

Neighbourhood Plan Revision

1st Public Consultation

Issues and Options July 2021

These boards set out the main issues on which the community can express its views before the new version of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is written.

Once the new version of the plan is produced the community will be consulted on the draft.

Every adult (16 years and over) in your household can complete the questionnaire online using this link: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LedburyNDP_Issues_Options or the QR code.

The deadline for receipt of completed questionnaires is Friday 16th June

If you do not have internet access or prefer to complete in writing, please fill out a paper questionnaire, return completed forms using the Freepost address on the questionnaire, or drop it into the Town Council office.

For any help or questions email the Town Clerk on clerk@ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk or telephone 01531 632306.

The key issues for the review are:

- Defining a settlement boundary for the town
- Addressing the lack of sufficient football playing fields
- Provision of new sites for employment
- Improving access to Ledbury Railway Station particularly the eastbound platform
- Supporting the town centre
- Safeguarding and enhancing green space
- Promoting good design in the built environment

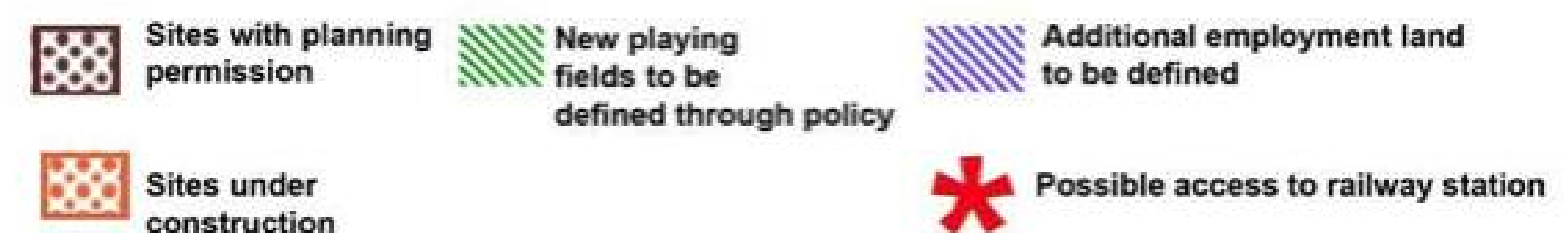
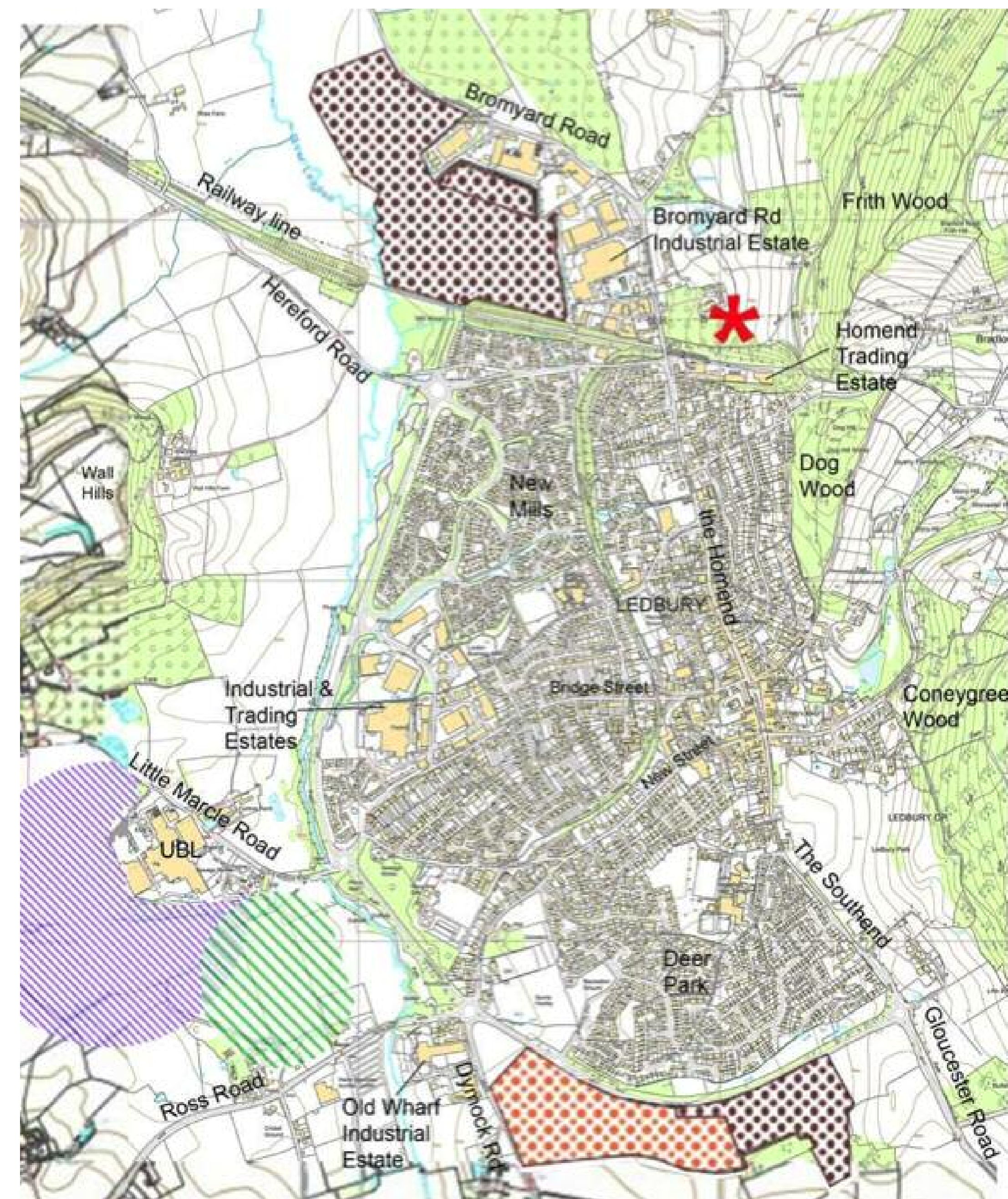
More detail on each of the issues can be found on the Town Council's website at <https://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk> Neighbourhood Plan page



Defining a Settlement Boundary: Question 1

A settlement boundary defines the limits of the town's growth. Ledbury Town Council believes that Ledbury would benefit from a settlement boundary as the lack of one has resulted in unplanned development permissions. Herefordshire Council and the professional consultants believe that Option C on the adjacent board gives greatest certainty and protection for the future.

