Tewkesbury Town Centre Masterplan and Design Guide

October 2026



Tewkesbury Borough Council



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Introduction

Tewkesbury is an exceptional town, famed for its history, heritage and landscape setting. It was the location of one of the most decisive battles in the Wars of the Roses and has 357 listed buildings, including seven at Grade I. The Abbey Precincts represent the spiritual heart of the pre-Reformation town, and the distinctive Norman tower of the Grade I listed Abbey Church continues to dominate the townscape today. The High Street and surrounding areas follow a coherent medieval building pattern that underpins a vibrant commercial centre, with independent shops and services occupying a diverse range of buildings spanning more than 800 years of development. The town centre hosts the largest street fair in Gloucestershire and one of the oldest mop fairs in the country. It is also home to the biggest free medieval festival in Europe, attracting around 2,000 re-enactors and 10,000 visitors.

Tewkesbury is also a place with a strong community spirit, where volunteers run major events, care for green spaces, serve as flood wardens and contribute to keeping the town clean and tidy.

Tewkesbury now stands at its next pivotal moment in history, presenting both opportunities and challenges. Three key circumstances are on the horizon that will bring change to the town:

- Rapid expansion of the local population with the arrival of Tewkesbury Garden Communities and other housing growth in north Gloucestershire.
- Retail competition, and potentially additional linked footfall, for the historic town centre from the new Cotswolds Designer Outlet and Dobbies Garden Centre at Junction 9 of the M5.
- A time of climate emergency and biodiversity crisis with an associated increase in extreme weather events.

This Town Centre Masterplan and Design Guide (hereafter referred to as the “Masterplan”) has been prepared through extensive engagement with local people, businesses and partners who know the town best. As a result, it provides a shared long-term vision and plan for responding to the changing circumstances and ensuring Tewkesbury continues to thrive during the next chapters of its story.

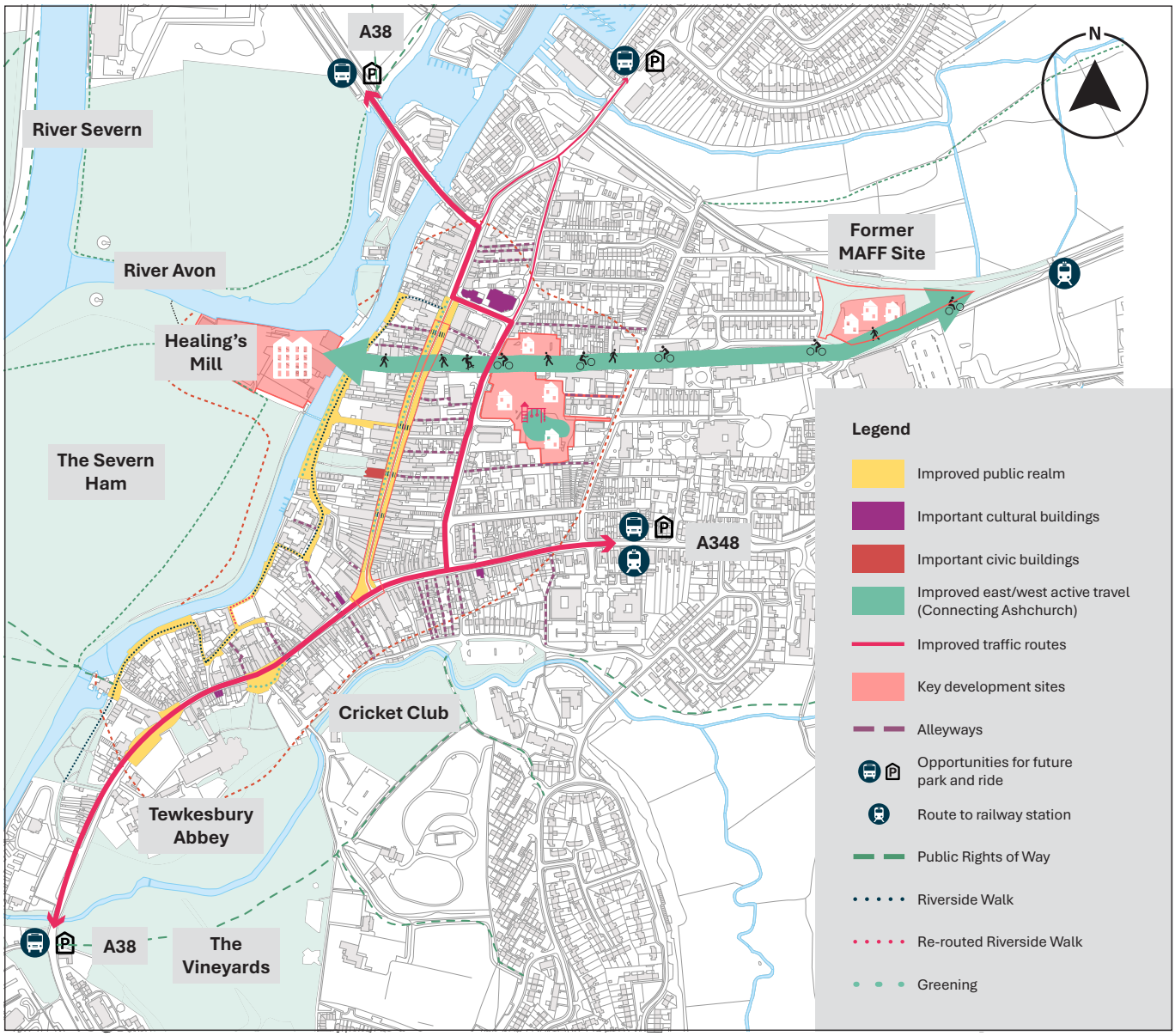
The extent of the study area can be seen on the Masterplan Framework diagram set out on the following page. This area forms the focus of the Masterplan because it encompasses the key character areas which, collectively, give the town centre its distinctive identity. It is centred on the High Street and adjoining commercial, residential and car parking areas, together with the riverside and historic Abbey Precincts. It also includes key regeneration opportunity sites which have already been formally allocated in the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan. These include a key site (the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (former MAFF) site) which, although lying outside the Masterplan boundary, nonetheless has strong associations with the town centre. Similarly, it is important to note that, while this document is town-centre-focused, connections into and out of the town area are also vital considerations, particularly in relation to residential and commercial developments around Junction 9 of the M5 to the east, and Mitton to the north.

Summary and overview of Masterplan proposals

The Masterplan Framework diagram below provides a concise illustrative overview of the main proposals and priorities set out in this Masterplan. This allows the overall structure and direction of the Masterplan to be understood before moving into the more detailed sections and justification that follow.

The Masterplan is supported by detailed background assessments of, and proposals for, the town centre's character, heritage, environmental constraints, movement network and development opportunities. This material is an essential part of the document and should be read alongside the Masterplan Framework diagram, as it explains the basis on which the proposals have been developed.

Masterplan Framework diagram (a larger version on pages 104-105)



Purpose of the Masterplan and how it should be used

This Masterplan for Tewkesbury town centre has a very clear purpose.

Drawing on detailed character analysis, evidence and public engagement, it sets out a long-term vision and joined-up framework for delivering a series of **'Big Moves'**.

The Big Moves are a set of themed objectives which, together, provide a springboard for enhancing Tewkesbury's historic character and guiding the town towards a thriving and sustainable future.

Supporting the Big Moves is a **Delivery Plan** (Appendix 1). This identifies a number of specific project proposals and initiatives, including for **Key Sites**. Many of these will require detailed project feasibility and planning through future work and funding streams. Taken as a whole, however, the Masterplan shows how this wide range of actions fits together to provide a coherent long-term picture for the future of Tewkesbury.

Looking beyond the currently identified Delivery Plan, the Masterplan provides the basis for additional initiatives over the long-term as circumstances change and opportunities arise.

The Masterplan sets out specific design guidelines for the redevelopment, creation or enhancement of certain priority areas (which we call "Key Sites"). The Key Sites include landmark redevelopment sites at Healing's Mill, Spring Gardens and the former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) site. Key Sites also include the High Street and 'Connecting Ashchurch' (a multi-user route linking the town centre to the proposed Garden Communities and other commercial development to the east of Junction 9 of the M5).

High-quality design is a core expectation of national planning policy and is central to the purpose of this Masterplan. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and related guidance emphasise the need for well-designed, attractive and locally distinctive places, informed by clear design principles and tools such as the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code. At the time of writing, a draft revised NPPF (2025) has strengthened its focus on the health of town centres and urges local planning authorities to support their vision for town centres through the preparation of design guides, codes and masterplans.

This Masterplan includes locally specific design guidelines which translate national principles into local place-based requirements. **Development proposals will therefore be expected to demonstrate a positive and well-considered response to these guidelines in contributing to a coherent and high-quality townscape.** In due course, it is expected that the design guidelines will be updated and incorporated into Design Codes through the formal local plan process (see further details below).

This Masterplan carries material weight in the determination of applications for development. Design and Access Statements should explain how the Masterplan has informed scheme details.

More generally, all development proposals and other initiatives affecting the town will be expected to demonstrate clear alignment with this Masterplan, particularly in terms of design vocabulary, public realm/open space, active travel and movement.

Whilst the Masterplan is primarily designed to guide planning decisions and shape future development proposals, its role extends beyond the land-use planning sphere. It also provides a shared vision through which partners can co-ordinate wider community action such as healthy living initiatives, events and tackling anti-social behaviour.

In summary, therefore, the Masterplan should be used as the basis for:

- Attracting investment to achieve the development of key sites in a manner which will contribute to the health, heritage and vitality of the town centre as a whole.
- Designing projects for town centre improvements (such as traffic management and public realm improvements) and seeking external sources of funding. In particular, the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (adopted March 2026) includes an infrastructure plan setting out transport measures necessary to mitigate the effects of the allocation of 1,000 dwellings at Mitton. Amongst others, these include cycle parking/active travel connectivity, junction improvements and a Mobility Hub in the town centre. Similarly, one of the key proposals in this Masterplan is the provision of a safe and attractive multi-user route connecting the town centre to new housing and large-scale commercial areas to the east of J9 (M5).
- Informing where developer contributions may be appropriate and necessary to deliver improvements where these relate to new development within and outside the town.

With regard to the latter, the projects and interventions identified in this Masterplan provide a strategic framework for co-ordinated investment and placemaking. Individual schemes will be developed to an appropriate level of detail as they progress through feasibility, design and/or, where relevant, the planning application process. For development within and around the town centre, and for major growth locations including the Garden Communities at Ashchurch, the Council will require site promoters to make necessary and proportionate developer contributions to support the delivery of the infrastructure and related projects within and around the town centre. Such contributions will be sought in accordance with national and local planning policies and the statutory requirements that planning obligations must be necessary, directly related to the development, and proportionate. Principally these will relate to the provision and maintenance of the active travel route connecting Tewkesbury to Ashchurch and public realm improvements.

The Council will also consider the use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts to assist in the delivery of town centre improvement schemes and wider infrastructure priorities identified in the Masterplan. Decisions on the allocation of CIL funding will be guided by the need to secure coherent, phased and deliverable investment across the town centre and its wider catchment, ensuring that growth is supported by timely and co-ordinated infrastructure provision.

Status

This draft Masterplan has been prepared by Tewkesbury Borough Council in association with LDA Design (a team appointed by the council).

It provides detailed guidance for Tewkesbury Town centre in the context of the formal policy framework set by the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy 2011–2031 (2017) (JCS) and the Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2011–2031 (2022) (TBP). It will form part of the evidence base for the emerging Strategic and Local Plan.

The Masterplan does not create new planning policy, nor does it seek to impose requirements beyond those set out in the existing Development Plan.

Importantly, this Masterplan is 'anchored' to the three up-to-date Development Plan policies set out below. It amplifies, and is to be read in direct connection with, those "host" policies:

Joint Core Strategy (2017)

- **Policy SD2: Retail and City/Town Centres.** This policy identifies Tewkesbury town centre as a Market Town and supports proposals that help deliver strategies for its regeneration.

- **Tewkesbury Borough Plan (2022):**

- **Policy RES1: Housing Site Allocations.** This policy allocates the following sites in Tewkesbury for housing.

1. Spring Gardens (30–100 dwellings)
2. Healing's Mill (100 dwellings)

- **Policy RET9: Town Centre Regeneration.** This policy supports proposals that contribute towards the regeneration of Tewkesbury Town centre. As well as allocating the two housing sites listed in Policy RES1 above, this policy also identifies the former MAFF site as a key redevelopment opportunity.

Policy RET9 also expressly requires all proposals to be in conformity with the relevant development principles and parameters set out in the Tewkesbury Town Regeneration SPD (a predecessor SPD which was adopted on 16 April 2019). For the avoidance of doubt, on adoption this Masterplan will supersede and replace the 2019 SPD.

There are also a wide range of other more general Development Plan policies and related guidance which will be relevant to the consideration of individual developments and projects in implementing this Masterplan. For convenience, these are listed in the 'Planning Context' section on page 13.

It should be noted that the JCS and TBP will, in due course, be replaced by the emerging Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan (SLP). The SLP will contain overarching policies providing continuity in planning policies for the conservation, enhancement and regeneration of Tewkesbury town centre.

Planning reforms in England

The Masterplan has been prepared during a period of major reform to the planning system. As part of these changes, the Government has confirmed it will end the adoption of any new Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) after June 2026. For this reason, the Masterplan is being issued as a non-statutory but robust and evidence-based document that will still effectively inform planning decisions and become an appendix of the SLP.


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A Masterplan shaped by the community and evidence

The draft Masterplan has been shaped through extensive local engagement prior to publishing for formal public consultation. In summary, a series of events took place in October and November 2023 in the form of walking tours, a community pop-up event at the annual Mop Fair and workshops with key stakeholders, members of the community, volunteer groups, business and civic leaders. The workshops were designed to explore key themes and projects and develop a shared vision. A Steering Group was also convened to develop the vision further.

The key themes and priorities emerging from that early public engagement are summarised briefly below. They have shaped the vision and priorities of the draft Masterplan. A full Stakeholder and Community Engagement Report is available to view on the Council's website.

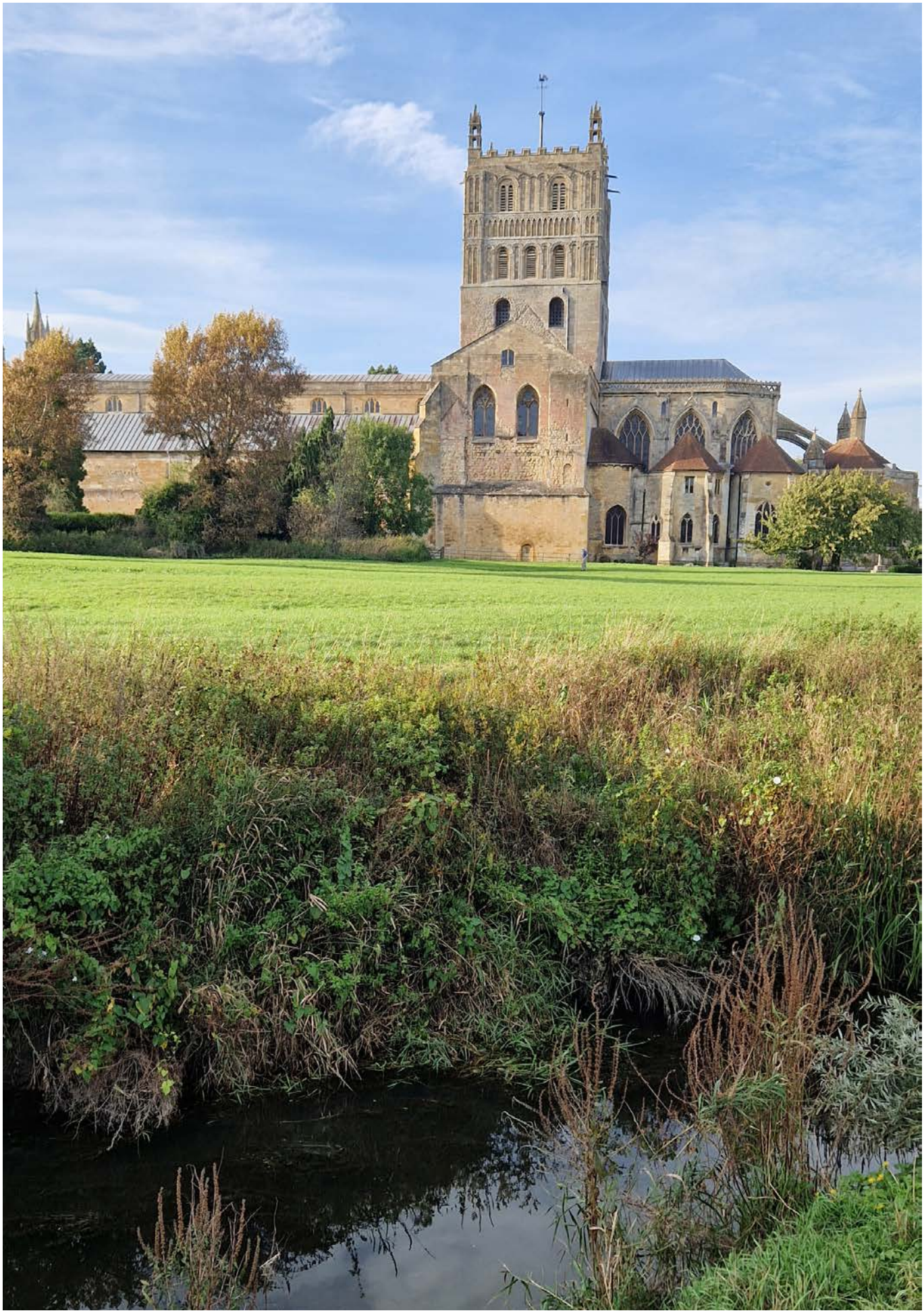
Key themes

- Heritage is Tewkesbury's defining asset and the foundation for regeneration.
- Rivers, the Ham and nature are central to the Town's identity.
- Higher quality public spaces and greener streets are needed.
- Movement, traffic and accessibility issues are day-to-day concerns.
- Co-ordinated regeneration is needed through the redevelopment of key sites at Healing's Mill, Spring Gardens, the Library/Roses/Tesco/Halfords cluster and the former MAFF site.
- Community identity is strong but needs nurturing, especially for young people.
- Independent shops, services and events in the town centre, including the weekly market, are highly valued and need to be supported.
- Reduced traffic dominance, better traffic management, parking, pedestrian/cycle routes and wayfinding in the centre is needed.
- More cultural/community and town centre living is needed.
- Stronger east/west link with the Garden Town will be essential.
- The former railway line should be reactivated as a heritage/public realm asset.

Key background evidence

The Masterplan is underpinned by a range of environmental, economic and societal evidence. Much of this draws on information and analysis which supports local plan documents and other strategies such as the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Of particular note, however, is the Heritage Strategy (see Appendix 4), prepared by Purcell alongside the Masterplan as part of a project awarded government funding through Historic England's High Street Heritage Action Zone programme (HSHAZ). The Heritage Strategy provides a statement of significance for Tewkesbury Town and sets out a strategy, vision and action plan. These complement the Masterplan and should be read alongside it. The Heritage Strategy is also being published for public consultation alongside it.



Vision

In 2040, Tewkesbury town will be vibrant and welcoming. It will be:

A heritage town

Where we continue to celebrate and protect our nationally significant built heritage and creative culture.

An inclusive town

A focus on health and wellbeing, where buildings and public spaces connect and integrate people at all stages of their lives.

A thriving town

Where growth, business and innovation are welcomed. Encouraging and supporting artisan to major businesses and promoting opportunities for regeneration.

A community town

The first-choice destination for local residents, connecting our growing communities through infrastructure and a collaborative approach.

A green town

Where our landscape, waterways and green spaces are protected and enhanced. With a sustainable approach to protecting the environment running through everything we do.

We will achieve our vision by working with our residential and business communities, local civic organisations, delivery partners and the best design teams to ensure that Tewkesbury is welcoming, inclusive and safe.

Planning context

This section describes the statutory planning framework that shapes the scope and content of the Masterplan. It summarises the relevant national and local planning policy context and identifies the key policy requirements and sites allocated for future development relevant to Tewkesbury town centre. Together, these elements establish the statutory and policy basis against which the Masterplan should be understood and implemented. More broadly, the priorities set out in this Masterplan have also been informed by an assessment of the wider economic, environmental and social context of the town. Summary analysis of the context for historic, environmental, economic, heritage, movement/street hierarchy, open space/waterways and town centre uses is set out separately in the appendices below.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets the overall context for this Masterplan and emphasises the vital role of town centres at the heart of local communities. Local planning policies and actions are required to positively support their growth, management and adaptation.

Existing local planning policies set a strategic framework for achieving these objectives for Tewkesbury town centre. As noted earlier, this Masterplan goes a step further and, specifically, amplifies JCS Policy SD2 and TBP policies RES1 and RET9.

However, there are numerous other important local planning policies which will also be relevant and must be considered in implementing the Masterplan. Principally, these include policies aimed at supporting the overall health and vitality of town centres, promoting good design, providing affordable housing, conserving the historic and natural environments, managing flood risk, providing and/or safeguarding infrastructure to encourage walking, cycling and public transport, supporting business and tourism and securing developer contributions. A non-exhaustive list of relevant policies is set out right:

Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy 2017:

SD3: Sustainable Design and construction

SD4: Design requirements

SD8: Historic Environment

SD9: Biodiversity

SD10: Residential Development

SD11: Housing Mix and Standards

SD12: Affordable Housing

SD14: Health and Environmental Quality

INF1: Transport Network

INF2: Flood Risk Management

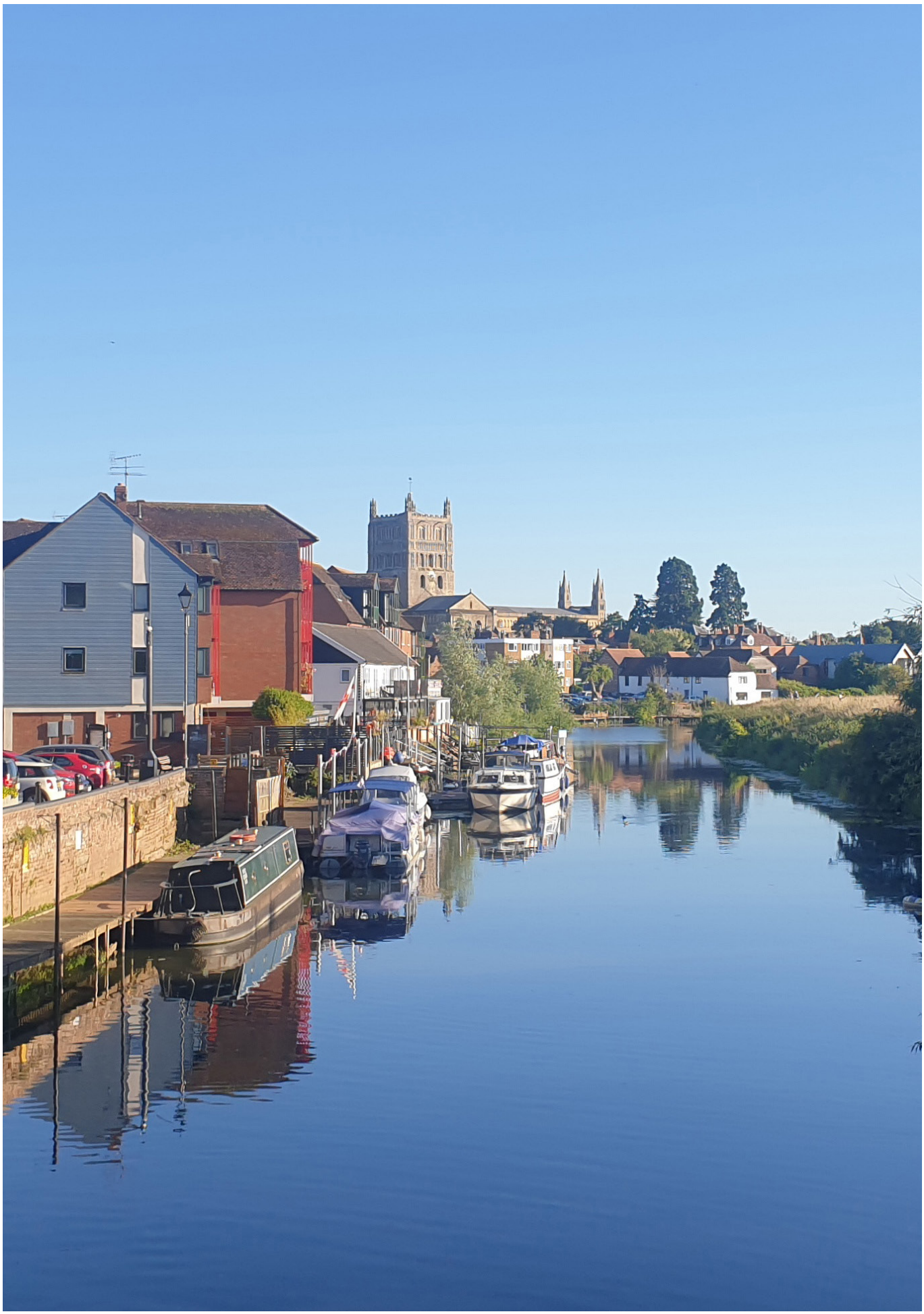
INF3: Green Infrastructure

INF4: Social and Community Infrastructure

INF5: Renewable energy/Low Carbon Energy Development

INF6: Infrastructure Delivery

INF7: Developer Contributions



Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2022

RES1: Housing site Allocations

RES6: New Housing Development

RES12: Affordable Housing

RES13: Housing Mix

RES14: Specialist Accommodation for Older People

RET1: Maintaining the vitality and viability of the town centre, borough and local centres

RET2: Tewkesbury Town Centre and Primary Frontages

RET4: Out of Centre Development

RET5: Single or Small Groups of Shops in Residential Areas

DES1: Housing space Standards

DES2: Street Signage and Furniture

DES3: Advertisements, Signs and Notice Boards

DES4: Shopfronts

HER1: Conservation Areas

HER2: Listed Buildings

HER4: Archaeological Sites and Scheduled Monuments

HER5: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

HER6: Registered Battle Site Tewkesbury

NAT1: Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Natural Features

NAT2: The Water Environment

NAT3: Green Infrastructure: Building with Nature

NAT4: Tewkesbury Nature Reserve

ENV2: Flood risk and Water Management

HEA1: Healthy and Active Communities

RCN1: Public Outdoor Space, sports Pitch and Sports Facility Provision

RCN3: Allotments and Community Gardens

COM2: Broadband Provision

TOR1: Tourism in Tewkesbury Town

TRAC1: Pedestrian Accessibility

TRAC2: Cycle Network and Infrastructure

TRAC5: Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Rail Station

TRAC6: M5 Junction /A46 Corridor

TRAC7: Tewkesbury Northern Bypass Corridor

TRAC8: Old Railway Line Tewkesbury

TRAC9: Parking Provision

Guidance that also should be considered in relation to this document includes:

- Tewkesbury Borough Heritage Strategy (2022)
- The Shopfronts, Shutters and Signage: Design Guidance for Tewkesbury Borough SPD (adopted 2022)
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
- Gloucester County Council (GCC) manual for Gloucestershire streets
- National Design Guide and National Model Design Code
- Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Emerging Strategic and Local Plan
- Environment Act 2021

Masterplan Framework

The Masterplan has been shaped by the Vision and informed by community consultation and supporting evidence gathered during its preparation. Its overall aims and objectives are expressed through a series of 'Big Moves' which are set out in the following pages. These Big Moves set the long-term priorities for change and improvement in the town centre and form the basis for a number of shorter-term actions – to be worked up in more detail – set out in the Delivery Plan. Together, they form the overall **Masterplan Framework** see plan on pages 104-105. They are summarised below and explained in more detail in the pages that follow.

Big Moves – in summary

Movement and transport

M1: Improve pedestrian and cycle infrastructure across the town centre.

M2: Improve the High Street prioritising the pedestrian.

M3: Consolidate parking and promote flexible solutions.

M4: Improve pedestrian and active travel connections between Ashchurch train station and the town centre.

M5: Explore opportunities to enhance and strengthen the east/west corridor.

M6: Reinstate lost alleyways.

Blue Green framework

B1: Protect the existing waterways and flood plains.

B2: Improve flood resilience and recovery across the town.

B3: Explore opportunities for creating new areas of green space outside the flood plain.

Built environment and identity

BE1: Deliver high-quality design and placemaking.

BE2: Upgrade the public realm.

BE3: Protect and promote heritage: celebrating the history of Tewkesbury.

BE4: Promote the regeneration of key sites.

BE5: Build new homes to meet net zero or Future Homes standards.

BE6: Consider appropriate retrofit where possible.

Economy and community

E1: Create a new heart: providing public open space to enable people to convene and gather for events.

E2: Encourage town centre living.

E3: Diversify the town centre.

E4: Encourage and provide a variety of workspaces.

The Big Moves – in detail

Movement and transport

M1: Improve pedestrian and cycle infrastructure across the town centre: Wherever possible reallocate excessive road carriageway space to cycleways and footpaths, to ensure improved accessibility for all users and installing well-located and well-designed cycle parking, taking full account of the heritage setting.

This would create a significant improvement to walking, cycling and access for less able-bodied people across the town centre, particularly if complementary infrastructure, such as seating, cycle hire, cycle parks, tree planting, drinking fountains and so forth, are also implemented if practical locations which enhance the heritage assets can be identified.

M2: Improve the High Street, prioritising the pedestrian: Explore opportunities for reducing vehicle dominance, downgrading the carriageway and improving the public realm. Options for consideration include one way traffic flow and or removing on-street parking.

Reconfiguring the way traffic moves around the town centre would reduce the need for vehicles to access the High Street. This would address the conflict between the movement function and the place function of the High Street. The street can then be upgraded into a space that prioritises pedestrians, designed as a space for public life and ease of pedestrian and cycle movement. Creating a civic space which could be used for markets and other community activities.

M3: Consolidate parking and promote flexible solutions: Sustainable travel that is easy to use and accessible by all would reduce the demand for private vehicle use.

This Masterplan seeks to make accessing the town centre by a range of modes as simple and safe as possible. This means making walking and cycling more appealing and viable for residents, supporting public transport choices and providing suitable levels of car parking. Innovative solutions to the provision of private car use will be encouraged, including the use of carpools.

By proposing a strategy to consolidate parking within the town centre, certain sites currently used for car parking could be re-purposed for development or public open space. (This will require further feasibility work as set out in the Delivery Plan). Where any new parking is proposed, design should be flexible and well-integrated with trees and landscaping to provide multi-functional spaces for when cars aren't present.

Disabled parking provision and electric vehicle (EV) charging points will be required, where appropriate, and be evenly distributed across town centre streets. This can be achieved by reclaiming road carriageway space as proposed throughout the Movement and Transport Big Moves.

M4: Improve pedestrian and active travel connections between Ashchurch train station and the town centre: Park and ride options and improved active travel options from Ashchurch to Tewkesbury would help reduce the volume of traffic that needs to come into the Historic Town Centre.

M5: Explore opportunities to enhance and strengthen the east/west corridor: This is closely linked to the success of the east/west active travel route from Ashchurch

M6: Reinstate lost alleyways: New development should reinstate routes of lost alleyways, Materials should reflect the original or existing, such as the blue pavers.

Blue Green framework

B1: Protect the existing waterways and flood plains: To allow them to function. Explore opportunities to improve and enhance the way water is managed within the town to help reduce the impact of flooding on the local community.

B2: Improve flood resilience and recovery across the town: Use of SuDS will help slow the flow of surface water into the drainage network. This could take the form of rain gardens, blue and green roofs, permeable paving, tree planting, use of resilient materials and street furniture, raised or protected thresholds for vulnerable properties and clear evacuation routes.

B3: Explore opportunities for creating new areas of green space outside the flood plain: This will provide amenity space for locals and visitors when the Severn Ham, Victoria Gardens and the Vineyards are in flood.

Built environment and identity

BE1: Deliver high-quality design and placemaking: Apply high quality and sustainable architecture to new and repurposed buildings, spaces and gateway features complementing historic and other existing assets to create a town centre with an attractive and distinctive identity. Shopfronts and signage must follow the requirements in the 'Shopfronts, Shutters and Signage: Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)'.

Utilities and services should be carefully and subtly positioned within the street scene to avoid being detrimental to the historic street scene. This includes distribution boxes, cables, cycle parking and communications equipment.

BE2: Upgrade the public realm: There are a series of key notes within the town centre which are identified on the Masterplan. These areas are considered priority for public realm improvements, which prioritise pedestrians and create 'gateway' features.

Creating a coherent, safe, well connected and resilient public realm of distinctive public spaces and inviting walking and cycling routes with clear wayfinding, use of high-quality materials, green infrastructure, street furniture, play features and sustainable drainage to improve the overall attractiveness of the town centre.

BE3: Protect and promote heritage: Celebrating the history of Tewkesbury. Promote the reuse of historic buildings to maximise the contribution to the town centre's identity and economy, whilst designing new spaces and buildings worthy of becoming future heritage.

BE4: Promote the regeneration of key sites: There are a number of opportunities at major sites that sit along an east/west 'spine'; the former MAFF site at the east end of Station Road, Spring Gardens just south of Station Road, Bishops Walk shopping precinct close to the junction of Station Road and Oldbury Road and Healing's Mill at the end of Quay Street.

Existing important civic and cultural buildings such as the Roses Theatre and Tewkesbury Library are also located in close proximity to this route.

BE5: Build new homes to meet net zero or Future Homes standards: This will ensure that new housing stock is able to manage more extreme climate changes.

BE6: Consider appropriate retrofit where possible: Encourage the use of appropriate retrofit techniques for the historic housing stock in line with latest advice from Historic England and conservation regulations.

Economy and community

E1: Create a new heart: Providing the community with a distinct area of dedicated public open space to enable people to convene and gather for events.

The heart of a town centre is an important focal point for public life and community activity. A new heart must be developed to provide a key area of public open space to hold such activities which can help bring residents and visitors together at an informal gathering point, as well as a local destination for community events.

Alongside an upgraded High Street part of the Spring Gardens car park could provide an ideal setting for this new area of public space.

E2: Encourage town centre living: Bringing more residents into the centre area to support shops and services.

Town centre living brings life into centres and enables a sustainable way of life. Quality of residential units will be important, with internal space standards and access to outdoor spaces essential. Residential use within a retail environment will help to support shops and services and add to the diversification of uses.

E3: Diversify the town centre: Creating a better experience, with a broad range of complementary uses and options for activities including more focused retail, community, leisure, creative, cultural, educational, accommodation, workshops, start-ups and food and beverage.

Proposals for the buildings along the High Street, Church Street and Barton Street and within the wider historic core should demonstrate that viable permanent or meanwhile uses will bring vacant retail units and upper floors into use to create a multi-purpose space.

E4: Encourage and provide a variety of workspaces: To enable existing businesses to remain and grow locally and to attract new opportunities.

Well-managed workplace hub-style accommodation for start-ups, satellite offices and drop-in facilities are in demand as working from home is more prevalent. Priority is also to be given to maintaining the existing business community and allowing and encouraging their expansion.

Delivering the Big Moves

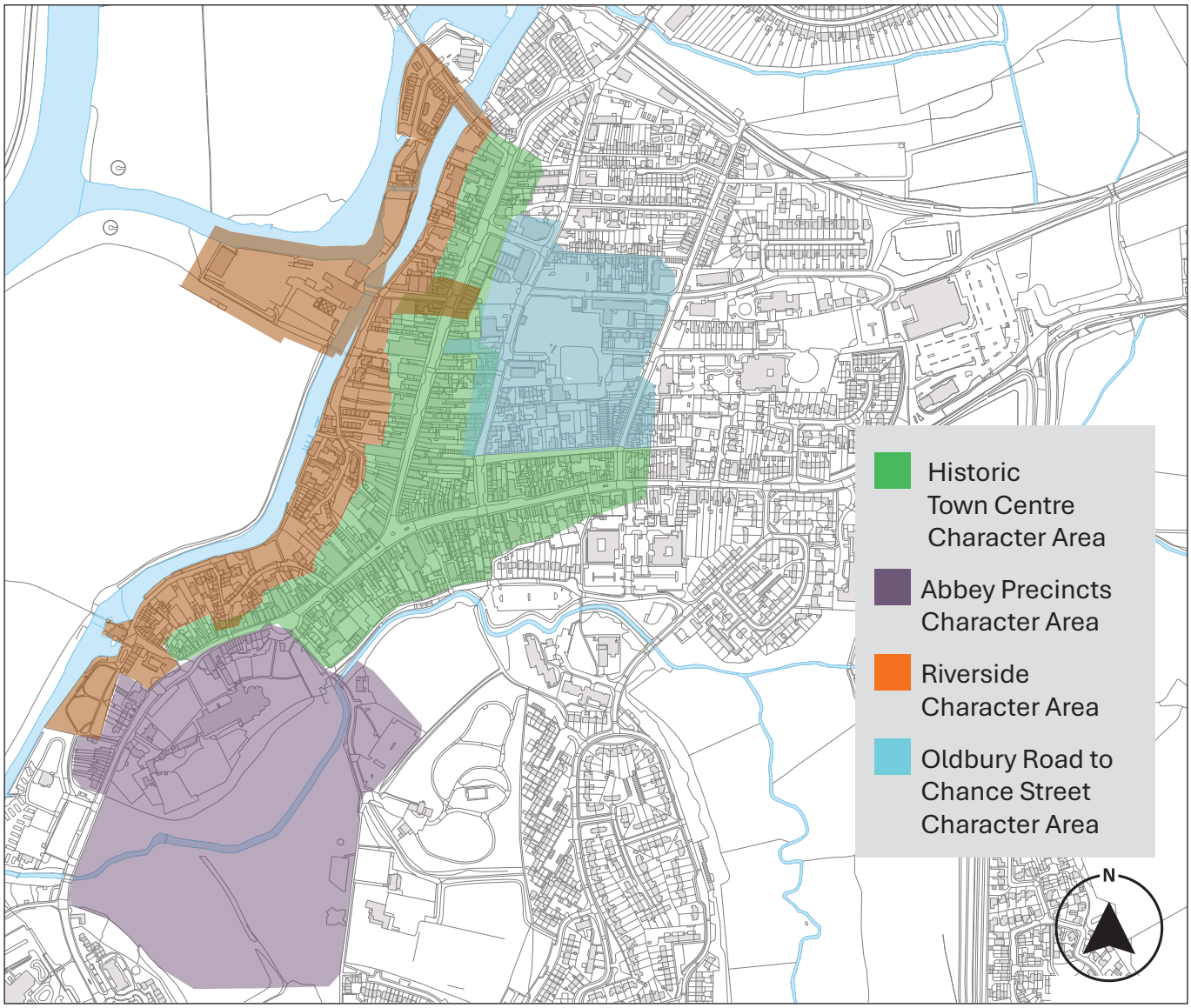
The following sections build on the Big Moves with Character Area and site-specific proposals and/or design guidelines. These projects will enable the town centre to achieve the vision and objectives over time. Immediate priorities for town centre management and enhancements are brought together in the delivery plan in Appendix 1.

Delivering the Masterplan Framework: Character Area opportunities and proposals

This chapter presents how the overall Masterplan Framework and 'Big Moves' can be delivered through actions which are sensitive to the special character of the town centre. In doing so, it is recognised that the town centre is not a homogeneous whole but rather a collection of four distinct but connected places, each shaped by its own historic context, land use, urban grain, economic activity and environment.

To help shape the delivery of the Masterplan Framework, therefore, an assessment of the character of each area is provided, together with details of constraints, opportunities and proposals for enhancement. This approach

Character Areas



ensures that priorities for improvement – whether through applications for planning permission or promoting other projects – recognise and respond to this diversity of place.

The four character areas are: (1) the Historic Town Centre, (2) the Abbey Precincts, (3) the Riverside Area and (4) Oldbury Road to Chance Street.

The location, context and background to each Character Area are described below, along with their key challenges and opportunities for re-development and other changes.

All of the proposals are set out in an illustrative Masterplan Framework diagram which is set out at the start of this document, a larger version is on pages 104–105.

Key Sites

Some of the Character Areas also include more detailed proposals and guidance for key areas which we refer to as "Key Sites". Project briefs for three such Key Sites are set out within the relevant Character Area sections. These include the High Street and two key development sites allocated in the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan. Also included are proposals and design guidelines for two further Key Sites which are located outside the Character Areas but are closely linked to the town centre. These are the former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) site and the strategic route of the proposed active travel corridor between the town centre and Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Railway Station.

The five sites are, therefore, as follows:

1. High Street (Historic Town Centre Character Area) see page 23 for details.
2. Healing's Mill (Riverside Character Area) see page 50 for details.
3. Spring Gardens and Oldbury Road Car Parks Regeneration (Oldbury Road to Chance Street Character Area) see page 63 for details.
4. Connecting Ashchurch (east/west active travel connection) (outside Character Areas) see page 67 for details.
5. Former Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) Site Regeneration (Outside Character Areas) see page 71 for details.

These Key Sites have been selected because they are either already planning commitments promoted through the Tewkesbury Borough Plan, or they are important transport projects requiring multi-agency working which are important to the long-term enhancement of the town centre. The locations of the sites are set out in the plan below.

A project brief is provided for each of the five Key Sites. This includes a description of the Site, Key Site considerations, a high-level site brief identifying the aspirations for the sites and Design Guidelines.

The Design Guidelines are site-specific and have been devised to assist applicants in following the principles and more general character area guidance. Proposals will therefore also need to demonstrate how they have responded to the design features for the relevant character area set out earlier in this document.

The Design Guidelines will be used by Tewkesbury Borough Council and others as a tool for preparing and determining planning applications made for development on these key sites.

Other sites

In addition to the five Key Sites set out in this section, the Masterplan also sets a context for the re-development and/or enhancement of other areas which have been identified in the Character Area assessments and which reflect the early public engagement. These may, in time, become available as realistic options for regeneration.

In particular, the Bishop's Walk shopping precinct and adjoining areas close to the junction of Station Road and Oldbury Road including the former Halfords site contribute

little to the historic character of the town. The Roses Theatre would also benefit from a larger building to better cater for the town's growing population.

The Masterplan would support, as part of wider public realm improvements to the town, the sensitive re-development of these areas in a manner which provides fit-for-purpose buildings and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

Similarly, the Poundland store in the High Street occupies a sizeable site and presents a blank red-brick flank along Smiths Lane alleyway. To the rear is the service yard and a private pay and display car park close to the riverside. In the longer term, redevelopment of this substantial plot incorporating replacement retail floorspace and/or a sensitively reconfigured rear area to provide improved public realm and green space would be welcomed. It is envisaged this would reinforce the proposal (set out in the Riverside Character Area) for the creation of a 'Green Moment' public space to replace existing car parking at Back of Avon.

All of the above Character Area Opportunities and Key Site proposals draw on the Heritage Evaluation and Strategy prepared by Purcell, the early public engagement carried out, and other relevant evidence and local knowledge, including the existing Tewkesbury town centre Regeneration SPD.

Character Areas

The Character Areas are as follows.

Historic Town Centre (see page 23)

(Church Street/Gloucester Road and High Street/Barton Street)

This area includes the High Street, Church Street, Barton Street, which has retained the historic street pattern of its principal streets.

Linking the principal streets, there is a network of courts and alleyways associated with the medieval burgage plots which contributes to the wider character of a walkable town.

These are car-free east/west connections which, with the gentle topography of the town, provide pedestrians with the means to move easily through the town centre.

