

Ledbury Town Neighbourhood Development Plan 2021-2031

Plan revision - 1st Public consultation Issues and options questionnaire April - May 2021

1. Introduction

The first and currently adopted Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) does not contain policies upon several important matters (and especially a settlement boundary) because it was considered insufficient evidence or clarity was available to support their inclusion, or they were not land use policies. Ledbury Town Council is undertaking a limited review of its NDP to address these matters.

An accompanying 'Issues and options' leaflet sets out the main issues that the NDP proposes to cover. If not delivered with this questionnaire it is available from Ledbury Town Council by emailing the Clerk at clerk@ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk or by telephoning 01531 632306 for a leaflet to be posted to you. Depending on the easing of lockdown restriction by now, you may also be able to collect a copy and spare questionnaires for other household members if you need them, from the office – please call to check.

This questionnaire is asking for your views about proposed key issue revisions to the NDP and its policies before the Town Council draws up a new draft plan. You will need the leaflet with its information on the options, including maps to show locations, to help you answer the questions.

It is easier and preferable for you to complete this questionnaire online if you can. It can be found at this link: www.surveymonkey.com/LINKXXXXXXX

If you are unable to complete it online or prefer to complete a written version, please answer the questions below on paper and return to Ledbury Town Council using one of the options given at the end of this questionnaire.

2. Defining a Settlement Boundary

Question 1: Which of the settlement boundary options do you prefer?

(Please rank the options in order of preference, 1 preferred, 3 least preferred)

<p>Option 1: Not to define a settlement boundary, but rely simply upon site allocations comprising those undeveloped housing sites with planning permission, the Core Strategy Strategic Housing site, and proposals for new uses identified by other studies.</p>	
<p>Option 2: To utilise the former Herefordshire UDP boundary for the town, adding extensions to incorporate recent developments and sites with planning permission upon its edge together with allocating the proposed housing site to the north of the viaduct utilising the area defined for this within its planning application.</p>	
<p>Option 3: To extend the settlement boundary defined above westwards to incorporate the Riverside Park, an area to be allocated for recreation and area for employment to the south of Little Marcle Road.</p>	

3. Land South of Little Marcle Road

Question 2a: Do you agree that providing land to expand provision for sport is a high priority? (Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

Question 2b: To get support from Sport England, any facility needs to provide for both adult and junior football. Do you agree that this should be on the indicated site off Little Marcle Road? (See settlement boundary Map Fig 3) (Please tick one answer choice.)

Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 2c: Are there other recreational or leisure needs for which land should be identified? (Please write your comments in the box below.)

Question 3: Given that Ledbury is required by the Core strategy to provide 12 ha. Of new employment land to the south of Little Marcle Road, would you agree to:

3a) Advancing one or more sites to meet this requirement?

(Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

3b) Exploring the potential for further employment land restricted to uses that can take place within or adjacent to a residential area without detriment to amenity in the vicinity of the Full Pitcher Roundabout?

(Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

3c) Identifying other smaller areas to accommodate new or expanded businesses in appropriate locations elsewhere on the periphery of the town?

(Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

4. Land North of the Viaduct and Railway Line

Question 4: Should a more proactive approach be taken, if possible, to provide improved accessibility to the eastbound platform of the railway station, platform services and extended car parking? (Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

5. Supporting the Town Centre

Question 5a) Which of the options do you prefer? (see Figures 4, 5 and 6)
(Please tick one answer choice.)

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	No opinion	
<input type="checkbox"/>				

5b) Do you agree that there should be no differentiation between primary and secondary shop frontages and shops, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, financial and professional services, and hot food takeaways be allowed within this combined frontage?

(Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

Question 6: Should we propose a co-ordinated approach to the regeneration of the Lawnside and Market Street area to benefit the town centre, its conservation area and community services? (Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

Question 7: Should the NDP promote the retention of health facilities in the town centre if it is at all possible? (Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

6. Green Infrastructure

Question 8: Do you agree with the following proposals:

8a) That the new and extended corridors and enhancement zones identified on the map above should be added to the existing green infrastructure identified in

the Herefordshire Green infrastructure report (Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

8b) That within those areas green infrastructure should be protected, enhanced and extended where possible? (Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

Question 9a) Do you agree that all green and open spaces shown in Figure 9 should generally be afforded protection as contributing to Green Infrastructure within and surrounding the town?

(Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

Question 9b) Do you agree that allotments and/or community gardens should be encouraged? Can you suggest a suitable location for them?

Question 10: Can you suggest any footpaths, cycleways or other connections that should be protected or created to benefit residents and access to wildlife?

(Please write your comments in the box below.)

Question 11: Can you identify an area where children's play facilities are needed or could be improved, including providing access to nature?

(Please write your comments in the box below, including what type of play area is needed e.g. open space, play equipment and for what age range.)

7. Design and the Environment

Question 12: Do you agree that that the NDP should include policies covering as wide a range of design matters as possible to include sustainable development and climate change? (Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

8. Other Matters

Question 13: Bearing in mind that this is an NDP revision, do you have any other comments on the specific topics covered above or any other issues you wish to raise? (Please write your comments in the box below)

Question 14: Please write your postcode in the box below. This helps us to see which areas of the Parish have responded and where greater engagements needs to take place.

It is preferred, if you can, that you complete these questions online using the link on page 1. Otherwise please return your response to the Ledbury Town Council Office by any of the following options.

To be completed including possible Freepost address

**Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan
2021-2031**

Final Draft

Issues and Options

March 2021 (v7)

Ledbury Town Neighbourhood Development Plan

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The first Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was unable to contain policies upon several important matters because it was considered insufficient evidence or clarity was available to support their inclusion or they were not land use policies. This included provision of employment land, promotion of a range of design matters, safeguarding local green space, and the identification of a settlement boundary for the town's built-up area. In addition, a number of planning permissions granted while the plan was being prepared or subsequently have produced added pressures upon facilities, the need to provide playing fields being one of the most notable.
- 1.2 Ledbury Town Council has agreed to undertake a limited review of its NDP to try to address these matters. It is not a comprehensive review, which should await the review of Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (The Core Strategy) that will set out requirements beyond the current plan period of 2011 to 2031. The Core Strategy contains a range of strategic or 'high level' policies that the NDP must comply with where they are applicable. They include two general locations where notable change should take place – land to the south of Little Marcle Road to provide employment to match housing growth and land to the north of the Viaduct and Railway Line to be developed for housing and employment. The Core Strategy also supports efforts to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- 1.3 This document sets out the main issues that the NDP intends to cover so that the community can express its views upon any revisions before the Town Council finalises its draft plan. The community will be consulted again when that draft plan has been prepared. Where possible this document presents some options upon which residents may wish to express a preference. The key issues for the review are:
 - Defining a settlement boundary around the town within which development to meet identified needs can take place, to protect the character of the town, and to prevent unrestricted growth into the countryside.
 - Accommodating the recreational needs of the town and its surrounding area, especially meeting the shortage of playing fields.
 - Retaining the ability to accommodate the Core Strategy requirement for 12 hectares of employment land to the south of Little Marcle Road.
 - The need to improve access to Ledbury Railway Station, thereby promoting this more sustainable travel option.
 - Supporting the town centre, including enabling it to accommodate improved health and other community services.
 - Retaining and enhancing green space (green infrastructure) within and surrounding the town for both the community and wildlife.
 - Promoting good design in its many forms.

