

Somerset West and Taunton

Glossary of Town & Country Planning Terms (May 2019)

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Glossary of Town and Country Planning Terms

Glossary

It should be noted that this is not intended as a comprehensive list of planning terms.

Adoption: The formal adoption, by Council, of its Local Plan (cf) or other Development Plan Document following public examination and receipt of a positive report from the Planning Inspectorate is the final formal stage in the evolution of a statutory planning document. Once a plan is adopted it has full legal weight in the determination of planning applications.

Allocation: Formal identification of a land parcel for a specific planning use through a development plan.

Amenity: A positive element, or elements, that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquillity.

Ancillary use: Where a building or plot of land is in a variety of uses (as defined by the Use Classes Order), the principal use will be the defined use of the land in planning law terms. For example, a factory may have a storage building, offices, a staff restaurant and over-the-counter sales to the public. All of the other uses are ancillary to the predominant use of the factory falling within Use Class B2. If there is no one dominant use a mixed use will exist. Changes in the balance of uses in both instances may constitute a material change of use and, therefore, require planning permission.

Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR): This measures how the Council is progressing with the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme. It also assesses the effectiveness of the various policies contained in the Development Plan Documents and monitors key indicators, such as house-building etc. The Localism Act has removed the statutory requirement to produce this document however it is good practice to prepare such a report.

Appeal: Within a set time of a planning application being determined, or if the Council has failed to determine the application within the statutory timeframe, an aggrieved applicant may ask for a decision to be (re)considered by the Planning Inspectorate. The appeal may be conducted (i) in writing, (ii) by an informal discussion led by the Inspector or (iii) by a formal public inquiry, with cross-examination of witnesses and perhaps barristers to present the respective parties' cases. The Planning Inspectorate decision is binding (but is subject to potential legal challenge in the High Court).

Application form: Each planning application must be accompanied by a formal application form. These forms follow a national standard and include the name and address of the applicant, the location of the development and details of the proposal. Must be accompanied by: a signed ownership certificate; a plan of the proposal at an appropriate and recognised scale; and usually by a variety of other information i.e. Design and Access Statement, an Environmental Impact Assessment, Ecological Surveys, Transport Assessments, etc.

Approved plans: A plan at a recognised scale that shows the development permitted by a grant of planning permission. Any significant variation in the built form from that shown on the approved plans may require a further planning application or may lead to enforcement action, which could include the demolition of the offending buildings or cessation of the aberrant use(s). See also 'Decision Notice'.

Blight: The reduction, or perceived reduction, in value of a building or piece of land as the result of a planning decision.

Brownfield land: Land which has been previously developed. Often associated with urban land but equally relates to previously developed land in the countryside. May be contaminated by pollutants which require remediation before re-use and redevelopment occur.

Call-in: Some planning applications must be notified to the Secretary of State to give her/him the opportunity to 'call-in' an application for her/his own determination. The Secretary of State also has powers to call-in any application and may direct us to hand it over to them. The application is considered at a public inquiry by one or more members of the Planning Inspectorate (cf) who make recommendations to the Secretary of State, who decides whether or not to allow the application.

Capacity study: A study designed to identify what capacity or 'headroom' there is for a particular form of development. Uses population projections and other statistical data/assumptions to identify whether there is a gap between the current amount of provision and the level of provision projected as being necessary (usually at some point in the future). Most commonly associated with retail capacity studies, where a developer wants to show that there is the capacity for a new store that will not undermine existing stores. But see also 'Urban capacity study'.

Change of use: Planning permission is usually required to change the use of a building or land to another use class. Intensification of a use may constitute a change of use.

Code for Sustainable Homes: A national standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes. It aims to reduce carbon emissions and promote higher standards of sustainable design above the minimal set out in the Building Regulations. The code awards new homes a star rating from 1 to 6, based on their performance against nine sustainability criteria which are combined to assess the overall environmental impact. Six stars are the highest achievable score, reflecting exemplary developments. Code level 3 compliance became mandatory in September 2010 for new-build residences, currently compliance with higher levels of the Code is voluntary.

