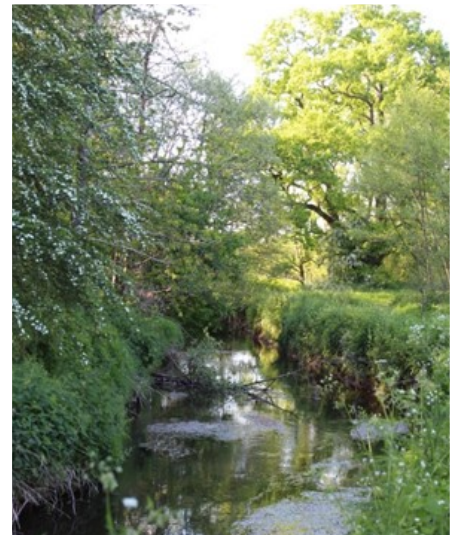


Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan

2017-2030

Regulation 14 Draft



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Ledbury Neighbourhood Area

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Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan Designation
Area Map

I. About Ledbury

Population

Ledbury is a market town with a population of 9,636 (2011 Census) and a centre for some 20 parishes in Herefordshire, as well as several villages in neighbouring Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, making a catchment population using its services and facilities of over 20,000.

Historical Interest

Since its origins as an Anglo-Saxon settlement, Ledbury has been at the crossroads of trade routes between the Midlands and Mid and South Wales. Recognised as the gateway to Herefordshire and the Welsh Marches, it is a convenient stopover offering friendly hospitality and service.

The Town Centre, originally formed in the 12th Century, has developed around a core of 15th to 17th Century buildings, from the proceeds of the wool trade and to this day retains its medieval street pattern.

These maps demonstrate the growth of Ledbury from a very small town reliant on agriculture in the early 20th century, to a small but prosperous town of traders.



Key buildings include the Market House and Ledbury Park (both listed Grade I buildings by Historic England), the recently restored Master's House (Grade 2* listed), St Katherine's Hall and Almshouses, the Old Grammar School Heritage Centre (Grade 2* listed), St Michael and All Angels Parish Church (Grade I listed) plus the Feathers and the Talbot Hotels (both Grade 2* listed). The latter being former coaching inns that accommodated the travellers of that time, maintaining the town's reputation for friendly hospitality.

I. About Ledbury

Much of the retail accommodation in the centre of town is of this era and recognised as historically important or special by listings of Grade 2 or Grade 2*. The town centre is a Conservation Area. The Civic Society runs a small museum and presents lectures by visiting speakers, as well as its work on conservation and the environment.



Visitors

The town centre provides interest for tourists and historians. It is also the venue for the annual Poetry Festival, an event of national status attracting well known participants from the arts. It is a few miles from Eastnor Castle which holds events and festivals throughout the year and has excellent facilities for family celebrations. Although Ledbury is an hour's drive from Cheltenham racecourse, the town's hotels are much in demand during race meetings for visitors, owners and trainers. As well as the town settlement, the parish of Ledbury includes a large area of productive and attractive agricultural land,

orchards and woodland. The eastern part of the parish, including Frith and Coneygree Woods, (known locally as Conigree) is within the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Ledbury has longstanding links with our armed forces and welcomes visits by the crew of HMS Ledbury, who were awarded the Freedom of the Town in 2011.

Shopping and Entertaining

The town is proud of its market, originally granted under a Charter by Queen Elizabeth I in 1584, and its thriving high street. Its independent shops feature local food, home interiors and clothing (modern and retro), as well as supporting general local needs. There are a number of specialist outlets tucked away in mews settings. Ledbury has some lovely pubs and a wide range of restaurants offering traditional British food and international menus.



I. About Ledbury

Housing

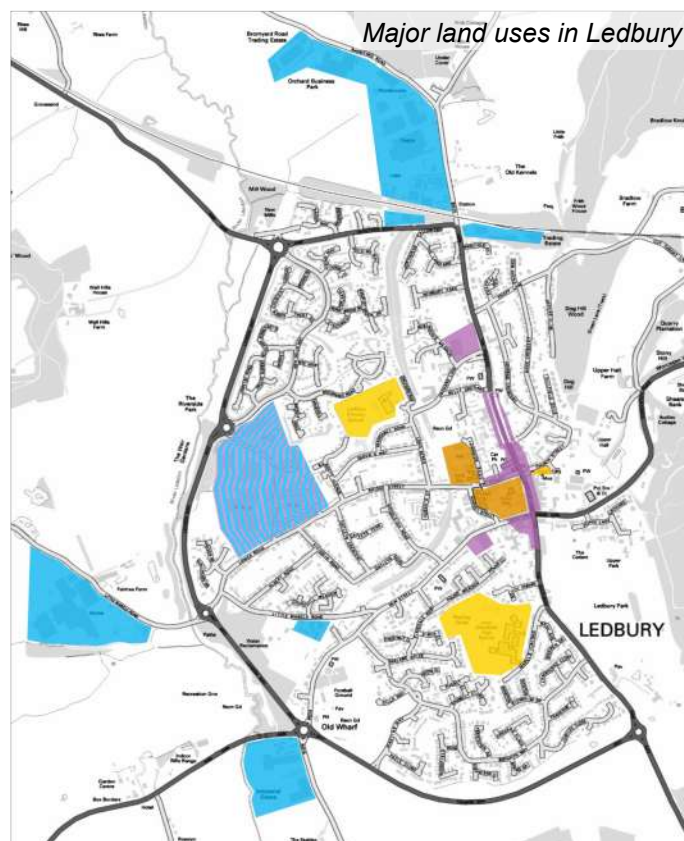
Until the 1980s, the population was stable at around 3,500,. In 1979 the bypass was built which led to sustained growth predominantly to the west of the town.

The town has grown much larger since the Second World War: building has extended along New Street and much of the building east of the Homend is post-war. The Langlands estate in the Homend was built in the 1960s and the quarter bounded by New Street, Gloucester Road and the bypass (called Deer Park—early 1980s) has been in-filled with well spaced single and two-storey houses.



The largest recent development was the New Mills estate (late 1990s) bordered by the bypass, Hereford Road and the disused Gloucester railway line. It comprises a development of high density 2, 3, 4 and 5-bedroomed houses. The average property price in Ledbury is the highest in the county.



Ledbury is a popular place for people to retire to – 25% of the population is 65 and over, according to the 2011 Census – 4% more than the county average. Nearly a third of households (32.5%) consist of only one person, and many of these will be elderly people.



Land Uses

		Employment & Retail
Retail		Schools
Employment		Other Community

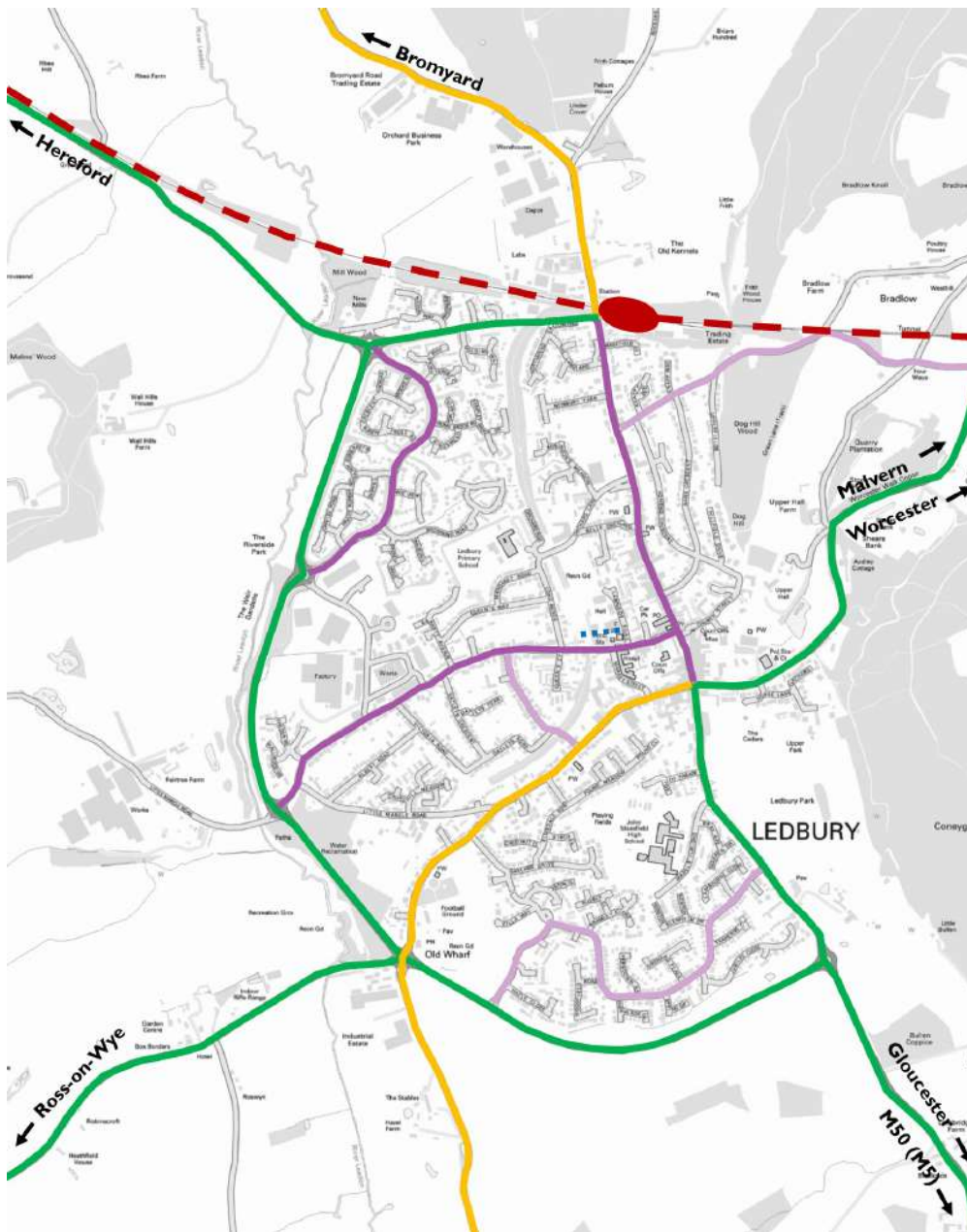
Business

Although mainly agricultural, with growers supplying most major supermarkets and food outlets (both organic and mainstream) with plums, apples and pears, Ledbury also has a thriving light industrial base, with companies such as Amcor, Galebreaker, Ormua, Helping Hand, ABE, Heineken and Bevisol.

