Strategic & Local Plan
Cheltenham, Gloucester & Tewkesbury

Cheltenham Borough, Gloucester City and Tewkesbury Borough councils' Strategic and Local Plan (SLP)

Settlement Hierarchy Topic Paper

November 2025

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Gloucester City Council
Transforming Your City

Tewkesbury Borough Council

Strategic & Local Plan

Cheltenham, Gloucester & Tewkesbury

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1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 This Settlement Hierarchy Topic Paper has been prepared using data available at the time and reflects the best information currently accessible for settlements within Tewkesbury Borough, regarding current population, services/facilities and accessibility.

1.2 It is acknowledged that settlements are dynamic and subject to change. Ongoing evidence gathering and accessibility analysis, will incorporate more recent data, including accessibility data from the DfT's recently introduced Accessibility Toolkit.

1.3 This Paper sets out the background and policy context behind the Settlement Hierarchy, together with the reasoning behind the requirement to update the current 2017 'Rural Settlement Audit'.

1.4 The Paper also provides, utilising available data and information to date, an emerging Settlement Hierarchy for the Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) area, from which to develop policy and direct growth in the most appropriate and sustainable way, over the Plan period.

2.0 Purpose and scope of this Topic Paper

2.1 Settlements provide services to local populations. Large settlements tend to provide more services, be more accessible and have a greater population of users, and vice versa. Over time, settlement hierarchies emerge and evolve on a local, regional and national basis. The Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) area is no different, with Cheltenham and Gloucester at the top and relatively remote rural villages such as Stanton and Prescott towards the bottom of the hierarchy. Whilst it is usually relatively easy for anyone to identify settlements at either end of a hierarchy, those in between are often less clear.

2.2 This Settlement Hierarchy Topic Paper is an evidence document to inform the Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council Strategic and Local Plan (SLP).

2.3 We need to understand how our towns and villages currently work and function before we start to shape the future and set a strategy for determining the pattern, scale and nature of future development. How our settlements currently function, can provide valuable information about what we need to do in the future to deliver positive outcomes for our communities.

2.4 This Paper starts to bring together information about individual settlements' key characteristics and functionality and how they compare to others within the Borough, in order to understand their current and expected future roles and functions over the SLP plan period.

2.5 Seeking clarity on each settlement's role within the area, utilising GIS data relating to settlements services and facilities, together with accessibility criteria, will help to identify relative positions within the hierarchy.

2.6 A settlement audit was originally undertaken in 2010/2011 (published in November 2011). The audit was subsequently refreshed in July 2017, as part of the Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) evidence base. This helped inform where new development could potentially be directed by the JCS and the Tewkesbury Borough Plan, encouraging close proximity of housing, jobs and services, in pursuit of a more sustainable development pattern.

2.7 This Topic Paper seeks to discuss how most appropriately to provide an updated picture of the settlements within Tewkesbury Borough, utilising updated methodology and drawing upon available GIS data.

2.8 The results of the updated methodology will help inform a detailed hierarchy based on each settlement's level of service provision and accessibility and will form part of the evidence base underpinning the Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council Strategic and Local Plan (SLP).

2.9 The Settlement Hierarchy will define categories of settlements and help ensure that policies developed as part of the SLP, are appropriate to the different settlement types and their capacity and direction for growth. This applies both in allocating sites for development and determining planning applications, commensurate with their size, role and function.

2.10 It is of note that a settlement's position within the settlement hierarchy does not mean that development is appropriate and deliverable, or that it is to be avoided. Other factors must be considered such as environmental constraints, available development sites and local character. This study must therefore be viewed within the context of the wider SLP evidence base and as part of the development of a new spatial strategy of growth for the area, over the plan period.

3.0 What is a Settlement Hierarchy?

3.1 A settlement hierarchy involves identifying and grouping together settlements that perform similar roles. It identifies the functions of settlements in terms of their housing, economic and commercial offers, as well as the scale of services and facilities already present within settlements. The settlement hierarchy will help to inform the spatial strategy for the Strategic & Local Plan (SLP), by ensuring that levels of growth appropriately reflects the relative sustainability of settlements.

3.2 It is the role of this paper to discuss how settlements might appropriately be grouped together within a hierarchy, in accordance with their relative sustainability in terms of available services and infrastructure. The emerging SLP will then examine in further detail, their ability to accommodate development.

3.3 This approach will be used to ensure that the SLP spatial growth strategy focuses housing and economic growth in the most sustainable areas, whilst helping to ensure that the vitality of the borough's rural communities is maintained and where possible, strengthened.

4.0 Why Produce a New Settlement Hierarchy?

4.1 Settlement profiles were originally compiled for each of the identified settlements[1] within Tewkesbury Borough as part of the JCS evidence base, which set out the over-arching strategy for growth throughout Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury, up until 2031. The JCS identified the objectively assessed need for Tewkesbury Borough and the spatial strategy to accommodate that level of development. The JCS also identified key locations for growth and set out strategic policies to guide future development.

