

**Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury
Joint Core Strategy
2011 - 2031**

**Adopted
11th December 2017**

Policy INF1: Transport Network

- 1. Developers should provide safe and accessible connections to the transport network to enable travel choice for residents and commuters. All proposals should ensure that:**
 - i. Safe and efficient access to the highway network is provided for all transport modes**
 - ii. Connections are provided, where appropriate, to existing walking, cycling and passenger transport networks and should be designed to encourage maximum potential use**
 - iii. All opportunities are identified and taken, where appropriate, to extend and/or modify existing walking, cycling and public transport networks and links, to ensure that credible travel choices are provided by sustainable modes**
- 2. Planning permission will be granted only where the impact of development is not considered to be severe. Where severe impacts that are attributable to the development are considered likely, including as a consequence of cumulative impacts, they must be mitigated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authorities and in line with the Local Transport Plan.**
- 3. Developers will be required to assess the impact of proposals on the transport network through a Transport Assessment. The assessment will demonstrate the impact, including cumulative impacts, of the prospective development on:**
 - a) Congestion on the transport network**
 - b) Travel safety within the zone of influence of the development**
 - c) Noise and/or atmospheric pollution within the zone of influence of the development**
- 4. Where appropriate the local planning authority may require applications to be accompanied by a Travel Plan that has full regard to the criteria set out in the NPPF.**

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 1, 2, 3 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9.

Explanation

- 5.2.6 All development influences travel patterns either through new trips on the network or the re-routing of existing trips. This may occur on a micro-level by providing a single access point onto the highway network, or the macro-level where a range of infrastructure improvements are required to provide a range of travel choices for a strategic allocation.
- 5.2.7 The desired outcome from all development remains a safe and efficient transport network where people feel safe and they have a reasonable variety of travel choices. The degree of choice must be realistic in relation to the proposed development in terms of use, affordability and ongoing maintenance. Policy SD4 sets out the approach to sustainable travel modes and choice in new development in regards to masterplanning, design and layout.
- 5.2.8 The need to mitigate the impact of car-based travel in respect of road congestion, health and atmospheric pollution is a key objective of the NPPF. It underpins the requirement in the NPPF for development that generates significant amounts of movement to be supported by Transport Statements or Transport Assessments. Proposals should fully consider measures, where feasible, to encourage individuals to walk or cycle for appropriate short distance trips (less than three miles) or use passenger transport for longer distance journeys. The impact

on passenger transport services needs to be considered to ensure site sufficient capacity exists on services and/or car-parking facilities at rail stations.

- 5.2.9 The local planning authority may require a site-wide travel plan to be submitted with proposals to address sustainable transport strategy for a development. Travel plans are a useful tool when considering how best to mitigate the impact of car-based transport and to promote a shift towards more sustainable modes. Travel plans will be expected to conform to the guidance set out in the NPPF and the PPG. They should form long-term management strategies to put in place measures to actively manage the transport impacts of development and promote and encourage sustainable travel. This should take into account all journeys likely to result from a development. Travel plans will be expected to identify specific outcomes, targets and measures and set out clear future monitoring and management arrangements.
- 5.2.10 Where known air or noise quality issues exist and a significant increase in car-based travel is expected from a development, all relevant environmental assessments must be completed as part of the planning application process. Particular issues exist at congested junctions within urban areas and on routes with a high volume of slow-moving traffic. Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury have declared five Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) under Section 83 of the Environment Act 1995 where Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) exceedances occur due to traffic-related emissions.

