



**HOUSING, ENABLING and PLANNING POLICY
GLOSSARY of TECHNICAL TERMS.**

AUGUST 2013



Introduction - The planning policy, housing and housing enabling services all make use of a range of technical terms arising from their respective areas of legislation, some of which are most frequently referred to by their initials.

This glossary sets out definitions of a range of these technical terms which should prove helpful particularly to those participating in the preparation of policy and the delivery of these services, for stakeholder partners and also for service users.

Since the General Election in May 2010 the government has been engaged in a comprehensive review of the statutory planning system the centrepiece of which is the Localism Act 2011. This is being implemented through revised and new Regulations and the condensing of all existing national planning guidance into a single, concise National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012. The definitions below reflect the current (4.1.12) position on these changes.

NB: A significant change in planning policy terminology which it is important to note is that the titles: "Local Development Framework" and "Core Strategy" are being phased out to be replaced by "Local Plan" which is not precisely analogous to either (see definition below).

AA - Appropriate Assessment - Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora – the 'Habitats Directive' - provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance (ie: Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas). Any plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect on a European designated wildlife site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. (see also HRA).

Adoption - The final process of making the DPD a statutory document following Examination, receipt of the Inspector's report and implementation of its recommendations through a resolution of the Council.

Adopted Proposals Map - The map showing areas designated for protection because of their landscape, nature conservation or heritage value, and areas at risk from flooding. Also sites allocated for particular land uses and development proposals included in any adopted DPD, and identifying areas to which specific policies apply. Minerals and waste allocations or safeguarding areas included in an adopted DPD prepared by Somerset County Council will also be shown. Inset maps may be provided for areas where the amount of detailed information requires a larger scale base map in the interests of clarity. The initial Adopted Proposals Map is the adopted 2006 West Somerset District Local Plan proposals map with any amendments arising from the final Local Plan to 2032.

AH – Affordable Housing – term used for any form of housing, rented or ownership, which is delivered for those people who are unable to access housing within the market, usually but not exclusively for financial reasons. This would include the new affordable rent model (80% of market rent) championed by central government as well as traditional social rent, shared equity and low cost home ownership models.

Affordable Housing bidding process 2011 to 2015 – This is the term used by the HCA to describe how they engage with stakeholders. The engagement is part of the LIP process and takes a more programmed and strategic approach to the subject of bidding for grant and funding of schemes.

AHG – Affordable Housing Group – This is the group of internal and external members set up to monitor and push forward delivery of Affordable Housing.

ARM – Affordable Rent Model – this is the model, introduced by Central Government, for delivering affordable housing whilst maximizing the amount of rental income for a housing provider in order to increase new delivery. Rents will be set at 80% of the market value at the time a property is allocated.

AMR - Annual Monitoring Report – The statutory requirement to prepare and submit a Local Development Framework AMR to the Secretary of State has been removed by the Localism Act, however the Council will continue to prepare an AMR in order to monitor and review the implementation of statutory development plan policies within the Local Planning Authority area. The AMR will become increasingly important with the emergence of Neighbourhood Development Plans. AMRs cover a “1st April to 31st March” year.

CBL – Choice Based Lettings – Allocation mechanism of the Homefinder System.

Code – Code for Sustainable Homes – Introduced in April 2007 these are the sustainability standards imposed on affordable housing. They are graded Code 1 to Code 6 (zero carbon). Currently any affordable housing scheme which requires Government Subsidy via the HCA must meet Code 3. These standards are in excess of those required by Building Regulations and are not mandatory on private sector housing. The intention to increase the minimum standard to Code 4 for affordable housing from 1st April 2010 was postponed due to the poor housing market conditions. There are plans to integrate the two in the drive to make all new housing zero carbon by 2016. The Code for Sustainable Homes is currently under review.

Concealed Households - A concealed household is someone living within another person’s household wanting to move to their own accommodation and form a separate household, for example adult children living with their parents.

