

Jargon Buster

Whilst we always try to avoid the use of complicated jargon, unfortunately in the world of planning there are a number of terms and acronyms you may encounter.

Here is a list of the key words and phrases used in planning along with their meanings:

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

An area of land given extra protection due to its high quality.

Ancient or veteran tree

A tree which because of its size, age or condition is considered to be of exceptional value.

Ancient Woodland

An important area of trees which has been present continuously since at least 1600 AD (when the first maps of the UK were produced).

Biodiversity

The variety of life, from all different species and habitats, including animals and plants.

Bio-abundance

Bio-abundance describes the numbers of individuals of each species of plant and animal, rather than their diversity.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

This principle calls for a development to leave nature in a better state than it was found.

Developers must increase and improve nature beyond the impact of the development. It is hoped this will help to increase the amount of nature-rich areas in the UK, creating bigger and more connected spaces for wildlife.

The Environment Act requires all developments to demonstrate a minimum of 10% biodiversity Net Gain in order to receive planning permission.

Birds and Habitats Directives (Natura 2000)

These are two very important pieces of retained EU legislation which currently apply in the UK after Brexit.

The Birds Directive provides a legal framework for the protection of all wild birds, including their eggs, nests and habitats.

The Habitats Directive protects habitats and other species of animals and plants.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

This is a planning charge used as a tool for local authorities to help deliver projects on local green spaces, or roads and schools, to support the development being built in their area.

Conservation Area

An area valued for its special historic interest, with a particular desirable character to protect, and which is legally designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Please note Conservation Areas do not necessarily refer to the natural value of an area.

Climate Change Adaptation

Adjustments to the way things are done in response to the effects of climate change.

Climate Change Mitigation

Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, mainly through reducing dependency on fossil fuels.

Community forest

An area identified through the England Community Forest Programme to revitalise countryside and green space, mainly in urban areas.

Designated sites (International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity)

If a site of nature conservation importance has 'Statutory Protection', it means that it receives legal protection through legislation based on its natural value.

This included all international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and where mentioned in local plan policies locally designated sites including 'Local Green Spaces', 'Nature Reserves' and Local Wildlife Sites (See also Habitats sites).

Designated rural areas

National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and areas designated as 'rural' under section 157 of the Housing Act 1985.

Ecosystem

All of the plants, animals, and other living things which interact in an area. It also contains non-living things such as soil, water, and landscape features. Examples you may find in Warwickshire include grassland, woodland, or wetland.

Ecosystem services

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

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

A procedure to be followed for certain projects, to ensure that decisions consider any likely significant effects on the environment.

Also referred to as Environment Statement (ES).

Environment Agency (EA)

The government agency with responsibilities relating to the protection and enhancement of the environment in England, including flood risk management.
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency

Ecology Report

Planning authorities have a duty to consider biodiversity when assessing planning applications. Where there is a likelihood that a planning proposal might affect important protected species or habitats, the council will require information on the species and habitat likely to be affected, and an assessment of the impacts of the proposals. This information should be provided before a planning decision is made.

Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS)

Refers to three schemes that will reward good environmental land management, intended to support the rural economy while achieving the goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan, and also a commitment to net zero emissions by 2050.

Through these schemes, farmers and other land managers may enter into agreements to be paid for delivering benefits such as clean air and thriving plants and wildlife.

Eutrophication

The process by which nutrients such as fertilisers can enter a lake, river or other body of water. Can cause a dense growth of plant life, which may kill aquatic animals due to lack of oxygen.

Green Belt

A planning policy tool, which while not stopping all development, restricts development of certain types and acts to stop settlements from merging together.

Green Wedges

Still used by some Councils comprise the open areas around and between parts of settlements, which maintain the distinction between the countryside and built up areas to prevent the merging of nearby places.

Habitats site

Any site which would be included within the definition at Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites (see also Designated Sites).

Irreplaceable habitat

Habitats which would be very difficult or take a very long time to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement and lowland fen.

Local Nature Partnership (LNP)

Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) bring together local organisations, businesses and people for the purpose of protecting and improving the natural environment and the benefits brought about from it.