Abbey Precincts (see page 34)

This includes areas associated with the Abbey including its precincts, Gloucester Terrace and the open space surrounding the Abbey and lower half of Church Street.

Riverside (see page 42)

This area stretches from Victoria Gardens to Mythe Road along the River Avon and includes significant buildings such as Abbey Mill and Healing's Mill.

The industrial heritage along the riverside in Tewkesbury is strongly expressed through both the landscape and built form. The creation of the canalised section of the River Avon and buildings such as Healing's Mill, Quay Street, the boat builders and the former railway bridge, contribute to the character of the river as formerly being a place of work and industry. Although some of the historic buildings are in a dilapidated condition, they remain valuable as reminders and landmarks of the industrial heritage.

Oldbury Road to Chance Street (see page 54)

This area runs east from High Street to Chance Street and north from Barton Street to Sun Street and Gravel Walk.

Historic Town Centre Character Area

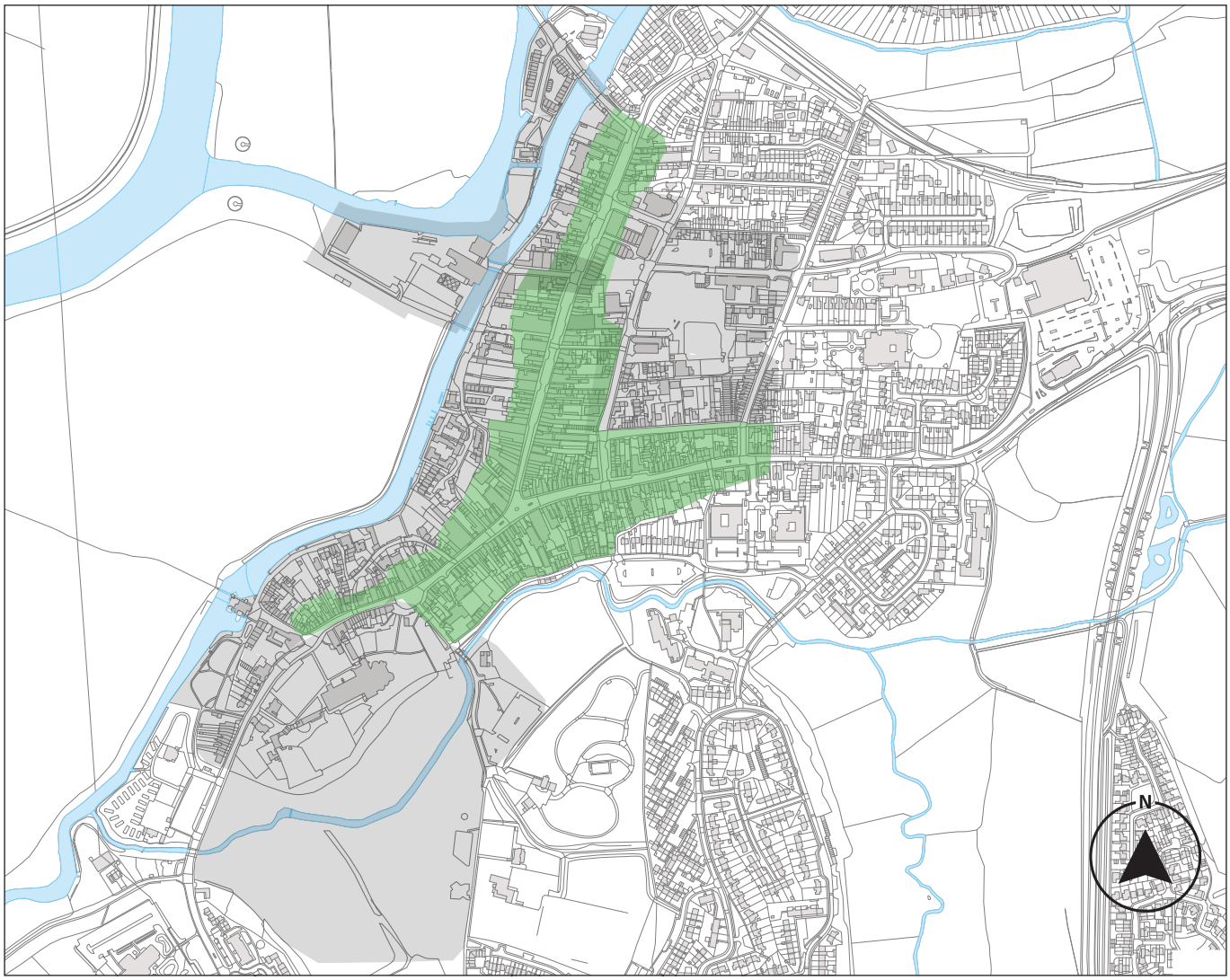
Introduction

The Historic Town Centre includes the High Street, Church Street, Barton Street, the burgage plots behind these streets and the associated alleys, lanes and courts which are a treasured characteristic of the town. There is a strong historic medieval street pattern and the Y formation of roads gives a strong character, enclosure and sense of place.

Architecturally, it is a diverse mix of building ages and styles, spanning 800 years of development. The variety of elevation proportion and design, building height, roofscape and materials, are a key characteristic of the High Street.

This area is vibrant with a highly active street frontage up to the middle of Church Street and the High Street. Many buildings have colourful shop fronts, and banners, lighting and bunting hanging from the catenary wires which span

Historic Town Centre Character Area boundary



the width of the streets contribute to the vibrancy of this area.

The historic town centre is linear in form with strong buildings lines and several key 'nodes'. These include:

1. Key junctions – Mythe Road, Quay Street, Nelson Street, Chance Street and The Cross at the roundabout with Barton Street & Church Street.
2. Key crossing points – Post Office Lane, Eagles Alley and Warder's Alley.
3. Key connections – the junction of Church Street & Gander Lane marking an entrance to the Abbey.

Land use

The High Street, Church Street and Barton Street have a diverse mix of property types with shops, public houses, guest houses, cafés and takeaways interspersed with residential uses.

Typically, there are commercial units at the ground floor with one to three storeys above which are often in residential use.

Urban grain

The urban grain is strongly influenced by the historic burgage plots and alleyways, many of which have survived and are still accessible by the public. This creates linear plots with the dominant façades facing onto the principal streets. There is a strong building line with occasional bays or jettied upper storeys breaking this line. The building line is punctuated by the accesses to the alleyways.

Height, massing and scale

There is a variety of building types ranging from two-storey narrow residential houses to taller and wider municipal buildings and public houses. Towards the north of the High Street there is a higher concentration of 20th century buildings which replaced burgage plots and the railway station.

There is a fairly consistent building height which is typically between two and three storeys interspersed with four-storey buildings. Historically there is evidence of the occasional taller building along the High Street.

There is a noticeable decrease in the amount of active frontage to the eastern side of the High Street between Bishops Walk and Sun Street.



Variety in building façades with commercial units at ground floor

Materials and elevation detailing

There is a diverse mix of materials used throughout the Historic Town Centre. These include red masonry brick, timber frame, render, and painted masonry. Civic buildings such as the Town Hall and the Methodist Church are emphasised with the use of buff masonry and stonework.

The 20th century buildings to the north of the High Street are red masonry brickwork with infill cladding panels. The newer buildings have often used lesser quality materials which have not aged as well as the traditional materials used in the historic buildings.

Elevations tend to be set out symmetrically, with one, two or three windows per storey. Buildings with more significant entrances are typically marked by a portico or porch. Shopfronts are typically fully glazed and designed for display.

Façades include details such as stone or brick sills, brick headers, stone quoins, string courses. Many windows are traditional timber sash windows or timber casement but there are also unusual examples such as arched window and doors and curved bay windows.

Doors are sometimes set back from building line, particularly in glazed shopfronts.

There is a varied roof-scape including pitched, parapet and flat roofs. Parapets and eaves include brick and stone corbels. There are occasional higher points such as clock towers and chimneys and occasional dormer windows.

Signage, street furniture and canopies

The High Street has a rich mixture of colourful hanging or fascia signage as well as occasional projecting canopies. Many signs are traditional sign-written fascia boards.

Some businesses have their own A-frame signage, and seating on the pavements.

Street lighting is typically mounted on buildings and there are permanent catenary wires which are used to hang banners and lights.

Opportunities and constraints

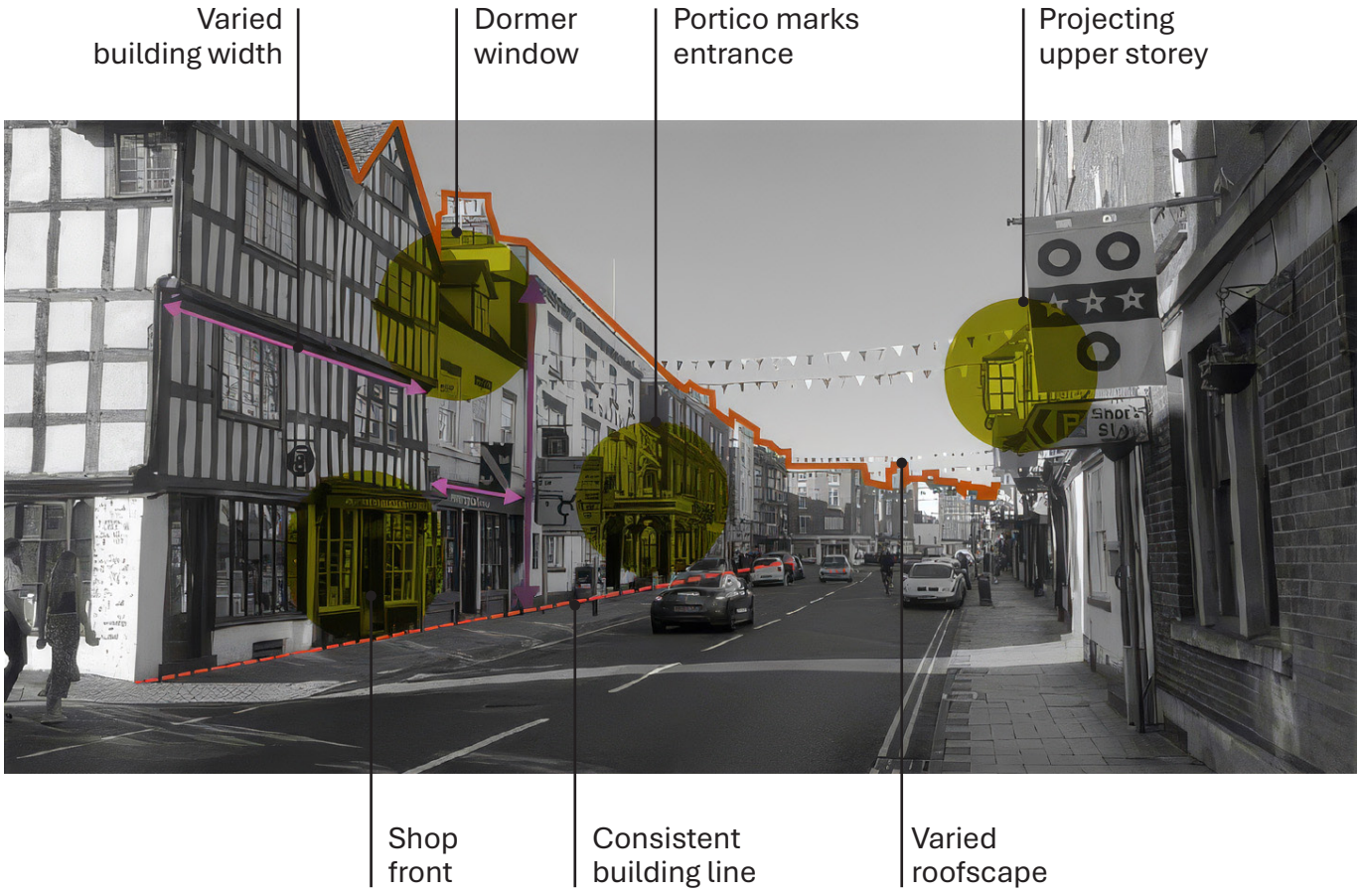
The town centre faces various constraints that hinder its ability to thrive. These have been identified through detailed analysis and public



Decrease in active frontage to eastern side of Bishops Walk



Townscape features which contribute positively to the character of the High Street (looking south east)



Townscape features which contribute positively to the character of Church Street (looking north east)

engagement. By identifying these constraints, this Masterplan highlights the challenges posed and proposes what could be done to overcome them.

Tewkesbury also benefits from a number of strengths and opportunities which development within the Masterplan area should utilise to ensure it enables a distinct and revitalised town centre.

Constraints

Transport infrastructure and connectivity

1. The historic A38 is a major A road which travels through Tewkesbury. It is heavily used and this is amplified if the M5 is closed and it is used as a diversion route. This puts pressure on the volume of traffic travelling through the town centre and the space required to accommodate it. This function as a movement corridor creates conflict with the main function of the High Street as a place.
2. Recent measures along the High Street have had their challenges including access for emergency vehicles and larger agricultural vehicles.

Poor public realm

3. Anti-social behaviour around the Bishops Walk area of town and the bus stops where there is a reduced amount of active street frontage.
4. A growing clutter of interventions to suit modern times including street signage, utilities boxes and redundant cabling as new services become necessary.
5. Narrow pavements with poor quality, mismatched and uneven surfaces.
6. Dominance of car parking along the High Street and river frontage.
7. Expanses of inactive frontage to the north of the High Street around the 20th century development including blank walls that face onto the principal streets.
8. Cohesion of street furniture including planter types, cycle stands, bollards, litter bins, signage and seating.
9. 20th century flat roof buildings that do not complement their historic setting.
10. Contemporary and illuminated signage that is not in accordance with Tewkesbury Borough Council policy.
11. Vacant retail units.
12. Competing centres are impacting the ability of Tewkesbury to attract visitors.
13. Visitors to the Abbey are not attracted to visit and shop in the town centre.



Example of hanging signage

Historic Town Centre Constraints Plan



Legend

A38 / A438 diversion route for M5 closures

Narrow pavement

Inactive frontage

On-street car parking

Opportunities

Historic buildings and heritage

1. Alleyway Improvements: Survival of historic alleys accessed from the High Street, Church Street and Barton Street and the blue pavers which denote which alleys are historic. This could include projects for improved lighting, surface finishes, greening, public art, interpretation and the removal of unnecessary street clutter.
2. Improved interpretation of the heritage of the area.

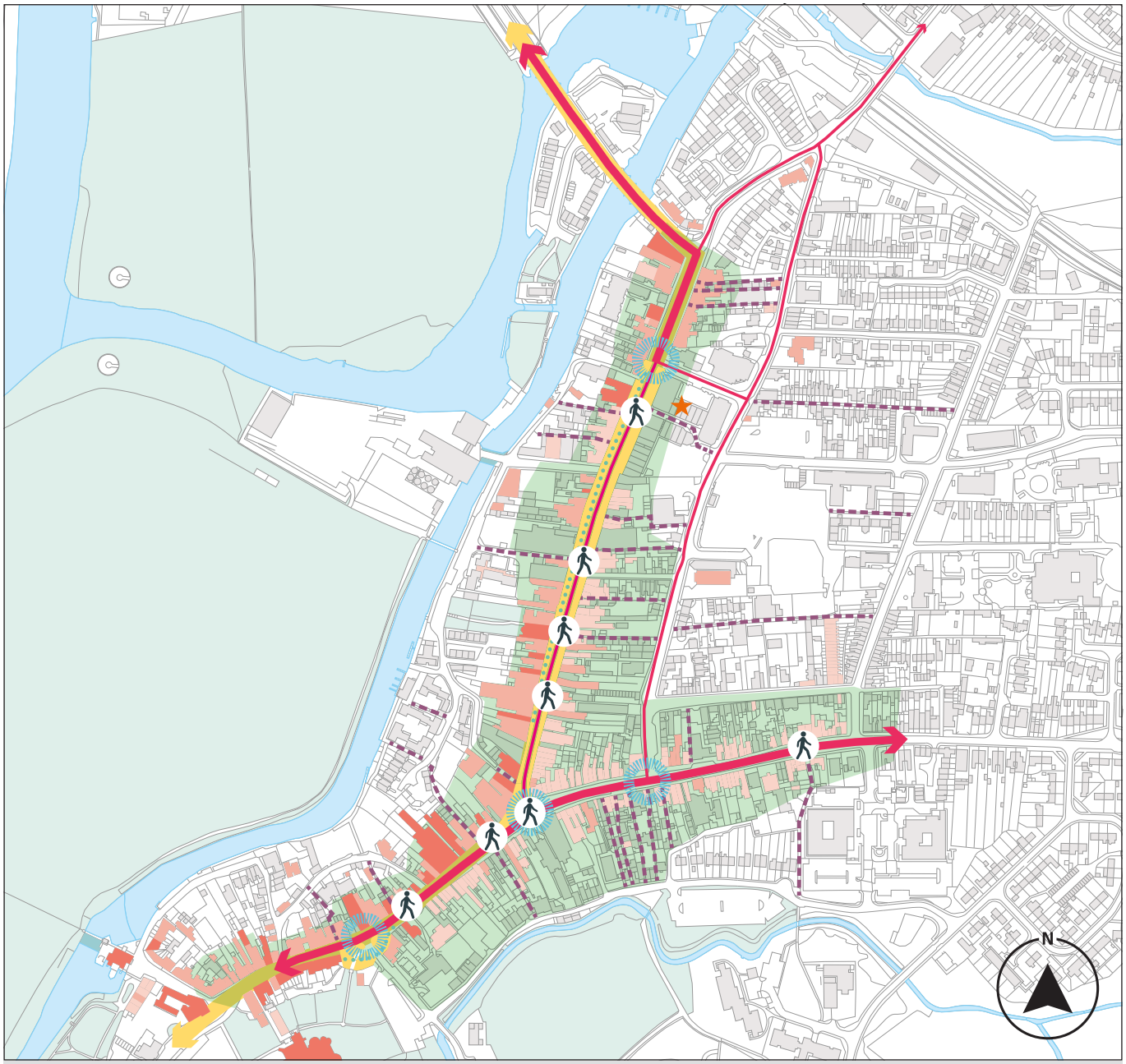
Create a people–focused town centre

3. Increased public realm to both sides of the High Street would provide a more attractive and usable environment for pedestrians, with improved seating areas, better cycle parking facilities and more planting, this would also provide space for businesses to have pavement dining as well as space for temporary events such as street markets.
4. Explore options to change the traffic flow through the High Street, such as a one-way system, utilising Oldbury Road as the predominant vehicle route though the town and discouraging vehicle movement though the High Street. This would help address the place and movement function conflict, improve air quality and create an attractive space for pedestrians to encourage longer dwell time and more sustainable movement.
5. Interventions at key gateways to improve the public realm will help announce the presence of the town centre and improve legibility.
6. Increasing the number of crossing points for pedestrians across Church Street, High Street and Barton Street should be considered. There are opportunities for these be located to connect alleyways and side streets east and west of the High Street.
7. The Crescent: Reducing the dominance of vehicles and increasing the space for public realm at The Crescent would create an improved arrival experience between the Abbey and the historic town centre.
8. Market Cross: Reconfiguration of the road network as part of the strategic transport review could provide an area of public realm between 103-105 Church Street and the Cross which could include soft landscaping and seating as well as providing a larger ceremonial place for Tewkesbury. Opportunities to enhance the setting of Tewkesbury Methodist Church should also be explored.

Investment and growth

9. Additional residential provision would support the vitality of the town centre long term.
10. There is also potential for local employment growth in various sectors. There is an absence of high-quality office space. This provides an opportunity.
11. Culture and leisure uses could also benefit from being centrally located and building on the success of the Roses Theatre.
12. Potential for linkages with educational institutions to strengthen the role of the town centre in supporting the arts and creative industries, along with opportunities for young people and lifelong learning.
13. The Historic Town Centre should continue to be the thriving heart of Tewkesbury. New purposes should be found for vacant ground floor units and town centre living should be encouraged to upper floors to strengthen the vibrancy and activity within the heart of Tewkesbury.
14. There are a number of publicly owned sites within the town centre which provide a major opportunity for regeneration.

Historic Town Centre Opportunities Plan



Legend

- Improved public realm
- Two way direction traffic
- One way system
- Greening
- Alleyway – enhanced
- Key gateway locations
- Pedestrian desire lines improvements
- Longer term aspiration
- Grade I listed building
- Grade II* listed building
- Grade II listed building

Key Site: High Street

This proposal seeks to improve the High Street, reducing the conflict between its movement function and its role as a place.

The negative impact that vehicles have on the High Street has been identified through our analysis and public engagement.

To help support our vision for a thriving town we wish to explore the options for reorganising traffic flow, reducing vehicle dominance and improving public realm.

Currently the High Street is the main through route for traffic and it plays an important role as a diversion route for the M5.

It has two-way traffic with parallel parking on both sides and is a bus route. There are pavements on both sides but these are narrow in places and there is a cluttered public realm.

At the southerly end is the junction with Church Street and the A438, this is a roundabout with a war memorial in the middle. At the northern end is another round about at the junction with Mythe Road and Bredon Road.

The historic nature of the High Street means that access for servicing shops and other businesses is at the front along the main street.

Access is also required to Quay Street and Trinity Street via the High Street.

We wish to explore options which might include introducing a one-way system, allowing a reduction in carriageway width which in turn would improve the space for public realm. Along with the removal of parking this would greatly improve the pedestrian experience and allow space for outdoor seating, markets and tree planting.

The main traffic route would be diverted to Oldbury Road, a suggested route is shown on the plan opposite. This proposal requires further work and studies.

Traffic levels on Tewkesbury High Street are also likely to rise as a consequence of major planned growth in the surrounding area. In particular, the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR) (adopted in March 2026) allocates a site for 1,000 houses at Mitton, to the north of Tewkesbury town centre. At the time of writing, part of the site is also the subject of a live planning application for 500 homes to meet the housing needs of Tewkesbury Borough.



An example of one of the historic alleyways between burgage plots

Development at Mitton has the potential to generate significant additional vehicle movements through the town. Accordingly, in line with the findings of the Examiners' report, the SWDPR requires a number of mitigating transport and travel measures to be implemented in and around Tewkesbury town centre. These are outlined in an Infrastructure Development Plan accompanying the SWDPR. Whilst the scheme details are to be worked up, they have the potential to bring both opportunities and threats to the character of the town centre. Most notably, these include:

- Installation of mini roundabouts at Sun Street and Quay Street.
- Junction capacity enhancements at Nelson Street/Barton Street (A438).
- Signalisation of Oldbury Road/Bredon Road.
- Junction improvements at the High Street/ Barton Street roundabout.
- Provision of a 15-minute bus service from Mitton to Tewkesbury town centre as well as contributions towards more localised bus service improvements for Tewkesbury.
- Provision of safe cycle and pedestrian connections to Mitton including trip end facilities/cycle parking in Tewkesbury.
- Provision of a Tewkesbury town centre Mobility Hub.

All of the above measures are to be at least part-funded through developer contributions and further scheme details will emerge as the planning application(s) are progressed. In the meantime, it is essential to ensure that all such measures are designed and delivered in full alignment with the Vision and Masterplan Framework/Big Moves and Key Sites actions set out in this Masterplan. In particular, for all measures, care should be taken to ensure that they preserve the town's special character and heritage assets, enhance the public realm and quality of pedestrian movements, and support the traffic management proposals.

Key Site considerations

1. The High Street is used as a diversion route during M5 closures.
2. Explore changing traffic flow to Oldbury Road instead of High Street.
3. Public realm improvements.
4. Improving public transport and active travel options.
5. Strategy set out to identify priority, further work to be undertaken and delivery approach for short, medium and longer term.
6. Co-ordinating improvement measures with those being required to mitigate the impacts of development at Mitton on Tewkesbury town centre.

High Street Design Guidelines

To be read in conjunction with the Ashchurch Connection Design Guidelines in this document.

Heritage

HS-HE01: Proposals for public realm improvement must respond positively to the historic environment and ensure its conservation or enhancement.

HS-HE02: Proposals for changes to commercial premises in the conservation area must adhere to the requirements set out in the Shopfront, Shutters and Signage SPD (2022).

Nature / Public Space

HS-NA01: Proposals must include street trees at regular intervals to provide shading and cooling.

Access and Movement

HS-AM01: Space for active travel must be incorporated into any new movement proposals.

HS-AM02: The High Street must prioritise pedestrian movement.

HS-AM03: Signage must be clear and easy to understand for all users including colour and written language.

HS-AM04: Cycle parking areas must be provided at key arrival points.

HS-AM05: The bus route must be retained.

HS-AM06: Transport mitigation for development in the area must support these proposals.

Materials

HS-M01: Materials should respond to a palette sympathetic to the historic setting, they must be consistent and durable.

HS-M02: Street clutter must be avoided.

HS-M03: Line painting and other street markings should be appropriate for the historic setting and kept to a minimum.

HS-M04: Surfacing to the cycle and footway must be appropriate and accessible for high use by cyclists, pedestrians, people in wheelchairs and with prams / pushchairs whilst being aesthetically appropriate for the setting.

Sustainability

HS-SU01: Property owners and tenants should refer to the most up-to-date Historic England guidance when considering adapting historic buildings for improved carbon and energy efficiency at the date of publication HEAN18.

HS-SU02: Consideration should be given to re-installing traditional shop awnings to provide protection from rain and sun wherever appropriate.

Abbey Precincts Character Area

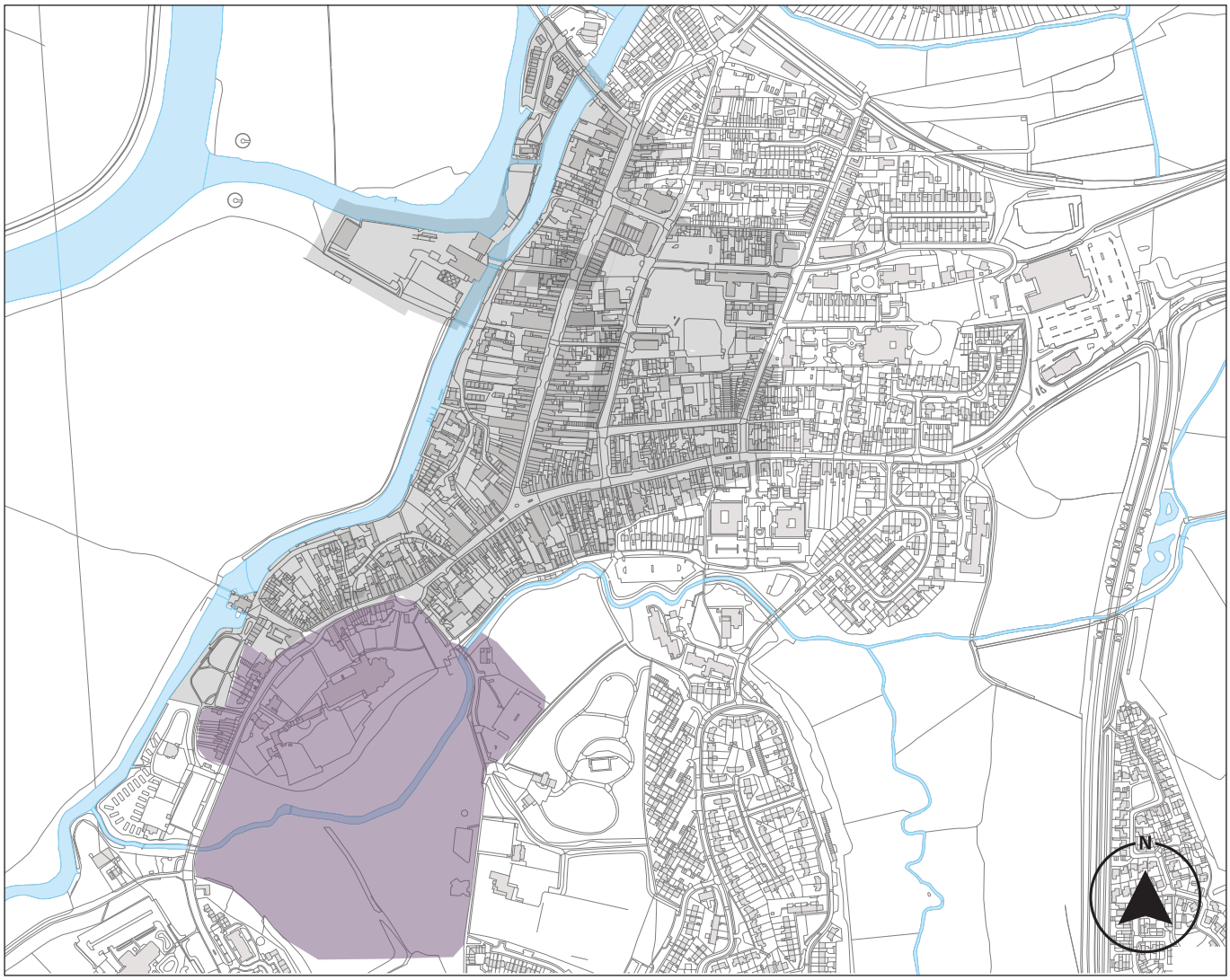
The Abbey is a key destination for visitors to Tewkesbury and a principal arrival point into the town. The character area includes the Abbey grounds and wider 'green' setting including the River Swilgate and The Vineyards. It also crosses slightly beyond Gloucester Road and Gander Lane to include adjacent buildings which have a relationship with the Abbey such as Gloucester Terrace, Mill Street and Abbey Mill.

Context and background

Tewkesbury Abbey, originally home to Benedictine monks, is a fine building with a long nave, large Norman church tower and famous medieval stained-glass windows. In addition to this, the Abbey plays a pivotal role within the wider townscape and landscape of Tewkesbury. Its sheer size, 'built at Cathedral scale', despite being a church means the Abbey was aptly described by Nikolaus Pevsner as a place that 'quietly dominates the land and skyline'.

Abbey Lawn Cottages are a Grade I listed terrace row (built as a commercial enterprise by the Abbey) located between the Abbey and Church Street and which add to the setting of the Abbey.

Abbey Precincts Character Area boundary



Heritage

The Abbey is Grade I listed and one of the most significant historic buildings in the United Kingdom. This character area is particularly significant as one of the earliest and enduring areas of settlement within Tewkesbury.

Abbey Lawn Terrace is a significant row of two to three storey terraced buildings along the Abbey side of Church Street.

Land use

The Abbey and its associated green spaces including the Abbey Lawn and the Vineyards are the most dominant use within the Character Area. The Vineyards are populated with informal areas of mature trees. The smaller grounds directly adjacent to the Abbey and the arrival points from the north and west are more formal.

The eastern edge of the character area is occupied by the Vineyards car park and Tewkesbury Cricket Club.

Along Gloucester Road is an area of greenery and car parking. There is an entrance to Victoria Gardens between two of the buildings.

Urban grain

A number of buildings sit in a loose informal arrangement around the Abbey Precinct and Abbey Gatehouse south of the Abbey. The arrival through the Gatehouse is very formal, but is less well connected to the centre of the town.

Building line

The Abbey is set back from all three adjacent roads – Gloucester Road, Church Street and Gander Lane.

Typically, buildings front onto the streets with the exception of the buildings along Gloucester Road which are set back from the footpath by short front gardens.



Abbey Terrace looking towards the junction with Gander Lane and Church Street

Height, massing and scale

The Abbey is the tallest building in Tewkesbury and the tower is 45 metres tall (the equivalent of fifteen storeys high). The height and massing of the Abbey are emphasised by the surrounding low-lying topography.

Other built form within the character area is typically between two and four storeys high. Occasionally there are single storey buildings such as 1 to 3 Gander Lane and Tewkesbury Cricket Club.

Materials

The Abbey is predominantly constructed from Caen stone, a limestone which was imported from Normandy and which is similar to local Cotswold stone.

The buildings on the surrounding streets use a diverse palette of materials including red coloured masonry brickwork, timber framed and panelled buildings, ashlar stone cladding and painted masonry brickwork.

Boundary treatments are a mixture of low stone walls, masonry brickwork and metal post and rail fencing. There are some areas of timber clad fencing between the Abbey complex and Gloucester Road. There is estate railing separating the Abbey grounds from the Vineyards.

Opportunities and constraints

The Abbey will continue to be a key destination for visitors and the local community. The Abbey experience should extend beyond the



The Abbey as seen from the Vineyards

immediate grounds to tell the wider story of its significance and connection to Tewkesbury.

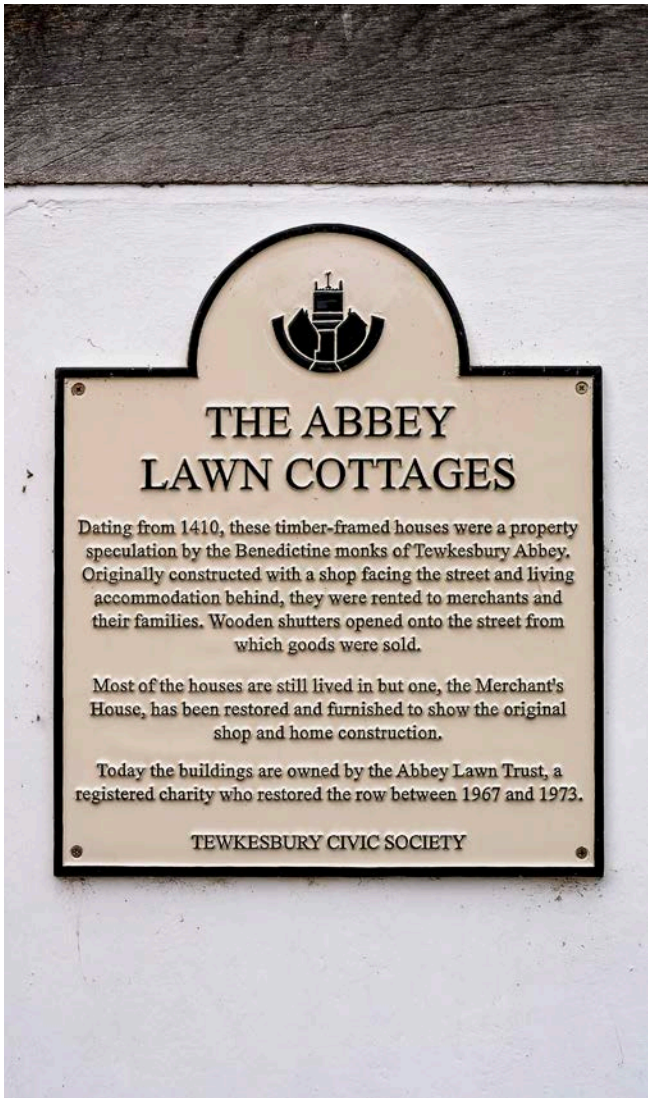
Constraints

Poor public realm

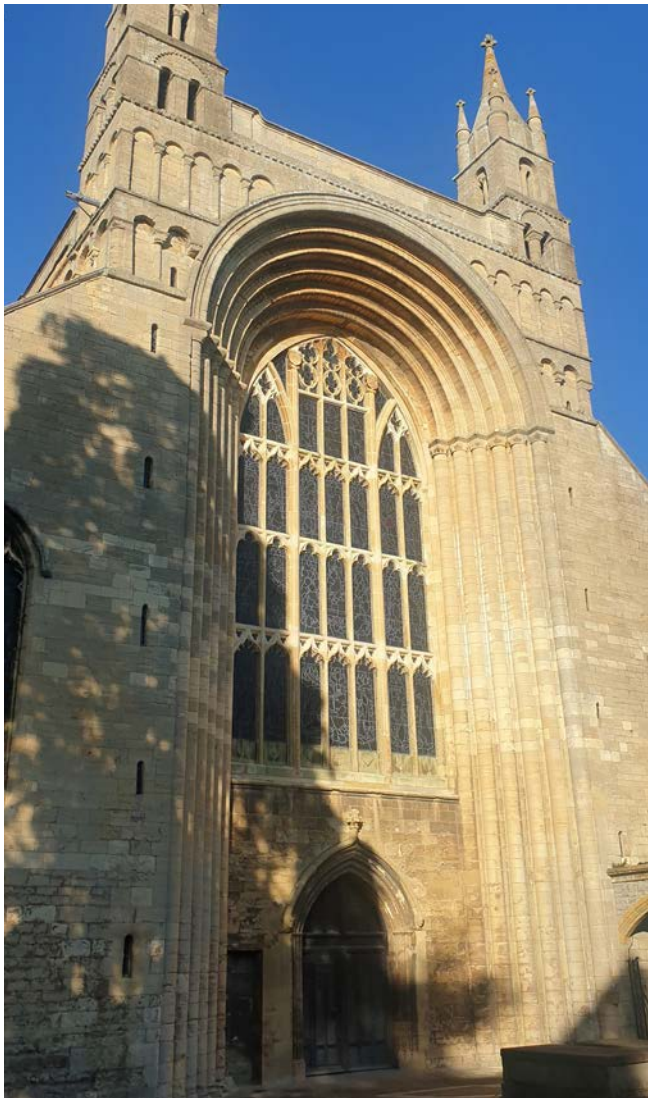
1. Mismatching boundary treatments along Gloucester Road.
2. Very narrow pavement to eastern edge and narrow western edge of Gloucester Road.
3. Trees which have grown to obscure key views towards the Abbey.
4. Car parking along Gloucester Road in front of the Abbey.

Vehicle dominance and connectivity

5. The Bell Hotel is Grade II* listed and a key view when travelling south along Church Street. Its location creates a pinch point in the road which makes crossing the road for pedestrians difficult.
6. Connectivity between green spaces is poor, e.g. from the Vineyards to the Water Gardens and access to Victoria Gardens from Gloucester Road car park is not legible.
7. The Crescent (technically the junction between Church Street and Gander Lane) is dominated by an overly large turning circle for vehicles; pedestrian routes do not correspond to desire lines.



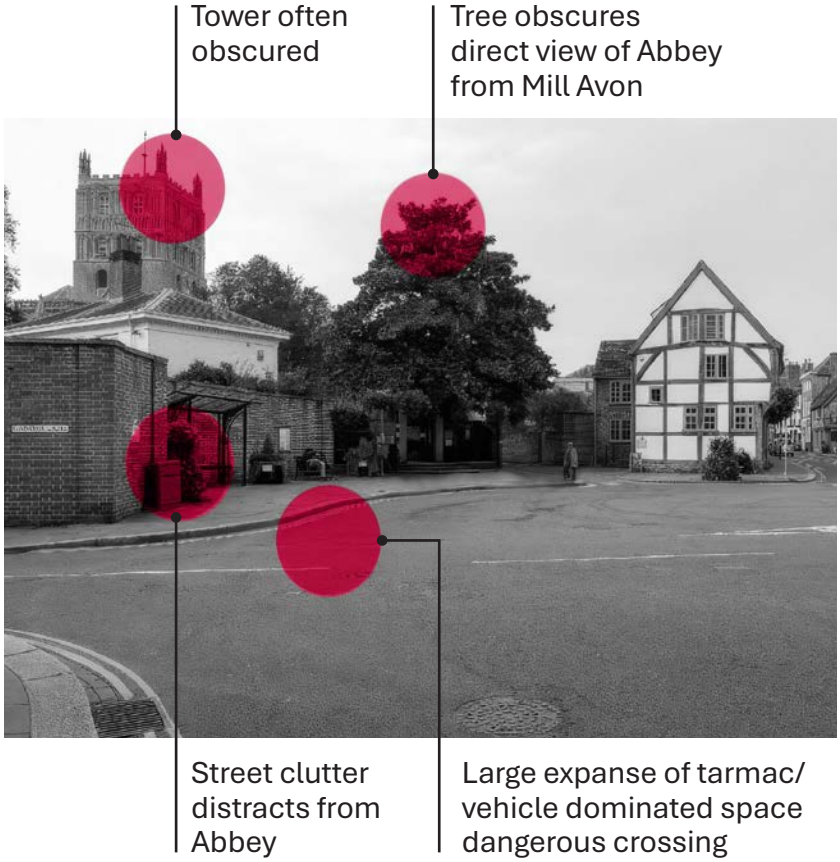
Tewkesbury Civic Society heritage signage



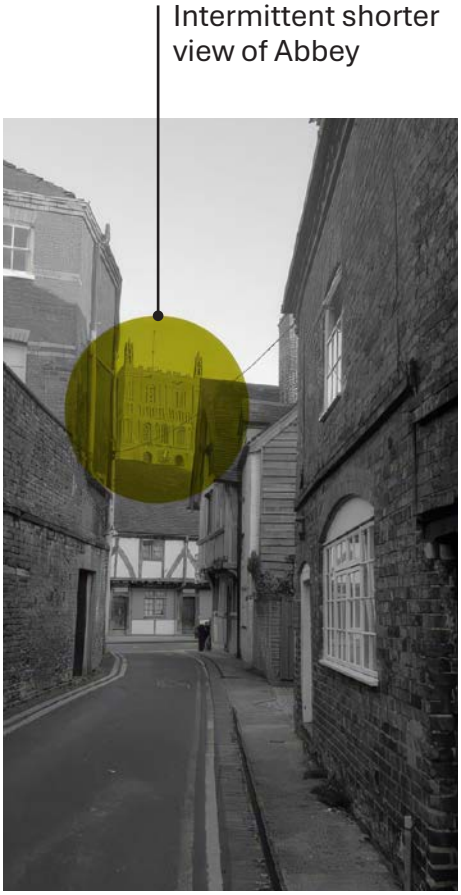
Caen stone used on Tewkesbury Abbey



Townscape features which contribute positively to the setting of the Abbey

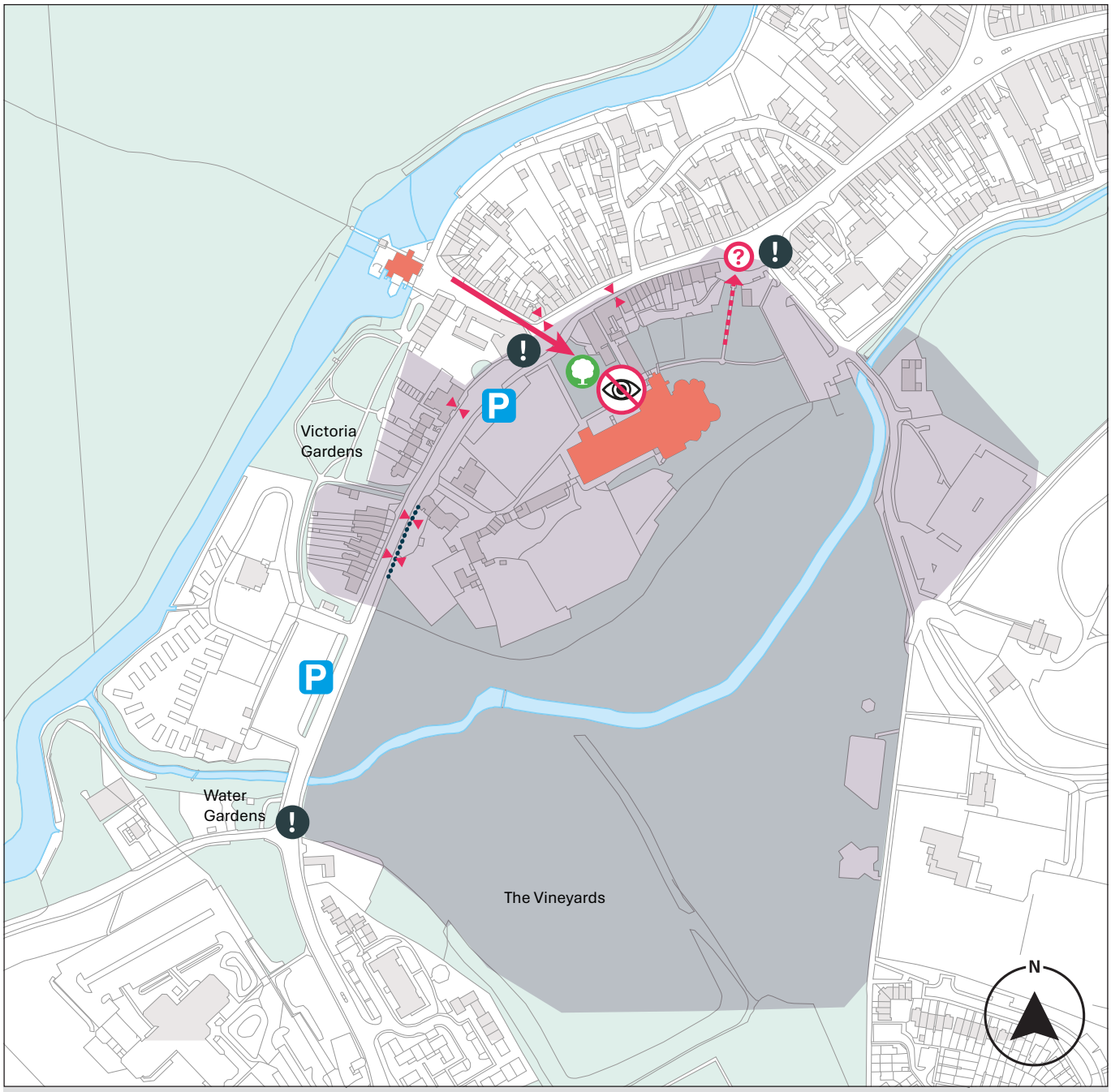


Townscape features which contribute negatively to the setting of the Abbey



Attractive view of Abbey

Abbey Precincts Constraints Plan



Legend

- Blocked view
- Boundary treatment poor quality
- Dangerous crossing point
- Existing car parks
- Landmark building
- Narrow pavements
- Poor connectivity
- Tree blocking view

Opportunities

Historic buildings and heritage

1. Opportunities to celebrate the quality and significance of the Grade I listed buildings.
2. Enhance and protect existing masonry walls within the public realm.

