



Ashchurch Rural Parish

Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020 -2031

Regulation 14 Draft

May 2021

Table of Contents

Glossary.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
How the NDP is organised.....	4
Introduction.....	8
Why the NDP has been prepared.....	9
Neighbourhood planning area and period.....	9
The Development Plan and planning context.....	10
Procedural considerations underpinning the preparation of this NDP.....	14
Local Characteristics.....	18
Community baseline.....	22
Key Challenges and development objectives.....	32
Vision and Policies.....	36
Infrastructure priorities.....	37
Housing Land Allocation.....	39
Roads, Traffic and Transport.....	43
Employment.....	48
Community Facilities and Services.....	50
Rural character and recreation.....	53
Water management.....	58
Housing in rural areas.....	60
Parish Council Aspirations.....	63

Glossary

Term	Meaning
A46DP	A46 Growth Corridor Development Principles
ARPC	Ashchurch Rural Parish Council
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
Desire Lines	An unplanned route or path (such as one worn into a grassy surface by repeated foot traffic) that is used by pedestrians or cyclists in preference to or in the absence of a designated alternative (such as a paved pathway)
GDP	General Development Principle
GFirst LEP	Gloucestershire's Local Enterprise Partnership
JCS	Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy 2031
LTP3	Gloucestershire County Council Local Transport Plan 3: Connecting Communities
MoD	Ministry of Defence
Major Development	For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m ² or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the "The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015".
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework 2019
RDP	Rural Development Principles
S.106	Section 106 Agreement also referred to as a "Developer Contribution"
SME	Small Medium Enterprise
STP	Station Travel Plan
SuDs	Sustainable Urban Drainage System

Acknowledgements

1. The Parish Council would like to thank all those who have been involved with the preparation of the Ashchurch Rural Neighbourhood Development Plan (ARNDP) and especially the members of the ARPC Steering Group.
2. Members of the group include:
 - Cllr Tony Davies
 - Cllr John Hargreaves
 - Cllr Angela Brown
 - Cllr David Street
 - Cllr David Garnett
 - Cllr Brian Cook
 - Alderman Gordon Shurmer
 - Former Cllr John Ward
 - Former Clerk Robert Stone
3. The Parish Council would also like to thank the Ashchurch community who have taken the time and effort to respond to our consultations and Save Our Lanes who have provided evidence in support of some policies. Significant assistance was provided by Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) officers who provided extensive advice on the preparation of this plan.

How the NDP is organised

4. The NDP is set out in four Parts:
 - Part 1: Introduction and background
 - Part 2: A description of Ashchurch Rural Parish
 - Part 3: Vision and Planning Policies
 - Part 3: Appendixes (not numbered)
 - Basic Conditions Statement
 - Consultation Statement
 - Habitats Regulations Assessment
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment
 - Interim Facilitation Report Feb. 2021
 - Planning Policy Context
 - 2014 Community Consultation Evidence
 - Save Our Lanes Evidence
 - Planning Appeal at Fiddington

PART 1

Introduction and background

Introduction

5. Welcome to the Ashchurch Rural Neighbourhood Development Plan (ARNDP).
6. Neighbourhood Development Plans were introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and enacted in the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations 2012. NDPs are prepared by Parish councils for a designated area – in this case, ARPC prepared this NDP. Once the NDP is “made” (i.e. adopted), it becomes part of the planning decision-making framework for Ashchurch Rural parish. This means that every planning application and decision that is submitted and considered in the parish must pay regard to the policies in this NDP.
7. The ARNDP has been developed by a Steering Group of parish councillors and community members to help shape the future of the rural parish and to help manage future development occurring in the area in a proactive and effective manner.
8. The ARNDP has undergone Regulation 14 consultation twice. This is explained in detail below and is also discussed in the Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement, both of which are appendixes to the ARNDP. The first consultation took place in 2018 and the NDP was then substantially rewritten and subject to a second consultation in 2020.
9. This Submission Draft takes account of the emerging Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan and the early discussions on the Garden Town and has been amended in the light of the responses to the 2020 Regulation 14 Consultation. This Submission Draft has also been subject to a Locality Neighbourhood Plan Health Check and Facilitation support from Locality. The Consultation Statement which accompanies this Submission Draft ARNDP explains these consultation activities. The Submission Draft ARNDP was also subject of a Habitats Regulation Assessment and a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
10. The production of the NDP has been funded through Locality Grant Funding and the Parish Council’s budget.

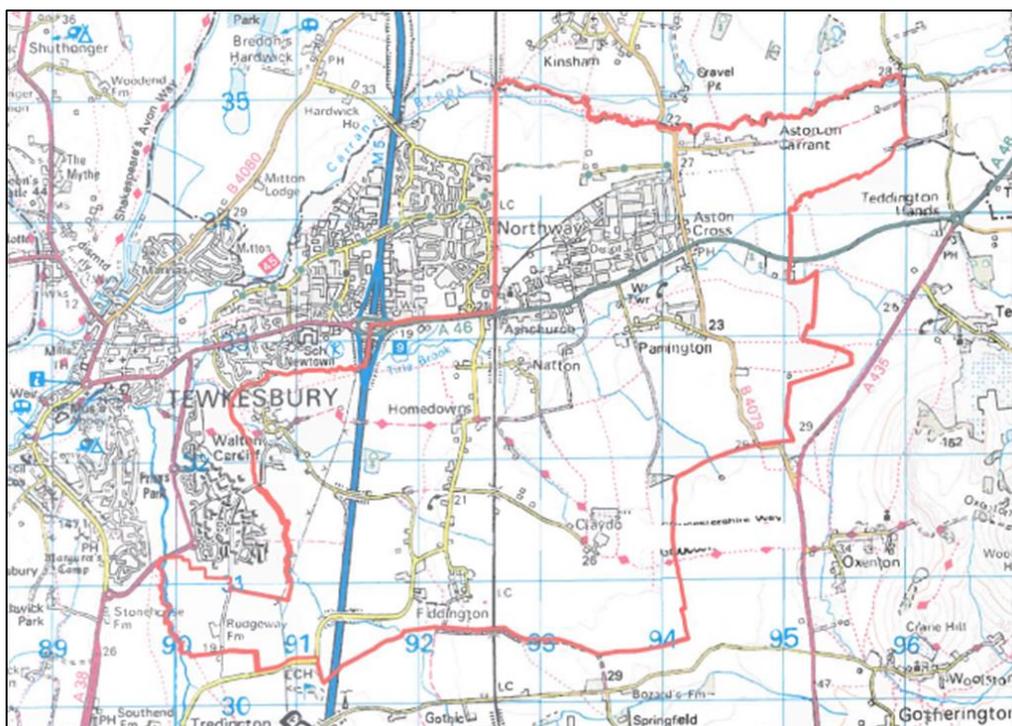
Why the NDP has been prepared

11. The ARNDP has been prepared under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 which introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape development in their area. By preparing a neighbourhood development plan, communities can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in their designated neighbourhood area.
12. ARPC wish to take this opportunity to shape the area, to ensure that new development reflects the character of the Parish over the course of the plan period and that it grows in a sustainable and measured manner to 2031. At present, Ashchurch Parish is largely rural and development will be limited. However, there are proposals for a Garden Town in the parish which will require a different response from planning policy. The NDP therefore seeks to address the current situation and the emerging proposals and suggests that an immediate review will be necessary to address the Garden Town proposals as they become formalised.

Neighbourhood planning area and period

13. TBC approved Ashchurch Rural Parish as the NDP area under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations on 8 January 2014. The Decision notice can be found in the Basic Conditions Statement.
14. The ARNDP area is shown in **Figure 1**.
15. **The period for the ARNDP is 2020 – 2031**. This is aligned to the end of the period for the Joint Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan.

Figure 1: Neighbourhood Plan Area



The Development Plan and planning context

16. The ARNDP has been prepared according to the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and the Localism Act 2011. Neighbourhood plans must meet certain basic conditions such as:
 - a. General conformity with strategic local policy in the Development Plan
 - b. Regard to national policy such as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 - c. Contributing to the achievement of sustainable development
 - d. Compatibility with EU Obligations.
17. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Neighbourhood Planning requires neighbourhood plans and planning groups to work closely with the Local Planning Authority, in this case TBC, to consider the implications of emerging planning policies in order that the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies do not conflict.
18. The Basic Conditions Statement and the Consultation Statement, both of which are appendixes to this plan, discuss the matters above in detail.
19. This NDP has been prepared in a quickly evolving policy context. It is likely that changes made by the reviewed Development Plan (JCS and Tewkesbury Borough Plan, both of which are under review), will quickly render some of the policies in this NDP out of date. Every effort has been made to follow advice in Planning Practice Guidance on the preparation of neighbourhood plans for the NDP to be both compliant with adopted Development Plan policies as well as to anticipate emerging policies. However, significant strategic matters will remain uncertain after this NDP becomes part of the Development Plan. It is therefore likely that the NDP will be reviewed soon after it is made.
20. The Development Plan for the ARNDP is:
 - a. Saved policies of the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan to 2011
 - b. Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2011 – 2031, Adopted December 2017
 - c. Adopted Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018 -2032
 - d. Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy 2027 – Adopted November 2012
 - e. Saved policies of the adopted Gloucestershire Waste Local Plan
21. Tewkesbury Borough Council submitted the Tewkesbury Borough Plan to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for examination on 18 May 2020. A Local Plan Inquiry was held in early 2021.
22. For the purposes of this NDP, policies will demonstrate compliance with the JCS and will refer to the appropriate emerging Local Plan policy.
23. The JCS is currently being reviewed and is expected to be adopted in 2023. This will require the TBC Local Plan to proceed to an immediate review.

24. TBC have recently been awarded Garden Town status for the Tewkesbury/Ashchurch area. Part of the development of the Garden Town submission included the Ashchurch Concept Masterplan (the Masterplan). The Masterplan envisages the eventual provision of around 10,000 homes and 120 hectares of employment land including community and transport enabling infrastructure. The Government announced on 25 March 2019, that Tewkesbury and its surrounding area (i.e. Ashchurch Rural Parish) is one of only a handful of locations to be awarded Garden Town status, which won it around three quarters of a million pounds in initial funding to deliver long-term sustainable development plans.
25. The proposals for the Masterplan are complex and of relevance to the ARNDP. Current thinking in the January 2018 document¹ prepared by the JCS team seeks to deliver the Masterplan over four phases.
26. Phase 1 (to 2031) envisages the development delivering: 3,180 new homes, 46 ha. new employment land, local centre with retail/services, new primary school and a Green Infrastructure corridor. The published Masterplan is shown diagrammatically in **Figure 2**.

¹ Tewkesbury Area Concept Masterplan Report, BDP, January 2018

Figure 2: Ashchurch Concept Masterplan Area for all phases

This diagram shows the complete Concept Masterplan.

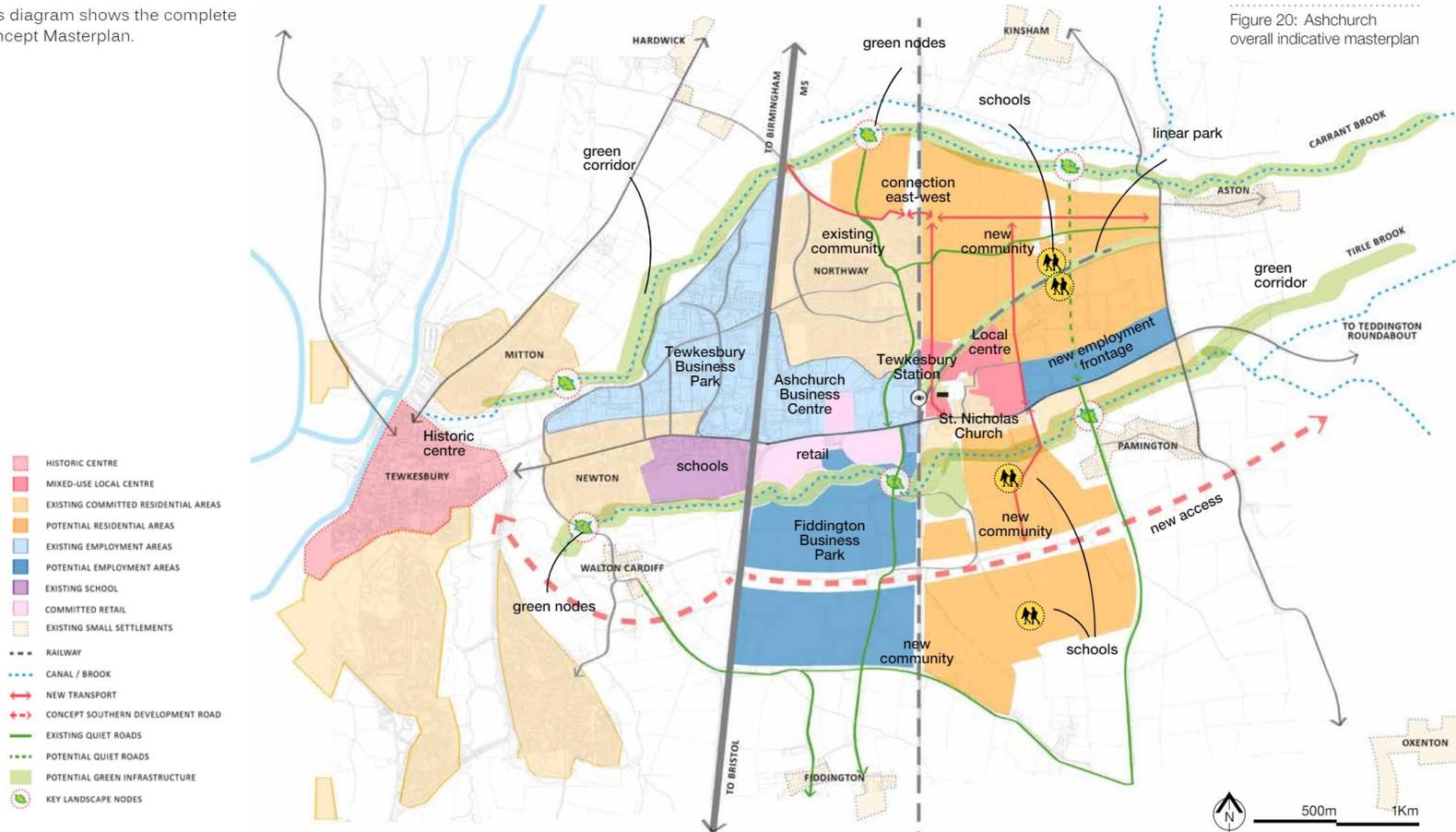


Figure 20: Ashchurch overall indicative masterplan

Source: Tewkesbury Area Concept Masterplan Report, BDP, January 2018, page 18.