Option A: No settlement boundary.



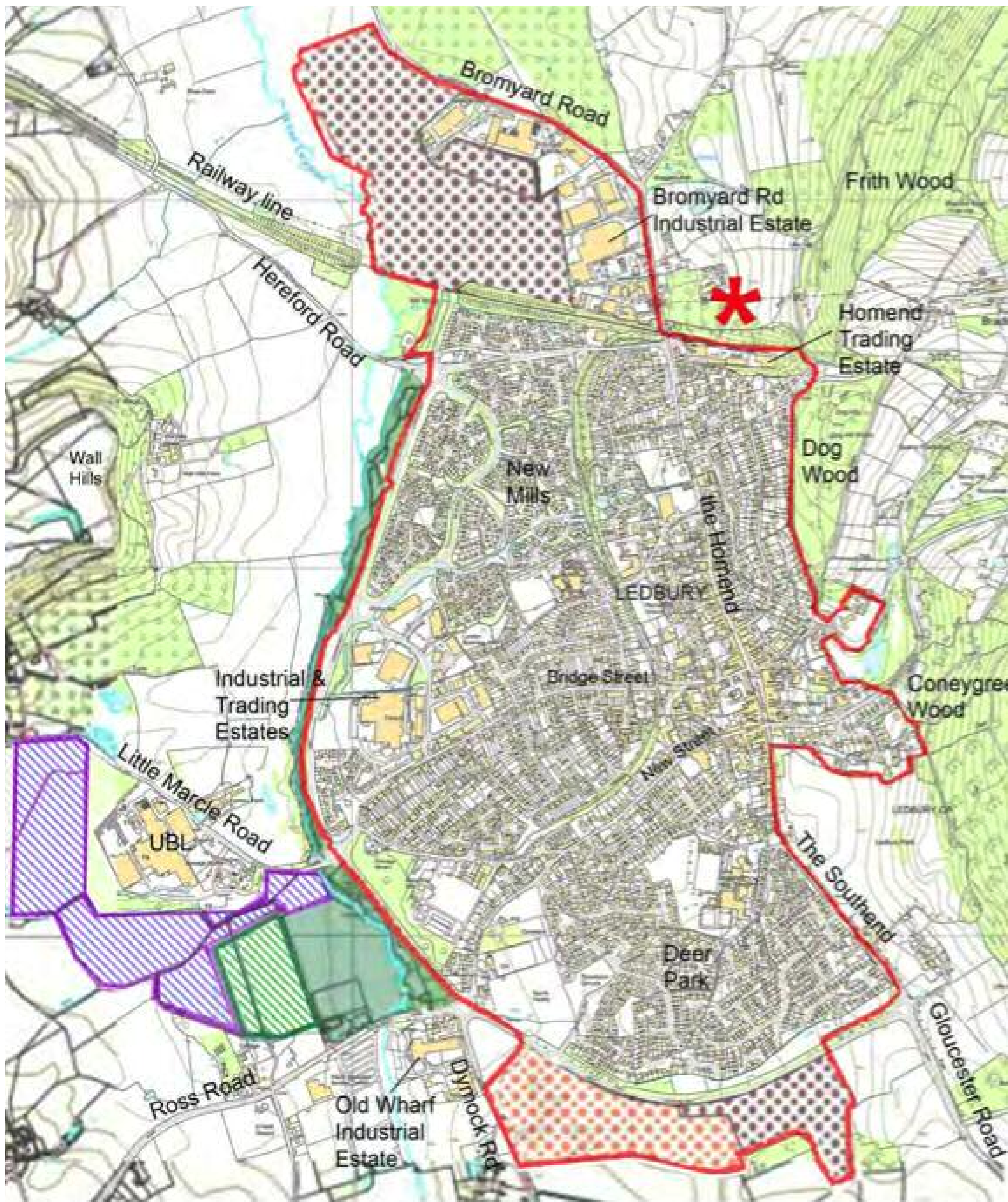
Advantages:

- offers flexibility in planning
- allows more space for development
- acts as a brake on land values

Disadvantages:

- offers no certainty to landowners, developers and community as to where development will be acceptable
- less community control over development
- less protection of the countryside.

Option B: Settlement Boundary based on previous UDP (2007) and includes an extension for land recently granted planning permission



NB Areas for new playing fields and employment are indicative and to be confirmed