4.2 A settlement hierarchy was set out within the JCS, as the basis for the strategy for delivering growth targets, derived from the objectively assessed need for housing, in the most sustainable manner possible. The current JCS settlement hierarchy for Tewkesbury Borough includes Tewkesbury Town as the top tiered settlement followed by the two 'Rural Service Centres' and then 12 'Service Villages'. The Rural Service Centre and Service Village classification was informed by the JCS Settlement Audit (2017).

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[1] The JCS Rural Settlement Audit identified 75 settlements. The 2025 emerging Settlement Hierarchy identifies 93 settlements.

These subsequently formed the locations at which housing land allocations were made through the Tewkesbury Borough Plan.

4.3 Figure 1 below, sets out the settlement hierarchy for Tewkesbury Borough.

Figure 1: Settlement Hierarchy as defined within the Tewkesbury Borough Plan - 2011-2031.

Settlement tier	Settlements
Market town	Tewkesbury town area[1]
Rural Service Centres	Bishop's Cleeve
	Winchcombe
Service Villages	Alderton
	Coombe Hill
	Gotherington
	Highnam
	Maisemore
	Minsterworth
	Norton
	Shurdington
	Stoke Orchard
	Toddington (inc. New Town)
	Twyning
	Woodmancote

1. The Tewkesbury Town area is defined as the wider built up area of Tewkesbury including Wheatpieces, Newtown, Northway and Ashchurch

4.4 In the intervening period since the previous settlement audit to underpin the JCS and Tewkesbury Borough Plan, settlements may have lost or gained services and infrastructure and these will need to be reviewed. Post offices and public houses may have been lost from particular settlements, for example, and bus and rail services may have also changed over time.

4.5 Arguably, the importance of certain types of services and infrastructure has also shifted over time. For example, the availability of high-speed broadband has gained increased importance since the 2020 Covid 19 pandemic and the resulting shift towards home working. This potentially reduces the importance of the proximity of

populations to places of employment and increases the importance of communication services such as high-speed broadband.

4.6 The populations of settlements have changed since the JCS, with a degree of growth for many settlements. However, some settlements (for a variety of factors) have grown more than others and will need to be assessed, based on a settlement's population relative to others in its tier of the hierarchy. This could potentially lead to a change in a settlement's position within the overall hierarchy.

4.7 All of the above means that the existing Settlement Hierarchy cannot be relied upon as robust evidence from which to determine a settlement's ability to deliver appropriate housing growth over the SLP Plan period. Consequently, the Hierarchy must now be revisited and updated.

5.0 Settlements within the SLP Area

5.1 The SLP area is dominated by three settlements: Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury.

5.2 Gloucester and Cheltenham are major centres providing services to the sub-region and beyond. As such, they fall outside of the scope of the settlement audit since their dominant position is clear and they will continue to play key roles in meeting the needs of the SLP area. Both areas are however, considered as part of the wider assessment of the connectivity of settlements to major employment areas and access to services. This will be explored in greater detail as part of the evidence gathering to inform the emerging Settlement Hierarchy.

5.3 Gloucester and Cheltenham both have administrative boundaries drawn tightly around their urban areas, with urban fringe settlements such as Brockworth, Hucclecote, Churchdown, Innsworth and Longford, located just beyond. These urban fringe settlements fall within the administrative area of Tewkesbury Borough (which surrounds both Gloucester and Cheltenham on three sides). However in terms of the settlement hierarchy, the above referenced settlements are considered the urban periphery of Gloucester City.

5.4 The urban fringe settlements such as those mentioned above, do not fit into the Borough's settlement hierarchy, as in strategic planning terms, they are considered to form part of the periphery of Gloucester and Cheltenham. They do however represent sustainable settlements possessing a good range of services and good accessibility, via sustainable transport modes, to Gloucester and Cheltenham.

5.5 A number of other built-up areas on the edge of Gloucester and Cheltenham extend into Tewkesbury Borough, for example Farm Lane/Leckhampton Lane in Shurdington Parish, Grovefield Way/Cold Pool Lane in Badgeworth Parish and Cockcroft Lane/Mill Lane in Southam Parish. Their place within the emerging Settlement Hierarchy must also be appropriately reflected.

Figure 2: Urban Fringe Settlements

Urban fringe settlements	
Gloucester	Brockworth Churchdown Hucclecote Innsworth Longford
Cheltenham	Uckington

5.6 With the exception of the urban fringe settlements to Gloucester and Cheltenham, much of Tewkesbury Borough is predominantly rural in character. Its major settlements include Tewkesbury town, Winchcombe town and Bishops Cleeve.

5.7 Tewkesbury town itself, also has separate and well-established fringe settlements at Wheatpieces, Northway and Ashchurch.

