

**Interim
Adoption
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CITY OF GLOUCESTER
(ADDITIONAL AREAS POST-1991 BOUNDARY EXTENSION)
LOCAL PLAN

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Gloucester**

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CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	(i)
INTRODUCTION	(ii)
OBJECTIVES	(iv)
FINANCE	(ix)
LOCAL PLAN STRATEGY	(xi)
CHAPTER 1 EMPLOYMENT	1
CHAPTER 2 HOUSING	5
CHAPTER 3 SHOPPING	15
CHAPTER 4 LEISURE AND RECREATION	19
CHAPTER 5 NATURE AND LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION	25
CHAPTER 6 TOURISM	29
CHAPTER 7 TRANSPORT	31
CHAPTER 8 THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT	37
CHAPTER 9 COMMUNITY SERVICES	45
CHAPTER 10 PUBLIC UTILITIES	49
APPENDICES	53
GLOSSARY	55
INDEX TO POLICIES	59
CHANGES TO POLICIES BETWEEN DEPOSIT & ADOPTION	63

IMPORTANT NOTE

In this document the Policy, Paragraph & Allocated Site numbers have been revised from the Deposit version to take account of subsequent changes and modifications. To enable comparison of policies to the deposit version, a “changes to policies” list is included at the end of the Plan for reference.

Please note that the content of this document takes into account changes approved by the City Council on 2nd October, 1996, some of which are the subject of modification procedures.

LIST OF PLANS AND APPENDICES

PLANS		Facing Page
1.	QUEDGELEY AREA: NETHERIDGE WORKS AREA OF CONSTRAINT; FLOODPLAIN; EAST OF A38	
2.	QUEDGELEY AREA: EMPLOYMENT	
3.	QUEDGELEY AREA: HOUSING	
4.	QUEDGELEY AREA: SHOPPING; RECREATION	
5.	QUEDGELEY AREA: TRANSPORT; COMMUNITY SERVICES	
6.	QUEDGELEY AREA: NATURE CONSERVATION	
7.	QUEDGELEY AREA: LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION; RURAL LAND	
8.	QUEDGELEY AREA: ARCHAEOLOGY	
9.	SNEEDHAM'S GREEN AREA: LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION	
10.	SNEEDHAM'S GREEN AREA: ARCHAEOLOGY	
11.	NORTHERN BY-PASS AREA: ARCHAEOLOGY; LONGFORD WORKS AREA OF CONSTRAINT	
12.	NORTHERN BY-PASS AREA: NATURE CONSERVATION	
13.	NORTHERN BY-PASS AREA: LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION	
14.	NORTHERN BY-PASS AREA: FLOODPLAIN	
APPENDICES		Page
1.	BOUNDARY OF GLOUCESTER POLICY AREA	53

IMPORTANT NOTE

For ease of compilation, in this interim document, all the Plans are attached at the end of the document.

PREFACE

- 0.01** The Highways and Planning Committee resolved on 4th June, 1991 that a separate local plan be prepared for the areas included within the City by the boundary extension. Quedgeley Parish, land adjacent to the Northern Bypass and west of the M5 motorway were incorporated within the City on 1st April, 1991.
- 0.02** The City Council is currently reviewing the City of Gloucester Local Plan, which will update policies applying to areas within the former City boundary. A new local plan is required for those areas added to the City in April 1991 to give district wide statutory plan coverage. The City will therefore have two local plans initially, but it is envisaged that these be amalgamated when the Plans are reviewed.
- 0.03** The policy and site numbers in this plan therefore follow on from the Pre-1991 Boundary Extension Plan so that eventually the two plans can be printed as one document. Where policies in this plan are identical to those in the Pre-1991 Boundary Extension Plan, or are variations dealing with the same topic, they are given the same policy number. New policies are given policy numbers to follow on from the sequence in the Pre-1991 Boundary Extension Plan. This means that policy numbers will not always appear in alphabetical order.