27. The emerging Local Plan has not allocated any sites or made provision to progress the Garden Town.
28. ARPC made strong objections to the Masterplan and the Garden Town proposals when the project was first mooted because of the severe disruption that the construction and development impacts will cause and the significant change to the existing character and amenity of the parish. However, the Garden Town is a possible scenario and the Parish Council is seeking to work closely with the Garden Town team so that local people's views are reflected in the proposals. The relationship between the Garden Town Team and the Parish Council is explained in more detail in the Consultation Statement.
29. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan². The Masterplan only heralds what future strategic policies may address and it is not yet part of the Development Plan. Therefore, the ARNDP has been prepared in a flexible manner which will enable the ARPC and the Ashchurch community to influence development in the parish whilst also being able to work with TBC as the Masterplan concept evolves.
30. In May 2020, TBC Submitted the Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2011-2031 (emerging Local Plan) to the Secretary of State. Whilst this did not allocate housing sites in Ashchurch parish, it did allocate sites for employment under policies SA1, EMP1 and EMP2.
31. A planning appeal was allowed in 2020 for a residential development of up to 850 dwellings, a primary school, local centre, supporting infrastructure, utilities, ancillary facilities, open space, landscaping, play areas, recreational facilities and new access to the A46 (T) and Fiddington Lane.
32. This site is within the proposed Garden Town area and over the proposed employment land allocation under JCS Policy SA1 and emerging Local Plan policy EMP2.
33. At the start of the planning inquiry, it was agreed that TBC could not prove a 5-year housing land supply. In any event, the Joint Core Strategy envisages a shortfall of deliverable housing land during the plan period. It is conceivable that the Local Plan and JCS policies will be out of date whilst the NDP policies are in force. Where this may occur and is of relevance (i.e. the policies relate to strategic housing and employment allocations), the NDP policies will anticipate there may be circumstances where speculative development will be put forward and the presumption in favour of sustainable development will be triggered under Para. 11 and Para. 14 of the NPPF. Accordingly, the ARNDP allocates land at the Fiddington Appeal site.
34. The appendix **Planning Policy Context** discusses the adopted and emerging development plan policy in detail. Further planning context is found in the appendix **Interim Facilitation Report Feb. 2021**.

² National Planning Policy Framework, footnote 16.

Procedural considerations underpinning the preparation of this NDP

35. ARPC began work on the NDP in 2014. At that time, the Steering Group appointed planning consultants Harris Ethical to support the process. Harris Ethical undertook a significant amount of consultation and engagement and completed an early draft of the NDP which contained draft policies and draft evidence chapters. This baseline evidence can be found in the appendix entitled **2014 Community Consultation Evidence**.
36. In 2015, Harris Ethical ceased trading and they passed the work over to Integrated Transport Planning. In November 2018, the NDP was published for Regulation 14 consultation.
37. The Local Planning Authority was highly critical of the 2018 Regulation 14 draft and suggested several significant modifications and clarifications. As a result, ARPC appointed Dr Andrea Pellegram MRTPI to complete the process and address the planning authority's concerns.
38. There are many reasons why the 2018 draft required updating. The original NDP evidence was gathered in 2014-2015 under the saved policies of the Tewkesbury Local Plan 2011. Since that time, the Development Plan was updated with the adoption of the Joint Core Strategy 2017 which makes strategic land allocation in Ashchurch Rural parish. The Tewkesbury Local Plan 2011 to 2031 was subject to pre-submission consultation in October 2019 which proposed additional employment land allocations in Ashchurch Rural Parish and had its Local Plan Inquiry in early 2021. The Joint Core Strategy is now under review at the time that the NDP is being finalised and significant proposals are being considered for Ashchurch Rural Parish in the form of a Garden Village of 10,000 homes and a new major employment area of around 120 hectares. The Hitchin's appeal for 850 houses in Fiddington has been a significant change in circumstances since the 2014 consultation was undertaken. None of these matters were considered in the 2018 draft.
39. In discussion with the Local Planning Authority, it has been agreed that the NDP would proceed using the 2014-15 community data but with reference to adopted and up to date planning policy (the Joint Core Strategy) with reference to the emerging Local Plan 2011-31. In addition, evidence was gathered by the Ashchurch Rural community with regard to a withdrawn appeal for an anaerobic digester in Fiddington which is relevant to policies in this NDP.
40. It is anticipated that following adoption of this NDP, subject to a successful referendum result, that the NDP will go into an immediate review to address the emerging policies as they continue to develop.

PART 2

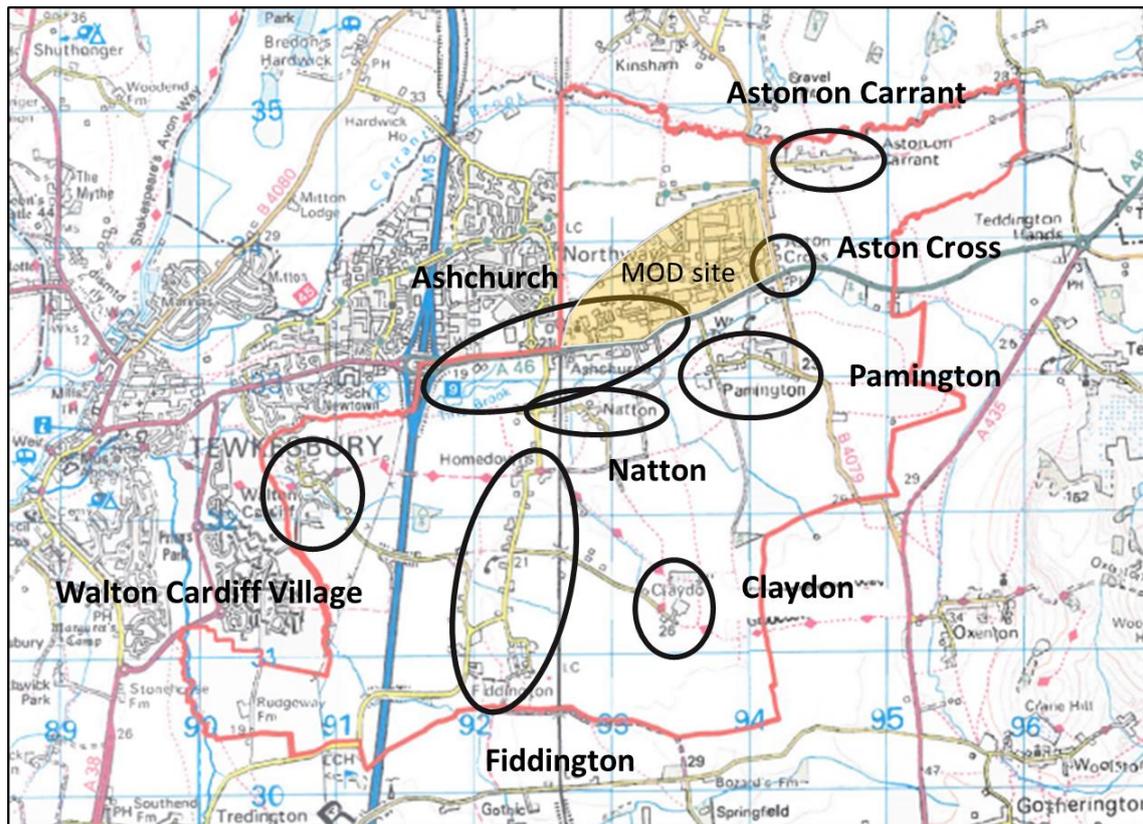
Ashchurch Rural Parish

Local Characteristics

41. Ashchurch Rural Parish lies to the east of the town of Tewkesbury. The Parish contains seven small settlements connected by a warren of back roads, public footpaths and cycle ways.
42. The M5 crosses the parish in its Western quadrant in a north/south direction and the A46 crosses the parish at its Northern quadrant. M5 Junction 9 is the intersection of the M5 and the A46. The M5 and A46 have determined the form of built development in the parish and most development is related to these routes. The remainder of the parish to the south of the A46 and the east of the M5 is largely rural and sparsely developed.
43. The M5 and the A46 provide quick and easy access to employment and services in Tewkesbury, Cheltenham, Gloucester and more widely, to Bristol, Worcestershire and Birmingham.
44. The largest density of housing and population can be found in the north. Although large-scale employment is limited, nearby towns and cities provide a wide range of employment, training and education facilities.
45. The local population was 957 residents³, many of whom were born and raised in the area. Ashchurch has also proven attractive to commuters who enjoy the peace and tranquillity of living within a rural setting, whilst still benefiting from the quick access to employment, health, and services.
46. Ashchurch settlement is arguably the centre of the parish where the church of St Nicholas is located as well as the local primary school and the village hall. The church provides an insight into the area's rich history: it was completed in 1145 and is believed to be made of some of the same stone used in the construction of Tewkesbury Abbey. The flat low-lying land in the parish has traditionally been used for agriculture.
47. Recent development has caused concerns to be raised by the local community to the Parish Council about new urban influences upon the traditional rural character. The large MoD site in the northern part of the Parish has become the UK's main Central Vehicle Depot. This was followed by new housing developments in the village of Ashchurch and Aston Cross.
48. The approximate location of the seven main settlements are shown in **Figure 3**. The settlement boundaries have not been surveyed or identified in this version of the NDP but it is the intention to identify Settlement Boundaries in the review.

³ 2011 Census Data.

Figure 3: approximate location of settlements in Ashchurch Rural Parish



Aston on Carrant

49. Aston on Carrant is a self-contained rural settlement reliant on access to other towns and villages for services. Situated in the north-east of the Parish, it is bound to the north by the Carrant Brook and to the south by the disused railway line that formerly linked Ashchurch to Evesham.
50. The settlement offers no shops or services, apart from the village notice board and the post box. However, the settlement does offer a rich historical stock of houses dating from the 11th Century, as well as being an ancient passing point for monks travelling from Evesham to Tewkesbury. The same path is available to the public today also functioning as an off-road extension to the National Cycle Network Route (41).
51. The settlement has a peaceful atmosphere, with little noise or light pollution from the A46, the MoD site (immediately to the West) or neighbouring settlements. The small number of new houses in the settlement are designed sympathetically to be in keeping with the surrounding buildings.
52. Movement through the settlement is limited by motor vehicle due to the dead-end road, however, pedestrian, cycle and bridle ways allow non-motorised access through the settlement. The minimal traffic adds to the character of the settlement and adds an element of safety for any pedestrians.

Pamington

53. This settlement lying to the east of the Parish is bound to the north by Tirlle Brook and a curtain of poplar trees and to the south by the flat and low-lying agricultural land distinctive of Ashchurch Rural Parish.
54. Similar in many ways to Aston on Carrant, Pamington has a mixture of housing with new housing being built in a sympathetic manner to the existing settlement character. Pamington provides bungalow housing on a small 'estate', which is not in keeping with the Ashchurch Rural Parish character as a whole, but which provides essential bungalow accommodation which cannot be found elsewhere in the parish.
55. Although the settlement sits closely parallel to the A46, the noise, traffic and light pollution is limited by a curtain of trees which allows the settlement to maintain and preserve its peaceful and safe atmosphere. Movement through Pamington is via an 'access only' road, which is quiet during the day.
56. During peak hour traffic times, many drivers from outside the Parish use the road as a rat run, passing through the settlement linking the A46 with the B4079. As with Aston on Carrant, Pamington is immaculately kept, with well-maintained and mature gardens, sloping down onto the road.
57. Pamington is experiencing significant housing growth with 150 homes being built adjacent to the A46. Development commenced in 2019.

Fiddington and Claydon

58. Fiddington is a small settlement lying in the south of the parish, defined by the central manor which was once a manor of Tewkesbury Abbey. Rich in history and settled maturely into the landscape, the houses surrounding the manor are also mature with gardens extending well out to the front and backs of the properties.
59. Claydon is set back at the end of a long narrow winding single-track road, with a small cluster of houses at the end. It is a quiet and tranquil settlement, hidden from view of the road and has limited vehicle movements.

Walton Cardiff Village

60. Walton Cardiff village is similar in building character and layout to Pamington. The winding single road that provides restricted access from the north and south to the village should provide a safe and tranquil atmosphere throughout the settlement. However, this road is also used as a rat run during busy traffic hours by drivers who do not live locally. Small areas surrounding Walton Cardiff are defined by the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan adopted in 2006 as being key wildlife sites identified for Great Crested Newts and for containing traditional orchards.
61. The site is also defined as being a Scheduled Monument due to it being a deserted medieval village. Today, pylons create urban focal points and the landform is generally undulating to flat. Although the surrounding fields are mostly pastoral, Walton Cardiff does encompass some arable fields. There is a distinctive barrier between what is urban and what is rural with the village, demonstrating an intimate and historic character that contrasts with much of the surroundings. The village is intersected by several popular footpaths and bridleways that provide access to surrounding areas.

