

Policy SP1: The Need for New Development

1. During the plan period, provision will be made to meet the need for about 30,500 new homes and land to support about 28,000 new jobs. This is to be delivered by development within existing urban areas through district plans, existing commitments, urban extensions to Cheltenham and Gloucester, and the provision of Strategic Allocations at Ashchurch. This strategy aims to locate jobs near to the economically active population, increasing sustainability and reducing out-commuting thereby reducing carbon emissions from unsustainable car use.

2. This housing requirement for each local authority will be as follows:

- Gloucester 11,300 new homes
- Cheltenham 9,100 new homes
- Tewkesbury 10,100 new homes

3. The appropriate level of new housing and employment will be monitored and a review undertaken five years following the adoption of the JCS and periodically thereafter, taking into account the most up-to-date evidence available at that time.

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8.

Policy SP2: Distribution of New Development

1. To support their economic roles as the principal providers of jobs, services and housing, and in the interests of promoting sustainable transport, development will be focused at **Gloucester** and **Cheltenham**, including urban extensions to these areas.

2. Over the plan period to 2031, land will be provided for about 31,040 new homes and for about 64 hectares of employment land, to support about 28,000 new jobs.

- **Gloucester and its urban extensions will accommodate about 11,820 new homes.**
- **Cheltenham and its urban extensions will accommodate about 10,655 new homes.**
- **Elsewhere within Tewkesbury Borough development will accommodate about 8,565 new homes. This will be met:**
 - Through strategic allocations at Ashchurch.
 - Through smaller scale development meeting local needs at Tewkesbury town in accordance with its role as a market town, and at rural service centres and service villages.

3. Whilst planning to meet the development needs of Gloucester and Cheltenham in and adjoining the two urban areas through the proposed urban extensions, no wider provision will be made elsewhere within Tewkesbury or Cheltenham Boroughs to meet these unmet needs.

4. **Rural service centres** and **service villages** as identified in Table SP2c below will accommodate lower levels of development to be allocated through the Tewkesbury Borough Plan and Neighbourhood Plans, proportional to their size and function, and also reflecting their proximity and accessibility to Cheltenham and Gloucester and taking into account the environmental, economic and social impacts. Over the plan period to 2031:

- The rural service centres will accommodate 1860 new homes, and
- The service villages will accommodate 752 new homes

5. In the **remainder of the rural area**, **Policy SD11** will apply to residential development and Policy SD2 will apply to employment related development. (The amount of development and its distribution is set out in Tables SP2a and SP2b [*at the end of this section of the plan*], and indicated on the JCS Key Diagram at Appendix 2.)

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Policy SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

1. Unless either of the parameters under (3) below apply, through their development plans the Joint Core Strategy Authorities will seek positively to meet the objectively assessed development needs of the area incorporating sufficient flexibility to adapt rapidly to change.

2. Planning applications that accord with this Joint Core Strategy (and with subsequent district plans or neighbourhood plans) will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision, the council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and unless:

- i. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole.
- ii. Specific policies in that framework indicate that development should be restricted.

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

Policy SD4: Sustainable Design and Construction

1. Development proposals will demonstrate how they contribute to the aims of sustainability by increasing energy efficiency, minimising waste and avoiding the unnecessary pollution of air, harm to the water environment, and contamination of land or interference in other natural systems. In doing so, proposals (including changes to existing buildings) will be expected to achieve national standards. Where viable, the JCS authorities will encourage proposals to exceed these standards. All development will be expected to be adaptable to climate change in respect of the design, layout, siting, orientation and function of both buildings and associated external spaces. Proposals must demonstrate that development is designed to use water efficiently, will not adversely affect water quality, and will not hinder the ability of a water body to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.
2. Waste created through the process of construction should be carefully managed and reduced wherever possible. Major planning applications must be accompanied by a waste minimisation statement which demonstrates how the development will seek to minimise waste and sustainably re-use waste materials whenever possible during the lifespan of the development.
3. To avoid unnecessary sterilisation of identified mineral resources, prior extraction should be undertaken where it is practical, taking into account environmental acceptability and economic viability relating both to extraction of the mineral(s) and subsequent implementation of the non-minerals development of the site.
4. Major planning applications must be submitted with an Energy Statement that clearly indicates the methods used to calculate predicted annual energy demand and associated annual Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) emissions.
5. Where viable, such developments should secure 10% or more of their energy demand from decentralised (on or near site) and renewable or low carbon energy sources (including the use of combined heat and power where appropriate).

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 5, 6 and 9.

