

Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan Reg 14 Consultation

Introduction

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) set out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

At the heart of the NPPF is the principle of sustainable development, which identifies three overarching objectives:

- An economic objective – to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy.
- A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities.
- An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act of 2011 reformed the planning system to give residents of towns new rights to shape the development of the communities in which they live.

The Influence of the Core Strategy

The next level of planning policy below the NPPF is Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy 2011-2031. The Core Strategy requires that "Ledbury will accommodate 800 new homes balanced with approximately 15 hectares of new employment land during the plan period". Further information particular to Ledbury is contained in Section 4.5 of the Core Strategy.

With completions and planning permissions for around 1,200 dwellings since 2011, including 625 homes to the north of the Viaduct, 415 homes south of Leadon Way, 93 homes on land behind the Full Pitcher, and windfall developments elsewhere, the minimum target of 800 homes set out in the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy for the Neighbourhood Area has been exceeded by around 50%. This has not been matched by the required growth in employment development or community facilities.

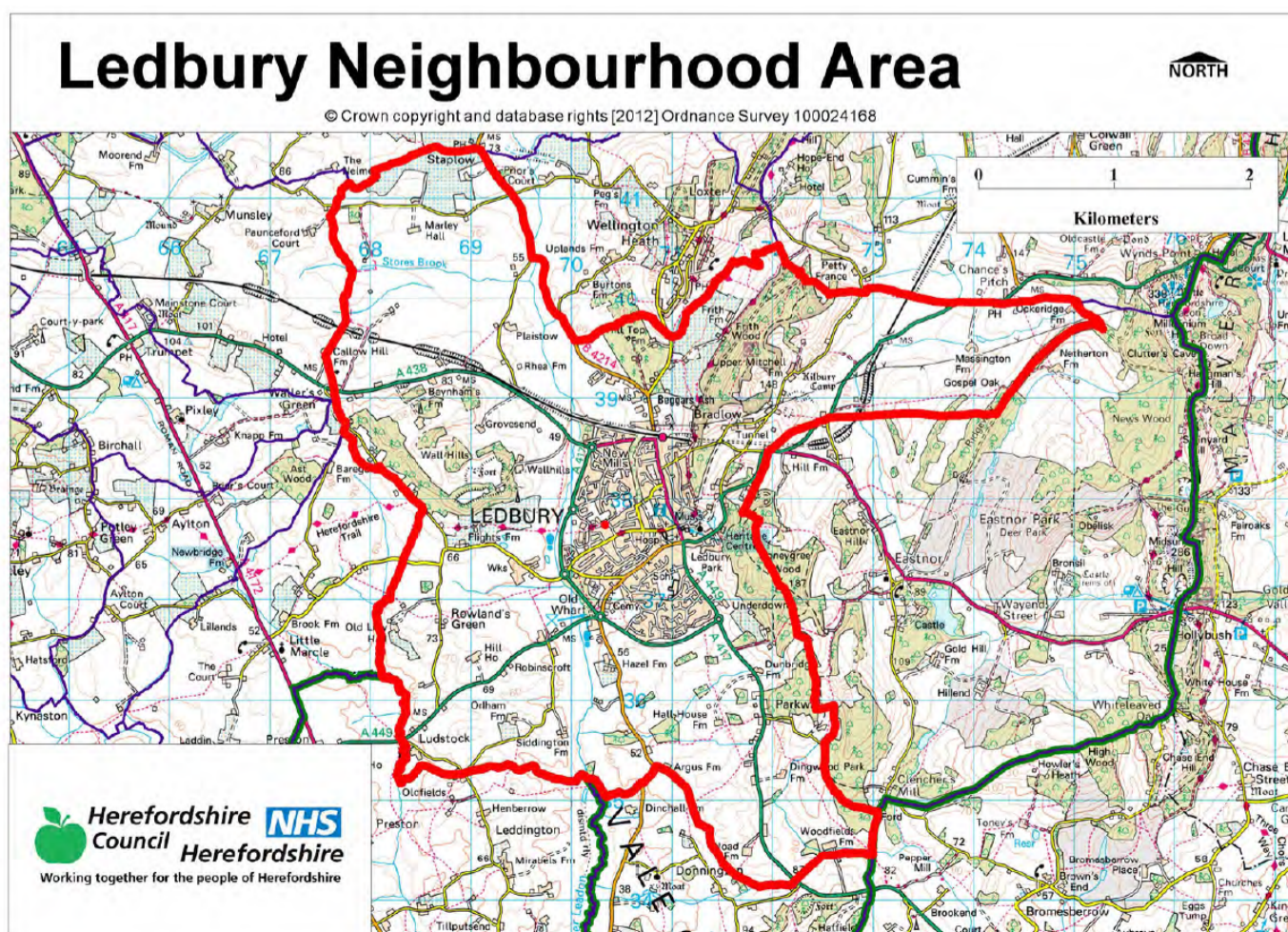
There are two policies within the Core Strategy that relate specifically to Ledbury—LB1 and LB2:

Policy LB1- Development in Ledbury

Ledbury will accommodate a minimum of 800 new homes balanced with a minimum of 15 hectares of new employment land during the plan period. The majority of new housing development will be focused to the north of the town as set out in Policy LB2 and the strategic location for new employment of around 12 hectares to the west of the town, south of Little Marcle Road.

Policy LB2 - Land north of the Viaduct

Development proposals north of the viaduct in Ledbury will be expected to achieve a sustainable mixed use urban extension of the town.



Ledbury NDP Vision and Objectives / Sustainable development

The Vision:

1. Preserve and Develop Prosperity
2. Preserve and Develop Wellbeing
3. Preserve Quality and Character
4. Widen Employment Base
5. Develop Educational Facilities
6. Develop Sport and Recreation
7. Preserve Environment
8. Nurture the Town Centre

In order to achieve sustainable development, the NDP does the following, all of which contribute to at least one of the three objectives for sustainable development:

- Defines a settlement boundary in order to ensure that new residential and other relevant development is located in sustainable locations, close to services and amenities.
- Supports appropriate housing growth in order to meet the housing needs of present and future generations.
- Seeks to protect and enhance the historic environment.
- Seeks to protect and enhance the natural environment and surrounding landscape.
- Includes provisions for the protection of biodiversity.
- Protects existing employment and retail provision and proactively seeks to enable new employment areas in order to contribute towards building a strong, responsive and competitive economy.
- Encourages food production in order to create new jobs and contribute to the local economy.
- Protects local green infrastructure and open spaces.
- Proactively promotes the provision of new community infrastructure and protection of existing provision, especially to meet the need for additional playing fields.
- The Objectives and Policies are set out as below:

The Objectives are in **blue**

The Policies are in a box

The Reasoned Justification is set out in italics after each policy in the Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2021 – 2031: Ledbury Town Council Draft, January 2022, which can be found online at <https://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/en-gb/ndp-documents>

85% of residents who responded told us they would like a settlement boundary including existing and all currently approved permitted developments plus protection for the Riverside Park and areas for recreation and employment southwest of Little Marcle Road.