Delivery

- 5.2.11 The policies will be implemented through the development management process.
- 5.2.12 The County Council has provided a number of useful documents which provide advice for developers. These are all available through Gloucestershire County Council's website (www.gloucestershire.gov.uk) and are periodically updated and amended to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
- **The Transport Implementation Strategy (TIS)** - This strategy sits alongside the JCS providing important explanation and guidance on implementation for decision makers interpreting policies in the JCS, particularly INF1 and transport elements of policies SD4 (design) and SA1 (strategic allocations).
 - **Local Transport Plan 2015-2031** – provides an overview of the strategic context of the transport network within the county, setting out strategy, policies and investment priorities. The LTP is a living document which will be updated and amended to reflect changing policy at the national and local level. This would enable the LTP to be responsive to any significant transport infrastructure needs that may arise through the JCS plan period, including future reviews.
 - **Local Developer Guide 2013** – provides a brief overview for developers on the type of infrastructure considerations that should be taken into account when making a planning application
 - **Manual for Gloucestershire Streets** and its appendices – provides guidance to developers, their consultants and design engineers, local planning authorities, Parish and Town Councils and the public, on how new development within Gloucestershire can contribute towards the provision of a safe and sustainable transport network within the County.

INF3 – GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Background

- 5.4.1 The term ‘green infrastructure’ is used to describe the network of high-quality green spaces, watercourses and other environmental features in an area. Because of the value of green infrastructure, individual features are often described as ‘assets’. These assets may be large or small, natural or man-made, ranging from expansive natural landscapes to individual trees and green roofs.
- 5.4.2 Strategic green infrastructure assets in the JCS area include The Cotswolds AONB, the River Severn and its washlands, and strategic corridors between major assets and populations including rivers, floodplains, pedestrian and cycle routes.
- 5.4.3 Local green infrastructure assets include but are not limited to public parks, private gardens, recreation grounds, amenity space, play space, allotments, woodlands and orchards. Linear features such as Public Rights of Way, local cycle paths, footpaths, bridleways, railway embankments, roadside verges, hedgerows, rivers, brooks and the floodplain are particularly important for connectivity. Finally, individual features, including trees, make a valuable contribution to the network.
- 5.4.4 All development, including development at Strategic Allocations, should make a positive contribution to green infrastructure in the JCS area, helping to establish and reinforce networks for ecology, recreation and active travel that are resilient to current and future pressures including climate change. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that individual assets and the integrity and connectivity of the network are planned, protected and enhanced, recognising that networks extend across local authority boundaries at landscape scale.

Policy INF3: Green Infrastructure

1. *The green infrastructure network of local and strategic importance will be conserved and enhanced, in order to deliver a series of multifunctional, linked green corridors across the JCS area by:*
 - i. *improving the quantity and/or quality of assets*
 - ii. *improving linkages between assets in a manner appropriate to the scale of development, and*
 - iii. *designing improvements in a way that supports the cohesive management of green infrastructure.*
2. *Development proposals should consider and contribute positively towards green infrastructure, including the wider landscape context and strategic corridors between major assets and populations. Where new residential development will create, or add to, a need for publicly accessible green space or outdoor space for sports and recreation, this will be fully met in accordance with Policy INF4. Development at Strategic Allocations will be required to deliver connectivity through the site, linking urban areas with the wider rural hinterland.*
3. *Existing green infrastructure will be protected in a manner that reflects its contribution to ecosystem services (including biodiversity, landscape/townscape quality, the historic environment, public access, recreation and play) and the connectivity of the green infrastructure network. Development proposals that will have an impact on woodlands, hedges and trees will need to include a justification for why this impact cannot be avoided and should incorporate measures acceptable to the local planning authority to mitigate the loss. Mitigation should be provided on-site or, where this is not possible, in the immediate environs of the site.*
4. *Where assets are created, retained or replaced within a scheme, they should be properly integrated into the design and contribute to local character and distinctiveness. Proposals should also make provisions for future maintenance of green infrastructure.*

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 4, 6, 7 and 9.

