



# LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

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17 March 2021

TO: Councillors Bannister (Chairman), Chowns, Eakin, Harvey, Howells, Knight, Manns, Morris (Vice-Chair) and Vesma (Town Mayor – Ex-officio)

Dear Member

You are hereby summoned to attend an **extraordinary meeting of the Economic Development & Planning Committee on Monday, 22 March 2021 at 6.30 pm.** During the Covid-19 Pandemic, meetings will take place via Zoom for the purpose of transacting the business set out below.

Members of the public will be able to watch the meeting live on the Council's Facebook Page at the link below:

<https://www.facebook.com/Ledbury-Town-Council-1834014213360154/?ref=bookmarks>

Yours faithfully

Angela Price PSLCC  
Town Clerk

## A G E N D A

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive any declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations

*(Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Ledbury Town Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011)*

*(Note: Members seeking advice on this item are asked to contact the Monitoring Officer at Herefordshire Council at least 72 hours prior to the meeting)*

### **3. Public Participation**

Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions, and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. If you wish to raise a question or concern related to any item on the agenda and would like to attend the meeting, please contact the Town Clerk for the Zoom link to join the meeting.

- 4. To approve and sign, as a correct record, the minutes of a meeting of the Economic Development & Planning Committee held on 11 March 2021  
(Pages 386-394)**
- 5. To review Action Sheet (Pages 395)**
- 6. To receive and note the minutes of a meeting of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Party held on 2 February and 2 March 2021  
(Pages 396-403)**
- 7. Notes of meetings 23-25 of the Steering Group (Pages 404-412)**
- 8. To approve invoices for payment: (Pages 413-414)**
  - i. Bill Bloxsome
  - ii. Carly Tinkler
- 9. To give consideration to and agree the limited aims and objectives of the NDP revision as agreed at a meeting of Councillors on 25 January 2021 and as recommended at a meeting of the Economic Development & Planning Committee held on 11 February 2021 (Pages 415-416)**
- 10. To receive and note the following documents: (Pages 417-650)**
  - i. Topic guide 1 – Design Guide
  - ii. Topic guide 2 – Employment
  - iii. Topic guide 3 - Recreation and open spaces
  - iv. Topic guide 4 – Green infrastructure
  - v. Topic guide 5 – Settlement Boundary
  - vi. Topic guide 6 – LVBA
- 11. To review an update on documents in respect of consultation phase (Pages 651-671)**
  - i. Documents filing list
  - ii. NDP Action List
  - iii. Consultation activities record
  - iv. First Public consultation qualitative responses

**12. To give consideration to and make recommendation of for approval Full Council the following documents in respect consultation phase (To Follow)**

- i. Issue's report
- ii. Summarised version of issues report to be distributed to residents
- iii. Residents Questionnaire
- iv. Communications and consultations plan

**13. To note that the date of the next meeting of the Economic & Development & Planning Committee is scheduled for 8 April 2021**

Distribution: Full agenda to: - Committee Members (7)  
Town Mayor (1)  
Press (2)

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 11 MARCH 2021  
VIA ZOOM**

*Agenda Item*  
*4*

**PRESENT:** Councillors: Bannister, Chowns, Eakin, Harvey, Howells, Knight, and Morris

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Angie Price – Town Clerk  
Patricia Wilkins  
Neil Baldwin

**P370. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Manns.

**P371. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

**P372. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Chairman welcomed Neil Baldwin to the meeting and advised that he was to make a representation in relation to planning application 204577.

Neil Baldwin advised that when submitting the planning application for the redevelopment of the former auctions site, the Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan had been taken into consideration. He advised that they had engaged with Herefordshire Council Planning Officers pre application and are subsequently making amendments to incorporate ways to promote sustainable travel as suggested by the Highways. Whilst there is not an equal amount of car parking bays to homes, it was believed that it would be more beneficial to the community to provide more 1-bedroom apartments and promote sustainable/active travel.

The Chair thanked Mr Baldwin for his statement.

**P373. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING COMMITTEE OF 11  
FEBRUARY 2021 AS A CORRECT RECORD**

Councillor Howells noted that the following minute numbers should read:

**P362**

*'The Town Clerk suggested that going forward all planning applications will be uploaded to the website and the Council social media accounts*

*before each month of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting.'*

**P369**

*'That Members receive and note the response of Herefordshire Suitable Transport Group document, noting that any comments are sent directly to the Herefordshire Sustainable Transport Group by Tuesday 16 February 2021.'*

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development & Planning Committee held on 11 February 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record subject to the above amendments.**

**P374.**

**ACTION SHEET**

Members were provided with the Economic Development and Planning Action Sheet. The Town Clerk updated Members on the progress she had made since the last meeting, including a virtual meeting with the acting Chair of Ledbury in Bloom, Christina Vass.

Councillor Harvey asked whether it would be possible to diarise some of the actions as they are ongoing, including discussions on colours and themes with Ledbury in Bloom.

**RESOLVED:**

That Action sheet be received and noted.

**P375.**

**PLANNING CONSULTATIONS**

**1. Planning Application 204577 – Former Auction Rooms, Market Street, Ledbury, Herefordshire**

There was a heated debate in relation to the planning application. Councillor Knight expressed concerns that had been raised with her by members of the public that the public were not being consulted on the application. Councillor Howells advised that in the current Neighbourhood Development Plan the former auction rooms was agreed to be the most popular building in Ledbury for development. However, there were some key points including keeping to the design and landscaping in a conservation area.

It was noted that some comments provided by the members of the public were not listed on the Chairman's notes. Councillor Harvey reassured the members and the public, that due to the planning application deadline, there would be enough time to discuss further comments in the next meeting of Economic

Development Committee. She also advised members of the public that representations can be made on the Herefordshire Council Planning website.

Councillor Harvey advised that due to the size of housing units on the site, the development would qualify for affordable housing, and therefore asked why this was not taken into consideration. She felt that there could be improvements to the design, incorporating history of the old former auction site and being more sympathetic to the Conservation area.

Councillor Chowns commented on the number of parking places, he asked whether there could be provision for electric charging points.

Mr Baldwin advised that to provide social housing, the developer would have to be registered as a social housing landlord, which they were not. He also stated that the development incorporates history of the railway, providing an industrial feel. He also addressed Councillor Chowns' comment and advised that there had been discussions on providing electric charging points.

Councillor Bannister advised members of the recommendation that had been agreed at the Major Planning Application Working Party. It was agreed that members of the Economic Development and Planning committee agree to meet with the developers and Herefordshire Council Planning Officers to discuss the development further.

Councillor Harvey advised members that Planning Officers at Herefordshire Council are very accommodating in terms of allowing additional comments to be made past the planning application deadline. She encouraged members of the public to make representation through the Planning Portal on the Herefordshire Council website.

Councillor Howells felt that it would be beneficial for the planning applications Working Party to prepare questions for the developers and Planning Officers. He advised that he send a copy of the Design Guide to members.

Councillor Harvey asked for clarification on mobility access in the development.

**RESOLVED: That Members of the Economic Development Planning Committee arrange a meeting with the developers and Planning Officers at Herefordshire Council.**

2. **Planning Application 204578– Former Auction Rooms, Market Street, Ledbury, Herefordshire**

**RESOLVED: That Members of the Economic Development Planning Committee arrange a meeting with the developers and Planning Officers at Herefordshire Council.**

3. **Planning Application 210087 – 22 Bramley Close, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2XP**

**RESOLVED: NO OBJECTION**

4. **Planning Application 210128 – Marley Hall, Staplow, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1NR**

**RESOLVED: NO OBJECTION**

5. **Planning Application 210187- Land at 46 Queensway Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2AZ**

**RESOLVED: NO OBJECTION**

6. **Planning Application 210271 – 8 New Street, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2DX**

**RESOLVED: NO OBJECTION**

P376. **PLANNING DECISIONS**

Members were provided with an up-to-date Planning Decisions table

**RESOLVED:**

**That the list of planning application decisions be received and Noted.**

P377. **MINUTES OF THE MAJOR PLANNING APPLICATION WORKING PARTY MEETINGS**

Members were asked to receive and note the minutes of the Major Planning Application Working Party meeting held on 22 February 2021.

**RESOLVED:**

**That Members of the Economic Development and Planning Committee receive and note the minutes of the Major Planning Application Working Party held on 22 February 2021.**

**P378. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT WORKING PARTY**

Members were asked to receive and note the minutes of the Traffic Management Working Party held on 23 February 2021.

**RESOLVED:**

**That Members of the Economic Development and Planning Committee receive and note the minutes of the Traffic Management Working Party held on 23 February 2021.**

**P379. UPDATE ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Councillor Howells provided members with an update on the Neighbourhood development plan including the following:

- a) Notes of the minutes of a meeting of the NDP held on 23 February 2021.
- b) Notes of meetings 17 – 22 of the Steering Group.
- c) NDP Revision 2021: Invitations to quote
- d) NDP 2021-2031 Issues and options February 2021 1<sup>st</sup> Review

Councillor Chowns expressed his concerns with the maps used in the Issues and Options document. He felt that they were difficult to read and that this should be considered before the consultation.

Councillor Harvey suggested adding a 'Draft Watermark' on the documents. She also suggested setting up focus groups with members of the public to get feedback before the consultation.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That update on the Neighbourhood Development Plan be received and noted.**
- 2. Notes of the minutes of a meeting of the NDP held on 23 February 2021 be received and noted.**
- 3. That the Notes of meetings 17 -22 of the Steering Group be received and noted.**
- 4. That the NDP Revision 2021: Invitations be accepted and deferred to the next meeting of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Party.**
- 5. That the NDP 2021 -2031 Issues and Options document be received and noted.**

P380. **ECONOMY AND TOURISM**

Members were asked to receive and note the minutes of the Economy and Tourism Working Party held on 22 February 2021.

Councillor Bannister advised members of the following recommendations:

**ET22 (1)** *That the issues of the Tourist Information Centre be considered as part of the Task and Finish Group.*

**ET22(2)** *Caroline Green and Christine Tustin will work with Helen Bowden on the Ledbury page of the new Herefordshire Tourism website.*

**RESOLVED:**

1. That Members of the Economic Development and Planning Committee receive and note the minutes of the Economy and Tourism Working Party held on 22 February 2021.
2. That Members of the Economic Development and Planning Committee agree that the issues of the Tourist Information Centre be considered as part of the Task and Finish Group.
3. That Members of the Economic Development and Planning Committee agree that *Caroline Green and Christine Tustin will work with Helen Bowden on the Ledbury page of the new Herefordshire Tourism website.*

P381. **HABITAT REGULATION ASSESSMENT (HRA)**

Members were provided with the Habitat Regulation of Neighbourhood Development Plans within the River Lugg hydrological catchment area.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Habitat Regulation of Neighbourhood Development Plans Be received and noted.**

P382. **REQUEST FOR LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL TO APPLY FOR A LICENCE TO CULTIVATE.**

Members were asked to consider applying for the licence to Cultivate land adjacent to Queens Walk and the bedding areas opposite Bye Street Public Toilets.

The Clerk advised that the request had been received from Ledbury Naturalists via the Climate Change forum.

Councillor knight asked for clarification on the proposed plans. She advised that members of the public had asked whether the current plants would be replaced as there are already wildlife residing there. The Clerk advised that the licence was to maintain however she would confirm before applying for the licence.

There was a discussion on applying for Licences to Cultivate and how long they can take to be granted. Councillor Harvey suggested contacting Hereford to ask whether it would be possible to apply for a block of licenses to save time in the future. She also noted that it would be beneficial to notify the schools nearby as they have been very proactive in encouraging the wildlife in the Bye Street Garden.

The Clerk was sure that Ledbury Naturist worked closely with the Schools, however she would double check.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Town Clerk be authorised to proceed with a Licence to Cultivate request for Queens Walk and the Bye Street Garden.**

P383.

**CORPORATE PLAN**

Members were provided with the Corporate Plan Action Sheet. The Clerk suggested keeping the corporate plan on the agenda as a standing item.

Councillor Knight asked whether the Corporate Plan action list could be published on the website.

Councillor Harvey asked whether the actions could be numbered for easy reference and that it would be beneficial to produce a delivery plan due to some crossovers. She suggested arranging a working group to produce a delivery plan for the next meeting of Economic Development and Planning.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the Corporate Plan be received and noted, noting that a copy be uploaded on the Ledbury Town Council website.**
- 2. That the Corporate Plan action list is numbered for easy reference.**
- 3. That the Town Clerk liaise with Councillor Harvey to set up a working party to produce a delivery plan for the Corporate Plan.**

P384. **THE FARM, BOSBURY, WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION.**

Members were provided with correspondence received from Pryor & Rickett Silviculture in respect of a Woodland Management Plan for The Farm, Bosbury.

The Clerk advised that if Ledbury Town Council wish to make comment, these should be provided no later than Wednesday, 17 March 2021.

Councillor Bannister noted that there was no mention of public asses in the documents.

Members agreed that it would be beneficial for the stiles and signage on posts be included in the management plan as well as the footpaths.

Councillor Harvey advised members that the Council had a similar management Plan for Dog Hill Wood. She asked whether the plan could be utilised when looking into plan programmes for Dog Hill Wood. The Town Clerk advised that she was already looking into this matter and will update members accordingly.

**RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk provide the agreed feedback on the proposed management plan no later than 17 March 2021.**

P385. **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

The Clerk reminded Councillor Bannister of two questions that had been raised by members of the public which had not been dealt with under agenda item 3.

**1. How much would Ledbury Town Council have to pay in costs if the appeal were lost?**

Councillor Bannister advised that the Council would only be liable to costs if the inspector felt that Ledbury Town Council acted unreasonably. The Council will only know if and how much they will have to pay when the decision has been made.

**2. Where is the money going to come from if Ledbury Town Council must pay, and what will the Town Council lose out on?**

Councillor Bannister advised members that if Ledbury town Council had to pay costs could come from reserves and that there would be negotiation on how this is paid.

P386. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED: To note that the date of the next Economic Development and Planning Committee will be held on 8 April 2021.**

The Meeting ended 9:11pm

Signed ..... Dated .....



# ACTION SHEET

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING COMMITTEE

11.03.2021

Minute No.	Action	To be Actioned by	Date Actioned	Comments	Status
P373	That the minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development & Planning Committee held on 11 February 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record with proposed amendments.	TC	16.03.2021	Minutes ammended and awaiting the Chair signature	Completed
P375	That the Town Clerk organise a meeting with the developers of the former auction site and the Planning Officers at Herefordshire Council	TC			In progress
P382	That Members receive of the Economic Development and Planning Committee instruct the Town Clerk to proceed with a Licence to Cultivate request for Queens Walk and the Bye Street Garden.	TC			In progress
P383(1)	That the Corporate Plan be received and noted, noting that a copy be uploaded on the Ledbury Town Council website.	TC	16.03.2021	Administrator working with web developer to create a Corporate Plan	In progress
P383(2)	That the Corporate Plan action list is numbered for easy reference.	TC	16.03.2021		Completed
P383(3)	That the Town Clerk liaise with Councillor Harvey to set up a working party to produce a delivery plan for the Corporate Plan.	TC			In progress

395

Item 5



Item  
6

**NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN WORKING PARTY  
HELD ON 2 FEBRUARY VIA ZOOM**

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Howells (Chair), Councillor Bannister, Nicola Forde (Deputy Chair) Ann Lumb, Paul Kinnaird, Steve Glennie Smith, Nick Fish, Celia Kellett

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk – Angela Price

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Helen l'Anson

**143 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None received

**144 MINUTES**

Members were requested to approve and sign the notes of a meeting of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Party (NDP) held on 5 January 2021 as an accurate record.

**RESOLVED:**

That the notes of a meeting of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Party held on 5 January 2021 be approved as an accurate record.

**145 NOTES OF THE STEERING GROUP – UP TO 22 JANUARY 2021**

**RESOLVED:**

That the notes of the NDP steering group from 31 December 2020 to 22 January 2021 be received and noted

**146 TOWN COUNCILLOR BRIEFING MONDAY 25 JANUARY 2021**

Councillor Howells updated members on a recent Town Councillor Briefing held on Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

Councillor Howells explained that if members agreed to the NDP current status briefing document, it would be sent for the ED&P Committee and Full Council for approval.

It was advised that Dave Tristram had suggested applying for a £5,000 grant this year and a further grant of £5,000 for next year. Councillor Howells advised members that he would be meeting with Dave Tristram and the Town Clerk to discuss further.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That updated Budget Position 2020/21 be approved.
2. That the Ledbury NDP current status briefing document 22/01/21 be approved, noting that a copy of the report is submitted to the next EDP Committee Meeting and Full Council to be formally approved.
3. That members receive and note the current project timeline forecast 09/01/21.

147

**UPDATE ON PROGRESS WORK OF Bill Bloxsome AND Carly Tinkler**

Nicola Forde advised members that Carly Tinker is still working on the baseline studies and that she is making progress. She also noted that Bill Bloxsome has completed most of the basic documents and that the Design Guide is looking very promising.

Members discussed areas in the town that would qualify as Local Enhancement Zones and Strategic Corridors with the aim of protecting them. Areas included Green Lane and Cut Throat Lane.

There was a lengthy discussion about the Design Guide including whether it carried weight with developers. Councillors Howells advised that the Design Guide has been useful when commenting on Planning Applications in the past.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the verbal update on the work of Bill Bloxsome and Carly Tinkler be received and noted.

148

**UPDATE ON FUNDING**

Councillor Howells updated members on the progress on obtaining funding and advised that he will be meeting with Dave Tristram and the Town Clerk to discuss which grants to apply for.

**RESOLVED:**

That the verbal update on funding be received and noted.

149

**UPDATE ON FILLING**

Councillor Howells advised Members that the Office Administrator has recently updated the NDP website and that by the end of February the website and office filing system set up should be completed.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the verbal update on filing be received and noted.

## APPROVE COMMUNICATIONS AND CONSULTATION PLAN

Members were provided with the current draft Communications and Consultation Plan.

Councillor Howells advised that he has been working with consultant Maxine Bassett on the document.

Members were advised that volunteers would be sought to help with consultation meetings and writing them up. As the consultation gets underway help would also be needed.

Two consultation meetings had been held: one with Heineken - Paul Kinnaird advised members that he had sent a copy of the notes of the meeting with Heineken and was waiting for them to approve them. Nicola Forde advised that the Ledbury Health Partnership had approved the minutes of their meeting verbally. The Clerk advised that an electronic signature should be sought.

It was agreed that once these documents had been signed the documents would be uploaded to the Town Council NDP website as evidence. The Clerk advised that the office have Adobe and that they could send a copy back to Heineken and Ledbury Health Partnership and ask for an electronic signature.

Anne Lumb asked whether the Town Council could provide a list of community groups that the council used to send correspondence to in October 2019. The Town Clerk advised that she would send a copy via email.

Members were advised that the Ledbury Portal would support the NDP and share any news or consultations on their platform.

### RESOLVED:

**That the Communications and Consultations Plan be received and noted.**

### DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

To note that future meetings of Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Party are scheduled to be held on the following dates in the 2020/21 Municipal Year and that meetings will be held via Zoom until further notice:

Tuesday, 2 February 2021 - 6.30 pm

Tuesday, 2 March 2021 - 6.30 pm

Tuesday, 30 March 2021 6.30 pm

Meeting closed at 7:45

Signed ..... Dated

398



**NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN WORKING PARTY  
HELD ON 2 MARCH 2021 VIA ZOOM**

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Howells (Chair), Councillor Bannister, Councillor Harvey Nicola Forde (Deputy Chair) Ann Lumb, Celia Kellett, Paul Kinnaird, Councillor Helen l'Anson.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk – Angela Price

**APOLOGIES**

None received.

**152 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None received.

**153 MINUTES**

Members were requested to approve and sign the notes of a meeting of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Party (NDP) held on 2 February 2021 as an accurate record.

Councillor Harvey had some concerns with how the Town Council are being presented with NDP documents to approve and endorse, including the Consultation plan. The Clerk advised that the documents will be in the next Full Council meeting Agenda.

Councillor Bannister asked whether there could be a dedicated Economic Development Planning Committee as well as a dedicated Full Council meeting to go through the appropriate NDP documents. Councillor Harvey advised members that the Council have previously requested further dedicated meeting of Full Council if needed.

Nicola Forde advised members that the first consultation was going to be published in the Ledbury Focus and that the copy deadline was Monday, 8 March 2021.

The Town Clerk suggested that she meet with Councillor Howells to discuss the first public consultation documents and timelines for the dedicated meetings to review them.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the notes of a meeting of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Party held on 2 February 2021 be approved as an accurate record.**
- 2. That the Town Clerk organise a dedicated meeting of the Economic Development and Planning Committee to review the**

**NDP documents for the upcoming proposed round of public consultation.**

154

**NOTES OF THE STEERING GROUP – UP TO 23 FEBRUARY 2021**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the notes of the NDP steering group from 28 January 2021 to 23 February 2021 be received and noted**

155

**UPDATE ON PROGRESS WORK – BILL BLOXSOME**

Members were provided with an 'Issue's report' which was proposed to provide the basis of the first round of public consultation on the revision of the NDP. It included the suggested consultation quantitative questions to be asked and that this document was a key one to go to the next Economic Development and Planning Committee for approval to go to full council.

Councillor Howells advised members that due to the pandemic lockdown which was still likely to be at least partly in place during the proposed timescale for this first round of public consultation, it was not going to be possible to have public meetings with residents. It is therefore proposed the Issues report be printed as a leaflet and distributed to all residents in Ledbury together with a printed questionnaire. This will be supported with an online questionnaire and NDP papers posted to the Ledbury Town Council NDP pages on the website.

Councillor Bannister queried section 2 of the Issues report: 'Land for Playing Fields'. He asked Councillor Howells to confirm whether the 5-6 hectares of sports facilities was in addition to the 12 hectares of employment land. This he confirmed and Councillor Howells advised also that the NDP WP was in the process of formally consulting with the football clubs on their needs, including questions on exactly how much land was required including the opportunity for an all-year-round pitch.

Councillor Howells confirmed that the linear park at the Viaduct site (Bloor Homes) development will come under green space as opposed to recreation.

Given the way the consultation was to be mainly online due to the lockdown and restrictions, Councillor Harvey asked whether the questions from the issues report could be simplified. Councillor Howells confirmed this was the plan. The Issues report was a technical document providing detail which was needed for the full background evidence on each of the agreed issues the NDP revision was to cover, and that once approved, it was proposed to produce a simpler and less detailed leaflet to go with the questionnaire to be distributed to every house. He stressed this meant there would therefore be two separate documents and agreed with Councillor Harvey that on the document for distribution the wording on the leaflet would be simpler with more bullet points.

700

Members discussed the consultation timeline and Councillor Harvey asked whether it would be possible to wait until the lockdown restrictions have eased to go ahead with the public consultation. Nicola Forde advised that if the regulation 14 was to go ahead in September, the first consultation could be pushed back. However, it would have to be completed before June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

Members agreed that the introduction needs to be simplified, including the greater use of bullet points. It was also confirmed that the order of items would be changed to put the settlement boundary first after the introduction. Although it was logical to put the other issues in first because they led to the justification for the settlement boundary options suggested, because it was known that the key reason for the NDP revision was to produce a settlement boundary it would be easier for the public to grasp.

Councillor Howells suggested that if members wished to make any comments on the Issues report to send to him and Nicola Forde for collation so they could be sent to Bill Bloxsome for editing. The deadline for comments was agreed as end of play on Friday March 12<sup>th</sup>.

Councillor Harvey felt that it would be beneficial to ask residents their opinions on whether the sporting land should be co-located or spread out in the Ledbury. Members agreed to add this question to the questionnaire and leaflet.

**RESOLVED: That the update on the Issues report be received and noted, noting that any comments be sent to Councillor Howells or Nicola Forde by email by Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

156

#### **UPDATE ON LVBA PROGRESS WORK OF CARLY TINKLER.**

Councillor Howells provided members with an update on the LVBA (Landscape and Visual Baseline Assessment) work progress by Carly Tinkler. He advised that there is still plenty of work to do, but it is a document that is work in progress which will continue to be informed by the consultation exercise. Members be updated on progress accordingly.

**RESOLVED: That the verbal update on the LVBA progress work of Carly Tinker be received and noted.**

157

#### **UPDATE ON FUNDING**

Councillor Howells updated members on the progress on obtaining funding and advised that the SG will continue to liaise with Dave Tristram (HC Funding Officer) and the Town Clerk to discuss the order in which to apply for grants. In the meantime, he was pleased to confirm that the first grant of £5,026 from Localities to be spent by the end of March had already been received.

Councillor Howells shared an updated budget document with members via zoom. The expected income and expenditure budget is currently at £30,000.

Councillor Howells advised members that in a meeting with the Town Clerk, it was agreed with the landscape consultant that an extra figure of around £2,000 - £2,500 was needed to complete the LVBA work to the end of the revision work, and that a recommendation will be sent to the Economic Development and Planning Committee to seek proposals for an extra £5,000 to be spent from the contingency element pay for further work between Carly Tinkler and Bill Bloxsome.

Councillor Harvey felt that the spreadsheet was clear to understand and suggested adding it to the Council website for transparency and to keep residents up to date. Whilst she understood the reasons of asking the current consultants for quotes to do additional work, she reminded members of the Financial Regulations and the importance of documenting the reasons why the quotes were not sent out to tender.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the updated budget document be received and noted, noting that a copy is made available on the Town Councils website.**
- 2. That members email Councillor Howells with any comments on the additional work proposal request documents by Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

158

**UPDATE ON FILING**

Councillor Howells said members would be aware that the new Council website will now be live on Thursday, 4 March 2021, and that the current NDP content would be transferred to the new site. Once in place then relevant NDP documents will be uploaded over the next few weeks leading up to the consultation period.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the verbal update on filing be received and noted.**

159

**REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS FOR THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION PHASE FOR PRESENTATION TO ED&P FOR APPROVAL**

Members were provided with the following documents:

- a) Updated Communications and consultation plan
- b) NDP Action list
- c) Consultation activities record
- d) 1<sup>st</sup> Public consultation qualitative responses recording spreadsheet

Councillor Howells advised that there will be a list of proposed consultees in the Communications and consultation plan, and they will be arranged under the relevant topic headings.

Councillor Harvey suggested engaging with tenants from social housing occupants and social housing landlords as part of the need to speak with

402

'hard to reach' groups that should be included in the consultation. She also asked members to consider the residents of Parkway, as occasionally they can be missed. Councillor Howells confirmed that hard to reach groups and Parkway would be in the list.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the above documents be received and noted.**

**160**

**TOPIC GUIDES 1-6**

Councillor Howells provided members with an update on the 6 issue topic guides that are being produced by the consultants to provide the baseline evidence to inform the eventual production of the new NDP document. He advised that the documents were still in an emerging and draft form but should be sufficiently ready for members to review progress soon.

It was noted that the 6<sup>th</sup> of these topic guides, the previously entitled 'Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Assessment' (LSCA), on review of what was needed for this revision version of the NDP, now had an agreed different focus and had been changed to being a Landscape and Visual Baseline Assessment (LVBA).

**RESOLVED:**

**That the verbal update on the Topic Guides 1-6 be received and noted.**

**161**

**DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

To note that future meetings of Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Party are scheduled to be held on the following dates in the 2020/21 Municipal Year and that meetings will be held via Zoom until further notice:

Tuesday, 30 March 2021 - 6.30 pm

Tuesday, 27 April 2021 - 6.30 pm

Tuesday, 25 May 2021 - 6.30 pm

Meeting closed at 7:45

Signed ..... Dated

*LeOB*



# Ledbury NDP Steering Group (SG) agenda and actions

Members: Cllr Phillip Howells (PH); Nicola Forde (NF); Ann Lumb (AL)

Consultants: Bill Bloxsome (BB); Carly Tinkler (CT) Samantha Banks,

Herefordshire Council (SB); WP = Working Party

Office: Angie Price (the Clerk, AP)

Action colour code: Red = still to do

Item 7

<b>Meeting 23 Thursday, 26th February 2021</b>	
<b>Present: PH; NF; AL</b>	
<b>1. Notes of SG meetings 21 and 22.</b> These were agreed as an accurate record	
<b>2. Brief for Consultants</b> Agreed NF to draft briefs for next stage of work for CT, MB and BB	NF
<b>3. Issues and Options Paper.</b> Agreed to send Sam Banks, ccd to James Latham, the amended paper explaining that the aim is to send a copy of the paper with a separate questionnaire to every household in the parish. Ask her to give feedback, if possible, before the Working Party Meeting on Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March. Agreed to send further documents: communications plan, revised projected timeline etc to Sam Banks and Carl Brace next week.	NF
<b>4. Advice from Sam Banks re employment land</b> Discussion about advice BB needs from Sam Banks. Need to find out whether the allocation of the land in the Core Strategy off the Little Marcle Road means that it cannot be allocated in the NDP. PH believed that the land was not allocated in the Core Strategy as only around 12 ha was referred to, the reference was not precise enough to be an allocation. Also need to explore access to the proposed recreation and employment sites – believed that access from the Little Marcle Road is the most appropriate but need evidence to support this.	
<b>5. Design Guide.</b> NF had received comments from Paul Neep and Paul Kinnaird she would compile the comments and feedback to BB. Send the next draft to Sam Banks, Carl Brace and Paul Esrich.	NF
<b>6. LVBA</b> PH would complete his section later in March. Discussion about whether CT could produce sensitivity work for BB without that section.	PH
<b>7. Filing update and Website</b> PH to let Olivia know that she needs to put back content she has removed from the NDP process page and either let the new content (about the history of the NDP in Ledbury) follow on from that or make a new page for it. PH explained that Olivia had a deadline to get the website content and pages finished by the end of March. When it is ready Hannah will be able to help upload content.	PH
<b>8. Funding.</b> Angie has registered on the Awards for All website. NF to look at and suggest content. PH pointed out that the important point is that we need to explain how the work will benefit the community. PH will meet with Dave Tristram when the draft is ready.	NF
<b>9. Articles for the Focus and All About the Hills.</b> The deadline for the Focus is 8 March, for All About the Hills deadline is 15 March. To place an article is free. Agreed PH to produce text with project	

## Ledbury NDP Steering Group (SG) agenda and actions

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Action colour code: **Red = still to do**

timeline and photograph of the town from viewpoint on Dog Wood. NF to mention NDP in Civic Society article.	
<b>10. Consultation Materials</b> Agreed Angie should be asked to get a quote for 5,000 copies of an 8 page A5 colour document and 10,000 copies of an A4 questionnaire black and white. If possible quotes to be sought before the Working Party on Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March.	<b>PH</b>
<b>3. Next SG Meeting</b> Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> March 11 am	

Members: Cllr Phillip Howells (PH); Nicola Forde (NF); Ann Lumb (AL)  
Consultants: Bill Bloxsome (BB); Carly Tinkler (CT) Samantha Banks,  
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**Meeting 24 – Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**Present: PH; NF; AL**

### 1. Notes of Meeting 23.

These were agreed with a minor amendment.

## 2. Copy and Delivery to Magazines

An article on the consultation process has been sent by PH to AP to reach the Focus before its deadline of 8<sup>th</sup> March and All About the Hills before 15<sup>th</sup> March. It will be sent as a Word document.

### 3. Quotes and Invoices from Consultants

Quote proposals to three consultants have to be approved at an Extraordinary Meeting of ED&P (followed by Extraordinary Meeting of Council) on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March. CT and BB are being asked to tender because they are already working on the NDP and therefore familiar with what still needs to be done. MB is being asked to tender as co-working with BB and she is also already involved.

PH to send briefs to the three consultants a.s.a.p. asking if the wording is appropriate and getting their informal response.

The £5,000 grant recently received is for consultants' work done in March, so invoices from CT and BB should be dated accordingly.

AP to be asked whether approval of invoices should be at council meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March or 1<sup>st</sup> April.

PH

PH

#### 4. Awards for All Application

NF to look at this and pass back to PH this week. It needs to be in place before the consultation work begins.

NF

## 5. Communications and Consultation Document

PH to update by Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> March.

PH

**6. Papers for ED&P Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> March**

Papers to go out: WP notes of meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> February; SG notes 17-22; budget; Issues and Options paper, including MB's questions; article for Focus.

PH

**7. Contact with SB and Carl Brace**

PH to contact SB for advice and feedback on several issues:

- a) Issues and Options paper (already sent); b) exact amount of NEW employment land required (12 ha. understood); c) SB's view on Section 4, Supporting the Town Centre, especially 4.1, 4.2 and associated questions; d) filing list and what should/should not go on website; e) SB's view on updated Comms and Consultation document, qualitative spreadsheet and list of communication activities.

PH

406

## Ledbury NDP Steering Group (SG) agenda and actions

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<p>Carl Brace to be sent Issues and Options paper and asked for his views on town centre proposals.</p>	<p>PH</p>
<p><b>8. Issues and Options Paper</b>  <u>a) Source Document</u>          Constructive discussion at the WP meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> March led to agreed changes to the Introduction. It was felt that key issues would be clearer if bullet points were used, and the importance of the settlement boundary enhanced by making it the first issue covered in the paper.          It was also suggested that Question 1, about land for sport, should include an additional question about the location of such land. Suggested question: Do you agree that there should be a sporting hub for junior and senior football on land south of Little Marcle Road? (See settlement boundary Map 3). WP members agreed to respond with any further comments on the Issues paper by the 12<sup>th</sup> March and with any comments on the quote proposals by the 11<sup>th</sup> March.          NF to send known feedback on the Issues paper to BB a.s.a.p. as he will only have a couple of days to act on additional comments before documents have to be sent to AP by 16<sup>th</sup> March.          AL to summarise feedback and questions on Topic Papers 2-5 and forward to NF for inclusion in one document for BB. This should also include feedback on Topic Paper 1 (Design Guide) which NF has coordinated.          The recent WP meeting agreed that all topic papers should be finalised to show to ED&amp;P as soon as possible.          SG also agreed that the topic papers should be sent to a wider number of individuals for their feedback during March and April.  <u>b) Public Consultation Version</u>          SG agreed that this paper would need editing and condensing for use as a consultation document, but that MB could advise on this and on the format of the leaflet. NF felt that the Issues paper should be related to the existing NDP and the public given the key, relevant sections at appropriate points online. BB to be asked to do this.          Mid-April would be the earliest date when consultation papers would be needed. SG discussed format options e.g. A5 coloured leaflet or A3 folded leaflet and a black and white questionnaire. AP has an estimate of £250 for internal printing of 5,000 short version leaflets and 5,000 questionnaires. NF suggested the cost-benefit of using an outside printer, which would reduce council staff workload. NF also suggested delivering the leaflets and questionnaires via the Post Office or Focus; the latter covers</p>	<p>NF</p> <p>AL</p> <p>NF</p> <p>SG</p> <p>NF</p>

## Ledbury NDP Steering Group (SG) agenda and actions

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the town only, volunteers to cover outlying areas. NF to find out about the cost of using the Post Office for delivery, which would be covered by the £1,000 consultation budget. NF also wanted more publicity between the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> consultations by using physical boards where possible to explain the proposals. We would again need Max's advice in the present Covid situation, and about how to reach schools, care homes and other groups difficult to reach.	NF
<b>9. Next SG Meeting</b> 12 <sup>th</sup> March – 2:00pm	



Members: Cllr Phillip Howells (PH); Nicola Forde (NF); Ann Lumb (AL)  
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409

Members: Cllr Phillip Howells (PH); Nicola Forde (NF); Ann Lumb (AL)  
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<p>SG agreed that the Issues Paper should include a question aimed at producing policy to protect valued views. PH to ask MB to cover this, perhaps under Question 7 (now 8) along the lines:</p> <p><i>'Have you any views which you would like to protect?'</i></p>	
<p><b>3. Design Guide</b></p> <p>BB has asked whether someone is producing a plan on where the views are from. SG agreed we need CT's input on this. In the meantime, NF to tell BB to leave a gap 'still to be completed' in the draft. NF also to get back to BB about another outstanding question concerning innovative designs and respond to his request for a copy of the old Design Guide (2018).</p>	<p>NF</p>
<p><b>4. Papers for ED&amp;P Meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> March</b></p> <p>Papers to be sent to AP by 16<sup>th</sup> March: notes of SG meetings 23, 24 and 25; notes of WP meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> March; Issues Paper (final draft); Comms. and Consultation plan; 3 consultants' invitations to quote; filing list; action list (showing various issues raised and action taken); spreadsheet for qualitative data analysis; spreadsheet for showing list of communications and consultation activities, article for the Ledbury Focus and All About West of the Hills magazines, consultations with organisations etc.</p> <p>SG discussed whether all draft Topic Papers should also be sent to ED&amp;P for 22<sup>nd</sup> March as 'work in progress'. PH's view is that they demonstrate the considerable work achieved to date, which is the basis of the Issues Paper and consultation exercise.</p> <p>PH to talk to BB about the topic papers before sending them to councillors. PH also to ask CT to send her LVBav2 with DRAFT written across the document.</p> <p>Draft consultation leaflet to be sent to councillors a.s.a.p.</p> <p><u>Administration:</u></p> <p>Various meeting notes need electronic signatures and recording. NF to send notes of meeting with medical services to PH. PH to ask Paul Kinnaid to do this for UBL minutes. All notes from meetings with sports organisations, landowners, medical services and UBL to be sent by PH to AP to get electronic signatures and eventual filing.</p>	<p>PH</p> <p>PH</p> <p>PH</p> <p>NF</p> <p>PH</p> <p>PH</p>
<p><b>5. Awards for All and Costs</b></p> <p>NF has looked at this and will complete the application next week. The start date for this grant is 4<sup>th</sup> June, so it won't cover the spring consultation, but will cover Regs 14 and 16. £4,000 from the original £10,000 council money is still available for the leaflet and associated consultation work.</p> <p>NF has asked for an outside quote for printing the leaflet. She has also had a quote for £404 for delivering 5,000 leaflets and questionnaires in envelopes by Royal Mail. (Final quote dependent on weight).</p>	<p>NF</p>

## Ledbury NDP Steering Group (SG) agenda and actions

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<b>6. Website and Filing</b> SG discussed whether all draft topic papers should be put on the website or final drafts only. PH felt that iterative versions show	
the development of ideas, a fuller record. NF suggested using an archive section on the website for this purpose. NF and AL were both of the view that iterative documents would be complex and difficult to manage, while at the same time ensuring accessibility and clarity of information. PH to ask views of BB and of SB as part of planned discussion with her on the subject. SG agreed that the new website was an improvement. PH to let Olivia know the following changes and order: 1) Remove material no longer relevant on first page and replace with the About page 2) What is Neighbourhood Development Planning? NF to add a couple of paragraphs to explain this on the second page 3) Meeting Dates 4) Minutes and Agendas 5) Supporting Documents with some changes to headings: Topics - Change to Key Issues; Design Guide – change to Design Issues.	PH  PH
<b>7. Next SG Meeting</b> Tuesday, 16 <sup>th</sup> March – 10:30am	



## Ledbury NDP Steering Group (SG) agenda and actions

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Item 8

**Bill Bloxsome**  
Environmental and  
Planning  
Consultant  
Westbourne  
Hereford Road  
Leominster  
Herefordshire  
HR6 8JU  
01568 616624

**Research Sub-contractor:**  
**Max Bassett**  
Max Bassett Research  
29a Westfield St  
Hereford  
HR4 9PJ

**INVOICE TO**

Clerk to Ledbury Town  
Council,  
Town Council Offices,  
Church St,  
Ledbury  
HR8 1DH

CUSTOMER NUMBER	NDP/LED
INVOICE NUMBER	NDP/LED/2020-21/1
INVOICE DATE	16/03/2021
YOUR ORDER NO	

**Work upon Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan**

	Type of support	Activity	Time (£40 p/h)	VAT	Cost (£)
1	Planning	Writing up settlement boundary proposals	£1,541	0	£1,541
2	Planning	Incorporating design guide content into existing plan/policies	£560	0	£560
	<b>TOTAL</b>		£2,101	0	£2,101

Cheques should be made payable to:

Bill Bloxsome  
Environmental and Planning  
Consultant  
Westbourne  
Hereford Road  
Leominster  
Herefordshire  
HR6 8JU  
01568 616624



**Carly Tinkler** BA CMLI FRSA MIALE

Landscape, Environmental + Colour Consultancy

46 Jamaica Road, Malvern, Worcestershire WR14 1TU \* Tel +44 (0)7711 538854 \* carly@carlytinkler.com

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For the attention of the Clerk

Ledbury Town Council  
Town Council Offices  
Church Street  
Ledbury  
HR8 1DH

17<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**Invoice No: CT21304**

**PROJECT: Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan Landscape & Visual Assessments**

Write up landscape and visual baseline assessment findings and produce report (March 2021)

**Fees:**

65 hours @ £45/hour	2925.00
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**Costs & Expenses:**

Included	0.00
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<b>TOTAL DUE:</b>	<b>2925.00</b>
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(VAT NOT APPLICABLE)

WITH COMPLIMENTS

**Carly Tinkler** BA CMLI FRSA MIALE

**BACS DETAILS:**

Carly Tinkler  
Ledbury Town Council  
Church Street  
Ledbury  
HR8 1DH

**TERMS: Settlement within 28 days of date of invoice**

We understand and will exercise our statutory right to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 (as amended and supplemented) if we are not paid according to agreed credit terms.

414



**Ledbury Town Council  
Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group  
NDP current status briefing document**

1. It is important to note from the original scoping document that this is a revision of the currently adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan and not a new plan. This places limits on how much the original can be changed, dictates the number of public consultation events necessary and affects the grants available to us.
2. The key aim was always to ensure we produced a settlement boundary that passes inspector examination and is not likely to be legally challenged by developers. This was the key failing of the current plan to be obtained. Other proposed changes were based on what were deemed to be important and capable of being addressed in this version of the NDP at the time – most of which were driven by suggestions by the inspector from the current adopted version. The urgent need to produce a settlement boundary asap means we have to be very firm on what we include in this version as key priorities only.
3. Changes in addition to the settlement boundary agreed at the time of scoping in 2019 were:
  - a. Develop a policy to cover green infrastructure and open spaces in more detail
  - b. A revision of the Ledbury NDP Design Guide (which was a separate referred to document to the current plan, but deemed by the inspector to be better included in the plan itself as a policy of the NDP)
  - c. Identification and allocation of land for a combined football facility for the town
  - d. Updating of the employment policies (identification and allocation of land to meet the 12ha requirements of the Herefordshire Local Plan – the Core Strategy)
  - e. Identification and allocation of possible land for a new medical centre
  - f. Identification and allocation of possible land to expand educational facilities
  - g. Consider commissioning a Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study
4. Changes to these and additional policies now also added as a result of further considerations, changes in circumstances and as discussed in a review of the plan by the Working Party, in agreement with consultants and the Herefordshire NDP team, when starting up the WP again after the 2020 break due to the COVID-19 lockdown period.
  - a. Not now looking at educational facilities
  - b. The design guide will probably not now be a separate policy, but its elements will be included in individual policies as deemed appropriate and necessary
  - c. The full Landscaping Sensitivity and Capacity Study initially proposed is now reduced for this version to be a landscaping baseline information study and a more basic landscape report
  - d. Instead, as a result of WP, consultancy and Sam Banks team input after a 'future conceptual scoping discussion' based upon probably new planning laws proposed by the government and a new

**Ledbury Town Council**  
**Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group**  
**NDP current status briefing document**

Herefordshire Local Plan/Core Strategy due to be produced within the next two years, we would conduct and produce a conceptual green infrastructure study and report looking ahead to identify important green areas to protect against development

- e. Updating the railway station policy to identify and allocate land to provide access to the north platform
  - f. Update the town's retail policy to remove separate primary and secondary areas and to just describe the 'town centre' to include the Coop and Tesco stores to be recognised as part of the town centre
5. In addition to these revision changes, the aim is to produce a new NDP which also achieves 3 other aims:
- a. Becomes a guide for future development of the next iterations of the NDP
  - b. Allows Ledbury to be proactive in 'informing' the emerging new Herefordshire Local Plan/Core Strategy as to Ledbury's planning priorities
  - c. Through the conceptual green infrastructure report also point the way to adopting future plans to the probable 'zoning' planning format proposed by the government
6. Timescale – the original scoping document aimed for adoption by the end of February 2020. Because of COVID and getting approval decisions made by ED&P and full Council for each stage of development, it is now envisaged to reach Reg 14 (when the plan first has legal status) in September 2020 and adoption by the end of the year. The timing is very important because of the need to:
- a. Have a settlement boundary in place asap to give us a legal say in proposed new developments
  - b. To give the revised NDP at least 2 years of effective 'life' (for which it applies to new housing developments) and before the new Core Strategy or proposed government new planning regulations come into force and may therefore override it or make it redundant.
7. Funding – it has been very difficult/impossible to practically pursue grant funding for most of the last year. Awards for All grants, for instance, were not being given for NDPs during this time. We have continually taken advice from Herefordshire's Funding Office, Dave Tristram, on how to proceed and are now starting new grant applications as per the new budget. It is now estimated the total cost will be less than originally conceived.
- 8. Recommendations:**
- a. That Councillors accept this report and its declared aims, funding needs and timescale as being an agreed programme plan to complete this revision of the NDP
  - b. That Councillors agree this report be submitted to the next ED&P Committee meeting and Full Council to be formally approved as being the agreed and anticipated NDP revision outcome.

4/6

Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan  
2011-2031

1<sup>st</sup> Review

Topic Paper 1: Integrating  
Ledbury Design Guide into the  
NDP

Draft Version 3  
March 2021

Ledbury Neighbourhood Development  
Plan Steering Group

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## Version Control

Date	Version	Tasks	Author
6/11/2020	V.1	First working draft prepared as a template for the NDP Steering Group to consider.	WB
9/3/2021	V.2	Revised following Steering Group Comments	WB
16/3/2021	V.3	Revised following further Steering Group Comments	WB

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## Contents

1. Introduction
2. Review of Ledbury Design Guide
3. Suggested draft policies for inclusion in the NDP
4. Issues not considered suitable for inclusion

Appendix 1 Design Guide Analysis

Appendix 2 Design Influences for Ledbury Character Areas (Extracts from Rapid Townscape Assessment - Herefordshire Council)

DRAFT

# Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan – Integrating Ledbury Design Guide into the NDP

## Purpose of this Report –

*To recommend how Ledbury Design Guide might be integrated into Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan.*

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The current Ledbury Design Guide<sup>1</sup> was adopted on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Elements within it cover architectural design, landscape, sustainability, highway matters, lifetime design and consultation requirements.
- 1.2 Regulation 16 draft NDP was subject to Examination in October 2018. That draft encouraged development to comply with the Design Guide (policies BE1.1 and BE2.1). However, the Design Guide did not form part of the NDP either within the plan itself or as an appendix and it is understood that the Examiner was concerned about public consultation upon the document. That draft NDP also contained a policy for renovation and preservation of the Town Centre which encompassed provisions for Ledbury Conservation Area and the many Listed Buildings within the town (Policy BE3.1).
- 1.3 The NDP Examiner removed reference to the Design Guide in policies BE1.1 and BE2.1 and deleted policy BE3.1. In these regards **the Examiner's comments were:**

### Policy BE1.1 (Examiner's report paragraph 145)

*"....., in the absence of information, it is not clear how 'developments will be encouraged' to comply with the town's Design Guide. In this respect, it is relevant to note that whilst Ledbury Design Guide provides helpful and detailed information, it is not an adopted planning document and does not carry material weight as such. ...."*

### Policy BE2.1 (Examiner's report paragraph 165)

*"The Policy then goes on to require development to 'adhere to the Design Guide'. Guidance is simply that – not a requirement. It is also noted earlier in this Report that the Ledbury Design Guide is not an adopted planning document. Taking these things together, developers cannot be required to 'adhere to the Design Guide'."*

### Policy BE3.1 (Examiner's paragraphs 174 and 175)

In so far as they relate to design matters for Listed Buildings and development within Ledbury Conservation Area, the Examiner concluded that the provisions did not comply with national and local planning policy. The objective in relation to the historic environment was deleted and a text inserted to refer more specifically to Ledbury Conservation Area and protections afforded through the NPPF and Core Strategy policy LD4.

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<sup>1</sup> [Link to document on LTC's website](#)

- 1.4 The current NDP does contain a number of landscape, biodiversity and green infrastructure-based policies that may be expanded to incorporate further design elements that are included within Ledbury Design Guide. These include:

Policy NE1.1 Protecting Biodiversity

*The conservation, restoration and enhancement of biodiversity, including that found in open spaces, trees and hedgerows, in order to promote and support wildlife and other forms of biodiversity will be supported. Additionally, proposals for the creation of small wetland or other nature reserves and which maintain and enhance streams and open watercourses will be supported.*

Policy NE2.1 Food Production in Ledbury

*The conservation, enhancement and/or creation of allotments and community gardens will be supported. Protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land for its economic and other benefits will be supported.*

Policy NE3.1 Farming Landscape around Ledbury

*Proposals for agricultural development, requiring planning permission, for example, intensive farming units, poly tunnels not comprising permitted development or solar farms, should demonstrate how they will protect landscape character through provision of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.*

Policy NE4.1 Protecting Ledbury's Woods

*The conservation and/or enhancement of Frith, Conigree, Wall Hills and Dog Hill Woods above Ledbury, or their setting will be supported. Proposals which protect community access to these woods or demonstrate alternative proposals are in place to maintain community access to these important community assets will be supported.*

*Proposals which promote active woodland management to maximise habitat diversity will be supported.*

- 1.5 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes the use of design policies, including within neighbourhood plans. NPPF paragraph 125 states:

*"Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and **evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.**"*

Consequently, appropriate elements of the Design Guide can be incorporated into the NDP. The NPPF goes on to add that Plans "should use visual tools such as design guides and code", and "their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified." Inclusion within a NDP enables policies and guidance to be consulted upon through its processes and, when adopted, be given appropriate weight.

- 1.6 A number of Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policies inform matters covered in the Design Guide, especially LD1 (Landscape and Townscape), LD2 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity), LD3 (Green Infrastructure), LD4 (Historic Environment and Heritage Assets), SD1 (Sustainable Design and Energy Efficiency), SD3 (Sustainable Water Management and Water Resources), and SD4 (Wastewater treatment and river water quality). In addition, the Core Strategy indicates that Herefordshire Council will prepare a Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document to provide baseline standards across the County and to inform NDPs. However, its most recent Local Development Scheme document (2018) indicates there is not currently a work programme in place for the production of this document because of other priorities. Herefordshire Council has not prepared a Conservation Area Appraisal for Ledbury **Conservation Area, although has undertaken a 'Rapid Townscape Assessment'** using guidance produced by Historic England<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.7 Malvern Hills AONB office has produced a range of guidance documents<sup>3</sup>. The following are relevant to development: Guidance on Building Design; Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development; Guidance on Keeping Horses in the Landscape; Guidance on Highway Design; Landscape Strategy and Guidelines; Solar Energy Guidance; Wind Energy Guidance and Heat Pumps Guidance. The Guidance on Building Design covers a range of design features, building forms and other aspects such as landscape, lighting and energy efficiency. Although only part of the Parish is within the AONB and the town is excluded, elements within the guidance could be more widely applicable and relevant to much of the Parish, especially as there are extensive views from the AONB across its transitional landscape.
- 1.8 Other design guidance is available that might be relevant including a National Design Guide<sup>4</sup>; Manual for Streets<sup>5</sup>; **Herefordshire Council's Highways Design Guide for New Development**<sup>6</sup>; and Secured by Design<sup>7</sup>. Herefordshire Council has also recently produced a Hereford Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document that contains sections on Design and Development; Views and Building Heights; Public Realm and Landscape; and Movement. It also looks in detail at a number of areas within the City where change is expected to take place. This is useful in showing the content for a design guide and although the preparation of a more detailed design guide for Ledbury is unlikely at the current time, it is understood that such a document may be prepared at a later date and possibly referred to in a further review of the NDP.
- 1.9 **It is worth noting that Government's recent White Paper 'Planning for the Future'** indicates that it is proposed to bring a new focus on design and sustainability and will (inter alia):

***'Expect design guidance and codes – which will set the rules for the design of new development – to be prepared locally and to be based on genuine community involvement rather than meaningless consultation, so that local residents have a genuine say in the design of new development, and ensure that codes have real 'bite' by making them more binding on planning decisions'.***

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1687/ledbury\\_rapid\\_townscape\\_assessment.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1687/ledbury_rapid_townscape_assessment.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/publications/>

<sup>4</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/843468/National\\_Design\\_Guide.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843468/National_Design_Guide.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/341513/pdfmanforstreets.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/341513/pdfmanforstreets.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5208/highways\\_design\\_guide\\_for\\_new\\_developments\\_full\\_document.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5208/highways_design_guide_for_new_developments_full_document.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/design-guides>

In this regard it is expected that Herefordshire Council may now give greater importance to the preparation of a Design Guide for the County and may also prepare design codes. It is expected that local community input will be encouraged so that locally distinctive elements are include.

- 1.10 Although it is not necessary to duplicate Core Strategy Policies or other guidance, and to promote design related issues that are important to the community, it would be useful to set out policies and supporting information that is applicable to the plan area, to add emphasis and further detail where this is considered beneficial, and to promote an integrated approach to locally distinctive design matters. It might also highlight issues that should be considered within a more detailed Ledbury Design Guide to be prepared in the future or a Design Guide prepared by Herefordshire Council **in response to Government's proposed changes.**

## 2. Review of Ledbury Design Guide Advice

- 2.1 Advice within Ledbury Design Guide covers a range of design aspects including:
- General Design and Appearance for Housing
  - Highways Design
  - Landscape Design
  - Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure
  - Sustainability Components
  - Agricultural Buildings
  - Conservation Area/Townscape elements (including Heritage Assets)
  - Consultation arrangements
  - Affordable Housing
  - Drainage
  - Industrial premises
  - Tourism (caravans and camping)
- 2.2 Given the aspiration to set out design requirements expressed in the NDP and the NPPF guidance on the inclusion of design policies, an assessment of the potential for including relevant matters covered by Ledbury Design Guide as policies within the NDP has been undertaken. Schedule 1 summarises the initial conclusions of this assessment (see Appendix 1).
- 2.3 The subsequent task involved drafting policies that might cover the requirements where there is evidence that these should be capable of meeting the '*basic conditions*<sup>8</sup>'.
- 2.4 Because of the breadth of matters covered in the Design Guide, a wide range of additional policies might be considered for inclusion within the NDP. An additional task has been to identify other design elements or associated matters that might also be covered so that a comprehensive approach would be adopted either now or later in a further review, and the community consulted on a wider range of design and related matters.
- 2.5 Ledbury has areas of distinct townscape character and qualities of built form and layout that need to be recognised and appreciated. Herefordshire Council has

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum>

produced a 'Rapid Townscape Assessment'<sup>9</sup> that defines nine character areas and describes their character, location and setting, historical development, townscape, heritage assets and place. Development and enhancement opportunities are also identified. It provides the opportunity to expand upon particular characteristics of each area within an appendix to the NDP and this might address a number of concerns expressed in the current Ledbury Design Guide.

### 3. General Design and Appearance for Housing

- 3.1 The following policy is suggested to cover most residential design provisions expressed within Ledbury Design Guide in so far as they are considered appropriate to a NDP.

#### Policy Ref No – Design Criteria for Residential Development

Emphasis will be placed on achieving high quality residential design and environments within the plan area, including through any alterations and extensions to existing properties and for conversions to dwellings. To achieve this, such development should:

- a) Provide a high and inclusive standard of architecture and also design for the public realm.
- b) In terms of scale, massing, proportion, materials, colour and roof profiles, new dwellings should relate to the characteristic built forms of Ledbury, so as to fit sensitively into the townscape and surrounding landscape as appropriate. Where possible and appropriate, buildings should be of their time and avoid poor imitation. Guidance to this character and local distinctiveness is given in Appendix X<sup>10</sup> which contains relevant extracts from **Herefordshire Council's Rapid Townscape Assessment 2010, and in the Malvern Hills AONB Guidance on Building Design.**
- c) Avoid repetition and regimented designs and layouts that are uncharacteristic of Ledbury through variations in density, public realm and building design. This should be part of a developed and coherent concept based on analysis of local and historical context combined with best practice.
- d) Ensure affordable housing within major housing schemes is of the same quality and design approach as open market housing upon the site so that it is not immediately identifiable as such.
- e) Ensure ridge heights are consistent with the heights of nearby buildings and only be more than 2.5 storeys where this can be shown to fit sensitively into townscape, the setting of Malvern Hills AONB and the historic environment.
- f) Encourage innovative design approaches in less sensitive areas but **which should comply with criterion b above. 'Off the shelf' house** types should be avoided, especially elevational treatments developed for anywhere in the country. Sustainable and energy saving elements and materials will especially be encouraged.
- g) In relation to extensions, avoid visually dominating the existing

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1687/ledbury-rapid-townscape-assessment>

<sup>10</sup> To be added when known

- h) building or neighbouring properties.
- h) Ensure all buildings present active and attractive frontages to streets and public areas providing natural surveillance.
- i) Protect the residential amenity of adjacent properties and ensure new dwellings are not adversely affected by existing agricultural or commercial activities or the adverse impact of light pollution.
- j) Provide sufficient garden space to enable residents to enjoy their use with appropriate degrees of privacy and functionality in terms of **providing for young children's outdoor play**, private clothes drying facilities and gardening.
- k) Provide or contribute to the provision of open space for play and public amenity **in accordance with Herefordshire Council's open space** requirements. Where such space cannot be provided on site, contributions should be made to the provision, improvement/replacement, operation, or maintenance of open space and play areas elsewhere within the Plan area and as close as possible to the proposed development.
- l) Retain important features such as tree cover, ponds, orchards, hedgerows, as well as adding to the natural assets of the Plan area.
- m) Include, where appropriate, an integrated and high-quality landscape scheme which should contribute towards mitigating the effects of climate change; incorporate an appropriate range of biodiversity measures; and link with the wider landscape to enhance green infrastructure.
- n) Provide safe cycle storage.
- o) Where proposals involve adaptive or mobility housing or residential homes for elderly people, provide secure covered storage for mobility scooters.
- p) Provide level access to the highway, including footpaths and any cycleways.
- q) Make provision for electric vehicle charging at an appropriate level which should normally be for each dwelling.

3.2 The policy requires a supporting statement, and the following is suggested:

Policy Supporting Statement:

The criteria within this policy set out clear expectations for the design of residential developments, both at the scale of the individual property and for major sites. They would also apply to extensions and alterations to existing dwellings and any conversions to dwellings where appropriate. Most criteria relate to the design of dwellings. Others seek to ensure that, in combination, the development will result in a high-quality environment for those who live in it, ensuring that it fits sensitively into its surroundings. A number address specific concerns such as promoting security through surveillance, retention and provision of gardens, provision of open space, landscape requirements, and connectivity. Larger schemes are required to provide an element of affordable housing. It is recognised that where management of such housing is required, for example by housing associations, grouped housing is preferred. However, such housing should still be fully integrated into any scheme, be of equal quality and adopt a consistent design approach.

Developers should set out their design approach in sufficient detail to show how all relevant criteria included in this policy have been addressed. This should include the

advice received during consultations undertaken prior to the application being made, including from the local community, in accordance with best practice and **Herefordshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement**. Until a local design guide is produced developers should utilise the principles set out in Government's National Design Guide<sup>11</sup>. Major schemes should consider seeking external advice through the Design Review Process and include this within their submissions.

## 4. Highways Design

- 5.1 Additional matters reflecting the need to address a wider range of development forms have been identified that might be covered by a highways design policy.
- 5.2 The following policy is suggested to cover the concerns expressed within Ledbury Design Guide and related matters:

### Policy Ref No: Highway Requirements

Where development proposals are advanced, these should ensure:

#### Highway Design

- a) Proposals would not cause such an increase in traffic where this would have a significant adverse effect on residential amenity.
- b) New development is designed in accordance with Herefordshire Council's Highway Design Guide for New Developments.
- c) Highway layouts within new developments minimise the impact of roads on the environment and encourage reduced speeds.
- d) Any new street furniture and signage that may be required should be minimal and consistent where this is possible.

#### Active Travel Measures

- e) Layouts support a pedestrian, cyclist and mobility vehicle friendly environment suitable for all users by creating convenient links to local facilities, the town centre and public transport connections.
- f) Layouts should also provide for the safety of children in areas designed and located for their play.
- g) Where appropriate, travel plans are provided that include offsite measures such as supporting infrastructure to promote active travel.

#### Parking Arrangements

- h) Proposals will not result in indiscriminate or on-street parking but should provide adequate off-street parking for residents, employees and visitors, as appropriate.
- i) Where appropriate, proposals address the need to reduce on-street parking problems that may exist within the vicinity.
- j) Parking and the design for vehicle use must not dominate or detract from the public realm.
- k) Provision is made for cycle parking including, where appropriate, businesses should look to provide changing facilities, lockers and safe cycle storage.

#### Related Sustainable Transport Infrastructure

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

- l) Off-road parking spaces and appropriate public hard landscaped areas are constructed using permeable materials.
- m) All new developments with parking make provision for electric vehicle charging at an appropriate level which should suit the needs of the expected level of traffic generation normally be for each dwelling in residential developments, and for other forms of development to.
- n) Any new street lighting is encouraged to be kept to a minimum and avoid light pollution in the immediate environment and local amenity.

5.3 The following supporting statement is suggested:

Policy Supporting Statement

With the need to accommodate further development, it is essential that the highway requirements are met through a comprehensive approach covering design requirements, promoting active travel, managing parking and ensuring associated infrastructure are incorporated. Safety of all residents, and especially children, older people and those with disabilities, is paramount and the network should be capable of coping with the traffic generated. This applies not only in the locations where growth is proposed but also elsewhere in the plan area. It is also important that residential amenity and the wider environment are protected from the impact of traffic. Design measures should be used to calm traffic, fit layouts into the landscape and avoid clutter.

Encouraging residents to minimise the use of cars is becoming increasingly important and all measures to promote this should be utilised. Layouts should emphasise active travel components ensuring easy and the most direct connection to footways and cycleways that provide access to the town centre, areas of employment and other facilities. **Larger sites will need to provide areas for children's play, and they should** be in safe locations as well as having easy access. Travel plans are key to ensuring an integrated approach. Measures to encourage active travel, not just through making provision for cycle parking, but through a range of measures, including accommodating the needs of disabled people should be considered according to the proposed use. Measures to promote the health and wellbeing of residents should also be undertaken, for example by providing links to the Public Rights of Way network.

Vehicle parking should be sufficient for the needs of the particular proposal yet located in such ways as to avoid a range of adverse effects. Existing parking problems may need to be addressed where this would constrain a particular use or where development may exacerbate a problem, including taking into account potential intensification of activity.

Careful thought needs to be given to highway related infrastructure to assist with storm water drainage and future proof for the transition to electric cars. Tranquillity within the plan area is something that residents and visitors to the Malvern Hills appreciate. The design and layout of any new development should minimise the need for street lighting. This requirement should not restrict provision or improvements where there is an overriding safety requirement.

## 5. Landscape Design

- 6.1 The following policy is suggested to cover the landscape concerns expressed within Ledbury Design Guide and associated matters, including those arising from a Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment:

Policy Ref No: Conserving the Landscape and Scenic Beauty of the Parish

**To ensure development contributes positively to the area's** landscape character and does not adversely affect it, proposals should:

- a) Be accompanied by a landscape scheme, informed by an analysis of **the site's setting and containing measures** forming an integral part of the design, retaining and enhancing as many natural features within or surrounding the site as possible.
- b) Ensure associated elements such as hard landscape measures, boundary treatment and building materials and colours are appropriate to the location.
- c) Ensure the effects of development upon the landscape setting of Ledbury, especially that within Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, are reduced and mitigated, and measures are included, where appropriate, to restore and enhance vistas and panoramic views.
- d) Promote positively the landscape character of the Parish, in particular ensuring the features contributing to their identification as Principal Settled Farmlands, Riverside Meadows, Principal Timbered Farmlands, Principle Wooded Hills, River Meadows, Settled Farmlands on River Terraces or Estate Farmlands as appropriate, are conserved, restored or enhanced through measures consistent with their particular characterisation.
- e) Protect and enhance the visual integrity of the River Leadon, its banks and associated riverside park; Frith, Conigree, Wall Hills and Dog Hill Woods above Ledbury together with their settings.
- f) Retain, wherever possible, important landscape features such as ponds, orchards, hedgerows and water courses, and maintain and preferably extend tree cover using native species, adding to the green infrastructure network where opportunities are available. Trees considered to be of amenity value should be protected through the use of Tree Preservation Orders where under threat.
- g) Landscape works within the existing urban area should maintain, and if possible, improve the street scene and be of high quality. Where possible the opportunity to increase street trees should be taken. Tree planting should be consistent with good arboricultural practice.

- 6.2 The following supporting statement is suggested:

Policy Supporting Statement

Development proposals need to show how they meet the provisions of Core Strategy Policy LD1. Part of the plan area falls within the Malvern Hills AONB and national

policy requires development within it to conserve and enhance its landscape and setting. Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan<sup>12</sup> together with relevant information produced by Natural England for the Malvern Hills National Character Area<sup>13</sup> should inform positive measures within any landscape scheme. The remainder of the plan area falls within the Herefordshire Lowland National Character Area<sup>14</sup> and its guidance is relevant. In addition, more specific advice is available within **Herefordshire Council's Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance**<sup>15</sup>. This identifies the character and features for particular landscape types which fall within various parts of the plan area.

The riverside park along the River Leadon is an important local feature that also forms the spine for a green infrastructure corridor, and which is to be extended northwards into the proposed strategic housing and employment area to the north of the viaduct and incorporating part of a restored canal. Frith, Conigree, Wall Hills and Dog Hill Woods are important features that provide the landscape setting for Ledbury, especially through their in-combination effect.

Landscape features should also be protected. There are numerous important trees within the Plan area. Whether subject to any protection or not, these features should be identified in surveys in support of any development proposals and inform landscape schemes. Such schemes should ensure development fits sensitively into the landscape. Important trees of amenity value should be protected through Tree Preservation Order. **The importance of the 'borrowed view' needs** to be recognised. Trees are also important within the urban part of the plan area and new development should take into account the expected size of the tree and the space available.

- 6.3 The topography surrounding Ledbury offers many attractive and interesting views, not only from the Malvern Hills. Residents were asked to identify those they considered most important and these have been assessed by the NDP Steering **Group's Landscape Consultant**.

NB an additional policy to protect particularly sensitive landscapes within the Parish and important views as a consequence of further work upon these.

Currently the following views have been identified:

- a) From Marcle Ridge looking east – Ledbury nestled on the side of the Malvern Hills.
- b) From Bradlow Knoll looking south west to the church spire – a rural scene the church spire framed by green sloping hills and woods.
- c) From the western edge of Frith Wood looking west – panoramic views covering the viaduct the north of the town and looking east and south east to Marcle Ridge and May Hill.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/management-plan/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/3039205>

<sup>14</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4827527503675392>

<sup>15</sup>

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2069/landscape\\_character\\_assessment\\_for\\_herefordshire.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2069/landscape_character_assessment_for_herefordshire.pdf)

- d) **From Dog Wood southern tip 'the Cricket Pitch' looking south west** over the town
- e) From approach roads to the west (Ross Road and Lilyhall Lane) looking west to the Malvern Hills. Views from these roads are vulnerable to being affected by housing, farm and light industrial buildings in the foreground particularly as you approach the fringes of Ledbury.
- f) From within the town views to the church and Barrett Browning buildings – care should be taken that taller buildings do not obscure these views as they make a strong contribution to the sense of place.

## 6. Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

- 8.1 The following policy is suggested to cover a number of the criteria included within the Design Guide together with other matters that are becoming increasingly relevant to an integrated and network approach. It incorporates some of the proposals arising from a review of the green infrastructure strategy set out in Topic paper 4.

### Policy Ref No: Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The conservation, recovery and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity will be supported in order to promote, support and expand wildlife and their habitats and green infrastructure in accordance with Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policy LD2.

To facilitate this, development should achieve at least the required level of biodiversity net gain through measures that:

- a) Contribute towards the wider ecological network, biodiversity and green infrastructure by enhancing the ecological corridors and stepping-stones identified by Herefordshire Council in its Ecological Network Map 2013 and the Biodiversity objectives in Malvern Hills Management Plan 2019 – 2024 (and any subsequent successor documents).
- b) Ensure the integrity of the Ridgeway Wood, Ledbury Cutting, and Upper Farm Quarry and Grassland SSSIs, maintaining or enhancing their conservation status.
- c) Maintain green spaces and provide habitat improvements and supporting features for areas of green infrastructure identified as Strategic Corridors, Enhancement Zones and Fringe Zones for Ledbury utilising objectives identified in Appendix (3)<sup>16</sup>.

Proposals that promote the creation and/or active management of sites to maximise habitat diversity, including woodlands, orchards, streams and wetlands, will be supported, as will those that result in additional and new natural areas capable of becoming local wildlife sites.

- 8.2 The following supporting statement is suggested:

<sup>16</sup> The correct Appendix reference in the NDP to be inserted when known.

#### Policy Supporting Statement:

This policy complements Herefordshire Core Strategy policy LD2. It sets out the broad measures that developers should consider to improve the local natural environment. **Ledbury's location nestled at the foot of the Malvern Hills is such that geological features as well as biodiversity is important.**

Elements of both the ecological networks for the County and Malvern Hills AONB fall with Ledbury Town Parish. The integrity of the combined networks is important, and their coherence and resilience need to be maintained.

There are three SSSIs within Ledbury Parish and one outside but immediately upon its border. Ridgeway Wood and Upper Farm Quarry and Grassland SSSIs are currently in favourable condition but Ledbury Cutting SSSI is unfavourable and declining. Mayhill Wood SSSI which is immediately adjacent to the **Parish's** eastern boundary is favourable but at risk. There are 10 local wildlife and 3 local geological sites identified within the parish although the condition and continued existence of many is unknown in that most were last surveyed around 40 years ago.

**Herefordshire Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy defines a range of corridors and zones.** The Strategy was produced before the inception of neighbourhood plans although it acknowledges that the strategy needs to be developed further, including to provide guidance on measures that might be introduced to retain and enhance important characteristics, opportunities and associated management measures. Appendix (3)<sup>17</sup> defines objectives for these corridors and zones, including for additional areas identified through further analysis. The benefits are seen as contributing towards mitigating the effects of climate change as well as promoting social cohesion, economic vitality, alternative means of movement and transport, and functional, healthy places.

An important element will be habitat creation, such as wetland and water features, especially where they provide or improve drainage, have the potential to support a wide variety of species, including those that might be at risk during times of drought. These and other natural areas have the potential to expand the network of local sites that support a range of species. Small individual measures can accumulate to provide significant support to wildlife such as small garden ponds, bird and bat boxes, and gardening for wildlife.

## 7. Sustainable Design Components

- 7.1 The following policy is suggested to cover the analysis in Appendix 1 of sustainable design matters expressed within Ledbury Design Guide together with matters not previously considered:

#### Policy Ref No: Sustainable Design

Development proposals should seek to achieve a zero-carbon footprint through containing a co-ordinated package of design measures which, in addition to regulatory requirements, include:

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

- a) In addition to relevant criteria in Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policies SS7 and SD1, where possible utilising renewable energy infrastructure such as photovoltaic panels where these do not detract from any historic assets or their settings.
- b) Seeking on-site measures that support energy conservation such as through tree planting and other forms of green infrastructure to provide shade and shelter where this does not cancel solar gain, the maximum use of permeable surfaces.
- c) Minimising the use of artificial light in order to limit the impact of light pollution on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation as well as to reduce energy consumption.
- d) Enabling a sustainable drainage system, including serving a wider range of properties where opportunities exist.
- e) Reducing the carbon intensity of the structures (embodied carbon), minimising construction traffic and reducing waste.
- f) Supporting proposals that utilise construction materials produced as locally as possible, minimising travel distances.
- g) Avoiding or fully mitigating the loss of woodlands, orchards, hedgerows, grassland and other features that absorb carbon, and where possible taking the opportunity to extend these environmental assets.
- h) Providing opportunities for tree and woodland planting to offset the full extent of carbon used during manufacturing of building materials and construction works.
- i) Developers should set out their design approach in sufficient detail to show how the criteria included in this and other relevant policies in the NDP have been addressed.

7.2 The following supporting statement is suggested:

#### Policy Supporting Statement

The community supports sustainable development, and this requires a comprehensive approach encompassing a range of sustainable design elements. This policy sets out criteria that, taken with other policies in this plan, should be considered as part of a co-ordinated approach aimed at achieving zero carbon covering both construction and subsequent use. Although the various elements covered in this policy may not apply to all developments, some will be applicable to most.

The approach to sustainable design should be undertaken in an integrated way addressing measures related to individual buildings, site layout and landscaping and support for off-site measures. The latter are covered by another policy promoting links to the public footpath and cycle networks and supporting public transport through such facilities as supporting services and providing bus shelters. This policy covers detailed design issues, covering matters such as energy and water use efficiency, provision of sustainability infrastructure such as green roofs, sustainable site design measures, and the construction process. These detailed matters support the more general provisions within Core Strategy policy SD1.

Energy conservation is considered an extremely important design element yet currently this is addressed through Building Regulations and nationally set standards. There are

higher standards such as Passivhaus and BREEAM and developers are encouraged to meet the highest level possible in order to make the maximum contribution to achieving a zero-carbon development. Developers should utilise guidance and advice from relevant professional bodies to set appropriate targets for embodied carbon within their development. One example of such guidance has been issued by the Green Building Council<sup>18</sup>.

