



STATIONS AS PLACES

Opportunity Prospectus

An integrated masterplan vision and delivery plan for Ledbury



Ledbury Station

July 2020



Introducing the concept of Stations for Places

The Stations as Places programme aims to promote local railway stations as community 'hubs' rather than simply access points onto the rail network. The vision is to develop local railway stations as an asset highly valued within the community, contributing to economic growth and acting as a hub for creativity, heritage and social amenity.

The Vision

"We will develop stations as quality gateways between communities and the railway, supporting the changing needs of our passengers, residents and visitors. Stations in the West Midlands will be community assets, supporting the wellbeing and development of the areas they serve through involving local community and business."

West Midlands Station Alliance (WMSA) Mission Statement

What does the prospectus do for Ledbury Station?

There is an important role for the railways to play in both the economic and social regeneration of the local areas which our stations serve. This Opportunity Prospectus sets out the economic, social and geographic landscape of the area around the station and highlights some of the opportunities for commercial development, partnership working, inward investment and community regeneration. We have included a profile of Ledbury station in this document and looked at different types of activity neighboring the station; from local businesses providing facilities to the travelling public to the local authorities using existing assets in different ways, from businesses looking for investment opportunities to the impact of new development in the surrounding area.

Why 'Stations as Places' for Ledbury?

Who are the West Midlands Station Alliance?

The WMSA is a formal alliancing arrangement between industry partners with a common vision and forward plan, including infrastructure owner Network Rail, station facilities owner West Midlands Trains (WMT) and the local government West Midlands Rail Executive. The role of the WMSA is to facilitate Stations as Places by bringing together various stakeholders to work together in partnership; ensuring that the Stations as Places vision and local aspirations are shared between the stakeholders, the infrastructure owner, the station facilities owner and the local government.

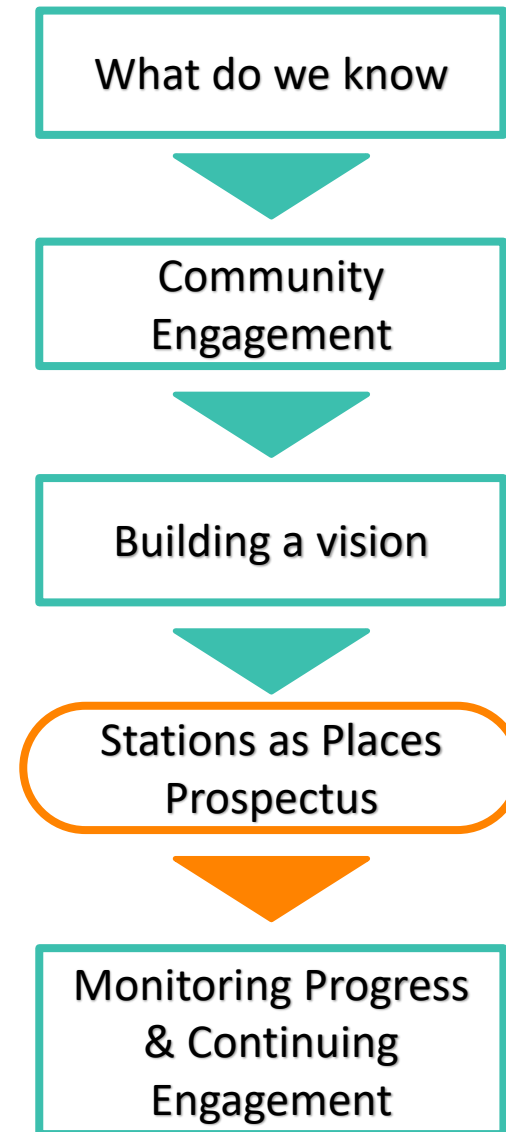
Why Ledbury Station has been selected?

Ledbury is a key station for commuters into Hereford, Birmingham, Worcester and London, as well as for bringing visitors into the market town and providing rail access to Hereford. The station has an important role to play in the economic growth of the town through supporting growth in tourism as well as enabling the residents of Ledbury to access employment, education and training across Herefordshire, Worcestershire and the West Midlands by opening Ledbury to the large workforce region wide.

The drivers for developing this location

Ledbury Station is used by 218,822 passengers annually: a growth of over 12% since 2014. There are limited facilities at Ledbury station, and it is not currently designated as step free. The station does have a ticket office which is operated by an external company. The station is located roughly 10 minutes away from the main part of Ledbury town centre. Although Ledbury station is not located next to any National Cycle Routes or National Trust Paths, Herefordshire Council has developed a walking and cycling map for the Ledbury town area. Ledbury station is a short drive away from the M50 motorway which leads to the South of England. The A449 and A417 both run through Ledbury town.

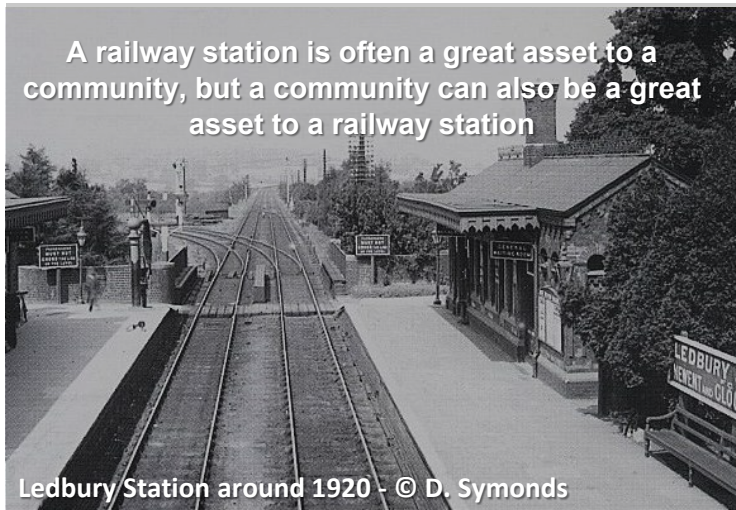
1. [Ledbury Walking and Cycling map: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2528/ledbury_walking_and_cycling_map.pdf](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2528/ledbury_walking_and_cycling_map.pdf)



Bringing our Partners together

Our stakeholders really matter to us. Whether it's a major developer building new homes in reach of the station or an individual customer that needs to be able to make an easy journey to a hospital appointment using a combination of train and bus, the Stations as Places team wants to hear views from stakeholders and customers.

