

Cheltenham Plan

~~Pre-Submission~~Main

Modifications ~~Version~~

~~(Regulation 19)~~

~~February~~October 20198

7. LANDSCAPE

This chapter should be read in conjunction with the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy, specifically policy SD6: Landscape

CONTEXT

- 7.1. Cheltenham owes much to its setting at the foot of the Cotswold escarpment. The town's eastern fringes include the high-quality scenery of the escarpment, with landscape and woodlands that are designated as part of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Beyond the western edge of the town lies the flatter, open countryside of the Severn Vale, where the designation of a Green Belt has helped to maintain a clear differentiation between Cheltenham and the neighbouring settlements of Gloucester (to the south) and Bishop's Cleeve (to the north).
- 7.2. Cheltenham's other major asset is its architectural heritage. The fine buildings and broad, tree-lined streets create graceful surroundings that appeal to residents, employers, shoppers and tourists alike. This impressive architectural legacy is often protected – the Cheltenham (Central) Conservation Area covers some 600 hectares, and the town continues to remain attractive to investors and developers. Consequently, the pressure for change, be it large-scale new build or small incremental alteration, needs to be carefully managed to protect buildings, trees, and the essential character of what is often valued most.

POLICY L1: LANDSCAPE AND SETTING

Development will only be permitted where it would not harm the setting of Cheltenham including views into or out of areas of acknowledged importance.

This policy contributes towards achieving the Cheltenham Plan Vision: Theme A - objective a; Theme C – objectives a, b and f.

LANDSCAPE AND SETTING

- 7.3. For the purposes of this policy, the 'setting' of Cheltenham is considered to embody those features which create the distinctive sense of place for the Borough,

LANDSCAPE

including the Cotswold escarpment, the distinguished architectural heritage and the myriad green spaces.

- 7.4. Cheltenham's attractive setting is undoubtedly one of its prime assets and is recognised by the emerging Place Strategy for the Borough as a key factor in helping to achieve sustainable economic growth and securing social wellbeing. The Council will therefore seek to continue the protection of the town's setting and encourage its future enhancement through sensitively designed / located development.
- 7.5. In doing so, the Council is mindful of the need to protect views into and out of areas of acknowledged importance such as conservation areas, ancient monuments, sites included on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, the AONB, the Green Belt, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, statutory and non-statutory nature reserves, Regionally Important Geological and Geo-morphological Sites, listed buildings and buildings of local importance.
- 7.6. The above policy is designed not only to complement the policy stance of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) but also to add further dimension through the recognition of local distinctiveness and the particular environmental qualities that make Cheltenham special.

POLICY L2: CONVERSION OF RURAL BUILDINGS

The conversion of rural buildings to uses other than agriculture will be permitted where:

- a) the building is structurally sound, suitable for and capable of conversion to the proposed use without substantial alteration, extension or rebuilding;
- b) the conversion and alternative use do not harm the character of the building and are appropriate to the character and setting concerned;
- c) the proposal would not cause conflict with existing or planned uses on or in close proximity to the site, including severance or disruption to the agricultural holding that would prejudice its continued viable operation;
- d) the proposal accords with other relevant policies embodied within the Development Plan.

This policy contributes towards achieving the Cheltenham Plan Vision: Theme B - objectives a and b.

CONVERSION OF RURAL BUILDINGS

- 7.7. In considering development in the countryside, the JCS is clear in its intention to support appropriate types of development. This approach is mirrored by the