

Proposition:

Transformational garden town for Tewkesbury, focused on the development of the Ashchurch area to the east. The project will deliver 10,195 new homes with 35% affordable housing and create 8,464 jobs with a new local centre by 2050.

Vision:

Reimagine Ashchurch as the 'modern' part of the historical Tewkesbury with a complete mix of housing options, expanded employment, transport improvements and a new centre located around the station and St. Nicholas Church. Ashchurch possesses the foundations to help deliver a vision for sustainable growth of the town, utilising the excellent transport links to the M5 and its prime location as a high-tech employment area, thereby encouraging people to live and work locally.

Key components

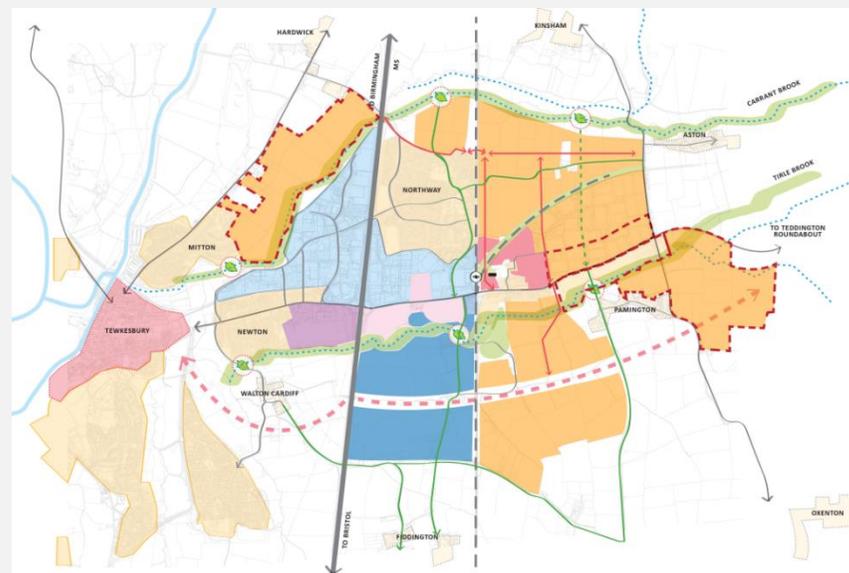
- Site size: 604 ha
- 10,195 homes
- 8,464 jobs
- 6 schools
- 1 health & care centres
- 4 community facilities
- 1 district centres & local centres
- 200 ha of green space

Project partners

- Tewkesbury Borough Council (Lead Authority)
- Gloucester City Council
- Cheltenham Borough Council
- Gloucestershire County Council
- Homes England
- MOD/DIO

Land ownership and site assembly

- MOD base - 80 ha under agreement with St. Modwens (release date delayed)
- Homes England - 5 ha
- 4 landowners all indicated interest in releasing their land for development
- Other small land owners and sites in multiple ownership
- Some land is under option. There are opportunities for public sector acquisition, including Homes England.



Planning status of site

The Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS), was adopted in December 2017 and is now under review, having undergone its first 'issues and options' consultation in early 2019. This Initial consultation has opened up the dialogue with stakeholders and local communities on the opportunities for accommodating additional growth at Ashchurch. The site in entirety will form a strategic allocation in the JCS as part of the review process. Under the existing JCS no housing land is allocated for the GT. Circa 200 homes with planning permission. An application for 900 homes currently subject to an appeal. 13ha of employment land already with planning permission.

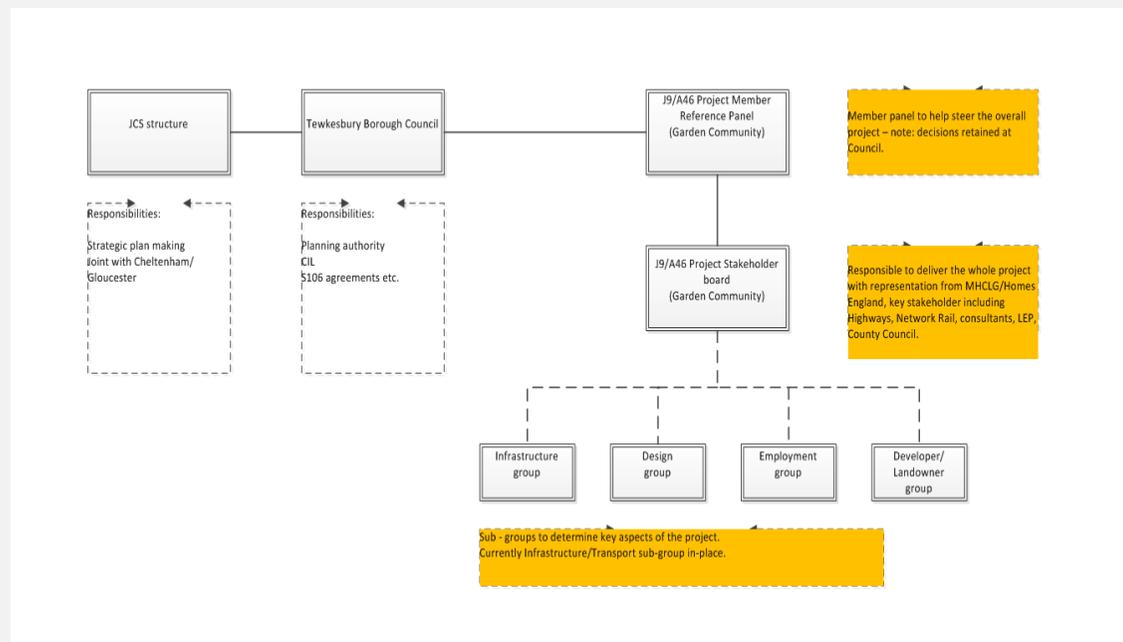
Major infrastructure requirements

Social and community facilities; New bridge over railway & associated link roads; A46 capacity improvements linking to J9 on M5; Improvements to Tewkesbury rail station development.