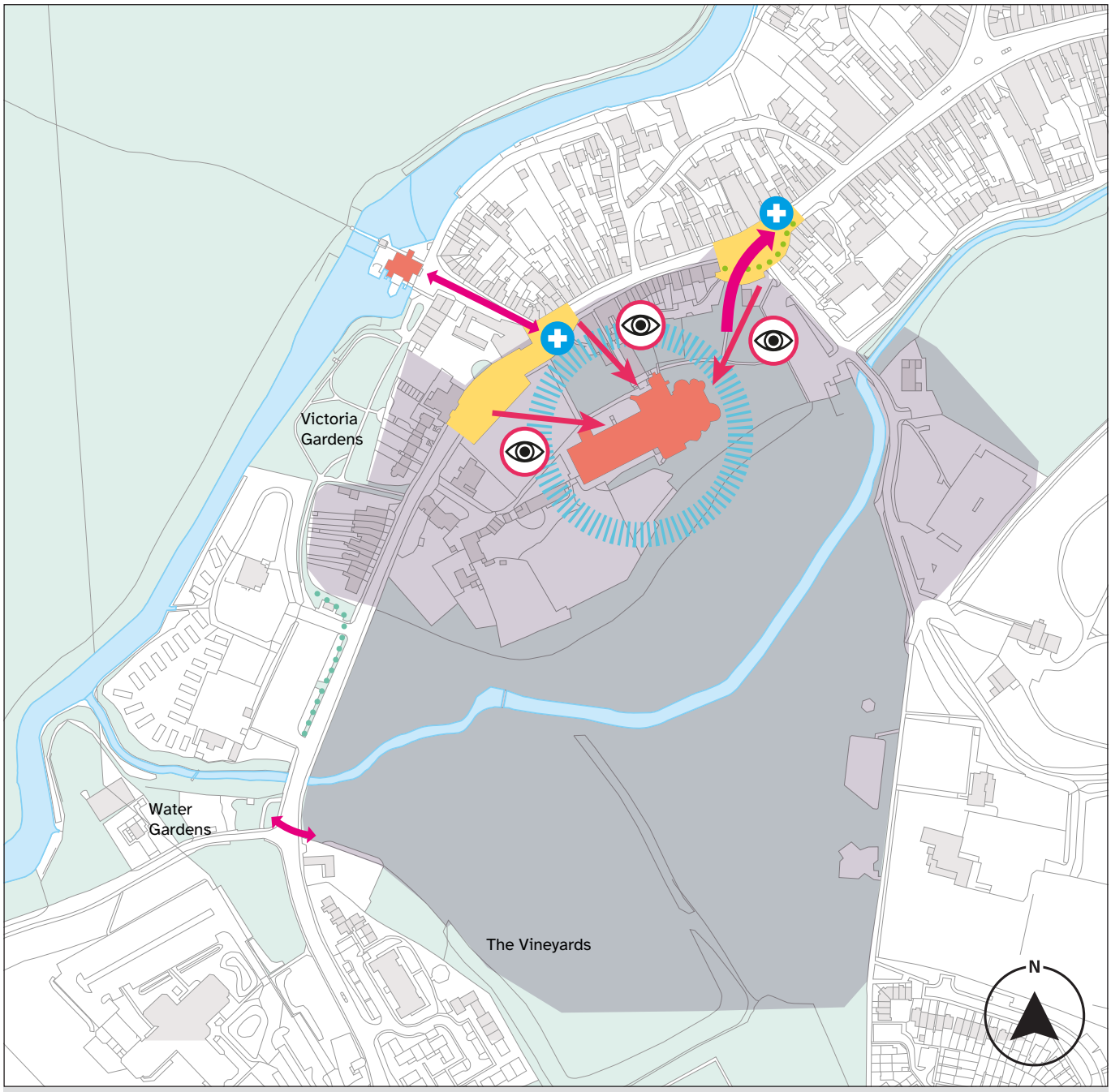
People-focused public realm

3. Opportunities should be taken to improve the public realm around the Abbey, particularly its arrival points and connections to Mill Street, these should prioritise people and minimise the dominance of vehicles.
4. The Crescent, there are opportunities to reduce the space for vehicles, enhance the experience for pedestrians and provide additional greening to Church Street. This could help reduce the conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.
5. Church Street and Mill Street junction improvements; Highway improvements in this area to help slow traffic travelling north into Tewkesbury.
6. Key views to the Abbey should be protected and future tree planting and management should be considered to ensure trees will not grow to block key views.
7. The Abbey Grounds are a popular green space. There are opportunities for managing key views with tree planting. Improved boundary treatments to the south against the flood plain would enhance the arrival experience.
8. Water Gardens and Gloucester Road car park, Improve connections to the Vineyards and enhance access to the river. There are opportunities to enhance the green verge and access into Victoria Gardens from Gloucester Road car park.



The junction between Church Street and Mill Street

Abbey Precincts Opportunities Plan



Legend

Public realm improvement

Pedestrian desire line improvements

Greening

Landmark building

Focal point

Key views preserved

Road junction realignment

Riverside Character Area

The Riverside Character Area stretches from Victoria Gardens to Mythe Road along the River Avon and includes significant buildings such as Abbey Mill and Healing's Mill.

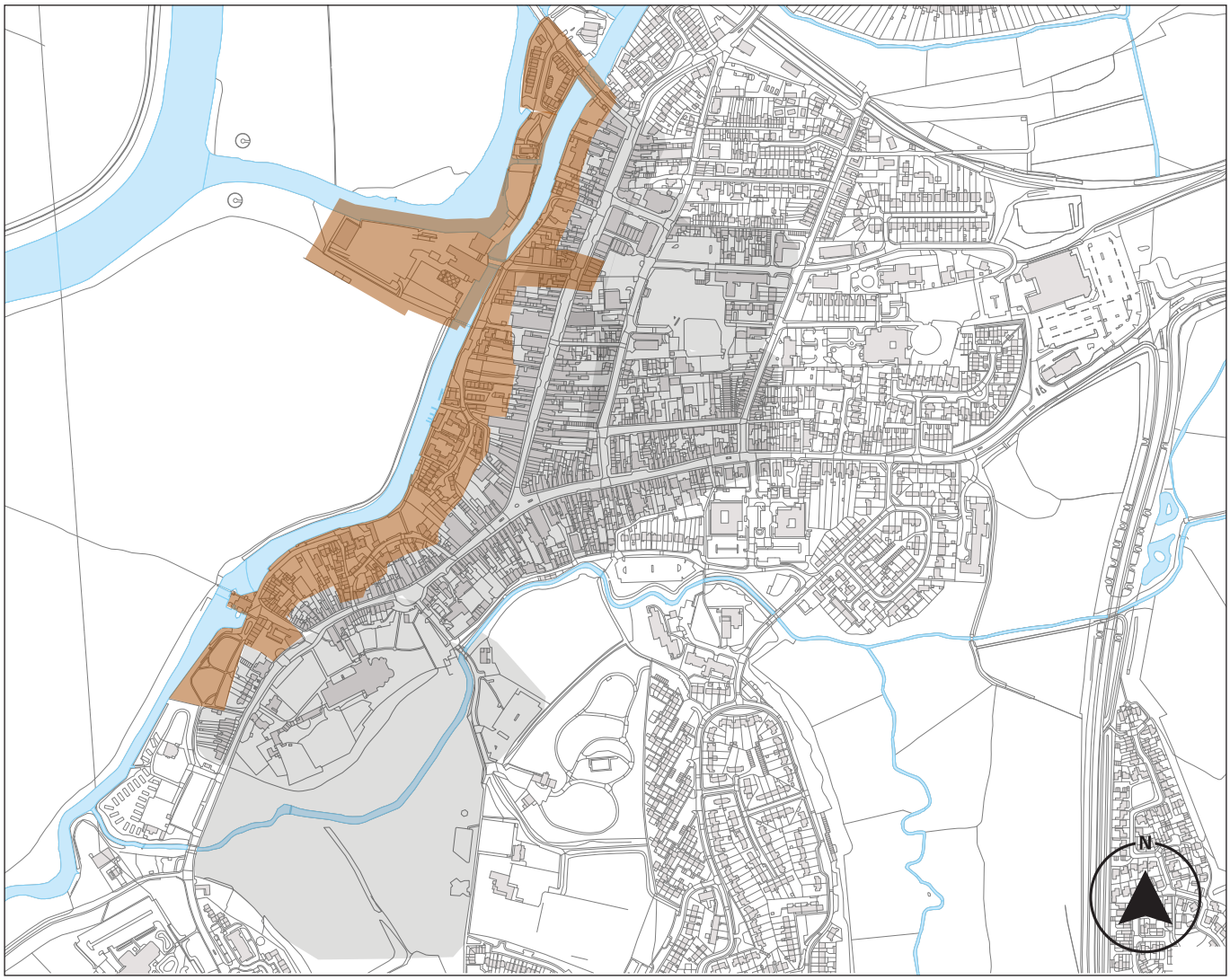
This area is an 'edge' to Tewkesbury. It is the end of the built environment and the threshold to the River Avon, the Severn Ham and the wider countryside including the Malvern Hills. Historically this was an area with industrial buildings and mills and this is still evident in the mix of historic and modern buildings along the waterfront.

On the town side, the area is characterised by a mix of uses including residential, workshops and cafés. These create a patchwork of activity along narrow roads and waterside footpaths. There are pockets of open space and green spaces along the river edge which provide views across the Severn Ham.

Healing's Mill is located at the western end of Quay Street and to the north-west of the town centre. The former flour mill, built in 1865, was once considered the largest and most modern flour mill in Europe and was in operation for 140 years. In its heyday it was well connected by water, road and rail.

Healing's Mill and its ancillary buildings have been closed since 2006 and the buildings,

Riverside Character Area boundary



which are in private ownership, are in a dilapidated condition.

The Mill buildings are a dominant feature in the skyline of the town and when viewed from across the Severn Ham their scale dramatically contrasts to the rest of the town centre, apart from Tewkesbury Abbey.

Other elements of the industrial heritage of the area such as the railway spur that travelled down Quay Street and other earlier industrial buildings have been lost over time.

Heritage

The original railway line travelled east/west through Oldbury on its way to Healing's Mill.

Although there are few physical remnants of this, it will be important to integrate interpretation of this into proposals.

Land use

There is a mix of existing uses along the riverside. Large areas along the water's edge are residential including purpose-built and conversions of historic buildings such as Abbey Mill. These are interspersed with small businesses such as boat builders, cafés, private offices and visitor accommodation, as well as moorings along the riverside. There are also businesses that provide boat trips and stations for paddle boarding located along the northern part of the Back of Avon.

Public open space is composed of a series of small parks and gardens along the waters edge, accessed from the River Walk footpath. This begins at Victoria Gardens in the south, passes the Anglo-American Memorial Garden and ends at the Lock Picnic Grounds to the north of Healing's Mill.

Urban grain

North of Tolsey Lane, the urban grain largely responds to the historic pattern of alleys between burgage plots leading to the Back of Avon. Historically there was built form up to the river edge. Today this is more evident to the west of St Mary's Lane.

South of Tolsey Lane has seen more change as factories along the river edge were demolished and replaced with new residential buildings during the 20th century. The urban grain here is more fractured with winding lanes and dead ends.



Town Hall gardens leading to Anglo-American Memorial Gardens



Riverside Walk where it travels along the bank of the Mill Avon

During the latter part of the 20th century increased access to the river edge has occurred as buildings have been demolished and footpaths such as the Riverside Walk have been created.

Building line

Buildings typically have an elevation on the boundary line. This is usually the principal elevation but can be the gable end. Very few historic buildings are set back from the pavement edge.

Height, massing and scale

Built form is typically between two and three storeys high, with only Healing's Mill (six to seven storeys) and Calico House, and Hanover Court (four storeys) exceeding this. Healing's Mill dominates the skyline and is a landmark at the northern edge of the town.

Building heights are not consistent along streets or terraces with a variety of roof pitches and building heights adding interest and variety to street scenes.

Dormer windows and rooflights are present on some buildings but are not common. They vary in type including catslide, gable and flat roofed. Older buildings typically have chimney stacks whereas these are absent from buildings from the late 20th century onwards.

Materials

There is a diverse mix of building types, elevation treatments and materials present within this character area. Varying tones of red masonry brick are the most common and there are also areas of render, painted masonry, exposed timber frame and timber boarding, and timber-effect cladding.

Typically, these are in neutral shades however there are brighter decorated shades to the timber effect cladding on some buildings such as Wharf House.

The buildings at Healing's Mill and the Elliott Court area have slate roof tiles. Other buildings typically have clay tiles while 20th century buildings have concrete tiles.

Where there are boundary treatments these are typically red masonry brick with a variety of coping types and styles.



Taller buildings at present at Healing's Mill and the former mill offices.



Historic buildings and features which contribute positively to the character of the Riverside area



20th century housing and features along Back of Avon which contribute positively to the character of the Riverside area



Former industrial buildings along the river which contribute positively to the townscape

There is a variety of street furniture throughout the character area including bollards, seating, lamp columns and planters. The edge treatment along the river varies from buff coloured masonry brickwork to iron post and rail.

Opportunities and constraints

These constraints and opportunities have been identified following the analysis and engagement. By identifying them, it will help identify options to revitalise the water's edge area, with creative re-use of Healing's Mill and its associated buildings as well as a regenerated public space along the waters edge. Further work required is outlined in the Delivery Plan.

Constraints

Vehicle dominance and connectivity

1. The river edge is dominated by car parking.
2. There is a lack of access to green spaces along the river edge and there is no level access to the Anglo-American Garden of Remembrance and Town Hall Gardens from Back of Avon.
3. The Mill and surrounding areas are within a Category 3A Flood Zone which places limitations on development opportunities.
4. Dilapidation of Healing's Mill, the buildings are Grade II listed and of national significance.
5. The Healing's Mill site is a barrier for people using the Public Rights of Way network to access the Severn Ham directly.
6. The area of the Ham when crossing the iron bridge, and the Quayside is underutilised.

Poor Public Realm

7. 20th century flat roof residential buildings that do not complement their historic setting.
8. The lack of active frontage at ground floor and typically garage accesses fronting onto public realm.
9. Dominance of vehicles parked along the river's edge reducing the amount of public space available.
10. Lack of variety of planting and underwhelming experience in the Anglo-American Memorial Garden. Difficulty in accessing the garden (and the Town Hall Gardens) due to stepped and gated access).
11. Type of surfacing materials contributing to Back of Avon being experienced as a road and not a piece of public realm.

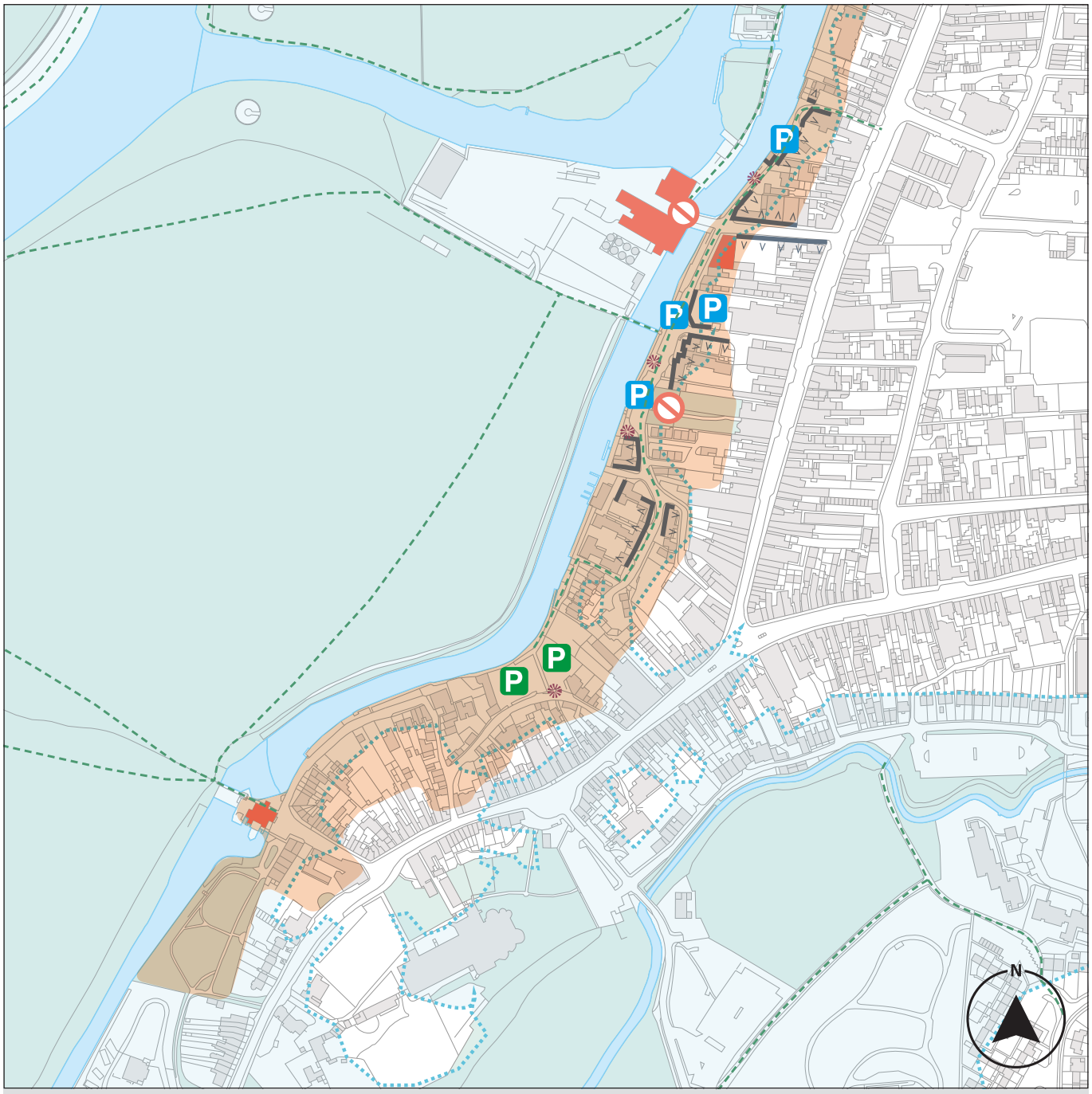


Dilapidated buildings at Healing's Mill



Remnants of the railway spur on the bridge over the River Avon

Riverside Constraints Plan



Legend

- Flood zone 3A
- Inactive frontage
- Footpath
- Cluttered street furniture
- Landmark building
- Barrier to pedestrian access
- Car parks affected by flood water
- Car park areas which constrain riverside green space

12. Modern boundary treatments such as monotone masonry brick walls.
13. Lack of cohesive street furniture.
14. Street clutter, such as wheeled bins belonging to houses, is unsightly and can create access issues.

Opportunities

Development opportunities

1. Healing's Mill presents a 'once in a generation' opportunity to create something of substance and quality for Tewkesbury. This could be an exciting new cultural centre, community space and fully mixed-use development and residential area celebrating the history of Tewkesbury. New development should be sensitive to the industrial heritage of the area (See Key Site section below).
2. Active frontage at ground level on new buildings should be encouraged where possible and desirable.
3. Re-development of the Poundland store and adjoining car park would enhance the Riverside environment.

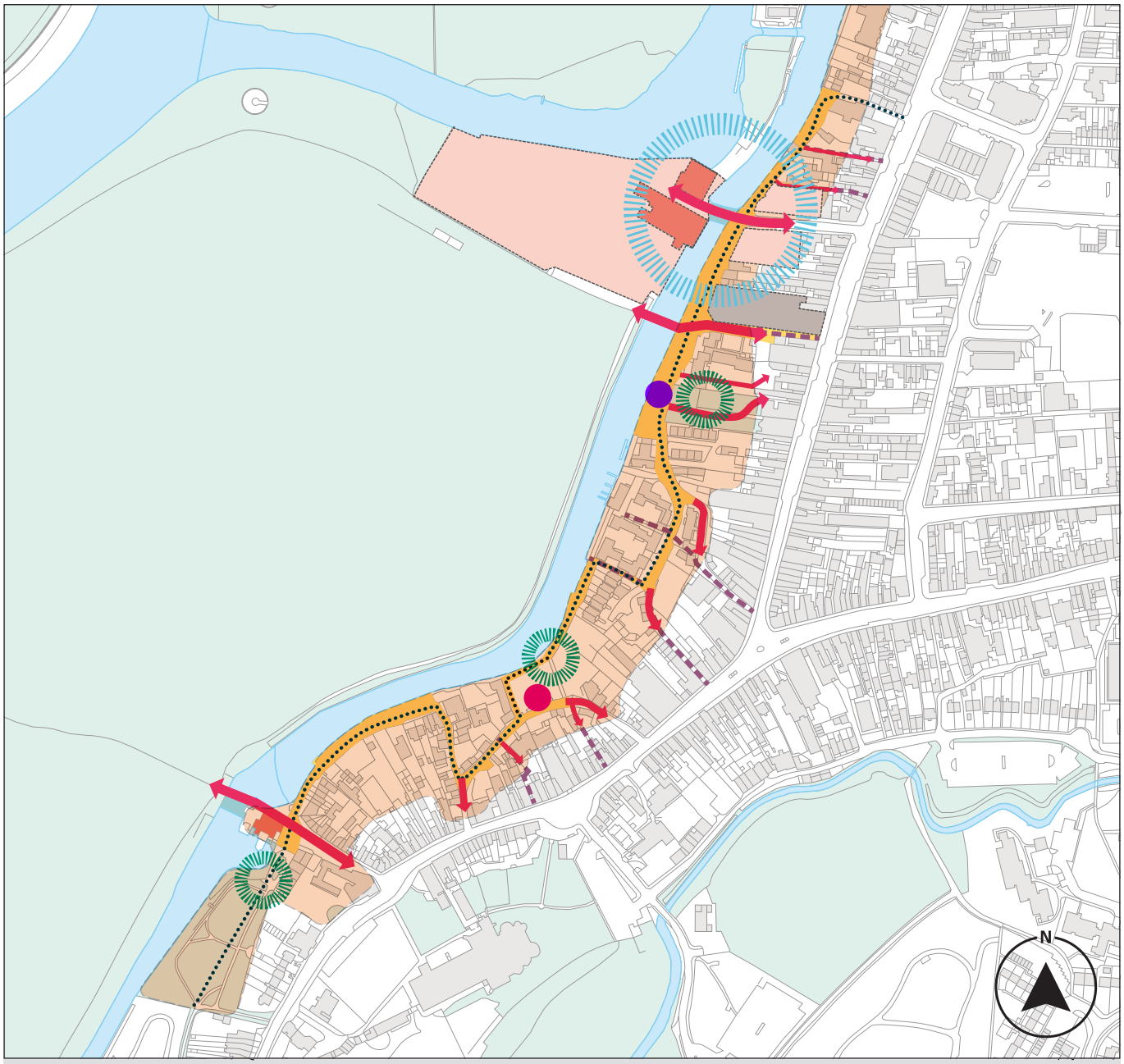
People-focused public realm

4. Creating a pedestrian focused river edge, reducing the conflict between pedestrians and vehicles, improved materials and increased crossing points, would enhance this valuable asset.
5. Connections between the River Avon and High Street should be enhanced by improving access to alleyways and ensuring they are appropriately lit and well maintained and with appropriate historical interpretation. Guardianship of these should be encouraged by local residents.
6. Riparian responsibilities should be communicated, with thought given to how the watercourse is accessed for maintenance and that access is retained for this.

Green space within the Riverside Character Area

7. At Victoria Gardens there are opportunities for elevating the arrival experience from Gloucester Road car park and the Abbey to promote this green space as the southern gateway to the river edge.
8. Converting the riverside edge of the existing St Mary's Lane car park into a small linear park would provide green space at a pivotal point along the River Walk and would be a valuable contribution to accessible green spaces when Victoria Gardens is flooded. Options for diverting the Riverside Walk footpath would help alleviate conflict between vehicles and pedestrians within any retained car park area.
9. There is considerable potential to increase biodiversity, improve access to the Town Hall/Anglo-American Gardens and expand this valuable green space into the neighbouring Lloyds Bank garden by redesigning the space to create a meandering accessible route to connect with improved public realm along the River's edge.
10. There is opportunity to enhance the river edge by creating a series of enhanced green 'moments' to increase places for pedestrians to pause, relax and engage with nature. They would contribute to the river edge being a destination for the local community and visitors to the town. There is also the opportunity to improve and add to the moorings where appropriate.

Riverside Opportunities Plan



Legend

- Development opportunity (local plan allocation)
- Longer-term re-development opportunity
- Landmark building
- Alleyway – enhanced
- Riverside walk
- Public realm improvement
- Green moment
- Gateway
- Enhanced key pedestrian and/or vehicular linkages
- Greening retaining vehicular access
- Greening with car parking retained

Key Site: Healing's Mill

Healing's Mill is a significant component of Tewkesbury's industrial past and forms a critical element of the Riverside Character Area. It connects the town, its people and the rivers. Unfortunately, since the closure of the Mill in 2006 the buildings have fallen into disrepair. This has led to them attracting anti-social behaviour and generally being considered an eyesore locally.

Healing's Mill is located to the western edge of Tewkesbury and the height of the surviving Mill buildings makes them a landmark when approaching the building from the north.

The Site is bounded to the north by the Old Avon river. The Mill Avon passes through the site separating the manufacturing building from the offices on Back of Avon and Quay Street. To the south and west of the Site is the Severn Ham.

The Site is heavily constrained. The Severn Ham, Tewkesbury (reference 1002616) is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The rest of the Site is within the Impact Risk Zone of the SSSI. The Site is also Conclusive Registered Common Land (CRoW).

To the west of the Site is the Tewkesbury Borough Oil Pipeline. The western part of the Site is within the associated easement and buffer zone of the pipework.

Parts of the Mill manufacturing buildings are Grade II listed although are included on the Heritage at Risk register. Several of the Mill Buildings along Quay Street and the Back of Avon are also Grade II listed. The Site is within the Tewkesbury Conservation Area.

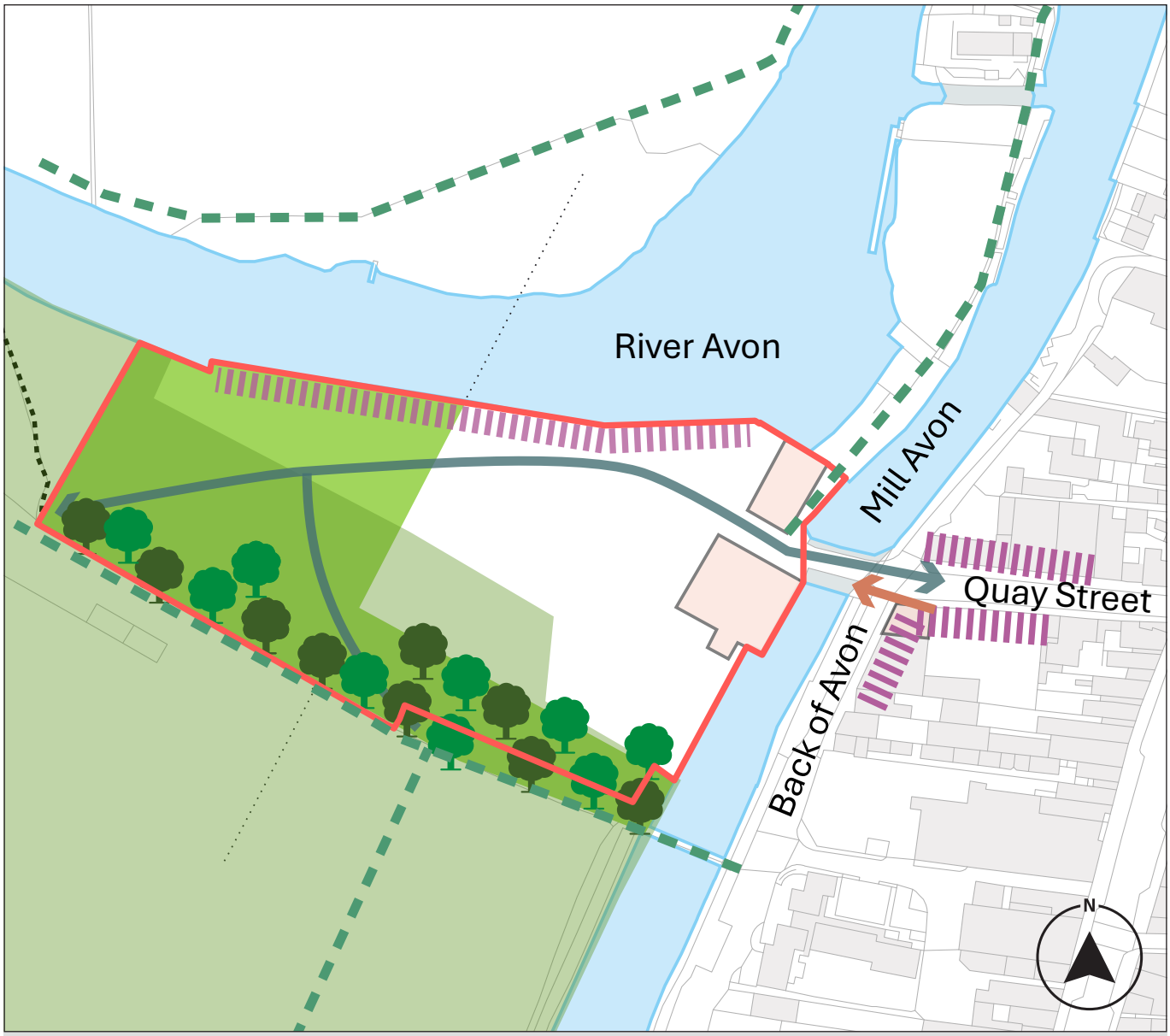
The site is within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Flood Zone 3b. This means that there can be no habitable accommodation at ground floor level and commercial and community uses will be limited to those that are designed to accommodate flood water. A sequential flood risk assessment will be required at pre-application stage.

The Mill presents a 'once in a generation' opportunity to create something for the people of Tewkesbury. Proposals for this site will need to be inspirational and demonstrate how they will positively impact the local community. For instance, they should consider the potential on or near the waterside for educational development, opportunities linked to the natural environment and active leisure and heritage protection and interpretation.

Key Site considerations

1. Landmark buildings (Flour Mill and grain store) with opportunity for significant use of these historic industrial buildings, mixed use with active/ community type use on ground floor.
2. Southern and western part of the Site is Conclusive Registered Common Land (CRoW).
3. Relationship to and connection with the Ham and SSSI (Policy reference NAT1 SSSI).
4. Important relationship with the town centre via Quay Street and bridge (listed).
5. Creative solutions that respond to the challenges of the constraints.
6. Revitalising the waterfront by exploring opportunities for additional uses such as vessel mooring and boat hire.
7. This is part of Tewkesbury's story and should be curated and accessible for future generations. It is significant both for Tewkesbury but also in a national catalogue of mill buildings and projects should seek to retain the historic parts of the building and create new high-quality interventions.
8. Need to integrate the redeveloped mill site into the riverside area between the Lock picnic area and Back of Avon.

Plan showing Key Site considerations for the Healing's Mill site



Legend

- Site boundary
- Existing Public Right of Way (PROW)
- Water course and river
- Severn Ham Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Proposed area for open space
- Opportunity for active frontage
- Grade II listed building to be retained
- Opportunities for permeability through the Site connecting existing routes
- Opportunity for new vehicle access point
- Existing tree planting

Healing's Mill Design Guidelines

Heritage assets

HM-HE01: Listed Borough Mill and former brewery buildings must be retained and other listed buildings and structures should be retained and repaired wherever possible.

HM-HE02: New educational opportunities should form an important part of the redevelopment of the Healing's Mill site, in particular the provision apprenticeships in the development of heritage building skills.

Land use

HM-LU01: Proposals must include a mix of options for the Mill building and the wider Site and should demonstrate community benefit.

HM-LU02: Historic buildings must be brought into re-use rather than being demolished, unless it can be proven that retention is less sustainable.

HM-LU03: Proposed functions of the site must demonstrate they are deliverable to avoid further decay to the Mill Buildings.

Urban / built form

HM-UR01: Active frontage must be provided along Quay Street, and Waters Edge.

HM-UR02: Active river frontage must be provided to the north of the River Avon and should include points to interact with the waters edge including mooring points and opportunities for water activities or similar.

Nature / public space

HM-NA01: Existing mature vegetation to the south of the Site should be retained.

HM-NA02: Green space must be provided within the development. This should include a mix of green space, new tree planting, natural play, and a variety of habitats to support biodiversity in line with local plan policy NAT1.

HM-NA03: A new public open space should be provided in the north-east of the Site adjacent to the River.

Access and movement

HM-AM01: Public access to the Severn Ham must be provided through the development site to connect with the wider Public Rights of Way and permitted rights footpaths.

HM-AM02: Where parking is required, it must not dominate the street scene and should not be visible along Waters Edge or Quay Street.

Materials

HM-M01: New interventions must respond positively to and be inspired by the existing palette of materials in the surrounding context.

HM-M02: Proposals should demonstrate a positive response to the industrial history of the character area the Site is within.

HM-M03: Historic materials from the demolition of any historic buildings should be re-used where possible to reduce embodied carbon in redevelopment.

Sustainability

HM-SU01: All new homes to be built to Future Homes standards.

HM-SU02: SuDS will be required unless it can be demonstrated to be infeasible.

HM-SU03: The use of low-carbon district heating should be considered for all developments of 10 or more units. Where this is not feasible, alternative low carbon provision must be made.

HM-SU04: All new buildings should be solar-ready in terms of roof orientation, pitch and structural capacity.

HM-SU05: All new developments should provide convenient access to affordable EV charging and secure cycle shelters.

Oldbury Road to Chance Street Character Area

To be read in conjunction with 'Oldbury Road / Chance Street Character' in Tewkesbury Heritage Strategy (Appendix 4).

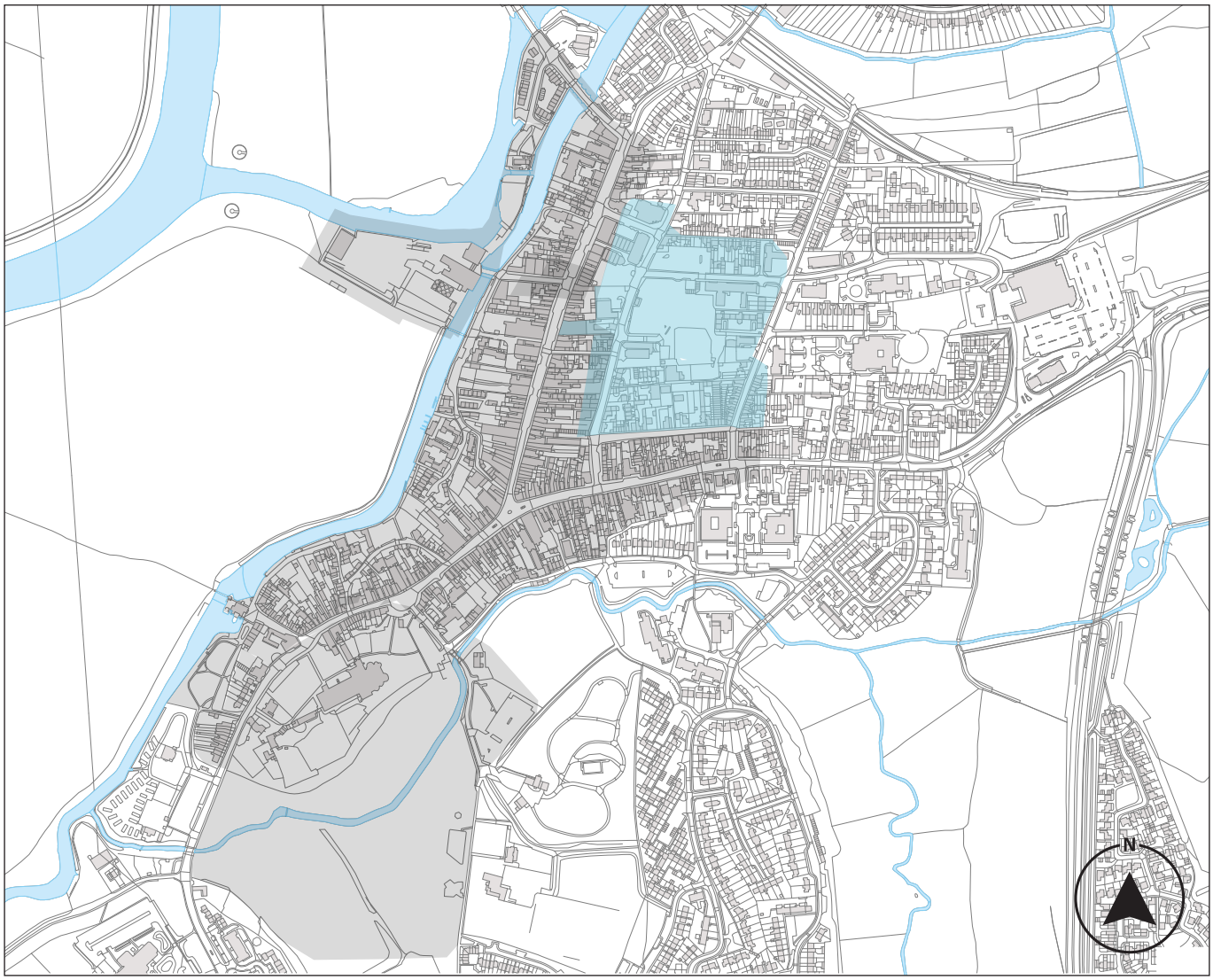
The Oldbury Character Area is defined as the area east of the High Street up to Chance Street and from the back of Barton Street in the south to Sun Street and Gravel Walk in the north.

It was one of the last areas within Tewkesbury's town centre to be developed following the enclosure of common land and the arrival of the railway line which travelled along Station Street to High Street.

As the area developed, built form tended to follow the rectangular field land ownership patterns, with linear gardens and orchards. Routes were formed along boundary lines which shared characteristics with the alleys through the burgage plots in terms of width and orientation.

The closure of the railway line and substantial markets like the Cattle Market in the 20th

Oldbury Road to Chance Street Character Area boundary



century meant the open space left over began to be used for car parking, market days and the annual Mop Fair.

Today a large proportion of this area of Tewkesbury continues to be used for at grade town centre car parking. The area is populated with a mix of residential, business and community uses. Some of the routes are still evident such as Gravel Walk and Trinity Walk but others such as Spring Gardens have been lost over time.

Much of the greening that existed in the gardens and orchards is noticeably absent today. There are a small number of street trees associated with Spring Gardens and Oldbury Road car parks however the area is dominated by hard materials and vehicular movements.

Heritage

The majority of this Character Area is outside the Tewkesbury Conservation Area and there are only a few listed buildings within the area. Remnants of the railway line are recognisable through the urban grain and footprint of more modern buildings such as The Maltings on Station Road which replaced former railway buildings.

Land use

There is a mix of existing uses within the Oldbury area. Where there is built form it is predominately residential peppered with institutional uses such as religious or education buildings or civic functions such as the Library and the Roses Theatre.

Open space is predominately used for car parking and there are no public open spaces in this neighbourhood.

Urban grain

The historic urban grain is more evident towards the southern and northern parts of the neighbourhood. This is shown through east/west linear passageways that followed field boundaries with terrace housing infilling these areas during the Victorian era.

Along Station Street, 20th century buildings such as the Maltings, have followed the urban grain and form of earlier buildings. Elsewhere, 20th century development has diverged from the historic grain with the creation of courtyards rather than lanes.



Victorian alleys



Car parking on important corners

Building line

Buildings typically have an elevation on the boundary line. This is usually the principal elevation but can be the gable end. Very few historic buildings are set back from the pavement edge.

Height, massing and scale

Built form is typically between two and three storeys high. Occasionally there are taller buildings distributed around the character area. These include Holy Trinity Church, The Roses Theatre and The Maltings. Building heights are not consistent along streets or terraces. There are a variety of roof types with pitched to gable ends being the most common. Occasionally there are buildings with parapet roofs.

Dormer windows are present on some buildings but are not common. They vary in their type including catslide, gable and flat roofed.

Materials

The majority of buildings are composed of red masonry brick. Occasionally there are buildings where the masonry has been painted in pale neutral shades. There are some rendered buildings which are also painted in pale neutral shades. These help to break up the dominance of a single material and provide interest. Instances of timber cladding and other materials are rare.

Prominent buildings such as Holy Trinity Church, Tewkesbury Church of England Primary School and no. 8 Oldbury Road have stone detailing.

Roofing materials vary from slates to clay roofing tiles. Modern concrete roof tiles are occasional and feel out of place.

Typically, boundary treatments are red masonry brick with a variety of coping types and styles.



Blank facades to 20th century buildings



Holy Trinity Church, one of a few listed buildings in this Character Area



Narrow pedestrian routes along Victorian alleyways



Extensive car parking



Buildings of all eras are typically masonry brick. No. 8 Oldbury Road has stone detailing

Opportunities and constraints

Oldbury is a key arrival point into Tewkesbury for pedestrians and cyclists using the Ashchurch Connection. It is essential that the way this area of Tewkesbury is thought about is elevated from 'back of High Street' to 'gateway to the historic town centre'.

Constraints

Vehicle dominance

1. The dominance of vehicles both along carriageways and with large areas of car parking on prominent street corners and to building frontages.