INTRODUCTION

0.10 Plan Area

The Plan covers the areas added to the City by the 1991 Boundary Extension (as shown on Plan 1). It includes the Parish of Quedgeley and other areas adjacent to the Northern Bypass and M5 which were added to the City by the boundary extension on 1st April, 1991.

0.11 Plan Status

The Plan contains two levels of policies. Firstly, Core Policies, which are the main policies designed to meet the objectives of the Plan and which make up the overall strategy. Secondly, Implementation Policies, which are designed to indicate in detail how the Core Policies will be carried out. However, in some cases implementation policies do not relate to specific core policies.

The City Council's detailed Development Control Policy Guidance is published separately and is referred to where appropriate in the text of the Plan.

0.12 Existing Planning Policy

The areas adjacent to the Northern Bypass are covered by the Gloucester North Environs Local Plan which was prepared and adopted by Tewkesbury Borough Council in March 1983. This Local Plan will repeal and replace the Gloucester North Environs Local Plan insofar as it applies to land within the Northern Bypass.

No local plan exists for Quedgeley or the other areas formerly within Stroud District. The statutory plan for these areas is technically the relevant provisions of the Gloucestershire County Development Plan (Gloucester Environs Town Map) which was last reviewed in 1968. This will be revoked insofar as it applies to the Plan Area when this Local Plan is formally adopted.

This Local Plan will give statutory effect to the policies contained in the Quedgeley/Hardwicke Planning Policy Statement. This Statement was prepared jointly with Stroud District Council to provide an overall strategy for further development and to relate future urban expansion to necessary infrastructure and services.

The Local Plan has been prepared in parallel with alterations to the Gloucestershire Structure Plan. The policies and proposals contained within the Local Plan are based on the First Alteration of the Structure Plan which was approved by the Secretary of State in January 1992.

0.13 Purposes of the Plan

The purposes of the Local Plan are four-fold:-

- (a) to interpret in sufficient detail the policies of the County Structure Plan for the purposes of the effective planning of the Plan Area through the process of development control;
- (b) to identify major problems and issues in the Plan Area and to propose policies for their resolution;
- (c) to co-ordinate the activities of other departments of the City Council towards the achievement of common aims;
- (d) to identify where other agencies are required to act in order to achieve the objectives of the Plan, e.g. the County Council, Severn Trent Water Limited, etc.

0.14 Timescale

The Structure Plan First Alterations provides strategic policies and proposals for the period from mid 1986 to mid 2001. The Local Plan has a similar timescale and is looking 10 years ahead from a base date of January, 1991. However, in order to monitor continually the performance of the Plan it is intended to publish biennial (2-yearly) reviews.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

0.20 Present and Future Trends

Gloucester is currently experiencing a period of considerable growth. Such a level of growth requires a comprehensive planning framework, in the form of a Local Plan, to ensure that it is controlled and will provide the maximum benefit for all the residents of the City. This chapter sets out the major objectives which have guided the preparation of the Local Plan.

0.21 Objectives

The City Council is anxious that the attractions of the City and the quality of life for all its residents are maintained and enhanced, and particular attention will need to be paid to meeting the specialised needs of individual groups in the community.

The Council as planning authority can also help to meet specialised needs in the design and layout of new developments. For example, in the design of public buildings and shopping centres, the requirement for access for people with disabilities and for people with prams and pushchairs should be accommodated. In the design and layout of new residential areas, the Council as planning authority will also have regard to the needs of women and people with disabilities in providing convenient and secure access to shops, schools and community facilities.

The Local Plan establishes the main planning framework for achieving these aims through a strategy based on the following objectives:-

- (i) To achieve employment growth and minimise unemployment
- (ii) To satisfy housing need
- (iii) To maintain Gloucester's shopping role
- (iv) To ensure adequate opportunities for leisure and recreation
- (v) To promote landscape and nature conservation
- (vi) To ensure efficient traffic movement
- (vii) To promote tourism
- (viii) To enhance the environment of the Plan Area and to protect its heritage
- (ix) To secure appropriate public services and utilities

(i) TO ACHIEVE EMPLOYMENT GROWTH AND MINIMISE UNEMPLOYMENT

The number of people employed in the City has gradually increased during the 1970's and 1980's, but the period has also been characterised by increasing numbers of young people coming onto the jobs market.