5.8 The 2017 Rural Settlement Audit did not explicitly account for character or location of the larger settlements within the Borough, however, it did identify that many such settlements are in fact significant and accessible service providers in the area.

5.9 In common with other parts of Britain, many urban and urban fringe areas within the SLP area have expanded significantly in recent years, while some rural settlements have struggled to retain their services as increased population mobility leads residents to obtain services more conveniently and with more choice elsewhere.

5.10 There were 75 named settlements identified within Tewkesbury Borough, within the 2017 JCS Rural Settlement Audit Refresh.

5.11 However, the 2017 Audit noted that there were a number of other small settlements/hamlets within the borough, in addition to those individually listed

settlements. For the purposes of the audit, those smaller settlements were not included at the time, due to their very modest scale, and/or remote location within the open countryside.

5.12 The emerging Settlement Hierarchy has been refined in this regard and GIS has been utilised to identify a number of the smaller settlements/hamlets, previously not included. As such, some 98 settlements have been identified as part of the background research accompanying the emerging hierarchy. It is acknowledged, as with the 2017 Audit, that this list of settlements may not be exhaustive and very modest scale hamlets/clusters of dwellings, and/or, those within remote locations/open countryside, may not have been included.

5.13 Updated List of identified Settlements

Alderton, Alderton Fields, Alstone, Apperley, Ashchurch, Ashleworth inc Nup End, Aston Cross, Aston-on-Carrant, Badgeworth, Bamfurlong, Barrow, Bengrove, Bentham, Bishop's Cleeve, Bishop's Norton, Boddington, Brockhampton, Brockworth, Buckland, Castle Hill, Chaceley inc Chaceley Hole, Chargrove, Charlton Abbotts, Churchdown, Church End (Twyning), Cleeve Hill, Coombe Hill, Deerhurst, Deerhurst Walton, Didbrook, Dixton, Down Hatherley, Dumbleton, Elmstone Hardwick, Evington, Fiddington, Fiddington Fields, Forthampton, Golden Valley, Gotherington, Great Washbourne, Great Witcombe, Greet, Gretton, Gretton Fields, Hailes, Hardwicke, Hasfield, Hawling, Highnam, Hill End (Twyning), Hucclecote, Innsworth, Laverton, Little Buckland Little Shurdington, Little Washbourne, Little Witcombe, Longford, Lower Apperley, Maisemore, Minsterworth, Northway, Norton, Over, Oxenton, Pamington, Prescott, Priors Norton, Puckrup, Sandhurst, Shuthonger, Shurdington, Snowshill, Southam, Stanton, Stanway, Staverton, Stoke Orchard, Sudeley, Teddington, Tewkesbury, The Leigh, Tirley, Toddington (incl. New Town), Tredington, Twigworth, Twyning, Uckington, Walton Cardiff, Wheatpieces, Winchcombe, Woodmancote, Wood Stanway, Woolstone, Wormington

6.0 Settlements Outside the SLP Area

6.1 The SLP area adjoins Cotswold, Forest of Dean and Stroud Districts in Gloucestershire, as well as Malvern Hills and Wychavon Districts in Worcestershire.

6.2 In view of this, several important settlements outside the SLP area, play a role in meeting the needs of the SLP population.

6.3 Settlements outside of the SLP area have not been considered as part of the updated Settlement Hierarchy research.

6.4 However, the wider relationship of neighbouring settlements with the SLP area will be considered in greater detail through on going work and as part of the Duty to Co-operate.

7.0 Planning Policy Context

7.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

7.2 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in December 2024, sets out the Government's consolidated planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF also provides a framework within which local communities and Local Planning Authorities can develop their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, with the overarching guiding principle of a presumption in favour of sustainable development. [2]

7.3 A number of key principles are embedded within the NPPF, that are of particular relevance to the audit of settlements within the borough and any hierarchy subsequently developed from it.

'To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby' (Chapter 5, para.83).

7.4 In order to support a prosperous rural economy 'Planning policies and decisions should enable: d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship' (Chapter 6, para.88).

7.5 Furthermore, to help ensure the vitality of town centres (Chapter 7), *'Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should: a) define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters'.* (para.90 (a));

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[2] National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance - GOV.UK

7.6 In promoting sustainable transport Chapter 9 (para. 109) of the NPPF advises that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of, amongst other objectives, identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use. However, paragraph 110 acknowledges that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

7.7 Local guidance

7.8 Paragraph 15 of the NPPF provides that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led, with succinct and up-to-date plans providing a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for meeting housing needs and addressing other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings. The development plan is the starting point for planning decision making.

