

# **Cheltenham Plan Examination**

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## **Matter 8: Transport**

**Written statement by Cheltenham Borough Council**

**23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019**

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## **1. 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?**

The Cheltenham Plan transport consultants (Arup) have produced a briefing note to address the relevant transport modelling matters raised by Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) in their draft position statement dated 17th January 2019 (Appendix A).

Arup updated the JCS transport model to forecast the demand as accurately as possible at the time the work was undertaken and agreed the methodology at the “Modelling Methodology Discussion” meeting with CH2M, Highways England & GCC on the 24th October 2017.

The primary aim of the Cheltenham Plan Transport Assessment was to identify the impact of the Cheltenham Plan on its own. Within Phase 1 the ‘without Cheltenham Plan’ scenario was compared against the ‘with Cheltenham Plan’ scenario using the highway network excluding the JCS DS7 mitigation. Further to this the ‘without Cheltenham Plan’ scenario was also compared against the ‘with Cheltenham Plan’ scenario using the highway network including the JCS DS7 mitigation.

In Phase 2 the ‘with’ and ‘without’ scenarios were modelled excluding the JCS mitigation package assuming a ‘worst case scenario’. This was for the following reasons:

- The DS7 mitigation package did not include delivery phasing. The mitigation measures are not a final and definitive list of infrastructure.
- The Phase 1 study shows that the JCS DS7 mitigation package is still a possible mitigation option of the ‘with development’ scenario.

## **2. Do the proposals for new development in the CP comply with scenario DS7 in the evidence base to the JCS?**

The evidence base presented in the Phase 1 report considered the JCS DS7 mitigation. The outcomes of that work show very minor differences in volume, volume capacity ratio and delays.

The detailed junction modelling in the Phase 2 report did not include the mitigation measures included in the JCS DS7 and this was for the following reasons:

- Additional scope,
- Additional significant work extracting turning volumes, and
- Missing data – design signal timings

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

Both Highways England and GCC have raised concerns as to whether JCS Policy INF1 will apply to all development within the Cheltenham Plan. The Council has reassured both parties that INF1 will apply to all development within Cheltenham. GCC maintain that it would be beneficial for the Cheltenham Plan to mention specifically that INF1 applies to all non-strategic sites. The Council are continuing discussions with GCC and intend to produce a Statement of Common Ground on any amendments to any Cheltenham Plan policies to help clarify this issue.

### **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?**

The Council do not consider that it is appropriate for this work to be carried out as part of the Cheltenham Plan as it would require a comprehensive revisit to JCS level modelling and include assumptions about delivery and mitigation which is strategic in nature. As mentioned above the mitigation measures included in DS7 are not a final and definitive list of infrastructure.

Additionally, the Phase 1 study shows that the JCS DS7 mitigation package is still a possible mitigation option of the 'with development' Cheltenham Plan scenario.

The Council agree with GCC that it should be made clear to landowners and developers that evidence in the form of a robust Transport Assessment will be required at the application stage. The assessment will identify traffic impact and determine the highway mitigation requirements in line with the JCS. The Council are continuing discussions with GCC and intend to produce a Statement of Common Ground on any amendments to any Cheltenham Plan policies to help clarify this issue.

### **5. Is the safeguarding of the former Honeybourne rail line (Policy TN1) justified?**

Cheltenham Borough Council considers that Policy TN1 and the safeguarding of the former Honeybourne rail line is justified for the following reasons.

The Honeybourne rail line is a vital corridor for sustainable modes of transport which is free from motorised traffic. This route is well used and it is predicted to gain further use, as the town grows with realisation of the developments to the west and north-west of the town from the JCS allocations. It is important that sustainable transport modes are protected and its use encouraged, of which the Honeybourne line is a vital part of Cheltenham's sustainable transport network.

A similar policy has been included in the Cotswold District Council Local Plan 2011-2031 (August 2018) (Policy SP6: Former Cheltenham to Stratford-Upon-Avon Railway Line), as the line extends beyond the border of Cheltenham Borough.

This policy is generally supported by Gloucestershire County Council as the highways authority.