

National Planning Policy Framework - A glossary of expressions

Following the launch of the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012 the following provides a comprehensive glossary of planning terms and expressions that will have a bearing on how planning applications are now considered by Local Planning Authorities. *(If you are looking for a specific expression try pressing "Ctrl + F" to search this page)*

Affordable housing:

Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.

Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as ?low cost market? housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

Aged or veteran tree:

A tree which, because of its great age, size or condition is of exceptional value for wildlife, in the landscape, or culturally. Air Quality Management Areas: Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.

Ancient woodland:

An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD.

Archaeological interest:

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

Article 4 direction:

A direction which withdraws automatic planning permission granted by the General Permitted Development Order.

Best and most versatile agricultural land:

Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification

Birds and Habitats Directives:

European Directives to conserve natural habitats and wild fauna and flora.

Climate change adaptation:

Adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic factors or their effects, including from changes in rainfall and rising temperatures, which moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

Climate change mitigation:

Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Coastal Change Management Area:

An area identified in Local Plans as likely to be affected by coastal change (physical change to the shoreline through erosion, coastal landslip, permanent inundation or coastal accretion).

Conservation (for heritage policy):

The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Community Forest:

An area identified through the England Community Forest Programme to revitalise countryside and green space in and around major conurbations.

Community Infrastructure Levy:

A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

Community Right to Build Order:

An Order made by the local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a site-specific development proposal or classes of development.

Competent person (to prepare site investigation information):

A person with a recognised relevant qualification, sufficient experience in dealing with the type(s) of pollution or land instability, and membership of a relevant professional organisation.

Decentralised energy:

Local renewable energy and local low-carbon energy usually but not always on a relatively small scale encompassing a diverse range of technologies.

Designated heritage asset:

A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Development plan:

This includes adopted Local Plans, neighbourhood plans and the London Plan, and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. (Regional strategies remain part of the development plan until they are abolished by Order using powers taken in the Localism Act. It is the government's clear policy intention to revoke the regional strategies outside of London, subject to the outcome of the environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken.)

Economic development:

Development, including those within the B Use Classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses (but excluding housing development)

Ecological networks:

These link sites of biodiversity importance.

Ecosystem services:

The benefits people obtain from ecosystems such as, food, water, flood and disease control and recreation.

Edge of centre:

For retail purposes, a location that is well connected and up to 300 metres of the primary shopping area.

For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of

edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.

Environmental Impact Assessment:

A procedure to be followed for certain types of project to ensure that decisions are made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.

European site:

This includes candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas, and is defined in regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

Geodiversity:

The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

Green infrastructure:

A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Heritage asset:

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Heritage Coast:

Areas of undeveloped coastline which are managed to conserve their natural beauty and, where appropriate, to improve accessibility for visitors.

Historic environment:

All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Historic environment record:

Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.

Inclusive design:

Designing the built environment, including buildings and their surrounding spaces, to ensure that they can be accessed and used by everyone.

Instrumentation operated in the national interest:

Includes meteorological and climate monitoring installations, satellite and radio communication, defence and national security sites and magnetic calibration facilities operated by or on behalf of the Government, delegated authorities or for defence purposes

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity:

All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

Local Development Order:

An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

Local Enterprise Partnership:

A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.

Local Nature Partnership:

A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, established for the purpose of protecting and improving the natural environment in an area and the benefits derived from it.

Local planning authority:

The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority apply to the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority and the Greater London Authority, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

Local Plan:

The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be development plan documents, form part of the Local Plan. The term includes old policies which have been saved under the 2004 Act.

Main town centre uses:

Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

Major Hazards:

Major hazard installations and pipelines, licensed explosive sites and nuclear installations, around which Health and Safety Executive (and Office for Nuclear Regulation) consultation distances to mitigate the consequences to public safety of major accidents may apply.

Minerals of local and national importance:

Minerals which are necessary to meet society's needs, including aggregates, brickclay (especially Etruria Marl and fireclay), silica sand (including high grade silica sands), cement raw materials, gypsum, salt, fluorspar, shallow and deep-mined coal, oil and gas (including hydrocarbons), tungsten, kaolin, ball clay, potash and local minerals of importance to heritage assets and local distinctiveness

Mineral Safeguarding Area:

An area designated by Minerals Planning Authorities which covers known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.

National Trails:

Long distance routes for walking, cycling and horse riding.

Nature Improvement Areas:

Inter-connected networks of wildlife habitats intended to re-establish thriving wildlife populations and help species respond to the challenges of climate change.

Neighbourhood Development Order:

An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) through which Parish Councils and neighbourhood forums can grant planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

Neighbourhood plans:

A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Older people:

People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose

housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

Open space:

All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Original building:

A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

Out of centre:

A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

Out of town:

A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.

People with disabilities:

People have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These persons include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs.

Planning condition:

A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning obligation:

A legally enforceable obligation entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Playing field:

The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010.

Pollution:

Anything that affects the quality of land, air, water or soils, which might lead to an adverse impact on human health, the natural environment or general amenity. Pollution can arise from a range of emissions, including smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, odour, noise and light.

Previously developed land:

Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Primary shopping area:

Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).

Primary and secondary frontages:

Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.

Priority habitats and species:

Species and Habitats of Principle Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Ramsar sites:

Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.

Renewable and low carbon energy:

Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment ? from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Rural exception sites:

Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority?s discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding

Safeguarding zone:

An area defined in Circular 01/03: Safeguarding aerodromes, technical sites and military explosives storage areas, to safeguard such sites.

Setting of a heritage asset:

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Shoreline Management Plans:

A plan providing a large-scale assessment of the risk to people and to the developed, historic and natural environment associated with coastal processes.

Significance (for heritage policy):

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Special Areas of Conservation:

Areas given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive, which is transposed into UK law by the Habitats and Conservation of Species Regulations 2010.

Special Protection Areas:

Areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within European Union countries. They are European designated sites, classified under the Birds Directive.

Site investigation information:

Includes a risk assessment of land potentially affected by contamination, or ground stability and slope stability reports, as appropriate. All investigations of land potentially affected by contamination should be carried out in accordance with established procedures (such as BS10175 (2001) Code of Practice for the Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites). The minimum information that should be provided by an applicant is the report of a desk study and site reconnaissance.

Site of Special Scientific Interest:

Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Stepping stones:

Pockets of habitat that, while not necessarily connected, facilitate the movement of species across otherwise inhospitable landscapes.

Strategic Environmental Assessment:

A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Supplementary planning documents:

Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan

Sustainable transport modes:

Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Town centre:

Area defined on the local authority's proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.

Transport assessment:

A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies what measures will be required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

Transport statement:

A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising out of development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.

Travel plan:

A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives through action and is articulated in a document that is regularly reviewed.

Wildlife corridor:

Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.

Windfall sites:

Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.

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