Social Value



Ledbury Station is already a valuable community asset which needs to be cared for now and in the future, however, there is room for growing the community's involvement in the station. Hence, the local community being identified as an opportunity for the station.

Local Perspective



To help shape the future of Ledbury Station and the area around it to the needs and requirements of the local community, involving the community is critical. The travel survey and workshops can establish what needs to be improved and allows us to hear the local voices.

Legacy



This will involve the community taking a level of ownership of the stations and passing this onto the future generations to keep each station a valuable part of the local community. Of course, Network Rail, West Midlands Trains and the local government will also have an important role in the legacy of the station and that is why partnership working between the community and these organizations is so important.

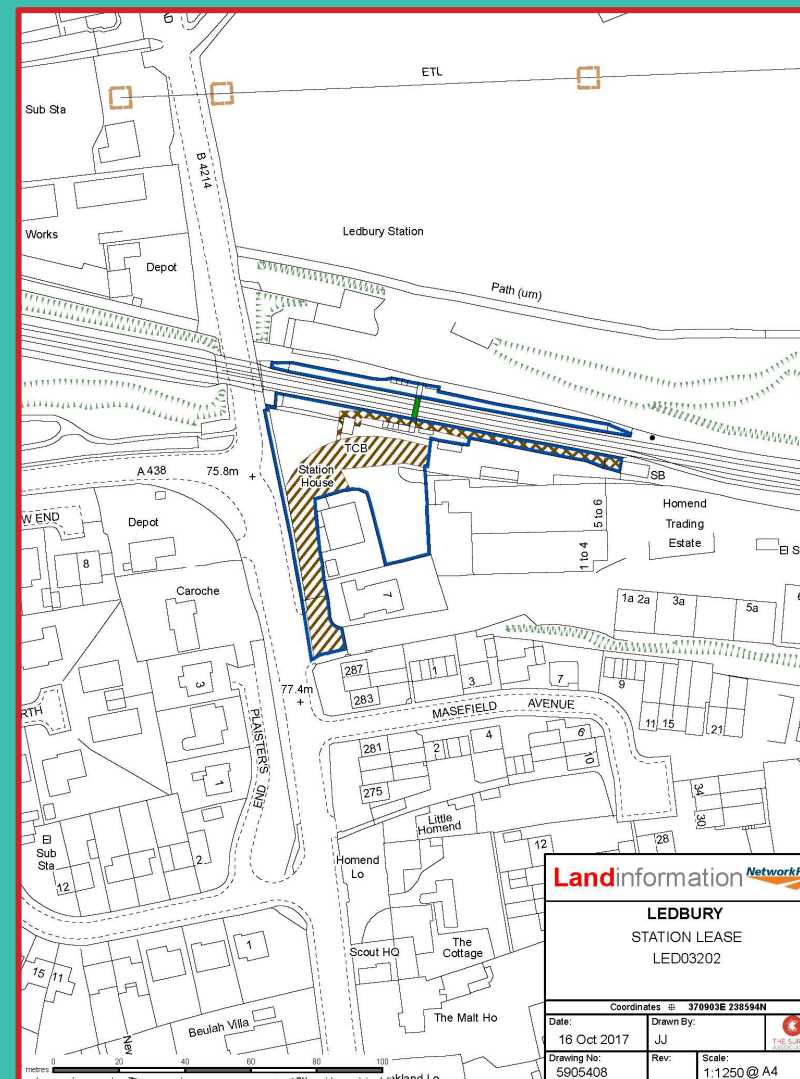
Key Facts

- Ledbury Station was originally built by the West Midland Railway and opened on the 15th of September 1861. Near the station lies Ledbury Viaduct which finished construction on the 12th of June 1861 and used over five million bricks for the structure. The official opening ceremony didn't go 100% smoothly. A local woman called Ms Richards was meant to perform the ceremony but she was left behind by the special charter train which was meant to bring her to the event. Luckily, she was still able to get to the viaduct and laid the final brick using a silver trowel.
- A well-known poet, John Masefield was born and brought up in Ledbury. A school in Ledbury has been named after him as well as the road, Masefield Avenue which is located next to the train railway station.
- Ledbury itself has origins which dates to 690AD as well as buildings dating back from the 1600s. A good example of this is the Ledbury Market House which was built in 1617. Due to Ledbury having an array of historical buildings, the town is very popular with tourists.

Station Typology

Local Gateway – Serves the small town and local centre

- A small station which serves the local community
- Local bus connections to neighbouring areas
- Easy access to Ledbury Town Centre and the towns residential areas

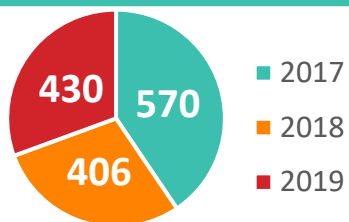


Land within the blue line boundary is leased by Network Rail to West Midlands Trains. West Midlands Trains is required to meet lease holder conditions on behalf of the landlord, Network Rail. This comprises of maintenance and enhancements to station areas, including the station buildings, platforms and facilities.

