

## **CHELTENHAM LOCAL PLAN 2011 – 2031 EXAMINATION**

### **Matter 2: Economic Development**

#### **Representor ID 093**

The JCS employment strategy is largely based on the Strategic Economic Plan prepared by GFirst LEP. This anticipated growth in GVA over the JCS period of 4.8% per annum, a highly aspirational rate of growth that many argued was wholly unrealistic. It generated the figure of 39,500 new jobs being created by 2031 and led the Inspector at the JCS Examination to add an “economic uplift” to the housing numbers to cater for in-migration to fill the new jobs.

CPRE challenged this strategy at the JCS Examination in 2015: the text of our written our submission is below at Annex.

Economic growth since 2011 has clearly been much lower than the projected figure of +4.8% GVA per annum and looks likely to stay that way for some considerable period ahead.

In the light of these economic realities, the Inspector needs to consider carefully whether the Cheltenham Plan due for adoption in 2019 should carry forward in full the employment land provision contained in the relevant JCS policies which need revision in the light of more up to date information.

#### *ANNEX: CPRE SUBMISSION TO THE JCS EXAMINATION 2015*

### **MATTER 5: EMPLOYMENT LAND PROVISION**

#### **Question: Whether the Draft JCS overprovides the amount of land for new employment uses and is therefore ‘Unsound’?**

In summary, the Pre-Submission JCS concludes:

- that employment uses outside the ‘B classes’ are predicted to provide over two thirds of the projected job growth across the area and do not usually generate a specific employment land requirement; and that the greatest B-class employment growth will be in the office, research and development sectors,

with a decline in manufacturing and industrial jobs and minimal growth in warehousing (para 4.2.7), and

- that overall, the JCS area already has a good stock of employment land, but not all existing sites are suitable for meeting modern employment needs, and a range of available sites and premises is needed to meet the requirements of potential new businesses and to allow for the expansion of existing firms without the need to relocate (para 4.2.8).

As a result, 64.2 hectares of employment land are provided for in the Strategic Allocations (Table SA 1).

Detailed work by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners – “Assessment of Updated Economic Forecasts – April 2014” has revisited the forecasts from Experian, Oxford Economics and Cambridge Econometrics for the period 2011 to 2031 and quantified the baseline employment land requirement for the JCS area (Table 3.3).

The total requirement across the JCS area ranged from 45.5 ha to 61.4ha. However, after applying a number of sensitivity tests, the projected employment land requirement is reduced further (Table 3.4) to a range from 34.2 ha to 45.8 ha when the composite sensitivity scenario is applied.

While NLP consider it would be prudent to plan towards the upper end of this latter range, their employment land figure is still substantially lower than that proposed in the JCS.

**Change sought: To secure a ‘Sound’ plan the upper end of the NLP projection, after the application of the composite sensitivity scenario, should be adopted as the base employment land requirement, i.e. 45.8 ha.**

The question of the relationship and balance between new housing and employment development has been addressed in our response to Matter 3: Housing Provision. See section on OAN (c): Whether the projected growth in employment (and the associated need for additional homes) is supported by the most recent additions to the Evidence Base?