2. Defining a Settlement Boundary

- 2.1 Further work was considered necessary for the NDP if it was to include a settlement boundary. There are both advantages and disadvantages to defining a settlement boundary. The principal benefits are considered to be that it provides greater clarity and certainty about where most forms of development might take place; protects the countryside and important landscapes; enables sites to be brought forward for development through consultation with the community rather than relying on windfall sites brought forward by others; and is a well understood and accepted planning tool. Disadvantages include that it can lead to 'cramming' inside the boundary; potentially increases land values; and leads to accusations of being a crude and inflexible approach. On balance, it is considered that a settlement boundary should be defined. Options might be influenced by how it is proposed development pressures should be accommodated. It is emphasised that currently the town has met and exceeded the required level of housing growth through policies in the Core Strategy and planning permissions and consequently this interim review does not propose any new housing sites. That should await a fuller review when the Core Strategy is rolled forward.
- 2.2 Options that are presented for consideration are:

Option 1: Not to define a settlement boundary but rely simply upon site allocations comprising those undeveloped housing sites with planning permission, the Core Strategy Strategic Housing site, and proposals for new uses identified by other studies.

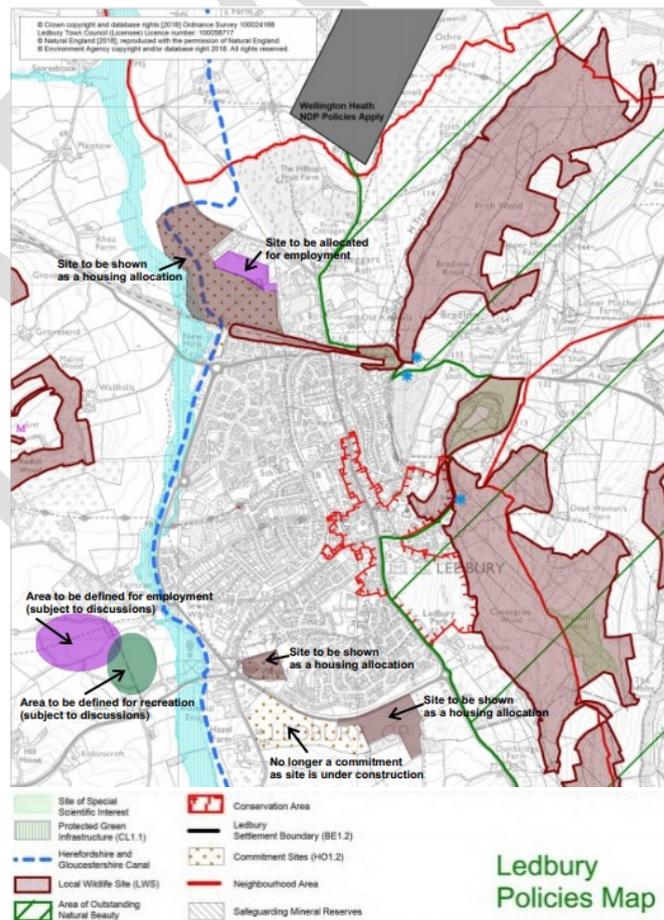


Figure 1: Settlement Boundary Option 1 – No Boundary (based on Current NDP Policies Map) – Map to be modified to take out references to allocations

Advantages: Acts as a brake on land values; avoids development being crammed within a settlement boundary; offers flexibility in planning.

Disadvantages: Provides no certainty to landowners, developers and the community as to where development is likely to be acceptable or not; provides less control over development and less protection of the countryside.

Option 2: To utilise the former Herefordshire UDP boundary for the town, adding extensions to incorporate recent developments and sites with planning permission upon its edge.

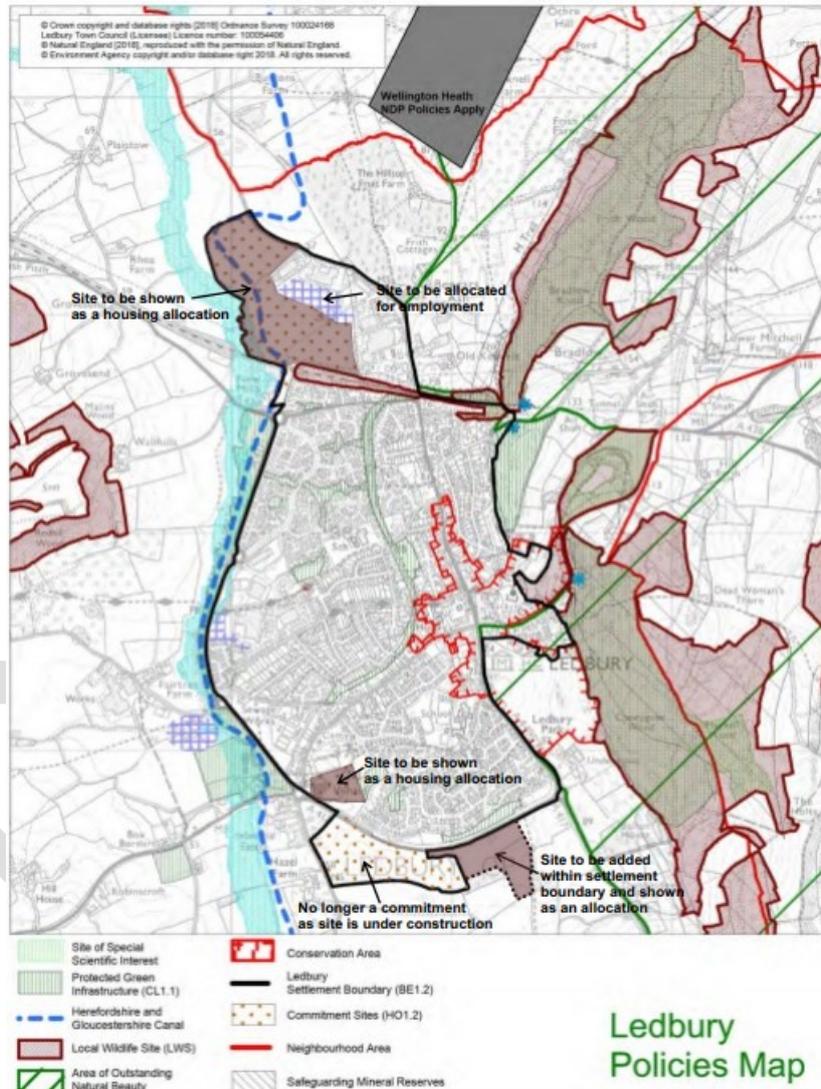


Figure 2: Settlement Boundary Option 2 – Boundary based on previous Draft NDP Submission removed at Examination with an extension for land recently granted planning permission. – Map to be modified to take out references to allocations

Advantages: Implies that development will be limited by the boundary of the existing built area, which has been determined over time by topography, the AONB and River Leadon.

