persons requiring mitigation.
- 1.8 The persons requiring mitigation resulting from the Local Plan site allocations and windfall allowance was then used to calculate a land requirement using 8 ha per 1,000 population for persons in the 400 m – 5 km mitigation zone and a lower provision rate of 2 ha per 1,000 population in the 5 km – 7 km mitigation zone (ENV008, table 6 and 7). This lower provision rate is the minimum SANG provision required in the 5 km – 7 km zone. The acceptable provision rate is determined by Natural England on a case-by-case basis. Using these provisions rate of 8 ha per 1000 population in the 400 m – 5 km mitigation zone and 2 ha per 1000 population in the 5 km – 7km mitigation zone generates a need for 12.5 ha of SANG to mitigate the development proposed in the Local Plan.
- 1.9 Given the remaining capacity was calculated to be 5 ha (as detailed in para. 1.2 above), the Council identified the need to provide an additional 7.5 ha of SANG to mitigate the Local Plan. The shortfall in SANG capacity was identified to occur in the 11–15-year period of the Local Plan.

2. ENV009 - Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy Updated Position

- 2.1 The Council submitted an updated SANG capacity position in its TBH SPA Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy, submitted to the Inspector in September 2023 [ENV009]. This updated the Council's SANG capacity calculations to a base date of 31 March 2023.
- 2.2 To prepare the updated SANG capacity position for ENV009, the Council added all planning permissions granted between 01 April 2022 and 31

March 2023, updated the windfall allowance to the same base date (the windfall allowance methodology is detailed in table 5 and paragraph 4.35 of ENV009) and reviewed all permissions, schemes under construction and completions included in the SANG capacity calculations that support the 31 March 2022 position presented in ENV008. The process identified several errors that had resulted in the remaining SANG capacity presented in ENV008 being lower than was the case in reality. These included:

- A number of unimplemented planning permissions that had expired. Removing these resulted in 100 units, equating to 240 persons (using 2.4 persons per dwelling and 1.9 ha of SANG (using 8 ha per 1000 population) capacity returned to the Council. The exact permissions are listed in the 'Removed Expired PP' worksheet of SANG Capacity - changes between ENV008 and ENV009 [ENV009b].
- A number of planning permissions, schemes under construction and completions with gross units but zero or negative net units that the calculation had incorrectly identified as requiring mitigation. These do not require mitigation as set out in the TBH SPA JSPB Delivery Framework. Removing these resulted in 362 units, equating to 868 persons (using 2.4 persons per dwelling and 7 ha of SANG (using 8 ha per 1000 population) capacity returned to the Council. The exact permissions, schemes under construction and completions are detailed in the 'Removed - 0 net units' worksheet of SANG Capacity - changes between ENV008 and ENV009 [ENV009b].
- Three consented schemes in the 5-km – 7km mitigation zone of more than 50 units incorrectly identified as requiring mitigation at 100% of the proposed units. These should be mitigated at a 25% rate as set out in ENV008 and ENV009. Correcting these resulted in 130 units, equating to 312 persons (using 2.4 persons per dwelling and 2.5 ha of SANG (using 8 ha per 1000 population) capacity returned to the Council. The exact permissions, schemes under construction and completions are detailed in the 'Corrected units' worksheet of SANG Capacity - changes between ENV008 and ENV009 [ENV009b].

2.3 Removing the errors outlined above, adding all planning permissions granted between 01 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 resulted in an increase to the Council's remaining SANG capacity position. The remaining capacity was found to be 847 units (ENV009, table 4), equating to 2032 persons (using 2.4 persons per dwelling) and 16.3 ha (using a ratio of 8 ha per 1,000 population). This represents 580 units, 1,392 people and 11.1 ha more existing SANG capacity than was originally presented in ENV008.

2.4 The full detailed list of extant planning permissions, schemes under construction and completions taken into account, as well as the updated

windfall allowance that informed the updated SANG capacity position set out in ENV009 are set out in the 'Completions', 'Under-construction' and 'Planning permissions' worksheets of the Council's SANG Capacity Calculations - ENV009 Position - 31 March 2023 Excel file [ENV009a]. The remaining capacity calculation is set out in the 'Remaining Capacity' worksheet of the same Excel file.