Comparison shopping: Shopping for non-essential items, generally of a higher value (such as furniture and electrical goods) but also extends to clothing, books, cosmetics, etc. Comparison shopping has traditionally been conducted in town centres, but since the 1980s has also been carried out in retail [warehouse] parks and, most recently, on-line. See also: 'Convenience shopping' and 'Town centres first'.

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO): An Order issued by the government, or a local authority, for the enforced acquisition of land or buildings for public interest purposes. For example, for the construction of a major road or the redevelopment of certain brownfield sites. The purchasing authority needs to be capable of demonstrating that they have tried to acquire the property by negotiation before a CPO can be issued. Most CPOs are preceded by a CPO Inquiry conducted by a member of the Planning Inspectorate, who will either confirm or reject the Order.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): A means of securing planning obligations for infrastructure projects through a flat rate levy. How the levy is calculated and apportioned to the various infrastructure projects is set out in publicly available documents on the Council's website at: <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/planning-policy/cil/>. Individually negotiated Section 106 agreements will still be used across for on-site items such as Affordable Housing and Children's Play.

Conditions: Planning permission is usually granted subject to conditions, all of which must be complied with. Conditions should only be imposed when permission would otherwise have

to be refused. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the terms of all conditions are met.

Conservation area: A defined area, designated by a local council, which is to be preserved or enhanced because of its special architectural or historic interest. There are 52 conservation areas in the LPA area. A special planning regime operates in conservation areas

Convenience shopping: Shopping for goods of an essential day-to-day nature, such as food, newspapers, tobacco, etc.

Decision notice: The official document, issued by the Local Planning Authority, Planning Inspectorate or the Secretary of State that grants or refuses planning permission. Development may not legally begin before the decision notice has been issued. Reasons for permitting or refusing development, and for any conditions imposed on a permission, are always given. In conjunction with the approved plans, this is the definitive statement of the development that has been granted or refused permission.

Design Guides, Statements or Codes: A document which focuses on the visual character of a place and how it might be protected or enhanced.

Delegation/delegated decision: Decisions on planning applications where officers make decisions on behalf of the elected planning committee. The majority of decisions are made in this way, provided that there are no complex issues, or the proposal is wholly acceptable in planning terms. It is also used for refusal when an application is clearly not in accordance with planning policies or practice.

Demolition: Requires planning permission only in certain circumstances (such as for homes), but planning permission is normally required to rebuild on the site. Demolition of listed buildings requires Listed Building Consent and special provisions apply in conservation areas.

Density: In the case of residential development, a measurement of either the number of habitable rooms (any room used or intended to be used for sleeping, cooking, living or eating purposes i.e. not bathrooms, hallways, utility rooms) per hectare or the number of dwellings per hectare [dph].

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG): Government department responsible for, inter alia, preparing primary and secondary legislation on town and country planning and for preparing guidance to direct and assist in the day-to-day interpretation and operation of the statutory town planning system, such as the National Planning Policy Framework. Also determines called-in or recovered planning applications.

Departure: A proposed development that is not in accordance with the adopted development plan, but for which the Local Planning Authority proposes to grant planning permission subject to no intervention from the government.

Design & Access Statement: Prepared by applicants for planning permission. Describes the development and explains how the design was arrived at, what local planning policies have been observed, how any public engagement has been reflected in the design, and how relevant principles of good design have contributed to the proposal. This document enables the lay public to understand how the finished proposal was arrived at, and acts as a check upon the quality of the decision-making process which led to that proposal by the developer concerned.

Detailed application/'Details': A planning application seeking full permission for a development proposal, with no matters reserved for later planning approval. Antithesis: outline application development: Defined in the 1990 Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land" (known as operational development) or "the making of any material change of use of any buildings or other land". Not all development

requires planning permission – see ‘Permitted development’.

Development Brief: See ‘Masterplan’.

Development Management: The new name for development control. The act of determining planning applications (and similar) in conformity with the development plan and material considerations.