Explanation

- 5.4.5 According to Natural England, green infrastructure needs to be planned and delivered at all spatial scales from national to neighbourhood levels. The greatest benefits will be gained when this network is designed and managed as a multi-functional resource, capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits (ecosystem services) for local communities. These include social and health benefits associated with recreational space, walking and cycling networks and opportunities for social interaction; environmental benefits such as enhanced biodiversity and flood mitigation; and economic benefits associated with an environment that is attractive to residents, visitors and investors. Design and management of the green infrastructure network should also respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitats and landscape types.
- 5.4.6 The JCS authorities have produced a Green Infrastructure Strategy based on an assessment of the area's environmental assets. The strategy identifies two key regional/sub-regional green infrastructure assets in the area: The Cotswolds AONB to the east and the River

Severn and its washlands to the west. The River Severn area has been promoted by the JCS authorities as a potential Regional Park. This would recognise the special habitat qualities of the area as well as its importance for the quiet enjoyment of the countryside. Below this, at an intermediate level, the strategy seeks to link these two assets and the main urban areas through a number of green corridors, most of which are watercourses. At a local level, the strategy identifies watercourse corridors as key green infrastructure assets in the urban areas. Ideally, all green infrastructure should link with these areas and form a co-ordinated network. The Green Infrastructure Strategy therefore includes a vision that everyone living in the JCS area can, within 300 metres (five minutes' walk-time), access a green infrastructure corridor or asset. From there, people will be able to travel through interconnected and multi-functional green spaces to ultimately emerge into the strategic assets of The Cotswolds AONB or the Severn and its washlands.

- 5.4.7 Enhancement of green infrastructure and ecological networks will require existing assets to be retained (where appropriate), improved and better managed, and new features to be created. It is recognised that the growth to be delivered through the JCS may increase demands on green spaces through increased recreational use. This will require careful management, particularly for ecologically sensitive sites. This could include requiring developer contributions for such provision (for example, a contribution towards the management of the Cotswolds Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation [SAC]). The JCS authorities will work together with key stakeholders, such as Natural England and the Environment Agency, to develop management and mitigation packages for important green and ecological networks and to discuss how future development can contribute to this. Policy on developer contributions is set out in Policy INF6. New green infrastructure should combine with established green spaces to thread through and surround the built environment, connecting urban areas and villages with the natural and agricultural areas beyond. This will require delivery of both large- and small-scale interventions at local, intermediate and strategic/landscape level. Development at Strategic Allocations will need to deliver connectivity through the site, linking urban areas with the wider rural hinterland.
- 5.4.8 As green infrastructure networks are enhanced by new development, it is important that other incidental green infrastructure assets are not lost or allowed to deteriorate. These include private gardens, cemeteries and allotments which will not all be identified on proposals maps but are nevertheless an essential element of the wider green infrastructure network.

Delivery

- 5.4.9 Delivery of a comprehensive green infrastructure network across the JCS area will require a co-ordinated approach to implementing improvements associated with new developments. This will be pursued in the context of Gloucestershire's Strategic Green Infrastructure Framework and the JCS Green Infrastructure Strategy. The JCS local authorities will work with their neighbours beyond the JCS area to deliver green infrastructure improvements in cross-boundary locations.
- 5.4.10 Delivery will be achieved primarily through the development management process. This will include landscaping, trees and other planting that meets the requirements of Policy SD4. Innovative features such as green roofs and living walls can also contribute to the network. Where new development creates a need for publicly- accessible green space, developers will need to make provision in accordance with Policy INF4.