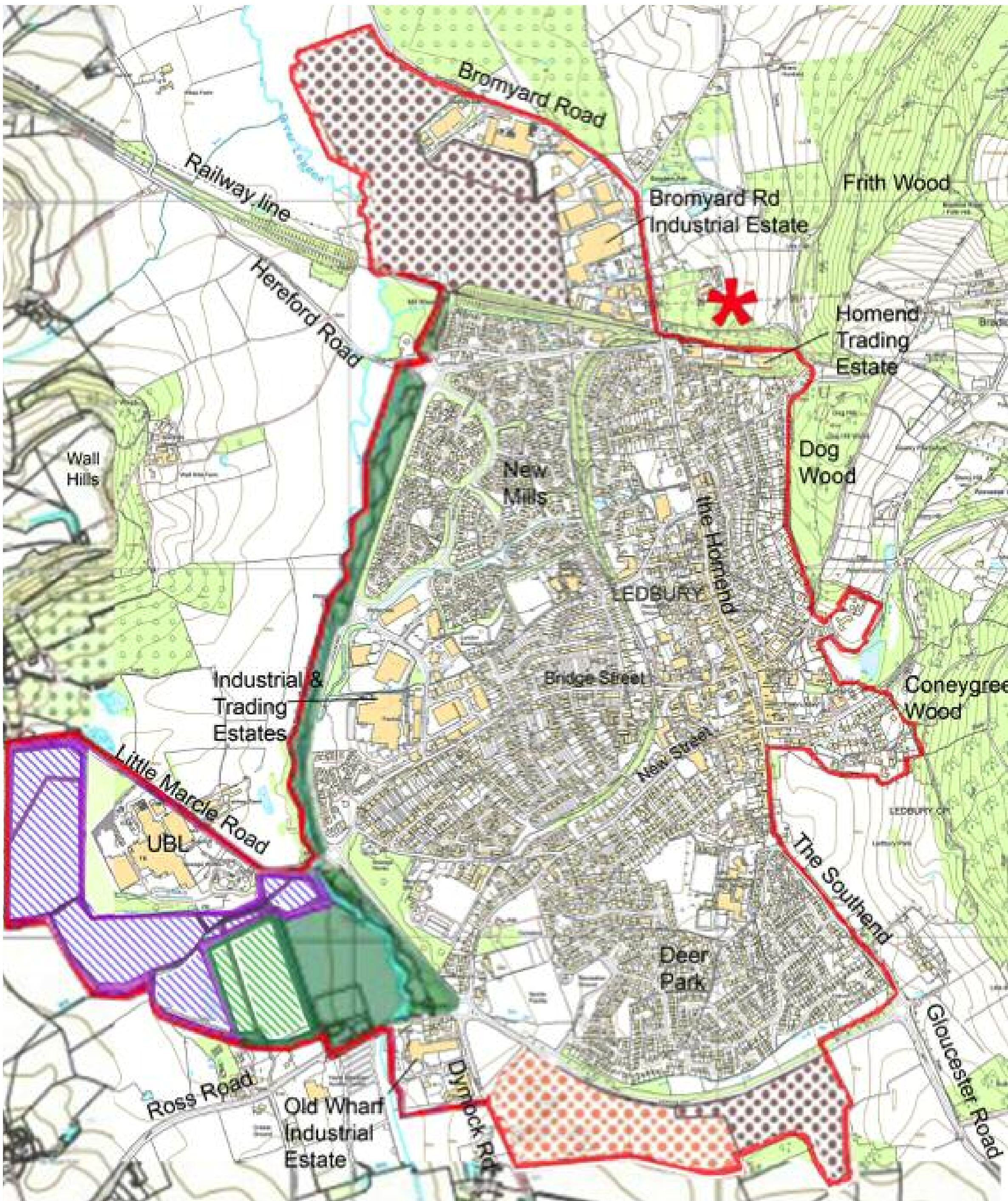
 Sites with planning permission	 Riverside walk & rugby pitch	 Indicative area for new employment land	 Proposed settlement boundary
 Sites under construction	 Indicative area for new playing fields	 Possible access to railway station	

- Advantages:

 - this seems to be the 'natural' boundary as development is limited to the existing built area
- Disadvantages:

 - developers have successfully challenged this boundary
 - doesn't provide room for needed employment provision or playing fields
 - doesn't protect public green space outside the built up area

Option C: To extend the settlement boundary to include the Riverside Park, and areas for recreation and employment to the south of Little Marcle Road.



NB Areas for new playing fields and employment are indicative and to be confirmed

 Sites with planning permission	 Riverside walk & rugby pitch		 Proposed settlement boundary
 Sites under construction	 Indicative area for new playing fields	 Possible access to railway station	

- Advantages:

 - respects the constraints of topography, the AONB and River Leaden
 - protects the Riverside Park and land to the south-west to meet Ledbury's present and future needs for recreation and employment
 - greater certainty for landowners, developers and community over where building is likely
 - ensures a controlled approach which is plan-led
 - protects the countryside from unnecessary development to protect the green infrastructure network around the town
- Disadvantages:

 - reduces flexibility and opportunities for landowners and developers
 - extends the boundary to the south-west of Ledbury potentially leading to additional pressures for development in that direction.