62. The recent development of 250 dwellings to the south of Walton Cardiff at Rudgeway Lane falls within ARPC.

Ashchurch

63. The Ashchurch Village settlement, which, as the result of archaeology investigations during the re-alignment of the A46 was discovered to have been occupied from around 400 AD during Romano-British times, consists of key facilities such as the primary school, village hall and, in particular, St Nicholas's Church with its quiet breathing space, green area and trees.
64. These heritage assets are flanked immediately by ribbon development of assorted age, but individual design; frequently two storey detached dwellings with large front gardens and hedges. The view toward Cleeve Hill adds to the green area, and spaces between houses incorporate trees/shrubs through garden planting.
65. Along the A46 are phased developments, from St Patricks Road and Fitzhamon Park both with Army history, the former consisting of bungalows with open plan frontage and green verges with trees, and the latter of 3-storey flats built around a courtyard layout in later 1960s style.
66. The A46 which connects the M5 Motorway to the Midlands and North Cotswolds, runs through the heart of the settlement and, as a consequence, at certain times of the day the road becomes congested with HGVs, light goods vehicles and private motor vehicles. Due to the size and capacity of the road and limited crossing points, access by members of the community to the key facilities can sometimes be difficult during these times.

Aston Cross

67. Aston Cross is a hamlet on the cross roads of the A46 trunk road and B4079. The junction dominates the settlement and acts as a centre for a small distribution of houses and forms part of the MoD site's boundary.
68. Views in area are limited from all sides due to a curtain of trees from the south to north, providing a barrier. The MOD site has limited views in and out from the north. Houses differ in style, size and layout. There seems to be no distinctive character within this part of the Parish. A new infill development of 12 dwellings began construction in 2018 at the former Queen's Head Public House adding further modern features.

Natton

69. Natton lies to the south of the Tirl Brook and can be defined as a small hamlet. First records of the settlement can be traced back to 1087 and is believed to be one of the first settlement sites in the Parish.
70. The settlement is defined to the east by the railway line, which should be easily accessed by vehicle or by cycle or on foot. However, inadequate pavements between the settlement and nearby service, such as the church, school, garage and railway station result in safety concerns and the need for infrastructure improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. The hamlet accommodates up to nine residential properties and five businesses.

Community baseline

71. The ARNDP has been prepared so that it represents the views of Ashchurch Rural Parish residents and also relies upon up to date evidence prepared by TBC and other organisations. The evidence base was sourced through two methods: existing evidence (Development Plan evidence, census data etc.) and new data (questionnaires, assessments and consultation). The evidence in this part of the NDP was mainly collected by Harris Ethical.
72. The Ashchurch Rural Parish evidence base has also drawn upon the Rural Community Profile produced by Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE) which provides a profile of the Parish; the population demographics, work habits, and travel habits.
73. The existing evidence for Ashchurch Rural Parish is extensive, therefore the new evidence produced in support of the NDP was focused primarily in engaging with the community, analysing the landscape and character of each of the small settlements and assessing the movement throughout the Parish.
74. The evidence base has been continuously built upon since the inception of the NDP, with two community engagement events, a school visit, household surveys, ongoing business engagement through the Junction 9 Group, landscape, housing, character and environment analysis, transport research and Station Travel Plan, A46 Midlands Connect research and the Tewkesbury (Ashchurch) Concept Masterplan.
75. The steering group focused on six main headings as a way of breaking the data and data collection into manageable tasks which seemed the best way to reflect community concerns. This was undertaken in 2014, considering the community survey results and other evidence. The approach was refined in the 2018 draft ARNDP and has been carried forward in this final version. These six main themes are elaborated in the policy section of this documents.:
 - Roads, Traffic and Transport
 - Housing
 - Economy
 - Environment
 - Facilities and Services
 - History
76. For each of these headings a large amount of research, assessments, on ground surveys and public surveys were conducted to help the Parish understand how Ashchurch Rural Parish has been shaped in the past and how it looks and operates today.

Roads, Traffic and Transport

77. Road safety concerns are of a high priority to the residents of Ashchurch according to data gathered during the preparation of the NDP in 2014. Local people are also concerned about rat-running on local roads as traffic in peak times seeks to avoid congestion on the A46 and M5 junctions.

78. The A46 Trunk Road, which connects the M5 Motorway to the Midlands and north Cotswolds, runs through the heart of the settlement. In peak traffic times, the road becomes congested with HGVs, light goods vehicles and private motor vehicles. Due to the size and capacity of the road and limited crossing points, access by members of the community to the key facilities can sometimes be difficult during these times.
79. The A46 is difficult to use for pedestrians and cyclists who are particularly affected by peak time travel congestion. There is little in the way of shelter and pedestrians and cyclists are exposed to the weather and pollution from the road.
80. To the south of the A46 lies a network of small country roads which connect the smaller settlements and add to the rural tranquil character of the parish. These “quiet routes” are bordered by rich hedgerows and are level with pockets of adjacent and well-screened residential and commercial development. These quiet routes are often used by cyclists wishing to travel from Tewkesbury to Cheltenham, and serve local people of neighbouring parishes and settlements such as Tredington and Stoke Orchard. Survey evidence demonstrates that these quiet routes are used regularly for recreational activities such as walking, cycling and horse-riding. There is notable conflict between leisure users and car and HGV traffic.
81. However, these roads are also used as rat runs during the peak hour when traffic builds up along the A46 between the M5 and Aston Cross. Walking and cycling during peak hours can be dangerous and unappealing.
82. Road safety concerns are of a high priority to the residents of Ashchurch, and these roads should be safeguarded to accommodate the cyclist, horse riders and pedestrians. NDP policies T1 and T2 seek to introduce safeguards for these recreational and sustainable transport routes.
83. Gloucestershire’s “Local Transport Plan 2015-2031 Connecting Places Strategy CPS 6 – Tewkesbury⁴” (the LTP) is principally focused on the urban A46/A438 corridor between Tewkesbury with Ashchurch. It anticipates a strategic allocation in Ashchurch and M5 Junctions 9 and 10.
84. The LTP recognises many of the transport issues noted by Ashchurch residents: congestion on the A46 and around Junction 9, barriers to walking and cycling on the A46 and rat-running on rural roads. It also notes that new development must have its transport impacts mitigated in order to avoid further decline.
85. The LTP seeks to deliver short-term improvements (to 2021) including cycle access improvements for the Ashchurch Road corridor and on the disused railway bridge on Northway Lane. These improvements will therefore be focused at the northern part of the parish and will not relate to the southern rural areas.
86. Longer term to 2031, the LTP seeks to introduce A46/A438 and Junction 9 improvements, improvements to the Ashchurch railway station and cycle access improvements over the M5 linking Ashchurch to Tewkesbury. Again, these programmed improvements will have little impact to the southern parts of the Parish.
87. The Tewkesbury Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) Smarter Choices report assesses interventions and their impact on traffic levels within the A46/A438 corridor

⁴ November 2017.

area. The role of the Smarter Choice programme is to encourage and offer opportunities to shift modal share positively towards sustainable choices (such as active travel and public transport) prior to major development along the A46 corridor.

88. Bus services are also limited within the Parish. The number 41 and 42 serve a part of the A46. A Dial-a-Bus service is also operational in the Tewkesbury area.
89. The local area is currently serviced by several taxi companies and a community taxi scheme in which individual applicants can apply for grants towards the cost of taxi services. However, this service may be removed.
90. Historically, the rural housing identity of Ashchurch Rural Parish, beyond the A46, focused around small clusters of buildings surrounding an old manor. The houses within these small settlements are mixed in architectural design and type, low density, full of unique characteristics, styles and craftsmanship, reflecting the ages in which they were built. As the MoD site was developed in 1938, the settlements of Ashchurch and Aston Cross developed to accommodate the rising population, reflected in the army style buildings found in parts of Ashchurch and Aston Cross today. However, these settlements also contain buildings providing reminders of the agricultural history of the Parish.
91. The 2011 Census data shows that the 957 residents living within the Parish are disbursed across 389 homes. Of the 93 'one person households', a third of them are residents over the age of 65.
92. Houses provide space for adequate parking and gardens, with residents often showing pride in their gardens and houses reflecting the overall well maintained and mature atmosphere throughout the Parish.
93. Household types in 2011 were:
 - a. 271 family households
 - b. 93 one person households
 - c. 25 other households
94. The 2011 census showed that housing types were:
 - a. 173 detached houses.
 - b. 87 semi-detached housed
 - c. 64 terraced houses
 - d. 63 flats
95. The conclusion that can be drawn from the census data is that housing in Ashchurch is dominated by detached family households.

Economy

96. The Tewkesbury Borough Employment Land and Economic Development Strategy Review⁵ concludes that major infrastructure works will be required at Junction 9 of the M5 in order to release key sites on the A46, including the MOD Ashchurch site.

⁵ Bruton Knowles, November 2016.

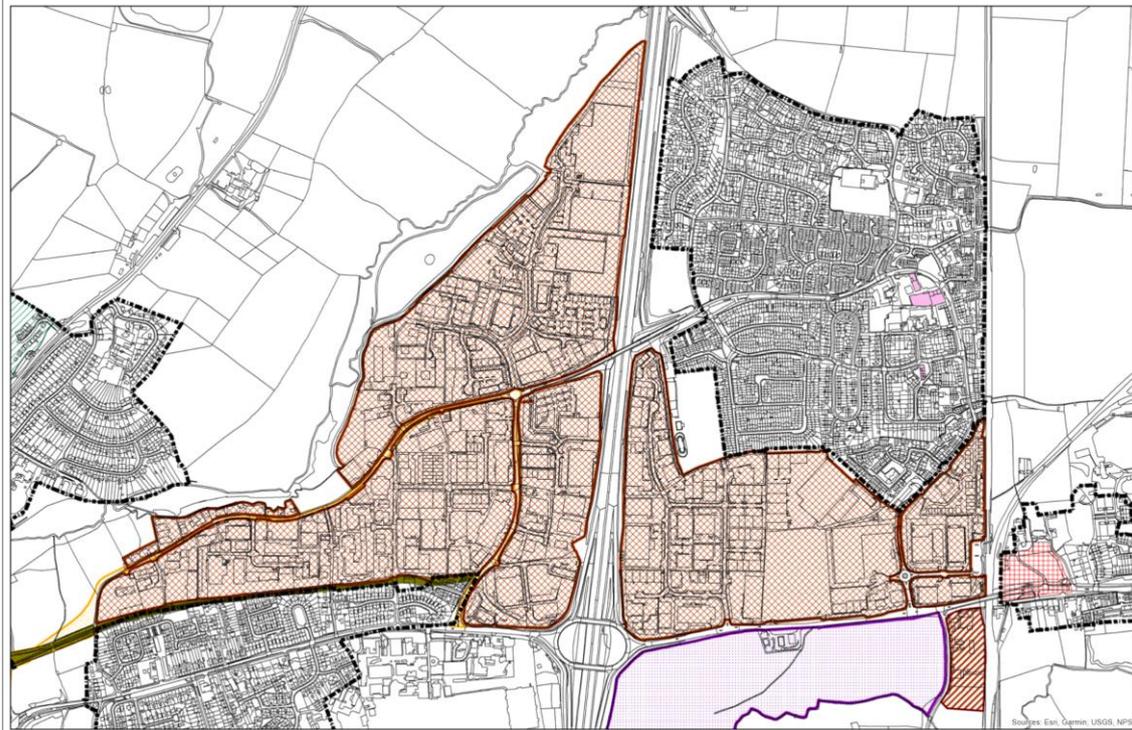
It concluded that despite the economic recession before publication in 2016, Tewkesbury Borough has proven to be an attractive proposition for developers and investors. Nearly 63% of the development during the period 2005-16 was for B1 uses. Property rental values for B1 space shows a strong market and the highest values are along the M5 corridor and centred at motorway junctions.

97. Agricultural and a rural character prevails in the southern portion of the parish below development along the A46. Local people are keen to maintain and support rural businesses. Ashchurch Rural Parish has a higher than average percentage of residents working from home. Ashchurch Rural residents have identified that it is important to support these homeworkers and to encourage more to follow suit. This will have a positive impact on the level of traffic on smaller roads.
98. In order to facilitate home working, consultation responses from a large majority of residents supported improvements to broadband speeds across the parish. This is supported by the GFirst LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) Strategic Economic Plan for Gloucestershire 2014, in which it is noted that the rural nature of much of Gloucestershire presents challenges in delivering high speed broadband to residents. The county aim is to bring Next Generation Access broadband to around 90% of homes and businesses.
99. Noticeably, there is a low number of residents travelling by public transport to work. This is largely due to the limited bus service available to Ashchurch Rural Parish and infrequent train services. If there were to be both housing and economic development within and surrounding the parish, improvements to the public transport infrastructure would play an important role in reducing traffic along the Ashchurch Rural Parish road network.
100. At a county level, the M5 corridor has been identified by GFirst LEP as a potential Growth Zone for future economic development. The Strategic Economic Plan for Gloucestershire (2014) pays particular focus to Junctions 9 and 10 on the M5 as areas for potential economic growth. Although Junction 9 does not directly sit within the Ashchurch Rural Parish boundary the impacts and opportunities relating to this potential Growth Zone would be significant to residents living within the Parish.
101. GFirst LEP supports the proposed development at M5 Junction 9. The economic plan expects that the site in total will produce an annual GVA of £74m and 3300 jobs. The impact on the A46 is recognised within the document, and GFirst LEP state that they will work alongside the Worcestershire LEP, Department for Transport, Highways England and the Local Authorities on a long-term strategy.
102. The Ashchurch Concept Masterplan has developed these proposals which have been supported by the successful bid for Garden Village status and are now likely to be delivered as major transport improvements for Junction 9 and the A46.
103. Impacts may amount to increase in traffic congestion and pressures on the local services and facilities, whereas opportunities for residents would include more job opportunities and greater potential for increased rail service. It is therefore applicable to include these plans within the NDP and to consider the implications of such development within the vision and aims for the ARNDP.
104. 2011 census data shows that most Ashchurch residents work in the local area: 16% work from home, 28% work within 5 km, and 38% travel more than 5 -20 km, and 17 travel more than 20 km to work.