Poor public realm

2. Heritage: This area of Tewkesbury has very few listed buildings and their setting is poor.
3. Lack of greenery and trees: Open space in this area is used for car parking.
4. Lack of active frontage along key streets.
5. Modern materials such as monotone red masonry brickwork and concrete roof tiles
6. Poor quality modern boundary treatments such as concrete post and rail fences.
7. The prominence of the public toilets building on Oldbury Road.
8. Derelict land where buildings have been demolished or are boarded up.
9. Lack of interpretation of the history of the area.

Lack of identity

10. Lack of identity: 20th century development has meant Oldbury has struggled to retain its own identity. The loss of features such as the gardens, orchards, the railway line and the Victorian alleys have contributed to this.
11. The strong urban grain that developed from field patterns to streets and passages during the Victorian times has been eroded. This loss has contributed to the area lacking a strong identity and sense of place.



Victorian terrace with building line onto pavement creates distinctiveness



Brick and stone detailing adds interest

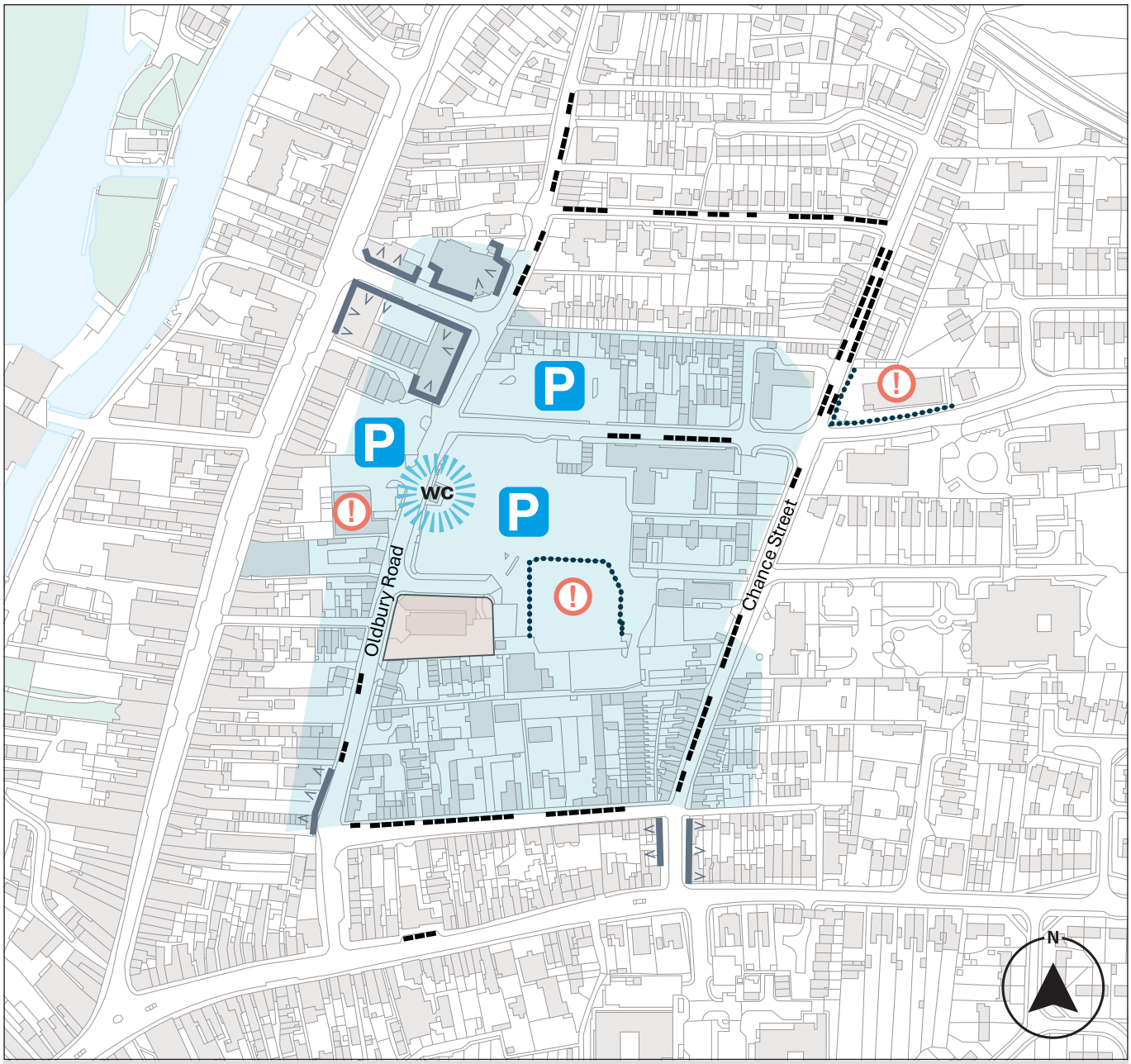


Lack of greening to streets reduces quality of townscape



Modern materials and lack of greening reduce quality of public realm

Oldbury Road to Chance Street Constraints Plan



Legend

- Inactive frontage
- Derelict land / low grade building
- On-street car parking
- Grade II listed building
- Existing car park
- Poor quality boundary treatment
- WC block dominant in street scape

Opportunities

People-focused public realm

1. Reorganisation of car parking in this area as part of a wider parking strategy for the town. This will enable more space to be utilised for people and regeneration projects.
2. A green identity, this area of Tewkesbury has a strong historic connection to agriculture, gardens and allotments which is no longer legible. This could be through interventions such as planting street trees, introducing rain gardens along the road edge associated with Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and the introduction of green roofs and walls. Possibly provision of new green open spaces.
3. Enhancing the setting of Holy Trinity Church, this would have a positive effect on its heritage value. It would create a much-needed green space in this area of Tewkesbury to increase biodiversity and improve people's well- being through access to nature.
4. Retain and enhance historic masonry boundary walls, such as to Spring Gardens car park and Gravel Walk.
5. Provide play spaces outside the floor area.

Development opportunities

6. Opportunities should be taken for enhancing the historic urban grain where there are gaps, this would help the area define its own identity as part of the story of Tewkesbury.
7. Spring Gardens car park and Oldbury car park are identified as a Key Site (TEW3) in the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan (RES1). An individual project brief is provided for this Site on page 63.

Connections

8. Retain and enhance east/west pedestrian links such as Trinity Walk connecting Chance Street to Oldbury Road, reinstating lost routes.

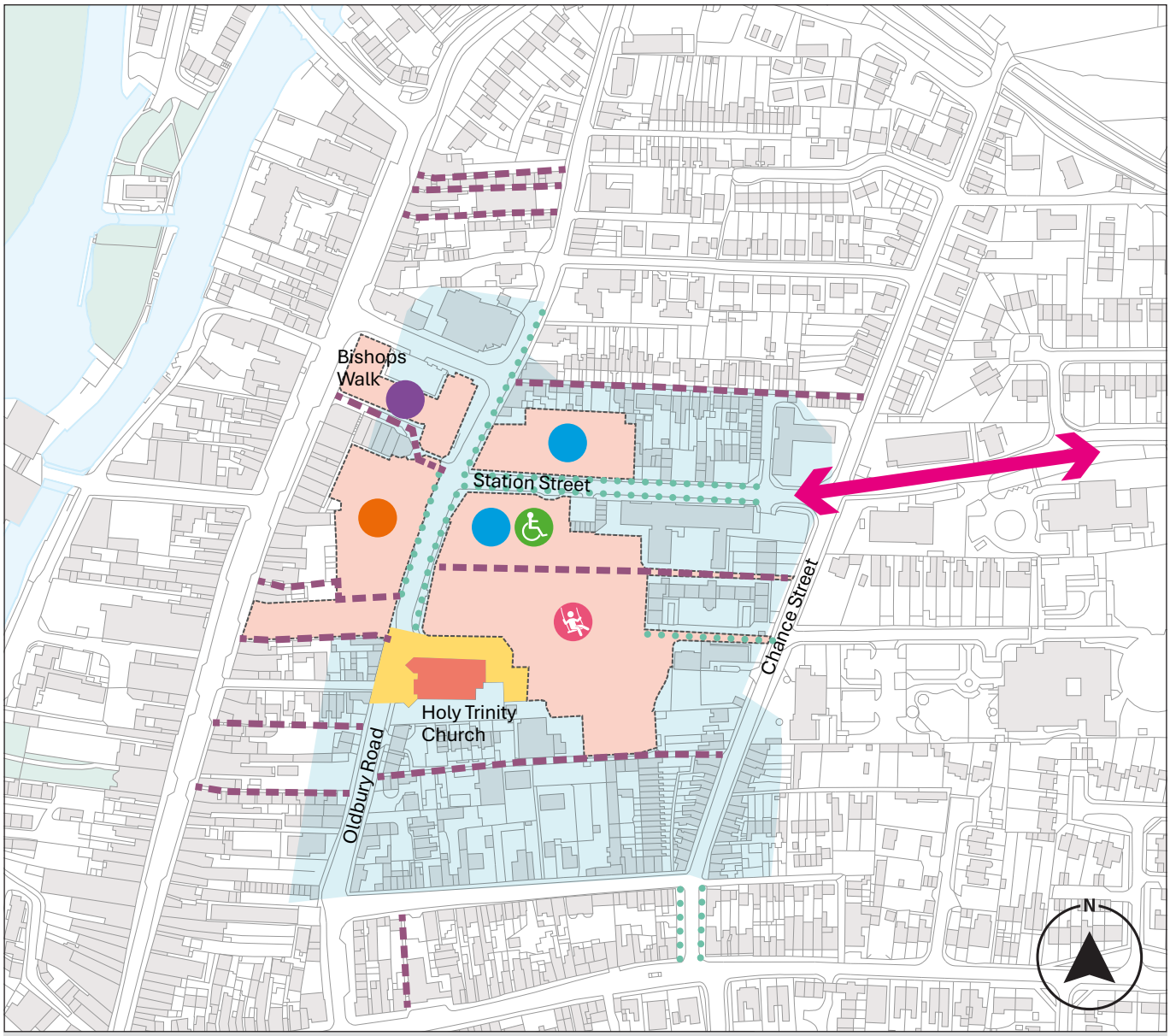


Retaining and enhancing existing historic boundary walls



Enhancing the setting of Holy Trinity Church

Oldbury Road to Chance Street Opportunities Plan



Legend

- Public realm improvement
- Development commitment (Local Plan allocation)
- Potential development opportunity
- Longer term redevelopment opportunity
- Landmark building
- Greening
- Potential play space
- Potential mobility hub
- Alleyway enhanced/re-instated
- East/west active travel connection to former MAFF site and railway station

Key Site: Spring Gardens and Oldbury Road Car Parks

Spring Gardens and Oldbury Road Car Parks are two substantial sites within the Oldbury Character Area. They are located to the east of Oldbury Road and north and south of Station Street. The sites are referred to as TEW3 in Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2022).

The sites are abutted by a mix of uses including residential retirement living at The Maltings, The Albion public house to the North and Holy Trinity Church to the south-west and at grade car parking to the west.

The two sites are both typically used as at grade public car parking. On Wednesdays and Saturdays Spring Gardens car park is used for the Tewkesbury Retail Market and in October is used for part of the annual Mop Fair.

To the south of Spring Gardens Car Park is an area of scrub land where the former town centre swimming pool, 'Cascades', stood prior to its demolition in 2016.

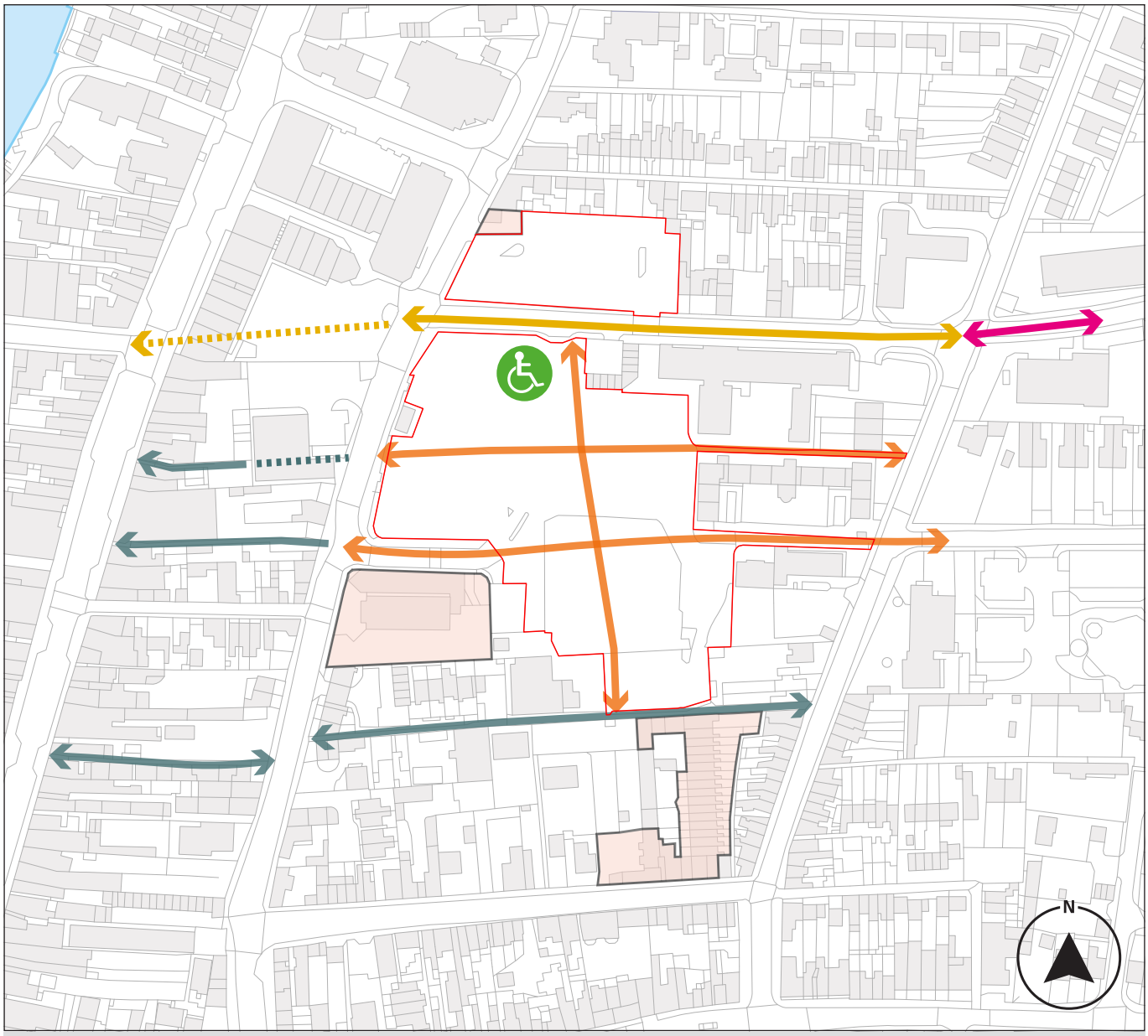
These two sites have an important role to play in strengthening the identity of this area of Tewkesbury and they provide opportunities to deliver mixed use redevelopment including some town centre living that complements the existing uses of the High Street.

The location of the sites adjacent to the proposed Ashchurch Connection means they are well placed within the town centre to provide Tewkesbury with a mobility hub.

Key Site considerations

1. Proximity to the proposed Ashchurch Connection.
2. Proximity to the centre of Tewkesbury town centre and local services and the opportunities this presents for a low car development.
3. Proximity to Grade II listed Holy Trinity Church.
4. Re-establishing the urban grain.
5. Strengthening the identity of the neighbourhood.
6. Contributing green space connectivity and acting as a stepping stone between the Severn Ham Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Local Wildlife Site (Tewkesbury Disused Railway).

Plan showing Key Site considerations for the Spring Gardens and Oldbury Road car parks site



Legend

- Site boundary
- Grade II listed buildings to be retained
- Existing east/west alleys
- Potential future connection
- Opportunities for permeability through the Site connecting existing pedestrian routes
- Potential future connection to Quay Street
- Mobility Hub
- Ashchurch connection east/west

Spring Gardens and Oldbury Road Car Parks Design Guidelines

Heritage

SG-HE01: The original brickwork to the south of Station Street and the corner of Oldbury Road should be retained and thoughtfully integrated into proposals. New openings could be considered.

SG-HE02: Opportunities to celebrate the history of the area through interpretation of the railway, the gardens, orchards and the market and nearby former stocking knitters houses, must be integral to the proposals.

Urban / built form

SG-UR01: Active Frontage must be provided along Station Road and Oldbury Road. This can be adjacent to the street or set back but needs to demonstrate passive surveillance.

SG-UR02: Proposed buildings heights must demonstrate how they respond positively to their surroundings including Holy Trinity Church.

SG-UR03: New development must seek to repair the lost historic urban grain.

Use

SG-LU04: There must be a mix of uses on site.

SG-LU05: Ground Floor uses should be predominantly retail or other non-residential active uses.

Nature / public space

SG-NA01: The site must contain an element of public open space for example a small public square, play space or green space.

SG-NA02: Street trees and rain gardens must be provided along Oldbury Road and Station Street.

SG-NA03: Opportunities for tree planting along new pedestrian routes should be tested to contribute to greening the Oldbury area of the town and provide shading and cooling.

Access and movement

SG-AM01: Pedestrian routes must provide connections through the site from Chance Street to Oldbury Road and connect with the existing routes along Spring Gardens, Trinity Walk and the lane to the north of Saint Joseph's Catholic Church.

SG-AM02: Pedestrian crossing points must be included over Oldbury Road and Chance Street at the end of passageways to connect with pedestrian routes beyond the site boundary. Opportunities for raised tables should be tested.

SG-AM03: A mobility hub must be provided which would include facilities for cyclists, public transport connections and car club spaces. This must be located in an area of the sites which is easy and clear to access from Station Street.

SG-AM04: Where parking is required, it must not dominate the street scene.

SG-AM05: The key junction of Station Street and Oldbury Road should be redesigned to strengthen east/west connectivity for active travel.

SG-AM06: Opportunities to enhance the setting and connections to Holy Trinity Church should be demonstrated in proposals.

Materials

SG-AM01: Masonry brickwork must not be monotone. It must respond positively to the historic brickwork within the character area.

SG-AM02: Painted and rendered façades could be considered to break- up monotony along street scenes.

SG-AM03: Boundaries treatments should be masonry brickwork. The use of concrete post and mesh, or timber fences must be avoided.

SG-AM04: Timber cladding should be avoided.

SG-AM05: New pedestrian footpaths along historic routes should be high-quality dark coloured paving units reminiscent of the original surfacing to the passageways but able to be determined as new. Repairs to historic paved areas must be carried out in matching materials.

Sustainability

SG-SU01: All new homes to be built to Future Homes standards.

SG-SU02: SuDS will be required unless it can be demonstrated to be infeasible.

SG-SU03: The use of low-carbon district heating should be considered for all developments of 10 or more units. Where this is not feasible, alternative low carbon provision must be made.

SG-SU04: All new buildings should be solar-ready in terms of roof orientation, pitch and structural capacity.

SG-SU05: All new developments should provide convenient access to affordable EV charging and secure cycle shelters.



Existing active travel route

Key Site: Connecting Ashchurch

Connecting Ashchurch is a proposal for a strategic active travel link between Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Railway Station and Tewkesbury town centre. Along the route it passes the three key development sites allocated in TBP Policies RET1 and/or RET9: the former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food (MAFF) Site (in the east, Spring Gardens and Oldbury Car Parking the middle before terminating at Healing's Mill in the west.

In the 2021 Census, 62.3% of people aged over 16 were economically active with 34% travelling less than 10km to their place of work and 34% mainly working from home.

Of those who travelled for work, 53% travelled by car or van with only 7.7% travelling by bicycle or by foot and only 2.2% travelling by bus, minibus or coach.

Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Railway Station is located 2.3km to the east of the Tewkesbury town centre and is separated by the north-south M5. Although the journey is a 15-minute cycle ride the existing infrastructure and the need to cross a busy motorway junction currently makes this option unappealing.

Improving the active travel connection between Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Railway Station and the new developments planned to the east of Tewkesbury (the Garden Communities and the Outlet Village) to the historic town of Tewkesbury will be vital in establishing a successful and symbiotic relationship between these differing residential and economic areas. A popular and successful active travel route will contribute to a reduction in private vehicle movements which will have far reaching benefits for the people of Tewkesbury and the environment as outlined in the design principles.

The old railway line connecting Bredon Road and Shannon Way forms an existing off-road spine for cyclists and pedestrians and is safeguarded in the Tewkesbury Borough Plan. It serves as the basis for wider connections between Tewkesbury and Northway on shared-use paths and on-road cycling. However, this route is fragmented with pinch points and hostile sections. The need for an attractive Tewkesbury to Ashchurch corridor, with a safe and convenient crossing point of the M5 is reflected as a priority in the Tewkesbury Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. This will require a wide range of measures including, for example, provision of new/widened surfaces track and management of on-street parking for on-road sections. Further feasibility work should now urgently be carried out and this should involve working in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council (as the Transport Authority) to ensure consistency with active travel infrastructure being provided as part of the Mitton development.

Key Site considerations

1. Local Plan: Policy TRAC8 Old Railway Line Tewkesbury / Policy TRAC 2 Cycle Network and Infrastructure.
2. Tewkesbury Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2024 Update), Gloucestershire County Council.
3. Active travel infrastructure being required to ensure development at Mitton is sustainable.
4. Exploration of a direct connection over the M5.
5. Identification of a route through the industrial/retail area at Ashchurch.
6. Development of key sites along the routes (see Project Briefs).
7. Strategy to be set out to identify priority further work to be undertaken and delivery approach for short, medium and longer term.

Plan showing route of Connecting Ashchurch



Legend

- Key Site locations
- Route of Connecting Ashchurch (existing active travel route)
- Connections onto Connecting Ashchurch
- Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Railway Station
- Potential future active frontage
- Potential future active travel connection over the M5
- Mobility Hub / Travel interchange and connection to Garden community and Cotswolds Designer Outlet
- Mobility Hub Spring Gardens
- Railway line

Connecting Ashchurch Design Guidelines

Heritage

CA-HE01: Creative interpretation must be provided along the route to allow the history of the railway to be more accessible to more people.

CA-HE02: Any remnants of the former railway should be integrated into interpretation along the route.

Urban / built form

CA-UR01: The height of any built form along the route must be demonstrated to be appropriate for its context.

CA-UR02: Built form should be creative, high quality and respond to the historic and natural context of the route.

Nature / public space

CA-NA01: Trees with Tree Preservation Orders must be retained. Existing trees should be retained however this must be balanced with creating a safe and accessible route.

CA-NA02: Impact on the existing local wildlife site must be carefully managed.

CA-NA03: There must be opportunities at regular intervals (ideally this would be every 100m) for people to stop and rest along the route. Seating must provide a range of options including back rests and arm supports as well as space next to fixed seating for wheelchairs.

CA-NA04: Incidental spaces should be provided along the route for informal play and public art.

CA-NA05: Space must be provided within the development area for biodiversity enhancements in line with Local Plan policy NAT1.

Access and movement

CA-AM01: The active travel route should have a minimum carriageway width of 4m and should be marked out with directional arrows.

CA-AM02: There must be provision for pedestrians to travel along the route without being impeded by cyclists.

CA-AM03: Appropriate lighting must be in either bollard lighting or column lighting. It must be on each night to promote a safe route for all users. Reflectors are not acceptable.

CA-AM04: There must be pedestrian connections off the Ashchurch Connection into the local wildlife reserves which provide opportunities for circular walking routes.

CA-AM05: There must be safe and easy to use access points from the Ashchurch Connection to residential and economic areas and the wider Public Rights of Way network.

CA-AM06: Signage must be clear and easy to understand for all users including colour and written language.

CA-AM07: Cycle parking areas must be provided along the route to provide opportunities for the route to be used for leisure activities including visiting the neighbouring wildlife site.

Materials

CA-M01: Materials should respond to a palette sympathetic to the woodland setting and the historic context of the railway line.

CA-M02: Boundary treatments along the route should be masonry brickwork. The use of concrete post and mesh fences must be avoided.

CA-M03: Surfacing to the cycle and footway must be appropriate and accessible for high use by cyclists, pedestrians, people in wheelchairs and with prams / pushchairs whilst being aesthetically appropriate for the setting.

Key Site: Former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) Site

The former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (referred to as MAFF Site) is located to the eastern edge of Tewkesbury. It is north of Morrisons supermarket and accessed from Station Road. It is bounded by two old spurs of the historic railway line.

The site is identified under policy reference RET9 in Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2022).

The Site is abutted to the south by Morrison's supermarket and its associated at grade car parking. To the west it is bounded by residential development on Station Road and Cotswold Gardens. To the north and east is woodland associated with the railway edge with allotments further north. There are two Public Right of Way footpaths which follow the route of the dismantled railway and provide and off-road connection between Station Road and Tewkesbury Industrial Estate. Beyond these Public Rights of Way the site is not accessible to the public.

The Site is outside the Tewkesbury Conservation Area and there are no listed buildings, or buildings on the local heritage list on or adjacent to the Site. There are occasional remnants of the historic railway line including old sleepers and the foundations of the signal box.

The Site is wrapped by a Local Wildlife Site (Adopted Local Plan Policy NAT1: Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Important Natural Features) to its north, east and western sides.

Since the Site has become disused it has begun to be recolonised by nature and there are considerable existing trees and hedgerows on the Site. These are predominately to the perimeter of the Site but are also present within the interior.

The Site is well positioned within Tewkesbury as it is approximately 10 minutes walk to the High Street and a 10–15-minute cycle to Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Railway Station.

This site has an important role to play in creating a gateway into the historic town centre of Tewkesbury for people arriving from the east with the proposed enhancements to the Public Right of Way as part of the Ashchurch Connection.

Key Site considerations

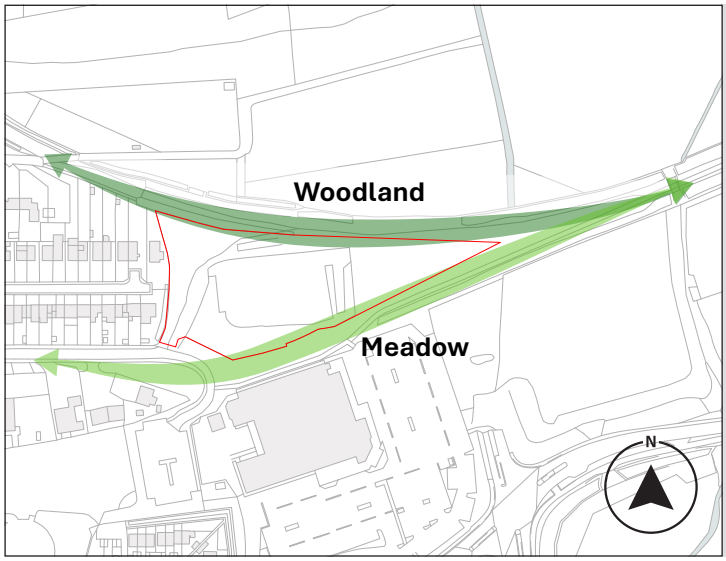
1. Proximity to the centre of Tewkesbury town centre and local services and the opportunities this presents for a low car development.
2. Proximity to the proposed Ashchurch Connection and potential for active travel connections.
3. Potential as gateway to historic town centre.
4. Potential to reveal heritage of the former railway line.
5. Scale and massing adjacent to Morrisons supermarket and residential buildings.
6. Flood risk due to being in Flood Zone 2.
7. Proximity of a Local Wildlife Site.

Plan showing Key Site considerations for the former MAFF site



Legend

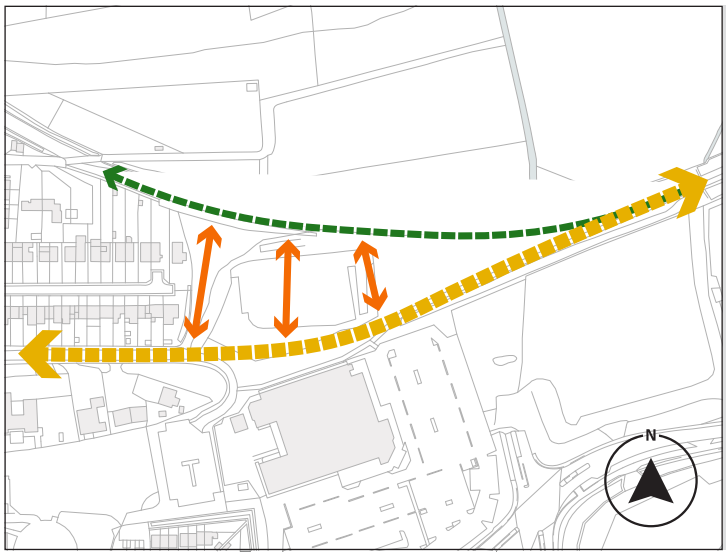
- Site boundary
- Local Wildlife Site
- Route of existing permitted footpath
- Proposed route of the Ashchurch Connection
- Opportunity for new vehicle access point
- Opportunities for permeability through the Site connecting existing routes
- Opportunity for active frontage
- Opportunity for gateway building
- Existing tree planting
- Existing Public Rights of Way and existing National Cycle Link Route



Legend

- Site boundary
- Protect the existing woodland character of the Public Right of Way to the north of the Site
- Opportunities for more open habitats such as meadow or grassland to the southern Public Right of Way

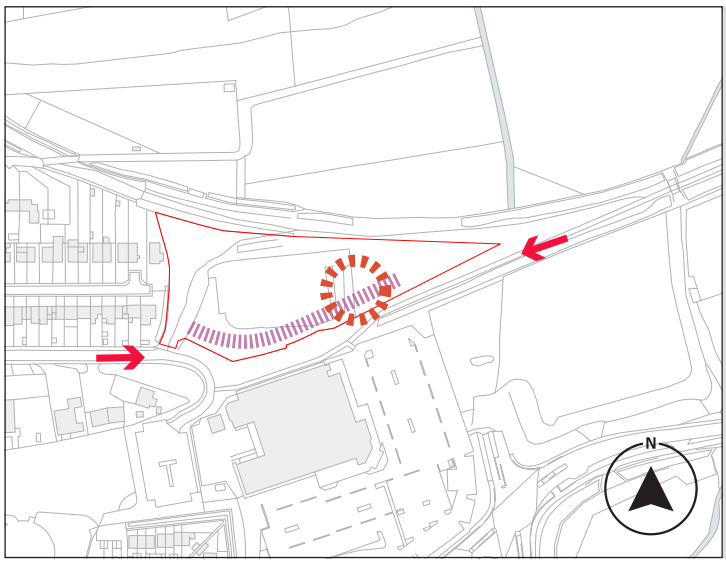
Green Infrastructure opportunities



Legend

- Existing Public Right of Way (PROW) footpath
- Opportunities to enhance National Cycle Highway Network through Ashchurch Connection
- Opportunities for pedestrian permeability through the Site to provide more north and south connections

Movement opportunities



Legend

- Key views towards the Site
- Priority areas for active frontage to provide passive surveillance over the Ashchurch Connection
- Opportunity for landmark building to create eastern gateway to Tewkesbury

Urban form opportunities

Former MAFF Site Design Guidelines

To be read in conjunction with the Connecting Ashchurch Design Guidelines [see page 69].

Heritage

MAFF-HE01: Any remnants of the former railway line should be integrated into interpretation of the historic railway along the proposed Ashchurch Connection.

Urban / built form

MAFF-UR01: Active Frontage must be provided alongside the existing southern Public Right of Way (PROW) to provide passive surveillance of the proposed Ashchurch Connection.

MAFF-UR02: There are opportunities for taller buildings on this Site to create 'the eastern gateway' to Tewkesbury. Proposals must demonstrate how height and massing is appropriate for the context.

MAFF-UR03: A high-quality building should be located at the eastern edge of the development block to contribute to this Site being the 'eastern gateway' to Tewkesbury

Nature / public space

MAFF-NA01: The qualities of the Local Wildlife Site must be retained and / or enhanced.

MAFF-NA02: The existing woodland belt that abuts the northern spur of the disused railway line must be retained and enhanced as a nature corridor.

MAFF-NA03: To support passive surveillance and visibility of the new gateway into Tewkesbury, opportunities for reducing the density of the woodland under-storey within the southwestern part of the Site should be investigated. Proposals would need to demonstrate how alternative habitats in this location would have a positive impact on the Local Wildlife Site.

MAFF-NA04: Applicants must demonstrate how any changes to the existing Local Wildlife Site will be carefully managed and full consideration given to meeting the requirements of Local Plan policies NAT1 relating to biodiversity net gain.

Access and movement

MAFF-AM01: Space must be given for the Ashchurch connection from the Site to be simple and straightforward to access from the Site for all pedestrians and cyclists.

MAFF-AM02: Development must be permeable with north to south pedestrian routes connecting the two existing Public Rights of Way (PROWS).

The route of the existing permissive path through the Site could be re-routed.

Materials

MAFF-M01: Materials should respond to the palette of materials in Tewkesbury generally but should also respond to the Woodland setting of this development as well as the requirement to be a gateway to the historic town.

MAFF-M02: Boundaries treatments should be masonry brickwork. The use of concrete post and mesh fences must be avoided.

Sustainability

MAFF-SU01: All new homes to be built to Future Homes standards.

MAFF-SU02: SuDS will be required unless it can be demonstrated to be infeasible.

MAFF-SU03: The use of low-carbon district heating should be considered for all developments of 10 or more units. Where this is no feasible, alternative low carbon provision must be made.

MAFF-SU04: All new buildings should be solar-ready in terms of roof orientation, pitch and structural capacity.

MAFF-SU05: All new developments should provide convenient access to affordable EV charging and secure cycle shelters.

Tewkesbury in context

The following provides a summary of the key moments in Tewkesbury's development. Further information is provided in the supporting Heritage Evaluation and Strategy 2024 prepared by Purcell (included in Appendix 4).

Historic context

Early history

Tewkesbury sits on a navigable waterway and prehistoric land-route between north and south-west England. Archaeological excavations have confirmed that a Romano-British settlement existed here, centred around Oldbury, east of where the medieval town centre later developed. An Anglo-Saxon settlement may have existed in the same area. The sinuous line of the south-west to north-east road follows a similar path to the present-day Church Street and Barton Street suggests this was the earliest route through the town.

Tenth to Twelfth centuries

The Benedictine Abbey was founded in 1087 and work on the Abbey commenced in 1102, possibly on the site of an earlier monastery. Built to house Benedictine monks, the Norman Abbey was near completion when consecrated in 1121. The River Avon was diverted at the behest of the Benedictine Monks and the monastery was granted two mills, one of these was on the site of the present-day Abbey Mill and the other is believed to have been on Swilgate.

Medieval

During the medieval period, Oldbury field which was agricultural land to the east of High Street, was divided into burgage plots and gifted to burgesses. By 1327 there were 114 burgage plots within the town centre. These were located along Church Street, High Street and Barton Street.

Industrial Revolution

Major industries in eighteenth-century Tewkesbury included cloth manufacturing, stocking knitting, nail making, malting, leather production and corn trading. Increasing trade saw an increase in road traffic. This was reflected in the increased number of inns within the town.

In the early 19th century following an 'Act of Inclosure' houses were rapidly constructed on newly enclosed land to the east of Oldbury Road.

The river network remained the principal transportation method for industry until, in 1840, the first railway came to Tewkesbury. This was a branch line that terminated at Healing's Mill with a station for the general public located on the High Street.

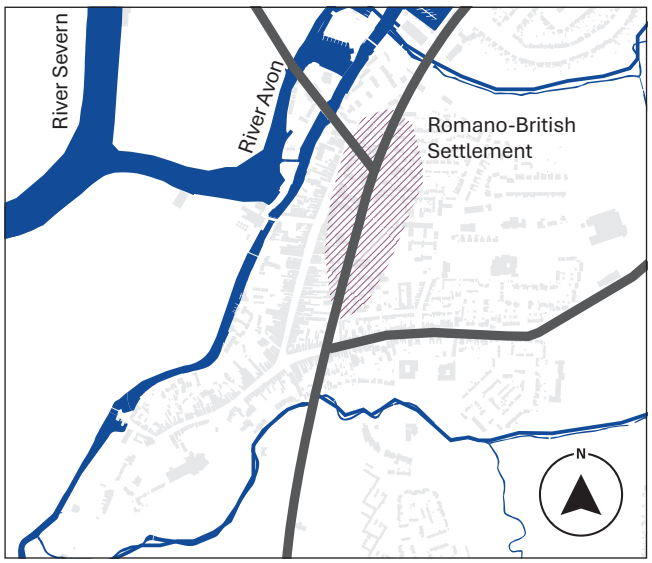
Twentieth century

The 20th century saw major change. Roads became the dominant transportation method and in the late 1960s the north-south M5 was constructed. With this, the use of the waterways and railways for transportation declined and industrial uses along the Back of Avon became residential.

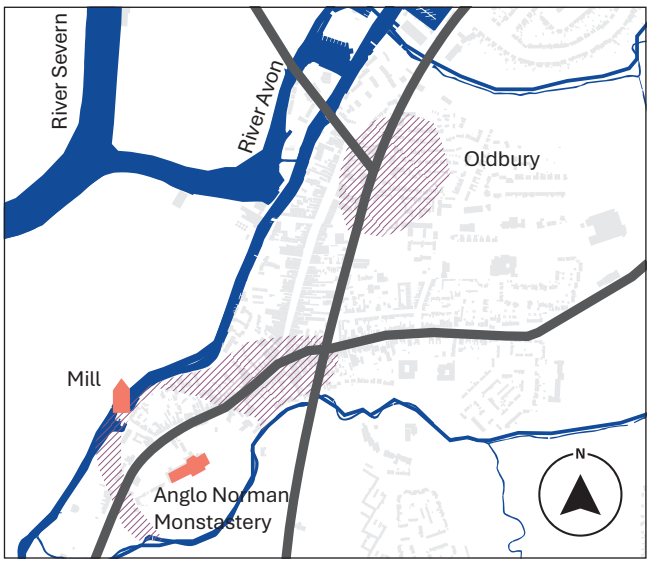
The railway station at Ashchurch became the only railway station serving Tewkesbury, and the branch lines became disused. New housing and development meant the town grew east and northwards with the rivers and Ham acting as a boundary to the west.

Twenty-first century

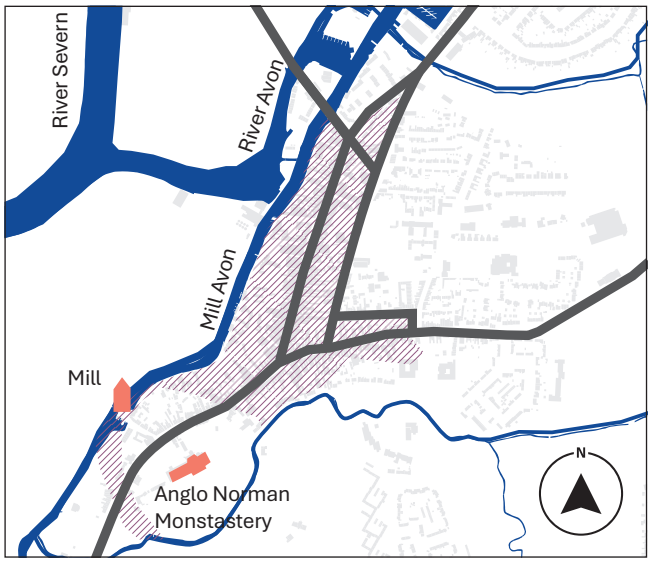
The twenty-first century sees new challenges and opportunities for Tewkesbury including the emerging garden communities west of the M5 and the new outlet village in Ashchurch.



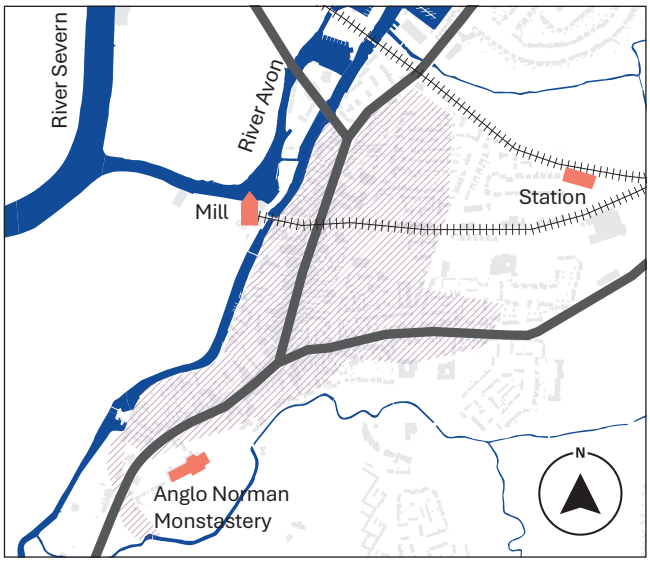
Early historic development



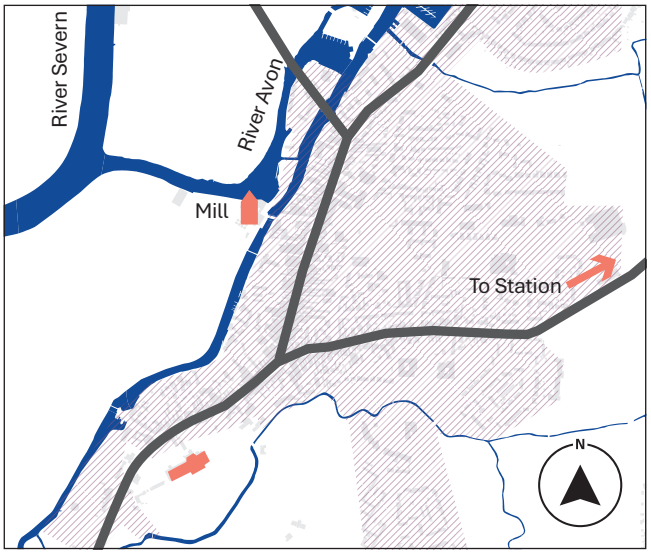
Tenth to Twelfth century development



Medieval development



Industrial revolution development



Twentieth century development

Environmental context

Water

Tewkesbury has a strong connection to water with two major rivers, the Avon and the Severn, converging immediately to the west of the town and several brooks and streams flowing through the open spaces to the east and south. This gives Tewkesbury a unique landscape. There is a strong sense of identity associated with flood water in the town, with the Ham appearing like a lake when water levels are high.

Tewkesbury Borough occupies a low-lying area of the Lower Severn catchment. Nearly the entire area drains into the River Severn, with the exception of small portions of the Windrush and Coln catchments in the east of the Borough which drain into the River Thames. While the small catchments contribute to flooding, especially in the event of ill-timed localised storms, it is the large River Severn and Avon catchments which have the major influence on flood risk in the Borough. The effects of climate change mean that at-risk areas are likely to flood more frequently and to a greater depth and extent. The lack of gradient, however, means that the velocity of flood water is not likely to increase significantly.

Flooding is a natural process which shapes the natural environment, but also threatens life and can cause substantial distress and damage to property. The effects of weather events may be more severe as a result of past decisions about the location, design and nature of development and as a consequence of climate change. While flooding cannot be prevented, its impacts can be avoided and reduced through good planning and management.

The Rivers Severn and Avon, at the point of entry into Tewkesbury Borough, derive from large catchments (around 6,980 km and 2,710 km respectively) and consequently these rivers are subject to a great variability in flow rate. Since the topography of the Borough is relatively flat and the underlying bedrock largely impermeable, there is a substantial risk of these rivers coming out of bank and flooding local areas during periods of high flows. This is evident from past and recent flooding episodes and the fact that a significant area, both around the town of Tewkesbury itself and to the south-west of the town, falls within Flood Zone 3. The confluence of these two rivers near the town poses the greatest flood risk within the Borough, both in terms of the probability of occurrence and the resulting consequences.