Ledbury has a flourishing town centre encompassing not only numerous (mainly independent) retail outlets and a twice weekly market, but also printers, accountants and solicitors. There are also health professionals such as dentists, osteopaths and physiotherapists.

In addition, a short distance from the town centre are three busy trading estates containing various commercial outlets and light industry.

I. About Ledbury



Rail and road routes in and around Ledbury

Key

- A-Road
- B-Road
- Main arterial route
- Main connective route
- Railway Station
- - - Railway

The Herefordshire Core Strategy has identified locations for new employment land, which will form the basis for new enterprises to develop and will promote the prospect of new businesses opening or moving to the town. This will generate opportunities for future employment of the residents of the new housing estates to be built to the north and south of the town.

Travel

The town is bounded to the west and south by a by-pass channelling traffic towards the M50 (5 miles away) which is the main strategic

infrastructure provision for the region. All traffic to and from Malvern must pass through the historic town centre (including commercial, leisure and commuting).

Ledbury has a railway station with regular services to Hereford, Malvern, Worcester and Birmingham. The town is fortunate to have a frequent service to London, which is an important connection for commuters wishing to travel within the region and further afield. Ledbury has bus services to and from Hereford, Gloucester and other surrounding towns and cities. There is a daily return National Express coach service to London.

I. About Ledbury

Education

Ledbury Primary School (500 nursery and primary pupils) has academic achievement results above national levels. Pastorally it champions values-based education.

Once primary education has been completed, education continues at John Masefield High School and Sixth Form Centre (800 students) which has been rated “good” by Ofsted.

Both schools are successful and recognise there will be an increase in demand, with their preferred option to develop and improve their existing sites, rather than attempt to relocate.



John Masefield High School is an academy with specialist school status for performing arts, catering for 11-18 year olds of all abilities.

Through Lottery funding and former district council investment, the school has comprehensive sports facilities available to pupils during school hours and the rest of the community at other times.

Private nursery education is also available in the local area.



Services

The town has a Fire Station, Police Station, and rapid response Paramedic Service. There is a recycling centre in the town.

Religious services are held in the Parish Church of St. Michael & All Angels; the Baptist and Catholic Churches; and other denominations.

As of June 2017, three high street banks remain with branches for personal and business support, despite the rise in online banking.

Ledbury has two well regarded doctors' surgeries, a Minor Injuries Unit, respite short stay unit, and good facilities for the elderly needing care.



Community and Sport

Ledbury has a strong voluntary sector with over 120 local groups. These include general interest clubs, education classes and support groups to the less fortunate in the community. The volunteer

I. About Ledbury

resource needed to support such activity is likely to be extended by the continuing demands made upon it to make up for the withdrawal of services by Herefordshire Council.

An admirable example of this effort is the volunteer-run Market Theatre which provides popular live shows and cinema for the community. Another success story is Ledbury in Bloom which achieved a tenth consecutive Royal Horticultural Society gold award in the 2016 Britain in Bloom competition.



Ledbury has successful rugby union, football, cricket, running, tennis, bowling and swimming clubs. In addition, the town has tennis courts, a bowling green and a Centenary Field recreation ground with a skateboard park, play equipment and various exercise facilities. It has an indoor swimming pool, reconstructed in 2016/17, and two leisure centres which run keep fit classes, including, yoga, kick boxing, and dancing.



2. About Neighbourhood Planning

Background and Overarching Planning Policy

Localism Act 2012

The Localism Act of 2012 reformed the planning system to give residents of towns new rights to shape the development of the communities in which they live.

They include: new freedoms and flexibilities for local government; new rights and powers for communities and individuals; reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective, and reform to ensure that decisions about housing are taken locally. The Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) encompasses the use of land for all types of property development, including use, design, density and affordability. It will preserve those areas of land which are of benefit to the wider community, such as sites of historical interest, areas of natural beauty and community facilities.

Neighbourhood Planning

Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their towns, the Localism Act sets out some important guidelines. One of these is that all Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with higher level planning policy, the overarching policy for England: the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (known as the NPPF). This "sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities."

The NDP can introduce planning policies to which

planning applications in the plan area have to adhere, as long as they are in compliance with neighbourhood planning regulations, the NPPF and the Herefordshire Core Strategy.

The NDP will become the **3rd tier** of planning policy against which planning applications in Ledbury will be assessed.

Layer 1 — National Planning Policy Framework

Planning policy document for England set by Central Government



Layer 2 — Herefordshire Core Strategy

Planning policy document for Herefordshire set by Herefordshire Council



Layer 3 — Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan

Planning policy for Ledbury set by the Community & the Town Council

Examples of such policies concern the planning of new homes, leisure facilities and opportunities to increase employment. The NDP aims to focus on guiding land use rather than stopping it. However, it also aims to protect existing facilities and areas, such as sports fields, from unwelcome development.

Neighbourhood Plans:

- **Must** contribute to achieving sustainable development
- **Cannot** be used to restrict development
- **Cannot** be used to promote a quantum of development smaller than set out in the Core Strategy.

2. About Neighbourhood Planning

Indeed, if a Local Authority says that an area needs to grow, then communities cannot use a Neighbourhood Development Plan to block the building of new homes and businesses.

The Government White Paper on housing dated 7 February 2017, suggests there could be changes to the NPPF. We will monitor those changes to ensure we are compliant.

The Influence of the Core Strategy

The next level of planning policy below the NPPF is contained in Herefordshire Council’s Core Strategy 2011-2031. The Core Strategy requires that “Ledbury will accommodate 800 new homes balanced with approximately 15 hectares on new employment land during the plan period”. Further information particular to Ledbury is contained in Section 4.5 of the Core Strategy. Where the NDP is silent on a particular issue, developers must take account of overarching national and county policies and, of course, building regulations.

The Government's Planning Portal website is now the main online planning and building regulations resource for England and Wales. All the information and forms needed to prepare and submit a planning application are online, or can be downloaded and sent to Planning Services at Herefordshire Council.

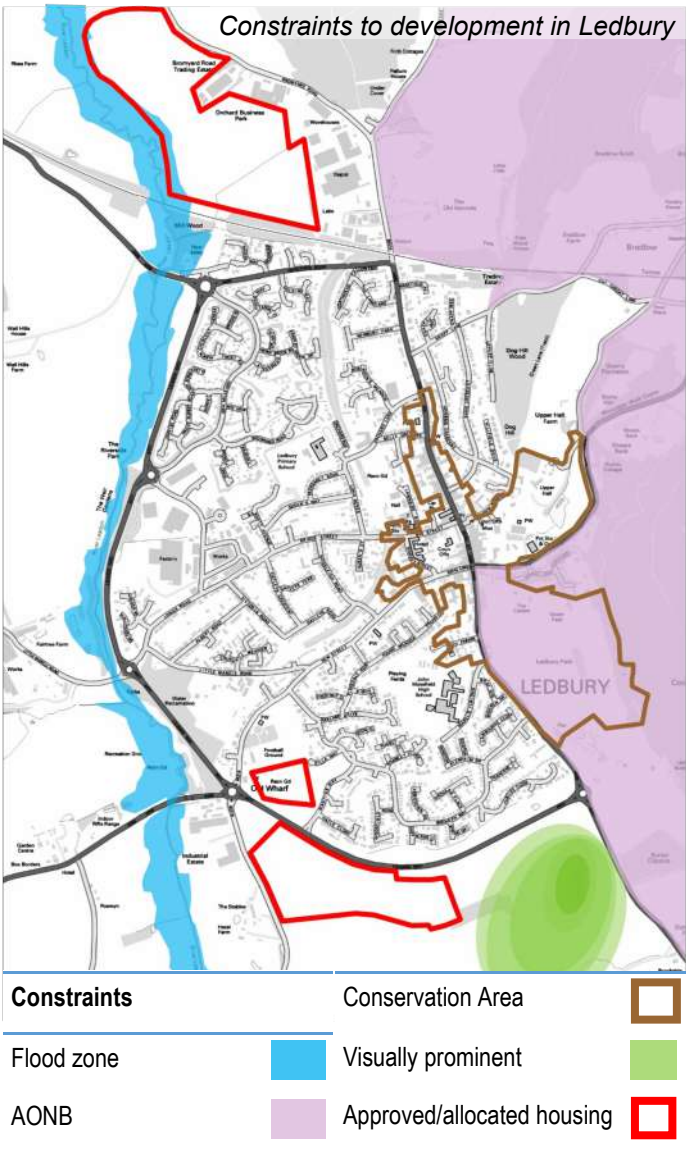
It must be noted that the NDP has not been able to consider, or provide guidance on, the location of major developments. Any such wish has been pre-empted by:

- the Core Strategy which stipulates that an allocation of 625 homes will be built at land to the north of the Viaduct;
- approved windfall developments from planning applications south of the bypass (321 dwellings) approved by the Planning Inspectorate on appeal; and Cricket Club

(100 dwellings) approved by Herefordshire Council.

The total of these new dwellings will exceed the minimum target of 800 stipulated in the Core Strategy.

Although solutions fall mainly outside the remit of the NDP, we record that the challenge will be to ensure that the commensurate growth in population is met with increased service provision when many facilities, such as health, are already operating at or near capacity. The NDP looks favourably on property having a change of use to expand such facilities. The Call for Sites was an exercise undertaken to ascertain and identify sites in the NDP Area that might have potential for housing, employment, community or other uses.



2. About Neighbourhood Planning

The exercise has identified a site (see Objective HO1) likely to be redeveloped which might have provision to expand a GP surgery.

The Core Strategy, which passed National Planning Inspection, was unanimously approved by Unitary Authority vote. Residents should note that the NDP has no impact on either the number of houses that Ledbury is expected to accommodate, or on the sites that have already been approved.

Relationship to the Town Plan

The Ledbury Town Plan (2008) is an aspirational document which expresses residents' desires to maintain and improve the community, whereas the NDP addresses land use planning and will, once adopted, have legal weight in decision making on planning matters.