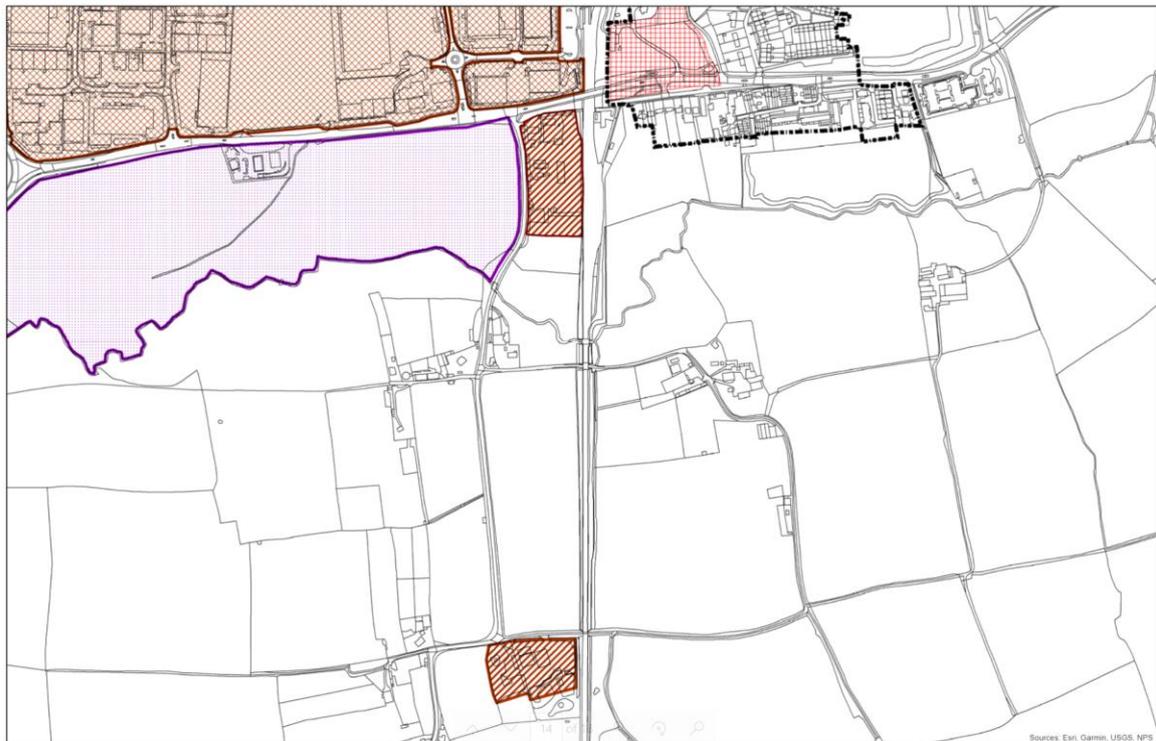
105. JCS Policy A5 Ashchurch makes a strategic allocation for 14 ha of employment land, 5 ha of green corridor along the Tirlle Brook, flood risk management, access from A46 and Fiddington Lane, traffic mitigation, public transport, enhance rail passenger service and pedestrian and cycle links. **Figure 4** shows Tewkesbury & Ashchurch Business Park allocation in the emerging Local Plan, EMP1 and Newton Farm BusinessPark and Homedowns Achievement Park, EMP2.

Figure 4:

EMP1 Tewkesbury & Ashchurch Business Parks



EMP2 Newton Farm Business Park and Homedowns Achievement Park.



Source: Employment Maps, Pre-Submission Tewkesbury Borough Plan, 2019

Landscape

106. The Landscape Sensitivity Study (LSS) for Tewkesbury and Ashchurch⁶ was commissioned by TBC to assist in determining the most appropriate locations for future development to be identified in the Emerging Local Plan. The LSS spanned an area greater than AR Parish. The study considered its study area in terms of land parcels with similar characteristics.
107. The LSS is discussed in detail in the appendix **Planning Policy Context**. Overall, the LSS concluded that large-scale residential and economic development in Ashchurch Rural Parish could have landscape impacts. These impacts with regard to the Masterplan will be more fully considered in the review of the NDP.

Ecology and Biodiversity

108. The rural parts of the parish are characterised by traditional agricultural activities and former orchards. The parish is rich in ecology and biodiversity and these also offer some constraints to development. The rural area is characterised by agricultural areas interspersed with woodlands, traditional orchards and some grazing marsh. Lapwing, a priority species, is present.
109. There are two Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSIs) that are outside the parish: Dixon Wood SSSI to the east, and Severn, Ham and Tewkesbury SSSI to the west. The Walton Cardiff Ponds area a local wildlife site.

Facilities and Services

110. Facilities and services available to the residents of Ashchurch are limited within the parish boundaries. The settlement of Ashchurch provides a primary school and community hall as well as a 24-hour garage (with shop) and Starbucks café. There is a train station serving the parish and the surrounding area, however frequencies and access via public transport to the station are limited.
111. There is one play park within Ashchurch, but other green spaces for children extend to the Church grounds, garden spaces, informal play areas and Pamington football pitch.
112. It was identified by residents through the public consultations and household surveys that local shops, cafés and a pub are all desired by residents of the Parish. New shops are also desired by businesses operating in the Parish. Additionally, the provision of additional safe green spaces and sports facilities for both children and adults are desired by the residents.
113. As a part of Gloucestershire's Local Transport Plan 2015 – 2031, parish and town councils were asked to think strategically about the future development of the A46. Key topics discussed in relation to the A46 corridor was the lack of bus services providing connections from rural communities to central hubs (Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, Gloucester and Evesham). The current rail service has been identified as an area in need of improvement in terms of higher frequency train services and

⁶ Toby Jones Associates, April 2017.[link](#)

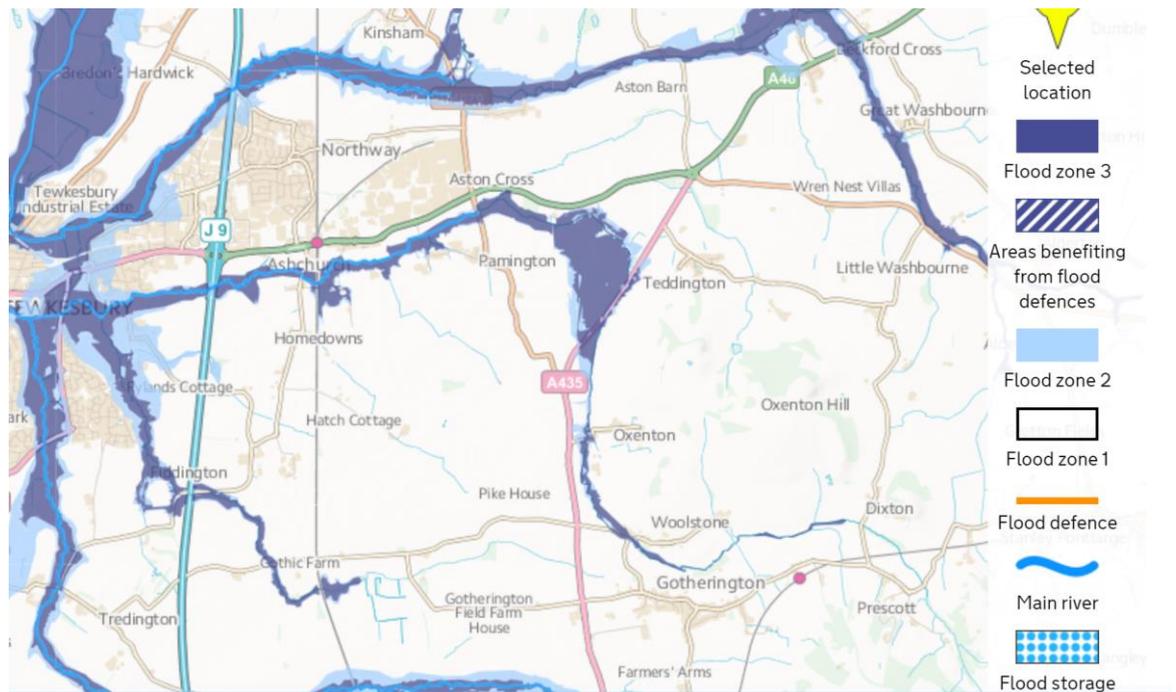
classed as sub-standard when compared to Gloucestershire as a whole, within Gloucestershire's Local Transport Plan.

114. Improvements to the network through enhanced passenger waiting facilities and improved information (both bus and rail) would support Gloucestershire's Local Transport Plan's objective to ensure that communities are being given the opportunity to benefit from economic prosperity.
115. Other key services not currently present in the parish are medical and dental facilities. If the parish is to experience growth over the plan period, addressing the gap in these services will be a priority to ensure access for all residents. Although new medical practices have opened in Tewkesbury, there are concerns from the doctor's surgery that the hospital would not be able to meet the demand for additional housing from Ashchurch Rural Parish. The review of the NDP will consider how an adequate doctor's surgery should be built as part of future development.

Flooding

116. In 2007 Tewkesbury and the surrounding area was devastated by extensive flooding, therefore it is imperative for future mitigation that the risk of flooding is carefully considered in the development of the Ashchurch Rural Parish. TBC have prepared supplementary planning advice on Flooding which clarifies how development should proceed in areas subject to flooding.
117. **Figure 5** is an excerpt from the Environment Agency Flood Map for planning. It shows that Ashchurch Rural parish is subject to flooding. Vulnerable areas are to the north of the Parish where the Carrant Brook runs putting some dwellings in Aston on Carrant at a risk of flooding, reaching as far as residents' gardens. Access north of the Parish along the B4079 towards Bredon may be disrupted during times of high rainfall. Walton Cardiff is also at risk of flooding. This zone extends along parts of the Fiddington to Tredington road as well as some farmland.
118. The settlements of Fiddington and Claydon are at no risk of flooding, however access to these settlements may be disrupted if access roads in Walton Cardiff and Natton were to flood. 63% of respondents to the household survey feel either moderately or very concerned about flooding in the Ashchurch Rural Parish.
119. The ARNDP will not contain policies on flooding, but the level of vulnerability to flooding is a considerable development constraint that will impact upon future development proposals and evolving planning policy. It is likely that the review of the NDP will consider flooding as it relates to green infrastructure. Specific areas where development would not be appropriate and where flood management measurements will be required will be identified.

Figure 5: Flood map for Ashchurch



Source: Environment Agency (February 2020)

120. There is also significant risk from surface water flooding, including water coming from the Escarpment during periods of heavy rain. This is particularly acute between Fiddington and the M5.