Disadvantages: Developers have been successful in challenging this boundary, notably in new housing developments south of Leadon Way. They continue to seek planning permission outside the UDP boundary, for example off Dymock road.

Option 3: To extend the settlement boundary defined above westwards to incorporate the Riverside Park, an area to be allocated for recreation and area for employment to the south of Little Marcle Road.

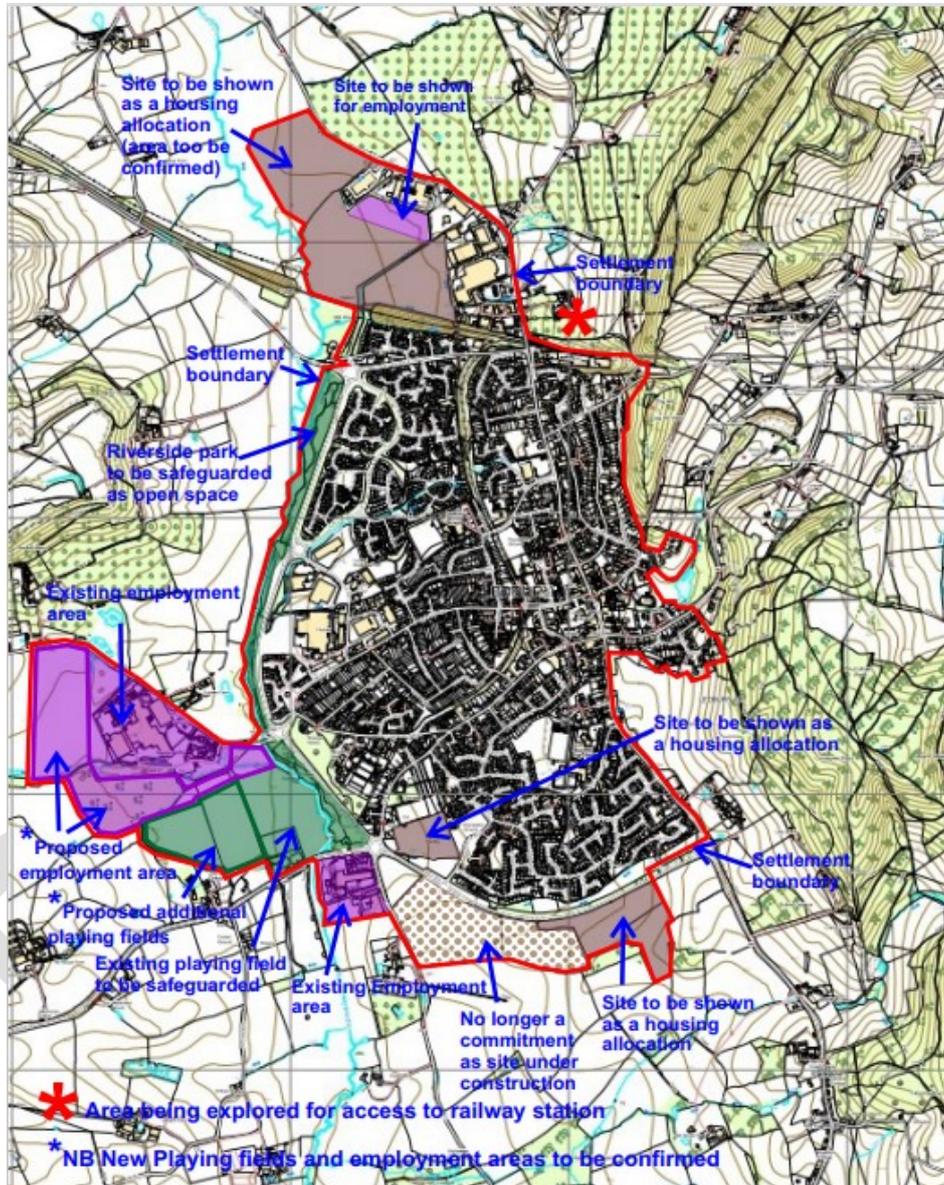


Figure 3: Settlement Boundary Option 3 Map to be simplified with coloured key – pink employment, green for playing fields, brown approved housing sites. Red line = proposed settlement boundary. Please take out blue text and arrows now redundant.

Advantages: This settlement boundary respects the constraints of topography, the AONB and River Leadon, with extensions to the west to protect the Riverside Park and to the south-west to meet Ledbury's present and future needs for recreation and employment land. It gives greater certainty to landowners, developers and community over where building is likely to be acceptable and where it is not. It will also help ensure a plan-led and controlled approach and protect the countryside from unnecessary development. In this respect, it is important that proposals are included to protect the green infrastructure network around the town, as outlined later in the paper.

Disadvantages: Extends the boundaries to the south-west of Ledbury that might potentially lead to additional pressures for development in that direction. Reduces flexibility and opportunities for landowners and developers.

- 2.3 Given that a settlement boundary is the prime objective of this NDP revision, Ledbury Town Council believes that Option 3 gives greatest certainty and protection. Furthermore, this option provides for a number of other development needs within the boundary which the Town Council consider should be addressed in the revised NDP and which are referred to in some of the subsequent sections of this document.

Question 1: Which of the settlement boundary options do you prefer? (Please rank the options in order of preference, 1 preferred, 3 least preferred)	
Option 1: Not to define a settlement boundary but rely simply upon site allocations comprising those undeveloped housing sites with planning permission, the Core Strategy Strategic Housing site, and proposals for new uses identified by other studies.	
Option 2: To utilise the former Herefordshire UDP boundary for the town, adding extensions to incorporate recent developments and sites with planning permission upon its edge together with allocating the proposed housing site to the north of the viaduct utilising the area defined for this within its planning application.	
Option 3: To extend the settlement boundary defined above westwards to incorporate the Riverside Park, an area to be allocated for recreation and area for employment to the south of Little Marcle Road.	

3. Employment and Recreation

Land for New Businesses

- 3.1 It is proposed that the NDP should seek to allocate land for employment, so that the town can grow in a balanced and sustainable way. In this way out-commuting to work, which is expected to result from the increase in population arising from housing development, can be reduced. Herefordshire Council indicates that 12 hectares of land for new businesses should be located to the south of Little Marcle Road. Its analysis of the landscape surrounding the town suggests that this is the location which is least sensitive. There are already business premises in that location. However, the location of the additional employment land is not defined, and currently there is no mechanism agreed that might deliver it. For the town to grow in a sustainable way, promoting local employment would reduce the need to travel elsewhere to work. The opportunity exists to utilise the Market Town's Economic Investment Plan project to try to bring forward employment land in this location. An assessment of potential employment sites identified a limited number of smaller sites in locations that are less sensitive or could be screened to a satisfactory degree. These might also contribute towards providing local employment across a range of businesses, including tourism.

Land for Playing Fields

3.2 There are no specific proposals for recreation in the current plan although there is a policy to support new or improved community facilities for the youth of the area subject to a number of criteria. Ledbury and District Sports Federation and its constituent clubs have identified the need for further playing fields especially in order to meet the needs of the local rugby and football clubs. This includes Ledbury Town FC where its proximity to new housing recently granted planning permission may restrict its ability to play at levels that it has traditionally achieved. The assessment is that at least 6 hectares of additional land may be required. Funding and delivery opportunities have been explored and the expansion in the vicinity of the rugby club is favoured. The need to provide for these sports is seen as one of the main purposes for the review of the NDP and potential sites have been explored. The preferred option is also to locate playing fields to meet the current needs to the south of Little Marcle Road, where combined facilities for adult and junior football will be supported by Sport England.