Core Strategy – This title is not used in the post-Localism Act 2011 development planning system. The main development plan policy document for the District is now to be known once more as the Local Plan (see also Local Plan - new).

Development Plan – the term for the suite of documents containing statutory planning policy applying to the plan area – RPG10, the Somerset and Exmoor National park Joint Structure Plan Review and the saved West Somerset District Local Plan of 2006. These are to be replaced in the revised development planning system by new style Local Plans and – where applicable - Neighbourhood Development Plans.

Development Register – this is the document which contains details of all the affordable housing schemes within West Somerset from very early stages through to completion. It is updated constantly by the Housing Enabler and is monitored bi-monthly by the Affordable Housing Group.

Discounted Purchase – this refers to affordable homes which are sold at a discount. This is usually done either by private developers or the Council under its Affordable Housing Policy. There is no rental element to this form of purchase.

DPD - Development Plan Document – Planning policy documents containing statutory planning policies and proposals for the District as a whole or specific locations within the District (including the West Somerset Local Plan to 2032). Their policies are subject to sustainability appraisal and to independent examination prior to adoption. DPDs have statutory status once adopted, their policies are used in the determination of planning applications.

Employment Land Review - An important objective of the local planning system is to deliver an appropriate local balance between competing uses for land, particularly housing and employment. The Employment Land Review plays an important role in achieving this balance and forms part of the Local Plan 'evidence-base'. Local Authorities are required to review their portfolios of employment sites and apply up to date and sensible criteria in terms of sustainable development and market realism.

ENPA – The Exmoor National Park Authority, which is the local planning authority for the parts of West Somerset District lying within the Exmoor National Park.

Evidence Base – The body of documents, research and information that assists in the identification of issues and options, supports and informs the drafting and justification of LDD policies and helps to facilitate the monitoring of policy implementation. Evidence base studies have to be updated periodically in order to remain effective.

Examination – In order to become an adopted part of the statutory development plan, DPDs must be found sound having been examined by an appointed planning Inspector. The Examination is concerned with legal compliance and the soundness of the document as a whole. The Examination is not concerned with hearing objections to the DPD's proposals, rather submissions as to whether the DPD's proposals are sound or not.

Flood Risk Assessment - A study to assess the risk to an area or site from flooding, now and in the future, and to assess the impact that any changes or development on the site or area will have on flood risk to the site and elsewhere. It may also identify, particularly at more local levels, how to manage those changes to ensure that flood risk is not increased.

Flood Zone Maps - The Environment Agency prepare Flood Zone maps which show the annual probability of a flooding event in a given area. There are three categories of flood zone: -

- Flood Zone 1 (low probability) - land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding in any year;
- Flood Zone 2 (medium probability) – land assessed as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding, or between a 1 in 200 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of sea flooding in any year, and
- Flood Zone 3 (high probability) – is divided into two sub-categories:
 - Flood Zone 3a: land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding or a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of flooding from the sea in any year, and;

- Flood Zone 3b (The functional floodplain) - land having a similar probability of flooding as for Flood Zone 3a, but where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood.

The SFRA should identify the distinction between Flood Zones 3a and 3b.

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/37837.aspx>

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.¹

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningtransportlocalgov/greeninfrastructure/default.aspx>

Greenfield site - Land upon which no previous development has taken place. Includes agricultural land.

HA - Housing Association – Also known as Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Registered Providers (RPs).

HRA – Habitat Regulations Assessment

Habitat Regulations Assessment is the process by which it is determined whether an Appropriate Assessment is necessary in relation to a proposed plan or project. (See also Appropriate Assessment above).

HCA – Homes and Communities Agency – The National housing and regeneration delivery agency for England. They currently administer the National Affordable Housing Programme and the funding allocated for affordable housing.