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)

All district and county councils have powers to acquire, declare and manage LNRs. Town and parish councils can create LNRs if the district council has given them the power to do this. To qualify for LNR status, a site must be of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment.

LNRs must be controlled by the local authority through ownership, lease or agreement with the owner.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS)

These strategies will be a statutory requirement of the Environment Act.

They are plans to help drive more coordinated, practical, focussed action and investment, delivering wider environmental benefits.

They will consist of a Statement of Biodiversity Priorities and a Local Habitat Map.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)

The Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) classification provides a means of identifying and safeguarding some of the county's best sites for wildlife.

The intention is to complement the network of designated sites, helping to ensure the survival of important areas for wildlife.

A number are mentioned as important sites in Local Plans which gives the designation more weight.

Local Plan

The plan for the future development of the local area, and set of laws that planning applications must follow, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community.

They have to pass through a rigorous legal process, rounds of public consultation and a formal examination from the Government.

Local Planning Authority

The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. Also known as the Council.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)

Published in 1994, the UK BAP described the biological resources of the UK and provided detailed plans for their conservation.

UK BAP priority species and habitats were those that were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action, under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP).

Natural England

Government adviser for the natural environment in England, aims to protect England's nature and landscapes.

Natural Flood Management

Managing flood and erosion risk by protecting and restoring the natural 'regulating' function of catchments, rivers, floodplains and coasts.

Nature Recovery Network

The Nature Recovery Network (NRN) is a major commitment in the government's 25 Year Environment Plan. A joined-up national network of places important for wild plants and animals.

It allows plants, animals, seeds, nutrients and water to move from place to place and enables the natural world to adapt to change.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) was the Act of Parliament that first established Natural England.

Section 40 of NERC places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard in conserving biodiversity.

National Nature Reserves

NNRs are designated under section 35 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. They are owned by or managed through agreements with Natural England.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

A document which sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England.

All planning applications must be in line with this legal document.

A revised version of the NPPF was published in July 2021.

Neighbourhood Plan

A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a designated neighbourhood area.

These plans set local laws for development, can designate land for housing or employment, designate Local Wildlife Sites and Nature Reserves and set out local environmental policies.

Management Plan

A plan for the detailed management or conservation of important areas, including nature conservation, in order to maintain and enhance the special features or qualities.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

Drainage solutions to manage surface water, to mimic natural drainage, reducing surface water flooding and improving water quality.

SUDS provide an alternative to the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses, and can contribute to environmental enhancement.

Priority habitats and species

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

Planning Portal

The UK Government's online planning regulations resource for England. Offers lots of helpful advice, available to view at: www.planningportal.co.uk

Planning Statement

A planning statement identifies the need for a development and includes an assessment of how the proposed development accords with relevant laws, national and local planning policies.

It may also include details of consultations with the local planning authority and wider community/statutory consultees undertaken prior to submission.

Ramsar Sites

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

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

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

An area of special importance for its plants, animals or natural features.

Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

SACs are designated where they support internationally important habitats and/or species listed in the EC Habitats Directive.

Special Protection Areas (SPA)

SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds. They are designated under the European 'Birds Directive 1979'.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO)

A Tree Preservation Order is an order made by a local planning authority in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of amenity. An Order prohibits the cutting down; topping, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage or wilful destruction of trees without the local planning authority's written consent.

Wild belt

The Wild Belt designation is being promoted by the Wildlife Trusts to help meet the Commitment for 30% of our land to be connected and protected for nature's recovery by 2030.

The designation would enable land that does not currently do much for wildlife, to be protected so that efforts to create or restore natural habitat or to rewild the area, were secure from future changes to land use.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the primary legislation which protects animals, plants and habitats in the UK.

Wildlife corridor

Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations. Stepping stones, pockets of habitat that, while not necessarily connected, facilitate the movement of species across otherwise inhospitable landscapes.

Other useful references:

Planning Portal Glossary of terms
www.planningportal.co.uk/directory/4/glossary/category/7

NPPF Framework Glossary: Annex 2: Glossary - National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance [National Planning Policy Framework](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/617353/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_Glossary.pdf)
([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/617353/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_Glossary.pdf))