Annual Passenger Footfall

Ledbury	
2017	200,849
2018	209,191
2019	210,861
Percentage Change	4.98%

Source: Office of Rail and Road (ORR) Estimates of Station Usage 2018-19



Crime and Safety Figures

- Recorded crimes have risen slightly between 2018 and 2019 by 24 although crimes dropped by 164 in 2017
- The most common recorded crime in 2018 was Anti-Social Behaviour

Car Parking

- The car park is in front of the station upon entry. The car park has enough space to cater for the usual amount of usage which the station usually gets although this has informal parking habits on neighbouring roads such as Masefield Avenue since parking charges were introduced in 2019.
- The station car park, operated by SABA on behalf of West Midlands Railway, has the following features:

- 50 spaces - plus 2 accessible badges.
- No EV charging available.
- Open 24/7 and is paid.

Parking Rates	
Daily	£3.00
Off Peak	£2.10
Saturday Rate	£2.10
Sunday Rate	£2.10
Weekly Rate	£11.50
Monthly Rate	£36.00
Annual Pass	£290.00

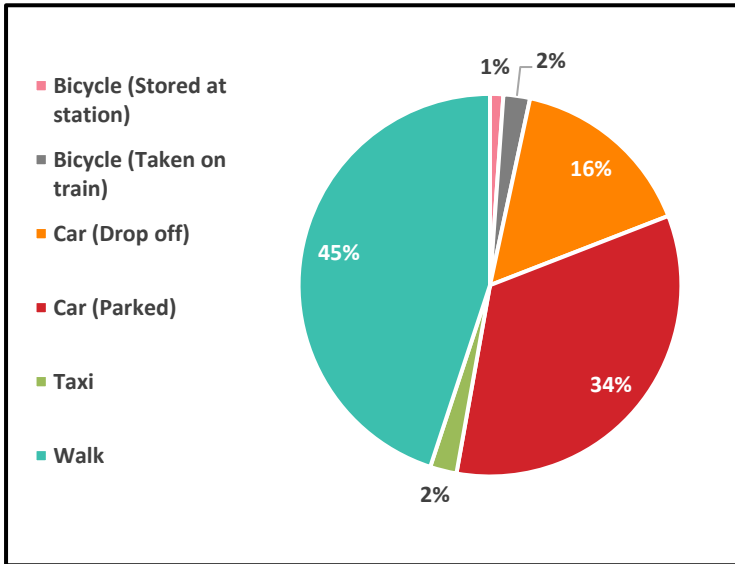
Station Services

- The ticket hut is staffed on Mondays to Fridays between 06:30 and 12:00, Saturday from 07:00 to 12:00 and is closed on a Sunday
- Help points and customer information screens are available on both platforms
- The Hereford bound platform is the only step free platform meaning that disabled users cant travel towards Worcester and Birmingham direct from Ledbury

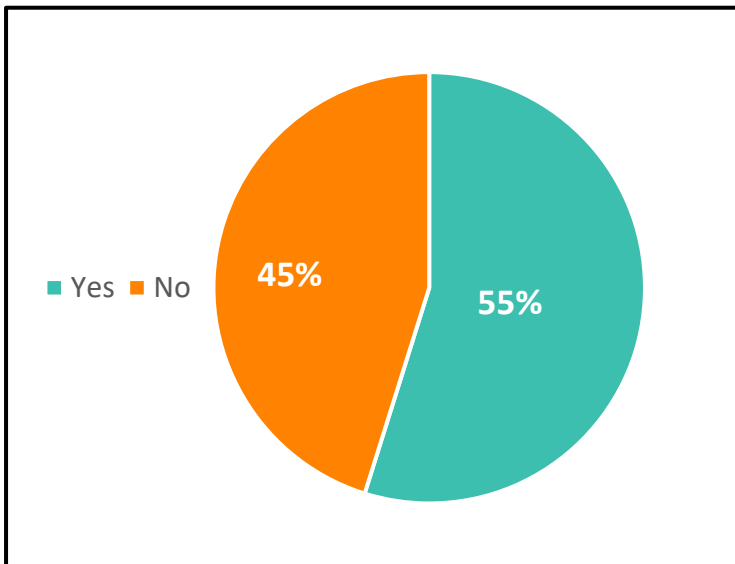
Public Transport, Walking and Cycling Access

- Ledbury station only has one entrance to the station which is from the car park onto Platform 1 (the Hereford bound platform). Customers can access the station from the main ramp which goes down onto the A438. The route into the station is step free although you cannot access Platform 2 step free due to the station footbridge not being accessible.
- Ledbury is a small station located on the Eastern border of Herefordshire and is well connected with the town itself being a 10-minute walk down the road from the station. Ledbury station is on the border of the town meaning that only the walk into the town and residential areas has A footway. The B4214 which starts next to the station and goes towards Wellington Heath and Staplow is a national speed limit country lane with tight hedges and no footway.
- Ledbury station also has a bus stop right next to its entrance. The bus stops are served by both DRM Bus which is a local family ran bus company based in Bromyard which runs services to Hereford and FirstBus Worcestershire who operate busses to Great Malvern, Worcester, Hereford and New Mills. A good competitor with the ready existing rail services.
- The area is well known due to its many historical buildings located in the main town of Ledbury. Such attractions include the Market House which was built in 1617 and Ledbury Park which was built around 1600

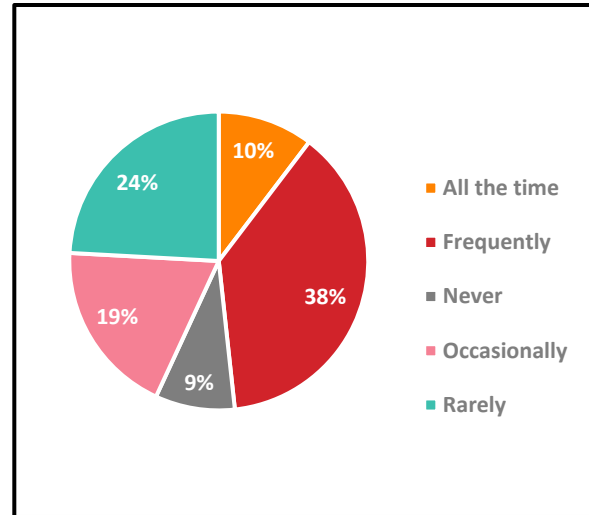
How do you usually travel to the station?