Policy SD7: Landscape

1. Development will seek to protect landscape character for its own intrinsic beauty and for its benefit to economic, environmental and social well-being.
2. Proposals will have regard to the local distinctiveness and historic character of the different landscapes in the JCS area, drawing, as appropriate, upon existing Landscape Character Assessments and the Landscape Character and Sensitivity Analysis. They will be required to demonstrate how the development will protect or enhance landscape character and avoid detrimental effects on types, patterns

and features which make a significant contribution to the character, history and setting of a settlement or area.

3. All applications for development will consider the landscape and visual sensitivity of the area in which they are to be located or which they may affect. Planning applications will be supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment where, at the discretion of the local planning authority, one is required. Proposals for appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures should also accompany applications.

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 4 and 9.

Policy SD10: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

1. The biodiversity and geological resource of the JCS area will be protected and enhanced in order to establish and reinforce ecological networks that are resilient to current and future pressures. Improved community access will be encouraged so far as is compatible with the conservation of special features and interests.

2. This will be achieved by:

- i. Ensuring that European Protected Species and National Protected Species are safeguarded in accordance with the law.
- ii. Conserving and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity on internationally, nationally and locally designated sites, and other assets of demonstrable value where these make a contribution to the wider network, ensuring that new development both within and outside such sites has no unacceptable adverse impacts.
- iii. Encouraging new development to contribute positively to biodiversity and geodiversity whilst linking with wider networks of green infrastructure. For example, by incorporating habitat features into the design to assist in the creation and enhancement of wildlife corridors and ecological stepping stones between sites.
- iv. Encouraging the creation, restoration and beneficial management of priority landscapes, priority habitats and populations of priority species. For example, by securing improvements to Strategic Nature Areas (as set out on the Gloucestershire Nature Map) and Nature Improvement Areas.

3. Any development that has the potential to have a likely significant effect on an international site will be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

4. Within nationally designated sites, development will not be permitted unless it is necessary for appropriate on-site management measures, and proposals can demonstrate that there will be no adverse impacts on the notified special interest features of the site.

5. Development within locally-designated sites will not be permitted where it would have an adverse impact on the registered interest features or criteria for which the site was listed, and harm cannot be avoided or satisfactorily mitigated.

6. Harm to the biodiversity or geodiversity of an undesignated site or asset should be avoided where possible. Where there is a risk of harm as a consequence of development, this should be mitigated by integrating enhancements into the scheme that are appropriate to the location and satisfactory to the local planning authority. If harm cannot be mitigated on-site then, exceptionally, compensatory enhancements off-site may be acceptable.

This policy contributes towards achieving Objective 4.

Policy SD11: Residential Development

1. Within the JCS area, new housing will be planned in order to deliver the scale and distribution of housing development set out in Policies SP1 and SP2.

2. Housing development will be permitted at Strategic Allocations and on sites that are allocated by district and neighbourhood plans.

3. On sites that are not allocated, housing development and conversions to dwellings will be permitted on previously-developed land in the existing built-up areas of cities, towns, service centres and service villages.

4. Housing development on other sites will only be permitted where:

- i. It is for affordable housing on a rural exception site in accordance with Policy SD13.
- ii. It is infilling within the existing built up areas of cities, towns and villages.
- iii. It is brought forward through Community Right to Build Orders.
- iv. There are other specific exceptions/circumstances defined in district or neighbourhood plans.

5. Proposals involving the sensitive, adaptive re-use of vacant or redundant buildings will be encouraged, subject to the requirements of other policies including Policies SD2, INF5 and SD9. Proposals that will bring empty housing back into residential use will also be encouraged.

6. Residential development should seek to achieve the maximum density compatible with good design, the protection of heritage assets, local amenity, the character and quality of the local environment, and the safety and convenience of the local and strategic road network.

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

Policy SD12: Housing Mix and Standards

1. Housing Mix

- i. Housing development will be required to provide an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures in order to contribute to mixed and balanced communities and a balanced housing market. Development should address the needs of the local area, including the needs of older people, as set out in the local housing evidence base including the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- ii. Self-build housing and other innovative housing delivery models will be encouraged as part of an appropriate mix.
- iii. Improvements to the quality of the existing housing stock involving remodelling or replacing residential accommodation will be encouraged where this would contribute to better meeting the needs of the local community, subject to the requirements of other policies including Policy SD5 and Policy SD9.

2. Standards

- i. New housing should meet and where possible exceed appropriate minimum space standards.
- ii. Housing should be designed to be accessible and adaptable as far as is compatible with the local context and other policies, including Policy SD9.

