



LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

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11 September 2026

TO: All Councillors, Councillor Simmons, Ann Lumb, Chris Thomas

Dear Councillors

You are invited to a meeting of the Major Planning Applications Working Party on Thursday, 17 September 2026 at 6.00 pm for the purpose of considering the following business:

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of a meeting of the Major Planning Applications Working Party held on 18 June 2026**
(Pages 1 - 2)
4. **To give consideration to Application No. 262052 – Construction of pump track and associated landscaping – Land at Martins Way Park, Ledbury, Herefordshire**
(Pages 3 - 9)
5. **To consider next steps in respect of potential Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of Martins Way Pump Track and park**
(Pages 11 - 16)

Yours faithfully

Angela Price PSLCC, AICCM, MIWFM
Town Clerk
Ledbury Town Council

Distribution: All Councillors (9)
Ann Lumb
Councillor Stef Simmons

**LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A MAJOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS WORKING PARTY
HELD ON 18 JUNE 2026**

PRESENT: Councillors Hamblin, Kettle, Morris (Chair) and Wilkinson.

ALSO PRESENT: Angela Price – Town Clerk
Sophie Jarvis – Minute Taker
Ann Lumb – Ledbury Civic & District Society

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received.

2. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MAJOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS WORKING PARTY HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Major Planning Applications Working Party held on 25 February 2026 were approved and signed as a correct record.

3. APPLICATION NO. 261165 - APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS RELATING TO LAYOUT, SCALE, EXTERNAL APPEARANCE AND LANDSCAPING (PURSUANT TO OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION APPEAL REF. APP/W1850/W/20/3244410 AND LPA REF. 171532) FOR 104 DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING, GARAGES, HIGHWAY AND DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE (PHASE 2B). – LAND NORTH OF VIADUCT, ADJOINING ORCHARD BUSINESS PARK, LEDBURY, HEREFORDSHIRE.

Members agreed that the Developers had proposed very minimal green infrastructure. It appeared that they had proposed to put in place the minimum number of trees. Members expressed concern that the green infrastructure should be enhanced that the development should not seek to meet only the minimum requirements.

Members instructed the Clerk to speak with Ward Councillors to establish whether the green infrastructure proposals represent significant improvement compared with Phase 1.

Councillor Wilkinson confirmed that it there was nothing within the application that materially differed from the original planning permission.

RESOLVED:

No objection.

4. **APPLICATION NO. 261238 - APPLICATION FOR VARIATION/ REMOVAL OF CONDITIONS FOLLOWING GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION 233023. TO REMOVE CONDITION 27 AND TO VARY THE WORDING OF CONDITIONS 1, 8, 9, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25 AND 26. TO REMOVE THE BIDDULPH WAY CYCLE LINK AND FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE ALREADY DISCHARGED INFORMATION. LAND SOUTH OF LEADON WAY, LEDBURY, HEREFORDSHIRE**

Councillor Wilkinson informed members that she had walked the Biddulph Way Cycle Link to assess the section of then route proposed for removal. She confirmed that only a very small section of the track is affected and noted that the remainder of the route can be bypassed via a quiet road, which she found easy to navigate, and that the overall route continues to function effectively.

RESOLVED:

No objection.

The meeting closed at 6:16pm.

Signed **Dated**

MAJOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS WORKING PARTY	17 SEPTEMBER 2026	AGENDA ITEM: 4
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Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

PLANNING APPLICATION P262052/F – LAND AT MARTINS WAY PARK, LEDBURY

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to enable the Working Party to consider planning application P262052/F and formulate a response to Herefordshire Council as the local planning authority.

The report also draws Members' attention to matters requiring separate consideration should Ledbury Town Council continue to pursue a Community Asset Transfer of Martins Way Park.

Detailed Information

Application details:

Application no.	-	P262052/F
Site Location	-	Land at Martins Way, Ledbury
Ward	-	Ledbury South
Applicant	-	Herefordshire Council
Proposal	-	Construction of pump track and associated landscaping
Application Type	-	Full planning permission

The full application can be viewed at: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-search/details?id=262052>

Site and Proposed Development

Martins Way Park is an area of public open space bounded by Martins Way, Biddulph Way and Villa Way and surrounded principally by residential development.

The wider park extends to approximately 9,850 sqm, with the planning application site covering approximately 3,070 sqm.