Changes made
following the
consultation in Summer
2021

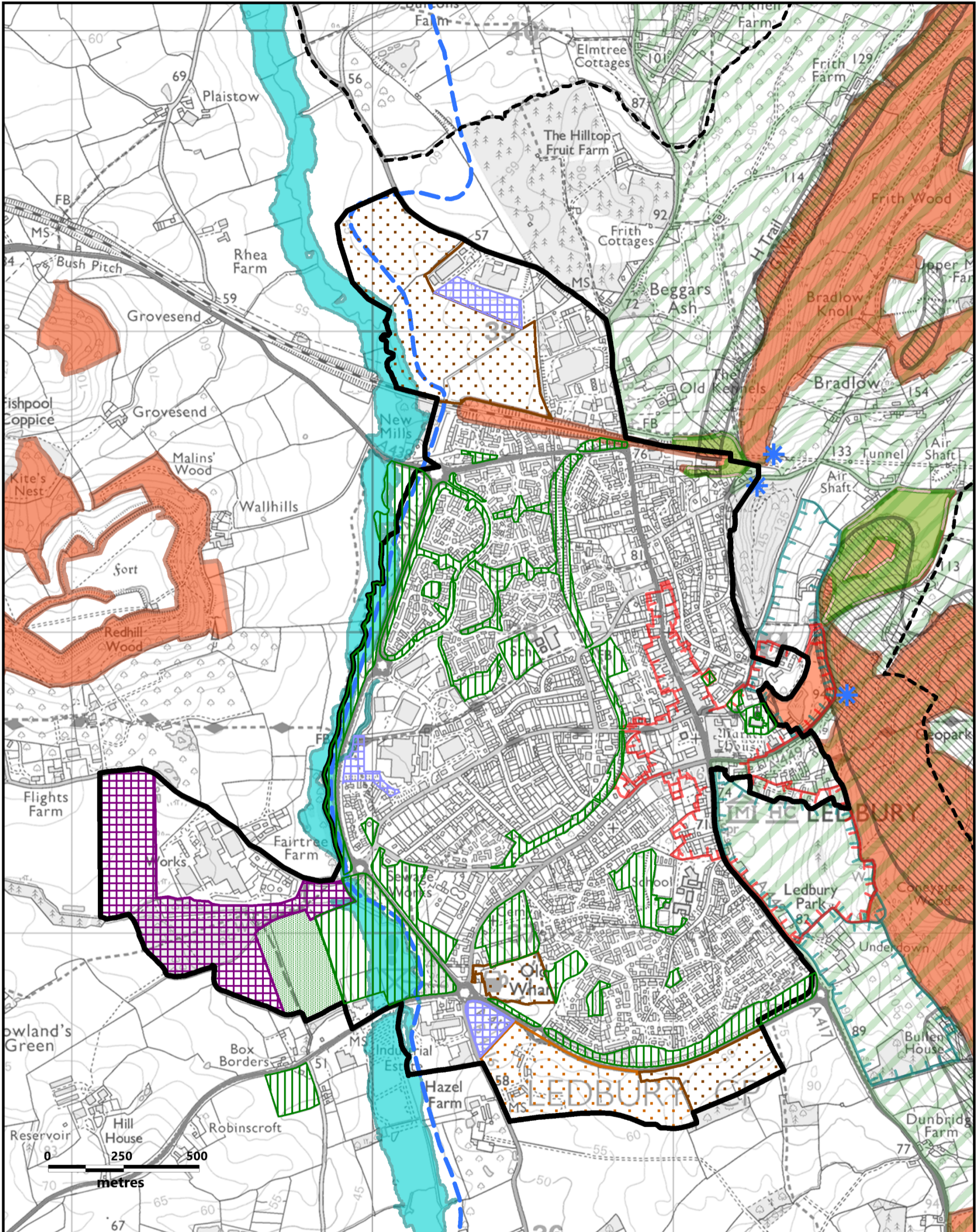
Objective SD1: To respond to the climate change emergency by developing Ledbury as a forward thinking, self-reliant and sustainable lifestyle community.