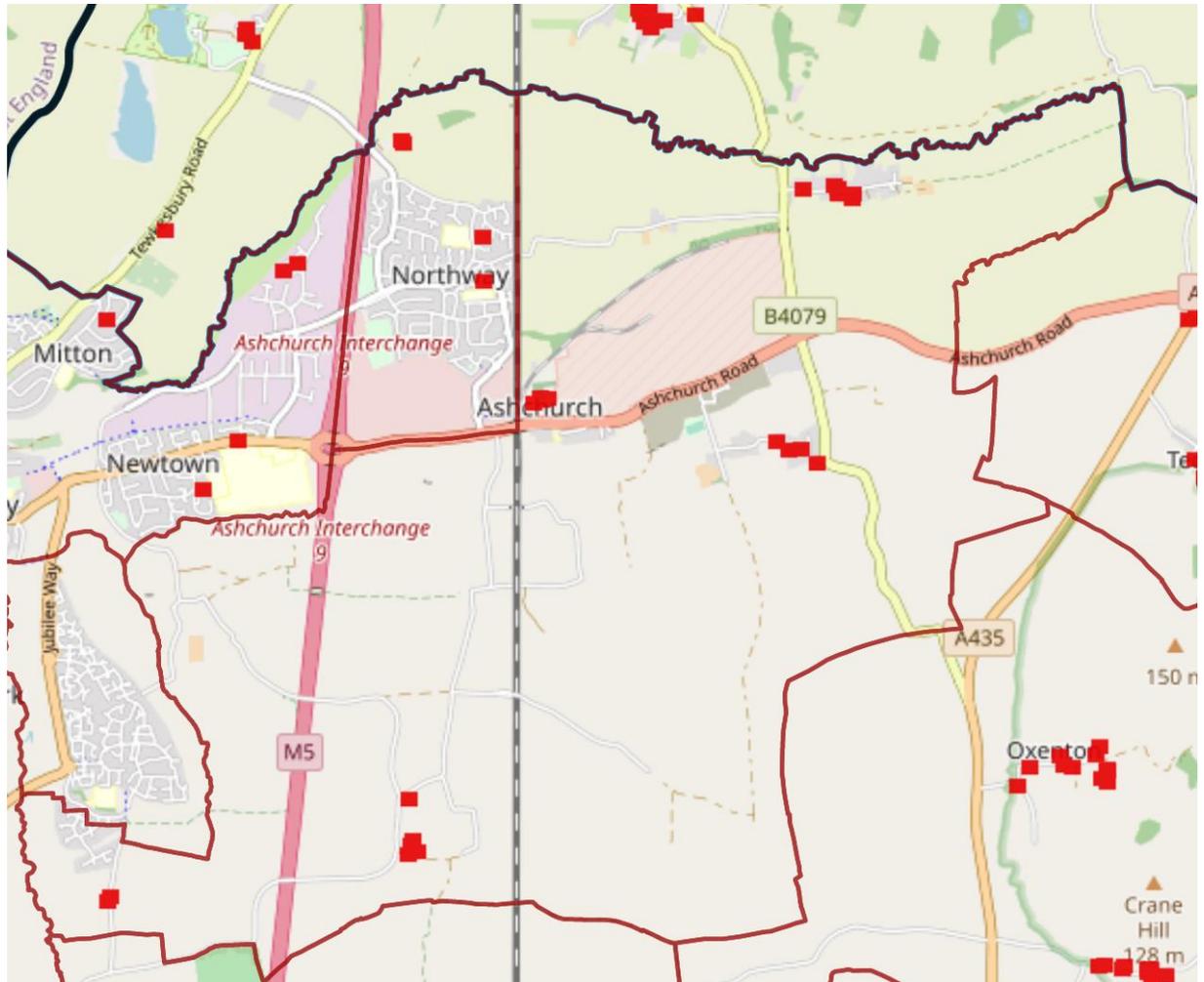
History and Historic Environment

121. Ashchurch has a wealth of history due not only the distinct character of the listed buildings scattered throughout the parish, but also through the pattern of historic developments. For most of its history, the parish has been agricultural: the flat low-lying land is heavy in clay and the fields are fed off the Tirlle Brook and its numerous tributaries.
122. During the Second World War, the Parish played a role in accommodating a large army camp. The camp became the Central Vehicle Depot of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and a vehicle depot of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. The MoD site is still in operation today and is a large employment site within the parish.
123. The railway was opened in 1840 and then has served as a minor railway centre. The introduction of the railway led to development of some larger houses within the parish to accommodate the more well-to-do. The bridge across the railway, which is now known as the A46, was previously the focal point of the parish, with the Parish Church, village school, police station and village hall nearby.
124. There are several listed buildings in the parish, located mainly within the small settlements, as shown in **Figure 6**. There is a Scheduled Monument in Walton Cardiff which is the site of a former medieval village. There are some Grade II and

II* listed buildings in some of the settlements of which 24 listed buildings, 4 of which are Grade II* and 2 of which are on the National Heritage at Risk Register⁷.

125. Sites across the parish were appraised in August 2014 set out in **Appendix 2**.

Figure 6: Listed buildings in Ashchurch Rural Parish



Source: Gloucestershire County Council interactive map

⁷ <http://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/results?q=ashchurch+rural>

Key Challenges and development objectives

126. Community consultation in 2014/15 and a review of Development Plan policy and evidence indicate that there are several key challenges and issues that the ARNDP must address. However, because the JCS review is in its early stages and the Masterplan has not been fully designed, many of these challenges will of necessity be addressed in the review of the ARNDP. The challenges and objectives are set out in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Ashchurch Rural Parish challenges and development objectives

- Accommodating the scale of growth needed to deliver strategic housing and employment objectives for Tewkesbury, Gloucester and Cheltenham whilst retaining and enhancing the character and identity of the villages and hamlets within the Parish.
- Ensuring that the transport packages put in place manage and deal with traffic growth, to prevent further severe impact of an already busy corridor, including, protection of quiet routes. Rat running through Ashchurch settlements will be managed.
- Ensuring that all development makes provision for climate change. This is particularly important in terms of greenhouse gas emissions and water management and flooding. The use of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems working in concert with Green Infrastructure provision and Biodiversity enhancement will be promoted.
- Good quality sustainable transport links between the parish and surrounding major destinations are required. This must include enhanced passenger waiting facilities information, and service destination improvements particularly for bus and train.
- Protecting and enhancing the environmental assets and landscape value of the area.
- Preserving and enhancing green assets and public rights of way and other linkages within the open countryside.
- Ensuring that the proposed growth benefits existing local residents, in terms of facilities and services on offer, including access to sport, green space, retail, café's and pubs, and health services associated with major development along the A46.
- Design for all new development should be of high quality, sustainable and should provide well-designed public realm as an integral part of schemes.
- Enabling local businesses to develop and grow.
- Improving broadband speeds for home workers.
- Provision of bungalows for the elderly.

127. Community consultation in 2014 and subsequently indicated that some issues were of concern to many members of the community. The consultation responses from 2014 can be found in a separate appendix. The NDP policies will seek to support these concerns.. The main consultation results are summarised in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Key points raised during community consultation	
What residents value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural, green environment • Quality of life • Identity of rural Parish • Strong community
Retaining Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green space and fields are important for retaining the rural feel/identity of the Parish • Landscape sensitivity, views of hills
Housing Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brownfield always before greenfield development • Mixed development signalled though there is no clear development type preferred • Small scale development to date are largely made with appreciation of local housing characteristics – exception of Fitzhamon Park which are noticeably modern • Low density to maintain rural feel • Green spaces desired within development sites • Parking provision desired
A46 Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking • Congestion and volume of traffic • Public transport provision • Need for schools and doctors • Impact of flooding • Traffic volume is already over capacity on the A46 • Congestion and junctions should be addressed
Traffic management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congestion problems • As the majority of residents are car users, and commuters, connection routes carry high volume of traffic
Road safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major concern for pedestrians especially along A46, primary school and majority of hamlets • Dangerous pavement parking • Transport audit identifies issues with safety, health and verge maintenance • Higher than average collision rate in the Parish • Improvements to adequacy of cycleway and pavements
Public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire identified for bus service, especially to support new housing development • Lack of public transport is causing issues for some businesses • Desire for higher frequency rail services
Broadband	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve broadband speed reliability and consistency • Need to improve broadband to support those that work from home and local business
Shops and community facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local shops, café, pub desired • New shops desired by other businesses • Sports facilities
Importance of Green Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The green spaces of the Parish are very important for walking, play, sport, health and are enjoyed by all ages • Are the most liked aspect of living in the Parish and should be protected • More provision of play spaces desired • Many countryside walking paths within the Parish are valued for recreation • Bench spots desired
Play spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football pitch • Play area for children
Jobs and business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some support for more local job opportunities, to be provided through outlet development and desire for more local shops, though does not seem a priority • Lack of new businesses in the last 5 years

PART 3

**Vision and Planning
Policies**

Vision and Policies

Policy Development

128. The purpose of the policies within this NDP are to strengthen and add detail to the policies in the NPPF and the Development Plan for Tewkesbury which is discussed in greater detail in the **Planning Policy** appendix.
129. Overall, the ARNDP seeks to promote sustainable development objectives as defined in NPPF 2019 para. 8.

Economic Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure priorities are identified • Housing and employment land with associated infrastructure is allocated in S1 • Transport development principles are set out in Table 3 • Parameters for modification of commercial (B and E class) uses is set out in E2 • Broadband is supported in C2 • Equestrian businesses are identified in Figure 10
Social Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road safety for recreation, PROW and amenity are protected in T2 • Community infrastructure development principles are set out in Table 4 and protected and promoted in C1 • Rural settlement character is protected in H1 • Design of housing in rural areas is set out in H2
Environmental Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modal shift is facilitated by T1 and T2 • Walking and cycling infrastructure standards are set out in T1 • Traffic from employment uses is managed in E1 • Broadband is support in C2 • Rural character is defined in para. 191 • Quiet routes are identified in Figure 9 • The intrinsic value of the countryside is protected in E1 • Water (flooding) is managed in Policy W1

130. At present, the parish is experiencing severe development pressure through 'windfall' housing sites and the strategic proposals for the A46 Growth Corridor. There is currently no secure 5-year housing land supply and this may lead to unplanned and speculative development. The NDP will allocate land for 850 homes which may provide a secure planning policy framework in the parish for a two year period after the plan is made, as explained in NPPF para. 14⁸.
131. As a community, Ashchurch Rural Parish needs to be ready to engage proactively with the development management process as it unfolds.
132. The guiding vision for the NDP has been framed around the issues that the community raised during its preparation. A set of policies has been created that seeks to guide development on these key issues to ensure that all development is undertaken having strong regard to the existing and future local community, sustainability and local character. More strategic issues will be left to the review of the ARNDP when the JCS and TBC positions on strategic allocations are clearer.

⁸ This is also providing that the local planning authority has at least a three year supply of deliverable housing sites (against its five year supply requirements) and its housing delivery as at least 75% of that required over the previous three years. In April 2021, this was below 3 years.

133. The Vision for the ARNDP has been prepared in an iterative manner and has changed from seeking to protect the rural characteristic of the parish to seeking to retain them and protect amenity whilst supporting the planning authority and developers to secure high quality and sustainable development. The final wording of the Vision has been prepared and agreed by the ARNDP steering group.

Ashchurch Rural Parish is likely to experience significant development over the next 10 years and beyond. This neighbourhood development plan seeks to ensure that this development enhances connectivity for the existing community and ensures that the appropriate level of necessary community facilities and services is provided. New development within Ashchurch Rural Parish will be sensitively designed to integrate within the existing environment. In rural areas, new development will reflect, preserve and enhance the existing rural character.

Infrastructure priorities

134. Infrastructure delivery relating to development is set out in JCS Policy INF6, and the type of infrastructure likely to be secured is itemised (but not prioritised) in INF6,2. Infrastructure prioritisation will be assessed having regard to the mitigation of cumulative impact together with implementation of the JCS Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
135. The current Development Plan policies for Ashchurch generally resist major development because of its largely rural character, except to the north near the A46. However, despite this, the lack of a secure housing land supply has led to speculative significant housing and commercial development being allowed on appeal (see NDP Policy S1).
136. The JCS, the emerging Borough Plan and this NDP all set out infrastructure requirements and JCS Policy INF6 does not prioritise these. There is a general trend in the Parish towards increasing urbanisation, and this presents different infrastructure requirements for the more rural parts of the Parish. If current trends continue, it is likely that the urban areas will encroach into the rural.
137. The Parish Council will receive 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds raised from new development once this NDP is made.
138. There are a number of funding sources that will become available as Ashchurch Rural parish faces these development pressures such as national Government funding, developer contributions and CIL. There is at present no clear prioritisation of how these resources should be allocated.

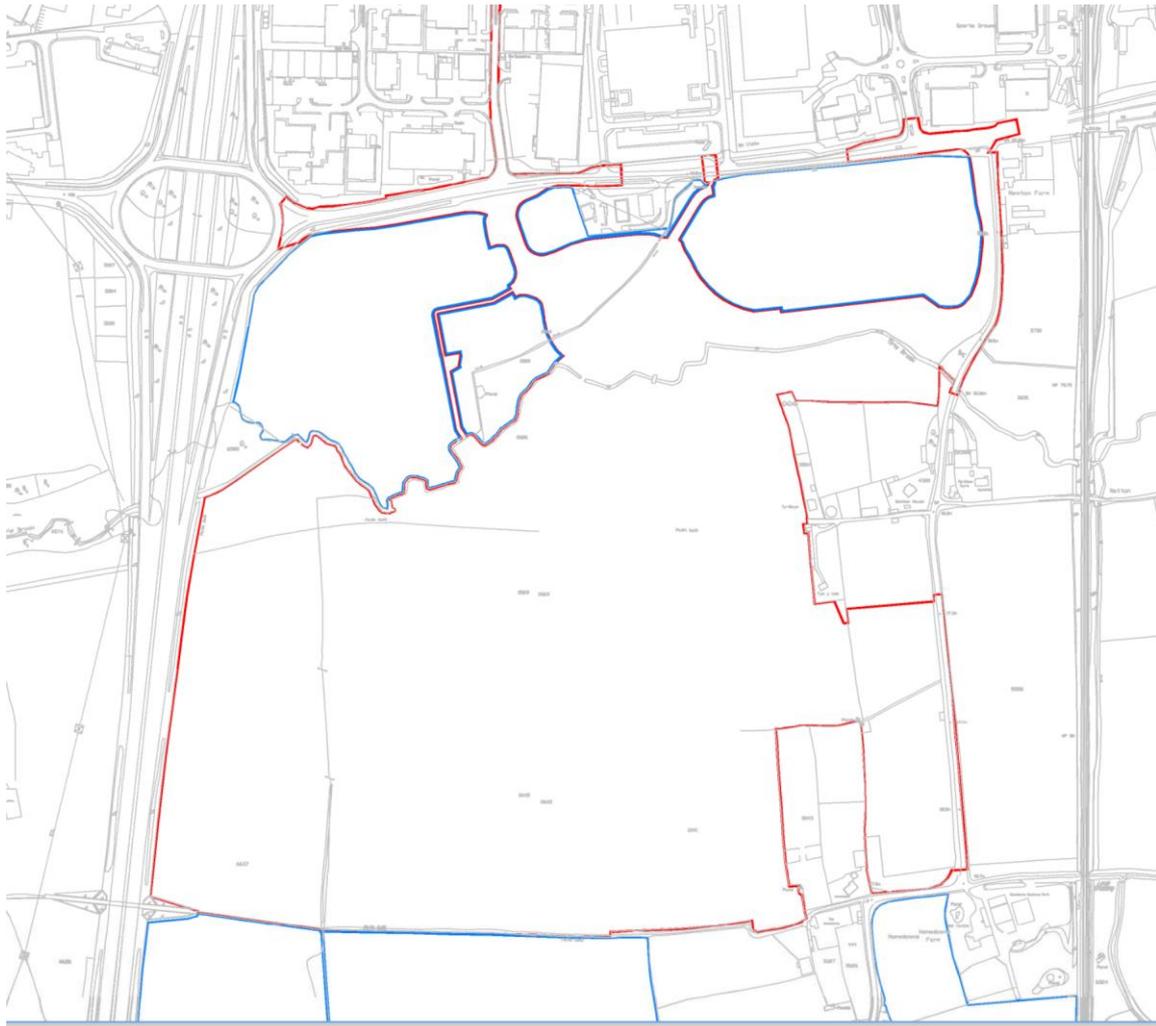
139. The greatest threats to Ashchurch Rural Parish arise from climate change and flooding, traffic congestion, and loss of walking/cycling and recreational opportunities. However, as new developments come on stream, such as that at Fiddington (Policy S1) other infrastructure such as education, community, broadband, green infrastructure will become more important.
140. JCS Policies INF6 (Infrastructure Delivery) and INF7 (Developer Contributions) set out the basis for decisions on infrastructure provision and developer contributions. These policies apply to all requirements in the ARNDP.