The proposed development includes:

- An asphalt pump track;
- Rollers, jumps and banked turns of varying heights;
- A compacted aggregate hardstanding area;
- Drainage and localised infiltration measures;
- Amenity grass around the track edges and slopes;

- Species-rich grass and wildflower planning within the track;
- Additional tree planting;
- Relocation of part of an existing dogwood hedge;
- Benches;
- A new access incorporating a self-closing gate; and
- Retention of the existing access for maintenance and emergency vehicles.

No lighting is proposed for the site.

The outer part of the track would measure approximately 45m, with the principal activity and starting area positioned towards the north-eastern part of the park. The applicant states that this location has been selected to minimise the separation from neighbouring dwellings.

The proposed track is intended for BMX and mountain bikes, scooters, rollerblades, skateboard and other similar non-motorised wheeled activities. The submitted management specification states that it would not be suitable for e-bikes, Surrons, mopeds, pit bikes or other motorised vehicles.

Proposal

The applicant identifies a need for additional recreational provision for older children and young people in Ledbury.

The planning statement refers to the Ledbury Listening 2024 youth survey, which received 630 responses from young people aged between 10 and 18. Improved parks, playgrounds and sports facilities were identified as priorities, with a particular gap in the provision for younger teenagers.

The proposal has therefore been developed as a specialist “all-wheels” facility intended to:

- Provide a positive outdoor space for children and young people;
- Encourage physical activity and active travel;
- Provide a space in which young people can meet and socialise;
- Address an identified gap in local recreational provision; and
- Make greater use of an existing area of public open space.

A well-designed and appropriately managed facility may provide positive activity, encourage a sense of ownership and reduce the likelihood of young people gathering in less suitable locations. However, this does not remove the need to consider the effects of the proposal on neighbouring residents and existing users of the park.

Consultation and Public Representations

A public consultation event was held at Martins Way Park on 22 July 2025. The applicant advises that information was distributed locally and shared through social media. The design was subsequently developed with input from Herefordshire

Council, Ledbury Town Council, Masefield Matters, the specialist track designer and representatives from John Masefield High School.

A number of residents have stated in their planning representations that they were not aware of, or could not attend, the earlier consultation. This consultation is separate to the statutory consultation undertaken as part of the planning application.

At the time of writing this report there were 71 representations and consultee responses published on the planning portal. These include objections, representations in support and technical consultee comments. The principal matters raised by residents are summarised below:

Anti-social behaviour and management

Residents have referred to existing incidents or concerns involving:

- Groups congregating within the park and near the bus stop;
- Alcohol or suspected drug use;
- Noise; shouting and intimidating behaviour;
- Litter, broken glass and discarded vapes;
- Vandalism and previous damage to play equipment;
- Fires and fireworks;
- Unauthorised use of motorcycles or similar motorised vehicles; and
- Uncertainty about who would monitor the facility or respond to incidents.

Some residents believe that the pump track could attract additional gatherings and exacerbate these problems, particularly during the evenings and weekends.

Conversely, supporters consider that providing purposeful activities for young people could help reduce anti-social behaviour by giving them a positive and valued place to go.

Noise and residential amenity

Concerns have been raised about:

- Noise from wheels travelling over the asphalt surface;
- Voices and social activity;
- Use during evenings, weekend and school holidays;
- Disturbance to nearby homes; and
- Potential effects on privacy.

The applicant acknowledges that there may be minor and localised increases in noise during periods of peak use but considers that these would be intermittent and consistent with recreational use of public open space. Proposed mitigation includes the positioning of the main activity area away from neighbouring dwellings, retention and enhancement of landscape buffers, signage encouraging considerate use and the absence of lighting.

Members may wish to consider whether further information is needed regarding anticipated hours of use, the enforceability of any restrictions and the arrangements for responding to substantiated noise complaints.

Access, traffic and parking

Residents have concerns about:

- The safety of the proposed entrance;
- Interaction between users, vehicles and buses;
- Additional parking on surrounding residential roads;
- Visitors travelling from other parts of the town or further afield;
- Speeding and existing traffic conditions; and
- The condition or flooding of some pedestrian and cycle access routes.

The proposal does not include a dedicated car park. The applicant's position is that the site is accessible by walking, cycling and public transport and is intended to support active travel.

Members may wish to consider whether the likely catchment of the facility and anticipated level of vehicle-borne visits have been sufficiently assessed.