- 2.5 In addition, as set out in the bullet points under paragraph 2.2 above, a full list of all changes to the extant planning permissions, schemes under construction and completions taken into account that resulted in the different remaining capacity positions presented in ENV008 and ENV009 are included in SANG Capacity - changes between ENV008 and ENV009 [ENV009b].
- 2.6 The Council also reviewed the SANG capacity requirement calculations for the Local Plan presented in ENV008 and found some minor errors in the number of units and persons calculated as requiring mitigation in the 400 m to 5 km zone and 5 km – 7 km mitigation zones that again were corrected. Correcting these resulted in a requirement for 12.9 ha SANG rather, an increase of 0.4 ha to the 12.5 ha of SANG required to mitigate the Local Plan in the position presented in ENV008. The SANG requirement presented in ENV009 therefore represents a more conservative position than that presented in ENV008.
- 2.7 Again, the Council used a more detailed occupancy model than the standard 2.4 persons per dwelling. This assumed a policy compliant mix, including a ratio of 70% market homes to 30% affordable homes. Whilst the Local Plan proposes a variable threshold for affordable housing depending on the size of a scheme, with schemes of 1 – 9 units required to provide a contribution equivalent to 20% of the units proposed. The occupancy model for affordable homes generates a bigger mitigation requirement than market homes due to the difference in the mix of sizes in the Council's identified housing mix need for affordable housing and market homes, which is set out in the Local Housing Need Assessment [HOU005]. As such, assuming an affordable housing component of 30% of the schemes represents a more conservative position than assuming the schemes will be 100% market or a lower proportion of affordable housing.
- 2.8 The changes to the calculation of the Council's remaining capacity position and the SANG requirement needed to mitigate the quantum of development proposed in the Local Plan set out in ENV008 resulted in the Council identifying that it had enough capacity to fully mitigate the development proposed in the Local Plan in ENV009, with 3.4 ha of remaining capacity.

3. ENV009c - Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy Latest Position

- 3.1 As the SANG capacity position is constantly changing, the Council has submitted a further updated SANG capacity position within SANG Capacity Calculations - Latest Position - 31 Dec. 2023 [ENV009c]. This updates the SANG capacity calculations to a base date of 31 December 2023, adding all planning permissions requiring mitigation between 01 April 2023 and 31 December 2023; removing unimplemented permissions that have expired and removes some identified duplicates. All these changes are fully detailed within the Council's SANG Capacity - changes between ENV009 and latest position [ENV009d].
- 3.2 When reviewing the March 2022 (i.e. the ENV008 position) and March 2023 (i.e. the ENV009 position) SANG capacity positions detailed above, the Council identified that 49 units of development requiring SANG mitigation had been incorrectly removed from the capacity position to 31 March 2023 set out in ENV009. These have therefore been added back into the latest capacity position presented in ENV009c. A full list of the permissions affected is set out in the 'Incorrectly Removed' worksheet of ENV009b and the worksheet of the same name in ENV009d.
- 3.3 **The latest SANG capacity position calculation results in a remaining capacity of 647 units, equating to 1,552 persons and 12.4 ha.** After taking account of the Local Plan site allocations and a windfall allowance (which have not been amended and are the same as the position presented in ENV009 and ENV009a), the Council is once again in a position where it does not have enough existing SANG capacity to fully mitigate the quantum of development proposed in the Local Plan with -0.4 ha of remaining SANG capacity after fully mitigating the Local Plan. The shortfall again occurs in the 11–15-year period of the Plan.
- 3.4 As detailed in the Council's Stage 1 Pre-hearing Statement and explained in the hearing session on 27 February, the Council has agreed to purchase land at Field Common Farm for use as a SANG. This will provide an additional 16 ha of SANG and will ensure the Council can provide the additional 0.4 ha of SANG needed to fully mitigate the Local Plan and enough additional SANG land to mitigate development that comes forward beyond the Plan Period. The Council has submitted the latest draft of the heads of terms for the purchase of land at Field Common Farm for the Inspector's review [ENV019].

Summary Table

Remaining SANG capacity (ha)*	SANG capacity calculation Base date	Evidence base document ref.	Corresponding excel file
-7.5	31 March 2022	ENV008	ENV008a
3.4	31 March 2023	ENV009	ENV009a ENV009b - for diff between ENV008/8a and ENV009/9a
-0.4	31 December 2023	N/A	ENV009c ENV009d - for diff between ENV009/ENV009a and ENV009c

** After taking account of all planning permissions since the adoption of the JSPB Delivery Framework in Jan. 2009 and the quantum of development proposed in the site allocations in the submitted Local Plan.*