

CABINET

**COUNCILLOR MARTIN TENNANT
MAJOR PROJECTS AND PROPERTY
PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

5 FEBRUARY 2019

REPORT NO. ED1901

KEY DECISION: NO

SOUTHWOOD SANG

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

This paper provides a progress report on the conversion of the former Southwood golf course to a major new parkland and to deliver Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the submission of planning applications as necessary to enable the conversion of the site to an operational SANG
2. Note the contents of the report

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This paper provides a progress report for the conversion of the former Southwood golf course to a major new parkland and enables the delivery of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. In [December 2017](#), Cabinet resolved to close Southwood Golf Course, at the end of the currently contracted period, to provide SANG to mitigate the potential recreational impact of net new residential development on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.
- 2.2. In October 2018, the operators of the golf course, Mack Trading, went into voluntary liquidation, and ceased trading prior to the end of their contract. The golf course closed and the site transferred back to the Council.
- 2.3. Since then, officers have been working with Natural England to bring forward plans to convert the site to parkland and identify complementary additional uses for the site.

3. **DETAIL**

Initial Requirements to Establish the SANG

- 3.1. To enable the new SANG to be opened as soon as practicable, a phased approach has been adopted to the conversion of the site. The initial phase focusses on the area to the west of Ively Road, as shown in Appendix 1, while subsequent phases will bring forward the remainder of the site, develop enhancements and propose complementary uses. These phases will be the subject of future reports to Cabinet.
- 3.2. For the first phase of development, Natural England has confirmed that the following are required:
 - 2.4km “circular” walking route
 - Fencing along the boundary with Ively Road (approx. 160m)
 - Interim signage to explain the purpose of the SANG and its ecological/recreational value
 - Car parking
 - Interim Management plan to guide the continued implementation of the SANG to deliver its full capacity
- 3.3. While these requirements can largely be accommodated on the site, further consideration of the car parking options is required. Although there is a car park adjacent to the former golf club house, highway works to incorporate road safety measures will be required in Ively Road to make it suitable for users of the new parkland. It is likely that these measures will take time to deliver and as such will not be available to enable the opening of the parkland as soon as possible.
- 3.4. An alternative approach to parking has therefore been developed which will, subject to planning permission, enable the delivery of Phase 1 of the new SANG. Natural England has confirmed that it would accept the development of a new car park accessed from Kennels Lane as shown in Appendix 2. The car park would be made of natural materials and would provide parking for 27 cars, plus 3 accessible spaces.
- 3.5. To enable the works to progress, planning permission is required for the car park. As requirements for the site continue to be developed, it may prove necessary for further planning applications to be submitted, and Cabinet is therefore asked to agree to the submission of planning applications as necessary to deliver the first phase of this project.

Project milestones

- 3.6. Subject to Cabinet’s approval to the submission of a planning application for the implementation of the new car park, the following milestones for the delivery of Phase 1 of the project have been identified:
 - April 19 – Planning application determined
 - May 19 – Works start

- June - July 19 – works carried out
- End July 19 – Phase 1 of park opens

4. **IMPLICATIONS**

Risks

- 4.1. Capacity at the Council's three existing SANG sites¹ is exhausted through the implementation of planning permissions, or committed schemes with SANG allocations, for residential development. Although the Council signed a memorandum of agreement with Hart District Council to secure access to mitigation for 3,600 people (approximately 1,500 dwellings) from SANG sites in Hart, to mitigate the impact of development within Rushmoor, the 5km catchments for these SANGs do not cover the whole of Rushmoor. Without the decision to deliver a SANG at Southwood, the Local Plan would have been found unsound and the Council would not have been able to bring forward its regeneration ambitions for Aldershot.

Legal Implications

- 4.2. There are no additional legal implications arising from this report.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.3. The costs for the initial set up of the SANG will be met from capital budgets that form part of Council's budget for 2019/20. As the works proposed in this report relate to the set-up and management of the SANG, and their principle has been agreed with Natural England in the management plan for the site, developer contributions can be collected to cover these costs.

Equalities Impact Implications

- 4.4. There are no additional equalities impact implications arising from this report.

5. **CONCLUSION**

- 5.1. Cabinet is requested to agree to the submission of planning applications as required to bring forward the conversion of the former Southwood Golf Course to a major new parkland and SANG.