HMA – Housing Market Area – Geographical expression referring to an area where common housing market conditions exist. They can be quite dynamic in terms of their extent and do not necessarily conform to administrative boundaries and can be very localised or, strategic (SHMA). West Somerset local authority area has been identified in the Northern Peninsula SHMA as having three different types of housing market; Exmoor and Downland Fringe, Coastal – Lower Value and, Dispersed Rural.

Homebuy – This describes the suite of options available through Government funded low cost home ownership schemes. The Government schemes have a much higher income threshold than the West Somerset Council Affordable Housing Policy (£60,000 compared with £35,000) and are mainly aimed at Key Workers. The most likely to be available in West Somerset is Newbuild Homebuy – formerly referred to as shared ownership or shared equity.

Housing Needs Survey - This provides data on housing need at a District-wide level. Serves to demonstrate the need for affordable housing within various parts of the area. A survey was included as part of the Taunton and South Somerset SHMA.

Housing Trajectory - The housing trajectory is a diagram providing a graphic representation of the rate of implementation of residential development against strategic housing requirements for the area and the estimated future rate.

¹ NPPF March 2012 Annex 2, Glossary.

Intermediate Housing – This describes options available for people who fall between needing affordable housing and being able to access market housing. It can refer to rented or home ownership and is usually pitched at the level of 80% of market housing.

LCHO – Low Cost Home Ownership – This is the umbrella under which all of the different ways of producing affordable homes for sale sit.

LDDs - Local Development Documents – A generic term for the statutory and non statutory policy documents which make up the LDF or new Local Plan (ie: DPDs and SPDs).

LDF - Local Development Framework – The former title given in the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act to a range of documents which together made up the district council level element of the development plan and various supplementary documents. Under the development planning system as modified by the Localism Act 2011, the Local Plan is once again be the term for the district level statutory development planning document.

LDS - Local Development Scheme – The programme management document that sets out the roles and purposes of the LDF documents to be prepared and which identifies time periods for their preparation, adoption and review.

LHA – Local Housing Allowance – Monthly assessed payment for rental charges formerly known as Housing Benefit.

LIP – Local Investment Plan – Plan put together by the five Authorities in Somerset as a strategy delivery document for the period 2010 to 2015. It includes programmes for Urban, Market Town and Rural schemes and includes housing (including affordable), regenerations projects, strategic site development and infrastructure projects.

Local Plan (new) - The traditional title for the district's statutory development plan has been resurrected to replace the terms 'Local Development Framework' and 'Core Strategy'. However, what is now proposed is not exactly the same as either the LDF or the Core Strategy. The new style local plan is more all-embracing than the Core Strategy, with a greater scope and a smaller number of documents than the LDF. The Local Plan once adopted will be a statutory development plan document setting out the spatial vision and strategic objectives for the planning of the area. It must be adopted before any other DPD can be submitted for examination.

Local Plan (old) - The old West Somerset District Local Plan of April 2006 remains part of the statutory development plan for the area, most of its policies having been saved for use until they are replaced by the adoption of new West Somerset Local Plan to 2032.

MAP – Multi Agency Panel – Internal and external agency intervention for individual challenging cases.

MARAC – Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committee – for discussion of vulnerable cases across Taunton Deane and West Somerset.

MIP – Mortgagee in Possession – A clause which enables a Lender to sell a property without regard to local connection and or income restrictions should they need to re-possess it.

NAHP – National Affordable Housing Programme – Programme of homes to be delivered with Government Grant bid for by developers.

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) – The government’s condensed revision of almost all the previously existing government planning guidance in a single new guidance document.

New Homes Bonus – A cash incentive paid by central government to local planning authorities comprising matched funding of council tax raised on each new home for a six year period (based on national averages of council tax bands).

PD List – Priority Delivery List – adopted by the AHG annually and updated using housing needs information this forms the basis of the areas where enabling work will be focused.

