

# TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

<b>Report to:</b>	Executive Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 October 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	Tewkesbury Garden Town – Evolution of the Concept Plan
<b>Report of:</b>	Tewkesbury Garden Town Programme Director
<b>Corporate Lead:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Lead Member:</b>	Lead Member for Built Environment
<b>Number of Appendices:</b>	One

## **Executive Summary:**

In October 2018 as part of the Joint Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation, the Council endorsed the Tewkesbury Area Draft Concept Masterplan for consultation. Since that time work has progressed, including consultation with Members, Parish Councils, Homes England and other stakeholders. As a result, the document has been subject to change and has been updated with support from the Council's consultants, Building Design Partnership (BDP).

The changes, which include reference to the award of Garden Town status by the government, have been incorporated into the 'Evolution of the Concept Plan'. This document is a summary of the current position of the work to deliver the Tewkesbury Garden Town and it is attached as Appendix 1.

A key element of the future development of Tewkesbury Garden Town is the high quality of development. The Tewkesbury Garden Town Member Reference Panel and the local Parishes have undertaken workshops and developed nine draft key Development Principles which are included in the document. In short, the draft Development Principles set out objectives relating to environment, economy and community matters which are intended to guide the creation of the future Garden Town.

When finalised, the principles can be adopted by the Council through the strategic planning process to make sure that the Tewkesbury Garden Town is developed to create 'a place' which is a comprehensive sustainable development of which the Council and the community can be proud.

The Council has delegated authority to the Executive Committee to monitor progress in respect of the garden communities in the Borough. This report updates the Committee in respect of the Evolution of the Concept Plan which will then be used as the basis for further engagement with the local community, landowners and the wider stakeholders.

As the Joint Core Strategy Review progresses, formal consideration of development within this wider area will take place through the statutory process.

**Recommendation:**

**That the Committee NOTES progress and changes made to the Tewkesbury Area Draft Concept Masterplan which are now included in the Tewkesbury Garden Town ‘Evolution of the Concept Plan’ (July 2021 attached at Appendix 1).**

**Reasons for Recommendation:**

To update the Executive Committee on progress and changes to the Tewkesbury Area Draft Concept Masterplan as set out in the Evolution of the Concept Plan document which will be used as the basis for further discussions with all stakeholders, landowners and the local community.

**Resource Implications:**

There are no additional resource implications arising for the Borough Council with any consultations with stakeholders/the community covered with the existing garden community team.

**Legal Implications:**

There are no specific legal implications at this stage. The engagement will be undertaken in accordance with the Council’s duties under the Equality Act 2010.

**Risk Management Implications:**

There are no specific risks inherent in the updated document and it will be used to work with stakeholders and partners to further develop proposals for Tewkesbury Garden Town in a manner which reduces the risk of poor-quality development. The updated document will allow stakeholder discussions to be focussed on the current position and avoid confusion.

**Performance Management Follow-up:**

Updates on the Garden Town programme are presented to Executive Committee.

**Environmental Implications:**

As part of any planning application, environmental implications will be considered and addressed accordingly.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

- 1.1** In October 2018, as part of the Joint Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation, the Council endorsed the Tewkesbury Area Draft Concept Masterplan for consultation. Since that time, work has progressed including consultation with Members, Parish Councils, Homes England and other stakeholders. As a result, the document has been subject to change and has been updated with support from the Council’s consultants, Building Design Partnership (BDP).
- 1.2** To reflect these changes, as well as the latest thoughts on the concept plan, this evolution has been finalised with BDP in conjunction with the Tewkesbury Garden Town Member Reference Panel and includes the following updates:
  - A list and details of the nine Development Principles for the Garden Town sustainable development.
  - The decision by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to maintain the majority of the base for operational purposes and release land at the Eastern end of the base for development.

- Inclusion of the Garden Community (Town) status awarded by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- Incorporation of extant planning permissions, including that of the Fiddington development of 850 homes.
- Inclusion of employment land provisionally located South of the A46/East of the B4079.
- General updates to the plan including a review of the baseline analysis, engagement that has taken place, and a draft Garden Town vision.
- Inclusion, as appropriate, of responses from the Joint Core Strategy Issues and Options public consultation.
- A name change from the Tewkesbury Area Draft Concept ‘Masterplan’ to ‘Concept Plan’ to more accurately reflect the evolutionary status of the document which is the basis for further detailed discussion with stakeholders.

## **2.0 THE CHANGES IN DETAIL**

- 2.1** To meet the government’s garden communities key requirement of sustainable development, the Concept Plan now includes nine draft ‘Development Principles’. These principles have been developed through discussion with local Parish Councils and the Member Reference Panel. They are based upon a number of best development and place making principles relating to Garden Towns. They will be refined further through future discussions and consultations with Members and stakeholders.
- 2.2** The overarching objective is that these principles will help define the Tewkesbury Garden Town as a future proofed, sustainable development and whilst the further detail of these principles will continue to evolve, the aim is that any development which takes place in the Garden Town area should meet these principles to ensure a comprehensive plan-led scheme. This is of particular importance in the case of more effectively managing speculative development. There are nine draft principles which promote sustainable development and are set out as follows:
1. Respect existing communities and local character.
  2. A strong identity and character of place.
  3. Interconnected blue infrastructure celebrating water.
  4. A carbon neutral community and building sustainably for climate resilience.
  5. Fantastic green spaces for people and wildlife.
  6. Sustainable wider connectivity.
  7. Integrated live-work-play communities.
  8. Mixed-tenure homes, housing types and densities for diverse communities.
  9. A social model for sustainability.
- 2.3** The document explains each of these development principles in detail with proposals on how these could be delivered through Tewkesbury Garden Town and the Garden Communities delivery model.