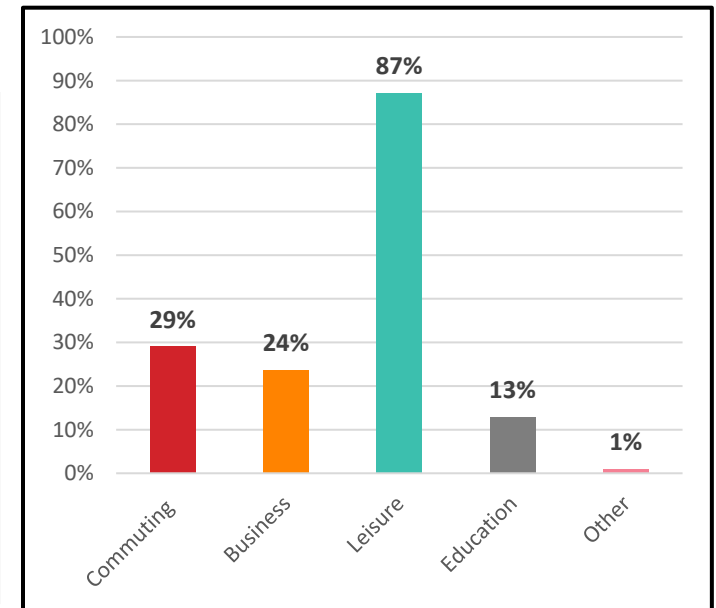
Have you ever had a mobility issue on a journey to, from or at Ledbury station?



How often can you find a parking space at Ledbury station?



What do you use the train for?



Did you know?

- Over 95% of the valid respondents listed Ledbury as their local or primary station. Only a few individual respondents listed other stations such as Malvern Link, Colwall and Hereford.
- 48% of respondents stated they can always or frequently get spaces at the station. This low figure may be due to the high number of leisure travellers who filled out the survey. By the time they have got to the station spaces will have been taken by commuters who may not have filled out this survey. This is backed up by 33% of respondents saying they can rarely or never find a space.
- 55% of respondents have stated they've had mobility access issues when using Ledbury station. This figure is quite high and is a contributing factor as to why respondents don't travel by rail more often. Ledbury station is only step free in one direction with one platform only being accessible by a footbridge. For older rail users or passengers with luggage and pushchairs this would make using the station difficult and may mean passengers feel using another station or another mode of transport more convenient.

The Station – Services and Trains



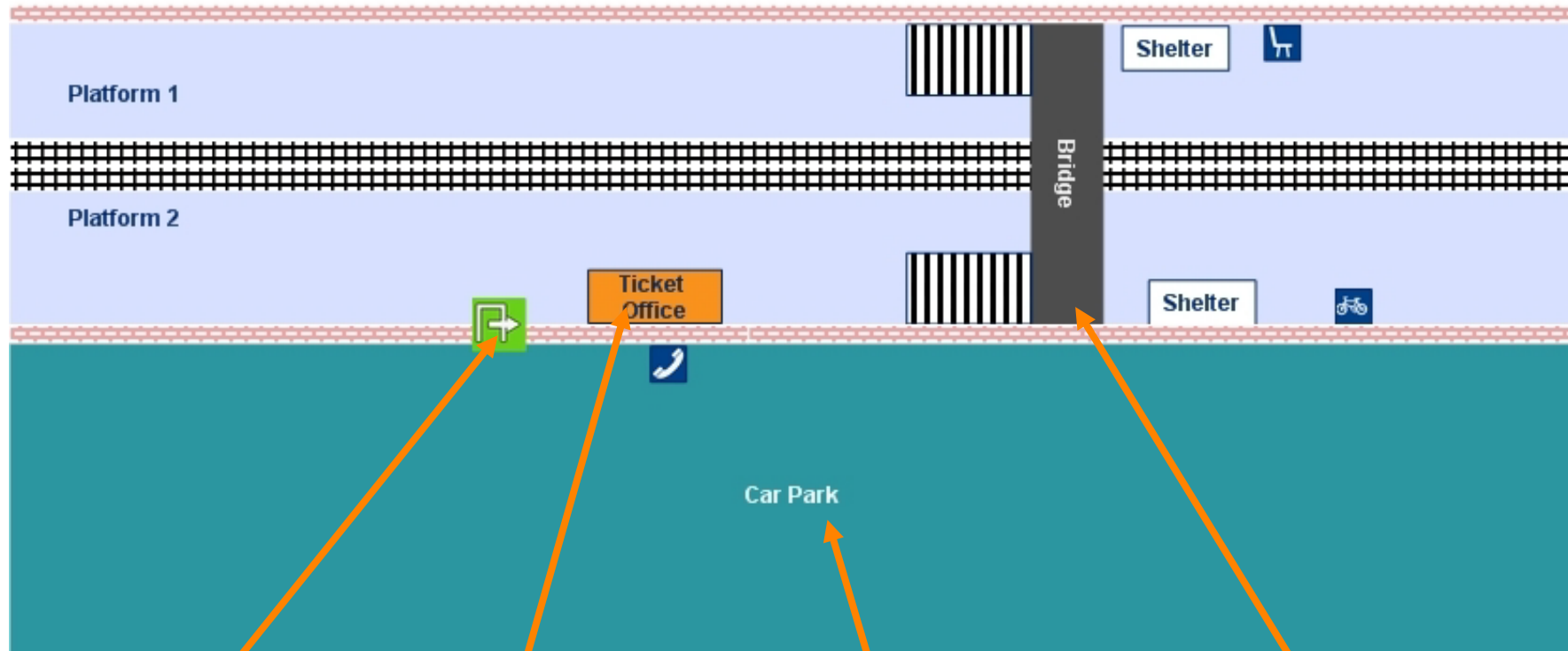
- Ledbury is a small station with a hourly train service between Hereford and Birmingham via Bromsgrove. On Sundays, the service jumps down to two hourly.
- Great Western Railway operate extra services in the peak between Hereford and London Paddington.
- The station is served by West Midlands Railway's diesel fleet, predominantly Class 170s as well as the new Class 172/0 trains which were introduced around April 2019. GWR Class 800 and 801 Intercity Express Trains also serve this station