Housing Land Allocation

141. A planning appeal in November 2020 (Appeal Reference: APP/G1630/W/20/3256319, LPA Reference: 19/01071/OUT) concluded that there was only a 1.84 year housing land supply in Tewkesbury Borough.
142. NPPF para. 65 requires planning authorities to prepare a housing figure for neighbourhood areas and should supply this to neighbourhood areas as set out in para. 66. This was not done in Ashchurch Rural Parish where it was expected that a wider housing need should be met. However, the emerging Local Plan does not allocate strategic sites in the parish because this will need to be addressed first in the review of the Joint Core Strategy.
143. NPPF para. 67 requires that “the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority” should be taken into account where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area.
144. The most recent strategy is set out in the Joint Core Strategy which states for Ashchurch Parish:
- As a result Tewkesbury Borough has an identified shortfall against the total JCS requirement of approximately 2,450 dwellings. Nevertheless, there are opportunities for development at the MoD Ashchurch site within the plan period if infrastructure constraints can be overcome to release available parts of the site. Similarly there is potential for development at a site at Fiddington once the highway infrastructure needs around the A46 and M5 Junction 9 are established. While these sites cannot be allocated now due to uncertainties over their deliverability and capacity, a commitment has been set out in the Delivery, Monitoring & Review section to undertaking an immediate review of Tewkesbury’s housing supply so that further work on the development potential around the Tewkesbury town and Ashchurch area can be carried out. (Para 3.2.17)*
145. The MOD have announced that the site referred to in the JCS is no longer available.
146. On 22 January 2020, appeal (APP/G1630/W/18/3210903) was allowed following call-in by the Secretary of State. Permission was granted for a residential development of up to 850 dwellings, a primary school, local centre, supporting infrastructure, utilities, ancillary facilities, open space, landscaping, play areas, recreational facilities and new access to the A46 (T) and Fiddington Lane. The site, referred to here as “Fiddington” is illustrated in Figure 7.
147. The appeal documents which contain the planning conditions for the proposal are attached as an appendix entitled **Planning Appeal at Fiddington**.
148. The SoS and the Inspector of the Fiddington appeal noted that there was a neighbourhood plan in preparation but determined that this should not be afforded any weight.
149. The SoS and the Inspector determined that “given its relatively early stage of development, the Secretary of State concludes that the emerging Tewkesbury Local Plan attracts only limited weight and the JCS review attracts no weight.

150. The appeal site is within the area identified in the Ashchurch Concept Masterplan shown in **Figure 2**. It therefore may have a material impact upon the delivery of the emerging masterplan which will now be required to take the Fiddington appeal into account as the masterplan becomes formal strategic planning policy in the emerging JCS review.
151. The appeal site, Land at Fiddington, is shown (outlined in red) in **Figure 7**.

Figure 7: Land at Fiddington, Ashchurch Rural Parish



152. In the light of these matters, i.e. the references in the JCS to unmet housing need and that provision should be made in Ashchurch; the lack of available housing land in Tewksbury Borough with a supply of less than 5 years; and the appeal at Fiddington, the ARNDP presumes that additional housing land in the Parish should be allocated. This would trigger the flexibilities allowed under NPP 2019 para. F 14 and may deflect speculative housing development in the parish whilst the NDP review and the Garden Town was clarified.

153. The “Site Assessment for Neighbourhood Plans Toolkit”⁹ states, that the allocated sites must be: suitable, available, and achievable.
- a. A site is **suitable** if there are no insurmountable physical or environmental factors which would restrict development, or it has received planning permission.
 - b. A site is **available** if there is evidence that a landowner or developer is willing to sell or develop the site at a known point in the future, and within the plan period.
 - c. A site is **achievable** if there is evidence that it is economically viable and there is a reasonable prospect that the particular type of development will be developed on the site at a particular point in time.
154. NPPF Appendix 2 indicates that to be considered “deliverable”, sites should be:
- available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. Sites that are not major development, and sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable unless permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (e.g. they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans). Sites with outline planning permission, permission in principle, allocated in the development plan or identified on a brownfield register should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years. (emphasis added).*
155. Permission granted subject to planning conditions for Land at Fiddington (APP/G1630/W/18/3210903) has demonstrated that the site is suitable, available and achievable. The site will therefore be allocated in the ARNDP.
156. Severn Trent, the Water Authority, has undertaken a Sewer Capacity modelling assessment at this site to determine the impact on the existing network. This assessment returned a high risk in the downstream network and as a result infrastructure improvements are required. Severn Trent request that the developer for the site maintains regular contact with them regarding the development housing trajectories, connection locations and progress of Severn Trent led improvement works.
157. Reserved matters applications relating to APP/G1630/W/18/3210903, or any subsequent amendments to that permission, should consider the implications of the emerging Development Plan policies, even where the policies do not bear significant material weight. Where there appears to be a discrepancy between adopted and emerging policies, planning proposals should consider the intention of emerging policies and should justify why emerging policy directions have not been accommodated. Planning applications should demonstrate that the approach to

⁹“Site Assessment for Neighbourhood Plans: A toolkit for neighbourhood planners”, Locality, 2015, pages 11-14.

discrepancies from emerging policy has been discussed with relevant planning authorities and the Parish Council.

Policy S1: Site allocation at Fiddington

- A. Land at Fiddington, shown in Figure 7 of the ARNDP, will be allocated in accordance with the decision of the Secretary of State and the Inspector, including all conditions (appeal reference APP/G1630/W/18/3210903) for the following:**

a residential development (up to 850 dwellings), a primary school, local centre (comprising up to 2,000 m² gross internal floor area) (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and D1 uses) with no single A1 comparison unit exceeding 500 m² gross internal floor area, supporting infrastructure, utilities, ancillary facilities, open space, landscaping, play areas, recreational facilities (including changing facilities and parking), demolition of existing buildings, new access to the A46(T) and Fiddington Lane in accordance with application ref: 17/00520/OUT dated 12 May 2017.

Roads, Traffic and Transport

158. Traffic and congestion on the A46 was the most frequently raised topic throughout the consultation exercises. For many residents of Ashchurch Rural Parish, the potential increase in congestion, journey time, safety and community severance from future large developments was a major concern. Key community facilities (school, church and village hall) are located along the A46 and traffic on this road therefore impedes access to them.
159. It is therefore of utmost importance that major developments ensure the impacts of increasing capacity along the A46 does not impact upon life in the Parish.
160. The NDP policies seek to provide an attractive, pleasant and safe alternative to the car by encouraging the provision of new and improved walking and cycling networks, and better access to public transportation.
161. Within the policies relating to roads, traffic and transport, there is much weight placed upon providing sustainable alternatives where currently there is nothing in place. Before new residents move into the parish, it is important that public transport is provided to allow for access to the station and to encourage the move away from private car at an early stage.
162. Currently there is a strong sense of community across the Parish, particularly in each concentrated settlement. The proposed growth from the Garden Town will bring more people and vehicles into the area, exacerbating traffic congestion locally and particularly on the A46.
163. Traffic through settlements causes severance because most have developed in a linear pattern adjacent to roads which now bisect them. Road safety concerns and the adverse impact of informal routes (rat-runs) around rural roads is likely to increase as development comes forward. Impacts on existing settlements will be unwelcome and disruptive causing severance within and between communities. Rat-running of freight and logistic movements will be particularly harmful and will require management where this is possible.
164. In order to maintain and increase connectivity between the new and the existing communities and reduce congestion and air pollution, new developments need to ensure that sustainable modes of travel are well integrated into proposals.
165. The development of a more enhanced sustainable transport network will help to alleviate some of the strain along the A46 corridor from Aston Cross towards Junction 9 on the M5. The local and quiet routes network on rural lanes may not always be wide enough to accommodate segregated cycle infrastructure, however these lanes should feed into an easily recognisable strategic cycle network including and connecting to the A46.
166. Walking and cycling improvements will also encourage healthy lifestyles, whilst reducing the growth of carbon emissions across the parish.
167. It is important to encourage a reliable and frequent public transport network, particularly for the young and elderly to support and allow for independence, travel to essential shops, health and employment.

168. Impacts during construction will also require control to ensure public rights of way remain open for use or provide appropriate diversions, so not to adversely impact local residents and users of access routes. The most convenient, shortest route possible from new developments to existing communities and places of employment, retail and leisure should be designed-in from the outset.
169. During consultation and in consideration of the adopted and emerging development plan policies, several development principles have emerged which inform the policies.
170. JCS policy INF1 requires new development to provide safe and accessible connections to the transport network. It also requires developers to consider the impact of proposals on the transport network in a Transport Assessment. Policies in this NDP should be considered in any such assessment so that the unique circumstances of Ashchurch Rural parish are fully addressed. Consultation in 2014 working with the transport consultant identified the principles set out in **Table 3**.
171. New Guidance on Cycling Infrastructure Design, LTN1/20 was issued in 2020 . It requires cycle networks and routes to be Coherent, Direct, Safe, Comfortable and Attractive. Inclusive design and accessibility should run through all five of these core design principles. Designers should always aim to provide infrastructure that meets these principles and therefore caters for the broadest range of people. Infrastructure must be accessible to all and the needs of vulnerable pedestrians and local people must be considered early in the process to ensure schemes are supported locally in the long term .

Table 3: Transport development principles in Ashchurch Rural Parish

ARPC will work with and encourage the local highways authority, applicants and key partners to ensure that:

- the A46/A438 corridor is strategically managed and appropriate traffic management, pedestrian, cycling and public transport investment is prioritised to deal with existing and future traffic growth;
- improvements to the A46/M5 Junction 9 are identified and implemented to address journey time delay and sustainable transport objectives;
- an area wide travel strategy for the A46 Growth Corridor is developed to reduce the use of the private car and provide appropriate sustainable transport alternatives;
- there is a robust Construction Management Plan and Construction Travel Plan in place to mitigate any adverse impact on the existing Parish community during the construction period of the A46 Growth Corridor and development in the parish;
- fully sustainable bus services are introduced along the A46 corridor, from Aston Cross into Tewkesbury and to provide connectivity to Cheltenham, Gloucester, and Evesham;

- roads in the parish are maintained and potholes addressed so that traffic is not impeded;
- roads will be designed so that they will not be adversely affected by surface water and will not exacerbate surface water flooding;
- the use of minor roads across the Parish (such as Pamington Lane) as rat runs will be discouraged, and
- the Transport Regulation Order “access only order” along Pamington Lane is retained.

The Parish Council will generally resist “major development” as defined in the NPPF 2019 except on allocated sites or sites with planning permission. However where it is acceptable in planning terms, major development should:

- Encourage sustainable transport and reduce the need to travel.
- Protect and enhance easy, safe and convenient access to the existing public rights of way network, national network, cycle lanes via the existing and network of quiet lanes, particularly through Aston Field Lane, providing new where necessary.
- Reduce congestion and improve air quality.
- Maintain and improve community cohesion by protecting and enhancing safe walking and cycling routes within and between settlements linking with the train station, facilities and services and employment opportunities within the Parish.
- Ensure the strategic and local road network can accommodate proposed growth.
- Ensure that the existing network of quiet lanes is safeguarded from increases in inappropriate traffic volume and types of vehicle.
- Ensure that the local highway authority safeguards access to key local facilities in any future plans for the A46 corridor including linkages to Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Station

Policy T1: Modal shift for major development proposals

- A. Transport Assessments should facilitate the delivery of the “Transport development principles in Ashchurch Rural Parish” set out in Table 3 of this neighbourhood plan.**
- B. Transport provision will be required to apply standards set out in the Manual for Gloucestershire Streets.**
- C. Proposals for major development will only be supported where they demonstrate measures to integrate the new community with existing**

communities, where applicable, within the parish by encouraging a shift from car-based travel to walking, cycling and public transport. These requirements will include, but are not limited to:

- i. Provision of walking and cycling links between new and existing communities which use quiet routes/streets and/or traffic free routes according to the standards in LTN1/20.
 - ii. New access arrangements and routes must be convenient and direct for walkers and cyclists and must create new accesses and routes that follow pedestrian desire lines according to guidance set out in LTN1/20 10 .
 - iii. Improvements to the public rights of way.
 - iv. Travel awareness and behaviour programmes which seek to encourage new residents and employees to use sustainable modes of transport or to use their cars less than they otherwise would. Predicted modal shift must be demonstrated in proposals.
 - v. Infrastructure improvements to significantly increase use of sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling, bus and rail between Ashchurch Rural Parish and Tewkesbury, Bishop's Cleeve, Cheltenham, Gloucester, Evesham and the surrounding area.
 - vi. Provision of quality (frequent, convenient and modern) bus services along the A46/A438 corridor.
 - vii. Where appropriate, proposals should contribute towards improving walking and cycling access to Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Station, Ashchurch Primary School and any new schools and employment areas within reasonable walking (1 km) and cycling (10 km) distance.
 - viii. All proposals should demonstrably seek to avoid or at the least minimise any increase in motorised traffic on the network of quiet lanes in Figure 9.
- D. Where appropriate, developer contributions will be sought to provide the sustainable transport solutions referred to in this policy, and as a priority, to improve walking and cycling infrastructure along/to the A46, A438 and M5 Junction 9.
- E. Developments will be required to provide a robust Construction Management Plan and Construction Travel Plan that makes specific reference to Policies T2.