- 5.4.11 Moving towards achieving the vision of the Green Infrastructure Strategy will require each development proposal to consider how it can contribute to improving connectivity in the network. Key linkages between areas of green infrastructure will be targeted through the JCS-wide Strategic Green Infrastructure Map and the urban area green infrastructure maps contained in the Green Infrastructure Strategy. Proposals that improve the accessibility of the green infrastructure network for sports, play and travel, for example by creating, improving or extending footpaths, bridleways and cycling links, will therefore be encouraged. Accessibility improvements should take account of the need to protect the ecological function of these corridors in accordance with Policy SD9.
- 5.4.12 Where specific policies are required to designate and protect local green infrastructure assets (such as public parks, sports pitches, allotments or local green space), these will be included in district plans and illustrated on associated Policies Maps. Other detailed policies relating to green infrastructure provision and protection, such as tree-planting requirements and Tree Preservation Orders, will also be contained in district plans where necessary. Ancient woodland and veteran trees will be protected in accordance with the NPPF.
- 5.4.13 The indicative site layout for the strategic allocation at North West Cheltenham indicates where a green buffer should be retained near Swindon Village when master planning this area in accordance with Policy SA1. The Cheltenham Plan will allocate the specific boundaries of Local Green Space in this area, along with any other Local Green Space to be allocated in the Borough.
- 5.4.14 Mechanisms and funding streams associated with other countywide and local strategies will help to secure improvements to green infrastructure. These include strategies for parks and open spaces, biodiversity/nature conservation and local transport. Landscape-scale projects that support the delivery of Policy SD9 will particularly be encouraged. Proposals that enable the expansion, buffering and re-connection of native and ancient woodland will also be encouraged.
- 5.4.15 District Plans may include policy or guidance on making provision for play space or improvements to recreational provision associated with growing populations.

INF4 – SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Background

- 5.5.1 Everyone living and working in the JCS area should have access to facilities that meet their everyday needs. Essential social and community infrastructure includes schools, health services, community and spiritual centres, libraries, sports pitches, open space, and children’s crèche and play provision. Other cultural and sports facilities, such as museums, galleries and entertainment venues, serve the community whilst also providing an important tourist attraction. By bringing people together and providing opportunities for social and physical activity, all these facilities contribute to quality of life, health and well-being in the area.

Policy INF4: Social and Community Infrastructure

- 1. Proposals to develop land or buildings currently or previously in use as a community facility will demonstrate, including evidence of engagement with relevant local community groups and partner organisations, why the facility is no longer required and, as appropriate, how, when and where suitable local replacement facilities will be provided. Provision of replacement facilities will have regard to the locational and other relevant elements of this policy.*
- 2. Where new residential development will create, or add to, a need for community facilities, it will be fully met as on-site provision and/or as a contribution to facilities or services off-site. New or refurbished provision will be of an appropriate type, standard and size. From an early stage, developers will be expected to engage with the relevant local authorities and infrastructure providers and, as appropriate, relevant local community groups where they exist, to ensure that new provision meets the needs of the community that it will serve and is fit for purpose.*
- 3. Social and community infrastructure should be centrally located to the population it serves and be easily accessible on foot and by bicycle. It should be located so as to have the potential to be well-served by public transport. Developers should aim to provide flexible, multifunctional facilities within mixed-use developments, creating shared space which maximises benefits to the community and minimises land-take. In the case of open space, ‘easily accessible’ means it is located within reasonable walking distance of the development it serves. New facilities should be accessible to all members of the community, and be planned and phased in parallel with new development.*

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Explanation

- 5.5.2 By providing and helping to maintain social and community infrastructure, development has an important role in promoting social well-being and creating healthy, inclusive communities. For the purpose of this policy and having regard to the JCS IDP, infrastructure in this respect includes facilities for education and training, health and social care, community and culture, village halls, local shops and pubs, libraries, places of worship, major sporting attractions, leisure centres and children’s play provision. Infrastructure for health, social care and education are essential community facilities that will need to be assessed in accordance with the NPPF.

INF4 – SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Background

- 5.5.1 Everyone living and working in the JCS area should have access to facilities that meet their everyday needs. Essential social and community infrastructure includes schools, health services, community and spiritual centres, libraries, sports pitches, open space, and children’s crèche and play provision. Other cultural and sports facilities, such as museums, galleries and entertainment venues, serve the community whilst also providing an important tourist attraction. By bringing people together and providing opportunities for social and physical activity, all these facilities contribute to quality of life, health and well-being in the area.