Unemployment levels fell from 9.7% in 1981 to a low point of 3.7% in September 1984 and in August 1994 stood at 8.0%. Even so, Gloucester City has the highest number of unemployed people in the County, and in parts of the City, particularly the Inner Area, levels are considerably higher. Long-term unemployment is also a continuing problem.

The structure of employment in the City has changed quite dramatically in the last 10 years with a considerable decrease in engineering and manufacturing based jobs matched by a similar increase in employment in banking, insurance and other services. The City has recently experienced a considerable growth in the latter sector, notably with the relocation of firms from the south-east of England.

The objective of the Local Plan is to maintain the recent level of employment growth and to continue promoting the City to a wide range of potential employers, including office, service and manufacturing sectors.

Through the medium of the Local Plan the objective will be to ensure that sufficient land in the right location is available for potential employers.

(ii) TO SATISFY HOUSING NEED

One of the main objectives of the Local Plan is to ensure an adequate supply of housing to meet both existing and future housing needs. The First Alteration to the Structure Plan predicts that an additional 12,300 dwellings will be required for Gloucester Policy Area between 1986 and 2001. Policies, therefore, aim to identify sites for new housing and to maintain the existing housing stock at acceptable standards. Policies are also introduced to protect and enhance the quality of the residential environment.

(iii) TO MAINTAIN GLOUCESTER'S SHOPPING ROLE

Gloucester is the major shopping centre for a large proportion of people living in the County. It has a catchment population of 320,000 (mid-1989 estimate) and, together with Cheltenham, provides shopping facilities comparable with those of a major regional centre. In keeping with its status as the major growth centre and county town of Gloucestershire the City must maintain its attraction to shoppers by ensuring that the facilities offered reflect changing requirements. In the City centre the range of shopping provision and quality of the shopping environment are likely to assume greater importance as visitor numbers increase in response to the promotion of tourism and development of the Docks. Specialist shopping facilities have therefore been identified as part of the Docks redevelopment proposals. Additionally, to meet anticipated increases in consumer spending, the Blackfriars site within the City centre has been identified for new retail development. The implementation of this scheme will secure much needed new shopping facilities and will add to the range of attractions which Gloucester can offer as a major tourist destination. Bulky goods shopping beyond the City centre is considered to be adequately catered for during the plan period, with existing provision and current commitments allowing a significant range of facilities to be provided. Consequently, the City Council has not allocated any sites for 'bulky goods' retailing. Any such proposals which may come forward will be judged against Policy S.1 and Policy S.1(a).

The principal objective is to maintain and enhance the quality of shopping in Gloucester, particularly in the City centre, with particular emphasis on securing a vital and viable City centre for the benefit of both residents and tourists.

(iv) TO ENSURE ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEISURE AND RECREATION

The demand for recreational facilities continues to increase as people become more mobile and have more leisure time. Gloucester's general prosperity and rising population indicate that the local demand for such facilities will be buoyant in the foreseeable future.

Apart from satisfying local demand, provision of a wide range of leisure activities also represents an important addition to the City's tourism product and an attraction to potential employers. For these reasons the Local Plan details policies to maximise the use of the City Council's own facilities, to make new provision where appropriate and to encourage other bodies and the private sector to play a more active role in satisfying recreational demands.

(v) **TO PROMOTE NATURE AND LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION**

Public awareness of the environment has been heightened by global conservation issues and by concern for the local environment. The Local Plan recognises the contribution of nature and landscape conservation towards the overall quality of the City's environment and identifies and protects areas of nature and landscape value. The Council will promote nature conservation interests through its adopted Nature Conservation Strategy.