Question 2a: Do you agree that providing land to expand provision for sport is a high priority? (Please tick one answer choice.)				
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 2b: To get support from Sport England, any facility needs to provide for both adult and junior football. Do you agree that this should be on the indicated site off Little Marcle Road? (See settlement boundary Fig. 3) (Please tick one answer choice.)		
Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 2c: Are there other recreational or leisure needs for which land should be identified? (Please write your comments in the box below.)

Accommodating these Employment and Sports Needs

3.3 It is important to show that in accommodating any playing fields, we will not restrict the ability to meet the Core Strategy requirement for employment land. Land south of the Heineken factory is expected to make a major contribution towards the 12ha required. However, promoting a range of sites to the south of Little Marcle Road with a flexible approach in terms of jobs that might be encouraged while protecting local amenity may enable both the requirements to be met. This would also enable advantage to be taken of recent changes to categories covering commercial, business and services uses to widen employment opportunities without having a significant

adverse effect on residential amenity or the landscape. The relocation of the auction building to the site on the Ross Road is an example of such flexibility.

- 3.4 A similar opportunity is afforded by land to the south of the Full Pitcher roundabout where there is currently a number of businesses and a sensitive development between these and dwellings to the east might mitigate some of the noise that is currently generated in this location. The current Plan refers to the establishment of a tri-service facility near the bypass and although the emergency services have no immediate plans to co-locate they welcomed the reference. Land in this vicinity may offer an opportunity that would benefit emergency services through vehicles avoiding having to travel on the more congested roads within the town to locations outside. Similarly, there is a suggestion that the promotion of additional hotel accommodation on the periphery of the town would add to tourism potential. The current NDP policy might be expanded to support additional hotel accommodation outside of the urban area. A location upon Ledbury Bypass may offer the opportunity to diversify the range of hotel accommodation on offer.
- 3.5 Should it be possible to bring forward a number of sites, these might contribute towards the 12 hectares required to the south of Little Marcle Road. It would have to be shown that such development would not adversely affect residential amenity, that it would support the enhancement of green infrastructure in this vicinity, and the care would be needed to show that any proposal would not have a significant adverse effect on views from or to the Malvern Hills AONB or Wall Hills Camp.

Question 3: Given that Ledbury is required by the Core strategy to provide 12 ha. new employment land to the south of Little Marcle Road, would you agree to:				
3a) Advancing one or more sites to meet this requirement?				
(Please tick one answer choice.)				
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
3b) Exploring the potential for further employment land (restricted to uses) that can take place within or adjacent to a residential area without detriment to amenity in the vicinity of the Full Pitcher Roundabout?				
(Please tick one answer choice.)				
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
3c) Identifying other smaller areas to accommodate new or expanded businesses in appropriate locations elsewhere on the periphery of the town? (Please tick one answer choice.)				
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree

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4. Land North of the Viaduct and Railway Line

- 4.1 A large part of this area is proposed for housing with some employment land within the Core Strategy which also sets out development requirements in some detail. This includes, among other matters, facilitation of the Hereford to Gloucester canal and a new park linking to existing walks and allotments.

Ledbury Railway Station

- 4.2 Ledbury's location on a railway line provides the opportunity to promote this more sustainable mode of travel and connect with other centres of employment and education. However, it is restricted in terms of safe access and car parking. The current plan indicates support for improvements to the accessibility and facilities available at the railway station. It has not yet been possible to deliver these improvements although adjacent land has been submitted for assessment as potential land for employment. Benefits in terms of improved access to the railway station are highlighted within the submission.

Question 4: Should a more proactive approach be taken, if possible, to provide improved accessibility to the eastbound platform of the railway station, platform services and extended car parking? (Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree

5. Supporting the Town Centre

Ledbury Town Centre

- 5.1 The Core Strategy seeks to increase the vitality and viability of Ledbury town centre, especially through supporting retail, commercial, leisure, cultural and tourism proposals and resisting proposals outside the centre where this would have an adverse effect on these qualities. The current NDP does not define a town centre area, but it does define primary frontages (mainly food, restaurants, clothing, drinking establishments and household shops) and secondary frontages (in addition to the above, including hot food takeaways and businesses), regulating the uses considered appropriate within these (See Figure 4).

It is proposed that the town centre is now defined and that the distinction between primary and secondary frontages is removed in order to encourage a more flexible approach to planning the future of the town centre. Changes in patterns of retailing and associated town centre uses are occurring rapidly and there may need to be a more flexible approach about what uses will retain Ledbury's attractiveness as both a retail and tourist destination.

The town centre boundary could include all the existing, defined frontages, as indicated in Figure 4 (Option 1). An alternative would be to allow the town to contract, reflecting current trends in the retail sector and the need to retain a defensible retail core (Option 2 – Figure 5). A third option might be to extend the town centre boundary to incorporate two of the larger supermarkets that lie just outside (Tesco and Co-op), as footfall between them means that they are closely related and mutually supportive (Option 3 – Figure 6).