The requirement for the design approach to indicate in sufficient detail how all the design criteria in this NDP have been addressed is important to show that the requirements for sustainable development as set out in National Planning Policy Guidance have been met. Herefordshire Council has a check list for compliance with climate change requirements<sup>19</sup> and also for biodiversity and ecology.

## 8. Agricultural Buildings and Related Development

11.1 The following policy is suggested:

### Policy Ref No: Farming Landscape around Ledbury

Proposals for farm diversification, agricultural development and other major development in the rural parts of the Parish requiring planning permission, for example, intensive farming units, poly tunnels or solar farms, should be compatible with the rural area, in particular protecting landscape character and the form of any historic farmstead through:

- a) Ensuring the character, scale and location of the proposal is compatible with the landscape setting and any area of nature conservation importance.
- b) Resisting the loss of or significant adverse effects upon heritage assets.
- c) Where appropriate, buildings should use materials and colours that blend sensitively into the landscape.
- d) Locating new buildings or other development sensitively within the landscape and these should normally be adjacent to and of compatible design with an existing group of buildings.
- e) Reusing or adapting existing farm buildings where these are available and possible.
- f) Limiting redevelopment of existing buildings that may no longer be suitable for an existing farm diversification proposal to small expansion upon the original building floorspace such that it would be in scale with the area and landscape concerned. Such proposals should also result in benefits to the environment and deal comprehensively with the full extent of the site. Avoiding the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land to permanent development where land of a lower quality is available.
- g) Fully screening any external storage, parking and ancillary uses.
- h) Requiring diversification proposals on farms to be complementary to the agricultural operations and operated as part of the farm holding.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.ukgbc.org/sites/default/files/UK-GBC%20EC%20Developing%20Client%20Brief.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-services/apply-planning-permission/2?documentId=62&categoryId=200142>

- i) Ensuring the traffic generated by the proposal can be accommodated safely upon the local highway network.

Where appropriate, the development should be informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and/or Heritage Impact Assessment.

11.2 The following supporting statement is suggested:

Policy Supporting Statement:

**The rural parts of the Parish outside of Ledbury's defined settlement boundary**

(and/or land proposed for specific uses adjacent to it – depending upon the chosen settlement boundary option) are considered open countryside. Core Strategy RA5 covers development that will support the rural economy, especially those aimed at diversification. Although this might include farm diversification, it does not contain any specific policies for the development of agricultural buildings or operations where planning permission is required. This policy aims to address the landscape and related effects of such development as well as proposals for diversification and other larger-scale developments. It aims to protect landscape quality and character; heritage assets, especially historic farmsteads; protect high quality agricultural land; and ensure an appropriate scale of development. It highlights the need for relevant impact assessments where the landscape and/or heritage assets may be affected, and these should inform both design and location. Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policy RA5 covers other aspects associated with the re-use of rural buildings.

## 9. Heritage Assets

- 12.1 It is noted that the NDP Examiner deleted a policy from the Regulation 16 Draft NDP relating to Listed Buildings and Ledbury Conservation Area. However, other NDPs have included policies covering these and other heritage matters that Historic England has supported, including referring to them as exemplary. These have sought to set out a comprehensive strategy for the historic environment within the NDP area concerned.
- 12.2 The following policy is suggested that utilises a format that has been supported by Historic England:

Policy Ref No – Protecting and Enhancing Heritage Assets

The significance of heritage assets and their settings within the Parish will be preserved and enhanced through:

- a) Resisting development that would adversely affect the site and setting of Wall Hills Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- b) Requiring appropriate development proposals elsewhere to be accompanied by full archaeological investigations and in the event of significant and/or extensive remains being found they should be preserved in-situ.
- c) Resisting development that adversely affects features or the setting of Listed Buildings and other similar heritage assets.

- d) Ensuring every effort is made to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Ledbury Conservation Area, including through site appraisals undertaken in association with relevant proposals.
- e) Only permitting development that would not adversely affect the significance of that part of Eastnor Castle Registered Historic Park and Garden falling within the Parish. This would include its setting **within Malvern Hills AONB, including contributions to any 'borrowed view'**.
- f) Ensuring every effort is made to retain and conserve buildings and heritage assets of local importance, including traditional rural buildings. (If identified, list in an appendix)
- g) Only allowing development within unregistered parks and gardens at Upper Hall; Ledbury Park; Underdown; Dingewood Park to proceed if an assessment has shown the effects of works will fit sensitively into the garden design. In addition, the contribution that such parks and gardens make to the wider landscape will be relevant to this consideration.
- h) Promoting development that would conserve the character of the **Parish's historic farmsteads through allowing sensitive conversions** where appropriate.

### 12.3 Policy Justification and supporting statement:

The area's heritage is reflected in the presence of a Scheduled Ancient Monument, 173 Listed Buildings, historic landscapes and other locally important monuments, buildings and assets. Although there is only one Scheduled Ancient Monument there are some 440 records for the **Town's area on Herefordshire Council's Historic Environment Record**. There is therefore potential for further archaeological assets to be found. Many heritage assets and, where appropriate, their settings<sup>20</sup> are important and need to be preserved, not the least because of the contribution they make to the wider setting of the Malvern Hills AONB. They also contribute to the local economy. Ledbury Conservation Area covers the town centre and extends to important surrounding streets and areas. No detailed conservation area appraisal has been undertaken and until one is produced, development proposals should be informed by appropriate analysis, taking into account characteristics identified for the relevant character areas described in Appendix (2)<sup>21</sup>. Part of Eastnor Castle Historic Park<sup>22</sup> falls within the Parish, having been registered by Historic England in 1986. The parkland does rely upon views between its various parts and of an important obelisk. Locally important heritage assets should also be recognised for their contribution to the townscape and landscape character. These include unregistered parks and gardens, historic farmsteads and (List other local heritage assets in an appendix). This policy should not restrict development but influence the approach taken to it which may include stimulating the re-use of buildings so that they contribute towards regeneration.

Historic England has sponsored a project to characterise the historic farmsteads within the County and the sites of some 28 of these can be found within the **Town's** area. In instances where they remain as complexes of buildings, it is understood that

<sup>20</sup> NPPF paragraph 128

<sup>21</sup> The correct Appendix reference in the NDP to be inserted when known.

<sup>22</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000459>

Historic England would like to see a positive approach to their conservation through promoting designs that will conserve, protect and sustain their historic forms, protecting their features, settings and cultural significance. They form important environmental capital within the setting of Malvern Hills AONB, contributing to its local distinctiveness and character.

## 10. Consultation Arrangements

- 13.1 Ledbury Design Guide promotes a number of consultation actions that major or significant developments should undertake. These reflect although are not **completely consistent with Herefordshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement**. Nevertheless, they present positive measures that developers might undertake. An approach based upon relevant developers agreeing consultation arrangements with the Town Council might usefully be set out in the NDP as part of a new section that would also set out an explanation of implementation and monitoring measures.
- 13.2 The following statement is suggested within a section on Community Involvement, Implementation and Monitoring

Landowners and developers will deliver most of the proposals that are promoted through policies in this NDP. Herefordshire Council as the local planning authority will **determine planning applications for development within the Town Council's area**. Such determinations should be in accordance with this NDP where appropriate.

Developers and other applicants for planning permission are encouraged to consult with the Town Council, and the community more generally, in a manner consistent with the scale of the proposal. In relation to significant applications<sup>23</sup> the Town Council would encourage developers to consult with it prior to the submission of a planning application including, where appropriate, attending one of its meetings. These meetings are open to the public. Community consultations are encouraged. **Herefordshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement**<sup>24</sup> sets out a number of methods and techniques that it will consider undertaking and Ledbury Town Council would encourage developers to consider these for use at the pre-application stage. Developers and other applicants for planning permission should consider their duties **for community consultation as set out in paragraph 10.17 of Herefordshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement** and may wish to discuss the most appropriate approach to be taken with the Town Council in advance. A statement on the consultation undertaken should be submitted with any planning application.

While the local planning authority will be responsible for development management, Ledbury Town Council will also use this NDP as the basis for making its representations on planning applications. The Town Council will continue to publicise all planning applications. Where necessary, Herefordshire Council will be asked to extend the time within which responses are required so that appropriate local publicity can be given before the Town Council considers important planning applications.

<sup>23</sup> See paragraph 10.16 in Herefordshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1566/statement-of-community-involvement-january-2017>

<sup>24</sup> Ibid paragraph 8.4

Herefordshire Council is required to monitor the achievement of its targets for a range of development types including whether sites are coming forward for development to meet its strategy set out in Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy. The Town Council will also monitor the effectiveness of the approach it has taken to the various issues covered in the NDP policies. This will be done through its annual report. That report will indicate:

- i) The number of dwellings granted planning permission within the **Town's area**, including a running total covering the Plan Period.
- ii) A list of planning applications for other matters received during the year indicating whether they are covered by policies in this NDP, the Town **Council's representations** made, and whether it is considered that they have been determined in accordance with the NDP.

It is anticipated that a review of the NDP will be needed, most likely when Herefordshire Core Strategy is also reviewed. In the unlikely situation that the strategy and approach in relation to its key requirements, including housing and employment land, does not deliver the level required to meet the targets for the Town, discussions will take place with Herefordshire Council upon whether an early review is necessary. Regardless of external pressures, Ledbury Town Council will undertake a review of the NDP at least every 5 years to ensure that it remains current and relevant to targets and community need.

## 11. Tourism

- 10.1 Ledbury Design Guide refers specifically to encouraging chalet, caravanning and camping sites indicating they should ideally be located within the development boundary or on suitable previously developed land, and in both instances should be able demonstrate how the development can meet the landscape sensitivity provisions of this guide. In addition, proposals should be of appropriate scale to the character **of both the site and its surroundings, including the site's existing or potential** relationships with close-by settlement areas and any important focal points such as views and historic buildings. Any site should be able to accommodate the proposal and ancillary facilities such as soft landscaping and parking and service areas.
- 10.2 The Design Guide's locational and site requirement criteria for chalet, caravanning and camping sites would be material to the principle of development and appropriate in a planning policy. The current NDP contains a general policy on tourist accommodation in its Employment and Economy section (policy EE2.1) and appropriate changes might be considered, if necessary, to that policy or its supporting statement to address any of the above factors that may not be covered (See separate Topic Paper).

## 12. Drainage

- 9.1 The Design Guide indicates a need for drainage strategies in association with development. The requirement does not indicate whether this is for wastewater, storm water or both. Stormwater drainage is no longer accepted into the wastewater system. The guidance also promotes the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). Core Strategy policies SD3 and SD4 are relevant to these matters and the **first requires development to include the appropriate use of SuDS. 'Wet systems'**

provide a similar arrangement for wastewater although in relation to Ledbury Town any such proposal would need to form part of a comprehensive system associated with its Wastewater Treatment Works. The Core Strategy policies are fairly comprehensive and should meet the needs set out in the Design Guide. This would include drainage requirements in isolated locations away from Ledbury Town.

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| 9.2 | No drainage policy is suggested although reference to the two Core Strategy policies (SD3 and SD4) might be made within the NDP. |
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### 13. Development within Conservation Area and Ledbury Town Centre

- 4.1 The Design Guide advances a number of criteria to enhance and improve the existing **character of Ledbury's town centre**. They include the following: avoid blank shop windows to ensure they integrate and enhance the street frontage; enhance the **street frontage by using signage that is 'conservation in style' and sensitive to Ledbury's character**; be high quality in terms of materials and finishes and sympathetic to heritage colours; in terms of the built form and height, be respectful of adjacent buildings; outdoor spaces should enhance the public realm through enabling increased interaction within the community; demonstrate the use of high quality and durable surfaces that are sensitive to Ledbury's environment.
- 4.2 The NDP refers to Ledbury Town Centre, although there is now no specific definition of what this might comprise within the adopted document. The Regulation 16 submission draft NDP did contain a map showing the town centre area but was deleted as a consequent action in relation to the deletion of draft NDP policy HO3.2. The former Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan identified a Central Shopping and Commercial Area which was to be *'retained and protected as the prime focus for retail, leisure and commercial activity in order to ensure the continued vitality and viability of these city and town centres (Policy TCR1)'*. This area is smaller than that defined within the regulation 16 NDP. The current NDP also refers in supporting statements to Ledbury Conservation Area. Should a Conservation Area Appraisal be prepared to inform an NDP policy, this would take some time and delay progress upon the NDP. As an interim measure, it should be possible to utilise design related **elements of Herefordshire Council's Rapid Townscape Assessment and present these** in an appendix (See Appendix 2). More general reference to Ledbury Conservation Area might be included within a broader heritage assets policy (See Para 12.2).
- 4.3 It is recommended that:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The NDP defines Ledbury Central Shopping and Commercial Area (or alternatively Ledbury Town Centre) based upon that included in the former Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP) with appropriate amendments to take into account adjacent land in need regeneration and/or capable of accommodating identified needs. A policy similar to that included within the UDP be included in the NDP.</li><li>2. Appendix 2 to this report be included as an Appendix to the NDP and reference be made to its content to inform design for development within the particular character areas as appropriate.</li></ol> |
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## 14. Other Matters

- 14.1 Ledbury Design Guide also includes policies relating to housing types, industrial development and open space. The latter two are addressed in separate topic reports. Currently it is not envisaged that the NDP will promote further housing growth (see Topic Paper 5).

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## APPENDIX 1: Ledbury Design Guide Analysis

Ref	Criterion	Analysis	Suggested Approach
ARCHITECTURAL STYLES			
LDG1.1	<b>In order to enhance and improve the existing character of Ledbury's town centre, the design of new retail and commercial developments within the town centre should:</b>	Preamble. It would be useful to define what is meant by 'town centre' and how it relates to the Conservation Area.	Utilise information included in Ledbury Rapid Townscape Assessment to define character until a more detailed assessment is undertaken if required.
1.1.1	Avoid blank shop windows to ensure they integrate and enhance the street frontage.	It is assumed this applies to window displays and these do not comprise development requiring planning permission. However, blank frontages can detract from the character of a town centre and attractive displays should be encouraged and this might be through other mechanisms. Some local authorities have prepared shop front design guides.	Retain as an element that should be promoted in an appendix to the NDP.  Urge Herefordshire Council to produce a shop front design guide.
1.1.2	Enhance the street frontage by using signage that is 'conservation in style' and sensitive to Ledbury's character.	This is a matter of detailed design that can apply to both public and private signage. It is relevant to design guidance although not generally something that would be set out explicitly in a planning policy. In terms of shop fronts, this might be a matter included in more detail within a shop front design guide. Some signage may be considered advertisements requiring advertisement consent. Local authority signage and	Encouraging a sensitive approach to signage within Ledbury Town Centre should be promoted in an appendix to the NDP.

		associated measures such as yellow lines do not fall under the planning acts although in a conservation area, a local planning authority must also pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. A	Urge Herefordshire Council to produce a shop front design guide that covers signage and also other components that contribute towards the character of the town centre most of which is a Conservation Area where the LPA has a duty to consider preserving or enhancing its character or appearance.
1.1.3	Be designed to be respectful of the historical buildings in Ledbury whilst being clearly 'of their time'. This may include taking cues from historical styles, but with a modern interpretation.	The principle is one that might be expressed in a NDP policy for the Conservation Area (or wider if applicable) which encompasses most of the town centre. Examples and more detail might usefully be set out in support of any NDP policy.	Include a policy upon conserving and enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area with more detailed information upon character in an appendix.
1.1.4	Be high quality in terms of materials and finishes and sympathetic to heritage colours. (See Appendix 2.0 for information on the standards which would be expected to be applied.)	The principle is one that might be expressed in a NDP policy for the Conservation Area (or wider if applicable) which encompasses most of the town centre. More detail might usefully be set out in support of any NDP policy.	Include a policy upon conserving and enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area

			with more detailed guidance in an appendix covering Design Guide matters for particular character areas.
1.1.5	Demonstrate the use of locally sourced materials where possible.	This is not a design matter but potentially one that relates to sustainable development	Consider whether it is possible to include this within a sustainable design policy.
1.1.6	In terms of the built form and height be respectful of adjacent buildings.	This is an important design matter that might be included within an NDP policy is an appropriate form. It is an criterion that might apply beyond the town centre.	Include within a Conservation Area or general design policy within the NDP
LDG1.2	<b>The Design and Access Statement for any proposed development in the parish should demonstrate how the public realm has been designed in such a way that:</b>	This is not a design policy but a process one. All proposals for planning permission, with limited exceptions for minor developments, must submit Design and Access statements. There are also other forms of statement that might cover some of the criteria listed including planning statements, traffic impact assessments; travel plans, heritage impact statements, landscape, ecological and archaeological statements being a number.	Reference might be made at various places within the NDP where such statements relating to the public realm may be necessary.
1.2.1	Parking does not dominate the external spaces, especially where the introduction of parking would conflict with the pedestrian environment or detract from a specific feature of historical importance.	This is a design issue that can be covered by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on highway/transportation matters.	Include within a NDP policy on highway matters

1.2.2	Outdoor spaces should enhance the public realm through enabling increased interaction within the community.	This is a design issue that can be covered by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on design of open space/green infrastructure.	Include within a NDP policy on residential and/or townscape design
1.2.3	Natural features are incorporated and are appropriate to the location, including water features and the use of native Herefordshire species and trees that do not dominate street frontages when fully grown.	This is a predominantly a design issue that can be covered by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on landscape matters, including reference to planting appropriate trees for the location.	Include within a NDP policy on landscape matters.
1.2.4	Consideration has been given to supporting and encouraging wildlife friendly habitats and biodiversity as an integral part of the development. This could, for example, be incorporating Swift boxes or Bat boxes into the design of new buildings, showing how lighting should be best included and managed to encourage wildlife and setting aside areas for wildflowers which particularly attract pollinators.	This is a predominantly a design issue that can be covered by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on biodiversity/the natural environment. Herefordshire Council has a specific Biodiversity SPG which might be referred to.	Include within a NDP policy on biodiversity/the natural environment.
LDG1.3	<b>The design of new residential developments should:</b>	Preamble	N/A
1.3.1	Reflect local and historical context and should not be from a standard palette of developer house types that are non-specific to anywhere in the country.	This is an important design matter that might be included within an NDP policy is an appropriate form.	Include a policy upon residential or general design matters
1.3.2	Be clearly of their time, of variable design and not a pastiche mix of so called 'traditional' styles.	This is an important design matter that might be included within an NDP policy is an appropriate form.	Include a policy upon residential or general design matters
1.3.3	Fully integrate 'affordable housing' into the development sites without grouping in specific areas.	This is an important design matter that might be included within an NDP policy is an appropriate form. It might be included within a general/residential design policy or one specific to affordable housing.	Include a policy upon residential/general design matters or one

			specific to affordable housing.
1.3.4	Deliver 'affordable housing' in such a way that it is not identifiable from market housing in terms of quality and design.	This very similar to 1.3.3 and again might be included within a general/residential design policy or one specific to affordable housing.	Include a policy upon residential/general design matters or one specific to affordable housing.
1.3.5	Provide building frontages that offer natural surveillance over the 'street' and any areas of public space, avoiding the use of tall boundary treatments adjoining those spaces.	This is an important design matter that might be included within an NDP policy in an appropriate form. It reflects provisions in Secured by Design, to which reference might be made for more detailed guidance.	Include a policy upon residential or general design matters
1.3.6	Demonstrate how innovative design and the increased use of natural materials, incorporating features such as green roofs, have been considered and incorporated wherever possible.	This is an important design matter that might be included within an NDP policy in an appropriate form. However, it presents a number of issues covering architectural design, landscape matters and sustainable design. It may need to be separated into its key elements/intentions with parts being included in a number of design related policies	Include in NDP policies according to how best the various matters might be presented.
1.3.7	Not exceed 2½ storeys.	This is very prescriptive and there may be locations, such as within the central area where buildings are more than 2½ storeys where it would be appropriate to have taller buildings. Reference to scale and massing within a NDP policy on design might contribute towards this as an objective. The approach must be expressed positively.	Include a policy upon residential or general design matters
LDG1.4	<b>When designing in roof windows or planning loft conversions or refurbishments and refits to the rooflines</b>	Preamble	N/A

	<b>of existing properties, developers are encouraged to take into account:</b>		
1.4.1	That roof, windows and new build extensions relate well to the proportions, roof form and massing of the existing house and neighbouring properties. They should be appropriate in size, scale and proportion to the existing house and adjoining properties and must not be so large as to over dominate the existing roof or to overwhelm their immediate setting.	A specific policy on extensions such as this or references to such within a general design policy might form the basis for matters covered by this guidance, although some of the detail should be included, more appropriately, in a design guidance appendix.	Include a policy upon residential or general design matters.
1.4.2	That householders, designers and architects, when seeking to build or extend existing property rooflines, aim to create attractive and interesting solutions which will enhance the existing surrounding architecture.	A specific policy on extensions such as this or references to such within a general design policy might form the basis for matters covered by this guidance, although some of the detail should be included, more appropriately, in a design guidance appendix.	Include a policy upon residential or general design matters (or a policy specifically on extensions)
1.4.3	That the choice of materials should reflect or complement the character of the existing roof, the rest of the property and the immediate area.	A specific policy on extensions such as this or references to such within a general design policy might form the basis for matters covered by this guidance, although some of the detail should be included, more appropriately, in a design guidance appendix.	Include a policy upon residential or general design matters (or a policy specifically on extensions)
1.4.4	The landscape provisions of this guide.	Many landscape provisions can be covered within a NDP policy and it is unnecessary to provide cross-references within policies.	There is no need for a such a cross-reference.
<b>LANDSCAPE</b>			
LDG2.1	<b>Applications for the development of all sites should ideally be accompanied by a Drainage Strategy setting out:</b>	A requirement to provide drainage strategies may be excessive for some types of development. Certain drainage aspects would be covered by Building	Consider dividing into separate policy approaches for

		Regulations and not the planning system. However, drainage can be a material consideration, and, in some instances, proposals can create benefits to the community and to wildlife. Storm/flood water drainage matters are wastewater drainage should now be considered separately and a policy approach based upon this would be more appropriate	storm/flood water and wastewater and whether policy advise is needed in the NDP.
2.1.1	Details of the integration of a sustainable drainage strategy (SUDS) to address all surface water run-off from the development site.	This can be covered by a policy within the NDP	Include a policy upon storm water drainage or in association with other related matters.
2.1.2	The approach to foul drainage.	This can be covered by a policy within the NDP	Include a policy upon foul drainage or in association with other related matters or cross refer to the relevant policy in Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy.
2.1.3	Any proposed infrastructure improvements and how these will be delivered.	It is presumed that this refers to other drainage infrastructure improvements. The only outstanding matter is considered to be flood risk and this might be covered with 2.1.1 above in a comprehensive policy.	Include in a policy with other related matters.
LDG2.2	<b>Maintaining the landscape character of Ledbury is important and developments should:</b>	Preamble	N/A

2.2.1	Demonstrate how the landscape design responds to a typical Ledbury rural environment.	This can be covered by a policy within the NDP	Include within a comprehensive landscape policy.
2.2.2	Demonstrate the use of high quality and durable surfaces that are sensitive to the Ledbury environment.	This can be covered by a policy within the NDP	Include within a comprehensive landscape or townscape policy.
2.2.3	Demonstrate how the use of boundary treatments is sensitive to the Herefordshire countryside or the specific environment. (See Appendix 1.0 for further definition.)	This can be covered by a policy within the NDP	Include within a comprehensive landscape policy.
2.2.4	Utilise a variety of parking formats so that car parking does not dominate the landscape and avoids the use of rear parking courtyards unless it can be demonstrated it would contribute to the character and appearance of the surrounding area - for example, where houses front onto open green spaces with rear served dwellings, which softens the green space and removes detracting street clutter and vehicles from the public open space.	This is a design issue that can be covered by to some extent by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on highway/transportation matters. Herefordshire Council has design guidance for new development that would need to be taken into account. However, there are design elements that it does not cover which are highlighted in this provision that may need to be highlighted	Include principles within a NDP policy on highway matters.
2.2.5	Demonstrate how the external and street lighting design is appropriate to the area and minimises light pollution whilst providing a safe environment.	This can be covered to some degree within a NDP policy although street lighting is a matter for the Highway Authority.	Include lighting within an appropriate design policy so far as is possible.
LDG2.3	<b>Planting and soft landscaping should be an integral part of new developments and should:</b>	The need for landscape proposals to be an integral part of designs for most developments should be required through a NDP policy	Include within a comprehensive landscape policy.
2.3.1	Utilise native Herefordshire species.	This can be covered by a policy within the NDP although must take into account the appropriateness of any tree for its location and climate change.	Include within a comprehensive landscape policy.

2.3.2	Introduce trees, and particularly into street scenes, that are carefully considered so that they contribute positively to the public realm and do not become dominant when fully grown.	This can be covered by a policy within the NDP although must take into account the appropriateness of any tree for its location and climate change.	Include within a comprehensive landscape policy.
2.3.3	Consider adding water features such as ponds and streams to support wildlife diversity and improve community quality of life.	This is a predominantly a design issue that can be covered by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on biodiversity/the natural environment. Herefordshire Council has a specific Biodiversity SPG which might be referred to. Legislation is proposed to require net gains in biodiversity through development and such measures may be promoted through such a policy.	Include within a NDP policy on biodiversity/the natural environment.
LDG2.4	<b>All new developments should be designed so that they improve non-vehicular connectivity, both to and within the town and to and within surrounding countryside, and integrate into the wider cycling, pedestrian and disabled access footpath networks. Furthermore, as applicable, they should demonstrate how they:</b>	This is a design issue that can be covered by to some extent by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on highway/transportation matters. Herefordshire Council has design guidance for new development that would need to be taken into account.	Include principles within a NDP policy on highway matters.
2.4.1	Connect to Ledbury town's existing footpath and cycle path network as a basis for their design.	This is a design issue that can be covered by to some extent by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on highway/transportation matters. Herefordshire Council has design guidance for new development that would need to be taken into account.	Include principles within a NDP policy on highway matters.
2.4.2	Provide connections within the development to give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and disabled access over vehicle use.	This is a design issue that can be covered by to some extent by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on highway/transportation matters. Herefordshire Council has design guidance	Include principles within a NDP policy on highway matters.

		for new development that would need to be taken into account.	
2.4.3	Provide positive and appropriate connections to public rights of way giving access to the wider landscape.	This is a design issue that can be covered by to some extent by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on highway/transportation matters.	Include principles within a NDP policy on highway matters.
LDG2.5	<b>Where possible all residents should have the opportunity to grow food, so developments are encouraged which:</b>	Preamble	N/A
2.5.1	Include gardens to all houses which provide an opportunity for a growing area which still offers additional suitable private amenity space.	<p>Residential garden areas provide opportunities for a range of incidental activities such as gardening, leisure and children's play. Choices are made by residents as to how these are used. Growing of vegetables may become more important for health benefits and to mitigate climate change by, for example, reducing haulage miles. Residents should be afforded a degree of privacy. Layout designs should aim for dwellings to be set back sufficiently from the eaves of a dwelling or to provide reasonable space between buildings to protect neighbouring privacy and minimise overlooking. Overlooking of gardens may be unacceptable where it would result in an intrusive, direct and uninterrupted view from a main room, to the most private area of the garden, which is often the main sitting out area adjacent to the property. As a general rule of thumb this area is the first 3-4 metres of a rear garden, closest to the residential property.</p> <p>Reference to protection of residential amenity and the provision of sufficient garden space that would enable residents to enjoy their use with appropriate degrees</p>	Include a policy upon residential or general design matters

		of privacy might be included within a NDP residential design policy.	
2.5.2	Consider how, where opportunities for growing areas are not possible for individual gardens, it could be possible to provide for an equivalent access to allotments or community growing areas (this also applies to apartments or mews style properties without gardens).	<p>Individual dwellings should normally provide gardens of sufficient size to meet the general needs of individual families in accordance with the above. The provisions in LDG guidance is assumed to refer to off-site or communal provision which may arise from either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dwellings such as flats where there are communal areas serving residents; or</li> <li>2. Residents who wish to have larger gardens than might generally be provided and wish to use allotments.</li> </ol> <p>Open space provision is normally sought based on standards that are or have been set. The standard can include on-site and off-site provision, with developer making contributions to the latter both to provide for larger community-based needs, such as parkland and recreation areas, and off-site contributions to equal benefit for provision that should normally be made on site. Herefordshire Core Strategy policy OS2 refers to 'applicable set standards of quantity, quality and accessibility' which are indicated to be those set by Fields in Trust, Sports England and Natural England. Not all potential open space needs are covered by these. Consideration might be given to setting out open space standards within the NDP to cover any gaps.</p>	Consider setting out open space standards within the NDP or rely upon those set out in Herefordshire Core Strategy, explaining what types of open space is required.

LDG2.6	<b>All new developments should be designed to carefully integrate waste and recycling facilities and should:</b>	These matters might fall under the heading of sustainable design and be included within a NDP policy on sustainable development	Consider whether it is possible to include this within a sustainable design policy.
2.6.1	Incorporate dedicated storage for waste and recycling for residential developments at a suitable capacity for current or foreseeable collection levels. This should be in a manner that is discreet and carefully considered either within the ownership boundary of each dwelling or as central shared waste and recycling storage or a combination of both.	This guidance covers capacity in terms of provision and location/design of storage areas in residential development. In relation to the first Herefordshire Council sets service standards for the collection of household waste. The second is a design issue that might be covered to a degree within a NDP policy with more detail added in the policy's supporting statement	Consider whether it is possible to include this within a sustainable design policy.
2.6.2	Provide adequate storage for commercial waste in a manner that does not impact on the public realm.	There are various forms of commercial (or trade) waste, some of which may be hazardous materials and also others for which licences under other legislation may be required. Storage provision for commercial waste can adversely affect the amenity and appearance of an area and should be planned for to reduce such effects. The effect can vary according to the particular location and approaches to tackling problem areas is not easily dealt within a NDP policy	Refer to screening of materials and non-hazardous waste where this may be required in association with industrial, commercial or similar development.
LDG2.7	<b>New developments will be supported that:</b>	Preamble	N/A
2.7.1	Protect and enhance existing natural features of sites that have importance with regard to their biodiversity and make them accessible to all.	This is a predominantly a design issue that can be covered by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on biodiversity/the natural environment. Herefordshire Council has a specific Biodiversity SPG which might be referred to. Legislation is proposed to require net gains in	Include within a NDP policy on biodiversity/the natural environment.

		biodiversity through development and such measures may be promoted through such a policy.	
2.7.2	Create new habitats within sites or the wider town, such as a small wetland nature reserve.	This is a predominantly a design issue that can be covered by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on biodiversity/the natural environment. Herefordshire Council has a specific Biodiversity SPG which might be referred to. Legislation is proposed to require net gains in biodiversity through development and such measures may be promoted through such a policy.	Include within a NDP policy on biodiversity/the natural environment.
LDG2.8	<b>Given the tourist and holiday importance to the Ledbury parish economy, the development of chalet, caravanning and camping sites is encouraged, but they should reflect the provisions of this guide so that:</b>	This is a planning policy issue that ought to be covered appropriately within the NDP.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted on caravan (static and touring) /camping/chalet sites to include within the NDP
2.8.1	Proposals are ideally either located within an existing development boundary or on suitable previously developed land. Proposals not within these preferred locations will be expected to demonstrate how the development can nevertheless meet the landscape sensitivity provisions of this guide.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering chalet/caravan/camping sites	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP
2.8.2	The proposed development is of appropriate scale considering the character of both the site and its surroundings, including the site's existing or potential relationships with close-by settlements and any important focal points such as views and historic buildings.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering chalet/caravan/camping sites	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP

2.8.3	The site is of a sufficient size to accommodate the proposal without prejudicing any appropriate provision of ancillary facilities such as soft landscaping and parking and service areas. The scale of the development should be compatible with, and fit comfortably into, its surroundings.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering chalet/caravan/camping sites	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP
LDG2.9	<b>New agricultural building proposals will be supported that show:</b>	This is a planning policy issue that ought to be covered appropriately within the NDP. However, not all agricultural buildings require planning permission. It may also be useful to define agricultural buildings – would this include, for example, polytunnels?	Determine whether an appropriate policy on agricultural buildings can be drafted to include within the NDP
2.9.1	Wherever possible, new agricultural buildings will be appropriately located in or adjacent to existing farmsteads or other farm buildings. Proposals for any new agricultural building located near to existing farmsteads should not dominate the existing farmstead, but instead, respect for the existing farmstead plan type should always be maintained.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering agricultural buildings. However, it may be too detailed and certain elements might either be included in the policy's supporting statement or in an appendix.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.
2.9.2	The building style, scale, massing and siting of any new building respects and will be complementary to the local landscape character and should not cause significant adverse effects on visual amenity. The visual impact of a larger building should be limited by the use of a series of shorter span portal frames to reduce elevations and create a lower roof height than a single span roof.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering agricultural buildings. However, it may be too detailed and certain elements might either be included in the policy's supporting statement or in an appendix.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.
2.9.3	The scale and mass of larger buildings will be broken up by setting back or projecting some sections of the building or by stepping the roofline. Overhanging eaves are encouraged to create a shadow line, making buildings appear smaller than they are. Consideration should be	This comprises criteria for a policy covering agricultural buildings. However, it may be too detailed and certain elements might either be included in the policy's supporting statement or in an appendix.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.

	given to constructing two smaller buildings rather than one large building, particularly where the topography is steeply sloping and there is limited space for development.		
2.9.4	When building on sloping ground, buildings are proposed to be constructed on lower rather than higher slopes, and on a break in the slope. This reduces both the visual impact and the need for earth movements and alterations in land form.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering agricultural buildings. However, it may be too detailed and certain elements might either be included in the policy's supporting statement or in an appendix.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.
2.9.5	Landscaping schemes will include a backdrop of mature trees or hills to reduce the building's visual impact. However the emphasis should be on alleviating visual impacts through good siting and design rather than through screening and mitigation measures.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering agricultural buildings. However, it may be too detailed and certain elements might either be included in the policy's supporting statement or in an appendix. Alternatively, reference may be made to an appropriate landscape policy.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.
2.9.6	New agricultural buildings will enhance the diverse existing built character, with historic features such as hop kilns and timber framed barns being retained.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering agricultural buildings. However, it may be too detailed and certain elements might either be included in the policy's supporting statement or in an appendix.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.
2.9.7	The use of materials and colours takes into account the landscape provisions of paragraph LDG 2.11.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering agricultural buildings. However, it may be too detailed and certain elements might either be included in the policy's supporting statement or in an appendix. Alternatively, reference may be made to an appropriate landscape policy.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.
LDG2.10	<b>Development proposals in the wider Ledbury countryside will be supported that demonstrate they respond positively to the following general design principles relevant to each local Landscape Character</b>	The Landscape Character Types covering the Town area might be included in a general landscape policy	Include within a comprehensive landscape policy.

	<b>Type (or LCT). (For more information on LCTs see Appendix 2.)</b>	that might specify the need to retain the relevant characteristics.	
2.10.1	The clustered settlement pattern with unsettled land between should be maintained and buildings should be set back from the road in their own grounds.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering landscape character. However, it may be too detailed and certain elements might either be included in the policy's supporting statement or in an appendix.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.
2.10.2	New domestic development, alterations and conversions should respect the simple character in design, materials and massing.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering landscape character. However, it may be too detailed and certain elements might either be included in the policy's supporting statement or in an appendix.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.
2.10.3	Development should enhance or be complementary to the characteristic mix of materials including timber, red brick and limestone, for example by including a red brick chimney or a stone extension on a timber-framed building or including a stone plinth on a red brick building. Designs should respect the dominant local character by protecting and creatively enhancing local characteristics such as large exterior chimneys, bread oven projections, or steeply pitched roofs.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering landscape character. However, it may be too detailed and certain elements might either be included in the policy's supporting statement or in an appendix.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.
2.10.4	In all areas external lighting should be kept to a minimum in all development to minimise impacts on dark skies. New lighting should minimise light spillage into adjoining areas and the sky. Schemes should demonstrate good practice, such as using low energy bulbs, directing lighting downwards, keeping lighting low to the ground and fitting hoods or shields to minimise light spillage. Motion sensors should be used to avoid permanently lit outside lights.	Lighting is covered in 2.2.5 above. This can be covered to some degree within a NDP policy although many of the elements are beyond the scope of planning controls and could only be covered through guidance.	Include lighting within an appropriate design policy so far as is possible.

2.10.5	The characteristic mixed species hedgerows and buildings set among a backdrop of native trees including oak, hazel and birch should be maintained and enhanced. Boundaries should normally comprise thick, mixed species native hedgerows, or stone walls in the more settled areas. All mature and veteran trees should be retained wherever possible.	This comprises criteria for a policy covering landscape character. However, it may be too detailed and certain elements might either be included in the policy's supporting statement or in an appendix.	Determine whether an appropriate policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.
LDG2.11	<b>All new developments should be designed to incorporate the use of appropriate colours to reduce the visual effects of buildings on the landscape so that:</b>	This issue might be linked with guidance on materials and included in a general design policy within the NDP	Determine whether an appropriate design policy can be drafted to include within the NDP.
2.11.1	Development proposals demonstrate an understanding of the important contribution colour makes to the special character and local distinctiveness of the area.	This is process guidance rather than design guidance	This might be referred to within the supporting statement of a design policy.
2.11.2	Due thought has been given in consideration of the use of colour when selecting materials and finishes. This is to ensure not only that new developments fit with the special landscape of the nearby Malvern Hills AONB, but also to the surrounding beautiful countryside of Ledbury parish.	The first element of this is process guidance rather than design guidance and duplicates the above. For the second part – see the below	Determine whether an appropriate design policy can be drafted to include within the NDP together with its supporting statement.
2.11.3	Guidance on appropriate materials and colour use has clearly been taken from the publication of 'Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development'. (See Appendix 2 for more information.)	The reference to this guidance is useful and might be included in a design policy with specific reference to that part of the plan area falling within the AONB. Its wider application might be referred to within a policy's supporting statement.	Determine whether an appropriate design policy can be drafted to include within the NDP together with its supporting statement.

SUSTAINABILITY			
LDG3.1	<b>It is desirable that all applications for new residential developments are encouraged to demonstrate in the Design and Access Statement how measures have been taken to design energy efficient dwellings and developments which should achieve at least one of the following:</b>	Nationally based energy efficiency requirements for dwellings are currently covered by Building Regulations and requiring submission of details within a Design and Access Statement cannot be a requirement. However, other sustainability requirements may be relevant to planning decisions and worth including in a specific NDP policy.	Consider whether a more comprehensive Sustainable Design policy might be included in the NDP
3.1.1	Passivhaus certification or equivalent.	Specifying this as an example of good practice within a policy's supporting statement is useful. However, currently it is not possible to require standards higher than those set out in the Building Regulations.	Consider referring to an example of good practice within the supporting statement to a relevant policy
3.1.2	Meet national technical standards and necessary Building Regulations and achieve high credits for energy. Developments should also demonstrate how they have been designed to take into consideration building orientation, solar gain, high levels of insulation and airtightness as best practice for a Passivhaus design approach, which aims for zero carbon emissions.	To an extent the first part of this provision duplicates other provisions. However, reference to other design elements such as building orientation can be useful and included within a sustainable design policy	Consider as part of a more comprehensive Sustainable Design policy might be included in the NDP
3.1.3	Meet national technical standards and necessary Building Regulations in combination with achieving a minimum of AECB Silver Standard.	Specifying this as an example of good practice within a policy's supporting statement is useful. However, currently it is not possible to require standards higher than those set out in the Building Regulations.	Consider referring to an example of good practice within the supporting statement to a relevant policy
LDG3.2	<b>It is desirable that all applications for new commercial developments are encouraged to demonstrate in the Design and Access Statement how measures have been</b>	Nationally based energy efficiency requirements for dwellings are currently covered by Building Regulations and requiring submission of details within a Design and Access Statement cannot be a	Consider whether a more comprehensive Sustainable Design

	<b>taken to design energy efficient buildings and should achieve at least one of the following:</b>	requirement. However, other sustainability requirements may be relevant to planning decisions and worth including in a specific NDP policy.	policy might be included in the NDP
3.2.1	Passivhaus certification or equivalent.	Specifying this as an example of good practice within a policy's supporting statement is useful. However, currently it is not possible to require standards higher than those set out in the Building Regulations.	Consider referring to an example of good practice within the supporting statement to a relevant policy
3.2.2	BREEAM Excellent or higher and achieve BREEAM Outstanding for the energy section of the assessment. Developments should also demonstrate how they have been designed to take into consideration building orientation, solar gain, high levels of insulation and airtightness as best practice for a Passivhaus design approach, which aims for zero carbon emissions.	Specifying this as an example of good practice within a policy's supporting statement is useful. However, currently it is not possible to require standards higher than those set out in the Building Regulations.	Consider referring to an example of good practice within the supporting statement to a relevant policy
3.2.3	BREEAM Excellent in combination with achieving a minimum of AECB Silver Standard.	Specifying this as an example of good practice within a policy's supporting statement is useful. However, currently it is not possible to require standards higher than those set out in the Building Regulations.	Consider referring to an example of good practice within the supporting statement to a relevant policy
LDG3.3	<b>Refurbishment of existing buildings:</b>	Preamble	N/A
3.3.1	Achieving Passivhaus EnerPHit certification will be encouraged. Where this is not achievable it should be demonstrated, within the Design and Access Statement for such projects, how energy efficiency has been addressed and ensured.	This would need to be more specific in terms of what forms of development it covers in order to determine whether it falls within planning controls such that a Design and Access Statement might be required. Again, currently it is not possible to require standards higher than those set out in the Building Regulations.	Consider referring to examples of good practice within the supporting statement to a relevant policy or in an appendix
LDG3.4	<b>Renewables:</b>	Preamble	N/A

3.4.1	All developments should demonstrate in their Design and Access Statement that consideration has been given to renewable energy sources and justification provided if these have not been included.	This is process guidance rather than design guidance to which negative responses would meet the requirement. A better approach would be to describe, through examples, measures that should be considered. There are forms of development to which such a requirement might not apply.	Indicate a requirement within a policy and supporting statement, as appropriate, upon sustainable design.
LDG3.5	<b>Sustainable transport:</b>	Preamble	N/A
3.5.1	All developments should comply with design guide clause LDG 2.4	No need for duplication	See responses to LDG2.4
3.5.2	All developments should demonstrate in their Design and Access Statement how sustainable transport methods have been considered and implemented in the layout and design of the site.	This is a design issue that can be covered by to some extent by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on highway/transportation matters and/or sustainable design. Herefordshire Council has design guidance for new development that would need to be taken into account. There are forms of development to which such a requirement might not apply.	Include principles within a NDP policy on highway matters or sustainable design.
3.5.3	It is desirable that all houses, including social housing, provide adequate and secure covered storage for cycles (allowing space for 1 cycle per bed space) and mobility scooters, with level access to the highway within the ownership boundary of each property. It would also be desired that secure and combined electric cycle, mobility scooter and electric vehicle recharging points be included at each property.	This is a design issue that can be covered by to some extent by a NDP policy but would fit more appropriately into one on highway/transportation matters and/or sustainable design. Herefordshire Council has design guidance for new development that would need to be taken into account.	Include principles within a NDP policy on highway matters or sustainable design.
LDG3.6	<b>Providing better highway design in new developments to minimise the impact of traffic:</b>	Preamble	N/A

3.6.1	Ledbury Town Council will work with Herefordshire Council and developers to provide improved highway design in new developments and minimise the impact of traffic. Highway design in new developments should minimise visual impact and encourage highways safety. Schemes should aim to provide an attractive and safe environment which encourages transport by means other than the private car and which supports pedestrians and cyclists. Against this background, the following design principles will be encouraged wherever possible.	This comprises a number of elements. The first matter is not a design one but reflects Core Strategy policy SS4 and might be covered by a similar policy in the NDP. The second part covers highways development management and should be consistent with Herefordshire Council's Design Guide for New Development. The third duplicates sustainable/active travel measures. All three might form policies within the NDP	Include principles within one or more NDP policies on highway matters or sustainable design.
3.6.2	Schemes should take account of the existing character of the road and traffic flow and not over-specify, to avoid encouraging speed increases.	This is a highways development management criterion and any design guidance should be consistent with Herefordshire Council's Design Guide for New Development.	Include appropriate principles within a NDP policy on highway matters
3.6.3	Interventions should be minimised and materials and colours used which are sympathetic to the landscape. Landscaping should include locally characteristic natural vegetation to enhance and soften new road schemes. Road surfacing should use local stone. Yellow road markings should be narrow and colour No.310 (primrose) should be used. New barriers and safety fences should only be erected where there is a proven need and timber clad barriers should be used whenever possible.	Most of these matters relate to highways which are outside of the scope of the planning system. Landscape matters should be covered within a landscape policy where this is appropriate. Road surfacing and barriers need to be appropriate for the location and purpose. Road markings are not a planning matter although the approach suggested may be encouraged in certain locations, in particular within conservation areas.	Consider whether the issues might to covered in various NDP policies.
3.6.4	Signage should be minimised. 'Flag signs' should be used to indicate side roads. Traditional finger posts and milestones should be retained wherever possible. Signs and poles should be sited against a backdrop of hedges or trees to avoid breaking the skyline and be painted in appropriate colours to blend into the landscape and	The types of signs referred to appear to be highway signs provided by the Highway Authority and do not generally fall to be considered as part of any planning application and would be outside of the scope of an NDP. Within Ledbury Conservation Area, the specific duty to preserve or enhance would apply	This matter should be discussed through any liaison mechanism that may be available to the Town Council so that an approach

	street scene. Backboards should not be used unless it is demonstrated they are essential.		might be agreed that addresses this matter.
3.6.5	Public lighting should be limited to footway lighting, be white in colour and fully cut off to avoid light pollution. The use of bollards should be avoided.	This is a highway matter outside of planning control and is associated with safety. Guidance for developers is provided within Herefordshire Council's Design Guide for New Development. This includes reference to the approaches being taken within the countryside and conservation areas. It is understood that Herefordshire Council has replaced all its lights with low energy bulbs as a conservation matter.	The matter should be addressed through reference to Herefordshire Council's Design Guide for New Development
<b>CONSULTATION</b>			
LDG4.1	<b>Developers wishing to submit applications for new residential developments larger than 10 dwellings and commercial developments larger than 500 square metres are encouraged to:</b>	Herefordshire Council has an adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) that sets out consultation duties in relation to planning applications (and other planning matters). The approach is based upon agreeing methods and timetables with groups and individuals who should be involved.	Developers should be referred to HC's Statement of Community Involvement
4.1.1	Make contact with Ledbury Town Council and provide details of the proposed site and the nature of the development and, if requested, attend a meeting to discuss the application prior to submitting the consultation.	The Town Council might set out its initial thoughts on the most appropriate approach developers should take in relation to consultation with it. It can encourage such an approach, but this cannot be expressed as a planning policy or a specific requirement. The Town Council should be open to discussion about a range of possible approaches.	Approaches to consultation with the Town Council and local community might be made in a section on Implementation and Monitoring within the NDP.
4.1.2	Undertake a minimum of 2 community consultations prior to a planning application being submitted. The first would be a session before any designs have been developed to gauge local opinion and gather information	The Town Council should be open to discussion about a range of possible approaches and these might	A statement in the NDP might set out its willingness to discuss

	from the community in order to inform the design process. This would be followed by a consultation prior to the application to enable feedback on the design being submitted and how it reflects and responds to community concerns. Additional consultations between these should be considered if appropriate to the feedback and to refine proposals.	usefully be based upon Herefordshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement.	consultation approaches.
4.1.3	Consultation sessions should be advertised in the local media, be advertised on town notice boards and details provided on the Town Council website. Advertisements should be made at least 2 weeks prior to consultation sessions taking place.	Publicity for consultation arrangements with the town council and community beyond those in the SCI might be encouraged but this cannot be expressed as a planning policy.	A statement in the NDP might set out its willingness to discuss consultation approaches.
4.1.4	If requested by the Ledbury Town Council, prior to final planning application, present the proposals prior to a planning application being submitted.	Developers could be advised that, for certain developments, the Town Council would be willing to receive a presentation, although the Town Clerk's advice upon how this would fit into public speaking at Council meetings would be affected and whether provision would also need to be made for opponents/other parties to speak.	A statement in the NDP might set out its willingness to discuss consultation approaches.
LDG4.2	<b>It would be desired that development applications that fall within the criteria set out on LDG 4.1 demonstrate in the Design and Access Statement:</b>	The SCI includes the submission of a statement on any consultation exercise as a duty on developers. This would be separate to a Design and Access Statement.	Reference should be made to the duties on consultation included within Herefordshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement
4.2.1	How the criteria set out in LDG 4.1 have been achieved.	The Community Consultation Statement might usefully contain information about the approach taken to those elements listed under LDG4.1	Reference should be made to the duties on consultation included within Herefordshire

			Council's Statement of Community Involvement
4.2.2	The number of people that have attended or responded to each consultation session.	The Community Consultation Statement might usefully contain this information	As above
4.2.3	What information was presented at each consultation session and the feedback received. All relevant feedback should be included (it is understood that not all concerns can be met).	The Community Consultation Statement might usefully contain this information	As above
4.2.4	How the proposals were developed at each stage to integrate feedback received at consultations and if relevant set out the reasons for not being able to integrate feedback into the designs.	The Community Consultation Statement might usefully contain this information	As above
LDG4.3	<b>In order to prove their design quality, new developments will be supported if:</b>	Preamble	N/A
4.3.1	They have been presented and developed with MADE or an appropriate similar body through their design review process.	Design Review is a useful tool, especially for major developments and important developments within Ledbury Conservation Area. MADE has recently combined with a neighbouring organisation to form Design Midlands Services. A fee is involved for its services. There is also a Design Review Panel run by the Design Council and Historic England also utilise design reviews. These are most often used for major schemes. Developers can be encouraged to use such panels, but it cannot be a requirement. Where it is felt that the scale of development and design is so important, Herefordshire Council should be asked to confirm whether it has sufficient design resource to	A statement encouraging the use of design review in appropriate circumstances might be included in association with a NDP Design policy.

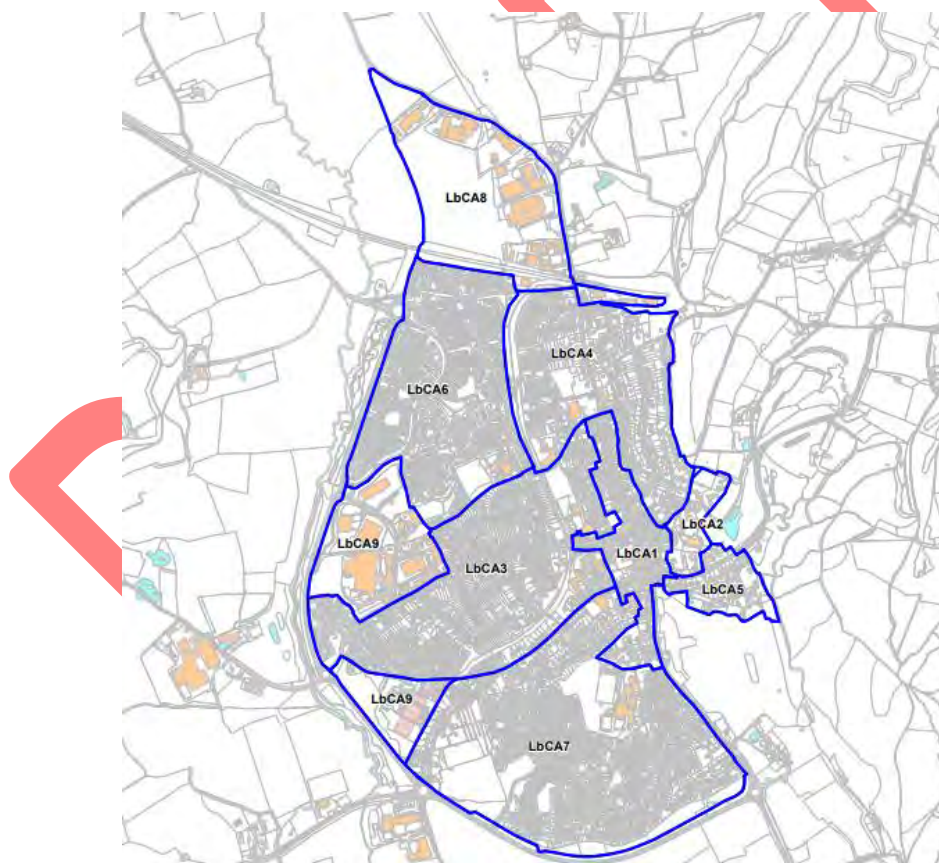
		consider a particular proposal without seeking external assistance.	
<b>DESIGNED FOR LIFE</b>			
LDG5.1	<b>It is desired that all applications for all new residential developments would:</b>	Preamble	N/A
5.1.1	Achieve Lifetime Homes Standard. If this is not possible, as a result of significant site constraints for example, then reasons for non-compliance should be set out in the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application.	Most of the provisions in this standard relate to internal standards and arrangements and these cannot currently be determined through planning applications. Part M of the <u>Building Regulations</u> includes requirements aimed in a similar direction to the Lifetime Homes Standards, but generally not going quite as far. Reference might be made to encouraging achieving these standards, but it cannot be a planning policy requirement.	Possibly include support for this standard in a supporting statement to a housing design policy should it be envisaged that further housing is to be promoted.
LDG5.2	<b>Applications for all new residential developments which integrate the following will be supported:</b>	Preamble	N/A
5.2.1	Dwellings within the development that provide accommodation for elderly and/or disabled persons linked to other house types.	Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policy H3 covers this issue. Although it seeks a range of accommodation to ensure a balanced community it contains specific reference to sites of 50 or more being dwellings expected to provide for elderly people and people with additional needs. It also refers to housing for single young people. That policy also points to considering the latest Local Housing Market Assessment that provides evidence of the need for an appropriate mix and range of housing types and sizes.	Should the NDP contain any sites of sufficient size within its revision, specify the types and range of housing to meet local needs in a specific NDP policy.
5.2.2	A mix of housing densities across large sites in particular, to avoid monotonous development layouts.	This is a design issue for larger housing sites.	As above.

5.2.3	Dwellings of a suitable size and cost to allow local people to reside within Ledbury and to support first time buyers.	Core Strategy policy HF seeks a range of housing types including for single young people. That policy also points to considering the latest Local Housing Market Assessment that provides evidence of the need for an appropriate mix and range of housing types and sizes. This would include house sizes and affordable housing, which includes intermediate housing, of which forms of low-cost home ownership forms part.	As above.
5.2.4	Dwellings or groups of dwellings for elderly persons within residential developments.	Duplicates 5.2.1	As above.

## APPENDIX 2: Design Influences for Ledbury Character Areas

The following characteristics and features have been identified for various areas within the built-up area of Ledbury which should be used to inform the design and/or appearance of new development within them, including alterations and extensions. The areas comprise those defined in Ledbury Rapid Townscape Assessment<sup>25</sup> and the characteristics distilled mainly from that document, with some limited additions where these relate to matters from the previous Ledbury Design Guide that are considered useful.

Changes to details such as doors and windows, the creation of parking forecourts and alterations to boundary features can erode local character. However, within residential streets outside of Ledbury Conservation Area a balance should be drawn between the importance of maintaining local distinctiveness and enabling residents to achieve their ambitions in terms of new dwellings or alterations and extensions to existing properties that meet their aspirations in terms of improvements. In these areas the aim should be to reflect the scale of development and to incorporate some locally distinctive features found within **the particular residential streets so that the neighbourhood's identity is maintained or reinforced through an appropriate degree of coherence in terms of design.**



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Map showing Ledbury Rapid Townscape Assessment Character Areas (Source Herefordshire Council)

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1687/ledbury-rapid-townscape-assessment>

## Ledbury Historic/Commercial Core Character Area (Reference LbCA1)

- This forms part of the central commercial and historic area of Ledbury and also the core of the Conservation Area where there is a requirement to preserve or enhance its character and/or appearance.
- The character area should continue to maintain a strong sense of place informed by its history, medieval plan-form, and historic buildings.
- Townscape density is high and street frontages are generally continuous. Most buildings are of two or three storeys. Building frontages are generally regular in width, based on historic burgage plots, except where plots have been amalgamated to accommodate banks and inns.
- The burgage plot frontages should maintain a regularity of scale with a variety of architectural designs and materials based upon locally distinctive precedent (e.g., timber framed buildings; Georgian brick or rendered facades), and including roofscape features (e.g., gables; parapets; pediments).
- The commercial character of this town centre and commercial area should be enhanced by reflecting traditional shopfronts (both in terms of scale and detailed design) and signage.
- **The form, scale, features and nature of buildings within the area's streets is** important and change should be informed by a thorough and detailed analysis of any site and its surroundings through Historic Impact Assessments where appropriate.
- The design and appearance of shop fronts, including signage, should reflect the character of the building within which they sit and shop keepers encouraged to maintain attractive displays.
- The following street characteristics are considered relevant considerations:

High Street: The medieval wedge-shaped marketplace dominates the character of High Street with its 17th Century timber-framed Market Hall. Townscape density is high and street frontages are generally continuous. Most buildings are of two or three storeys, with a concentration of three-storey buildings on the east side set at the rear of the footway. The mix of buildings include those with timber-framing and jettied (oversailing) upper floors and buildings that have been re-fronted in brick or render and fitted with sash windows, shopfronts and parapets. The west side of High Street displays greater irregularity. Private alleyways giving access to the rear are important. The visual amalgamation of frontages should be avoided. Building frontages are generally regular in width, based on historic burgage plots, except where plots have been amalgamated to accommodate banks and inns. Some rendered frontages have inserted shopfronts concealing timber frames, indicated by jettied upper stories. On the west side the 19<sup>th</sup> Century two-storey and stone **St Katherine's Hospital, 14th Century sandstone rubble St Katherine's Hall; and the 15th Century timber-framed Master's House form an important group** that should be protected, including their settings. Although tree planting within and walling surrounding the adjacent car park offers some mitigation to the effect on their settings, further enhancement would benefit the townscape.

Church Lane: should maintain its cobbled pedestrian form and sense of enclosure through the combination of timbered framed and red brick mostly two-storey buildings. Detail is important through reflecting locally distinctive features such as jettied upper floors, occasional colour washed frontages, and fenestration, among other elements.

Church Street: built-form comprises mostly three storey buildings on the north-side and two storey on the south. Its narrow width again heightens the sense of

enclosure which should be retained. The buildings are mostly red brick with some roughcast. The footway is cobbled. Detailing is again important as in Church Lane.

Bye Street: the eastern part of the street is quite narrow, reflecting the historic sense of enclosure close to the main street. The street becomes wider as you travel westwards. In places the historic townscape has been replaced by post 1950s commercial or civic buildings, a number of which are set back further than surviving older buildings. Although brick is the predominant material, the age, scale and architectural style varies along the street as do the range of uses, including shops and similar commercial buildings, fire station, ambulance station, and youth centre. Although consistency with the central areas historic form reduces as you travel westwards, the potential to strengthen this link should be taken where opportunities arise. There are gaps in the street frontage. A number of forecourts and parking areas present incongruous features.

The Homend: has a long slightly curving nature of the street with a continuous frontage comprising mainly three-storey buildings closer to the town centre with two storey buildings beyond. Commercial uses predominate for most of its length although the north end of the street is primarily residential. It exhibits a variety in terms of architectural form and roofscape. There are a number of timber-framed buildings, some of which are concealed behind later frontages. Timber-framing is an important element within the central core with variations including stucco, jettied upper floors, inserted 19th Century shopfronts, roughcast, exposed medieval cruck-trusses, symmetrical Georgian houses with individual design features, and terraces of plain houses, the latter generally located at the north end of the character area. There are some nineteenth Century Victorian red brick buildings the most prominent of which is the Barratt Browning Institute. Alleyways and carriageways give access to the rear of premises, and in some cases to shops and other commercial premises in refurbished buildings behind the main frontage. As one of the most visible parts of the town centre and Conservation Area, it is essential that any change should reflect its particular characteristics.

The Southend: is dominated by timber-framed buildings at the Lower Cross. On the south east side of the junction is Ledbury Park, the largest and very prominent timber framed building in Ledbury. As you travel southwards Ledbury Park gardens is then enclosed by a prominent high brick wall which reduces in scale to include railings above a lower wall further to the south. This is a strong component of the **Conservation Area's character in this location. Beyond a limited number of firstly** timber framed then brick painted or stucco commercial buildings close to Lower Cross on the west side of Southend, the buildings present a residential character built mainly in red brick on the rear of the footway, initially as three-storey town houses then reducing to a combination of 2 and 3 storey buildings. The southern end of the Conservation Area and this character area is punctuated on the west side by an imposing three storey property, a green gap and then a strongly contrasting small **single storey 'dormer' Toll Cottage, whose exceptional and idiosyncratic appearance** is added to by a gothic style arched doorway. On the east side, the end of the Ledbury Park wall and Conservation Area are similarly punctuation by the three storey Bowling Green Cottage. There should be no change to the separate characters presented for the two sides of this street.

New Street: New Street extends westwards from the Lower Cross. It is narrow at the east end, becoming wider further west. The townscape scale is less regular than elsewhere in the character area, with the exception of Bye Street although the street

frontage is continuous at the east end with gaps further to the west to allow access to the rear of properties. Buildings are of two and three storeys. There is a strong sense of enclosure at the east end where the street narrows and the first floor of a timber-framed building extends over the footway supported by wooden posts, and where the jettied upper floors of several timber-framed buildings (now faced with roughcast) oversail the footway. A mixture of timber frame, white painted brick, stucco and red brick intermingle although lighter colours predominate to reduce the feeling of enclosure. The street is primarily commercial, and enhancement would be through removing the 19th or 20th Century shopfronts.

**Worcester Road:** This extends eastwards from the Lower Cross. The north side is lined by a very regular stuccoed or painted brick frontage of symmetrical 18th Century two storey houses set at the rear of a narrow footway. Common features include prominent doorcases with pediments, and sash windows. Some variation is introduced in the form of several shallow bay windows, several early 20th Century shop windows, and a carriage entrance. The street is primarily residential and should remain so.

#### Ecclesiastical Precinct Character Area (Reference LbCA2)

- This character area also forms part of Ledbury Conservation Area where character and appearance should be preserved or enhanced.
- The Parish Church of St Michael and All Angels Church sitting within a high walled churchyard of red brick and sandstone rubble dominates this space and provides a quiet green space.
- Lanes enclosed by high walls give access to the churchyard from the south and from the north.
- A dispersed arrangement of large dwellings sit in generous plots as an associated feature surrounding the churchyard on three sides.
- A heavily landscaped park sits just outside its fourth and eastern side.
- A Walled Garden, a landscaped public garden enclosed by a high redbrick wall, sits at the eastern end of Church Street and Church Road and is also a quiet sanctuary close to the town centre.
- The townscape density is low although many of the buildings have large footprints. Most buildings are of two storeys, several with wings of one storey.
- Mature planting of trees and hedgerows play a number of roles including screening and softening the effects development.
- There is little opportunity for further development without the loss of these particular distinctive features.

#### Central-West Civic/Residential Character Area (Reference LbCA3)

- The area is characterised by a mixture of high density planned residential development both public sector and private, beginning in the mid-19th Century and continuing into the 21st Century.
- The area is generally fine-grained and of high density,
- The large green space comprising the public recreation ground and playground south of Orchard Lane is supported by a smaller public green space and playground at Childer Road and Lower Road, and these are important amenities.
- The Ledbury Town Trail is a green corridor extending through the character area from north to south.
- Important views include looking northeast along New Street where the spire of St Michael and All Angels Church towers above the roofscape; looking east from upper

Bridge Street to views of the wooded slopes of Coneygree Wood; and looking west there are more distant views of wooded hills.

- Much of the development in the area is of a standard and repetitive urban estate form and character. Locally distinctive character and features found within the particular residential streets include:

Bridge Street/Lower Road: Houses are set back behind gardens upon this long curving road, and distant views of Wall Hills together with a sense of openness are maintained. The east end is characterised by two-storey brick terraces with pitched slate roofs, set on narrow plots with front gardens and brick boundary walls. Further west the street is lined by standard designed two-storey semi-detached brick houses and short terraces on the west side, and rendered on the east side, with front gardens and hipped tile roofs. On the south side of Lower Road there are several terraces of two-storey brick houses with slate pitched roofs on narrow plots with front gardens. Infilling has taken place through detached houses and bungalows set further back from the road, again utilising brick or render and tiled roofs. Local features include stone lintels, original boundary walls and piers, some timber-framing, painted frontages and porches.

New Street is lined by large detached two-storey brick houses that formerly occupied generous plots with front gardens. Most plots have been sub-divided to accommodate recently-built houses, some of which are set further back. There are areas where density varies including smaller plots with narrow forecourts and some set directly at the back of the footway. At the east end there are several terraces of two and three storey brick houses, although some have rendered frontages. Features include slate roofs, sash windows, bay windows, and hooded doorcases, staggered frontages, and some curved frontages all of which add interest to the streetscape.

Belle Orchard comprises a linear plan. Houses are of two storeys constructed of a mixture red and yellow brick with slate roofs, and some stone dressings, bay windows, and false timber-framing. On the south side of the street most houses are detached; on the north side most are semi-detached or short terraces. There is a range of plot sizes and features include small front gardens, shrubs, hedges and redbrick boundary walls. Woodleigh Road comprises plain two-storey brick houses, semi-detached and short terraces, with slate roofs, some with stone lintels or bay windows. They are set on narrow plots with small front gardens enclosed by brick walls. There are some later built houses and bungalows of brick or render, occupying larger plots. Most are set back further from the street behind front gardens.

Victoria Road and Albert Road are characterised by two-storey semi-detached plain brick houses and short terraces with slate roofs. They are set on narrow plots with small front gardens set directly onto the street. Later developments in this area include some larger detached houses set back further from the street in larger plots and several terraces of small two-storey brick houses on much smaller plots set perpendicular to the street.

**The Queen's Way** area comprises an estate of two-storey semi-detached houses and short terraces of plain brick with hipped tile roofs, with front gardens enclosed by wire and wooden fences and hedges. Occasional grass verges soften the townscape to a limited extent. A later development consists of rendered dwellings, again with hipped tiled roofs but also with door hoods, and some with advanced gables at the front elevation.

Belle Orchard Close and Lawnside Road are characterised by a number of housing types. Short terraces of two-storey brick houses and bungalows, and some two and three storey blocks of flats. Other elements include a small green space, some landscaped grounds, lock-up garages and off-street parking.

Churchill Meadow comprises detached and semi-detached brick with tiled roof bungalows, open front gardens and parking. Childer Road is a cul-de-sac development of brick-built semi-detached houses and short terraces on narrow plots with open front gardens, parking and a landscaped green space with playground. At Market Street there is a short terrace of two-storey brick houses on very small plots. Staggered frontages, dormer windows, stone dressings, door hoods and small paved open forecourts with plantings add interest to the streetscape. Several retirement or sheltered housing projects on cul-de-sacs have been undertaken on backland sites, including Harling Court off New Street, Queens Court off Bridge Street, and Woodleigh Close off Woodleigh Street.

Lawnside Road and Market Street area contains several civic and utilities buildings, generally brick-clad modular frame buildings of one or more storeys. Most of these buildings have adjacent surface parking areas, including a public car park off Lawnside Road.

- Development should especially try to avoid eroding the 19<sup>th</sup> Century character through significant changes which has occurred through unsympathetic development or alterations.

#### North-East Residential Character Area (Reference LbCA4)

- The character area includes a wide range of residential developments dating from the 17th Century although much is of mid to late 20th Century date, with its contemporary form, materials and construction methods. Of particular note are parts of The Homend, an area of large 18th Century houses and Victorian villas on generous plots with mature gardens and trees enclosed by hedges and brick walls. **Part of Homend Crescent a "homes fit for heroes" 1920s local authority housing** development, including crescent-shaped soft landscaping and extensive views across the Leaden valley.
- Much of the character area is of fairly high density. There is a small number of buildings with large footprints including a supermarket and three blocks of flats including sheltered housing.
- It contains evidence of historic modes of communication and transportation (canal and railway) which should be preserved as part of its character.
- Locally distinctive character and features within the parts of the character area include:

The Homend is characterised by large two-storey brick villas, detached and semi-detached, of 18th and 19th Century date, set on generous plots with front gardens and mature trees enclosed by hedges and brick or stone walls. Architectural forms include symmetrical plain-fronted Georgian houses with slate hipped or pitched roofs, prominent central doorcases with flat hoods and sash windows. Victorian houses range in style with slate or tile roofs, prominent gables, bay windows, polychrome brick dressings and false timber-framing. Several of these houses have been adapted to multiple occupancy or commercial use and front gardens have been lost to parking areas. Recent residential and commercial developments have eroded the suburban **"villa and garden" character of the area.**

Newbury Park, is laid out in a linear grid, mainly with detached and semi-detached two storey brick villas set on large plots with small front gardens enclosed by brick walls. Local details include dormer windows, bay windows, yellow brick dressings, balustrades and gables with false timber-framing. Variations include a short terrace and bungalows built on infill sites.

- The Langland area comprises two-storey detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows of brick with tile roofs with front gardens, many now parking hardstandings, and enclosed by hedges. **Robinson's Mews** comprises short terraces of two-storey brick houses, with false timber framing. Several larger buildings are located on Orchard Lane. They include the symmetrical two-storey redbrick former workhouse; a residential home of three to five storeys, with balconies; and a single storey supermarket with a large surface car park at the front.

The area east of The Homend is residential. Knapp Lane is a narrow road with detached houses and bungalows on large plots where the lack of footways give the area a semi-rural character. On the north side are post 1950s private two-storey brick houses and bungalows in cul-de-sacs. Further north, Masefield Avenue consists of two-storey brick semi-detached houses and short terraces with small open gardens and parking.

Homend Terrace is a narrow road without footways developed on a piecemeal basis. On the east side are two groups of rendered houses consisting of two-storey semi-detached and short terraces with gables at the front elevation and flat door hoods, each group set behind a crescent shaped grass verge with footpath. Further south on the east side are some two-storey brick or painted brick detached houses. On the west are two-storey houses and bungalows, of various architectural styles, periods and massing, set directly on the street or behind small front gardens in the backland of medieval burgage plots. At the southern end of Homend Crescent are brick-built bungalows. Upperfields delineates the eastern boundary of the character area along the edge of Dog Hill Wood with several two-storey detached brick houses. This former rural lane has recently been subjected to suburbanisation.

Much of Bank Crescent is lined by detached houses and bungalows of 1920s design brick and render design with bay windows. House plots are large and front gardens on the east side. Private garages on both sides of the street are set prominently at the rear of the footway. At its the southern end are a number of large two-storey detached and semi-detached brick houses. Other design elements include render, gables with false timber-framing, bay windows and stone dressings. Most are set on large plots enclosed by brick walls or hedges.

Church Street, on the southern edge of the character area, is dominated by a large two-storey sheltered housing development of flats that present a plain brick façade to the street. Further east, retirement housing on a cul-de-sac consists of several terraces of brick two-storey houses with prominent dormer windows set on small plots.

- Important green spaces include the green corridor associated with Ledbury Town Trail; the bowling green at Bank Crescent; and a green space surrounded by trees at the rear of The Knapp. Several smaller green spaces contribute to the character of residential areas including two crescent-shaped green spaces associated with 1920s local authority housing at Homend Crescent.

## Worcester Road Civic/Residential Character Area (Reference LbCA5)

- The area is suburban in character comprising residential and civic developments including detached two-storey houses and bungalows with large plots on cul-de-sacs. Limited variations comprise both larger properties and two short rows of terraces. Much of the area is of moderate density and fairly fine grained.
- The developments reflect national trends in terms of design, materials and plan-form including a variety of brick with render and hung-tiles, and with front gardens, open or enclosed by hedges, shrubs or stone walls.
- On the north side of Worcester Road, **the magistrates' court and police station is** an institutional, symmetrical neo-Georgian building of two storeys in brick with hipped tile roof and prominent central entry. It is the only building with a large footprint. It has surface parking and limited soft landscaping.
- There are no publicly accessible green spaces in the character area. A small area of woodland in the south-east is part of the Ledbury Park estate.
- There is little potential for further residential development in the character area. **Encroachment of the Bishop of Hereford's medieval deer park by residential development should not be permitted.**

## New Mills Residential Character Area (Reference LbCA6)

- The area is characterised by intensive late 20th Century private residential development on cul-de-sacs linked by a sinuous access road screened by trees. Footpaths and cycle tracks, a number of which run through green corridors, link residential neighbourhoods. Plot sizes and architectural details are variable and housing density is high.
- Locally distinctive character and features within the parts of the character area include:

New Mills Way is a long sinuous access road, with traffic-calming measures, linking six groups of residential cul-de-sacs screened by trees. Footpaths and cycle tracks, a number of which run through green corridors, also ensure permeability between residential neighbourhoods. Plot sizes range from fairly large to small and narrow; a significant percentage are very narrow. House types include large detached two-storey houses, smaller semi-detached houses, short rows, and bungalows. Most are of brick or roughcast under tile roofs, some with dormer windows. Decorative details include brick or stone dressings, false timber-framing and bargeboards. Front gardens are open and usually small with some soft landscaping, including lawns and shrubs, and paved hardstanding.

Saxon Way is characterised by detached two-storey houses, in some cases with dormer windows and false timber-framing. Front gardens are open with lawns and shrubs, and hard-standing parking. The plan form is of cul-de-sacs with generally large or adequate house plots.

Ledbury Primary School is a modern, modular-framed one- and two-storey building with brick cladding and glazing and a hipped roof, occupying a large site with ancillary buildings, car park, playground and playing field surrounded by trees.

