

Cheltenham Borough Council
Local Plan 2011-2031
EXAMINATION
www.cheltenham.gov.uk/LPexamination

Examination into the soundness of the Cheltenham Local Plan (CLP) 2011 -2031

Inspector's Note: Examination of alternative or omission sites

My letter to the Council of the 31 October 2018 states that I will not be considering the merits of any proposals for development (or designations such as LGS) which have been omitted from the CLP. This includes sites which are proposed as alternatives to sites which have been allocated in the CLP. I will be considering the soundness of the CLP as a whole. This includes the basis on which proposals in the CLP have been selected and whether they comply with national policy and deliver the spatial strategy for the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS). The examination will consider whether the retention of any of the policies as drafted, including for the allocated sites, would cause the CLP to not be sound.

For the reasons stated in my letter, the examination is being carried out against the policies of the NPPF 2012. Therefore the tests of soundness in paragraph 182 apply. Where a representor has an objection to an allocated site, evidence should be presented to demonstrate that the CLP would fail the tests of soundness if the site was to remain in the CLP.

It has been suggested that this approach to alternative or omission sites would prevent me from considering whether the CLP would be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives. The NPPF states that "the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, ---, based on proportionate evidence". Clearly it is open to participants in the examination to argue that the strategy of the CLP is not the most appropriate and give their reasons for this, but I am not as part of this process considering the relative merits of alternative or omission sites.

If, in the course of the examination I consider that alternative or additional designations or allocations are required to make the CLP sound, I will raise the matter with the Council to identify any modifications that they consider to be appropriate. This could include further consideration by the Council of alternative or omission sites which have been put forward in the process of consultation on the CLP.

Wendy Burden

Inspector
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