7.9 The development plan for Tewkesbury Borough specifically, currently comprises the Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester Joint Core Strategy (JCS), together with the Tewkesbury Borough Plan - 2011-2031(TBP) and any 'Made' Neighbourhood Development Plans. It should be noted that Cheltenham Borough and Gloucester City, have their own adopted Local Plans, those being The Cheltenham Plan 2011-2031 and The Gloucester City Plan 2011-2031, respectively.

7.10 The Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire, March 2020 (MLP) and Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy, Nov 2012 (WCS), also form part of the statutory development plan and these are both prepared by Gloucestershire County Council.
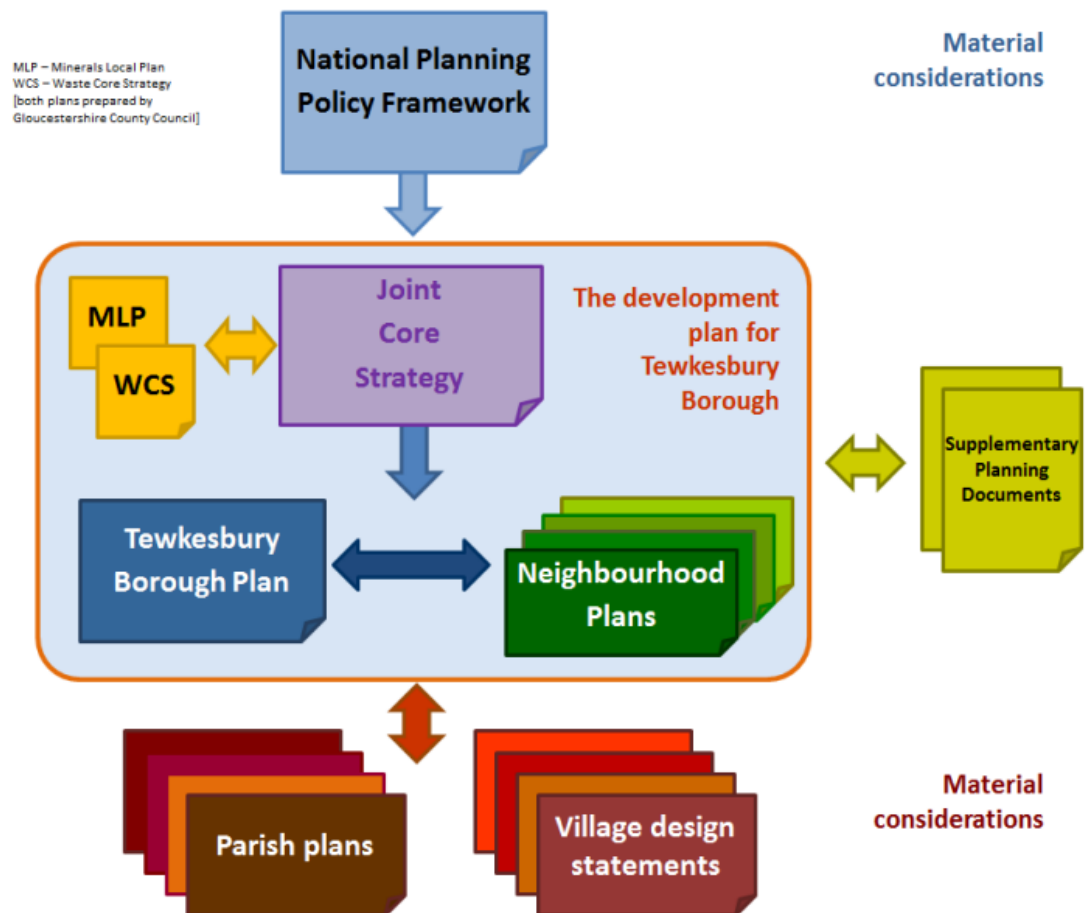
7.11 The JCS presents the overarching strategic plan for the area, including identifying larger 'strategic allocation' sites for development and providing policy guidance on important issues such as Green Belt, flooding and transport.

7.12 The Tewkesbury Borough Plan identifies the additional specific locations for smaller-scale growth and sets out detailed policies for development and protection of the borough's key assets, such as valued countryside, historic heritage and open spaces.

7.13 The three authorities (Cheltenham Borough, Gloucester City and Tewkesbury Borough councils), are currently working jointly to produce a Strategic and Local Plan (SLP). The SLP will include strategic policies covering all three councils and will also include local policies, covering issues which may have more relevance to either Cheltenham, Gloucester or Tewkesbury, specifically. Upon adoption, the SLP will supersede the JCS and each of the three councils' adopted Local Plans.

7.14 The updated Settlement Hierarchy will form an important element of the evidence base for the emerging SLP.

Figure 3: Current Development Plan

8.0 Profile of the Borough

8.1 Tewkesbury Borough is one of six districts in the county of Gloucestershire. It has 50 parishes covering an area of 160 square miles with a population of 86,900 (ONS, June 2015), which is an increase of around 14% since 2001. The borough has a predominately rural character with over 50% of people living in rural settlements and large market towns.

