

# Appendix 1: Planning Policy Relating to Trees

Table 6: National and Local Planning Policy Relating to Trees

Policy Document	Policy References	Policy Wording / Description
<p>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in December 2023 and is a material consideration in planning decisions and outlines the Government’s planning policies for England, setting out how these are expected to be applied. The consideration for existing trees and woodlands in the context of planning and new development is set out within Section 12 ‘Achieving well-designed and beautiful places’ and Section 15 ‘Conservation and Enhancing the Natural Environment’.</p>		
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Section 12, paragraph 136	states that “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”.
	Section 15, paragraph 180	provides a series of prerequisites to inform how planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. This includes “recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland”.
	Section 15, paragraph 181	addresses the need to take a “strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure and adding that plans should be made for the enhancement of natural capital at the catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries”.
	Section 15, paragraph 186	highlights a series of principles that local planning authorities should apply when determining planning applications, stating that “if significant harm biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused”.
	Section 15, paragraph 186 (c)	also adds that “development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensatory strategy exists”.
Local Planning Policy – Uttlesford District Council’s Local Plan (Adopted January 2005)	Policy ENV3	“The loss of traditional open spaces, other visually important spaces, groups of trees and fine individual tree specimens through development proposals will not be permitted unless the need for the development outweighs their amenity value.”