Destinations and Service Details

- One direct train an hour to Birmingham via Worcester and Bromsgrove.
- One train an hour to Hereford. (WMR)
- Six Eastbound direct services to London via Oxford. (GWR)
- Five Westbound services to Hereford. (GWR)



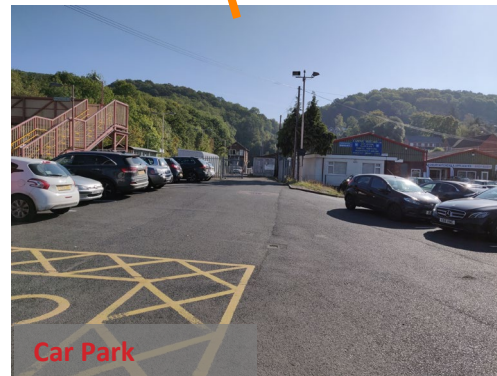
The Station – Layout



Station entrance



Ticket Office



Car Park



Platforms 1 and 2 and the footbridge

The Headline Opportunities – The Station

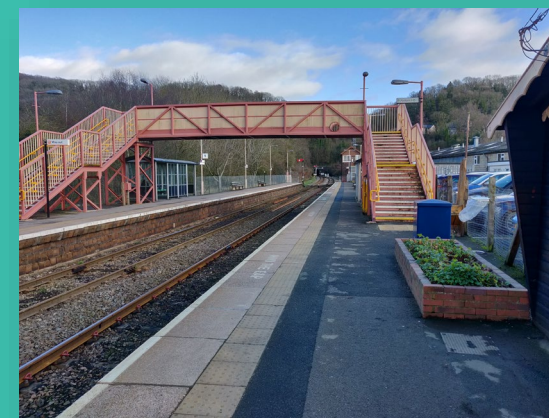
Physical and Information Improvements

Ledbury Station only has one entrance and that is from the ramp leading from the A438 to the station car park. The ramp itself has a footway although it is quite narrow for someone to use in a wheelchair/mobility scooter and the footway has no tactile paving or railings to hold on as it is steep. It is easy to spot the station from the road as it has an older style tall National Rail sign, the sign itself is starting to fade and look a bit dated. When in the car park, users have direct access to Platform 1, with Platform 2 being accessible via the footbridge.

The station has a ticket vending machine (TVM) and a small ticket office which is ran by an external group instead of West Midlands Trains, the ticket office also has coffee facilities which allows passengers to get a coffee whilst purchasing a rail ticket. The station platforms have a shelter and a help point. The station community group have also put flowerpots alongside the platforms to give the station a very warm and welcoming feel.

Platform 1 has a direct entrance from Platform 1 whilst Platform 2 is only accessible from the footbridge from Platform 1. This means that the station is not fully accessible and only allows people with limited mobility to travel in the Hereford direction. Improvements which will enable the accessibility of Ledbury Station is a key opportunity for Ledbury as it will allow more users to travel in and out of the station. Looking at the 2011 Census data, over 30% of the local community have long term health problems or a disability which may limit their day to day activities. Making the station more accessible would lift barriers for people who live locally and those who also may want to travel to the station for tourism purposes.

Although the station itself looks welcoming, it is starting to look slightly worn out. Aesthetic initiatives could be carried out such as giving the station a fresh coat of paint, improving the lighting and signage, providing more shelter on Platform 2 for passengers waiting in the rain and even putting wayfinding signs up in the car park to guide people to the town centre would give the station more of a friendly and local feel.



The Worcester bound platform is not accessible meaning that people with disabilities can only travel towards Hereford



The entrance from the station car park onto Platform 1

The Headline Opportunities – The Station

Operational Improvements

Currently, Ledbury station currently has one train an hour to Birmingham via Worcester and Bromsgrove and one train an hour to Hereford which is both ran by West Midlands Railway. Great Western Railway also run six eastbound trains to London via Oxford and five westbound trains to Hereford during the peaks. Although the service frequency could be greater, there are no current plans to increase service frequency due to the track infrastructure not allowing to do so.

Train capacity is currently a big problem with the West Midlands Railway services with busy trains and cramped conditions being a frequent occurrence on this route.

In the upcoming months, the West Midlands Railway services will be operated by brand new Class 196 units which will have air conditioning, better seating space and live on train information. These trains will also help mitigate the many crowding issues which this line has.

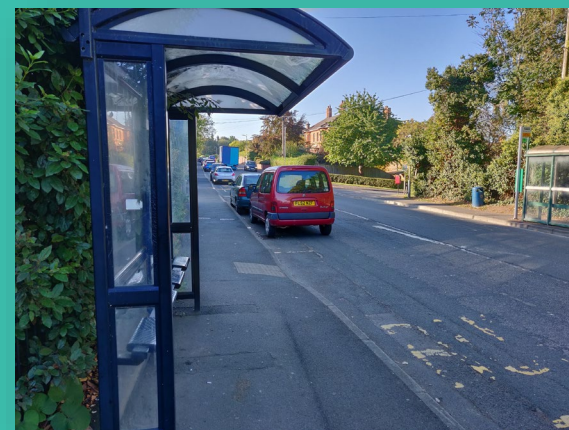
Integration

For the benefits of the community and its stations, it is fundamental to promote access to all modes of transport (e.g. connectivity with local buses), to consider planned development in the surrounding area and to promote activities across town. Although Ledbury Station is right next to bus stops, no real time bus information is provided at the station. Some of the bus services from the bus stops also go to Great Malvern and Hereford just like the trains, this means that customers have a free choice about how they get to Malvern or Hereford and may not see a big difference between taking the bus or the train. Could joint bus and train ticketing help with the train and bus decision making and allow greater value for money and flexibility for the customer?