Policy SD1.1 Ledbury as a Self-Sustaining Community

Policy SD1.2 Settlement Boundary

Policy SD1.3 Sustainable Design

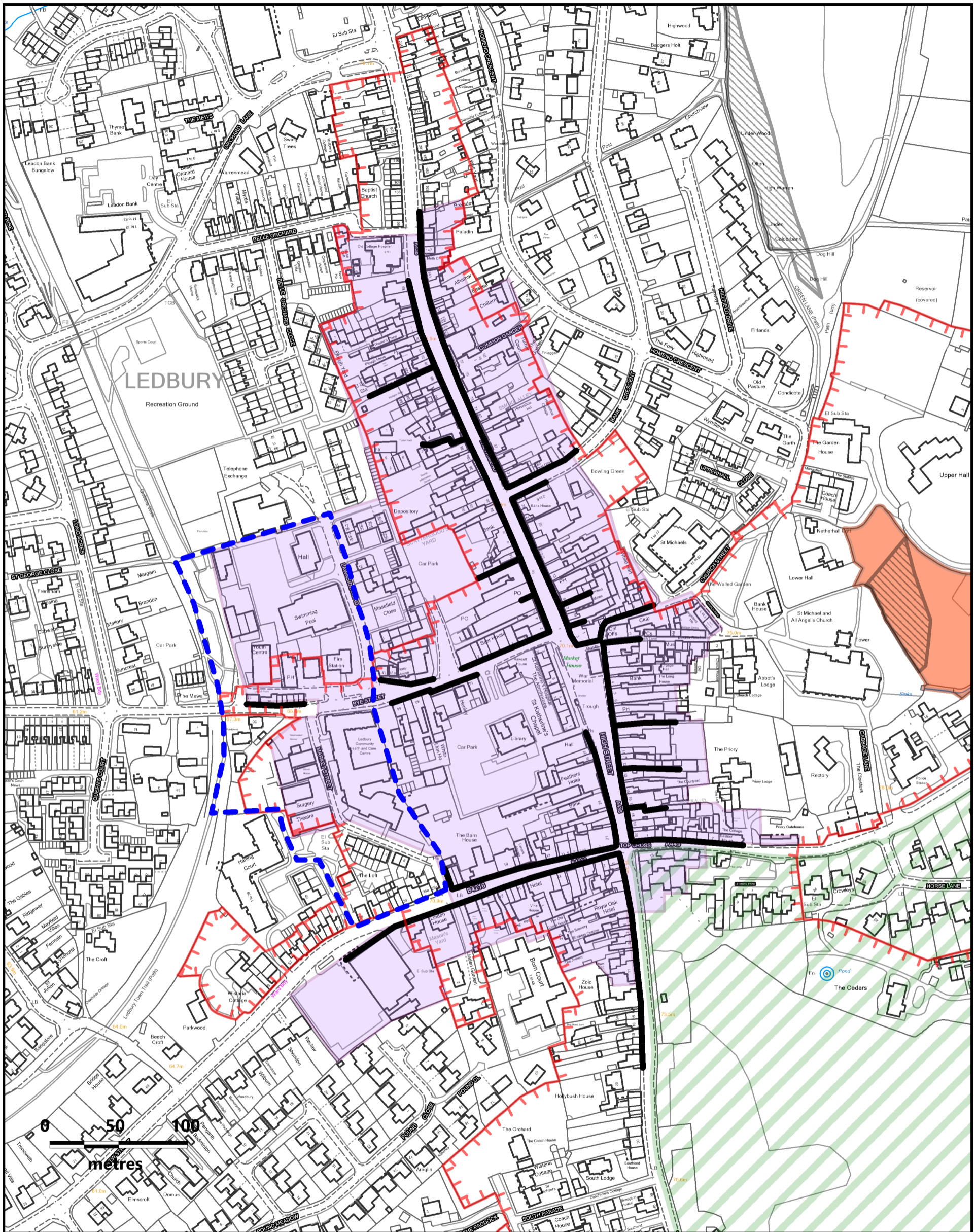
Ledbury Town Policies Map










Ledbury Town Map Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan

- | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Site of Special Scientific Interest (NE1.1) | Safeguarding Mineral Reserves | Local Geological Sites (NE1.1) | Committed/Allocated Housing Sites (SD1.2) | Proposed New Playing Field (CL2.2) |
| Local Wildlife Sites (NE1.1) | Ledbury Conservation Area (BE2.1) | Proposed route of Hereford to Gloucester Canal (NE2.1) | Housing Sites Under Construction | Ledbury Town Settlement Boundary (SD1.2) |
| Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NE2.1) | Parks and Gardens Unregistered (BE2.1) | | New Small Employment Sites (EE1.2) | Protected Open and Green Space (CL2.1) |
| Land Liable to Flood | Ledbury Civil Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area | | New Employment Site south of Little Marcle Road (EE1.1) | |

Town Centre Map



-  Ledbury Conservation Area (BE2.1)
-  Local Wildlife Sites (NE1.1)
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NE2.1)
-  Safeguarding Mineral Reserves
-  Shopping Frontages and Primary Shopping Area (EE3.1)
-  Defined Town Centre (EE3.2)
-  Lawnside & Market Street Regeneration and Opportunities Area (EE3.3)

Ledbury Town Centre Map Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan



Housing - Objectives & Policies

There is no need to consider further housing development within this review in that the amount of new housing is significantly greater than that proposed by the Core Strategy.

The Policies below reflect the fact that the Core Strategy target has been exceeded and promotes housing development to meet the immediate needs of the community, most particularly affordable starter units for the young and new families and appropriate units for the elderly.

Objective HO1: To ensure that new housing in Ledbury meets the needs of residents.

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.

Ledbury's Large Housing Sites

The Ledbury Town Policies Map indicates the location of committed housing sites and these comprise:

- Market Street Auctions Rooms
- the Viaduct Site
- the Full Pitcher Site
- land South of Leadon Way
- land South of Leadon way off the Gloucester Road Roundabout

At the time of drafting this NDP, only one of these developments had commenced construction with a considerable number of dwellings on other sites yet to be started. The committed yet undeveloped sites are retained as housing allocations, identified on the Ledbury Town Policies Map, given the possibility that their planning permissions may expire before development commences (see Policy SD1.2).

