

CHELTENHAM LOCAL PLAN 2011 – 2031 EXAMINATION

Matter 4: Green Belt and Green Infrastructure

Representor ID 093; Comment No 390

The Cheltenham Plan addresses the subject of Green Infrastructure in Section 16. This considers green space in a wide range of contexts as set out in paragraph 16.3. Paragraph 16.4 continues as follows:

“16.4. Green space in the urban environment has worth for its townscape, environmental, wildlife and recreational values. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Para. 73) describes the contribution open spaces make to the health and well-being of communities. The Borough Council will take this into account when making development control decisions and formulating local plan policies.”

However, there is no specific Policy in the Plan to achieve this.

Cheltenham Borough Council is a signatory of the Gloucestershire Green Infrastructure Pledge which has as its goal:

“Making green infrastructure work for Gloucestershire - for our Communities, wildlife and economy. Our pledge, created by the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership, is a promise to commit to making Gloucestershire a pioneer of green infrastructure, creating a better, more attractive place to live, work and visit, as well as becoming an exemplar for the rest of the country.”

It goes on to set out a set of five actions. Its full wording is set out in the appended two-page document.

Among other things, the Pledge undertakes to take forward the pioneering work of the ‘Building with Nature’ benchmark for the design and maintenance of green infrastructure in housing and commercial development, committing all parties to action. It is disappointing that this is not reflected in the Cheltenham Plan.

We strongly endorse the following policy which appears in Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2011 – 31 Preferred Options which was subject to public consultation during 2018:

Policy NAT3 – Green Infrastructure: Building with Nature

Development must contribute, where appropriate to do so and at a scale commensurate to the proposal, towards the provision, protection and enhancement of the wider green infrastructure network.

All proposals for green infrastructure will be expected to be designed in accordance with the ‘Building with Nature’ standards.

Reasoned Justification

- 8.47. JCS Policy INF3 provides the strategic guidance on what is expected from new development in regard to green infrastructure provision. All development should contribute towards the provision, improvement and maintenance of the green infrastructure network across the Borough where appropriate to do so. All development can potentially make a positive impact on the green infrastructure network and proposals will, where appropriate, be expected to make such provision at a scale that is commensurate with the development.
- 8.48. In 2017 a partnership between the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and the University of the West of England launched the 'Building with Nature' scheme. Building with Nature introduces a set of best practice standards for the development of green infrastructure, being together existing guidance to recognise the importance of high quality green infrastructure at all stages of the development process. The standards help to define what good green infrastructure and set out the basic approach to providing it through new development.
- 8.49. To achieve high quality infrastructure provision, and to ensure that best practice is followed, the Borough Council will expect developers to utilise these standards to inform development from the outset. Compliance and the design process should be demonstrated through Design and Access Statements and/or any site-based green infrastructure strategy.

Tewkesbury Borough, like Cheltenham, forms part of the JCS area. CPRE urges that a similar be policy be included in the Cheltenham Local Plan.