- Throughout the area there are several small communal green spaces, play areas and green corridors. Trees, green spaces, green corridors and road-side verges are an important local amenity in screening and softening the built environment as well as providing recreational opportunities.

- Adjacent to the character area, and linked by footpaths and cycle trails, are the Ledbury Trail; the Riverside Park; Ledbury Bypass - Leadon Way; and the Hereford-Ledbury railway line.

#### Deer Park Residential Character Area (Reference LbCA7)

- Residential development on cul-de-sacs linked by several sinuous access roads. Footpaths also link residential neighbourhoods.
- Plot sizes are small or very narrow.
- Architectural details are minimal with little variety in house design.
- Housing density is high and development fine-grained, particularly in the central area of smaller terraced houses on narrow plots. The secondary school building, a supermarket and a large block of flats occupy large footprints. A block of flats, off New Street, at three storeys, is also the tallest building in the character area.
- Biddulph Way comprises mainly of two-storey detached houses and bungalows of brick with hung tile or wooden cladding and tile roofs. They have open front gardens, lawns and hardstandings. In the central area there are smaller brick houses and flats, in short terraces of two storeys on small or very small plots with open paved forecourts, limited soft landscaped areas and some off-street parking areas.
- Oakland Drive and Elmsdale Road are long access roads with short cul-de-sacs. Dwellings comprise brick bungalows and two-storey semi-detached houses and short terraces with front gardens, open or enclosed by hedges or walls, many with parking.
- **Mabel's Furlong Lane** is made up of two-storey semi-detached houses of plain brick, short rows and bungalows with front gardens generally enclosed by hedges or fences. Within this area John Masefield High School consists of a group of large linked buildings with several smaller ancillary buildings. The main buildings are of modular frame construction and brick. The school occupies a large site with sports field, games courts and surface car parks.
- New Street is an area of a mixed townscape more variable in terms of building age, architectural design, function, massing and set-back from the street. Dwellings comprise detached brick houses on large plots, some with mature gardens, hedges and mature trees. Two short cul-de-sacs sit off this with short rows of smaller homes on narrow plots. Other uses include a modern brick and glazed church, a supermarket, and several large blocks of flats. Set-back distance from the street, building height and roofscape are variable.
- Open green spaces in the character area include a large sports ground, with adjacent football field (north side), recreational space and playground (east side) and open area, located in the western part of the character area; the school sports field; a lineal green space extending along the southern edge of the character area between the Leadon Way by-pass and the residential area; several smaller neighbourhood green spaces in the Biddulph Way area.

#### North Ledbury Trading/Industrial Estates (Reference LbCA8)

- The area is characterised by modular frame buildings with low profiles and large footprints, and adjacent surface parking and storage areas. The western part is open agricultural land.
- The industrial and commercial facilities are of similar character to those of any other late 20th Century trading estate.
- Cladding materials include steel and brick; roofs are generally shallow-pitched or flat.
- Most large buildings are adjacent to surface parking and storage areas.

- Surviving railway infrastructure, including the brick arched viaduct that crosses the Leadon Valley, embankment and bridge, Station House and the decorative brick retaining wall at the station approach road, are a reminder of the history of Ledbury, and create a sense of place and an area of local interest. In addition, there is a small wooden prefabricated station and waiting room, a footbridge and a signal box.
- In the northwest, several groups of oak trees and other species are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order.

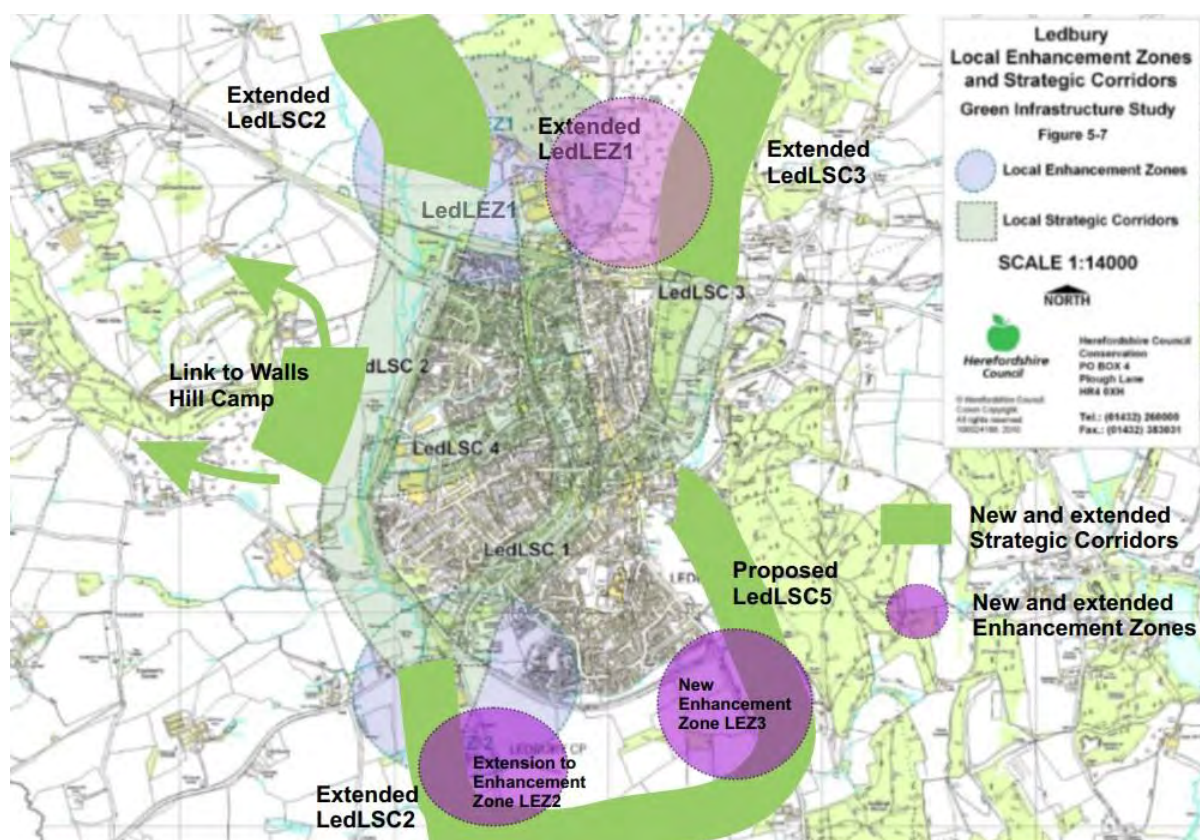
#### West Ledbury Trading/Industrial Estates (Reference LbCA9)

- The area occupies two sites either side of character area LbCA3. They are characterised by modular frame industrial buildings with a low profile and large footprint and adjacent surface parking and storage areas.
- Site activities and functions include a range of general and light industries, other commercial operations and, in the southern part, a sewage treatment works with extensive water treatment ponds and a household waste site is adjacent.
- Cladding materials include steel and brick, roofs are generally shallow-pitched or flat.
- Soft landscaping includes embankments and plantings. Both parts contain areas previously protected as green space in the Hereford Unitary Development Plan and they are liable to flooding, and part of one was also previously a landfill site.

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## APPENDIX 4: Green Infrastructure Objectives.

The following Objectives have been set for each of the Local Strategic Corridors and Enhancement zones and these should inform development proposals that may fall within them. Map X below shows these Corridors and Enhancement Zones.



### Local Strategic Corridor 1 (LedLSC1) Objectives

- Retain the level of green infrastructure and enhance it where opportunities present themselves, including in association with open spaces that lie within or just outside the corridor.
- Encourage appropriate tree, shrub and other garden planting for wildlife.
- Seek replacement of and green space lost to at least equal wildlife and residential amenity value.
- Reinstate the protection offered to areas of woodland and other green space that was shown as such in the former Herefordshire UDP.

### Local Strategic Corridor 2 (LedLSC2) Objectives

- Retain the ecological qualities of the water environment, linear bankside wet woodland and the transition to grassland, as appropriate.
- Create and enhance wet grassland and wet woodland habitats along the corridor.
- Include measures to improve water quality and support climate change mitigation by retaining good quality soils and utilising spare land for tree planting (including wet woodland), where this would reflect the character with the landscape.
- Utilise opportunities in areas ancillary to sporting and employment uses south of little Marcle Road to support landscape character and wildlife, and also for carbon offsetting.

- Extend the riverside walk further to the north and south exist along the protected line for the Hereford and Gloucester Canal including the potential for a cycle route **along what might be considered the canal's towpath** to link with other parts of the network in those directions.
- Between Walls Hill Camp with its surrounding ancient woodland and the riverbank, **maintain and enhance the 'estate' character with large fields and hedgerow trees,** hedgerows and grassland.

#### Local Strategic Corridor 3 (LedLSC3) Objectives

- Maintain and enhance the extent and condition of the woodland together with community access.
- At the northern end in particular, enhance the areas of rich habitat and heritage comprising woodland and parkland and the connection to the traditional orchards and grasslands that lie further to the west.

#### Local Strategic Corridor 4 (LedLSC4) Objectives

- Maintain and strengthen areas providing wildlife stepping-stones, pocket parks and larger spaces, as well as the relatively substantial planting that softens the urban environment and helps to absorb carbon and other pollutants.

#### Local Strategic Corridor 5 (LedLSC5) Objectives

- To improve the ecological network by strengthening the elements within the corridor that characterise its transition role from lower hillside slopes through to parkland, then to estate-lands and finally river valley.
- In its eastern compartment, to maintain the diversity of elements comprising a mosaic of habitats; including a number of historic land enclosures, ancient and veteran trees, woodlands and dense hedgerows, and has a parkland character.
- To the south, to utilise opportunities to enhance the network of hedgerows, **hedgerow trees and grasslands, although maintaining the 'estate' character** comprising large fields with small pockets of woodland planting.
- At the western end of the corridor around the connection with the River Leadon, wet grassland and woodland habitat creation and enhancement are needed.
- Increase accessibility, including links to the riverside walk along the River Leadon and to Parkway, especially those that provide views towards the Malvern Hill.

#### Local Enhancement Zone 1 (LedLEZ1) Objectives

- Support the restoration of the canal to develop a continuous linear aquatic habitat, accompanied by pedestrian and non-motorised vehicular access, especially cycling.
- Protect and expand wet grassland areas and associated features particularly streams, ditches and ponds.
- Restore and replant traditional orchards, predominantly to the east of the zone.
- Create new paths and access to improve the existing network of public rights of way between the town and open countryside, particularly from the town trail and **riverside park towards the town's northern allotments and Wellington Heath.**
- Soften the transition from built form to open countryside through the introduction of new linear woodland, orchards and hedgerows around any new development.
- To maintain **a green gap between Ledbury's built-up area and the settlement of Wellington Heath** that complements that included in Wellington Heath NDP.

### Local Enhancement Zone 2 (LedLEZ2) **Objectives**

- Enhancement through extending the riverside habitat created as part of the riverside park, to the south of the A449, particularly the creation of linear wet woodland.
- Reinstatement of the historic pattern of field boundaries through the planting of hedgerows, particularly to the south of the ring-road.
- Introduction of linear woodland planting along the southern side of the ring-road to mitigate the visual impact of the road and more recent residential development.
- Maintain and enhance the remaining small, informal recreational open spaces within the ring-road, compensating for those lost through development pressure on the western side of the bypass, and seeking improvements to pedestrian linkages to the centre of the settlement.

### Local Enhancement Zone 3 (LedLEZ3) **Objectives**

- Strengthen the buffer on the north side of Leadon Way, an important area of amenity open space.
- Maintain the open aspect on the higher ground on the south-west side of the Gloucester roundabout, through taking opportunities to integrate the area with the parkland aspect to the east through the introduction of characteristic landscape features.
- Create a new path and cycle-way between the town and Parkway along a green corridor.
- Strengthen the landscape character of the area between Ledbury Town and Parkway and maintaining it as a green gap similar to that to the north of the town.

**Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan  
2011-2031**

**1<sup>st</sup> Review**

**Topic Paper 2: Employment and  
Economy**

**March 2021**

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### Version Control

Date	Version	Tasks	Author
30/11/2020	V.1	Template produced identifying matters for discussion and further investigation	WB
18/02/2021	V.2	Update following a number of planning decisions that affect two sites.	WB
16/3/2021	V.3	Update following discussions with interested parties	WB

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# Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan –Employment and Economy

## **Purpose of this Report –**

*To review business and employment proposals within the first NDP and recommend changes that may be required as a consequence of needs arising since its adoption.*

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The current NDP contains 5 policies under this heading:

### Policy EE1.1 - New Employment Sites

*New employment sites (~~will~~ be supported. (\* remove bracket)*

*The regeneration, proportionate intensification or reassignment of previously developed brownfield land to employment land uses will be particularly supported.*

### Policy EE1.2 Protecting Existing Employment Land

*The change of use of employment land and premises to non-employment uses, for which planning permission is required, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that continued employment use is no longer economically viable, through the provision of evidence showing that the site or premises have been actively and openly marketed at the market value for the existing use/other suitable employment uses, for at least a 12 month period\*. (\*Add 'period')*

### Policy EE2.1 Promoting Visitor Accommodation

*Proposals which increase local hotel and visitor accommodation provision in the urban area will be supported, subject to respecting local character, residential amenity and highway safety.*

*Outside the urban area the re-use of existing buildings, that are structurally sound and capable of conversion without complete or substantial reconstruction and conversion, to self-catering tourism units will be supported.*

### Policy EE3.1 Retail Areas & Provision

*Map 14 overleaf defines the current primary and secondary shopping frontages for ground floor units.*

*To preserve the current character, the change of use of A1 (Shops,) A3 (Restaurants & Cafes) or A4 (Drinking Establishments) to other use classes in the primary shopping area will not be supported.*

*New A1, A3 and A4 provision will be supported within the primary and secondary shopping areas. New A2 (Financial & Professional Services) and A5 (Hot Food Takeaways) will not be supported within the primary shopping area but will be encouraged within the secondary shopping area.*

*New town centre development of this area will be expected to retain or enhance the existing provision of parking spaces.*

Policy NE3.1 Farming Landscape around Ledbury

*Proposals for agricultural development, requiring planning permission, for example, intensive farming units, poly tunnels not comprising permitted development or solar farms, should demonstrate how they will protect landscape character through provision of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.*

- 1.2 These complement elements of Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (the Core Strategy) policies which make provision for business.

Policy LB1: Development in Ledbury

Relevant elements in this policy are:

- *Provision of a minimum of 15 hectares of new employment land during the plan period.*
- *Of this, the strategic location for new employment of around 12 hectares is to be located to the west of the town, south of Little Marcle Road.*
- *New development proposals will be encouraged where they allow for suitable small-scale employment sites including live work opportunities within or adjoining the town.*
- *New development proposals will be encouraged where they maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the existing town centre.*
- *Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 400m<sup>2</sup> 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.*

Policy LB2 - Land north of the Viaduct

*Development proposals north of the viaduct in Ledbury will be expected to bring forward the following to achieve a sustainable mixed-use urban extension of the town (among other non-business elements):*

- *around 3 hectares of employment land, restricted to Use Class B1;*

- 1.3 The adopted NDP does not include any policy proposing employment land as a consequence of the deletion of Regulation 16 draft NDP policy EE1.3 by the NDP Examiner, who considered this duplicated the Core Strategy or related to land with planning permission. The areas concerned comprised the Core Strategy's strategic employment site to the south of Little Marcle Road (indicative area), an area adjacent to Orchard Business Park in accordance with the Core Strategy's requirement for 3 hectares of employment land to the north of the Viaduct (specific site area shown although only a general location was defined in the Core Strategy), and a plot on Lower Road Trading Estate that had planning permission. The NDP Examiner made a number of other modifications to assist the interpretation and utility of the employment policies.

NB the map references in the relevant paragraph within adopted plan are incorrect and should have read *'Maps 10, 11 and 12 show land .....'*. Further map referencing is also incorrect as a consequence.

- 1.4 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which preceded the Core Strategy, allocated 12.2 hectares of employment land to the north of the Viaduct together with safeguarding the line of a road to go along its western edge linking Ledbury bypass with the Bromyard Road. The Core Strategy changed these policies. Some 3 hectares of employment land is to remain in that area and it is understood that part of the strategic site to the south of Little Marcle Road is a replacement for most of the previous requirement with an additional amount to provide for the further growth within the new plan period. The overall 15 hectares is indicated to be a minimum. Relevant extracts from Herefordshire Core Strategy pertinent to the issue are provided in Appendix 1.
- 1.5 Herefordshire County Employment Land Study 2012 provides an analysis of employment provision and needs within Ledbury, produced to assist the preparation of the Core Strategy. It sets the objective for Ledbury as to regenerate the wider economy of the market town, in order to support its viability as a key service centre for the rural area by ensuring that it remains the focus for appropriate levels of new development. It identified two principal employment areas based at Bromyard Road Industrial Estate and the recently extended Lower Road Trading Estates. Local property advice indicated that there was good demand for industrial and warehouse premises in the Eastern Corridor area considering the current economic climate. The town continues to benefit from good access to the motorway network being 3 miles from Junction 2 of the M50 and its links to the M5. There was some interest to larger (regional, national and international) companies due to this proximity to the M50 motorway and accessibility to the wider highway network. At that time interest was being shown in future development opportunities and existing companies were expanding and choosing to relocate to sites and premises at Ledbury.
- 1.6 In terms of available employment sites, Ledbury had no 'best' sites identified with the Employment Land study 2012, with Lower Road Trading Estate, the Homend Trading Estate, Land north of the Railway Viaduct with planning permission and Bromyard Road ranked as 'good' sites, being some available in the immediate to short term and others in the medium term. The part of the land north of the railway viaduct without planning permission was classified as 'poor' being only available in the longer term. Notwithstanding that the Core Strategy reduces the amount of land proposed for employment to the north of the viaduct and replaces this elsewhere through a strategic allocation, this analysis is considered to remain valid for the plan period.
- 1.7 An assessment of potential employment sites was undertaken when the NDP was first prepared. Some 14 sites were assessed, and these have been reviewed (see Appendix 2).
- 1.8 Other policies within Herefordshire Core Strategy may also be relevant. Policy E4 promotes a range of tourism measures including protection of the route, infrastructure, buildings, towpath and features of the Hereford to Gloucester canal which passes to the immediate west of Ledbury's built-up area. Policies E5 and E6 cover development within town centres and the defining of primary and secondary shopping frontages, indicating that neighbourhood plans should review these. The current NDP defines such frontages indicating the uses that would be permitted

within them, although a map defining the town centre in the draft plan was removed following the public examination.

## **2. Employment Land**

- 2.1 The Core Strategy has a vision for Ledbury where growth is proposed, among others, to reduce the need to travel by private car and to facilitate the provision of new jobs to stem out-commuting. These elements of the vision are also reflected in those for Ledbury NDP. Strengthening these elements of sustainability should be a key component of the NDP review in the light of the climate emergency.
- 2.2 The NDP Examiner, in deleting policy E1.3, indicated that it did not comprise a land use policy but simply identified two areas previously identified for employment in the Core Strategy and another that had planning permission. However, the two areas identified in the Core Strategy were not site specific.
- 2.3 The review of the NDP provides the opportunity to determine whether it is possible to identify land to meet the strategic requirement for employment land to the south of Little Marcle Road. Herefordshire Core Strategy policy LB1 identifies a strategic employment location amounting to 12ha to the south of Little Marcle Road although is not site specific. Little Marcle Road would indicate the northern limit, and although there is evidence to suggest that land south of the current Heineken factory is the area envisaged, no southern limit is indicated in that policy (See Appendix 1).
- 2.4 An area of land to the south of both Little Marcle Road and the Ross Road has been granted planning permission for employment uses (building for indoor auctions and associated land) since the Core Strategy was adopted and this would contribute an estimated 1.75ha to the 12ha required to meet the strategic land requirement. Positive discussions with Heineken indicate that the company may be willing to release an area of undeveloped land to the south of its current factory which would amount to around 7.5ha provided associated arrangements did not affect its current operation. Options to deliver the residue of the strategic requirement are considered in Appendix 2 which reviews the site assessment work undertaken for the current NDP. In terms of land south of Little Marcle Road, suitable options appear to be to propose one large site to the south of the Heineken factory where sufficient land appears to be available. However, it is understood that an extension to the current playing fields is being investigated that might utilise some of this area. An alternative might be to provide most of the strategic requirement to the south of the Heineken factory with other smaller areas being proposed elsewhere to make up any shortfall. Some options appear to be available that might contribute towards any shortfall although availability will need to be determined.
- 2.5 A smaller area of around 3 hectares of employment land required to the north of the Viaduct through Core Strategy policy LB2 will come forward through a comprehensive development proposal now granted outline planning permission that also includes housing, open space, an extension to the town trail, drainage and facilitation of the canal that will pass through the area. The area proposed for employment within that development has a strong locational relationship with an adjacent existing employment area. Core Strategy policy LB2 contains an extensive list of requirements, including restricting the employment land to Use Class E (previously Use Class B1) because of its proximity to housing.

- 2.6 Currently NDP policy EE1.1 supports the use of brownfield land for employment uses. A more positive approach encouraging small scale employment on other than brownfield sites is promoted through Core Strategy policy LB1. Options that might be considered in the review of the NDP include setting out a general policy that might apply adjacent to the settlement boundary (which the Core Strategy already promotes) or the allocation of specific sites to be released for business uses. A proposal that might be considered has been advanced for land at Old Kennel Farm which was an area considered as part of the site assessment for the current NDP (See site 12, Appendix 2). This comprises a smaller site to that assessed and which might meet the concerns expressed upon the larger area. It also presents potential community benefits. The need to determine whether a suitable area might be developed in this location without adversely affecting the setting of Malvern Hills AONB has been recognised and an assessment is to be carried out.
- 2.7 Despite being only half-way through the Core Strategy plan period, the required level of housing growth within the town has exceeded that proposed in the Core Strategy without any of the proposed employment land being made available. The relationship between the requirement for employment land and housing growth is uncertain but is a consideration, especially to reduce out-commuting and mitigate the effects on climate change. Although this may be addressed within the review of the Core Strategy which is commencing, the pressure for development within the town to ensure sustainable levels of growth is immediate, particularly given no proposals have come forward to release the land to the south of Little Marcle Road. Issues that arise from this include:
- Whether there is a need to make additional employment land available and how much is required to meet the anticipated additional housing growth during the plan period?
  - To achieve sustainable development, should any further housing proposals be advanced by developers, would it be appropriate to require them to contribute towards the release of employment sites to address the effects arising from their development?
- 2.8 Ledbury is located upon the rail link that connects to the well-established science and research base at Malvern and its Science Park. The New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering (NMITE) will strengthen the midlands technology corridor that will stretch through to Hereford via Malvern. Technology and other forms of training are being promoted and Ledbury has the potential to benefit from its location along this corridor. Ledbury has potential to contribute towards making available space for employment and training associated with the strategy being promoted by the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership. In addition to reducing out-commuting, increasing employment within the technologies and engineering sector can assist in providing more local, better paid job opportunities which is a shared objective with the Core Strategy (its Objective 7).
- 2.9 Herefordshire Council's Economic Masterplan proposes to provide business incubation centres within each of its market towns, including Ledbury. These will contain flexible, affordable workspace, accompanied with a wraparound offer of meeting rooms, reception facilities, postal and ICT services. The rollout of this programme will be dictated by the provision and availability of suitably located and specified buildings. The key market towns will be prioritised, in particular where there is a shortage of business accommodation or where known demand exists. In conclusion, a more proactive approach to releasing land for employment should be advanced

through allocating a range of potential employment sites that would benefit local businesses and the wider economic strategy for the County and wider area.

- 2.10 There are a small number of typographical corrections that need to be made to policies and associated information, including to policies EE1.1, EE1.2. The Map reference on page 30 should be amended to 10, 11 and 12 not 11, 1,2 and 13, if these are retained.
- 2.11 Housing growth and its continued pressures have resulted in a need to bring forward employment land to match population growth so that Ledbury can achieve sustainable development. A flexible approach within the not inconsiderable environmental and community constraints needs to be considered in allocating land that would meet the town's needs.

### 3. Town Centre Issues

- 3.1 Core Strategy policy LB1 indicates (among others) that:

*Within Ledbury, new development proposals will be encouraged where they:*

- maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the existing town centre. Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 400m<sup>2</sup> 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.*

The supporting text to Core Strategy policy E5 (Town Centres) indicates that neighbourhood plans should review town centre boundaries. Although a town centre boundary was defined in the draft NDP, this was in the context of a policy on town centre housing that was removed following the NDP's Examination, and the map was deleted as a consequence. Defining a town centre boundary, however, is important to inform decisions about when an impact assessment is necessary within the context of Core Strategy policy LB1.

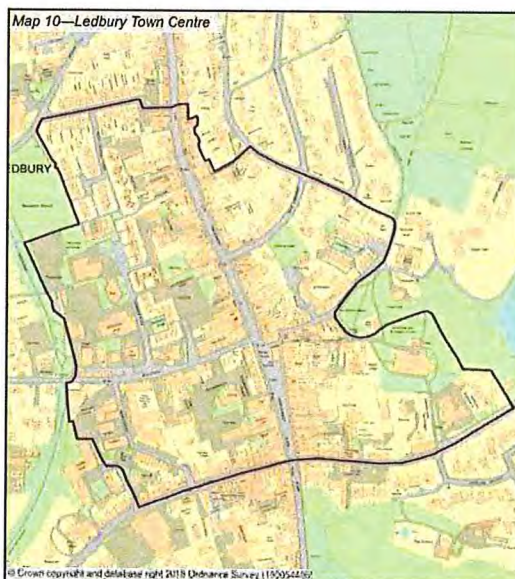


Figure 1: Map of previously defined town centre boundary

- 3.2 The former UDP defined a different town centre (Central Shopping and Commercial Area) boundary for the purposes of defining where a relevant shopping policy will apply.

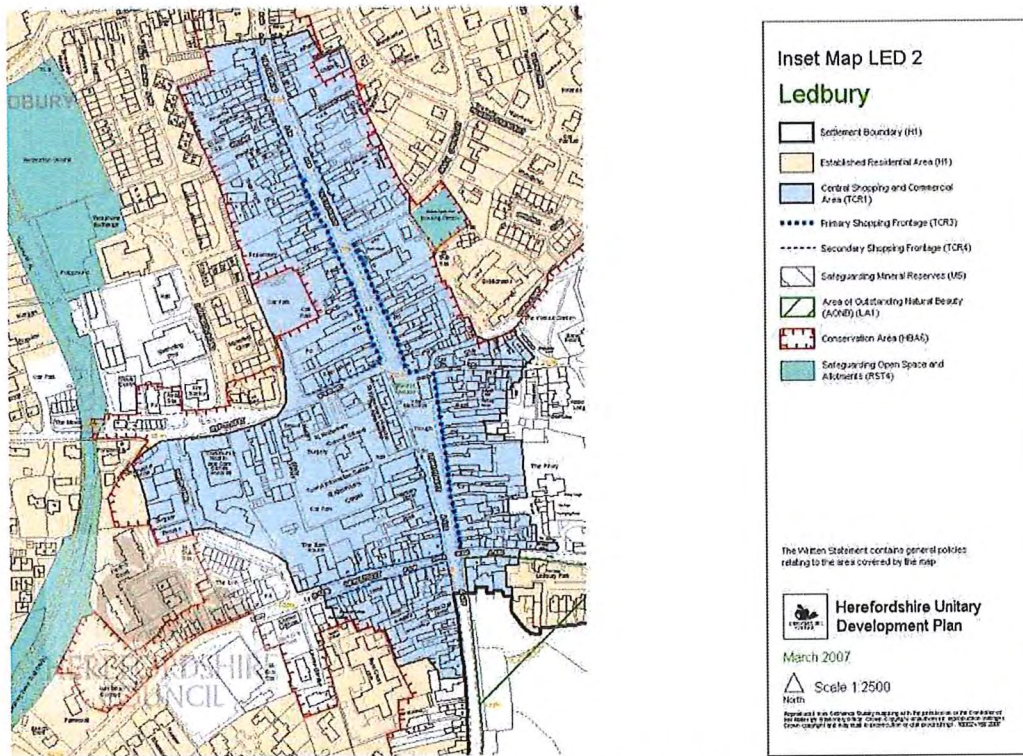


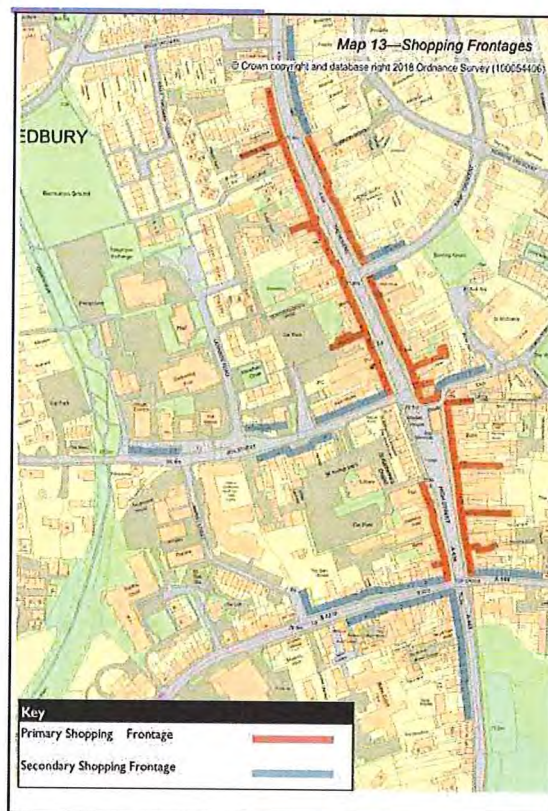
Figure 2: UDP Central Shopping and Commercial Area Boundary

- 3.3 There are currently three supermarkets serving the town, all of which sit outside both previously defined town centre boundaries. The Co-op sits relatively close to their southern edges; Tesco just beyond its northern boundaries, off The Homend; and Asda, which is located to the west within one of the town's industrial areas and close to Ledbury bypass.



Figure 3: Location of the Town's supermarkets

- 3.4 Policy EE3.1 sets out the approach to accommodating particular uses within primary and secondary shopping areas (frontages). It seeks to retain existing and support new shops, restaurants and cafes, and drinking establishments within such frontages but to restrict financial and professional services and hot food takeaways to secondary frontages. The frontages in the NDP vary only slightly to those in the former UDP. There have recently been changes to the categories covering these uses which will require rewording to take this into account. Herefordshire Council's Development management section has suggested that the currently defined frontages should be reviewed, including whether there remains a need to differentiate between primary and secondary frontages.



**Figure 4: Primary and Secondary Frontages defined in the Current NDP**

- 3.5 The area comprising Lawnside and Market Street comprises a mixture of uses and is an area where there is pressure for change. A major redevelopment by Shaw Healthcare was undertaken recently and there is currently a proposal for redevelopment on the opposite corner of Market Street. There is a possibility that the fire station may look to relocate to another location in association with other emergency services and a proposal for the rationalisation and expansion of primary care services is expected following the establishment of Ledbury Health Partnership. The area sits on the edge of the town centre and Ledbury Conservation area. It is an area of opportunity that may be promoted through the Market Towns Economic Investment Plan. It is considered that an ad-hoc or piecemeal approach to development should be avoided in this location if possible. The approach should provide an area for mixed development, including residential, retail outlets at an appropriate scale and space for offices and associated space, especially where this would enable improved health service facilities, supporting the town centre and visitor attraction while enhancing the appearance of the conservation area.

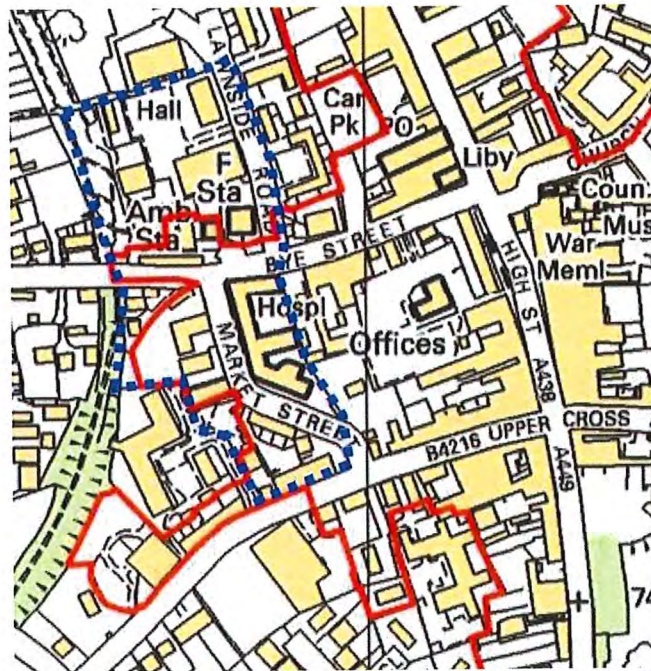


Figure 5: Lawnside and Market Street (Defined by the blue dotted line)

- 3.6 There is a shared vision with the Core Strategy in seeking to increase the vitality and viability of Ledbury town centre, especially through supporting retail, commercial, leisure, cultural and tourism proposals and resisting proposals outside the centre where this would have an adverse effect on these qualities. In redefining the town centre and primary shopping area<sup>1</sup>, views upon the objectives that might inform any changes should be sought, especially from local businesses within the area.

## 4. Tourism Development

- 4.1 Policy EE2.1 covers visitor accommodation firstly within the urban area and secondly through the conversion of rural buildings. Ledbury Design Guide (see LDG2.8) encourages chalet, caravanning and camping sites subject to a number of qualifications although these are not referred to specifically within the NDP. Core Strategy policy E4 supports a wider range of measures promoting the unique character of market towns as a destination; visitor accommodation, capitalising on rivers and waterways, and specifically the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal; the landscape of the AONBs; supporting walks, cycleways and trails. Pressures to develop a wider range of measures may arise and Ledbury is well placed to attract more visitors.
- 4.2 The combination of the surrounding high-quality landscape, especially the Malvern Hills, and the town's historic buildings and character, attracts many tourists to the town. There may be greater potential to increase visitor accommodation beyond that currently proposed through supporting this within the town's urban area and the conversion of existing buildings to self-catering accommodation within the Parish's rural area. Other opportunities to provide accommodation that may benefit many town centre businesses and support the diversification of the surrounding rural

<sup>1</sup> See NPPF paragraph 85 -

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

economy may be available. The potential for chalet, caravan and camping accommodation is already acknowledged. In addition, sensitively located hotel accommodation outside of the urban area may also have benefits. A location upon Ledbury Bypass has been suggested to diversify the range of hotel accommodation on offer close to the town.

- 4.3 Safeguarding the route of the Herefordshire to Gloucestershire Canal so that a restoration project might lead to the reopening of the link at some time in the future is a tourism project already promoted within the Core Strategy. This should continue to be included in the NDP.

## **5. Agricultural and Rural Development**

- 5.1 Although Ledbury is one of the County's largest market towns there is an extensive surrounding rural area falling within its parish boundary. There are two policies that relate directly to agricultural or rural economic development and these are policy EE2.1 which refers to the re-use of appropriate rural buildings to self-catering accommodation and NE3.1. In relation to the first, Herefordshire Historic Environmental Record identifies 28 historic farmsteads within the Parish. Although not all of these may currently represent farm complexes, it indicates that there is reasonable potential for both agricultural development and rural building conversions. There are other economic uses, as well as residential and social uses, to which such buildings might be put and Core Strategy policy RA5 provides a high degree of flexibility in terms of acceptable uses subject to a number of constraints.
- 5.2 Ledbury Design Guide (see LDG 2.8) contains a number of guidelines that relate to agricultural buildings. These cover location, building design and landscape requirements. These can be included as policy requirements within the NDP to give them greater weight.
- 5.3 Scale of rural development is important and particularly relevant within that part of the Malvern Hills AONB within the parish and in locations where there might be adverse effects on important views from this area. Policy NE3.1 requires agricultural development to show how they would protect landscape character although it refers to a limited number of examples that are often recognised as intensive uses. Herefordshire Council has produced a Polytunnels Planning Guide (June 2018) which contains useful guidance that may also be applicable to other forms of development within the countryside.

## **6. Commercial Office Development**

- 6.1 Ledbury falls within a sub-area defined as 'Eastern Corridor' defined within Herefordshire County Employment Land Study 2012. That study identified this identified that office use was not particularly established in this sub-area, with the majority of supply being small suites located in converted buildings, either in the town centres or in more rural locations. The town does not function as key office location that would attract larger occupiers and therefore provision is focused towards smaller locally based businesses. Take-up of office space is generally from local firms with limited interest in larger units. Available space generally offers up to 500 sq. m of floorspace for which demand is steady but at a low level with no discernible upward or downward trends although recent evidence at that time suggested a lower level of activity as the result of the downturn in the economy. This

is unlikely to have changed and the position is considered likely to remain the case during the rest of the plan period. It would not be usual for sites of less than 0.25 ha to be allocated for employment use within a NDP. Should there be any instances where a large site may be required, the strategic employment site would provide an option.

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 There are ongoing discussions to determine the use of various parcels of land to the south of Little Marcle Road with the aim of meeting the strategic need for employment land and land for playing fields. This also includes the need to undertake a landscape assessment to inform the options available.
- 7.2 Work is to be commissioned that should enable a decision to be made upon whether land might be made available for business uses and enable improved access to Ledbury Railway Station.
- 7.3 Measures to support the vitality and viability of Ledbury Town Centre by increasing its attractiveness are to be encouraged and clear objectives upon what these should comprise should be subject to public and business consultation.

## **Appendix 1: Employment Related Extracts from Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy and Supporting Documents**

### **Extract from Chapter 4: Place Shaping (Supporting statements to policies LB1 and LB2)**

#### New jobs

*4.5.4 The policy to deliver around 12 hectares of employment land to the south of Little Marcle Road will help facilitate greater employment opportunities for Ledbury residents, promoting its role as a multi functioning centre and reduce the need for commuting by private car. This area of arable land adjoins existing employment land and sports pitches and is of low landscape sensitivity and biodiversity value. Acceptable access can be achieved from Little Marcle Road, whilst new sustainable transport links can be created into the town including safe crossings of the by-pass. Structural landscaping will be required along the western and southern boundaries to mitigate the visual impact of new buildings. The land will particularly provide opportunities for medium and large size business requiring large land areas, including the expansion of existing businesses.*

*4.5.5 Land north of the viaduct will also include around 3 hectares of employment land (in addition to any existing commitments), which will be restricted to use class B1 (light industry, offices, research and development) in order to complement the larger employment area. Small-scale sites for employment use will also be identified through a Neighbourhood Development Plan.*

*4.5.6 The figures for employment (as with housing) are targets for the whole plan period and will be monitored through the annual monitoring process to assess performance and the need for any management measures.*

### **Extract from Chapter 5: General Policies (Supporting Statement to Policy E1)**

#### Land between Little Marcle Road and Ross Road, Ledbury

*5.2.11 This location is to the south-west of Ledbury and will comprise approximately 12 ha of employment land which will come forward to support the existing population and proposed growth of Ledbury. The land adjoins existing employment land and is rated as 'moderate' and will cater for a mix of employment uses, particularly smaller based business which may help to reduce the need to travel for the local community.*

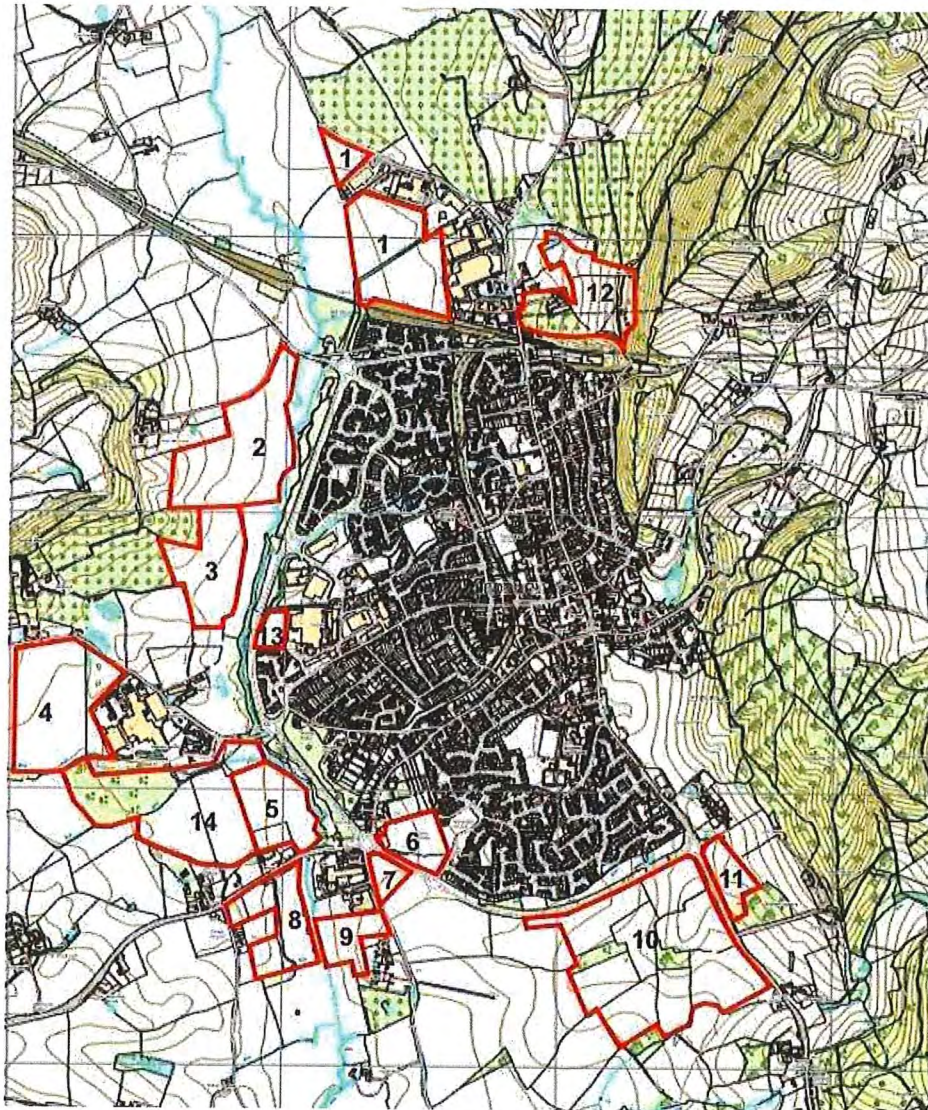
### **Extract from the Core Strategy's supporting Sustainability Appraisal relating to land south of Little Marcle Road:**

*'The areas in which development is proposed under this option are of low/medium landscape sensitivity (15); and concentrating development here avoids it being directed to other areas around the town which are of higher landscape/biodiversity value'.*



## Appendix 2: Assessment of Potential Employment Sites

1. The preparation of Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (2018) included a 'call for sites' to be considered for developments such as housing, employment, community and recreational uses. After an initial sieve, 10 sites were identified for detailed assessment as having potential for some form of development. Those rejected at this stage were deemed not suitable for being too far from the town's built-up area to be sustainable or too small to be able to contribute meaningfully to development requirements. Of the 10 sites four (4) were identified to be assessed as potential employment sites. Further areas that were not submitted through the call for sites were identified as options for investigation, although their availability was uncertain. Map 1 below shows the options that were considered as part of the employment land assessment.



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**Map 1: Potential Sites for Employment Sites Considered for the 2018 NDP and subsequently**

2. The absence of certainty about the ability to deliver any site was the primary determinant for adopting a general approach in the NDP, based upon supporting policies for employment in Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy. This was recognised by the NDP Examiner who considered that the policy promoting this within the Submission Draft NDP was duplication and unnecessary.
3. Since the adoption of the NDP, a significant amount of housing development has taken and continues to take place, while the provision of a commensurate amount of local employment has not materialised, including through the provision of the required employment land. Unless such land is brought forward, the objective to promote sustainable growth will not be achieved. Consequently, the need to deliver land upon which new businesses might develop has attained greater importance, and the review of the NDP has accepted that further efforts need to be made to include site specific allocations.
4. Although many of the previously sites were ruled out in principle, they have been reviewed. With limited exceptions they surround the northern, western and southern edges of the town. The Malvern Hills AONB skirts the eastern edge of the town ruling out options in that direction. Notwithstanding it was directed at potential for housing use, some of the information presented in Herefordshire Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) may assist the review, especially that which relates to landscape sensitivity. The table below contains the review of the site previously considered.

Site Reference and Location	Assessment of Potential	Conclusion
Site 1: Land north of the Viaduct (Part of larger site amounting to approx. 17.7ha)	<p>Not a submitted site.</p> <p>Site was previously proposed for employment in Herefordshire UDP. However, now included in the Core Strategy as a strategic housing and employment site CS policy LB2 with provision for 3 hectares of employment land. There appears to be agreement about where this area might be located.</p> <p>The site would not contribute towards the strategic requirement for land to the south of Little Marcle Road.</p>	Most of the area is now considered appropriate for housing. The area comprising some 3 hectares of employment land indicated in planning permission code P171532/O <sup>2</sup> should be shown as an allocation on this basis unless development has commenced by the time the NDP is adopted.
Site 2: Land South West of Ledbury Viaduct Roundabout (Approx.15.5 ha)	<p>Not a submitted site so may not be available. Land shown as having significant constraints in Herefordshire SHLAA and it is understood that the site was not submitted for consideration through that process. Land not considered in HC's Employment Land Study. Site considered High to Medium landscape sensitivity in HC's Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis. Development would have a significant effect on the setting of Ledbury Town</p>	This is an inappropriate site for employment development.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning\\_services/planning\\_application\\_search/details?id=171532&search-term=Viaduct%20Site](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=171532&search-term=Viaduct%20Site)

	<p>and adversely affect views from Malvern Hills AONB. Site falls within the setting of Walls Hill Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument and Historic England has expressed the view that the impact of development on another site in a similar location could be considerable (application reference 184447<sup>3</sup>).</p> <p>The site would not contribute towards the strategic requirement for land to the south of Little Marcle Road.</p>	
Site 3: Land west of Ledbury Bypass (Approx. 12.5ha)	<p>The site exhibits the same characteristics as the site above.</p> <p>NB. The site of planning application 184447 is immediately adjacent to this site along its southern edge and between site 3 and Little Marcle Road. It appears not to have been considered within the original site assessment but also exhibits the same characteristics as both the sites to the east of Walls Hill Scheduled Ancient Monument and west of the town.</p> <p>The site would not contribute towards the strategic requirement for land to the south of Little Marcle Road.</p>	This is an inappropriate site for employment development as is the land immediately between site 3 and Little Marcle Road.
Site 4: Land south of Little Marcle Road west of the Heineken factory	<p>Not a submitted site. The site was not considered for housing in Herefordshire Council's SHLAA. The site is considered to have a medium to low level of landscape sensitivity. The site comprises arable farmland that rises slightly above the Heineken factory although the silos from the works are visible from some distance to the west.</p> <p>Access along Little Marcle Road has been highlighted as a major constraint. This would either have to be widened or, most likely, an alternative found through land to the south of the Heineken factory.</p>	The land has some potential to enable the expansion of employment land in this direction although is more sensitive than land to the south of the Heineken factory. An appropriate access would need to be identified although an option appears possible.
Site 5: Site of Ledbury Rugby Club	<p>Not a submitted site. The site is already in use as playing fields for Ledbury Rugby Club. It is intensively used and contains high quality community-based facilities. Should an alternative use be proposed, the current facilities would need to be relocated to another site. The site is of High to Medium landscape sensitivity and its current uses does not detract from this. The eastern part of the site falls within an area identified to be at risk of flooding.</p>	The site is not available. Use for employment would result in the potential loss of a well-used recreational facility and should be avoided unless there are no other options, and a replacement facility of at least equal utility can be provided.
Site 6: Land to the rear of The Full Pitcher	<p>Not a submitted site. This site has outline planning permission for up to 100 new dwellings (P141651/O<sup>4</sup>) and has commenced seeking approval for all the reserved matters.</p>	The site is not available for employment related development having

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning\\_services/planning\\_application\\_search/details?id=184447&search-term=184447](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=184447&search-term=184447)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning\\_services/planning\\_application\\_search/details?id=141651&search-term=Full%20Pitcher&search-service=search&search-source=the%20keywords&search-item=%27Full%27%20and%20%27Pitcher%27](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=141651&search-term=Full%20Pitcher&search-service=search&search-source=the%20keywords&search-item=%27Full%27%20and%20%27Pitcher%27)

		planning permission for houses.
Site 7: Land south-east of the Full Pitcher roundabout (Approx. 1.6ha)	Not a submitted site. It was considered to be land with significant constraints in Herefordshire SHLAA. However, a large site immediately to its south was similarly assessed but is being developed in phases for housing. The phase closest to the site has been refused planning permission on two occasions because proposals have yet to show that the noise from a nearby industrial use on the opposite side of the Dymock Road can be satisfactorily mitigated. In relation to this site's potential as industrial land, this is likely to be constrained by the housing development although it could be restricted to Use Class E (previously Use Class B1 -light industry; a <b>use</b> which can be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit). It might accommodate other forms of employment uses such as offices provided conditions can be met to protect amenity. A tourism use, such as a hotel might also provide a suitable use. The site does fall within the high to medium landscape sensitivity category although this has not restricted the adjacent housing development.	The site may have some potential for employment provided appropriate protection can be given to the amenity of the housing development to the south-east. Restricting any use to Use Class E (previously use class B1) would be necessary were it to be considered for industry.
Site 8: Land at Hazel Meadows (south of the Ross Road) (Approx. 8ha)	Site submitted in the Ledbury NDP 'Call for sites' (Site LO6) and the assessment considered it had potential for small scale light employment (industry). Herefordshire SHLAA did look at the potential for housing on the site but concluded that it had no potential during the plan period. A large portion of the site has planning permission <sup>5</sup> for use as an auction centre for both inside and outside auctions. It appears to have enabled the relocation of the indoor auction from a town centre location. Most of the site comprises arrangements for an external auction with the buildings for the indoor operation being in the north-west corner just as the land starts to rise. The landscape for this site is considered to be of high to medium sensitivity. The land sitting below the indoor auction room falls within the area of flood risk, mostly flood risk zone 3. The area outside of that at risk of flooding comprising the building and land within the curtilage further to the west amounts to around 1.75 hectares. A Listed Building sits to the east of the southern end of the site although the current use in this vicinity comprises undeveloped land. Dwellings sit close to the indoor auction building and, although there is no indication that an alternative use may be sought for this, any change of use to industry would need to ensure their amenity is protected from noise and other forms of pollution and hence restricted to Class B1.	Part of the developable area of the site already contains a building that has a business use, for auctions. An area of undeveloped land exists to the west of the building. That part to the south of a row of houses is also undeveloped although any development may affect the amenity of those dwellings.
Site 9: Land west of the Dymock Road	Not a submitted site. The site was considered within Herefordshire SHLAA but considered to have no potential for housing during the plan period. The site falls into the high to medium level	The site may have some potential for employment although restrictions may limit

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning\\_services/planning\\_application\\_search/details?id=173031&search=173031](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=173031&search=173031)

(B4216) (Approx. 6 ha)	of landscape sensitivity. However, housing development has been permitted opposite. Evidence in terms of planning applications for that residential development suggests that any industrial development on this site would affect residential amenity unless restricted to light industry. Hazel Farmhouse and the Granary to its north-east side are Listed Buildings and their settings need to be protected. Land along its eastern edge is at risk of flooding.	uses to light industry. The extent of land that might be developed may need to be restricted to protect the setting of the adjacent Listed Buildings, potentially affecting its viability. There remains some uncertainty therefore that this would be an appropriate use.
Site 10: Land south of roundabout junction at the east end of Leadon Way. (Approx. 30ha)	Site submitted in the Ledbury NDP 'Call for sites' (Site LO4) where it was not considered to be sustainable given its isolated location. It was also considered very prominent. However, planning permission <sup>6</sup> has been granted for housing upon the north-western portion of the site adjacent to another housing site which the element of isolation addresses to some degree. The remaining undeveloped areas are far more prominent, and this is recognised in the current NDP (Map 4), a characteristic supported at appeal <sup>7</sup> by a planning inspector upon another site. The site is also prominent at the very attractive southern entrance to Ledbury along the A417. Herefordshire SHLAA identified some of the site to have significant constraints and the remainder as having no potential for development within the plan period. Herefordshire Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis indicates the area has a high to medium level of landscape sensitivity. The eastern end of the site sits immediately adjacent to the boundary of the Malvern Hills AONB.	The site is not considered a suitable location for employment development in that it would have a significant adverse effect on the setting of the town and Malvern Hills AONB.
Site 11: Land adjacent to Gloucester Road (east of roundabout junction at the east end of Leadon Way) (Approx. 3ha)	Site submitted in the Ledbury NDP 'Call for sites' (Site LO9) where it was not considered particularly sustainable, does not relate well to the town and would result in an isolated form of development in the countryside. Herefordshire SHLAA did look at the potential for housing on the site but concluded that it had no potential during the plan period. Herefordshire Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis indicates the area has a high level of landscape sensitivity. It falls within Malvern Hills AONB and forms part of an unregistered historic park and garden.	The site should not be considered as a potential site for employment because of its high level of environmental sensitivity.
Site 12: Old Kennel Farm (Approx. 10 ha)	Site submitted in the Ledbury NDP 'Call for sites' where it was concluded to be a sustainable location but very prominent and sensitive that would adversely affect Malvern Hills AONB (Site LO2). Employment was one form of development considered suitable on the south-west quadrant. Herefordshire SHLAA considered the site to have no potential during the plan period although this	An undefined area comprising the south-west quadrant may be suitable for employment uses. The extent and exact location would need to be defined by a landscape assessment.

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning\\_services/planning\\_application\\_search/details?id=192482&search-term=Leadon%20Way&search-service=search&search-source=the%20keywords&search-item=%27Leadon%27%20and%20%27Way%27](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=192482&search-term=Leadon%20Way&search-service=search&search-source=the%20keywords&search-item=%27Leadon%27%20and%20%27Way%27)

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning\\_services/planning\\_application\\_search/details?id=184032&search-term=184032](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=184032&search-term=184032)

	<p>may have related to the whole site (larger than that shown in Map 1 above).</p> <p>The site would not contribute towards the strategic requirement for land to the south of Little Marcle Road.</p> <p>See also paragraph 5 below.</p>	
Site 13: Land at Lower Road Trading Estate	<p>This site falls inside the bypass and was shown as employment land in Herefordshire UDP. It was assessed in the Herefordshire County Employment Land Study 2012. There may be some flooding constraint although it is suggested this ought not to be a barrier to development. The adjacent dwellings are highlighted as potentially sensitive to employment development and may result in some restrictions to use. Site area approx. 1.3 ha.</p> <p>The site would not contribute towards the strategic requirement for land to the south of Little Marcle Road.</p>	The site should remain available for employment uses although some limitations about the type of employment will be required to protect residential amenity.
Site 14: Land west of Ledbury Rugby Club (Approx. 13 ha)	<p>The site had not previously been assessed for any use. There are potential opportunities to enable access that might be explored both to the north, through an existing industrial area onto Little Marcle Road, and to the south, onto the Ross Road. The site is in an area considered to have medium landscape sensitivity and generally within a strategic location for new employment of around 12 ha indicated in the Ledbury Key Diagram in the Core Strategy and which is referred to in policy LB1. It comprises a large area to the south of the Heineken factory which is understood to control the access road along its northern edge. The land is understood to be available. It is also understood that part of the area is being explored as a site for playing fields.</p>	The area should be explored further to determine whether, and , if so, how much it might contribute towards the 12ha required in this strategic location.

5. The owner of Site 12 (Old Kennel Farm) has submitted a proposal to various parties, including Ledbury Town Council and the NDP Working Party which comprises a range of business uses including business incubator units, a food rural business centre, farm shop and café, and car park. In addition, parking and dropping off areas would be provided for the railway station and disabled access afforded to the northern line. The area involved is within the south-west corner of site 12. Such a proposal may involve the agreement of a range of partners to ensure delivery, be complex, require legal agreements to be entered into, and not possible within the timescale for the preparation of the NDP review.
6. The following conclusions have been drawn from the above assessment:
  - i) The area identified for employment land in planning application P171532/O north of the Viaduct is the appropriate location for this within the wider development promoted by Core Strategy policy LB2.
  - ii) Land identified as Site 13, previously shown as employment land in Herefordshire UDP should continue to be shown for that use.
  - iii) The availability of land south of Heineken factory comprising site 14 should be explored with the aim, among others, to determine whether and how much might make a contribution to the strategic employment land requirement to the south of Little Marcle Road.

- iv) Should the area in iii) above not be available or insufficient, the availability of land comprising site 4 might be explored.
- v) Land comprising 1.75 hectares and forming that part of site 18 containing the auction building may be considered to contribute to the strategic employment requirement to the south of Little Marcle Road.
- vi) The proposal for the south-west corner of site 12 may bring important community benefits. Subject to a landscape assessment indicating the extent of any such area can be developed without having a significant adverse effect on the setting of Malvern Hills AONB, an appropriate policy, for such a site should be considered, including achieving community benefits.

- 7. The identification of employment land is only one aspect of facilitating provision to support sustainable development. The ability to deliver proposals within the NDP requires an assessment of whether the market may bring the relevant areas forward. Businesses may be able to bring forward proposals to meet their own requirements but the development of industrial estates, especially those not associated with other developments, such as housing, is less straightforward. The advice of Herefordshire Council's Economic Development section, which has links to Marches Local Enterprise Partnership, would be useful to ascertain what delivery vehicles may be available to bring forward the strategic employment site.

# **Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2011-2031**

## **1<sup>st</sup> Review**

### **Topic Paper 3: Recreation, Leisure and Open Space.**

**March 2021**

**Draft No 2**

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DRAFT

## Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan – Recreation, Leisure and Open Space

### **Purpose of this Report –**

*To review recreation, leisure and open space policies within the first NDP and recommend changes that may be required as a consequence of needs arising since its adoption.*

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The adopted NDP contains a number of policies that address, directly or indirectly, some specific issues that might fall under this broad topic. These include:

### Policy NE2.1 - Food Production in Ledbury

*The conservation, enhancement and/or creation of allotments and community gardens will be supported. Protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land for its economic and other benefits will be supported.*

### Policy CL1.1 - Young People's Facilities

*The Plan will support new or improved community facilities for the youth of the area, providing the facilities are appropriate to its location in regard of its use, size, design and its impact on neighbouring residents and traffic.*

### Policy CL3.1 – Sports Provision

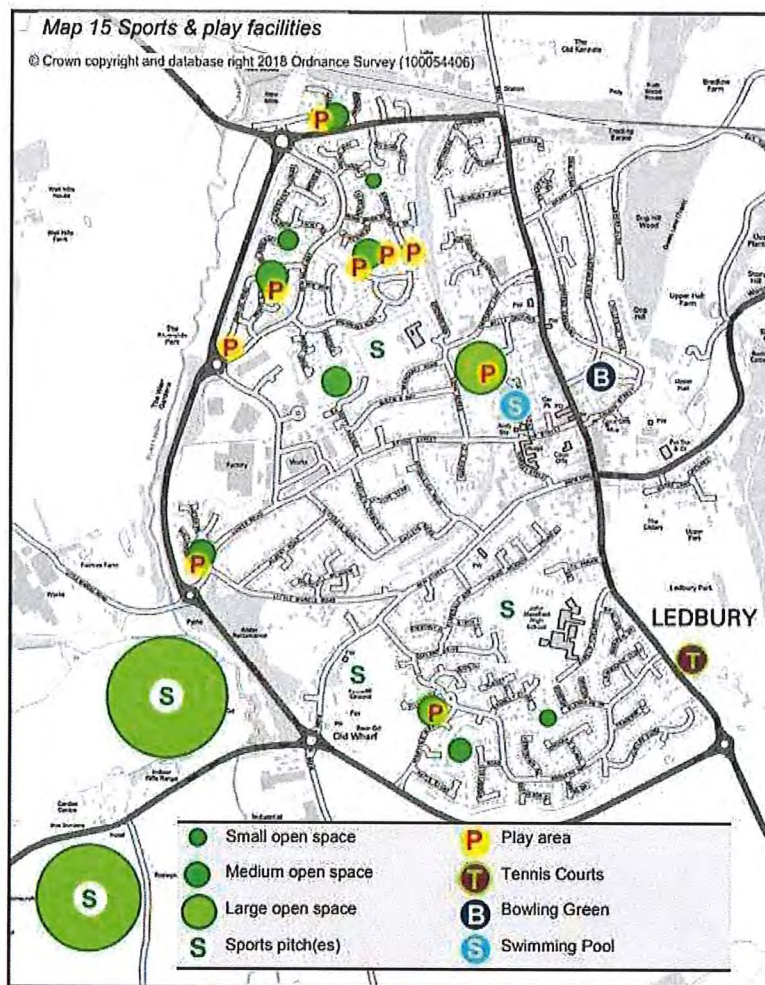
*The provision of facilities for people with mobility impairment will be supported.*

### Policy TR1.1 - Footpaths & Cycleways

*Improvements and/or extensions to the network of footpaths and cycling routes in the Neighbourhood Area will be supported, especially where they:*

- *Create appropriate crossing facilities dedicated to cycle, pedestrian and disabled access from the proposed strategic housing location north of the viaduct to give safe access to the station, schools, out of town shops and the town centre.*
- *Improve cycling, pedestrian and disabled access to and from the station and the town, especially where junctions create a hazard.*
- *Improve the Ledbury Town Trail to provide better cycling and disabled access along its whole length, including provision of street lighting and footbridges.*
- *Extend the Ledbury Town Trail at the Ross Road roundabout over Leadon Way to provide safer cycling, pedestrian and disabled access to the Rugby Club and new Cricket Club.*
- *Provide an appropriate crossing facility across Leadon Way at the Little Marcle Road roundabout for cyclists, pedestrians and the disabled, going to and from the Little Marcle business and farming areas.*

- 1.2 The NDP contains a map showing open spaces, sports facilities and play areas.



**Figure 1: Areas of Open Space, Sports facilities and Play Areas presented in the Current NDP.**

- 1.4 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (the Core Strategy) policy LB1 encourages new proposals that 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, and also where they will contribute to addressing deficiencies in community facilities. It also contains more general policies that protect, manage and plan for the preservation of existing and delivery of new green infrastructure (Policy LD3), that require housing and other developments to provide appropriate open space, sports and recreation facilities (Policy OS1), how developments should meet such needs (Policy OS2), and determining the appropriateness of proposals that would result in the loss of open space, sports or recreation facility (Policy OS3).
- 1.5 These policies are backed up by a number of strategies, studies or assessments found in Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy Evidence Base<sup>1</sup>. The Environmental Scoping Report draws conclusions from these that are relevant to the NDP area. These are:

*Herefordshire Playing Pitch Assessment 2012* identifies that there were 22ha of playing pitch area of which 13.1ha has community access.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directory/29/local\\_plan\\_-\\_documents](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directory/29/local_plan_-_documents)

*The Open Spaces Study 2006* reveals that within the wider area of which Ledbury is a part, there is extensive under provision of parks and gardens and outdoor sport; extensive over provision of natural and semi natural greenspace; and the Ledbury area has a provision of 1.13 ha of parks and gardens per 1000 population.

*The Play Facilities Study 2012* indicates there are 9 play facilities in Ledbury town of which 0.5 are owned by a housing association, 1 Town Council, and 7.5 Herefordshire Council.

However, all three studies are out of date although in relation to the latter two studies, the Environmental Scoping Report recommends that it may help to include policies in the NDP which encourages and facilitates the provision of outdoor recreational facilities and play facilities.

- 1.6 Herefordshire Council identifies standards set by Fields in Trust, Sport England and Natural England as informing its assessments of open space, sports and recreation needs although proposes to update its evidence base and to incorporate local standards in NDPs and other documents. However, it is understood this work has yet to proceed. Utilising the Fields in Trust information, Ledbury would require around 28 hectares of open space for outdoor sports, equipped/designated play areas and other similar provision. This would increase to 54 hectares with access to parks and gardens and natural and semi-natural space.
- 1.7 Since Ledbury NDP was adopted, a number of issues have arisen that require the NDP to promote positive changes in relation to green infrastructure, and particularly recreational land.

## **2. Provision for Recreation**

- 2.1 A robust assessment of outdoor sports provision needs to be based upon up-to-date evidence. Currently information about needs which should be planned for in Ledbury can be found in Herefordshire Council's Playing Pitch Assessment (2012); this is updated by the Outdoor Sports Investment Plan<sup>2</sup> prepared by a range of sporting bodies. Ledbury Area Investment Plan February 2016 is understood to be the most recent assessment of all sporting needs for the town. This sought to address the identified deficiencies in football, rugby and cricket although the latter subsequently saw improved facilities through the relocation of the Cricket Club to a new facility in 2017. The current NDP does not make any provision for improvements to address this shortfall.
- 2.2 It is understood that the outstanding requirements for Rugby will be addressed through the Rugby Club utilising its own land currently leased to football, resulting in the latter losing much of its pitches. Ledbury Town FC is also under pressure to relocate and its current pitch is located adjacent to a housing development site where its use of floodlights and crowd noise may eventually lead to complaints. The 2016 Investment plan identified a need for football within the town of some 4.5 hectares of land to provide pitches to meet both existing provision and deficiencies. Herefordshire Council and the relevant sporting bodies are encouraging the development of a sustainable football hub for Ledbury to accommodate both senior (Ledbury Town FC) and junior football (Ledbury Swifts FC). This should comprise a new dedicated site with security of tenure that will free up land at the Rugby Club

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<sup>2</sup> The Steering Group for this comprises Sport England, Herefordshire Council, the County Sports Partnership and the National Governing Bodies for football, cricket, rugby and hockey.

where the club currently play and to provide facilities that meet both existing needs and deficiencies based on future growth requirements, especially for junior and women's football. In addition, it will provide for both junior and senior training needs and enable the relocation of Ledbury Town FC. Currently the latter's tenure of the current ground is insecure and its relocation to a ground meeting the ground grading requirements is urgently required. These additional requirements may increase the area needed for pitches. Appendix 1 sets out what is understood to be the longer-term requirements utilising further work upon need undertaken by Ledbury Sports Federation.

- 2.3 The requirements for rugby include area to meet existing and future deficiencies. The short-term lease to Ledbury Swifts FC would provide 2 senior rugby pitches. The Club currently hire facilities out of county at Hartpury College. Not only is this unsustainable but constrains the club's growth plan. At peak times this is further compounded by the use of the facilities by Ledbury Swifts FC.
- 2.4 Although not indicated within the assessment by the Outdoor Sports Investment Steering Group, there is a suggestion that other outdoor sporting needs might be provided for within any site proposed, including an athletics track.
- 2.5 Ledbury NDP needs to be able to show that the playing pitch requirements can be delivered and developer contributions may provide some funding through Herefordshire Council's Planning Obligations SPD requirements. Herefordshire Council has identified that overall contributions sought from new housing will contribute approximately 65% of the total investment required to bring forward the project to provide the necessary facilities for football. Match funding will be sought via the Outdoor Sports Investment Steering Group. Discussions have been held with the FA, Herefordshire FA and Herefordshire Council to ensure a funding package commensurate with the need can be devised. In this regard, the guidelines set by Sports England have been worked to. The FA and Sports England are very clear that the best way forward is for a joint football facility housing Ledbury Swifts and Ledbury Town in order to sustain football in the future. Ownership of any land brought forward for football is currently being discussed between Ledbury Swifts, Ledbury Town FC and Herefordshire Council. The outcome of such discussions at the earliest opportunity would be helpful in determining the form of any policy for the area ultimately chosen for inclusion in the NDP.
- 2.6 An assessment of potential sites was undertaken by Ledbury Sports Federation has concluded that land to the west of Ledbury Rugby Club offers the best solution. This presents the best option from those considered provided it does not restrict the ability to deliver the strategic employment land requirements set out in Core Strategy policy LB1. Appendix 1 presents information upon the assessment of potential sites.

To meet the aspirations of local, County and national sporting bodies land to the west of Ledbury Rugby Club has been identified as the best site for new playing fields to meet the needs of football to serve the town and its surrounding area. Further investigations are needed to:

- Identify the extent of the land required and location within the preferred area carried. This would also indicate the ability to meet the needs of Core Strategy LB1 which requires 12 hectares of employment land located to the south of Little Marcle Road and identify whether and how much other land may need to be identified.
- Determine the ownership arrangements for the future playing fields.

- Indicate the funding mechanisms for any proposal in the NDP to show the NDP Examiner that any allocation for playing fields is deliverable within the plan period.

### 3. Play Space

- 3.1 Provision of play space is a normal requirement upon larger housing sites, according to the size of development, as part of housing developments and in accordance with standards set by the local planning authority. Where they cannot be provided on site, contributions to offsite provision can be made. However, there may be historical shortfalls in provision resulting from developments undertaken before such standards were introduced. Play areas have often been provided by developers although managed by either the Town Council or Herefordshire Council. Ledbury Town Council has also provided a number of play areas. The current NDP identifies locations where such facilities were available at the time the plan was prepared and this shows most located to the north of Bridge Street. Identifying and meeting deficiencies across the whole of the town's area in terms of play areas for small children, older children and youths either in terms of amount or location has not been the subject of a detailed study for this review.
- 3.2 The current NDP contains a general policy that would enable new or improved facilities for youth, subject to a number of safeguards, and this would apply to play space. It could be utilised where opportunities are identified to meet any identified shortfall.
- 3.3 Ledbury Town Council does not currently have any proposals to provide additional play areas or space.

It is proposed that the needs for play space to meet the needs of all age ranges will be reviewed in detail when the NDP is reviewed again at the time the Core Strategy is rolled forward. It is proposed that Herefordshire Council be encouraged to undertake a thorough review of provision and need on a county-wide basis so that it and town and parish councils might agree a consistent approach for use in reviewing NDPs.

### 4. Informal Leisure and Amenity Open Space

- 4.1 Traffic free paths within and immediately adjacent to the built-up area of the town are identified in the current NDP. A number provide for cyclists as well as pedestrians. This network and its links out into the countryside, especially to the east which comprises part of the Malvern Hills AONB, provide opportunities for walking and, to some extent, cycling. The most extensive network is in the north-east quadrant beyond the town. To the west, the network is relatively sparse. NPPF paragraph 98 indicates that planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails. The Town Council is also keen to promote safe routes for walkers and cyclists. The NDP can promote these in association with development proposals. New

routes, including those that would increase connections between existing routes would involve further work, including the identification of resources to deliver any proposals, and delay this review which is proposed to cover a limited number of matters. The identification of possible new routes should commence with a view to their inclusion in a full review of the NDP when the Core Strategy is rolled forward. Aspirations may, however, be identified to promote such future work

- 4.2 Ledbury Town Council has already identified the need for a safe cycle link to Wellington Heath and this is replicated in Wellington Heath NDP. The current NDP provides support for crossing facilities to enable cycle, disabled and pedestrian access from the town through the Viaduct site. The development of a strategic housing site to the north of the viaduct includes provision for part of that link in accordance with Core Strategy policy LB2 which requires:

*'a new linear informal park to link to the existing town trail, riverside walk, recreational open space and existing allotments'.*

The allotments are provided by Ledbury Town Council between the town and Wellington Heath although they are located outside of the NDP. Part of any connecting route and the allotments fall within a green gap protected in Wellington Heath NDP. They also sit within the Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zone LedLEZ1. Further improvements to pedestrian and cycle access within Ledbury NDP to these allotments and Wellington heath are also promoted through objectives set for this Enhancement Zone. The extension of the informal park forms part of the tow path for Hereford to Gloucester canal, the route of which is protected by the Core Strategy (policy E4). It should be made clear that the tow path should provide for both pedestrians and cyclists along its length within the Parish.

The protected route for the Hereford to Gloucester canal should include sufficient width to make provision for pedestrians and cyclists along the tow path. Opportunities to connect at either end to other footpaths and cycleways or safeguarded routes for these should be retained where possible. At the northern end, this should provide a link from the tow path to afford pedestrian and cycle access to the allotments up to the edge of the parish boundary opposite the allotments on the edge of Wellington Heath Parish.

- 4.3 A community allotment/walled garden is also being developed to the south of the town at Underdown (see paragraph 2.4, Proposal 1 above). The organisation promoting this is emphasising the community nature of this proposal. Measures to support this initiative on the basis that it would comprise a community facility or visitor facility would benefit the residents and/or local economy. It is understood that other community garden and pocket (very small) park projects are being considered by local groups. These will add to green infrastructure as well as supporting health and wellbeing.

Where community groups promote and deliver community gardens or very small parks such as the walled garden project at Underdown and these allow community access, where appropriate efforts will be made to designate these as 'Local Green Space' in a future review of the NDP in order to retain them as being special to the community.

- 4.4 Areas of amenity open space provided within developments and elsewhere are protected through Core Strategy policy OS3. It is not necessary to identify all such areas in order to show that they have the protection offered through that policy

although it would be beneficial to do so for the larger and most important areas. The draft NDP did have a plan showing such areas, although it was deleted because the policy that applied to it was considered inappropriate. That plan did not contain all such areas and there were a number of notable omissions that were previously identified in Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (predecessor of the current Core Strategy). Additional areas have been identified in the Green Infrastructure Study (See Topic Paper 4).

Notable areas of amenity open space contributing to green infrastructure within and surrounding the town be identified in the NDP for protection through Core Strategy policy OS3.

