Building with Nature

How the climate emergency is an opportunity to rethink our approach to placemaking and placekeeping

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We've defined quality

Drawing from evidence and good practice guidance, we have defined high quality green infrastructure at each stage of the development process, from planning and design, through to long-term management and maintenance.

The role of standards

Wellbeing
Water
Wildlife

CORE STANDARDS

Distinguish green infrastructure from a more conventional approach to provision for open and green space.

WELLBEING STANDARDS

Secure health and wellbeing benefits through the delivery of green infrastructure features close to where people live.

WATER STANDARDS

Managing water quantity and quality, and maximising opportunities for amenity and biodiversity.

WILDLIFE STANDARDS

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Building With Nature @BuildWithNature · Sep 18

Thrilled to see we feature in the @RTPIPlanners review of #tools for addressing #ClimateEmergency

Extra happy to hear that we're only tool to address each key driver #adaptation #mitigation #climatejustice #planmaking #development @CAGConsultants #RTPILearn #PlanTheWorldWeNeed

> **Royal Town Planning Institute** @RTPIPlanners · Sep 17
>
> RTPI launches guide for planners who want to understand how to reduce carbon emissions while also managing climate impacts such as flooding and overheating #PlantheWorldWeNeed @CAGConsultants More info on #RTPILearn Climate Tools for Planners module at rtpi.org.uk/press-releases...

CLIMATE TOOLS

	Adaptation	Mitigation	Climate justice	Plan making	Development management
Adaptation Catalyst - supporting adaptation strategies	●			●	●
B£ST - valuing the benefits of blue-green infrastructure	●	●			●
BlueHealth - collecting information on blue infrastructure	●			●	●
BREEAM - Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method	●	●		●	●
Building with Nature Standards and Accreditation	●	●	●	●	●
Climate Just - highlighting climate disadvantage	●		●	●	●
Climate View - carbon neutral transition tool		●		●	
Heat Resilient Cities Toolkit	●			●	
Natural Capital Planning Tool - implementing environmental net gain	●	●			●
Neighbourhood Planning in a Climate Emergency	●	●		●	
Overheating Toolkit - mitigating overheating risk in new homes	●			●	●
Planning for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy: a toolkit for planners		●	●	●	
RESIN - Climate resilient cities and infrastructures	●			●	

How does good quality GI help to deliver better developments?

Climate emergency **mitigation + adaptation**

e.g. sustainable drainage (flood resilience)

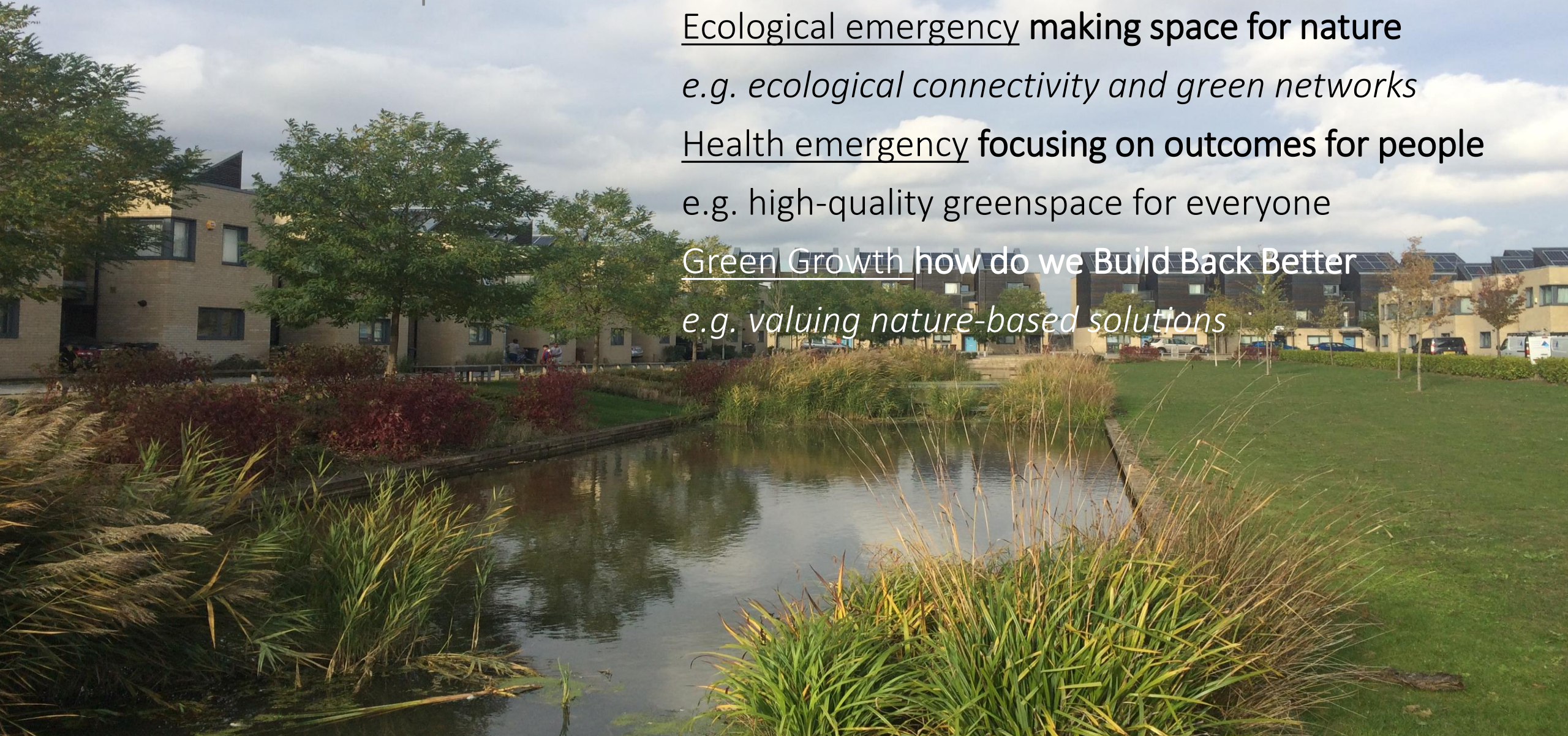Ecological emergency **making space for nature**