Nature

The Severn Ham is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as classified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). It is one of the most significant parts of the natural environment within Tewkesbury and is a place for wildlife as well as a recreational area for people for leisure activities such as walking, running, dog walking and simply experiencing the natural environment. It is also a fundamental part of the flood plain for the River Severn and River Avon and is classified as Common Land for grazing animals.

The Abbey Grounds, the Vineyards, Victoria Gardens and other small green spaces contribute to the locally important open spaces within Tewkesbury.

The former railway line along the northern edge of the town centre has been reclaimed by nature and is now the Tewkesbury Disused Railway Line Local Wildlife Site. To the east of the town centre and south of Ashchurch Road is Tewkesbury Nature Reserve. This provides forty hectares of flood meadows and pasture.

Economic context

Tewkesbury Borough was recognised as ‘the strongest local economy in the UK’ (Raisin UK Report, April 2021) and one of the best places for local businesses to recover following the pandemic.

Tewkesbury Borough recorded a population of 94,900 at the 2021 Census which is an increase of 15.8% over the previous ten years. The population is expected to increase by 30.8% by 2043 which would make it the second largest council area in the UK.

The town is the largest retail centre in the borough and is located at the confluence

of the Rivers Severn and Avon. An historic market town, Tewkesbury contains a range of both independent and national retailers and services, and a number of local facilities including, a library, theatre and town hall.

The town centre retains an historic character with the retail area focused on the High Street together with the northern section of Church Street and the western extent of Barton Street.

The current retail composition of town centre occupiers is provided by Goad category data and is set out in Appendix 2.

As shown in the tables, the town centre has a higher proportion of Comparison Retail units that the UK average but slightly lower convenience representation than nationally.

Retail Service and leisure service outlets are broadly comparable with the national average and Finance and Business service units in Tewkesbury are higher than average. The GOAD 2024 report states a retail unit vacancy rate in Tewkesbury of 12.14%, this is below the national rate of 14.46%.

A robust set of evidence in relation to retailing and wider characteristics of the main town centres in Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury is currently being updated to inform the SLP. This intelligence also assists in informing the Tewkesbury Town Centre Masterplan.

The evidence is being prepared on a two-part basis and can be accessed on the SLP web pages here: https://strategiclocalplan.org

Part 1 of the Study was published in October 2025. This includes a review of the background to retail, commercial, leisure and town centre uses, including recent trends and market sector characteristics. It also includes a 'health check' of each of the town centres and provides data on current spending patterns across the SLP area. Part 2 of the Study will follow in 2026 and will provide evidence on the projected need for additional retail floorspace, together with advice on where that should most appropriately be provided to inform planning policies.

The evidence in Part 1 shows a continuation in the prevalence of online shopping. Whilst retail sales are expected to grow by around 15% up to 2032, the amount of growth available to traditional 'bricks and mortar' retailers is expected to be closer to 10%. When looking by sector, comparison goods expenditure per head is forecast to grow by 2.6%, whilst convenience goods spending per head is expected to decline.

Against this backdrop, there has been a reduction in physical shopping floorspace across the UK, with the rate of decline fastest in town centre locations.

As a smaller town centre, Tewkesbury has a comparatively limited catchment area and relatively modest market share for both convenience and comparison good shopping.

Nevertheless, given its small and independent shop character, the town centre has shown a degree of resilience to the wider market headwinds. The updated evidence shows that there has not been a significant reduction in the proportion of comparison goods retailers over the last 5 years, and only modest changes have occurred in the convenience and service sectors. In addition, the number of vacant units has fallen. Such trends reinforce the importance of preserving and enhancing the town centre's character and vitality.

The wider Tewkesbury/Ashchurch area is, however, undergoing rapid change with the opening of the Dobbies garden centre in 2022 and, more recently, the Cotswold Designer Outlet to the east of J9 (M5).

This new retail floorspace, coupled with rapid population increase associated with the Tewkesbury Garden Communities, brings both opportunities and threats to the Town centre. It will be important to ensure that growth at Ashchurch functions in a complementary way to the town centre. Preliminary evidence suggests the garden centre and Designer Outlet at Ashchurch draw trade from an area well beyond the established catchment area of the town. Every effort should be made to encourage such visitors to also choose to visit the town centre to enjoy local shops, leisure, hospitality, tourist, heritage and cultural services.

Bearing also in mind the strong housing and population growth planned for the Ashchurch Garden Communities, it will be imperative to secure safe and attractive multi-modal connectivity between the town centre and homes, shops and the railway station at Ashchurch, to ensure a successful symbiotic relationship. This forms a fundamental objective of the Masterplan and is reflected in the commitment to provide an active travel route as set out in the 'Big Moves' Masterplan Framework section below.

The Heritage Evaluation and Strategy prepared by Purcell notes that 'a recent economic study commissioned by Historic England identified that England's heritage sector contributed £45.1 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) to the UK Economy in 2021, and employed over 538,000 workers.

In 2010, analysis of economic activity across a range of towns in England found that areas with strong historic character attracted independent businesses, especially in the leisure, retail, cultural and hospitality industries. Further research subsequently demonstrated that businesses operating in historic buildings benefited from a 'heritage premium' of 4.4% GVA above the average business in the UK and 26% of all creative industries in the South West of England are based in conservation areas.

Tewkesbury is in a strong position to benefit from the number and variety of heritage assets in the town centre.

Tewkesbury town centre plays an important role in supporting the economic prosperity and resilience of the wider area. The Council's Economic Development and Tourism Strategy identifies key aims to work with local town centres and retail sector businesses to help them grow and develop locally led plans.

This includes key aims of: supporting the regeneration of retail centres across the borough, including key development sites and explore a more diverse range of uses, and the development of local business growth hubs, within retail centres.

Heritage context

Tewkesbury's heritage assets are typically located along High Street, Barton Street and Church Street. The majority of these are Grade II listed buildings with a number of Grade II* buildings interspersed. The Abbey and a selection of associated buildings have the highest designation at Grade I and are clustered at the southwestern end of Church Street.

Tewkesbury has a number of other heritage assets which have been granted listed building protection including walls, monuments within the Abbey grounds and the raised pavement opposite the Abbey Mill.

The majority of the town centre is included in Tewkesbury Conservation Area, one of the oldest to be designated in the UK. Areas not included in the Conservation Area include 20th century development to the east of Oldbury Road.

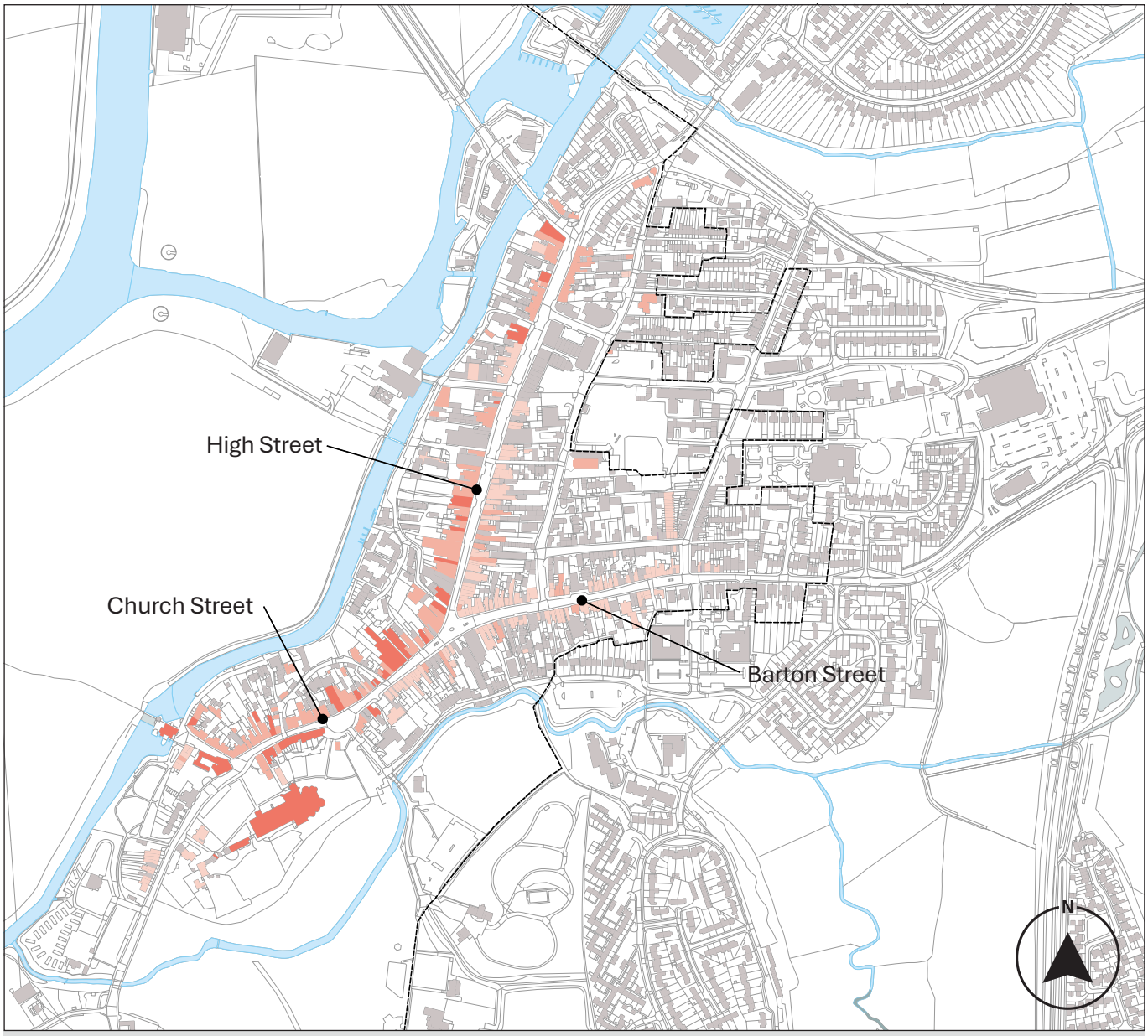


Tewkesbury Abbey is an example of one of the Grade I listed buildings in the town



View looking north east along Church Street showing the diverse mix of historic buildings in Tewkesbury

Heritage Assets Plan



Legend

- Grade I Listed Buildings
- Grade II* Listed Buildings
- Grade II Listed Buildings
- Other buildings
- Watercourse and rivers
- Tewkesbury Conservation Area Boundary

Movement and Street hierarchy context

The principal vehicular movement through Tewkesbury is along the two A-roads. The A38 travels north-south along the High Street and Church Street and connects Junction 1 of the M50 to Gloucester. The A438 travels east/west along Barton Street and Barton Road connecting with Junction 9 of the M5 and Ashchurch and the railway station. The A438 joins the historic A38 at the Cross.

The secondary vehicular movement is along through roads that run to the east of, and parallel to, the High Street north of Barton Street (principally Oldbury Road and Chance Street).

Other vehicular routes through Tewkesbury typically provide access to properties, businesses and car parks such as St Mary's Lane Car Park and Rails Meadow, and Vineyards car parks. Other routes such as access to Back of Avon are dead-ends and provide access only.

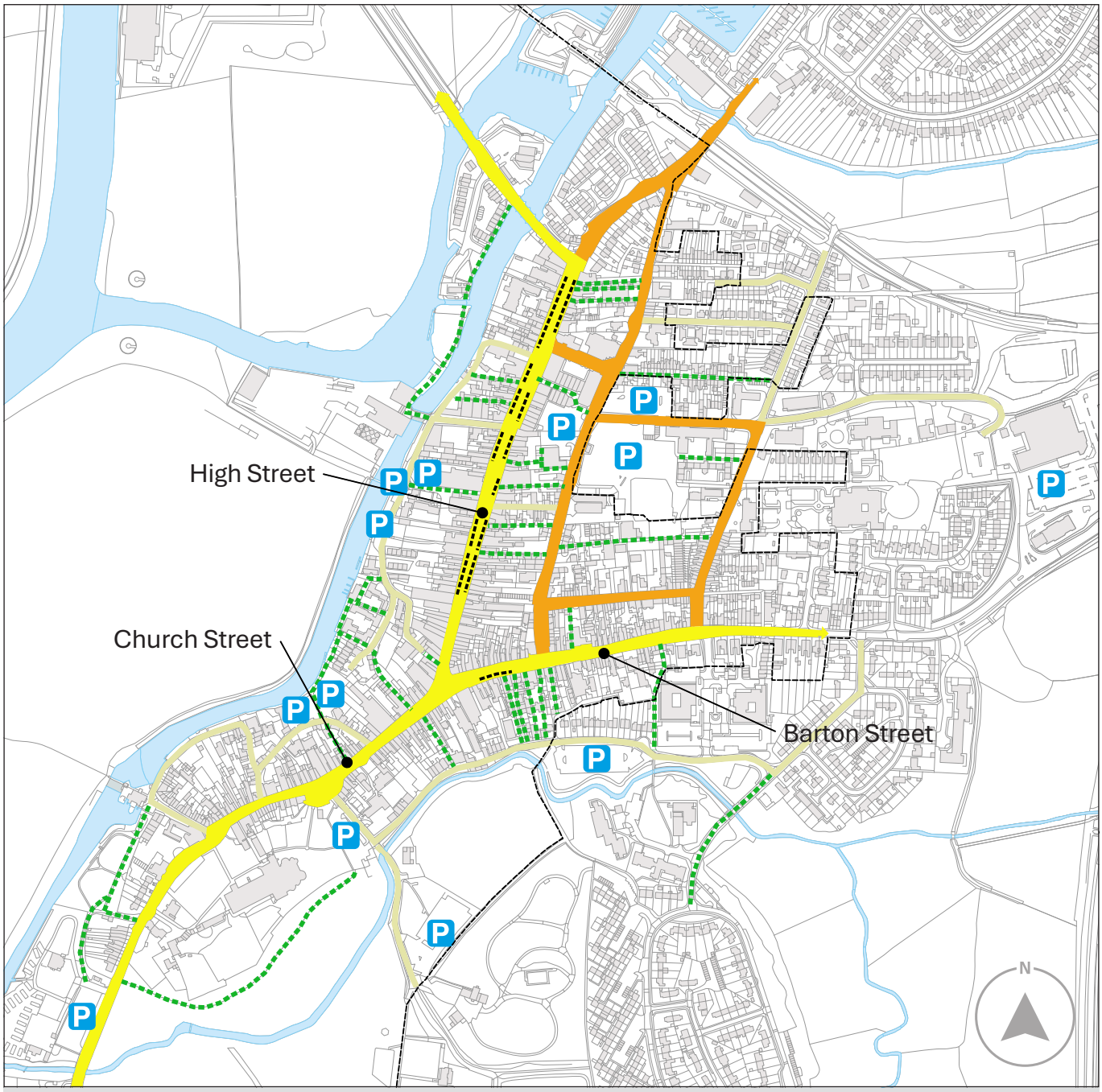
The majority of town centre car parking is within 5 to 10 minutes walk of the High Street. The furthest car park from the town centre is at Tewkesbury leisure centre, a 12-minute walk from The Cross.

Pedestrian movement follows the principal vehicular routes north-south along High Street, Church Street and Barton Street. In addition, the historic alleyways provide pedestrian only, east/west access routes from Back of Avon, Oldbury Road and Swilgate Road to the principal streets.



Oldbury Road car park, east of the High Street which is one of the main town centre parking spaces

Movement and Street Hierarchy Plan



Legend

- Principal roads
- Secondary roads
- Tertiary roads
- Watercourse and rivers
- Car parks
- On-street parking
- Other buildings
- Pedestrian only routes

Blue Green areas

Tewkesbury is a town enclosed by watercourses and green spaces but with relatively small amounts of open space within its town centre.

The River Avon and River Severn flow from north to south with the Mill Avon bounding the edge of the town to the west. The proximity of the rivers and the Severn Ham mean it is just a couple of minutes to walk from the busy town centre to an area of nature.

The green spaces surrounding Tewkesbury are well served by a mix of Public Rights of Way (PROWs) and permissive paths. These create a network of looped walks through the countryside.

The Severn Ham is located to the west of Tewkesbury is an island between the River Severn and River Avon.

The Severn Ham meaning 'meadow in the bend of a river, water meadow, or flood plain', is a traditionally managed large water meadow that is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); Registered Common Land and is within the Tewkesbury Conservation Area.

The Ham and the surrounding rural landscape along the watercourses are key components of flood risk management. They provide floodplain storage and are essential in reducing the amount of times the water level reaches developed areas of the town in a flood event. The intermittent flooding of the Ham supports a rich biodiversity and attracts different species of birds.

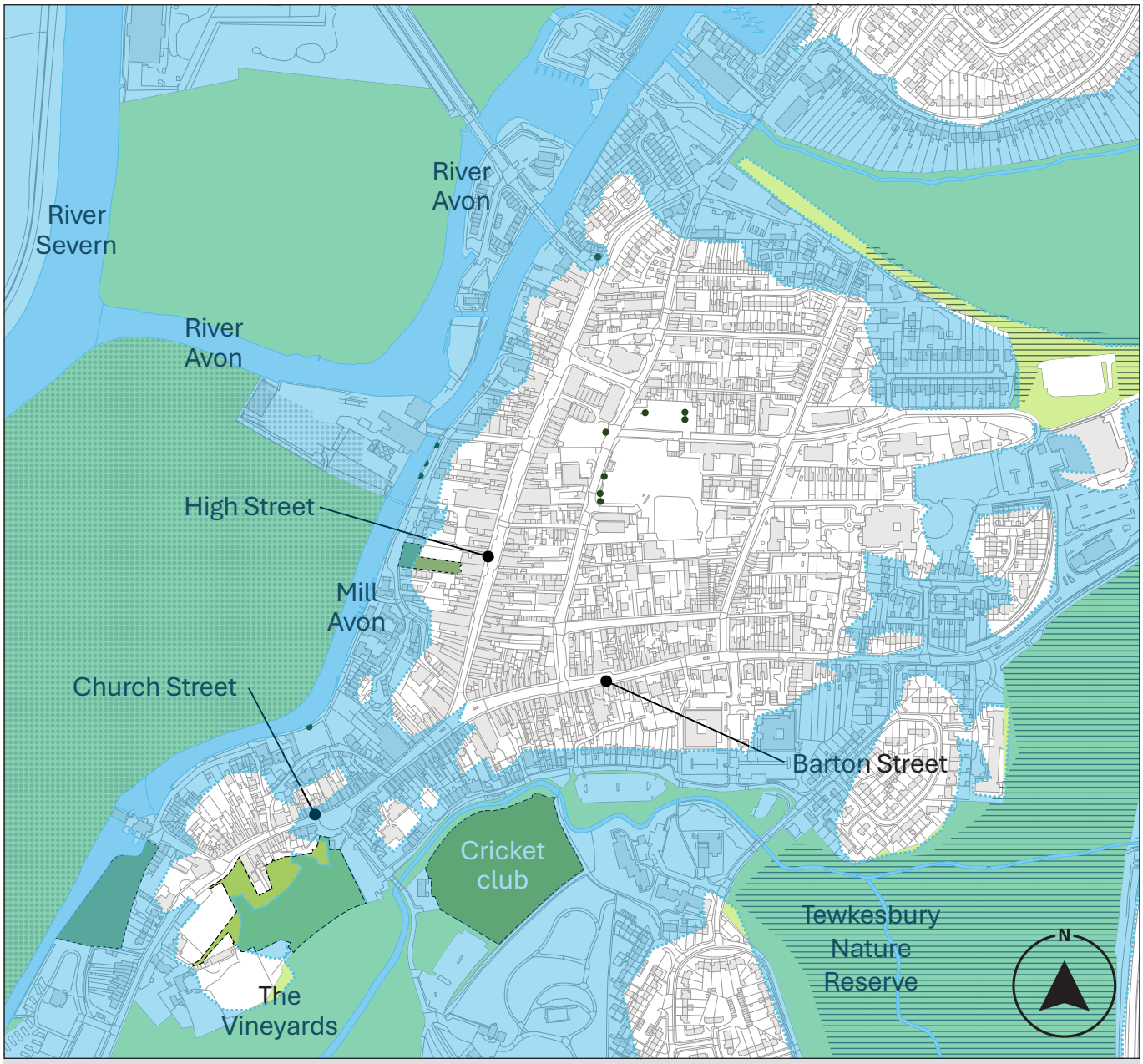
The Ham is approximately 70 hectares (175.0 acres) and is close to the town centre. It is accessed by Public Rights of Way over the Mill Avon (canalised part of the river) at Abbey Mill and Healing's Mill. In the northern part of the Ham there is a network of Public Rights of Way which connect to a 1km walking loop around the edge of the Ham. Access to the Ham for recreation is popular with the local community and visitors. Access is limited when the rivers are in flood which reduces the ability to use outdoor green space in Tewkesbury during these times.

The Severn Ham Committee manage the Ham. In 2022 a Vision and Implementation Plan (VIP) was created. This set out a number of recommendations for the Ham which are being implemented.



Victoria Gardens alongside the River Avon

Blue Green Infrastructure Plan



Legend

- Tewkesbury Abbey grounds
- Severn Ham Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Public access parks and gardens
- Local wildlife site
- Sports facilities
- Watercourses
- Street trees
- Other public access green space
- Other buildings
- Flood zone 3A

Town centre use and public realm

The principal streets, High Street, Church Street and Barton Street are where the majority of active frontage occurs. This would have historically been the case in Tewkesbury where there was not a market or town square. Active frontage is reasonably continuous along the High Street and becomes more intermittent along Church Street and Barton Street moving away from The Cross.

The majority of uses at ground floor where there is active frontage are shops, cafés, restaurants and occasional businesses. Uses such as cultural, religious and historic public houses are interspersed. Religious buildings are set back from the principal streets within their own grounds or in the less historic built areas of the town.

Public realm is typically along the carriageways. Along the High Street there are pockets where the carriageway narrows and has been populated with benches, planters, and cycle parking. These areas are located to the northern side of the High Street where the overall street width is greater, but at the southern end pavements are narrow, restricting pedestrian movement.

On Church Street, the public realm is composed of narrow footpaths either side of the carriageway. There is a limited amount of seating around the bus stop at the junction between Gander Lane and Church Street. There is a small area of seating and sculpture outside the National School.

Along the river edge between Wharf House and Quay Street there is an area of seating and planters looking out onto the Avon and Severn Ham beyond.

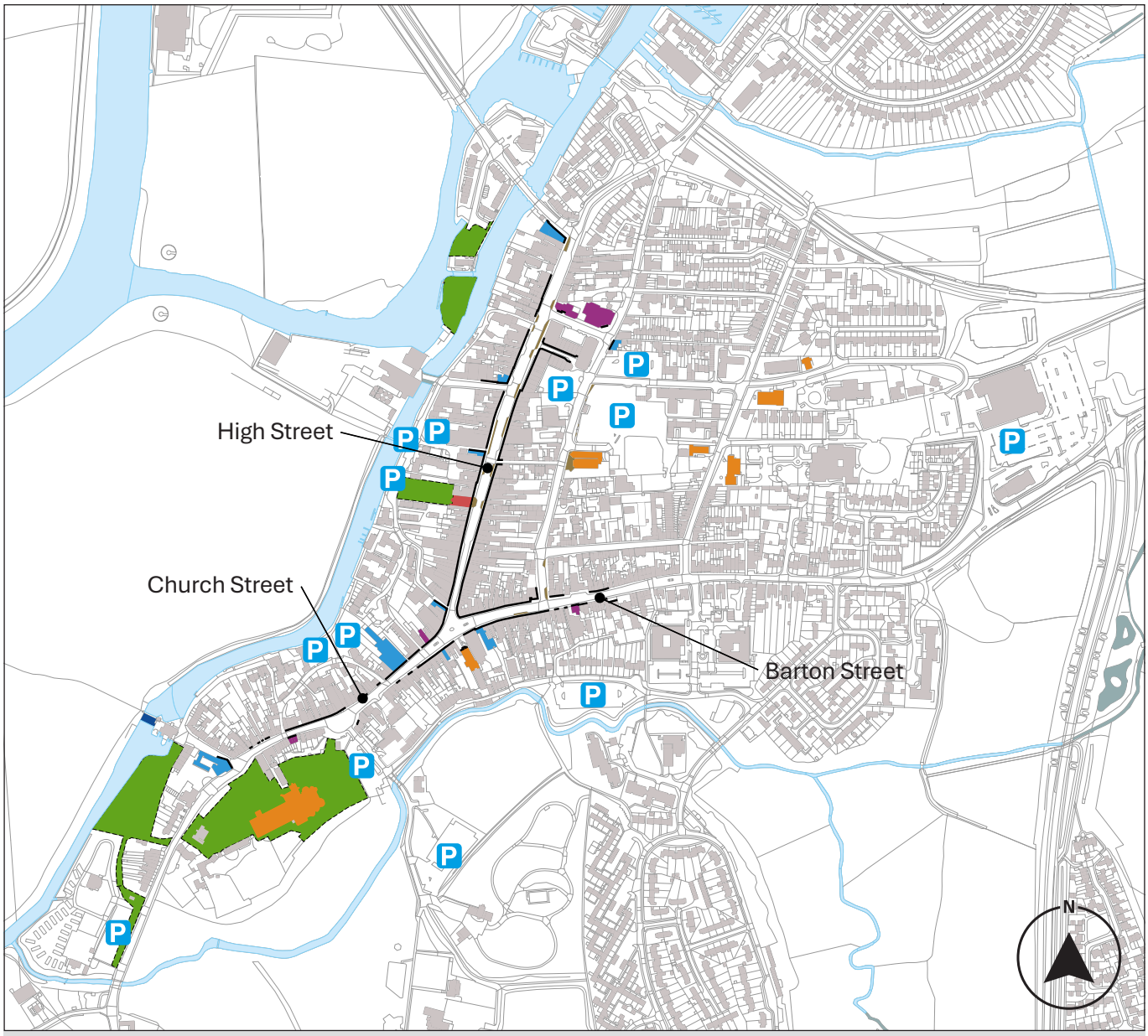
There are managed green spaces set back from the principal streets including Victoria Gardens, the Town Hall Gardens and the Abbey Grounds.

Tewkesbury does not have a market square or town square and instead Spring Gardens car park is used as an outdoor event space for the bi-weekly market. The annual Mop Fair is also held on Spring Gardens car park as well as closing Oldbury Road and Barton Street.



Active frontage along Church Street at the junction with the High Street and Barton Street

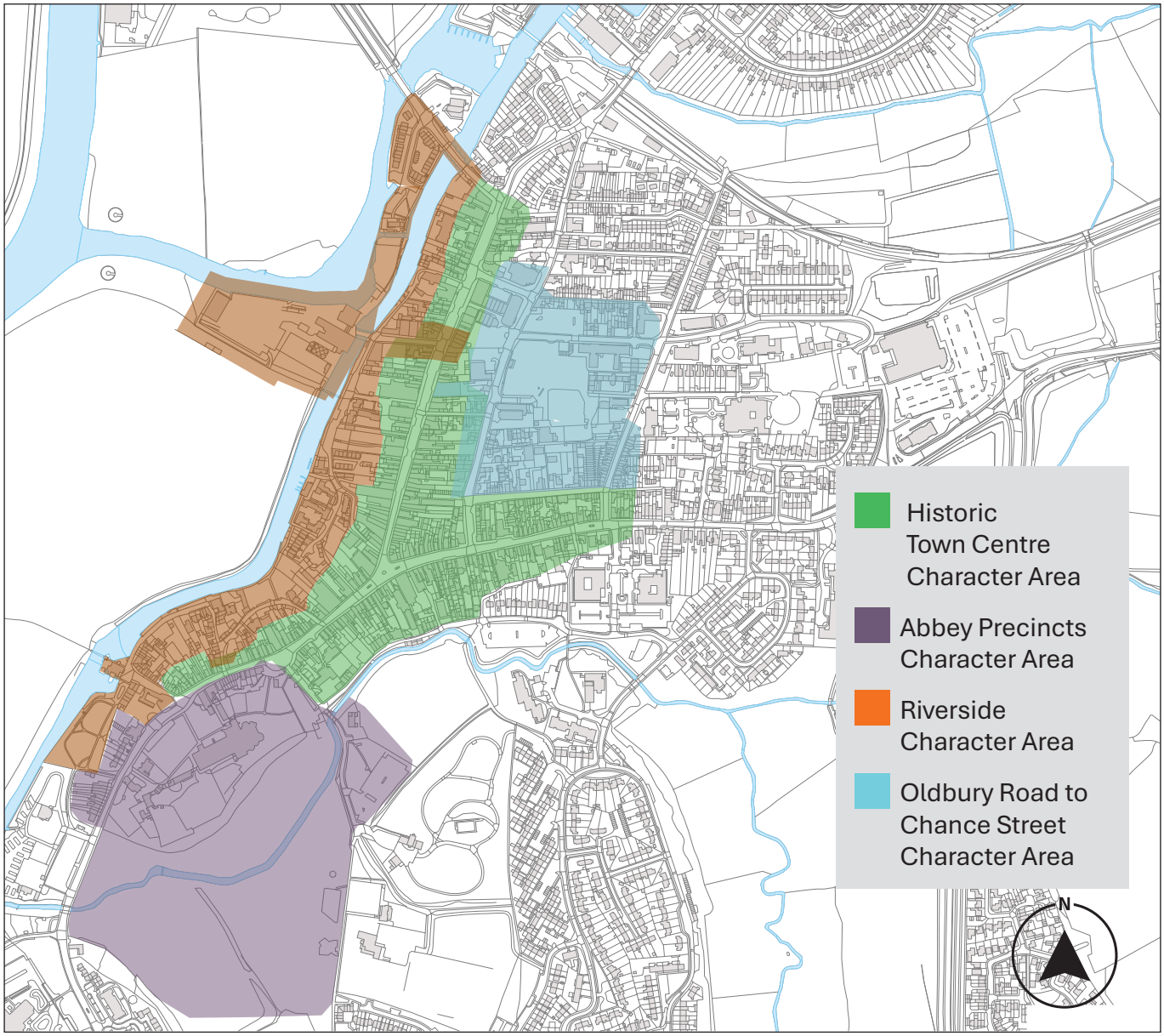
Town Centre Uses Plan



Legend

- Places of worship (all denominations)
- Public house
- Civic building
- Cultural building
- Public access parks and gardens
- Active frontage
- Watercourse and rivers
- Car parks
- Other buildings

Tewkesbury Character Areas



Appendices

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Appendix 1
Delivery Plan

Delivery Plan: Movement and Transport

Ref	Project Name	Summary	Actions	Priority
1	Town centre traffic management and pedestrian priority enhancements.	Carry out feasibility and evidence base for the implementation of travel and movement within and around the town centre.	Convene a multi-agency working group comprising officers from Gloucestershire County Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Tewkesbury Town Council (with specialist input from others as required) to oversee the commissioning of evidence base and feasibility work and agree a programme of funding and delivery for traffic, sustainable transport and pedestrian movement projects in and around the town centre. Priority projects include: • Introducing traffic management improvements and a potential one-way system on A38 High Street and Oldbury Road. • Design and quality of mini roundabouts and junction capacity improvements works associated with Mitton development, including Sun Street, Quay Street and High Street/Barton Street and Nelson Street/Barton Street junctions. • Role, location and design of Mobility Hub in Tewkesbury town centre. • Tewkesbury town centre to Ashchurch active travel route. • Car, coach and cycle parking need and supply assessment (off-street and on-street). • Pedestrian routes' audit to achieve pedestrian desire lines and enhance experience. • Back of Avon green space and removal of existing car parking. • Re-modelling Gloucester Road/Mill Street (the Bell junction) to offer a more pedestrian-friendly crossing.	High

Ref	Project Name	Summary	Actions	Priority
			• Road layout changes at the Abbey Crescent to reclaim road space for pedestrians and enhance the Abbey environs. • Undertake audit to identify barriers to pedestrian movement. • Undertake audit to document town centre clutter (signage, posts, fences, bollards, seating, bins, cables, plant and utility cabinets, paving materials etc.) and identify options for rationalisation. • Informed by the streets audit, prepare a Streets Design Guide setting out principles for ensuring development and other changes within Tewkesbury are consistent with and appropriate to its heritage significance. • Other projects relating to public realm improvements.	

Delivery Plan: Built Environment and Identity

Ref	Project Name	Summary	Actions	Priority
2	Alleyway Improvements.	Celebrate the alleyway routes across the town centre, with regular maintenance and clear historic interpretation and signage.	Establish small steering group to: • Identify issues and opportunities for small scale improvements. • Look at alternative models of delivery including volunteers, adoption and so forth. • Agree a set of simple design principles around materials, signage and so forth. • Deliver small scale improvements.	Medium
3	Introduction of new green spaces along the river's edge.	Creating a series of enhanced green parks and spaces along the river's edge, supporting the ongoing development of the Riverside Walk.	Review (in conjunction with movement and transport actions), update and publish riverside strategy, to include creation of an outline brief and design concept for each area, consistent with the Tewkesbury Streets Design Guide.	Medium
4	Town Hall and American Memorial Gardens and link to Back of Avon	Re-design the gardens and Back of Avon to create an attractive and accessible public open space.	Work with the Town Council to identify stakeholders and explore opportunities for change within the space: • Explore the opportunities to use the space for events, leisure, entertainment and so forth, with due appreciation of nearby residents' needs for access, peace and quiet and delivery access to the Town Hall.	High

Ref	Project Name	Summary	Actions	Priority
			• Engage landlords of former Lloyds Bank in discussion about adding their garden to the plan. • Develop a concept brief for the space in line with Tewkesbury Streets design guide. • Identify sources of funding.	
5	Mill Street / St. Mary's Road.	Public realm improvements to improve the pedestrian experience and enhance the setting of the historic buildings in an iconic view of the town from the Severn Ham.	Vehicular access to properties required, but review: • Road surface and attractiveness. • Opportunity for artwork, access to water, access to Ham, renovation to walls at Abbey Mill and beside moorings and creation of more attractive public space in front of flats. • Create outline concept and plan for incremental enhancement. • Deliver project.	Low
6	Abbey setting	Minor improvements to the setting of the Abbey to maintain and enhance accessibility and visibility.	Work with the Abbey and the Abbey Lawn Trust to: • Update the arboricultural study of trees, their heritage and townscape value, health, management and so forth. • Assess condition of pathways, boundary treatments, risks and opportunities to improve accessibility across the site. • Identify any opportunities for change to improve visitor experience. • Develop concept brief. • Identify funding. • Deliver project.	Medium

Ref	Project Name	Summary	Actions	Priority
7	Water Gardens and Gloucester Road Car Park.	Improvements to the entrance to Tewkesbury to enhance the sense of arrival.	Identify ownership and opportunities for changes to: • Reconfigure the space to create a sense of arrival and better links between the garden and the car park green spaces. • Enhance the maintenance and management regime. • Consider scope for Battle of Tewkesbury interpretation. • Develop concept brief. • Identify funding. • Deliver project.	Low

Delivery Plan: Key Development Sites

Ref	Project Name	Summary	Actions	Priority
8	Healing's Mill and Quay Street.	Redevelopment of the Mill Site including restoration of historic buildings.	• Pre application design review panel to review emerging proposals and develop vision for the site that aligns with the wider Masterplan. • Ongoing engagement with owners to bring forward a plan that works for the community and the developer in line with the principles outlined in this Masterplan. • Explore opportunities for the way Tewkesbury Borough Council can be actively involved in the redevelopment. • Commission feasibility study to explore viable uses of the site in addition to residential with commercial at ground floor, especially to bring benefit to the Tewkesbury community. • Consider hosting a design competition to deliver an exceptional heritage-led scheme for the site to create a new focal point for the town. • Explore opportunities for meanwhile uses on or near the site, to build awareness of the issues and challenges in bringing the site forward.	High

Ref	Project Name	Summary	Actions	Priority
9	Spring Gardens.	Re-development of this key town centre site to provide a mixed-use scheme including new homes, public open space and play space in the heart of Tewkesbury.	• Clarify site ownerships, boundaries and contact potential partners beyond the immediate site to support delivery of a potential wider regeneration area. • Establish steering group to develop outline brief for the site and surrounding areas • Commission refined feasibility study of core and wider site regeneration to include viable uses, design style, active frontages, opportunities for green infrastructure, water management, a sense of arrival so that Oldbury Road is seen as part of the town centre, potential delivery partners, funding etc. • In line with Movement and Transport actions, incorporate mobility hub and connection to Ashchurch active travel link and assess need for retention of car parking.	High
10	Former Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) Site.	Re-development of this edge-of-centre site to provide a mixed-use scheme including new homes and public open space at a key gateway to Tewkesbury town centre.	• Clarify site boundaries, ownerships etc. to support redevelopment of the site. • Commission a feasibility study into site regeneration to include possible uses, design style, boundary treatment. • In line with Movement and Transport actions, incorporate measures to provide Ashchurch active travel link.	High

Delivery Plan: Heritage and Tourism

Ref	Project Name	Summary	Actions	Priority
11	Design Quality.	Continue to ensure new design is of the highest quality.	• Review process for major schemes and/or those on highly sensitive sites. • Use the Design Guidelines during preapplication process and as part of decision-making evidence base. • Use the Streets Design Guide to inform changes to the public realm which affect the setting of historic buildings.	High
12	Tewksbury's significance.	Understanding of the special significance of the town's heritage.	• Review and update the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) for Tewkesbury's Conservation Area and ensure the updated document is easy to use and gives clear guidance on significance and appropriate management of change. • Review the existing Article 4 Direction. • Consolidate guidance on the maintenance, conversion and retrofit of historic buildings. • Ensure that all planners are fully trained in heritage and conservation issues, in particular the significance of the town centre's historic built environment.	High
13	Building Conservation.	Focussed intervention for town centre buildings in need of architectural reinstatement or enhancement.	• Proactively engage with building owners and tenants to ensure that Tewkesbury's listed buildings are appropriately and well cared for and changes to the fabric are well considered and in keeping with the ambience of the historic environment. • Consider options for renovating and repurposing buildings most at risk using Local Authority powers under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the High Street Rental Auctions legislation under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.	Medium

Ref	Project Name	Summary	Actions	Priority
14	Heritage Tourism.	Increase awareness of Tewkesbury's heritage and develop tourism to create a more sustainable economy for the town.	Develop a tourism and marketing strategy to: • Continue to promote interest in Tewkesbury's special historic significance across the wider region, nationally and internationally. • Continue to attract visitors to visit, stay and explore the town, its history and culture. • Continue to review, add or enhance historic interpretation of the town's built environment and history. • Work with highways teams to ensure that the brown tourist signs for Tewkesbury are well- located, informative and well-maintained. • Work with Network Rail to enhance the arrival experience at Ashchurch for Tewkesbury railway station.	High
15	Heritage 'Know-it-alls'.	Work with the local community to enhance understanding of heritage.	Devise campaigns locally to: • Engage the younger generations in the understanding of and care for the town's heritage and history. • Increase awareness of occupiers to care for the historic buildings they own or live in by running PR campaigns, updating and disseminating guidance, providing hands-on experiences to learn about caring for heritage.	High

Delivery Plan: Blue Green Environment

Ref	Project Name	Summary	Actions	Priority
16	Town centre flood mitigation.	Planning for reduced flood risk in Tewkesbury town centre	• Ensure a long-term plan to reduce river flooding in Tewkesbury forms part of evidence base work for the Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan. • Work with partners at Gloucester County Council, the Environment Agency, Severn Trent, Tewkesbury Town Council, developers and others to devise a strategy for implementation and ensure it is delivered in a timely way.	High
17	Sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS).	Review opportunities for the inclusion of new SuDS schemes and green roofs.	• Identify locations through new development and more generally in Tewkesbury town centre to locate new SuDS schemes or interventions such as green roofs and living walls in a manner in keeping with the heritage of the town centre.	High

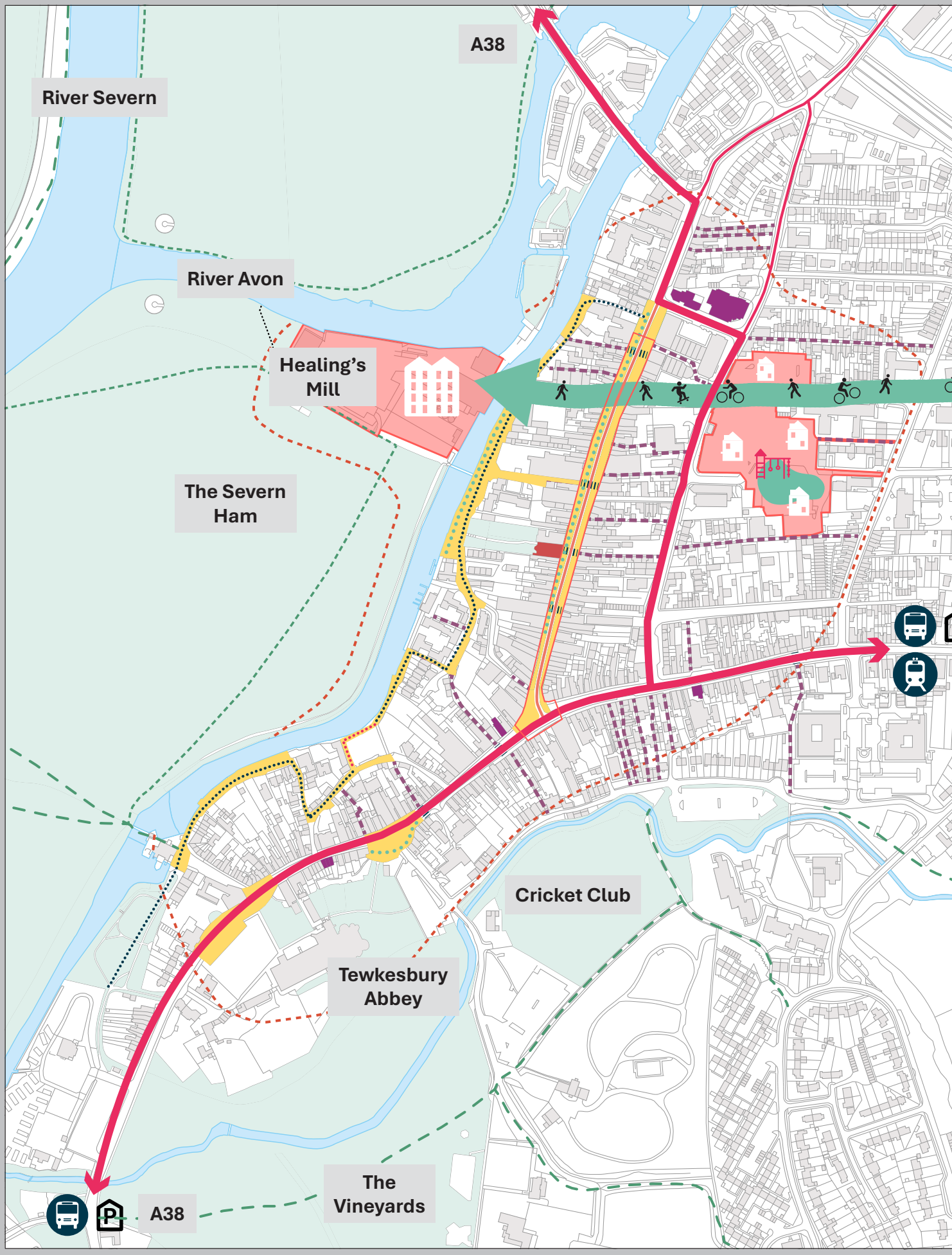
Appendix 2
Retail Composition by Outlets

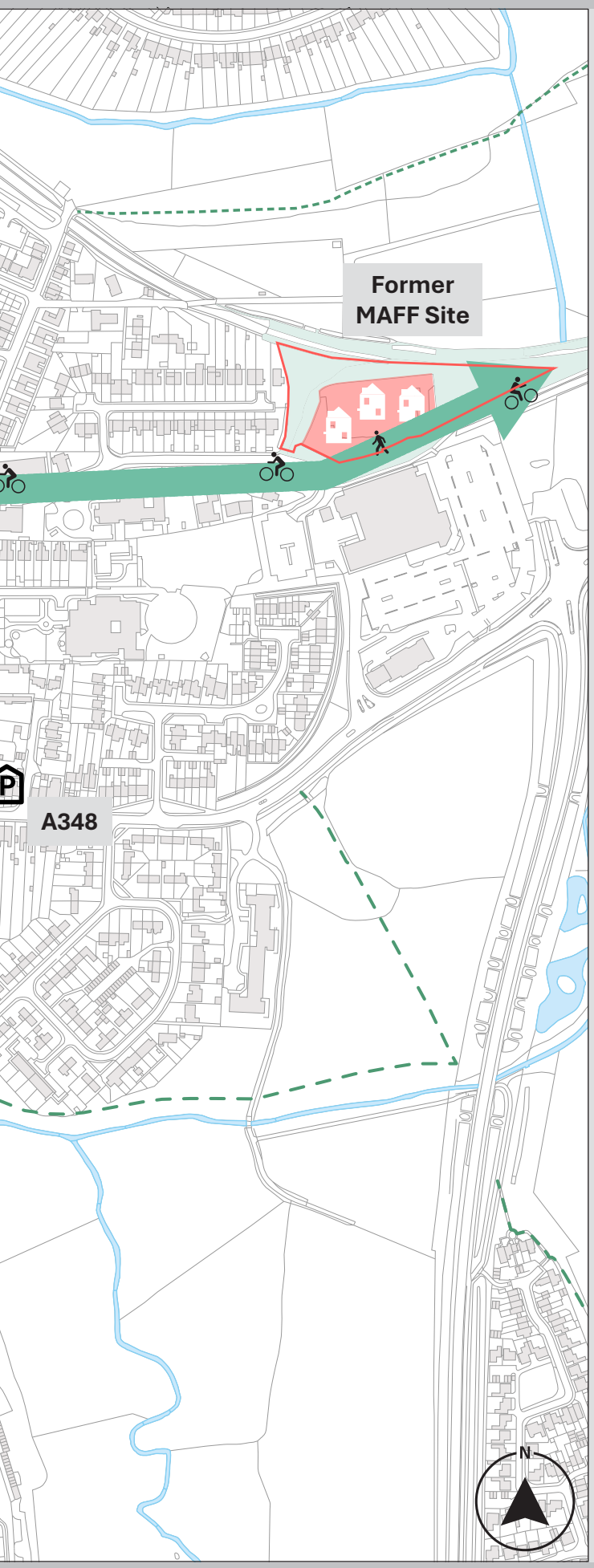
Composition of units and floorspace in Tewkesbury

Sector	Number of Units	Percentage of retail composition	UK Average (percentage)
Comparison	61	28.91	26.07
Convenience	16	7.58	9.34
Retail Service Outlets	31	14.69	15.76
Leisure Service Outlets	54	25.59	26.53
Financial and business services outlet counts	22	10.43	7.94
Vacant	27	12.80	14.14
Total	**211**		

Sector	Total Floorspace (square feet)	Percentage of retail composition	UK Average (percentage)
Comparison	110,400	30.11	28.68
Convenience	37,300	10.17	15.27
Retail Service Outlets	35,700	9.74	7.20
Leisure Service Outlets	107,600	29.35	27.69
Financial and business services outlet counts	31,100	8.48	6.05
Vacant	44,500	12.14	14.46
Total	**366,600**		

Appendix 3
Town Centre Masterplan Framework


A38
River Severn
River Avon
Healing's Mill
The Severn Ham
Cricket Club
Tewkesbury Abbey
The Vineyards
A38



Town Centre Masterplan Framework

Legend

- Improved public realm
- Important cultural buildings
- Important civic buildings
- Improved east/west active travel (Connecting Ashchurch)
- Improved traffic routes
- Key development sites
- Alleyways
- Opportunities for future park and ride
- Route to railway station
- Public Rights of Way
- Riverside Walk
- Re-routed Riverside Walk
- Greening

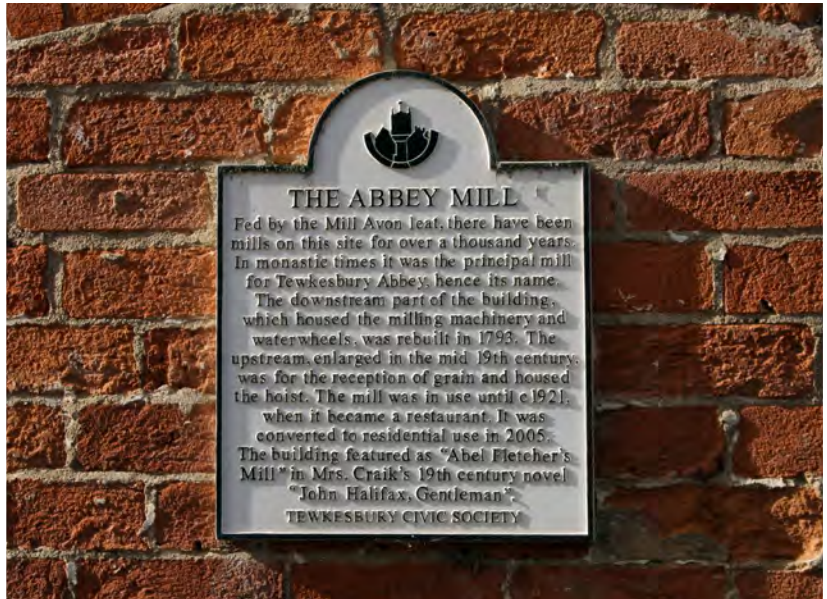
Appendix 4 Heritage Evaluation and Strategy





TEWKESBURY TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN AND DESIGN CODE
HERITAGE EVALUATION AND STRATEGY

FEBRUARY 2024





PURCELL

Tewkesbury Borough Council

On behalf of Purcell®
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A team of experienced consultants from Purcell jointly contributed to the completion of this Heritage Strategy.