The preparation of the NDP has taken account, wherever relevant, of the views expressed in the Town Plan.



Ledbury Town Plan



The NDP sets the planning scene for Ledbury for the next ten years or so. Ledbury is a vibrant town: the NDP's main thrust is to ensure that it continues to prosper.

Return on Investment

It has taken thousands of hours by residents, volunteers, Ledbury Town Council (LTC) staff and Councillors, guided by paid consultants, to produce this Plan. For this investment in time and money there is a long term return. Where an NDP exists, the parish or town council becomes a beneficiary of an enhanced share of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This is a levy on developers which the town can use for infrastructure projects. Examples could be to facilitate disabled access to both platforms at the railway station (see NDP Objective TR3) or to support the restoration of the Hereford to Gloucester canal in line with the Core Strategy decision. Herefordshire are yet to adopt a CIL Charging Schedule, however once it and the NDP are adopted, Ledbury Town Council will receive 25% of CIL monies to spend for the benefit of the community.

Useful links

Population data sources:

<https://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/>

https://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/337/KeyFindings_Ledbury_locality.pdf

Evidence base for the Core Strategy:

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/559/core_strategy_-_examination_documents

Evidence base from Ledbury consultations:

www.ledbury-ndp.org

3. The Vision

Preserve and Develop Prosperity

As a prosperous market town, Ledbury will continue to be a vibrant, thriving community, both socially and economically, with an attractive, well managed and safe built environment, in sympathy with the surrounding natural landscape. The town will continue to be a popular destination as an attractive place to shop for residents, the local rural community and visitors, with a successful tourist industry celebrating the town's heritage.

Preserve and Develop Wellbeing

Residents are proud of Ledbury and gain a sense of well-being from living here. There is a strong sense of community and there are currently good services and amenities. Infrastructure will be developed in line with the rate of housing development to maintain this.

Preserve Quality and Character

The town's population will live, work and play in high quality, flexible, sustainable /energy efficient and well designed buildings with appropriate infrastructure, which meet the needs of everyone who spends time in the town, and maintains its unique character and heritage.

Widen Employment Base

Currently there is an imbalance between housing and employment building with some 40% of the working population commuting out of the town. The employment base will be widened in order to help develop and diversify the economy, and to continue the technology corridor from the midlands via Malvern, in order to attract high-tech and R&D businesses to Ledbury. The effect of this will be to provide the option to many residents of working in the town, and reduce the numbers commuting out of the town.

Develop Educational Facilities

Ledbury will be a willing partner in the development of higher education facilities in Herefordshire and will look to develop additional facilities and, if plans for Hereford University go ahead, a campus.

Develop Sport and Recreation

Ledbury wishes to become an area of sporting excellence for all generations and intends to develop more indoor and outdoor sports facilities as the town grows.

Preserve Environment

The built environment will retain its well defined boundaries and good connectivity. Sustainable transport options such as walking and cycling, will be encouraged and public transport disabled access provisions enhanced in priority over vehicular traffic . Easy footpath network access to the surrounding countryside and beyond will be improved and maintained . The Malvern Hills AONB is the backdrop to the town and all development will be complementary to the landscape and the views. The need for related design sensitivity for these and other developments in the NDP is encapsulated in the Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan Design Code which is a complementary document to the NDP.

Green space will be protected and biodiversity safeguarded, while the town's relationship with the open countryside will be strengthened through the prioritised use of urban trees, landscaping and decorative planting throughout all developments. There will be the opportunity to create a 'green corridor' along the safeguarded route of the projected Gloucester and Hereford canal reinstatement, largely following the route of the River Leadon.

Nurture the Town Centre

Ledbury's role as a prosperous market town with a diverse economy, including a burgeoning tourist industry, will be protected and enhanced, while the heritage of the town will be preserved and celebrated. The town will cherish and nurture its vibrant retail core, and will grow its reputation for markets and festivals. Traders will be encouraged to provide a wide range of products, in order to enhance the standing of Ledbury as a prime visitor destination. Increasing sustainability within the town will mean that Ledbury steadily gains the reputation for being a 'Green Town'.

4. Introduction to Objectives & Policies

Section 3 sets out the overall vision for Ledbury as a whole. The Vision was developed in response to the issues identified from the evidence gathering and consultation exercises undertaken at the start of the Plan process.

The Vision helped shape the Objectives which are grouped under 6 headings:

- Housing
- Employment and Economy
- Built Environment
- Natural Environment
- Community and Leisure
- Transport and Infrastructure

Policies were then developed to deliver the Objectives. Each Objective is supported by one or more Policies which are designed to help deliver each Objective.

The Objectives and Policies are set out as below:

The Objectives are in bold

The Policies are in a coloured box

The Reasoned Justification is set out in italics after the policies.



5. Housing

Housing - The Background



The Herefordshire Core Strategy sets a minimum target of 800 new dwellings for the Ledbury parish, to be provided during the Plan period (2011-2031). The bulk of this allocation (625 dwellings) will be located to the north of the town, on what is known as the Viaduct site. This site was opposed by the Town Council and the community. The site was, however, allocated in the Core Strategy by Herefordshire Council regardless and approved at examination. The site is expected to deliver most of the housing that the town requires over the Plan period and there is no desire in the town for a quantum of development significantly greater than that proposed by the Core Strategy.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan can determine the site allocations for the remaining 175 dwellings. Since the beginning of the Plan period, windfall provision and approved planning applications have brought forward approximately 200 dwellings. This figure includes the 100 units on the Full Pitcher, former cricket ground site. Added to this figure will be the 321 dwellings, approved following appeal, on the site south of Leaddon Way. When these windfall sites are added to the 675 dwellings planned for the Viaduct site, the total of 1151 units considerably exceeds the Core Strategy target.

13%

Of the population of **Ledbury** are **aged 75+** compared to

Number of **over 85s** expected to *nearly double* over the Plan period with associated impacts on services.

7%

in the rest of **England**.



HOUSE SIZES

There are very few 1-bed flats and houses so shortage of properties for 1st-time buyers and downsizers



HOME OWNERSHIP



High rate of home ownership - **70%**. Consequently there are few rental opportunities

HOUSING NEED IN LEDBURY

The Herefordshire HMA identified 3 key issues:

- Under-supply of smaller affordable housing
- Under-supply of all mid-sized semis & terraced homes
- High house prices and consequent affordability issues

800

Number of new homes required in Ledbury in the 20 years between 2011 and 2031.

5. Housing

The Policies below reflect the fact that the Core Strategy target is likely to be exceeded, and seek to limit development to the immediate needs of the community, including affordable starter units for the young and new families and appropriate units for the elderly.

The NDP can also determine the design standards preferred by the community for housing and other developments. These are documented in the related Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan Design Code which is an integral component of the NDP.

Housing - Objectives & Policies

Objective HO1:

To ensure that new housing in Ledbury meets the needs of residents.

Policy HO1.1

Market Street Auction Room Allocated Site



Site specific requirements for the site allocation:

- The site is considered appropriate for high density homes and/or flats.
- Development up to 4 storeys would be supported.
- 50% of the dwellings provided on the site should be appropriate for the needs of elderly people (these units must be built to lifetime home standards and made available to rent to those over the age of 65).

The community consultations indicate that people in Ledbury want new developments on small sites which relate well to the town, are suitable for the elderly and young people, and which also provide opportunity for self build projects.

The most popular site at community consultation for these purposes was the Market Street Auction Rooms site which was selected by the public to meet these needs in the call for sites consultation.

The Market Street auction room site will be appropriate for elderly people, due to its proximity to the health centres; and for young people due to the proximity of the town centre. This is important in Ledbury given the demographics of the town and the desire to meet the needs of those who wish to downsize. This site could allow for the expansion of doctors surgery which is next door to the site, with an opportunity to add a pharmacy to the Market Surgery.



5. Housing

Objective HO2:

To ensure that all new housing in Ledbury is developed in a sustainable manner

Policy HO2.1

Reinforcing balanced housing communities

Proposals for windfall development in excess of 10 housing units will only be supported where there is a satisfactory mix of building sizes, types and tenures of housing stock (complete with ancillary support facilities, referred to as a 'balanced housing community') which is defined as including:

- Low cost housing – for below market value rental
- Low cost housing – shared rental/part ownership
- General housing for sale at market value
- Mixed sizes as per the overall plan

Traditionally Ledbury has been a low income area derived from its past agricultural dependency, although it is now a high cost housing area due to its convenient location and suitability for commuting to the midlands and beyond. House prices are high in comparison to the rest of Herefordshire due to its popularity with those commuters and also for those wishing to retire to an attractive market town. To help meet the housing market needs and the needs of the local area population, a mix of building sizes, types and tenures of housing stock is required.

The evidence from the initial NDP consultation in 2014 shows that people in Ledbury prefer new developments to be on small sites to help encourage integration socially, and between young and old. There is a desire to encourage the young and families to the town, who may then remain.



Policy HO2.2

Housing Density

The Housing density should consider the potential impact on the character and distinctiveness of an area with flexibility in the mix and type of housing being provided. The housing density should not exceed the following:

- Town Centre sites: no less than 30 and no more than 50 dwellings per hectare
- Other sites: No more than 30 dwellings per hectare

On larger sites a discount of at least a 10% reduction of these density figures should be applied to provide for infrastructure provision such as footpaths, cycle ways, landscaping, local open space and community facilities.

Flatted development, especially those in the town centre providing specialised accommodation for elderly people, will not be subject to minimum or maximum densities.

Provision of support facilities as required is to be included with all developments.

Developments outside the town centre should be lower density in order to maintain an 'edge of the countryside' feel which is important to the community and a key characteristic of Ledbury.

The use of structured planting, trees, shrubs, etc., will be encouraged to create small areas of community within larger developments.

5. Housing

Objective HO3:

To recognise and provide for the growth in the needs of older persons and related specialist housing, as identified in a Study of the Housing and Support needs of Older People in Herefordshire.

Policy HO3.1

Housing for the Elderly

Proposals for following types of housing will be supported, provided they comply with other policies:

- Retirement homes
- Enhanced sheltered retirement homes
- Extra care housing
- Specialist housing for people with dementia.

Based on information taken from the 2011 census, the demographic of the Town's population, shows an increasingly elderly majority, greater than 55 equals 55%.