e.g. ecological connectivity and green networks

Health emergency **focusing on outcomes for people**

e.g. high-quality greenspace for everyone

Green Growth **how do we Build Back Better**

e.g. valuing nature-based solutions

What can Building with Nature deliver?

1. Reduce planning uncertainty

2. Shared framework of standards

3. Smoother passage through planning

4. Help secure benefits for people and wildlife: climate resilience, biodiversity enhancement, health and wellbeing outcomes, water management and landscape connections

5. Practical ideas for how the development industry and planning authorities can tackle the climate and ecological emergencies

Not just development...

Green Infrastructure

Pre-application Advice Note
June 2019

Status of this advice note

Cotswold District Council (CDC) is committed to providing a high standard of pre-application advice to assist customers with the preparation of their applications.

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This advice note explains CDC's development plan objectives for green infrastructure. Responding positively to this advice will increase the likelihood of your application meeting the green infrastructure requirements of the development plan.

What is green infrastructure?

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines green (or blue) infrastructure as:

"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."

This network connects the towns and villages of our District and County, enhancing the character and appearance of our rural and urban environments. It can improve water management, air quality and public health and wellbeing. It provides opportunities to protect and increase biodiversity, improve food and energy security, facilitate community development, and build resilience to the effects of climate change.

This is why our adopted Local Plan highlights the importance of green infrastructure. Depending on scale, use and location, proposals for development must contribute to the protection and enhancement of existing green infrastructure and/or to the delivery of new green infrastructure.

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

What are the key things to consider when designing green infrastructure?

1 Delivering multi-functional benefits

Green infrastructure should be provided and managed as a network.

As many elements as possible should be multi-functional. For example, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) serve a drainage role, but can also contribute to visual amenity and habitat creation. Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) uses surface water as a resource in creating beautiful, successful and resilient places.

Street trees help to define the identity of an area and enhance its character and appearance, as well as providing shade and shelter. They also contribute to our wellbeing, improve air quality and provide habitats for wildlife.

Green roofs on buildings can slow surface water runoff, improve insulation and provide habitats for wildlife.

2 Character and quality of the area and the way it functions

Proposals should enhance existing landscape, ecological and historical features. Existing stone walls, hedgerows, trees and ponds should be successfully integrated.

Where development will affect heritage assets, green infrastructure should help conserve and enhance those assets and their settings. For example, by preserving key views.

Interfaces between new and existing development should respect the amenity of existing properties, while also bringing new and existing communities together.

New on-site green infrastructure should be linked physically with the off-site network, taking opportunities to create or improve ecological connections and the movement network. Where practicable, improved management of off-site wildlife areas in the locality should also be achieved.

3 Successful implementation and future management

Early implementation is critical. Where implementation is phased over years, green infrastructure should be delivered as an integrated part of each phase of development.

Implemented schemes should clearly distinguish between the public realm and private spaces.

Private spaces should be suitable for the development in terms of size, natural lighting and degree of privacy.

Planting schemes should reflect the function of the green infrastructure, favour native species and improve resilience to climate change.

Management plans should set out arrangements and responsibilities for subsequent long-term maintenance and monitoring. Where practicable, they should take opportunities to enhance biodiversity assets and networks.

The network and as many of its assets as possible should be multi-functional

Existing, mature trees can be successfully integrated within new green infrastructure

Implemented schemes should clearly distinguish between the public realm and private space

4 Ensuring accessibility and usability

Green infrastructure enhances the quality of our environment. It should be accessible to as many people as possible, encouraging and facilitating healthy lifestyles.

