

# Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan

## Design Guide - Scoping Document

June 2019

### Background

The Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was adopted in January 2019. Some previous work had taken place to establish a Design Guide to shape how development should be undertaken in the town and the initial intention that this was document was integral to the NDP itself.

Ultimately the Design Guide was a separate, not formally adopted document, but on the recommendation of the examiner the wording referring to the Design Guide (in objective BE1. Policy BE1.1) was edited to read 'The Town Council will seek to encourage developers to make use of the Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan Design Guide'.

It is the intention of the Town Council that an appropriate updated Design Guide be developed so that is integrated within the planned revision of the NDP. It will seek proposals from appropriate consultants to help it produce the guide in line with this scoping document.

### CABE (The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment)

A design code (the NDPWP description of what is proposed is a Design Guide on advice from the Herefordshire NDP support team) is a type of design guidance but detailed and written as a set of instructions or rules. A design code can be useful where there are a number of stakeholders involved in long-term development or to prescribe very detailed requirements particularly when dealing with historic buildings.

Design codes are technical documents and require the expertise of an experienced design professional if you choose to adopt this route. A code secures design quality early on in a development but decisions about what rules are fixed and what is flexible needs to be made early on. Preparing a good design code is about finding a balance between technical specificity and a succinct description of what is required. Some of the best, most effective codes are very short.

### Scope

The broad objectives/requirements of the Design Guide should be:

- To consult with the NDP working party to establish the towns aspirations in order to establish key objectives.
- To develop a Design Guide that is sufficiently robust that it can form an integral part of the NDP. This may be as an accompanying document but could also be as an extension of an existing policy or new policy all together (to be established through the process).
- Undertake a character assessment of the town to inform policies.
- The process for the adoption of the Design Guide will likely need to be developed, this may include consultation and examiners review so allowances should be made for minor amends as a result.

## Design Guide

All elements of the Design Guide should be based on sound assessment of the locality and relevant design guidance in order to establish an evidence-based set of requirements. It is anticipated that the Design Guide should address:

- **The style, form & materiality** for development (e.g. new build residential/commercial, building conservation, shop frontages/signage etc) based on an assessment of local architectural styles and how these could be applied whilst avoiding poor quality pastiche development.
- **Placemaking** so that new developments, for example, are creating well considered communities that are integrated with the town – and how this can be measured (i.e. through Building for Life 12 assessment).
- **Landscape design** to ensure an appropriate approach to specification and design of hard and soft landscaping. This could also cover design and use of sustainable drainage (Suds) measures to avoid overly engineered solutions.
- **Meeting housing need** in terms of size, tenure, access, elderly accommodation
- **Sustainable design** – setting a standard for quality of construction is difficult but there is a clear aspiration for Ledbury to lead the way with low energy buildings. There are a variety of standards (such as Passivhaus, AECB, BREEAM) but setting these as a requirement may be difficult?
- **A requirement for certain developments to undertake consultation** with the public as well as the Town Council (or potentially the NDP Working Group / Design Group) at key points during the project development (i.e. when there is a chance to influence proposals and again, potentially, to explain final proposals).