The policy proposals would help free up houses suitable for occupation by families.

This is important to ensure that the right type of housing is available for Ledbury's aging population.



Policy HO3.2

Town Centre Housing

Smaller development proposals located within the town centre (as defined on the map below) must give priority to the needs of the elderly unless physical considerations, such as steepness of access, determine otherwise.



Due to an ageing population in Ledbury it is important we encourage inclusivity within the community, combatting loneliness often experienced by elderly residents.

Provide easier access to centrally located health and support services, ensuring such residents feel part of the community and have easy access to all amenities

Any development of this type must be on level ground or be accessible to all, i.e. with a lift.

5. Housing



Objective HO4:

To provide sustainable and affordable homes for local singles and young families.

Policy HO4.1

Housing for Young People

Proposals for small-scale 1, 2 and 3 bedroom family dwellings will be supported, particularly, where it can be demonstrated that young people will be given priority. Proposal for starter homes will also be encouraged.

The high cost of property in the Ledbury parish (as described above) is one of the main reasons for local young people and families leaving the area, creating an unbalanced age demographic.

The Plan will support the building of “affordable”, low cost, 1, 2 and 3 bedroom starter units to meet the needs of those on low incomes, and those with long term local connections with the town. Workers involved in the local agricultural industry and health and care workers, are particularly in need of this type of housing.

Providing the opportunity for the young to remain within the community will help Ledbury retain its recognised strong sense of being a caring, welcoming town, inclusive of all ages and abilities.

Objective HO5:

To encourage individual and community based self-build projects.

Policy HO5.1

Self-build

Self-build proposals will be supported, including proposals for development sites for the provision of self-build plots.

There is evidence that the people of Ledbury will support self build developments as individuals or as a Community Build projects (Consultation Survey Results, section 3). The formation of Community Land Trusts will be encouraged to allow individuals to come together as a group, although at this stage an appropriate parcel of land has not been identified.

Proposals in line with the NPPF and the Core Strategy are to be encouraged.

6. Economy & Employment

Economy & Employment - The Background



According to the Herefordshire Employment Land Study 2012, Ledbury 'has a good balance of employment provision which is primarily focused on the industrial and warehouse sector. There is some office provision however; the town does not function as a key office location'.

Ledbury has two principal employment areas, at Bromyard Road Trading Estate and the recently extended Lower Road Trading Estate. There are around 10 key employers. The low number of large employers has not yet given rise to the establishment of a Chamber of Commerce; this is possibly a weakness in managing trade expansion.

Supply of employment land in and around the town is good; however some of the existing sites are tired and most date back 20 years or more. There are few high quality, modern employment units available.

Ledbury has excellent access to the M50 and the M5 making it an attractive location for industry, particularly situated around the ring road. Employment sites to the north of the town have the advantage of the nearby railway station.

Ledbury has slightly more industrial employment as a proportion of its overall employment provision

Unemployment rate in Ledbury is:

3.1%

Lower than the national average of:

4.4%

70% of those in work are in **full-time** work while **30%** are in **part-time** work



The town has more **retired** people than the national average



EMPLOYMENT LAND

'Ledbury has a good balance of employment provision which is primarily focussed on the industrial and warehouse sector'

'There is therefore potentially scope to increase the office provision in the town given the location and transport links'

RETAIL PROVISION

The town centre has a wide mix of uses:

- **50% shops** (A1)
- **13% are Financial & Professional services** (A2)
- **6.5% are Food & Drink** (excluding pubs & takeaways) (A3)



215

Approximate total number of units in Ledbury town centre

6. Employment & Economy

than the average for Herefordshire and has less office employment. The town has significantly above average sales activity, but otherwise the surveyed employment activity in Ledbury is broadly in line with the rest of the county.

The Core Strategy demands the development of a minimum of 800 new homes. To provide employment for the new residents will be a challenge.

Ledbury has visitor attractions. In 2015 its historic buildings were enhanced by the completion of the renovation of the Master's House which is the venue for the annual Poetry Festival. It is two miles from Eastnor Castle which holds a number of events throughout the year and provides a setting for weddings, festivals and other functions. Ledbury accommodates racegoers to the Cheltenham Festival. It is adjacent to the Malvern Hills and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Core Strategy promotes the rehabilitation of the Hereford to Gloucester canal which, when complete, will be a visitor attraction.

Employment & Economy—Objectives & Policies

Objective EE1:

Strengthen and grow the presence of key employment sectors by a deliverable mix of sustainable employment sites to cater for future growth. In particular, the town wishes to encourage high quality long term employment, business start-ups and creative industries.

Key employment sectors include:

- Independent and national retail
- Tourism - domestic and business: day, overnight and short visit
- Research and Science
- Manufacturing and Distribution

- Engineering
- Food & Drink
- Agricultural services
- Professional services
- Art, Design & the Creative Industries
- Healthcare
- Sustainable technology industries such as renewable energy and recycling.

Policy EE1.1

New Employment Sites

Proposals for employment land throughout Ledbury, as identified in the Core Strategy, will be favourably considered, subject to compliance with other relevant planning policies. The regeneration, proportionate intensification or reassignment of previously developed brownfield land to high quality employment land uses will be particularly supported.

An application for an Enterprise or Business Start-up hub would be encouraged.

If Ledbury cannot provide more employment, it risks becoming a commuter town; its new residents seeking employment farther afield. Bristol, Birmingham and Cardiff are commutable by car and it is intended not to promote car journeys. The policy seeks to offer support to new or expanding business: to grow the town as a regional centre with particular regard to start-ups. Increasing employment opportunities will help to ensure that Ledbury is a sustainable place for all ages in which to live, work, and play. Ledbury particularly



6. Employment & Economy

wishes to encourage its talented young residents to stay, by ensuring it has diverse employment opportunities. Enhancing the speed and bandwidth of broadband provision for the town and surrounding parish is seen as essential to achieving these aims.

Policy EE1.2

Protecting existing employment land

Existing employment sites and premises and allocated future employment sites, will be protected from change of use to alternative non-employment uses. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that the site has been actively marketed for employment use for a continuous period of at least twelve months before any such change of use will be considered.

In order to sustain and grow Ledbury as a prosperous local centre, the loss of employment land to non-employment will not be supported unless the existing use is no longer economically viable and the site has been marketed at a reasonable price for at least a year for that, and any other suitable employment or service trade uses.

Poor quality employment land should be improved, rather than changed to a different use.



Objective EE2:

Promote and enhance facilities necessary to attract visitors and to encourage tourism.

Policy EE2.1

Promoting Visitor Accommodation

Proposals which increase local hotel and visitor accommodation provision in and in the vicinity of, the town for both business and leisure purposes, provided proposals are consistent with other policies. Proposals supported within the settlement boundary include:

- Hotels
- Bed & Breakfasts

The following will be supported outside, but close to the settlement boundary:

- Camping & caravanning
- Lodges, yurts and other semi-permanent provision.

Ledbury has excellent accommodation in old coaching inns such as the Feathers Hotel, Talbot Inn and The Royal Oak. There are a handful of B&B establishments and holiday lets, however for a town the size of Ledbury, with its heritage assets and attractions, there is a paucity of visitor accommodation. The nearest budget hotel for the business traveller is the Premier Inn, located at the end of the M50 near Ross on Wye.

As a consequence, if the town expands as a tourist destination and business centre, it will need to provide a better visitor infrastructure. Moreover, a new hotel would provide employment opportunities.

Objective EE3:

Promote the Town Centre as the destination of choice for retail, leisure and community activities, in order to enhance the appearance and historic character of the town.

Policy EE3.1

Retail Areas & Provision

This plan redefines the current primary and secondary shopping areas.

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.



Ledbury has a thriving centre made up predominantly of independent shops, food outlets, services and pubs. A residents' survey undertaken for the Town Plan showed that over 70% do their main food shopping in Ledbury; and a visitor survey showed that over 90% value the variety of shops. The retail area is focused along the Homend and High Street with secondary provision on intersecting streets. Local butchers and greengrocers, supplemented by twice weekly markets, provide fierce competition to the two supermarkets. A third low cost supermarket will be developed in 2017 which will add to the competition in that sector.

This may bring more visitors to the town and will certainly provide extra employment opportunities.

There are a number of specialist shops in and near Ledbury which attract visitors from farther afield which have created thriving online business, too.

Thus, Ledbury has a sound base upon which to expand its retail business, both as a by-product of its tourism and by enhancing its reputation as a centre for specialist shopping. There is a need to retain a balance of type of outlet and to continue to provide support to independent enterprises.



The shopping areas have evolved over time, as some shops have closed down. Meanwhile, excellent new ventures have opened in the centrally located mews areas. This requires a repositioning of the retail boundaries of the town to reflect current use, but also to avoid sprawl. It will be important to contain the small scale retail interest within a reasonable distance of the three main town car parks, so that easy access for shoppers and visitors is maintained.

7. Built Environment

Built Environment - The Background



Ledbury residents are very proud of the character and appearance of the town. A compact town, with historic buildings dating back to the 15th century, Church Lane, The Market House and The Masters House, along with coaching inns, give daily pleasure to residents and are an attraction for tourists.

The preservation and enhancement of not only the historic town centre and the Conservation Area, but also the whole urban area is considered vitally important to maintain an attractive and vibrant town.

It is important that any new development takes account of the opportunities and constraints offered by individual sites, and by the wider community, to deliver sympathetically responsive design solutions that will stand the test of time.

'Ledbury has a distinctive character and a unique local identity owing to its rich history and built heritage.'

CONSERVATION AREA

A large portion of Ledbury's town centre is covered by a Conservation Area which includes a multitude of listed buildings, many timber-framed, including the 17th Century Market House.



The Homend and High Street form a broad main thoroughfare through the town centre and are home to numerous historic buildings



GROWTH OF THE TOWN

3,500

Population of Ledbury in the **1980s**

10,000

Population of the town **today**

This rapid growth has shaped the character of the town - while the town centre and surrounding areas constitute the historic core of Ledbury, the north, south and west of the town date very much from the latter 20th Century

7. Built Environment

Built Environment - Objectives & Policies

Objective BE1:

To ensure that Ledbury maintains its character as a rural market town, with new development sympathetic in style and form to the immediate surroundings. Future development will contribute to the preservation of the overall distinctiveness of the town and its setting.

