

CHELTENHAM LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

HANNICK HOMES

Participant ID: 160

Comment Number: 1060

Matter 4: Green Belt and Green Infrastructure

Hearing Statement

January 2019

Contents

Matter 4: Green Belt and Green Infrastructure	3
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Matter 4: Green Belt and Green Infrastructure

Main Issue: Green Belt

Question 1: Does the CP accord with Policy SD5 of the JCS in relation to the Green Belt?

- 1.1 There is no conflict between Policy SD5 and the current Local Plan in our view, however, Policy SD5 purposely retained flexibility within the worded of part 2 of the policy for additional limited Green Belt release at local plan stage. The use of such flexibility afforded by Policy SD5 is now required in order to meet Cheltenham's housing needs.

Question 2: Are there any exceptional circumstances which would justify a limited review of Green Belt boundaries through the CP?

- 1.2 Yes, there are exceptional circumstances that would justify a limited review of Green belt boundaries through the Cheltenham Local Plan.
- 1.3 Such a conclusion would be consistent with the findings of the JCS inspector and the potential for such release was allowed for within the wording of Policy SD5 to enable flexibility when it came to the progression of District Plans.
- 1.4 Instigating this flexibility to allow further limited Green Belt release is required, and fully justified, in order to meet the housing requirements set and found sound within the JCS. Such release is justified for the same reasons as concluded by the appeal Inspector¹ and because of the identified shortfalls in both five year supply and meeting overall plan period needs if further release from the Green Belt were not permitted.
- 1.5 Indeed, the JCS Inspector was, at one point during the examination of the Local Plan, advocating that the JCS Councils should considered the release of further smaller sites on the edge of Cheltenham to contribute to both short term needs, and to meeting overall plan period supply. Indeed, in her preliminary findings, the Inspector did identify the potential for further Green Belt sites on the northern edge of Cheltenham to be released² but later accepted that she could not enforce this release on the Authorities. Instead, she accepted the Authorities' desire to instead retain flexibility with Policy SD5 to allow the potential for additional Green Belt release at Local Plan stage. Such release is now required and exceptional circumstances do exist to support this.

¹ As set out at paragraphs 158 to 177 of the JCS Inspector's Report

² Please see paragraphs 4.4 to 4.6 of Turley's Representation for Hannick Homes to the Pre-submission Draft Local Plan

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