Name	Position	Role
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Date	Issue	Revision	Reviewed	Approved
February 2024	01	First Draft	EB/MB	MB

Tewkesbury Borough Council

PURCELL

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TEWKESBURY TOWN CENTRE: HERITAGE EVALUATION AND STRATEGY

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Tewkesbury has a rich and varied heritage resource which contributes to the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the town. The first part of this document evaluates the existing situation including the significance of the town's heritage and how this contributes to the local economy, the wellbeing of residents and mitigating climate change. The second part of the document sets out the vision for Tewkesbury's historic environment and a strategy for how this will be achieved. It provides a framework within which future initiatives and investment can be exploited to enhance Tewkesbury's rich heritage.

The study focuses on Tewkesbury town, rather than the wider Borough which is subject to its own Heritage Strategy. It primarily looks at the historic town centre, as indicated on the map below, extending from the Abbey to King John's Bridge and from the Mill Avon to Chance Street. It also considers wider historic and significant features such as the Severn Ham and site of the Battle of Tewkesbury. In addition to the physical historic environment, the study also considers less tangible heritage, industries, events and people which contribute to what makes Tewkesbury interesting and valuable.

1.2 CONTEXT

This Heritage Strategy fits into a wider structure of local government planning policy and governmental funding. In 2020, Tewkesbury was one of 60 historic high streets in the country to be awarded government funding through Historic England's High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) programme. Over the course of the programme, Tewkesbury Borough Council has worked closely with Historic England to develop and deliver a series of projects to bring vacant buildings back into use, undertake repairs to significant listed buildings and improve interpretation of Tewkesbury's heritage. The Heritage Strategy forms part of the final project within the HSHAZ programme, along with a masterplan and design code for the town centre. Both look forward beyond the current funding stream to identify the ambitions for continued enhancement of the town and its heritage, building upon the work started under the HSHAZ.

The Heritage Strategy is intended to be primarily used by decision-makers within the Borough Council to inform strategic planning. However, it will also be useful for developers, local amenity groups and individuals who all play a part in shaping the future of Tewkesbury. This document forms part of the local planning policy evidence base and will be a material consideration in planning decisions. Of relevance to the considerations in this document are the Joint Core Strategy (2017) and Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2011-2031 as well as the Tewkesbury Conservation Area Appraisal (2012).

1.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Prior of the preparation of this Heritage Strategy, two days of workshops were held in Tewkesbury Abbey Parish Hall with representatives from departments of the Borough Council, Gloucestershire County Council, the parish council and local amenity and interest groups. These workshops involved working collaboratively with stakeholders to understand:

- what people value about Tewkesbury and should be protected;
- the issues facing Tewkesbury's heritage and how these may be overcome; and
- an ambitious vision for the town's future.

A draft version of this document will be consulted upon by representatives from the Borough Council.

1.4 DOCUMENT STRUCTURE AND APPROACH

This document has been produced following site visits to Tewkesbury in November and December 2023 and a study of desk-based sources to form an understanding of the historic development and physical nature of the town. Drawing on these aspects as well as the relevant planning legislation, policy and best-practice guidance, a broad understanding of the town's significance has been established. The site visits, along with stakeholder engagement, have informed the development of the vision and action plan.

The document is structured as follows:

- Heritage Evaluation
  - Tewkesbury's heritage designations
  - A timeline of the historic development of Tewkesbury
  - A summary of the character of Tewkesbury
  - Identification of the factors which contribute to Tewkesbury's heritage
  - A summary statement of significance for Tewkesbury
  - The value of Tewkesbury's heritage
- Heritage Strategy
  - Opportunities – the current key challenges and opportunities facing Tewkesbury's heritage
  - Vision and aims for the future of Tewkesbury's heritage
  - Action plan for delivering the vision
- Further Sources and Bibliography – the sources used to prepare the document and links to further sources of information

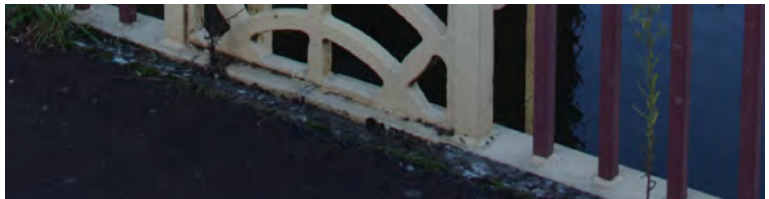






Back

HERITAGE EVALUATION





2.1 TEWKESBURY'S HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS

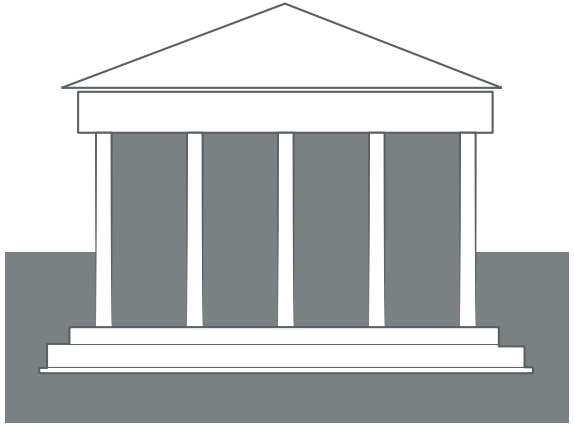
Tewkesbury's rich and varied history is reflected in the breadth and number of designated heritage assets within the town centre. These include mills, warehouses, churches, chapels, schools, hotels, bridges, and a nationally significant collection of timber-framed buildings. The Abbey precincts, designated as a Scheduled Monument, represent the spiritual nucleus of the pre-Reformation town and the distinctive Norman tower of the Grade I listed Abbey Church continues to dominate the townscape today.

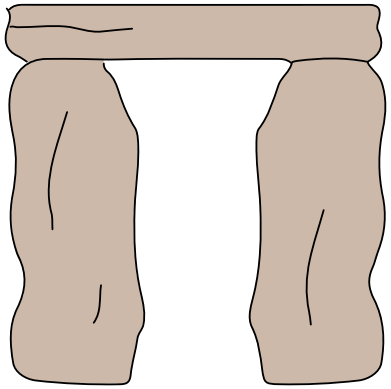
Alongside the high concentration of nationally important historic structures and archaeological sites, Tewkesbury also lays claim to one of only 47 Registered Battlefields in the country. In 1471, around 11,000 Yorkist and Lancastrian soldiers descended on the area of open ground just south of the town centre to fight a decisive battle in the Wars of the Roses, known as the Battle of Tewkesbury.

The town centre falls within Tewkesbury Conservation Area, a heritage designation which protects the distinctive historic planform of narrow burgage plots and alleyways and the traditionally managed water meadow, the Severn Ham.[01]

The town centre, identified here as the area falling within 1.2 kilometres of The Cross, contains: 308 Grade II listed buildings, 42 Grade II* listed buildings, 7 Grade I listed buildings, 2 Scheduled Monuments, 1 Grade II Registered Park and Garden and 1 Registered Battlefield.

Tewkesbury's heritage assets are shown on the two plans overleaf and a summary of key assets on the following pages. A wealth of information exists for Tewkesbury's heritage assets; a selection of the further sources of information for each type of asset is listed in the Further Sources section at the end of this document.





308 Grade II listed buildings

42 Grade II* listed buildings

7 Grade I listed buildings

2 Scheduled Monuments

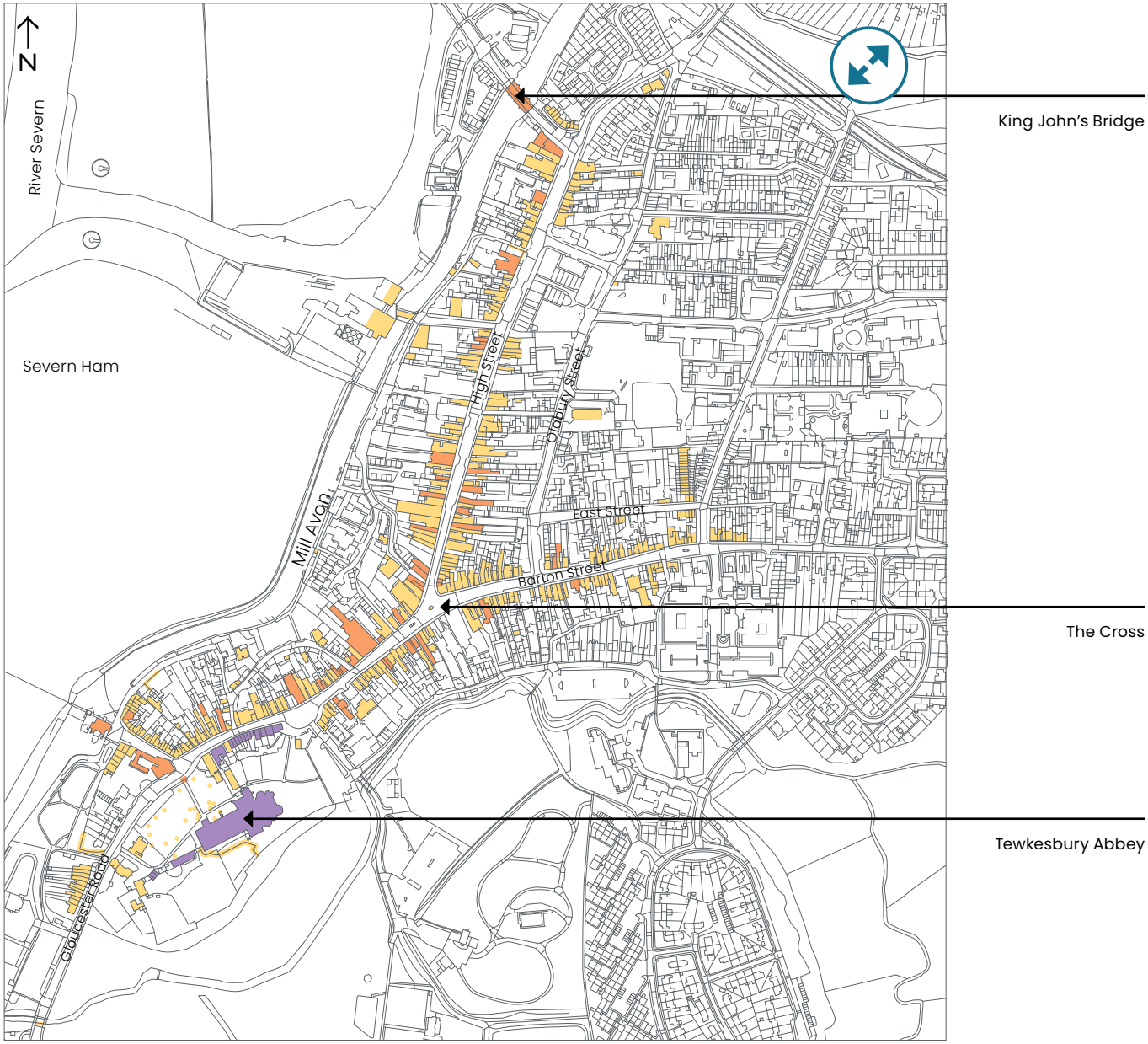




1 Grade II Registered Park and Garden

1 Registered Battlefield

01 Tewkesbury Borough Council, Tewkesbury Conservation Area Appraisal, February 2012.

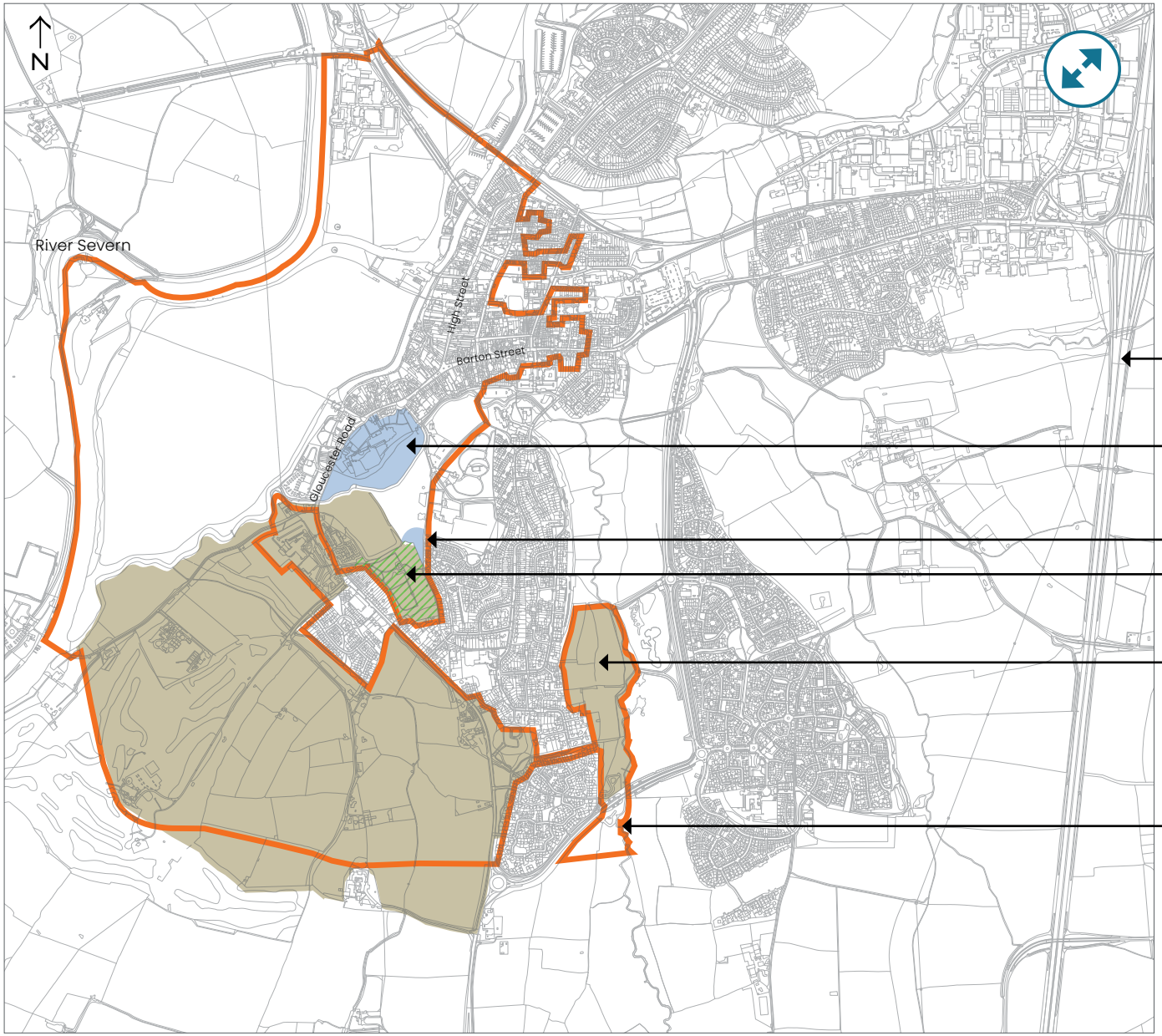


HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS: LISTED BUILDINGS

- Grade I Listed Building
- Grade II* Listed Building
- Grade II Listed Building

This plan is not to scale

Plan showing the distribution of listed buildings in Tewkesbury.



HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS : OTHER

- Scheduled Monument
- Registered Park and Garden
- Registered Battlefield
- Tewkesbury Conservation Area

This plan is not to scale

M5 Motorway

Site of St Mary's Abbey - Scheduled Monument

Margaret's Camp, moated site and associated remains - Scheduled Monument

Tewkesbury Cemetery - Grade II Registered Park and Garden

Battle of Tewkesbury 1471 - Registered Battlefield

Tewkesbury Conservation Area

Plan showing the distribution of designated heritage assets in Tewkesbury, excluding listed buildings.

Key Heritage Assets:

Tewkesbury Abbey

Tewkesbury Abbey, Grade I listed, was founded shortly after the Norman Conquest in around 1087 AD. The oldest fabric of the Abbey Church includes Norman west front and the central crossing tower, which date from the first quarter of the 12th century. The church was originally situated within walled precincts containing monastic buildings. Although many of these buildings were destroyed around 1540, the church itself was saved when the citizens of Tudor Tewkesbury purchased it from the Crown to serve as their parish church.





Other Religious Buildings

Although the Abbey is the most visually prominent religious building in the town, many smaller churches and chapels survive to illustrate a tradition of non-denominational worship in the town centre. These include The Old Baptist Chapel, reputedly the oldest chapel of its type still in existence (Grade II* listed) and Kingdom Hall on Barton Street (an early-19th century former Congregational Chapel).[02]



The interior of The Old Baptist Chapel in 2009. *Historic England Archive*



Holy Trinity Mission Hall, Barton Street.

02 https://www.johnmooremuseum.org/old-baptist-chapel/; https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1201190?section=official-list-entry; https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1201291

Timber Framed Buildings

Tewkesbury has a nationally important collection of timber-framed buildings from the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries. This high rate of survival was influenced by the position of the railways, which by-passed Tewkesbury and helped to protect the town from rapid redevelopment. There are many examples of timber-framed buildings fronting each of the three main streets. The overhanging jetties and ornate carvings are highly distinctive and contribute a special historic character to the town centre.



Cross House on Church Street, formerly two early-16th century dwellings, extensively restored in the mid-19th century.

Healings Mill

An historic sign on the east elevation of the building announces that this was the 'Borough Flour Mill', an increasingly rare survival of a large-scale flour milling operation, dating from 1865. A reminder of the history of Tewkesbury as a regional agricultural centre prior to the Industrial revolution, the complex may occupy the site of the two ancient town mills recorded in the Domesday survey.[03]



Coaching Inns

At the northern end of the High Street, on the opposite side of the town to the Abbey, is the early 16th-century Black Bear Inn. The Black Bear is one of a nationally important collection of timber framed buildings present in Tewkesbury. It illustrates the historic movement of people and goods through the historic market town and marks the northern gateway into Tewkesbury. Its significance is reflected in its Grade II* listing.

Other historic coaching inns in Tewkesbury include the Grade II*, late-17th-century Bell Hotel at the southern entrance to the historic core, and the Royal Hop Pole Hotel on Church Street. The latter, also Grade II* listed, constitutes a 15th-century house to the north and a late-18th-century inn to the south. The inn makes an appearance in Charles Dickens' first novel, Pickwick Papers; "At the Hop Pole in Tewkesbury they stopped to dine; upon which occasion there was more ale, with some more Madeira, and some Port besides, and here the case-bottle was replenished for the fourth time."



The Black Bear Inn on the corner of Mythe Road and the High Street.

03 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1461284

Civic Buildings

Founded in 1813, this Grade II listed Former National School demonstrates the expansion of Tewkesbury the 19th century and is one of several new civic buildings which were erected in the town centre at this time. The school was built in the fashionable Tudor Gothic style, accessed via Church Street through a four-centred arch under a hood mould with highly decorative spandrels.[04]

Tewkesbury's Town Hall was originally built in 1788 as a town hall and covered market space, set back from the High Street with an open aisled Cornmarket opening onto the street. The original building contained a ballroom which stretched the full width of the first floor.[05] In the mid-19th-century, a covered market hall was built in the courtyard. The honey-coloured stone façade seen from the High Street today dates from this time.[06]



The early-19th-century former National School at the south of the town centre.

The Severn Ham

The Severn Ham is an ancient water meadow, and frequent flooding has protected it from development for centuries. The Ham has always been common land and was used in medieval times by the town burgesses to graze their animals. Today, this valuable open space is used for walking and recreation, and provides striking views of the Severn Vale to the west. The heritage significance of the site is reflected through its inclusion in the Tewkesbury Conservation Area.



Burgage Plots

Burgage plots are long, narrow and deep plots fronting onto a main street, originally assigned to 'burgesses', townsfolk with the right to trade. The plots allowed each trader to have a shopfront on the main street to garner trade, and the long and narrow proportions allowed many such sites to be clustered along a short length of road. In Tewkesbury, many of these plots ran back to the River Avon, allowing traders to access the waterway to import and export goods.



Excerpt of the 1883 OS map for Tewkesbury clearly showing the burgage plot pattern.

04 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1205636
05 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1206399
06 https://tewkesburyhistory.org/The-Town-Hall

2.2 Summary Timeline Of The Historic Development of Tewkesbury

Early History

Tewkesbury sits on a navigable waterway and prehistoric land-route between north and south-west England. Archaeological excavations have confirmed that a Romano-British settlement existed here, centred around Oldbury, just east of the medieval town centre. An Anglo-Saxon settlement may have existed in the same area.[07] The sinuous line of the south-west to north-east road constituting Church Street and Barton Street suggests this was the earliest route through the town.[08]

Anglo-Saxon Agriculture

Just before the Norman Conquest in 1066, Tewkesbury was the centre of a large agricultural estate which included parts of present day Ashchurch to the east and Tredington to the south.[09] The Domesday Book recorded this estate as 'Teodechesberie', a large manor supporting 12 ploughs and worked by 50 serfs.[10]

The Norman Abbey

The Benedictine Abbey was founded in 1102, possibly on the site of an earlier monastery. The Abbey was consecrated in 1123 and was granted two mills, and the Mill Avon watercourse was established to connect the Avon and the Severn.[11]

Queen Maud's Market

In the early-12th century, Queen Maud established 13 burgesses (free men with the right to trade) and a market at Tewkesbury.[12] The proportions of The Cross reflect those of 11th-century marketplaces elsewhere in England, which suggests The Cross may have been the nucleus of the 12th-century market. It is likely that the long burgage plots on the three main streets were formally laid out at this time.[13]

Royal Connections

The growing prosperity of Tewkesbury was advanced by the frequency of royal visits during the 13th century. In 1204, King John kept Christmas at the town, and he built a substantial bridge across the Avon on or near the site of the current King John's Bridge around the same time.[14] Two town mills were referenced early in the century, quite possibly on the site of the mid-19th-century Healings Flour Mill.[15]

The Medieval Market Town

By 1327, there were 114 burgage holdings within the manor, indicating substantial trading activity within the medieval town. Metalworkers were recorded during the 14th century. Tewkesbury prospered as a market town in the 15th century, as attested by the many jettied merchants' dwellings which survive on Church Street and the High Street.



W. Dyde's map of Tewkesbury, produced in 1790, clearly shows the distribution of medieval burgage plots around the three main streets. In some areas these plots stretch right back to the Mill Avon. *Tewkesbury Historical Society.* ***permission pending***

07 Gloucestershire County Council Historic Environment Record, Tewkesbury Romano-British Settlement. https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=5517&resourceID=108

08 Alan Hannan, 'Excavations at Holm Hill, Tewkesbury', in Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Transactions, Volume CV, 1997. https://tewkesburyhistory.org/Medieval-Town-Development

09 'The borough of Tewkesbury: Introduction', in *A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 8*, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1968), pp. 110-118. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol8/pp110-118

10 'The borough of Tewkesbury: Economic history', in *A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 8*, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1968), pp. 137-146. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol8/pp137-146

11 Tewkesbury Borough Council, Tewkesbury Conservation Area Appraisal, February 2012.

12 'The borough of Tewkesbury: Introduction', in *A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 8*, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1968), pp. 110-118. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol8/pp110-118

13 Alan Hannan, 'Excavations at Holm Hill, Tewkesbury', in Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Transactions, Volume CV, 1997. https://tewkesburyhistory.org/Medieval-Town-Development; Tewkesbury Borough Council, Tewkesbury Conservation Area Appraisal, February 2012.

14 Tewkesbury Historical Society, 'King John's Bridge', by C R Elrington, 1968. https://tewkesburyhistory.org/King-Johns-Bridge

15 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1461284

The Battle of Tewkesbury

In 1471, the Battle of Tewkesbury took place just south of the town centre, putting an end to the second phase of the Wars of the Roses (1455-85) and securing the throne for the Yorkist Edward IV until his death in 1483.[16] A near-contemporary account of the battle suggest that the defeated Lancastrians were eventually funnelled into 'Bloody Meadow', where many, including Queen Margaret's son Prince Edward, were killed.[17]

Dissolution of the Monastery

Many of the monastic buildings surrounding the Abbey were destroyed during the Reformation, circa 1540. The Abbey church, utilised by the parishioners as their parish church, was saved. Staple trades within the town at this time included cattle, wool, yarn, grain, cloth, leather and 'smart biting mustard'.[18]



A late 19th-century photograph of the Norman west end of the Abbey Church. The Church has stood as a local landmark for centuries. *Historic England Archive.*

16 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000039

17 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000039

18 'The borough of Tewkesbury: Economic history', in *A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 8*, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1968), pp. 137-146.

Restoration and Renewal

In 1661 the west window of the Abbey Church was rebuilt following a great storm. In 1674 the Abbey almshouses were founded.[19] In 1696, the Bell Hotel on Church Street, just east of the Abbey, was reconfigured as an inn to accommodate travellers moving through the town.

The Height of Industry

Major industries in 18th-century Tewkesbury included cloth manufacturing, malting, leather production and corn trading. In 1774 the town was described as 'a large, beautiful, and populous town, of which the chief manufacture is woollen cloth and stockings.'[20] An increase in road traffic was reflected in the establishment of two posting houses - The Swan Hotel on the High Street and the Royal Hop Pole Hotel on Church Street.[21] Many of the 15th-century timber-framed houses lining the principal street were refaced in the 18th-century neo-classical style.

A Changing Religious Landscape

In contrast to the medieval town, which was spiritually centred around St Mary's Abbey, 18th-century Tewkesbury was home to Meeting Houses for Anabaptists, Quakers, Methodists and Presbyterians.

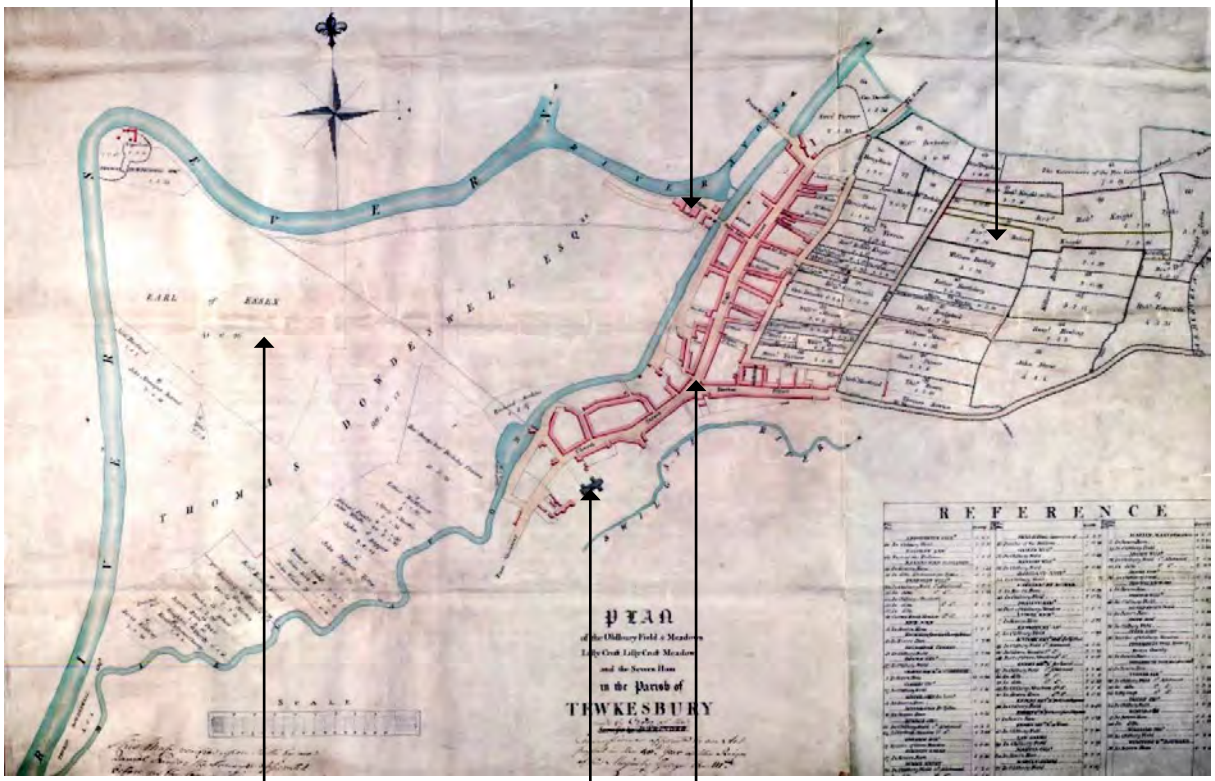
19 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1282761

20 https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol8/pp110-118

21 'The borough of Tewkesbury: Introduction', in A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 8, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1968), pp. 110-118; https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1201242; https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1205936

Enclosure and Development

An 'Act of Inclosure' was passed in 1808. Circa 1810, 200 houses were erected on newly enclosed land at Oldbury, east of Oldbury Road.[22]



The enclosure map, published in 1811, shows how the the land at Oldbury had been 'divided, allotted, and inclosed.'[23] This map was produced just before the expansion of the town to the east, on the open land at Oldbury. *Tewkesbury Historical Society.* ***permission pending***

22 Tewkesbury Borough Council, Tewkesbury Conservation Area Appraisal, February 2012

23 Tewkesbury Inclosure Act 1808. https://vlex.co.uk/vid/tewkesbury-inclosure-act-1808-808168581

The Coming of the Railways

In 1826, the cast-iron Mythe Bridge was opened to the north of the town.[24] In 1836, the Gloucester and Birmingham Railway Co. built a new line two miles east of Tewksbury, on an easier route to Cheltenham. The resulting isolation from the main line injured the success of Tewkesbury's industries. A branch railway from the main line at Ashchurch, which opened in 1840, damaged the fortunes of Tewkesbury's inns and posthouses.[25]

The Continued Decline of Trade

In 1861 the Malvern and Tewkesbury Railway was built from Ashchurch via Tewkesbury to Great Malvern. Healings Flour Mill was first built in 1865, along with a brewery directly opposite.[26] Despite this development, the general trajectory of the town's economy in the later-19th century was one of decline. Excepting metalworking and light engineering, almost all other industries failed.[27]

Tewkesbury in the 20th Century

Tewkesbury continued to function as a market town, albeit not on the main line of communication. Light engineering continued to prosper. The King John Bridge was rebuilt in stone and concrete, retaining some earlier features, in 1962.[28] Residential development to the south (Prior's Park) and north-east (the Mitton estate) further expanded the town.

24 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1282810

25 'The borough of Tewkesbury: Introduction', in *A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 8*, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1968), pp. 110-118; https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1201242;

26 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1461284

27 The borough of Tewkesbury: Economic history', in A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 8, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1968), pp. 137-146. British History Online http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol8/pp137-146

28 'The borough of Tewkesbury: Introduction', in A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 8, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1968), pp. 110-118; https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1201242;

Recent History

Tewkesbury in the 21st century constitutes a busy market town with a thriving independent High Street. The heritage of the town is actively celebrated; the medieval festival, begun in the 1980s on the site of the historic battlefield, has grown into a hugely popular annual event drawing visitors from across Europe. The annual Mop Fair, held at Tewkesbury since the 17th century, is one of the largest and best-known street fairs in the UK.[29]



Tewkesbury as seen from the south-west in 1947. At this time, the goods line ran through the centre of the town, with a level crossing on the High Street, to Healings Mill. *Historic England Archive.*

29 Tewkesbury Museum, Tewkesbury Mop Fair. https://www.tewkesburymuseum.org/the-collection/the-object-collection/fairground-display/tewkesbury-mop-fair/

2.3 SUMMARY OF TEWKESBURY'S CHARACTER

One of the things that makes Tewkesbury special is the diversity of character which exists within the town centre. These different character areas can be broadly summarised as the Abbey Precincts, Church Street/Gloucester Road, the High Street/Barton Street, Oldbury Road/Chance Street and The Riverside. The character of each area is summarised below.

The Abbey Precincts

The precincts are dominated by the imposing Abbey Church with its muscular Norman tower. The massing of historic structures within the precincts is concentrated to the north, west and south-west. High-status buildings such as The Grade I listed Abbey House and the Abbey Gatehouse announce the historic status of the precincts. The low fence and dwarf wall which surround the site to the north and west facilitate a sense of connection between the Abbey and the town.

Despite this porous visual relationship, the precincts retain a sense of separation from the busy commercial core of Tewkesbury. This is particularly so to the south and east of the Abbey Church, where green open space dominates and the noise of the traffic from Gloucester Road and Church Street falls away. Mature tree planting lends a leafy and verdant character, which contrasts with the busy and tight urban grain of the adjacent town centre.



The Abbey Church from the north-east. The green open space beyond the fence on the left-hand side, which leads down to the River Swilgate, was historically part of the precincts.



Looking north-east from the Abbey precincts across the adjacent floodplain.



Abbey House, just south-west of the Abbey Church. In the right-hand side of the image can be seen the battlemented parapet of the late 15th- or early 16th-century gatehouse



The Abbey Lawn Cottages. Originally constructed with a shopfront facing the street and living accommodation behind, these properties were rented by the Abbey to local merchants from the 15th century. Backing onto the precincts and fronting onto Church Street, the cottages illustrate the interdependent relationship between the Abbey and the medieval town.

Church Street/Gloucester Road

Church Street retains many historic burgage plots on either side, most of which have been subject to less development than those further north on the High Street.[30] The gentle curve of this arterial road into the town allows those entering from the south to appreciate Church Street iteratively as it wends towards the town centre. Reaching the junction with Gander Lane, The Cross comes into view.

The buildings on Church Street are largely of three storeys, with some of the older timber-framed structures reaching two storeys and the majority of those on Gloucester Road (mostly 19th- and 20th-century structures) standing at two and a half storeys. There is a high concentration of timber framed buildings on both sides of Church Street; the 17th-century Bell Inn to the south, at the junction with Gloucester Road, announces an historic access route into the market town. The architectural treatment of this area is eclectic, combining timber framed vernacular structures with 18th-century classical refacing work and 19th-century revivalist styles, including a striking Georgian terrace off Gander Lane. External finishes comprise exposed brick and timber alongside paint and render. Historic shopfronts reference the commercial history of Church Street, whilst historic dwellings on Gloucester Road and adjacent streets demonstrate continued residential occupation in the area.



On the corner of Church Street and St Mary's Lane, a 16th-century timber framed dwelling sits adjacent to an early-18th-century house.



A striking early-19th-century Georgian terrace at the junction between Church Street and Gander Lane.



Warped glass in a historic shopfront on Church Street. In the distance is the 16th-century inn known as The Bell.



Looking east up St Mary's Lane back towards Church Street. This street has a quiet residential character, with historic dwellings of various ages opening directly onto the street.

30 Tewkesbury Borough Council, Tewkesbury Conservation Area Appraisal, February 2012.

The High Street/Barton Street

The High Street and Barton Street bear many similarities to Church Street, although have been subject to a greater degree of intervention and modern development. The buildings are of a larger scale consummate with their more central location, reaching three and sometimes four storeys. Many long burgage plots survive, though some have been lost or amalgamated. The character of this area is more clearly commercial than Church Street due to the high concentration of historic shopfronts and the conversion of historic dwellings to commercial units, particularly on the High Street. The architectural eclecticism of the façades demonstrates a long history of reconfiguration on both streets, many older timber-framed buildings having been re-faced in a neo-classical style. There is a lack of green space in this area, partly due to majority of buildings opening directly onto the pavement and eliminating areas which may otherwise be occupied by gardens or green forecourts.

The alleys, retained from the layout of the medieval town, often reveal older built fabric and draw attention to the repeated modernisation of building stock. The side roads and alleys maintain historic surface finishes, most distinctively blue brick. Like Church Street, both Barton Street and the High Street have a high concentration of timber-framed buildings. The integrity of the historic character is strongest nearest The Cross where historic structures, plots and road layouts have been best retained.



Tudor House, originally a 16th-century dwelling house on the west side of the High Street. The street-facing façade was re-fronted in 1701 with new timber framing applied in the late 19th-century.[31] The gateway to the left dates from the late-17th century.[32]



Clark's Alley, leading from the High Street to the riverside. The alley retains an historic surface finish with lines of paved brick designed to give purchase to those bringing heavy loads up from the river.[33]



The High Street is characterised by architectural eclecticism, as seen here in a photograph depicting Auriol House, rebuilt in an Elizabethan style c.1845, on the eastern side of the High Street.



A photograph of the bottom of Barton Street, west side. The large jettied building with the mansard roof dates from the 15th or 16th century, with a 20th-century reconstructed frontage. The brick-faced building to the left of it constitutes an 18th-century façade applied over 17th-century fabric.

31 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1280099?section=official-list-entry

32 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1282772?section=official-list-entry

33 https://tewkesburyhistory.org/Clark%E2%80%99s-Alley

Oldbury Road/Chance Street

Oldbury Road and the areas to the east (East Street, Station Street, Chance Street etc.) were developed in the 19th century following the enclosure of common land at Oldbury and the coming of the railway.[34] The provenance of the area east of the commercial core is reflected in its architecture, layout and character, which departs significantly from that of the older streets radiating from The Cross. The tight grain of the medieval streets, organised around long and uniform burgage plots, gives way to a looser arrangement of structures of varying heights and proportions. Where historic structures survive, these constitute a combination of high-density industrial housing alongside light industrial buildings and workshops.[35] Key structures affiliated with 19th-century expansion include the Holy Trinity Church (1837), a group of workers cottages on Gravel Walk, and an historic terrace on East Street (previously a stocking-knitting factory).