## **5. Parks, Gardens and Natural and Semi Natural Space**

- 5.1 The town has no large areas of green space, such as public parks, within its urban area where residents can walk or stroll in the open. The Riverside Walk does, however, offer such a facility non the western edge of the town and this might be should as a facility serving residents by its inclusion within a settlement boundary. The town's compact nature and location adjacent to the Malvern Hills affords relatively easy access to natural greenspace and woodlands to the east.

Accessible green space should be addressed through ensuring pedestrian links to areas surrounding the town, and particularly the Malvern Hills, are retained and expanded where opportunities allow.

## Appendix 1: Assessment of Site Options for Playing Fields

1. Following on from the Herefordshire Playing Pitch Assessment for Ledbury undertaken in 2012 further subsequent assessments undertaken by the Ledbury Sports Federation at a more local level has established that a site of approximately 4.5 ha is required as a minimum to accommodate the needs of both senior and junior football (source: *Current and Future Sports Provision for inclusion in Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan February 2016*). Having identified a shortfall in playing fields, Ledbury Sports Federation investigated a number of options in seeking a site upon which to provide for current and expected needs.
2. The shortfall comprises under provision for both football and rugby. Currently the shortfall in terms of playing fields for rugby results from it having enabled youth football the temporary use an area which it now requires for its own purposes. In addition, there is a need to provide a senior floodlit pitch for Ledbury Town FC (LTFC) which needs to relocate from its current site. Provision is therefore in terms of football pitches and work has been undertaken with the FA, Herefordshire FA, Sports England and Herefordshire Council to set out the specific needs and a delivery package.
3. Ledbury Sports Federation has over the last 5 years investigated a number of options in seeking a site upon which to provide for current and expected needs. The following options in terms of pitch requirements are understood to be supported by Herefordshire Council.

### Option 1: All Grass Pitches

- 1 x 11-a-side main floodlit grass pitch (LTFC)
- 2 x 11-a-side grass pitches
- 2 x 9-a-side grass pitches
- 2 x 7-a-side grass pitches
- 2 x 5-a-side grass pitches

### Option 2:

- 1 x 11-a-side main floodlit grass pitch (LTFC)
- 1 x floodlit 11-a-side 3G pitch
- 1 x 11- side grass pitch
- 1 x 9-a-side grass pitch
- 1 x 7-a-side grass pitch
- 1 x 5-a-side grass pitch

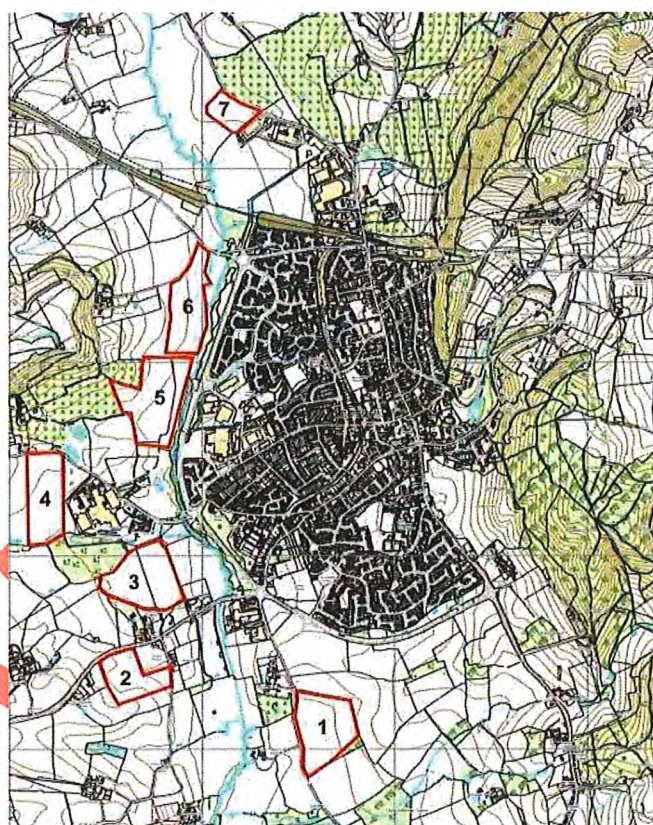
### Ancillary Facilities for both options

- Main pitch to have floodlights, stand, changing rooms for 2 teams and also officials.
- Changing Rooms: 4 x changing rooms plus club room and officials – traditional construction
- Car parking

Option 2 requires less land but is significantly more expensive. At the minimum around 5 hectares is understood to be required although this assumes an efficient layout in terms of best practice. However, nearly twice as much land may be

required to achieve option 1. Determining minimum land take for either option should be informed by a scaled layout plan.

4. Seven site options were investigated. Map 1 below shows their location. The table below the map sets out the investigations into those sites and conclusions reached upon each.
5. The FA and Sports England, the primary funding bodies, have made it very clear that the only way forward is for a joint football facility housing Ledbury Swifts and Ledbury Town. This is considered the only way to sustain adult football in the town.



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**Map 1: Sites Explored for Playing Fields**

Site Reference and Location	Assessment of Suitability and Availability	Conclusion
Site 1: Land on east side of Dymock Road	This land is subject to an agreement between the landowner and a developer. A planning application (code P184032) included around 4.88 hectares of land to be gifted for community purposes and which might be used for playing fields. This was dismissed on appeal although it is understood that the developer is preparing a further proposal. The area proposed might accommodate Option 2 in terms of playing fields although it remains uncertain whether a suitable access could be achieved; the needs of LTFC accommodated; and the impact of two sets of floodlights could be	There remains considerable uncertainty that the site is suitable and also whether it is available purely for a playing fields proposal. There is also uncertainty that a proposal providing for all the playing field and associated infrastructure needs

	<p>mitigated on any adjacent residential development. The location has been identified as sensitive in relation to effect on views from Malvern Hills AONB. It is assumed that the site would not be available purely for playing fields without any associated housing development.</p> <p>The Planning Department's position is that the site would be unsuitable for sports use chiefly due to landscape impact and the impact on the setting of Ledbury and the Malvern Hills AONB, which it is considered is endorsed by the Planning Inspectors decision on 180432 where these issues led to the appeal being dismissed. Furthermore, vehicular access on to Dymock Road was also found to have a significant harmful landscape impact that also led to the Appeal being dismissed. Herefordshire Council is unconvinced floodlighting could be adequately mitigated. Concern is also raised over the costs to develop the site for sports pitches with regards topography and drainage.</p>	can be accommodated in association with a housing development proposal, especially given the dismissed appeal.
Site 2: Land off Ross Road adjacent to Cricket Ground	This site of around 6 hectares (14 acres) was found to be available and initially supported by Sports England and Herefordshire Council. In principle on planning and constraint grounds the site would be acceptable albeit reliant on private vehicles to access the site. However, investigations found that it would be extremely expensive to level and drain. This in addition to landowner expectations of value indicated that the site was not deliverable for the intended use.	The site was found not to be deliverable for playing fields on the grounds of cost.
Site 3: Land west of Ledbury Rugby Club	The site comprises around 10 hectares (24 acres) and although the landowner has indicated some of this land may be available this is on the basis that some might accommodate commercial development. It is within an area identified as being the least sensitive in landscape terms. Access to the site from the Little Marcle Road has agreement in principle with another landowner. It is, however, in a general location identified in Herefordshire Core Strategy as one where 12 hectares on employment land should be provided. Should some or all of the site be proposed for playing fields, it would need to be shown that the ability to deliver the Core Strategy employment land requirement has not been prejudiced. Herefordshire Council's Employment Land study 2012 suggests an area of around 5 hectares of undeveloped land is outside of the 12.5 hectares which it suggests for employment.	The site presents a reasonable option provided it does not prejudice the ability to deliver 12 hectares of employment land to the south of Little Marcle Road.
Site 4: Land west of Heineken factory, Little Marcle Road.	Discussions with relevant stakeholders indicated this site had potential and could accommodate at least Option 2 and nearly all Option 1 requirement such that there was sufficient confidence for a planning application for change of use to be submitted. However, subsequently unforeseen circumstances resulted in the land becoming unavailable. Constraints include the need to assess its ecological value and access along Little Marcle Road identified as a major constraint. An alternative access would need to be identified.	The site was found to be undeliverable unless an alternative access could be found.
Site 5: Land west of Ledbury Bypass.	This site is understood to be part of an area under contract to Gladmans and may not be available. A planning application (code P184447) was disposed	The site does present a reasonable option because it is

	of under Article 40 (13)(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. It is understood that the developer had not addressed serious concerns about the impact of the proposed development upon the landscape, including the fact that the proposed vehicular means of access rises across steep land and other aspects of the development were on rising land. Historic England had expressed significant concerns about effect on the adjacent Scheduled Ancient Monument. This particular part of the site subject to the planning application is landlocked.	landlocked and there are concerns that development, that would include buildings car parking and floodlights, would not be acceptable in environmental terms.
Site 6: Land between Walls Hill Farm and Leadon Way	A site of 5.7 hectares (14 acres) was indicated to be available should it be possible to achieve development on other land in the vicinity. The site has similar landscape constraints to site 5 given its relationship to Walls Hill Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument.	The environmental considerations for a site in this location are likely to weigh against its use with the associated facilities needed.
Site 7: Land North of Bromyard Road Trading Estate	<p>This area of approximately 4 hectares (10 acres) forms part of an area identified as a strategic housing and employment location in Herefordshire Core Strategy. Initial discussions with Bloor Homes (site developer), HFA, Sport England and Herefordshire Council supported a proposal in principle, but this would swap the employment provision to sport. Development in this vicinity has been accepted and the landscape effects of the development would be similar to those for housing/employment, although floodlighting for any pitches would be more prominent. This would be at night so unlikely to affect views from the Malvern Hills during the day. Planning permission has now granted (P171532/O) for housing and employment that includes this land for which an appeal decision is awaited.</p> <p>An alternative would be to adjoin the site on its northern edge, and it is understood this would be acceptable in that site would adjoin and be easily connected to and in reach of a significant number of users by foot or cycle. It is also advised that there would be no inherent insurmountable landscape or heritage concerns.</p>	There may some scope to extend beyond the northern edge of the current development site further to provide for all requirements, although its availability is uncertain at this time. It may offer potential for further exploration should other options under discussion not be available.

## Conclusions

6. Sites 2, 5 and 6 were found to have significant constraints such that they had to be discounted from consideration. Sites 1 and 7 are controlled by developers and although they present potential to provide for some of the playing field requirements. The latter, in particular may present greater scope especially in light of the expressed views by the governing bodies for sport about how football should be accommodated in the town. Site 4 appears to meet the aspirations of all parties in a suitable location, although there are major access problems that could not be solved in the short term. Site 3 also meets the aspirations of all parties but requires evidence to be presented to Herefordshire Council that it will not restrict the ability to achieve the strategic employment requirement set out in Core Strategy policy LB1 for 12 hectares of employment land to the south of Little Marcle Road.

7. Playing field use at the level suggested may be a significant traffic generator and consequently highways advice should be taken upon whether suitable access can be achieved to any otherwise suitable option.

DRAFT

# **Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2011-2031**

## **1<sup>st</sup> Review**

### **Topic Paper 4: Green Infrastructure.**

**February 2021**

**Draft No 1**

DRAFT

## Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan – Green Infrastructure

### **Purpose of this Report –**

*To review and update the approach to green infrastructure set out for Ledbury in the Core Strategy and recommend how this might be incorporated into Ledbury NDP.*

*The report:*

- *Reviews work undertaken by Herefordshire Council for its Core Strategy and Ledbury Town Council for its current Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) – **Section 1.***
- *Considers those green infrastructure assets present within and surrounding the town – **Section 2.***
- *Puts forward proposals to ensure the local strategy for green infrastructure within and around the town is sufficiently comprehensive, and to protect and enhance those green spaces and features that contribute to the green infrastructure network – **Sections 3 to 5.***

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Green Infrastructure can be defined as *a network of multi-functional green space and other green features, both urban and rural, which can deliver quality of life and environmental benefits for communities.* Examples of green spaces and features within and surrounding the town include, among others, parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, orchards, rivers and streams, street trees and allotments. Natural England considers it should comprise high-quality green spaces. It should underpin sustainability, being designed and managed to respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area, including habitats and landscape types. It should include established green spaces and new sites and should thread through and surround the built environment and connect the urban area to its wider rural hinterland. It needs to be delivered at all spatial scales from sub-regional to local neighbourhood levels, accommodating both accessible natural green spaces within local communities, and often much larger sites on the urban fringe and wider countryside. Not all areas, however, need to be accessible to fulfil the function of supporting biodiversity.

- 1.2 The adopted NDP contains some policies that address a number of these elements or features. These include:

### Policy NE1.1 - Protecting Biodiversity.

*The conservation, restoration and enhancement of biodiversity, including that found in open spaces, trees and hedgerows, in order to promote and support wildlife and other forms of biodiversity will be supported. Additionally, proposals for the creation of small wetland or other nature reserves and which maintain and enhance streams and open watercourses will be supported.*

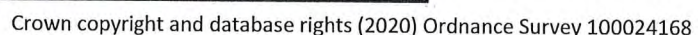
### Policy NE2.1 - Food Production in Ledbury

*The conservation, enhancement and/or creation of allotments and community gardens will be supported. Protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land for its economic and other benefits will be supported.*

*The conservation and/or enhancement of Frith, Conigree, Wall Hills and Dog Hill Woods above Ledbury, or their setting will be supported. Proposals which protect community access to these woods or demonstrate alternative proposals are in place to maintain community access to these important community assets will be supported. Proposals which promote active woodland management to maximise habitat diversity will be supported.*

- ## Protecting Green Infrastructure

1.4 This was deleted by the NDP Examiner because there was no substantive evidence in respect of how the policy will be implemented, including how it will be paid for, how it will be managed, or who by. It was not considered deliverable, having regard to Paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The policy also refers to “redevelopment” when the majority of the areas shown on Map 17 were undeveloped and consequently, it is not clear how this might apply. The Policy was considered imprecise.



520

- 1.5 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (the Core Strategy) policy LB1 encourages new proposals that protect and enhance its (Ledbury's) 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. The Core Strategy also contains more general policies that are relevant including one to protect, manage and plan for the preservation of existing and delivery of new green infrastructure (Policy LD3).
- 1.6 These policies are backed up by a number of strategies, studies or assessments found in Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy Evidence Base<sup>1</sup>. The Environmental Scoping Report prepared for this NDP review draws conclusions from these that are relevant to the NDP area. These are:
- Building Biodiversity into the Local Development Framework - Ledbury NDP can (be used to) overcome any existing constraints and capitalise on opportunities to enhance habitats and their networks.
  - Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis - The study provides evidence that could inform policies for the Ledbury NDP. Land to the east of Ledbury falls into the Malvern Hills AONB. The historic core of the town is situated in an elevated position with sloping wooded hills on its eastern edge. Ledbury is visually constrained, north is restricted by the viaduct and embankment, the east restricted by landform, the south by hills and west by woodland. Conservation features in the core of Ledbury Town with notable listed buildings, this extends westwards to encompass Ledbury Park and Upper Hall historic parks.
  - Herefordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy - The study provides evidence that could be taken into account when preparing policies for the Ledbury NDP. It establishes policies and principles for the protection and enhancement of those features and functions that contributes to the environment of Herefordshire across a range of scales.
  - Water Cycle Study - The River Leadon is currently classed as 'Poor' ecological status. Unless there are mitigation measures, the significant increase in housing pressure will exacerbate the situation. Water quality is an issue in both the upper and lower River Leadon sub catchments currently having poor ecological status. Mitigation measures should be considered whilst drafting emerging policy. Examples of mitigation strategies are: Promotion of SUDs, reduction of water demand and sewerage disposal, and improved adaptive land management to reduce levels of orthophosphate from horticultural and farmed land.
  - Condition of SSSIs within Ledbury: Ridgeway Wood (Favourable); Ledbury Cutting (Unfavourable Declining); Farm Quarry and grassland (Favourable).
  - In relation to local wildlife sites the NDP should capitalise on opportunities to protect or enhance the areas of value to nature conservation.
- 1.6 Since Ledbury NDP was adopted, a number of issues have arisen that require the NDP to promote positive changes in relation to green infrastructure, and particularly to contribute towards health and wellbeing, biodiversity net gain and climate change mitigation.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directory/29/local\\_plan\\_-\\_documents](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directory/29/local_plan_-_documents)

## 2. Green Infrastructure

- 2.1 Figure 5.2 in Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (Core Strategy) identifies examples of green infrastructure at a range of levels (Table 1 below).

**Table 1: Hierarchy of Green Infrastructure Assets (Source: Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy)**

Geographic Tier	Example of green infrastructure asset
County/Regional Strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty</li><li>• Sites of national and international nature conservation importance (e.g., SAC, SSSI)</li><li>• Verges of trunk roads, motorways and railways</li></ul>
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rivers and large streams and their floodplains</li><li>• Local wildlife sites. Scheduled Ancient Monuments</li><li>• Designed landscapes</li></ul>
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public and private parks and gardens</li><li>• Recreational grounds, cemeteries, playing fields and public green spaces.</li><li>• Public rights of way and cycle paths</li></ul>

- 2.2 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policy LD3 states:

*Development proposals should protect, manage and plan for the preservation of existing and delivery of new green infrastructure, and should achieve the following objectives:*

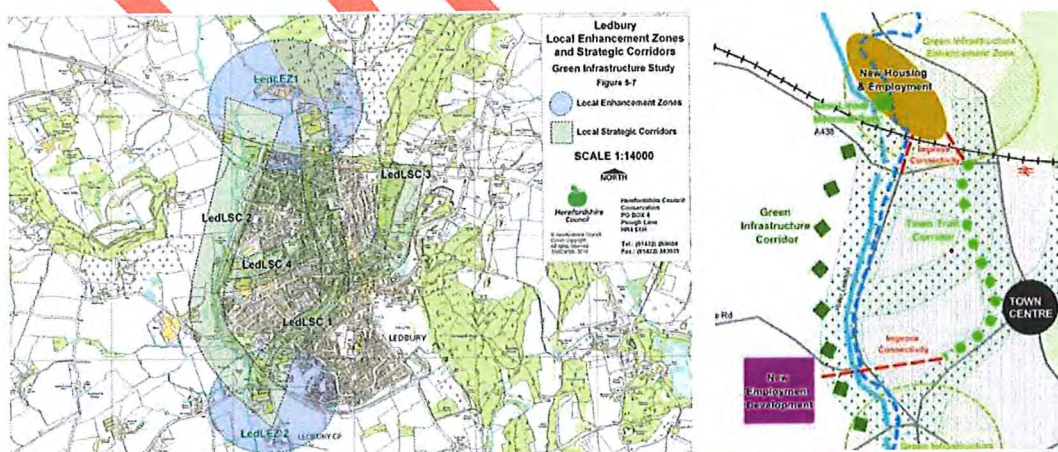
- 1. identification and retention of existing green infrastructure corridors and linkages; including the protection of valued landscapes, trees, hedgerows, woodlands, water courses and adjoining flood plain.*
- 2. provision of on-site green infrastructure; in particular proposals will be supported where this enhances the network; and*
- 3. integration with, and connection to, the surrounding green infrastructure network.*

### **Developing the Green Infrastructure Strategy for Ledbury**

- 2.3 Elements from all three tiers shown in Table 1 can be found within or surrounding the built-up area of Ledbury emphasising its importance to the importance of green infrastructure of the County and beyond.
- Malvern Hills AONB, along the eastern edge of the town, is an important Regional Strategic green infrastructure asset. This is supported by a number of SSSIs, including one which comprises the cutting for the railway line that is in unfavourable condition and declining.
  - At the District level, several large local wildlife sites, many comprising ancient woodlands, sit on the slopes of the Malvern Hills, forming the backdrop to the town on its eastern side. To the west of the town runs the River Leadon and its narrow flood plain, which also provides a riverside walk along part of its length. Further to the west and north of Little Marcle Road sits Wall Hills Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument surrounded by ancient woodlands that are designated local wildlife sites.

- The Core Strategy protects the route of the Hereford to Gloucester Canal as a County-wide proposal. Locally this runs through the riverside walk to the west of the town and extends further to both its north and south.
- Local assets include:
  - The Unregistered Parks and Gardens at Ledbury Park, Underdown and Upper Hall extend southwards along the eastern edge of the town.
  - To the west and south, verges along the edge of Ledbury Bypass enhanced by recreation areas either side of the Ross Road, extend almost uninterrupted between the Hereford and Gloucester roundabouts.
  - Ledbury Town Trail which runs north-south roughly through the middle of the built-up area.
  - Small pockets of amenity and play space sit within some of the town's residential areas, although there are few of any note within the older parts.
  - A significant concentration of green infrastructure comprising the network combining the school playing field, Ledbury Cemetery, Ledbury Town FC's pitch, and the area surrounding Ledbury Wastewater Treatment Works which is a combination of grassed areas and tree planting. This area has seen a reduction in its extent through housing development upon the playing fields that previously sat behind the Full Pitcher Public House.
  - Urban trees, including those in rear gardens and along a number of avenues, the most significant of which are along New Mills Way. Gardens themselves also add to 'greening' the town, providing space for nature.
  - New Mills Way provides a green corridor with a separated cycle-path and footpath as does Ledbury Town Trail. There are a limited number of other footway links not associated with roads through the built-up area, some of which are associated with amenity green space.

Many of these assets, although not all, were shown on Map 17 included in the Submission draft NDP. These reflect green infrastructure corridors identified in a number of Herefordshire Council documents. Given the provisions within Core Strategy Policy LD3, the NDP should consider whether it is possible to add to those identified within the Herefordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy<sup>2</sup>.



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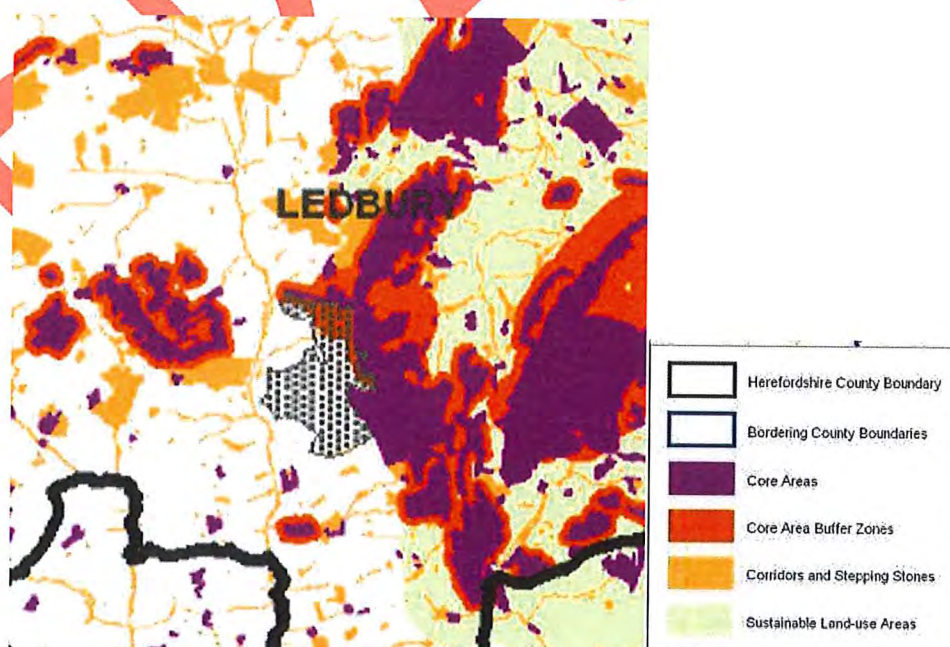
**Figures 2 and 3: Extract from Herefordshire Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy<sup>3</sup> relating to Ledbury; and the Core Strategy Key Diagram<sup>4</sup> (Figure 4.8) for Ledbury.**

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2063/herfordshire-green-infrastructure-strategy>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/123/adopted\\_core\\_strategy](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/123/adopted_core_strategy) - section 4

- 2.4 New green infrastructure should contribute towards enabling greater and wider access to open space to the benefit of health and wellbeing and supporting nature. The Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy provides a helpful basis for an overall approach identifying Local Strategic Corridors and Local Enhancement Zones and this has fed into the Core Strategy Key Diagram for Ledbury (Core Strategy Figure 4.8). These fit into an overall strategy for the County although in relation to Local Strategic Corridors, the Strategy indicates those identified are not exhaustive<sup>5</sup>, again suggesting that further such areas might be defined. The objectives for the network more generally referred to in Core Strategy Policy LD3 are set out in greater detail within the Green Infrastructure Strategy. The importance of the green infrastructure corridor along the Leaden Valley, just outside the western edge of the town, appears to be increased by its protection and enhancement being specified in Policy LB1. However, this does not mean that its other corridors and also the enhancement zones are of lesser importance, or that additional corridors and areas that might be enhanced should not be defined if there is good evidence for their identification.
- 2.5 The Local Strategic Corridors follow most green linkages through or around the town. The Local Enhancement Zones reflect areas where change was anticipated although other areas have subsequently been developed to the south of the town outside of those highlighted in the Green Infrastructure Strategy. Herefordshire Council's Ecological Network Map<sup>6</sup> (see extract below) indicates more extensive 'core areas' and 'buffers' along the town's eastern edge than are represented by the current Local Strategic Corridors and there is also an important east-west corridor, supported by a number of 'stepping-stones', beyond the town to the south. The Ecological Network Map also highlights important areas on the western slopes of the Leaden Valley surrounding Walls Hill Scheduled Ancient Monument beyond the Local Strategic Corridor.



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**Figure 4: Extract from Herefordshire Council's Ecological Network Map for the area surrounding Ledbury.**

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2063/herefordshire-green-infrastructure-strategy-para-4.3.27>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/77/ecological-network-map>

### 3. Local Strategic Corridors

- 3.1 Within these areas the following sustainability elements are considered assets that should be preserved and, where possible enhanced, through development:

- biodiversity
- conservation and enhancement of local distinctiveness
- flood management
- leisure and recreation
- alternative transportation opportunities
- climate change mitigation (added since the strategy was prepared)

When considering development proposals, all opportunities should be taken where possible to increase green infrastructure whether it be through small scale proposals such as planting individual trees or larger structural landscape measures. These corridors are explored in greater detail to determine whether local proposals or measures might be included in the NDP to promote this objective.

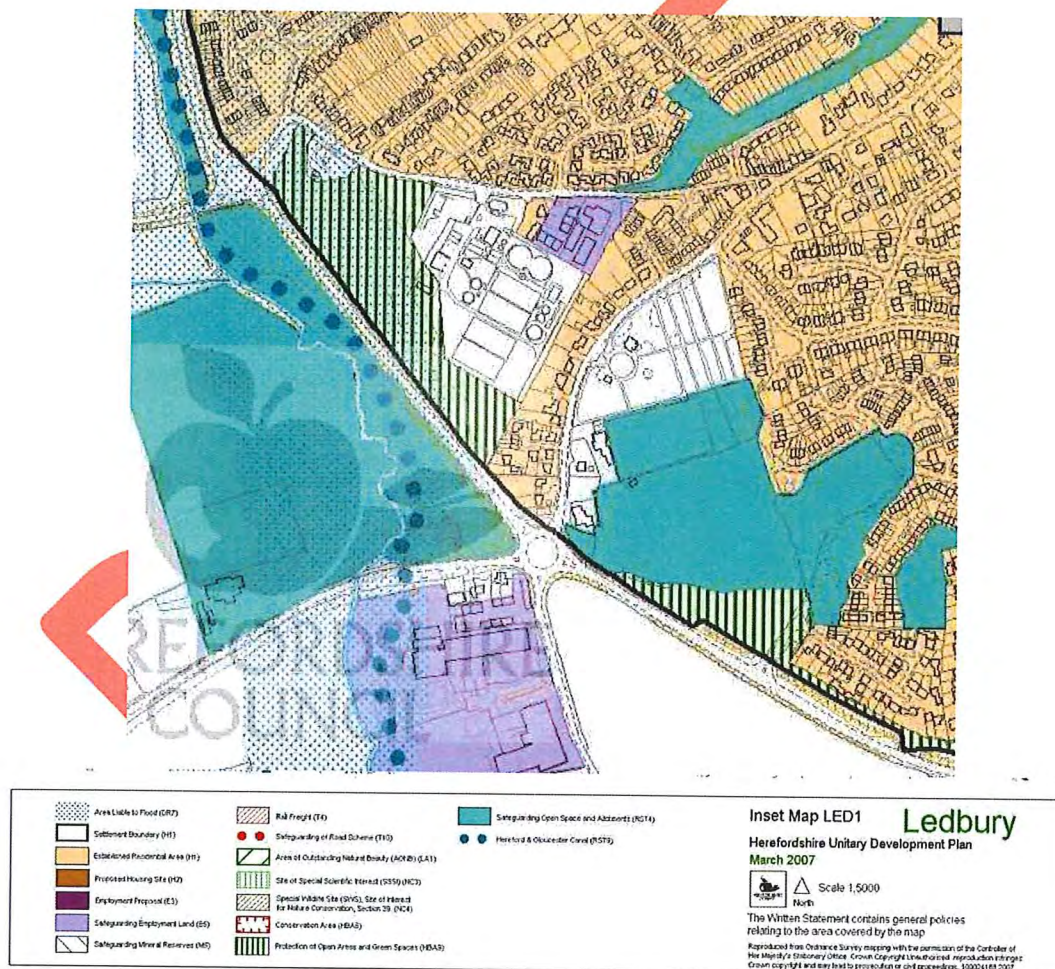
- 3.2 A number of the Local Strategic Corridors fall within defined Fringe Zones identified in the Green Infrastructure Strategy. The provision of green infrastructure within these should create a comfortable, dynamic and functional transition between the settlement and open countryside, both in conjunction with new development and through specific projects. The provision of green infrastructure in these fringe zones is based on and will respond to the existing visual sensitivity of the areas, biodiversity resources and historic and cultural significance. The aim is to achieve the integrity of green infrastructure to complement the linear, radial corridors and network of sites that occupy ground in and beyond the town.

#### **Local Strategic Corridor 1 (LedLSC1)**

- 3.3 This corridor passes roughly north-south through the town's urban area, utilising Ledbury Town Trail which generally follows the line of the former Ledbury-Gloucester railway. Currently it is a continuous linear green space, footpath and cycle way that links Hereford Road in the north, near the railway station, with Little Marcle Road in the south near to the town cemetery. It provides easy access to substantial housing areas, the primary school and town centre. It has the potential for both health and wellbeing benefits and provides a corridor for wildlife through the town. It starts and finishes adjacent to corridor LedLSC2 at points where there are enhancement zones. The current approach is to retain the level of green infrastructure and enhance it where opportunities present themselves, including in association with open spaces that lie within or just outside the corridor. Residents can add to its value by appropriate tree, shrub and other garden planting for wildlife.

- 3.4 Some development is expected that may affect green spaces and features within this corridor. Planning permission has been granted that will result in the loss of the cricket ground to housing and this will also increase pressure upon the adjacent football ground. This will reduce the amount of green space at the southern end of the corridor although there are other relatively large expanses in the vicinity, namely the town's cemetery, areas of grass and woodland surrounding the town's wastewater treatment works and a relatively large grassed play area. The loss of the grassed cricket ground has been compensated for by a new pitch on the edge of the enhancement zone (LedLEZ2) to which the corridor is connected. The grassed area and woodland that surrounds the town's wastewater treatment works were not

identified upon the draft NDP's green infrastructure map. The first may be required in association with the treatment works. However, the woodland was a protected open area and green space in the former Herefordshire UDP and unless there is a reason for its omission this should continue to form part of the green infrastructure network if possible. The cemetery is a green space contributing to the corridor that was not identified as such on the draft NDP map. Its purpose as a community facility will not change, although an environmentally based yet sensitive management regime would ensure it contributes towards the objectives for the corridor. Change is expected at the northern end of the corridor as part of the development of the viaduct site for housing and employment. This falls within another enhancement zone (LedLEZ1) for which objectives have been set. Little change is expected within the central part of this corridor although it does include part of the area 'Lawnside' which may see some redevelopment should the Town Council's preferred location for medical facilities materialise.



**Figure 5: Extract from Herefordshire UDP showing protected area adjacent to the Wastewater Treatment Works**

**Proposal 1** – The area comprising woodland adjacent to Ledbury Wastewater Treatment Works identified as protected open space/green space in the former Herefordshire UDP be again shown as having appropriate protection within the NDP.

## Local Strategic Corridor 2 (LedLSC2)

- 3.5 The riverside linear park along which the length of this corridor runs marks the town's western edge and follows the course of the River Leadon and Leadon Way. The corridor has a continuous footpath and provides a recreational facility for residents, especially those in the west of the town. Its ecological qualities are based upon water, linear bankside wet woodland and the transition to grassland, especially on the west side. Objectives should be based upon retaining these qualities, improving water quality and supporting climate change mitigation by retaining good quality soils and utilising spare land for tree planting (including wet woodland), but where this would not be out of character with the landscape. To the north of Little Marcle Road, limited hedgerows currently link the corridor to the ancient woodland surrounding Wall Hills Camp as does a Public Right of Way that connects to the woodland's southern edge. This should remain an open landscape, but the connection is important to wildlife and the character and setting of the town. To the south of Little Marcle Road there are two significant areas of recreational, a strategic proposal for employment land and a search area for further playing fields. Opportunities might be taken where possible to utilise areas not required for these uses to support landscape character and wildlife, and also for carbon offsetting. The protected line for the Hereford and Gloucester Canal runs along this corridor. Opportunities to extend the riverside walk further to the north and south exist and might include the potential for a cycle route along what might be considered the canal's towpath to link with proposals understood to be advanced or supported by the adjacent parishes in those directions. This would bring additional health and wellbeing benefits.
- 3.6 This corridor falls with the Fringe Zone immediately along the western side of the town and is associated with the valley and narrow corridor of the River Leadon where the target habitats for creation and enhancement along this corridor are wet grasslands and wet woodlands. Further to the west, which would incorporate Walls Hill Camp, the land falls within a separate fringe zone which is considered to have an 'estate' character with large fields and hedgerow trees, hedgerows and grassland. Maintaining and enhancing the network of hedgerows and grasslands, should be the focus for action in this area.

**Proposal 2** – LedLSC2 should be extended further to both the north and to the south along the River Leadon to incorporate the safeguarded line of the Hereford to Gloucester Canal. The protection offered to the route of the Hereford to Gloucester Canal through the Parish should include the potential for a cycle route and footpath as part of its towpath. This would enhance its value to residents, communities to the north and south of the town, and visitors, promoting active travel. Improved public access, to include cycling, should be enabled along this corridor, if possible, in advance of any works to restore or provide the canal tow path.

**Proposal 3** - In addition, the corridor should be widened or have a link to the ecological core area surrounding Wall Hills Camp between the A438 Hereford Road and Little Marcle Road. This will enhance connectivity within this landscape, the importance of which is highlighted by Core Strategy policy LB1 and heightened by Historic England in relation to comments made in relation to planning application P184447.

### **Local Strategic Corridor 3 (LedLSC3)**

- 3.7 This corridor is based upon the green lane (part of the Geopark Way) running along the eastern boundary of Dog Hill Wood which is an important linear green infrastructure asset for the town that connects it to the boundary of Malvern Hills AONB. This corridor provides a link to open countryside from the centre of the town (Church Street) with parkland to the east and adjoining ancient semi-natural woodland to the west. The combination provides an attractive walk with access to a variety of wildlife. Current NDP policy NE4.1 supports the conservation and/or enhancement of Dog Hill Wood and its setting, protection of community access to it, and active woodland management to maximise habitat diversity. The corridor might usefully be extended further to the north to include Frith Wood which is also covered by NDP policy NE4.1. Although new development is not expected within this corridor as a consequence of the NDP, should any proposals come forward there should be an emphasis on protecting the current assets.
- 3.8 This corridor falls within a fringe zone comprising rising ground to the east of the settlement, which is dominated by woodland, most of which is considered ancient. Maintaining and enhancing the amount and condition of the woodland resource to the east of the settlement is a priority for this area. Areas of parkland merge with the woodland to form a landscape rich in habitat and heritage. At its northern end traditional orchards and grasslands have become the most significant components of the landscape. Their enhancement, expansion and connection should be the principal target of green infrastructure provision.

**Proposal 4** – This local strategic corridor should be extended to the north to include Frith Wood which is a continuation of the linear ancient woodland linking the town to the Malvern Hills through good community access.

### **Local Strategic Corridor 4 (LedLSC4)**

- 3.9 This comprises an arc firstly, starting at its southern end, connecting the industrial area inside the western edge of the town through a corridor to the Town Walk via a network of footpaths and relatively large green spaces. The corridor then links the Town Walk to New Mills Way by generally smaller green spaces running alongside tree lined avenues. The spaces are important as stepping-stones, pocket parks and larger spaces, while the relatively substantial planting softens the urban environment and helps to absorb carbon and other pollutants. Little change is expected within this corridor. The approach along New Mills Way presents an exemplar for new development.

### **Local Strategic Corridor 5 (LedLSC5)**

- 3.10 This is a proposed newly defined corridor comprising two compartments. The first compartment runs along the south-eastern edge of the town's built-up area and comprises a parkland setting connecting the town centre at its northern end to the southern extent of the town's built-up area. It then turns westwards within a sensitive, relatively open landscape with pockets of woodland, including the core area of Upper Highbridge Coppice. This compartment sits just beyond the southern edge of the town's built-up area and includes a Public Right of Way linking the Ledbury Road with the B4216 to Dymock. The corridor then extends on to the River Leadon. Beyond the northern edge of this compartment is an area of change where biodiversity net gains and carbon offsetting would have been beneficial although the opportunities for this may now be limited. Both the eastern and western ends of the southern compartment are sensitive landscapes, especially in terms of effect on the

views from and setting of Malvern Hills AONB. The project to utilise an existing '1 acre' walled garden within the curtilage of Underdown, a Listed Building within an Unregistered Park and Garden, as community allotments is an example of promoting the multi-use of green space.

- 3.11 The importance of this corridor is reflected in its transition role that spans three fringe zones. That lying to the east comprises a mosaic of habitats; including a number of historic land enclosures, ancient and veteran trees, woodlands and dense hedgerows, and has a parkland character. Maintaining this homogeneous, but distinct character through continuation of the diversity of elements will be central to green infrastructure provision directly or indirectly resulting from development. The compartment to the south of the town is similar to that on the western slopes having an 'estate' character with large fields and hedgerow trees, hedgerows and grassland. The opportunity to maintain and enhance the network of hedgerows and grasslands, has been lost through major residential development. The approach should now be utilised beyond the town's newly defined southern edge through the defining of this corridor. The western end of the corridor then completes the transition from hill to valley by connecting with the River Leadon where habitat wet grassland and woodlands creation and enhancement are needed.

**Proposal 5:** A new Local Strategic Corridor should be defined to include Ledbury Park and Underdown Park; the area south of the housing developments off Leadon Way and incorporating Upper Highbridge Coppice and the brooks flowing to the north of Hall House Farm; and extending to meet the River Leadon corridor beyond the Dymock Road. The eastern part of this corridor comprises the two unregistered parks and gardens and the objective here should be to maintain settlement and landscape character on the edge of Malvern Hills AONB. The southern part of the corridor is just beyond an area of change (planning permissions codes P192482/O and P182628) where biodiversity enhancement should be promoted. The NDP should identify parts of this compartment as visually prominent. The emphasis should be upon maintaining the open sensitive landscape with woodland pockets, promoting grasslands, increasing accessibility especially linking to any extension to the riverside walk along the River Leadon and to Parkway, improving the ecological network and biodiversity, and maintaining the integrity of views from the Malvern Hills AONB.

## 4. Local Enhancement Zones

- 4.1 These identify areas where development is most likely and should create benefits to the local community and environment.

### Local Enhancement Zone 1 (LedLEZ1)

- 4.2 Some of this area north of the railway viaduct is under active discussion following its inclusion within the Core Strategy (Policy LB2) for housing and employment. Some residential but mainly commercial development has already taken place resulting in an extension of the settlement and creating an abrupt interface between developed land and open countryside. The area is low-lying to the west where associated with the River Leadon, and rises to the north-east, towards Wellington Heath. Two of the identified local strategic corridors (LedLSC1 and 2) terminate in this zone which incorporates the route of the former Hereford to Gloucester canal. Covering part of the transitional area between the uplands of the Malvern Hills to the river valley, are fringe zones where the rich landscape varies from woodland to traditional orchards then grasslands, the enhancement potential should range across these elements

through the zone being extended to the east to connect with LedLSC3. This area has also been identified as important in landscape terms with the adopted Wellington Heath NDP<sup>7</sup> containing a policy to maintain a green gap between its main settlement and Ledbury. Some opportunities for enhancing green infrastructure in this zone have been included within policy LB2. Additional measures may also be promoted, and it is to be hoped that all the following can be achieved through measures included in the NDP:

- Support the restoration of the canal to develop a continuous linear aquatic habitat, accompanied by pedestrian and non-motorised vehicular access, especially cycling.
- Protect and expand wet grassland areas and associated features particularly streams, ditches and ponds.
- Restore and replant traditional orchards, predominantly to the east of the zone.
- Create new paths and access to improve the existing network of public rights of way between the town and open countryside, particularly from the town trail and riverside park towards the town's northern allotments and Wellington Heath.
- Soften the transition from built form to open countryside through the introduction of new linear woodland, orchards and hedgerows around any new development.
- The zone contains a green gap between Ledbury's built-up area and the settlement of Wellington Heath. The NDP for the latter has a policy to protect this green gap and this should be replicated within Ledbury NDP's area to maintain its integrity.

**Proposal 6:** The expanded list of objectives for this enhancement zone be adopted, including especially the defining of a complementary green gap between Ledbury and Wellington Heath to reflect that included in Wellington Heath NDP.

**Proposal 7:** The enhancement zone be extended to connect with strategic corridor LedLSC3 to encompass the traditional orchards habitat referred to in the objectives.

### **Local Enhancement Zone 2 (LedLEZ2)**

- 4.3 This area to the south-west of the town comprises intensive agriculture and some commercial development which has weakened the pattern and character of the landscape, fragmenting habitats and reduced its ecological integrity. This enhancement zone lies at the termination of the two principal local strategic corridors (LedLSC1 and 2). Despite the loss of the cricket pitch, the town cemetery to the east of the ring road, and the river and sports grounds to the west all provide opportunities for enhanced green infrastructure. However, development pressures have and continue to affect some informal public open space and the football pitch inside the bypass resulting in the reduction of this potential. This Zone should be extended southwards to encompass the junction of LedLSC2 with the proposed LedLSC5. The junction falls within a visually sensitive area acknowledged in planning decisions. Enhancement opportunities that exist include:

- Enhancement through extending the riverside habitat created as part of the riverside park, to the south of the A449, particularly the creation of linear wet woodland.
- Reinstatement of the historic pattern of field boundaries through the planting of hedgerows, particularly to the south of the ring-road.

<sup>7</sup> <https://wellingtonheathpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/WHNDPfinal-v14.04.pdf>

- Introduction of linear woodland planting along the southern side of the ring-road to mitigate the visual impact of the road and more recent residential development.
- Maintain and enhance the remaining small, informal recreational open spaces within the ring-road, compensating for those lost through development pressure on the western side of the bypass, and seeking improvements to pedestrian linkages to the centre of the settlement.

**Proposal 8:** Enhancement Zone LedLEZ2 be extended southwards to include the junction of LedLSC2 with the proposed LedLSC5 and the above opportunities be agreed as objectives for any development that might take place in this area.

### **Local Enhancement Zone 3 (LedLEZ3)**

- 4.4 This zone is a key point in the transition from historic parkland character with ancient and veteran trees, woodlands and dense hedgerows to an 'estate' character with large fields and hedgerow trees. At this point the elements are highly visible and prominent as a consequent of the topography. Development that was unforeseen at the time the Green Infrastructure Strategy was prepared has extended outside of the town's former built-up area boundary marked by Leadon Way. The current NDP identifies the high ground to the south-west of the Gloucester roundabout as sensitive in landscape terms. To the north-west of the roundabout, a high bank with green space behind sits on the north side of Leadon Way screening views of housing. This was previously protected in the former Herefordshire UDP but not in the current NDP. Parkway, a small hamlet, sits to the south of the zone and would benefit through the creation of a footpath and cycle link to the town although the gap separating the two is important. The scenic qualities on the approach to the town from the south would be significantly harmed by any extended ribbon of development along the undulating landform. The objectives for this area should include:

- Strengthening the buffer on the north side of Leadon Way, an important area of amenity open space.
- Maintaining the open aspect on the higher ground on the south-west side of the Gloucester roundabout, through taking opportunities to integrate the area with the parkland aspect to the east through the introduction of characteristic landscape features.
- Creating a new path and cycle-way between the town and Parkway along a green corridor.
- Strengthening the landscape character of the area between Ledbury Town and Parkway and maintaining it as a green gap similar to that to the north of the town.

**Proposal 9:** An additional local enhancement zone be added to the current green infrastructure strategy for the town located in the area surrounding the Gloucester roundabout with green infrastructure objectives set out above being agreed for this zone.

**Proposal 10:** The areas of open space on the north side of Leadon Way previously protected in Herefordshire UDP should be included with similar protection in the reviewed NDP.



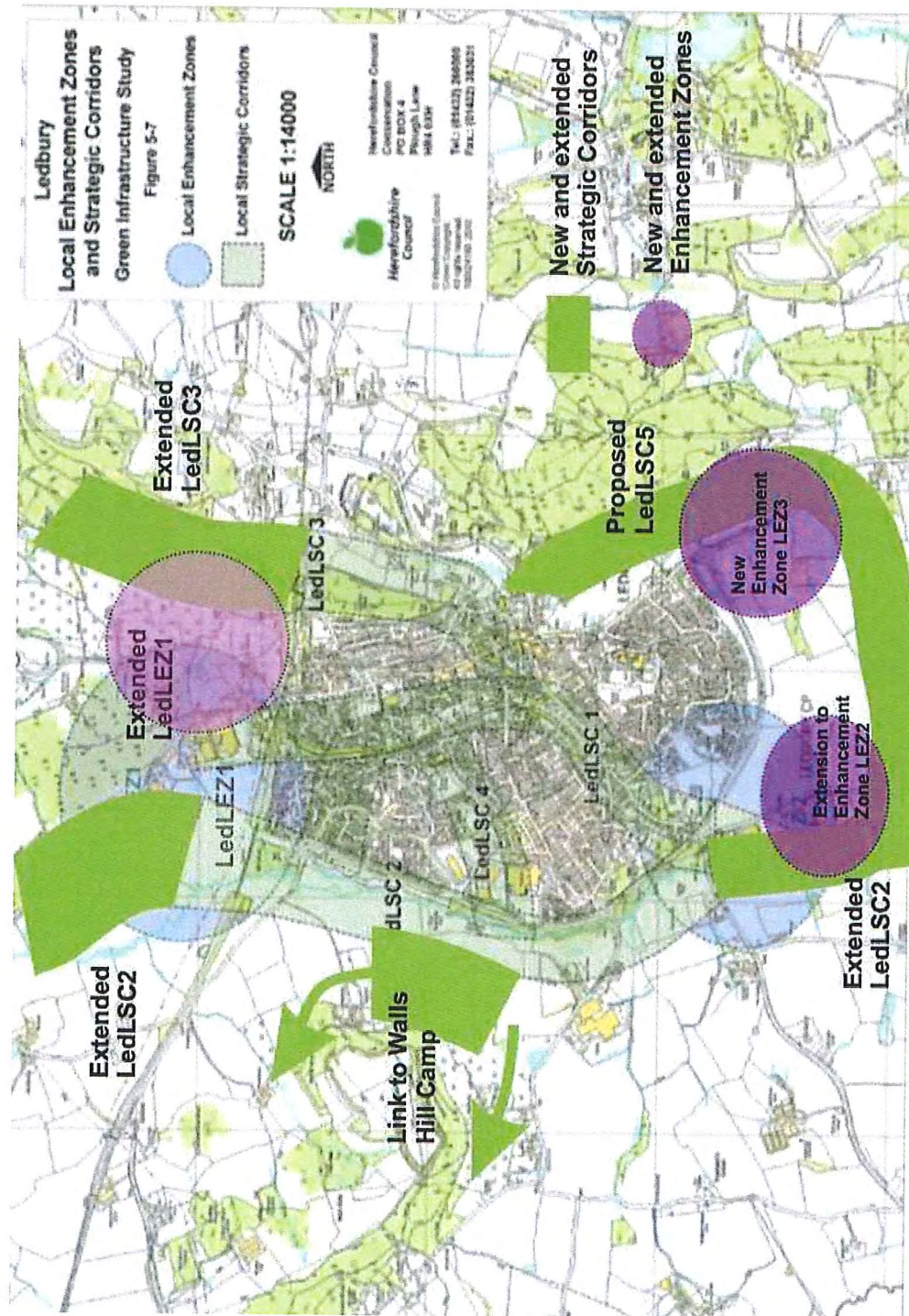
protected on the basis of a hierarchy although opportunities to enhance these and seek gains to contribute towards the network as a whole should be sought.

4. Local Green Space can also be designated where sites are demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance. Examples include land special because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, or richness of its wildlife where not covered sufficiently by other designations above. Such areas do not necessarily require public access and they should not comprise extensive tracts of land. No such additional areas have so far been identified where the use of this designation will be needed although the matter will be kept under review.

- 5.3 Where any of these areas already exist, specific policies should indicate how these should be preserved or enhanced and, where appropriate, their locations identified. How new developments should contribute towards green infrastructure should be defined. These should include measures to address climate change. The objectives for the various corridors and enhancement zones should be adopted and used when formulating policies in the NDP. This may be in relation to specific proposals or more generally to areas of land through policies. A number of relevant policy areas are considered in other topic papers, particularly Topic Paper 1 (Design Guidance) and Topic Paper 3 (Recreation, Leisure and Open Space). The objectives for the corridors and zones set out above might usefully be included in an appendix within the NDP.

**Proposal 11:** Areas identified in this report as contributing to green infrastructure should be protected so far as it was possible through designations such as those covering habitats, open space, recreation land and local green space.

**Proposal 12:** The NDP should contain policies (as necessary) referring to the need for development proposals to include measures aimed at supporting green infrastructure based on objectives set out in sections 3 and 4 above.



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Figure 7: Additional Green Infrastructure Corridors and Enhancement Zones

**Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan  
2011-2031**

**1<sup>st</sup> Review**

**Topic Paper 5: Ledbury Town  
Settlement Boundary**

**March 2021**

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### Version Control

Date	Version	Tasks	Author
5/11/2020	V.1	First working draft prepared as a template for the NDP Steering Group to consider.	WB
17/11/2020	V.2	Minor amendments following meeting of Steering Group	WB
1/3/2021	V.3	Update following discussion with Sports Federation and Football Clubs	WB

537

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# Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan – Ledbury Town Settlement Boundary

## **Purpose of this Report –**

*To define the need for and location of a settlement boundary for Ledbury Town.*

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Regulation 16 Submission Draft Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Policy BE1.2 sets out the basis for a settlement boundary for Ledbury Town. The policy for this is set out below and the proposed settlement boundary shown at Appendix 1.

### **Policy BE1.2 – Settlement Boundary**

*Map 15 overleaf shows the settlement boundary of Ledbury. Development within the settlement boundary will be supported. Residential development outside the settlement boundary, other than that identified as appropriate within HCS Policy RA3, will not be supported.*

- 1.2 In determining whether to utilise a settlement boundary, a SWOT analysis was undertaken.

Internal	External
<b>STRENGTHS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides clarity as to where development is or isn't appropriate.</li><li>• Gives protection to areas of open space, areas of ecological value, and areas of high landscape value.</li><li>• Gives additional clarity as to where some NDP policies apply and where they don't.</li><li>• Limits growth of the town beyond that desired by the community.</li></ul>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gives the community control of the direction and extent of growth of the town.</li><li>• Provides protection of sites which are unsuitable for development.</li><li>• Enables sustainable sites within the settlement boundary to be considered suitable in principle for development.</li></ul>
<b>WEAKNESSES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creates rigidity in policy terms.</li></ul>	<b>THREATS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Failure of the site to deliver the number allocated could mean the town is unable to meet its housing target.</li><li>• May prevent a suitable site coming forward if outside designated settlement boundary.</li><li>• May invoke challenges by interested landowners</li></ul>

- 1.3 A community consultation in December 2016 revealed 88% of respondents agreed with the need for a settlement boundary although only 50% agreed with the boundary proposed in the NDP with 42% disagreeing. The level of opposition reflected dissatisfaction with the inclusion of either the viaduct site or land south of Leadon Way, both of which were committed sites being a Core Strategy strategic housing site in the first instance and a site with planning permission in the second.

- 1.3 However the NDP Examiner recommended deleting both Policy BE1.2 and Map 15. The basis for this recommendation was that *'neither Policy BE1.2 nor its supporting text provide any information in respect of how the proposed settlement boundary was considered through the plan-making process. Further information provided by the Qualifying Body in this regard appears limited in its scope.'* In addition, the Examiner considered neither the Consultation Statement nor the Basic Condition Statement, which are required to be prepared in association with the NDP, provided substantive evidence to justify the chosen settlement boundary. *Consultation undertaken on the NDP indicated that only 50% of respondents agreed with the proposed settlement boundary.* The Examiner could not conclude that the settlement boundary had been endorsed by the community or that its location had been justified through the plan-making process. In terms of the plan making process for this aspect of the NDP, the Examiner was looking, for example, for the presentation and consideration of various options, details and choices that were widely consulted upon and scrutinised so that the settlement boundary might receive significant levels of support from the community.
- 1.4 The Examiner's recommendation was accepted in order that other considerations set out in the amended NDP should proceed to referendum and adoption. However, it remained the intention to review this aspect of the NDP at a later date.
- 1.5 As part of its review of the NDP, Ledbury Town Council NDP Working Group (17<sup>th</sup> February 2019) set three aims of which *'to include an evidence-based settlement boundary'* was one. The task was to identify options for a settlement boundary presented in a manner suitable for use in public consultation and display. Options need to be identified so that the public may have a choice and be stimulated into making constructive comments on the ideas presented, leading to clear support for one solution. The intention is to build a strong and defensible evidence base for the proposed boundary options.
- 1.6 In order to progress this matter, this paper has been prepared and comprises three parts. Firstly it considers the criteria that should be used to determine the location of the settlement boundary; secondly it identifies a number of alternatives that might be considered; and finally it presents the results of the consultation upon the options presented (*NB this third section will be added following the consultation upon the first two matters*).

## 2. Criteria to determine the location of the settlement boundary

- 2.1 Herefordshire Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note 20 provides advice upon defining settlement boundaries. Its key messages are:
- The settlement boundary does not necessarily have to cover the full extent of the settlement nor be limited to its built form.
  - There is a presumption in favour of development within the settlement boundary, subject to specific policy provisions, such as protecting character.
  - Any land and buildings outside of the boundary line are usually considered to be open countryside where development would be regulated with stricter planning policies.
  - Engaging the local community through public participation is key to identifying a settlement boundary, or any alternative.

- A set of criteria should be used when defining your settlement boundary

## 2.2 Examples of criteria are provided and include:

- Land allocated for housing, employment or other uses should be included within the boundary.
- The boundary should facilitate an appropriate level of growth within the plan period.
- Commenced planning permissions, recent refusals, planning appeal decisions and previous Local Plan inspector's comments concerning areas on the edge of the settlement should be considered.
- A settlement boundary should include new developments which may have occurred recently or that has received planning permission.
- Important amenity areas form part of the character of the settlement and could be identified and protected by policy and included in the settlement boundary due to their contribution to built-form.
- The boundary traces the edge of the built-up area, excluding roads, paths, railways and other lines of communications.
- Wherever possible physical features should be followed, such as buildings, field boundaries or curtilages. However, to conserve the character and to limit expansion, a settlement boundary can exclude large gardens, orchards and other areas thereby not relating fully to such physical features.
- Boundaries may need to include areas of land and/or buildings which offer the opportunity for improvements to the entrance of the settlement or ensure infrastructure improvements or general enhancement.

## **Accommodating Growth and Necessary Development**

- 2.3 Necessary development needed to meet the appropriate level of growth for housing, employment and other uses are identified at various levels. Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policies LB1 and LB2 set out a number of strategic land requirements specifically identified for Ledbury (See Appendix 2). The specific requirements comprise a minimum of 800 new homes and 15 hectares of new employment land. Of these requirements around 625 new homes and 3 hectares of employment land are to be located on land north of the viaduct, and 12 hectares of employment land to the west of the town, south of Little Marcle Road. As such, the locations for the majority of the strategic housing and employment land needs have been determined through Herefordshire Council's Local Plan. At the next level, the community has identified a number of other community-based needs for land, especially recreation. These are considered necessary to meet deficiencies in community facilities and to promote sustainable development in accordance with Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policy LB1 (bullet 4).

## **Provision for Housing**

- 2.4 The current Ledbury NDP contains a map showing three housing sites, two of which had planning permission at the time the plan was prepared (Land at the Full Pitcher Site - planning permission for 93 dwellings; and Land South of Leadon Way - planning permission for 321 dwellings). The third represents what is understood to be the area promoted within Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy for development at the Viaduct site which would accommodate around 625 dwellings. The area shown reflects that of the planning application for the site submitted in April 2017. In addition, a further planning permission for a significant number of dwellings (140) south of Leadon Way was granted planning permission in August 2020. The four

sites together would accommodate around 1,180 dwellings which represents at least 40% over and above that required to meet strategic housing requirements. These sites should be included within the settlement boundary as indicated in Herefordshire Council's Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note 20.

- 2.5 As a consequence of the considerable excess of dwellings over and above the minimum requirement, the brief for reviewing the NDP does not include making further provision for housing outside of the existing built-up area and planning permissions. Herefordshire Council has commenced a review of its Local Plan (Core Strategy) and Ledbury Town Council has agreed that a further review of the NDP will be undertaken at such a time as Herefordshire Council's strategy and consequent housing and other requirements are known. In addition, there are good sustainability reasons for allowing a period of consolidation before any further housing growth is considered, one of which is to enable employment growth and necessary community facilities to catch-up with the population increase arising from the substantial number of dwellings that are being developed.
- 2.6 Housing development pressures have, however, continued and an examination of planning applications for other parcels of land reveal the following:
- Land north of the Viaduct was proposed in Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy for both housing and employment (policy LB2). However, planning permission was refused (code 171532) because of unsatisfactory vehicle access arrangements that were proposed. It was considered that the reasons for refusal could easily be capable of being overcome by providing a second vehicular means of access off the Leadon Way (A417) / Hereford Road (A438) roundabout.
  - Land north of Little Marcle Road between Walls Hill Camp and the River Leadon (Planning application code 184447). The proposal was to build 210 dwellings with public open space and access off of Little Marcle Road on a site of 18.6 hectares. The application was disposed of under Article 40 (13)(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Notwithstanding that decision, there were serious concerns about the impact of the proposed development upon the landscape, including the fact that the proposed vehicular means of access rises across steep land and other aspects of the development were on rising land. Not only is this site currently open countryside but it is sensitive due to the setting of the listed buildings at 'Fairtree Farm' and the proximity of the Walls Hill Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument. Further information was requested that would assist in judging the effects of development upon these considerations. Historic England was consulted upon the application and expressed considerable concern (see paragraph 2.17) which highlighted the high level of sensitivity of this land within the historic landscape, including the settings of both the Scheduled Ancient Monument and the town itself.
  - Land east of Dymock Road to the south of new housing development off Leadon Way (planning permission 182628). Planning applications codes 174495/184032 were for 420 dwellings with public open space, land for community facilities, landscaping and sustainable drainage system (SuDS). An appeal against non-determination was dismissed and planning permission refused. In weighing the planning considerations, the Planning Inspector considered that the proposal was contrary to policies that protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and for the conserving and enhancing of those environmental assets that contribute to the County's

distinctiveness, especially those landscapes with specific environmental designations; and the proposed housing would not be in an accessible location. The Inspector's report does, however, highlight that the current NDP does not meet the provisions of paragraph 14b of the NPPF in that it does not contain any housing allocations.

- Land South of Leadon Way comprising a detailed planning application (code 200752/200753) for the second phase of a housing development of 46 dwellings approved in outline under code 182628. Planning permission was refused on the basis that noise from the adjacent factory, which operates 24 hours a day 7 days a week, remains a major constraint with regards to night-time noise impact on this proposed dwelling site and noise mitigation was insufficient. In addition, no provision had been made for an element of affordable housing. Although these may be detailed matters that could be addressed through various means, the need to protect areas of existing employment from nuisance complaints is relevant to this and possibly other potential housing locations.

### **Provision for Employment**

- 2.7 The current NDP does not propose any employment sites although at an earlier stage it included a diagrammatic representation of Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy's provisions for such land north of the Viaduct site and south of Little Marcle Road together an area of undeveloped land within Lower Road Trading Estate. The policy referring to these areas was deleted by the NDP Examiner and replaced simply by a statement referring to them. The Lower Road Trading Estate already falls within the existing built-up area of the settlement and land to the north of the Viaduct sits within any extension that might accommodate the area comprising the current planning application.
- 2.8 Topic Paper 2 describes the investigations and conclusions drawn upon whether and how the requirement for 12 hectares of employment land to the south of Little Marcle Road might be accommodated within the NDP. Its conclusions have used to inform options for the settlement boundary.
- 2.9 Locally determined associated employment needs include enabling:
- provision for higher education, skills and workplace training, utilising opportunities that might be available to operate as satellite operations, for example such as connected to the New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering which is being established in Hereford.
  - small scale employment developments within or on the edge of the town in appropriate locations.
  - the promotion of tourism, particularly through increased hotel accommodation.

These will be dependent upon landowner, business and institutional needs and requirements which are currently unknown and might more usefully be promoted through an appropriate policy rather than allocations informing the definition of the settlement boundary.

### **Community Facilities**

- 2.10 The most significant need for community facilities that might influence the definition of a settlement boundary is the provision of playing fields. This is explained in Topic Paper 3 and its conclusions used to inform options for a settlement boundary. In this

regard, Herefordshire Council's advice that land allocated for other uses and important amenity areas can be included within a settlement boundary has been taken into account.

- 2.11 Other community facilities that may be relevant include provision for an enlarged surgery to serve the growing community, improved facilities for youth, additional parking at and improved access to Ledbury Railway Station, and the establishment of a tri-service facility near the bypass. Again, these are detailed land requirements dependent upon the requirements of specific organisations which are currently unknown and might more usefully be promoted through an appropriate policy rather than allocations that might inform the definition of the settlement boundary.
- 2.12 The need for other amenity open space and green infrastructure has also been investigated (see Topic report 6). Herefordshire Council's Guidance indicates these should be included within a settlement boundary where they form part of the character of the settlement and could be identified and protected by a policy. This advice has been taken into account

### **Protection of Important Sensitive Areas**

- 2.13 To protect the most sensitive landscapes, heritage assets and natural areas, these may need to be excluded from the settlement boundary to avoid development that might adversely affect them. The NPPF and Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy define general provisions for a number of these features, and it is proposed that the NDP should identify those of importance within its area (see Topic Paper 1). Legislation is currently being considered that may increase the importance of further areas, such as those that will make a significant contribution to the Nature Recovery Network.

### **Landscape Sensitivity**

- 2.14 The boundary of Malvern Hills AONB runs along most of the eastern edge of the town's built-up area. This area has the highest level of protection and 'major development'<sup>1</sup> would not normally be permitted within this AONB other than in exceptional circumstances which are described in the NPPF. The AONB boundary should continue to inform the edge of the settlement along its eastern edge.
- 2.15 Elsewhere surrounding the built-up area of the town, the landscape is also sensitive but to varying degrees. Herefordshire Council has produced an Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis for Ledbury<sup>2</sup> that indicates the level of sensitivity for various areas and shown on the Map at Appendix 3. The area along the eastern side of the town falling within Malvern Hills AONB is identified as an area of high sensitivity. The remaining areas surrounding the town, with limited exceptions, are considered to be high to medium sensitivity.
- 2.16 Herefordshire Council's analysis was on a very broad basis and a more detailed Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment<sup>3</sup> has been commissioned to provide further evidence that would inform the defining of the town's settlement boundary.

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<sup>1</sup> See NPPF (2019) footnote 55

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/187/urban\\_fringe\\_sensitivity\\_analysis\\_2010](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/187/urban_fringe_sensitivity_analysis_2010)

<sup>3</sup> [Link to report if prepared](#)

## Heritage Assets

- 2.17 Ledbury contains many important heritage assets although most are within its town centre. Walls Hill Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument (see Appendix 4), beyond to the west of the town, is an important heritage asset that should influence the settlement boundary in that direction. Historic England was particularly concerned to protect its setting when consulted upon a potential development proposal between the Monument and the town. In this regard its comments were:

*"The communities who lived in the area were, however, primarily farmers, and the landscape around the hillfort would almost certainly have been intensively occupied with farmsteads. The Leaden Valley immediately to the east of the hillfort was certainly part of this landscape, and as such contributes strongly to the significance and understanding of the hillfort."*

*"Although the town of Ledbury itself is also to the east of the hillfort, it is entirely contained on the far bank of the River Leaden (as viewed from the hillfort). In contrast the west bank of the Leaden, and slopes leading to the hillfort are currently almost free of development and open and rural in character."*

The full extent of Historic England's comments on the proposed development in this location can be viewed under 'Representations' at [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning\\_services/planning\\_application\\_search/details?id=184447&search-term=184447](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=184447&search-term=184447)

Core Strategy policy LB1 refers specifically to the valley of the River Leaden, protecting views across it from the west that are important to Ledbury's setting and historic character. The high level of sensitivity resulting from the combination of the settings for this heritage asset and the town's character is considered to affect the area rising to the west from the River Leaden between Little Marcle Road and the railway line to the north.

- 2.18 Also running along the western edge of the settlement is the historic route of the former Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal. A route has been defined and protected as both an economic and heritage asset within Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (policies E4 and LD4). The specific policy reference in E4 is:

*"In particular, the tourist industry will be supported by a number of measures including:*

*5. the safeguarding of the historic route of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal (shown on the Policies Map), together with its infrastructure, buildings, towpath and features. Where the original alignment cannot be re-established, a corridor allowing for deviations will be safeguarded. New developments within or immediately adjoining the safeguarded corridor will be required to incorporate land for canal restoration. Development not connected with the canal that would prevent or prejudice the restoration of a continuous route will not be permitted."*

The current NDP presents an alignment (assumed based upon the Core Strategy and previous Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan line) for the safeguarded route although it is possible that detailed engineering studies may result in deviations as suggested by Core Strategy policy E4. In addition, a substantial part of the route to the west of Ledbury passes through other possible land uses including the Viaduct housing site and Riverside Park that was a safeguarded amenity area in

Herefordshire UDP. On this basis it is considered that the alignment of the safeguarded canal route should not be utilised to inform the settlement boundary as a possible infrastructure project. In addition, a marina or canal basin is suggested as a potential development in association with the canal. This is understood to be an aspiration although it is uncertain whether it is capable of being delivered during the plan period.

- 2.19 Ledbury Park, and a number of other Unregistered Park and Gardens sit along the town's eastern edge. Ledbury Park contains an important Listed Building, sitting at the south-eastern end of Ledbury town centre, within a sensitive setting. The building and parkland also fall within the Malvern Hills AONB area and Ledbury Conservation Area. Consequently, the need to protect of its character and appearance is recognised and covered by a number of National and Core Strategy policies.

### **Natural Areas**

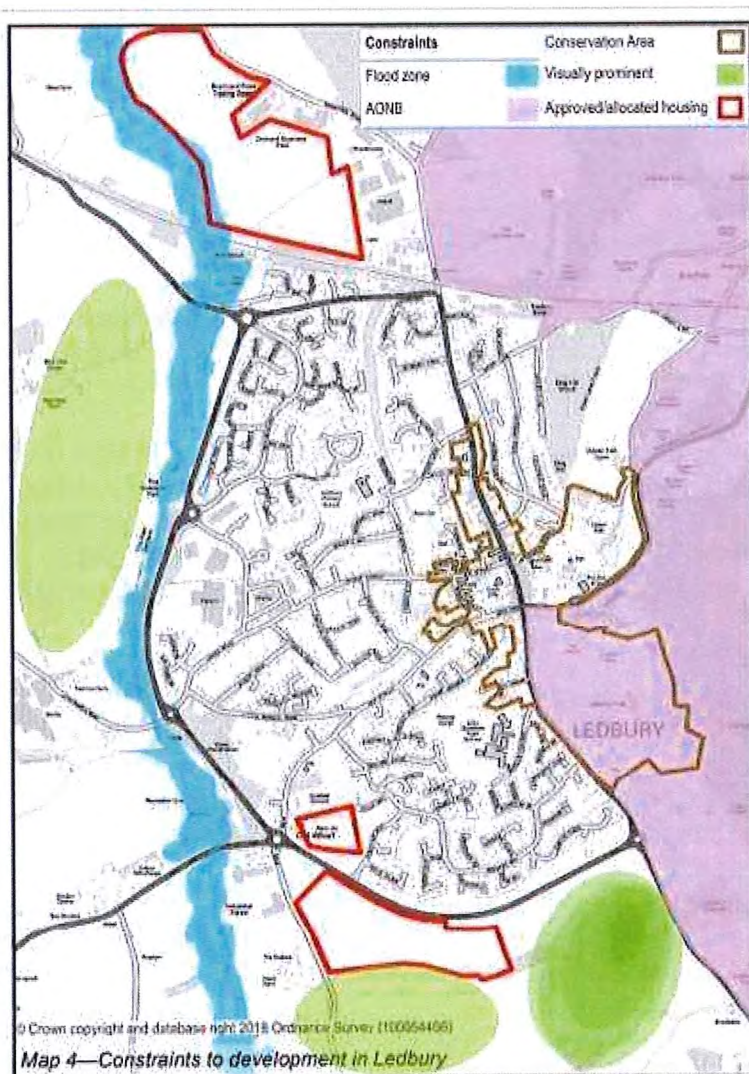
- 2.20 There are two Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the Parish, close to the eastern edge of the town and extensive areas of local importance to both the west and east of the built-up area, comprising Special Wildlife Sites (see Ledbury NDP Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report<sup>4</sup>). A number of these either contain or lie adjacent to Local Geological Sites. In combination these comprise large 'core areas' with substantial buffers upon Herefordshire Council's Ecological Network Map<sup>5</sup>. The core area along the eastern side of the town immediately abuts the edge of its built-up area. That to the west comprises woodland surrounding Walls Hill Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument. The River Leadon is identified as a wildlife corridor, and together with other corridors and stepping-stones links the western and eastern core areas (see Appendix 5). The location of the 'core area' to the east of the town should have a significant influence upon any settlement boundary. That to the west may, of itself, have less influence but adds weight to other environmental factors. It remains to be seen how such areas will be considered within any Nature Recovery Network or Strategy. Herefordshire Council is expected to be responsible for preparing the latter and may utilise information within its Ecological Network Map as one of a number of tools to inform its content.
- 2.21 The combination of environmental designations along the east side of Ledbury, comprising the AONB area, Conservation Area, national and local wildlife sites and unregistered parks and gardens referred to above, provide an extremely strong and sustainable boundary along that edge that has proved effective in maintaining Ledbury's character and setting. Elsewhere, Map 4 in the current NDP identifies a number of constraints, including a visually prominent area upon the town's southern approach. A review of landscape areas surrounding the town, including evidence presented above (paragraph 2.6) highlights two further sensitive landscape areas which should be added to this constraints map. These are:
- i) Land mainly to the east of Dymock Road and south of development under construction Leadon Way (west end): The landscape sensitivity of this area is supported by a Planning Inspector's site analysis (paragraph 2.6, bullet 3).
  - ii) Land west of the River Leadon between Little Marcle Road and the railway line: The sensitivity of this area has been confirmed by Historic England's expression of

<sup>4</sup> Add link when document placed on the NDP website

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1594/ecological-network-map>

the area's importance in forming the setting of Walls Hill Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument and the setting of Ledbury (paragraphs 2.6, bullet 2 and 2.17.

The Map below contains the additional two areas of constraint referred to above together with those previously identified.



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### Previous Boundaries

- 2.22 Herefordshire Council's guidance indicates that settlement boundaries that were defined within Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan are no longer valid. However, it is considered that these can be useful in informing work upon defining a new boundary, providing a starting point to which additions and/or deletions might be made. Appendix 6 shows the settlement boundary defined in Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> To enlarge this view Herefordshire Council's website link

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/5391/ledbury-map>

### 3. Policy Options

- 3.1 The SWOT analysis at paragraph 1.2 provides an indication of some advantages and disadvantages of defining a settlement boundary. Herefordshire Council's Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note 20 lists a number of others.