(vi) **TO PROMOTE GLOUCESTER AS A MAJOR TOURISM CENTRE**

Although the Docks and the Cathedral will continue to lead the City's drive for a successful tourism product, Gloucester has many other undervalued attractions which need to be developed. Visitors also expect a full range of high quality ancillary services such as accommodation, car parking and public conveniences. The Local Plan addresses these issues and, in conjunction with the "Tourism Strategy for Gloucester", aims to provide comprehensive guidance for the development of tourism in the future.

(vii) **TO ENSURE EFFICIENT TRAFFIC MOVEMENT**

It is essential that the transport system throughout the City is both efficient and safe. The Local Plan policies aim to ease congestion on radial routes to the centre and ensure an adequate balance between public transport and parking provision, whilst maintaining a high quality environment as well as pedestrian safety and convenience. The policies recognise the importance of cycling and walking and these, along with the needs of people with disabilities, are considered an integral part of traffic management.

(viii) **TO ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE CITY AND TO PROTECT ITS HERITAGE**

Gloucester has a rich and diverse heritage which forms the basis for the City's attraction today. The City Council recognises that the quality and character of the built environment, with a high level of community safety, is of prime importance not only to residents but also for the development of Gloucester as a centre for tourism and for the attraction of new commercial and industrial investment to the City.

The Local Plan contains policies to enhance the environment of the City, to conserve historic buildings and archaeological sites, to ensure crime prevention is considered in new developments, and to ensure a high quality of development throughout the City.

(ix) **TO SECURE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES**

The City relies on a wide range of public services and utilities including health, education, community facilities, police and fire services, water supply, drainage, gas and electricity and refuse disposal.

In a city such as Gloucester where development and redevelopment is continually taking place, it is important to ensure that the provision of infrastructure and services is programmed to cater for expansion and change.

Most of the services and utilities are not under the direct control of the City Council, but, as local planning authority, the Council acts as a co-ordinator in the provision and programming of such facilities. The Local Plan provides a framework for such programming and, where necessary, can encourage the improvement of services where a shortfall is perceived.

0.22 Planning Policies

The objectives of the Local Plan have not been ranked in order of priority as they are all essential elements in the achievement of the overall aims of enhancing the City's attraction and improving the quality of life for its residents. However, all of the objectives need to be viewed in the context of concern for the environment as set out in the Government's 1990 White Paper "This Common Inheritance". The City Council will reflect this prime concern for the 1990's in the implementation of the Local Plan.

Priority may be placed at different times on different objectives as needs and opportunities arise. The biennial review procedure enables that flexibility and such changes in emphasis can take place as appropriate within the overall framework of the Plan.

FINANCE

- 0.30** The Local Plan, rather than being concerned with the relatively narrow view of land use has much wider objectives and identifies ways in which the economic well-being of an area can be influenced and promoted. Consequently, the implications on available resources are much greater and if the Plan is to have any credibility there must be some reasonable match between the aims and objectives of the Plan and the financial and other resources available.

No precise costings of any of the Core Policies have been attempted. However, it is fairly obvious that, owing to the existing capital and revenue expenditure constraints, there will be a need for direct involvement with the private sector if many of the objectives are to be achieved. This may have to be negotiated through the planning process or, alternatively, by the private sector directly providing and running the facilities required as a commercial venture.

To give some indication of the constraints which Local Government faces and which will affect the ability of the Plan to achieve its aims, the following position regarding Capital and Revenue spending can be usefully considered.

0.31 Capital Expenditure

Under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the Council can finance any amount of capital expenditure directly from revenue accounts, revenue reserves or available Capital Grants and Usable Capital Receipts (currently, 25% from Council Houses and 50% from other receipts). It may also borrow money which counts as use of "credit approvals". The use of credit approvals is limited annually by the Department of the Environment. Borrowing is from external and internal resources. Use of internal resources would include the temporary use of reserves and balances.