Policy BE1.1

Design

Developments will be encouraged which:

- Create public space for events, such as varied market provision in the High Street or around the Market House;
- Enhance community amenities;
- Comply with the town's Design Code.

Developments will be encouraged which enhance the distinctiveness of the town avoiding buildings/styles with a generic look. Proposals by developers who are prepared to go through a Design Review process with MADE, or appropriate similar body, will be encouraged.

Both national and county planning policy guidance identify the need to encourage high quality development that responds to the characteristics of the immediate and wider area. One of the main features of Ledbury is the number of listed buildings. It is important that developments seek to maintain this historic character. To this end developers are required to demonstrate, in their Design and Access Statements, how their proposals meet the advice set out in the Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan Design Code.

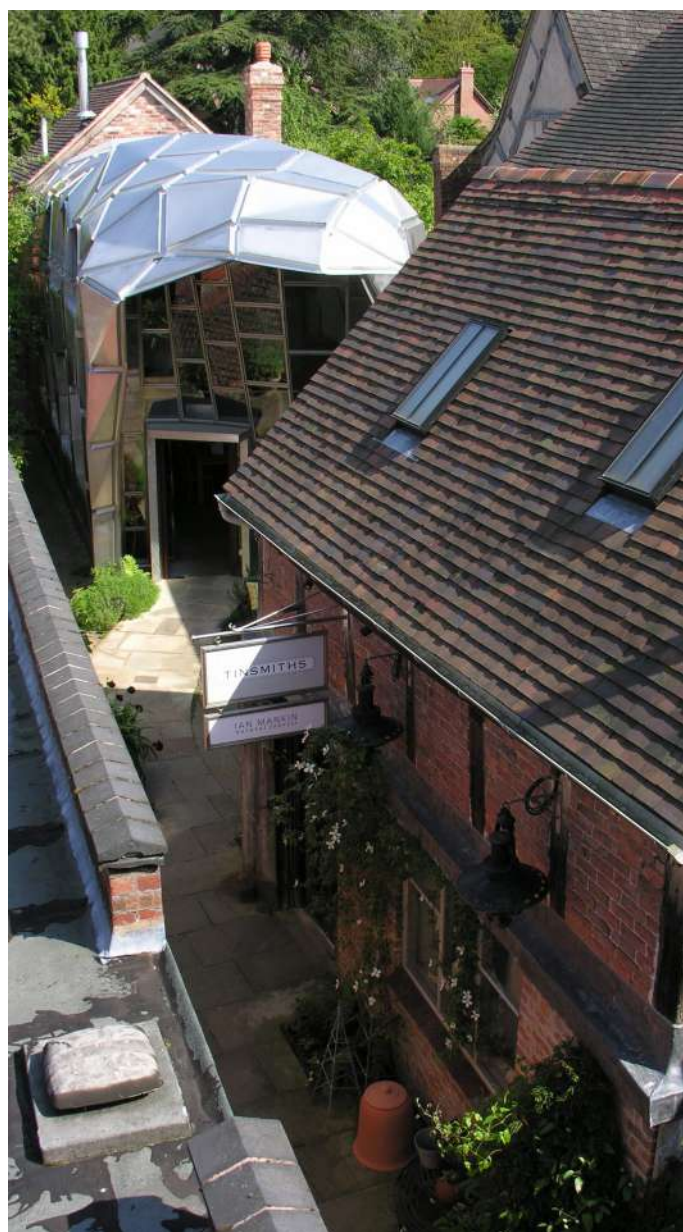
Policy BE1.2

Settlement Boundary

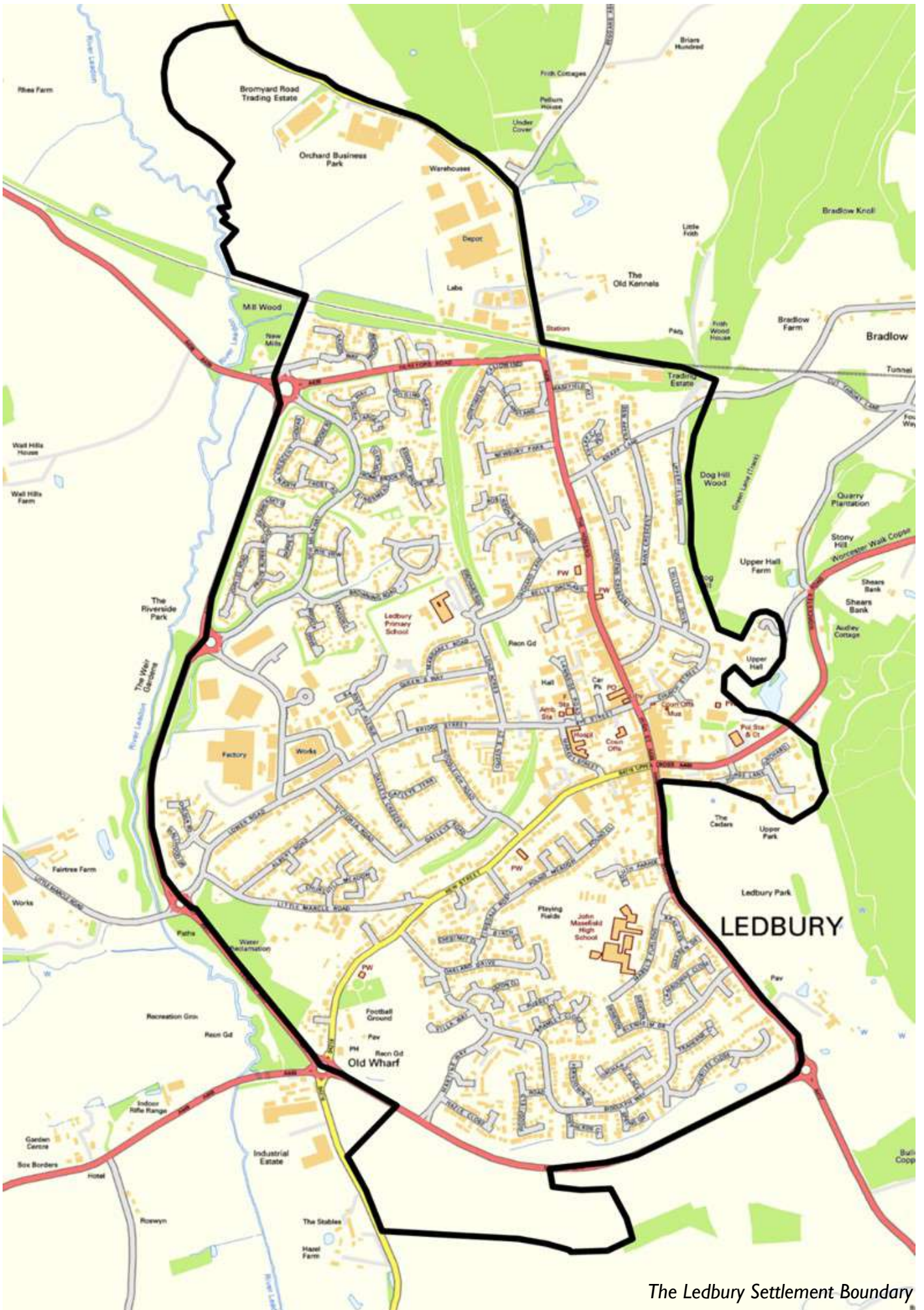
The Map overleaf shows the settlement boundary of Ledbury. Development within the settlement boundary will be supported.

A settlement boundary is considered appropriate in order to:

- Prevent urban sprawl into the open countryside
- Prevent the loss of areas of ecological value, landscape value and recreational value
- Prevent the unnecessary loss of the countryside.



7. Built Environment



The Ledbury Settlement Boundary

7. Built Environment

Objective BE2:

To protect the transition from town centre to edge of town where it is more rural, so that any new 'edge of town' development maintains the character of the current settlement boundary.

Policy BE2.1

Edge of Town Transition

Developments will be supported which clearly enhance and protect existing or establish new:

- Hedgerows;
- Woodland;
- Green spaces;
- Landscape features and ensure that new developments provide landscaping which blends with the environment;
- Street trees in the town including the planting of new trees of appropriate species and location.

The density of housing in the vicinity of the perimeter of the town should be appropriate to the location and type of housing that is required, and its environment.

Whilst exceptions may be appropriate in certain areas, buildings should be low rise and of not more than 2 storeys.

The policy seeks to maintain harmony between the urban and rural areas and minimise the visual impact of any crude change of environment.

The Plan will support low level development and enhanced landscaping to complement the Malvern Hills AONB area, and to maintain rural vistas of the surrounding area.

Objective BE3:

To promote preservation and use of the historic environment and buildings within the town centre.

Policy BE3.1

Renovation & preservation of the town centre

Renovation and preservation of existing town centre buildings will be encouraged where:

- The proposal is sympathetic to, and in keeping with, the historic environment;
- Changes made, including those to mixed use, promote full occupancy of buildings.

The very soul of Ledbury is bound in the legacy of the historic buildings and the events which have shaped the town over many centuries. It is important that renovation continues, The Master's House being the most recent success in the vision of those who promoted the project and provided the considerable funding. Full use and occupancy should help to keep the buildings alive and maintained as supported by a majority of respondents during the consultation. Ensuring Ledbury town centre is kept to a good standard for residents and, just as importantly for visitors, will ensure the tourist trade is maintained.



8. Natural Environment

Natural Environment - The Background



Ledbury is a traditional country market town situated in the rural and beautiful Herefordshire landscape. Open and green spaces with a wide diversity of wildlife and fauna form an important part of the town and its surrounding countryside which borders the Malvern Hills AONB.

These are features that help make the town a very attractive place in which to live and visit, with tourism being one of the principal areas of economic activity. Conserving the town's natural environment has consistently shown to be very important to the Ledbury community.

With these considerations in mind, and aware of the commensurate wider need for natural environment preservation and conservation, the Ledbury NDP includes appropriate policies that reflect both the local need and a responsibility to help sustain biodiversity.

This is also in keeping with national and Core Strategy policies, making sustainability an important and recurring theme throughout the Ledbury NDP.