8.2 In the existing Borough Plan's base date of 2011, there were 37,057 residential dwellings in the borough, which was an increase of 11% since 2001, by 2018 there were

an additional 4,200 representing a further increase of around 11% bringing the total to 41,257. Compared with the rest of Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury borough has a higher than average number of people aged 65 and over but fewer people under 18 and of working age. Approximately 2.5% of residents in the borough are from minority ethnic group backgrounds, which is lower than the countywide average of 4.6%.

8.3 Tewkesbury Borough is currently a District Council. At the time of preparing this paper, there are plans for local government reorganisation, and Tewkesbury Borough would form part of a larger Council. Whilst the details of this reorganisation have not been agreed, it is worth noting Tewksbury Borough's settlements will form part of a wider administrative area. As such, it reiterates the importance of considering important infrastructure, such as employment areas and educational facilities, which may be outside of the current borough boundary but accessed by settlements currently within Tewkesbury's administrative area.

9.0 Scope of Study and Methodology

9.1 This section sets out the broad methodology which will adopted for identifying the current role and function of settlements in the SLP area, together with their functional relationships and future potential roles. As previously mentioned, it is an updated methodology from the 2017 Rural Settlement Audit and utilises new data sources. The main focus of the study is Tewkesbury Borough, but it will also look at the relationship with, and transportation linkages to, the neighbouring employment centres, notably Cheltenham and Gloucester, which are within the SLP area. The study will also consider the relationship of settlements within the borough, with larger settlements further afield, where good transport linkages from the area would make travel to these major employment centres more viable.

9.2 It should be stressed that the settlement hierarchy will be "policy-off" as far as feasible, and based on the functional, economic and transport characteristics of settlements in the context of promoting transport sustainability and self-containment. As such, forecasts do not take account of future policy decisions, for example, to locate future development at certain settlements. The study will provide an indication of the baseline picture for settlements and it is for policy makers to determine the actions required to meet needs, address issues and realise opportunities in the future.

9.3 In order to inform the emerging Settlement Hierarchy, settlements have been identified through a multi-stage process, which included:

- Review of previous settlement hierarchy information undertaken.

- Desk-top research (including local officer knowledge, aerial photography, Google Streetview etc.).

- Parish and Councillor local expertise.

- Utilising GIS sources in respect of buildings and services.

- Site visits to verify settlements.

- Analysis of the distance between settlements in order to establish how settlements and their services might relate to one another.

9.4 The main change to the methodology from previous versions, is the utilisation of GIS to assist the identification and assessment of settlements. The process has, included identifying the concentration of the built environment, and utilising the National Building Database (available from the OS as NGD Features: Buildings). Further analysis of settlements' densities, has been undertaken, in order to generate density-based, built form clusters. It can reasonably be considered that the identified clusters, form the predominant area of each settlement. For the purposes of the emerging settlement hierarchy, this equated to a minimum of 30 buildings per cluster, and a search radius of 150 metres.

9.5 The population of settlements has been calculated using aggregated persons per households per area, informed by ESRI demographics. This figure has then been multiplied by the number of residential properties within the settlement boundary. This approach helped establish the number of houses and population within each settlement, which is an important factor in helping estimate the viability of service and transport provision. Populations are dynamic and change regularly. As such, it recognised that the population is an estimate – but an estimate which has a clear rationale.

9.6 This combination of buildings and density data, has helped define the settlement boundaries. A settlement boundary marks the physical extent to towns and villages, being the dividing line between built-up/urban areas (the settlement) and non-urban or rural areas (the countryside).

9.7 The household size figures were extracted from the ESRI 2023 Demographics service, compiled / calculated by Michael Bauer Research[3]. The values are average household sizes for the settlement areas and vary between an average household size of 1.9 and 2.7.

9.8 The ESRI 2023 data has been utilised in preference to the 2021 Census, as a source of population data. This is due to the fact that the Census does not take into account new builds, constructed since the Census and therefore, the ESRI data is considered to

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[3] Michael Bauer Research GmbH—Esri Demographics | Documentation

allow for a more accurate representation of a settlement's population at the current time.

9.9 In addition, the settlement areas defined within the emerging Settlement Hierarchy study, would be more tightly defined to the core settlement areas, thereby reducing the possibility of artificially inflating the settlement's population by including those dwellings present within the wider area. Conversely, if the population figures were based on the Census data settlement area, this has a higher potential for anomalies to occur within the population calculations.

9.10 The settlements identified will then be reviewed further, using a range of data sources including:

- Retail, Food and Fuel – Defined by size

- Post Offices – Defined by facilities offered

- Schools and Libraries (Council information)

- Health Facilities – Defined by size and services

- Leisure facilities (e.g. swimming pool, tennis courts, etc.)