More integration with the town centre would encourage tourists to travel to Ledbury by train. Currently there is minimal signage guiding people from the station to the town centre despite it being a straight 10-minute walk down the A438.



The new Class 196 units will bring more capacity to the line serving Ledbury as well as a more modern and comfortable interior than the current trains which serve the station



The Bus Stops outside Ledbury Station

The Headline Opportunities – The Surrounding Area



Wider connectivity improvements to the station

Improvements to the pedestrian connectivity between Ledbury Station and the town centre as well as enabling free accessibility to Platform 2 is a key opportunity for the station as it will allow more people to travel to and from Ledbury for tourism and general travel.

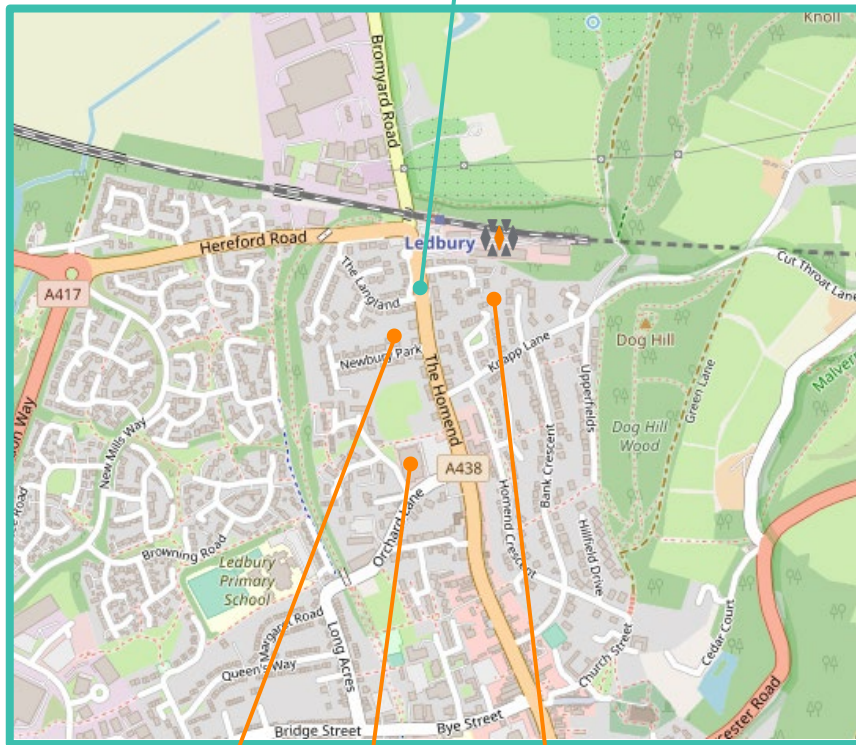
Although some places for example, Eastnor Castle being a short drive away from Ledbury. The walking distance can be significantly longer and even up to an hour. This gives people no choice but to drive or get a taxi from the station to the castle especially if they are less mobile. Things like better public transport connectivity to known tourist areas would encourage more people to travel into Ledbury by train and enjoy the local area without causing congestion on the roads.

More promotion of Train Operating Company retail offerings such as GroupSave discounts and railcards may help encourage bigger groups of tourists to travel to Ledbury off peak instead of travelling down by coach and having coaches parked up all around the town.

The Last Mile

The main route to Ledbury Station which uses the A438 which leads down from the station to the town centre. The quality of this route is questionable as the quality of the footway changes throughout and the width of the path can cause issues for those in wheelchairs and mobility scooters. Tac tile paving can be found along the route from the station to the town although they are quite worn down and damaged. One key issue which was found was the Esso petrol station located just before the town, the pavements have no dropped kerbs and no tac tile paving which causes issues regarding accessibility for people with sight impairments, the petrol station also has signage on the footpath which causes clearance issues for people in scooters and wheelchairs. The junction for Knapp Lane also has no dropped kerbs or tac tile paving. When leaving Ledbury station and crossing the road to use outside the station to use the Hereford bound bus stop, it can be an issue crossing the road as traffic may be driving fast and making things unsafe. Something like a zebra crossing or traffic lights may mitigate any safety issues as older and less mobile people may cross the road to use the bus stops.

Ledbury Station bus stop



The Homend Trading Estate

Tesco

Redlands Hotel

(Potential Station Neighbours)

The Headline Opportunities – The Surrounding Area

Surrounding Land Use Activities

Ledbury is located on the eastern boundary of Herefordshire and is just west of the border for Worcestershire. Ledbury an incredibly historical market town with its beautiful old buildings and cobbled streets which many tourists visit to see and enjoy. Three miles away from Ledbury is Eastnor Castle which is a 19th century mock castle surrounded by amazing scenery. Other tourist attractions include Eastnor Pottery and Westons Cider Mill.