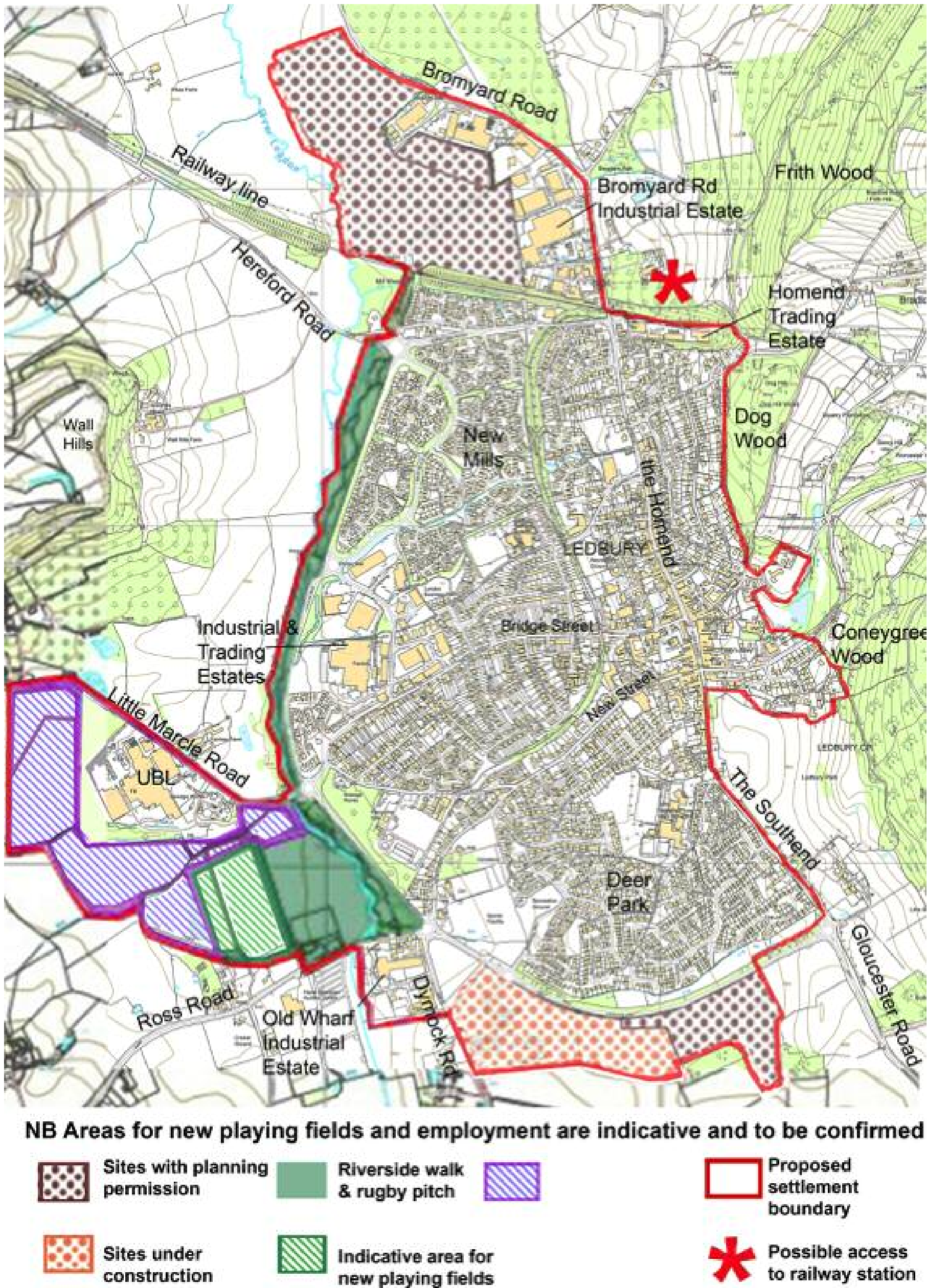
Employment and Recreation: Questions 2a – 3b

Ledbury does not have enough playing fields, particularly for its football clubs.

Sport England will support a plan in which youth and adult facilities are combined. Different sites have been explored and the proposal is for new pitches to the south of Little Marcle Road as shown on the map below for Ledbury Swifts and Ledbury FC.

There is also a need to find around 12 hectares of employment land south of the Little Marcle Road (this is required in the Herefordshire Core Strategy although a specific site is not specified). Land has been identified which would be suitable for this purpose as shown on the adjacent map.

Other smaller sites could also contribute towards business needs. For example land adjacent to the Full Pitcher roundabout, and the Hawk Rise housing development where employment uses suitable for location adjacent to housing is proposed (light industrial, hotel accommodation, an emergency services ‘hub’ or a community garden).



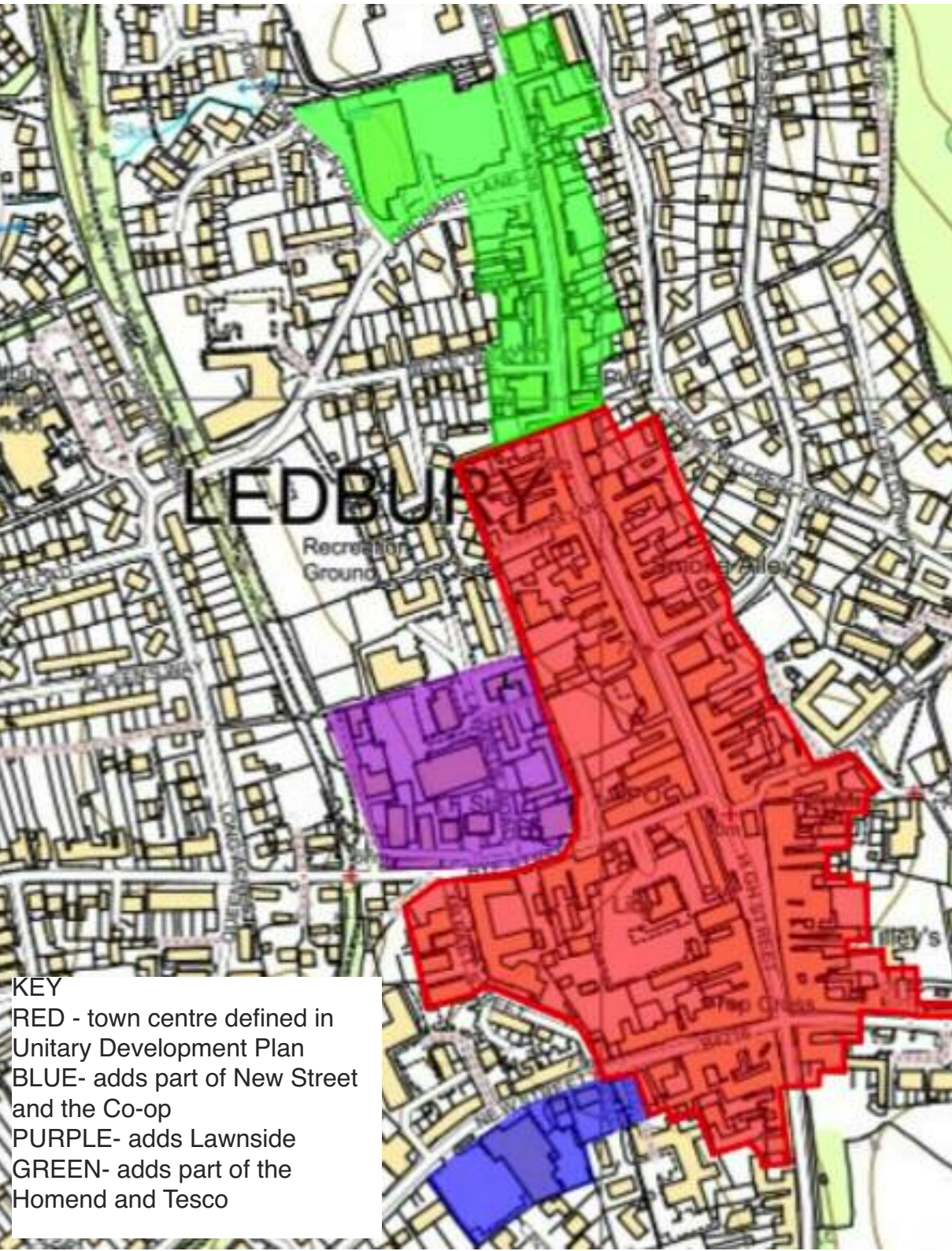
Access to the ‘Viaduct Site’

