

Ledbury Station 'eastbound'

v0.2 19th January 2017

This document sets out to outline a top level proposal for development of the eastbound side of Ledbury railway station to enable discussion to start with initial stakeholders: Herefordshire Council, Network Rail, First Great Western, Malvern Hills AONB, Gareth Davies (train users group), Marches LEP, The Wilce family, Ledbury Town Council, John Goldrick (platform ticket franchisee), Ledbury Cycle Forum, H&W Chamber of Commerce, All Ledbury parish councillors (as of January 2017), The Ledbury neighbourhood planning committee, Herefordshire Council transport department, Hereford planning department, Hereford High Sheriff (Bill Jackson), Head of Herefordshire Council, Bill Wiggin (MP) who has contacted transport minister Chris Grayling.

1 Current Issues

- 1.1 Limited access to the eastbound platform. The only access is via a stepped metal bridge or by crossing the line itself.
- 1.2 Insufficient car parking. Existing free parking is provided but is generally full early on forcing motorists to park on nearby roads which subsequently have had double yellow lines introduced.
- 1.3 Limited access to the eastbound platform may be contributing to the lack of investment in the station and the restoration of its former facilities.
- 1.4 The landowner of the land adjacent to the eastbound platform (Mr Wilce) has no retail facilities to promote the products they produce from their farm business (Ledbury Cider and Juice Co Ltd).
- 1.5 A shortage of affordable start up office units for SME's in the Ledbury area.

2 The proposed features

- 2.1 Provide vehicle access from the Bromyard road to the eastbound platform including road and small roundabout enabling a passenger drop off point and potential taxi rank and bus parking space.
- 2.2 Provide parking for an additional 50 cars.
- 2.3 An oak beamed 'farm shop' to facilitate retail, licenced cafe, meeting room, toilets and a showcase for local products and services.
- 2.4 The provision of 4 business incubation units providing office accommodation and facilities to support start-ups and existing SMEs.

3 The proposed benefits

- 3.1 Satisfy the requirements of the Hereford core strategy to provide additional parking for Ledbury Station. (4.5.9)
- 3.2 Provide access to the platform for those people with reduced mobility. (TR3.1)
- 3.2 Improving the facilities at the station and enable it to promote the local area in its role as a transport gateway into Ledbury. (TR3.1)
- 3.3 Generate employment opportunities in both securing existing jobs and in creating new ones including those associated with the new station facilities, the 'farm shop' and the start-up business hubs. Complementing the planned Office/Lab employment land allocation at the viaduct site.
- 3.4 Enable Network Rail to have vehicle access to the eastbound platform and potential for investment and development of currently underutilised land.
- 3.5 Enhance the Area of Outstanding Beauty by promoting walking and cycling in the local area and the Malvern Hills and surrounding countryside. A centre from which to embark on woodland walks utilising the existing footpath would be created and promoted.(CL1)
- 3.6 The 'farm shop' would enable a new hub for the cycle hire business currently operated from the existing Old Kennels Farmhouse. This would result in an increase in the availability of cycles for hire including the potential for electric bikes and a potential hook up with other local businesses, e.g Eastnor Castle, Westons Visitor Centre and hopefully, eventually the canal basin/dock and cycle routes. (TR1.1)

ANNEX

A1. Herefordshire Core Strategy document

Policy LB1- Development in Ledbury

Ledbury will accommodate a minimum of 800 new homes balanced with a minimum of 15 hectares of new employment land during the plan period. The majority of new housing development will be focussed to the north of the town as set out in Policy LB2 and the strategic location for new employment of around 12 hectares to the west of the town, south of Little Marcle Road. Further development will take place through the implementation of existing commitments, in fill development, and sites allocated through a Neighbourhood Development Plan. A number of sites which have future potential for development have been identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). Within Ledbury, new development proposals will be encouraged where they:

- allow for suitable small scale employment sites including live work opportunities within or adjoining the town;
- maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the existing town centre. Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 400m² in gross floor space and located outside the town centre will need to be supported by an impact assessment to determine whether there could be any adverse impacts on the town centre;
- improve accessibility within Ledbury by walking, cycling and public transport, particularly where they enhance connectivity with, for example, local facilities, new employment areas and the town centre;
- contribute to addressing deficiencies in community facilities and/or allow for infrastructure improvements (including broadband) in the town, to promote sustainable development;
- reflect and enhance the characteristic built historic elements of Ledbury, such as its stone, brick and timber-framed buildings, medieval plan form, conservation areas and setting overlooking the Leadon Valley;
- protect and enhance its green infrastructure, including connections to the public right of way network and biodiversity, particularly the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the east and the Leadon Valley to the west;
- protect and enhance the setting of the town from eastern and western viewpoints; and, where this is not possible, incorporate appropriate mitigation measures; and
- have demonstrated engagement and consultation with the community including the town council.

Movement

4.5.7 The policy approach for movement in Ledbury is based on reducing the need to travel by private car. This will be achieved by locating new development within walking and cycling distance of existing and new facilities (including the railway station) and improving and extending sustainable transport routes. New employment land and other policies in the Core Strategy, as well as the forthcoming Neighbourhood Development Plan, will also promote local employment opportunities. This will help address the issue of reducing the need to travel. Herefordshire Council (through the Local Transport Plan) proposes to work in partnership with bus operators and developers to ensure housing and employment locations are served by public transport and that service frequencies linking to Hereford are maintained. Place Shaping - Ledbury 86 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2031 Place Shaping - Ledbury

4.5.8 Vehicular, pedestrian, cycle and bus access to the housing site will need to be provided with additional sustainable transport links to the station. A reduction in the speed limit along the Bromyard Road and improvements to the Hereford Road/Bromyard Road junction are also likely to be required to improve the design, safety and efficiency of this road and junction. These, and any other highway improvements, will be informed by a traffic assessment, and will be considered as part of the Council's determination of planning applications on the site.

4.5.9 The issue of car parking supply and demand at the railway station and in the town centre will be addressed through a Neighbourhood Development Plan. With regards parking to serve the railway station, the opportunity may exist for an underground overspill car park on land north of the railway line which could be funded through community infrastructure levy monies, subject to landowner agreement

A.2 Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (Draft)

Objective TR1: To promote the use of sustainable transport methods such as cycling, walking and public transport as primary means of getting around Ledbury both within the existing settlement and with new areas of development.

Policy TR1.1—Footpaths & Cycleways Proposals will be supported which will contribute to the improvement and extension of the entire network of footpaths and cycling routes in Ledbury to encourage greater accessibility, safety and usage by residents and visitors. In particular: Create a dedicated cycle route from the Strategic Site to the town. A safe route for pedestrians and cyclists from the designated employment development site at Little Marcle Road from the site over and over the By Pass (Leadon Way). Improve cycle/pedestrian access to the station from the town and from the proposed newbuild north of the viaduct.

Objective CL1: To protect and enhance our Green Spaces, open areas and woodland areas including Riverside Park, Line Bank Town Trail and Dog Hill, Conigree and Frith Woods .

NB.

(Frith Woods are located above Old Kennels farm and accessible from the existing footpath that runs between the railway and the farm itself)

Objective TR3: To encourage the use of Ledbury Railway Station as a transport hub for Ledbury and District by improving access and facilities with additional parking.

Policy TR3.1—Ledbury railway station Proposals which will improve the accessibility and facilities available at the railway station, including additional cycle parking, car parking and step free access to the Malvern/Worcester platform will be supported. Proposals should take account in terms of their design to the siting of the railway station on the boundary of the Area of Natural Beauty.

L02 Old Kennels Farm site - comments from NDP call for sites - (not included however in latest plan as being within proposed development boundary).

Overall Suitability: Very sustainable location adjacent to the existing settlement boundary and close to the railway station. Visually prominent and sensitive as development of the site would impact upon the Malvern AONB. Potentially suitable for limited employment or residential development with a sympathetic and lower density scheme on the south western quadrant of the site which would relate to the existing build edge of Ledbury's settlement boundary and existing railway infrastructure.