Loss of open space and effects on existing users

Residents have emphasised that the park is already used for:

- Informal ball games;
- Cricket, badminton and similar activities;
- Picnics;
- Dog walking;
- Kite flying;
- Quiet recreation and reading; and
- General family use.

Concerns have therefore been raised that the proposal would reduce the amount of flexible open space and change the character of the park.

The development would occupy part, rather than the whole, of Martins Way Park.

Landscaping, wildlife and drainage

Residents have raised concerns about:

- Loss or relocation of hedging;
- Effects on established trees and wildlife;
- The replacement of grass with asphalt;
- Surface-water runoff; and
- Existing flooding affecting nearby routes and properties.

The applicant advises that the design was informed by an arboricultural assessment undertaken on 7 April 2026. The layout was altered to avoid the root protection areas of retained trees.

The submitted scheme proposes species-rich grassland, wildflowers and additional trees. The applicants biodiversity calculation indicates a proposed on-site biodiversity net gain of 25.82%.

Surface water from the asphalt is intended to discharge to adjacent grassed areas, with gravel infiltration pits and landscaped low points used to assist storage and infiltration.

Members may wish to ask whether the drainage proposals have been supported by site-specific ground infiltration testing and whether existing reports of surface-water flooding have been fully considered.

Management and Maintenance

The application is accompanied by a detailed [management and maintenance specification](#). This identifies requirements including:

- Regular inspection of the track and removal of debris;
- Maintenance and periodic renewal of the asphalt surface and markings;
- Management of grass and wildflower areas;
- Establishment, watering and replacement of new trees and relocated hedging;
- Maintenance of visibility splays;
- Inspection and maintenance of benches, gates and signage;
- Routine, operational and annual safety inspections;
- Prompt response to damage, vandalism and safety defects; and
- Periodic specialist inspection in accordance with relevant standards and guidance.

While the specification explains what work should be undertaken it should be established which authority or organisation would be responsible for undertaking and funding each activity, both before and after any Community Asset Transfer.

Planning Considerations

The Town Council is a statutory consultee and not the decision-making authority. Its response should principally address material planning considerations, which may include:

- The principle of recreational development on public open space;
- The need for and benefits of youth and sports provision;
- Residential amenity, including noise and disturbance;
- Accessibility and active travel;
- Highway and pedestrian safety;
- Landscaping, trees, hedging and biodiversity;
- Drainage and flood risk;
- Design, layout and visual impact;

- Safety and natural surveillance; and
- Whether identified impacts can be addressed through design changes or enforceable planning conditions.

General concerns about the cost of the scheme, the identity of the future landowner or whether the Town council should accept a Community Asset Transfer are not, in themselves, matters determining the planning application. They are, however, important considerations for the Town Council in deciding whether it should assume ownership or management responsibility.

Questions for Members to consider

In considering the planning application, Members may wish to discuss:

1. Does the proposal provide an appropriate response to the identified need for facilities for young people?
2. Is Martins Way Park an appropriate location for the facility, taking into account accessibility, surrounding housing and existing park uses?
3. Does the proposal provide an appropriate location for the facility, taking account of accessibility, surrounding housing and existing park uses?
4. Are the likely effects on residential amenity sufficiently understood and mitigated?
5. Are the proposed access arrangements safe and is further information required about parking and traffic?
6. Are Members satisfied with the information concerning trees, hedging, ecology, drainage, and surface water management?
7. Would further mitigation be appropriate, such as additional planting, bins, cycle stands, signage, management arrangements or a review following the first year of operation?
8. Are any requested measures capable of being secured through enforceable planning conditions, rather than relying on informal assurances?

Options Available to the Working Party

Working Parties are non-decision-making committees. Their remit is to make recommendations to either the Council or it's Standing Committees.

The Working Party, therefore, should make a recommendation to Full Council of either of the following:

- Support;
- Support subject to specified conditions or further information;
- No objection, with observations;

- Objection on identified material planning grounds; or
- Deferral of response pending essential clarification, subject to the planning authority agreeing to more time.

Any response should explain the planning reasons supporting the Working Party's conclusions and should acknowledge both the identified benefits for young people and the legitimate concerns raised by neighbouring residents. The response should include any relevant policies from within the Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan.

Recommendations

1. That the Working Party considers planning application P262052/F, the supporting documents and the representations made.
2. That the Working Party formulates a recommendation in respect of a response to Herefordshire Council based on material planning considerations, without prejudging any future decision concerning a Community Asset Transfer.
3. That the Working Party identifies any mitigation measures or planning conditions it considers necessary to protect residential amenity, highway safety, landscaping, drainage and the continued wider use of the park.

Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

**POTENTIAL COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER OF MARTINS WAY PARK,
LEDBURY**

Ledbury Town Council has submitted an expression of interest in a Community Asset Transfer relating to the pump track and other associated areas of Martins Way Park.

No final decision to accept a transfer should be inferred from the expression of interest or from any planning response submitted by the Town Council. Planning permission would establish whether the proposed development is acceptable in land-use planning terms. It would not require the Town Council to accept ownership or responsibility for the facility.

Any decision on the Community Asset Transfer should be taken separately, following appropriate legal, financial, operational and technical due diligence.

Matters to Be Clarified Before Any Transfer

Members may wish to request the following information from Herefordshire Council.

(It should be noted that a request has been sent to Herefordshire Council officers containing a number of the points listed above. Should these be received by this meeting the Clerk will provide the information to the meeting.)

Extent and terms of transfer

- A plan showing the exact land and assets proposed for transfer.
- Whether the transfer would include the whole park, the pump track only, the existing play area, paths, access points, hedges, trees, drainage features, benches and other furniture.
- Whether the transfer would be freehold, lease or management agreement.
- Details of any covenants, restrictions, rights of access or retained rights.
- Whether Herefordshire Council would retain responsibility for any tree, boundary hedges, drainage caused by retained trees or hedges to the track or neighbouring property.
- Whether the land must remain as public space and the consequences if the pump track becomes unviable.

Condition of the site at handover

- What works will be completed to the wider park and existing play area before transfer.
- Whether all construction defects and outstanding landscaping works will be remedied before handover.
- The length and scope of the construction and landscaping defects period.

- Who will replace failed trees, hedging, turf or wildflower planting during the establishment period.
- Whether the existing play equipment will be independently inspected and brought to an agreed standard (Members should note that a separate EOI has been accepted in respect of the play areas within Martins Way by LTC).
- Whether existing paths, gates, fences, drainage and access points will be repaired before transfer.
- Whether any known contamination, drainage or ground-condition issues exist.

Surveys and technical information

- The date, scope and findings of the current tree and hedgerow survey.
- A detailed arboricultural impact assessment and tree protection plan.
- Current condition and safety surveys for the existing play area and other park assets.
- A topographical and drainage survey, including evidence of ground infiltration testing.
- Information concerning reported flooding affecting the park and neighbouring land.
- A utilities search and confirmation of any services or easements.
- An ecological survey proportionate to the site and proposed works.
- A boundary and title survey.
- An accessibility and equality assessment.
- A crime, disorder and site-management assessment undertaken in consultation with the police and relevant community safety officers.

Future management and cost

- The required inspection regime and the qualifications needed to undertake inspections.
- Estimated annual grounds maintenance, cleansing and inspection costs.
- Anticipated lifecycle and resurfacing costs for the pump track.
- Responsibility for litter, graffiti, vandalism and emergency callouts.
- Arrangements for reporting and responding to anti-social behaviour.
- Insurance requirements and claims history for the site.
- Whether a capital or revenue contribution would accompany the transfer.
- Whether Section 106 funding includes an allowance for future maintenance.
- Whether CCTV, additional bins, cycle stands or other management measures are proposed and how these would be funded.
- Whether the facility would be subject to opening hours and, if so how these could be practically managed without fencing and locking arrangements.

It should be noted that a request has been sent to Herefordshire Council officers containing a number of the points listed above. Should these be received by this meeting the Clerk will provide the information to the meeting.

Additional Information and Potential Financial Implications

The *management and maintenance specification*, as submitted with the pump track application is a standard recommended planning requirement. This document demonstrates compliance with relevant industry standards, and quality assurance requirements. The extent of maintenance undertaken shall be determined by available budgetary provision and the prioritisation of resources, reflecting prevailing economic constraints. Where minimum standards are sufficient to maintain a safe, good, and decent state acceptable for recreation and leisure purposes. Any enhancement beyond these requirements should be regarded as discretionary.

Currently the grass at Martins Way is cut approximately up to 8-10 times a year (with variance based on seasonal conditions). The proposed pump track uses a grass mix that introduces a broad mix of species, that aims to enhance biodiversity and is intended to be cut only 2 times a year. In effect, the pump track can be seen as being in an area of longer grass with a strip to the edge of the track (cut or sprayed) to prevent growth penetrating the asphalt.