#### Advantages

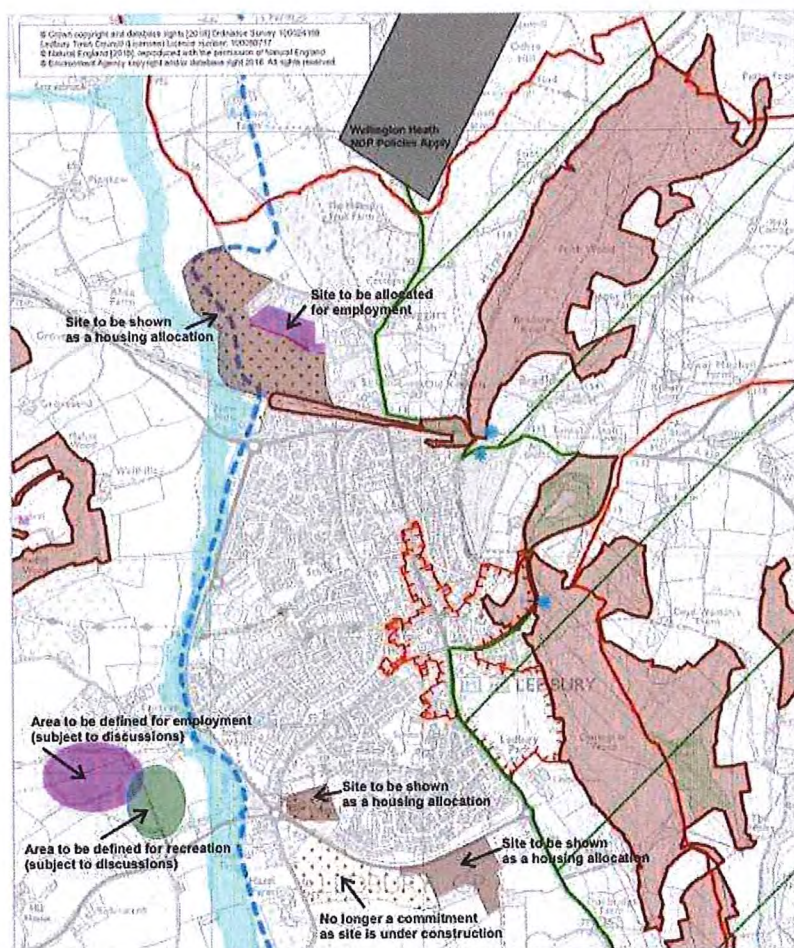
- Certainty: with a 'black line' being plotted on a plan it is easy to identify the 'settlement' from 'open countryside'.
- Locally, settlement boundaries are an understood and accepted planning tool for guiding and controlling developments.
- Ensures a more plan-led and controlled approach to future housing growth, allowing for allocating sites within your settlement rather than windfalls.
- Protects the countryside from unnecessary development and prevents ribbon development.
- Provides a co-ordinated and consistent approach providing a firm basis for refusing planning applications which are unacceptable in planning terms.
- Allows for more certainty to developers/landowners with sites/land within the boundary, as long as they adhere to all other plan policies.
- Allows the development of small sites which cannot be identified as allocations.

#### Disadvantages

- Increases land values within the settlement boundary.
  - Increases hope values for land adjoining but outside the boundary.
  - The use of settlement boundaries has led to criticism that they result in cramming as every available area of land competes for development resulting in a potential reduction in the landscape quality and townscape character, unless other policies are in place.
  - Settlement boundaries can be crude and inflexible.
  - The character of properties and the settlement, could be altered if development is allowed within the gardens of these houses within a settlement boundary
- 3.2 The above are general considerations. There may also be local considerations that would be relevant to determining whether, and if so where, a settlement boundary might be defined. The following options are presented as the basis for consultation with the community.

## **Option 1**

*Not to define a settlement boundary but rely simply upon site allocations comprising those undeveloped housing sites with planning permission, the Core Strategy Strategic Housing site, and proposals for new uses identified by other studies.*



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- 3.3 This would retain the current town policies map but with possible additions allocating land for employment, recreation and a number of community aspirations. It has been included in view of the Examiner's report upon the current NDP.

### **Additional Advantages:**

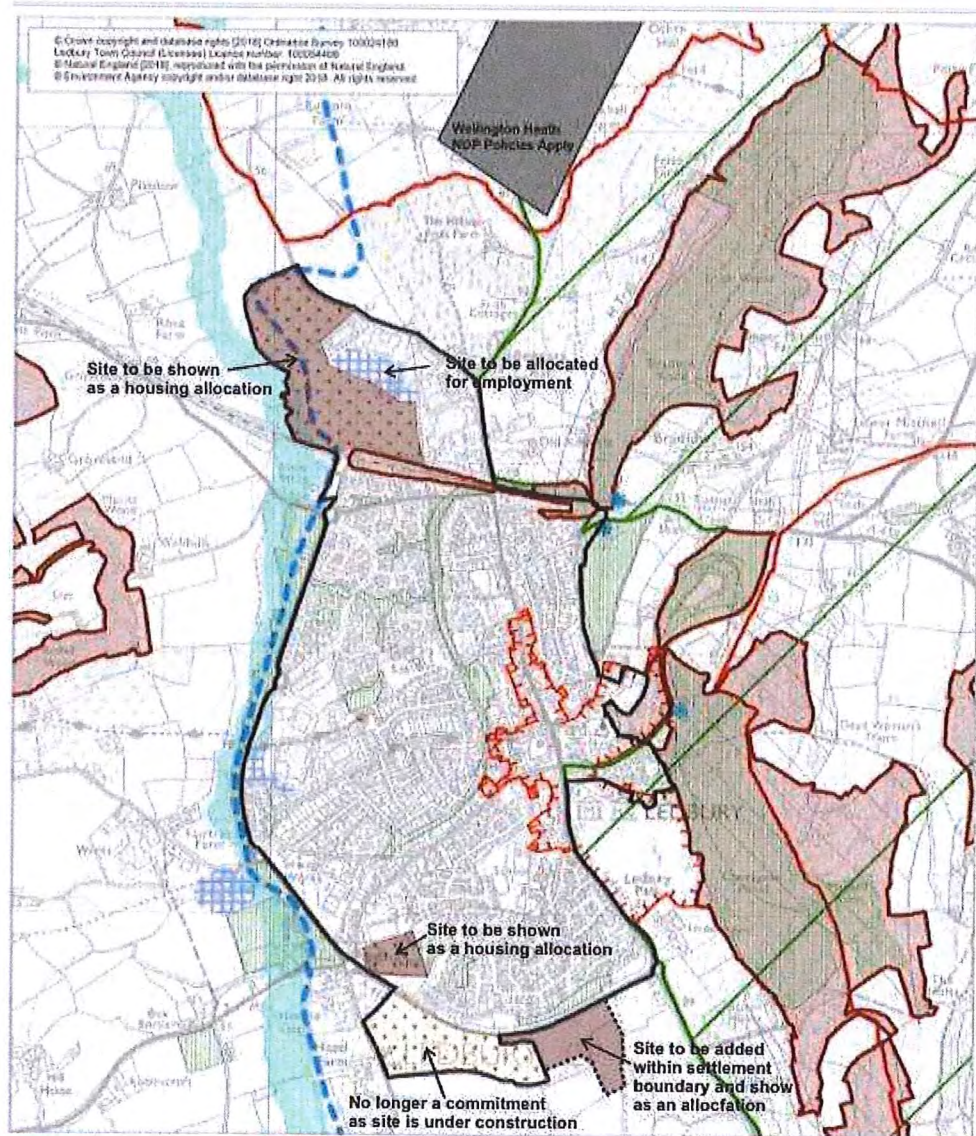
- The greater flexibility may reduce pressures for development within the historic parts of the town.

### **Additional Disadvantages:**

- Reduces the safeguards to non-designated or identified areas of importance to the environment such as the sensitive landscapes to the south and west.

## Option 2

*To utilise the former Herefordshire UDP boundary for the town, adding extensions to incorporate recent developments and sites with planning permission upon its edge together with allocating the proposed housing site to the north of the viaduct utilising the area defined for this within its planning application.*



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- 3.4 This option is similar to that included in the Original Regulation 16 Submission Draft NDP but with a number of changes to reflect:
- i) The inclusion of the housing site south of Leaddon Way (east end) which has planning permission. This should be shown as a housing allocation unless development has commenced.
  - ii) The designation of the site to the north of the Viaduct for housing and light industry. Although it was included within the boundary of that plan, it was not allocated for those purposes. Again, this should be shown as a housing allocation unless development has commenced.

- iii) The allocation of land to the rear of The Full Pitcher, New Street which is awaiting the grant of planning permission pending a Section 106 Agreement.
- iv) The site south of Leaden Way (west end) is no longer a commitment because it is under construction.

Additional Advantages:

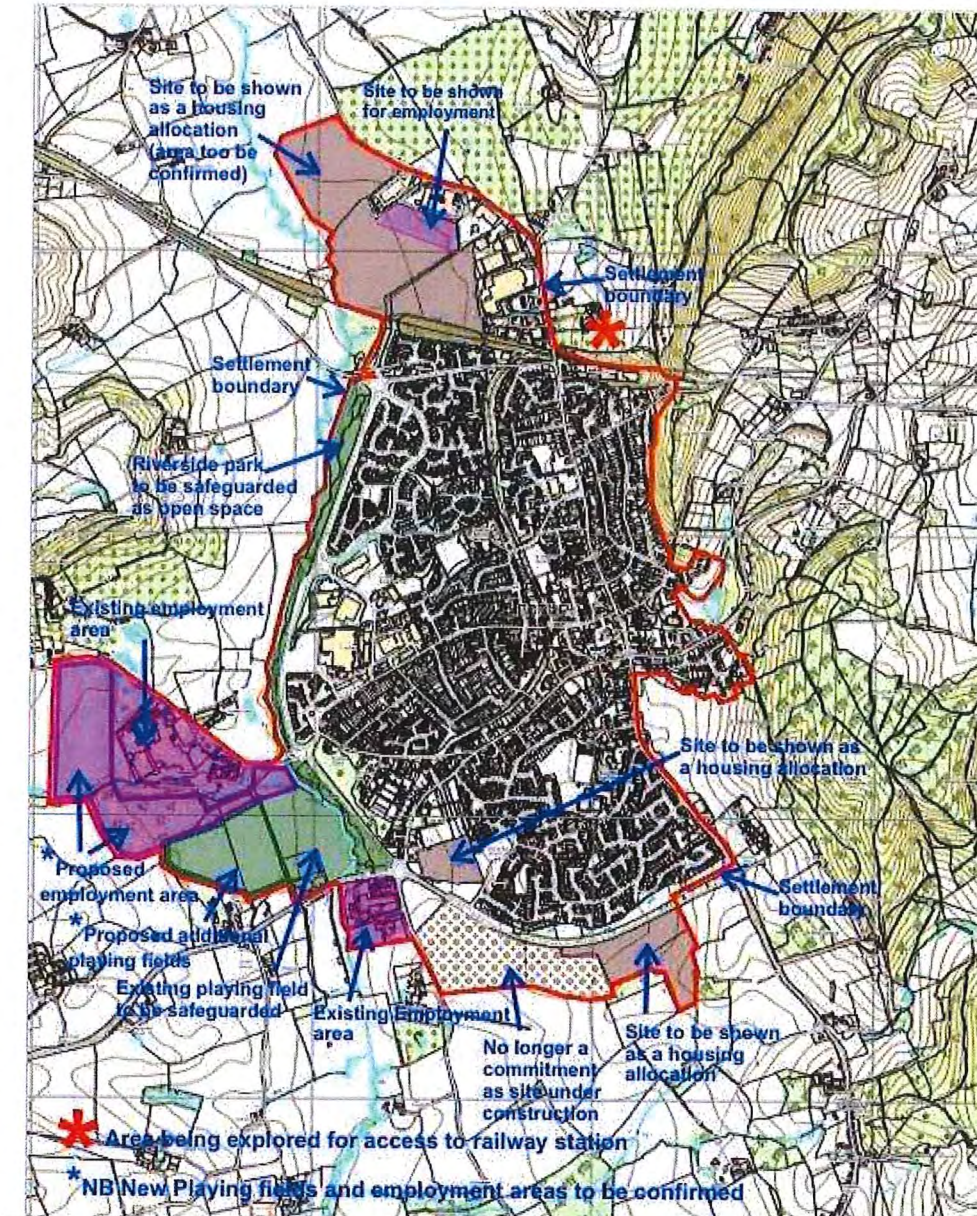
- The former UDP boundary for the town is a sound basis upon which to add additional areas that have been developed or approved through either planning permissions or strategic allocations within Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy.
- It would include housing allocations and as a consequence meet the provisions of NPPF paragraph 14b and strengthen the weight that should be given to the NDP.
- It does not include proposals that, as yet, do not have a high degree of certainty that they might be delivered.
- Exclusion of proposals for non-residential development reduces the potential for alternative uses being brought forward for these should the intended use not prove to be viable or otherwise deliverable.

Additional Disadvantages:

- It excludes a number of important amenity areas that form part of the character of the settlement, in particular the Riverside Park to which the public has access.
- It does not include proposals for employment growth and much needed recreation land within the settlement boundary and may result in reliance upon broad policies enabling such development that would not be site specific, hindering the ability to deliver.
- There is the possibility, given the three proposed allocated housing sites are have planning permission or are currently going through the planning application process, that should they all commence before the NDP is adopted, this may lead to changes that would not enable NPPF paragraph 14b to be engaged.

### Option 3

*To extend the settlement boundary defined above westwards to incorporate the Riverside Park, an area to be allocated for recreation and area for employment to the south of Little Marcle Road.*



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- 3.5 This option again builds upon the settlement boundary defined in the former Herefordshire UDP together with completed and committed development but, in addition to the housing allocations, adds further areas inside the boundary to provide for both employment growth and recreation.

#### Additional Advantages

- Inclusion of land for both employment and recreation to match housing growth by their inclusion within a settlement boundary will add to the certainty of their delivery.

- Again, providing for the two uses will help in the maintenance of a balanced and sustainable community.

#### Additional Disadvantages

- Evidence that the proposed uses cannot be delivered or unnecessary may lead to pressures for alternative development within these areas, particularly housing.

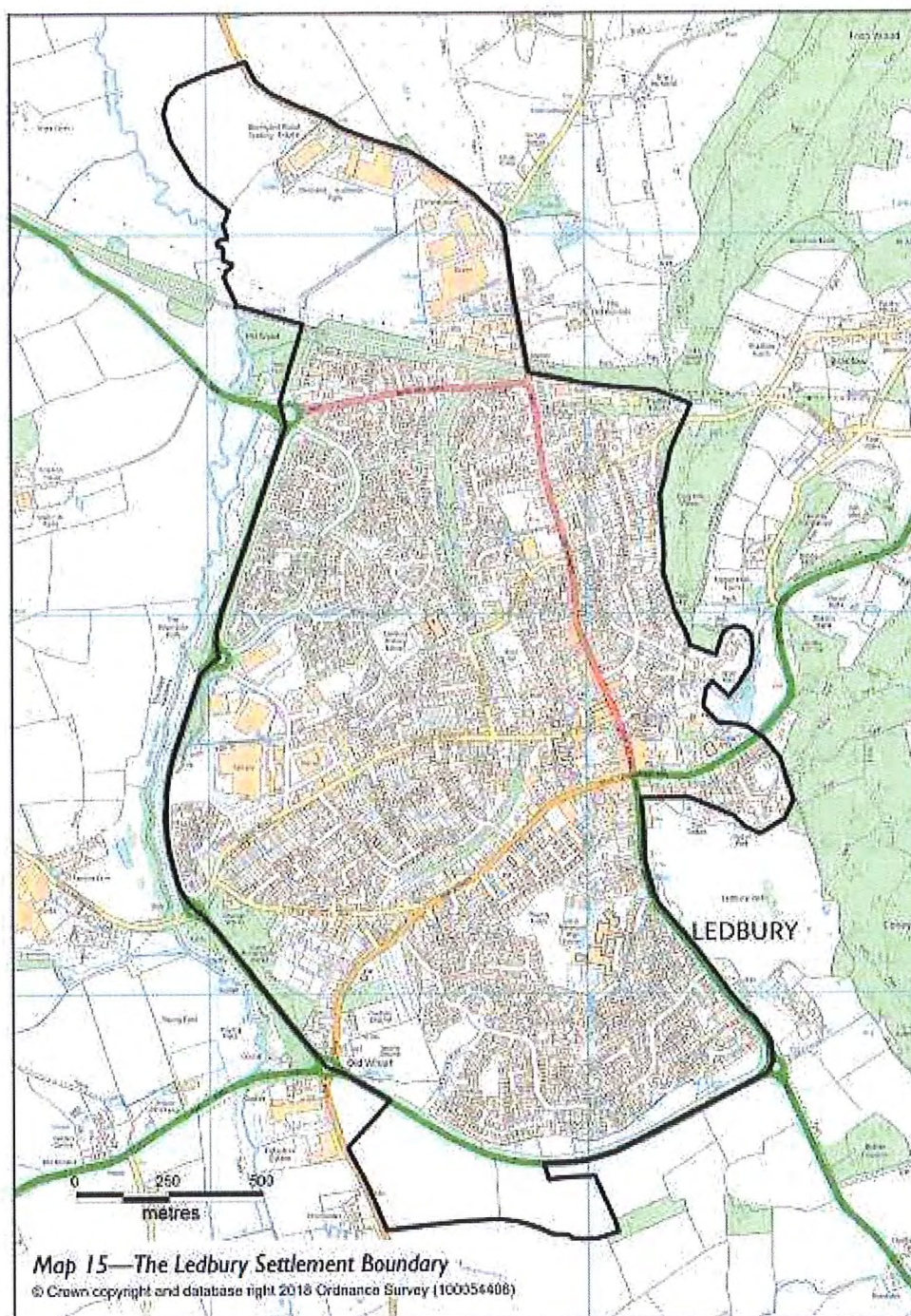
### **Further Options**

- 3.6 No further options are presented in that these would be expected to promote additional housing growth. Reference has already been made to the significant overprovision of new housing within the town and the need for a period of consolidation in order that other forms of development might be brought forward to create a balanced and sustainable community. In addition, Herefordshire Council has begun the review of its Local Plan Core Strategy which will define the extent and location of additional housing requirements for the next plan period. Further additional development at this time, when unnecessary, might compromise both any future development strategy and the approach to safeguarding the natural environment which it is understood to be under review, both in terms of landscape protection and biodiversity enhancement. In addition, the climate emergency may place a greater emphasis on the environmental component of sustainable development.

## **4. Community Consultation**

- 4.1 This section will be completed following the community consultation upon the options presented above.

## Appendix 1: Settlement Boundary Map included in the Regulation 16 Submission Draft NDP.



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## **Appendix 2: Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policies LB1 and LB2**

### **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, infill 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 400m<sup>2</sup> 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.

### **Policy LB2 - Land north of the Viaduct**

Development proposals north of the viaduct in Ledbury will be expected to bring forward the following to achieve a sustainable mixed-use urban extension of the town:

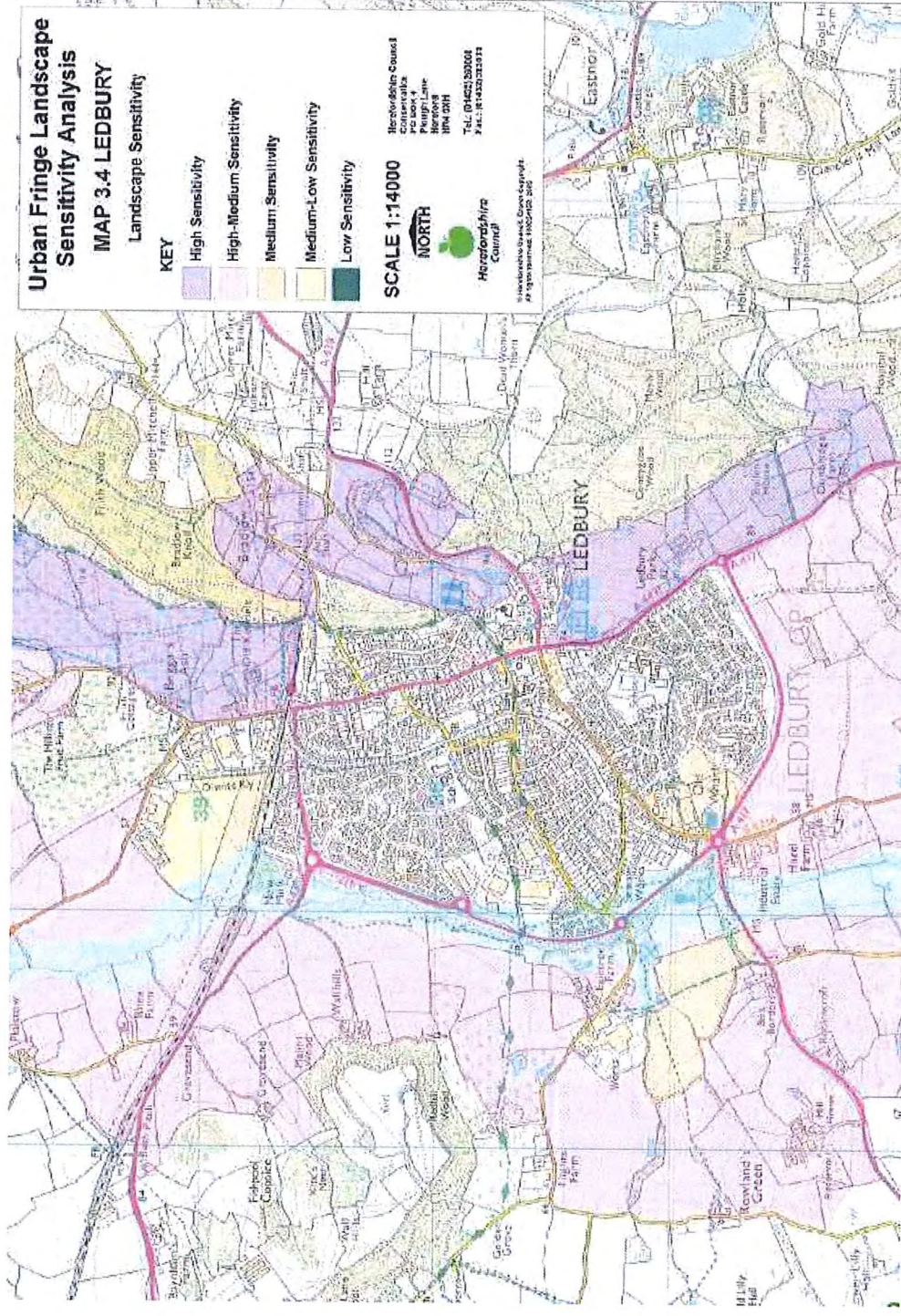
- a comprehensively planned, mixed use development of around 625 new homes, at an average density of around 40 dwellings per hectare, comprising a mix of market and

affordable house sizes and types that meet the requirements of Policy H3 and the needs identified in the latest version of the Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment;

- around 3 hectares of employment land, restricted to Use Class B1;
- a target of 40% of the total number of dwellings to be affordable housing; • land and contributions to facilitate a restored canal to be delivered in partnership with the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust;
- a new linear informal park to link to the existing town trail, riverside walk, recreational open space and existing allotments;
- the provision of developer contributions towards any identified need for new/improved community facilities/infrastructure improvements. This shall include a new 210 place primary school within the development (or an expansion of the existing primary school) and new recreational open space, play, indoor and outdoor sport facilities;
- provision of satisfactory vehicular access arrangements, the details of which will be determined at planning application stage;
- appropriate mitigation to safeguard the amenity of future occupants from unacceptable levels of noise and to safeguard the continued operation of existing businesses adjoining the area;
- development of bespoke, high quality and inclusive design, including accommodation that will meet the needs of older persons and that contributes to the distinctiveness of this part of Ledbury and respects the setting and significance of the listed viaduct and the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- safeguards to ensure there is no adverse impact on water quality and quantity in the River Leadon;
- new walking, cycling and bus links from the urban extension directly to the town trail and riverside walk under the viaduct, the railway station and town centre to create linkages to nearby development and existing community facilities;
- sustainable standards of design and construction; and
- a comprehensive sustainable urban drainage system which includes measures such as rain gardens and swales to manage ground and surface water drainage and safeguard against any increased flood risk.

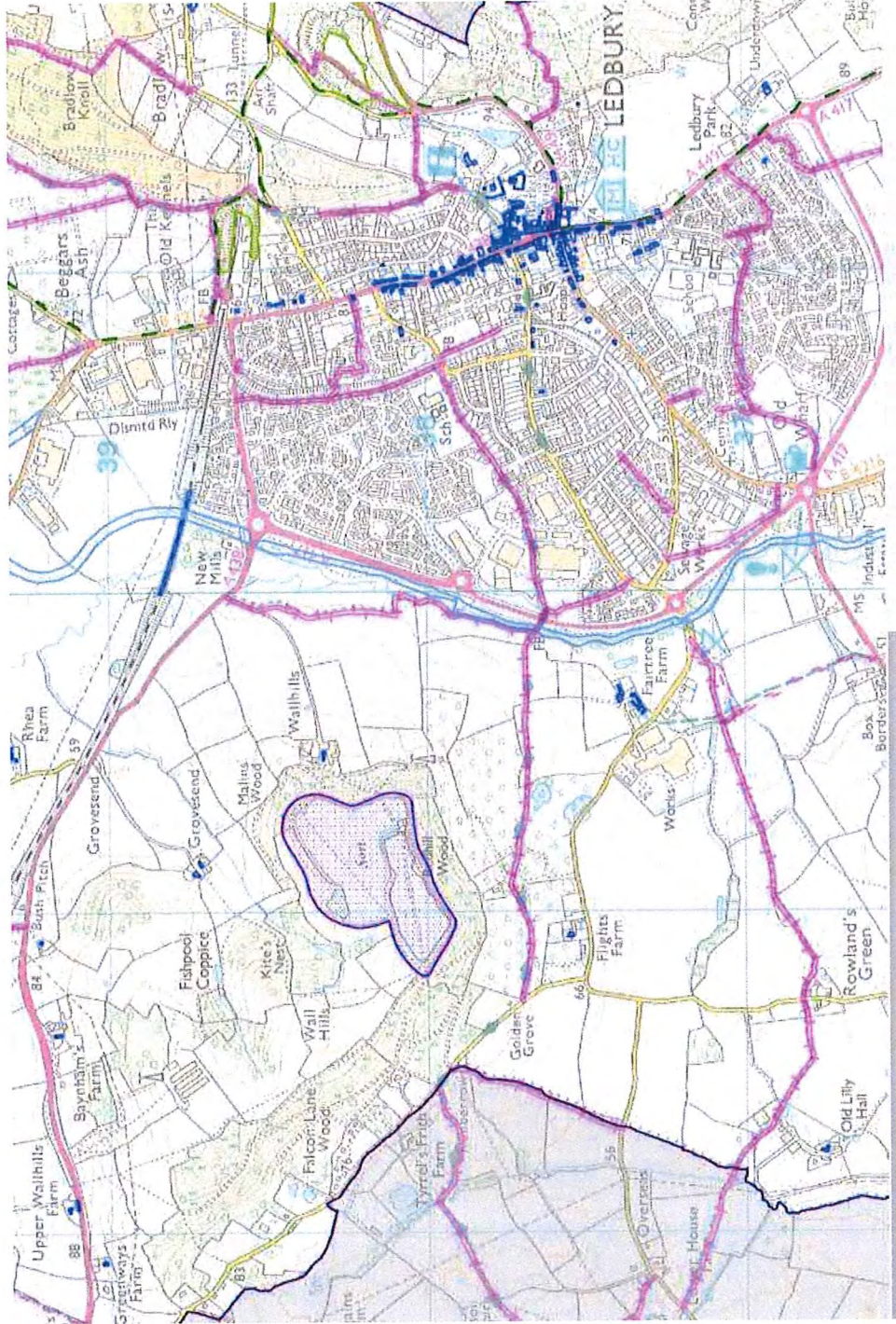
557

### Appendix 3: Ledbury Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis (Source – Herefordshire Council)



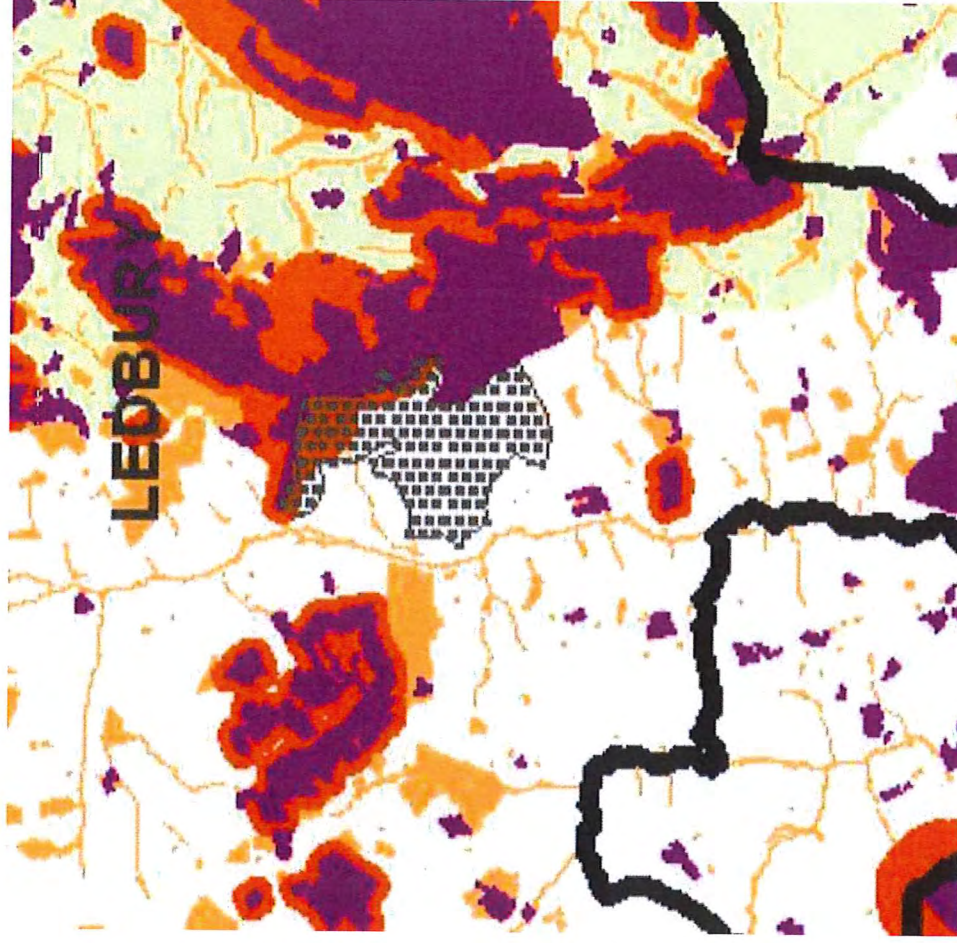
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## Appendix 4: Location of Walls Hill Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument

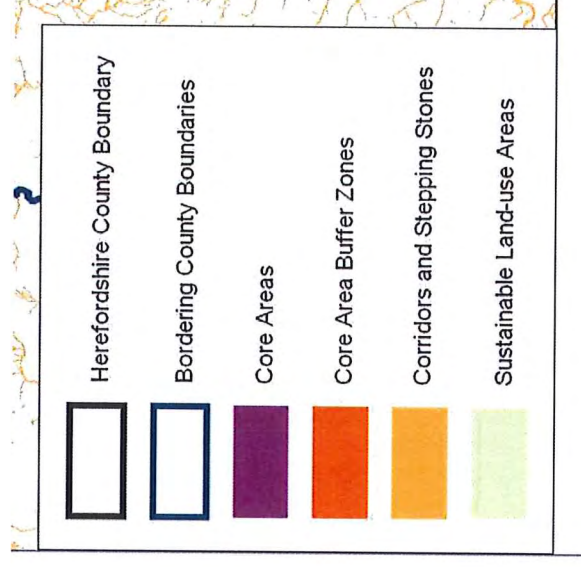


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## Appendix 5: Extract from Herefordshire Council's Ecological Network Map

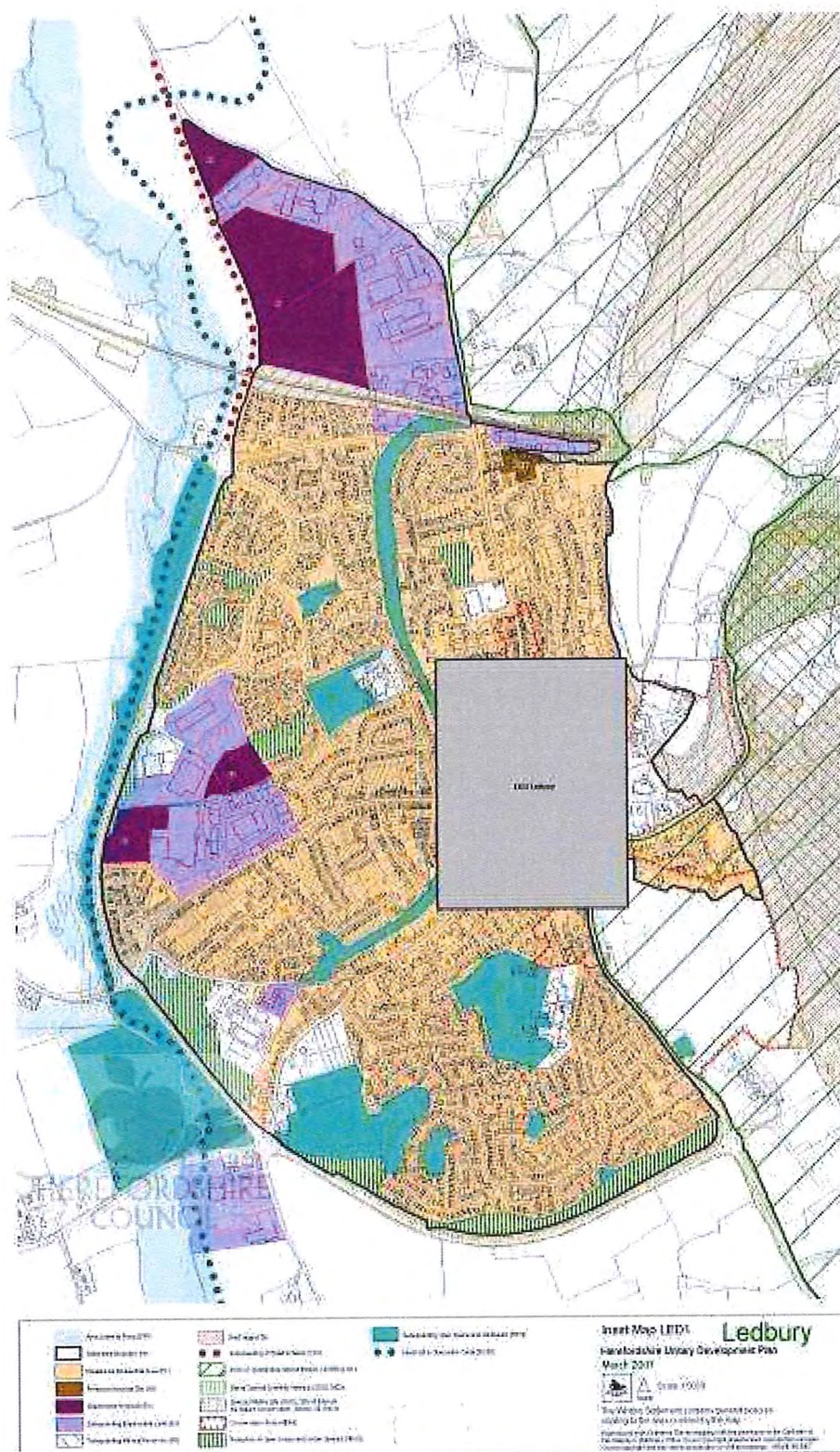


560



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## Appendix 6: Settlement Boundary Defined in Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan



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561



# Ledbury

Neighbourhood Development Plan

## Landscape and Visual Baseline Assessment

### COVER PHOTO TBC ###

## Report

Commissioned by Ledbury Town Council

### date 2021

### working draft v3 ###

# Document Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Comment
DRAFT v1	15.01.2021	CT	Issued to LTC NDP WP for review & comment
DRAFT v2	16.02.2021	CT	Issued to LTC NDP WP for review & comment
DRAFT v3	17.03.2021	CT	Working draft issued to LTC NDP WP for information
###	###	###	###

# Contents

Page number

## Foreword

## Acronyms

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>###</b>
	1.1 Purpose of Study	
	1.2 Structure of Report	
	1.3 Relevant Experience	
<b>2</b>	<b>Planning Context</b>	<b>###</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Background to NDP and LVBA</b>	<b>###</b>
	3.1 Introduction	
	3.2 Background to NDP 2012 - 2019	
	3.3 LSCA: 2019 - March 2020	
	3.4 LVBA: March 2020 - ### date 2021	
<b>4</b>	<b>Method, Process and Approach</b>	<b>###</b>
	4.1 Introduction	
	4.2 Landscape & Visual Assessment: Methods	
	4.3 Ledbury's LVBA: Process	
	4.4 Preliminary LVSA: Process	
<b>5</b>	<b>Landscape Baseline</b>	<b>###</b>
	5.1 Introduction	
	5.2 Ledbury Parish	
	5.3 Designated Landscapes	
	5.4 National Landscape Character	
	5.5 Regional / Local Landscape Character	
	5.6 Physical Landscape	
	5.7 Settlement Character and Pattern	
	5.8 Heritage Assets	
	5.9 Landscape History & HLC	
	5.10 Cultural Associations	
	5.11 Biodiversity	
	5.12 Significant Vegetation	
	5.13 Public and Social Amenity	
	5.14 Green Infrastructure	
	5.15 Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities	
	5.16 Key Landscape Functions	
	5.17 Approaches and Gateways	
	5.18 Key Constraints	
<b>6</b>	<b>Visual Baseline</b>	<b>###</b>
	6.1 Introduction	
	6.2 ### TBC	
<b>7</b>	<b>Conclusions and Recommendations</b>	<b>###</b>

564

# Appendices

Note: all appendices are available as separate documents

### all TBC

**Appendix ###: ### Figures** (see list below)

**Appendix ###: ### Landscape & Visual Assessment Criteria**

**Appendix ###: ### Maps / Settlement Pattern Analysis**

## Figures

Note: the figures are in colour; they are best printed at A3 size, but should also be legible at A4

### list = draft - all TBC

**Figure 1A:** Location Plan and Study Area - Wider

**Figure 1B:** Location Plan and Study Area - Local

**Figure 2A:** LSCA Areas - Wider

**Figure 2B:** LSCA Areas - Local

**Figure 3A:** Aerial Photograph - Wider

**Figure 3B:** Aerial Photograph - Local

**Figure 4A:** Landscape Baseline - NCAs and LCTs - Wider

**Figure 4B:** Landscape Baseline - NCAs and LCTs - Local

**Figure 5A:** Landuse - Wider

**Figure 5B:** Landuse - Local

**Figure 6A:** Landscape Baseline - Heritage - Wider

**Figure 6B:** Landscape Baseline - Heritage - Local

**Figure 7A:** Landscape Baseline - Historic Landscape Character - Wider

**Figure 7B:** Landscape Baseline - Historic Landscape Character - Local

**Figure 8A:** Landscape Baseline - Biodiversity - Wider

**Figure 8B:** Landscape Baseline - Biodiversity - Local

**Figure 9A:** Landscape Baseline - Significant Vegetation - Wider

**Figure 9B:** Landscape Baseline - Significant Vegetation - Local

**Figure 10A:** Landscape Baseline - Public and Social Amenity - Wider

**Figure 10B:** Landscape Baseline - Public and Social Amenity - Local

**Figure 11A:** Landscape Baseline - Policy - Wider

**Figure 11B:** Landscape Baseline - Policy - Local

**Figure 12A:** Visual Baseline - Wider

**Figure 12B:** Visual Baseline - Local

# Foreword to the Report

This report forms part of the evidence-base for Ledbury's neighbourhood development plan. It is the result of many months of study and hard work. As far as I am aware, it is unique. Usually, technical assessments are undertaken by expert professionals; in Ledbury's case, the majority of the baseline collection and analysis was carried out by volunteers from the local community. Several professional landscape architects also offered their help pro bono. It has been a truly collaborative community exercise. Furthermore, all are keen to start work on the next stage of the process, which involves developing and realising the vision for Ledbury as it will be in 2060.

I am very grateful to everyone who generously provided their time, assistance, information and on-the-ground knowledge, all of which have been invaluable. Any errors in the text are likely to be mine, so if spotted, please let me know. Feedback can be via the Parish Council / NDP Steering Group representatives, or directly to the author of this report ([carly@carlytinkler.com](mailto:carly@carlytinkler.com)). Thank you.

Carly Tinkler BA CMLI FRSA MIALE ### date

# Acronyms

Below are acronyms commonly used in the landscape assessment:

ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
ASNW	Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BRC	Biological Records Centre
CA	Conservation Area
CRoW	Countryside and Rights of Way
DPH	Dwellings per hectare
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ELC	European Landscape Convention
EPS	European Protected Species
GI	Green Infrastructure
GLVIA3	Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition
HC	Herefordshire Council
HE	Historic England
HER	Historic Environment Record
HLC	Historic Landscape Character / Characterisation
KFP	Key Focal Point
KVP	Key Viewpoint
KVR	Key View Route
KVZ	Key View Zone
LVSA	Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment
LVBA	Landscape and Visual Baseline Assessment
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment
LCT	Landscape Character Type
LGS	Local Green Space
LGeoS	Local Geological Site
LNK	Local Nature Reserve
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LSCA	Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment
LTC	Ledbury Town Council
LVA	Landscape and Visual Appraisal
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
NARA	Nature and Recreation Area
NCA	National Character Area

NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NE	Natural England
NFI	National Forest Inventory
NPA	Neighbourhood Plan Area
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NVC	National Vegetation Classification
OS	Ordnance Survey
PHI	Priority Habitat Inventory
POS	Public Open Space
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PRoW	Public Right of Way
QoL	Quality of Life
QoLC	Quality of Life Capital
RPG	Registered Park and Garden
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SM	Scheduled Monument
SEO	Statement of Environmental Opportunity
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
UPG	Unregistered (Historic) Park and Garden
WFD	Water Framework Directive
VP	Viewpoint
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility
ZVI	Zone of Visual Influence

568

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of Study

- 1.1.1 This report sets out the findings of an assessment commissioned by Ledbury Town Council (LTC), the aim of which was to establish Ledbury's current landscape and visual baseline situation.
- 1.1.2 The information forms part of the NDP's evidence-base. In the short term, it will be used to i) inform preliminary judgements about landscape and visual sensitivity; ii) help establish the line of the town's settlement boundary; iii) identify and allocate land for certain uses and / or protection; and iv) inform, guide and support policies being proposed for inclusion in the next iteration of Ledbury's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).
- 1.1.3 In the longer term, it will be used to inform other studies that will be needed to determine the direction of travel for Ledbury's growth over the next forty years. In addition, it will be a valuable resource for the local community and decision-makers, helping to ensure that when changes are proposed, they can be accommodated without causing harm to valuable landscape features and qualities. In the case of development, it will also help ensure that the end product is of a quality that is commensurate with its surroundings.
- 1.1.4 The report will be updated as changes occur and new information comes in, with additional assessments being carried out as required.
- 1.1.5 The above are explained in more detail in the report.

## 1.2 Structure of Report

- 1.2.1 **Section 2** sets out the wider planning context within which the neighbourhood planning and landscape and visual assessment processes fit.
- 1.2.2 **Section 3** summarises the background to Ledbury's NDP, explains the role of the assessments within it, and describes the approach adopted and processes followed during the commission.
- 1.2.3 **Section 4** explains landscape and visual assessment methods and techniques generally, and the method that was developed specifically for Ledbury. This is followed by an explanation of Ledbury's landscape and visual baseline assessment process. The section concludes with a summary of the landscape and visual sensitivity assessment process.
- 1.2.4 **Section 5** describes the current landscape baseline situation in and around Ledbury town and parish.
- 1.2.5 **Section 6** describes the area's visual baseline.
- 1.2.6 **Section 7** sets out the assessment's conclusions, and recommendations.
- 1.2.7 Appendices are as follows:  
### all TBC

## 1.3 Relevant Experience

- 1.3.1 This assessment was carried out and the report produced by landscape practitioner Carly Tinkler, with the help of the local community and professional volunteers.
- 1.3.2 Carly is a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI), a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA), and a Member of the International Association for Landscape Ecology (MIALE). She specialises in landscape, environmental and colour assessment / planning, masterplanning, design, and historic

landscapes, and has done so for over 35 years. She is currently a freelance consultant based in Malvern, but ran her own multidisciplinary practice with offices in the UK and France in the 1980s and 90s, and has worked in both public and private sectors.

- 1.3.3 She was a contributor to the Landscape Institute (LI)'s *Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* 1<sup>st</sup> edition, and a reviewer of the current 3<sup>rd</sup> edition ('GLVIA3'). She judges awards and competitions for the LI, and is a member of LI and Natural England working groups tasked with updating current guidance and providing consultation responses, recent examples including the revised NPPF, the 25-Year Environment Plan, and the Agriculture Bill.
- 1.3.4 Carly has been instrumental in the promotion of the 'landscape-led and iterative' approach to development, which is now being adopted by local planning authorities and other bodies. She produced the method and criteria for, and led the team undertaking, landscape assessments of over 300 sites for Herefordshire Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). She has recently produced / is currently working on guidance documents for the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership, is a member of design panels, and is regularly called as an expert witness for planning inquiries, giving evidence on behalf of appellants, defendants and Rule 6 Parties.
- 1.3.5 She works closely with local communities, carrying out landscape and visual assessments for, and providing ongoing advice on, neighbourhood plans, helping people to develop a more in-depth and informed understanding of their landscapes, and 'landscape value'. In March 2020, she was invited to give a presentation on 'valued landscapes' at the Planning Inspectorate's Annual Training Event.

## 2 Planning Context

- 2.1 This section sets out the wider planning context which dictates the neighbourhood planning and assessment processes.
- 2.2 In 2010, the government introduced the concept of neighbourhood planning. Following the 2011 Localism Act, neighbourhood planning policies were included in the first (July 2012) version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.3 The NPPF sets out the policies with which new development should comply. Broadly speaking, there are three key factors that must be taken into account in the decision-making process: social, economic and environmental. An appropriate - ideally equal - balance should be struck between them.
- 2.4 The NPPF states that development should be on land '*of the right types*' and '*in the right places*', and that '*Planning policies and decisions should... ensure that new development is appropriate for its location.*' It also states that development should '*contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment*', and places great emphasis on '*the creation of high quality buildings and places*', noting that '*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities*'.
- 2.5 Clearly, some areas are likely to be more appropriate for development than others, for example degraded, or previously-developed / 'brownfield' land<sup>2</sup>. However, in many cases it seems that regardless of what the NPPF's requirements and aspirations are, environmental factors do not carry as much weight as they should in the planning balance; places and features of high value are being lost, 'sense of place' and 'local distinctiveness' are being eroded, and 'high quality' design is rarely achieved.
- 2.6 One of the reasons for this is probably the time and effort involved in establishing exactly what is there; whether it is valuable and if so, to whom and why; and whether it merits conservation, protection, restoration and / or enhancement.
- 2.7 Gaining an in-depth understanding of an area's character, and its importance / value, is a fundamental part of the process of judging the effects of change on the landscape and those who use it, and the implications. The health and well-being of both the environment and the communities it supports are of paramount importance, and landscape makes a significant contribution to this (the meaning of landscape as used in a planning context is explained in Section 4).
- 2.8 However, whilst information about nationally-important sites and features is readily available, it is more difficult and time-consuming to find information about sites and features of local and neighbourhood importance, especially if they are not designated.
- 2.9 In Ledbury's case, the eastern part of the parish lies within the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB), and the rest of it lies within the AONB's setting. AONBs are agreed to be highly valuable (on a national and even international level) by common consensus, and are therefore afforded the highest level of protection in the NPPF (although even these designations do not preclude new development).

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<sup>1</sup> The NPPF was first published in March 2012, and was revised in July 2018 and February 2019. In this report, all NPPF policy references relate to the February 2019 version unless stated otherwise. ### check no later revisions prior to report publication esp check refs to para 170 / other in report

<sup>2</sup> The revised (21<sup>st</sup> July 2019) version of the Government's Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) on the Natural Environment provides more information on this subject - see paragraph 003 Reference ID: 8-003-20190721 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment>

- 2.10 Conversely, features and factors of high local and neighbourhood value may not be designated so are often overlooked. The onus of establishing features and factors of high value often falls on the local community, as it is rarely volunteered by the developer. Ironically, the community studies sometimes identify previously unknown or undesignated assets which are later recognised as being of national significance.
- 2.11 One of the NPPF's original 'fundamental objectives' was *'to put unprecedented power in the hands of communities to shape the places in which they live'*.
- 2.12 According to the Government's website<sup>3</sup>, *'Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area.*  
*'They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead.*  
*'Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.'*
- 2.13 In other words, local communities can help to protect, enhance, and shape the future of, their local environment by producing their own NDPs, with planning policies which are specific and relevant to the local area and its people. So long as the NDP policies do not conflict with national or local policies, the NDP will form part of and sit alongside the plans prepared by the local planning authority (LPA).
- 2.14 It is also important to note that neighbourhood planning is not just about trying to find the most appropriate places for new development (of any form) to take place: it is also an opportunity for the community to identify the *least* appropriate places, and formally protect areas / features which it considers to be of high local value.
- 2.15 NDPs can designate certain areas as 'Local Green Spaces' (LGSs)<sup>4</sup>. The designation is *'a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities'*. The criteria for LGS designation include areas / features which are *'demonstrably special to a local community'*, of *'particular local significance'*, and *'local in character'*.
- 2.16 Producing an NDP can take several years. Both Ledbury and neighbouring Colwall parish began work on theirs in 2012. The process involves rounds of public and statutory consultation, and the draft plan may be revised many times before it is complete. The final version of the NDP goes before an examiner, who studies the document and decides whether it is fit-for-purpose. The proposed NDP policies must be fully justified, and based on clear evidence derived from a wide range of studies and technical assessments - hence the need for this one. Ledbury's NDP wasn't 'made' until 2019 (with caveats - see Section 3), and Colwall's NDP has yet to be made. ### check before publish report - may have been by then.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

<sup>4</sup> <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/making-local-green-space-designations-neighbourhood-plan/>

## 3 Background to NDP & LVBA

### 3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The background to, and detailed information about, Ledbury's NDP is available on LTC's website<sup>5</sup>; this section summarises the background to Ledbury's NDP, explains the role of the landscape and visual baseline assessment within the NDP process, and describes the approach adopted and processes followed during the commission.

### 3.2 Background to NDP: 2012 - 2019

- 3.2.1 Ledbury's 'neighbourhood area' - i.e. the area that the NDP would cover - was designated in November 2012. An NDP steering group was set up, and work on the plan began right away.
- 3.2.2 According to the published NDP, the plan took *'thousands of hours by residents, volunteers, Ledbury Town Council (LTC) staff and Councillors, guided by paid consultants, to produce'*.
- 3.2.3 By July 2017, the Regulation 14 draft plan was ready for submission to Herefordshire Council (HC). In April 2018, the Regulation 16 draft was produced, and consultation was carried out during April and May of that year. The NDP examination commenced in June, and the examiner's report was published in October 2018.
- 3.2.4 The report set out recommendations for a number of modifications to the plan, including the deletion of Policy BE1.2 and associated Map 15. Policy BE1.2 related to the town's settlement boundary, which was drawn on Map 15. The policy said, *'Development within the settlement boundary will be supported. Residential development outside the settlement boundary, other than that identified as appropriate within HCS Policy RA3, will not be supported'*.
- 3.2.5 The basis for the recommendation was that *'neither Policy BE1.2 nor its supporting text provide any information in respect of how the proposed settlement boundary was considered through the plan-making process. Further information provided by the Qualifying Body in this regard appears limited in its scope.'* In other words, the examiner concluded that not enough evidence had been provided to objectively determine the line of the settlement boundary; furthermore, the line had not been endorsed by a majority of respondents.
- 3.2.6 HC decided to accept and make the recommended modifications - many of which were minor adjustments to the text - in order for an amended NDP to proceed without further delay to referendum and hopefully, adoption.
- 3.2.7 However, without a policy-protected settlement boundary in place, the town and its outskirts would be more vulnerable to the pressures of development. In planning terms there is a presumption in favour of built development within the settlement boundary whereas, beyond the boundary in open countryside, development is much more tightly controlled. The purpose of the settlement boundary is to act as a distinct, robust and defensible line between these areas, determining where certain types of development may be acceptable or, where protection of land is required, for a wide variety of reasons. It was therefore agreed that this matter would be dealt with during the future NDP review.
- 3.2.8 In December 2018, a referendum for voters within the Ledbury neighbourhood area was held. 90.6% of those who responded to the question *'Do you want Herefordshire Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Ledbury to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'* answered 'yes'.
- 3.2.9 The NDP was made on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2019. Soon afterwards, LTC's NDP Working Party began the process of building up the evidence-base for a new settlement boundary and other policies. It was

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/Neighbourhood\\_Development\\_Plan.aspx](http://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/Neighbourhood_Development_Plan.aspx)

clear that technical studies would be needed, especially to help identify and evaluate potential settlement boundary lines and land use allocations, and justify the preferred options.

- 3.2.10 LTC had been advised that the best form of study for the exercise was a Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (LSCA), and so they decided to find out more about what that entailed.

### 3.3 LSCA: 2019 - March 2020

- 3.3.1 In February 2019, LTC asked Carly Tinkler and a local planning consultant to attend an NDP Working Party meeting to discuss the settlement boundary / allocations study and LSCAs specifically, and the NDP review generally. In June 2019, LTC prepared a brief and invited landscape practitioners including Carly to submit fee proposals for carrying out an LSCA.
- 3.3.2 More information about LSCA and other forms of landscape assessment is provided in Section 4, but in a nutshell, LSCA was developed in response to the growing need for people, communities, planning authorities and government organisations to make informed decisions about the future allocation of land for development of various types. It is a systematic, evidence-based process, providing an objective, impartial and transparent system for assessing the sensitivity of the landscape and its capacity to accommodate change of a certain type, whilst also retaining the aspects of the environment which - for a variety of reasons - are valued.
- 3.3.3 In Ledbury's case, the LSCA's primary purpose was to establish levels of capacity for residential development, to help the community to decide objectively whether new residential development may be acceptable / appropriate in certain locations, given the likely implications. It would also consider the capacity of land west of the town for future employment and / or recreational use.
- 3.3.4 The findings would be used to inform decisions about the location of the settlement boundary, LGSs, green infrastructure, and key viewpoints. They would form part of the evidence-base required for a variety of NDP policies, and would also be factored in to Ledbury's Design Guide. In addition, they would be used to help develop detailed landscape strategies and future environmental and recreational projects / initiatives / enhancements / design codes for the local area, the settlement, and individual parcels of land - these could also be the subject of NDP policies.
- 3.3.5 LSCAs usually involve several months' work for a dedicated team of people, and so they are costly: unfortunately, the quotes LTC received were well beyond the available budget. Carly was subsequently invited to a meeting to discuss alternative solutions. She explained that one of the most time-consuming parts of LSCA is carrying out and writing up the findings of the baseline landscape and visual studies; she therefore suggested that local people might volunteer to undertake the bulk of the baseline studies themselves, under her guidance. She would then do the required analysis, carry out the technical assessment, and write up the report.
- 3.3.6 She said that this had worked well on past projects, especially because local people often know more about their own back-yards than most and are a mine of information. Importantly, local involvement in the studies helps engender a sense of community ownership / responsibility / pride in the outcome, as well as a deeper understanding of and respect for landscape and its value.
- 3.3.7 LTC agreed with the suggestion, and work started in January 2020. Volunteers were recruited. Groups were set up with members who would be responsible for each LSCA topic (physical landscape, character, heritage, biodiversity, public and social amenity, views and visual amenity and so on). The LSCA purpose and process was explained to them; examples and templates were sent out; maps were provided. The instructions were straightforward: go out and record 'what's there'.
- 3.3.8 Despite the majority of the volunteers being no more than keen amateurs, their submissions were of a higher quality than many professional assessments. Furthermore, not only had they comprehensively recorded 'what is there', they had also started considering the next stage of the

LSCA process, i.e. determining 'how important is what is there, to whom, and why' - in this case with the focus being on factors and features of high neighbourhood landscape and visual value.

- 3.3.9 One of the LSCA's main objectives was to establish levels of capacity for future residential development along with some employment and / or recreational use west of the town. However, it soon became clear that what was really needed was a cohesive plan for the vision of Ledbury as it could be in 2060, which would factor in predictions about how people might be living / working / travelling then, and accommodate the various requirements associated with the increase in population, and climate change. New infrastructure, access, education, health, employment, sustainable food production, GI / natural capital / ecosystem services and so on would need to be considered. The Ledbury community was not against the principle of new development and growth - on the contrary, there was an appetite for it. However, the community wanted to be involved in planning their own future, and not have what could be perceived as arbitrary developments imposed upon them.
- 3.3.10 It was agreed that the Ledbury 2060 vision was important, but the immediate priority was completing the LSCA and revising the NDP to include the evidence-based settlement boundary and other policies. It was hoped that the NDP would be made early in 2021, in time for it to form part of HC's forthcoming core strategy review. However, it was also agreed that this would be the first stage of a two-stage process, the second stage being development of the Ledbury 2060 vision.
- 3.3.11 The aim was to complete the LSCA and produce settlement boundary and land allocation options for informal consultation by midsummer 2020. The NDP would then be revised, and Regulation 14 consultation would begin in early autumn.
- 3.3.12 By early March 2020, about half the baseline work had been carried out, the rest was ongoing. LTC decided to organise a day-long workshop for the LSCA topic group members, the aim being to bring the teams together, discuss what had been done so far, and plan the next steps. The information gathered would be pooled, shared, and cross-referenced with other topics. Any information gaps or help needed would be noted. The attendees would be asked to start making objective value judgements about the features and factors they had identified. This was also an ideal time to exchange preliminary thoughts about the Ledbury 2060 vision, and consider incorporating aspects of the vision into the LSCA if relevant.
- 3.3.13 In addition, the workshop was an opportunity to meet and talk to the landscape practitioners who had offered their time free of charge, to help digitise the information, analyse it and establish levels of sensitivity and capacity. Interestingly, the fact that the community was carrying out the technical studies themselves had generated interest from other professionals, including representatives from government organisations and other bodies. Several asked if they could attend.
- 3.3.14 The workshop was due to be held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March, with over 50 people expected. By Friday 13<sup>th</sup> it was clear that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, social-distancing measures were likely to be required, so numbers were cut to the bare minimum. On Monday 16<sup>th</sup>, the government announced that 'unnecessary social contact' should be avoided. At that point, LTC decided to postpone the workshop, pause the NDP and LSCA work, and regroup in due course.

## 3.4 Landscape & Visual Baseline Assessment: March 2020 - ### date TBC 2021

- 3.4.1 Despite the enormous challenges it posed to so many, with hindsight it appears that lock-down - and the enforced pause in work on the NDP - had certain benefits.
- 3.4.2 The programme for revising and making the NDP was ambitious, and in mid-March 2020, there was still much to be done. However, although no-one knew how long social-distancing measures would

remain in place, it was clear they would make both technical assessments and public consultation exercises difficult if not impossible. They would probably also delay the Core Strategy review programme and other planning procedures. This meant there would be more time available for finalising the LSCA and the NDP revisions.

- 3.4.3 In addition, LTC was preparing for a public inquiry that was due to be held in Ledbury in mid-July. This would require significant input including from some of the NDP working party and LSCA topic group members, who would have struggled to cope with both at the same time.
- 3.4.4 Furthermore, the inquiry was considering whether approval for new residential development and employment use should be granted on a previously-allocated site at the northern edge of the town (known as the viaduct site). If approved, the LSCA and NDP would need to factor it in, but the decision was unlikely to be published until several months after the inquiry closed. There was another site, south of Leadon Way, on which planning permission for residential development was being sought, and which, if approved, would also affect the findings of the LSCA, and NDP strategies and policies (in fact, permission for the Leadon Way site was granted in August 2020, and the viaduct site appeal was allowed in March 2021). Other planning applications have been, and will continue to be made<sup>6</sup>.
- 3.4.5 Finally, in August 2020, the Government announced it was proposing a new planning system, which it said '*is easier for the public to access, transforms the way communities are shaped and builds the homes this country needs*'. The proposals were subject to consultation and as of ### date, responses were still being considered. ### add footnote ref to white paper or updated info ### TBC outcome / update below if final before publish baseline report
- 3.4.6 Under the new system, plans produced by local authorities would have to divide land within the plan area into three categories: 1) Growth, 2) Renewal and 3) Protected:
- Growth areas are those considered suitable for 'substantial' development. Importantly, within these areas, *outline approval for development would automatically be secured* for the forms and types of development specified in the plan.
  - Renewal areas are considered suitable for some development, "*such as gentle densification*".
  - Despite their name, protected areas are not automatically protected from development, but development would be "restricted" as it is now in National Parks and AONBs.
- 3.4.7 Neighbourhood planning would continue under the new system, but there would be greater community involvement in drawing up local plans: the government says this will "*give neighbourhoods and communities an earlier and more meaningful voice in the future of their area as plans are made*".
- 3.4.8 Representatives from LTC / the NDP working party and their consultants discussed the proposed planning changes along with other NDP matters at meetings with HC held in August and September.
- 3.4.9 The priority was still to get the NDP made as quickly as possible, focussing on policies for the settlement boundary, broad allocations for future development (mainly sport / employment), strategic GI, and a commitment to developing the vision for Ledbury in 2060. However, on the basis of the uncertainties and factors outlined above, especially the changes to the planning system, it was concluded that a different approach to the landscape and visual assessments would have to be adopted.
- 3.4.10 In fact, the new system is similar in principle to the zoning system already envisaged for Ledbury, so could work well. Instead of HC carrying out the studies required to establish which land should fall

<sup>6</sup> Currently, ### TBC = note update before publish baseline report Ledbury is under significant pressure to accept new development, residential in particular. This because phosphate levels in the River Wye, which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), are above acceptable limits; therefore, until the situation improves, HC cannot approve any planning applications that could potentially increase levels of phosphate entering the watercourse. Ledbury is one of the few larger settlements in the county that is not affected by the moratorium, as it is not within the catchments of the Rivers Wye or Lugg.

into which category, LTC and its consultants would do the work in collaboration with the local community. It was not clear whether LSCA or a different form of assessment would be most appropriate for the exercise - the method would have to be tailored to suit whatever the new planning system dictated, which could require the identification and designation of growth, renewal and protected category areas at local and neighbourhood (and ideally, site-specific) levels. However, it was still necessary to complete the evidence-base required for the current NDP revisions.

- 3.4.11 It was therefore agreed that the best approach would be not to progress the full LSCA as planned, given that it could quickly become redundant, but to start work on a stand-alone report that captured and set out the findings of the landscape and visual baseline studies (see method in Section 4). This information would form the starting point for future assessments.
- 3.4.12 At the same time, a preliminary landscape and visual sensitivity assessment (LVSA) would be carried out (this is explained further in Section 4.4); the findings would be used to inform and guide decisions about, and policies for, the settlement boundary, green infrastructure, LGSs, allocations and so on. It would also form the basis of planning for Ledbury 2060.
- 3.4.13 The allocations would be for a variety of uses, including residential, employment, commercial and sport. In this iteration of the NDP they would simply be shown as indicative zones on a map: however, they would have been based on technical and granular landscape and visual baseline and sensitivity studies, mostly at an individual land parcel scale. Other uses and allocations would be considered during the process of developing the 2060 vision, and the present allocations would be the subject of specific policies informed by detailed studies and site-specific design guides. Ideally, these would be completed in time for the core strategy review, which had been delayed until probably the end of 2022 at the earliest. ### TBC = note update before publish baseline report
- 3.4.14 Following the September meeting, the NDP programme was updated to take the above into account, and a target date of June 2021 for reaching the Regulation 16 stage was set. This was based on the assumption that COVID-19 restrictions would soon be lifted and public consultation could safely be carried out; however, unfortunately that turned out not to be the case, and further delays ensued.
- 3.4.15 In fact, most of the wider and a few of the LSCA Area baseline studies had already been carried out and written up by then, but the LSCA topic group members were asked to update and revise their sections to take into account various changes which had occurred in and around the town in the previous few months, including the approval for residential development south of Leadon Way.
- 3.4.16 At the same time, work began on the LVSA. The baseline study findings were analysed. Sketch plans showing i) options for the line of the settlement boundary and ii) mixed-use development (mainly sport and employment) and strategic GI / structural landscaping west of the town were drawn up, with associated schedules. The information was shared with the NDP groups, HC and other parties who were working on the NDP revisions.
- 3.4.17 By ### date TBC, the draft landscape and visual baseline assessment report was complete and ready for informal consultation, along with a series of draft 'topic' reports which had been informed by the baseline, sensitivity and other studies and which covered topics including the settlement boundary and ### TBC.
- 3.4.18 ### rest of section TBC >

## 4 Method, Process and Approach

### 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The background to and reasons for the need for this assessment are set out in the previous sections. In summary, its purpose was to establish and report Ledbury's current landscape and visual baseline situation.
- 4.1.2 The information will form part of the NDP's evidence-base. In the short term, it will be used to i) inform preliminary judgements about landscape and visual sensitivity; ii) help establish the line of the settlement boundary; iii) identify and allocate land for certain uses and / or protection; and iv) inform, guide and support policies being proposed for inclusion in the NDP.
- 4.1.3 In the longer term, it will be used to inform other studies that will be needed to help determine the direction of travel for Ledbury's growth over the next forty years. In addition, it will be a valuable resource for the local community and decision-makers, helping to ensure that when changes are proposed, they can be accommodated without causing harm to valuable landscape features and qualities. In the case of development, it will also help ensure that the end product is of a quality that is commensurate with its surroundings. The report will be updated as changes occur and new information comes in, with additional assessments being carried out as required.
- 4.1.4 This section begins with an overview of landscape and visual assessment methods and techniques generally, and the method that was developed specifically for Ledbury. This is followed by an explanation of Ledbury's landscape and visual baseline assessment process. The section concludes with a summary of the LVSA process.

### 4.2 Landscape & Visual Assessment: Methods

#### Overview

- 4.2.1 As explained in Section 3, due to uncertainties about the government's proposed changes to the current planning system, it is not clear whether the originally-proposed LSCA is the most appropriate form of study for future planning exercises; however, the aim of any future assessment will be to provide the evidence-base that informs judgements about a) which areas are most appropriate for specific uses, and b) if the new planning system comes into force, which areas should be covered by the growth, renewal and protected category designations.
- 4.2.2 Clearly, any new development will result in certain changes to the existing baseline landscape and visual situation, which are likely to subsequently affect landscape character and views in some way.
- 4.2.3 In order to make decisions about whether the changes are 'acceptable' or not, firstly it is necessary to establish exactly what and who could be affected by these changes, and what the implications of the changes would be, taking into account a wide range of factors.
- 4.2.4 At the outset, questions have to be asked such as:
- What is there?
  - Who sees it?
  - How important is what is there, to whom, and why?
  - What is the nature of the proposed change?
  - Is what is there (and / or the people who see / experience it), tolerant of, or sensitive to, this type of change?

- How and to what degree would the changes affect what is there and those who see / experience it?
- Does the area have 'room', or 'capacity', for these types of changes?
- Is the change acceptable or not, especially in relation to current planning policy, guidance and strategy?

4.2.5 Technical studies are usually required to help answer these questions (the order in which they are posed is deliberate). The landscape and visual assessment process is complex, but it is important to understand it in order to interpret the findings and draw conclusions. The assessments' findings may be used by planning authorities and others to inform decisions about whether the change is acceptable (for example in relation to planning policy and guidance), or whether it is inappropriate and / or would result in unacceptable consequences, which are often expressed as 'harm', or negative / adverse effects.

4.2.6 Often, a variety of published methods and techniques for carrying out the different types of assessments required are used and combined in order to provide the fine-grained, evidence-based and objective results which are necessary in situations such as this. Other matters such as physical constraints to development are factored in.

4.2.7 The three main forms of assessment used are Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), LSCA, and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)<sup>7</sup>. The footnote<sup>8</sup> lists the relevant guidance and other documents used for the studies.

#### LCA

4.2.8 LCA answers the question 'what is there?'. It is really a stand-alone process / study, and may, for example, be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), simply describing the baseline landscape situation without necessarily making any 'value-judgements'. However, the information recorded in the LCA informs all aspects of the other types of landscape and visual assessments, so it is always carried out first.

4.2.9 In *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment* (October 2014), Natural England (NE) defines LCA as '*... the process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features (characteristics) that make landscapes distinctive... By setting down a robust, auditable and transparent, baseline, Landscape Character Assessment can not only help us to understand our landscapes, it can also assist in informing judgements and decisions concerning the management of change*'.

4.2.10 It is also important to understand what exactly is meant by 'landscape' in the above context. The definition given in the 2002 version of the LCA guidance (para. 1.11) is as follows:

*'Landscape is about the relationship between people and place. It provides the setting for our day-to-day lives. The term does not mean just special or designated landscapes and it does not only apply to the countryside. Landscape can mean a small patch of urban wasteland as much as a mountain range, and an urban park as much as an expanse of lowland plain. It results from the way that different*

<sup>7</sup> The term 'LVIA' is often used to describe all forms of landscape / visual effects assessment; however, it is important to note that a 'full and formal' LVIA is only carried out when proposed development is the subject of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). For developments which are not subject to the EIA Regulations, GLVIA3 recommends that an 'informal' Landscape and Visual Appraisal of effects is carried out, following GLVIA3 but without the EIA requirements being factored in. For the purpose of this report, the term LVIA has been used throughout, but LVA could also be appropriate.

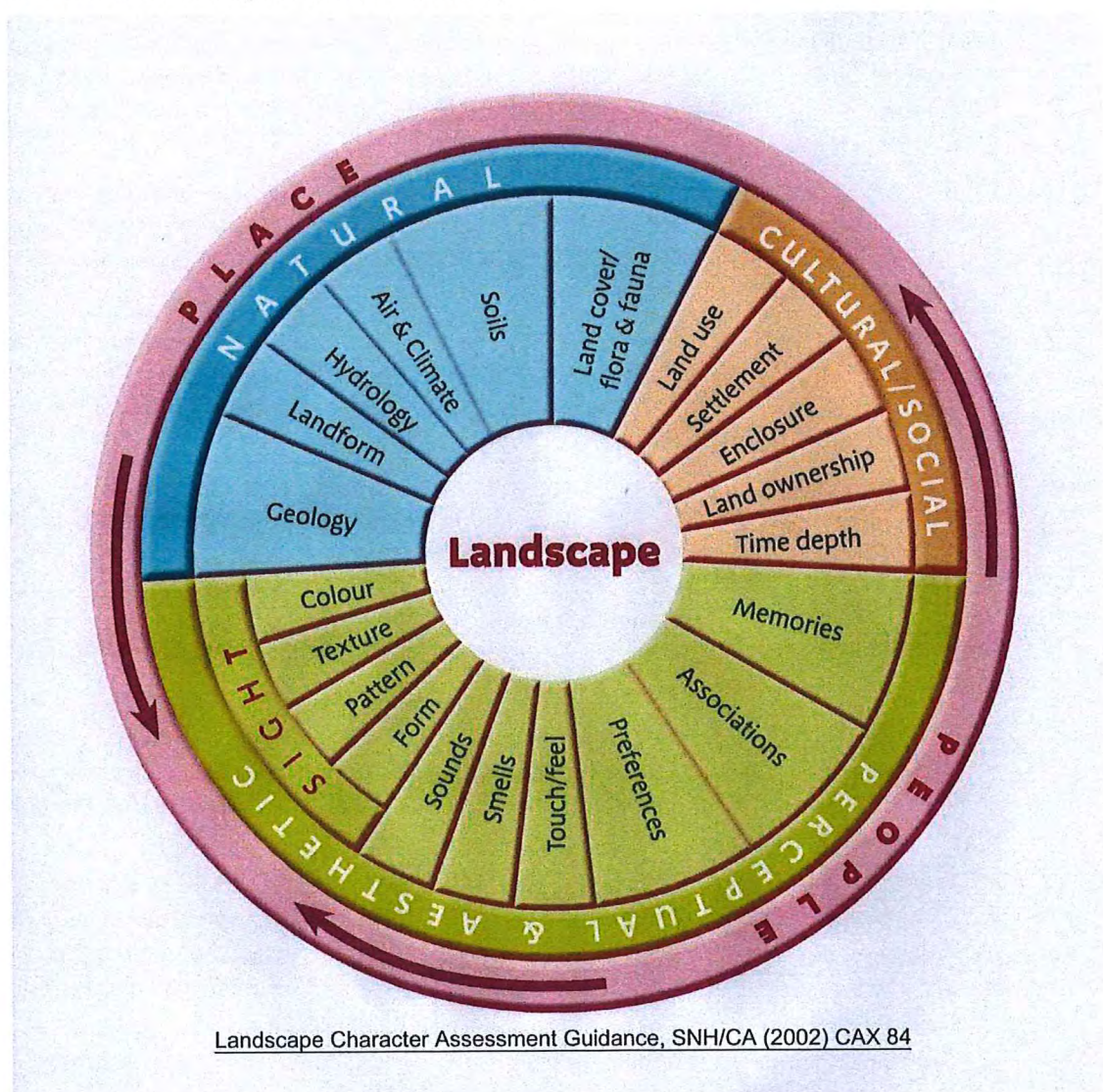
<sup>8</sup> For further information on the various methods, techniques, processes and advice, see *An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management* (June 2019) Natural England; *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment* (October 2014) Natural England; *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland* The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002); *Topic Paper 5: Understanding Historic Landscape Character* and *Topic Paper 6: Techniques and criteria for judging sensitivity and capacity* (ditto); and *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* (2013) Landscape Institute / Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (usually referred to as 'GLVIA3').

components of our environment - both natural (the influences of geology, soils, climate, flora and fauna) and cultural (the historical and current impact of land use, settlement, enclosure and other human interventions) - interact together and are perceived by us (**Figure 1.1**). People's perceptions turn land into the concept of landscape.