Policy INF4: Social and Community Infrastructure

- 1. Proposals to develop land or buildings currently or previously in use as a community facility will demonstrate, including evidence of engagement with relevant local community groups and partner organisations, why the facility is no longer required and, as appropriate, how, when and where suitable local replacement facilities will be provided. Provision of replacement facilities will have regard to the locational and other relevant elements of this policy.*
- 2. Where new residential development will create, or add to, a need for community facilities, it will be fully met as on-site provision and/or as a contribution to facilities or services off-site. New or refurbished provision will be of an appropriate type, standard and size. From an early stage, developers will be expected to engage with the relevant local authorities and infrastructure providers and, as appropriate, relevant local community groups where they exist, to ensure that new provision meets the needs of the community that it will serve and is fit for purpose.*
- 3. Social and community infrastructure should be centrally located to the population it serves and be easily accessible on foot and by bicycle. It should be located so as to have the potential to be well-served by public transport. Developers should aim to provide flexible, multifunctional facilities within mixed-use developments, creating shared space which maximises benefits to the community and minimises land-take. In the case of open space, ‘easily accessible’ means it is located within reasonable walking distance of the development it serves. New facilities should be accessible to all members of the community, and be planned and phased in parallel with new development.*

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Explanation

- 5.5.2 By providing and helping to maintain social and community infrastructure, development has an important role in promoting social well-being and creating healthy, inclusive communities. For the purpose of this policy and having regard to the JCS IDP, infrastructure in this respect includes facilities for education and training, health and social care, community and culture, village halls, local shops and pubs, libraries, places of worship, major sporting attractions, leisure centres and children’s play provision. Infrastructure for health, social care and education are essential community facilities that will need to be assessed in accordance with the NPPF.

- 5.5.3 It is important that new development, which will add to the combined needs of the community, contributes to new or expanded facilities to ensure that these additional needs are met. For provision to be sufficient and timely, it must be brought forward in parallel with new housing and other development so that facilities are available for use when needed. Where new development occurs in areas of inequality or undersupply, there may be opportunities to re-connect the area and provide wider benefits. Developers should therefore take opportunities where they exist to integrate new provision with existing facilities (for example, by extending a facility) or to provide it in a location that is accessible to residents of neighbouring areas with identified needs.
- 5.5.4 The right location for a community facility will depend on its scale and function. Facilities that serve the day-to-day needs of a community should be located in local centres close to the communities that they serve and should be fully accessible and inclusive. The location of higher-level facilities, such as leisure centres, should be highly accessible to all members of the community and, where possible, should be directed to an allocated site or an appropriate site in an area of undersupply. All facilities should be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. Mixed-use development can help to ensure that housing and businesses are close to services and that neighbourhoods are safe, lively and well-maintained. Facilities that are flexible and perform a range of functions can also help to generate higher levels of activity whilst making more efficient use of land.
- 5.5.5 As stated in the introduction, social and community infrastructure is vitally important in ensuring the quality of life and well-being of communities. For this reason, the redevelopment of a community facility will only be acceptable in certain circumstances; for example, where the facility will be replaced, or where it can satisfactorily be demonstrated that there is no current or future need or demand, or where a marginal loss will result in improvement or provision of a complementary use. Proposals to build on existing sports and recreational buildings or land should be considered in accordance with the criteria in the NPPF.

Delivery

- 5.5.6 Delivery will primarily be through the development management process. Through preparation and implementation of the JCS IDP, the three JCS councils, Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Forums will continue to work collaboratively with infrastructure providers, developers and partnership groups to ensure that social and community infrastructure needs of existing and future communities are met. Existing social sustainability initiatives including the partnership between Cheltenham Borough Homes, the Barnwood Trust, Bromford and Sovereign, as well as the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) initiative at Gloucester city, will be taken forward by the JCS authorities, including through the district level plans.

