



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

**APRIL 2018**



**Introduction** - The planning policy service makes use of a range of technical terms arising from the application of legislation, some of which are most frequently referred to by their initials.

This glossary of such terms should prove helpful particularly to those participating in the preparation of policy and the delivery of planning policy, for stakeholder partners and also for those with an interest in planning applications and the development control process.

The main body of current national planning guidance is set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (March 2012). There is an accompanying body of *Planning Practice Guidance* which exists as an online resource. The definitions below are intended to reflect the current (April 2018) position.

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**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 step in making a Local Plan, or other DPD, a statutory document following Examination, receipt of an Inspector's report finding the document sound and the implementation of the Inspector's recommendations through a resolution of the Council.

**Adopted Policies Map** – Comprises a map of the LPA area which must be produced from or be based on an Ordnance Survey map, must include an explanation of any symbol or notation it uses, and must illustrate geographically the application of the policies in the adopted development plan. This will include for instance: areas designated for protection because of their landscape, nature conservation or heritage value, and areas at a high 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.

**AH – 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.

**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 - Authority Monitoring Report** - Local planning authorities (LPAs) are required to publish information at least annually that shows progress with Local Plan preparation, reports any activity relating to the duty to cooperate and shows how the implementation of policies in the Local Plan is progressing. This is important to enable communities and other interested parties to be aware of progress. Local planning authorities can also use the AMR to help determine whether there is a need to undertake a partial or full review of the Local Plan. Regulation 34 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 sets out what information the reports must contain.

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

**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 known once more as the Local Plan (see also Local Plan - new).

**Development Plan** – This includes adopted Core Strategies, Area Action Plans, Local Plans and neighbourhood plans, and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**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.

**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 research and information that assists in the identification of issues and options, supports and informs the drafting and justification of statutory planning policies and helps to facilitate the monitoring of policy implementation. Evidence base studies have to be updated periodically in order to remain effective. National Planning Guidance advises that each local planning authority should ensure that the Local Plan is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area. Local planning authorities should ensure that their assessment of and strategies for housing, employment and other uses are integrated, and that they take full account of relevant market and economic signals.

**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.

See: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

**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.<sup>1</sup>

<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).

**Help to Buy South West** – the Government appointed Help to Buy Agent providing a one stop shop for prospective purchasers to apply for a whole host of schemes and developments regardless of the supplier, operating under the 'Help to Buy' brand

**Help to Buy** – 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.

**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.

Moved up to 'Help to Buy'

**Homes England** – (formerly Homes and Communities Agency) brings together land, money, expertise and planning and compulsory purchase powers, with a clear remit to

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<sup>1</sup> NPPF March 2012 Annex 2, Glossary.

facilitate delivery of sufficient new homes, where they are most needed, to deliver a sustained improvement in affordability

**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.

**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 re-introduced to replace the terms 'Local Development Framework' and 'Core Strategy'. The West Somerset Local Plan, adopted in November 2016, is the statutory development plan document setting out the spatial vision and strategic objectives for the planning of the area.

**Local Plan (old)** - The old West Somerset District Local Plan of April 2006 remains part of the statutory development plan for the area, some of its policies remain valid because they address matters not covered by the policies of the West Somerset Local Plan to 2032. Further details are provided as an appendix to the 2016 West Somerset Local Plan

**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. In early 2018 revisions to the 2012 NPPF are being consulted on by MHCLG.

**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.<sup>2</sup>

**Programme Officer** – The administrator for the DPD / Local Plan Examination process. Arranges the Examination sessions so that the appropriate people are present at the

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<sup>2</sup> NPPF Annex 2 Glossary.

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

**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).

**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.

**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.

**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*).

Now called Help to Buy South West. Moved to **'H'TA – Temporary Accommodation** – usually self contained private sector housing leased by the Council.

**Universal Credit** – is being introduced in stages across the UK and has been live in West Somerset since October 2016 . It is a payment for people over 18 but under State Pension age who are on a low income or out of work. It includes support for the cost of housing, children and child care, and financial support for people with disabilities, carers and people too ill to work.

**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.

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**NB** - This glossary does not seek to provide an exhaustive list of technical terms used in the planning policy service. 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.

**For planning policy queries please contact - [ldf@westsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@westsomerset.gov.uk)**

V10 TWC 27<sup>th</sup> April 2018.