- Travel patterns (Census information and Department for Transport [DfT])

- Distance and accessibility to major employment centres (including employment centres outside of the Tewkesbury area but within the commutable catchment. (*Defined – update pending DfT information*)

- Railway stations, Bus services, and Cycle Paths - Frequency of services and destinations using DfT information

- Parks and Open Space – and access to them

- Housing and population

9.11 The above facilities will be assessed within a 1 km radius distance, of the settlement, equating to a 15 minute walking radius.

9.12 Settlements located within a 15 minute cycle ride of the facilities will be classified as within the catchment of the services. Settlements within a 5 minute drive of facilities are also proposed as being classified as within the catchment. This will help determine the 15 minute living boundary and inform accessibility and sustainability of settlements. Further information on the methodology, is included within Appendix A.

9.13 The ONS, in its publication 'Towns and cities, characteristics of built-up areas, England and Wales': Census 2021[4] states: *"Built-up areas (BUAs) are a geography*

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[4] Towns and cities, characteristics of built-up areas, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

based on the physical built environment, using Ordnance Survey topographic data to recognise developed land, such as cities, towns, and villages. This allows economic and social statistics to be investigated based on actual settlements where most people live.

BUAs are classified by population size as minor, small, medium, large or major, and characteristics are explored using Census 2021 data."

Table 1: Built-up area (BUA) size classification

Population range (Usual resident population)	BUA size classification	Approximate settlement type
0-4,999	minor	hamlet or village
5,000-19,999	small	larger village / small town
20,000-74,999	medium	medium towns
75,000-199,999	large	large towns / smaller cities
200,000+	Major	cities

Source: Office for National Statistics

[1] Towns and cities, characteristics of built-up areas, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

9.14 Table 2 below, categorises the population of settlements in the SLP Area, based upon BUA Size Classification above (ESRI Demographics Methodology outlined within paraphs 8.7 and 8.8, utilised to obtain population data for each settlement)

9.15 The urban fringe settlements/urban periphery are not defined separately within the BUA classification but have been referred to within the table below, for clarity/ease of reference.

Table 2: Settlements by Population in the SLP Area

Settlement Type	Population	Areas
Major Town / Small City	75,000-199,999	Cheltenham, Gloucester
Medium Town	20,000-74,999	None
Small Town/larger village	5,000-19,999	Tewkesbury, Bishops Cleeve, Winchcombe
Urban Fringe Settlement	12,000-19,999	Innsworth
Urban Fringe Settlement	5,000-11,999	Brockworth
Urban Fringe Settlement	1,500-4,999	Churchdown, Hucclecote, Longford,

Tewkesbury Fringe Settlements	5,000-11,999	Northway, Wheatpieces
Medium Village	1,500 – 4,999	Woodmancote, Twigworth, Shurdington, Highnam
Small Village or Hamlet **Areas in bold are currently villages but will expand in size due to their 'Garden Community/Communities' status and/or consented planning approvals.**	0-1,499	Alderton, Alderton Fields, Alstone, Apperley, **Ashchurch**, Ashleworth inc Nup End, Aston Cross, Aston-on-Carrant, Badgeworth, Bamfurlong, Barrow, Bengrove, Bentham, Bishop's Norton, Boddington, Brockhampton, Buckland, Castle Hill, Chaceley inc Chaceley Hole, Chargrove, Charlton Abbots, Church End (Twyning), Cleeve Hill, Coombe Hill, Deerhurst, Deerhurst Walton, Didbrook, Dixton, Down Hatherley, Dumbleton, Elmstone Hardwick, Evington, Fiddington, Fiddington Fields, Forthampton, **Golden Valley**, Great Washbourne, Great Witcombe, Greet, Gretton, Gretton Fields, Hailes, Hardwicke, Hasfield, Hawling, Hill End (Twyning), Laverton, Little Buckland, Little Shurdington, Little Washbourne, Little Witcombe, Lower Apperley, Maisemore, Minsterworth, Norton, Over, Oxenton, Pamington, Prescott, Priors Norton, Puckrup, Sandhurst, Shuthonger, Snowshill, Southam, Stanton, Stanway, Staverton, Sudeley, Teddington, The Leigh, Toddington inc New Town, Tirley, Tredington, **Uckington**, Walton Cardiff Village, Wood

		Stanway, Woolstone, Wormington.

9.16 By way of comparison with regard to some of the larger settlements within the borough, based upon the ESRI demographics methodology, the estimated population of Tewkesbury town is 12,790 (based on an average household size of 2.3 and 5,562 dwellings). The estimated population of Bishops Cleeve is 13,668, based on an average household size of 2.0 and 6,834 dwellings. The estimated population of the urban fringe settlement of Innsworth is 13,193, based on an average household size of 2.5 and 5,277 dwellings. Based on the ONS definitions of settlements, this would place all three in the higher range of large villages/ small towns (defined as between 5,000 and 19,999 population).