3. Specialist accommodation

- i. Provision of specialist accommodation, including housing for older people, will be supported where there is evidence of a need for this type of accommodation and where the housing/bed spaces will contribute to meeting the needs of the local community.
- ii. Specialist accommodation should be located to have good access to local services. In the case of Extra Care housing schemes which provide ancillary facilities on site, these facilities should complement those already available in the locality and should be made available to the wider community.
- iii. Schemes that create self-contained dwellings will be subject to the requirements of Policy SD13.

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 5, 8 and 9.

Policy SD13: Affordable Housing

1. The JCS local authorities will seek through negotiation to deliver new affordable housing as follows:

- i. On sites of 5-9 dwellings (or covering 0.2 hectares or more of land), 20% affordable housing will be sought.
- ii. On sites of 10 or more dwellings (or covering 0.4 hectares or more of land), 40% affordable housing will be sought.

2. This policy applies to dwellings (as defined by use class C3) and also any self-contained units of accommodation within a residential institution (use class C2). Where a development site has been divided into parts, or is being delivered in phases, the site will be considered **as a whole** for the purpose of determining the appropriate affordable housing requirement.

3. Where possible, affordable housing should be provided on-site and should be seamlessly integrated and distributed throughout the development scheme. On sites where it is not possible to deliver all affordable housing as on-site provision, the residual requirement should be provided through acceptable alternative mechanisms (such as off-site provision or financial contributions). Further guidance on acceptable mechanisms may be provided in District plans.

4. Affordable housing must also have regard to meeting the requirements of Policy SD12 concerning type, mix, size and tenure of residential development.

5. The design of affordable housing should meet required standards and be equal to that of market housing in terms of appearance, build quality and materials.

6. Provision should be made to ensure that housing will remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or that subsidy will be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Rural exception sites

7. In certain circumstances, where there is clear evidence of a local housing need that cannot be met elsewhere, affordable housing will be permitted on rural exception sites. A rural exception site must be within, or on the edge of, a rural settlement. It should be of a small scale and well related to the settlement both functionally and in terms of design.

Viability

8. Where there is an issue relating to the viability of development that impacts on delivery of the full affordable housing requirement, developers should consider:

- i. Varying the housing mix and design of the scheme in order to reduce costs

whilst having regard to the requirements of other policies in the plan, particularly Policy SD5, and the objective of creating a balanced housing market.

ii. Securing public subsidy or other commuted sums to assist delivery of affordable housing.

9. If a development cannot deliver the full affordable housing requirement, a viability assessment in accordance with Policy INF7 will be required.

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 8 and 9.

Policy SD15: Health and Environmental Quality

1. High-quality development should protect and seek to improve environmental quality. Development should not create or exacerbate conditions that could impact on human health or cause health inequality.

2. New development must:

i. Cause no unacceptable harm to local amenity including the amenity of neighbouring occupants.

ii. Result in no unacceptable levels of air, noise, water, light or soil pollution or odour, either alone or cumulatively, with respect to relevant national and EU limit values.

iii. Result in no exposure to unacceptable risk from existing or potential sources of pollution. For example, by avoiding placing sensitive uses in locations where national or EU limit values are exceeded, or by incorporating acceptable mitigation measures into development.

iv. Incorporate, as appropriate, the investigation and remediation of any land contamination within the site.

v. Ensure that any risks associated with land instability are satisfactorily resolved.

vi. Take into account the quality and versatility of any agricultural land affected by proposals, recognising that the best agricultural land is a finite resource.

vii. Have regard to any areas of tranquillity that are identified in adopted or emerging district plans and neighbourhood plans.

viii. Avoid any adverse impact from artificial light on intrinsically dark landscapes.

3. Proposals for development at Strategic Allocations, and other development proposals at the discretion of the local planning authority, must be accompanied by a health impact assessment.

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

Policy INF1: Access to the Transport Network

1. Developers should aim to provide safe and accessible connections to the transport network to enable travel choice for residents and commuters. All proposals should ensure that:

- i. The development provides safe vehicular access to the highway network.
- ii. Any increased level of car use derived from the development does not result in severe impact. Severe impact will be determined on a case by case basis.
- iii. Any severe impacts that can be attributable to the development must be mitigated.
- iv. Connections should be provided where appropriate to existing walking, cycling and passenger transport networks and should be designed to enable and encourage maximum potential use.

2. Where a significant amount of new trips is anticipated from a proposed development, 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, 6, 7 and 9.