This site is to be developed for housing and employment. Access to the site off the Hereford Road roundabout is not currently proposed, but there might be an opportunity to preserve this option in the future. Any review would need to consider whether the route would be permissible in planning terms, and it is considered as unlikely to be deliverable in any timescale covered by this plan.

Access to the Railway Station

The eastbound platform of Ledbury railway station is not accessible at ground level and there is limited car parking for the station. Land north of the railway station has been submitted for assessment as employment land, these proposals could also provide access to the eastbound platform and some car parking. The red star on the map indicates the proposed access.

Supporting the Town Centre: Questions 4a – 4d

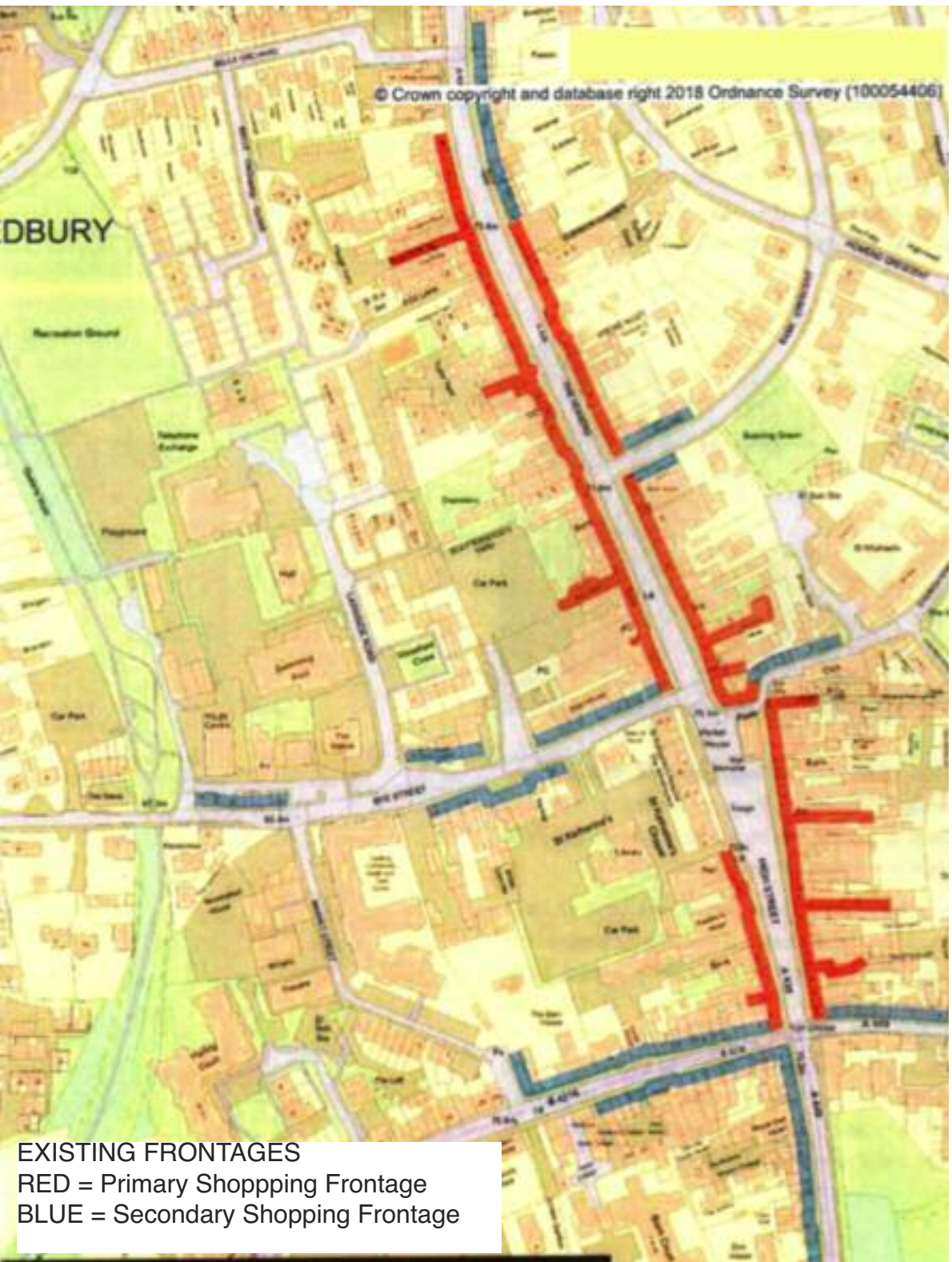


Defining the Town Centre

The Core Strategy supports retail, commercial, leisure, culture and tourism proposals within the town centre and resists such proposals outside it.