INF5 – RENEWABLE ENERGY AND LOW CARBON ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Background

- 5.6.1 Renewable energy is energy that has been derived from natural resources that are generally regenerative or are practically inexhaustible. As well as the more usual renewable technologies such as wind and solar, there is potential for hydro, biomass and biogas. Some of these technologies, such as biogas, provide opportunities for rural employment as well as biodiversity and landscape benefits.
- 5.6.2 Some renewable energy technologies, such as ground source heat pumps and solar panels, can easily form part of a range of sustainable design and construction measures (set out in Policy SD3) and should be readily incorporated into new developments wherever possible, taking into account the other policies in this plan.
- 5.6.3 Commercial renewable energy installations tend to be large as they have to capture the available natural energy from the environment around them and, as such, they have tended to be controversial.
- 5.6.4 The drive for renewable/low carbon sources of energy is not just about reducing greenhouse gas emissions; it also concerns a more secure energy market, long- term cheaper energy costs, and importantly for the JCS, retaining money within the local economy. Installation of plant can also support local job creation.
- 5.6.5 Policy INF5 applies to proposals concerning renewable energy or low carbon energy-generating technologies, including biomass generators, anaerobic digestion plants and other energy from waste technologies, hydropower turbines, and ground-mounted solar photovoltaic arrays. The one exception to this is with wind turbines. Locations for these, unless government guidance changes to the contrary, will be allocated through district level plans or neighbourhood plans where appropriate.

Policy INF5: Renewable Energy/Low Carbon Energy Development

- 1. Proposals for the generation of energy from renewable resources, or low carbon energy development (with the exception of wind turbines), will be supported, provided the wider environmental, social or economic benefits of the installation would not be outweighed by a significant adverse impact on the local environment, taking into account the following factors:***
 - i. The impact (or cumulative impact) of the scheme, including any associated transmission lines, buildings and access roads, on landscape character, local amenity, heritage assets or biodiversity*
 - ii. Any effect on a protected area such as The Cotswolds AONB or other designated areas such as the Green Belt*
 - iii. Any unacceptable adverse impacts on users and residents of the local area, including emissions, noise, odour and visual amenity.*
- 2. Proposals are more likely to be supported when they demonstrate:***
 - i. That they have been designed and sited so as to minimise any adverse impacts on the surrounding area*
 - ii. Benefits arising directly from the scheme to the local economy, the community and achievement of national targets*
 - iii. The feasibility and cost-effectiveness of removing any installation and re-instatement of the site in future years*
 - iv. The net gain of carbon savings, taking into account carbon use through manufacturing and installation of the technology.*

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 1, 3, 4 and 6.

Explanation

- 5.6.6 The Government has adopted ambitious targets for renewable energy generation. Nationally the expectation is that we will generate 15% of our total energy demand through renewable sources by 2020. This is total energy that includes heat and transport. To achieve this, a step change in the take-up of renewables will be needed, and the planning system has a key role to play in this. There are more ambitious targets for 2030 and beyond.
- 5.6.7 The NPPF makes clear that planning plays a key role in reducing greenhouse emissions and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon-associated infrastructure. Amongst other things, local planning authorities should have a positive strategy to promote renewable and low carbon energy, have policies that maximise renewables and low carbon development while ensuring their adverse impacts are satisfactorily addressed, and give support to community-led initiatives.
- 5.6.8 The NPPF suggests that local planning authorities consider identifying suitable areas for renewable energy. Gloucestershire County Council commissioned ENTEC to undertake a study into renewable energy capacity across the county in 2010. It considered renewable/low carbon development at a commercial level and identified wind and biomass as potential resources for the JCS area. Furthermore, it identified that there were no significant grid constraints within the JCS area, and that electric and gas grid availability was generally good. The ENTEC study does not provide sufficiently strong evidence on its own to enable the JCS authorities to identify suitable areas for developing renewable energy;

however, district plans may seek to identify these based on more detailed local evidence, or may seek to provide further guidance on the issue.

