

Cheltenham Plan Examination

Matter 6: Historic and built environment

Written statement by Cheltenham Borough Council

23rd January 2019

Matter 6: Historic and built environment

1. Will Policy D1 deliver the quality of design and townscape appropriate to Cheltenham?

JCS Policy SD4 is a very detailed design policy which also includes supporting tables on principles of urban design, principles of architectural design and masterplans and design briefs. Care was taken in drafting the Cheltenham Plan not to replicate elements of this policy. Policy D1 in the Cheltenham Plan emphasises priorities which are particularly pertinent to the borough. It was considered that more detailed design policies would be over prescriptive and prevent the flexibility required to manage development in a diverse borough.

2. Are policies HE1, HE2 and HE3 clearly worded and in accordance with national policy in paragraphs 126-141 of the NPPF?

Policy HE1 concerns the protection of buildings of local importance and non-designated heritage assets. The borough contains a large number of buildings which have been identified as important such as those on the Index of Buildings of Local Importance and 'positive' buildings within Conservation Areas. The council consider that this policy is in accordance with the NPPF, in particular paragraph 135 which states:

“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.”

Policy HE2 concerns the protection of national and local archaeological remains of importance and the preference for remains to be preserved in situ. The council consider that this policy is in accordance with the NPPF, in particular paragraph 139 which states:

“Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.”

Policy HE3 concerns advertisements, signs and hoardings in Conservation Areas. Inappropriate and over-extensive signs and advertisements can be particularly damaging to the character of a conservation area. Consequently, the Council will exercise close control of advertisements in these areas; a particularly high standard of design, materials and finish will be required, and all advertisements will need to suit the particular character of a building and its surroundings.

The NPPF recognises that advertisements can have a detrimental impact on the built environment. Paragraph 67 states:

“Poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment. Control over outdoor advertisements should be efficient, effective and simple in concept and operation. Only those advertisements which will clearly have an appreciable impact on a building or on their surroundings should be subject to the local planning authority’s detailed assessment.”

The Council consider that Policy HE3 accords with the NPPF in that it provides a method to manage advertisements and signs within sensitive areas.

3. In CP Table 14, how would the indicator in a) work to provide evidence that the objective is being met?

The Council concede that this indicator does not clearly relate to the plan objective. It may be necessary to revise this.