Quality and innovation aspects

- A concept masterplan as been developed for Ashchurch. This sets out 8 development principles: Defining a local character for Ashchurch; Put Tewkesbury on the map; Build a sustainable community; Transformation to a sustainable movement environment; Support infrastructure delivery; Promote an active, healthy quality of life; Create a place within a landscape; Create a flexible framework that guides development.
- The Councils are committed to work collectively to achieve not just the housing delivery, but also the economic growth and the overall "place making" - all three critical to this development opportunity.
- The 'Thinking Place' visioning exercise proposes a step change in which Tewkesbury becomes a place that is a "hub and heartland driving the future success of the wider area" but not quite translated into a clear vision. Transformational outcomes expected need to be fleshed out.
- Possibility of MMC (a preliminary study of the feasibility of this is underway by Tewkesbury Borough Council
- Not clear what review process or tools will be used to embed quality into the GT.



Key barriers to delivery

- Development north of MOD Base requires a 'northern access road link ' & railway bridge (£8.1M HIF bid).
- Infrastructure investment totals £202 million (TBC estimate) split mainly between new schools and roads.
- Not included in the above cost is an off-line A46, required to unlock development beyond 3000 homes.
- Recently adopted CIL charging requires development to contribute £20 million.
- Land assembly is complex due to multiplicity of land ownerships.
- Release of MoD base, which may not be available for development for another 10 years.
- Existing flood zones to the north and more centrally acting as green buffers.

Housing Trajectory (2018-2050)

Period	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025-2030	2031-2035	2036-2040	2040+	Total
Units	0	25	25	150	325	420	450	2450	2180	2110	2060	10,195

Proposed delivery mechanism

Homes England owns approximately 5 ha of land which is strategically located next to the railway station and together with release of parts of the MOD base (approximately 80 ha) could facilitate early delivery. The LAs and Homes England are involved in discussions with land owners to the north of the MOD base. To the south of the base an appeal site could deliver circa 900 homes and other sites are being actively promoted.

Other relevant programmes

HIF (MVF - Tewkesbury Ashchurch Housing Zone £8.1m (railway bridge). (Contract Issued)

Project diagnostic**Key master planning issues**

The Council's have engaged consultants to undertake some initial 'concept' master planning work in support of the JCS Review. The completed study gives clarity about the potential identity of the garden town, spatial arrangement of uses and phasing. It also provides base line evidence of site constraints and opportunities. This work needs to be built upon and developed in order to generate a clear spatial vision, development concept, development and place-making objectives, together with potential delivery mechanisms and principles for long term stewardship. This will ensure that a viable and high quality Garden Town is delivered to the timescales envisaged. Key areas to focus on in any further master planning work should include:

- Transformational outcomes for existing communities including future high quality employment opportunities.
- How walkable and cyclable neighbourhoods can be delivered alongside opportunities for 'Smarter' travel and mobility choices and behaviours and technologies.
- Utilising green infrastructure opportunities and integrating biodiversity net gain as part of a landscape led approach and to deliver healthy place making outcomes.
- Consideration of legacy and future stewardship arrangements for community assets/GI.

The appointment of an experienced master planner to develop a deliverable masterplan framework for the Garden Town is important next step. This work should incorporate and expand upon the 'Thinking Place' piece and the BDP Commission to develop the story of Tewkesbury as a whole and incorporate ideas on how to connect this vibrant new community with the existing historic market town and its communities. Any further master planning work should also be used to embed Garden City principles and innovation and further test housing capacity, viability and deliverability.

Key deliverability issues

Land assembly and delivery of strategic infrastructure is critical. A new road link and railway bridge is required to release phase 1. Funding through the HIF would unlock this. A new off-line southern link road to take capacity off the A46 is required. This A46 improvement scheme forms part of a wider corridor study which is being led by Midlands Connect. It is not clear what level of priority is being afforded to the Tewkesbury 'end' and is therefore a significant risk. Delivery of the full 10,000 homes relies heavily on the release of the MOD base which is not certain. The MOD base may not be available for a further 10 years. Ashchurch for Tewkesbury railway station only has two-hourly service and this needs to be increased. Flood mitigation will need to be carefully considered.

Other issues

New governance arrangements are required to reflect the new Garden Town status. There is no project team and the work is being supported through the JCS workstream which is not ideal.

Initial support areas identified (to be provided by Homes England)

- **Delivery advice and support** – particularly on land assembly and infrastructure delivery.
- **Master planning advice** – including assistance in procuring a master planner
- **Governance and project management advice** – including participation in any new governance arrangements
- **Cross Government Brokerage** – HIF bid for railway bridge, A46 capacity issues, MOD release of whole base in med-long term.