'This is not just about visual perception, or how we see the land, but also how we hear, smell and feel our surroundings, and the feelings, memories or associations that they evoke. Landscape character, which is the pattern that arises from particular combinations of the different components, can provide a sense of place to our surroundings'.

- 4.2.11 The 2014 version of the 'Figure 1.1' referred to in the guidance is shown below; it illustrates all the different factors / qualities that LCA and other forms of landscape and visual assessment must consider.

LCA Guidance 2014 Figure 1: What is Landscape?



- 4.2.12 The three separate but interrelated aspects of landscape character, which are also resources, are natural, cultural and visual. The visual resource includes views and the general visual amenity experienced by people, but LCA also considers how the landscape is experienced in terms of sound, smell, touch and taste.

- 4.2.13 In Ledbury's case, because of the area's scenic beauty, it was agreed that the baseline studies would place more focus on specific views and viewpoints than is normally the case in LCA, answering the second question 'who sees what is there?'. Thus, the study would be called a Landscape and Visual Baseline Assessment (LVBA).

#### **LSCA & LVIA**

- 4.2.14 As mentioned above, the original plan for Ledbury was to carry out an LSCA, but it is not certain if this will be the most appropriate form of study for future planning exercises. The LSCA process is summarised below as it is likely that there will be similarities.
- 4.2.15 LSCA has been developed in response to the growing need for people, communities and planning authorities to make informed decisions about the allocation of land for development of various types. It also responds to an increasing public interest in, and awareness of, what the term 'landscape' really means, as shown on *Figure 1: What is Landscape?* above. There is also a desire to understand for oneself how development can change the landscape, and what the effects and subsequent implications of this might be, both on the landscape itself and those who experience / use / benefit from it (for example, many people visit AONBs to enjoy the outstanding natural beauty, and this can bring economic benefits to local communities).
- 4.2.16 LSCA is a systematic, evidence-based process, providing an objective, impartial and transparent system for assessing the sensitivity of the landscape (sensitivity is explained in the following section) and its capacity to accommodate change of a certain type, whilst also retaining the aspects of the environment which - for a variety of reasons - are valued.
- 4.2.17 Such change is usually some form of social and / or economic expansion, for example new housing developments, although the method can be applied to other forms of development and changes in land use such as 'intensive' agriculture, energy production and commercial forestry. The LSCA should always specify the type of change which is being assessed.
- 4.2.18 Whilst '*Topic Paper 6*' 2002 sets out techniques and criteria for LSCA practitioners to use, and still broadly underpins the approach likely to be adopted here, the document was only ever intended to be '*An exploration of current thinking about landscape sensitivity and landscape capacity, to stimulate debate and encourage the development of common approaches*'; over time, more bespoke methods have evolved. These can be tailored to suit specific commissions such as this, where the findings are used to inform an NDP, and future planning and design decisions. It is hoped that the LI will publish LSCA guidance in the not-too-distant future.
- 4.2.19 LSCA considers the likelihood of certain types of development giving rise to certain effects (adverse or beneficial) on landscape character and visual amenity. This is factored in to conclusions about levels of capacity; the effects assessment process follows the principles of LVIA, the guidance for which is set out in 'GLVIA3'.
- 4.2.20 However, LVIA is used mainly for assessing the effects of site-specific schemes, where the type, scale and form of a proposed development is known. LSCA tends to be carried out at an early stage in the planning process, as the findings are used to inform judgements about the suitability or otherwise of land for certain generalised forms of development such as housing, industry, energy production etc. The potential for likely effects is factored in, but only at a high-level.
- 4.2.21 The Government's Natural Environment Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) (revised in July 2019) notes that '*To help assess the type and scale of development that might be able to be accommodated without compromising landscape character, a Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment can be completed. To demonstrate the likely effects of a proposed development on the landscape, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment can be used*'.
- 4.2.22 In Ledbury's case, a combined LSCA / LVIA would consider effects arising from specific forms of development with known criteria and parameters such as form and height; the 'generic' types and

levels of landscape and visual effects arising from such development would therefore be relatively straightforward to predict.

- 4.2.23 The full methods and techniques used for LSCA and LVIA are not set out in full here (for further information, see the previous footnotes), but it is helpful to understand the process, the role of the baseline studies within it, and how judgements about landscape and visual sensitivity and capacity are made. In summary, the baseline studies answer the first two questions set out at the start of this section (what is there? and who sees it?), LSCA / LVIA provide answers to the rest.

### **Landscape & Visual Sensitivity**

- 4.2.24 The fifth question on the list relates to landscape and visual sensitivity, and the answer is informed by answers to the third, fourth and fifth questions, which relate to value, the nature of change, and susceptibility to the change. These are explained below, but it is important to understand the concept of sensitivity as used in this context.
- 4.2.25 A landscape's sensitivity is not a baseline quality or attribute: it is the outcome of the process of identifying and analysing the landscape's natural, cultural and aesthetic factors and features (i.e. the baseline situation) which may be sensitive to certain types of change.
- 4.2.26 Natural England (NE)'s June 2019 publication *An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment* explains the term 'sensitivity' as follows:
- Landscape sensitivity may be regarded as a measure of the resilience, or robustness, of a landscape to withstand specified change arising from development types or land management practices, without undue negative effects on the landscape and visual baseline and their value – such as changes to valued attributes of baseline landscape character and the visual resource. Landscape sensitivity assessment is a process that assesses the resilience / robustness of landscape character and the visual resource – and what we value – to a defined change, or changes. It can help decision makers to understand likely changes and the nature of change should particular courses of action – the development / land management scenarios – be taken forward.*
- 4.2.27 LCA Guidance also emphasises that 'A landscape is sensitive if it is likely to be adversely affected by the type of change proposed'. Small changes in a landscape of high sensitivity could be very damaging, whereas large changes in a landscape of low sensitivity could potentially be more acceptable.
- 4.2.28 A landscape's visual sensitivity is determined through an assessment of the visual resource that the landscape provides (in terms of visual quality, availability of views and so on), and ascribing levels of visual value and susceptibility to change.
- 4.2.29 The sensitivity of the various visual receptors (i.e. people who would see changes in the landscape) is also assessed. The criteria<sup>9</sup> for Very High sensitivity visual receptors include: people visiting nationally-designated landscapes such as AONBs specifically to appreciate their natural beauty, special qualities and other attributes; people visiting nationally-important heritage assets such as scheduled monuments and grade I and II\* listed buildings, and places with nationally-important cultural associations; and people who live in / enjoy areas where the landscape setting makes a highly important contribution to visual and social amenity.
- 4.2.30 As mentioned above, it is also important to consider how people would experience changes in the landscape in terms of smells and sounds.

<sup>9</sup> Judgements about levels of landscape / visual value, susceptibility to change and magnitude of effect are made with reference to previously-set criteria (see Appendix ###). Not all the criteria have to be met in order for an area to be categorised at a certain level: they simply indicate the factors which need to be taken into consideration, and professional judgement must be applied when deciding which ones are most relevant. The levels are graded on a five-point scale from Very High to Very Low with the possibility of 'split' categories in between, which means that small variations in quality, value, susceptibility and magnitude of effect are taken into account and a clear hierarchy can be established.

## Landscape & Visual Value

- 4.2.31 The third question is 'how important, or valuable, is what is there, to whom, and why?'. Answering this question is the next step in the assessment process, as it helps to inform judgements about sensitivity. Levels of value are attributed to the various landscape elements, features and qualities, and views of them, which have been identified in the baseline studies.
- 4.2.32 Understanding landscape (and associated visual) value is essential, especially as it plays a major role in many of the UK's environmental, landscape and social planning policies, for example in the context of NPPF paragraph 170 a)'s 'valued landscapes', and the Natural Environment PPG (revised July 2019).
- 4.2.33 The 2002 LCA guidance explains that landscape '*can provide habitats for wildlife and a cultural record of how people have lived on the land and harnessed its resources. Landscape can have social and community value, as an important part of people's day-to-day lives. It can contribute to a sense of identity, well-being, enjoyment and inspiration. It has economic value, providing the context for economic activity and often being a central factor in attracting business and tourism.*'
- 4.2.34 Landscape also performs a variety of highly valuable functions, including contribution to landscape character, visual and social amenity, context and setting (e.g. AONB, settlement, heritage asset); green gap / buffer / transition zone; approach / gateway / corridor / link; ecosystem services / natural capital / green infrastructure; and hydrological (e.g. flood zone / water catchment).
- 4.2.35 In fact, the social and community value of the landscape matters greatly in land use planning, especially as this value is tied to the important role that landscapes - and views / experiences of them - play in peoples' quality of life. Furthermore, a 'small patch of urban wasteland' may be as valuable to some as a National Park is to others, if it is all they have to call and use as a 'landscape': '*a service that matters at national level is not necessarily more important than one that matters only locally*'<sup>10</sup>.



<sup>10</sup> Source: Quality of Life Capital methodology. QoLC approach guidance was developed jointly by the Countryside Agency, English Nature, English Heritage and the Environment Agency to 'provide a consistent and integrated way of managing for Quality of Life' (<https://www.google.co.uk/#q=Quality+of+life+capital+overview+report+2001>). Although this guidance concentrates on the benefits for human Quality of Life that come from the environment, the approach is as valid for social and economic as for environmental benefits. The relationship between QoLC and landscape issues is set out in Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland *Topic Paper 2: Links to other sustainability tools*. Essentially characterisation describes, whereas QoLC evaluates and derives aims. The two are complementary.

- 4.2.36 Highly valuable landscapes are usually designated and protected from harm through planning policy. Very high value landscapes have features / qualities / attributes which are known and agreed to be of international / national significance / rarity, and / or of benefit to the planet, and to the largest numbers of people. Examples include World Heritage Sites (categorised as being of outstanding universal value), AONBs and National Parks. Landscapes of countywide and neighbourhood value can also be designated and protected from harm through policy.
- 4.2.37 The Natural Environment PPG states:  
*'Where landscapes have a particular local value, it is important for policies to identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence. Policies may set out criteria against which proposals for development affecting these areas will be assessed. Plans can also include policies to avoid adverse impacts on landscapes and to set out necessary mitigation measures...where necessary'.*
- 4.2.38 However, the NPPF emphasises that a landscape does not have to be designated in order for it to be 'valued', and for the planning system to protect it from inappropriate development. Para. 036 of the Natural Environment PPG (revised July 2019) emphasises that the NPPF *'is clear that plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally-designated landscapes but also the wider countryside'.*
- 4.2.39 Also, whilst international and national landscape designations automatically confer a 'Very High' level of value, this does not necessarily mean that the landscape is in good condition or of high quality (although in the case of AONBs it should be borne in mind that natural beauty is the main reason for the designation being made in the first place), nor that it has a high degree of susceptibility to certain types of change (see below). The assessment needs to 'go beneath the blanket' of these designations and consider the area's landscapes on their own merit at a more local level, although the weight of the designation must be factored in.
- 4.2.40 The 2002 LCA guidance says that:  
*'A landscape may be valued by different communities of interest for many different reasons without any formal designation, recognising, for example, perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness; special cultural associations; the influence and presence of other conservation interests... Landscape can have social and community value, as an important part of people's day-to-day lives. It can contribute to a sense of identity, well-being, enjoyment and inspiration. It has economic value, providing the context for economic activity and often being a central factor in attracting business and tourism.'*
- 4.2.41 As noted in Section 2, unfortunately, features and factors of high local and neighbourhood value may not be designated and can be difficult (and time-consuming) to quantify, so are often overlooked. The onus of establishing features and factors of high value often falls on the local community, as it is rarely volunteered by the developer. Ironically, the community studies sometimes identify previously unknown or undesignated assets which are later recognised as being of national significance.
- 4.2.42 Community involvement and public consultation are the best ways of objectively establishing what is important to local people and why, and can result in judgements - especially those about what is valuable enough to be protected - ratified by 'common consensus' as far as possible.
- 4.2.43 Regarding visual value, it must be borne in mind that people value views for different reason.
- 4.2.44 Judgements about levels of visual value factor in a) recognition of the value ascribed to particular views by people including residents with a 'proprietary interest', and b) specific indicators of the value attached to views by locals / visitors / tourists, which may include featuring on maps / in guide books, the provision of parking spaces / facilities, and references in literature / art (see GLVIA3 para. 6.37).

584

- 4.2.45 Other aspects of landscape character, such as aesthetic and perceptual qualities, add to the understanding of the quality, value, function and importance of views.
- 4.2.46 In considering visual value it is essential to identify and analyse the baseline landscape character factors which contribute to visual value. It must be noted that whilst areas with high levels of landscape value are often also of high visual value, that is not always the case; however, analysis of the baseline information helps to explain the 'nature' of the view, which is influenced by matters such as how well-cared for and / or well-used the landscape is, what its character 'tells' us about an area's history and sense of place, and what it contributes to its local distinctiveness.

#### **Nature of Change**

- 4.2.47 The fourth question is, what is the nature of the proposed change?
- 4.2.48 As noted above, LSCA assesses the capacity of the landscape to accommodate often very generalised forms of change such as housing or industry, so only considers generalised effects; if the change is considered appropriate, LSCA is also carried out to inform and guide future plans and allocations, and matters such as a development's type, scale and form.
- 4.2.49 LVIA assesses effects arising from proposed development where there is usually sufficient information about the scheme to be able to make fairly accurate predictions about the nature and degree of effects likely to arise. However, it must be borne in mind that some planning applications are submitted in outline form not full, which means that only the principle of that type of development and its likely effects are considered, not the details.
- 4.2.50 Clearly, the more information available, the more accurate the predictions will be.

#### **Landscape & Visual Susceptibility to Change**

- 4.2.51 Once the nature of the change is known, the next (fifth) question is, 'is what is there (and / or the people who see / experience it), tolerant of, or susceptible to, the type of change being assessed / proposed?'. Answering this involves making judgements about levels of landscape and visual susceptibility to change, which is defined in LVIA guidance (GLVIA3 para. 5.40) as:
- 'The ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality / condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and / or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and / or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies'.*
- 4.2.52 In a nutshell, if a landscape is susceptible to a certain type of change, it is very likely to be affected by it (negatively or positively). A good example of this is polytunnels: landscapes within which there are no existing polytunnels are likely to be highly susceptible to the changes they cause; landscapes within which there are already a few polytunnels are probably less susceptible to the addition of more, unless they have reached a tipping-point where the addition of more tunnels would change the landscape's character to an unacceptable degree; landscapes within which there are many polytunnels would probably be described in character assessments as 'polytunnel landscapes', and it may be concluded that this is now the best place for all new tunnels to go.
- 4.2.53 In terms of the visual resource, the landscapes which are most visually susceptible to change are those which are the most highly visible over a wide area, form part of highly-valued views and / or perform highly important functions, and within which development would create an unacceptable visual intrusion into the wider landscape that almost certainly could not be mitigated.
- 4.2.54 Once levels of landscape and visual value and susceptibility to change have been determined for all the landscape and visual receptors, they are combined to give the overall level of receptor sensitivity (see criteria matrices in Appendix ###). When all the results have been set out they are analysed,

tested and compared, and professional judgement is applied, to ensure the assessment is on a like-for-like basis. Adjustments are made if considered necessary.

#### **Magnitude of Change, Effects & Capacity**

- 4.2.55 The next stage involves answering the question 'how and to what degree would the changes affect what is there and those who see / experience it?'
- 4.2.56 First of all, for every receptor identified (and in-combination), the level of magnitude of each of the effects likely to arise is assessed, in terms of its size, scale, extent, duration and reversibility. Often it is necessary to factor in mitigating measures which could avoid or reduce high levels of adverse effects, and or enhancement / compensation. Once the level of magnitude has been established it is combined with the level of the receptor's sensitivity. This gives the overall level of effect.
- 4.2.57 If the assessment is LSCA, it will also answer the question, 'does the area have 'room', or 'capacity', for these types of changes?'

#### **Planning Policy**

- 4.2.58 The final question in the assessment process is, 'is the change acceptable or not, especially in relation to current planning policy, guidance and strategy?' Planning policy, strategy and guidance are relevant to landscape and visual assessments. As noted above, LVIA evaluates *'the ability of the landscape receptor... to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for... the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies'*. The planning context within which new development has to be considered is an important factor, and clearly, the most sensitive sites / those with least capacity are also most likely to be in conflict with landscape and other policies.
- 4.2.59 It is important to note that LSCAs / LVIAs do not state whether an area of land can or should be developed; they simply set out the various implications arising from a known type of development being built in a specific place, taking into account identified factors. Once the levels of capacity and likely effects throughout an area have been established, informed decisions can be made - by the community and other stakeholders / interested parties / decision-makers - about where to 'draw the line' in terms of which level of capacity or effect forms the 'threshold' between development being 'acceptable' or 'unacceptable'. Also, an area's level of landscape and visual capacity is only one of many matters that must be considered before any decisions are made about its suitability for future development, and in Ledbury's case, about where to draw the line of the settlement boundary.
- 4.2.60 LSCAs do not normally consider matters such as land-ownership or rights of access: regardless of a landowner's opinions about the future development of their land, the LSCA simply states what the level of capacity of the land is judged to be. Whether or not it is included as a potential development site in the NDP is up to the community / decision-makers.
- 4.2.61 Even if the development of a certain parcel of land was found to be feasible, viable and deliverable, other factors would play an important role, including future allocations, planning applications, and the number of houses built during the plan period.

### **4.3 Ledbury's Landscape & Visual Baseline Assessment: Process**

- 4.3.1 As mentioned previously, the majority of the baseline-gathering and reporting was carried out by volunteers from the local community, with professional input and guidance.
- 4.3.2 One of the first steps was to establish the study area boundary. The outer boundary was defined by the parish's wider 'landscape context' and its 'area of influence'. This is partly determined by the 'visual envelope' (i.e. the places from which a given area is visible), and partly by landscape character - the latter is usually influenced by factors such as underlying geology, so the extent is not necessarily

586

determined by visibility. 1:30,000 scale Ordnance Survey (OS) maps were used for the wider baseline studies.

- 4.3.3 The study area boundaries for features or places of importance such as heritage assets and sites of nature conservation importance were drawn with consideration given to the potential area of influence of the individual feature / site.
- 4.3.4 For ease of reference, the study area was divided into four geographical sectors (North to East, East to South, South to West, and West to North). The central point is in the town centre at the junction of Long Acres and Bridge Street.
- 4.3.5 Before the first lock-down began it had been assumed that a full LSCA was being carried out. One of the LSCA's main objectives was to establish levels of capacity for future residential development on the outskirts of the town, along with some employment and / or recreational use west of the town. The parish-wide baseline studies would set the context for the sensitivity and capacity assessments, but the latter would need to be more granular. A boundary for the core study area was drawn around the settlement: it included land adjacent to, or having a relatively close association with it (developers are aware that in theory there is more chance of gaining planning permission on sites close to the settlement than on those lying in open countryside). 1:15,000 scale OS maps were used as the basis for these studies.
- 4.3.6 The core study area is shown on Figures ### in Appendix ###; however, although the Malvern Hills and Marcle Ridge were included in the study, they are not shown on the figures, as other information would be unreadable on the scale of map that would be required. Both features exert considerable influence on Ledbury, and due to their elevation there are far-reaching views from them; however, there is limited interinfluence between the parish and the lower-lying landscapes immediately west of the Hills / east of Marcle Ridge, and therefore the assessment's main focus is the parish's landscapes.
- 4.3.7 The town centre itself was not the subject of the granular landscape and visual studies, but information about its history and numerous features and qualities have been identified, recorded, and factored into the baseline and sensitivity assessments.
- 4.3.8 In order to understand all the elements, features and factors that contribute to an area's landscape character and make judgements about its value, it is necessary to carry out research, including reviewing and recording (on maps, schedules and in note-form, both by hand and digitally) relevant background material from sources such as books, reports and studies, historic maps and documents, archives and historians, government and other websites, and the local community.
- 4.3.9 The baseline studies took into account national and / or local landscape-related designations, strategies, policies and guidance (especially that produced by the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership); the landscape's natural history and cultural heritage; its character; settlement and land use patterns; key views; public rights of way; recreation; hydrology; topography; significant vegetation and so on.
- 4.3.10 Once the desktop studies were complete, the findings were tested and verified on the ground, both within the parish and beyond its boundaries. The fieldwork involved a combination of driving, walking and cycling along public rights of way (roads, footpaths, bridleways, byways open to all traffic, restricted byways), making notes and taking photographs. Both publicly-accessible and - where possible and accessible with permission - privately-owned areas were visited. Key views and viewpoints were also mapped.
- 4.3.11 The volunteers wrote up and illustrated their findings, and sent them to Carly who reviewed and edited them as required. Each topic was cross-referenced with the others to ensure consistency and identify any missing gaps.
- 4.3.12 The decision not to proceed with the full LSCA was taken in September 2020, although this did not change the approach to the baseline assessments. However, whilst most of the baseline studies had

already been carried out and written up by that time, the LSCA topic group members were asked to update and revise their sections to take into account various changes which had occurred in and around the town in the previous few months, including approval for residential development south of Leadon Way.

- 4.3.13 The draft report was issued for informal comments in ### date TBC 2021, and was completed in ### date ### 2021.

## 4.4 Preliminary Landscape & Visual Sensitivity Assessment: Process

- 4.4.1 Both LSCA and LVIA use the findings of the baseline studies to determine levels of landscape and visual sensitivity (see Section 4.2). As previously explained, the original intention had been to carry out a full LSCA for Ledbury; however, due to changing circumstances, it was decided that only the first stage of the LSCA would be carried out for the time being, i.e. recording and reporting the current landscape and visual baseline situation. The information would be used to help establish the line of the town's settlement boundary; identify and allocate land for certain uses and / or protection; and inform, guide and support proposed NDP policies. However, decisions about these matters would have to be informed by evidence-based judgements about landscape and visual sensitivity.
- 4.4.2 It was therefore agreed that once the majority of the baseline information had been gathered, an interim high-level LVSA should be carried out. Due to time and budget constraints, the results of the LVSA would not be published in a formal report; however, a sensitivity plan would be drawn up, and the information gathered during the exercise would be shared with those responsible for revising the NDP, to inform and guide decisions about, and policies for, the settlement boundary, green infrastructure, LGSs, allocations and so on. It would also form the basis of planning for Ledbury 2060.
- 4.4.3 The LVSA would concentrate on the areas within which there was the greatest urgency to allocate land for specific uses, at individual land parcel scale. All the areas were within the LSCA study area boundary (although preliminary judgements about the sensitivity of landscapes beyond the LSCA area were made), but the focus would be on the landscapes south and west of the town. The main reason for the latter was because HC's core strategy had identified land west of Leadon Way (south of Little Marcle Road) as 'an area in which new employment uses will be supported'; the area's boundaries were not defined, it was simply shown on a plan as an oval-shaped zone (the plan is included in the current version of the NDP).
- 4.4.4 Another reason for focussing on land to the south and west was that it clearly had fewer constraints to / opportunities for development than land to the north and east. To the north, a large area of land had already been allocated for residential and employment use (the viaduct site which was the subject of the public inquiry in 2020). To the east, the baseline studies indicated that there were significant constraints to development, including the AONB / other designations, topography and access.
- 4.4.5 The specific uses which the LVSA would consider were agreed with LTC and HC. They comprised:
- sport / recreation: sports pitches; sports hub with multi-functional use e.g. youth, scout and cycling groups, schools; cycle path / footway along Herefordshire and Gloucestershire canal route
  - employment / commercial: associated with sport; local university; hotel; canal (new wharf and visitor centre)
  - green infrastructure: protect / conserve / improve existing GI; create new multi-functional green spaces; establish links between existing and new / proposed GI, footpaths / cycleways, and recreational facilities
  - local green spaces.
- 4.4.6 Work on the LVSA began in September 2020. The baseline study findings were analysed, information was updated, additional desktop studies, field surveys and informal consultation were carried out.

- 4.4.7 Sketch plans showing i) options for the line of the settlement boundary and ii) mixed-use development (mainly sport and employment) and strategic GI / structural landscaping west of the town were drawn up, with associated schedules.
- 4.4.8 The information was shared with the NDP groups, HC and other parties who were working on the NDP revisions.
- 4.4.9 The final version of the sensitivity plan was completed in ### date.

## 5 Landscape Baseline

### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section describes the landscape baseline situation within the wider study area. It begins with an overview of Ledbury parish, followed descriptions of the area's landscape designations, national and regional character areas and types, physical landscapes, and designated / other key features / factors. The findings of the heritage, cultural and historic landscape character studies and the settlement pattern analysis are set out, and key landscape functions and various constraints are noted.
- 5.1.2 The findings are broadly set out in a hierarchy from international / national to local and neighbourhood levels.
- 5.1.3 The baseline information is shown on Figures ### to ###. Most of the figures have a version 'A', which shows the parish-wide information on a map at a large scale (1:30,000), and a version 'B' which shows the information in the core study areas at a smaller scale (1:15,000), for ease of reference when carrying out the more granular studies.

### PHOTOS & MAPS TO BE ADDED THROUGHOUT SECTION

### 5.2 Ledbury Parish

- 5.2.1 Ledbury is a civil parish in south-eastern Herefordshire. Ledbury is also the name of the parish's market town; it is centrally-located within the parish, close to the south-western end of the Malvern Hills which form the Herefordshire - Worcestershire county boundary. The eastern side of the parish is within the Malvern Hills AONB, as well as a small part of the settlement. Great Malvern lies c. 11km north east of the town; the city of Hereford lies c. 20km to the west.
- 5.2.2 The parish covers c. 26 sq km (c. 10 sq miles), and according to the UK census, in 2011, the parish population was 9,290. Until recently, the town covered an area of some 2.5 sq km (approximately 10% of the parish area). With development on the allocated viaduct site to the north and the approved sites to the south in place, the area would be c. 3 sq km - an increase of 20%.
- 5.2.3 Some sections of the parish boundary are well-defined, following distinct physical features such as roads, tracks, watercourses and field boundaries, whereas others appear to be arbitrary lines. However, the latter would almost certainly have once been along a trackway or field boundary which was subsequently stopped up or removed.
- 5.2.4 The northernmost part of the parish is just west of Staplow, a small settlement lying just beyond the parish boundary.
- 5.2.5 The parish's northern boundary runs south-eastwards from Staplow for some 2.2km along the B4214 Bromyard Road before turning north east and following a watercourse and field boundaries, with Wellington Heath parish and village to the north. It continues south east / east, with Colwall parish to the north, skirting Petty France and Barton Court, until it reaches Ockeridge Farm, which marks the easternmost part of the parish. The farm lies on the lower slopes of the central section of the Malvern Hills, just below the Herefordshire Beacon (usually called British Camp).
- 5.2.6 The parish's eastern boundary runs south-westwards from Ockeridge Farm along the northern section of the Ridgeway - a c. 4km long crescent-shaped ridge of Wenlock limestone which carries the main carriageway through Eastnor deer park, and which forms the boundary between Ledbury and Eastnor parishes. It then turns west, crossing fields, the London - Hereford railway and the A449 Worcester Road before turning south west towards the town. Some 600m from the settlement's edge

it runs south / south eastwards along the ridge of the wooded slopes c. 600m east of the A417 Ledbury - Gloucester road, as far as Webb's Coppice.

- 5.2.7 The southern boundary zig-zags west / north west from Webb's Coppice to Ludstock, which lies c. 2.3km south west of the settlement. The parish's southernmost point is at Brand Oak Coppice, on the A417. For much of its length the boundary follows field boundaries / minor watercourses, although some sections appear to be along arbitrary lines (see note above).
- 5.2.8 From Ludstock, the parish's western boundary runs north - north-westwards, firstly along Ludstock Brook, then field boundaries and sections of Falcon Lane before crossing the A438 Hereford Road, the railway and Stores Brook. From the brook, it zig-zags north - north east back to Staplow, along field boundaries and across fields.
- 5.2.9 The character and qualities of Ledbury's landscapes are described in detail in the sections below. In summary, they are distinctly rural and sparsely-settled. Agriculture is the predominant landuse within the parish, and the wider area as well; some is intensive - several local farms grow soft fruit and other tender crops under polytunnels.
- 5.2.10 Tree cover within the parish is relatively sparse, mainly confined to plantation blocks, linear corridors along watercourses and roads, and field boundaries. Much of the ancient woodland has long-since been cleared for cultivation and / or forestry, although a few good sites remain, for example west of the town around Wall Hills, and a significant 5km long belt on the hill slopes east of the town, between Petty France and Parkway. There are a few remnant traditional orchards, and some modern bush orchards.
- 5.2.11 Due to its historically-strategic location, the majority of the roads in the area, including those mentioned above, converge in Ledbury. The railway runs along the northern edge of the town, partly in tunnel; the railway station is situated at the Homend / Bromyard Road / Hereford Road junction.
- 5.2.12 Several watercourses run through the study area, the largest being the River Leadon, which flows from north to south, and close to the western edge of the town.
- 5.2.13 The line of the now-defunct Herefordshire and Gloucestershire canal also runs north - south, mainly within the Leadon valley except where it traverses the town (see Section 5.9). The canal is now the subject of an active and ambitious restoration scheme being run by the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust<sup>11</sup>. The proposal for Ledbury is to divert the section at the northern approach to the town to a line which curves around the west side of the allocated viaduct site, and divert the town centre section to the west, alongside the River Leadon. It would be some way from the old wharf, which is on the town's south-western outskirts, and would rejoin the original route at a point south of the A449 Ross Road and the industrial estate.

## 5.3 Designated Landscapes

- 5.3.1 The Malvern Hills AONB designation covers the eastern side of the parish, including a small part of the settlement (Horse Lane Orchard, south of the A449) - the boundary is shown on Figures ### and ##.
- 5.3.2 According to the Malvern Hills AONB's Management Plan (2019 - 2024):  
*'The AONB covers 105 square kilometres and includes parts of Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire. The special quality of the Malvern Hills lies in the contrasts. The distinctive, narrow, north-south ridge, a mountain range in miniature, thrusts unexpectedly from the pastoral farmland patchwork of the Severn Vale. The highest point is Worcestershire Beacon (425m) and walkers along the ridge crest enjoy views as far as Wales and the Cotswolds. The geological variety, and centuries of*

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.h-g-canal.org.uk/>

*traditional farming have given the AONB great ecological value. Herb-rich, unimproved pastures and native woodland support a wealth of habitats, species and wildlife. In addition, it is also a historical landscape, the ridge is crowned by three ancient hill forts, the most famous being the ditches and ramparts of British Camp.*

*'This is an area of pastoral farming, with dairying and stock-rearing, plus fruit growing, mixed crops and forestry. Large areas are grazed as ancient commons. The AONB has a population of approximately 12,000 and villages such as Malvern Wells have experienced considerable growth in their retired population and in workers commuting to Birmingham and Worcester. The towns of Great Malvern and Ledbury fringe the AONB and the rural economy includes light manufacturing and prestige office development together with the important conference and tourism sector. Tourists have flocked here to 'take the waters' since the early 1800s and Great Malvern's formal paths and rides give the nearby slopes the air of a Victorian pleasure garden. The ridge and hillside paths and the commons are traditional 'day trip' country. The Worcestershire Way footpath is an important recreation resource in the AONB.'*

- 5.3.3 AONBs are of national importance (and indeed of international importance, being recognised as Category V protected landscapes by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature). They are designated solely for their special landscape qualities. They are considered to be of such outstanding natural beauty that they require, and enjoy, a high level of protection through European, national and local planning policies and plans, in order to *'secure their permanent protection against development that would damage their special qualities, thus conserving a number of the finest landscapes in England for the nation's benefit'*.
- 5.3.4 The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape, and AONB partnerships have a statutory duty to conserve and enhance that natural beauty.
- 5.3.5 In terms of the designation, an area's natural beauty is deemed to include its geology, climate, soils, animals, communities, archaeology, buildings, the people who live in it (past and present) and the perceptions of those who visit it.
- 5.3.6 Public appreciation is a key component of natural beauty, and the secondary purposes of AONB designation include meeting the need for quiet enjoyment of the countryside, and having regard for the interests of those who live and work there.
- 5.3.7 The natural beauty of these areas is recognised as contributing significantly to economic activities and well-being through tourism and inward investment. In Chapter 8, the Management Plan states that *'Each year, some 1.25 million visitors come to the AONB to enjoy its natural and cultural heritage. Tourism makes a significant contribution to the local economy'*.
- 5.3.8 Furthermore, the importance of access to 'healthy' landscapes is now recognised as being vital to human health and well-being, and the AONB's landscapes make highly important contributions to both local and wider natural capital and ecosystem services (see landscape value in Section 4).
- 5.3.9 The Management Plan sets out the vision of what the AONB will be like in 20 years' time (i.e. in 2040). In terms of the AONB's landscapes, the Plan notes the vision that *'Change in the landscape is accepted and its impacts accommodated through positive management. However, the landscape largely comprises broadleaved woodland and grassland, interconnected with hedgerows and hedgerow trees, all in good condition'*. Another vision is that *'The distinctive character of villages, historic farmsteads and rural buildings is sustained by high standards of informed design and development'*.
- 5.3.10 The baseline assessment process provides an in-depth understanding of the character of the AONB landscapes within the study area, using the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership's various guidance and publications as key sources of reference.

5.3.11 The Malvern Hills AONB's 'special qualities' are set out on page 9 of the Management Plan. Many are present within the study area. Those of most relevance to this study, with the most relevant at the top of the list, are:

- *A sense of remoteness and tranquillity, underpinned by dark night skies and limited noise and disturbance. People feel calm and spiritually refreshed.*
- *A history of recreation and tourism that continues today, with people coming to enjoy the hills, spas and the tranquillity of the rural landscapes.*
- *An unspoiled 'natural' environment supporting a wide variety of wildlife habitats and species, many of which are nationally rare.*
- *A distinctive combination of landscape elements that include orchards, parklands, ridgelines, ponds, quarries, hedgerows and watercourses.*
- *An historic landscape of ancient unenclosed commons, varied field boundary patterns and designed parks and gardens, for example at Eastnor.*
- *A strong spirit of place, landscapes that have inspired and continue to inspire and which have a deep cultural narrative.*
- *Distinctive villagescapes, including conservation areas, listed buildings and local features, that define a 'spirit of place' in the settlements.*
- *Thriving and active communities with a low deprivation index that reflects the area's prosperity and the availability of employment.*
- *Open access in many places over the hills and commons, providing opportunities for bracing walks with fine views.*
- *The Malvern Hills: a high, dramatic ridge of ancient rock that is visible from the Severn Vale and from the rolling hills and valleys to the west.*
- *Dramatic scenery and spectacular views arising from the juxtaposition of high and low ground.*
- *A distinctive and varied geology, with a variety of different rock types including granites, diorites, volcanic lavas, limestones, sandstones, mudstones and shales. This gives rise to a unique array of landscapes and natural habitats.*
- *A wide variety of landscape types in a relatively small area. Assessments of the area's landscape character identify ten distinct landscape types. Woodland and grassland in varying mixes are the most prevalent.*
- *A distinctive combination of landscape elements that include orchards, parklands, ridgelines, ponds, quarries, hedgerows and watercourses.*
- *A rich and distinctive historic environment including Bronze Age burial grounds, moated sites and Iron Age hill forts, for example British Camp.*

5.3.12 Where appropriate, this information is supplemented and illustrated in the sections below.

## 5.4 National Landscape Character

5.4.1 Nationally, the country is divided into National Character Areas (NCAs)<sup>12</sup>.

5.4.2 NCAs are the responsibility of Natural England. They are '*... areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment.*'

5.4.3 For each NCA, a 'profile' document is produced. NCA profiles are '*... guidance documents which can help communities to inform their decision-making about the places that they live in and care for. The*

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making>

*information they contain will support the planning of conservation initiatives at a landscape scale, inform the delivery of Nature Improvement Areas and encourage broader partnership working through Local Nature Partnerships. The profiles will also help to inform choices about how land is managed and can change'.*

- 5.4.4 The NCA profiles contain specific 'Statements of Environmental Opportunity' (SEOs) for each area, which offer guidance on the critical issues identified, and which can '... help to achieve sustainable growth and a more secure environmental future'.
- 5.4.5 The profiles also set out recent landscape changes and trends within the NCA, and the key drivers of future changes: those of most relevance - to both this assessment and Ledbury's future planning - are highlighted below.
- 5.4.6 The NCAs which cover the Ledbury study area are shown on Figures ### and ##.
- 5.4.7 The landscapes in the western half of the area are covered by NCA 100 Herefordshire Lowlands<sup>13</sup>. The majority in the eastern half are NCA 103 Malvern Hills<sup>14</sup>, apart from the very south-easternmost part of the parish which is NCA 104 South Herefordshire and Over Severn<sup>15</sup>. NCA 101 Herefordshire Plateau lies north of the parish, beyond Bosbury, where the land begins to rise towards Bromyard; however, the preliminary studies concluded that there was very limited interinfluence between the parish's and NCA 101's landscapes, so they were not included in the baseline assessment.
- 5.4.8 The boundary between NCAs 100 and 103 runs north - south along the western edges of the hills which characterise the landscapes east of the town, and is broadly contiguous with the AONB boundary. NCA 104's northern boundary runs between Webb's Coppice and Noad Farm.

#### **NCA 100 Herefordshire Lowlands**

- 5.4.9 This NCA covers much of central Herefordshire, with small areas to the north and east in Shropshire and Worcestershire, and to the south east in Gloucestershire. From Ledbury, the NCA extends west - north-westwards as far as Ross-on-Wye to the north west and Ludlow to the north.
- 5.4.10 The majority of the landscapes within the study area are very typical of their host NCA, which is described in the profile as follows:

*'It is largely tranquil and rural in character but does include the larger settlements of Hereford and Leominster. There are small dispersed settlements of hamlets and villages, many of which contain older buildings with the local vernacular of black-and-white timber-framed buildings. Restored cider barns with characteristic double-doors and historic farmsteads are also common.*

*'The landscape is gently undulating... Woodland within the area is a significant landscape feature, typically on the hill tops and valley sides. Many of these woodlands are actively managed (commercially) to produce quality timber... The NCA is an important area for commercial agricultural [sic] supported by the fertile and high-grade agricultural soils; the farming is mixed arable and livestock. Traditional orchards are still to be found, though suffering decline, with new orchards and dwarf varieties of trees also common. The area is also important for commercial production of soft fruit under polytunnels, supplying much of the UK. Historic parklands... have many veteran trees that are important for invertebrates.*

*'There are many rivers in the area ... flowing through wide, fertile mudstone valleys. Old Red Sandstone is commonly found in the west and east of the area and here the soils take on a distinctive red colour... Recreational opportunity is offered by long-distance trails including... the Herefordshire Trail which links the market towns in Herefordshire [including Ledbury]. Views can be expansive across to neighbouring*

<sup>13</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4827527503675392?category=587130>

<sup>14</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/3039205?category=587130>

<sup>15</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5018311469301760?category=587130>

*NCA, looking west to the Black Mountains, north to the Clun and Shropshire Hills, and east to the Malvern Hills.'*

5.4.11 The NCA displays a wide range of key characteristics; those which are well-represented in the study area comprise:

- *Gently undulating landscape with localised steep-sided hills in the centre and wide agricultural flood plains.*
- *Much of the area is underlain by Old Red Sandstone, with localised deposits of alluvium and glacial drift. Fertile soils support intensive mixed agriculture, especially on the better drained glacial river terraces.*
- *Wide, meandering river valleys drain the area....*
- *Pasture with occasional wet meadows and permanent grassland along the rivers. Low hedgerows with sparse tree cover. Arable cultivation on lower-lying land.*
- *Localised traditional and bush orchards and occasional hop fields planted with windbreaks.*
- *Several historic parklands... and numerous medieval parks, many with important ancient and veteran trees.*
- *Timber-framed (black-and-white) buildings are characteristic with stone and red brick also used frequently as building materials.*
- *Dispersed rural settlement pattern throughout with scattered villages, hamlets, farmsteads and clustered settlements around commons.*
- *Tranquil and relatively undisturbed by major infrastructure aside from a few crossing A roads.*

5.4.12 Ledbury is mentioned several times in the profile, noted as being an historic, strategically-located market town; for example it says that '*Hay-on-Wye to the west and Ledbury to the east act as 'gateways' into the area, from Wales and from the Malvern Hills respectively.*'

5.4.13 All the SEOs for NCA 100 are relevant to Ledbury:

- *SEO 1: Protect and manage the internationally important River Wye Special Area of Conservation and the many other watercourses and their flood plains to improve the health of the rivers and the quality and availability of water. Develop the capacity of the riverine environment to tolerate more extreme flow levels by protecting and creating new wet meadow and woodland in the flood plain and seek to increase recreational opportunities related to the riverine environment.*
- *SEO 2: Protect and enhance the natural and historic environment, integrating new development through the use of green infrastructure principles informed by existing heritage, geodiversity and biodiversity assets. Protect the agrarian character of the area by making the most of versatile and fertile soils to produce food while integrating semi-natural features and protecting above- and below-ground heritage assets and geological assets and reinforcing the strong sense of character.*
- *SEO 3: Protect, manage and restore semi-natural habitats, in particular woodlands, grasslands, orchards and wet meadows within the rural and urban areas to improve ecological connectivity, biodiversity, landscape character, the historic environment, and flood water storage capacity and the ability of the landscape to adapt to the impacts of climate change. In particular, manage, restore and create new woodland, and develop connectivity in other semi-natural habitats such as the hedgerow networks and orchards.*

5.4.14 The recent changes and trends identified within the NCA and which are of relevance to Ledbury include (paraphrased in parts):

- *New development is having an adverse effect on the surrounding countryside, resulting in some visual intrusion from urban development.*
- *Decline in / lack of management and neglect adversely affecting woodlands (especially coppice), traditional and bush orchards, and hedgerows / hedgerow trees and associated habitats.*

- Some recent increase in woodland resource.
- Hedgerow removal resulting in field enlargement.
- Neglect of riverine habitats.
- Flood plain erosion is judged to be a significant issue by some stakeholders and seems to have been partly caused by draining and intensively farming the flood plain for root crops.
- Pasture improvement and arable expansion threaten areas of semi-natural grassland and meadow resulting in fragmentation and loss of habitats.
- The valley bottom meadows are under pressure from agricultural intensification and fragmentation.
- Evidence suggests that the character of important aspects of the historic landscape remains neglected.
- A number of heritage assets in the area are identified as being 'at risk'.

5.4.15 Relevant drivers of change include:

- Climate change.
- The need for food security may result in continued expansion of arable production. This may impact on ecological habitats, networks and species, as well as landscape character.
- In parts of the NCA, development pressure provides a key driver for improved delivery of green infrastructure and the possibility to maximise opportunities to integrate it into new development from the outset.

### NCA 103 Malvern Hills

5.4.16 This NCA includes the Malvern Hills, their footslopes, and the flatter albeit undulating land to the west which characterises the transition between the Malvern Hills and the lowland areas.

5.4.17 The NCA's landscape is described in the profile as follows:

*'...The area is one of great contrasts. These range from the majestic height of the hills themselves to the undulating swells and low wooded escarpments of Eastnor and the Suckley Hills, and to the jumble of rolling hills and woodlands marching away to the west. Most of the area lies within the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).'*

5.4.18 Many of NCA 103's key characteristics are well-represented in the parts of the study area which are covered by it (the study area includes the Malvern Hills, although they are not shown on the figures). Those of relevance to the Ledbury area include:

- *A prominent, narrow north–south ridge of high, unenclosed, rounded hills [which] ... form a highly visible dominant landmark, visible from a long distance;*
- *A varied geology, which is reflected in the soils;*
- *Along the Malvern Hills ridge there are a number of dramatic historic sites, including the bronze-age barrows, iron-age hill forts at British Camp and Midsummer Hill, and the Shire Ditch;*
- *There is a high density of public rights of way and an extensive area of open access land;*
- *There are good rail and road links to urban populations;*
- *To the north and west of the hills there are wooded limestone ridges, separated by vales of mixed shale. The lower slopes and ridges – particularly the steeper ones – are densely wooded, with blocks of ancient woodland and occasional plantations. Many field boundaries are species-rich and also of medieval origin; and*
- *The ridges and vales form a mixed pastoral landscape of small irregular fields, orchards, hop yards and many ancient, species-rich hedgerows and meadows. Interspersed throughout this landscape*

*(particularly to the south, where larger farms and estates developed) are larger fields bounded by thorn.*

5.4.19 All the SEOs for NCA 103 are relevant to Ledbury:

- *SEO 1: Conserve and appropriately manage the areas of semi-natural habitat in the wider character area of the Malvern Hills such as woodland and traditional orchard, providing economic opportunities, fostering community participation;*
- *SEO 2: Manage and improve access to the landscape, as well as the cultural and geological features of the Malvern Hills National Character Area and promote enhanced understanding and enjoyment to reinforce a strong sense of place;*
- *SEO 3: Protect and appropriately manage the historic environment and its setting, ensuring that historic features and landscapes are recognisable and valued; and*
- *SEO 4: Plan for an expansion of semi-natural habitats where appropriate, so that a significant ecological network is created and interconnected to adjoining areas. This will increase biodiversity, pollination, food and drink production, as well as regulate soil erosion, water and soil quality, reinforcing a strong sense of place.*

5.4.20 The recent changes and trends identified within the NCA and which are of relevance to Ledbury include (paraphrased in parts):

- Neglect and replacement of traditional orchards have affected the landscape.
- Woodland clearance and the gradual loss of trees along hedgerows and stream sides have damaged visual links between areas historically cleared and those still wooded.
- Limited extent of boundary management, signs of neglect: hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees including fruiting species have been lost or replaced by fencing, resulting in deterioration of the characteristic regular enclosure pattern.
- The character is predominantly pastoral. The dominant and increasing land use is grassland and uncropped land, but cereals are also increasing.
- The fragmentation of large farms / estates can result in the enlargement of extant properties and/or an increase in the demand for buildings and associated infrastructure (both residential and agricultural). It can also lead to a loss in linear habitats such as hedgerows.
- Growth in the size of settlements around the NCA will impact on views into and out of the area.

5.4.21 Relevant drivers of change include:

- Climate change.
- Opportunity to manage and extend traditional orchards and increase the resource for the production of fruit and apple juice, perry and cider and to benefit wildlife and pollination.
- Development pressures present the opportunity to advocate good, sustainable design, looking to reduce the impact on the landscape and increase climate regulation, within the parameters of maintaining the built character.
- Challenge to reduce the impacts on the NCA of polythene and polytunnels that are being used for intensive production of certain crops and can be highly visible. This is particularly prominent around the borders of the AONB, especially to the south and west [the extent of polytunnel development in and around the parish can be seen on the aerial photograph in Figure ###].
- Scope for additional woodland: as well as increasing habitat this could absorb some of the pressure of recreational use from other heavily-used areas.
- Extension of semi-natural habitats and maintenance of hedgerows to connect adjoining landscapes and make biodiversity stepping stones and corridors.

5.4.22 Ledbury town is beyond (albeit adjacent to) the Malvern Hills NCA, but is featured in the profile due to its historic importance and influence within / associations with the wider area. There is also a note

in the Malvern Hills profile which is of great relevance to Ledbury, relating to ecosystem services and the regulation of water flow - see Section 5.14 Green Infrastructure.

#### **NCA 104 South Herefordshire and Over Severn**

- 5.4.23 NCA 104 extends from Tarrington (north) to Monmouth (south), and from the England / Wales border at Kentchurch (west) to Bromsberrow Heath (east).
- 5.4.24 The landscapes of South Herefordshire and Over Severn are described in the profile as '*a picturesque, rural, well-wooded landscape with substantial areas of ancient semi-natural woodland, parkland and traditional orchards and a network of ancient hedgerows with hedgerow trees contributing to a timbered feel*'.
- 5.4.25 It continues, '*Stunning panoramic views are available from Garway Hill in the west and May Hill in the south-east across the NCA and beyond to up to 12 counties on a clear day... Land use is mainly a mix of livestock and arable farming... Key ecosystem services within this NCA include water regulation as a part of the Wye and Severn catchments, food production through extensive agriculture, an important genetic resource of local fruit varieties and a sense of tranquillity intrinsic in the scenic rural character of the landscape*'.
- 5.4.26 The study concluded that the small part of the parish which is covered by NCA 104 is broadly typical of its host.
- 5.4.27 The extent of this NCA within the study area is very small, so only a few of the key characteristics of NCA 104 are present. They include:
- *An undulating landscape with... lower rolling ground, ridges and valleys...*
  - *Well-wooded character created by larger woodlands confined ...to hillsides. Smaller tree clumps often found in groups around hill tops, farmsteads, hamlets and prominent buildings including small areas of ornamental parkland-style planting and scattered parklands.*
  - *Numerous mature and over-mature trees along hedgerows and watercourses including ash, oak, alder and some pollarded willows.*
  - *Traditional historic cider apple orchards and commercial bush orchards on steeper valley slopes and around farmsteads, hamlets and country houses throughout the area, contributing to the woodland character [there is traditional orchard at Woodfields Farm].*
  - *Substantial country houses set within historic landscaped parklands.*
  - *Varied field pattern bounded by hedgerows, ranging from sparse and low 19<sup>th</sup> century to dense and species-rich hedgerows dating from the medieval period.*
  - *Large-to-medium-sized fields dominate the intensive arable farming on the fertile soils of the lower undulating ground and river valleys.*
  - *Dispersed settlement pattern throughout the area with scattered farmsteads...*
  - *Traditional building materials in the west are predominantly red sandstone.*
  - *Historic wild daffodil fields of Over Severn and the Wye Valley have inspired poets and stimulated tourism [this is of great relevance to Ledbury: see reference to poetry in Section 5.10 Cultural Associations].*
- 5.4.28 Within the south-eastern sector of the study area, due to localised topographical variations, the degree of interinfluence between NCAs 100, 103 and 104 varies from place to place: it is relatively high along parts of the A417 north west of Brand Oak Coppice. Intervisibility also varies: dense, mature vegetation along the A417 screens many views even during the winter months.
- 5.4.29 All the SEOs for NCA 104 are relevant to Ledbury:
- *SEO 1: Protect and manage the woodland, parkland, traditional orchards and hedgerows with hedgerow trees that contribute to the well-wooded feel of the landscape, securing the new*

*generation of replacement trees. Expand and restore the currently much-fragmented semi-natural habitats across the National Character Area (NCA) to enhance the ability of species to move across the landscape, enabling some resilience to climate change, and benefiting soil quality and water quality and reducing soil erosion.*

- *SEO 2: Sustainably manage the productive agricultural landscape, enhancing food provision and increasing permeability to the movement of species. Manage in such a way as to preserve and enhance soil condition and water quality and reduce soil erosion, particularly in relation to the River Wye Special Area of Conservation.*
- *SEO 3: Maintain and enhance the many historic features and characteristic settlement pattern of rural hamlets, isolated farmsteads and small villages and towns using local materials. Preserve the tranquil rural character of the area, protecting and promoting the biodiversity, geodiversity, access, recreation and heritage of the area.*
- *SEO 4: Protect and enhance the rivers Wye, Leadon and Monnow and their tributaries for their internationally important biodiversity associated with the River Wye Special Area of Conservation, their contribution to landscape, the ecological network, and sense of place and inspiration, and for the regulating services that they provide including water flow, water quality and water availability.*

5.4.30 The recent changes and trends within the NCA and which are of relevance to Ledbury include (paraphrased in parts):

- Increase in take-up of management / other agreements for woodland, traditional orchard, hedgerows, stone walls and other habitats / features.
- Agricultural improvement has led to a loss of species-rich grassland particularly in the Leadon Vale, and to remaining semi-natural habitats in the area being fragmented. It has been suggested that the environmental value of grasslands should be maintained through low usage of fertiliser and appropriate grazing regimes.
- In 1918 about 3 per cent of the NCA was historic parkland. By 1995 it is estimated that 51 per cent had been lost. Historic farm buildings appear to be at risk.

5.4.31 Relevant drivers of change include:

- Climate change.
- Increased pressure for food production may result in arable expansion of current farming systems, and thus increased pressure on semi-natural habitats, archaeological features and ecosystem services such as water availability and water quality; however, may provide an opportunity to encourage low water consumption devices to be installed.
- Increased visitor numbers and recreational activities may mean that 'honey-pot' sites suffer high levels of disturbance, particularly within the AONB.

## 5.5 Regional / Local Landscape Character

5.5.1 NCAs are relevant to this study for the reasons set out above, and it is important that the assessment evaluates whether the local landscapes are good representations of landscape character at a national level, which can increase their value. However, the NCA descriptions usually cover very large geographical areas, so it is necessary to look at character at regional and local scales, where landscape

character has been surveyed and categorised by HC<sup>16</sup>, Gloucestershire County Council<sup>17</sup> (GCC) and the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership<sup>18</sup>.

5.5.2 The purpose of HC's LCA is 'to promote the use of landscape assessment as part of the development control process, to increase awareness of the countryside's character and to ensure that future development is compatible with that character' (para. 1.1.2).

5.5.3 The LCA assesses landscape character areas and types; the difference is explained in para. 4.1.2:

*'Firstly, there will be landscape character areas, which in the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment are called Sub-regional Character Areas and Landscape Description Units (LDU). The larger areas are at a regional scale while the smaller LDUs are at a much more local scale. These are all individual, unique areas with their own identity and character. These areas are identified by description and given appropriate local names such as the Northwest Herefordshire Hills Sub-regional Character Area or Downton Gorge LDU which is one of a number of LDUs found within it. Their individual descriptions are held in the Technical Handbook.*

*'Secondly, there will be landscape character types. These have been identified through assessing the characteristics that make up landscape character. Thus, different combinations of these characteristics will result in different landscape character types (called Landscape Types in the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment) [in this assessment, the term Landscape Character Type (LCT) is used]. Since this is a generic classification, the same combination of characteristics will always result in the same Landscape Type wherever it is found in the country.'*

5.5.4 Some of the LCTs are rare in Herefordshire and only occur in the Ledbury area, for example Settled Farmlands on River Terrace: this increases their level of landscape value.

5.5.5 During Ledbury's landscape baseline assessment it was noted that some of the landscapes within the area did not conform to the LCT description in HC's LCA, and displayed the key characteristics of a different LCT. In order to check this, it was necessary to consult the LCA *Technical Handbook* mentioned above, as this contains individual descriptions of the LDUs (only the LCTs are described in the LCA SPG document).

5.5.6 Unfortunately, despite searches and requests to HC, it was not possible to find hard or electronic copies of the documents or the supporting database which apparently 'contains useful detailed information'.

5.5.7 If the information comes to light at a later date, or if the LCA is updated which it will have to be at some point in the near future, Ledbury's baseline studies would be updated to incorporate it.

5.5.8 HC's LCA begins with classifying sub-regional landscape character areas. Para. 4.2.12 explains that *'The location and list of Sub-regional Character Areas is shown in Fig. 9. The descriptions of both these and the Landscape Description Units are available in the technical handbook, which accompanies this SPG. Since they are site specific descriptive areas they are not considered directly pertinent to this planning guidance but they do provide valuable additional information which will be vital in the future preparation of documents such as management plans and design guides'.*

5.5.9 As mentioned above, unfortunately, the Technical Handbook and LDU descriptions appear to have been lost, so no description of the sub-regional character area covering the study area (Leadon Vale) can be provided here.

<sup>16</sup> Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (2004, updated 2009) Herefordshire Council [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2069/landscape\\_character\\_assessment\\_for\\_herefordshire](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2069/landscape_character_assessment_for_herefordshire)

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/ecology-and-landscape/](https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/ecology-and-landscape/landscape/)

<sup>18</sup> Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Landscape Strategy and Guidelines 2011 <http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MalvernLandStratGuideLoResFinal.pdf>

- 5.5.10 The locations of the county- and AONB-wide LCTs in and around Ledbury are shown on Figures ### and ##.
- 5.5.11 There are eleven different LCTs within the Ledbury study area, including ten of Herefordshire's twenty-three (the other type is Wooded Vale which occurs in Gloucestershire but not Herefordshire). The large number of LCTs within such a small area is an indication of how complex and interesting the landscapes in and around the parish are, being the product of the myriad natural and cultural factors and influences (which are described in more detail in the following sections).
- 5.5.12 On the whole, the landscapes within the study area are good representations of the countywide LCTs (material variations and anomalies are noted).
- 5.5.13 Where of relevance to Ledbury and this study, extracts from the countywide LCAs for each of the LCTs within the parish are provided below; however, it is important to note that in some places there is a high degree of interinfluence between the parish and neighbouring LCTs, so this must be factored in to future studies. The LCA describes broad settlement patterns within the LCTs, and this information has informed the settlement character and pattern sections below. In addition, the LCA contains important information about management guidelines and environmental mitigation for the LCTs, which should be referred to when necessary (for example when preparing / reviewing planning applications).

#### **Principal Timbered Farmlands**

- 5.5.14 Principal Timbered Farmlands occur as a narrow belt in the north-eastern part of the parish, and a wider belt south of the town.

##### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

*Principal Timbered Farmlands are rolling lowland landscapes with occasional steep sided hills and low escarpments. They have a small scale, wooded, agricultural appearance characterised by filtered views through densely scattered hedgerow trees. These are complex, in places intimate, landscapes made up of a mosaic of small to medium sized fields, irregularly shaped woodlands and winding lanes. The key element of these landscapes is the strong unifying presence of tree cover in the guise of woodlands, hedgerow trees, and linear tree cover associated with streams and watercourses... The irregular outline of many of the woodlands, together with the pattern of hedgerows and winding lanes, contributes to the overall organic character of this landscape. A densely dispersed pattern of farmsteads and wayside cottages is typical with a notable number of buildings constructed out of brick and timber.*

##### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

###### Primary

- hedgerows define field boundaries
- ancient wooded character portrayed by the hedgerow trees and woodland
- densely scattered hedgerow trees, predominantly of oak
- filtered views between the hedgerow oaks

###### Secondary

- organic enclosure pattern
- small scale landscapes

##### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

*The deterioration of the distinctive character of these landscapes is very evident and continuing... due primarily to the decline and fragmentation of the tree cover elements, particularly the hedgerow trees... A gradual increase in arable land use is resulting in loss of function of many hedgerows and this in turn will lead to a gradual demise of the hedgerow structure through inappropriate management.*

*Development pressure has resulted in new dwellings which do not respect the characteristic settlement pattern.*

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

*The organic enclosure pattern indicates an unplanned landscape arising from the previous enclosure of both former woodland and open fields. It is vital for the retention of landscape character that the organic pattern of enclosure is preserved and that a geometric pattern is not superimposed by subdividing fields or enlarging others and employing straight fence or hedge lines.*

#### **Principal Wooded Hills**

- 5.5.15 This LCT covers the upstanding landscapes which characterise the east side of the parish, with a smaller area at Wall Hills on the east side. The LCTs coincide with areas of Ancient Semi-natural Woodland (ASNW).

#### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

*These are upstanding, densely wooded, hilly landscapes with a steeply sloping topography. The inherent character is derived from the pronounced relief and the dominant, flowing woodland cover which provide a strong sense of unity and visual integration. These are landscapes of large irregularly shaped ancient woodlands and wooded streamlines which interlink with the surrounding hedged fields... The ancient semi-natural status of many of these woodlands confirms their high nature conservation value. These landscapes are sparsely settled by farmsteads and wayside cottages. Views are usually framed between the woodland blocks.*

#### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

##### Primary

- *varied, often steeply sloping topography*
- *ancient wooded character made up of mixed broadleaved woodlands, often of ancient origin*

##### Secondary

- *wooded land use with occasional pasture*
- *hedges define field boundaries*
- *linked woodland pattern*
- *medium-framed views*
- *scattered settlement pattern*

#### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

*These are highly visible landscapes, framing long distance views and therefore their visual integrity is of paramount importance in the rural landscape... more recent woodland clearance and the gradual loss of trees along hedgerows and stream sides damages both the biodiversity and landscape character. The hedgerow and streamside trees are a vital component in maintaining visual integration between the areas of historic clearance and those still wooded.*

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

*The enclosure pattern is an organic composition of irregularly shaped pastoral fields bounded by hedges and often cleared from the adjoining woodland. Any changes to woodland cover, either through clearance or new planting, should respect the historical significance of the old patterns of woodland clearance and ensure the conservation of these patterns along with boundary hedges of assorted origin.*

### **Settled Farmlands on River Terrace**

- 5.5.16 This LCT covers the landscapes west of the River Leadon. The LCT also occurs north of the town, covering Beggars Ash and the landscapes between the east side of Wellington Heath village and Frith Wood; however, the baseline studies suggest that the area more typical of this LCT is to the west, a narrow band of land currently assessed as Principal Settled Farmlands. This area is most likely river terrace, mainly used for intensive horticulture.

#### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

*This landscape shares many of the characteristics of the Principal Settled Farmlands. These are areas defined by the highly fertile, free draining, sandy brown soils of the river terraces which give rise to the predominantly horticultural cropping land use. Settlement here tends to be sparsely dispersed and is limited to small discrete clusters. These areas have a small to medium scale field pattern with very sparse hedgerow tree cover and consequent open views. They may have been void of woodland for a substantial period of time as they have always been the most fertile and productive agricultural land. In Herefordshire this Landscape Type is only found along the River Leadon near Ledbury.*

#### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

##### Primary

- horticultural cropping land use

##### Secondary

- hedgerows delineate the field boundaries

#### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

*The demands of modern horticulture have resulted in a landscape that is generally denuded of hedgerow trees and where the remaining hedgerows are themselves in very poor condition. Tree cover is now limited to those around buildings and those growing along water courses where the land is not required for crops.*

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

*The sub-regular pattern of hedged fields has been lost in many areas as hedgerows have been removed or neglected.*

### **Riverside Meadows**

- 5.5.17 Riverside Meadows form a narrow linear belt running north south along the River Leadon valley.

#### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

*These are linear, riverine landscapes associated with a flat, generally well defined, alluvial floodplain, in places framed by steeply rising ground. They are secluded pastoral landscapes, characterised by meandering tree lined rivers, flanked by riverside meadows which are defined by hedge and ditch boundaries. Settlement is typically absent. Throughout these landscapes, the presence of extensive areas of seasonally grazed waterside meadows has in the past provided a strong sense of visual and ecological unity. These are landscapes that accommodate a degree of annual flooding, a factor which has been reflected in the traditional patterns of land use, the lack of settlement and development (except for the occasional water mill), and the representation of species and habitats tolerant of such waterlogged conditions.*

#### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

##### Primary

- pastoral land use

- *well defined linear patterns of willow and alder*
- *tree cover represented by stream side and hedgerow trees*
- *unsettled landscape*

#### Secondary

- *wetland habitat*
- *river channel*
- *hedge and ditch boundaries*

#### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

*The strongly consistent visual and ecological character that has arisen through traditional methods of land management has been noticeably impoverished during the post war period. A rapid increase in arable cropping... has disrupted the classical patchwork of water meadows and pasture. The decline in the traditional practices of seasonal grazing and hay making, together with flood alleviation works... have all led to a reduction in ecological and visual interest. Elsewhere, built development has been undertaken and the resulting risk of flooding has often been overcome by the construction of uncharacteristic structures.... These are linear landscapes where the sense of unity relies heavily on extensive views along the length of river corridors. Added features such as roads or embankments which dissect the river corridor have resulted in numerous instances of visual fragmentation.*

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

*The pattern of enclosure is that of a planned nature where regularly laid out fields are hedged, ditched and traditionally managed.*

#### **Principal Settled Farmlands**

- 5.5.18 This LCT is scattered in the county, with the greatest concentration in the centre. Within Ledbury parish it only occurs as a very small area north of the town, covering part of the vicinity of the viaduct site which is allocated for future residential development and employment use. The rest of that site is covered by the Riverside Meadows and Urban LCTs, although the latter is another anomaly in the LCA, as the land is currently arable fields and is probably an extension of the Principal Settled Farmlands LCT to the north.

#### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

*The rolling, lowland area of Central Herefordshire is dominated by this Landscape Type. These are settled agricultural landscapes of dispersed, scattered farms, relic commons and small villages and hamlets. The mixed farming land use reflects the good soils on which they are typically found. Networks of small winding lanes nestling within a matrix of hedged fields are characteristic. Tree cover is largely restricted to thinly scattered hedgerow trees, groups of trees around dwellings and trees along stream sides and other watercourses. The composition of the hedgerow tree cover differs from that of Timbered Farmlands in its lower density and lack of oak dominance. This is a landscape with a notably domestic character, defined chiefly by the scale of its field pattern, the nature and density of its settlement and its traditional land uses. Hop fields, orchards, grazed pastures and arable fields, together make up the rich patchwork which is typical of Principal Settled Farmlands.*

#### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

##### Primary

- *hedgerows used for field boundaries*

##### Secondary

- *mixed farming land use*

#### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

*The pattern of small to medium sized hedged fields is vulnerable to change as the tendency towards arable dominance reduces the functional need for hedgerows... inappropriate maintenance is still resulting in the degradation and loss of the hedgerows which are one of the most significant features of the landscape. Intensification of farming practices is also resulting in a simplistic visual uniformity as landscape character is eroded. Development pressure in many of these areas has resulted in a distinctly nucleated or clustered settlement pattern which is contrary to the landscape character.*

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

*The enclosure pattern varies considerably but is generally of a planned sub-regular nature. The small to medium sized fields are vulnerable to amalgamation through hedgerow loss.*

#### **Sandstone Estatelands**

- 5.5.19 The LCA notes that 'This Landscape Type is only represented in Herefordshire by two Land Cover Parcels which make up the northern tip of the North-west Gloucestershire Sandlands Sub-regional Character Area around Brompton'. Within the parish, it covers two fields between Woodfields Farm and Webb's Coppice.

#### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

*These are open rolling landscapes characterised by a pattern of large arable fields, straight roads and estate plantations. This is a planned landscape in which strong, regular patterns of field layout, road networks and woodland shape play a dominant structural role... this is essentially a fairly open, large scale landscape with a notably sparse hedgerow tree presence... isolated brick farmsteads and clusters of wayside dwellings are interspersed with occasional small estate villages and their accompanying country house.*

#### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

##### Primary

- highly intensive arable land use
- hedgerows used for field boundaries
- planned enclosure pattern of straight boundaries and roads

##### Secondary

- heathy/acid grassland ground vegetation
- planned woodland character
- discrete woodland pattern
- large scale landscape
- clustered settlement pattern

#### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

*These are large scale landscapes in which the intensive land use has resulted in an overwhelming dominance of arable cropping. Hedgerows have therefore lost their primary function of stock containment and their continual deterioration has robbed these landscapes of much of their unifying presence. The deterioration of parkland and its encroachment by other land use is very evident, with many parkland trees now marooned in a sea of arable crops. The distinctive natural, heathy grassland is becoming increasingly rare as intensive management of non-productive land destroys the native plant communities.*

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

*These are large scale landscapes with a regular geometric pattern of large hedged fields.*

### **Estate Farmlands**

- 5.5.20 This LCT covers the landscapes in the north-westernmost part of the parish, north of Wall Hills and south of Staplow. The LCT extends westwards as far as the River Frome.

#### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

*The majority of this land has historically been in the ownership of a few land owning families who have influenced the character of the landscape by laying it out in an ordered fashion. This is a mixed farming, medium scale landscape where the medium to large sized fields are defined by hedgerows. The views are framed by tree groups associated with its planned character. These are often small, geometrically shaped plantation woodlands, possibly used in the past for shooting purposes, together with the tree features associated with large country house estates and ornamental parklands. This landscape type is similar to the Wooded Estate lands but it lacks the medieval parks and associated ancient woodland. Settlement is largely restricted to discrete clusters of dwellings and associated small estate villages.*

#### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

##### Primary

- hedgerows define the field boundaries

##### Secondary

- mixed farming land use
- planned woodland character
- medium-framed views
- clustered settlement pattern

#### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

*The tendency towards arable conversion is gradually changing the character of this Landscape Type. Hedgerow loss and deterioration are very often associated with an arable land use change, as hedgerows are no longer required for their primary function of stock containment.*

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

*This is a planned landscape with a sub-regular pattern of medium to large hedged fields. In Herefordshire, the fields tend to be smaller than in some other parts of the country.*

### **Urban**

- 5.5.21 The Urban LCTs are not described in the LCA, but see settlement character in Section 5.7.

## **5.6 Physical Landscape**

- 5.6.1 Ledbury's geology, topography and hydrology are complex. They give rise to fertile soils and wooded hills which were exploited by the communities which settled west of the Malvern Hills during the Mesolithic period. The landscapes of the study area are characterised by locally-distinct patterns of contrasting elements and features shaped by both nature and culture. They provide a wide range of highly valuable and valued resources for residents and visitors, and perform many essential functions.
- 5.6.2 This section describes the physical landscape (geology, topography, soils, hydrology, land cover and land use) of Ledbury parish, with reference to its wider context and influences.

### **Geology**

- 5.6.3 Ledbury's geology originated mainly in the Silurian and Devonian periods, about 425 million years ago, when the area was part of a shallow, tropical basin stretching westwards to modern-day Wales.

Sea levels fluctuated, and as they did, various layers of sediments were deposited, ranging from fine-grained sandstones and siltstones to limestone. The geology evident today can be broadly divided in two: sandstone to the west, and limestone hills to the east.

- 5.6.4 Ledbury and the area immediately to the west are situated on sandstone, mudstones and conglomerates of the Siluro-Devonian, Lower Old Red Sandstone group, laid down as sedimentaries.
- 5.6.5 The hills immediately to the east of Ledbury consist of limestone and shales. Situated on the western flank of the Malvern Hills, the area was affected by the faulting and complex folding of very old rocks that produced the Malverns. Such folding and movement also occurred along a north-south fault through Ledbury, causing earlier Silurian limestone to re-emerge in the hills to the east of the town. This eastern geology now consists mainly of Wenlock Limestone and Ludlow Shales.
- 5.6.6 Similar folding further west caused limestone to re-emerge in Marcle Ridge c. 7km west of Ledbury, forming the eastern edge of the Woolhope Dome.
- 5.6.7 Wall Hills, c. 2km north west of Ledbury, comprises Old Red Sandstone capped by crystalline Cornstone or calcretes (Devonian rock left following erosion of surrounding beds).
- 5.6.8 Wenlock Limestone used to be quarried within the area for mortar, fertiliser and crushed rock for aggregate. It was also used in cottages, boundary walls and buildings such as St Katherine's Hospital.
- 5.6.9 Within the Wenlock Limestone, Ledbury Marble was found - a hard, crystalline, fossil-rich limestone used for decorative purposes, for example in Church Lane's cobbles.
- 5.6.10 There are several disused quarries in the area, now important for their biodiversity. Three sites (Knapp Lane quarry, Ledbury Tunnel quarry and Coneygree Wood) are also identified in HC's Ecological Network Map (2013) for their geodiversity. ### Local Geological Sites (LGSs) TBC

### Topography

- 5.6.11 Topography is determined by the underlying geology and the effects of erosion and abrasion over many millennia. The topography of both the study area and the town / its immediate surrounds is shown on the OS maps in Figures 1A and 1B respectively.
- 5.6.12 Topography is an integral aspect of Ledbury's context and setting, and has also had a significant influence on the town's evolution and growth, which is constrained and built up against the hills to the east and bounded by the River Leadon to the west. The highest part of the settlement is to the north east just below Dog Hill, at c. 120m above Ordnance datum (AOD). The urban area slopes broadly westwards down to the River Leadon, the lowest part being at c. 45m AOD, south west of the Full Pitcher roundabout.
- 5.6.13 The town developed away from the north-south axis of the original settlement (the Homend, High Street and the Southend at c. 80m AOD) to cover the eastern slopes rising above the town. A much larger area of the town developed to the west of the main Homend-Southend axis on the gentle slopes of the Leadon valley. This urban development is mostly between c. 50 and 60m AOD.
- 5.6.14 In the wider area, the more resistant limestone has produced a ridge of hills with steep scarps which extend some 6km from the town's eastern edges. From north to south, the hills are: Frith Wood to the north-east at c. 260m AOD; Dog Hill at c. 150 m AOD; and the larger Coneygree Wood to the south and east, at just over 190m AOD. The hills are characterised by steep slopes, as are the routes through them, notably Knapp Lane and the A449 Worcester Road.
- 5.6.15 To the north-west, west and south-west of Ledbury town, the land is low-lying and gently undulating. The River Leadon, flowing north-south to the west of Ledbury, forms a plain at between 45 and 60m AOD.
- 5.6.16 Within this northern and western valley, there are slightly higher river terraces (for example around the 60 metre contour), representing a former flood plain into which the River Leadon has cut down

to its present course. Such river terraces were formed due to fluctuations in climate during the Quaternary Period. As the ice sheet expanded during a cold phase, sea levels fell and rivers such as the Leadon cut deep channels into their flood plain. When the ice melted, these channels were filled with glacial debris, so that a typical terrace is covered with a sheet of gravel and sand passing upwards into finer alluvium. During a warmer, interglacial period, the sea failed to recover its former level and rivers continued cutting down to produce a flood plain at a lower level than before.