Ledbury is a medium sized community and is only a 10-minute train ride away from the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Ledbury Town Centre



Ledbury's Hospitality Industry



Malvern Hills
AONB



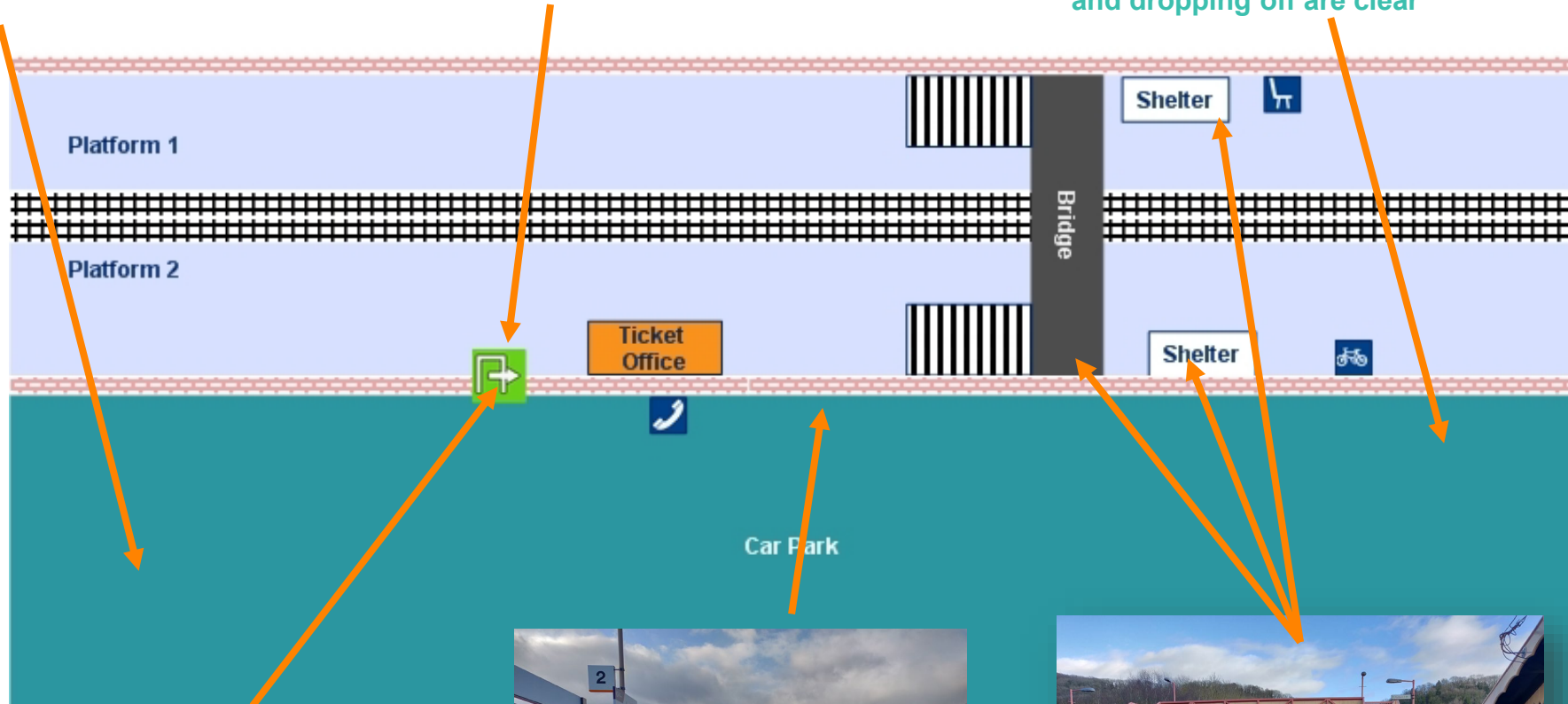
Eastnor Castle

Opportunity Plan

Improved connectivity with local busses

Improved pedestrian access from the station to the town centre

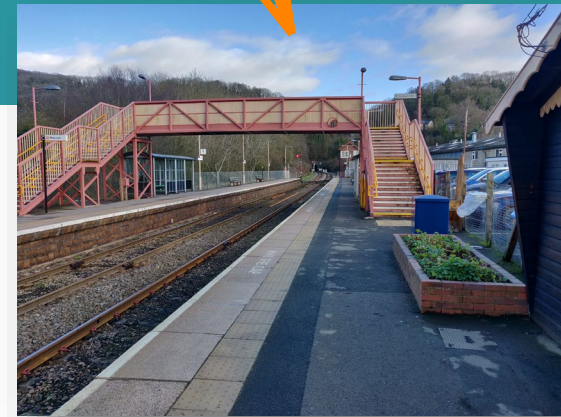
Updating the current car parking facilities so that pedestrian routes are more clear and markings for picking up and dropping off are clear



