

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)

Guidance

Introduction

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) is the name given to greenspace that is of a quality and type suitable to be used as mitigation to offset the impact of new development on the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA). The purpose of SANGs is to provide alternative greenspace to attract visitors away from the Ashdown Forest SPA.

A SANG site can be created from:

- Existing open space with existing public access, which could be enhanced to become a SANG site.
- Existing open space of SANG quality with no existing public access, which could be made fully accessible to the public.
- Other land which could be converted to a SANG site.

SANG Criteria

The assessment of the suitability of a site as SANG is made against a number of criteria. Essential features are those that will be required in order for land to become a SANG site and additional features are those that can be implemented to enhance a SANG site.

Essential Features

Provision of these features will be required in order for the site to fulfil its purpose as a SANG.

Landscape

- Natural greenspace with areas of open (non-wooded) countryside and areas of dense and scattered trees and scrubs. Land should preferably not be entirely flat.
- A range of habitats should be provided for users to experience if the SANG site is larger than 12Ha.
- Perceived as semi-natural with few buildings or artificial structures except in the immediate vicinity of car parks.
- Perceived as safe – no tree or scrub cover along parts of the walking routes.
- No unpleasant intrusions (e.g. sewage treatment smells etc).

Car Parking and Access

- Parking should be provided on all SANG sites larger than 4Ha (unless the site is intended for use of developments within 400m only). The amount of car parking space should be adequate, determined by the anticipated use of the site and reflect the visitor catchment.
- Car parks must be easily and safely accessible by car and should be clearly sign posted.

- Safe access route on foot from the nearest car park and/or footpath(s) to the SANG.

Walks

- It should be possible to complete a circular walk of 2.3 - 2.5km, which starts and finishes at the car park (if the site is larger than 4Ha). It is desirable to have a choice of routes available, extending up to 5km in length.
- Paths must be easily used and well maintained, but most should remain unsurfaced to avoid the site becoming too urban in feel.

Additional Features

Provision of additional features on the SANG site will increase its attractiveness to visitors and enhance their experience. These features could be added to the SANG site.

Landscape

- Focal point such as a view point, monument or feature of interest within the SANG.

Access

- The SANG site should be clearly sign posted or advertised in some way.
- It is desirable for access points to have signage outlining the layout of the SANG and the routes available to visitors.
- It is desirable for leaflets to be made available at entrance points and car parks.

Walks

- Visually-sensitive way-markers and some benches are acceptable.