

Independent Examination of the Cranbrook Local Plan

MATTERS AND QUESTIONS

RESPONSE by NATURAL ENGLAND

7 January 2020

There are no outstanding issues between the Council and Natural England as set out in a statement of common ground between the two parties (Natural England response to matter 2 annex 1).

Where the Inspector has raised specific questions relating to matters that are now resolved (as set out in the statement of common ground) these are addressed under matter 2 (Q31), matter 7 (Q115) and matter 16 (Q195, Q196 & Q198).

The Inspectors questions addressed in this document are shown in bold.

Matter 7 – The Grange Expansion Area

Issue 10:

Is the Grange Allocation (Policy CB5) positively prepared, justified and effective?

Q115. Is the allocation of Percy Wakley Woods as part of the SANG justified and effective?

In response to the Regulation 19 consultation on the Plan Natural England (letter dated 16 April 2019) questioned whether the SANG allocation south of Grange offered satisfactory space for a peripheral walk of at least 2.5 km. Natural England consider that for SANG provision to be adequate it should be possible to complete a circular walk of 2.3 – 2.5 km around the SANG. This has been the advice provided to other planning authorities¹.

Natural England recognise that the SANG shown in appendix 1 of the delivery plan enables a peripheral walk that exceeds the required distance (a walk following closely the outer boundary of the SANG offers a walk of some 3km). However the SANG provision identified in the submission Plan is relatively narrow in places and 'indented' in shape. The inclusion of the additional piece of land (Percy Wakley Wood) would give the option of a more satisfactory and appealing circular walk and would enhance the existing provision. This would therefore offer, overall, a more suitable and attractive SANG.

Natural England support inclusion of Percy Wakley wood within the SANG provision as set out in the statement of common ground.

¹ Guildford Borough Council, Thames Basin Heaths SPA avoidance strategy 2017, SPD July 2017. Appendix 4 – Natural England guidelines for the creation of SANG & Appendix 3 – Natural England response. [Special Protection Area \(SPA\) - Guildford Borough Council](#)