- 5.6.17 Some Herefordshire valleys contain a 'staircase' of several terraces caused by several phases of climate fluctuation. However, in the valley area to the north, west and south-west of Ledbury, it is difficult to distinguish more than one river terrace level and only remnants remain.
- 5.6.18 The area south of Leadon Way is more undulating, sloping west / north west towards the river from c. 90m AOD close to the southern entrance to Ledbury to c. 50m AOD by the B4216 Dymock Road. The valley area between the Little Marcle Road and the A438 Hereford Road is also undulating, sloping gently up to Wall Hills, which rise above the plain to over 110m AOD.
- 5.6.19 Further afield, both to the east and west, Ledbury is bounded by much higher relief. The Malvern Hills to the east form a distinctive chain of peaks which run north-south, from the River Teme west of Worcester to the northern Gloucestershire border at Chase End. The highest peak is the Herefordshire Beacon (also known as British Camp), at 338m AOD.
- 5.6.20 The Hills are pre-Cambrian (between 600 - 800 million years old), and act as a barrier between the drift deposits of the Severn Valley river terraces to the east and the undulating Old Red Sandstone claylands to the west, with great contrasts in resulting landcover and land uses. There is a high degree of physical association and interinfluence between the Malvern Hills and Ledbury, but limited intervisibility due to screening by the intervening upstanding topography of Frith Wood and further north, Oyster Hill at c. 211m AOD.
- 5.6.21 Marcle Ridge to the west forms high ground ranging from c. 170 to just over 200m AOD. There is a high degree of intervisibility between the Ridge and the Malvern Hills, with Ledbury visible on the lowlands in between.
- 5.6.22 Topography also influences the climate of the Ledbury area, sheltering it from easterly winds and resulting in a south-westerly orientation, but in the rain-shadow of Wales to produce a mild, productive climate.

### Soils

- 5.6.23 In the lower-lying areas where the underlying geology is Old Red Sandstone, to the north, west and south of Ledbury, the soils are predominantly Category 8. They are 'slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage'<sup>19</sup>. Fertility is moderate to high, and the landcover predominantly arable and grassland.
- 5.6.24 Superficial surface deposits (clay, silt, sand and gravel) are found along the course of the River Leadon, giving rise to characteristic riverside meadows.
- 5.6.25 Within this lowland area, the river terraces north, west, and south-west of Ledbury are noted for their sandy brown soils, which are free-draining and highly fertile. These are the most productive soils in the area and have long been cultivated, most notably for horticultural crops.
- 5.6.26 The area to the north-east of Ledbury, bordering Frith Wood, and in a 'tongue' to the south-east of the town, consists of Category 6 soils. This is 'freely draining slightly acid loamy soil' (Soilscape). Its fertility is relatively low and gives rise to arable farming and grassland.
- 5.6.27 The high hills comprising Frith Wood, Coneygree Wood and the area adjacent to the A449 as it leaves Ledbury have mainly Category 17 soils. These are described as 'slowly permeable seasonally wet acid

<sup>19</sup> Source: Soilscales <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscales/>

loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage' (Soilscape). They have relatively low fertility associated with grassland, some arable production, and forestry.

- 5.6.28 According to the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), land in the Ledbury area is predominantly Grade 2 (very good). Within the Grade 2 area west of Ledbury, there are two areas of Grade 1 (excellent): one south of Flights Farm, the other east of the B4216 Dymock Road near Ledbury. The western, mainly Grade 2 area is also broken by small areas of Grade 3 (good to moderate). Wall Hills is surrounded by Grade 3, as is land either side of the River Leadon, from north of the viaduct to where it flows out of the parish to the south.
- 5.6.29 To the east of Frith Wood and Dog Hill is a narrow band of Grade 4 (poor), orientated approximately north-south. Roughly parallel with this is a more extensive area of Grade 3 land, from around Cummins Farm in the north to the edge of Coneygree Wood, south of Hill Farm. This Grade 3 area includes some small areas of Grade 2 land either side of the railway line.

### **Hydrology**

- 5.6.30 The drainage system of the Ledbury area is determined by the River Leadon and its tributaries. Its catchment area is defined by the local topography, bounded by the high relief of Seager Hill and the Marcle Ridge to the west, and the hills extending from Frith Wood to beyond Coneygree Wood to the east (see relief on Figure 1A).

### RIVER LEADON

- 5.6.31 The River Leadon is relatively short (51km) and, as its Celtic name suggests, mainly a "broad stream". Rising further north near Evesbatch, it flows in a southerly direction to Bosbury, Ledbury and Dymock to join the River Severn at Over, near Gloucester. Within the Ledbury parish area, the Leadon flows from north of the railway viaduct to a course west of the town, roughly parallel with the A417 ring road. It then continues southwards following a course to the west of the B4216, Dymock Road.

### TRIBUTARY STREAMS

- 5.6.32 Water coming off the high hills to the west and east of the river drains into various small tributary streams. Within the study area, these include Stony Brook, which flows eastwards from near Durlow Common to join the River Leadon north of Ledbury. Further south, there are several streams flowing in an easterly direction, for example joining the Leadon near Fairtree Farm and in a westerly direction, joining the main river opposite Siddington Farm.

### SOIL DRAINAGE

- 5.6.33 Drainage on the area's mainly clay soils (Category 8) is described as impeded i.e. slow to soak away or drain to the local stream network described above. Similar impeded drainage is found on the hills of Frith Wood and Coneygree Wood (Category 17). Smaller areas on the western edge of Frith Wood and in a narrow tongue of land to the east of the town (Category 6) are more free-draining to local groundwater and streams.

### FLOODING

- 5.6.34 Sources of reference for this section include the *River Severn Catchment Flood Management Plan* 2009, and *Herefordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment* 2019.
- 5.6.35 The Vale of Leadon is part of the Lower Severn Corridor and Leadon Catchment sub-area, and is liable to flooding both by surface and river water.
- 5.6.36 The overall flood risk of the area on both sides of the River Leadon at Ledbury is 'low to moderate'. Flood Zone 3 (land assessed as having a greater flood risk (>1%)) is closest to the Leadon; there are small 'patches' of Flood Zone 2 (medium probability of flooding (>0.1%)) adjoining Flood Zone 3, but further from the river.

- 5.6.37 The studies predict that with present trends in land use and management, climate change and further urbanisation, flood risks near Ledbury will increase in future.
- 5.6.38 The River Leadon and its tributaries have had a significant influence on the area's settlement pattern. The risk of flooding has been a major constraint to the development of Ledbury west of the A417 ring road; settlement in the rest of the Vale of Leadon is rural, sparsely dispersed, often with single farmsteads.
- 5.6.39 Finally, the River Leadon and its tributaries form a highly important and strategic north-south green / blue infrastructure corridor with distinct biodiversity.

#### **Landcover**

- 5.6.40 Beyond the urban area, Ledbury's landscapes are predominately agricultural, with landcover comprising a patchwork of arable and pastoral fields. The latter are predominantly improved grassland so like the arable fields have limited biodiversity value; however, at Stony Hill on the east side of the town there are small, locally-rare patches of Lowland Calcareous Grassland and Lowland Meadows (Priority Habitat Inventory sites - see biodiversity in Section 5.11).
- 5.6.41 Land south of new development adjoining Leadon Way is agricultural, mainly arable, interspersed with small blocks of mature woodland (broadleaved and coniferous plantations) and coppice.
- 5.6.42 The areas to the south west and north west / north of Ledbury are covered by more open agricultural land, with little tree cover except along watercourses. These sectors also contain a few small areas devoted to intensive agriculture and more extensively, modern bush orchards. Poly tunnels are relatively common in the local landscapes and are highly visible from several locations in and around the parish<sup>20</sup>.
- 5.6.43 Landcover includes a large area of mixed woodland (deciduous and coniferous) on the range of steep hills to the east of Ledbury and close to Wall Hills to the north-west of the town. Much of this tree cover is categorised as ASNW (some replanted).
- 5.6.44 These wooded hills form the eastern boundary to significant areas of historic parkland (see Section 5.9 Landscape History and Historic Landscape Character below). Ledbury Park and Underdown lie close to the south-eastern edge of the town: much of the land is categorised as Woodpasture and Parkland Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat, which is typical of historic parkland and of high value. There is a smaller area of parkland near Fairtree Farm, close to the western edge of Ledbury.
- 5.6.45 Beyond the town and its hills, the eastern part of the parish that extends towards Malvern is mainly under arable cultivation; along the A449 corridor, the land slopes down to the road on both sides. In this sector, woodland cover is most noticeable on surrounding hills and ridges to the north west and south, with mainly pastoral fields just below the wooded heights.

#### **Land Use**

- 5.6.46 Parish-wide land use was mapped at a 1: 10,000 scale (see Figure ###). The information was gathered through a combination of field-walking, local knowledge, and studying maps and Google Earth.
- 5.6.47 In summary, beyond the urban area and that under construction south of Leadon Way, land is predominately in agricultural use. Within this, small but significant areas are in horticultural use, mostly for apples grown in modern orchards and soft fruits grown under poly tunnels.

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<sup>20</sup> Poly tunnels are usually white, which results in a high degree of contrast when viewed against a darker, usually green background; however, bright yellow tunnels are being trialled near Trumpet for pest-repellent reasons. Surprisingly, the yellow is less jarring than white, probably because a) fields of yellow-flowered oilseed rape are now a common sight, and b) landscape greens tend to contain a high percentage of yellow.

- 5.6.48 There are also extensive woodlands on the hills to the east of Ledbury which are still managed for forestry, but are also highly valued for their views, biodiversity and general recreational use on the western edge of the Malvern Hills AONB.

## 5.7 Settlement Character and Pattern

- 5.7.1 This section describes the characteristics and patterns of settlement present within the core study area and parish, the present-day character of Ledbury town, and how it developed. It was informed by research, map regression exercises, and settlement pattern analysis. The contextual history and evolution of Ledbury's settlements and landscapes are set out in Section 5.9; see also map sequence 1831 - 2006 in Appendix ###.

### Study Area / Parish Settlement Pattern Overview

- 5.7.2 The countywide LCA describes the various LCTs within the study area (see Section 5.5); this includes an overview of the patterns of settlement that characterise each LCT, and importantly, an indication of what the most appropriate siting / layout / form of residential development would be within that LCT. The settlement pattern descriptions for the LCTs which cover the parish are as follows:

#### Principal Timbered Farmlands

##### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

*These landscapes typically have a dispersed settlement pattern of frequent roadside dwellings and farmsteads, set amongst winding lanes. In accordance with UDP policy, additional individual dwellings would conform to the settlement character, as long as they do not occur in sufficient density to convert the pattern to wayside or clustered status. Modern development favouring groups or clusters of new houses would not be appropriate in this landscape.*

#### Principal Wooded Hills

##### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

*This is a landscape with a scattered settlement pattern of occasional dwellings which were traditionally small forestry workers cottages. An occasional additional dwelling could be assimilated if it is in accordance with... policy, but the density of dwellings should remain extremely low.*

#### Settled Farmlands on River Terrace

##### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

*Pressure for built development has been resisted in these areas that are so valuable for horticulture. However, limited new development could be accommodated, either as small clusters or individual dwellings, but only in accordance with... policy. The density should remain very low.*

#### Riverside Meadows

##### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

*These are essentially unsettled landscapes with occasional mills or other buildings directly associated with the river.*

#### Principal Settled Farmlands

##### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

*The dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and hamlets is capable of accommodating limited new development if it is in accordance with... policy. Low densities of individual dwellings would be acceptable as long as they are not sited close enough to coalesce into a prominent wayside settlement*

*pattern. Additional housing in hamlets and villages should be modest in size in order to preserve the character of the original settlement.*

### **Sandstone Estatelands**

#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

*The settlement pattern varies between isolated brick farmsteads, clusters of wayside dwellings and occasional estate villages.*

### **Estate Farmlands**

#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

*The settlement pattern is of clustered groups of dwellings, often estate villages. New development which tends towards a clustered pattern would be appropriate in these landscapes if in accordance with... policy. However, the siting of new development should be undertaken with extreme care in order to avoid compromising the visual integrity of distinctive estate villages.*

- 5.7.3 Broadly, settlement patterns within the parish are typical of the LCTs in which they occur; however, there are local variations which are likely to affect, and must be factored into, plans and decisions about siting, layout, form and design of new development.
- 5.7.4 Over time, settlement of the landscapes on the west side of the Malvern Hills has ranged from transient encampments to individual farmsteads and cottages clustered in hamlets, small and large villages, and market towns such as Ledbury.
- 5.7.5 Ledbury is the only town within the study area; Wellington Heath and Colwall are the largest villages. Several small villages / hamlets / settlement clusters are quite evenly-scattered throughout, encircling Ledbury. The scatter and density of the smaller settlements and other built form varies, with location determined by, and reflecting, natural, cultural and other factors / constraints.
- 5.7.6 In the north to east and east to south sectors, apart from Wellington Heath and Colwall (both in the north to east sector), settlement is characteristically very sparsely-scattered, comprising a few small villages and hamlets (including Old Colwall, White-leaved Oak and Bromesberrow); settlement clusters (such as Bradlow, Hollybush and Parkway); individual dwellings (large and small, old and modern, roadside / isolated); traditional farmsteads; and occasional hostleries.
- 5.7.7 This is partly because the land is hilly / sloping / undulating / wooded and the network of lanes is narrow, but also due to the presence of large country houses (often medieval manors, or in the case of Eastnor, a castle) surrounded by extensive private estates (parks and / or farmland), on which there is usually very little built form (occasionally estate villages, lodges and associated dwellings / farm buildings). In addition, because the landscapes are of high quality and value (for these reasons), they are covered by the AONB designation: this means that in most cases, new development must be carefully considered and fully justified before it is allowed, and of a commensurate level of quality.
- 5.7.8 The patterns of settlement in the south to west and west to north sectors of the study area reflect human responses to opportunities offered by the flatter, more accessible and very fertile lowlands which characterise the landscapes west of Ledbury. Here, the land was more easily-exploited for commercial production: with Ledbury being a strategically-located, bustling market town, the area attracted and established the wealthier classes.
- 5.7.9 In these sectors, unsurprisingly, the density of settlement and built form is highest in the areas closest to Ledbury (Wall Hills is an exception, perhaps due to factors such as topography and the scheduling), and reduces markedly the further west one travels, only increasing again when approaching the outskirts of Hereford (for example at Bartestree / Lugwardine, and Rotherwas, respectively c. 14 and 16km from Ledbury).

- 5.7.10 A few small villages / hamlets / clusters of dwellings are widely scattered throughout, including Leddington, Preston Cross, Little Marcle, Aylton / Putley Green, Pixley, Trumpet and Staplow. There are also roadside dwellings (but little ribbon development). Traditional farmsteads are characteristic, often brick-and-timber and featuring an oast house; however, many have been significantly enlarged in recent times (from the mid-1970s onwards), and are now large, intensive agricultural complexes comprising modern, industrial-scale units which dwarf the original cluster (in several cases, the original farmhouses and outbuildings buildings are listed). These tend to be relatively well-separated, but the landscapes between Ledbury and Marcle Ridge (which forms the eastern edge of the Woolhope Dome on the east side of the River Wye, and lies within the Wye Valley AONB) are open, and tree cover is sparse. This increases the physical and visual association between the large complexes (particularly where polytunnels are used), and the effect occasionally becomes cumulative, especially when seen from elevated viewpoints.
- 5.7.11 Although there are a few country houses within private parkland, the estates appear to be 'minor' in comparison to the large individual landholdings east of Ledbury, such as Eastnor and Bromesberrow.
- 5.7.12 The southern and western outskirts of Ledbury saw considerable expansion of built form in the mid- to late-20<sup>th</sup> century, which continues to the present day. This is described in more detail in the following section.

#### **Ledbury Town Present-Day Character**

- 5.7.13 The town itself probably originated in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century (c. 690 AD) as a cluster of dwellings at Lower Cross. For millennia, this had been the main crossing point of north-south and east-west trackways to and from sites of cultural significance including early hillforts. Ledbury is located along the main pilgrimage route between Hereford and the Malvern Hills, famed for their natural spring water which was considered sacred.
- 5.7.14 In those times, major crossing points were good places to meet, rest and trade, and eventually, to settle. Ledbury marked the point along the route to the Hills where the terrain became more challenging, so it was a logical place to pause. It was also a good location for settlement: there were abundant natural resources, it was accessible, lay above the flood plain, was sheltered by wooded hillslopes, and commanding views could be gained from the more elevated locations.
- 5.7.15 When the Domesday Book was compiled in 1086, Ledbury was a rural manor in the episcopate of the Bishop of Hereford (Richard de Capella, d. 1127); it was recorded as Liedeberge. The Bishop created a new town or borough, with a market place in what is now High Street.
- 5.7.16 There was a large minster church in Ledbury at the time of the Domesday survey, in the same location as the present Grade I-listed St Michael and All Angels church, on the town's central eastern edge near an important routeway junction. The site is in an elevated position, the area forming the transition between the steep-sided hills to the east and the river valley to the west. Worship at the site may have commenced during the 8<sup>th</sup> century, when the Bishop of Hereford sent a group of his clergy to establish a Christian presence there. The church was rebuilt between c. 1120 and 1140, and from about the 1230s, when the bishop founded St Katherine's Hospital, the second rebuilding of the church began, including the detached bell tower.
- 5.7.17 The Chapter House was built in 1330 off the north side of the church, either by the Benedictines of Hereford who were hoping to take over Ledbury church, or as a shrine to a local saint, Katherine de Audley of Ledbury (who was never formally canonised).
- 5.7.18 The presence of the minster and the ownership of the town by the Church influenced its layout - with triangular marketplace and burgage plots along the main north-south road - and how it has grown since. Houses extended north along 'The Homend' (name first recorded in 1288) then along Southend. Bye Street was probably developed next, and finally New Street, where houses had been

built by 1186. This 12<sup>th</sup> century town plan was hardly altered until the building of the canal and railway in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and mid-19<sup>th</sup> centuries respectively, and is clearly legible in the town centre today.

- 5.7.19 St Katherine's Hospital was founded in 1231 by Bishop Hugh Foliot, and it is one of the most important surviving medieval hospital sites in the country. Along with the nearby Alms Houses this is now a Grade II\*-listed building. Hospitals like this were fairly common in the Middle Ages, but few have been retained in their entirety. The Chapter House was built in 1330, either by the Benedictines of Hereford who were hoping to take over Ledbury church, or as a shrine to a local saint, Katherine of Ledbury (who was never formally canonised).
- 5.7.20 In the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century, Ledbury was affected by the Black Death, which resulted in significant loss of population and economic decline, and the town only began to expand again in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when the wool trade brought wealth to the area. This allowed the town to be rebuilt, although the original layout of streets and central market place below the church were retained. A great deal of the work was carried out between 1570 - 1620, as the town prospered from its trade in wool and the weaving of cloth: the Civil War caused but a brief hiatus.
- 5.7.21 In fact, the majority of the historic buildings in the town centre today date from the 15<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, and all make highly important contributions to Ledbury's sense of place, identity and local distinctiveness. Notable examples from the earlier part of this period include: the Master's House built in 1487-8 (Grade II\*-listed, part of the St Katherine's Hospital complex); the Heritage Centre aka the Old Grammar School (1489-90, Grade II\*); No.1 Church Lane (1510-11); the Feathers Hotel (1560-70, Grade II\*); the Butcher Row House (1581-2); the Old Talbot Inn (c. 1596, Grade II\*) and Ledbury Park (c. 1595, Grade I).
- 5.7.22 These and many of the other buildings are very good representation of the vernacular of their respective periods, resulting in a diverse mixture of styles and materials (black-and-white timber-framed being highly characteristic); yet the arrangement - still following the ancient cross-roads street pattern (somewhat disrupted by market encroachment some time before 1617, resulting in the 'hidden' entrance to Church Street) - gives rise to a strong sense of order and unity.
- 5.7.23 Work started on a new building in the market place in 1617, although it took 50 years to complete (1668 - the man who was responsible for the building works, John Phillips, died in 1655). Today, the Market House is one of Ledbury's most distinctive (and probably most-photographed) buildings. It is Grade-I listed and is considered to be one of the finest examples in England. It still hosts the Charter Market (granted by Queen Elizabeth I in 1584) on Tuesdays and Saturdays.
- 5.7.24 The listing description states: *'Begun circa 1617 and completed after 1655, and attributed John Abel, the King's Carpenter. Timber-framed with a gable-ended tiled roof. 2 storeys. The upper storey is supported on 7 posts on the long sides and 3 at the ends all with curved braces. The posts are of local Spanish chestnut, on stone bases, they are moulded grooved and tapered with moulded bases. Upper storey projects on all sides with chamfered bressummers and exposed timber framing, herring bone patterned on the west and south, the other sides with square panels... Market House with all the listed buildings on the east side of High Street form a good group'.*
- 5.7.25 In fact, there are inaccuracies in the listing, which dates from 1953, and there is doubt that it was the work of John Abel. In 2006, the Market House had to be jacked up in order to treat a wasp infestation. This gave experts and interested parties the opportunity to inspect every part of the building, which was re-roofed at this time. Duncan James (expert in timber-framed buildings of Herefordshire) produced a report called *An Analysis of the Historic Fabric of Late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> Century Buildings in Ledbury, Herefordshire* (June 2007). The Market House is discussed on pp 14-18. The 'posts' are not 'local Spanish chestnut', they are in fact '16 tapering oak pillars'.
- 5.7.26 The Reformation (1517 - 1648) also resulted in certain changes in Ledbury; in particular, the Church no longer owned the town - it had been sold off, and had passed into the ownership of a small group of families who also owned many of the surrounding estates.

- 5.7.27 In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Turnpike Trust attempted to improve the roads, and in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire canal was built to improve the movement of heavy loads; however it was the coming of the railway in 1861 which affected growth of the town the most. The Victorian age resulted in the coming of running water, sanitation and power supplies. The first OS map of 1887 (see map in Appendix ###) shows the town still surrounded by fields and woodland but expanding, now with recently-constructed housing, much of it associated with the railway. The station opened in 1861, and a new cattle market opened in 1887. In 1892, a private electricity plant was built at Fairtree on the town's western outskirts (this later became a jam factory, and is now the site of United Beverages Limited (UBL).
- 5.7.28 Construction of dwellings at Happy Land and Newtown began in the 1850s. They were built using locally-made bricks - there was a brickworks in New Street and another in Victoria Road. The Happy Land housing was built for the working classes in Bridge Street, with more expensive individual housing in Newtown's Victoria Road and Albert Road. The project was carried out with the aid of the Ledbury Benefit Building Society, with members making contributions into a mutual fund which was used to purchase land and build the houses. Newbury Park was developed from 1886 over a period of about twenty years by the Ledbury Building Society; Bank Crescent followed from the 1890s. Land was purchased, divided up into plots, sold and gradually, individual homes were built.
- 5.7.29 The expansion of the town continued during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, albeit relatively slowly. After World War (WW) I, new housing was built as 'Homes for Heroes', and during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, plots were sold for the building of individual homes. Between WWII and the late-1970s / early 80s, many new houses were constructed, including a large housing estate on the former Deer Park (of Ledbury Park - see Sections 5.8 and 5.9 below), and several apartment blocks. However, there was little further growth in the town until the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In 1971, Ledbury town's population was 3,911; it then stabilised for some time. By 2011 (the date of the last Census), the town's population had grown to 9,636, and since then, many new homes and other developments have been built.
- 5.7.30 Historically, the direction of Ledbury's outward growth was usually determined by the presence of natural and man-made features. The railway formed the northern limit of the town until the 1970s, when employment units were built on fields north of the railway, on the west side of the Bromyard Road. The land to the east is wooded, hilly, and only accessible via narrow lanes, and since 1959 has been designated as an AONB; both factors act as forms of constraint to development. The River Leadon lies to the west, a natural constraint, although in recent years some large-scale modern and visually unattractive developments have been allowed, for example the UBL factory and the auction site on the south side of the Ross Road, opposite the rugby club.
- 5.7.31 In the 1980s, a new relief road was built west and south of the town: the final Hereford Road section to join the Leadon Way roundabout was completed in 1989. This provided a much-needed by-pass around Ledbury, diverting traffic from the medieval town-centre streets and allowing it to flow well-beyond the modern built-up edges of the town. It was designed to effectively contain the settlement, clearly separating town from countryside, and to act as a defensible boundary to the town's southern and western edges. By that time, large new housing estates had been developed south of the town centre, on land lying between the A417 and Mabel's Furlong (Wild House Farm) - Leadon Way ran south of these. Landscape buffers, some with acoustic bunds, were established between the new road and the settlement, many of which are now belts of semi-mature woodland.
- 5.7.32 Leadon Way also enclosed several fields which have all since been built on, mainly by the New Mills housing (late 1990s) and Lower Road trading estate (from 1969). However, it excluded the industrial estate at Old Wharf (site of engineering works in late 19<sup>th</sup> century, developed as industrial estate in 1970s, enlarged / modernised in 1980s and 90s).

- 5.7.33 Infill of various spaces with houses since the millennium include the estate beside the old goods yard at the station (now a trading estate), which was formerly site of the redundant abattoir (built in 1926), and homes built on the ground between the Hereford Road and the viaduct.
- 5.7.34 Much of the new development (residential and commercial) has been located on land west and south of the town centre, although a large area of land to the north of the town has been allocated for residential and employment use (the viaduct site, or Bloor scheme, which was the subject of the public inquiry in 2020: the appeal was allowed in March 2021).
- 5.7.35 Planning permission has also been granted for housing on the former football and cricket pitches at the lower end of New Street, although by ### date of final report it had not yet been built.
- 5.7.36 Currently, c. 320 new homes are being built south of the town on land (formerly fields) south of Leadon Way (the Barratt scheme). Due to the consequences, this was one of the more unfortunate decisions relating to new development in south Ledbury, as it allowed Leadon Way to be breached for the first time (HC recommended refusal, but it was allowed at appeal<sup>21</sup> and is now under construction).
- 5.7.37 The scheme has resulted in the loss of Leadon Way's function, and it has now become a barrier to safe and easy access from the new residential area into the town. The Barratt scheme has also changed the landscape and visual baseline situation in this part of Ledbury, making it almost inevitable that permission would be granted (as it was in August 2020) for the construction of up to 140 new houses south of Leadon Way, adjacent to the Barratt site's eastern boundary.
- 5.7.38 As mentioned above, until recently, the town covered an area of some 2.5 sq km (approximately 10% of the parish area). With development on the viaduct site and the approved sites south of Leadon Way in place, the area would be c. 3 sq km - an increase of 20%.
- 5.7.39 In the past, Ledbury has regularly received national plaudits, being recognised as one of those rare and very special places that stands out from its peers.
- 5.7.40 The Sunday Times newspaper put the town in its selection of both 2019 and 2020 top-ten places in which to live in the Midlands, one year calling it a *'humdinger of a half-timbered market town, with a winning roster of schools, scenery and independent shops'* and with *'a handsome history'*. In the following year, it said, *'Its half-timbered main street is the model of old-fashioned affluence. Few streets can match Ledbury's Church Lane for timeless charm. Cobbled alleys and crooked gables may offer a beguiling hint of mystery, but happy gentility is the watchword here. Rowdy it isn't, classy it definitely is. Party time arrives with an annual poetry festival that is the biggest in Britain - Margaret Atwood attended last year. This is a place where you sip your cappuccino in a coffee house or coffee lounge, not a cafe, and buy your underwear at Bra Boudoir rather than M&S.'*
- 5.7.41 Similar praise for Ledbury was once published by The Guardian newspaper in its property pages 'Let's move to': *'If you want a refresher, Ledbury's your place, its streets an utterly charming jumble of redbrick Georgian townhouses, ickle cottages and, its speciality, black and white timber-framed Tudor, twisted and tottering on to the pavements. It wears its beauty lightly. Were this not in Herefordshire, hardly in the thick of things, it would have become self-aware, pretentious. Ledbury keeps it real, with butchers, bakers and gunmakers on its streets and a twee-free atmosphere, give or take the odd gifte shoppe. There is something irresistibly timeless about the place, in our age of freneticness'.*

## 5.8 Heritage Assets

- 5.8.1 The baseline studies identified numerous designated and undesignated heritage assets within the study area. The locations of most of the designated / key features and sites listed below are shown

<sup>21</sup> APP/W1850/W/15/3009456

on ### Figure/s ###. Their distribution is a good illustration of how the area's character has evolved and changed over time.

- 5.8.2 The previous and following sections explain and provide further background context for these assets, and note their influence on / contribution to the area's landscapes and communities.

### Scheduled Monuments

- 5.8.3 Only one Scheduled Monument (SM) is located within the parish: Wall Hills Camp, which lies in a dominant position on Ledbury's western outskirts c. 650m west of the River Leadon. It comprises the remains of a large, early Iron Age multivallate hillfort, covering c. 10.1ha.
- 5.8.4 Hillforts in Britain are known from the Bronze Age, but the great period of hillfort construction was during the Iron Age, between 700 BC and the Roman conquest of Britain in 43 AD. Debate continues as to whether these forts were places of occupation or simply meeting places and focal points for the communities concerned.
- 5.8.5 Historic England's description of Wall Hills Camp is as follows:  
*'The hillfort enclosure is irregular in plan approximately 650 long by 435m wide that is divided into two separate areas by a bank and ditch. The hillfort is defined by a steep natural slope beneath two ramparts and associated quarry ditches. The monument has four entrance gaps, with the north eastern entrance being inturned and two entrance gaps between the enclosures. Excavation of the site has revealed Roman and 12<sup>th</sup> century pottery and a Civil War cannonball.'*
- 5.8.6 Evidence of flint working and flint tools, flakes and cores characteristic of the period 6000 - 4000BC have been found around and within Wall Hills hillfort (and also near Frith Farm in Wellington Heath parish), suggesting there maybe earlier sites, possibly simple enclosures lying beneath. Bradlow Knoll may be the site of a Bronze Age round barrow or burial mound. A number of portable antiquities dating from the Bronze Age and later have also been found in the fields between the hillfort and the River Leadon below.
- 5.8.7 There is no public access to the hillfort, but it is described and illustrated in *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club (1883-85)*<sup>22</sup>, an extract from which is as follows:  
*'The camp itself is very large. It comprises within its area nearly 30 acres of ground. It has two main entrances; one from the north, through the outer portion, called "Fluck's Close," and another from the east - this entrance is approached by a deep fosse road, or covered way, from the north, and it is also defended by a traverse and deep fosse in front of it.*  
*'The camp is supplied with water from a spring close to the ramparts, and by two ponds in the southern side of the outer fosse. The portion on which we now stand is the bastion guarding the northern entrance, and is called "The Churchyard," but whether the human bones which have been found in the camp came from here is not stated.*  
*'The portion termed "The Camp" is nearly rectangular, with a small projection at the eastern end, called "The Little Camp." It is nearly 20 feet higher than the western portion. This is called "Peas Hill," with the narrow portion near the eastern entrance, called "Humble Bee Park." [...] You will observe an entrance on the western side; this is not an original entrance. The fosse near it is called "The King's Ditch," but the origin of this name is lost.*
- 5.8.8 There are two other scheduled hillforts in the wider area, on the Malvern Hills: Midsummer Hill which lies c. 4.6km east of Ledbury town, and British Camp which lies c. 5.2km to the north east. Both have a starting date in the late Bronze Age (c. 800 BC). The Shire Ditch which runs along the Hills' ridgeline

<sup>22</sup> <https://archive.org/stream/transactionsofwo83wool#page/24/mode/2up>

is scheduled, the listing describing it as a medieval boundary dyke, but evidence suggests that it also dates from the Bronze Age.

5.8.9 Beyond the parish boundary and within the core study area (i.e. the extent of the map bases used for the baseline figures) there are three other scheduled monuments:

- Barton Court dovecote: Also Grade II\* listed. South west of Colwall Green, within the grounds (unregistered historic park and garden - see below) of Grade II-listed Barton Court. Believed to date from the middle of the medieval period.
- Bronsil Castle: between Eastnor Castle and Midsummer Hill. Remnants of a mid-15<sup>th</sup> century fortified and moated manor house with a gatehouse and four towers. Built to incorporate the ruins of an earlier property, possibly belonging to the Beauchamp family.
- Moated site at Bellamy's Farm: south east of Leddington. Medieval moated site (majority in country built between 1250 and 1350). Believed to have taken its name from the Bellamy family who appear in the Dymock manor rolls of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### Listed Buildings & Structures

5.8.10 A total of 244 listed buildings and structures were identified within the parish. Around three-quarters are concentrated in a tight cluster within the town centre, lining both sides of the four roads which meet at Top Cross (see previous section). Most are within the Conservation Area (see below) - indeed, the majority of properties within the Conservation Area are listed.

5.8.11 The parish's three Grade I-listed buildings are all in the town centre (described in more detail in previous and following sections):

- St Michael and All Angels church: 8<sup>th</sup> century origins, rebuilt from c. 1120 to 1140, second rebuilding in c. 1230s (detached bell tower built with wooden shingle spire). Spire rebuilt in stone 1732 - 36, further works in late 19<sup>th</sup> & early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- The Market House: begun c. 1617, completed c. 1668, timber-framed.
- Ledbury Park: late 16<sup>th</sup> century, timber-framed (see unregistered historic park and gardens below); was called New House up until mid- 19<sup>th</sup> century.

5.8.12 Within the town there are twenty-two Grade II\*-listed buildings and numerous Grade II. The Grade II\* buildings include:

- Master's House: 15<sup>th</sup> century (1487-8) - recently renovated.
- St Katherine's Chapel, hall and stable: 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- Feathers Hotel: 1560-70, timber-framed.

5.8.13 The 31-arch railway viaduct which crosses the River Leadon north of the town was built between 1859 and 61, out of around one million locally-made bricks. It is Grade II listed, and is a landmark feature in the local area. Ledbury station house is also listed Grade II.

5.8.14 Beyond the settlement and within the parish there are no Grade I-listed buildings, but three Grade II\*-listed buildings:

- Woodhouse Farmhouse: a Grade II\* 14<sup>th</sup> century half-timbered property lying in the northern part of the parish, just south of Staplow.
- Barn south of Wallhills Farmhouse: 15<sup>th</sup> century or earlier.
- Dingwood Park Farmhouse: a small country house c. 1690 lying c. 1.6km south east of the town on the hill slopes east of the A417 (within unregistered historic park and garden - see below).

- 5.8.15 There is also a good scatter of Grade II buildings in the parish landscapes, many of which are 16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> century farmsteads.
- 5.8.16 Neither the Butcher Row House, now a museum in Church Lane (built c. 1581), nor the Heritage Centre / Old Grammar School (built 1489 - 90) are listed although they are good candidates, as is the other part-survival of a Butcher Row house in Skipper Alley.

### Registered / Unregistered Parks & Gardens

#### REGISTERED PARKS & GARDENS

- 5.8.17 There are three Registered Parks and Gardens (RPGs) within the study area, although none are in the parish. All are described in detail in *A Survey of Historic Parks and Gardens in Herefordshire*<sup>23</sup>.
- 5.8.18 Eastnor Castle is a Grade II\* RPG lying c. 1.7km east of Ledbury town at its closest point. The registered landscape extends to 100ha and comprises 19<sup>th</sup> century gardens and a pinetum with a fine deer park of late medieval origin, providing the setting for Grade I-listed Eastnor Castle.
- 5.8.19 The Cock family was seated at Castle Ditch, Eastnor, from c. 1600. Charles Cox, MP, was raised to the peerage in 1784 as Baron Somers of Evesham, and improvement of his estate began almost immediately. In 1811, John Somers Cocks, Lord Somers, his son, commissioned a major new house, Eastnor Castle, to replace the timber-framed Castleditch, which was first recorded as an unfree tenement in c. 1288. Work on the castle began in 1812. At much the same time, the laying out of its pleasure grounds began. In the 1830s, a pinetum - to become one of the most celebrated aspects of the Eastnor landscape - began to be planted in the pleasure grounds.
- 5.8.20 The Deer Park, or New Park as it was then termed, had been created some time before 1808, probably c. 1785. It embraced, especially in its eastern part, land formerly within Bronsil Park. That had been created in c. 1460 by Richard Beauchamp of Bronsil Castle, 2km east of Eastnor, who was granted permission to create a new 1300 acre (c. 540ha) park.
- 5.8.21 The Grade II\*-listed Obelisk (also known in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as The Monument) is situated at the highest point of Eastnor's parkland. Designed by Robert Smirke and built of stone, it was erected in 1811 by Lord Somers. The base memorial bears inscriptions to the first Lord Somers, lord chancellor to William III (d. 1716), and to Ensign James Cocks, killed in 1758, with an additional inscription to Lord Somers' eldest son, Edward Charles Cocks, killed in action at Burgos (Spain) in 1812.
- 5.8.22 The Obelisk stands some 90 feet (27.4m) high, and is an iconic landmark feature in the landscapes west of the Malvern Hills, having been situated so as to be visually prominent even in more distant views. Panoramic views can also be enjoyed from the Obelisk, notably to the east (hills between British Camp and Midsummer Hill), and west (to the Iron Age hillfort of Kilbury Camp).
- 5.8.23 Parts of Eastnor's park (including the Obelisk) are accessible via public footpaths which cross it, and there is an area of Open Access land at Howler's Heath. According to the Castle's website<sup>24</sup>, it is now '*an exclusive-use wedding venue, corporate team building venue and private party venue, as well as a venue for product launches and location filming*'.
- 5.8.24 Hope End Grade II RPG lies c. 2.3km north east of the town. It comprises c. 100ha of late 19<sup>th</sup> century ornamental parkland within a larger and older deer park, designed as a picturesque landscape by J C Loudon - a renowned Scottish landscape gardener and architect considered to be the most influential horticultural journalist of his time<sup>25</sup>; he also designed the associated country house at Hope End

<sup>23</sup> *A Survey of Historic Parks and Gardens in Herefordshire* 2001 Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust Whitehead D and Patton J (ed)

<sup>24</sup> <https://eastnorcastle.com/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Claudius-Loudon>

which was later demolished. Elizabeth Barratt-Browning, one of the most prominent English poets of the Victorian era, spent her girlhood at Hope End.

- 5.8.25 Homme House is a Grade II-listed RPG which lies c. 3.5km south west of the parish boundary at Much Marcle. The designed parkland probably dates from the 1820s - 30s but some features may be earlier; it surrounds Grade II\*-listed Homme House (part c. 1500), and in the gardens there is a very fine (Grade I-listed) late 17<sup>th</sup> century (Pevsner suggests c. 1670), two-storey summerhouse.

#### UNREGISTERED PARKS AND GARDENS

- 5.8.26 In Herefordshire, notable parks and gardens which are not on Historic England's register are given the title 'unregistered parks and gardens' (UPGs); they and their settings / view corridors are protected by planning policy (Core Strategy Policy LA4).
- 5.8.27 Eight unregistered UPGs were identified within the study area, four of which are within Ledbury parish. They are also described the *Survey of Historic Parks and Gardens in Herefordshire*.

#### UPGs Within Parish

- 5.8.28 Upper Hall: The parkland associated with Upper Hall (also known as Over Hall) extends north east from the town centre on land between Dog Hill and Stoney Hill. *The Survey of Historic Parks and Gardens in Herefordshire* says that Upper Hall is 'one of two portionist estates of the church at Ledbury and before the Conquest was part of an extended precinct, which developed around the ancient minster' (evidence suggests that Ledbury's minster had been founded and endowed by the 8<sup>th</sup> century at the latest<sup>26</sup>).
- 5.8.29 The house at Upper Hall is Grade II-listed. It is of pre-conquest origin: a large medieval timber-framed building, with stone cellars. Largely destroyed in the Civil War, the 'Jacobean' building of five bays was built of brick between 1660 and 1680, with a contemporary walled garden, bowling green, summerhouse and fish ponds. A Georgian wing was built at the eastern end in c. 1730, with further building in 1766. The house and gardens were altered in 1841, with another wing added in 1849 and further extensions before 1867. The walled garden was removed and replaced with a pleasure ground in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century together with a new vegetable garden and complex of glasshouses, and a new summerhouse was built on Dog Hill. In WWI it became an auxiliary hospital, being sold in 1920 and used as a grammar school from 1923 to 1991. It has now become a series of apartments. *The Survey* adds, 'New dwellings have been built behind the house but the park-like setting remains. A wonderful oasis in a busy market town, and a tremendous setting for the parish church'.
- 5.8.30 Ledbury Park (also New House Park / Ledbury Deer Park) is one of Ledbury parish's most notable designed landscapes, and is of 13<sup>th</sup> century origin (possibly c. 1232). It extends from the town centre along the east side of the A417 as far as adjacent Underdown (also UPG - see below), with Coneygree Wood forming the backdrop to the east, on hill slopes.
- 5.8.31 The house was built in c. 1595, and was claimed to be the finest timber-framed mansion in the land. It stands on the eastern side of the Southend on the corner of the Worcester Road, (formerly Horse Lane) at Upper Cross. The five-gabled western front originally had its front entrance centrally-placed, with a few steps down to the street; the top storey was added in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Major renovations in 1820 by John Biddulph provided the range facing Worcester Road and a lodge with the front entrance now in the courtyard on the east side. Much of the gardens have now been built on with housing and the house divided into apartments. The deer park was sold for housing, built in the 1970s and 80s. Some consider this to have been the site of the Bishop's Palace, but it is unlikely as it is now known to have been laid out as burgage plots in medieval times; the Bishop's

<sup>26</sup> *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Herefordshire: A Study in Land-Unit Antiquity* Sheila Kathryn Waddington (May 2013)  
[https://etheses.bham.ac.uk/id/eprint/4738/9/Waddington13PhD\\_-.pdf](https://etheses.bham.ac.uk/id/eprint/4738/9/Waddington13PhD_-.pdf)

Palace was probably built on the north side of Worcester Road adjacent to the churchyard, but its precise location has not yet been identified.

- 5.8.32 According to the *Survey of Historic Parks and Gardens in Herefordshire*, although the wider parkland tree arrangement is almost entirely lost, *'the large trees in Ledbury Park... serve to emphasise what a tremendous asset this piece of rus in urbe is for Ledbury'*.
- 5.8.33 Underdown is a small 17<sup>th</sup> century gentry estate immediately south of Ledbury Park. Underdown (the house) is Grade II listed, a small but elegant Georgian country house rebuilt in Ledbury Park by Anthony Keck in c. 1780. It comprises three storeys of three bays with a park and walled kitchen garden plus two walled garden enclosures, parkland lawns and shrubbery; also vinerias a conservatory, peach house, plus melon and cucumber pits. The house has since become apartments with other properties built in the grounds. Some of the land was across the main road towards Hazle Farm, where there was evidence of amenity planting and an avenue of trees radiating from the farm towards Hall House Farm (see Other Key Historic Features below).
- 5.8.34 Dingwood is a park south east of Ledbury - its northern boundary is at Parkway - on land lying between the A417 and Clencher's Mill. *The Survey* notes that *'In the 13<sup>th</sup> century the bishops of Hereford had a deer-park at Dingwood'* and that *'the easy curve of the road [A417] at this point is very reminiscent of the pale of a medieval park'*. It surrounds a late 17<sup>th</sup> century house (now Dingwood Park Farmhouse), and accommodates Woodfields Farm (now a large, modern farm complex).

#### UPGs In Neighbouring Parish

- Priors Court: east of Staplow. 19<sup>th</sup> century garden.
- Barton Court: south of Colwall Green. Gardens contain scheduled medieval dovecote, but house built c. 1790 and new park and gardens created in late 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Old Colwall: adjacent to (north east of) Hope End. According to *The Survey* it developed in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century as a minor gentry estate. *The Survey* author's view is that the park's connections with Uvedale Price and J C Loudon and proximity to Hope End RPG *'suggests that it should have an equal place on the English Heritage Register'*.
- Haffield: lies south of the A417, east of Donnington, and comprises a small early 19<sup>th</sup> century estate with parkland, ornamental trees and a kitchen garden.

#### **Conservation Areas**

- 5.8.35 There are currently 64 Conservation Areas (CAs) in Herefordshire. Ledbury CA was designated in 1995. As far as it has been possible to ascertain, no formal appraisal of Ledbury's CA has ever been carried out<sup>27</sup>.
- 5.8.36 The extent of Ledbury's CA is shown on Figure ###. It extends either side of the main thoroughfare through the town centre, from the traffic lights on the A438 at The Homend and Orchard Lane junction, down into the High Street and then through the Top Cross crossroads onto the A449 Gloucester Road and The Southend as far as the Mabel's Furlong junction by the entrance to John Masefield High School.
- 5.8.37 Although the history of the town of Ledbury is intimately connected to its wider rural location, which is full of historical interest of significant importance in its own right, it is within the compact CA that Ledbury's heritage is particularly fascinating and extraordinary. There is an abundance of historic material describing the very large number of the town's heritage assets (particularly impressive

<sup>27</sup> An undated 'Appendix1: Herefordshire Conservation Areas and Assessment' from an unidentified report indicates that no appraisal has been done; the type of conservation area is described as an 'Urban Centre'.

relative to its small market town size of just over 10,000 people). These reflect the importance of Ledbury's heritage, and why the town centre is designated as a CA.

- 5.8.38 Two publications especially demonstrate the high level of heritage experts' interest in Ledbury: *The Victoria County History of Herefordshire*<sup>28</sup>, and the Heritage Lottery Funded *England's Past for Everyone* - a four-year project that led to the publication of two books on Ledbury's heritage. But probably the most emphatic portrayal of how important the CA is as a heritage asset, and which is a combined appraisal of the CA's physical assets, is the slim but impressive 2007 publication *An Analysis of the Historic Fabric of Late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> Century Buildings in Ledbury*. It lists nearly seventy buildings, nearly all still existing and situated within the CA.
- 5.8.39 There are also several local societies and organisations which provide historical background and show how the CA contributes to the town's important tourism trade, which is a crucial driver of the local economy.
- 5.8.40 On its aesthetic and communal heritage values the town also ranks on a similarly outstanding scale. It has an internationally famous cultural reputation which attracts visitors from all over the world for its poetry connections. Ledbury was the birthplace of John Masefield, Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom from 1930-1967 and who was born in the town in 1878; it was also the home of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. It is closely associated with the six famous Dymock Poets (Rupert Brooke author of 'The Soldier', Robert Frost regarded as one of the USA's most prominent poets and others with scarcely lesser reputations - Lascelles Abercrombie, John Drinkwater, Wilfrid Gibson and Edward Thomas, who lived nearby for a few years before the First World War). Local paths and buildings in which they lived mark their continued influence now, over 100 years later.
- 5.8.41 The Master's House, in addition to now housing Ledbury's Library, also provides a home for the John Masefield Archive, and the Dymock Poet's collection.
- 5.8.42 Drawing on this literary heritage, the ten-day long Ledbury Poetry Festival held each July has become the leading poetry festival in the UK, featuring poets from all over the world. Its events take place in many of the historic buildings and on the streets of the town's CA, bringing them to vibrant life and connecting them inextricably into the local and visitor community. The physical heritage assets do not gather dust in splendid isolated display, but are a living part of the fabric of the town.

#### **Other Key Historic Landscape Features**

- 5.8.43 There are numerous undesignated but valuable historic features within the study area. Many are listed in the Historic Environment Record (HER), which was a source of reference for this assessment.
- 5.8.44 Of particular note are the following:
- Bronze Age features e.g. round barrows / burial mounds (Bradlow Knoll could be such a feature).
  - Unscheduled hillforts / camps.
  - Old / ancient quarries.
  - Medieval farming features such as lynchets and ridge-and-furrow.
  - Old / ancient woodland, hedgerows, alder carr, orchard, coppice etc.
  - Old / ancient trackways, bridges, fords.
  - Springs, spouts, wells, fountains, pools, ponds (especially medieval fishponds), dams, mill-races.
  - Mills.
  - Squatters' cottages.

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.history.ac.uk/research/victoria-county-history/county-histories-progress/herefordshire>

- Holloways (e.g. Cut Throat Lane, Knapp Lane, Burtons Lane).
- Medieval deer park boundaries (potentially at Dingwood, along A417).
- The route of, and features / cultural histories associated with, the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal and the dismantled railway.
- Historic designed landscape features. Examples are listed below (see also Section 5.12 Significant Vegetation):
  - Ornamental tree clump in prominent, elevated position in field between A417 and Leaddon Way, just below Underdown. Likely to have been planted as an 'eye-catcher' within a wider designed parkland (the clumps are shown as mature on the 1889 - 1892 map), possibly by Jacob Tonson, (d. 1735) who owned the Hazle then.
  - Formal tree avenue, leading south west from Hazle Farm across the Dymock Road and along a track. The 1889 - 92 map shows it leading to an orchard.
  - Historic parkland trees south of the Hazle Farm avenue (subject of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)).

## 5.9 Landscape History and Historic Landscape Character

### Introduction

- 5.9.1 Heritage, landscape / cultural history and historic landscape character are integral elements of landscape character assessment. This was emphasised in para. 170 of the 2012 version of the NPPF: *'Where appropriate, landscape character assessments should also be prepared, integrated with assessment of historic landscape character'*, although in the later versions, for some reason this recommendation disappeared.
- 5.9.2 Landscape assessment guidance is also clear about the matter, setting out the range of historic and socio-cultural baseline information which needs to be gathered, analysed and factored in to the findings. It states, *'The history of the landscape, its historic character, the interaction between people and places through time, and the surviving features and their settings may be relevant to the LVIA baseline studies, as well as the cultural heritage topic'*.
- 5.9.3 Establishing and analysing an area's time-depth is a very important part of the landscape character assessment process.
- 5.9.4 According to *Topic Paper 5 Understanding Historic Landscape Character*<sup>29</sup>, *'HLC/HLA is most of all concerned to trace the imprint of the past on landscape. Known as 'time-depth' (see Box 1), this is one of the landscape's most important characteristics. It can be defined as "the long-term interaction between human activity and natural processes" [5]. It recognises that the long sequence of events and actions that have produced the present environment, and which is visible within the landscape, is the result of human activity as well as natural processes.'*
- 'A proper understanding of time-depth needs to recognise the various, and often complex, ways in which the landscape has been influenced by past human actions. HLC/HLA focuses on this human perspective and adds a fuller historical dimension to the basic Landscape Character Assessment process.'*
- 'Time-depth is reflected within HLC/HLA through readily identifiable components like field boundaries, and through less obvious remains of settlement or communications and transport networks. It is also reflected through human influence on vegetation patterns, and in the "hidden", buried evidence of past*

<sup>29</sup> *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland - Topic Paper 5: Understanding Historic Landscape Character*  
The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002)

*environments which survives across the landscape in the form of palaeoenvironmental deposits, for instance, or as cropmarks in ploughed land.*

*'An important aspect of understanding time-depth is recognising that human influence has occurred, and can be traced, even where the landscape appears natural. It enhances our appreciation of how landscape components have changed through time, or survived through continuity.'*

- 5.9.5 Understanding historic landscape character is important because otherwise, the value of certain features may be missed, and not factored into judgements about sensitivity / capacity / potential effects. This may lead to the levels of capacity and / or effects being reported as lower than they should be. Also, although detailed assessments of heritage assets, their significance and potential effects on their settings are beyond the scope of this study, it is important to analyse the data and use the information to build up an understanding of how the area's landscapes and settlements evolved over time, and establish factors such as intended / current interinfluence and intervisibility.
- 5.9.6 It is possible to identify features in the landscape today and trace their history back for many centuries; from this information, their rarity and value can also be determined. In this case, a range of maps and documents dating from the 11<sup>th</sup> century onwards (and old photographs) were consulted and compared<sup>30</sup>. Historic map regression exercises were carried out to establish how and why both the landscapes and the settlements have developed as they have, and what relevance this has to current and future landscape-related matters, especially character.
- 5.9.7 For example, analysis of the 1812 preliminary OS map (### TBC extract below) not only reveals a great deal about what the area's landscapes may have looked like and how they were being used at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it also provides a good indication of which features - especially trackways, hedges and trees - are likely to have been present at that time. The inclosure map of 1813 has been found to be more useful than the tithe map of 1841 in such respects.
- 5.9.8 The assessment found that the landscapes within the study area have significant time depth, and a great deal of this is visible in and around Ledbury. Many of the features described above and below, and illustrated on ### Figure/s ###, make highly important contributions to landscape character and visual / social amenity, some at a national level, others at a regional and / or local / neighbourhood level. They must also be factored in to judgements made about landscape value and susceptibility to change.
- 5.9.9 This section combines the findings of the historic landscape character assessment and the settlement pattern analysis (see also map sequence 1831 - 2006 in Appendix ###). It sets out the history and evolution of Ledbury's landscapes, settlements and communities. This helps to explain how and why its various patterns and characteristics have developed into its present day character.

### **Ancient History**

- 5.9.10 The Malvern Hills and surrounding areas have been a focus for human activity and settlement since the Bronze Age, and possibly earlier (Warners Pit in Mathon dates from the Palaeolithic period (between c. 500,000 and 150,000 BP); a handaxe from the same period was found north of Colwall, and possible Mesolithic / Neolithic occupation sites have been identified in Cradley).
- 5.9.11 The Hills exert a large and extensive influence on both local and wider landscapes. They are visible from distant viewpoints, and also command exceptional views. They are an abundant source of pure

<sup>30</sup> Sources of reference include: the Herefordshire section of the Domesday Book (1086); Diocesan Records from 1265; The Red Book of Hereford - surveys of the Bishopric Estate of 13<sup>th</sup> century (1288); Ledbury Parish Registers - Baptisms, Burials, Marriages from 1556; Ledbury Tithe Book (collected by William Davies, vicar of Ledbury 1595-1607); Ledbury Parish Books - Vol 1 1686-1763, Vol 2 1760-1850 and Vol 3 1852-2006; Ledbury Inclosure Act 1813; Ledbury Inclosure Award with plan 1816; and Gwatkin Ledbury tithe map 1841. Other maps include: 1831-2, 1899-1900 and 1920 Cassini historical maps; 1887 OS 1st ed 25 inch; 1932 HMRC map of town; and 1954, 1982 and 2006 OS maps.

spring water, and the lower-lying areas are fertile and sheltered. The Hills are also believed to have been an early sacred site, of importance for religious and cultural practices. As a result of this, and the increase in trade of valuable raw materials such as salt, many ancient trackways and pilgrims' trails criss-cross throughout the area. 1:25,000 scale mapping shows the key routes, most of which are still in use, either as roads or public / private rights of way. The routes tended to be direct, aligned with widely visible landscape features such as hilltops for ease of wayfinding, with only minor detours where physical obstacles barred the way. (This gave rise to the concept of 'ley lines' proposed by the Herefordshire-born archaeologist and antiquarian Alfred Watkins in the 1920's; whilst some people are sceptical about the validity of the notion, it is interesting to understand the nature of real straight line markings in ancient landscapes, and what part they have played in 'the hidden history of human consciousness'.)

- 5.9.12 The geology and associated topography on the west side of the Malvern Hills is very different from that on the east side, which has resulted in distinct variations in land use and social history. The east side was not favourable for settlement between the post-glacial period and the Iron Age, being predominantly flat, poorly-drained brackish marshland. The west side offered better opportunities for a safe, settled and sustainable way of life.
- 5.9.13 The shape of the hills and valleys of the district today is a legacy of the last Ice Age, which ended around twelve thousand years ago. Dense woodlands appeared after the glaciers had retreated and people slowly began to settle: their small flint tools occur in several places close to Ledbury, including the area around Wall Hills and Frith Farm. Remote ancestors left traces in the area, an example being a 300,000-year-old and still sharp hand-axe found in 1970 in a ploughed field at Hoe Farm, north of Colwall.
- 5.9.14 A recent geological study has shown that around 500,000 years ago, a large river flowed southwards along the western flank of the Malvern Hills. No Neolithic or Bronze Age settlements have yet been found in the Ledbury area. However, some Early Bronze Age circular burial mounds have been identified, including a damaged mound crowning Bradlow Knoll in Frith Wood and another levelled mound within a circular ditch revealed by aerial photography at New Mills, by the River Leadon on the western edge of Ledbury.
- 5.9.15 The Iron Age brought the construction of strategically-placed hillforts or camps (several are scheduled - see above) including Wall Hills, British, Midsummer Hill, Kilbury, Sutton Wall, Haffield and Oldbury Camps (the latter at the southern end of Marcle Ridge). Prehistoric and Romano-British Ledbury seems to have been centred on Wall Hills.
- 5.9.16 Reference to the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) indicates that there was other activity going on in the Ledbury area, with historic features such as a boundary bank found in Frith Wood. Also in Frith Wood there are occasional small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*) pollards of great age (see Section 5.12 Significant Vegetation).

#### **Roman Period - 6<sup>th</sup> Century**

- 5.9.17 Although there is little evidence of Roman occupation within the study area, some scatters of pottery sherds suggest at least two concentrations of activity between Ledbury and Colwall, another in the south of Eastnor parish and further sites south and east of Ledbury, from within Wall Hills Fort and Sutton Walls (archive held in Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record).
- 5.9.18 Further discoveries of Roman pottery and building materials at Donnington were made in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Roman road to the west of the Leadon and Wall Hills suggests a trade route running roughly north-south, from Dymock on the Leadon only four miles south of Ledbury and Ashperton and Stretton Grandison in the Frome valley, five miles to the north-west.

### 7<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> Centuries

- 5.9.19 The episcopal see for the Magonsætan was established on the site of Hereford Cathedral in c. 680 AD, the boundaries of the diocese reflecting that of the sub-kingdom. On the west of the Mercian kingdoms, main centres of administration in the area included a number of Bishop's palaces, including those at Ledbury, Bosbury and Ross. Market towns at these administrative places grew to become important local centres along the main routes, including the Roman roads, such as Ashperton to Stretton Grandison and Leominster to Ludlow, with small communities forming stopping places in between.
- 5.9.20 Worship at what is now the site of Grade I-listed St Michael and All Angels church is believed to have commenced during the 8<sup>th</sup> century, when the Bishop of Hereford sent a group of his clergy to establish a Christian presence there.
- 5.9.21 There are no finds of Anglo-Saxon metalwork in the Ledbury district. Some clues concerning the direction of settlement can be found from place-names; those ending 'low' probably derive from the Old English word for 'barrow' or 'mound' (hlæw). The first Anglo-Saxon communities migrated into the Upper Leadon district not long after 600AD and no doubt existed side-by-side with the indigenous British people (whom the English denoted as 'Welsh' meaning 'foreigner'), hence there are also some Welsh place-name elements.
- 5.9.22 Boundary dykes are a feature of this migration period in Herefordshire, such as that occupied today by field boundaries extending southwards from Dingwood Park Farm just south of Ledbury to the northern limit at Haffield Park and another boundary bank at Frith Wood. Many ancient field patterns and evidence of buildings can be seen in crop marks observed by aerial photography undertaken as part of the Malvern Hills AONB National Mapping Programme. Lynchets have been found in two fields west of and within Frith Wood, c. 1.2km north of the church, in addition to banks and levelled ridge-and-furrow which have been recorded from aerial photographs as part of the Mapping Programme Project.

### 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Centuries

- 5.9.23 The arrival of the Normans in the 11<sup>th</sup> century brought changes to landownership, and the way in which the land was used, especially in terms of hunting and agriculture: the predominantly 'wildwood' landscapes were altered and tamed as manorial courts and estates were established.
- 5.9.24 Ledbury is first recorded as a settlement in the Domesday Book, at which time Wall Hills lay abandoned. Its place-name is of Anglo-Saxon origin, rather than British or Welsh. In 1066, Ledbury belonged to the Church of Hereford; along with the Church's other large manors along the west flank of the Malvern Hills, it lay in the administrative subdivision or hundred of the county called Wigmund's Tree, later Winstree, which prior to Domesday included Much Marcle. The meeting place for the men of the hundred, where courts were held at that time in Ledbury parish, was at Wigmund's Tree, later Winstree Elms Copse, a short distance north-west of the later borough of Ledbury.
- 5.9.25 Evidence suggests that at some time before 1066 when it was first recorded, Eastnor was formed out of the south-eastern part of an early, larger Ledbury parish (then, the easternmost part of Ledbury parish stretched to the Malvern Hills' ridgeline, but that part was awarded to Eastnor in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century - see below).
- 5.9.26 There is no founding charter, but the town was laid out in burgage plots by the Bishop of Hereford's surveyors, starting with 'Middletowne' (first called High Street in 1461) and its triangular market place (from c. 1125). Next came the Homend, the Southend, Bishop Street (now Bye Street), and finally New Street (c. 1186). In 1138, King Stephen gave the town its Market Charter, renewed in 1584 by Queen Elizabeth I, for a weekly market and two annual fairs.
- 5.9.27 By the time of the Domesday survey, a large minster church had been built in Ledbury, no doubt replacing the earlier Anglo-Saxon timber-framed church (the present-day church is called St Michael

and All Angels; in medieval times it was known as St Peter's, or St Peter and St Paul's church, but it was renamed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century - the reason for the change is not known).

- 5.9.28 The minster church was rebuilt from about 1120 to 1140, and again in the 1230s when the bishop founded St Katherine's Hospital. The core was extended, and a massive, detached bell tower was built in the church yard to the north of the church (marshy ground to the west and south prevented a tower being attached in the more conventional manner to the west side of the nave or to the south aisle). The tower, which was topped with a short (15ft) stubby wooden shingled spire, was initially built in two stages, of yellow sandstone similar to that of the chancel, suggesting that both were built at a similar period in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, with new bells on the upper floor being rung from the ground floor below. The existing bells, the sanctus bell in the chancel, and the bell in the west door turret, were retained within the church itself at this time.

### 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries

- 5.9.29 In 1231, Bishop Hugh Foliot founded the hospital in Ledbury, in the name of St Katherine of Alexandria who was martyred on a wheel. A second charter in 1233 placed the hospital in the care of the dean and chapter of Hereford Diocese. As well as offering hospitality to the poor and needy, in addition to passing pilgrims or other travellers, another duty was to offer prayers for the souls of those who donated land to the hospital; within a century they had accumulated 1600 acres, a very profitable offering. The hospital grounds beside the High Street are now a car park, but in those days it would have been a farmyard.
- 5.9.30 The names of most of the farms which still surround Ledbury, including Hazle, Knapp, Massington and Woolpit, plus other place names within a few miles of Ledbury, were already in use in 1288, when the Bishop had his bailiffs and scribes make a rental register known as *The Red Book of Hereford*. Many of these farms were now landholdings of the bishop. The common lands provided grazing for the people of Ledbury and district - rights that were 'jealously guarded'. While William of the Frith and Geoffrey Goldsmith lived in the comfort of Ledbury's Southend, Alured [Alfred] de la Frith and others living in Ledbury Foreign [outside the town itself] were so poor they had to provide services in place of rent to the Lord of the Manor, the Bishop of Hereford. Poor Alured had to guard the corn at harvest time, guard any thieves brought to court in Ledbury at other times, and act as postman delivering the bishop's letters anywhere within the bishopric.
- 5.9.31 These farms were the main employers, and often had tied cottages nearby for their workers and their families. They include Burtons, Withers, Massington, Netherton, Argus, Hazle, Fairtree and Wallhills, all many centuries old and still an important presence in the landscape today, defining its character. Field boundary patterns reveal the legacy of the medieval open fields divided into furlongs. The presence of lynchets indicates the attempts to maximise the amount of tillable land from the steeper countryside. There is evidence of people exchanging land to consolidate their holdings and enclosing areas of arable land even in medieval times.
- 5.9.32 The Normans introduced rabbits (coney) and the enclosed warrens they lived in (some are still visible today, for example on Midsummer Hill). This was food only for the wealthy. The warren established in Conigree Wood had a professional rabbit keeper; in 1346 John the Forester, Priest of Ledbury, was convicted for poaching in the bishop's warren and after public penance in Ledbury church, swore not to repeat the offence and to abstain from all hunting for three years.
- 5.9.33 The church's north-facing Chapter House (previously called St Katherine's Chapel) dates from 1330.
- 5.9.34 The Black Death arrived in Ledbury in 1349 and resulted in a significant decline in the population, as elsewhere. The loss of so much labour caused the Church to rent out its farms and accept much less in return than the profits they had previously attained from their crops. The even greater loss of clergy meant some of the many new priests created in several mass ordinations in Ledbury and elsewhere in the county, were less than suitable candidates.

### 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries

- 5.9.35 The Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century resulted in political and religious changes which led to further changes in landownership, land use and management which altered many of the landscape patterns and characteristics that would have been common at that time. Some early enclosure was recorded in Wolsey's Commission on Depopulation in 1517. The county of Herefordshire as a whole was heavily enclosed by 1600.
- 5.9.36 In 1586 Sir William Camden referred to the predominantly corn-fed animal husbandry as '*A county both for feeding of cattle and produce of corn, everywhere is excellent soil; ... And therefore says that for three W -Wheat, Wool and Water, it yieldeth to no Shire of England*'. There had been enclosure of open fields in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and earlier, after which production rose, with the heaviest wheat crops in the county produced here. There was rotation of crops, from fallow to wheat to beans or pulse and then fallow again.
- 5.9.37 After the Reformation the town of Ledbury, as but a small part of a collection of formerly Church property, was sold to the local gentry for the sum of £957 6s 2d (today worth in excess of £6.5m).
- 5.9.38 The two Rectors or Portionists of Upper Hall and Nether Hall were no longer clergy and so the vicar now had to survive on the tithes he collected from everyone, including even eggs and milk, all listed annually in the Easter Book. William Davies *alias* Weaver farmed his own glebe at Mabel's Furlong, he owned both ruddges (ridges) and headlands there, plus a small green off the Southend. This ground lay open in 1607, but by 1616 the glebe terrier distinguished between land severely divided (i.e. enclosed) including 11 acres there and open land.

### 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries

- 5.9.39 In 1593, Edward Cowper, Master of St Katherine's Hospital, wrote a letter to Lord Scudamore, the Crown's representative in Hereford, to persuade him that Ledbury needed a market house. After more than twenty-five years of consideration of the matter, land in the market place was purchased - by John Phillips, clothier - and cleared to begin (in 1617) the erection of the Market House. This would enable crops brought to the town to be stored away from rats and mice and other vermin. It was still incomplete when John Phillips died in 1655. Eventually, in 1668, John Skyppe II and the other trustees decided to employ charitable funds left to provide coats and gowns for the poor, towards completing the Market House. The increased rents paid for its use was then used to maintain the buildings and also to provide for the poor as previously, continuing for a further two hundred years to provide the coats and gowns for the poor on Christmas Eve each year.
- 5.9.40 During this prolonged erection of the Market House, life was interrupted by the Civil War. Ambrose Elton, Lord of the Manor of the Hazle in Ledbury Foreign and part-owner of the Manor of Ledbury, raised a troop of Dragoons for the King. Ledbury experienced invasion of troops on at least three occasions: in 1645, during the English Civil War, a brief but terrifying pitched battle, the 'Battle of Ledbury', was fought through the orchards, gardens and streets, mercifully with little long-term damage. A glass case in the church's Chapterhouse contains a sword reputedly belonging to Major Backhouse, a Roundhead who was mortally wounded in the battle. The parish church itself was the scene of fierce fighting, and musket balls were dug from the north door by the Victorians and are now on display in the sword's cabinet. The holes in the door can still be seen.
- 5.9.41 The Butcher Row House Museum also contains other Civil War artefacts, including a sword of this period, discovered about a decade ago rammed deep into a hedge on the east side of Dog Hill, perhaps by a fleeing soldier. Prince Rupert stayed at New House briefly: he and his troops fought Colonel Massey and his men, chasing them off to Gloucester.
- 5.9.42 During the late 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, changes in forest law resulted in de-afforestation. This ended certain restrictions on the use of land for agriculture; royal lands were sold and the new landowners began the process of enclosing large areas, which included common land. This resulted in significant

changes in the landscapes in Ledbury and its surrounding districts. Strip fields began to disappear in favour of fields with border hedging. By 1800 there was less than 10% of land in the county left open and only 4% was subject to parliamentary enclosure.

- 5.9.43 The dominance of wheat did not prevent *'meadows, orchards, extended lawns and hop-grounds satiating the eye by one continued scene of luxury'*. In 1700, when Celia Fiennes viewed Herefordshire from the top of the Malverns, she saw *'a County of Gardens and Orchards, the whole country being full of fruit trees etc.'*
- 5.9.44 Newly-cultivated fields around the town's farms and estates were mostly used to grow arable / vegetable crops, although there were still many orchards. Between 1676 and 1705, George Skyppe of Upper Hall had over eighty fruit trees planted in his new walled garden, including a unique collection of peaches (as he had died in 1690, the later trees must have been planted and listed in his diary by his successor).
- 5.9.45 Frith Cottages on Beggar's Ash Lane date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and lie within the town boundary.
- 5.9.46 At this time, Herefordshire's roads - better described as ways - were notorious due to them becoming increasingly heavily-trafficked. Hopes in the county of improving the navigation of the River Wye as a means of transport led to opposition from Ledbury and the surrounding parishes, who were too far-distant to benefit from it, or from the River Severn in Worcestershire either. An improved manner of delivering coal and other useful commodities was sorely needed.
- 5.9.47 In 1721, the Ledbury Turnpike Act was made. It was not only the first in Herefordshire, it was also only the third passed in the neighbouring counties of Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Shropshire. The 'Gentlemen and other inhabitants of Ledbury' had petitioned parliament for a 'Bill to repair several roads leading thereto', claiming that the roads around the town were damaged by 'the heavy grain carriage' and by 'waggons carrying goods between the Wye and the Severn'. And so it became impossible to pass through Ledbury without payment of the appropriate toll. A situation which continued for the next 150 years.
- 5.9.48 To control the situation it was necessary to have a gate and toll collector at every entry point. Given the number of roads which converged there, Ledbury had to have six, all just outside the borough boundary. A turnpike milestone is sited at the junction of the Bromyard Road and Beggar's Ash Lane - such markers came into use in the 1740s and were made compulsory in the 1760s.
- 5.9.49 The local farmers were not happy with paying the tolls, and turnpike disturbances spread to Ledbury. In 1735 - despite the death penalty for 'cutting down turnpikes' - there was great disturbance in the town, and at Upper Hall, John Skyppe III had to read the Riot Act and took prisoners, who were taken to London for a show-trial. One man turned king's evidence and survived, the other unfortunate, the son of a Ledbury farmer, was hanged. A single amendment to the tolls charged was made in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ledbury Turnpike Act of 1742, halving the toll of a wagon pulled by two horses; nonetheless English agriculture from 1730 to 1750 was a time of great depression.
- 5.9.50 The idea of a canal to solve the heavy transport problem where the turnpikes had failed led, at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, to the plan to build a canal from the River Severn at Gloucester to Hereford. Begun in 1792 in Gloucester, by 1798 it had reached the Wharf on the outskirts of Ledbury. The price of coal in the town plunged overnight. However, by then, funds had run out, and work did not restart until 1830, enabled by further funding including from John Biddulph and John Martin (both bankers). The canal finally arrived in Hereford in 1845.
- 5.9.51 The route wound its way through the lowlands (albeit there were long, straight sections, such as the stretch west of Staplow). At Staplow (on the B4214) there is a typical canalside cottage, and a little further on, behind Prior's Court, is the remains of a lock. Along the next stretch there are two single-arched aqueducts: the first crosses the River Leadon, the second crosses a stream. The canal then turned south - there was a wharf at the road junction where Wellington Heath bridge is still standing. The canal ran along the east side of the Bromyard Road as far as Beggars Ash, crossing it and

continuing south / south-westwards through the town centre to New Wharf in Bye Street. From there, it ran south again, firstly along the east side of the River Leadon, then the west, the crossing point being just south of Siddington Farm

- 5.9.52 In 1550, there were five bells in St Michael and All Angels church's bell-tower; in 1690 these were recast with extra bell metal to make eight bells. In 1727 it was proposed that the short wooden shingle spire should be rebuilt. The tower had become dilapidated following a fire, and was in need of renovation. Nathaniel Wilkinson of Worcester was engaged, from 1732 - 6, and the crenelated fourth stage of the tower built, topped by the stone spire, now 202 feet high, complete with its weathercock weighing about 28½ lbs (13 kg). (The cockerel has since come to earth, and sits on a church windowsill in the south aisle.)

### 19<sup>th</sup> Century

- 5.9.53 In the 1830s, John Biddulph had become interested in the new railways which were being planned and constructed elsewhere. Linking Worcester and Hereford by rail had been discussed since the mid-1840s, which was when there was a railway boom, but it was not until 1853 that the Act permitting this was passed. Work began the following year. The most direct route would have bypassed Ledbury; however, the bankers living in the town were able to influence the route via tunnels through the Malvern Hills and Dog Hill at Ledbury, where a 31-arch viaduct was built across the Leadon valley, with about one million locally-made bricks. The railway opened on 13<sup>th</sup> September 1861 and became part of the Great Western Railway (GWR), which then bought the canal, closing it in 1881 and converting the Ledbury to Gloucester section into a branch line.
- 5.9.54 The earliest map of 1831-3 shows a track east of New Mills, leading north for a short distance, long before the railway was thought about (further on, this leads to the viaduct).
- 5.9.55 As part of the process of enclosing the remaining areas of common land and waste (by Parliamentary Act in 1813), the whole of Ledbury parish was surveyed. A series of nine very fine maps was drawn by Trophimus Fulljames and William Womak prior to the award being made in 1816. This recorded that rights of common on all pieces of common land and waste on the side of Malvern Hill, between the Hill and the turnpike road leading from Upton-upon-Severn to Ledbury, were to cease, as well as at Bradlow Common and at Wellington Heath, then part of Ledbury parish. New roads were laid out as part of the enclosure, as decided by the Enclosure Commissioner, over the common lands of Wellington Heath and Bradlow. At least thirty-nine squatters' cottages had been built on Wellington Heath by 1813 and their removal would have caused mass homelessness, so the landowners agreed to hold an auction. Some fifty-three freehold plots were sold, and as a consequence only two squatters lost their land.
- 5.9.56 In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, several landscaped parks and gardens were created by wealthy landowners, in accordance with the latest fashions (the registered and unregistered parks and gardens within the study area are described and their history is explained in the previous section). Often the new house that sat within the emparked areas were built on sites of medieval timber-framed manorial properties which were demolished to make way for brick and stone. Landscape designers incorporated remnant features from medieval chases and deer parks, such as fish pools and woodland blocks, although these lost much of their previous 'natural' form, since an ornamental 'picturesque', 'semi-wild' character was favoured.
- 5.9.57 A dispensary was established in Ledbury in 1824 by the young surgeon Congreve Selwyn, for the working poor; vaccination against smallpox was also introduced. He was joined in 1831 by Miles Astman Wood who served Ledbury's people until 1897 along with his namesake son, also a doctor, (1875-1907), from their home at Orchardleigh in New Street.
- 5.9.58 The first OS map of 1887 (see Appendix ###) shows the town still surrounded by fields and woodland but expanding, now with recently-constructed housing, the railway and its station (opened in 1861) and the new cattle market (opened in 1887). In 1891, the Cottage Hospital (established in 1873 in the

former *Railway Hotel* on the Homend) was replaced, across the road, with a purpose-built one provided by Michael Biddulph MP. A Methodist and a Baptist Church had been built in the Homend, complementing the Non-conformist chapel, founded in 1607, which hid behind the High Street shops (now renamed the Burgage Hall and accessed from Church Lane). In 1898, the Plymouth Brethren left Ledbury after many years. In 1901 the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity began services in Ledbury, finally opening a newly-built church in New Street in the mid-1970s. The Quakers now meet in their homes, and Ledbury Elim Church meet in Ledbury Primary School.