Planning Obligations – An agreement (legal and/or voluntarily entered into by a developer) covering non-planning matters that could not be dealt with through conditions on a planning permission. They are entered into with the developers and set out any affordable housing provision (on or off site), recreation contributions, and any other agreed matters. Also referred to as Planning Obligations agreement.

POG – Planning Obligations Group – An officer group including Member Portfolio Holder representation which monitors Section 106 Agreements, monies available and ensures spend within Council priorities.

Previously Developed Land (PDL) – 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.²

Programme Officer – The administrator for the DPD / Local Plan Examination process. Arranges the Examination sessions so that the appropriate people are present at the right times to discuss the matters identified by the Inspector. Assists the Inspector generally and although funded by the Council is independent of it.

Publication – The formal publication of a DPD allows for representations from those parties casting doubt on any aspects of its soundness prior to formal submission to the Secretary of State. It is designed as an opportunity to fine tune the document prior to submission if there are serious flaws in it which would prevent it from being found sound

² NPPF Annex 2 Glossary.

on examination. The Council should only publish a DPD which it believes to be sound and properly justified by evidence.

RHP – Rural Housing Project – Project works across North Devon, West Somerset and Exmoor National Park and Currently employs a Rural Housing Enabler and an Assistant

RHPSG – Rural Housing Project Steering Group – Officers and Members from across the three Authorities concerned which meet to monitor the work of the project and the work programme of the Rural Housing Enabler.

RP – Registered Provider – formerly referred to as Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) or Housing Associations (HAs)

RSL – Registered Social Landlord – formerly known as Registered Providers and Housing Associations (HAs).

RSS - Regional Spatial Strategy – Former draft strategic planning document for the region, now revoked by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government using powers included in the Localism Act. The RSSs provided the strategic element of the statutory Development Plan (previously provided by the County Structure Plans). Although the RSS themselves have been abandoned, the evidence base which informed their preparation remains an important source of evidence for the local development planning process.

Rural Exception Sites – Small sites, usually adjacent to rural settlements, on which open market housing development would not be permitted, that are developed solely for affordable housing. Development is subject to the support of the local parish or town council and with the active involvement of a Registered Social Landlord (RSL).

S106 – Section 106 Agreement – A legal agreement covering non-planning matters that could not be dealt with through conditions on a planning permission. They are entered into with the developers and set out any affordable housing provision (on or off site), recreation contributions, and any other agreed matters. Also referred to as Planning Obligations.

SA - Sustainability Appraisal - The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to help to create sustainable development through the integration of social, economic and environmental considerations into the preparation of new or revised Development Plan Documents (DPD) . A baseline SA study is carried out at the beginning of the DPD preparation process, and its objectives are used to test the policies / strategy as the DPD progresses.

<http://www.gosport.gov.uk/sustainability-appraisal/>

SCI - Statement of Community Involvement – This document sets out the way in which partners, stakeholders and the community will be involved in the preparation of the Local Plan / LDF, and also in the development control process within the Local Planning Authority area. Compliance with the procedures set out in the SCI is one of the tests of soundness applied to the DPDs by the Independent Examiner.

SFRA – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – Studies in varying detail showing the extent and vulnerability of land to flood by rivers (fluvial) and/or the sea (tidal) with areas

identified by flood-zone (1 – 3) according to the level of risk. Level 1 Assessments show the general extent of flooding whilst Level 2 Assessments look at potential development land already identified as subject to flooding in more detail.

Shared Equity – this refers to traditional shared ownership housing and is part rent/part buy. Also referred to as Newbuild Homebuy.

SHLAA - Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment - The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is a piece of evidence identifying land which may be available to meet the 5, 10 and 15 year housing land requirements for the District. The SHLAA includes an assessment of sites put forward by landowners and developers in terms of their suitability, availability and deliverability (as defined in PPS3 – Housing). The assessment also includes likely yield of dwelling numbers and timescale over which they might be delivered. It does not allocate housing sites for development.