A lack of trees and greenery affords an urban character to this area of the town, particularly around the site of the old railway station, where there are large areas of hard standing.



Holy Trinity Church, built 1837 to serve the expanding population of Tewkesbury.



Tewkesbury Church of England Primary School on Chance Street, built in circa 1905.



Nineteenth-century workers cottages in Gravel Walk.



A 19th-century terrace on Chance Street.

34 Tewkesbury Borough Council, Tewkesbury Conservation Area Appraisal, February 2012.

35 Tewkesbury Borough Council, Tewkesbury Conservation Area Appraisal, February 2012.

The Riverside

The Riverside, to the west of the commercial core, has a distinctive industrial character afforded by the presence of mills and warehouses. Historic red-brick structures are clustered around the 18th-century Abbey Mills to the south and the 19th-century Healings Mill to the north. Both mills, and their surrounding infrastructure, articulate the importance of the water network to the economic history and development of Tewkesbury, as well as providing striking local landmarks.

The riverside retains a strong relationship with the High Street due to the retention of the medieval burgage plots, some of which run all the way back to the river. Where the rear boundaries of the plots reach the riverside, the footpath connecting the town and the riverside is forced inland towards the town centre.

Also adjacent to the Mill Avon, off Gloucester Road in the south of the town, is the open space known as Victoria Gardens, laid out for Queen Victoria's jubilee. Though some of the space's original features, such as the bandstand, have been lost, the site continues to provide valuable green open space.



A footbridge connecting Back of Avon with the public footpath on the eastern edge of the Ham. The 19th-century Borough Flour Mill can be seen in the background.



The Abbey Mill – a 17th-century structure on the site of a medieval mill affiliated with Tewkesbury Abbey. The mill is a reminder of Tewkesbury's historic reliance on the watercourse.



An 18th- or early-19th-century warehouse across the Mill Avon from the Healing's Flour Mill.

The Ham

The sites of the two mills are connected by footpath on the western bank of the Mill Avon, which facilitates striking views over the ancient water meadow towards the dramatic rural landscape west of the town. The lack of development on the Ham draws a stark contrast between town and country and makes an important contribution to the public realm. The character of the area changes seasonally, forming open and accessible green space during the warmer months whilst being covered by a vast expanse of flood in the winter.



The footpath between the Mill Avon and the Severn Ham, looking south. In the distance, the Norman tower of the Abbey Church rises over the surrounding buildings.

2.4 TEWKESBURY'S HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Tewkesbury's diverse heritage affords wide-ranging significance; telling both local and national histories, contributing to the aesthetic value of the town, supporting local pride and a sense of community, and preserving valuable evidence which will enhance historic and archaeological research in the future.

Mercantile Heritage



Numbers 82 and 83 Church Street, late-15th or early 16th-century merchants houses.

Tewkesbury's history as a market town is everywhere to see. Matilda, wife of Henry I, established (or formalised) a market at Tewkesbury in the early-12th century to stimulate commercial activity in the town. It is likely that the triangular area containing the town's war memorial, The Cross, was established as the marketplace at this time.

The Cross continues to form the physical nucleus of the town to this day, providing a clear spatial and visual link to the medieval past. The long burgage plots, narrow and deep plots fronting onto the main streets and originally assigned to townsfolk with the right to trade, are another survivor from the medieval town. Some of these plots are notably long, stretching down to the Mill Avon in some areas on the High Street and Church Street.

The narrow alleyways, a typical feature in historic market towns, survive particularly well in Tewkesbury. Their original purpose was to provide access to back land dwellings and buildings where burgage plots became subdivided. Today they constitute publicly accessible connections between the riverside and the High Street. Additional alleys were created at Oldbury in the 19th-century.[36] Inaccessible to vehicular traffic, many of these alleys preserve historic surface finishes such as brick pavements and gulleys. The names of the alleys and courts (alleys later terminated by doors or buildings) provide direct links to the citizens and industries of the historic town. Stephens Alley, for example, was lined with cottages rented to stocking frame knitters for a Mr Stephens.[37]

Tewkesbury contains a nationally important collection of timber-framed merchants' houses, such as the 15th-century terrace on Church Street, originally rented out by the Abbey to local merchants. The survival of this terrace illustrates that the relationship between the Abbey and the town was economic as well as spiritual. As well as maintaining a connection to those who lived and worked in Tewkesbury in the past, the survival of such a high number of 15th and 16th-century buildings in the town centre brings a high degree of visual interest. Many of the buildings retain beautiful and delicate architectural detailing, including tracery and sculpture, which can be still appreciated from the street as originally intended.

Other associations with the mercantile activity of Tewkesbury can be found in the surviving historic inns, such as The Black Bear (16th-century), The Bell (17th-century) and the Royal Hop Pole Hotel (18th-century). Located at the north, south and centre of the town respectively, these establishments demonstrate the continual flow of traders, coaches and goods which characterised pre-industrial Tewkesbury. Many of these establishments continue to feed and accommodate 21st-century visitors, enhancing their special interest.

36 Project Alleycat, Tewkesbury, History of the Alleys. https://alleycat.org.uk/history/#:~:text=Tewkesbury's%20alleys%20are%20special%20because,soon%20after%20the%20Norman%20Conquest

37 Ibid.

Industrial Heritage



The 18th-century Abbey Mills, viewed from the flooded east bank of the Mill Avon.

The centrality of industry to the history of Tewkesbury is reflected in the landscape itself, the watercourse having been manipulated to suite the needs of the mills through the creation of the Mill Avon in the early-12th century.[38] Station Street, which runs between Oldbury Road and Chance Street to the north, marks the site of the 19th-century railway line which ran through the town directly to the Healings Mill, facilitating the transportation of manufactured goods in and out of the town. The line closed in the 1960s.

The centre of Tewkesbury retains a high degree of industrial infrastructure, providing a direct link to the tradespeople who flourished here until the mid-19th century; including cloth-makers, tailors, hosiers, mercers, chapmen, tanners, metalworkers, spicers, and boat-makers.[39] The most visually striking survivals are the 18th-century Abbey Mills at the south of the town and Healings Flour Mill to the north, but many industrial buildings survive east and west of the commercial core including an historic tannery on St Mary's Lane, an old Malt House on Barton Street, and several warehouses around Healing's Mill. There are also surviving workers' houses from different eras, including a terrace at St Mary's Lane to the west and at Gravel Walk to the east.

38 Tewkesbury Borough Council, Tewkesbury Conservation Area Appraisal, February 2012.

39 The borough of Tewkesbury: Economic history', in A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 8, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1968), pp. 137-146. British History Online http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol8/pp137-146

Religious Heritage



Holy Trinity Mission Hall, Barton Street.

The oldest surviving religious building in Tewkesbury is the Abbey Church, which was founded in 1102, possibly on the site of an earlier monastery. The Abbey's founder, Robert Fitzhamon, envisaged Tewkesbury as an urban centre and a base for the conquest of south Wales.[40] The imposing tower is a fine example of Norman architecture and is highly visible across the town. Described by architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner as "the finest Romanesque tower in England", it stands as a visual reminder of the town's long history and the importance of Tewkesbury to the Norman elite.[41]

That the Abbey Church survived the Reformation also demonstrates its value to the citizens who purchased it from the Crown in 1540 and have used it as their parish church ever since. The Abbey Church remains an important site for residents and visitors today; it is open to the public daily and holds regular services. The grounds, once part of the monastic precincts, provide tranquil open space in which to appreciate the Church itself, the surrounding architecture, and the wider landscape.

The range and distribution of historic religious establishments is also important, providing visual interest and aesthetic value within the town centre as well as illustrating the diversity of religious denominations which characterised 18th and 19th-century England. Non-conformist denominations frequently thrived in burgeoning towns and industrial districts where the Church of England was weakest, making towns such as Tewkesbury prime locations for the proliferation of alternative denominations.[42] Historic places of worship in the town centre include:

- The Old Baptist Chapel - a medieval timber-framed building on Church Street, adapted for use as a Baptist chapel circa 1690, reputedly the oldest of its type still in existence.[43]
- The George Watson Memorial Hall, Barton Street – a former Friends Meeting House founded in 1805.[44]
- Kingdom Hall, Barton Street, a former Congregational Chapel dating from 1820.[45]
- Tewkesbury Methodist Church, The Cross, founded 1878.[46]
- Holy Trinity Mission Hall - a later 19th-century Mission Hall on Barton Street.

40 Alan Hannan, 'Excavations at Holm Hill, Tewkesbury', in Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Transactions, Volume CV, 1997. https://tewkesburyhistory.org/Early-Town-Development

41 David Verey and Alan Brooks. *The Buildings of England Gloucestershire 2: The Vale and the Forest of Dean*, 2002.

42 Historic England, Nonconformist Places of Worship: Introductions to Heritage Assets, 2016. https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/iha-nonconformist-places-of-worship/heag139-nonconformist-places-of-worshipi-iha/

43 https://www.johnmooremuseum.org/old-baptist-chapel/

44 Gloucestershire Places of Worship, Friends Meeting House (now George Watson Memorial Hall), Tewkesbury. https://churchdb.gukutils.org.uk/GLS870.php

45 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1201190?section=official-list-entry

46 Gloucestershire Places of Worship, Tewkesbury Methodist Church, Tewkesbury https://churchdb.gukutils.org.uk/GLS864.php

Relationship with Water

Proximity to the River Severn was hugely important to the economic development of Tewkesbury, facilitating industries such as milling, malting, and tanning. Several historic bridges over the Mill Avon and the Severn survive in and around Tewkesbury today, continuing to enable the movement of people and goods in and out of the town. King John's Bridge likely occupies the site of the bridge funded by King John around 1200. Although rebuilt in the 20th century, the bridge is recognisable as that depicted in 19th-century engravings of Tewkesbury and has long formed a central access route over the water as well as a prominent visual feature. The decorative iron bridge at Quay Street, connecting Healings Mill to the western bank of the Mill Avon, pre-dates the current mill buildings and illustrates a long history of activity on this part of the riverbank. The town Quay, just west of Healings Mill, similarly articulates the importance of water-reliant trade and industry to the town. The Quay appears on W. Dyde's map of Tewkesbury from 1790 and from 1840 until the 1960s it was served by the goods line which ran through the centre of Tewkesbury.

This important relationship with water is also visible in the spatial layout of the town itself; the annual flooding of the Severn Ham forcing 19th and 20th-century development to be focused on higher ground east of the commercial core and leaving large areas of open space to the south and west. The Ham is a water meadow, an historic irrigation system whereby land would be deliberately flooded to encourage deposits of fertile silt from surrounding watercourses. Once a common feature of the agricultural landscape, the use of water meadows declined significantly in the 19th century.[47] The retention of the Ham at Tewkesbury, which is still traditionally managed, illustrates an historic practice whereby natural resources were manipulated to the benefit of agriculture. The Ham is also a highly significant archaeological habitat, being designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

The town's location at the meeting point of the Severn and the Avon makes it particularly vulnerable to flooding. Historic records show this has always been the case; severe floods were recorded in 1484, 1587, 1611 and 1673. In 1772 and 1814, citizens were able to row boats in the town, and in 1947 the Severn Ham lay under six feet of water.[48] The resilience of the town to such regular flooding has thus endured over many centuries.

The prominence of flood water, and the inevitable damage this causes to built fabric, makes the survival of so many historic structures in the town centre particularly remarkable.

The historic waterways continue to be of value to inhabitants and visitors to Tewkesbury today, facilitating recreational activities such as water sports and river cruises.



Looking south across the river in flood from King John's Bridge, towards Healings Flour Mill.

47 https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/iha-water-meadows/heag237-water-meadows/

48 The borough of Tewkesbury: Introduction', in A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 8, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1968), pp. 110-118. British History Online http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol8/pp110-118.

Royal Associations

During the 13th century, the royal court was frequently present at Tewkesbury. King John kept Christmas in the town in 1204, and in 1236 Henry III and Llywelyn the Great, ruler of Gwynedd in Wales, signed a truce here. In 1278, the court were in Tewkesbury again when Alexander III of Scotland offered his homage to Edward I. Richard II stayed in Tewkesbury for some time during the parliament held at Gloucester in 1378. It is likely that the prosperity of the medieval town was enhanced by these regular royal visits.[49] In 1526, the Princess Mary spent time at Tewkesbury, as did King Henry VIII in 1535. George III, staying at Cheltenham in 1788, visited Tewkesbury several times.[50]

Tewkesbury was also the site of a major battle between warring royal factions – the Yorkists and the Lancastrians – which took place just south of the town centre in 1471. The Wars of the Roses, waged between 1455 and 1485, reached a crescendo following the death of the Earl of Warwick in April of that year. With the powerful 'King Maker' dead, Queen Margaret returned from exile in France in an attempt to secure the throne for her son, Prince Edward. Denied entry to Gloucester, Margaret's forces arrived in Tewkesbury on 3rd May 1471. They were met by Edward IV's army the following morning. The exact position and extent of the action is unclear, but near-contemporary records suggest that the Lancastrian forces were eventually funnelled into 'Bloody Meadow' – the long meadow either side of the Colnbrook south of the Abbey – where many were killed. The battle was decisive, ending the second phase of the Wars of the Roses and securing the position of Edward IV until his death in 1483.[51] The battle continues to be memorialised some 500 years on with the annual Tewkesbury Medieval Festival and the battle site being one of the first nationally designated battlefields.



Looking over Bloody Meadow, part of the Registered Battle Ground, just south of the town centre.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000039

Hidden Heritage

As well as the multitude of visible structures, significant below-ground archaeology is likely to survive in and around the historic core. Archaeological excavations have uncovered the existence of a Romano-British settlement, with a nucleus at Oldbury to the north-east, which covered much of the area later subsumed by the medieval town. In 1257, the High Street was known as Oldbury Street, 'bury' meaning 'town' or 'fortified place' in Middle English, and thus indicating that medieval inhabitants were aware of an older settlement to the north of present core.[52] Although much of this area has been developed since the 19th-centrury, there is still a high likelihood that deposits survive below-ground which could enhance understandings of the early town.

Surviving archaeology to the south of the town, an area less disturbed by modern development, may hold information about the location of the original marketplace/s. Some scholars have suggested that the medieval market was held in the broadened area of Church Street (known as The Crescent) until the 1540s, when the market moved away from the Abbey and this area was used for bull-baiting.[53] Others see the nucleus of the medieval market as The Cross.[54] Below-ground archaeology and careful analysis of the plot and street patterns in these areas may help to establish the layout, status and function of these areas and their relationship to the wider medieval town.

Similarly, both below-ground archaeology and analysis of streets, plots and boundaries have the potential to reveal information about the layout and ecclesiastical history of the pre-Conquest town.

Twelfth-century sources allege a tradition of monastic foundation at Tewkesbury dating to the early-8th century, although no evidence has yet been found to corroborate this.[55]

It is known that below-ground remains relating to the Benedictine Abbey of St Mary survive to the south of the site. Waterlogging, due to the proximity of the site to the River Swillgate, may have created an anaerobic environment below-ground and preserved some perishable items relating to the history of the Abbey and wider town.

Below-ground archaeology has the potential to reveal the layout of the Abbey prior to the destruction of many buildings in the Reformation.[56]

The site of Holme Castle, south of the town centre adjacent to the Prior's Park estate, is a Saxon and Medieval manor thought to have been destroyed in the early-13th century. The site is also likely to preserve nationally important archaeology remains.[57] Future research and investigation on this site would likely enhance our understanding of the site itself and the early history of the wider town.



Looking south-east across the historic abbey precincts , any remains of which remain hidden.

52 Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record, HER 5517

53 John Dixon, T.H.S Historical Briefing No. 1 – The Crescent. Tewkesbury Historical Society.

54 Tewkesbury Historical Society, 'Early Town Development.' Extracted from Alan Hannan, 'Excavations at Holm Hill, Tewkesbury', in Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Transactions, Volume CV, 1997. https://tewkesburyhistory.org/Early-Town-Development.

55 Ibid.

56 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1009317

57 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1002100

Stories, People and Events

As an ancient town, Tewkesbury has many associations and stories to tell, often less tangible since they are not expressed physically through the built environment or the landscape. One notable name associated with Tewkesbury is that of the painter J.M.W Turner, who produced several sketches of the Abbey and the surrounding buildings in the later-18th century and may have owned the burgage in Turner Court.[58] Shakespeare was familiar with the town, giving one of his characters in Henry IV a wit 'as thick as Tewkesbury Mustard', whilst the Royal Hop Hotel is referenced in Charles Dickens' first novel, *The Pickwick Papers*.[59] Less well known but equally important contributions to the fabric of Tewkesbury's history were made by figures such as John Rogers, the 'Grand Old Man of Tewkesbury' who taught himself to read and write at the age of 18, later publishing a text on the history of the alleys, courts and lanes of Tewkesbury which is still used by local historians.[60] These people, their stories and the many others which are known locally, contribute greatly to the intangible heritage of Tewkesbury.

Summary Statement of Significance

Tewkesbury's history as a prosperous commercial and trading town is clearly demonstrated through its surviving mercantile heritage and industrial infrastructure. This includes 15th-century merchants' houses, burgage plots, alleys, inns, mills and warehouses. The centrality of the town's relationship to the water, and its historic resilience to continued flooding, is reflected both in surviving infrastructure and in the spatial layout of the town. The significance of the Abbey to the economic and spiritual life of Tewkesbury is apparent in the visual prominence of the Norman tower and the porous boundaries between the precincts and Church Street. The changing fabric of religious life is demonstrated by the range of 18th and 19th-century churches, chapels and meeting houses elsewhere in the town centre.

As well as embodying important aspects of both local and national history, Tewkesbury's heritage contributes highly towards the aesthetic value of the town and does much to enhance the public realm. The historic structures present a range of architectural styles, materials, proportions and features including grand classical façades and jettied, timber-framed dwellings. Hidden evidence of the town's history, which survives in the form of historic plots, the routes of the smaller streets and below-ground archaeology, still has much to reveal about the history of this special and intriguing town.



The Nave of the Abbey Church.

58 Tewkesbury Historical Society, J.M.W. Turner, R.A.: His Presence in Tewkesbury. https://tewkesburyhistory.org/J-M-W-Turner; Tewkesbury Historical Society, 91-92 Church Street – The Old Curiosity Shop. https://tewkesburyhistory.org/91-92-Church-Street-The-Old-Curiosity-Shop

59 https://www.tewkesburymustard.co.uk/history-of-tewkesbury-mustard/

60 Tewkesbury Historical Society, John Rogers (1808-1909), https://tewkesburyhistory.org/John-Rogers

2.5 The Value Of Tewkesbury's Heritage

The benefit of Tewkesbury's heritage can be broadly divided into three areas – economic, social and environmental. For ease, these areas are discussed separately below, however they are inextricably linked and should not be seen as discrete from one another. For instance, a well-preserved historic environment can attract economic investment, which in turn encourages the creation of a thriving town with many local amenities. The provision of amenities can enhance the well-being of local people and encourage long-term residence and diversity in the local population. Similarly, the benefits of taking climate action in our built heritage go beyond the reduction of carbon emissions; reducing running costs, creating healthy, comfortable internal environments, increasing market values and avoiding redundant buildings.

Economic Value

Multiple studies have shown the important, measurable contribution made by the heritage sector to the national economy. This is measured across a range of sub-sectors including construction, libraries, archives, museums, architectural and engineering services. A recent economic study commissioned by Historic England identified that England's heritage sector contributed £45.1 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) to the UK Economy in 2021, and employed over 538,000 workers. The heritage sector in the South West region contributed 7% of the total GVA (Gross Value Added) in 2021, compared with 24% generated in London and 2% generated in the North East region.[61]

Historic buildings, properties with historic features and those situated in historic settings are likely to be of higher value, with houses in conservation areas fetching a premium of 23% on average. Similarly, properties sited on well-maintained canals and waterways can command a premium of up to 20%.[62]

In 2010, analysis of economic activity across a range of towns in England found that areas with strong historic character attracted independent businesses, especially in the leisure, retail, cultural and hospitality industries. Further research subsequently demonstrated that businesses operating in historic buildings benefited from a 'heritage premium' of 4.4% GVA above the average business in the UK.[63] 26% of all creative industries in the South West of England are based in conservation areas.[64]

As a town with a rich heritage which is visually appreciable within the historic core, Tewkesbury is in a prime position to capitalise on the economic advantages set out above. The town supports a range of independent businesses, which sets it apart from the many urban high streets where large chains predominate and helps resist the national trend of high street decline. The quantity and quality of historic building stock in the commercial core makes Tewkesbury an attractive option for independent retailers, creative industries, and the hospitality sector.

Tewkesbury's status as a visitor destination also relies heavily upon the preservation of its distinctive historic character. Pre-Covid pandemic, in 2019, 1.8 million people visited Tewkesbury district, spending £64 million.

Staying trips within the district performed better relative to other county districts including the Forest of Dean and Stroud.[65] Tewkesbury Abbey attracted almost half a million visitors between 2012 and 2019, surpassing other important heritage attractions in Gloucestershire including the historic sites at Newark Park and Berkeley Castle.[66]

Although the Abbey is the best advertised and most popular attraction in the town, the status of Tewkesbury as a historic market town also makes it a highly attractive destination for those visiting the South West of England; market research for nearby Stroud indicated that 75% of those visiting the Cotswolds sought access to market towns.[67] Other key draws for visitors noted in the research findings included interesting architecture, local viewpoints, rivers, canals and waterways.[68] These attributes are all accessible within Tewkesbury town centre, which is situated just outside the Cotswolds AONB, attracting visitors and investment catering to the tourism industry.

61 GVA is a quantitative assessment of the value of goods and serves produced, minus the cost of input and materials consumed during the production of those goods and services.

62 Heritage Lottery Fund, *Values and Benefits of Heritage: A Research Review*, 2016. https://visionforsidmouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/values_and_benefits_of_heritage_2015.pdf

63 Heritage Lottery Fund, *Values and Benefits of Heritage: A Research Review*, 2016. https://visionforsidmouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/values_and_benefits_of_heritage_2015.pdf; Historic England, Heritage Counts 2018: South West, 2018. https://historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2018/sw-regional-report-2018/

64 Historic England, Heritage Counts 2018: South West, 2018. https://historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2018/sw-regional-report-2018/

65 The South West Research Company, *The Economic Impact of Gloucestershire's Visitor Economy 2019*, 2020. https://www.cotswolds.com/dbimgs/Gloucestershire%20&%20districts%202019.pdf

66 Gloucestershire Live, Gloucestershire's most and least popular attractions according to Visit Britain, 2020.

67 Stroud District Council, *A Heritage Strategy for Stroud District: Valuing our Historic Environment and Assets, Supplementary Planning Advice*, 2018. https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/1164372/heritage-strategy_feb-2018_updated-jan-2020.pdf

68 Stroud District Council, *A Heritage Strategy for Stroud District: Valuing our Historic Environment and Assets, Supplementary Planning Advice*, 2018. https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/1164372/heritage-strategy_feb-2018_updated-jan-2020.pdf

Research by Visit England showed that eating out, shopping and visiting bars or pubs rank amongst the top activities which day visitors to locations across England regularly engage in.[69] The commercial core of Tewkesbury marries the provision of these experiences with access to the historic environment, thereby meeting multiple demands of the visiting public simultaneously.

Alongside the more visible elements of Tewkesbury's heritage, people are also attracted to visit, shop, eat and stay in the town centre due to the draw of the 'Mop Fair', an annual fair held in Tewkesbury since 1609, and the annual medieval festival.[70] The latter event, which centres around the re-enactment of the 1471 Battle of Tewkesbury, draws visitors to enjoy music, dance, drama, exhibitions, refreshment and a market on the Registered Battlefield, while other events are held further north in the town centre.[71] The weekend-long event provides a regular income stream, with accommodation in the town centre becoming booked up swiftly each year.[72]

Tewkesbury's heritage, both tangible and intangible, thus supports the local economy through attracting many annual visitors and investment from sectors drawn to the characterful historic environment. Importantly, the tourism industry also creates local employment opportunities. These include jobs directly related to the heritage sector (in the visitor centre and the town's two museums for example) but also in retail, catering and hospitality.[73] There is potential for further investment and larger visitor numbers to generate additional local employment.



The heritage sector contributes towards

economic prosperity

and growth at a local and national level.



Analysis of the heritage tourism economy carried out in 2010 by Oxford Economics showed that

30%

of overseas visitors cite heritage as the biggest single motivation for their visit to the UK – the largest single factor for non-business visitors.[74]



Between 2011 and 2021, heritage employment growth outstripped the rest of the UK economy, rising by

24.6%

as opposed to the job-market average of 10.3%.[75]

69 Visit England, England Tourism Factsheet 2019. https://www.visitbritain.org/research-insights/value-tourism-england

70 Tewkesbury Museum, *Tewkesbury Mop Fair*. https://www.tewkesburymuseum.org/the-collection/the-object-collection/fairground-display/tewkesbury-mop-fair/

71 https://www.tewkesburymedievalfestival.co.uk/

72 https://www.tewkesburymedievalfestival.co.uk/

73 Nomis, Labour Market Profile – Tewkesbury. https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157377/report.aspx#tabrespop

74 Heritage Lottery Fund, *Values and Benefits of Heritage: A Research Review*, 2016. https://visionforsidmouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/values_and_benefits_of_heritage_2015.pdf;

75 Historic England, The Economic Value of the Heritage Sector, 2023. https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-economy/economic-value/

Social Value and Well-Being

Although the well-being benefits of heritage are harder to quantify than the economic or environmental benefits, several studies have shown that heritage can enhance mental and physical health, promote local pride and social cohesion, as well as providing opportunities for 'upskilling' and improving employment prospects for local people.[76] The Government's 2022 Levelling Up White Paper identified heritage as a key element which will support a nationwide increase in pride of place, including "*people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community*".[77]

In 2018, the National Lottery Heritage Fund ran a training and volunteering initiative across 10 heritage sites aimed at helping long-term unemployed or socially isolated people in Greater Manchester, known as the Volunteering for Wellbeing Project. One year after the project concluded, 75% of participants reported experiencing a significant boost in wellbeing, with 60% maintaining this for the next two to three years and 30% securing employment as a result of the skills acquired during the project.[78]

A recent telephone survey of 4,200 households demonstrated that most UK households appreciate local heritage, with 93% attesting that it raises their quality of life. 80% thought local heritage made their area a better place to live in. More recent polling by Public First showed that heritage ranked third when voters were asked to list their main sources of civic pride.[79]

The importance of Tewkesbury's heritage to local people is demonstrated by the presence of the Tewkesbury Historical Society, an active organisation which has published much literature on the history of the town and holds regular talks and events.[80] Attitudes towards frequent flooding demonstrate that residents of Tewkesbury draw pride and a sense of local identity from the town's resilience to this historic and persistent threat.[81]

With a diverse heritage consisting of vernacular and civic buildings, industrial architecture, places of worship and historic open spaces, Tewkesbury is well-placed to deliver significant wellbeing benefits and to connect with diverse audiences. In fact, the town centre contains every 'type' of heritage used to assess the well-being impact of visiting heritage sites in an important 2014 study by Fukiwara et al.[82]

The annual medieval festival provides an important nucleus for the celebration of both local and national heritage and is an accessible event, open to all ages and free of charge. The positive impact of the participatory events offered during the festival are supported by various studies, which have demonstrated the therapeutic effects of active engagement with heritage such as museum object handling.[83] The festival itself is organised by volunteers. Volunteering in the heritage sector has been shown to reduce symptoms of mental health conditions, improve life satisfaction, contribute to skills development and strengthen social networks. This makes the provision of such opportunities an important part of the festival's contribution to well-being through heritage.[84]

Volunteering placements have previously been provided at both the Tewkesbury Museum and the John Moore Museum, and future conservation projects within the town could provide opportunities for 'upskilling' local people with highly sought-after traditional craft skills.

In 2019, a study found that spending time in historic places could have a biological and psychological effect. Visitors' cortisol levels were measured before and after their visit to an historic site, with the results indicating a **40% increase** in subjective well-being and a **60% decrease** in stress levels.[85]



Visiting heritage sites has been estimated to save over **£193.2m** to NHS from the reduction in GP visits and use of mental health services.[86]

Community-based heritage projects can promote social cohesion: Research into the impact of volunteering shows that the majority (**92%**) of Heritage Lottery Fund volunteers meet new people through their involvement with HLF projects and **35%** of volunteers sustain these relationships.[87]



76 APPG on Conservation, Places and People, *First Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Conservation, Places & People*, 2022. https://conservationplacespeople.appg.info/resources/CPP-APPF-First-Report---The-Value-of-Heritage-011222.pdf

77 HM Government, Levelling Up the United Kingdom, 2022. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom

78 Historic England, *Heritage and the Wellbeing Economy*, 2023. https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-economy/wellbeing/

79 APPG on Conservation, Places and People, *First Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Conservation, Places & People*, 2022. https://conservationplacespeople.appg.info/resources/CPP-APPF-First-Report---The-Value-of-Heritage-011222.pdf

80 https://tewkesburyhistory.org/home

81 Sustainable Flood Memories, *Tewkesbury and Floods: Known by Association?* 2012. https://floodmemories.wordpress.com/

82 Historic England, *Heritage and the Wellbeing Economy*, 2023. https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-economy/wellbeing/

83 Historic England, *Improving Mental Health Through Heritage*, 2023. https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-society/mental-health/

84 Historic England, *The Benefits of Heritage Volunteering*, 2023. https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-society/volunteering/

85 Historic England, *Improving Mental Health Through Heritage*, 2023. https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-society/mental-health/

86 Ibid.

87 Heritage Lottery Fund, Values and Benefits of Heritage: A Research Review, 2016. https://visionforsidmouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/values_and_benefits_of_heritage_2015.pdf

Environmental Value

The heritage sector has a crucial role to play in reducing emissions from the UK construction industry and achieving the 2050 net zero commitment. According to the UK Green Buildings Council, in 2019, buildings (both their construction and operation) were responsible for up to 43% of the UK's total greenhouse gas emissions. Retrofitting (a term used to describe the process of improving the environmental performance of buildings through modern intervention) and re-using existing building stock will reduce the need for new buildings. It will also help to avoid the release of 'embodied carbon' – the CO^2 generated during the construction, maintenance and demolition of a building.[88] The act of constructing of a new building could account for 28% of that building's total carbon emissions over a 60 year period, whilst a responsibly retro-fitted Victorian terrace will emit less carbon over a 30-year period than a new-build replacement of a similar size.[89]

With almost every building lining the three main streets being statutorily listed, Tewkesbury represents an example of how historic places can be adapted to serve the needs of a viable modern town whilst preserving their special historic character. Its ancient buildings have been adapted to serve as museums, shops, cafés and residences, whilst others (such as public houses) have retained their original functions. Unlike modern purpose-built structures, which are often prohibitively difficult to adapt, historic buildings are more likely to be flexible and have the capacity to accommodate multiple uses at once. Indeed, many of the timber-framed buildings on the main streets were originally designed to be multi-functional; providing residential accommodation on the upper levels with shopfronts facing the street on the ground floor and small industrial structures such as workshops and breweries to the rear.

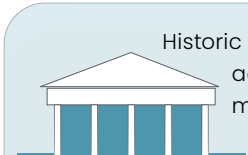
When approached with a robust understanding of their history, significance and capacity for change, there is ample scope for vacant upper floors and disused structures to be brought back into viable and productive use.

There are also many opportunities to enhance the environmental benefits of re-purposed building stock through responsible retrofit. Such interventions could take the form of thermal improvements to historic structures through adding roof, loft, wall or floor insulation, addressing thermal bridges, upgrading windows and installing air source heat pumps. As well as improving the comfort of users, Historic England have estimated that the refurbishment and retrofit of older buildings could reduce the carbon emissions of those buildings by more than 60% by 2050.[90]

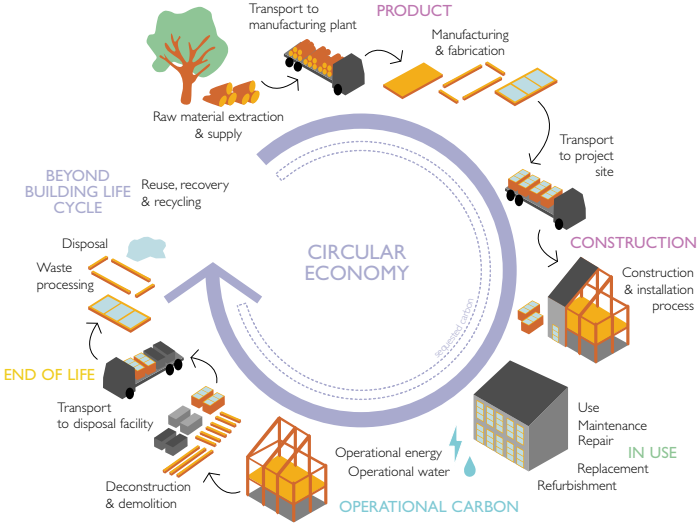
Retrofitting and refurbishing historic buildings can help to meet environmental goals and green business commitments whilst lowering energy bills, increasing asset values, reducing maintenance costs, improving comfort and wellbeing and protecting our irreplaceable heritage against the impacts of climate change.



Environmental benefits are also inherent in the preservation of the historic open spaces around the town centre, which provide ecological and biodiversity benefits. The Severn Ham, an ancient water meadow perpetually managed as common land, has never been developed and is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Tewkesbury Nature Reserve, which borders the A38 to the east of the town centre, also constitutes historically open land which intersects with the eastern extent of the Registered Battlefield.



Historic buildings tend to be durable and adaptable, unlike purpose-built modern buildings. Looking after existing building stock saves money, prevents the release of embodied carbon, and retains the special character of historic places.



Source: Beyond Net Zero Toolkit, August 2023, Purcell

88 APPG on Conservation, Places and People, *First Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Conservation, Places & People*, 2022. https://conservationplacespeople.appg.info/resources/CPP-APPF-First-Report---The-Value-of-Heritage-011222.pdf

89 Ibid.

90 Historic England, *There's No Place Like Old Homes: Re-Use and Recycle to Reduce Carbon*, 2019. https://historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2019/hc2019-re-use-recycle-to-reduce-carbon/





Back

HERITAGE STRATEGY





3.1 Challenges and Opportunities

3.1.1 Challenges

This section explores the current key challenges facing Tewkesbury's historic environment as well as the opportunities that exist to enhance the heritage and the contribution it makes to the local community, economy and environment. Potential solutions to these challenges have been explored with examples where relevant. It should be noted that the challenges and opportunities are not presented in order of priority.

Challenge: Healings Mill

Healings Mill, whilst contributing historic value and serving as a distinctive local landmark, has been unoccupied since 2006 and is now derelict and deteriorating. There is significant subsidence, foliage growth, water staining, boarded up windows and clear neglect of this important building. Its current condition considerably depreciates the aesthetic value of the complex.

The fabric of vacant buildings deteriorates at a much faster rate than occupied structures due to lack of regular maintenance, poor ventilation, water ingress and plant growth, and thus as long as the Mill remains empty the integrity of the fabric will continue to decline. Vacant buildings are also targets for anti-social behaviour and vandalism.[01] The associated office buildings and former 19th-century brewery opposite on the east bank of the Mill Avon, are similarly vacant and in a deteriorating condition. Refurbishing and finding viable future uses for these buildings is critical to preserving the historic and architectural value of this part of Tewkesbury and would represent a significant improvement to the public realm.



One of the principal elevations of Healing's Mill – showing many boarded-up windows. There is significant evidence of water ingress to the right of the image and the gutters are blocked with vegetation.

Potential Solutions: Healings Mill

In the current Local Plan , the site of Healings Mill is identified as a Site Allocation for 100 residential dwellings as part of a mixed use development.[02] Although there are examples of historic mills which have been successfully converted to residential use, regular flooding in Tewkesbury could make this use less suitable for Healings Mill.[03] The constraints in relation to safe means of escape present a considerable challenge in terms of residential use in the context of the low height of the Quay Bridge and the known flood risks. It is therefore important that alternative options are considered, to ensure that any agreed future usage is optimal both for the building, its future occupants, and the wider town.

Healings Mill is a large site which may be suitable for a range of uses which could include residential but with a proportion of other uses such as retail and leisure, cafés and restaurants, education or tourism-related development.[04] Research has shown, for example, that businesses (particularly those in creative sectors) are often drawn to the distinctive character of redundant factories and warehouses.[05]

Current ownership of the site is holding back its regeneration and opportunities to release the site for development should be sought to secure its future. This may include compulsory purchase, a joint venture with a developer or a private sector led scheme.

A feasibility study should be commissioned to assess the viability of all options for the future of the building and wider site. Following the production of a feasibility study, the Local Authority could initiate a national design competition to generate exemplary proposals for the site. This would also provide an opportunity to raise the national profile of Tewkesbury and its commitment to high-quality, heritage-led design.

01 Historic England, *Vacant Historic Buildings: Guidelines on Managing Risks*, 2018.

02 Tewkesbury Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2011-2031. https://tewkesbury.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Tewkesbury-Borough-Plan-Final-Version-with-front-cover.pdf

03 Examples of historic mills converted successfully to residential use include Shedkm's conversion of several historic cotton mills in Manchester to provide 200 homes: https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/buildings/shedkm-creates-200-homes-on-listed-cotton-mill-site-in-manchester#:~:text=The%20conversion%20of%20the%20listed,in%20adjacent%20new%2Dbuild%20Phoenix.

04 Tewkesbury Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2011-2031. https://tewkesbury.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Tewkesbury-Borough-Plan-Final-Version-with-front-cover.pdf

05 APPG on Conservation, Places and People, First Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Conservation, Places & People, 2022. https://conservationplacespeople.appg.info/resources/CPP-APPF-First-Report---The-Value-of-Heritage-011222.pdf

The re-purposing of structures like Healings Mill has often spurred additional regeneration in formerly industrial areas.[06] There are additional opportunities for development in the immediate vicinity of Healings Mill (including the derelict former brewery on the Mill Avon and dilapidated properties on Quay Street). This currently under-utilised area of Tewkesbury could be harnessed to provide a new quarter in this former industrial area within the town centre, as a counterpoint to the Abbey.

Case Study: Brierfield Mills, Lancashire

A joint-venture between Pendle Council and local developer Barnfield Investment Properties saw this 19th-century cotton spinning mill successfully transformed into a mixed-use development including a new leisure facility, an extensive adult learning centre, a canal marina, a creative arts studio and 70 residential apartments. The mill is Grade II listed and is sited within the Brierfield Mills Conservation Area.



Challenge: Visual and physical impact of cars and car parking

As a town at the heart of its community and not on directly connected to the railway, Tewkesbury is subject to high levels of surface and street car parking for use by both residents and visitors. Both the detracting visual impact and the physical impact of the traffic created present a challenge for the town particularly in the context of the climate emergency. Reduction in cars will visually enhance the historic environment of the town centre as well as making it a more pleasant place to be and reduce carbon emissions in the town centre.

Potential Solutions: Visual and physical impact of cars and car parking

Undertaking a car parking audit for the town would be a beneficial starting point in order to understand where people are parking, where there is over or under provision of parking spaces and where people are going once they have parked. This evidence base will guide the various solutions available including rationalisation of Council operated parking, freeing up sites for other purposes; identifying suitable tourist coach drop off / pick up points as well as parking in a discrete location for coaches; where enhancements should be made to existing public transport provision (e.g bus routes across the motorway to the new Garden Town and railway station) and active travel provision (e.g enhanced cycle routes).

Challenge: Vacant Upper Floors

As with towns and high streets across the UK, Tewkesbury town centre contains many vacant upper floors and some vacant retail units. This results in buildings being underutilised or unused when they could be generating income for the town (either directly through retail provision, or indirectly through enhancing the town's offer and encouraging residents and visitors to spend in the town centre), leading in turn to greater investment and public services. Empty shops can discourage investment and unoccupied buildings in general are more likely to suffer the impacts of poor ventilation, damp and general lack of maintenance.

Potential Solutions: Vacant Upper Floors

Finding viable uses for vacant historic buildings would be of benefit to the growth of the town, residents, visitors and the structures themselves. Many of the buildings within the historic core are more readily adaptable than purpose-built structures such as modern office blocks. As such there is ample potential to find new uses for whole buildings and/or individual floors over existing commercial units. Future uses may include residential dwellings, offices, community spaces, cafés, bars and entertainment venues. Indeed, recent research has concluded that post-pandemic, high streets are more likely to succeed if they become multi-purpose places, which support retail and residential uses alongside leisure, cultural spaces, educational facilities, healthcare, and offices.[07]

There are many actions which can be taken to return vacant floors or buildings to viable use dependent on local factors such as the availability of funding. These can range from 'meanwhile use' to full renovation and conversion.

06 APPG on Conservation, Places and People, First Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Conservation, Places & People, 2022. https://conservationplacespeople.appg.info/resources/CPP-APPF-First-Report---The-Value-of-Heritage-011222.pdf

07 House of Commons Library, Town Centre Regeneration, December 2021. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9218/CBP-9218.pdf

Case Study: Pop-Up Shops in Newport High Street

'Meanwhile' and pop-up use can temporarily fill vacant properties and can provide an opportunity to test new ideas and foster long-term strategies in the future.[08] After the Covid-19 pandemic, the Isle of Wight Council set up pop-up shops in Newport High Street, within vacant properties. All traders reported a successful experience and would participate in a similar scheme again. Sales exceeded expectations, additional footfall was attracted to the High Street, and the scheme received positive media coverage. The project was self-funded by the Local Authority.[09]

Case Study: Improving Shopfronts to Reduce Vacancy: Leicester City Council

In 2020, Leicester City Council offered business owners a 50/50 grant scheme to improve vacant shopfronts and make them more attractive to tenants. The scheme won Leicester City Council the 'Best Small Business Friendly Initiative' award. The project has had a positive impact on retail businesses and improved the appearance of the public realm.[10]

Case Study: Conversion of a Grade I Listed Georgian Town House

In 2013, The Brantingham Group successfully converted the vacant Grade I listed Norwood House in the Beverley Conservation Area from a house into offices. The project secured a commercially viable future for the Georgian townhouse which was consequently removed from the Heritage at Risk Register.[11] The quality of the project and its contribution to preserving local heritage was recognised by the Georgian Group.[12]



Norwood House Beverley. *Historic England Archive.*

As discussed in detail in Section 2.5, Tewkesbury is in a prime position to attract independent businesses in the leisure, retail, cultural, hospitality and creative industries; research having shown that these sectors are drawn to areas with a strong historic character. Further incentives for potential occupants of vacant buildings could include offering subsidised business and / or council tax rates. Research indicates that the retail economy has benefited from the recent reduction in business rates across England and Wales.[13]

Consideration could be given to commissioning accessible guidance on the conversion of vacant and partially occupied historic buildings, to supplement existing documents such as the Tewkesbury Town Centre Urban Design Framework (2002) and the Tewkesbury Shopfront Guide (2021). Examples of succinct, accessible conversion guidance includes Ashfield District Council's 2019 "Guide for Converting Shops to Residential Supplementary Planning Document."[14] Other Local Authorities have embedded guidance within wider shopfront design guidance.[15] Such documents provide helpful information for applicants and parameters against which to assess planning applications.