- 2.4** Work will continue to refine these principles – in particular their definition and how they will be achieved. Factors such as promoting effective public transport infrastructure, flood prevention and blue infrastructure provision, integrated green infrastructure, a successful local economy, carbon zero delivery, facilitating a sustainable social community, cycling, place development and critically the longer-term legacy the Garden Town can deliver.
- 2.5** In 2020, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) announced an investment plan for the existing Ashchurch base, aimed at renovating and modernising the base for the next 20 years plus. As part of this, circa 15 hectares of land is proposed to be released for development on the eastern edge of the base. Originally, the whole base had been highlighted by the MoD for release and re-development. This announcement amounted to a loss of 64 hectares of potential development space equivalent to approximately 1,300 homes plus employment land. These changes have been incorporated into the Evolution of the Concept Plan document.
- 2.6** In 2019, the strategic growth potential at Ashchurch and the Council's aims for a top-quality development were recognised by the award of Garden Town status. As part of the bid for Garden Town Status and as noted by Council, the development potential from the original concept of 8,010 homes was increased to 10,195 homes. The proposed provision for employment land was maintained at circa 100 hectares. To meet this increased potential housing number, as well as replacing any re-assigned development land, a land parcel to the east of the MOD base and the B4079 has been included in the Concept Plan.
- 2.7** The Concept Plan includes a site known as 'the Mitton site' which is wholly within Wychavon District Council, part of which is subject to a current planning application with 500 dwellings from this site included in the housing numbers for Tewkesbury Borough within the adopted Joint Core Strategy. The remaining is a current proposal within the South Worcestershire Strategic Development Plan Review. Because of its proximity, the site is currently included in the Garden Town proposal and Wychavon DC is supportive of this approach.
- 2.8** The recent planning permission for 850 homes at Fiddington is also reflected in the updated Concept Plan.
- 2.9** The above noted changed circumstances increased the scope for further housing delivery, however land originally highlighted for employment has been reduced. Therefore, further employment land has been proposed east of the B4079 included in the Concept Plan.
- 2.10** The original document included a phasing outline which has been updated in this report with the latest information. The main change to the potential trajectory results from recent planning permissions. However, the overall focus of the potential trajectory remains as:
- Phase 1: north of the A46/Ashchurch MOD base; and
  - Phase 2: being the remaining development opportunities south of the A46.
- 2.11** A new strategic link road is required in respect of the M5J9/A46 and this work is being led by the Highway Authority, Gloucestershire County Council. This new road infrastructure provision requirement was noted in the original concept plan. The updated document maintains this requirement and, although the plans do not indicate any specific solution, the preference for a new route south of the existing A46 linking to the new Garden Town employment proposals is noted.

**2.12** Comments have been received from Members that the term ‘Masterplan’ used in the original document has been confusing for some people. The term suggests that the document is a statement of development intentions rather than a concept of what the Garden Town could be. The name used in this edition of the document has therefore been changed to Tewkesbury Garden Town Concept Plan.

### **3.0 PLANNING STATUS**

**3.1** This document is a concept plan outlining what development is possible in this area. It remains a high-level evolving document, which though will feed into, does not prejudice, or presuppose the planning system including the development plan led system. The appropriate planning processes will still need to be followed, with adoption of any development plan document, including the Joint Core Strategy, a matter for Council. However, the Council’s strategic aims for Tewkesbury Garden Town, have been endorsed by the government’s award of Garden Town status.

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

**4.1** None.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

**5.1** The changes and updates included in the Evolution of the Concept Plan document have been discussed with Members, local Parish Councils and other stakeholders.

### **6.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES**

**6.1** None.

### **7.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

**7.1** None.

### **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)**

**8.1** None – any future engagement with the wider stakeholders will be undertaken by the existing Garden Community team.

### **9.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)**

**9.1** As noted above, a key basis of the Garden Town development proposal is to deliver a sustainable development. This is embodied in the development principles within the document.

### **10.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)**

**10.1** Engagement will be undertaken in accordance with the Council’s duties under the Equality Act 2010.

## **11.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS**

- 11.1** The development and delivery of the Tewkesbury Garden Town is a Key Priority within the current Council Plan 2020 – 2024.

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<b>Background Papers:</b>	Tewkesbury Area Draft Concept Masterplan January 2018 <i>(Issued as a background paper with the Joint Core Strategy Review Issues and Options public consultation in October 2018).</i>
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<b>Appendices:</b>	1 – Evolution of the Concept Plan ~ July 2021.