

# Cheltenham Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 Examination

## Matter 8: Transport

### Subject: Hearing Statement

Client:	Bloor Homes and Persimmon Homes	Version:	2
Project No:	2314	Author:	JW
Date:	21/01/2018	Approved:	NM

## I Introduction

- 1.1.1 PJA is retained by Bloor Homes and Persimmon Homes to provide transport advice in relation to the JCS Strategic Allocation at North West Cheltenham (NWC), referred to as ‘Elms Park’.
- 1.1.2 The companies submitted an outline planning application for Elms Park in September 2016 to Cheltenham Borough Council (ref 16/0200/OUT).
- 1.1.3 Whilst the outline planning application has yet to be determined, significant progress has been made and the only outstanding issue that requires resolution is highway modelling and off-site highway improvements.
- 1.1.4 This hearing statement relates to the Inspector’s Matters, Issues and Questions for the forthcoming examination of the Cheltenham Plan (CP), and specifically Matter 8 – Transport.

## 2 Matter 8-I

*“To what extent has the impact of proposals within the CP been assessed in accordance with the package of key transport and highway improvements in both the local and strategic networks proposed to accommodate the proposals in the JCS?”*

- 2.1.1 The proposals within the CP have not been assessed in accordance with the package of improvements identified in the JCS.

- 2.1.2 Whilst the JCS transport studies do account for future non-strategic background housing growth within Cheltenham, they do not identify or assess the specific locations for growth which are proposed within the CP.
- 2.1.3 The CP transport studies (Transport Assessment Parts 1 and 2) do not provide any evidence to suggest that the key improvements identified in the JCS would be appropriate when considering the development allocations proposed in the CP.
- 2.1.4 Furthermore, the Transport Assessment Part 2 finds that without the JCS package of measures, parts of the highway network would be at capacity, resulting in severe queuing and delay without any further intervention. However, neither of the Transport Assessments submitted to support the CP propose any additional or alternative mitigation measures relating to the allocations proposed in the CP.
- 2.1.5 This is particularly relevant when considering the JCS allocations to the North West and West of Cheltenham (JCS Policies A4 and A7 respectively). The CP seeks to allocate further development on the western side of the Borough, namely the Arle Nursery site, which will serve to exacerbate existing and future transport issues, and assessments should be undertaken to determine whether the infrastructure identified in the JCS evidence base remains suitable.

### **3 Matter 8-2**

*“Do the proposals for new development in the CP comply with scenario DS7 in the evidence base to the JCS?”*

- 3.1.1 No. Beyond the Strategic Allocations identified in the JCS, scenario DS7 accounts for non-strategic growth as dispersed background growth, whereas the CP seeks to allocate the growth to specific locations.
- 3.1.2 These specific locations for growth may result in different patterns of movement than were assessed within the JCS evidence base. The CP should therefore assess whether previously identified packages of key improvements are still suitable.

### **4 Matter 8-3**

*“Does the CP include policies which adequately manage the delivery of development so that severe transport impacts do not arise?”*

- 4.1.1 Policy INF1 of the JCS would also apply to the CP allocations and therefore additional policies are unnecessary.

## 5 Matter 8-4

*“Does there need to be any assessment at the time of submission of relevant planning applications to determine how much development may proceed in advance of the JCS highway interventions being in place. If so, does this need to be made clear in any relevant CP policies?”*

- 5.1.1 Any Transport Assessment should consider the phasing of development and the associated required infrastructure, both in respect of the impacts arising from the development which is the subject of the Transport Assessment, but also the cumulative impacts of other allocated and committed developments.
- 5.1.2 The requirements for Transport Assessments are specified within both JCS Policy INF1 and in the NPPF. The specific requirement to consider the cumulative effects of new development is also set out within the Planning Practice Guidance.
- 5.1.3 Therefore, whilst the existing policy framework set out in the JCS and NPPF should offer sufficient clarity, the CP policies should at least be consistent with policy INF1 of the JCS.

## 6 Matter 8-5

*“Is the safeguarding of the former Honeybourne rail line (Policy TN1) justified?”*

- 6.1.1 As set out in the text supporting Policy TN1, parts of the redundant rail line have already been brought back into use as a footpath and cycleway. This provides a valuable off-road link through the town, including a connection to the rail station.
- 6.1.2 An extensive network of high quality new and improved cycle facilities is proposed as part of the Elms Park scheme, including connections to the Honeybourne Line. The ability to provide wider sustainable connections through future extensions to the Honeybourne Line would therefore be welcomed.