Improved transport connections to the town centre will also facilitate increased visitor numbers and build confidence in the sustainability of the commercial core, encouraging a reduction in the number of vacant historic (and non-historic) buildings. A successful network provides multiple routes in and out of the town centre, a range of street types that facilitate all users and encourage walking and cycling, and clear connections to existing routes and facilities.[16] There are clear opportunities to improve links to the M5 and the railway station to the east of the town, and consideration should also be given to improving bus services and active travel options.[17]

08 Local Government Association. Dealing with Empty Shops – A Good Practice Guide for Councils, 2020. https://www.local.gov.uk/dealing-empty-shops-guide#action-framework

09 Local Government Association. Dealing With Empty Shops: Isle of Wight Council, 2021. https://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies/dealing-empty-shops-isle-wight-council

10 Local Government Association. Dealing With Empty Shops: Leicester City Council, 2021.

11 Historic England, Retail & Office Space. https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/constructive-conservation/sustainable-growth-for-historic-places/retail-office-space/

12 https://www.savills.co.uk/insight-and-opinion/savills-news/171018-0/the-georgian-group-architectural-awards-2013--winners-announced---sponsored-by-savills

13 Savills, *Business Rates Revaluation 2023*: The Retail Impact, 2022. https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/336721-0

14 https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/media/8d8500686f92a1d/final-spd-jan-2019.pdf

15 https://www.merton.gov.uk/system/files?file=shop_front_cab_060417_website.pdf

16 Tewkesbury Borough Council & Tewkesbury Town Council, Tewkesbury Town Regeneration Supplementary Planning Document, March 2019.

17 Tewkesbury Borough Council & Tewkesbury Town Council, Tewkesbury Town Regeneration Supplementary Planning Document, March 2019.

Challenge: Inappropriate Alteration and Lack of Maintenance to Listed Buildings

Nearly every building on Tewkesbury's main three streets is listed. Many of these buildings are well cared for, however those that are not detract from the appearance of the historic core. Inappropriate alteration includes the replacement of historic sash and casement windows with uPVC and the installation of unsympathetic modern shopfronts. Some listed buildings suffer from lack of maintenance, which manifests in peeling paint, efflorescence, and decaying timber window frames. This is detrimental to the public realm as well as being harmful to the historic fabric of the structures.



No.24 High Street, Grade II* listed, is a 17th-house with an 18th-century extension to the rear. The historic character of the building is obscured by the deep 20th-century fascia and modern plate glass shopfront.



Nos.43 and 44 High Street are Grade II listed, a pair of mid-late 18th century houses. Whilst No.44 retains an attractive 19th-century shopfront, No.43 has been replaced with a 20th-century frontage which detracts from the aesthetic value of the buildings itself, and from the setting of the adjacent No.44 and the early-19th century inn to the south (both Grade II listed).

Potential Solutions Inappropriate Alteration and Lack of Maintenance to Listed Buildings

Improve Guidance

Guidance on the maintenance and conversion of historic buildings can be an invaluable tool for owners of historic buildings looking to make changes and improvements. There are already several design and technical guides on Tewkesbury Borough Council's "Heritage Advice" webpage, as well as links to Historic England's "Home Advice" and SPAB's "Advice" pages. Consideration might be given to commissioning or consolidating accessible and engaging guidance more specific to the historic building typologies within Tewkesbury town centre; particularly timber-framed buildings, Victorian townhouses, and industrial buildings such as breweries and warehouses.

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for the Tewkesbury Conservation Area is also a vital tool for building owners and occupiers. The existing CAAMP is relatively out of date and would benefit from a review and update to ensure it remains fit for purpose. An exemplar CAAMP provides information in a succinct and accessible format and includes appropriate guidance for owners and occupiers on maintaining, repairing and altering buildings in the conservation area. Guidance on the consent process and appropriate means of retrofitting historic buildings may also be beneficially included within the CAAMP.

Promote Success Stories

More could be done to publicise 'success stories', where maintenance or sensitive refurbishment, informed by a robust understanding of history and significance, has led to increased property values and/or furthered commercial success. Recent projects funded in Tewkesbury by the Historic England High Street Heritage Action Zone scheme may provide material for case studies. There are also many examples of HSHAZ projects from further afield which are relevant to Tewkesbury and could be used to highlight the benefits of sensitive restoration, such as No. 14 Whitefriargate in Hull and various historic shopfronts in Nottingham.[18]

Review and Update Article 4 Directions

Article 4 Directions can be a useful tool in historic areas to provide greater control with regards to development and change by increasing the types of works for which planning permission is required. Tewkesbury has an existing Article 4 Direction which restricts certain permitted development rights for unlisted buildings, however it was developed in the 1980s and may no longer be fit for purpose. A review of the existing Direction and, if necessary, instigation of a new one that meets the current needs of the town's historic building stock would be highly beneficial. This will include identifying the types of works which have, or are likely to, take place such as replacement of windows with uPVC, and that will particularly affect the special historic character of Tewkesbury. Publicising the existing content of the Article 4 Direction is also vital to ensure that owners and occupiers are seeking appropriate advice and consent from the Council before undertaking works.

Increase Awareness of Responsibilities

Easily accessible and succinct information around the responsibilities of listed building owners could help promote regular maintenance and discourage unconsented works. Although the Local Authority has a range of enforcement actions at its disposal, damage to or loss of historic fabric is irreversible and detrimental impacts can be expensive to mitigate retrospectively. Misconceptions about owning listed buildings abound; many assume that no changes can be made to a listed building, whereas others may believe incorrectly that works to the interior of a building are exempt from Listed Building Consent. The Local Authority might consider expanding the information currently available online, for example with an FAQ section for owners of listed buildings. The Council's website states that undertaking work to a listed building without Listed Building Consent is a criminal offence.[19] This could be expanded to highlight the various ways in which the Local Authority may take enforcement action as well as a review of the enforcement actions currently being utilised.

Proactively, the use of social and digital media to communicate key messages around the benefits of maintenance, how to undertake specific maintenance tasks (such as gutter cleaning and maintaining timber windows) and why looking after a historic building is in owners' interests would demonstrate a commitment to raising standards and awareness of the needs of Tewkesbury's historic buildings.

18 https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/impact/hull/; https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-business/planning-and-building-control/building-a-better-nottingham/heritage-regeneration/heritage-action-zone-and-conservation-area-grants/

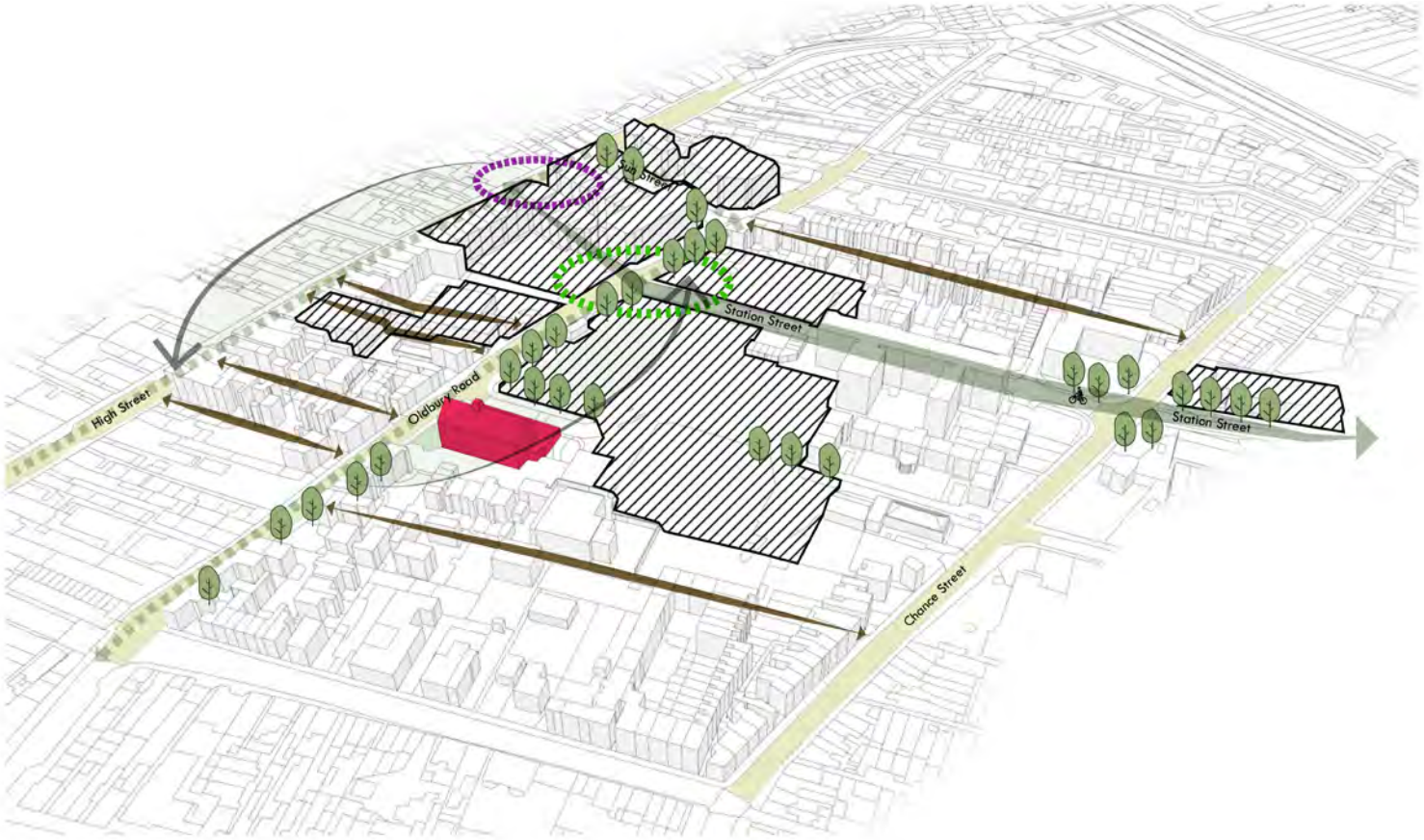
19 https://tewkesbury.gov.uk/services/planning/conservation/listed-buildings/

3.1.2 Opportunities

Opportunity: Spring Gardens Site

The vacant swimming pool site and the large area of surface car parking which surround it present a clear opportunity to enhance this detracting and underutilised part of the town centre. Better integrating this area east of the High Street would provide a much improved setting for the historic core whilst also providing new housing and / or services for the town.

The former swimming pool site is identified as an opportunity site by the Council; however, it would be beneficial for the redevelopment of this site to be considered as part of a wider scheme. Any scheme must be of high-quality design, sensitive to its conservation area setting and could draw upon the historic layout of the area lost in the post-war period. A residential-led, mixed use development is likely to be most successful here with enhanced connectivity across Oldbury Road to the High Street. This site is explored in the Town Centre Masterplan (2024).



LDA Design's evolving masterplan proposals for the Spring Gardens site. Copyright LDA Design 2024.

Opportunity: Enhancement of the Conservation Area

Tewkesbury is a well-maintained town with high quality historic buildings. However, there are opportunities for enhancement of both the architectural character and public realm, which would improve the experience of the historic town centre. This opportunity is explored in more detail in the Tewkesbury Town Centre Masterplan (2024) but includes:

- Opportunities to enhance the public experience of the High Street through reduction in traffic, broader pavements, greening and street furniture provision
- Increased crossing points over the busy roads of Church Street, Barton Street and the High Street
- New pockets of high-quality public realm at the Crescent and the Cross
- Long-term opportunities for the sensitive refurbishment (or replacement) of unsympathetic and detracting buildings such as those at Bishops Walk.

Opportunity: Marketing Tewkesbury

Tewkesbury has a wide range of attractions with potential to attract a diverse visitor base. Currently the Abbey is both the most-visited and the best-marketed site, with specific brown signage on the M5 motorway for example. There is considerable opportunity to market Tewkesbury more effectively and thus to draw increased visitor numbers, spending and investment to the town. A starting point would be to commission a marketing, tourism and branding strategy centred on the heritage of Tewkesbury. This would set out how to draw visitors to attractions beyond the Abbey and the annual Medieval Festival, highlighting all the other features on offer (e.g. the museums, riverside walks and the Ham, the medieval high street and the battlefield walk). Specific opportunities could include:

- Better physical and digital signposting to the heritage and cultural offer of Tewkesbury
- Collaboration with other nearby historic towns – Pershore, Evesham and Winchcombe – to more efficiently drive tourism and investment in the area
- Improving the sense of arrival at the railway station, better signposting to Tewkesbury town centre and enhancing transport links to the town centre to welcome visitors who arrive this way and improve access to the town
- Similarly, ensuring new residents of Garden Town are drawn to Tewkesbury, use its services and enjoy its heritage assets. This will likely be acheived through enhanced transport and active travel connections.
- Developing a positive and mutually beneficial relationship with the new retail outlet village to ensure it is seen as a benefit rather than a threat to the town centre.

Opportunity: Tewkesbury's Heritage as a Vehicle for Upskilling and Education

Tewkesbury as a Hub for Heritage Skills

The conservation of the historic environment relies on the availability of skilled craftspeople who understand the construction techniques and materials used in traditional buildings and have the skills to conserve and repair them. There is a well-documented shortage of skilled craftspeople in England and a need to provide training to prevent further erosion of the skills base.[20] The appetite for training in traditional skills such as carpentry, lime plastering, stained glass and blacksmithing is illustrated by the popularity of courses held at the recently established Heritage and Rural Skills Centre in Wiltshire.[21] With its vast and varied collection of traditional building stock, Tewkesbury has much potential to become a focus for the provision of training in heritage craft skills and education.

Some funding is available for heritage organisations and Local Authorities to provide on-site training experiences, where attendees can observe craftspeople at work and/or gain hands-on experience. This can be in the form of one-off training days, such as the Heritage Skills Experience Day held in Preston in September 2023, or more formalised arrangements such as the regular Working Parties held by SPAB (the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings). There are also longer-term training opportunities which enable students to learn about traditional craftsmanship on site – the Prince's Foundation's annual Building Craft Programme for example organises 15-week industry placements on projects around the UK.[22]



A lime plastering course organised by SPAB, 2023. Copyright Rachael Stoplar. ***permission pending***

Some higher education institutions are also working to deliver heritage-related projects. With funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the University of Northampton are supporting practitioners to disseminate knowledge on community heritage, natural heritage, industrial heritage and the heritage of local architecture in Corby. By bringing together practitioners, heritage organisations and schools, the project hopes to develop heritage skills and sector knowledge, whilst driving engagement with local heritage. Practical workshops and site visits are envisaged alongside sessions on developing funding bids and building strategic partnerships.[23]



Repair to a historic wall during a SPAB Working Party, 2023. Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. ***permission pending***

20 National Heritage Training Group, Traditional Building Craft Skills: Assessing the Need, Meeting the Challenge, 2005. https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/research/traditional-building-craft-skills-skills-needs-analysis-of-the-building-heritage-sector-in-england-2005/

21 https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/oxfordshire-buckinghamshire-berkshire/heritage-and-rural-skills-centre/events

22 The Prince's Foundation, Building Craft Programme 2023-24, 2023. https://d16zhuza4xzjgx.cloudfront.net/files/building-craft-programme-2023-24-programme-overview-9eef3765.pdf

23 https://www.northampton.ac.uk/community/heritage-projects-and-partnerships/heritage-skills-hub/

The rich built heritage within Tewkesbury could make the town centre a highly desirable location for colleges, universities and heritage organisations looking to offer vocational courses or experiences in heritage crafts. Collaboration between the Local Authority, local secondary schools, higher education providers and heritage industry professionals could lead to the provision of work experience placements for local young people.

Building Relationships

Reaching out to higher educational institutions, national heritage organisations, schools, heritage practitioners and other local authorities could foster mutually beneficial relationships and lead to the delivery of heritage-based projects and learning in Tewkesbury town centre. This could bring measurable benefits including;

- Raising the profile of the town by establishing Tewkesbury as a hub for the study of historic buildings, construction techniques, materials, and craft skills.
- Offering opportunities for upskilling local people and heritage practitioners from across the UK.
- Securing additional funding for conservation projects in the town centre.
- Diversifying history curriculums and engaging young people in built heritage.

Engaging and Upskilling the Local Community

Besides developing practical vocational skills, the rich heritage of Tewkesbury also offers plentiful opportunity for members of the community to engage in other enriching heritage-based activities. This might include volunteering at the local museums, at the annual re-enactment or responding to public consultations and planning applications which propose change to the historic environment. Increasing and diversifying the pool of informed people who feel engaged and excited by the historic environment would provide health and wellbeing benefits, as discussed in detail in Section 2.5, and be of benefit to the heritage of Tewkesbury.

The Tewkesbury Civic Society responds to planning applications which may impact the town's heritage. One route to furthering engagement with heritage could be through promoting the work of the Society within the local community. Advertising its lectures and events could enhance the size, diversity, and capacity of its membership. Interrogating planning applications and drafting responses on behalf of the Society could also provide valuable work experience for anyone interested in the heritage sector, architecture or the planning system as well as increasing the strength and diversity of the voices considered when change is proposed to the town centre.

The organisation "Civic Voice" put forward nominations for Civic Society awards including best website, best newsletter and best social media activity. Nominations from this pool could provide helpful inspiration and exemplars on how Tewkesbury's communications surrounding the activities of the Civic Society could be enhanced and promoted. The organisation also produces toolkits, guides and briefing notes to assist and inspire the work of Civic Societies across the UK.[24]

Retrofit of Historic Buildings

Upgrading and using existing building stock is a vital part of responding to the climate emergency and reducing our carbon emissions. It is also important that buildings remain comfortable places to live and work and do not have excessive running costs. Retrofit is the means of adapting existing buildings to meet these challenges. Tewkesbury has a vast number of historic and traditional buildings many of which will require some degree of retrofit in the coming decades. Due to the density, there is an opportunity for Tewkesbury to lead the way in this field. This could begin with the development of guidance for building owners on appropriate retrofit techniques and technologies for listed and historic buildings but also expand into a broader education offering.

24 https://www.civicvoice.org.uk/

Opportunity: Increasing Interpretation and Engagement with Local Heritage

Much of the historic, aesthetic and architectural value of Tewkesbury's heritage is immediately apparent in the built environment and surrounding landscape. Other elements are more intangible and bringing them to life for residents and visitors alike requires creative and engaging techniques. There are several interpretation boards in and around Tewkesbury town centre, and whilst these are generally well-maintained and informative, it is beneficial to provide a range of interpretation tools to maximise engagement.

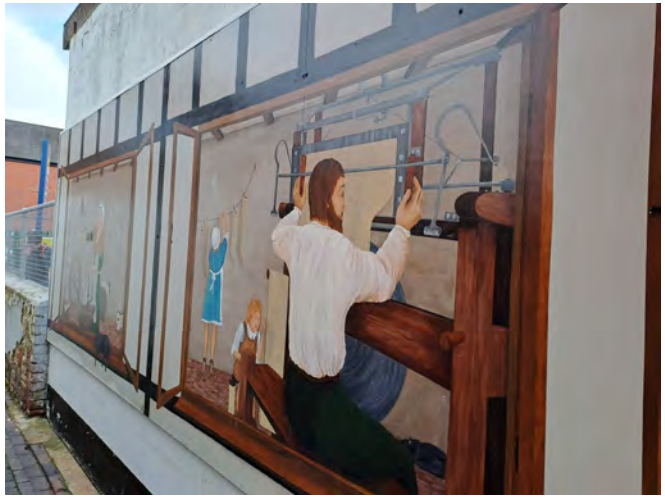
Public Art

Successful examples of imaginative interpretation in Tewkesbury include street art and plaques commissioned by Project Alleycat, a community project promoting interest in the town centre's historic alleys and the stories they can tell. The organisation has worked with local schools to create public art, simultaneously driving engagement with local heritage whilst providing an opportunity for young people to contribute to their local townscape.[25]

There is potential for further art to be commissioned in response to Tewkesbury's intangible heritage, building on this previous success. This approach can be highly effective at communicating past events, people and stories which make up the fabric of a place.



A striking plaque fixed to the wall outside Fletcher's Alley records that 'Mr Fletcher was a sheet metalsmith'.



'Stocking Knitting', a mural by local artist Maxine Williams in Stephen's Alley illustrating the importance of this local industry and its relationship to the alley, where many stocking knitters lived in the 19th century.



Gallos, a bronze sculpture at Tintagel Castle, Cornwall, was commissioned to reflect the relationship between the seat of the Cornish Kings at Tintagel and the legends which grew up around the site over the medieval period. Ian Capper/Gallos/CC BY-SA 2.0

25 https://alleycat.org.uk/art-in-alleys/

Enhancing Traditional Storytelling

Museums provide an accessible and traditional approach to heritage interpretation. Tewkesbury has two museums and a Heritage Centre, which between them provide "living history" days, lectures, tours, workshops and exhibitions. Through their activities, these organisations explore some intangible elements of the towns heritage, such as the story of past Tewkesbury resident and polar explorer Raymond Priestley.[26]

The reach of Tewkesbury's museums and Heritage Centre has the potential to be expanded through greater provision of online material in multi-media formats. This has been successfully implemented at the Northallerton Heritage Hub, which can be visited in person but also has an attractive, well-branded and navigable online presence. The website collates albums of historic photographs and a "voices audio archive" of stories about Northallerton's past.[27] Providing information in a range of formats maximises opportunities for engagement and can expand the range of stories it is feasible to tell.

Case Study: Northallerton Heritage Hub

Northallerton Heritage Hub, funded by the High Street Heritage Action Zone scheme, provides an online archive of short, narrated stories recording the people and events which constitute the history of the town. The narratives are wide ranging, revealing the stories of individual buildings, local people and historic industries.



QR Codes

QR Codes are a low-tech, effective and space efficient way to encourage engagement with heritage, allowing people to access information on the move and in their own time. They can be placed on mundane but heavily used objects, such as parking meters, as well as included on interpretation boards, floor discs, plaques, and printed materials. Restaurants, cafés and other businesses where people are likely to rest could be encouraged to include QR codes on walls or printed materials. QR codes can be coloured or applied to different surfaces in creative ways to make them more noticeable and visually appealing. The codes could direct users to curated stories and information about the heritage of Tewkesbury and may form networks, for instance of heritage walks around the town and its surroundings.

Case Study: Severn Arts "The City Speaks" Installation

In July 2021, arts charity Severn Arts produced a large-scale poetry installation across the town of Worcester. As part of the installation, temporary QR codes were stencilled directly onto areas of paving so passers-by could scan and listen to the poems.

Interpretive Paving

People today are often more likely to notice a point of visual interest on the ground in front of them than a plaque on the side of a building they are walking past. This can make interpretive paving a useful technique for encouraging engagement in outdoor and urban sites like Tewkesbury town centre. Interpretive paving can range from marking out the foundations of whole buildings to a single stone commemorating an historic event. This technique is versatile and can be used to draw attention to past events, lost buildings, archaeological discoveries, former routes, and the people who once moved through a place.

"Then and Now"

Viewfinders can be a simple and elegant way to facilitate "then and now" comparisons in relation to historic views, individual buildings, or whole streetscapes. This might take the form of a freestanding board framing a view, with the corresponding historic view provided adjacent for comparison or using augmented reality. Using this simple technology could encourage deeper engagement with Tewkesbury's heritage, perhaps in areas which have experienced much change, such as the site of the old train station. Historic views can also be harnessed to communicate intangible stories and connections; for example, one might illustrate how a particular view or building would have appeared to Dickens, Turner, or a stocking worker from Tewkesbury's industrial past.



A decorative manhole cover on Church Street. Footways and surface finishes contribute to the public realm and can present opportunities to interpret and enrich the historic environment.

26 https://www.tewkesburymuseum.org/the-collection/the-object-collection/raymond-priestley-antarctic-explorer/

27 https://www.northallertonheritage.uk/

3.2 VISION AND AIMS

3.2.1 Vision

Tewkesbury has a rich and diverse history which is expressed through both the historic environment and the strong local identity of the town. The vision for Tewkesbury is that this important heritage contributes appreciably to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the town. This includes Tewkesbury being a vibrant place to live, which meets the needs of a diverse population; the heritage assets of the town being well maintained and in viable use; and delivering a varied and engaging experience for visitors.

3.2.2 Aims

This vision for Tewkesbury will be achieved through the following aims:

- Healings Mill and other vacant buildings and underused sites to be brought back into long-term viable use
- Increase heritage tourism as a key contributor towards a sustainable economy for the town
- Broader engagement with, and shared responsibility for, the town's heritage amongst the local community
- Tewkesbury to become a regional hub for heritage skills, education and retrofit of historic buildings, capitalising on the density and variety of the historic building stock
- Understanding of the special significance of the town's heritage is accessible to all
- New development, including alteration, showcases high-quality design that is sensitive to the historic context

See outcomes of the Town Centre Masterplan and Design Code for further broad aims for Tewkesbury

3.2.3 Action Plan

The following set of actions have been prepared to deliver the aims of this heritage strategy and prioritised in terms of short, medium, long-term or on-going. Some actions contribute to other aims but have been categorised by the principal aim achieved.

Aim	Action	Timescale
Healings Mill and other vacant buildings and underused sites to be brought back into long-term viable use	Consider and if needed instigate compulsory purchase of the Healings Mill site and or continue to engage with site owner regarding its future	Short-term
	Commission feasibility study to explore viable uses of the site beyond residential	Short-term
	Host a design competition to deliver an exceptional heritage-led scheme for the site to create a new focal point for the town	Short-term
	Follow recommendations in the Masterplan for Spring Gardens and MAFF sites to bring these into viable use	Short to medium-term
	Explore opportunities to incentivise reuse of vacant upper floors including 'meanwhile uses' and rate discounts.	Short to medium-term

Aim	Action	Timescale
Increase heritage tourism as a key contributor towards a sustainable economy for the town	Develop a tourism and marketing strategy to ensure the town is making the most of its heritage offer and diversifying this offer where needed	Short-term
	Enhance arrival at Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Railway Station and improve transport connections to the town from the station and from new Garden Town to Tewkesbury	Medium-term
	Improve signage to ensure visitors are aware of attractions other than Abbey and their close proximity to the town centre (see Masterplan for more details)	Short-term
	Develop new forms of interpretation such as heritage walks around the town utilising both physical and digital formats	Short-term

Aim	Action	Timescale
Broader engagement with, and shared responsibility for, the town's heritage amongst the local community	Seek opportunities to engage young people with the town's heritage through education, volunteering and leisure activities	Short-term / on-going
	Continue to expand the volunteering opportunities in relation to the annual Medieval Festival, Mop Fair and at the town's museums / heritage attractions	Short-term / on-going
	Increase awareness of responsibilities of caring for historic buildings such as developing / reviewing existing guidance and / or social media campaign	Medium-term
Tewkesbury to become a regional hub for heritage skills education and retrofit of historic buildings, capitalising on the density and variety of the historic building stock	Identify potential partners to deliver this aim such as a higher education institute or living museum provider	Medium to long-term
	Ensure that conservation repair and retrofit of historic building projects are exemplar through existing planning controls in order to showcase credentials	Short-term / on-going

Aim	Action	Timescale
Understanding of the special significance of the town's heritage is accessible to all	Review and update the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) for Tewkesbury's Conservation Area and ensure the updated document is easy to use and gives clear guidance on significance and appropriate management of change	Short-term
	Review the existing Article 4 Direction	Short-term
	Consolidate guidance on the maintenance, conversion and retrofit of historic buildings	Medium-term
New development, including alteration, showcases high-quality design that is sensitive to the historic context	Instigate formal Design Review process for major schemes and/or those on highly sensitive sites	Short-term
	Use the Design Code during pre-application process and as part of decision-making evidence base	Short-term / on-going
	Seek and embrace opportunities to enhance Bishop's Walk and other visually detracting sites in the town	Long-term



FURTHER INFORMATION AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Further Sources

Further sources available for researching the history and significance of each type of heritage asset can be found below:

Asset	Source
Listed Buildings	• The National Heritage List for England holds a digitised entry for each listed building, which can be found by keyword, postcode, list entry number or map search on the Historic England website: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/
	• Historic maps can assist in tracking the evolution of a building's footprint over time. The National Library of Scotland has digitised Ordnance Survey Maps for Tewkesbury from 1882 to 1970. https://maps.nls.uk/
	• Tewkesbury Conservation Area Appraisal (2012) is a helpful resource for understanding how groups of listed buildings relate to the historic evolution of the town centre. This document can be downloaded online.
	• The Gloucestershire Archives may hold records for individual listed buildings including planning applications and architectural drawings. https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/researching/online-catalogue/
	• The local Historic Environment Record may hold information relating to individual listed buildings, for example where Building Recording has taken place. The HER repository can be browsed in part via Heritage Gateway. https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/
	• A more comprehensive Historic Environment Record Search Request can be performed via the Gloucestershire County Council website. https://forms.gloucestershire.gov.uk/HERRequest
	• Historic paintings, drawings and photographs can be helpful in illustrating the appearance of a building over time. A good place to start is the digitised material from the Historic England Archive. https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/
	• Historic England's 'Selection Guides' are useful documents for contextualising and determining the heritage significance of different types of listed buildings. The following publications will be particularly prescient for the centre of Tewkesbury:
	• Domestic 1: Vernacular Houses: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dlsg-vernacular-houses/
	• Infrastructure: Transport: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dlsg-transport-buildings/
	• Industrial Sites: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dssg-industrial-sites/
	• Places of Worship: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dlsg-places-worship/
	• Education Buildings: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dlsg-education-buildings/

Asset	Source
Scheduled Monuments	• The National Heritage List for England holds a digitised entry for each scheduled monument, which can be found by keyword, postcode, list entry number or map search on the Historic England website: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/
	• The Tewkesbury Historical Society has published an extract from a helpful article covering the history of the scheduled Abbey precincts. https://tewkesburyhistory.org/Early-Town-Development
	• The local Historic Environment Record may hold information relating to scheduled monuments, for example where archaeological excavation or geophysical investigation has taken place. The HER repository can be browsed in part via Heritage Gateway. https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/
	• A more comprehensive Historic Environment Record Search Request can be performed via the Gloucestershire County Council website. https://forms.gloucestershire.gov.uk/HERRequest
Registered Parks and Gardens	• The National Heritage List for England holds a digitised entry for each Registered Park and Garden, which can be found by keyword, postcode, list entry number or map search on the Historic England website: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/
	• Historic maps can assist in tracking the evolution of a garden or landscape over time. The National Library of Scotland has digitised Ordnance Survey Maps for Tewkesbury from 1882 to 1970. https://maps.nls.uk/
	• The local Historic Environment Record may hold information relating to registered parks and gardens, for example where archaeological excavation or geophysical investigation has taken place. The HER repository can be browsed in part via Heritage Gateway. https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/
	• A more comprehensive Historic Environment Record Search Request can be performed via the Gloucestershire County Council website. https://forms.gloucestershire.gov.uk/HERRequest
	• Historic paintings, drawings and photographs can be helpful in illustrating the appearance of a garden or landscape over time. A good place to start is the digitised material from the Historic England Archive. https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/
	• Tewkesbury Historical Society have published some helpful information on the history of the town's registered cemetery within their 'Cemetery Database'. https://tewkesburyhistory.org/Cemetery-Database
	• Historic England's Register of Parks and Garden Selection Guide: Landscapes of Remembrance is a useful document for contextualising and determining the heritage significance of these assets: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/drpgsg-landscapes-remembrance/
Registered Battlefields	• The National Heritage List for England holds a digitised entry for each Registered Battlefield, which can be found by keyword, postcode, list entry number or map search on the Historic England website: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/
	• Historic England's 'Selection Guides' are useful documents for contextualising and determining the heritage significance of different types of assets. The Registration Selection Guide for Battlefields will be a useful resource for Tewkesbury: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dsg-battlefields/
Conservation Area	• Tewkesbury Conservation Area Appraisal (2012) is a helpful resource for understanding the history and significance of the Conservation Area. This document can be downloaded online.

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Maps and Plans

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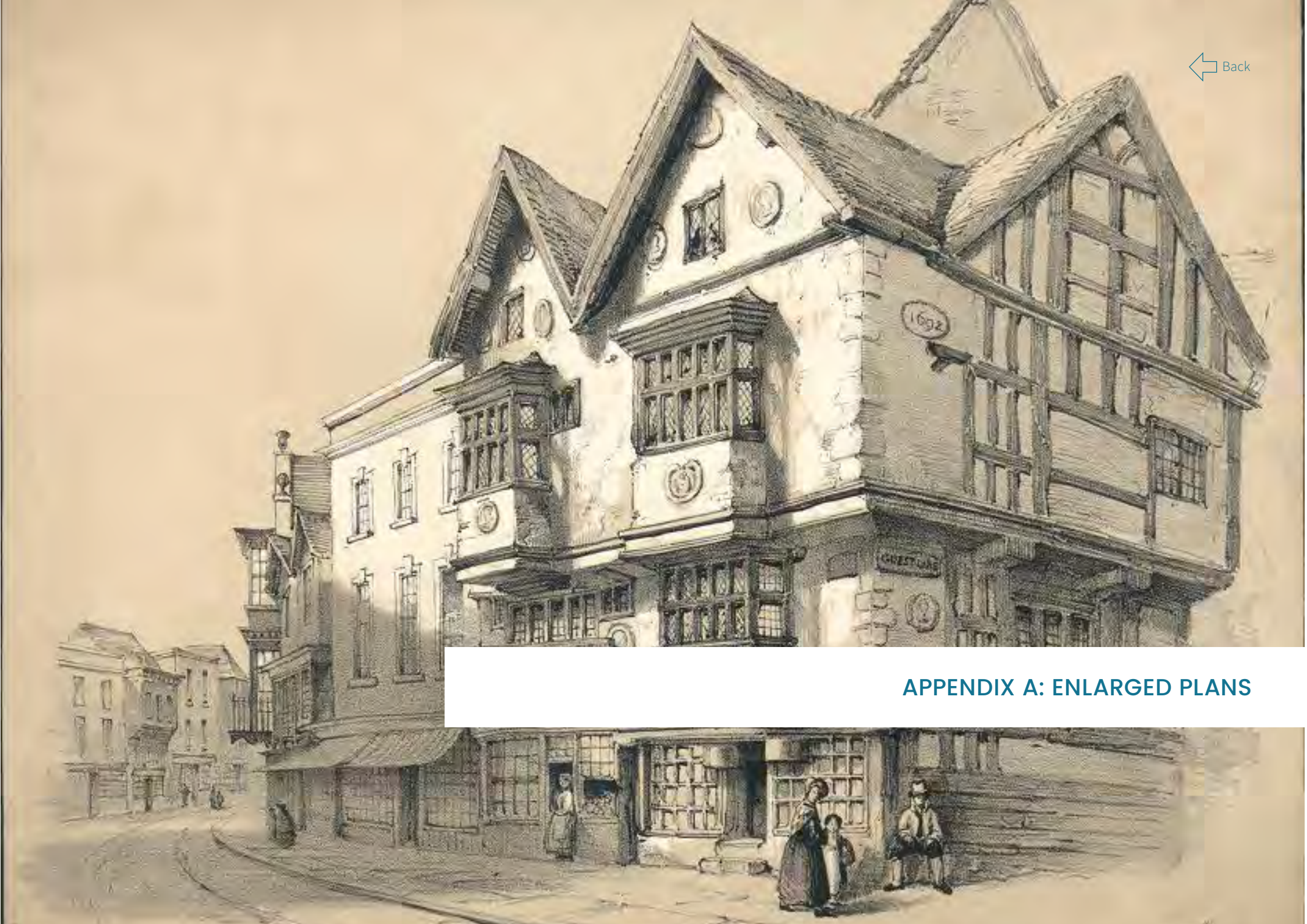
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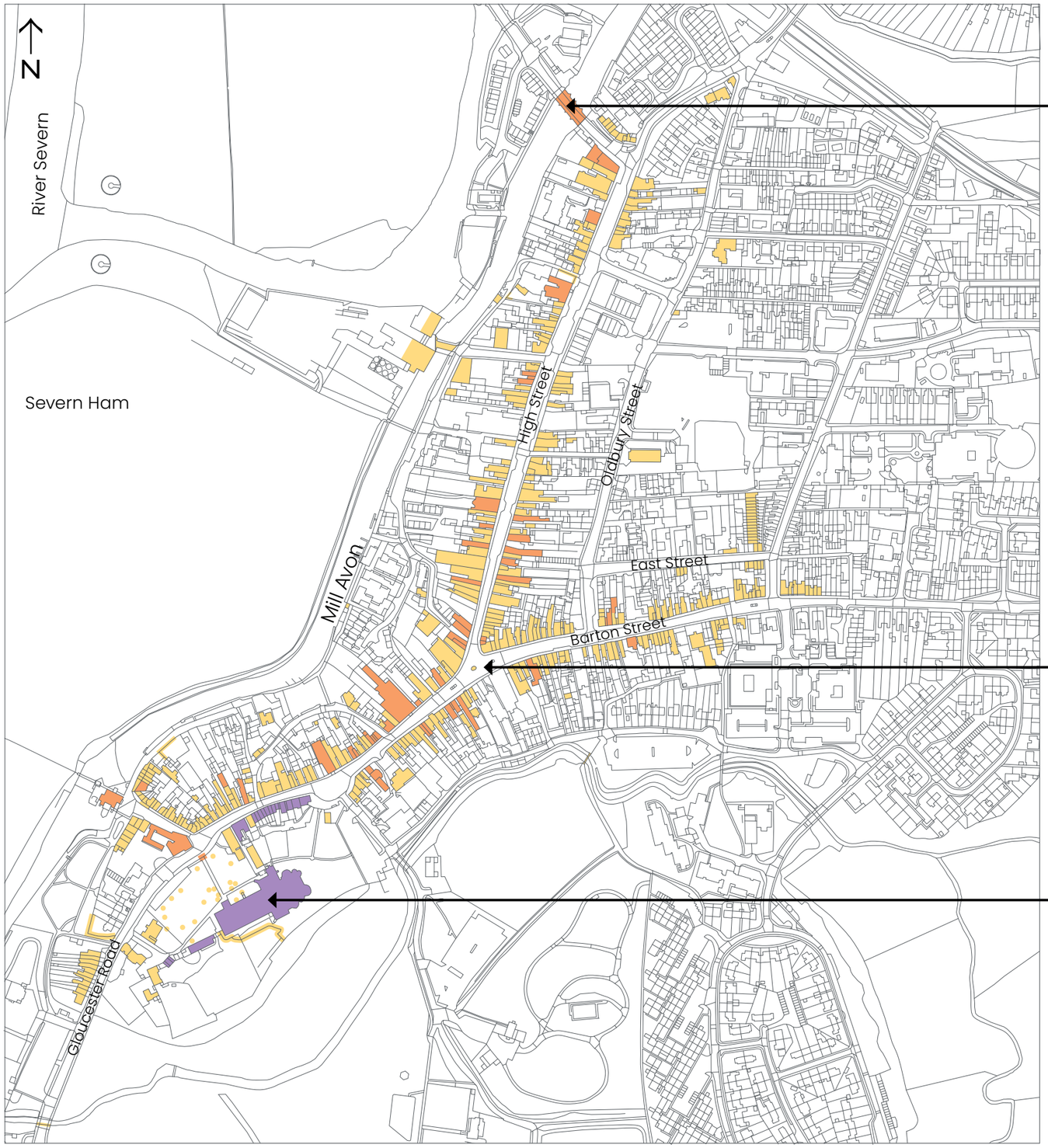
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APPENDIX A: ENLARGED PLANS

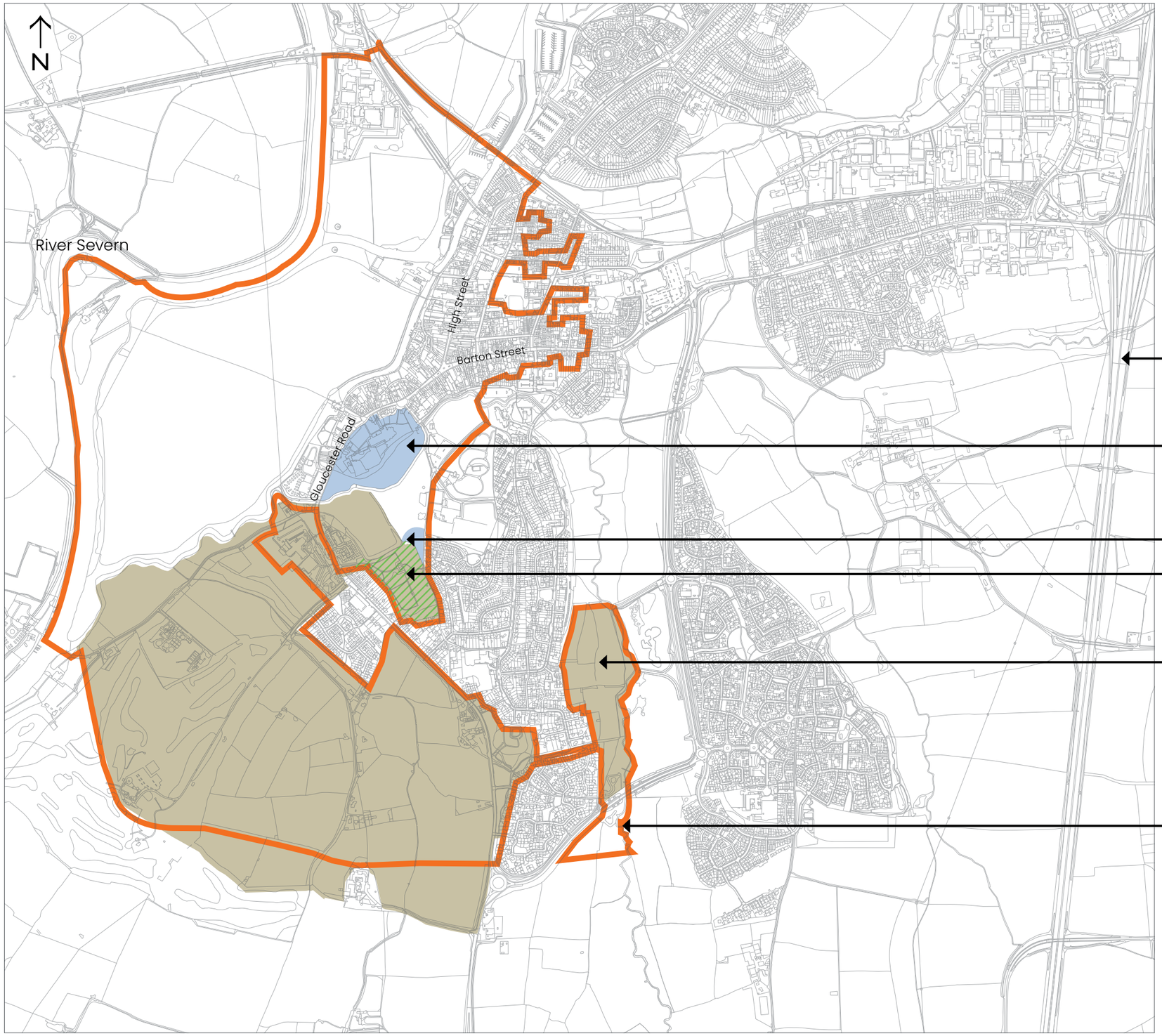


HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS: LISTED BUILDINGS

- Grade I Listed Building
- Grade II* Listed Building
- Grade II Listed Building

This plan is not to scale

Plan showing the Listed Buildings of Tewkesbury.



HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS

- Scheduled Monument
- Registered Park and Garden
- Registered Battlefield
- Tewkesbury Conservation Area

This plan is not to scale

Plan showing the heritage designations of Tewkesbury, excluding listed buildings.

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