Ledbury is well provided with **green infrastructure** and in particular a number of important local corridors connecting to wider areas.

Running through the centre of the town is the route of the former Ledbury to Gloucester railway branch line, now forming the Ledbury Town Trail. Connecting to this to the west of the town is the Riverside Walk. And passing through Ledbury are the regional Herefordshire Trail and Geo Park Way.

Connecting to these corridors is a network of local and area footpaths providing a rich natural environment access facility which must be maintained

WOODLAND

There is extensive woodland in the vicinity of the town, including Frith Wood, Conigree Wood and Dog Hill Wood.



FLORA AND FAUNA

The area around Ledbury is **species-rich**. Legally protected and priority species of flora and fauna present include:

- Wild daffodil
- Great crested newt
- Bat
- Dormouse
- Badger
- Barn owl
- Peregrine falcon
- Slow worm



8. Natural Environment

Natural Environment - Objectives & Policies

Objective NE1:

To maintain, enhance and increase existing open spaces, trees and hedgerows in order to promote and support wildlife and biodiversity.

Policy NE1.1

Protecting Biodiversity

Proposals that preserve the existing open spaces, trees and hedgerows in order to promote and support wildlife and 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.

Given its long history in a very rural setting, Ledbury is rich in open spaces and wildlife habitats that contribute to the distinctive character and setting of the town and the surrounding countryside, which are demonstrably enjoyed by the population. The community has a clear and overwhelming desire to protect the existing wildlife habitats and level of open space in the town.



Development proposals that include any open space, tree or hedgerow removal will not be supported unless justified, and as a minimum provide for replacement of at least an equivalent infrastructure which sustains existing wildlife corridors.

Objective NE2:

To promote local food production and encourage small-scale, sustainable producers.

Policy NE2.1

Food production in Ledbury

Developments will be encouraged which:

- Provide food growing space for residents e.g. gardens, allotments, community gardens.
- Protect prime agricultural land so that the current level of food production is maintained

The availability of locally produced food has an historic importance going back centuries. Feedback from the population of the town consistently rates community gardens and areas in which allotments can be provided as being important to them, and there is demand expressed for the provision of new community garden and allotment areas.

Demand for locally produced food is also very well established and an important element of the economic well being of the town and its agricultural surroundings.



8. Natural Environment

Objective NE3:

To commission and update a landscape impact assessment of local industrial level agriculture on issues such as local flooding and visual appearance, in order to ensure that this sort of activity does not detrimentally impact on the existing natural beauty, biodiversity and visual appeal of Ledbury and surrounding areas.

Policy NE3.1

Farming landscape around Ledbury

Proposals for new polytunnels, and in particular where existing vegetative landscape clearance is required to install them, must be accompanied by a Landscape Impact Assessment. This should demonstrate that there will not be a significant negative landscape or visual impact upon the tourist and resident utility and setting of the town and its near surrounding environment, including the Malvern AONB designated area and, in particular, on the floodplain of the Leadon Valley.

The plan is sensitive to the need for balancing local farming efficiency and employment with the importance of tourism and attracting people to Ledbury and the surrounding countryside such as the Malvern AONB. These are vital economic considerations for the area. It is therefore regarded as important by the residents that we ensure activities such as poly tunnel farming do not denude vegetation to the extent that biodiversity is detrimentally affected, or that the risks of flooding in the Leadon Valley or water pollution are increased due to rapid water run-off. The character and setting of these areas should also not be unduly visually impacted as a result of any such developments.

It is important that regular landscape impact assessments are made to ensure this objective is

maintained for the landscape protection of Ledbury and any potentially affected surrounding communities.

Objective NE4:

To register the historic woods above Ledbury as being community assets, for both their historical significance and their utility to Ledbury as sources of sustainable wood supplies and as sites of natural beauty and wildlife biodiversity that make Ledbury an attractive tourist destination.

Policy NE4.1

Protecting the setting of Ledbury woods

Proposals which would negatively impact upon the setting of Frith, Conigree and Dog Hill Woods above Ledbury will not be supported. Proposals which affect community access to these woods must be able to demonstrate alternative proposals are in place to maintain community access to these important community assets.

The woods of Frith, Conigree and Dog Hill on the hills above Ledbury have been an historical and important source of employment, resource and leisure activity for centuries and continue to have that important role to the community today. Conigree, as it is known locally,



8. Natural Environment

(otherwise spelled Coneygree) is an ancient woodland site of 56 hectares which is rich in plant and insect life, with evidence of prehistoric occupation such as Neolithic flint implements and in more recent times, the sites of a water mill and lime kiln.

Dog Hill Wood is a popular walking area of mixed deciduous woodland of mature oak, ash and yew, with wood anemones, bluebells and primroses in spring. Frith Wood is a 75 hectare wood, owned and managed by the Forestry Commission and probably identified with the wood 'half a league by a half' mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086. It has traces of human activity from well before that time and its many paths allow the exploration of the flora, fauna and history of the area. All three are listed by The Woodland Trust as woods of note worth visiting.

The community regards it as vital that these woods are registered as recognised community assets to ensure that adequate notice and the right of representation are given, should any activity or change be proposed that will alter the nature of these amenity values to Ledbury and surrounding communities.



Objective NE5:

To develop Ledbury as a forward thinking, self-reliant and sustainable lifestyle community to reflect increasing climate change challenges.

Policy NE5.1

Ledbury as a self-sustaining community

Proposals which are aimed at developing Ledbury as a self reliant and environmentally sustainable community, such as for self build zero carbon based housing development, growing our own environmentally supporting food, generating our own renewable energy supplies and locally recycling our waste and water to improve water supply and quality, will be supported.

In anticipation of the environmental and lifestyle changes that climate change mitigation will require in the coming decades, it will be increasingly necessary for local communities to become more self sustaining. Early adoption and implementation of this policy has the potential to establish Ledbury as a leading national example of a community which is self reliant and environmentally sustainable.

Community & Leisure - The Background

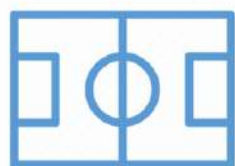
18

Number of **playing pitches** in Ledbury

All pitches within Ledbury have been rated '**good**' except for the junior football pitches at Ledbury Primary School which have been rated 'average'.

12

Number which are secured for use by the community (59%)



OPEN SPACE



Herefordshire Council found:

- Under provision of parks, gardens and outdoor sports facilities;
- Over provision of natural and semi-natural green space.

9

Number of play areas in Ledbury, the majority in the north of the town.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

4

Community Buildings - Burgage Hall, St. Katherine's Hall, Market House, Community Hall

6

Churches - Parish Church, Methodist Church, Baptist Church, St Katherine's Church, Catholic Church, Church of the Holy Trinity

11

Pubs - Prince of Wales, Feathers Hotel, Royal Oak, The Retreat, Seven Stars, The Horseshoe, The Full Pitcher, The Brewery, The Talbot, The Royal British Legion, The Lion

The vision for Ledbury makes clear that the local services and facilities are an important part of ensuring good 'quality of life' for new and existing residents. The planning system has a responsibility towards health and wellbeing. Protection and enhancement of such facilities are set out within the policies. Ledbury has a higher than average ageing population requiring support. Equally important are the needs of younger people, many of whom are struggling on low incomes, and they should not be overlooked. An aim of the Plan is to establish Ledbury as a desirable location, by offering a good standard of facilities, services, and open spaces.

The Town Plan comprehensively addresses the views of residents on health services and we do not rehearse them here. We should however highlight some of the key issues.

One of the main challenges for the town is how to manage the expansion of health services to meet growing expectations of patients and the forecast increase in population. The doctors' surgeries are "at saturation point". They have already had to absorb migrants from the EU, requiring the services of interpreters. They have no capacity for taking on additional personnel: consulting rooms are constantly in use by GPs "hot desking" with other health professionals.

9. Community & Leisure

The limited parking for health staff and patients is another issue. There is a need for an improved NHS dental care facility, as a service is only available one day a week in the NHS Minor Injuries Unit. Therefore, dental care can only be accessed privately or by travelling to neighbouring towns. The NDP is not the forum to address healthcare issues, but it should aim to facilitate the acquisition of property near to the location of existing services should they wish to expand.

As for leisure facilities, and especially as a means of helping to reduce the demands on health care, there is substantial evidence from consultation on the NDP and Town Plans, that the community highly values the town's public and green spaces for recreational use. They also want to see an enhanced footpath network in and around Ledbury. These needs are reflected through specific policies in the NDP 'Community & Leisure' and 'Travel & Infrastructure' sections.

Community & Leisure - Objectives & Policies

Objective CLI:

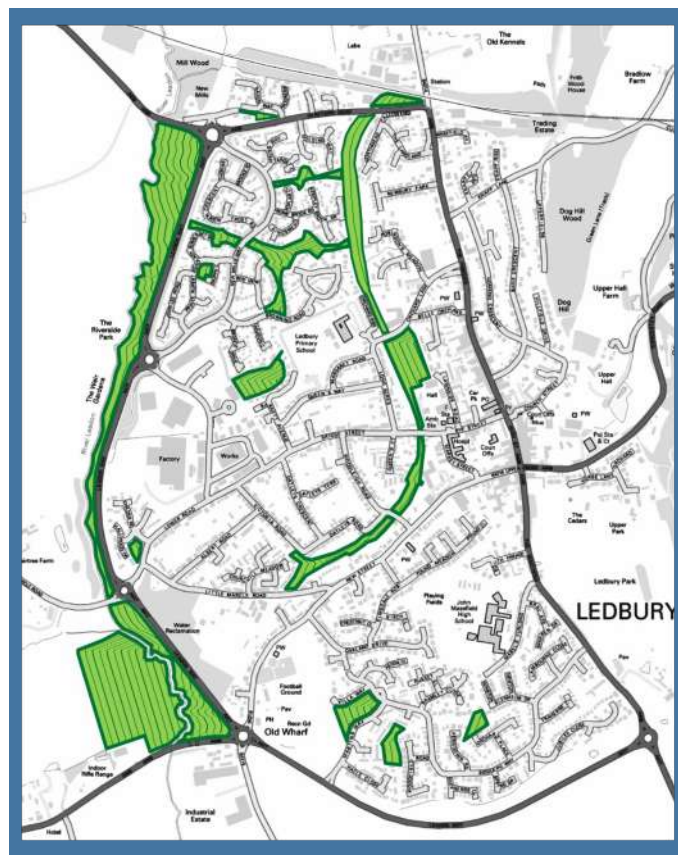
To protect and enhance our green spaces, open areas and woodland areas, including Riverside Park, Line Bank Town Trail and Dog Hill, Conigree and Frith Woods.