Designers should consider the needs of all users carefully, including small children, the elderly, and those with impaired mobility or senses.

Proposals should be informed by the appropriate standards: e.g. Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard; Fields in Trust benchmark guidelines; and the National Allotment Society's recommendations.

Where possible, enhancements to off-site green infrastructure assets should promote greater public access.

Green infrastructure in the public realm should be accessible to as many people as practicable

Is green infrastructure an issue for all planning applications?

All applicants should consider how their proposals can contribute to the protection and enhancement of existing green infrastructure and/or to the delivery of new green infrastructure. This will depend on the location of the site and the nature of the proposals. However, there may well be opportunities to enhance the existing network, irrespective of the scale of development proposed.

Building scale

At the individual building scale, it may be possible to incorporate features such as green roofs. Bird or bat boxes can help to achieve net gain in biodiversity on a site.


Infill scale

Where infill development is proposed, the network can also be enhanced by retaining existing trees and hedges. There may also be opportunities to provide new planting and stone walls.

Neighbourhood scale

Where larger-scale development is proposed, the network can be enhanced and extended through the retention of existing and the provision of new assets, including green spaces, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), and street trees.

The adopted Local Plan provides further guidance. In particular, refer to relevant policies in chapters 10 and 11, together with the Cotswold Design Code and Strategic Principles for Green Infrastructure in Gloucestershire (appendices D and H respectively).
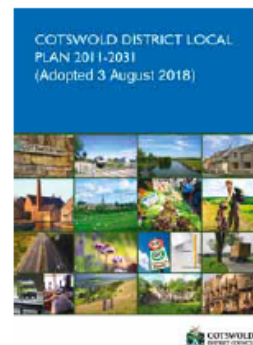
Will I need to submit extra information with my planning application?

Providing new and/or enhanced green infrastructure as part of your proposals will not necessitate the submission of extra information with your planning application. For most applications proposals for green infrastructure can be described and illustrated by material that would be required in any case: e.g. design and access statement; layout and landscaping plans; planting schemes; and drainage details, etc. For more complex applications, green infrastructure proposals can also be described and illustrated within supporting documents and assessments, which again would be required in any case; e.g. Environmental Statement - Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

Applicants proposing large-scale development may wish to provide a discrete green infrastructure strategy document in support of their application. However, this could equally form part of a framework master plan document, or an appropriately structured design and access statement.

Should I consult others before submitting my application?

CDC encourages all applicants to consider whether pre-application consultation with others would be beneficial. If so, applicants should engage with the local community and with statutory and non-statutory consultees, as appropriate, before submitting their applications.

Gloucestershire has already led the way in developing the Building with Nature framework of standards, which enables prospective developers to have their proposals assessed for accreditation, including at the pre-application stage.

Where can I find further information?

In addition to providing advice notes, CDC offers site-specific advice - see the 'Pre-application advice and guidance' page on CDC's website. There is likely to be a charge for this service, depending on the complexity of your proposals.

Click on the documents opposite and on the links below for further information about design and delivery of green infrastructure.

- Natural England - Publications, maps and data
- Landscape Character Assessment
- The Landscape Institute - green infrastructure
- Green Infrastructure Partnership
- Fields in Trust guidance
- Play England
- The SuDS Manual (C753)
- Sport England

Accreditation and Award

We offer Accreditation at both pre- and post-construction stages, to highlight what good looks like at each stage of the green infrastructure lifecycle.

We encourage applications from different types of development, and at various scales, however the current accreditation system is set up to assess schemes of 10 units or more (i.e. 'major' applications).

Schemes which are at the Masterplanning stage can apply for Design Accreditation. Schemes at the detailed / RMA stage can apply for a Full Accreditation (Good or Excellent) which includes a post-construction check to ensure green infrastructure has been delivered in line with plans and designs, and we can see people and wildlife benefiting from sustainably managed features.

The Standards can also be used to assess strategic policy documentation, such as Local Plans, SPDs or a GI Strategy.

What's in this for LPAs?

- An <u>evidence-based and consistent approach</u> to tackling the climate and ecological emergencies.

- Consider green infrastructure aims, strategies and designs options on a site-by-site basis <u>at an early project stage</u>, involve key stakeholders and experts.

- Identify opportunities for multi-functional features and design accordingly with <u>input from the whole team</u> (culture change vs. silo-working).

- <u>Clearly document</u>, present and promote a site's green infrastructure offering as part of a planning application (no additional info required).

- Consider <u>external verification</u> of a site's green infrastructure offering e.g. Building with Nature Accreditation for each project stage.

- Offers some reassurance that HQGI will be delivered during construction and managed post-construction (i.e. supports enforcement)

Building with Nature

Thank you

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