¹⁰ Desire lines are defined in the Glossary at the start of this NDP. Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20 can be found at this [link](#).

Policy T2: Road safety for walking and cycling

- A. Transport provision made under Policy T1 should be supported by evidence that indicates existing road safety issues will not be exacerbated and, where justified, should demonstrably improve road safety for all road users including pedestrians and cyclists.**
- B. Where freight and HGV traffic will arise from the scheme, including during construction, scheme proposers should provide a plan showing routes that will avoid rat-running along minor roads or through settlements. The submitted plan should form part of the development proposal and if not, will be attached to any permission as a planning condition.**
- C. Development should not, including during construction, cause harm or obstruction to the public rights of way network. Where diversions to the network are suggested, these must be of a similar or better quality than the route that is being replaced. Diversion routes will be drawn up in consultation with the Parish Council and local community in order to identify best routes.**
- D. Development should ameliorate existing and potential new conflicts between sustainable transport and surface water flooding in order to encourage greater walking and cycling in inclement weather.**

Employment

172. Existing B and E class employment uses dominate the A46 corridor. Employment in the southern rural area consists mainly of agricultural and small enterprises (SMEs). Under adopted JCS policies, new employment land has been allocated at a site at the junction of the M5 and south of the A46. This allocation overlays NDP site allocation S1 and the permitted development for 850 homes and supporting infrastructure, and is therefore not deliverable.
173. The Emerging Local Plan identifies additional local employment land adjacent to the JCS allocation. Should the Masterplan proposals be realised in the review of the JCS, significant new employment areas will be identified within the NDP plan period.
174. The NDP policies address the existing development patterns, the JCS allocation and the emerging local plan employment allocation. The future allocations that may arise from the review of the JCS and the emerging Masterplan will be left for consideration in a review of the NDP.
175. For many residents of Ashchurch Rural, the 'C' and unclassified road network is used recreationally and serves as a reminder as to the rural nature of the Parish, therefore quiet routes in the Parish would not be suitable to service larger development bringing greater flows of traffic. Development of employment sites which reflect the rural nature of the parish will be encouraged and are recognised to provide employment opportunities for residents of Ashchurch Rural Parish and neighbouring Parishes.
176. To alleviate traffic in the parish, home working is encouraged. Highspeed broadband is essential to enable this, as currently service is poor for many residents living within the parish. Improving broadband services would also give potential for new start-up businesses and assist in making the parish a more attractive place to live and work.
177. JCS policy SD1 anticipates B class employment uses (recently changed to B2, B8 and E classes) at strategic allocated employment sites. SD1 (vi) allows employment in the wider countryside (i.e. in the rural area south of the A46 where there are no strategic employment allocations) within settlements, adjacent to existing employment centres and employment-generating farm diversification projects.

Policy E1: Employment and traffic

- A. B and E Class employment uses constituting major development should avoid adding traffic to minor “C” roads in the parish and should therefore be located with access to the A46 or other trunk roads.**

Policy E2: Modification of existing B2, B8 and E class development

- A. Extensions or modifications of existing Use Classes B2 (industrial), B8 (storage and distribution) and E must be of a scale, type and character commensurate with existing and surrounding development, particularly if located within an existing settlement or the countryside.**

Community Facilities and Services

178. Currently access to and availability of community facilities and services are limited for residents of Ashchurch Rural Parish. As it stands, residents are being forced to travel out of the Parish for employment, essential shopping and health services, which is increasing pressure on the A46 corridor.
179. Concerns over growth within the parish are primarily focused on the increased volume of traffic on the A46 and rural road network as a result of a lack of access to essential community facilities and services. Therefore, proposals which provide these services within the Parish boundary will be supported. Not only will new local community infrastructure help in reducing the short local trips which are currently made by car but which could in future be made by walking, cycling or public transport, they may also allow for elderly residents of the parish to maintain or even regain their independence.
180. The 2014 community consultation revealed that there was a perceived need for additional community infrastructure. Lack of public transport was the most commented upon missing amenity but the lack of facilities for young people and a pub was also noted.
181. Community infrastructure will facilitate the development of an integrated community between new and old, as well as provide employment locally.
182. During the consultation on the NDP it was identified that Ashchurch Primary School is a central location of importance to not only residents of the Ashchurch Rural Parish, but also to parents and children of neighbouring parishes. The lack of other community facilities such as a village shop or public house means that the school acts as a community hub, encouraging community cohesion and development.
183. Ashchurch Primary School does not have capacity to meet the rising demand for child places from a large development. As the parish grows through new development including Land at Fiddington, additional capacity at the existing school or a new school will be required. In accordance with other policies in the NPD, new school places should be supported by measures to ensure safe and sustainable routes to school. This is to alleviate some of the journey's that will be made, which will alleviate traffic congestion and air pollution locally.
184. In addition to local transport improvements, improvements to Ashchurch for Tewkesbury station are referenced within Local Transport Plan 2015-2031, the Station Travel Plan. Key connecting infrastructure is required to enable new development and reduce the reliance on single occupancy car travel, which is causing traffic issues on the A46. All new developments will need to demonstrate how they connect to existing communities, as well as new and provide connectivity to sustainable modes of travel, including Tewkesbury Railway Station and bus services.
185. The Parish Council will seek to work with providers of rail and bus services to ensure a reliable and frequent service to key destinations.
186. Formal and informal play areas are valued by the community, however access to these play areas is often restricted by A46 corridor traffic. Current provisions for safe access do not allow for independent travel to and from play areas for many children and parents. Encouraging play and healthy activities is a priority for the parish and

aligns itself with countywide policies within the Connecting Places Strategy CPS 6, of the Gloucestershire’s Local Transport Plan 2015-2031.

- 187. New burial sites will be required to meet the needs of a larger local population. Proposals for major development should consult the Parish Council and seek to make provision for additional burial space where this is necessary and possible. The Parish Council should be able to assist in assessing the level of need.
- 188. JCS Policy INF4 protects existing community infrastructure. The policies in this NDP add detail to how this policy should be administered. JCS policy INF6 requires development to provide additional infrastructure, including Broadband.
- 189. Ashchurch is a dispersed community with a rural nature and local shops and meeting places are important. Recent changes to the use class order¹¹ allow more flexibility for current community uses to change, particularly to housing. Where this can be avoided, it is in the community’s interest that measures are made to seek to retain these uses if possible. Once they are lost, it is difficult to replace them. As the area develops, for instance where the Garden Town might be realised through major development, it will be necessary to re-think the approach to infrastructure needs and to plan for this holistically and strategically. However, until that happens, retaining existing community infrastructure supports the sustainability of the community.

Table 4: Community infrastructure development principles in Ashchurch Rural Parish

ARPC will work with and encourage applicants, the local planning authority and key partners to ensure that:

- Existing and future communities have the level of community facilities and services needed for proposed strategic growth and infrastructure must meet the impact of development;
- Primary and secondary school provision is adequate to meet community needs;
- Library services are provided to meet the demands arising from future developments;
- Play provision is well designed, accessible by foot and cycle on safe routes and meets community needs;
- High specification broadband is provided to support businesses and homes within new development areas in order to support home-working and reduce the need to travel;
- Land for burial sites is provided to help meet future need;
- A community hub is provided within the A46 Growth Corridor as a part of new major development, including health care facilities, dental and

¹¹ Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020.

services for the elderly, which is easily accessible through sustainable methods of transport to the entire parish.

Policy C1: Community Infrastructure

- A. Proposals for major development should help facilitate, and where appropriate contribute to, the delivery of community infrastructure identified in Table 4 “Community infrastructure development principles in Ashchurch Rural Parish” in consultation with the Parish Council.**
- B. Where feasible, community facilities should be easily accessible by foot or cycle and should not encourage growth in car journeys. Where existing community facilities are replaced or modified, there should be a net improvement in accessibility.**
- C. Loss of existing community infrastructure (Class F) as well as and including sports and recreation pitches, play areas, informal green spaces, meeting spaces and community halls, local services and shops will be resisted. Where a change of use is proposed, evidence will be required to demonstrate that the building or facility was actively marketed for sale within its current land use for a period of 12 months and that the current use is no longer viable or necessary.**

Policy C2: Broadband

- A. Proposals for major development will be expected to provide high speed broadband infrastructure which offers the fastest internet connection possible and that could enable greater online access in the future.**

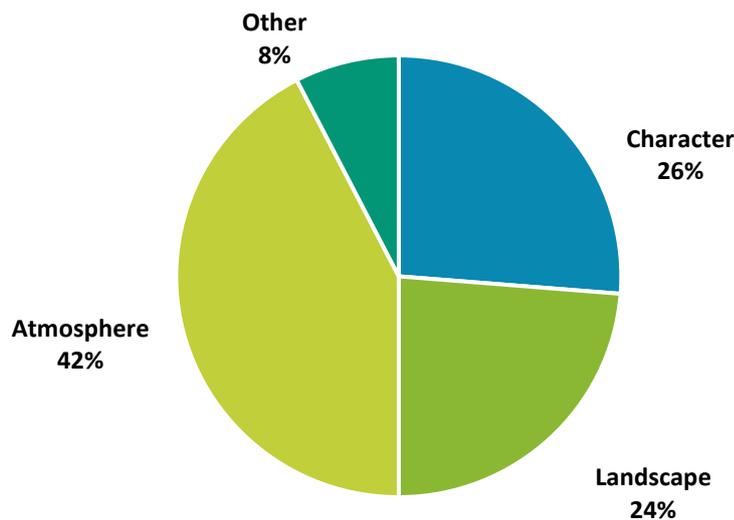
Rural character and recreation

190. A significant amount of evidence was gathered by the Ashchurch and Fiddington communities in response to a planning appeal for an anaerobic digester.¹² In support of the appeal, a community survey was undertaken by a community group called Save Our Lanes (SOL) which provides a good snapshot of how the community values and utilises the rural environment in the parish. In total, 90 surveys were completed.
191. The respondents were asked to write three words that described how they felt about the landscape. The question was open-ended and did not seek to guide responses in any direction. The response are summarised as:

Character	Simple, unspoilt, homely, natural, timeless, traditional, undeveloped, pastoral, rural, sympathetic, passion, green, fields, functional, unpolluted, private
Landscape	Pretty, attractive, beautiful, picturesque, scenery, views, idyllic, outlook, countryside, flat, wildlife, colourful
Atmosphere	Tranquil, calm, peaceful, quiet, relaxed, private, pleasant, escape, happy, refreshing, restorative
Other	Precious, irreplaceable, legacy, protected, disappearing, everyone, diminishing, resource

192. The chart below shows the frequency with which the categories were raised by respondents (in number of words per category), shown in **Figure 8**.

Figure 8: Number of words per category



¹² Appeal ref: APP/G1630/W/17/3174163 & 3177872. The survey was undertaken by Save Our Lanes who were acting as a Rule 6 party to the appeal. The appeal was withdrawn.

193. The rural part of the parish and the settlements contains many footpaths, bridleways and other rights of way that are linked by country lanes to provide a comprehensive network of recreational routes.
194. The survey sought information on how local people use the rural portion of the parish. One survey question asked respondents what they use the landscape (footpaths and lanes) for. The responses are set out in the following table.