Development Plan Document (DPD): Statutory documents produced by LPAs that must be taken into account in determining planning applications eg: the Local Plan. Currently, planning permission must be granted in accordance with these documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Development Plan Documents must be subjected to examination by The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. Under the changes introduced by the Localism Act and the NPPF (2019) most of the former Local Development Framework documents have been combined into a single Local Plan.

Edge of centre: A location that is within easy walking distance of the primary shopping area.

Enabling development: Development that is usually contrary to established planning policies but which is exceptionally permitted because it has been demonstrated to be necessary to generate funds to enable the conservation of a Listed Building or its setting and where the indirect benefit of the enabling development clearly outweighs any direct harm that it would cause.

Enforcement: The investigation and resolution of alleged breaches in planning control, usually undertaking development without permission or failing to observe conditions. An otherwise acceptable breach of planning control can be corrected by a retrospective planning application. Formal enforcement action, which could include issuing of an Enforcement Notice to require the demolition of any offending buildings/structures or cessation of any aberrant use, may only be undertaken if the development would not be permitted and it is considered “expedient” to take action. Can ultimately lead to action in the County Court against the defaulting party if negotiation and service of an Enforcement Notice fails to remedy the breach of planning control.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA): Likely to be required for nationally defined large-scale developments. Undertaken by the developer when applying for planning permission, the EIA assesses the social, economic and environmental impacts of the proposed development and identifies what remedial measures may be necessary to counter any negative impacts. Used as an informative to decision-making rather than a determinant of whether permission should be granted.

Environmental Information Regulations 2005 (EIR): Provide a statutory right of access to environmental information held by public authorities. Covers information about air, water, soil, land, flora and fauna, energy, noise, waste, emissions and information about decisions, policies and activities that affect the environment.

Examination: See ‘Public examination’.

Fee: Nationally set fees are required for a planning application to be determined. Locally-set fees are payable for pre-application discussions and advice. In both cases, the fees vary depending upon the scale and nature of the development being proposed. The fee income is kept by the Council and offset against the costs of providing the planning service. There are limited exemptions from paying planning application fees, including householder applications by registered disabled persons.

General Permitted Development Order (GPDO): The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 allows for the extension of, or changes to, a property without the need for express planning permission, within certain guidelines. This includes small domestic extensions which comply with pre-determined measurements.

Grampian-type condition: A negative condition imposed on a planning permission barring development from happening until a particular action on another piece of land not owned by the applicant has been performed (usually highways works). Named after a court case involving Grampian Regional Council in 1984.

Green Belt: refers to an area that is kept in reserve for open space, most often around larger cities. The main purpose of the green belt policy is to protect the land around larger urban centres from urban sprawl, For further detail see advice within the NPPF (2019) at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/13-protecting-green-belt-land> Note: There is no land designated as Green Belt within Somerset West and Taunton.

Greenfield land: Land which has not previously been developed (hence antithesis: brownfield land). Most commonly associated with land in the countryside but could equally apply to an undeveloped site within an urban area.

Highways Authority: Somerset County Council is the Highways Authority for Somerset. It is charged with the statutory responsibility of adopting, maintaining, designing, making safe and constructing all roads, footways and public rights of way which are not the responsibility of the Highways Agency. A major consultee on planning applications and in the preparation of Local Plans.

Householder application: A, generally smaller-scale, application to alter or enlarge a house, including works within the garden of a house which are not permitted development. Nationally these form the majority (60%) of the applications received by LPAs.

Inquiry: See 'Appeal'.

Judicial Review (JR): A challenge to the High Court by any aggrieved and affected party against a decision made by, for instance, the Council, the Planning Inspectorate or the Secretary of State. Can only be made on points of law (viz, not planning judgments) and must be made "expeditiously" after the decision to be challenged has been made. This means that applications for JR must be made within 3 months.