These five sites together amount to commitments of over 1,000 homes. It is considered that these sites, in conjunction with windfall sites that have already or will come forward within the settlement boundary, considerably exceed the needs of the town in terms of housing provision over the plan period.

Objective HO2: To ensure that all new housing in Ledbury is developed in a sustainable manner.

Policy HO2.1 Reinforcing Balanced Housing Communities

Policy HO2.2 Housing Density

Policy HO2.3 Design Criteria for Residential Development

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

Objective HO4: To provide sustainable and affordable homes for local singles and young families in order to promote balanced communities.

Policy HO4.1 Housing for Young People

Objective HO5: To encourage individual and community based self-build projects.

Policy HO5.1 Self-Build



No significant changes to these objectives & policies

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

Changes made following the consultation in Summer 2021

There was agreement (72%) that more than one site should be considered to meet the requirement of 12 hectares (approx. 30 acres) of **new employment land** to the south of Little Marcle Road.

There was agreement (75%) that the Land by the Full Pitcher roundabout and adjacent to the new housing development (Hawk Rise) should be considered for **employment restricted to uses suitable near to a residential area.**

There was agreement (62%) that smaller areas elsewhere on the edge of the town should be identified to **accommodate new or expanded businesses.**

- Sustainable technology industries such as renewable energy and recycling.

Policy EE1.1 New Employment Sites – Land South of Little Marcle Road

Policy EE1.2 Small Employment Sites Within and Adjoining the Town

Policy EE1.3 Protecting Existing Employment Land

Objective EE2: Promote and enhance facilities necessary to attract visitors and to encourage tourism.

Policy EE2.1 Promoting Visitor Accommodation

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.

The majority of respondents wanted **areas added to the currently defined town centre.** There were only 106 respondents out of 795 who wanted to keep the Town Centre as it was defined in the Unitary Development Plan. There is a clear wish from respondents to extend the Town Centre definition.

Further work from the NDP Steering Group has proposed a new Town Centre Boundary after consultation with the public, businesses and planning officers. See Town Centre Map.

There was agreement (84%) that a **co-ordinated approach to the regeneration of Lawnside and Market Street** was needed.

Policy EE3.1 Protection of Shopping Frontages and Primary Shopping Area

Policy EE3.2 Defined Town Centre

Policy EE3.3 Lawnside and Market Street Regeneration and Opportunities Area

Built Environment – Objectives & Policies

It is important that any new development takes account of the opportunities and constraints offered by individual sites and the surrounding area, to deliver sympathetically responsive design solutions that will stand the test of time. Although a number of development specific design policies are located in other sections of this NDP, the following policies promote the maintenance and enhancement of the Town's local distinctiveness.

Changes made
following the
consultation in Summer
2021

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.

There was agreement (83%) from respondents that the NDP should include policies covering as **wide a range of design matters** as possible.

There was strong agreement (88%) that the NDP should include policies to support **sustainable development** to mitigate the climate and ecological emergency.

Policy BE1.1 Design

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. Developers should comply with the design policies in this NDP and utilise the associated guidance contained within Appendices 1 and 2. Significant elements of the Ledbury Design Guide have been incorporated into this NDP together with supporting information produced in association with the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy. Further, the design review process can provide an opportunity to save time and money and speed up proposals through the planning process by getting design issues resolved early on. Early consultation with the local community is also recommended and a further explanation of the approach which Ledbury Town Council advocates is explained in Chapter 12.

Objective BE2: To promote preservation and enhancement of the Parish's heritage assets and character.

Policy BE2.1 Protecting and Enhancing Heritage Assets

Ledbury Conservation Area

Ledbury Conservation Area is fundamental to the character of the town. National policy and guidance, particularly that set out in Chapter 16 of the NPPF (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) and Core Strategy Policy LD4 (Historic environment and heritage assets), or any Policy which may replace it, work together with policy BE2.1 to protect this valuable resource.



Natural Environment - Objectives & Policies

Changes made following the consultation in Summer 2021

Objective NE1: To maintain, enhance and increase existing open spaces, trees and hedgerows in order to promote and support wildlife and biodiversity.