SHMA - Strategic Housing Market Assessment - A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA) describes the operation of the housing market in an identified sub-regional area particularly in terms of supply and demand. The scale of SHMAs is not prescribed however they usually cover more than one local authority area. West Somerset is included in two overlapping SHMAs, that for the Northern Peninsula area (Exmoor National Park, [former] North Cornwall, North Devon, Torridge and West Somerset), and also that covering the Bridgwater, Taunton and, Yeovil area (Taunton Deane, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and, West Somerset).

Shoreline Management Plan – Document showing the coastal areas, their existing levels of flood defence and identifying the short, medium and long-term future coastal management proposals over the next 100 years. As at 4th January 2012, the October 2010 SMP final draft was still awaiting final sign off by the Environment Agency.

Somerset Homefinder – System used for applicants to apply for housing and bid for suitable vacancies.

Soundness – To be ‘sound’ a DPD should be “justified, effective and consistent with national policy”. ‘Justified’ and ‘effective’ mean that it must be founded on a robust and credible evidence base, be the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives and also be deliverable, flexible and be able to be monitored. The job of the examining Inspector is to determine whether a DPD is sound or not.

Spatial planning – another term which featured prominently in the 2004 Act, but which is not mentioned in the Draft NPPF. However, place shaping and strategy delivery are still important parts of what the new Local Plan has to do, it will set out to do so by:

- Producing a vision for the future of places that responds to the local challenges and opportunities, and is based on evidence, a sense of local distinctiveness and community derived objectives, within the overall framework of national policy.
- Translating this vision into a set of priorities, programmes, policies and local allocations together with the resources to deliver them
- Creating a framework for private investment and regeneration that promotes economic, environmental and social well being for the area;
- Working with other partner organisations through the new Duty to Co-operate.
- Creating a positive framework for action on climate change and
- Contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development.

SPD - Supplementary Planning Documents – Provide additional detail on the implementation of adopted statutory planning policies in the Development Plan. SPD cannot be used to make new policies, only to help in applying or interpreting policies which already exist. They are not subject to independent examination prior to adoption or to sustainability appraisal. They do form part of the LDF although they are not part of the statutory Development Plan. They are however a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

SSHOG – Somerset Strategic Housing Officers Group – County-wide group of Housing Officers working together to co-ordinate delivery strategies.

Submission – The stage following Publication, at which the Local Plan / DPD is sent to the Secretary of State for formal examination by an Inspector.

Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) – Identifies the location and possible extent of land liable to flood due to surface water run-off and ponding, following extreme localised rainfall events (exclusive of delayed/consequential impact of fluvial [river] flooding).

Sustainable Drainage Systems - Sustainable Drainage Systems cover the whole range of sustainable approaches to surface drainage management including: source control measures including rainwater recycling and drainage; infiltration devices to allow water to soak into the ground, that can include individual soakaways and communal facilities; filter strips and swales, which are vegetated features that hold and drain water downhill mimicking natural drainage patterns; filter drains and porous pavements to allow rainwater and run-off to infiltrate into permeable material below ground and provide storage if needed; and basins and ponds to hold excess water after rain and allow controlled discharge that avoids flooding (*draft NPPF definition*).

SWH – South West Homes – the Government appointed ‘Zone Agent’ for providing a one-stop administration process for all low cost home ownership options within the South West Peninsula.

TA – Temporary Accommodation – usually self contained private sector housing leased by the Council.

Windfall Site – A site not previously allocated for development or identified as part of the housing land supply for the area for which residential planning permission is granted

WSHF – West Somerset Housing Forum – Forum of those organizations which provide or have an interest in the provision of affordable housing within West Somerset.

WSSHf – West Somerset Supported Housing Forum – Forum of those organizations which provide or have an interest in the provision of supported housing within West Somerset.

NB - This glossary does not seek to provide an exhaustive list of technical terms used in the planning policy, housing and housing enabling services. Please let us know if there

are any other terms you come across which you would like us to explain, and add to the glossary.

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