Landbank: A stock of land (for housing, for example) which has planning permission or is allocated for development in adopted Core Strategies or Local Plans but has yet to be developed. Housebuilders commonly have considerable landbanks, which bolster their value on the Stock Exchange.

Lawful Development Certificate (LDC): A specialist type of application that determines: (i) whether the existing use of land or buildings is lawful for planning purposes or (ii) confirms that a proposal does not require express planning permission. Often necessary to confirm that the use, operation or activity named in it is lawful when land or property is placed on the market for sale. A fee is charged for an LDC; it is not the same as a planning permission. Sometimes used in enforcement cases.

Listed Building: A building or structure on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest maintained by the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport. Listing began as a consequence of the destruction of historic buildings during the 1939-45 war and was included in the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act. It was the Planning Act of 1968 however which introduced the concept of 'listed buildings' as such and which afforded them statutory protection. Listing currently protects some 500,000 buildings and structures across England and Wales. By reason of their relative importance, Listed Buildings fall into three categories: Grade I, Grade II* and Grade II, of which the majority - over 90% - are Grade II. A listed building may not be demolished, extended or altered without Listed Building Consent from the Local Planning Authority. No fee is charged for applications for Listed Building Consent but a flat fee is charged for pre-application discussions. Enabling

development may, exceptionally, be contemplated in order to secure the preservation of a Listed Building where this can be properly justified.

Local Development Scheme (LDS): This document sets out which planning policy documents are to be prepared by the LPA and also the timetable for their review and the preparation of new documents.

Local Plan: A term which describes the statutory local planning document produced under the pre-2004 planning system that set out all the Council's policies on the development and change of use of land and buildings. Since the passing of the Localism Act 2011 and the publication of the NPPF, the Local Plan is also the new statutory planning document which replaces the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and associated documents which had been introduced in 2004.

Local Planning Authority (LPA): A local authority is charged by central Government with the statutory duty to prepare development plan documents and undertake other duties under the Planning Acts. District Councils have planning powers for all development in their administrative areas with the exceptions of minerals and waste and nationally significant infrastructure projects such as the Hinkley Point C new nuclear proposals. County Councils have planning powers for minerals and waste proposals within their administrative areas.

Major application: Involves any one or more of the following: (i) mineral deposits; (ii) waste development; (iii) a site for 10 or more new homes or where the site area for new homes is 0.5ha or more; (iv) the provision of a building or buildings where the floorspace to be created is 1,000m² or more; or (v) any other development carried out on a site with an area of 1 hectare or more.

Masterplan: A term usually applied to a comprehensive written and/or cartographic representation of a potential development scheme. Sometimes a masterplan may have SPD status or it may be submitted with a planning application. Alternatively, land-owners or developers may prepare masterplans to guide their own, or other parties', development. It is important to have a clear understanding of the status and intent of any particular masterplan in order to ascertain how much weight should be placed upon it. A good masterplan sets out constraints and opportunities presented by a site and the principles of the type, form, layout and appearance of development appropriate for it.

Material considerations: Factors considered in the determination of applications for planning permission, alongside the statutory development plan. These include: residential amenity, highway safety, traffic, noise, smell, design and appearance, conservation and listed building interests and any relevant planning comments made by consultees. In order to be material a consideration must relate to the use and development of land and to the planning merits of the development in question. Non-planning comments and the number of objections received are not material considerations. What is considered to be material may be subject to appeal and/or judicial review but the weight to be attached to a material consideration is solely for the decision-maker and will not be challenged by the courts.

Minerals Local Plan: A statutory long-term development plan framework for mineral extraction and associated development. Covers oil, coal, gas, sand, gravel, crushed rock and chalk. All minerals planning powers (plan-preparation and development management) reside with the County Council in Somerset.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): From 1 April 2012 this 50 page document replaced 2,000 + pages of national government policy, advice and guidance contained in Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes and their annexes. Until up-to-date local plans are put in place, planning applications must be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF (2019).