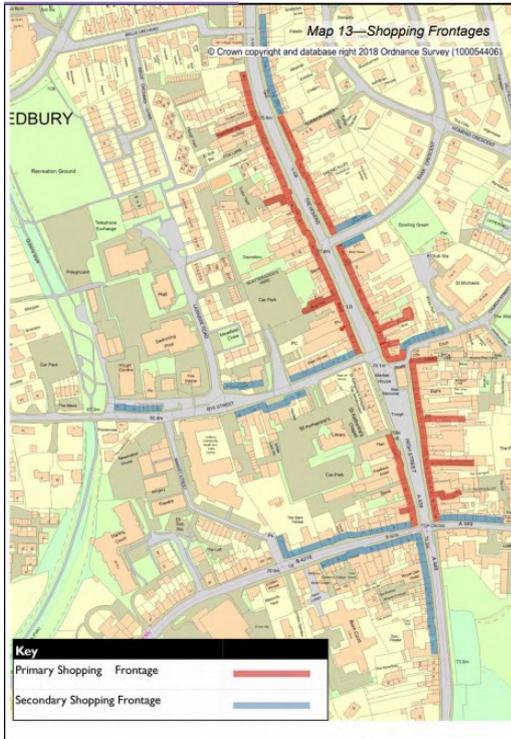


Figure 4: Existing frontages

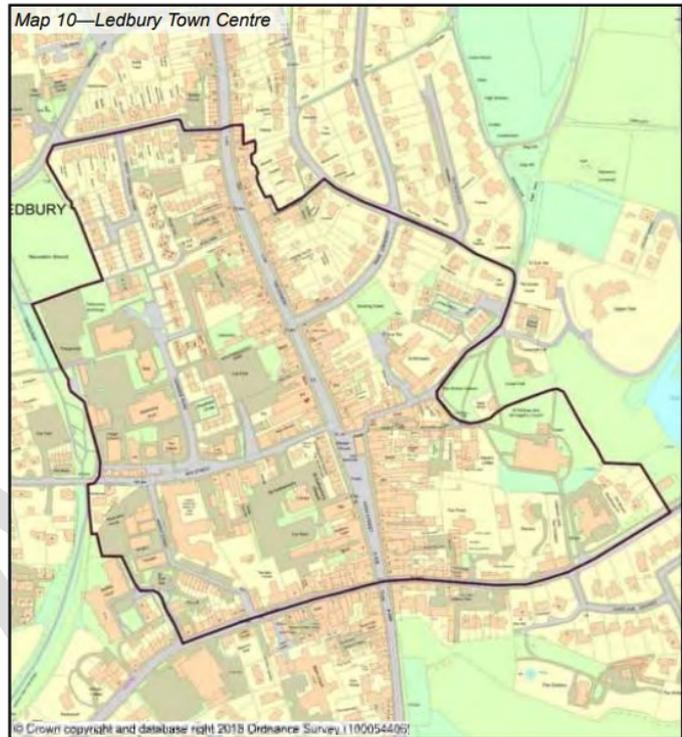


Figure 5: Replace with new Figure 5, as in Fig. 4, but with frontages in black and remove - Worcester Rd. most of Southend, . The Homend beyond the old Methodist Church and the Gunmakers, New Street below the takeaway below the Talbot and the entrance to Market Street.

Figure 6: NEW MAP showing enlarged area to include Tesco (and the petrol station opposite) and Co-op. Worcester Rd. and most of Southend removed.

Question 5a) Which of the options do you prefer? (see Figures 4, 5 and 6)				
(Please tick one answer choice.)				
Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	No opinion	
Question 5b) That there should be no differentiation between primary and secondary shop frontages and shops, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, financial and professional services, and hot food takeaways be allowed within this combined frontage?				

(Please tick one answer choice.)				
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Town Centre Regeneration and Community Services

- 5.2 The area comprising Lawnside and Market Street, on the periphery of the town's shopping streets, is one of mixed uses where there are pressures for redevelopment, and these may be added to through the need to improve healthcare facilities. It is suggested that a comprehensive approach is taken to defining how redevelopments might proceed to enable improved health service facilities, provision of other uses supporting the town centre, its attractiveness to visitors is increased, and the enhancement of the conservation area's character and appearance. An option is to retain the current approach and allow any development within Lawnside to proceed on an ad-hoc basis.

Question 6: Should we propose a co-ordinated approach to the regeneration of the Lawnside and Market Street area to benefit the town centre, its conservation area and community services? (Please tick one answer choice.)				
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Health and other Emergency Services

- 5.3 The current NDP contains a policy to support proposals which improve, or increase the capacity of and access to medical, dental and care facilities, by expansion or relocation. Since that plan was prepared Ledbury Health Partnership has formed comprising the two former general practices serving the town and its hinterland together. Its current accommodation is inefficient and fragmented and although provides for present needs, would not be able to meet expected population growth, and is unable to accommodate the range of other NHS and associated services expected for a modern health service practice. The benefits of the 'joined up' and holistic approach to health care services for the community would be enhanced further through improved and extended accommodation. Options are being explored although Ledbury Town Council would prefer to retain facilities within the town centre if that is possible as this would provide easiest access for all and support the town's economy. This would not be to the exclusion of other options should that not be possible.

Question 7: Should the NDP promote the retention of health facilities in the town centre if it is at all possible? (Please tick one answer choice.)
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Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree

6. Green Infrastructure

- 6.1 Green infrastructure comprises the network formed by green spaces and other green features within and surrounding the town including, among others, parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, orchards, rivers and streams, street trees and allotments. Current NDP policies afford protection to some green infrastructure elements such as woodlands surrounding the town and a number of features that contribute towards biodiversity.

The Neighbourhood's Green Infrastructure

- 6.2 The approach now being suggested is to maintain, enhance and encourage further natural features within the series of green corridors (referenced LedLSC) and enhancement zones (referenced LedEZ) identified in Herefordshire Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy which is a supporting document to the Core Strategy. Some of the corridors are associated with town-wide pedestrian and cycle routes. Further work undertaken for the review has highlighted additional corridors and enhancement zones together with additional measures. The new corridors and zones are shown in Figure 8 (current zones shown in Figure 7).
- 6.3 Objectives for these areas will be set out in the NDP for adoption by the Town Council and local community groups and should also be met if and when development is proposed within the areas. These objectives should strengthen those features contributing to the character and ecological value surrounding the whole of the town's built-up area including, where possible, measures to mitigate the effects of climate change. The areas and measures comprise:
- **Local Strategic Corridor LedLSC1** passes through the town along the line of the former Ledbury-Gloucester railway. The green corridor should be retained and enhanced where possible, including protecting open spaces in its vicinity.
 - **Local Strategic Corridor LedLSC2** incorporates not only the riverside walk but also greening along the edges of the western leg of Ledbury bypass and the adjacent sports grounds. An extension to or widening of the corridor to link to Walls Hill Camp and its surrounding woodland is proposed because of its importance to local heritage and the setting of the town. Extensions to the north and south would also ensure connectivity along the River Leadon and the proposed route for the reinstatement of the Hereford to Gloucester canal.
 - **Local Strategic Corridor LedLSC3** stretches out from the centre of the town to the north-east to link with Dog Wood. The green spaces within the town's built-up area, such as the churchyard and a large walled garden, are important elements within this corridor. The corridor's extension to include Frith Wood would be consistent with objectives for public access to the nearby woodlands.
 - **Local Strategic Corridor LedLSC4** is an example of what can be achieved in terms of connected green space within residential and associated areas and which residents can add to through wildlife friendly gardens.
 - **A new Local Strategic Corridor LedLSC5** is proposed incorporating locally important parks and gardens along the east of the town and a wildlife corridor

based on the stream and public right of way to the south of the town. The new area would not only look to protect important landscapes but strengthen the connectivity and transition between the upland ecological network defined for Malvern Hills AONB in its Management Plan and the lowland valley of the River Leadon.

- **Local Enhancement Zone LedLEZ1** is where considerable new development is proposed in the Core Strategy. Herefordshire Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy encourages a range of actions to enhance the area that borders Wellington Heath parish including creating new paths, other environmental measures including wetland features, and the restoration of the canal. Wellington Heath NDP identifies a settlement green gap¹ to prevent, among others, coalescence between its settlement and Ledbury. It also indicates that a footpath and safe cycleway might be developed within its area to help link the two settlements, and for screening be used to mitigate the effects of development and protect the landscape setting of Malvern Hills AONB. The transitional landscape between upland and valley in this location needs to be recognised for its importance to the setting of the AONB to which the zone might be linked by an extension to the east. The enhancement requirements for this area should also protect this green gap. A complementary policy setting out the additional enhancement measures which ought to accompany any development within this area should be included in the NDP. Natural flood control measures to reduce the flooding effects of the new development upon the River Leadon should be introduced, including measures to benefit wildlife.
- **Local Enhancement Zone LedLEZ2** is an area where change is underway despite being identified as an important sensitive landscape by a planning inspector. The extension of the enhancement zone along the Dymock Road to incorporate the land identified as sensitive and enhancement measures that might be incorporated within those parts where development is likely should be included in the NDP.
- A new **Local Enhancement Zone LedLEZ3** is proposed on the higher ground at the eastern end of Ledbury Bypass and south-west of the Gloucester roundabout that was identified as a sensitive landscape in the current plan and that would be a backcloth to new development that is under construction. The new zone would also create a green gap between Ledbury Town and Parkway and would include a new path and cycleway between the two communities.