The current definition of Ledbury town centre is shown in red on the adjacent map. This concentrates footfall within a relatively small area, but limits commerce.

It is proposed that the town centre be re-defined to include some or all of the 3 areas shown on the adjacent map.



Primary and Secondary Frontages

The current NDP categorises commercial activities permitted in the town centre into primary and secondary:

- primary (red on the adjacent map) - food, clothing, restaurants, drinking establishments and household shops
- secondary - as above plus hot food takeaways and businesses

It is proposed that the distinction between primary and secondary frontages be removed allowing flexibility to retain the town centre’s vitality and character.

Town Centre Regeneration

Lawnside and Market Street adjoin the town’s shopping streets. They have mixed uses.

It is proposed that any development in these two areas is co-ordinated to support and improve the town centre and conservation area rather than proceed on an ad-hoc basis.

Health and other Emergency Services

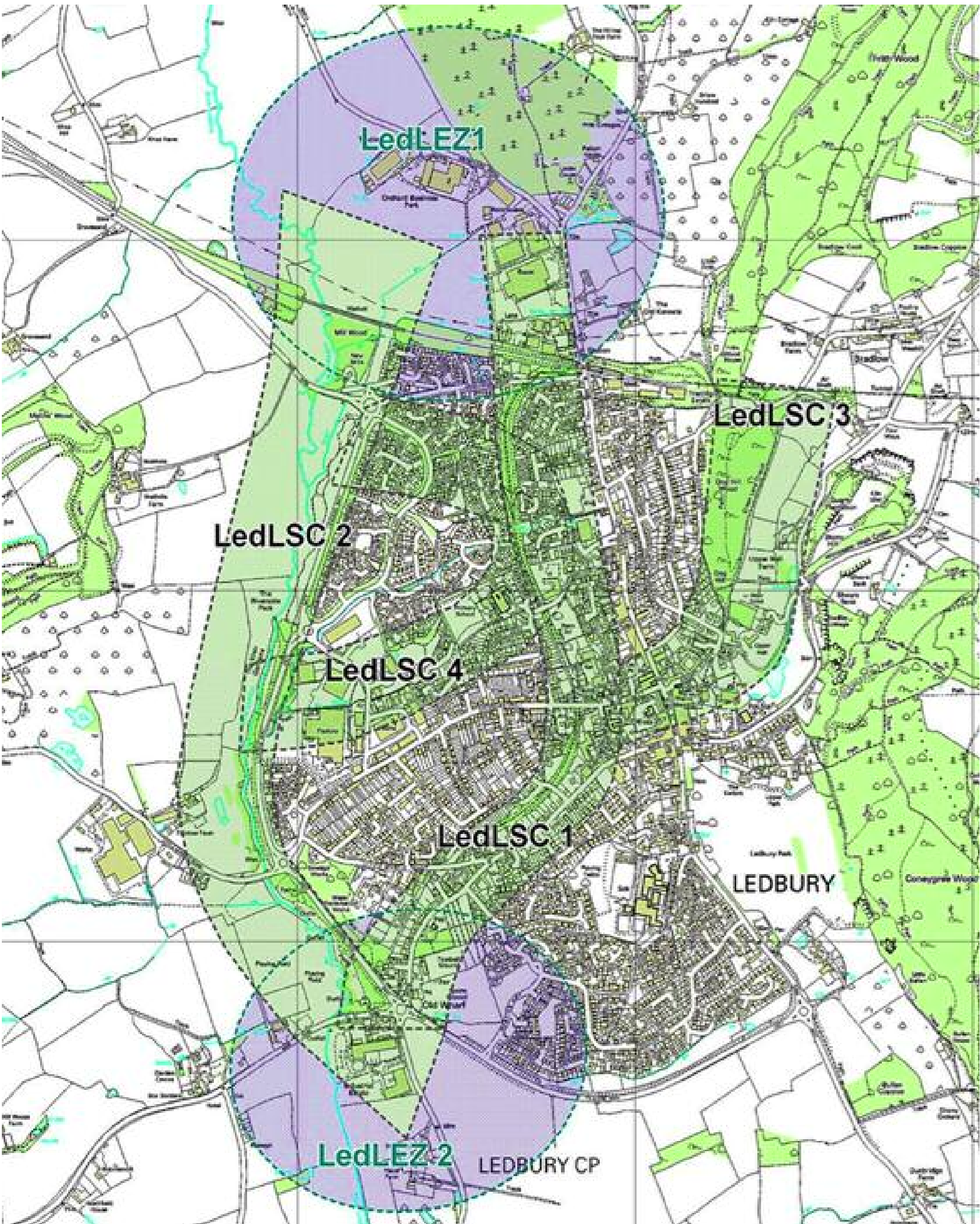
Current health service accommodation is fragmented and located across different sites. They must expand to accommodate expected population growth and future needs. It is proposed that improved and larger accommodation should be located in the town centre if possible. This would not be to the exclusion of other options if that is not possible.