National Planning Practice Guidance: A web-based resource initiated by the Secretary of State on 6th March 2014 giving additional information on the practical application of the National Planning Policy Framework. Available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Neighbourhood plans: Introduced under the planning provisions of the Localism Act 2011. Parish or Town Councils may prepare statutory neighbourhood development plans, the policies of which will be material in assessing planning applications within the designated neighbourhood area concerned. These Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan. After public examination, if found compliant with the regulations they must be subject to a local referendum following which, if successful, being formally 'made' by the LPA.

Net migration: Takes into account natural change in the population (births and deaths) and also those people who have moved into, and out of, the locality.

Non-determination: If the Council fails to make a decision on a planning application within the set time, the applicant may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate who then make the decision, rather than the Council.

Objections: Representations received by the Local Planning Authority or any other determining body in respect of either a planning application or a development plan which opposes all or part of the proposals. In order for the objections to be considered and given weight they must raise legitimate planning matters (see 'Material considerations'). The number of objections received is not a legitimate ground for refusing planning permission.

Outline application: An application for planning permission primarily designed to establish that a development is acceptable in principle, subject to subsequent approval of detailed matters. Usually applies to major developments where it is either uncertain whether the proposal is in conformity with the development plan or where the scale of the development is such that it is inappropriate to be exact in every detail at the time of applying for planning permission.

Out of centre: In retailing terms, a location that is clearly separate from the primary shopping area of a town centre but not outside the urban area.

Out of town: In retailing terms, a location clearly outside the current urban boundary.

Overbearing: A term used to describe the impact of a development or building on its surroundings, particularly a neighbouring property, in terms of its scale, massing and general dominating effect.

Over-development: An often pejorative term describing an amount of development (for example, the quantity of buildings or intensity of use) that is considered excessive in terms of demands on infrastructure and services, or impact on local amenity and character.

Overlooking: A term used to describe the effect when a development or building affords an outlook over adjoining land or property, often causing loss of privacy.

Overshadowing: The effect of a development or building on the amount of natural light presently enjoyed by a neighbouring property, resulting in a shadow being cast over that neighbouring property.

Performance targets: Local Planning Authorities have nationally set performance targets to meet, principally revolving around the time taken to determine different types of planning applications. These were originally set as Best Value Performance targets.

Permitted development: Building works and uses as defined by the General Permitted Development Order and Use Classes Order that can be undertaken without the need for express planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Planning Acts: The first Planning Act was in 1909 but the modern planning system was introduced by the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947. There have been a series of further Acts over the succeeding years, with the main ones in use today being the four 1990 Acts, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Acts of 1991 and 2004 and the Planning Act of 2008. To these have been added the planning provisions of the Localism Act 2011. Supplementing the Acts are various circulars, statutory instruments (such as the Local Planning (England) Regulations) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) as well as other guidance notes, policy statements and ministerial announcements.

Planning application: A planning application is necessary in order to secure express planning permission from the relevant Local Planning Authority for development that is not otherwise permitted development. See also 'Application form'.

Planning Obligations: Securing the delivery of community benefits by legal agreement following negotiation with applicants for planning permission, without which any development would be unacceptable. May include the physical construction of facilities, the provision of land or the payment of a fee in lieu of on-site provision. The building of affordable housing and the provision of new children's play areas are examples. Also known as Section 106 agreements. These may not be used to remedy existing infrastructure deficiencies and should only be used to meet the needs generated by the development being permitted. There is currently no Community Infrastructure Levy in the locations covered by the former West Somerset LPA area.

Planning Inspectorate (PINS): National Body that undertakes planning and enforcement appeals on behalf of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (usually against Local Planning Authority refusal of permission or non-determination of planning applications). As of 2012 it also determines nationally important infrastructure projects. Holds evidence-gathering, quasi-judicial examinations into both planning applications and local plans and DPDs. PINS decisions on planning applications are binding on all parties except Government, but all of its decisions may be overturned by the courts on limited technical grounds following judicial review.