Policy CLI.1

Protecting Green Infrastructure

The areas marked on the map below, shall be promoted, protected and enhanced by improved access and connectivity.

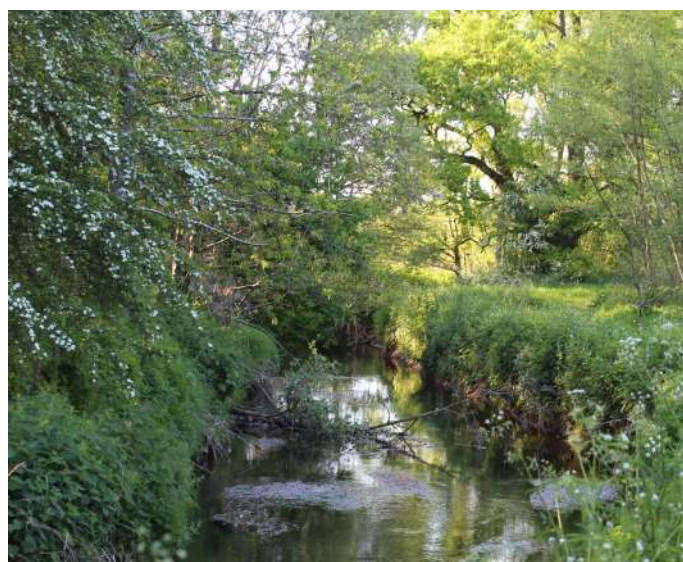
Redevelopment will only be permitted when the area has no significant value for recreation, beauty, tranquillity, wildlife or historic importance.



The Plan will seek to protect both wooded areas and green open spaces within the boundary of Ledbury which already enhance the aesthetics of the town, and provide wildlife environment and safe walking routes for everyone.

The woodland areas lie within the Malvern Hills AONB and are therefore covered by their regulations.

Through all our consultations, the view of the local community is that these are important pieces of land that need to be protected to ensure continued use.



9. Community & Leisure

Objective CL2:

To improve and increase varied types of facilities for youth activities.

Policy CL2.1

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.

Presently, Ledbury only has a temporary building for a youth club, therefore any proposal to provide a

permanent building would be regarded favourably. Clubs, associations and sports facilities are widely available to young people, but there is a shortage of non sport related facilities. Teenagers and young adults seeking advice, guidance or a safe environment currently lack support and information, and this must be addressed to provide a balanced and inclusive community.

Objective CL3:

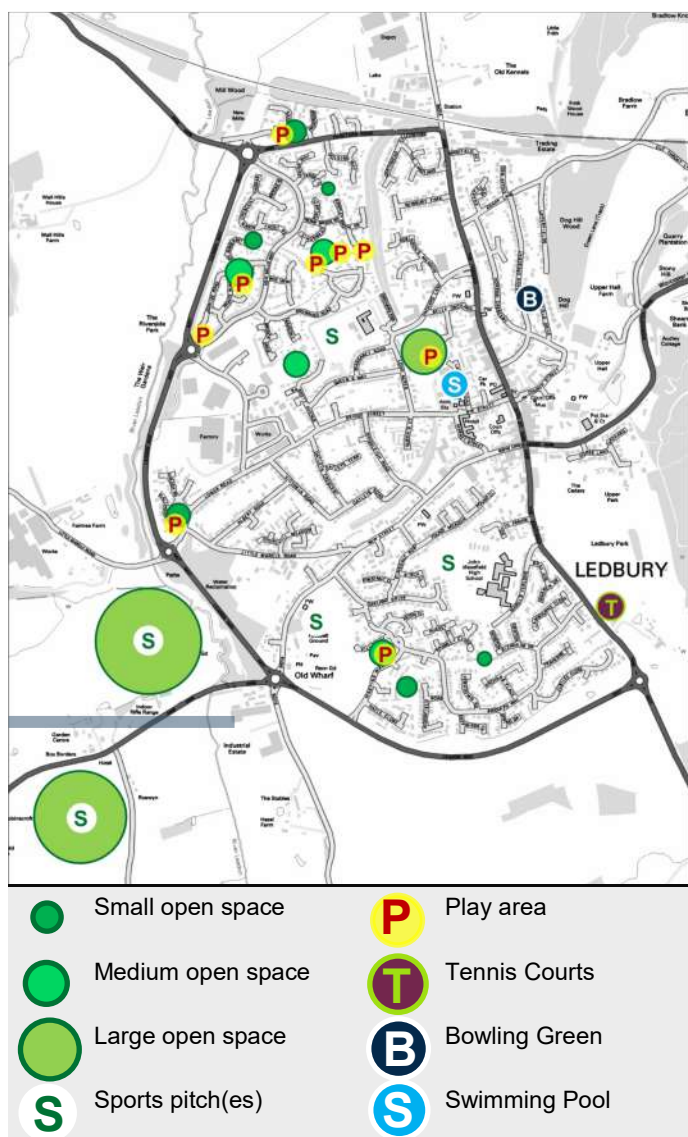
To provide local medical and care facilities commensurate with population growth and the increasing needs of the elderly in the community.

Policy CL3.1

Medical & Dental Facilities

Proposals which improve, or increase the capacity of and access to medical, dental and care facilities, by expansion or relocation will be supported. Preference will be given to proposals that maintain provision of services close to existing facilities and the town centre.

During the Call for Sites exercise a parcel of land was submitted which would enable the extension of one of the doctors' surgeries, both of which are at full capacity. Currently neither surgery has plans for extension or relocation, however this may change with the proposed housing development under the Core Strategy. Alternatively, a new medical facility may be required, although there is doubt that NHS England would fund it. There is a clear need for accessible NHS dental care, which is not currently available in the town. If a new medical facility was to become available, it would not need to be within the town centre, but within the settlement boundary.



Objective CL4:

To protect, increase and improve all existing sport and leisure facilities for indoor and outdoor recreation and leisure, in line with national standards.

Policy CL4.1

Sports Provision

Proposals that would result in the increase or improvement of existing indoor or outdoor sports and leisure facilities and enable greater participation will be encouraged.

A replacement cricket ground has been secured, but land is needed for junior football. The policy is in favour of retaining our current facilities, because with an anticipated increase in demand their presence will be strongly supported by players, supporters and the wider community.



However, caveats are in place to allow the loss of a building or facility where that facility may be relocating or expanding, and where new or alternative facilities are provided. These replacement facilities must be within walking distance of the town to maintain their role within the community, and maximise their accessibility and sustainability, and must comply with Sport England criteria in relation to accessibility and safety.

10. Transport & Infrastructure

Transport & Infrastructure - The Background



It is national and local policy to reduce the impact of, and reliance on, car travel in order to reduce pollution and encourage better health by human effort. The town can already get congested at peak times of the day. Moreover with at least 800 new houses planned for the town, we can expect the car population to increase by 1000 at the very least.

Cars will, however, continue to be used by the rural population to get into the town for work, shopping and for access to financial and medical services. In addition, Ledbury is an attraction for tourists. It is hoped that tourism will increase with the addition of The Master's House to the inventory of viewable historic buildings, so access for cars and coaches must be maintained. By promoting vehicular tourism we possibly add to an already congested traffic problem. There are no easy solutions to this conundrum.

Ledbury is fortunate to have a mainline railway station, which has direct services to London. The limited capacity for parking is exceeded daily, causing overspill parking on the adjacent main roads and in surrounding residential areas. Increasing use of train services for work, business and leisure needs to be supported by appropriate, dedicated parking provision nearby.

1/4

The **station** is one of only four railway stations in Herefordshire but is in a poor state of repair.

It is possible to reach the following places by train from Ledbury by 9am:

Hereford; Malvern;
Worcester; Droitwich;
Bromsgrove; **Birmingham**;
Cardiff; **London** Paddington



TRAVEL TO WORK

65%

Of residents travel to work **by car or van**

24%

Of residents travel to work **on foot or by bicycle**

2%

Of residents travel to work **by train**

INFRASTRUCTURE

Ledbury has the following **medical facilities**:



- Ledbury Market Surgery
- St Katherine's Surgery
- Ledbury Minor Injuries Unit
- Ledbury Market Lodge

The doctors' surgeries do **not** consider themselves **at capacity**.