There was strong support from respondents (90%) that the **new and extended corridors and enhancement zones** should be added to the existing green infrastructure identified in the Herefordshire Green Infrastructure Report.

Policy NE1.1 Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Please see Green spaces and Green infrastructure corridors & enhancement zones.

There was strong support (96%) that all green and open spaces should generally be **afforded protection as contributing to green infrastructure** within and surrounding the town.

Objective NE2: To conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of the Parish.

Policy NE2.1 Conserving the Landscape and Scenic Beauty of the Parish

Policy NE2.2 Protecting Important Views and the setting of the Town

Objective NE3: To promote local food production and encourage small-scale, sustainable producers.

There was agreement (87%) that **allotments and/or community gardens** should be encouraged.



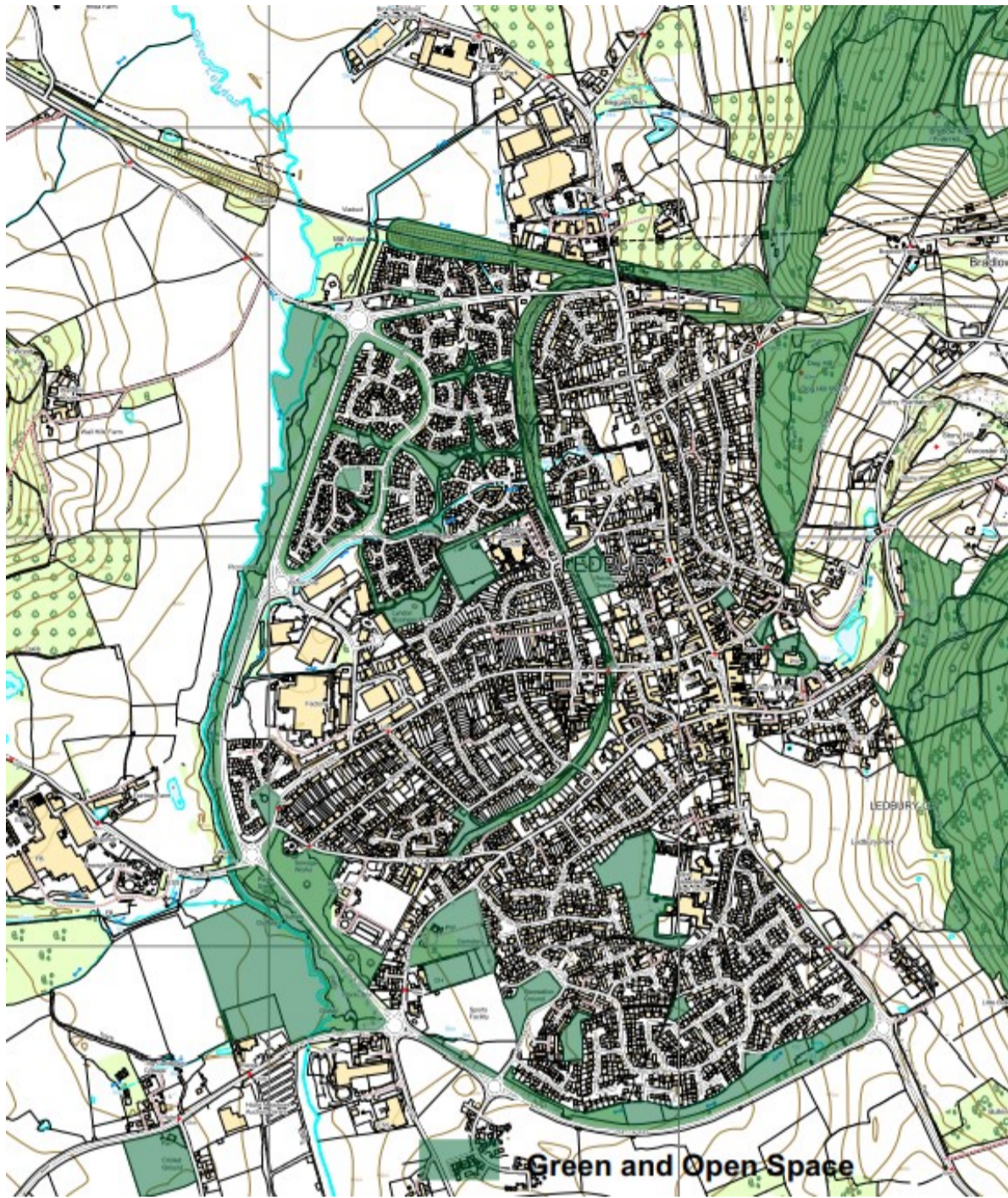
Policy NE3.1 Allotments and Community Gardens in and around Ledbury

Objective NE4: To ensure that agricultural and other economic activity in the countryside does not unacceptably impact on the existing natural beauty, biodiversity and visual appeal of Ledbury and surrounding areas.