Green Infrastructure: Questions 5a – 5e

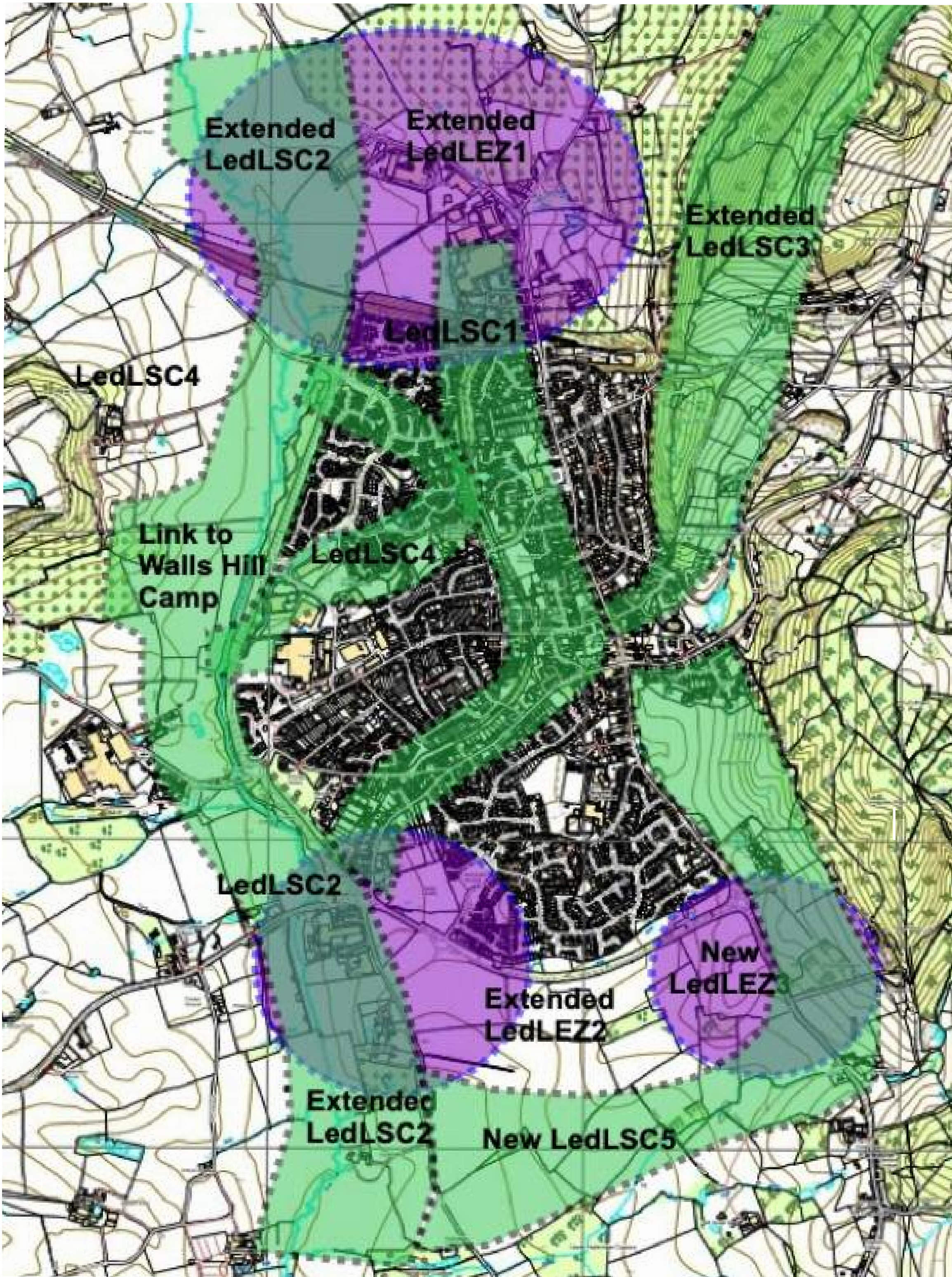
Green infrastructure is the network of green and blue (water) spaces and features within and surrounding Ledbury. These include parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, orchards, rivers and streams, street trees and allotments. They can provide habitats for wildlife and plants, flood and water management services as well as public amenity (footpaths, recreation, etc).

It is proposed that the green infrastructure identified by Herefordshire Council (see map 1 below) be enhanced as shown in map 2 adjacent.

Some of the proposals are associated with pedestrian and cycle routes. Other areas have been identified are valuable for biodiversity, historic reasons, landscape character or where measures are needed to mitigate the effects of climate change.



Map 1:
Ledbury's
Green Infrastructure as
identified by Herefordshire
Council



Map 2:
Green Infrastructure
Proposals

Key to Maps

LEZ = Local Enhancement Zones - areas where green infrastructure can help create sustainable places to live and work
LSC = Local Strategic Corridors - areas in which link of green and blue assets.