¹ See Policy WH3 at <https://wellingtonheathpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/WHNDP-v15.11.pdf>

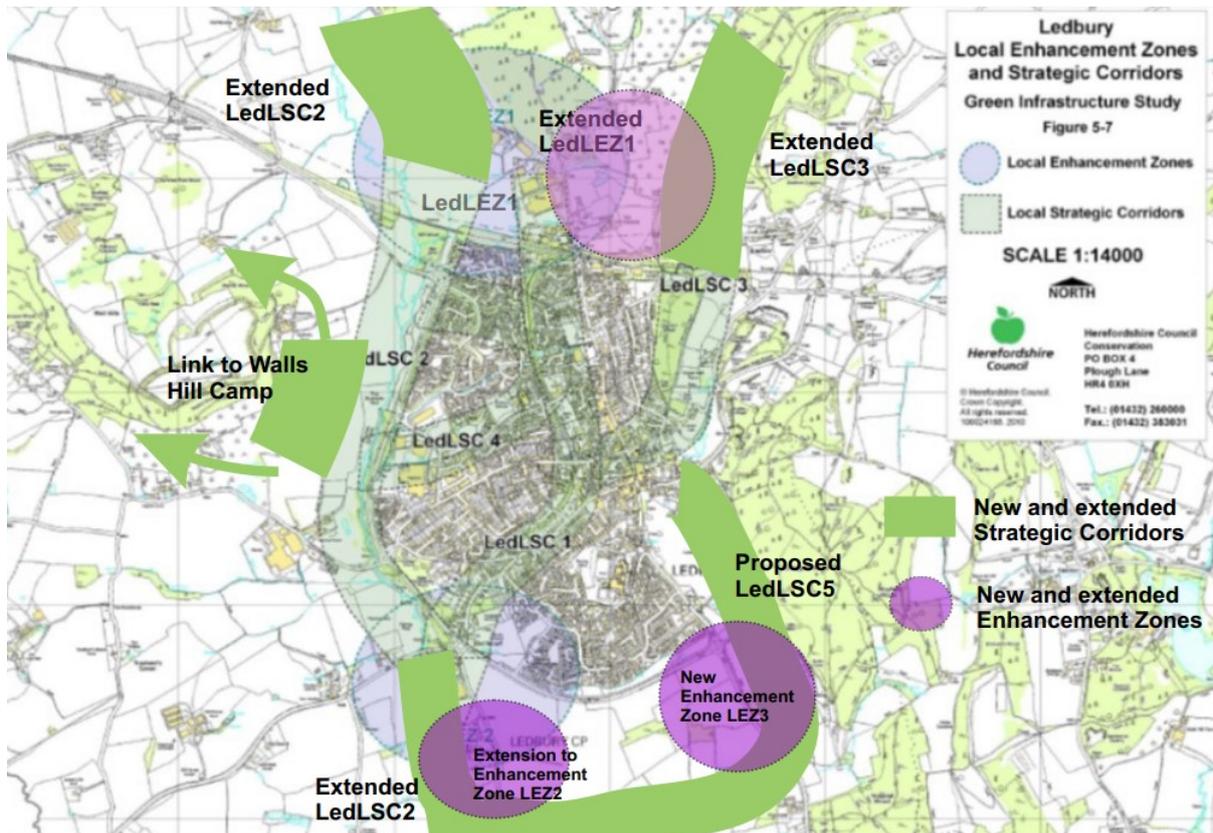


Figure 8: Current and proposed Local Strategic Corridors and Local Enhancement Zones

NEW FIG 7: Current Herefordshire Council Local Strategic Corridors and Local Enhancement Zones

Question 8: Do you agree with the following proposals:				
8a) That the new and extended corridors and enhancement zones identified on the map (Figure 8) above should be added to the existing green infrastructure identified in the Herefordshire Green infrastructure report (Please tick one answer choice.)				
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8b) That within those areas green infrastructure should be protected, enhanced and extended where possible? (Please tick one answer choice.)				
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Green Spaces Within Ledbury

- 6.4 The elements and features that form the corridors and enhancement zones need to be protected and opportunities taken to promote positive measures to increase their extent, including net gains in biodiversity, where development is proposed. Not all the important green and open spaces requiring protection are included within these defined areas. Small and medium sized green and open spaces can add to local amenity and provide valuable wildlife refuges. The map below shows the green spaces identified in the draft NDP edged dark green with proposed additional open spaces, including along Leaddon Way, shown edged in brown. Many of these were identified as protected area in the former Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan. Different levels of protection may, however apply, for example playing fields may be replaced with the same or better facilities elsewhere. It is also proposed that where appropriate and opportunity arises, the creation of community gardens and allotments should be considered.



Figure 9: Current and proposed green and open spaces to be protected.

Map to include additions and make no distinction between previous and proposed green spaces.

Question 9a): Do you agree that all the green and open spaces shown in Figure 9 should generally be afforded protection as contributing to Green Infrastructure within and surrounding the town?				
(Please tick one answer choice.)				
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Question 9b): Do you agree that allotments and/or community gardens should be encouraged? Can you suggest a suitable location for them?				
(Please tick one answer choice.)				
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Comment/other possible locations:				

Footpaths, Cycleways and Public Rights of Way

- 6.5 Footpaths, cycleways and public rights of way are important elements within the corridors defined through and surrounding the town, especially those associated with green spaces and corridors. Many of the latter lead out from its built-up area, enabling access to woodlands and other natural green spaces in the surrounding countryside, especially upon the Malvern Hills. There remains the ambition to add further to this by safeguarding the route of the Herefordshire to Gloucestershire Canal so that a restoration project might lead to the reopening of the link at some time in the future and with the tow path providing pedestrian and cycle access to neighbouring areas. Facilitating access to parts of the town and its surrounding villages and hamlets along green corridors supports three objectives of promoting health and wellbeing, retaining and increasing biodiversity, and mitigating the effects of climate change. Encouraging improved links to the wider network will also benefit both physical and mental health.

Question 10: Can you suggest any footpaths, cycleways or other connections that should be protected or created to benefit residents and access to wildlife?

(Please write your comments in the box below.)

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Children's Play

- 6.6 Children's play areas can provide access to nature as part of their design and contribution to wellbeing. Herefordshire Council's Play Facilities Study 2012 identified 9 children's play areas within the town. All but one of these were in the northern part

of its built-up area with only one to the south of Bridge Street. Circumstances may have changed slightly since that study with specific provision being made to serve new housing development. However, even if these were to serve a wider area, most are to the south of Leadon Way which is a major barrier to access by children. No opportunities to increase children’s play area provision within the southern part of the town have been identified. It is proposed to enable provision of additional play facilities in areas of need if and when opportunities are identified.