Policy NE4.1 Farming Landscape around Ledbury

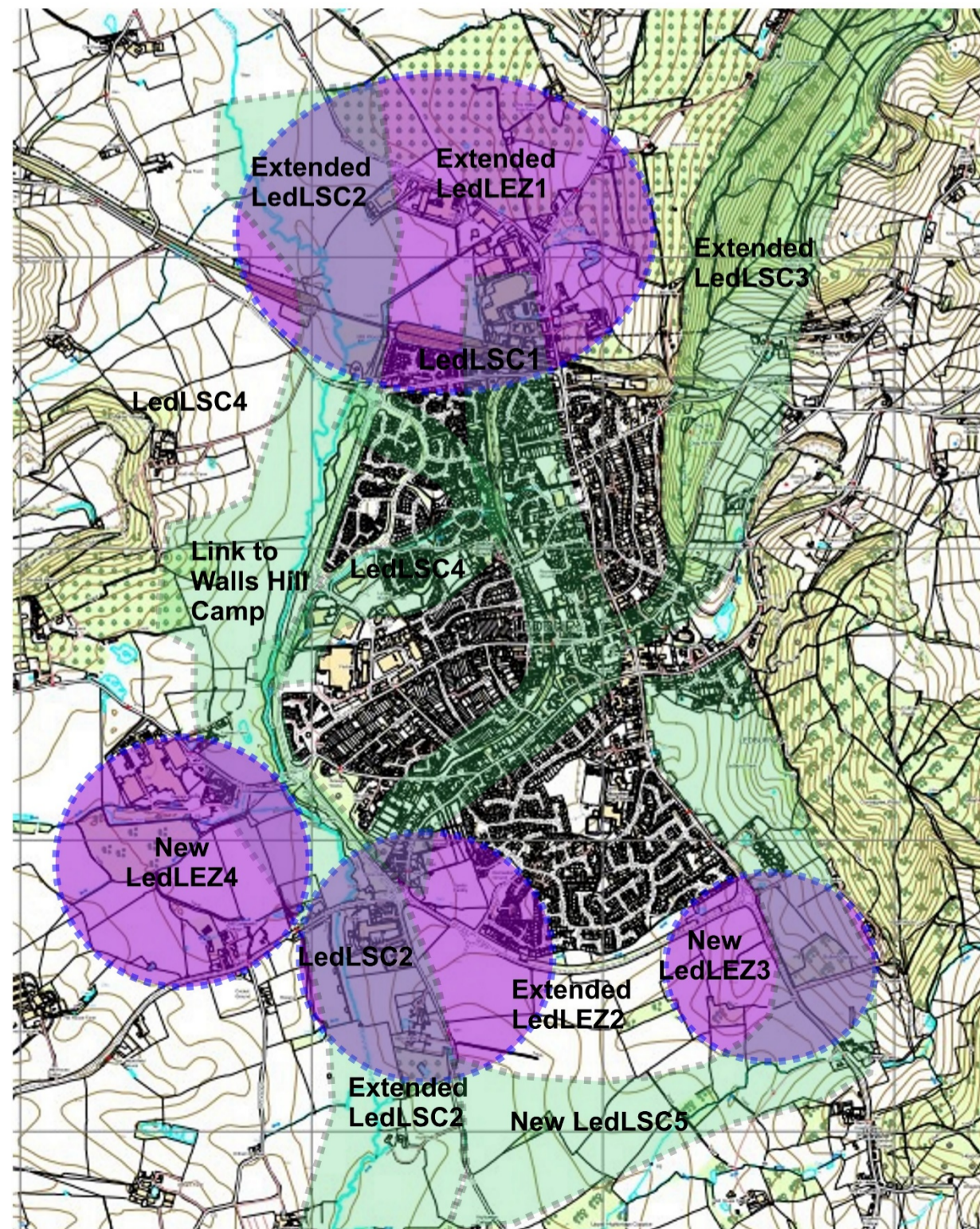
Objective NE5: To register the historic woods above Ledbury as being community assets, for their historical significance, utility value, contribution to the amenity of the town and wellbeing of residents, as being sources of sustainable wood supplies and as sites of natural beauty and wildlife biodiversity that make Ledbury an attractive tourist destination.