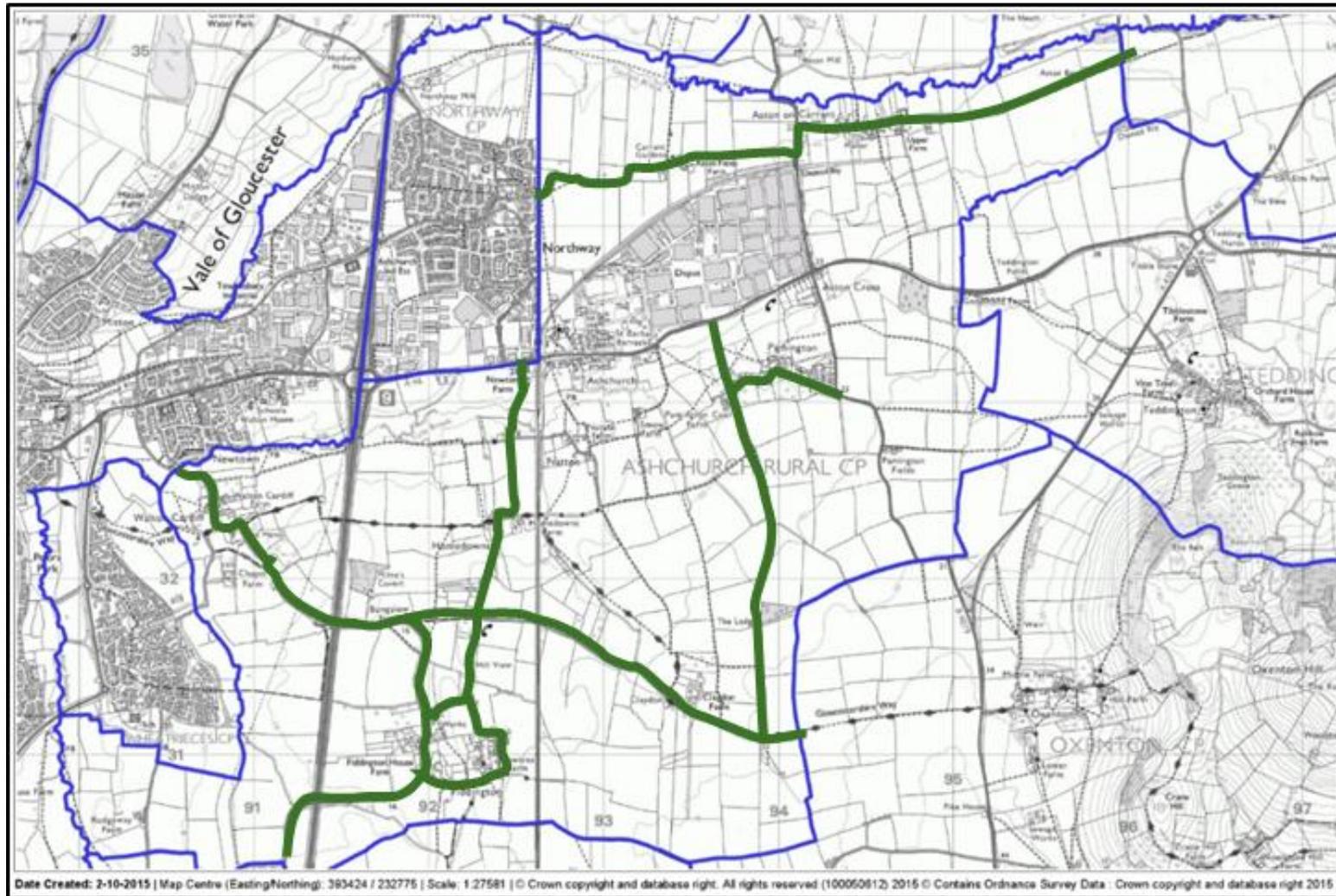
Table 5: How local people use the landscape (90 respondents)		
Walking	83	92%
Running	20	22%
Cycling	50	56%
Equestrian	17	19%

195. The survey also sought information on when the landscape was used. The responses are set out in the following table.

Table 6: Frequency of use of the landscape (90 respondents)		
Used area daily	62	69%
Used area all year	78	87%
Used area in summer	89	99%
Walked with a dog(s)	28	31%

196. The survey data illustrates that local people use the lanes and footpaths for a range of active and passive leisure activities. Most of them use the landscape daily, and virtually all use the landscape in the summer. The landscape offers a pleasant environment for relaxation and recreation for all ages. The most important routes are shown in **Figure 9**.

Figure 9: Lanes regularly used by local people for recreation (“Quite Lanes” in green)



Source: community survey data collected by Harris Ethical (2014) and Save Our Lanes (2017)

There are 26 horse stables and clubs in the area, illustrated in **Figure 10**. It is possible that this density of stables is unique in and around Tewkesbury and that the area is of particular value to the equestrian community.

Figure 10: Equestrian businesses in Ashchurch Rural Parish (diamonds)



Source: Save Our Lanes, 2017

197. The list below shows active sports clubs in the area identified through the SOL survey:
- Abbey Dressage Equestrian Centre
 - British Horse Society
 - Leadon Vale Riding Club
 - Tewkesbury Hillbillies
 - Cheltenham County Cycling
 - Veco Club Montpellier
 - Tewkesbury Triathlon Club, Tewkesbury Athletics Club
 - Cheltenham Riding Club
 - Woodmancote Wheelers
 - Tewkesbury Ladies Running
198. Adopted and emerging Development Plan policy has not identified any strategic sites in the Ashchurch Rural area other than the two industrial land allocations to the south of the A46 discussed above. The majority of land south of the A46, including these allocations and existing development and settlements, is rural in character and it is inappropriate under existing and emerging policy to introduce development in the countryside in Ashchurch Rural parish. Land to the north of the A46 is generally well developed and cannot be considered “rural” in character.
199. The 2017 survey data indicates that the rural character of the area is valued by local people who regularly enjoy the tranquillity and opportunities for recreation that it provides. This should be protected for its intrinsic value, though its future is questionable should the review of the JCS introduce a Garden Town allocation.
200. JCS policy SD6 requires development to protect landscape character for its own intrinsic beauty and for its benefit to economic, environmental and social well-being. Therefore, under this policy it will be necessary for development proposals to consider the intrinsic value of the countryside in Ashchurch Rural parish, particularly as a place where local people find tranquillity and enjoy passive recreation opportunities in the countryside.
201. Equestrian facilities offer a unique recreational feature in Ashchurch that is enjoyed by people from a wide area. These establishments make a particularly strong contribution to the local character and while the area remains rural, they should be allowed to flourish and should be protected in a manner similar to community infrastructure.

Policy V1: Protection of the intrinsic value of the countryside

- A. Development proposals in rural parts of the Parish other than on sites allocated through the Development Plan, particularly south of the A46 and in other rural areas and outside the developed areas of existing settlements (Claydon, Fiddington, Pamington, Walton Cardiff) will provide evidence that the tranquillity and accessibility of the countryside by foot, cycle, horse or other non-motorised mode will be protected.**
- B. Loss of existing equestrian infrastructure will be resisted. Where a change of use is proposed, evidence will be required to demonstrate that the building or facility was actively marketed for sale within its current land use for a period of 12 months and that the current use is no longer viable or necessary.**

Water management

- 202. It is important that development manages its surface water sustainably so as to ensure that flood risk from the sewerage network and existing surface water system is reduced.
- 203. It is important to retain watercourses including ditches in new development. The removal of watercourses and ditches from development sites, presents a risk for future growth and development in such that links to the natural water cycle can be removed resulting in a potential increase of on site and off site flood risk. The removal of these features would result in an increased need to connect surface water to the sewerage network, and this is against the drainage hierarchy outline in the Planning Practice Guidance.
- 204. Another key aspect supporting sustainable development is Water Efficiency. The implementation of water efficient technology can result in wider benefits both from an energy consumption perspective and from a surface water management perspective.

Policy W1: Water Management

- A. All applications for new development shall demonstrate that all surface water discharges have been carried out in accordance with the principles laid out within the drainage hierarchy, so that discharge to the public sewerage systems is avoided, where possible.**
- B. Water courses, including ditches, will be retained and where necessary enhanced in new development to avoid surface water flooding.**
- C. New development must incorporate water efficient design, preferably meeting the optional water efficiency target contained within Building Regulations Part G.**

Housing in rural areas

205. Policy S1 allocates land for 850 houses and associated infrastructure. There are no other strategic housing allocations in the adopted development plan policies or the emerging local plan south of the A46 or in the countryside in Ashchurch Rural parish. There are strategic employment allocations, however only that in the JCS has been adopted.
206. Consultation in 2014 with the community indicated that additional development in this rural part of the parish should be small in scale and limited to existing settlements and should avoid creating additional traffic on rural roads. Until and unless there is strategic housing and other land allocations south of the A46 in the parish with accompanying provision of significant infrastructure improvements, this area is not sustainable as a location for increased housing development.
207. The JCS and emerging Local Plan do not define the rural settlements in Ashchurch Rural Parish as either rural service centres or services villages, they are deemed to be in open countryside. Therefore, these strategic plans do not propose to allocate development in these rural settlements.
208. Within rural villages and hamlets the aim of the NDP is to improve housing provision for current residents wishing to downsize, but who seek to remain within the community. A need has been established to widen the type of housing provision for all wishing to live in these settlements and in particular single level, bungalow accommodation.
209. JCS policy SD10 (4) restricts housing development in Ashchurch Rural to affordable housing, infill or exceptions in a neighbourhood plan. This NDP does not allocate housing land other than in Policy S1 nor indicate where additional housing might be required.
210. JCS SD10, 4,ii and para 4.11.5 defines infill as “the development of an under-developed plot well related to the existing built development”, as affirmed in Appeals APP/G1630/W/17/3184561. The term “under-developed” is not defined in the JCS and the Inspector applied the everyday meaning as “not fully developed”.
211. The settlements within the Parish are identified in **Table 7**, including their relative size as of March 2018. This neighbourhood development plan seeks to ensure that only appropriate development in terms of scale and overall size will be considered within each of these rural settlements, in the form of infill development.
212. The future review of the NDP will seek to ensure that an appropriate distance buffer will exist between the individual rural settlements and new strategic development. This will seek to prevent the coalescence between traditional and modern settlements and maintain the unique identity of each settlement.

Table 7: Existing Rural Settlement Size, March 2018		
Location	Population	Dwellings
Ashchurch	280	220
Pamington	150	60
Aston on Carrant	160	62
Aston Cross	46	22
Fiddington	72	28
Walton Cardiff	40	18
Natton	28	12
Homedowns	20	9
Claydon	20	10
	816	441

213. Ashchurch Rural parish contains a number of listed buildings and older but undesignated buildings and features of architectural and historic character. New development should fit into the local character where possible and where modern features are introduced into traditional rural settings, design should take account of neighbouring development and local features. New residential development and modifications to existing buildings should consider local features such as boundary treatments, building materials, massing and scale and should not introduce new features or add an urbanising influence.
214. JCS policy SD4 requires that new development should respond positively to, and respect the character of, the site and its surroundings. Design should establish a strong sense of place. In the context of Ashchurch Rural parish, there are distinctly characters and local features that differ according to the level of development and historic influences. North of the A46, the local character can be characterised as urban and suburban, whereas to the south, settlements are rural in character and the origin of settlements around a Manor house are still legible. Therefore, new development will need to consider the immediate surroundings for its design cues in support of SD4.

Policy H1: Housing in Rural Areas

- A. New residential development, other than on sites allocated through the Development Plan, will be supported in the countryside and within existing settlements (Claydon, Fiddington, Pamington, Walton Cardiff) where the following criteria are met and the development is:**
 - i. “Infill” development or adjacent to the edge of the settlement, or**
 - ii. An extension or modification of an existing dwelling house, or**
 - iii. Conversion and modification of a redundant building, or**
 - iv. Within the garden of an existing dwelling house as defined by fences, hedges and other boundary features, but not necessarily within the wider land ownership that may fall outside the normal residential curtilage of the existing dwelling house.**
- B. Single level and bungalow developments will be supported.**
- C. Residential proposals for the development of isolated homes will usually be resisted except under the provisions set out in paras. 78 and 79 of the NPPF (2019).**
- D. Development and modifications to existing buildings must be appropriate in terms of scale and overall size and respect local character and density.**
- E. Development will only be allowed where local infrastructure can meet the impact of the development.**

Policy H2: Design of housing in the countryside and Claydon, Fiddington, Pamington and Walton Cardiff

- A. Proposals for new residential dwellings or modifications to existing dwellings will be expected to take account of nearby architectural features, building materials, massing and boundary treatments and should conform with the neighbouring built character whilst avoiding urbanising features that are inappropriate in within the countryside.**
- B. All residential development should be carbon neutral.**

Parish Council Aspirations

215. Ashchurch Rural Parish Council is seeking to work closely with TBC as proposals in the emerging Local Plan and the review of the Joint Core Strategy progresses.
216. This neighbourhood plan will be reviewed as the emerging policy begins to become formalised in order to ensure that any future strategic housing and employment land allocations take full account of the existing community. The preservation of the countryside, improved transport on main arterial routes whilst preserving where possible the tranquil recreational use of the countryside will be a key priority for the Parish Council.
217. It is expected that the NDP review will consider such matters as:
 - a. Managing the impact of climate change.
 - b. Development boundaries around existing settlements to protect their character. The introduction of green buffers may be considered as a means to ensure that the existing settlements do not coalesce with new development.
 - c. Green infrastructure corridors that serve to retain a high level of biodiversity and flood management whilst providing recreational and walking and cycling opportunities for all residents.
 - d. Protection of the existing Public Rights of Way and undesignated quiet lanes and walking, cycling and equestrian routes in a designated network.
 - e. Accommodation of current leisure users of the countryside such as equestrian, running and cycling clubs into new development where possible.
 - f. Managing the construction of strategic development (including roads, housing, business development and public transport) by setting out principles of development that will protect and enhance the amenity of existing residents.
 - g. Necessary infrastructure such as school places, doctor and dentist surgeries, recreation, open space, flood management, etc.
218. The following Parish Council aspirations are designed to promote good working practices between ARPC and local stakeholders.

ARPC will:

- Be actively engaged with the Borough Council on development proposals, both in terms of plan making and development management processes.
- Be actively engaged in the Local Transport Plan process, including any A46 corridor studies and Ashchurch Rail Station Strategy.
- Provide input into the Garden Town Masterplan process.
- Provide a local voice on planning applications.
- Be an active partner in the development of Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Station, engaging with the development process, encouraging better and more frequent rail services to and from the station. ARPC will work with Network Rail, Gloucestershire County Council and Northway Parish Council in this process as the station is shared between both locations.
- Expect developers to seek early stage and continued engagement / consultation with the Parish Council and local community on the master planning and design of the redevelopment. Developer contributions will refer to the CIL schedule, gap analysis identified as part of the Station Travel Plan and outputs resulting from the Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Station Strategy.
- Be engaged with, as part of any freight management, in an attempt to restrict HGV use of minor roads. Minor roads should only be accessed by essential logistics such as farm, slurry and milk vehicles.