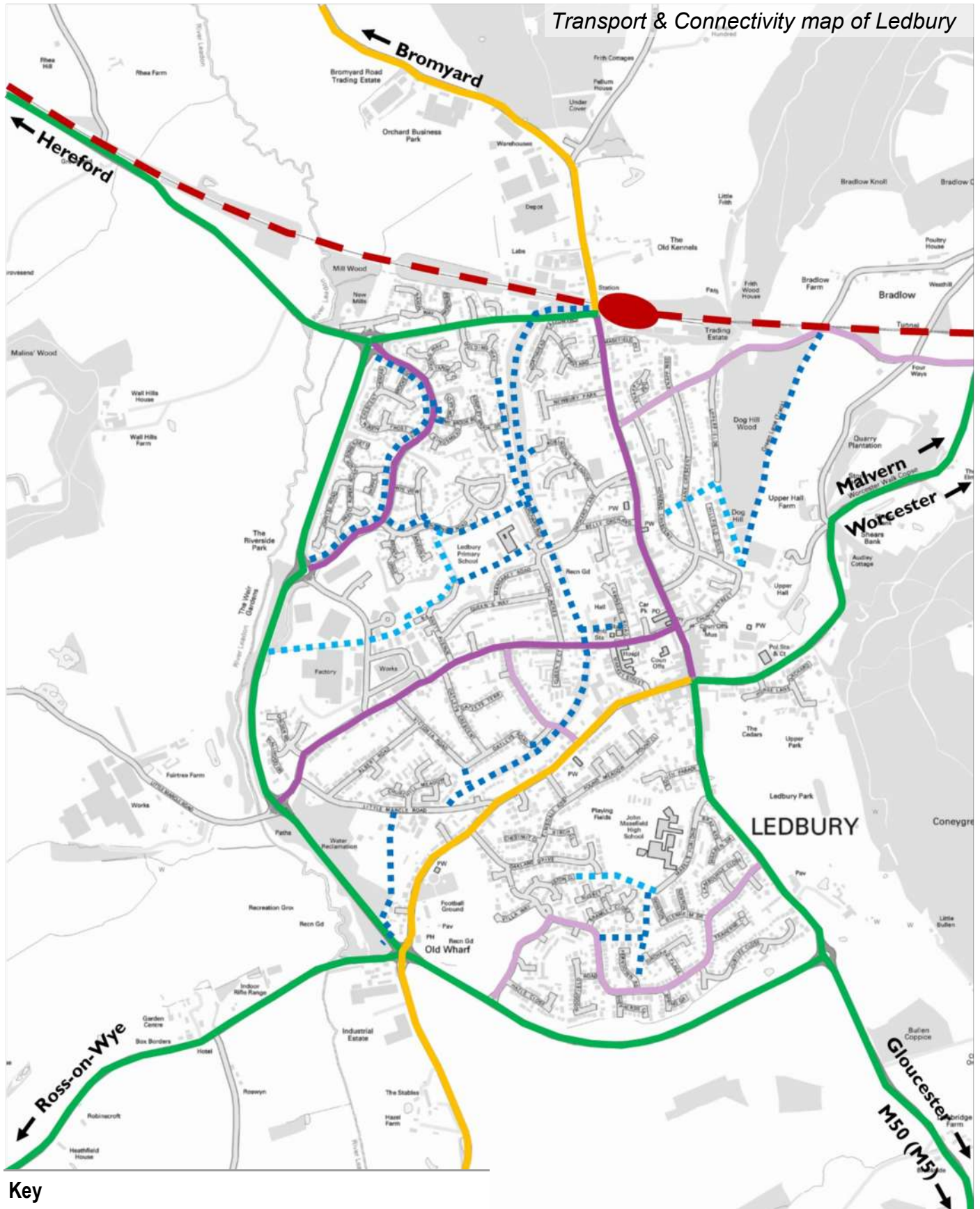
Broadband speeds are **reasonable** but **not fast** - range from **6mbps** to **14 mbps** depending on the location



'GOOD'

Ledbury has a **Primary** School and a **Secondary** School both rated 'Good' by Ofsted

Transport & Connectivity map of Ledbury



Key

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
|  | A-Road |  | Traffic-free path |
|  | B-Road |  | Traffic-free path (pedestrian only) |
|  | Main arterial route |  | Railway Station |
|  | Main connective route |  | Railway |

There is currently no access, other than a footbridge, to the Malvern/Worcester platform. The station is unmanned so crossing on the level is impossible. People unable to use the footbridge (wheelchair users, mothers with pushchairs etc.) can only travel in the Malvern/Worcester direction by first going to Hereford. This is an intolerable burden on the less mobile and needs to be addressed.

Transport & Infrastructure - Objectives & Policies

Objective TRI:

To promote the use of sustainable transport methods such as cycling, walking and public transport as primary means of getting around Ledbury both within the existing settlement and the proposed Strategic Allocation site.

Policy TRI.1

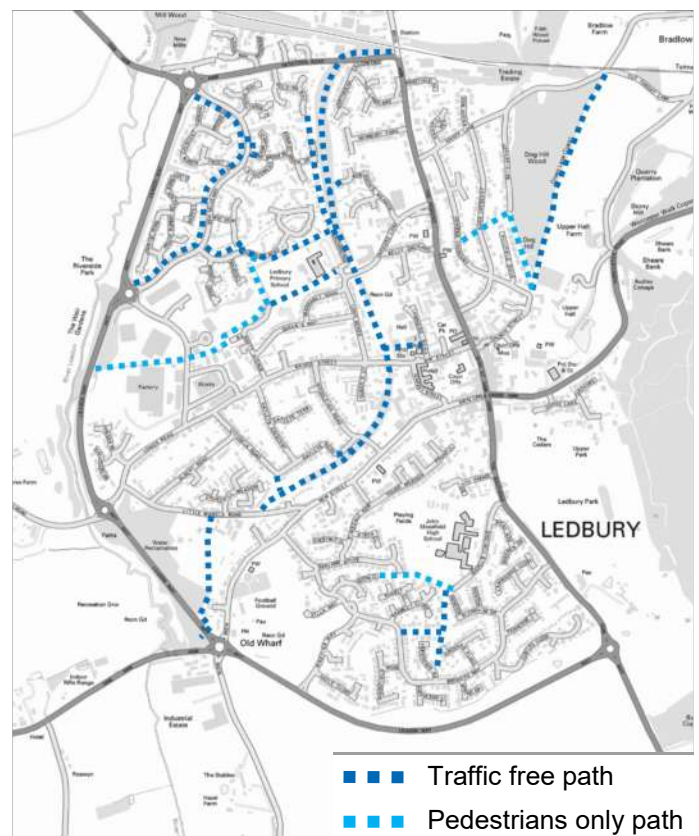
Footpaths & Cycleways

Proposals will be supported which will contribute to the improvement and extension of the entire network of footpaths and cycling routes in Ledbury to encourage greater accessibility, safety and usage by residents and visitors. In particular:

- Create a dedicated cycle, pedestrian and disabled access route 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
- Improve the Ledbury Town Trail to provide better cycling and disabled access along its whole length

- Extend the Ledbury Town Trail at the Ross Road island over Leadon Way to provide safer cycling, pedestrian and disabled access to the Rugby Club and new Cricket Club
- Provide a safer route across Leadon Way at the Little Marcle Road island for cyclists, pedestrians and the disabled going to and from the Little Marcle business and farming areas
- Establish formal LTC liaison with a Ledbury Footpaths Officer to advise when footpath improvements or maintenance is required to keep them safe and accessible

Improvements to encourage cycling and walking would help offset road congestion, limit and reduce air pollution, and provide a healthier option for short essential and recreational trips around the town. The new routes will focus on creating links between new and existing residential areas and local facilities and



10. Transport & Infrastructure

services; predominantly schools and community facilities; and the railway station. Applications for all new major development must demonstrate how account has been taken to improve the pedestrian and cycle network.



With the possibility of a Toucan crossing over the Leaddon Way ring road for the proposed development south of Leaddon Way, this would open up other opportunities for more crossings to provide safe routes and support the cycling, pedestrian and disabled access priorities. Evidence from the consultations shows this is a firm desire of the people of Ledbury.

Other footpath and cycle way improvements the NDP will support include:

- Improvements in maintenance and waymark signage on important paths leading out of the town and into the surrounding countryside;
- Maintaining or improving existing or adding new connecting footpaths to the neighbouring parishes of Wellington Heath (already discussed), Eastnor, Colwall, Pixley and Bosbury.

Objective TR2:

To provide a satisfactory supply of car and cycle parking and coach drop-off and pick-up points in the vicinity of the town centre, in order to meet the needs of residents and visitors.

Policy TR2.1

Town Car Parking

Proposals that would result in a significant increase in the number of people accessing the town centre would be expected to provide a mix of the following provisions:

- Car parking
- Coach drop-off points
- Secure cycle parking
- Park & ride
- More electric vehicle charging points
- Reserved parking spaces for the local car sharing scheme

Convenient town centre parking is equally important for local residents to undertake their daily business and for visitors, most of whom visit Ledbury by car. These facilities are vital for sustaining our local high street economy, our visitor attractions, upon both of which rests the income flow to maintain our many heritage buildings.



Apart from public bus stops, there are just two spaces in the town centre for coaches to drop off and pick up. These are in very regular use for coaches bringing visitors to the town and for local use, e.g. bringing school children to the Swimming Pool. Further provision would encourage more visiting coaches to Ledbury (there is a coach park located a mile from the town centre). Applications for development must demonstrate how existing parking spaces are maintained or improved upon, perhaps with the addition of park & ride, as consistent with the objectives of the Ledbury Town Plan.

Objective TR3:

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

Policy TR3.1

Ledbury Railway Station

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

By improving the station infrastructure, it is hoped to encourage the use of the train over cars for a range of journeys. The Core Strategy recommends consideration of an underground car park to the north. This would require a geological survey, as the area is subject to water saturation, and clearly some imaginative design will be required to achieve a long term solution.



Location of a new car park on the northern side, would be integral to any future development of the station and require a new access off the Bromyard Road. This would require the landowner's agreement. Any

redesign of the station should include improved passenger facilities and lockable, covered stands for cycles. Any development on the northern platform would also need to consider the impact on the Site of Special Scientific Interest, to the east of the station.

Consideration might also be given to adding a footbridge, at platform height, across the Bromyard Road to improve the connectivity and safety to the existing footpath/Town trail network. Crossing this road is tricky at busy times and road traffic will increase after completion of the north Viaduct housing development.

It is important to maintain and enhance the railway station in Ledbury to ensure it remains a key element of a sustainable transport infrastructure.

Infrastructure Objectives & Policies

Objective IN1:

To encourage the provision of a new tri-service emergency centre for Ledbury.

Policy IN1.1

Tri-Service Emergency Centre

To support proposals to relocate or enhance the Fire Service, Police and Ambulance facility in Ledbury, provided that these are consistent with the need for fast response to the Town Centre in the event of an emergency. Ideally this location should be outside of the town centre but within the perimeter of the by-pass.

Evidence derived from the Town Plan indicates that residents valued the Ambulance Service (975 call outs in 2005/6) and were dismayed at the loss.

The Department for Communities and Local Government and the Home Office have made funds available for the coordination of the emergency

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services to encourage resource sharing. “Blue Light Collaboration” was launched in 2015 and West Mercia Police are already involved. Completed projects have shown savings on vehicle maintenance, management and training. Establishment of a tri-service facility near the by pass should improve response times, as emergency vehicles on a call outside of the town would travel on less congested roads. The existing service vehicles buildings could be used for other purposes where convenience to the town centre is desirable: this might be for expanded health services, a community facility, or flats for the young.



The Services have no immediate plans to co-locate but welcome a reference in the Plan. For that reason no suitable land has been identified, but should any become available, the Services will be contacted to review their interest.