Question 11: Can you identify an area where children’s play facilities are needed or could be improved, including providing access to nature?

(Please write your comments in the box below, including what type of play area is needed e.g. open space, play equipment and for what age range.)

7. Design and the Environment

Design Guidance

7.1 Ledbury Town Council has a Design Guide (2018) and it hoped in the future to update and put it to community consultation for approval as an adopted planning document. However, given the time involved in such a detailed exercise, and the subsequent delay that would be incurred to defining the settlement boundary, a design guide is not proposed at this stage.

It is nevertheless important to embed design preferences in the body of the NDP. This will be done on a wide range of design issues, as well as cross-referencing to the National Model Design Code, which sets the framework for design policies.

Question 12: Do you agree that that the NDP should include policies covering as wide a range of design matters as possible to include sustainable development and climate change? (Please tick one answer choice.)

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree

8. Other Matters

8.1 The NDP may include a limited number of other matters although it is not intended to encompass a major review. Herefordshire Council has started a review of its Core Strategy although this may take some time before it is complete. This may identify

further development needs for the town requiring a more significant review of the NDP.

Question 13: Bearing in mind that this is an NDP revision, do you have any other comments on the specific topics covered above or any other issues you wish to raise? (Please write your comments in the box below)

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DRAFT

Ledbury Town Neighbourhood Development Plan 2021-2031

Plan revision - 1st Public consultation Issues and options explanatory leaflet (V1) April - May 2021

1. Introduction

Ledbury Town Council is revising its Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) primarily to include a realistic settlement boundary, but also to add provision of employment and recreation land, policies covering a range of design matters and the safeguarding of important green space. This is a partial revision and not a comprehensive review, with the aim of addressing the specific shortcomings of the current adopted plan.

This leaflet sets out the main issues so that the community can express its views before the draft plan is written. The community will be consulted again on that draft plan.

More detail on each of the issues is set out in Topic papers 1-6 which you can view on the Town council website at [\(insert link\)](#):

The key issues for the review are:

- Defining a settlement boundary for the town
- Addressing the lack of sufficient playing fields
- Provision of new sites for employment
- Improving access to Ledbury Railway Station particularly the eastbound platform
- Supporting the town centre
- Safeguarding and enhancing green space
- Promoting good design in the built environment

2. Defining a Settlement Boundary - Question 1

A settlement boundary defines the limits of the town's growth. There are both advantages and disadvantages, but Ledbury Town Council believes that Ledbury would benefit from a settlement boundary as the lack of one in the current NDP has resulted in unplanned planning permissions. This means that the town will grow faster than had been predicted and that this will impact negatively on its character, its services and its infrastructure.

Below are three options; each has advantages and disadvantages. The preferred option (number 3) aims to accommodate identified needs for employment and recreation land (see section 3 below) in locations which will have the least impact on the character of the town based on an analysis of the landscape around the town. (See Topic paper 5 at [insert link](#)). Options that are presented for consideration are **(see question 1 to give your views)**:

Option 1: No settlement boundary (see map figure 1)

Advantages:

- acts as a brake on land values;
- allows more space for development

- offers flexibility in planning.

Disadvantages:

- offers no certainty to landowners, developers and community as to where development will be acceptable
- less community control over development
- less protection of the countryside.

Option 2: This uses the former Ledbury Urban District Plan boundary and adds in recent changes (see map figure 2)

Advantages:

- this seems to be the 'natural' boundary as development is limited to the existing built area, which has been determined over time by topography, the AONB and River Leadon.

Disadvantages:

- doesn't provide room for needed employment provision or playing fields
- developers have successfully challenged this boundary - eg. south of Leadon Way and they keep trying
- doesn't protect public green space outside the built up area

Option 3: To extend the settlement boundary defined in Option 2 westwards incorporating the Riverside Park, and areas for recreation and employment to the south of Little Marcle Road (see map figure 3).

Advantages:

- respects the constraints of topography, the AONB and River Leadon,
- protects the Riverside Park and land to the south-west to meet Ledbury's present and future needs for recreation and employment
- greater certainty for landowners, developers and community over where building is likely
- ensures a controlled approach which is plan-led
- protects the countryside from unnecessary development to protect the green infrastructure network around the town

Disadvantages:

- reduces flexibility and opportunities for landowners and developers
- extends the boundary to the south-west of Ledbury that might potentially lead to additional pressures for development in that direction.

The definition of a settlement boundary is the prime objective of this NDP revision and Ledbury Town Council believes that Option 3 gives greatest certainty and protection for the future.

3. Recreation and Employment Questions 2 and 3

Ledbury does not have enough playing fields particularly for youth rugby and football clubs. Different sites, funding and delivery opportunities have been explored; Sport England have been consulted and have stated they require youth and adult facilities to be combined. The proposal is to provide new pitches and facilities to the south of Little Marcle Road (see map figure 3), a new home for Ledbury Swifts and Ledbury FC. (If you would like more information on the issues see Topic paper 3 at [insert link](#)). **See question 2 to give your views.**

There is also a need to find land for new businesses. More employment opportunities in the town would reduce the need for people to commute for work enabling Ledbury to grow in a balanced and sustainable way. Herefordshire Council has analysed the landscape surrounding Ledbury and indicated in its Core Strategy that 12 hectares (ha) of land south of the Little Marcle Road would be the best location for employment development in terms of access and landscape sensitivity, but the Strategy did not stipulate precisely where this should be.

A site south of Little Marcle Road (beside UBL) has been identified where there are already business premises and Herefordshire Council's Market Towns Economic Investment Project could help to bring forward land in this location. This, with other smaller sites, also identified for their low sensitivity, could contribute towards future employment needs across a range of businesses, including tourism.

It is proposed that both playing fields and employment needs can be met from land south of Little Marcle Road and that other smaller sites could contribute. For example, land off the by-pass and near the Full Pitcher roundabout and Dymock Road could be advanced for a variety of limited development. Ideas considered include light industrial use, hotel accommodation, possible future relocation of the emergency services, a community garden.

Any development here must be required to enhance green infrastructure and shown not to have a significant adverse effect on the neighbouring residential amenity or on views from/to the Malvern Hills AONB or Wall Hills Camp. **See question 3 to give your views** and Topic papers 2 and 3 at [insert link](#) for further details

4. Access to the Railway Station - Question 4

There is no access to the eastbound platform of Ledbury railway station for people with disabilities or limited mobility. In addition there is limited car parking. The current NDP indicates support for improvements, but it has not yet been possible to deliver these. Adjacent land has been submitted for assessment as employment land and these proposals would also provide access to the eastbound platform and some car parking. **See question 4 to give your views.**

5. Supporting the Town Centre - Questions 5, 6 and 7

a) Defining the Town Centre

The Core Strategy seeks to increase the vitality and viability of Ledbury town centre, by supporting retail, commercial, leisure, culture and tourism proposals within the centre and resisting such proposals outside the town centre. Activities within the town centre have a close relationship and are mutually supporting, especially if they are within walking distance of each other.

