

Updated National Planning Policy Framework - branching out to a street near you!

Simon Randle and Elizabeth Nicholls

4-5 Gray's Inn Square

**** Released yesterday****, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published the long awaited revised National Planning Policy Framework. This sets out the government's long-term planning policies for England. The framework provides for sustainable development and key environmental issues, such as promoting sustainable transport, the far-reaching effects of climate change...and trees!

One particular issue that we have noticed relates to the elevation of the importance of trees which has been given special mention within what is a strategic, rather than a detailed policy document. Under 'Achieving well-designed places', "Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users." Paragraph 131

The positive effects of trees are well-known however, "...the right trees in the right places" would appear to be the challenge, having seen the impacts of planting the wrong tree in the wrong place on several occasions...!

What are the other significant changes are from the earlier consultation version?

This remains to be fully appreciated, however you can now download your own copy here, from the Gov.uk website National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) A further update will follow, once the published version of the Framework has been fully considered.

Should you have any questions on the framework or any other planning or aboricultural related issue, please contact the planning and environmental team, via clerks@4-5.co.uk