Policy INF2: Safety and Efficiency of the Transport Network

1. Developers will be required to assess the impact of proposals on the transport network to ensure that they will not detrimentally affect its safety or efficiency. All proposals will demonstrate the impact of prospective development on:

- i. Congestion at network pinch-points.
- ii. Travel safety within the vicinity of the development.
- iii. Noise and/or atmospheric pollution within the vicinity of the development.

2. Planning permission will be granted only where the impact of development is not considered to be severe or, where severe impact is considered likely, can be mitigated to the satisfaction of the local planning authority in consultation with the Local Highway Authority.

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

Policy INF3: Flood Risk Management

1. Development proposals must avoid areas at risk of flooding, in accordance with a risk- based sequential approach. Proposals must not increase the level of risk to the safety of occupiers of a site, the local community or the wider environment either on the site or elsewhere. For sites of strategic scale, the cumulative impact of the proposed development on flood risk in relation to existing settlements, communities or allocated sites must be assessed and effectively mitigated.

2. Minimising the risk of flooding and providing resilience to flooding, taking into account climate change, will be achieved by:

i. Requiring new development to, where possible, contribute to a reduction in existing flood risk.

ii. Applying a sequential test for assessment of applications for development giving priority to land in Flood Zone 1, and, if no suitable land can be found in Flood Zone 1, applying the exception test.

iii. Requiring new development that could cause or exacerbate flooding to be subject to a flood risk assessment which conforms to national policy and incorporates the latest available modelling and historic data and information and guidance contained in the authorities' Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and Supplementary Planning Documents, in order to demonstrate it will be safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

iv. Requiring new development to incorporate suitable Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) where appropriate in the view of the local authority to manage surface water drainage: to avoid any increase in discharge into the public sewer system; to ensure that flood risk is not increased on-site or elsewhere; and to protect the quality of the receiving watercourse and groundwater. Where possible, the authorities will promote the retrofitting of SUDS and encourage development proposals to reduce the overall flood risk through the design and layout of schemes which enhance natural forms of drainage. Developers will be required to fully fund such mitigation measures for the expected lifetime of the development including adequate provision for on-going maintenance.

v. Working with key partners, including the Environment Agency and Gloucestershire County Council, to ensure that any risk of flooding from development proposals is appropriately mitigated and the natural environment is protected in all new development

This policy contributes towards achieving Objective 6.

Policy INF4: Green Infrastructure

1. The green infrastructure network of local and strategic importance will be conserved and enhanced, in order to deliver a series of multi functional, 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.
- iii. Designing improvements in a way that supports the cohesive management of green infrastructure.

1. 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 INF5. Development at Strategic Allocations will be required to deliver connectivity through the site, linking urban areas with the wider rural hinterland.

2. 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.

3. 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.

Policy INF5: 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, multi functional 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.

Policy INF7: Infrastructure Delivery

1. Where need is generated as a result of individual site proposals and/or as a consequence of cumulative impact, new development will be served and supported by adequate and appropriate on- and/or off-site infrastructure and services. In identifying infrastructure requirements, development proposals will also demonstrate that full regard has been given, where appropriate, to implementing the requirements of the Joint Core Strategy Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

2. Where need for additional infrastructure and services and/or impacts on existing infrastructure and services is expected to arise, the local planning authority will seek to secure appropriate and proportionate infrastructure provision in respect of:

- i. Affordable housing.
- ii. Climate change mitigation/adaptation.
- iii. Community facilities.
- iv. Early Years and Education.
- v. Health and well-being facilities.
- vi. The highway network, traffic management, sustainable transport and disabled people's access.

vii. Protection of cultural and heritage assets and the potential for their enhancement.

viii. Protection of environmental assets and the potential for their enhancement.

ix. Provision of Green Infrastructure including open space.

x. Public realm.

xi. Safety and security including emergency services.

xii. Flood risk management infrastructure.

This list is neither exhaustive nor are its elements mutually exclusive.

3. Priority for provision will be assessed both on a site-by-site basis and having regard to the mitigation of cumulative impact, together with implementation of the JCS Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

4. Planning permission will be granted only where sufficient provision has been made for infrastructure and services (together with their continued maintenance) to meet the needs of new development and/or which are required to mitigate the impact of new development upon existing communities. Infrastructure and services must be provided in line with an agreed, phased timescale and in accordance with other requirements of this Plan.

This policy contributes towards achieving all the JCS Strategic Objectives.

Policy INF8: 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.

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. The submitted assessment and its methodology may be independently appraised.

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