Policy NE5.1 Protecting Ledbury's Woods



Green spaces

Green infrastructure corridors & enhancement zones



Community & Leisure - Objectives & Policies

Objective CL1: To enable improvements to medical, care, emergency, educational and youth facilities commensurate with the needs of the whole community as the town grows.

Objective CL2: To protect and enhance our green and open spaces and playing fields, including the Riverside Park and the Line Bank Town Trail.

Changes made following the consultation in Summer 2021

There was some concern about the **current level of infrastructure** of the Town. Comments were made about the medical facilities, schools, roads and recreation facilities being already strained; additional development would therefore increase this pressure.

There was strong support (86%) for **providing land to expand provision for sport** being a high priority for this NDP update.

There was agreement (79%) that any **new adult and junior shared football facility should be on the indicated site off Little Marcle Road.**

In terms of **other recreational or leisure needs** for which land should be identified, there was felt to be a general need for more open space, more diversity of sports to be considered and the importance of space to walk and cycle.

Policy CL1.1 Community Services and Facilities Proposals for new or expanded community

Policy CL2.1 Protection of Open and Green Spaces and Playing Fields

Policy CL2.2 Alternative Use of Land South of Little Marcle Road as Playing Fields.



Transport & Infrastructure - Objectives and Policies

Objective TR1: To promote the use of sustainable transport methods such as cycling, walking and public transport as a primary means of getting around the Parish of Ledbury and providing connectivity to neighbouring parishes.

Changes made following the consultation in Summer 2021

There was substantial input from respondents on **footpaths, cycleways or other connections** that could be improved or created to benefit residents and give access to green space and wildlife.

There was quite a wide variety of locations where **safer footpaths** were requested. The more commonly cited ones were north of Ledbury to Wellington Heath, up Knapp Lane to provide a safe walking route to Frith Wood and Dog Wood, pavements both sides of the roads by the bypass and connections between Ledbury and neighbouring parishes.

There was strong support from respondents (81%) that the option to create **vehicular access off the Hereford Road to the viaduct housing development** be preserved for the future.

There were many comments specifically about having **safe cycleways**. Although the largest common response was to have safer cycleways on every route, as per footpaths, additional routes mentioned were connections between Ledbury and the neighbouring parishes, along the river and from new developments to the town centre.

Policy TR1.1 Footpaths & Cycleways

Policy TR1.2 Highway Requirements

Objective TR2: To encourage the use of Ledbury Railway Station as a transport hub for Ledbury and district by

There was strong support from respondents (81%) agreeing with the provision of ground level eastbound platform access, improved platform services and additional car parking at the railway station.

Disabled access to both platforms was absolutely needed. The proposed access to the north of the station was potentially not the best solution with concerns around loss of green space and adding to the traffic congestion already around that location with risks that it will get worse with further planned development.

There were differing opinions about the need for additional parking. Some felt that there was enough parking, but with high charges the allocated parking was not used, with many using nearby residential streets.

improving access and facilities with additional parking.

Policy TR2.1 Ledbury Railway Station

How to respond after you have read the draft plan

After you have read the draft plan there are a number of ways you can feed in your comments on the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan and its policies:

1. The Response Form can be completed online (preferred if possible) at https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LedburyNDP_Reg14 or via the link on the council website <https://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/en-gb/ndp-process>

2. It can also be accessed via the QR code.



3. Alternatively, paper copies of the Response Form can be collected from Ledbury Town Council Offices in Church Lane during working hours. If responding on a paper version, send your comments to Ledbury Town Council either:
 - by post to: Freepost LTC NDP (put in an envelope; no stamp required)
 - by hand to: Ledbury Town Council Offices (letter box in Church Lane)
 - by email to: clerk@ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk

Paper copies of the draft plan are available to view at Ledbury Town Council offices and Ledbury Library.