Improved signage and wayfinding from the station to the town centre

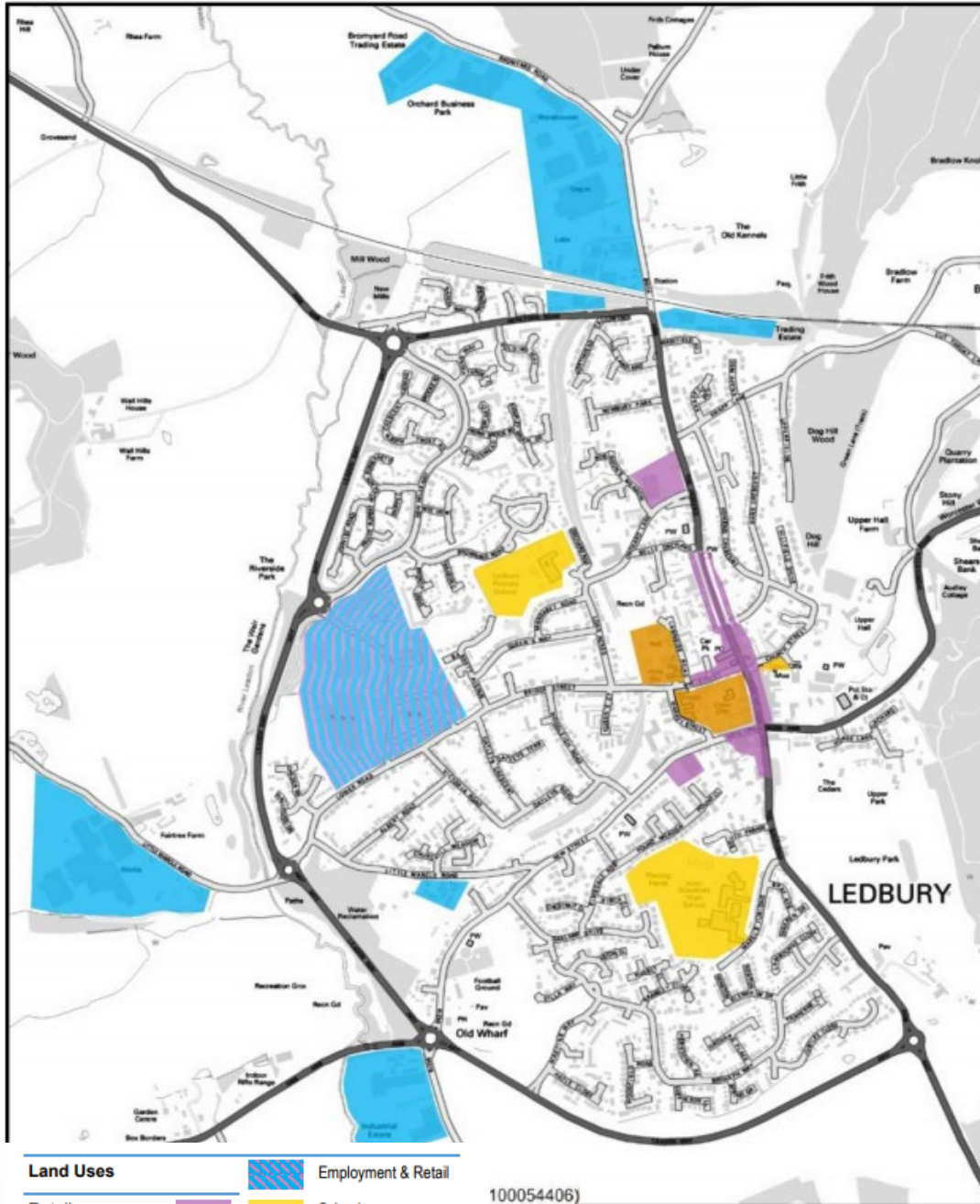


Refreshed paintwork for the station as it is fading away and starting to look less smart



Step free access to Platform 1 and more sheltering for both platforms as the shelter space is limited and is quickly occupied

'Last Mile' Concept Plan



1. Map: Taken from the Ledbury Neighborhood Plan 2018-2031

Why is it important to integrate station's and local growth?

The local authority can choose to use planning conditions (or Section 106 or 278 obligations) for defined schemes e.g. 100 secure cycle spaces and a bike hire building. Where new housing or employment development is likely to occur, such as those sites identified as part of Bromsgrove District Council's SHLAA, these should also be recognised in the scheme planning application. Off-site sustainable travel measures which fall outside the station boundary should be delivered and funded via local transport strategies or development control contributions through the relevant property developer.

Last Mile Priorities

Encouraging and boosting the tourism of Ledbury by encouraging people to travel by rail

Improved pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of the station including improved signage to and from the station

Better integration with the existing bus services and integrating bus services with local landmarks and tourist hotspots so people can travel without taking the car

An accessible railway station which will enable a good amount of people to travel in and out of Ledbury by train freely

Stations as Places is also about promoting wider connectivity to existing communities, businesses, local centres and future development sites. The 'Last Mile' concept plan considers other land uses in the surrounding area and what the priorities should be in terms of integration of sustainable transport modes and station facilities. Key local stakeholders have been identified through initial consultation and auditing of the local area. Engagement will focus on improving access to rail services and how Stations as Place can unlock development potential and enhance existing connectivity for residents and the local economy.

Small Scale Options

Encourage ongoing work carried out by the Friends of Ledbury Station adoption group.

Refresh ready existing signage on the station to present information about the history of the station, the history of Ledbury and promote local tourist attractions as well as providing tourist travel information.

Refresh of the paintwork around the station so that it looks neater and looked after.

Look at ways to mitigate informal parking on neighbouring roads to the station.

Investigate potential for joint rail and bus ticketing to give wider choice to customers when travelling to areas where both the train and bus go to.

Medium Scale Options

Seek options for a sustainable ran tourism sector tailored community bus service which provides links from the station to areas such as Eastnor where local busses do not go.

Provide better lighting for Ledbury station

Better enforcement of car parking to avoid rail user vehicles over spilling and informally parking on neighbouring roads around Ledbury station

Improvements to the station forecourt area such as better markings for picking up and dropping off and pedestrian routes as well as wayfinding signs and material leading people to the Town Centre from the station which could be achieved via S106 funding.

Large Scale Options

Enable Ledbury Station to be a fully step free station with no accessible barriers for its users.

Work alongside Ledbury Town Council and the Herefordshire County Council on delivery of the Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan.

Create a 'community hub' with the station and the surrounding area by helping and investing into public and community facilities.



WHO TO CONTACT AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED



Railways bring people together and there is a powerful historic sense of pride in the railways in the UK. Stations began life as beacons of hope and revival for local communities and when stations are places of welcome, happier & more passengers ensue.

The Stations as Places initiative is designed to be open to all.

We really want to engage with organisations of different shapes and sizes. We'd love to hear from developers and their consultant teams about how we can work more closely with you to connect with your development schemes, especially if you are needing people to take the train to ease pressure of the road network and make your development proposals work effectively.

But we'd also love to hear from shopkeepers and other local businesses, from social enterprises and residents groups, and from organisations supporting disabled people and others needing accessibility support. So how to get involved?

You can email saps@wmre.org.uk
and one of the team will get back to you!

Contact us if you would like to

- Give us feedback about this Prospectus
- Flag up an opportunity with your proposed development
- Talk to us about how your organisation can get involved

You can also follow progress on
Stations as Places at
www.wmre.org.uk/stationsalliance

