

## Gloucester City Plan

### Open Space – Site allocations note

### September 2019

#### 1. National planning policy

- 1.1 National planning policy is set out in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2018) and associated planning policy guidance. The NPPF states that open space, which includes all open space of public value, can take many forms and can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby; have an ecological value and contribute to green infrastructure, as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development, and an important component in the achievement of sustainable development.
- 1.2 The NPPF recommends that local authorities robustly assess the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision in their area. Assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses in the local area, taking into consideration local circumstances where necessary.
- 1.3 The NPPF includes the ability for local communities to further protect the most important community spaces with a Local Green Space designation via local and neighbourhood plans. Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.
- 1.4 The NPPF also states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
  - The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
  - The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.
- 1.5 In addition to national planning policy, there is an ever-increasing awareness of the importance of the population being healthy and active, to maintain and improve both physical and mental wellbeing, and providing well-kept, accessible open spaces can play a major role in this. Other national organisations have produced strategies that support these aims, for example:
- Public Health England: Everybody Active, Everyday (2014)
  - Sport England: Towards an Active Nation (2016-2021)

#### 2. Local planning policy

- 2.1 Along with the overarching national policies set out above, there are a number of locally adopted strategies and plans, many of which have aims and objectives that overlap those

presented within this open space strategy. The cumulative impact of these inter-related documents serves to further emphasise the vital role that good-quality, accessible open space plays for both local communities and the natural environment within the city and beyond.

### Joint Core Strategy (JCS), adopted Dec 2017

- Co-ordinated strategic development plan that sets out how the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury area will develop up to 2031. Adopted in by all three councils in December 2017.
- Vision and policies include a commitment to build new developments to the highest standards of design, without increasing the risk of flooding, and focus on protecting the quality and distinctiveness of each community. Developments will be designed with respect for the natural and built environment and all residents and businesses will benefit from improved infrastructure, which includes roads, public transport and series and community facilities.
- Gloucester's natural environment will continue to be safeguarded and improved, particularly through the protection and enhancement of landscape features and key habitats within the City's boundary, such as Robinswood Hill and adjacent to it at Chosen Hill.
- Duty to co-operate, where open space serves a wider area.
- Sets out Community infrastructure Levy (CIL) requirements for Gloucester, a charge applied to most new residential buildings that will be used to help deliver infrastructure to support development (including open space improvements). CIL adopted from January 2019.

### Gloucester City Council – City Plan (2011 - 2031)

- City Plan delivers the JCS at a local level and will sets policies that seek to address local issues and opportunities in the city.
- Identifies where and how new development will take plans to ensure it positively contributes to the City's needs.
- Strategic objectives include: *conserving and enhancing the environment, delivering excellent design in new developments, protecting and improving playing fields and open spaces, meeting the challenge of climate change and promoting healthy communities.*

## 3. Other considerations

### Gloucestershire 2050 vision

- *'Gloucestershire: A great place to live, work and do business, with a thriving future'*.
- Key outcomes include:
  - *an inclusive county ensuring that the economic and social benefits are felt by all*
  - *a prosperous county: rising productivity and household income, offering higher living standards*
  - *a healthy, happy, and safe county: people have a good work/life balance and see improved health and wellbeing*
  - *a sustainable county: more efficient use of resources and more use of sustainable energy*

## Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board

- The Board is responsible for overseeing the development and delivery of the *Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy* - a 20-year strategy which aims to improve the lives of people in Gloucestershire. The principles that underpin the plan are:
  - Supporting communities to take an active role in improving health
  - Encouraging people to adopt healthy lifestyles to stop problems from developing
  - Taking early action to tackle symptoms or risks
  - Helping people to take more responsibility for their health
  - Helping people to recover quickly from illness and return home to their normal lives
  - Supporting individuals or communities where life expectancy is lower than the county average or where quality of life is poor.
- *Joint Policy for Enabling Active Communities in Gloucestershire (2015)* – action plan working to enable local communities to become more active, stronger and more sustainable, and in turn improve the health and wellbeing of local people.
- *GloW – Gloucestershire Wellbeing* - Gloucestershire health and wellbeing board's commitment for better mental health. Gloucester City Council is signed up to this county-wide initiative, which sets out what it takes to promote good mental health and wellbeing and help prevent mental illness.