Planning Permission: The consent given by the Local Planning Authority, the Planning Inspectorate or the Secretary of State for development. Usually given with conditions and with a time limit for the beginning of development. May be subject to planning obligations. Reasons for permission will be given on the decision notice. Will be closely based on the information given in the planning application form and the ancillary information supplied by the applicant.

Planning Portal: A Government sponsored web-site from which much useful generic information about the statutory town and country planning and building control systems can be gathered. Most LPAs are connected to the Planning Portal via hyperlink, such that it acts as a 'one stop shop' for developers and the public wishing to gain access to the planning pages of their local authority's web-site. The Council, offer electronic submission of planning applications and the payment of fees via the Planning Portal.

Pre-application discussions/fees: An opportunity for councils and developers to work together to achieve developments that deliver benefits to the community and the economy. These discussions are provided for a fee, for officer time, but in the long-term they can save time, costs and frustration and optimise the potential of a site.

Previously Developed Land (PDL): See 'Brownfield land'.

Primary Shopping Area (or Primary Shopping Frontage): A designated area where the number of Use Class A1 shops is most concentrated in a town centre. Beyond the primary shopping area may lie secondary and tertiary shopping areas, where shop uses become more diluted by other A-use classes (such as pubs, restaurants, banks) and other town-centre type uses (such as assembly and leisure uses).

Prior Approval: A procedure where permission is deemed granted if the Local Planning Authority does not respond to the developer's application within a certain time. Often relating to telecommunication or agricultural developments. **Public examination:** An interrogatory process led by one or more members of the Planning Inspectorate, held to examine the soundness of a DPD. Similar to an informal hearing: see 'Appeal'.

Public [local] inquiry (PLI): See 'Appeal'.

Refusal of planning permission: The guiding principle in determining planning applications is that development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will "cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance". The person making the decision will issue a decision notice detailing the reasons for refusal. Within a set time, aggrieved applicants have the right to appeal against the refusal of planning permission.

Retrospective planning application: Occasionally a Local Planning Authority may receive, or in some enforcement cases encourage, those parties that have undertaken unauthorised development to submit a planning application to regularise the situation. Attempting to sell land or buildings upon which unauthorised development has occurred can lengthen the process and reduce the price received.

Saved policies: Policies within a development plan that the Secretary of State has allowed to continue to have legal force, following passage of the 2004 Act, during the production of replacement Development Plan Documents. Development plan policies which were not included in saving directions issued by the Secretary of State no longer have any effect.

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government: The member of the Government with responsibility for local government functions including town and country planning.

Section 106 agreements: See 'Planning gain/obligations'.

Sequential test: The process of demonstrating that development is to occur on the most preferable location for the appropriate use. Most commonly associated with the 'town centres first' policy.

Site Notice: Statutory notice posted on, or close to, a development site for at least 21 days, providing public notice of the existence of a planning application on the site. Usually accompanied by the publication of the same notice in a newspaper circulating in the locality.

Soundness, tests of: At a public examination held by one or more members of the Planning Inspectorate, local plans are checked against four tests of soundness – whether they have been positively prepared, are justified, effective and consistent with national policy - and whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the duty to co-operate, legal and procedural requirements. Neighbourhood plans are not tested for soundness but will be tested for compliance with the relevant regulations. These criteria are established in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): This sets out the Council's policy on involving the community in policy-making and major planning applications. The preparation of an SCI is a statutory requirement.

Stop Notice: Notice served by an LPA on a land-owner where there is a breach of planning control that requires to be stopped. Serving a stop notice must follow an enforcement notice. Does not come into force for three days and gives reasons why the stop notice is necessary.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): Required to be prepared for plans and policies under the terms of the European directive 2001/42/EC for "environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes". Undertaken in conjunction with the Sustainability Appraisal. All but the least important of planning documents now have to be subject to SA/SEA.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA): Study to provide a reference and policy document to inform the local plan; and to ensure that the Council meets its legal obligations in respect of managing flood risk. SFRA come in two levels, SFRA Level 1 covers the whole LPA area at a relatively basic level. SFRA level 2 focuses in considerably more detail on flood risk issues affecting areas for which major development is proposed.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA): Study to determine the availability and viability of potential future housing sites.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA): Study to identify the full objectively assessed housing need for the area including evidence on the types of housing that are needed to meet current and future demand. Used to inform both the local plan and development management decisions...

