

Matter 6: Achieving well-designed places

Whether the GCP provides a positive framework relating to the built and natural environment and, whether the policies of the GCP are effective, justified, and consistent with Policies SD3, SD4, and SD6 of the JCS, the GWCS, and national policy?

53. Is the wording of Policy F1 effective, specifically what is meant by, ‘strongly compliment local distinctiveness’?

53.1 The spelling needs to be corrected to ‘complement. The Council acknowledges that well considered, innovative modern materials can create a positive architectural response. These materials may not be locally distinctive to Gloucester, as they may not have been used before. The Council wishes to offer flexibility for such innovation and creativity whilst ensuring that such materials complement and enhance what is locally distinctive. The policy would still deliver what the Council requires without the word ‘strongly’.

54. Is it appropriate for all major proposals to be accompanied by a landscape scheme and is the wording of the Policy F2 clear?

54.1 All major developments are likely to have some greening, planting, biodiversity net gain, or boundary treatments and as such the information contained in the landscape scheme is useful in determining the appropriateness of the proposal. The landscape scheme required by the policy also identifies retained features which are an important element of the site constraints and the pre-application design work.

55. Is there any tension between the environmental objectives of the JCS and the GCP, with particular reference to the criteria contained within policies A1, F3 and F5, ecological and climate change matters, lighting and the provision of parking?

55.1 Proposed changes have been submitted to Policy F3 ‘Community Safety’ and F5 ‘Open Plan Estates’ in Submission Document CD010a ‘Schedule of changes Pre-Submission Gloucester City Plan addendum’ (November 2020) to take account of the impacts to climate change and ecology. These can be found at PM060, PM062 and PM063. The proposed will ensure that low energy lighting will be used that does not create glare for the highway user or have a detrimental impact on wildlife. The changes also ensure that enclosures do not degrade ecological networks. These proposed changes ensure that the policies contribute to the environmental objectives of the JCS and GCP.

55.2 In terms of the requirement within A1 Effective and Efficient Use of Land and Buildings for ‘adequate off-street parking...covered and secure cycle storage...’ Adequate ensures that there is not a surplus of parking and will be determined on a case by case basis with input from the Highways Authority who actively encourage, as does the JCS and GCP, sustainable active modes of transport first. Car parking is not always required, or required at a reduced level, in areas where there is sufficient access to alternative modes of transport. Residential car parking spaces will be required to provide Electric Vehicle charging point

56. Is there duplication between the design policies and other detailed policies of the plan? Does this lead to confusion? For example, are E1, E4 and F2 written in such a way, that it is unambiguous how a decision maker should react to development proposals?

56.1 There is some duplication between elements of E1 'Landscape character and sensitivity', E4 'Trees, woodland and hedgerows' and F2 'Landscape planting' in terms of the retention of existing trees and hedgerows. However, each policy has a different overall function. E1 looks at wider landscape context beyond the site alone. This may include a developments impact on the landscape character of Robinswood Hill for example. F2 looks at designing new landscape schemes internally within the site ensuring appropriate new landscaping is provided, and E4 affords retention and protection to existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows and outlines how biodiversity net gain can be achieved.

57. Should explicit reference be made to the appearance of the proposed development with Policy A9?

57.1 Yes. The Council deals with a large number of house extensions every year. For many residents this will be there only interaction with the Local Plan. For ease of use and clarity for homeowners it was considered appropriate to explicitly reference what is considered acceptable in terms of the appearance of an extension or outbuilding in one place within this policy.