9.17 However, it must be noted that the settlement tiers arising from the emerging Settlement Hierarchy, will not be based solely upon estimated population data. A wider methodology should be utilised, in order to achieve a finer grained assessment of a settlement's relative position within the hierarchy.

9.18 Protected Areas and Assets

9.19 Whilst the settlement hierarchy will take a policy-off approach, the following constraints/designations will be mapped in order to help determine the settlements' context, character and access to protected landscapes and historic assets, together with areas which may be potentially unsuitable for future development. Mapping the below assets will enable a more complete picture of the settlements.

- Flood zones 2 & 3

- Nature reserves

- Greenbelt (updated with the latest Green Belt review information)

- SSSIs

- Conservation areas

- Watercourses

- National Landscape areas

- Listed Buildings

- Registered Parks & Gardens

- Scheduled Monuments

- Battlefields

9.20 Like the 2017 Settlement Audit, the emerging Settlement Hierarchy will predominantly be a desk-based study, which will analyse existing evidence and readily-available data, relating to each of the settlements. The 2017 Study compiled settlement profiles for each of the identified 75 settlements within Tewkesbury Borough, via desk research of 24 key services/facilities and accessibility criteria, which included post offices, food shops, community centres/village halls, GP surgeries, primary schools and local employment opportunities. Identified 'secondary services', such as broadband connection, banks, public sports pitches and children's play areas, were also audited.

9.21 As mentioned above, the scope of the emerging study will be extended with the help of GIS, to include additional identified settlements within the borough, including the smaller hamlets. The resulting aim will be to produce a 'profile' of the settlements, identifying their main roles, how they function now and how this might change in the future.

9.22 Planned Major Developments

9.23 Furthermore, major development commitments (i.e housing and associated infrastructure, granted planning approval but not yet built) will also mapped, in order to help determine if the future role of the settlements may change over time.

10.0 Scope of Study

10.1 Once the characteristics of the settlements have been established, they will be evaluated to determine the level of service provision. Services will not all be graded equally, but instead, on the size and provision of the service. For example, a large retail store (e.g. supermarket) will 'score' more highly than a single, small retail store.

10.2 The services identified, will thus be given a 'weighting', based upon agreed methodology, in recognition that some services perform a more important function than others – e.g. a healthcare centre will incorporate additional services over and above a small GP practice and therefore, receive a higher grading/weighting.

10.3 The relative weighting given to services and facilities will require further investigation and agreement in terms of methodology. However, an example of how certain services/facilities could be weighted, in order to help inform the emerging hierarchy, is provided within Table 3 below;

Table 3: Potential Service Provision Grading Criteria

Settlement Name: XXX			Population: XX	
Service	**Description**	**Weighting of Service**	**Transport Accessibility**	**Overall Score**
Type of Service	**Higher score if open 5 days, lower score if part-time opening**	**1 = Low Criteria** **5 = High criteria** **Score reflects importance of service**	**Walking Distance = 5** **Cycle Distance = 3** **Major Transit Route = 2**	**Weighting of Service x Location Score**
Hospital	7 days a week Full heath care provision	5	5 + 3 + 2 = 10	
Health Centre	5 days a week. 3 Drs + Nurses	5	5 + 3 = 8	
Doctor Branch	Opens 3 days a week. 1 Dr	3		
Dentist	Opens 6 days a week	4	2	
Pharmacy	Open 6 days a week	4		
Food Retail Large Store	Open 7 days a week	5		
Food Retail Medium Store	Open 7 days a week	4		
Food Retail Small Store	Open 7 days a week	2		

10.4 It is proposed that each settlement is scored against the service provision, then ranked in a league table. The results will then be placed into deciles for easy ranking and

comparison. The overall score of the settlement will help define where it should be placed within the settlement hierarchy.

10.5 The following table provides a comparison of three larger settlements within Tewkesbury Borough, illustrating the total services by type, within a 15 minute walk of the centre of the settlement. Each of the settlements will be assessed in this way, in order to allow ease of comparison/ranking.

Table 4: Total services by each settlement.

| Total Service Type | Settlement | | |
Row Labels	Bishops_Cleeve	Innsworth	Tewkesbury
Accident_and_Emergency			1
Active_Place	1		3
Bank	2	1	7
Community_Services	4		4
Food_Outlet	7	1	4
Foodbank			1
General_Practice	2		2
Leisure_Camping			2
Leisure_Club			2
Leisure_Culture			1
Leisure_Licenced_Venue	1		
Leisure_Sports	4	3	11
Library	1	1	1
Licenced_Vendor			2
Market			1
Open_Space	9	16	6
Park_Playground	1	3	9
Petrol_Station		1	2

Pharmacy	3	1	4
Place_of_Worship	3	2	9
Post_Box	10	8	16
Post_Office	1		
Primary_School	3	5	4
Pub_Bar_Club	6		10
Public_Village_Hall	4	1	10
Religious_Hall	2	2	2
Restaurant_Cafe	1	2	13
Secondary_School	1		1
Shop_Retail_Services	62	52	161
Total	**128**	**99**	**289**

11.0 Defining the Settlement Hierarchy for the Strategic and Local Plan – How might the new Settlement Hierarchy look?

11.1 Settlements in the emerging settlement hierarchy will be grouped and ranked into tiers, with all other settlements (i.e very small villages/hamlets), classed as being within open countryside.