Delivery

- 5.6.9 Other than through the technologies incorporated into buildings, design and sustainable construction, delivery of renewable energy development will be through the private sector bringing forward proposals for commercial renewable or low carbon energy generation. This may be significantly influenced by the incentive regimes that are in place at a national level, whether for heat or electricity.
- 5.6.10 The JCS authorities will work in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, the LEP and other partner organisations, to identify and take advantage of opportunities to increase renewable energy generation, such as the potential for providing combined heat and power to new development, wherever it is compliant with the other policies in this plan.
- 5.6.11 Development management decision-taking will reflect the value and priority attached to moving towards a low-carbon economy and more sustainable energy generation.

INF7 – DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

Background

- 5.8.1 Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are used to mitigate harm that may be caused by a development. Obligations are negotiated as part of the planning application process, either as unilateral undertakings or as agreements. The Act enables local planning authorities and developers to negotiate a range of obligations, which can be linked to financial contributions, be restrictive in nature, or require specific works or actions to take place.
- 5.8.2 The Planning Act 2008 and relevant regulations also make provision for a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Following a formal preparation process that includes viability analysis of the plan as well as independent public examination and through setting a charging schedule that sets out local tariffs, CIL empowers local planning authorities to make standard charges on all new development over a certain threshold.
- 5.8.3 The JCS authorities will continue to use S106 planning obligations during a transitional period when consideration is given by each of the three constituent authorities to the introduction of a CIL system. Even where CIL is introduced, it is likely that the S106 mechanism will be retained for use in securing site-specific obligations and particularly in respect of affordable housing.

Policy INF7: Developer Contributions

- 1. Arrangements for direct implementation or financial contributions towards the provision of infrastructure and services required as a consequence of development, including its wider cumulative impact, and provision where appropriate for its maintenance, will be negotiated with developers before the grant of planning permission. Financial contributions will be sought through the S106 and CIL mechanisms as appropriate.*
- 2. Where, having regard to the on- and/or off-site provision of infrastructure, there is concern relating to the viability of the development, an independent viability assessment, funded by the developer and in proportion with the scale, nature and/or context of the proposal, will be required to accompany planning applications. Viability assessments will be undertaken in accordance with an agreed methodology and published in full prior to determination for all non-policy compliant schemes. Where necessary the JCS authorities will arrange for them to be independently appraised at the expense of the applicant*

This policy contributes towards achieving all of the JCS Strategic Objectives.

Explanation

- 5.8.4 To secure the best use of land, the JCS authorities need to ensure, through the use of conditions and planning obligations attached to planning permissions, that new development provides for the infrastructure, facilities, amenities and other planning benefits which are necessary to support and serve it, and to offset any consequential or potential loss to the local area which may result from the development.
- 5.8.5 The JCS authorities recognise that economic viability of development can be finely balanced, particularly where significant infrastructure requirements are identified as being needed to

make the proposal acceptable to the local planning authority. The balance may be particularly sensitive in respect of redevelopment of brownfield land and, where evidence is available, the local planning authority will be mindful of that in those cases. It is in the interests both of the local planning authority and the developer that an independent viability assessment is undertaken to enable an objective appraisal to inform negotiations. Whilst the JCS authorities recognise that the viability assessment needs to be proportionate with the nature and scale of the proposal, it should not be assumed that only 'major' development as defined in regulations will be subject to this requirement. It will be a matter for the local planning authority to decide, on a case-by-case basis, the requirement for and scope of viability assessment

- 5.8.6 Publication of viability assessments will be required for non-compliant schemes in line with best practice and for reasons of transparency. Publication of such assessments will allow communities to assess the robustness of the appraisal and empower decision makers. Publication of viability assessments will be required in full for non-compliant schemes except in exceptional circumstances when it can be proven that publication of certain specific information would harm the commercial confidentiality of the developer to no public benefit.

Delivery

- 5.8.7 This policy will primarily be delivered through the development management process. Early engagement with the local planning authority at pre-application stage is encouraged. Developers may note in this respect that Gloucestershire County Council has adopted a 'Local Developer Guide: Infrastructure & Services with New Development' (February 2013) that relates to infrastructure requirements and associated matters for which it is responsible.