A.3 Images



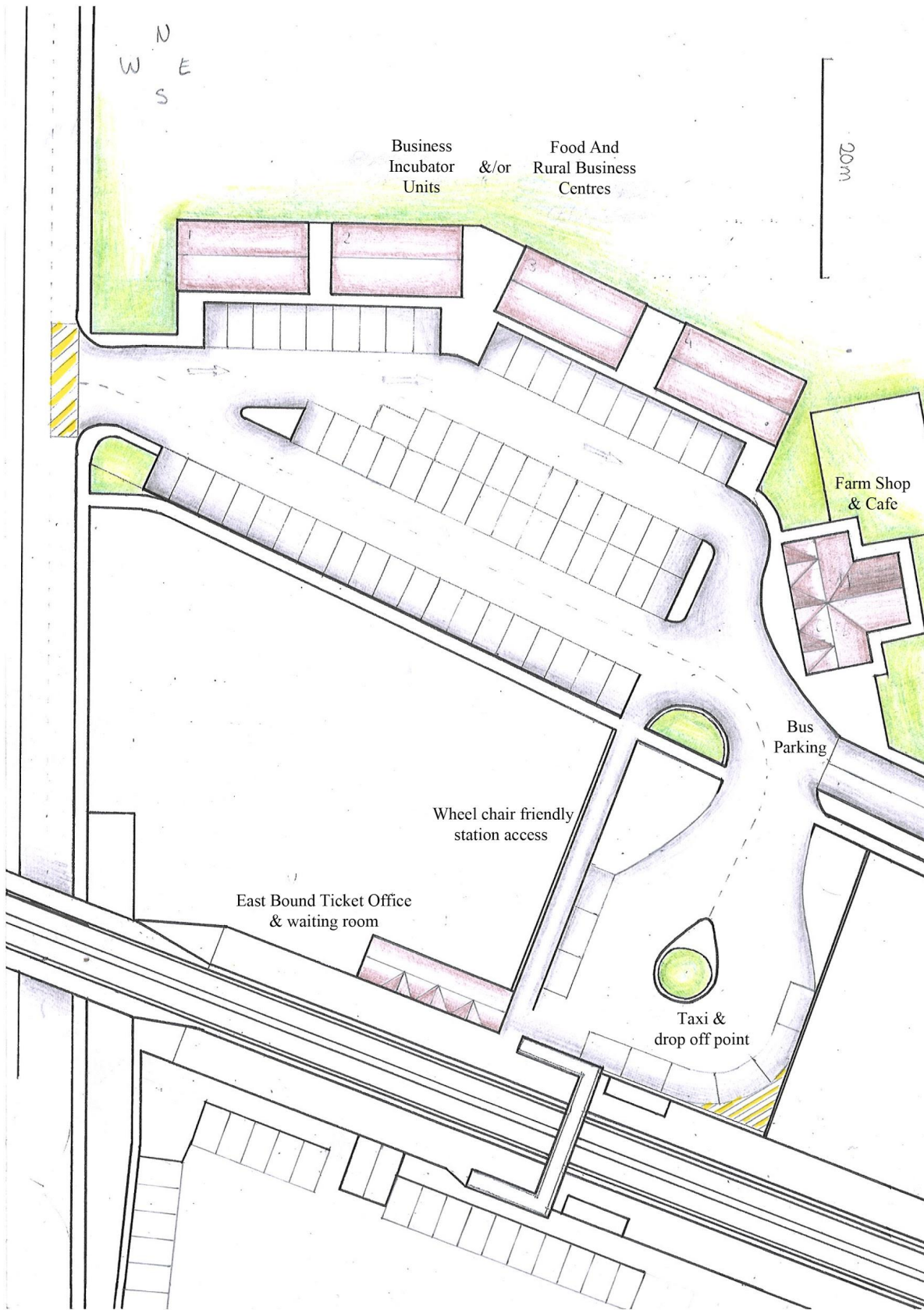
A.3.1 The station in 1958 showing original station buildings



A.3.2 The station as it looks today



A.3.3 Google Earth map of the site



A.3.4 First draft sketch of possible layout