¹ Southwood Woodlands, Hawley Meadows/Blackwater Park and Rowhill Local Nature Reserve

Background documents:

[Cabinet report – Southwood Golf Course 12 December 2017](#)

Contact details:

Report Authors:

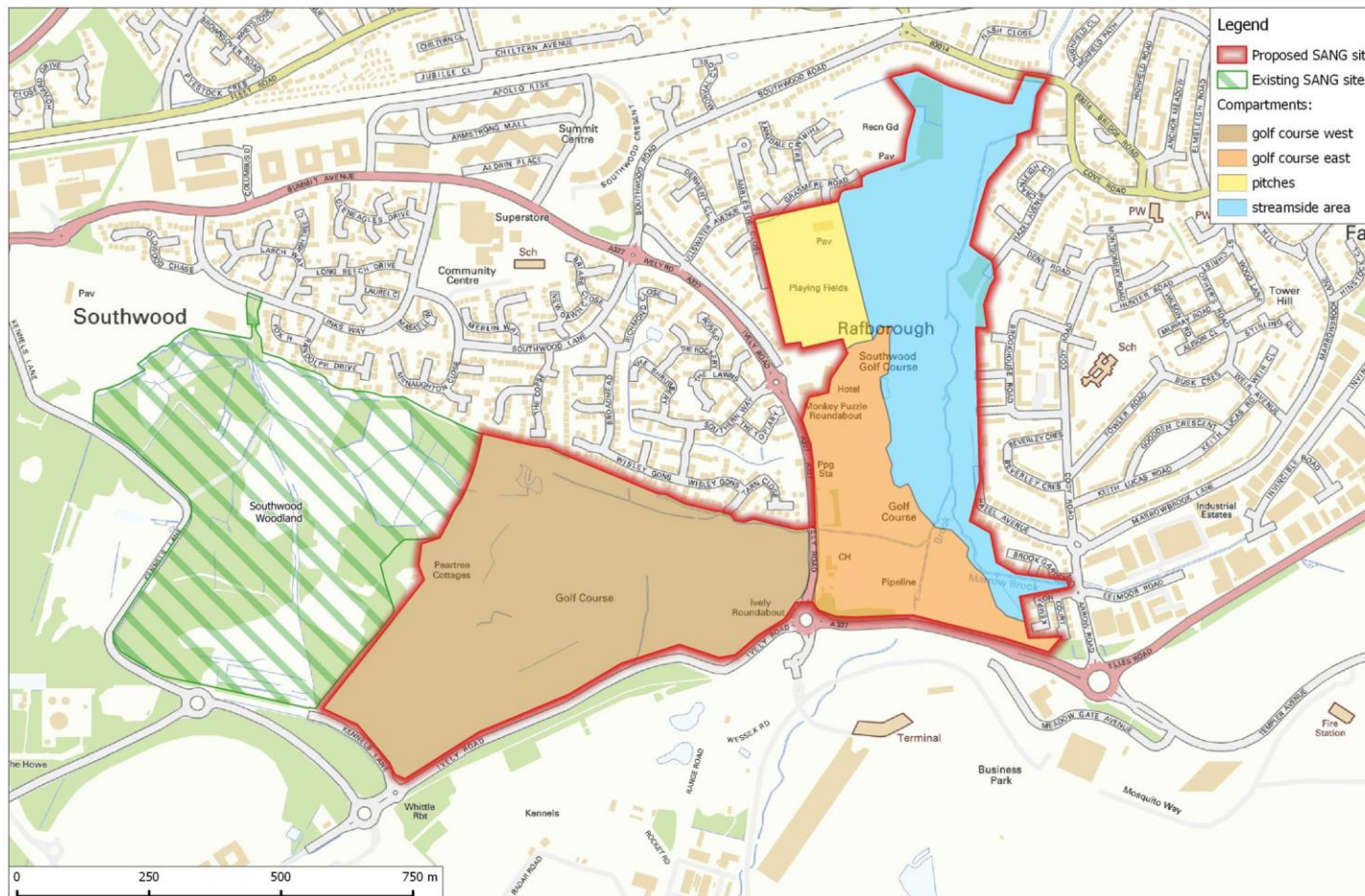
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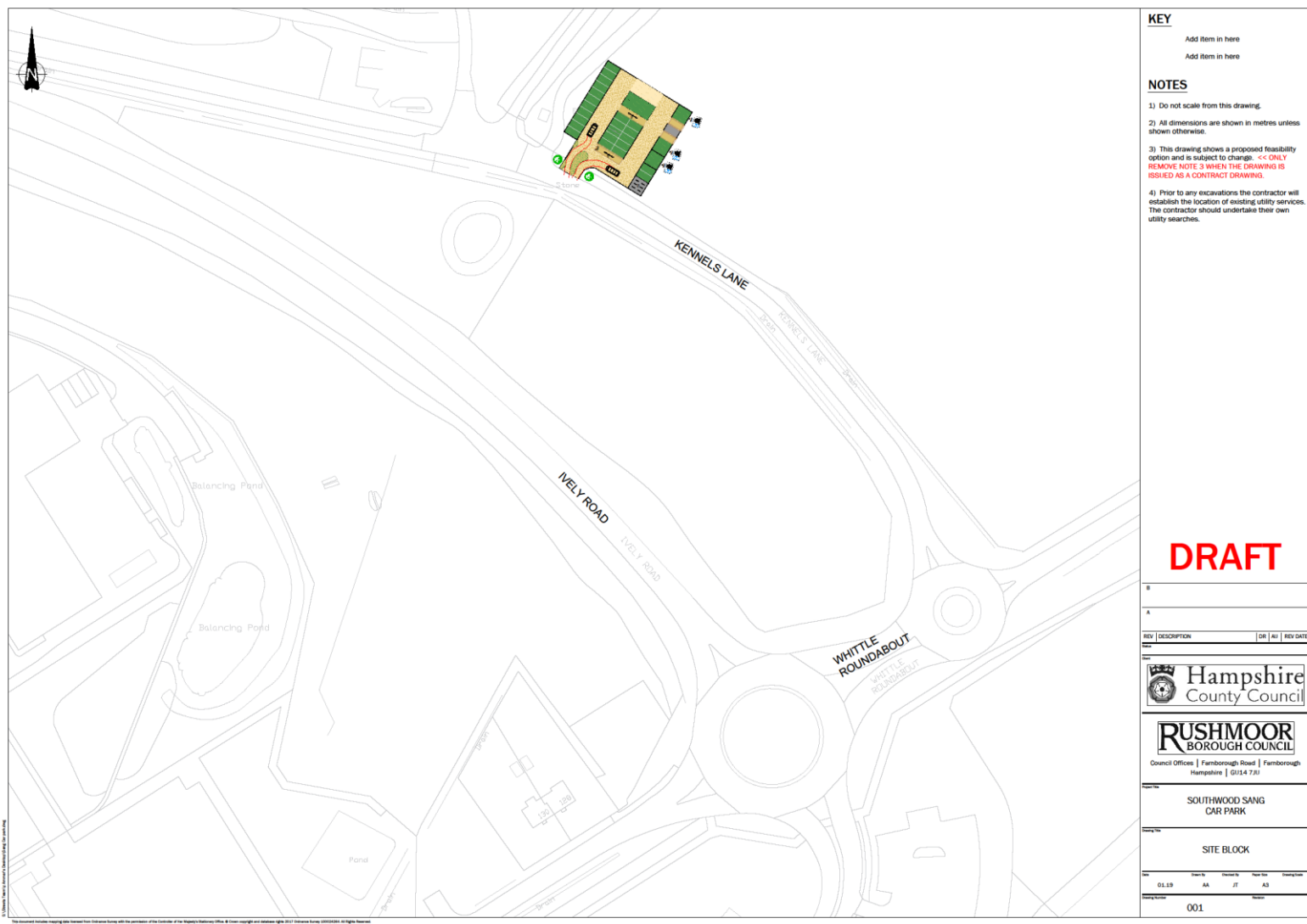
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Map xx: Local context and compartments of the proposed SANG site.



Proposed location of car park





KEY

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NOTES

- 1) Do not scale from this drawing.
- 2) All dimensions are shown in metres unless shown otherwise.
- 3) This drawing shows a proposed feasibility option and is subject to change. << ONLY REMOVE NOTE 3 WHEN THE DRAWING IS ISSUED AS A CONTRACT DRAWING.
- 4) Prior to any excavations the contractor will establish the location of existing utility services. The contractor should undertake their own utility searches.

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REV	DESCRIPTION DR AU REV DATE



**SOUTHWOOD SANG
CAR PARK**

SITE BLOCK

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