Sui generis use: A use not falling within any of the defined planning Use Classes (cf). Any change of use requires express planning permission.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): SPD provides more detailed information on the way in which statutory planning policy and proposals featured in development plan documents will be applied. They are also used in the process of determining planning applications.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA): An assessment of the impact the proposals contained within a DPD would have on the environment, economy and society. It is carried out in conjunction with the Strategic Environmental Assessment. The results of SA are used to help make choices between available strategy /policy options in the interests of developing a sustainable Local Plan.

Sustainable Development: The underpinning definition for planning is that included in Resolution 24/187 of the United Nations General Assembly: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This definition is cited in paragraph 7 of the Nation Planning Policy Framework (2019). What this means in practice is then set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF (2019).

Temporary Stop Notice: Served by an LPA on a landowner where a breach of planning control needs to be stopped immediately. Lasts for 28 days, during which the LPA must decide whether to issue an Enforcement Notice. Must specify the activity to be halted. See also 'Stop Notice'.

'Town centres first': A sequential locational test that developers and LPAs have to demonstrate has been followed in the placing of new shopping, leisure and office developments. The preferred order in the sequential test is: town centre; edge of centre; out of centre; out of town. Only if it can be clearly demonstrated that the development cannot be placed in a location higher in the preferential scale can the development be placed in a less favoured location lower in the hierarchy.

Town, Parish or Village Plans: Community led documents which help a community come to a collective view about various issues affecting its life and future development. They can address both planning and land use issues as well as social and service related matters. Their contents are not material considerations in considering planning applications unless they have been prepared through the full SPD processes and have been adopted by the Council as such. One of the main benefits of this type of document is that it helps communities respond to consultation exercises in a well-informed way.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO): An order made by an LPA securing the protection of a single tree or group of trees of significant amenity benefit to their local area. In general, it is an offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot, willfully damage or willfully destroy a tree subject to a Tree Preservation Order without the consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Unauthorised development: Development that requires planning permission but which does not have it. Once unauthorised development comes to the attention of the Local Planning Authority an enforcement investigation will be begun. Unauthorised development can be regularised by a retrospective planning application in some instances or it may be beyond the time limits for enforcement action (four years for operational development or ten years for a change of use or breach of a planning condition). A Lawful Development Certificate is sometimes applied for to regularise the situation.

Use Classes [Order]: Government statutory instrument that sets out broad classes of similar uses. Currently there are 15 different use classes. Within each class, planning permission is not required to change from one use to another e.g. changing from a butcher's shop to an internet café does not require planning permission as both fall within the same use class (A1 - shops). There are also certain changes of use from one class to another that do not require planning permission e.g. from a pub (class A4) to a shop (class A1).

Validation: The initial process carried out by the Local Planning Authority upon receipt of a planning application. Checks are undertaken to ensure that all of the necessary information has been supplied with the application form and that the appropriate planning application fee has been paid. Only once this process has been completed will an application:

- be registered as valid;
- be given a unique reference number;
- be allocated to a specific planning officer (known as the case officer) to process and determine, and;
- be added on to the weekly list.

The necessary consultation letters will be sent out only after validation is completed.

Waste Local Plan/LDF: A statutory long-term development plan framework for managing and disposing of waste. In Somerset, Somerset County Council is the waste local planning authority being responsible for both plan-preparation and development management concerning waste matters.

Weekly list: A compendium of all new valid planning applications received by the Local Planning Authority in the preceding seven days. Gives limited details including the application reference number, the address of the development, a brief description of the proposals and the name of the case officer. Available to view free of charge or to purchase.

Weight: The weight to be attached to an issue in the determination of a planning application is a matter for the decision-maker and will not usually be challenged by the courts. See also 'Material considerations'.

End