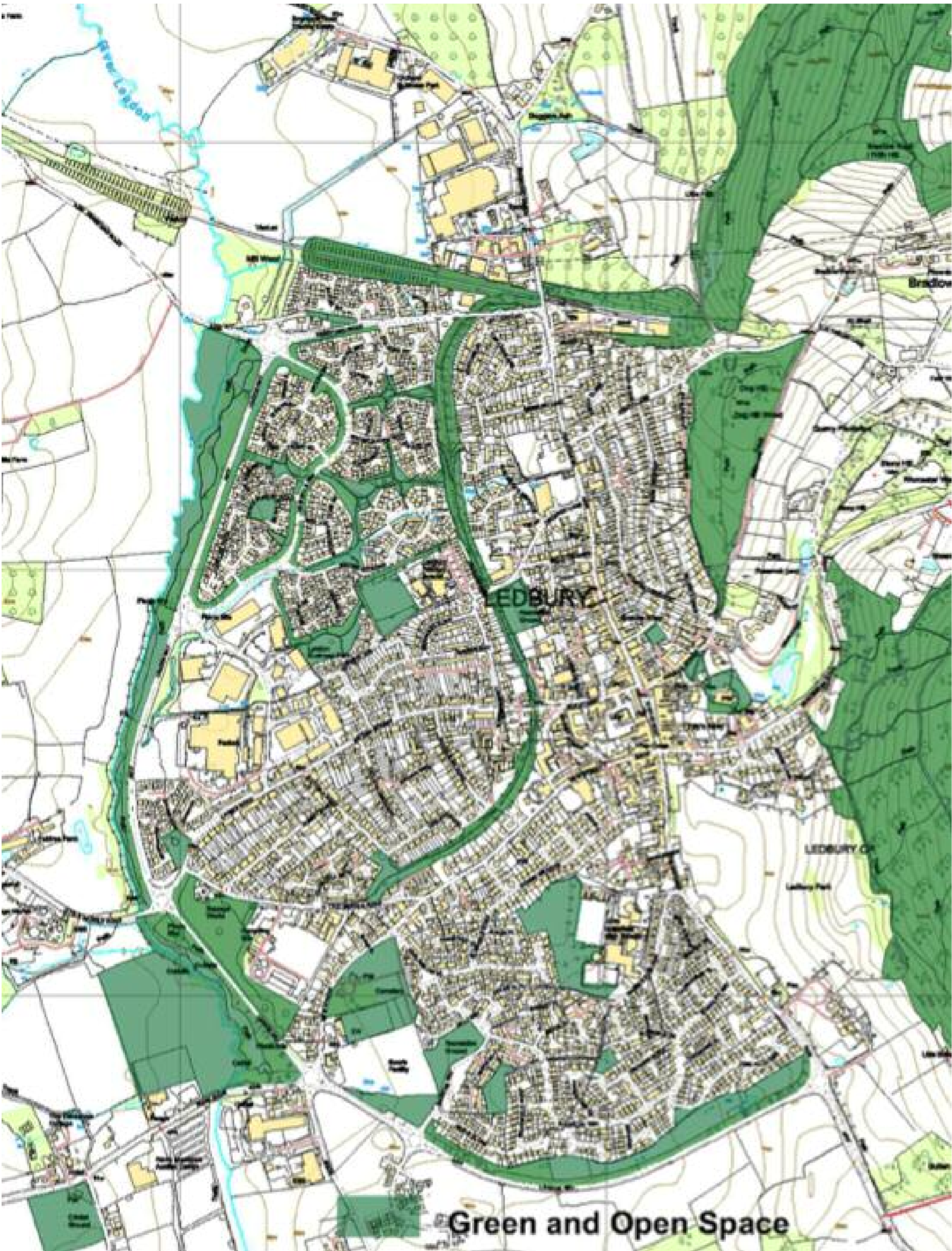
- LSC1 - The Town Trail.
- LSC2 – Includes the Riverside Walk and adjacent sports grounds and a link to Wall Hills Camp and its surrounding woodland, and north and south along the river/route of the proposed canal.
- LSC3 - This corridor runs from the churchyard and Walled Garden to Dog Hill Wood. The proposal is to extend this corridor north to Frith Wood.
- LSC4 - Green spaces running through New Mills Way are connected to Leadon Way and the Town Trail.
- LSC5 – Links Ledbury Park, the stream and public right of way to the south of the Bovis and Hawk Rise sites, connects the Malvern Hills and the River Leadon and protects a green gap between Ledbury and Parkway.
- LEZ1 – 625 new homes will be built here and it will also incorporate part of the reinstated Hereford to Gloucester Canal. This zone can incorporate footpaths and cycleways linking to Wellington Heath; provide a 'green gap' between Wellington Heath and Ledbury, and incorporate flood control measures.
- LEZ2 – This is adjacent to the Full Pitcher roundabout and the Dymock Road. The proposal is to extend this zone to incorporate the land identified as sensitive by a planning inspector
- LEZ3 – This high ground near the Gloucester Road roundabout forms a backdrop to the new housing developments.

Green Space Within the Town: Question 5c

The map below shows the important green spaces within the built up area of the town.

Different levels of protection may apply to these spaces; for example playing fields may be built on if the schools need to extend (but if this happens they will need to be replaced elsewhere), and the cemetery and church yard have special protection. However they do make valuable contributions to the green infrastructure of the town.

It is also proposed that where appropriate and opportunity arises, the creation of community gardens and more town allotments should be considered.



Footpaths, Cycleways and Public Rights of Way: Question 5d

Public rights of way are important elements in the green infrastructure of the town. Many lead from the built-up area to the woods and surrounding countryside, and the Malvern Hills. The restoration of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal provides an opportunity to develop the towpath as a pedestrian/cycleway linking to neighbouring parishes. Such green corridors will support delivery of some of the key objectives in the NDP: to promote health and wellbeing, retain and increase biodiversity and mitigate the effect of climate change.

Children’s Play Areas: Question 5e

Children’s play areas can provide access to nature as part of their design and contribute to wellbeing.

There are nine official children’s play areas within the town, but only one of these is south of Bridge Street.

There are play areas planned in the developments south of Leadon Way, but these are inaccessible to children on the town side of the by-pass. No opportunities to increase children’s play area provision within the southern part of the town have been identified.

It is proposed that additional play facilities should be supported in areas of need if and when opportunities are identified.

Design and the Environment: Question 6

Ledbury Town Council has a Design Guide (2018). This is not a policy document, but it provides guidance to builders and developers.

The proposal is that specific design policies should be included in the NDP based on the ideas in the Design Guide.

This will give the policies more weight when planning applications are considered. In addition, policies should be updated to encourage sustainable development, measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change and the promotion of active travel.

Other Matters: Questions 7a

The NDP may include a limited number of other matters although it is not intended to encompass a major review.

Herefordshire Council has started a review of its Core Strategy although this may take some time before it is complete. This may identify further development needs for the town requiring a more significant review of the NDP.

MAPS AND PLANS

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