The overall cost of grass cutting is expected to remain unchanged following the installation of the pump track, as any reduction in the area requiring mowing should be offset by the additional work needed to maintain and trim around the edges of the track.

Currently, the cost of each cut undertaken by the Ledbury Town Council Groundsman at Martins Way, which is often in addition to the cuts undertaken by Herefordshire Council, is £120. However, this does not include the small play area and a small increase would be expected to take into account this additional area. This is currently costed within Ledbury Town Councils annual budget and therefore, would not incur any substantial increase in cost to Ledbury Town Council, should they agree to take on Martins Way via a CAT.

It should be noted that the hedges are part of the grounds maintenance contract and the cost for this is included in the annual grounds maintenance costs for amenity areas and therefore, this is unlikely to incur any substantial additional costs to this Council.

However, if Ledbury Town Council were to proceed with the CAT then the responsibility for trees would fall to them, which is not currently the situation. Therefore, officers would recommend that a copy of the most recent tree surveys for this area be obtained prior to any final decision is made to proceed with the CAT. Over years this will incur additional costs for tree surveys and works but it is difficult to estimate a figure for this until it is known when the last tree survey was carried out and its findings.

Regarding the pump track, generally, there is a 10-year guarantee on the track surface, and the designers of the track from their experience have tracks operating for 15 years without any substantial repair works. They advise that the life span is approximately 30 years.

Clarification has been provided in respect of whether trees and hedges would be included in the CAT – the response received is that *“Yes, the trees and hedges are included. The CAT includes the extent of the park, up to the extent of highways (footpaths/road), and includes the trimming of the hedges along the footpaths and road.”*

CAT financial uplift

Herefordshire Council have advised that in terms of the CAT provision (current provision £75,000), there is scope to uplift this amount, subject to a written request, setting out the reasons why, and for this to be submitted to Leigh Whitehouse for consideration.

Questions for Members to consider

What additional information should be obtained before the Council considers whether to proceed with the Community Asset Transfer?

Recommendation

That the Working Party recommends that no final decision be taken on the Community Asset Transfer until the extent of the proposed transfer, condition of the assets, future responsibilities, survey information, maintenance requirements and full financial implications have been established.

MAJOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS WORKING PARTY	17 SEPTEMBER 2026	AGENDA ITEM: 5 (Supplementary information)
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Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

FEEDBACK FROM MALVERN COUNCIL

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with feedback from Malvern Town Council with respect to the creation of a pump track, similar to the one proposed for Ledbury.

Detailed Information

Whilst considering whether Ledbury Town Council should agree to take on the responsibility of the pump track and associated open space Members requested that the Clerk contact the Clerk at Malvern Town Council to understand any issues that they had encountered in respect of antisocial behaviour following the completion of their pump track.

The Clerk subsequently had a conversation with the Clerk of Malvern Town Council, and their feedback is provided below:

“They did experience some antisocial behaviour in the early days of the pump track, particularly at night, however through working with the Local Police this has helped mitigate the problems.

They advised that whilst not all of the issues have gone away it has improved considerably and at no stage does the Clerk consider the problems have been as bad as the local residents had expected.

They had a small group of around 10 residents who were quite vocal in the planning stages of the track, but the bike community tipped the balance in helping to make the decision to proceed.

The Clerk advised that there is one resident who lives opposite the car park to the area who contacts the council about issues, but other residents seem to be content with it being there now.

The Clerk advised that they created a car park as a number of residents were concerned about the number of cars that would start parking around the area, however they have noticed that whilst some people do travel by car from outside the area to use the track, it is mostly used by local residents who travel to the track on their bikes etc.

They also said they have a member of staff attending the site one or two times a day and having eyes on the site definitely helps reduce issues like littering and antisocial behaviour during the day."

On the whole the Clerk consider the feedback to be positive from Malvern Town Council and when asked whether they would do it again, the Clerk said they would definitely consider doing it again, as it has become very much valued by the local community and provided a much need space for young people in Malvern, with the youngsters taking ownership of a space they want and use, which in turn has helped to considerably reduce the antisocial behaviour in the area.

Recommendation

Members are requested to receive and note the feedback from Malvern Town Council and to take this into account when considering whether Ledbury Town Council wish to proceed with the Community Asset Transfer of Martins Way pump track and open space.