## Gloucester City Council – Council Plan 2017-2020

- Focus on regeneration, housing, leisure and culture
- Core values include: *Efficiency and value for money, forward thinking with innovation, making residents lives better, passionate about the city and working together to make it happen.*

## Gloucester City Vision 2012-2022

- 'Gloucester will be a flourishing, modern and ambitious city, which all residents can enjoy'.
- Key aims include: *A city which improves through regeneration and development, a city where people feel safe and happy in their community, a healthy city with opportunities for all.*

## Gloucester's cultural vision and strategy 2016-2026

- *'Putting Culture at the Heart of Gloucester for the Good of All'*
- Key objectives include: *'Broaden the cultural offer so as to support social and economic development, develop a vibrant city full of cultural things to do.'*

## Gloucester City Council climate emergency declaration (July 2019)

- Proposal to make the city carbon neutral (net zero carbon dioxide emissions) by 2050
- City council to have a net-zero carbon footprint by 2030 and to find impacts of climate change when reviewing the council's strategies, policies and plans.

#### Green infrastructure strategy (2014)

- Part of the JCS evidence base – providing a strategic development plan for the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury area up to 2031.
- Focus on connectivity and water.
- Vision that everyone should be able to access green infrastructure within 5 mins walk of home and use a series of interconnected, multifunctional green spaces to access the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or the River Severn and its washlands.

## 4. Gloucester City Plan – Housing allocations

- 4.1 The JCS sets the number of new homes that will be required to meet Gloucester’s needs until 2031. However, within the city, there are few sites left to accommodate large-scale housing development.
- 4.2 The list below sets out the remaining larger sites that have been allocated within the Gloucester City Plan (or already granted planning consent) for new housing and indicates the amount and type of open space that should be provided as part of each development.
- 4.3 Smaller developments would not have enough space to provide on-site open space, and in these cases off-site financial contributions to improve existing open spaces will be sought, through S106 or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Location	Indicative housing capacity	Ward	Open space implications
Land at Winneycroft Farm (JCS allocation)	620 dwellings	Matson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strategic land allocation made through the JCS (Policy A6), consisting of two separate land ownerships.</li> <li>• Formal play and sports facilities to be provided on site.</li> <li>• Allotments to be provided on site.</li> </ul>
Land at Great Western Road Sidings	200 units	Kingsholm and Wotton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporation / improvements to Great Western Road Rest Garden (E) open space. This space is currently under-utilised and represents an opportunity to incorporate into a larger, more functional and safer open space for the wider community.</li> <li>• Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) or equivalent facility for children and young people provided on site.</li> <li>• Off-site contribution for formal sport and allotments.</li> </ul>
Land at St Oswald’s Retail Park	300 units	Westgate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An opportunity to create better connectivity with wider open space and provide open space to address a shortfall within the local area.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) or equivalent facilities for children and young people provided on site.</li> <li>Connectivity to Westgate Park, including improved cycle access.</li> <li>Off-site contribution for formal sport and allotments.</li> </ul>
Land at King's Quarter	156 units	Westgate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given the city centre location of the site, off-site contribution for formal play and sport.</li> </ul>
Land at The Wheatridge <i>(allocated as a school site, but with a fallback use as residential if no school use required)</i>	-	Abbeydale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) or equivalent facility for children and young people provided on site.</li> <li>Off-site contribution for formal sport.</li> </ul>
Other small allocation sites, less than 35 units per site	Total up to 350 units	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sites over 35 units would normally be expected provide some on-site open space.</li> <li>Off-site contributions to upgrade existing nearby open spaces, including allotments, formal sport and play in accordance with the City Council's adopted strategies.</li> </ul>

- 4.4 The expected level of provision for new open spaces, sports facilities and play areas, as indicated in the table above, should be in accordance with the benchmark standards set out in the Fields in Trust '**Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard, 2015**' or any subsequent update. The City Council would expect any new open spaces to be a minimum 0.2ha in size and of a usable/practical shape (for example, long, narrow, linear strips of land would not generally be acceptable, unless they adjoin a larger space where informal recreation such as ball-games can take place).
- 4.5 The FiT guidance states that '*Quantity guidelines should not be interpreted as maximum levels of provision, and it is recommended that these are adjusted to take account of local circumstances.*' The document also sets out accessibility guidelines, indicated as walking distance from dwellings and these should also be considered when proposing new open space facilities.
- 4.6 Section 7 of this document sets out in more detail the local considerations and limitations for the provision of new open space in Gloucester City.

## 5. Housing growth adjoining the city boundary

- 5.1 There are several significant new or proposed housing developments that are located on the 'urban fringe', just outside of the Gloucester City administrative boundary. Largely these are allocated through the JCS, but also include sites in Stroud District including Hunts Grove. Residents living in these locations are likely to closely associate with Gloucester and will use the infrastructure within the city, including open spaces and sports facilities.

- 5.2 Some of these larger new developments will also provide their own open space, sports and play facilities on-site, which residents living within the city would be able to access.
- 5.3 This housing growth, and the increased demand created on the city's outdoor sports facilities has been factored in to the adopted Playing Pitch Strategy and the likely impact will also need to be considered when developing or upgrading open space facilities located nearby. Funds for investment in these spaces may be available through CIL.