11.2 Based upon the GIS data gathered to date, together with desk-top study of settlements and initial 15 minute walk/5 minute drive, accessibility assessment, an emerging Settlement Hierarchy is taking shape, as set out within Table 5.

11.3 Any settlements within the lowest tier of the hierarchy comprise the smaller villages/hamlets within the rural area and are designated as settlements within the open countryside. These settlements are very small in terms of number of properties and residents – having populations of less than 250 and more commonly less than 100 residents. The modest size of these populations cannot attract or support any significant service provision and instead rely upon services in nearby settlements. As a

result, the level of service provision within these settlements is very minimal, with most having no services at all and a small number having just one service. The built form of these settlements is often dispersed throughout their wider parish, leaving very few opportunities for infill development. Furthermore, sustainable transport connections are usually poor/infrequent, with opportunities to access day to day services and facilities by means other than private vehicle, severely restricted. As such, the position of these settlements within the overall hierarchy, is reflected of their relative lack of opportunity to support sustainable growth, over the Plan period.

Table 5: Emerging Settlement Hierarchy based upon updated methodology

Settlement Tier	Settlements
Gloucester	
Cheltenham	
Market town	Tewkesbury (including Mitton, Newtown, Priors Park)
Urban Fringe Settlements	Innsworth, Brockworth, Churchdown, Longford, Hucclecote
Fringe Settlements (Tewkesbury Town)	Northway, Wheatpieces
Rural Service Centre – Tier 1	Bishops Cleeve
Rural Service Centre – Tier 2	Winchcombe
Service Villages	Alderton, Apperley, Coombe Hill Gotherington Highnam Maisemore Minsterworth Norton Shurdington Stoke Orchard Toddington (inc. New Town), Twigworth, Twyning Woodmancote
Villages	Ashleworth inc Nup End, Aston Cross, Badgeworth, Bamfurlong, Dumbleton, Elmstone Hardwick, Evington, Fiddington, Fiddington Fields, Greet, Gretton, Gretton Fields, Down Hatherley, Hill End (Twyning), Little Shurdington, Little Witcombe, Lower Apperley, Pamington, Southam, The Leigh, Tirley
Smaller Villages/Hamlets	Alderton Fields, Alstone, Aston-on-Carrant, Barrow, Bengrove, Bentham, Bishop's Norton, Boddington, Brockhampton, Buckland, Castle Hill,

	Chaceley inc Chaceley Hole, Chargrove, Charlton Abbotts, Cleeve Hill, Deerhurst, Deerhurst Walton, Didbrook, Dixton, Forthampton, Great Washbourne, Great Witcombe, Hailes, Hardwicke, Hasfield, Hawling, Laverton, Little Buckland, Little Washbourne, Over, Oxenton, Prescott, Priors Norton, Puckrup, Sandhurst, Shuthonger, Snowshill, Stanton, Stanway, Staverton, Sudeley, Teddington, Tredington, Walton Cardiff, Wood Stanway, Woolstone, Wormington

11.4 It should be noted that the above emerging hierarchy is based upon early assessment and data collection, to date, and therefore, subject to change. As the methodology is refined and the data assessed in greater detail, settlements may move up or down within the hierarchy.

11.5 The hierarchy will inform the emerging policy formulation for the SLP, and help to support sustainable and appropriate growth, over the plan period.

Appendices

Appendix A:

Defining Population:

This appendix provides further technical detail on how the population of settlements was achieved.

The ESRI demographics data 2023 was used to identify the median persons per household within the settlement area then multiplied that by the total number of residential properties found within the settlement boundary. Residential properties data was extracted from the most recent LLPG dataset (published 10/02/2025), available from OS in the AddressBasePremium dataset.

 Several benefits of calculating population like this include

- It accounts for any new build properties since 2023 within the settlement boundaries (and therefore the population increase due to new movement to the area). As an example, assuming that there's not been a huge change in the per household makeup since 2023 per area, it should be pretty close to the resident settlement population as of this February.

- It does not rely on a 'population by area extract' from underlying census datasets (2021). Detail: Census Output areas (OAs) that population stats are 'binned by', are sometimes much bigger than a settlement contained within them- the algorithm assumes an even population spread across the OA and doesn't account for the higher population density likely to be concentrated in the settlement itself.