

Cheltenham Borough Council
Local Plan 2011-2031
EXAMINATION
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Examination into the soundness of the Cheltenham Plan (CP) 2011-2031

Post Hearing Advice

Introduction

1. At this stage I consider that the CP is a Plan which could be found sound subject to main modifications (MMs). However I have reached no final conclusions at this time. The MMs will be subject to consultation and I will reach my final conclusions taking any representations into account.
2. During the hearing sessions a number of potential MMs were discussed and a list has been maintained by the Council. In addition I indicated at the hearings that there were matters on which I would need to deliberate before I would be in a position to advise the Councils as to whether any additional work or further MMs should be considered. This letter provides my views on these matters. It also sets out the administrative arrangements relating to all potential main modifications.
3. I am not inviting any comments about the contents of this letter, although I am seeking the Council's response on the matters raised. I will detail my full reasoning on these issues in my final report on the CP.

Site HD4

20. The site is allocated for some 29 dwellings, and the Council has refused planning permission for a development of 69 houses. I note the position of Historic England (HistE) which raises issues relating to potential impact on the settings of the Grade II* listed Ashley Manor and the Grade II listed Charlton Manor. However, the views of HistE are disputed by expert evidence which I have taken into account in my consideration of the potential for development of the site. I visited the site on the 5 March 2019.
21. Historic England proposes amendments to the wording of Policy HD4. These would restrict new housing to the west of the site behind the existing tree belt and require improvements to be secured to the Ice House which lies between Charlton Manor and Ashley Manor. However, having reviewed the evidence and visited the site, I consider that the reduction in the area of the development recommended by HistE is not justified. Nevertheless, there is good reason to amend the boundaries of the development area from that currently proposed in the CP, and to require new tree planting around the east and south boundaries to safeguard the settings of both listed buildings.
22. New housing should be located away from the setting of the west elevation of Ashley Manor. This could be achieved through the amendment to the southern boundary of the allocation site so that it continues in a straight line westwards from the rear of the northernmost school building. In addition, to provide an undeveloped buffer between the rear garden boundary of Charlton Manor and the new development, the eastern boundary of the site should be repositioned at least 30 metres west of the rear boundary with Charlton Manor. The Ice House would remain within the confines of the site, but its future could be secured through the inclusion of the requirement put forward by Historic England as bullet point 2.
23. An MM is required to Policy HD4 to identify the boundaries of the site as suggested above; to identify the level of new housing which could realistically be accommodated within the new site boundary; to identify the need for new tree planting around the east and south boundaries of the site; and to require the improvements to the Ice House in accordance with the views of HistE. Changes will also be required to the Plan of HD4 (currently on page 70) and to the Policies Map.