- 5.9.59 The parish of Wellington Heath was carved out of Ledbury in 1842. The arrival of roads, rail and industry gave rise to new forces for change which re-shaped landscapes and settlements once again. New residential developments in Ledbury resulted in the loss of meadows and orchards and woodland cover in the Happy Land, Newtown and Newbury Park areas on the edges of the town, providing a mix of housing suitable for workers, professionals and the retired in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 5.9.60 In addition to the Free Grammar School founded in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and Mrs Hall's Cookery School in the Southend for poor girls, in 1818 two new schools opened for the poor, one for boys in the old workhouse and one for girls in Church Street. Both were based on the pattern of the National Schools. There were numerous private establishments which faded away following the Education Act of 1871, as the town now had the County School for boys in the Homend, with girls and infants in Church Street opposite Lower Hall.
- 5.9.61 The removal of the Butcher Row from the High Street was prolonged and costly, as it required money for two private Acts of Parliament, in 1819 and 1835, in addition to money to buy out its owners and the residents. Respectability was of prime importance in the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and required the removal of anything noxious, which included the Butcher Row and the blood and guts of slaughter at Lower Cross, the culverting of drains and ditches and removal of piles of 'manure' (which some collected in their back yards, in the hopes of selling it).
- 5.9.62 In 1830 the Duke of Wellington was Prime Minister and Parliament passed the Beer Act, which granted, on payment of a small fee, the licence to sell beer brewed on the premises of the householder. With no safe water supply on tap at that time, everyone drank beer, which was boiled in the making and so safe to drink. Ledbury had over thirty drinking places, each tradesman working in his workshop whilst his wife sold beer in the house.
- 5.9.63 The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 removed the duty of the parish in caring for the poor, a duty held since the days of the Elizabethan Poor Law. The old Workhouse became a boys' school, and a new workhouse was built off Horse Dealers Lane (later renamed Union Lane and now Orchard Lane) on land in Belle Orchard, for 150 persons at a cost of £3,500. It opened in 1837 and provided relief, until the welfare state took over, to the twenty parishes which formed the Ledbury Union. When no longer in use most of it was demolished, preserving the front range which now houses a series of apartments.
- 5.9.64 Water piped from a spring in Conigree Wood arrived in the town in 1592, using lead piping. The water supply prior to this had been from springs via streams or from wells, although it seems there was a conduit situated outside St Katherine's Chapel long before this (which may perhaps only have supplied the water down an open gutter: in 1585, Edward Cowper, Master of St Katherine's Hospital (d. 1596) made an entry in the Hospital Accounts to pay 'John Bond and his man for making a gutter to carry the waste water from the town conduit into the hospital pool', indicating it was causing a problem at the time. In 1587, Edmund Skinner (a weaver), left a bequest for 20 shillings (£1 then but today worth c. £336) to 'the town of Ledbury to help the amending of the common water course into the conduit there'. Both of the above pre-date the lead piping used by Thomas Hall the plumber in 1592. Most people used wells, but from either source it was not safe to drink without first being boiled. Much later (in 1828), piped water arrived in the Southend, and later still, additional supplies came from reservoirs at Massington. The Public Health Act of 1872 led to the establishment of the

Ledbury Rural Sanitary Authority. Today, Welsh Water provides Ledbury's supply on behalf of Severn Trent.

- 5.9.65 A gas supply came to Ledbury in the 1830s, from the gas works at the canal wharf, which lit the streets as well as homes. A new gas works at the corner of New Street and Little Marcle Road (then called Gas Works Lane) supplied the town from 1875 until nationalisation in 1948.
- 5.9.66 A new cemetery was built at the lower end of New Street, opening in 1861 (enlarged in 1908). It is now managed by LTC. This accommodates Anglicans and others, including the Baptist and Methodists whose churches were both built in the Homend in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Methodist Church has recently been sold due to its falling congregation and they have moved their church to the old String Factory in Bye Street. The Dissenters Chapel, hidden behind the High Street since 1607, had been rebuilt twice and served its Congregationalists until 1972 when they combined with the Presbyterians to form the United Reform Church. The chapel was abandoned but subsequently renovated, and became the 'Burgage Hall', now run by the Ledbury Civic Society on a peppercorn rent for community use.
- 5.9.67 In the 1880s, plans were made to reform the areas of administrative bodies in England and Wales in preparation for the creation of elected councils by the Local Government Act 1888 (in the event, the recommendations of the commissioners were not carried out)<sup>31</sup>. In Ledbury's case, a tidying-up exercise transferred Haffield, a small, detached portion of Ledbury parish, to neighbouring Donnington in 1885; nine years later, Wellington Heath ceded from rural Ledbury to become a parish in its own right. 1888 saw the creation of elected county councils, and six years later, elected parish and district councils were established. Ledbury Urban District was created with authority over a slightly larger area than the old borough; Ledbury Rural District embraced much of south-east Herefordshire, up to the county borders with Worcestershire to the east, along the Malvern Hills ridgeline between British Camp and Midsummer's Hill, and Gloucestershire to the south, between Clencher's Mill and Ludstock.
- 5.9.68 For reasons unknown, in c. 1860, St Peter's church was renamed St Michael and All Angels church. More work to both the tower and the spire was needed several times during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries; some of the renovations were major, and lasted for years.

## 20<sup>th</sup> Century

- 5.9.69 In 1914, the first electricity in the town was delivered, by way of wires strung between poles, supplied to those in the town who could afford it (a private electricity plant had been installed by Mr J C Davies in 1892 at his brickworks at Fairtree on the town's western outskirts, where later he built a jam factory, now the site of United Beverages Limited (UBL)). Ledbury Cottage Hospital did not get electricity installed throughout until 1922, which then enabled X-Ray equipment to be installed as well (they had had a telephone as early as 1906, due to a donation from one of the governors). The Cottage Hospital continued until 2002, when the new St Katherine's health complex (with GP surgery, community hospital and care home) opened in Market Street.
- 5.9.70 New housing was built as 'Homes for Heroes' in Homend Crescent after WWI, and during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, plots in Bank Crescent were for sale for the building of individual homes. During and after WWII, German prisoners-of-war were housed in the Mabel's Furlong area, shown on the OS map of 1954. This site was later used to build the secondary school which combined with the Grammar School as a Comprehensive School and has since become John Masefield Academy.
- 5.9.71 After WWII, in the mid-1950s, a small group of houses was built on a corner of Pound Meadow, off New Street, with further construction over the next few decades of houses along Pound Meadow and

<sup>31</sup> By the 1880s the issue of county government had become a major political issue. One of the most pressing matters was the necessity of boundary changes: in many cases, counties had very irregular boundaries, and the lower-level units such as boroughs, parishes, poor law unions and sanitary districts often lay in more than one county.

Pound Close, Elmsdale Road, and Oaklands Drive on the land leading down to the cemetery. In the 1950s and 60s, a large estate of council houses was built on the fields behind the west side of the Homend. In the 1960s the Langlands estate was built on the site of Old Kennel Meadow, the former rugby field. A large housing estate was then built on the former Deer Park (of Ledbury Park) and a relief road built in 1979, around the south and west of the town, providing a partial by-pass of the town centre, linking the Gloucester Road to the Hereford Road, and enclosing several fields which have all since been built on, mainly by the New Mills housing and Lower Road trading estate.

- 5.9.72 Within the town a number of blocks of apartments were built, specifically for the over-55s and offering various degrees of support. Harling Court was built in the 1950s on the site of the town's old allotments, and even received a visit in 1957 from the Queen and Prince Philip. Dawes Court was built on the site of the old Church of England Boys' School (built in 1868). Born Court, Turner Court, Bethell Court and most recently Leadon Bank, have also been built in recent years.
- 5.9.73 In 1951, the bells in St Michael and All Angels church were restored, the project led by the Poet Laureate John Masefield. A few years ago, the eight bells were found to be urgently in need of restoration and fund-raising began in 2018. The restoration of tower and bells was completed towards the end of 2020, with two bells recast, six retuned, and two new lighter bells added, now a ring of ten.
- 5.9.74 Once the post-WWII developments described above had been completed, there was little growth in the town. In 1971, Ledbury town's population was only 3,911, and it then stabilised for some time.
- 5.9.75 In 1974, the most momentous change in local government united Herefordshire and Worcestershire, in what Pinches (2009) describes as '*a forced and troubled marriage (ended by divorce in 1998), and during this period Ledbury formed part of the Malvern Hills District - an unlikely joining of two areas which had always been separated physically and in outlook by those very hills*'.

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- 5.9.76 By 2011 (the date of the last Census), the town's population had grown to 9,636; since then many new homes and other developments have been built.
- 5.9.77 In 2002, the doctors' surgery moved from the Master's House - which had been the practitioners' base for the previous twenty-five years - into a new purpose-built surgery. Before this, the surgery was in the Steppes house in New Street, home to doctors since at least 1831. Despite the St Katherine's complex having opened less than twenty years ago, it is already in need of replacement with larger premises due to the growth of the number of local residents. The doctors have expressed a wish to combine with the Market surgery on a single site, to offer a wider range of services more efficiently. The doctors of the Market Street Surgery and of St Katherine's Surgery have combined to form the Ledbury Health Partnership. A care home is also being built on Martins Way.
- 5.9.78 Infill of various spaces with houses since the millennium include the estate beside the old goods yard at the station (now a trading estate), which was formerly site of the redundant abattoir (built in 1926), and homes built on the ground between the Hereford Road and the viaduct.
- 5.9.79 Much of the new development (residential and commercial) has been located on land west and south of the town centre, for example the UBL factory and the auction site on the south side of the Ross Road, opposite the rugby club.
- 5.9.80 Also, a large area of land to the north of the town has been allocated for residential and employment use (the viaduct site, or Bloor scheme, which was the subject of the public inquiry in 2020 - APPEAL ALLOWED IN March 2021).
- 5.9.81 Planning permission has also been granted for housing on the former football and cricket pitches at the lower end of New Street, although by ### date publish report it had not yet been built.

- 5.9.82 Currently, c. 320 new homes are being built south of the town on land (formerly fields) south of Leadon Way (the Barratt scheme). In August 2020, planning permission was granted for the construction of up to 140 new houses adjacent to the Barratt site's eastern boundary.

## 5.10 Cultural Associations

- 5.10.1 The Ledbury area has important cultural associations with a wide variety of notable individuals and events. Ledbury also lies within landscapes which form an integral part of panoramic views from the Malvern Hills, which inspired artists of all kinds.

- 5.10.2 Notable individuals associated with the area include (in approximate chronological order):

- Katherine (or Catherine<sup>32</sup>) de Audley (1272 - 1326/7), widow of Sir Nicholas de Audley, became recluse of Ledbury. Enclosed by the Bishop of Hereford as an anchoress in the church (then called St Peter's). Regarded as an unbeatified saint in the town, her maidservant Mabel brought her food, herbs and milk from Hazle farm, along a lane which came to be known as Mabel's Furlong; there was also a field south of it called Catherine's Acre.
- William Langland (1332 - c.1400) was probably born in Ledbury; he was educated at Little Malvern Priory, then moved to London. He may well have been one of the many 'poor unbeneficed priests of that time' who made their living by singing at rich men's funerals or as wandering minstrels. Langland's Middle English allegorical narrative poem *Piers Plowman* (c. 1370) opens on the Malvern Hills, and scholars say he incorporated the imagery around him in his work<sup>33</sup>. Langland was a contemporary of Chaucer, and *Piers Plowman* has an important place in the English canon, akin to *The Canterbury Tales*.
- Jacob Tonson (1655 - 1736), the noted London publisher, purchased the Hazle Estate in 1721, and later became owner of the Plume of Feathers until his death in 1736, when his nephew's daughter Mary and her husband William Baker became owner of what would later become the Feathers Hotel.
- William Baker (1705 - 1750) was a global businessman who (at different times) was chairman of the East India Company and the Hudson Bay Company. The Feathers Hotel remained in his family until 1813 when John Biddulph (1768-1845), of New House (now Ledbury Park), bought it. He was a banker, spending much time in London with Cocks, Biddulph & Co, as did John Martin (1774 - 1831), another banker of Martins Bank 'at the sign of the grasshopper', who inherited Upper Hall, Ledbury by marriage in 1812.
- William Wordsworth (1770 - 1850), whilst returning from a visit to friends at Brinsop, Herefordshire wrote the sonnet *St Catherine of Ledbury*, inspired by Katherine de Audley (see above), the first few lines of which are as follows:

*When human touch (as monkish books attest)  
Nor was applied nor could be, Ledbury bells  
Broke forth in concert flung adown the dells,  
And upward, high as Malvern's cloudy crest;  
Sweet tones, and caught by a noble lady blest  
To rapture!*

<sup>32</sup> The name, whether Audley or Hospital, was originally spelt Catherine, but nowadays is always spelt Katherine: this change happened about a century ago, although it is not clear why.

<sup>33</sup> malvernmuseum.co.uk/Langland

- Lord Byron (1788 - 1824) was having an affair with Lady Oxford who lived at Brampton Bryan near Wigmore. He mentions Ledbury in not very complimentary terms in a letter written from Ledbury in 1813, which says, 'Dear H. – I am on my way to town – writing from my sordid Inn – ..'
- Elizabeth Barrett (1806 - 1861) spent a large part of her childhood living in Hope End, attending worship at the non-Conformist chapel behind the High Street, accessed via the alley between nos 3 and 4 of the High Street. This building is now a community hall, called the Burgage Hall. The Barrett Browning Memorial Institute was named to commemorate her life.
- H Rider Haggard (1856 - 1925), brother-in-law of the Rector Charles Maddison Green, Master of St Katherine's Hospital, opened the Barrett Browning Memorial Institute in January 1896. In addition to his exciting adventure stories, Rider Haggard also wrote on rural topics, in part based on research in Herefordshire. Rider Haggard is commemorated by a small plaque in the church, as well as one at the building he opened.
- Edward Elgar (1857 - 1934) lived in Malvern Wells between 1899 and 1904, and was a music teacher at Wells House School. From 1904 to 1912, he lived in Hereford. The Three Counties / Three Choirs landscapes greatly influenced his music – his piece *Caractacus* was inspired by British Camp (according to legend, Caractacus fought against Roman invasion from the hill fort at the Camp). Melodies often arose while he was cycling around the area, often between Hereford and Worcester, passing through Ledbury on the way: in her diary, Elgar's wife Alice commented, 'There cannot have been a lane within 20 miles of Malvern that we did not ultimately find'.
- Lascelles Abercrombie (1881 - 1938) lived in Dymock for a short time after WWI, and founded the Dymock poets' group (the other members were Rupert Brooke, John Drinkwater, Robert Frost (lived in Ledbury in 1914), Wilfred Gibson and Edward Thomas (began writing poetry in Ledbury in 1914)). Their poetry collection, donated to Herefordshire Libraries by Linda Hart, is held in The Master's House, now Ledbury's library, with new additions as the collection continues to develop.

In their works, the Dymock poets often celebrated the wild daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*, which is highly characteristic of ancient woodland and pasture in certain parts of the Three Counties including Ledbury (unfortunately in decline due to loss of habitat). According to the Friends of the Dymock Poets website<sup>34</sup>, 'the Dymock Poets countryside (an informal and unofficial appellation) stretches from May Hill in the south to the Malvern Hills in the north'. Examples of daffodil mentions include Robert Frost's poem *The Road Not Taken*, which begins, 'Two roads diverged in a yellow wood...', the word yellow almost certainly referring to daffodils. See also John Masefield below.

- John Masefield (1878-1967), poet laureate, was born in Knapp House in the Homend, Ledbury, the son of a local solicitor. He wrote not only poetry but also many plays and novels, some concerning life in Ledbury and the surrounding countryside. In 1951 he wrote a booklet in support of the church bells' restoration fund, in which he explained which poems referred to Ledbury and which did not. In old age, the year before he died, he wrote *Grace before Ploughing*, recollections of his early years, vividly describing life in a market town through the eyes of a child. His archive is also held in Ledbury's library. His poem *The Daffodil Fields* (c. 1913) evokes the Leadon Valley landscapes and communities of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and like Frost, he mentions the sight of daffodils growing in woodland:

*'Daffodils glimmered underfoot, the flooring  
Of the earthy woodland smelt like torn-up moss;'*

The poem also mentions daffodil-pickers: daffodils provided an early spring cash crop for farmers, their flowering coinciding with Mothering and Palm Sundays. Visitors would travel from the cities to see the 'golden tides' stretching in swathes across the countryside. The 'Daffodil Special' train

<sup>34</sup> <https://dymockpoets.org.uk/Visit.htm>

ran from London to Gloucestershire bringing city dwellers to walk in the meadows, enjoy and buy the flowers. The daffodils were picked by local people including school children, and were sent to London by train to be sold at the major flower markets and delivered to hospitals.

*'And there the pickers come, picking for town  
Those dancing daffodils; all day they pick;  
Hard-featured women, weather-beaten brown,  
Or swarthy-red, the colour of old brick.'*

- J R R Tolkien (1892 - 1973): *The Hobbit* was published in 1937. Tolkien walked on the Malvern Hills during visits to the area, and his writing was influenced by the landscapes. Apparently, his inspiration for the White Mountains between Rohan and Gondor were the Malvern Hills and views to the west.
- W H Auden (1907 - 1973) taught at the Downs school in Colwall. He married Thomas Mann's daughter in Ledbury church in 1935: as a German Jew she wanted British citizenship so it was a marriage of convenience.
- Conroy Maddox (1912 - 2005): born in Ledbury. He was an English surrealist painter, collagist, writer and lecturer, and a key figure in the Birmingham Surrealist movement.

#### **Other Notable Individuals**

- Cricketers Mary Duggan and James Crosbie-Smith.
- Footballers Miller Craddock (who played for Aston Villa) and Steve Emery.
- Darts player Terry 'The Bull' Jenkins.
- Actor Elizabeth Hurley, sold her home in the Cotswolds and bought Donnington Hall.

#### **Royal Visits**

- Princess Victoria came to Ledbury in 1830 when she was eleven years old (she became Queen of England in 1837), and visited New House (now Ledbury Park). She planted an elm tree there, (which has since been lost, falling in a storm).
- Princess Mary of Teck, later Queen Consort to King George V ('Old Queen Mary') visited the town in 1893, en route to Eastnor Castle.
- In 1934 the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth) came to Ledbury during a visit to the Three Counties Show. The Duchess returned in 1960 when then the Queen Mother was visiting the Lord Lieutenant at Colwall.
- In April 1957 the Queen and Prince Philip (Duke of Edinburgh) visited the town, and came again in 2003 to visit Harling Court.
- Richard the Duke of Gloucester came to see the Master's House in 2017.

## **5.11 Biodiversity**

### **5.11.1 ### TBC**

## **5.12 Significant Vegetation**

636

## Introduction

- 5.12.1 The term 'significant vegetation' is used here to describe predominantly mature trees and hedgerows which form noticeable / distinctive features and patterns in the landscape. Other types of significant vegetation such as grassland are described in the Biodiversity section above, but are noted here where relevant. The information is also useful for understanding local and wider ecological connectivity, and in determining which 'corridors' are likely to be most valuable, which are intact and in good health, and which could benefit from restoration. The same applies to landscape character elements and features, and GI assets and functions.
- 5.12.2 Whether individually and / or in combination, mature vegetation makes a significant contribution to landscape character, setting / context and function, and thus visual amenity. It also affects how views are experienced, as it can screen, filter, or frame them. In addition, it adds to the diversity of visual experience by changing the landscape's colours and textures with the seasons.
- 5.12.3 Google Earth is used for the analysis in the first instance, as this makes it much easier to identify the vegetation and draw it onto the baseline maps (see Figure ### Significant Vegetation, and also Figures ### - Aerial Photographs); the information is then verified and augmented during the on-the-ground surveys. In Ledbury's case the majority of the information was gathered, recorded and written up by the parish Tree Warden.
- 5.12.4 Significant vegetation includes designated / other high value features such as:
- ASNWs
  - PHI and BAP Priority Habitat sites
  - NFI areas
  - Trees covered by TPOs
  - Ancient / veteran trees
  - Traditional / old orchards.
- 5.12.5 Within the study area, on the whole, this vegetation makes a highly important and valuable contribution to landscape character, setting / context, function and local distinctiveness. It also often makes a highly important and valuable contribution to visual amenity and biodiversity; however in some areas, the vegetation is uncharacteristic, is a visual detractor, and has little ecological value. In places where the vegetation is in poor health and condition, the quality of the landscape deteriorates, especially in combination with other detractors.
- 5.12.6 There is a wide variety of species and types of planting arrangements throughout the parish and beyond its boundaries, the latter often forming the context and setting for the parish's landscapes and settlements. This engenders a unique sense of place, as each of the different types reflects different aspects of the locality's natural, cultural and social history and influences.
- 5.12.7 Much of the tree cover in the area is considered to be 'locally-characteristic', especially when it comprises fully mature native species, but it is always changing. Often the change is so gradual that it is hardly noticed, as explained further below.
- 5.12.8 It must be borne in mind that this study represents a snapshot in time, and anyone using it as a source of reference should check the baseline situation carefully, to determine whether or not it has changed since.

## Ledbury's Significant Vegetation: Overview

- 5.12.9 In terms of its visual appeal and character, Ledbury owes much to its location and in particular its significant vegetation, being cupped by wooded limestone ridges to the north and east, and more distant high wooded ground to the west. This is confirmed by a glance at Figure ###, which shows the extensive areas of significant vegetation within and around the town.

- 5.12.10 In views along the approach to Ledbury from the north west, travelling in from Hereford, and from the south west, travelling from Ross, the town appears to nestle in its surrounding wooded ridges below the prominent steep drop of Bradlow Knoll; approaching from the east, the road enters the green tunnel formed by Coneygree Wood on one side and the wooded grounds of the Upper Hall estate on the other, and then suddenly emerges into the light, virtually in the centre of the town.
- 5.12.11 Standing on high ground to the north east of the town on Kilbury Camp looking south, the town appears to be enveloped in woodland, with the wooded ridge of Dog Hill in the foreground and Coneygree rising to the left, and the land rolling away towards May Hill on the horizon. The only sign that Ledbury is there at all, not far away, is the sight of the church spire rising above the trees.
- 5.12.12 So, we are fortunate indeed to find ourselves living in such a well-wooded and green place in a country that has been losing its woods and trees and fields and meadows, especially in close proximity to towns, at an alarming rate. We have woodland and open countryside on our doorstep that is not only beautiful, but easily accessible from the town, and it is possible to spend all day wandering in our woods without ever being very far from home.

### Woodland

- 5.12.13 While all woods are valuable, Ledbury's woods are particularly special because Dog Hill, Frith, Coneygree, Hospital and Mayhill Woods to the east of the town, and the woods around Wall Hills hillfort and along the ridge adjacent to Falcon Lane to the west of the town, are all classified as ASNW: Ledbury is lucky to have so large an area of this rare habitat within the parish.
- 5.12.14 ASNW is woodland that has existed continuously since at least 1600, and in many cases it will have been woodland of one sort or another for even longer than that - an area of woodland that is still part of Frith Wood is mentioned in the Domesday Book, and on the Malvern Hills there are small areas of what is likely to be original wildwood (i.e. wholly natural and uncultivated).
- 5.12.15 In most ancient woods, the trees and shrubs have been cut down periodically as part of the management cycle. Provided that the area has remained as woodland, the stand is still considered ancient. Since it may have been cut over many times in the past, ancient woodland does not necessarily contain very old trees. Some woodlands are classified as 'replanted' ASNW, which usually indicates plantation, often coniferous.
- 5.12.16 However, replanted or not, features of ancient woodland often survive on and under the ground, providing a unique habitat with irreplaceable communities of soil life, plants, mosses, lichens and fungi, and all the insects, invertebrates, birds and small mammals that they support.
- 5.12.17 Ancient woods are, or have been until recently, continuously worked by people and this means they are also full of human history and signs of human presence. Ledbury's woods are no exception, and the signs are there to see in the form of boundary banks, terraces, pollarded trees, trackways, remnants of quarries, lime kilns and charcoal pits (see Section 5.9). The trees within many areas of the woods will have been coppiced (cut to the ground and the regrowth harvested) in the past for wood products, and some of the coppice stools visible today in parts of Frith and Coneygree Woods are huge, and are likely to be the oldest trees still living there now because, counterintuitively, continuous coppicing of a tree has the effect of prolonging its life.
- 5.12.18 In Frith Wood there are also occasional small-leaved lime pollards of great antiquity (some lime pollards in Gloucestershire are estimated to be 2,000 years old). Nowadays it is a relatively rare tree in the UK, but after the last ice age, it was common (Oliver Rackham called lime 'a living link with the Mesolithic wildwood'). Its decline may be due to the fact that its uses were mainly limited to carving, making twine and rope, so it was not grown on an 'industrial' scale (climate change may also have played a part).
- 5.12.19 Until recently, on the Eastnor estate there was an ancient and well-loved oak tree called 'the White-leaved Oak' (after the nearby hamlet of the same name), which probably started life in the late 11<sup>th</sup>

century. This was at the time when royal hunting forests or chases<sup>35</sup> were being created, although the oak could also have established in wildwood.

- 5.12.20 In the churchyard of St. Bartholomew's Church, Much Marcle, there is a huge, hollow yew tree which is at least 1500 years old. The limestone ridge of Mayhill Wood is full of ancient yew trees and is a relatively rare type of woodland, for which is designated as a SSSI (see Biodiversity above). Evidence suggests that Druidry was practiced widely in the Malvern Hills and surrounding areas well before the Roman invasion, and Druids held trees such as yew, oak and holly sacred.
- 5.12.21 Early in the year, violets and primroses speckle the ancient woodland floor, taking advantage of the light before the canopy closes; in spring the woods light up with wood anemone, wild daffodils and bluebells, all associated with ancient coppiced woodland. There are many other wild flowers and plants associated with this habitat: dog's mercury, spurge laurel, sanicle, yellow archangel, wood vetch, and the rare herb paris, if you are lucky enough to find it.
- 5.12.22 The same elusive quality applies to the spreading bellflower that might, just might, appear along the rides on the west side of Frith Wood. This is a mysterious plant, associated with the disturbed ground along old trackways, possibly including old droving routes. The Forestry Commission, who manage Frith Wood, have carried out some coppicing to open up the area where the bellflower has been found in the hope that it will respond to these more favourable conditions. There are of course many other wild flowers that appear along the rides, no less lovely for being more common: bugle, stitchwort, yellow pimpernel, enchanter's nightshade, several types of thistle and willow herb, red campion, tutsan and St John's wort to name but a few.

#### **Trees Outside Woodland**

- 5.12.23 As well as its woodland, the parish benefits from the presence of many trees, in gardens, open spaces, hedgerows, and field trees.
- 5.12.24 ### rest of section TBC

#### **Tree Preservation Orders / Trees Within Conservation Areas**

- 5.12.25 There are a number of trees within the parish covered by a TPO<sup>36</sup>, either individually or in groups (locations are shown on Figure ###).
- 5.12.26 Within conservation areas, normal TPO procedures apply if a tree is already protected by a TPO; however, if a tree in a CA is not covered by a TPO, written notice of any proposed work must be given to the LPA before the work starts. This is called a 'section 211 notice' and it gives the LPA an opportunity to consider protecting the tree with a TPO.
- 5.12.27 TPOs are a rather random designation, and contrary to what many people would expect, are granted only under very specific conditions, and in practice confer very little real protection. The council may grant a TPO on application if they meet the following conditions: the tree is special, either because it is old, unusual, or of historic significance, is visible from a public right of way and has amenity value, *and* it is under threat. It is a criminal offence to breach a TPO. Broadly, if the breach is likely to lead to the tree being destroyed, the offence is subject to an unlimited fine. All other breaches are subject to a fine of up to £2,500. In reality, if a TPO is granted, the only protection it confers is that it obliges the landowner to notify the council if any work is proposed to the tree, or that will affect it, and the council has to give permission for the work to go ahead, or not. If the tree is deliberately destroyed or damaged by an unsympathetic landowner without good reason or permission, despite the penalty it is rarely enforced, and not enough resources are available to enforce the requirement that the tree

<sup>35</sup> A forest was royal property, a chase could be held by a subject. The terms forest denotes an area that includes a wide variety of landuses and habitat types, from woodlands to open commons.

<sup>36</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas>

is replaced (to be 'of an appropriate size and species and planted at the same place' - yet clearly some trees are irreplaceable, and their loss cannot be compensated for).

- 5.12.28 The only real protection for special trees is that they are loved and valued by people and communities, who will look out for them.

#### **Ancient, Veteran and Notable Trees**

- 5.12.29 There are about forty trees within or on the boundaries of the parish that are recorded on the Ancient Tree Inventory<sup>37</sup>, a national database of trees in the UK that are designated as being Ancient, Veteran, or otherwise Notable.
- 5.12.30 This is separate from trees with TPOs - some may have them, but many will not. This study is by no means exhaustive, and it is extremely likely that there are more special trees within the parish that would qualify and should be recorded. It would be an excellent project to involve parish residents in looking for these trees (see Recommendations in Section 7.2).
- 5.12.31 I will mention just three that I know of, that are not at present recorded, and the specific projects within the parish that these trees suggest or could give rise to.

#### **Black Poplars**

- 5.12.32 A special tree in the parish but as yet unrecorded is an old pollarded black poplar near Flights Farm on Falcon Lane. Native black poplars (*Populus nigra ssp betulifolia*) are becoming a rare sight in the country generally including in Herefordshire, and this is one of only ### no. TBC known trees in the whole county. Black poplars are a distinctive and iconic large tree, often associated with wet ground near rivers and streams, but most of the existing trees are now very old and getting towards the end of their lives. There are separate male and female trees, but very few females are left, and for this reason, plus the fact that the seed is not viable for long, and needs the conditions found in wet meadows and floodplains (now rare habitat) to germinate and grow in, the tree is not regenerating naturally and would be in danger of disappearing altogether unless it were not propagated and planted by people.
- 5.12.33 As parish Tree Warden I have been working with a couple of colleagues and a small group of students from the Youth Council to plant native black poplars and disease-resistant elms along the River Leadon to restore both these iconic tree species to our landscape in and around the town. Some elms and black poplars have been planted at various sites along the Leadon in the Weir Garden, and we hope to plant more along the course of the river.

#### **Old Pear Tree, and Fruit Trees in the Parish**

- 5.12.34 Another special tree is a lovely old pear tree that is situated in a hay meadow just outside the town between the Worcester Road and Knapp Lane (and which itself is designated important grassland, and a SSSI - see Biodiversity section). The tree is a sight to behold in flower, and is the last survivor of perhaps several in that field; there was another one several years ago, but this has now gone. Interestingly, the meadow is named 'Pear Tree Walk' on the 1813 enclosure map of the parish.
- 5.12.35 Herefordshire is known for its fruit orchards, particularly apples and pears, grown both for cider and perry as well as for eating. There is also an historic local association with cherry trees, and damson hedges. The parish has ### no. TBC areas of named traditional orchard on the PHI maps that cover the parish, but only ### no. TBC remain as orchard.
- 5.12.36 It would be an excellent project to revive or recreate one / some of these orchards in the parish as the Colwall Orchards project has done. Other possibilities, perhaps in conjunction with looking at

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<sup>37</sup> <https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>

existing and new hedges in the parish (as yet not surveyed), would be reviving the presence of damsons as hedgerow trees (see Recommendations).

### **Boundary Trees**

- 5.12.37 Another tree of note is a huge ash pollard that is on, or very close to, the eastern parish boundary as it runs towards Eastnor park ridgeway. This suggests another potential project, which would be locating existing trees, or planting them, as boundary marker trees around the perimeter of the parish, and perhaps even revive the tradition of beating the parish bounds once a year!

### **Ash Trees and Ash Dieback**

- 5.12.38 The mention of this tree gives rise to the issue of ash dieback disease (*Chalara fraxinea*) and its potentially significant impact on the trees in the parish.
- 5.12.39 This is a fungal disease, spread by spores, affecting trees in the *Fraxinus* family but most notably ash trees. It has been spreading in the ash population in the UK since at least 2012 and possibly before, having been introduced on imported nursery stock.
- 5.12.40 As tree Warden I and a small team of volunteers have been conducting a survey of a selection of ash trees from around the parish for the last three years. While this is not a large sample, and none of us are experts, we are generally encouraged so far to see that our selected trees do not appear to be significantly affected by the signs of the disease.
- 5.12.41 Some parts of the country have been badly affected and many trees lost, but I remain cautiously optimistic that ash trees may develop some resistance. However, ash dieback is present in Herefordshire and the parish, so there is always the possibility that it will escalate at some point in the future and have a significant impact, as some experts are predicting it will. So, it is important to acknowledge this and to plan for it.
- 5.12.42 In 2016 Herefordshire Council collected data on ash trees within the county, and among the conclusions were that ash is the most numerous hedgerow tree, provides more than 50% of the non-woodland tree canopy cover of the county, and ash-dominated woodland covers more than 25% of all its broadleaved woodland. Many of the county's special ancient, veteran or notable heritage trees are ash, and 79% of the descriptions of TPOs in the county include ash.
- 5.12.43 So, it is not difficult to see that significant loss of ash trees would have a devastating effect on the landscape, let alone the ecological impact of losing the species as a host to the many insects, invertebrates, fungi, mosses lichens and other taxa, some of which use it exclusively.
- 5.12.44 Another implication of diseased or dying ash trees that are in proximity to roads or other areas with public access is the risk to public safety and the burden that could impose on local authorities including town and parish councils to monitor and remove any that are dangerous.
- 5.12.45 It is not known how many ash trees there are in the parish, but ash in Herefordshire generally is a highly significant tree, as shown by the 2016 survey mentioned above, so this is likely to be true in Ledbury also. It may be that a survey could be undertaken by parish residents, and the ash dieback monitoring survey extended by recruiting more volunteers - see Recommendations in Section 7.2.
- 5.12.46 The Tree Council has prepared some detailed guidance for local authorities entitled *Ash dieback: an Action Plan Toolkit* and it is to be recommended. It covers all aspects of good practice concerning the management of ash trees relating to ash dieback disease, but, as importantly, addresses the issue of considering the future and strategies for replacing ash as an important tree in the landscape.

641

## 5.13 Public and Social Amenity

5.13.1 ### TBC

## 5.14 Green Infrastructure

### Introduction

- 5.14.1 Natural England's definition of Green Infrastructure, or GI, is as follows:
- 5.14.2 *'Green Infrastructure is a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability. Its design and management should also respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitats and landscape types.'*
- 5.14.3 *Green Infrastructure includes established green spaces and new sites and should thread through and surround the built environment and connect the urban area to its wider rural hinterland. Consequently it needs to be delivered at all spatial scales from sub-regional to local neighbourhood levels, accommodating both accessible natural green spaces within local communities and often much larger sites in the urban fringe and wider countryside.<sup>38</sup>*
- 5.14.4 The Government's recently-revised (July 2019) version of the Natural Environment PPG para. 006 explains that GI 'assets' and 'functions' can help achieve the following planning goals:
- building a strong, competitive economy
  - achieving well-designed places
  - promoting healthy and safe communities
  - mitigating climate change, flooding and coastal change
  - conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 5.14.5 GI assets are physical / natural / historic / recreational features and elements, individually and in combination. Examples of those which are present in the study area are listed in Ledbury's GI section below.
- 5.14.6 GI functions include the various roles that the assets play / functions they perform. Such functions include the provision of:
- access, recreation, movement and leisure
  - habitats for, and access to, nature
  - landscape setting and context for development
  - energy production and conservation
  - food production and productive landscapes
  - flood attenuation and water resource management
  - cooling effects.
- 5.14.7 Amongst its many benefits, GI has a vital role to play in peoples' health and wellbeing. Evidence shows that those who live near nature generally cope better with the stress of everyday life and are considered happier than those who do not have easy access to green spaces. *'Proximity to greenspace is generally associated with increased levels of physical activity. This effect is particularly marked in the*

<sup>38</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35033>

*under 25s, who are more likely to be obese if they do not have access to greenspace. Regular participation in physical activities has been shown to improve physical and mental health. Increasing physical activity through access to high quality greenspace has the potential to save the NHS £2.1 billion a year... The green infrastructure approach therefore integrates consideration of economic, health and social benefits to ensure that delivery against both environmental and socio-economic objectives is central to the planning, management and delivery of these spaces.'*<sup>39</sup>

- 5.14.8 The Landscape Institute's publication *Green Infrastructure An integrated approach to land use*<sup>40</sup> is also a very useful source of reference on the subject. GI can improve the community's experience and understanding of natural and historic places. Integrating access to green spaces with natural, cultural and heritage value into peoples' everyday lives can help to develop a connection with the local area and increase community participation. It can provide learning opportunities, reduce crime and encourage social activity. Education involving the natural environment and green spaces can positively influence the functioning of communities through reducing anti-social behaviour, increasing self-esteem and improving skills.
- 5.14.9 It can also benefit the natural and historic environment by creating and enhancing biodiversity, connecting wildlife corridors and networks, protecting and enhancing landscape character, and improving the quality of rivers and streams as well as conserving and enhancing heritage assets such as historic landscapes and archaeological features, and improving the setting of historic buildings and monuments.
- 5.14.10 GI is factored in to judgements about landscape value, and should form an integral part of planning for the future (it is an important aspect of both national and local, and often neighbourhood planning policy - see below). It should be the subject of focussed studies if and when required, especially as part of planning applications. Landscape assessments '*will often need to address the effects of proposed development on green infrastructure as well as the potential the development may offer to enhance it*'<sup>41</sup>.

#### **Local Green Infrastructure: Background**

- 5.14.11 HC's Green Infrastructure Strategy<sup>42</sup> dates from 2010, and forms part of the evidence-base for Herefordshire's Core Strategy. The strategy's stated aim is '*to place a framework of natural and culturally important features and functions at the heart of planning for a sustainable future for development within Herefordshire*'.
- 5.14.12 The strategy divides existing green infrastructure into two groups: natural systems and human influence. Within these two groups there are subdivisions: geology; biodiversity; hydrology; land use; access and movement corridors; historical, cultural and archaeological value; landscape character; and formal designated and accessible open space. These divisions are dealt with at three levels: county, district and local or ward. Within each division, resources, issues and opportunities are identified.
- 5.14.13 The strategy identifies deficiencies and needs at a county-wide level, the key findings being the fragmentation of the natural systems, their vulnerability to change, and their inaccessibility to residents. Large-scale resources are located on the edges of the county, with the interior predominantly arable agriculture. Para. 4.3.1 of the strategy states, '*Many of the most diverse and*

<sup>39</sup> Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2013 – 2018 (WCC)

<sup>40</sup> [https://landscapewpstorage01.blob.core.windows.net/www-landscapeinstitute-org/2016/03/Green-Infrastructure\\_an-integrated-approach-to-land-use.pdf](https://landscapewpstorage01.blob.core.windows.net/www-landscapeinstitute-org/2016/03/Green-Infrastructure_an-integrated-approach-to-land-use.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> GLVIA3 para. 2.10

<sup>42</sup> *Green Infrastructure Strategy Herefordshire Local Development Framework* (February 2010) Herefordshire Council  
<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2063/herfordshire-green-infrastructure-strategy>

*valued sites and corridors within the county are constricted and limited to small or narrow components of the landscape'. The agricultural areas are significantly less biodiverse.*

- 5.14.14 Roads and railways are often barriers to movement as well as corridors in their own right. Within settlements there is little provision of green or open space - reflecting medieval origins - and this is true of Ledbury town centre where gardens are small or non-existent. Green space in new developments tends to be islands disconnected from other green space. The most deprived areas in towns are the areas with the least green space: again, this is true in Ledbury where there is little play space in the south of the town.
- 5.14.15 Relevant to Ledbury is the identification of the Malvern Hills AONB as a County Strategic Area, recognition that development in this area may impact on assets and features beyond county boundaries and may be of national importance.
- 5.14.16 A network of District Strategic Corridors (DSCs) links the six major towns (Herefordshire GI Strategy p 106). These corridors feature: nationally and locally recognised and protected sites; sites of green infrastructure significance (rivers, ranges of hills) and functional landscapes (for example river basins and woodlands which minimise the effects of flooding). Ledbury's DSCs connect to Hereford, centred on Woolhope Dome, and Bromyard following the River Frome and the upper catchment of the Leadon. There is no complete connection to Ross-on-Wye. At a district level, strategic District Enhancement Zones (DEZs) have been identified where landscapes could provide green infrastructure goods – public amenity, biodiversity, flood mitigation. There are no DEZs near Ledbury.
- 5.14.17 Within each town, Local Strategic Corridors (LSCs) have been identified showing the framework of connected GI within the settlement and adjacent to the settlement. The area around sites identified for urban expansion in the Core Strategy have been designated Local Enhancement Zones (LEZs) where there is an opportunity to enhance green infrastructure alongside development. Finally Fringe Zones (LFZs) surround each town, covering the transition between town and country and indicating the local importance and sensitivity of these transitional areas (Herefordshire GI Strategy pp 143-149).
- 5.14.18 The Regulation 16 draft of the Ledbury NDP (pp 45 and 46) contained a GI policy – CL1.1. The Examiner in his report stated that: *'no substantive evidence is provided in respect of how this will occur, how it will be paid for, how it will be managed, or who by. There is nothing to demonstrate that Policy CL1.1 is deliverable...'* Following the Inspector's recommendation, the policy and accompanying map were deleted and there is no policy in the existing NDP covering GI.

### **Ledbury's Green Infrastructure**

- 5.14.19 ### create GI figure & ref here
- 5.14.20 Many of Ledbury's GI assets and functions have been identified and are described in the previous topic sections, for example Heritage, Biodiversity, Significant Vegetation and Public and Social Amenity; see also Landscape Functions in Section 5.16. In summary, within the wider study area, GI assets include:
- Natural and semi-natural rural and urban green spaces – includes woodland and scrub, grassland, meadow, marsh / wetlands, open and running water, brownfield sites, bare rock / geological habitats (for example quarries).
  - Parks and gardens – urban, country and historic parks, formal / public and private gardens, and institutional grounds (for example schools).
  - Amenity green spaces – informal recreation spaces, play areas, outdoor sports facilities, housing green spaces, domestic gardens, community gardens, roof gardens, village greens, commons, living roofs and walls, hedges, civic spaces, and highway trees and verges.
  - Allotments, orchards, suburban and rural farmland.

- Cemeteries and churchyards.
- Green and blue corridors – watercourses (including their banks and floodplains), railways, road verges, old trackways.
- Public right of way network -roads, lanes, footpaths, bridleways, cycle routes and trails, including long-distance / themed trails.
- Sites of nature conservation value / importance (designated / undesignated); also designated local geological sites.
- Green spaces (designated / undesignated) selected for historic significance, scenic beauty, recreation, wildlife, tranquillity etc.
- Archaeological, historic and cultural sites / features (designated / undesignated).
- Functional green spaces such as sustainable drainage schemes (SuDS) and flood storage areas.
- Built structures – living roofs and walls, bird and bat boxes, roost sites.

5.14.21 A few of Ledbury's key GI assets are described below:

#### MALVERN HILLS AONB

5.14.22 The eastern part of the parish lies within the Malvern Hills AONB. The boundary of the AONB runs along the A417 Ledbury to Gloucester Road and roughly follows the eastern boundary of the town, going north to the railway station and along the Bromyard Road. The Hills attract tourists from across the country as well as being well used by local people. Ledbury Park, an unregistered park within the AONB boundary, slopes up to Coneygree Wood from The Southend forming a transition between the town and the Hills. The character of the park bringing a large wedge of countryside right into the town centre is distinctive.

#### LOCAL WOODLANDS TO THE NORTH AND EAST OF THE TOWN

5.14.23 Two fall within the AONB - Frith Wood and The Coneygree; Dog Wood lies adjacent to the AONB boundary between the other two, and is owned by LTC. Ledbury is distinctive in having direct pedestrian access to the countryside from the town via these ancient woods. They are all well-used by local people and have a network of footpaths which link to the countryside and settlements beyond including the Malvern Hills. Within the woods are archaeological sites, ancient boundaries, old quarries and ancient woodland as well as Forestry Commission plantations in Coneygree and Frith. The woods as a backdrop to the town are essential to its character.

#### RIVER LEADON VALLEY

5.14.24 The River Leaddon runs through the area to the west of the town, flowing from north to south. A natural boundary between the town and the countryside, along its banks is a well-used public path, although it floods regularly. Between the river and the by-pass, semi-mature woodland of native trees has been planted as a buffer. This planting is repeated on the other side of the by-pass between the road and the town and is almost continuous from the Hereford roundabout to the Gloucester roundabout. This belt forms a highly important and valuable multi-functional GI corridor.

5.14.25 As mentioned in Section 5.4, the Malvern Hills NCA 103 profile refers to land north / north east of Ledbury town which is of relevance to ecosystem services and the regulation of water flow. It states that whilst regulating water flow is a relatively low issue for NCA 103, ***'it is an important area for its potential contribution to attenuation of flooding in downstream Ledbury, particularly through land management which increases vegetation cover (particularly trees/scrub) and surface roughness to increase evapotranspiration and infiltration and slow flows. These actions will also increase biodiversity, water availability and improve soil quality through the expansion, restoration and siting of semi natural habitats, which have a higher water storage potential'*** (emphasis added).

#### TOWN TRAIL

- 5.14.26 The Town Trail follows the route of the old railway and canal – above the surrounding landscape to the north, below in the centre and then back up to ground level at its south end. Again, a well-used public amenity, but it has potential to support greater biodiversity. It provides an essential link through the town which other smaller green spaces could be linked to – at one point it almost links up to the riverside walk.

#### NEW MILLS

- 5.14.27 The area of housing at New Mills to the north west of the town is well provided with a network of informal green spaces which are linked, and footpaths which are independent of roads. Larger green spaces, stands of native trees and a number of play areas make this a much-used public amenity with some biodiversity.
- 5.14.28 ### rest of section TBC

## 5.15 Aesthetic and Perceptual Landscape Qualities

- 5.15.1 ### TBC

## 5.16 Key Landscape Functions

- 5.16.1 The baseline assessment identified certain areas of land which perform highly important functions within the landscape, and / or make valuable contributions to landscape character and visual amenity. These are factored in to judgements about landscape and visual sensitivity.
- 5.16.2 The most relevant are in relation to an area's contribution to / function as, and / or forming an integral and important part of:
- National and / or local landscape character
  - Rural open countryside (location and character / use)
  - Historic (pastoral / ornamental) context and setting of settlement
  - Historic landscape character (pastoral / ornamental - current landuse)
  - Characteristic / historic landscape patterns
  - Heritage asset / context and setting
  - Aesthetic / perceptual qualities
  - Biodiversity
  - Significant vegetation
  - Key approach / gateway (see next section)
  - Green gap (especially where preventing coalescence), and / or buffer / transition zone (desirable between densely and sparsely-settled area, and areas of tranquillity and activity, for example, and to protect wildlife and other 'sensitive' sites)
  - Green corridor / link (these often perform a wide variety of functions including ecological and recreational)

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- Social amenity
- Green Infrastructure asset / function
- Ecosystems / natural capital / catchment
- Views and visual amenity.

## 5.17 Approaches and Gateways

- 5.17.1 The baseline assessment identified certain areas of land which perform highly important functions within the landscape, and / or make valuable contributions to landscape character and visual amenity. These are factored in to judgements about landscape and visual sensitivity.
- 5.17.2 Ledbury has several approaches and gateways. Each approach and gateway is different, reflecting its locality's natural, historic / cultural and social influences. The gateways in particular are important because their character reflects key aspects of Ledbury's character; the treatment and levels of quality of the gateway areas vary from place to place, and often there is scope for improvement.
- 5.17.3 Many of the approaches are along historic / prehistoric routes; however, because parts of the settlement have extended outwards over time, the gateways are not necessarily 'historic'; today, they lie at points where the rural landscape transitions into a suburban one, and where there is clearly a first experience of built form which is closely associated with the settlement, often at the settlement boundary.
- 5.17.4 The extent of each gateway's area of influence varies depending on a number of factors such as sense of arrival / what is being announced; views at / towards / from the gateway; whether there are characteristic / key features at or near / within sight of the gateway; and so on.
- 5.17.5 The locations of the gateways are shown on Figure ###.
- 5.17.6 ### Gateways TBC

## 5.18 Key Constraints

- 5.18.1 Landscape assessments can identify some, but not all of the constraints which may have to be considered in determining the feasibility / viability of the future development of certain areas. Many of the designations and features identified in the assessment are potential constraints to development at one level or another, although they do not necessarily preclude development *per se*<sup>43</sup>.
- 5.18.2 The main constraints include:

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<sup>43</sup> In the case of AONBs, recent revisions to the Natural Environment PPG have clarified the NPPF's intentions and requirements for how development within them (and other designated landscapes) should be approached. The PPG states that 'The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that the scale and extent of development in these areas should be limited, in view of the importance of conserving and enhancing their landscapes and scenic beauty. Its policies for protecting these areas may mean that it is not possible to meet objectively assessed needs for development in full through the plan-making process, and they are unlikely to be suitable areas for accommodating unmet needs from adjoining (non-designated) areas. Effective joint working between planning authorities covering designated and adjoining areas, through the preparation and maintenance of statements of common ground, is particularly important in helping to identify how housing and other needs can best be accommodated. All development in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Beauty will need to be located and designed in a way that reflects their status as landscapes of the highest quality. Where applications for major development come forward, paragraph 172 of the Framework sets out a number of particular considerations that should apply when deciding whether permission should be granted'. (Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 8-041-20190721 Revision date: 21 07 2019)

Land covered by designation and / or specific planning policy: for example AONB, SSSI, Open Access land, LGS.

Land in Flood Zones 2 and / or 3<sup>44</sup>: As well as being a constraint to development, building in the flood plain may be uncharacteristic in terms of local landscape character (see hydrology in Section 5.7).

Land with covenants: Occasionally, certain parcels of land are the subject of covenants which specifically preclude development of the land, or access to it.

Land on steep or very steep slopes: Although it may not be uncharacteristic in steeply-sloping areas, building on steep slopes usually requires extensive / intrusive engineering works which could give rise to significant adverse effects on landscape character, visual and social amenity in order to achieve modern-day standards. Even if building can be achieved, it may not be possible to get access to the land without cutting into the slope, removing roadside vegetation to achieve sightlines and so on.

No direct access from public highway: Access to some areas may be possible through adjacent developed land which does have direct access to a public highway, either now or in the future; others are perhaps only reached via fields, or narrow lanes / tracks which would require widening / 'improving' which would almost certainly give rise to adverse landscape and visual effects.

- 5.18.3 It should be noted that there are other matters beyond the scope of landscape and visual assessments which have to be factored in to judgements about whether development of a site is feasible and / or viable, and whether it can be achieved without giving rise to unacceptable levels of adverse effects.
- 5.18.4 For example, land-ownership and / or the protection and / or management of land may have to be considered where relevant to landscape and visual value / sensitivity to change in terms of how a landscape looks and / or functions; however, land-ownership / management *per se* is not of relevance to sensitivity and capacity, especially as the situation can change over time. From a neighbourhood planning perspective, any sites which are considered for future development would have to be feasible, viable and deliverable.
- 5.18.5 ### rest of section TBC

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<sup>44</sup> Within Flood Zone 1 there is a very minimal risk of flooding (less than 0.1% chance of flooding in any year, sometimes known as 'having a 1:1000-year chance'). There are very few restrictions in terms of flood risk to development on Flood Zone 1 areas, although applications for proposed development on land over 1ha in area must be accompanied by a flood risk assessment, which should consider areas deemed to be at high risk of flooding from rainfall (known as Critical Drainage Areas).

## 6 Visual Baseline

### TBC

## 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

### 7.1 Conclusions

7.1.1 ### TBC

### 7.2 Recommendations

7.2.1 ### TBC

Carly Tinkler BA CMLI FRSA MIALE ### date



# Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018 - 2021

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## 1.0 Admin, governance and funding

### 1.1 Admin

Up to date copy of this filing list	Excel	WP	X	X	n/a	
Up to date Ledbury NDP 2018-21 Action index	Excel	WP	X	X	n/a	
NDP WP contact list 6th August 2020	Excel	n/a	Y	X	n/a	
NDP WP contact list 28th October 2020	Excel	n/a	Y	X	n/a	
NDP WP email list 23 Dec 2020	Excel	n/a	Y	X	n/a	
NDP WP members and support teams who contributed	Excel	n/a	X	X	X	
Ledbury Town Council - NDP confidentiality agreement (template)	pdf	n/a	Y	X	n/a	
Ledbury Town Council - WP confidentiality agreement individual signed copies		n/a	X	X	n/a	Individual WP signed copies to be filed
Declaration of interest - WP individual signed copies		n/a	X	X	n/a	Individual WP signed copies to be filed
List of individually signed confidentiality agreements and declarations of interest	Excel	Y	X	X	n/a	
NDP consultation visits or meetings reporting form November 2020	Word	Y	X	X	n/a	
NDP filing system process 140121	email	n/a	Y	X	n/a	

### 1.2 Funding and budget

26 06 19 Funding meeting Dave Tristram	Word	Y	Y	X	X	
Ledbury NDP budget 2019-20 v010719	Excel	Y	Y	n/a	r	
Ledbury NDP budget 2019-20 v170919	Excel	Y	Y	X	r	
Malvern ANCOB Grants and funding	Word	n/a	X	n/a	n/a	
Email to Angle re NDP funding applications 180121	email	Y	Y	X	X	
Ledbury NDP budget 2019-21 v220121	Excel	Y	X	X	X	
Localities Grant Application January 2021	On-line		X	X	?	
email Localities approval 150221 Your Application for a Grant - Neighbourhood Planning 2018-2022	email	n/a	X	X	n/a	
email Neighbourhood Planning Programme - NPG-11957 - Basic Grant approval and conditions 180221	email	n/a	X	X	n/a	
Ledbury NDP budget 2019-21 v050321	Excel	WP	X	X	X	

### 1.3 Objectives and terms of reference

2019 NDP Working Party Scoping Plan rev. 15 03 19	Word	n/a	Y	X	n/a	First draft
Approved 2019 NDP Working Party Scoping Plan rev. 05. 19	Word	Y	Y	X	X	
LTC Corporate plan with NDP area highlights Jan 21	Excel	Y	X	X	n/a	

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email for Councillors Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan briefing on Monday 25th January 2021 at 6.30pm  
Ledbury NDP current status briefing document 22nd January 2021

## 1.4 Project plan

NDP Project Timeline May 2019	Word	Y	Y	Y	X	r	
NDP Timeline PDF page 1 July 2019	pdf	Y	Y	Y	X	r	
NDP Timeline PDF page 2 July 2019	pdf	Y	Y	Y	X	r	
NDP Revisions 2019 Schedule of revs 2 091219	Excel	n/a	Y	Y	X	n/a	
NDP Project timeline post covid v 280920	Excel	n/a	Y	Y	X	n/a	
NDP project timeline 27 11 20 (dated 21/2/20)	pdf	?	?	X	X	r	One of these only?
NDP Draft project timeline 27 11 20	Excel	?	?	X	X	r	One of these only?
NDP Timeline Crunch points v2 050121	Word	Y	Y	Y	X	n/a	
09 01 21 Project Timeline	Word	Y	Y	Y	X	X	

## 2.0 Communications and consultation

### 2.1 Documentation

Ledbury Carnival day NDP leaflet Aug 19	?	n/a	X	X	X	X	Inviting NDP input - Need file from Olivia
Email to community groups inviting NDP participation October 2019	email	Y	X	X	X	X	
CONTACTS FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS	Word	n/a	X	X	X	n/a	
Ledbury NDP outline of a communications and consultation process plan June 2019	Word	n/a	Y	Y	X	n/a	First draft
Ledbury NDP communications and consultation process plan February 2020	Word	n/a	Y	Y	X	n/a	Second draft
Ledbury NDP communications and consultation plan November 2020	Word	Y	Y	Y	X	n/a	Amended second draft
Ledbury Council newsletter Dec 2020 with NDP note	pdf	n/a	Y	Y	X	X	
Additional community groups NDP consultation letter by email 290121	Word	n/a	X	X	X	X	
Additional community groups list sent NDP letter by email 290121	email	n/a	X	X	X	n/a	
Up to date Ledbury NDP 2018-21 Consultation activities record	Excel	WP	X	X	X	X	
Ledbury NDP communications and consultation plan v3 January 2021	Word	n/a	X	X	X	n/a	Third draft
Ledbury NDP communications and consultation plan v4 February 2021	Word	WP	X	X	X	n/a	Fourth draft

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## 3.2 Bill Bloxsome

File format	Approved by ED&P (WP = by Working Party)	LTC Paper file	LTC PC file offline*	LTC Website	Notes
W Bloxsome Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan - Revisions 240919	Powerpoint	Y	X	X	X
Advice on the Programme and Timeline W/B Dec 19	Word	Y	Y	X	X
Ledbury NDP SG January 2020	Powerpoint	Y	X	X	X
emails Bill & NF re SEA and LSCA work Ledbury NDP 171220	email	n/a	X	X	n/a
Ledbury NDP Review Work Updates January 2021	Word	Y	X	X	X
Proposal invitation BB NDP 2nd phase work v2 March 2021	Word	Y	X	X	X
Proposal invitation MB NDP consultation support work March 2021	Word	Y	X	X	X
email W Bloxsome Invoice for NDP work as per Localities grant 160321	email	n/a	X	X	n/a
Invoice NDP LED.2020.21. No1	pdf	X	X	X	n/a

## 3.3 Carly Tinkler

Carly permission letter draft Jan 2020	Word	Y	X	X	n/a	Letter to landowners for LSCA work
Catch up and invoicing 240220	email	n/a	Y	X	n/a	
Ledbury NDP LSCA Invoice 1.250320	email	n/a	Y	X	n/a	
286 Invoice LedburyLSCA CT20286 1.25.03.2020	Word	Y	Y	X	n/a	
292 Invoice LedburyLSCA CT20292 2.29.06.2020	Word	Y	X	X	n/a	
Proposal invitation CT for additional LVBA sensitivity study work March 2021	Word	Y	X	X	X	
email C Tinkler Invoice for NDP work as per Localities grant 160321	email	n/a	X	X	n/a	
304 Invoice LedburyLVBA CT21304 17.03.2021	Word	X	X	X	n/a	

## 3.4 Sam Banks and NDP support team at Herefordshire Council

Ledbury SLA June19	pdf	Y	X	X	?	Need signed version in the file
HC Sam Banks team NDP review meeting agenda for 031220	email	n/a	Y	X	n/a	

## 4.0 Topics

### 4.1 Employment

NPWP - Interview Report - Kennels Farm 2015

pdf

n/a

X

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654



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		Working Party)				
2017 Jan Wilce - Ledbury Station East	pdr	n/a	x	x	?	
4.6 Sport and fitness (including football)						

Gladmans and Dymock Road appeal site reapplication in relation to the Ledbury NDP 151220	email	n/a	x	x	?	
Layout for Playing Fields Ledbury Jan 2021	pdf	n/a	x	x	?	
Ledbury Swifts and Ledbury Town playing field requirements Jan 21	email	n/a	x	x	?	

[illegible]

## 5.0 Design guide

Hereford Design Guide Consultation Notice Jan 19	email	n/a	x	n/a	n/a	Supplementary Planning Document notices
Design Code - Scoping Document May 2019	Word	n/a	Y	x	n/a	First draft version
Design Code - Scoping Document June 2019	Word	Y	Y	x	x	Adopted version
GOODE DESIGN CODE SUGGESTION 28 June 2019	Word	n/a	Y	x	n/a	Discussed as part of options
Ledbury NDP – Design Guide- Initial thoughts PN 240719	Word	n/a	Y	x	n/a	As an option: not pursued
Employment land map and design guide JU 300120	email	n/a	Y	x	n/a	Briefing on reviewing design guide
Topic paper No 1 - Integrating Ledbury Design Guide into the NDP November 2020	pdf	W/P	x	x	x	Draft version 1
UK Climate Change Committee on housing heating Dec 2020	Word	n/a	x	x	n/a	
Light Pollution from Bromyard Road Industrial estate 160221	email	n/a	x	x	n/a	

## 6.0 Green spaces and recreation

Haygrove Community Garden Letter from Ledbury Town Council Sept 2019	pdf	n/a	x	x	x
email Haygrove Community Gardens Charity Presentation to NDPWP 011220	email	n/a	x	x	Link <a href="https://vimeo.com/296029286/821d6f445">https://vimeo.com/296029286/821d6f445</a>

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## 6.2 Footpaths and cycleways

Wellington Heath NDP Transport Sub-Group ideas for a safe route to Ledbury for walkers and cyclists	Powerpoint	Y	X	X	n/a	
email re Ledbury Footpaths - LR6 to LR37 Jan 2021	email	n/a	X	X	n/a	
Ramblers Forgotten Paths project 2020	pdf	n/a	X	X	n/a	
2020.07.09 Slow Ways Plan	pdf	n/a	X	X	n/a	
quiet_janes_1	pdf	Y	X	X	n/a	
PRoW LR39 reinstalled Dymock Road west to River Leaden	pdf					

## 6.3 Public green spaces

Green infrastructure comments made at W/P meeting on 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Word	n/a	X	X	n/a	

## 6.4 Other green spaces and recreation


## 7.0 Herefordshire Council planning documents (if not the file, then give links to the HC website for the appropriate documents)

Herefordshire Local Plan Core strategy 2011-2031	eLink	n/a	n/a	n/a	Link	<a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1789/core-strategy-sections-combined">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1789/core-strategy-sections-combined</a>
Herefordshire Local Plan Core strategy 2011-2031 - Appendices	eLink	n/a	n/a	n/a	Link	<a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1789/core-strategy-appendices-combined">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1789/core-strategy-appendices-combined</a>
HC What is a neighbourhood plan August15	pdf	n/a	X	X	X	
HC Guide to settlement boundaries August2015	pdf	n/a	X	X	X	
HC Guide to Examination of Neighbourhood Development Plans	pdf	n/a	X	X	X	
HELAA 2020 (Herefordshire Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment) 050820	email	Y	X	X	X	
Five Year Land Supply Sept 2020	pdf	n/a	X	X	X	
5YHLS Addendum to 2020 at Jan 2021_Final	pdf	n/a	X	X	X	
HDT (Housing Delivery Test) Briefing Note for HC Cabinet 200120	pdf	n/a	X	X	X	

159

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## 8.0 Landscape and Visual Baseline Assessment

2019 Ledbury NDP consultancy proposal doc 050419	Word	Y	X	X	X	X		Spec for LSCA consultancy proposal
Wellington Heath LSCA information for the Ledbury NDPWP 220719	pdf	n/a	X	X	X	?		
NDP Landuse action groups terms of reference Dec 19	Word	WP	X	X	X	?		
NDP baseline focus and interest groups FINAL December 2019	Word	WP	X	X	X	?		
email re Ledbury NDP Action Groups Workshop meeting for 070120	email	WP	X	X	X	n/a		
Ledbury NDP LSCA Topic Group Workshop 050220	email	n/a	X	X	X	n/a		Info for workshop invitees
email CT Ledbury LSCA Topic Group Homework #1 Landscape Value 300320	email	n/a	X	X	X	n/a		
email CT Ledbury LSCA Public Social Amenity Topic Footpaths with map 030420	email	n/a	X	X	X	n/a		
Emails with CT ref LSCA work programme December 2020	email	n/a	X	X	X	?		
NDP WP note re progress and actions on the landscape work 311220	email	n/a	X	X	X	n/a		
H&WEHT email re Local Geological Sites in Ledbury Parish Feb 21	email	n/a	X	X	X	n/a		
Ledbury NDP LVBA Sensitivity Actions 15.02.2021	Word	n/a	X	X	X	n/a		
ledbury NDP VB Report Contents v2 150221	Word	n/a	X	X	n/a	n/a		

## 9.0 Maps

ledbury SHLAA map 2020	pdf	n/a	?		X			
ledbury-Walk-Cycle-Map	pdf	n/a	?		X			
NNDP LSCA Public & Social Amenities (PSA) map-markup_C1_v1	jpg	n/a	X		X		X	
ledbury NDP settlement boundary Option 3 whole map 17 November 2020	pdf	Y	Y		X		X	
Green infrastructure extension conceptual map BB Dec 20	pdf	Y			X		X	
Barbara Davis hand drawn map of Ledbury Footpaths	jpg	n/a	X		X		X	
ledbury Parish LGS (Local Geological Sites) locations Feb 21	jpg	n/a	X		X		X	
ledbury Parish LGS (Local Geological Sites) boundaries Feb 21	jpg	n/a	X		X		X	
NDP areas of opportunity map Feb 2021	pdf	n/a	X		X		X	
ayout for Playing Fields Ledbury Jan 2021	pdf	n/a	X		X		X	

## 10.0 Meeting agendas

### **10.1 Agendas - Working Party**

NDP WP agenda 211118	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	No agenda available
NDP WP agenda 101218	Word	n/a	Y	X	X	
NDP WP agenda 220119	Word	n/a	Y	X	X	









**Action needed and decisions made (recorded from notes and organisation/individual inputs)**

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663

## 4.0 Consultation topics

### 4.1 Employment

Rest of business consultation letters to be sent	01/01/21	Town centre consultation	Rest of business consultation letters to go to all town centre retailers and businesses (approx 175 by hand) by mid-Jan 21	Discussion of whether hand delivery was allowed, check data for addresses if available from Herefordshire Council? In the end concluded it was legal to hand deliver and rest of business letters hand delivered around the town in early February 2021.	In total, 76 letters were posted initially to larger business around the town in Dec 20, 48 sent by email specifically to Traders Association Members and then 165 hand delivered to all businesses of all types around the town centre (duplicating Trader members in most cases)	✓
Review retail policy in the existing plan to re-define the town centre and revisit retail type uses preferred. Refer to new document in classification of retailers/businesses and which are supported by the NDP - Change to use classes from 1 September 2020	08/10/20	Redefine town centre area	A result of questions over NDP application to planning applications in the town centre at the ED&P meeting held 8/10/20 and a later 2021 meeting with HC planners over the Deeley application impact on the town centre. Need to re-write the current retail policy to expand the town centre area definition, combine different primary and secondary areas into one, review retail categories supported or not and clarify change of use conditions supported			
From the Ledbury Corporate Plan as an ED&P committee related NDP action	17/01/21	Achieve sustainable growth	Work with county council planners and local landowners to achieve sustainable growth by bringing forward local employment sites alongside new homes and improved community infrastructure	Consider as being adequately reflected in the employment topic guide		
<b>4.2 Herefordshire &amp; Gloucestershire Canal Trust</b>						
<b>4.3 Medical facilities</b>						
<b>4.4 Neighbouring NDP parishes</b>						
<b>4.5 Railway station</b>						
From the Ledbury Corporate Plan as an ED&P committee related NDP action	17/01/21	Railway station access	Work with local stakeholders, landowners and HC planners to improve facilities at/serving the train station	Already a major objective of the NDP revision		
<b>4.6 Sport and fitness (including football)</b>						
Nick Fish to provide info. on football site options that had been considered over the years	31/12/20	Sports site options	BB identified need to list site options considered for football to include in the topic guide, before end Jan 21	List of sites considered and assessment comparison outcomes produced and completed by SG member Ann Lumb provided to BB for inclusion in the topic guide	Ledbury football clubs confirmed all sites considered had been included	✓
From the Ledbury Corporate Plan as both an ED&P and E&L committees related NDP action	17/01/21	Sporting land availability	Work with the community and stakeholders to ensure land for sporting activities is available	Already a major objective of the NDP revision		

665



667

Include proposed sites on either side of the bypass for the access to and foundations for a new cycling and walking footbridge to be built from between the two Bovis and Barratts sites across the ring road, allowing for a route across the fields into the Shepherds Close area.	01/01/21	Footbridge across the bypass	After being discussed in meetings over options for active travel links from the south of the bypass developments into the town, now needs to be considered in the NDP		
Review if an how to mention the issue of affordable (as in the socially affordable definition particularly) housing, either in the housing policies and/or in the design content of the respective NDP policies	20/02/21	Affordable housing	Given this is a formal housing strategy of HC and growing importance, consider if and how it can be mentioned/referred to in this revision of the NDP		
<b>13.0 Previous 2019 adopted Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018-2031</b>					
Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018-2031	01/01/21	Consolidate files	Reduce 3 sections on website & PC file to one, remove from NDP into page and re-post into the supporting documents page on the website.		
<b>14.0 2021 Revised version of the Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2021-2031</b>					
<b>Future considerations for next iterations of the NDP</b>					
From the Ledbury Corporate Plan as an ED&P committee related NDP action	17/01/21	Community led housing schemes	Consider the introduction of community led housing schemes	To be considered in next iterations of the NDP	

68

## Ledbury NDP 2018-21 revision consultation activities record

As at:		11 March 2021			Note: details of the responses and action taken for the NDP are in the separate qualitative consultation input detail and actions spreadsheet	
Date	Description	Medium used	Number delivered, contacted or estimated audience	Number of recorded responses		
2019	Personalised letter to community groups inviting NDP volunteer participation and/or contribution	Posted, personalised letter	76 Ledbury community groups and organisations	3		
December 2020	Ledbury Town Council quarterly newsletter with NDP progress update info	pdf file on the Town Council website and on the Town Council Facebook page. Hard copy also available from the Town Council offices	All readers of the info, not recordable, but the FB page has 615 followers	None specific		
December 2020	Letter to all business in Ledbury not in the town centre	Personalised posted letter to senior management in each company	76	4		
25 January 2021	Ledbury Town Councillors NDP consultation and briefing meeting held by Zoom	Briefing to all Town Councillors including those not involved in the NDP WP to advise of progress and get agreement to the current, updated aims, objectives, timeline and budget to go into the upcoming public consultation round	All Councillors invited (currently 9)	Not applicable		
Early February 2021	Hand delivered business letter to all retail and business premises in the town centre	Non-personalised business contribution invitation letter signed by the Clerk with an email response request	165	4		
W/C 15/02/21	email copy of the same business letter sent to the Ledbury Traders Association	Letter emailed to all Ledbury Traders and Business Association members - duplicating the hand delivered letters but sent to ensure all had received it	48	Included in above		
March 2020	Ledbury Town Council quarterly newsletter with NDP update, inviting input and advising of the public consultation programme expected for April and May	pdf file on the Town Council website and on the Town Council Facebook page. Hard copy also available from the Town Council offices	All readers of the info, not recordable but the FB page has 615 followers	None specific		
03 March 2021	In-depth consultation with Ledbury Town Football Club, Ledbury Swifts Football Club and Ledbury Sports Federation on the need and plans for a combined football facility in Ledbury	Zoom online	5 Sports representatives on the call covering some 70 adult players. 300+ junior players, 50 or so adult coaches and helpers and some 1,000 connected family members	Not applicable		
08 March 2021	Ledbury Focus Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan consultation info copy March 2021	Full page of information to go in the April edition advising readers of the upcoming NDP 1st consultation round April - May 2021	6,000 copies distributed free to all households in the Ledbury area	None specific		







Date	No	Comment from	Topic	Comment	Response/ Follow up	Action Taken
	1					
				Ledbury would like to see zero carbon or near zero carbon developments coming forward. Ledbury has a history of high quality buildings which contribute to its rich environment, there is an aspiration that the town can lead the way in response to climate change as well as good quality design. This would involve targeting significant reductions in energy usage for new builds, with the opportunity for providing on plot or district renewables. Approaches such as Passivhaus are ready made, rigorously tested design standards that make this achievable and ensure well built, healthy, low energy homes.		
				Electric car charging should be a minimum. Developments should be designed to prioritise pedestrian and cycle users and avoid being vehicle dominated tarmac covered environments. Each development should incorporate public open space at a minimum size of 30m2 per bedroom in an integral element of a site layout alongside a good quality landscape design which also enhances biodiversity and uses opportunities to integrate above ground sustainable drainage features.		
				The NDP group would like to actively engage with developers at an early stage to ensure policies are explained and that proposals have the best possible chance of integrating with the existing communities and take into account longer term objectives. This does not mean a guaranteed route to support.		
				Ledbury welcomes high quality, well considered, truly sustainable development that sets out to enhance our town. On the contrary, poorly conceived designs that pay no respect to the town or the environment will be challenged regardless of site.		

671