In total this enables the City Council to carry out estimated capital programmes of £3 million for housing and £3 million for other services in 1996/97. It follows therefore that implementation of policies requiring major expenditure will require additional funds from other sources, eg. the private sector and The National Lottery.

0.32 Revenue Expenditure

The maximum budget which the City Council is allowed to fix is restricted by Government capping powers. Each year the Secretary of State for the Environment will set criteria to determine whether an authority's budget requirement is excessive. Under the capping criteria for 1996/97 the City Council was only allowed to increase its budget by 0.5% over the 1995/96 budget.

The process of universal capping will lead to a convergence of revenue spending around the Standard Spending Assessment (SSA). The SSA is the amount of money which the Government calculates it would cost the local authority to provide a standard level of service, consistent with the Government plans for the total aggregate of local authority spending. The SSA is used to calculate the amount of Revenue Support Grant payable to each authority. If every local authority budgeted in line with its SSA then the Council Tax could be set at around the same level across the country.

In 1996/97, Gloucester's net revenue budget is £11,111,900 and its standard spending assessment is £10,447,516.

Local authority revenue spending in Gloucester City is funded by Revenue Support Grant (38%), Special Grant (1%), Business Rates (33%), Council Tax (21%) and Community Charge Balances (7%).

LOCAL PLAN STRATEGY

0.40 Structure Plan

The areas subject to this plan are within the Gloucester Policy Area as defined by the Gloucestershire Structure Plan. Whilst the Gloucester Policy Area is identified as an area for growth within the County it is important that the rate of growth is controlled to allow commensurate investment in infrastructure and services. This Plan therefore applies the strategy in the First Alteration to the Structure Plan by regulating land release and relating development to specific improvements in infrastructure and services. The City Council will expect reasonable contributions towards the provision of infrastructure and community services from developers where appropriate, in accordance with the Government advice which is currently set out in Circular 16/91. This approach will be applied throughout the City area.

LPS.1 THE CITY COUNCIL WILL, WHERE APPROPRIATE, IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS, SEEK TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS UNDER S106 OF THE 1990 ACT AND WILL EXPECT DEVELOPERS TO MAKE REASONABLE CONTRIBUTIONS, IN THE FORM OF LAND AND/OR OTHERWISE, TOWARDS THE PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES RELATED TO THEIR DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS.

0.41 Land at Quedgeley

Daniel's Brook and the A.38 form a natural boundary to the urban area generally. In this plan period 33.6 hectares at Waterwells Farm are proposed for business development and 13 hectares are proposed for housing development to contribute towards strategic requirements to the year 2001. These allocations must be developed so as not to prejudice the comprehensive treatment of the wider area. It is accepted that all or part of the balance of this area may be required in the very long term for urban development. However, it is premature to speculate on what future land requirements for the area may be. No decisions should therefore be taken which would pre-empt or limit future options for the area. In addition, development of this area would require considerable transport and other infrastructure. Piecemeal development could jeopardise or limit options or other solutions to infrastructure and transport problems in the longer term, such as a new railway station or a light rail transit system. The Ministry of Defence announced in 1994 that the Quedgeley RAF base is to close in 1998 which emphasises the need to avoid limiting options for potential future development and to safeguard the area for comprehensively planned growth in the period beyond the year 2001 should it be required through the review of the Structure Plan. Any comprehensive plan must include the Ministry of Defence Sites 2, 4 and 6 which are located in the administrative area of Stroud District Council.

LPS.2 ANY DEVELOPMENT IN QUEDGELEY EAST OF THE A38, WHETHER OF LAND ALLOCATED FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THIS PLAN OR NOT, SHALL TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE NEED TO AVOID PREJUDICING THE PROVISION OF A COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE PATTERN FOR THAT AREA, WHICH MAY BE REQUIRED TO ACCOMMODATE GROWTH BEYOND THE YEAR 2001.