

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

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

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

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