The current NDP does not define a town centre but it does define primary frontages (mainly food, clothing, restaurants, drinking establishments and household shops) and secondary frontages (including hot food takeaways and businesses in addition to the above), regulating the uses considered appropriate within these. (See map figure 4).

It is proposed that a town centre should be defined and that distinction between primary and secondary frontages be removed as changes in use are occurring rapidly and a more flexible approach may be needed to retain the town centre's attractiveness. The town centre boundary could include all the formerly defined shop frontages (map figure 4 - Option

1); concentrate activity within a smaller area (map figure 5 - Option 2); or be extended to include Tesco and Co-op in line with recent retail studies which have shown these supermarkets support town centre shopping (map figure 6 - Option 3). **See maps figures 4, 5 and 6, and question 5 to give your views.**

b) Town Centre Regeneration and Community Services

Lawnside and Market Street are sited on the edge of the town's shopping streets. They have mixed uses, with pressure for change including a need to improve and extend healthcare facilities in future, preferably in the town centre for ease of access.

It is proposed that a co-ordinated approach be adopted to ensure development contributes to the quality of the town centre and enables improved health service facilities as well as other uses to support the vitality of the town centre. This will also increase the centre's attractiveness to visitors and enhance the character and quality of the conservation area. An alternative option is to allow any development in the Lawnside area to proceed on an ad-hoc basis. **See question 6 to give your views.**

c) Health and other Emergency Services

The two GP practices joined to form Ledbury Health Partnership a short time ago. Current accommodation is inefficient with medical, dental and care services fragmented. It covers present needs but must meet expected population growth in the town and surrounding area and provide a wide range of services expected of modern, future healthcare. A joined-up & holistic approach is proposed to meet the future town's needs through improved and larger accommodation for medical facilities in the town centre, providing the easiest access for all and supporting the town's economy. This would not be to the exclusion of other options if that is not possible. **See question 7 to give your views.**

6. Green Infrastructure - Questions 8, 9, 10 and 11

a) The Neighbourhood's Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is the network of green and blue spaces and features within and surrounding Ledbury, these include parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, orchards, rivers and streams, street trees and allotments. They can provide habitats for wildlife and plants, flood and water management services as well as public amenity (footpaths, recreation etc).

Current NDP policies protect some green infrastructure such as the woods surrounding the town and some features that contribute towards biodiversity. In addition, Herefordshire Council has developed a Green Infrastructure Strategy (2012) for the whole county and identified green corridors (LSC) and green enhancement zones (LEZ) for Ledbury (see map figure 7). We are proposing that these need continuing protection and careful management.

We are also proposing adding to this infrastructure as shown in map figure 8. Some of the proposals are associated with town-wide pedestrian and cycle routes. Others are areas which have been identified as sensitive and valuable for biodiversity, historic reasons, where the landscape contributes strongly to the character of the neighbourhood or where measures are needed to mitigate effects of climate change.

Below are descriptions of these green infrastructure corridors and zones and outlines of the new proposals:

LSC1 – The Town Trail.

LSC2 - The Riverside Walk and the adjacent sports grounds. The proposal is to extend this to link to Walls Hill Camp and its surrounding woodland which is an important local heritage asset and provides a setting to the town, and to the north and south along the River Leadon and the route of the proposed Hereford to Gloucester canal.

LSC3 – This corridor runs from the churchyard and Walled Garden to Dog Hill Wood. The proposal is to extend this corridor north to Frith Wood.

LSC4 – This corridor runs through New Mills along Kempley Brook and includes the recreation ground. It brings together significant green spaces, verges and stands of trees within a residential area which residents can add to through wildlife friendly gardens.

LSC5 – A new corridor is proposed to incorporate Ledbury and Upper Hall parks and the stream and public right of way to the south of the Bovis site and Hawk Rise outside the bypass. The new area would strengthen the connectivity and transition between the upland ecological network of the Malvern Hills and the River Leadon.

LEZ1 – This enhancement zone covers the viaduct site where 625 new homes will be built and which borders Wellington Heath parish. The proposal is to extend this zone and within it to create new footpaths and cycleways including links to Wellington Heath; to restore the canal; and to protect the green gap between Wellington Heath and Ledbury to prevent coalescence between the settlements. This landscape is important to the setting of the Malvern Hills. Natural flood control measures to reduce the flooding effects of the new development upon the River Leadon should be introduced.

LEZ2 – This enhancement zone is adjacent to the Full Pitcher roundabout and the Dymock Road, an area where change is underway despite being identified as an important sensitive landscape by a planning inspector. The proposal is to extend this enhancement zone along the Dymock Road to incorporate the land identified as sensitive.

LEZ3 - A new Enhancement Zone is proposed on the higher ground off the Gloucester Roundabout and above the housing site to be developed by Bovis. This area was identified as a sensitive landscape in the current plan and it will form a backcloth to the new development. This will form a green gap between Ledbury and Parkway and include a proposal for a new footpath/cycleway. **See map figures 8 and 9 and question 8 to give your views.**

b) Green space within the town

The map figure 9 shows in more detail the important green spaces within the built up area of the town. Different levels of protection may apply to these spaces for example playing fields may be built on if the schools need to extend (but if this happens they will need to be replaced elsewhere) and the Cemetery and church yard have special protection. However they do make valuable contributions to the green infrastructure of the town. It is also proposed that where appropriate and opportunity arises the creation of community gardens and allotments should be considered. **See map figure 9 and question 9a and 9b to give your views.**

c) Footpaths, Cycleways and Public Rights of Way

Footpaths, cycleways and public rights of way are important elements in the green infrastructure of the town. Many lead from the built-up area to the woods and surrounding

countryside, especially Malvern Hills. The restoration project for the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal provides an opportunity to develop the tow path as a pedestrian and cycleway linking to neighbouring parishes.

Such green corridors will support delivery of some of the key objectives in the NDP: promote health and wellbeing, retain and increase biodiversity and mitigate the effect of climate change. **See question 10 to give your views.**

d) Children's Play

Children's play areas can provide access to nature as part of their design and contribution to wellbeing. There are 9 children's play areas within the town, but only one of these is south of Bridge Street. There are play areas planned in the new developments south of Leadon Way, but these are inaccessible to children on the town side of the by-pass. No opportunities to increase children's play area provision within the southern part of the town have been identified. It is proposed additional play facilities should be supported in areas of need if and when opportunities are identified. **See question 11 to give your views.**

See Topic papers 4 and 6 for more detail on these issues at [insert link](#)

7. Design and the Environment - Question 12

Ledbury Town Council has a Design Guide (2018). This is not a policy document, but it provides guidance to builders and developers. The proposal is that specific design policies should be included in the NDP based on the ideas in the Design Guide. In addition, policies should be updated to encourage sustainable development, measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change and the promotion of active travel. **See question 12 to give your views.** See Topic paper 1 for more detail at [insert link](#)

8. Other Matters - Question 13

The NDP may include a limited number of other matters although it is not intended to encompass a major review. Herefordshire Council has started a review of its Core Strategy although this may take some time before it is complete. This may identify further development needs for the town requiring a more significant review of the NDP. **See question 13 to give your views.**

The next pages show the maps and plans referred to in the text.

MAPS AND PLANS

SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY OPTIONS:

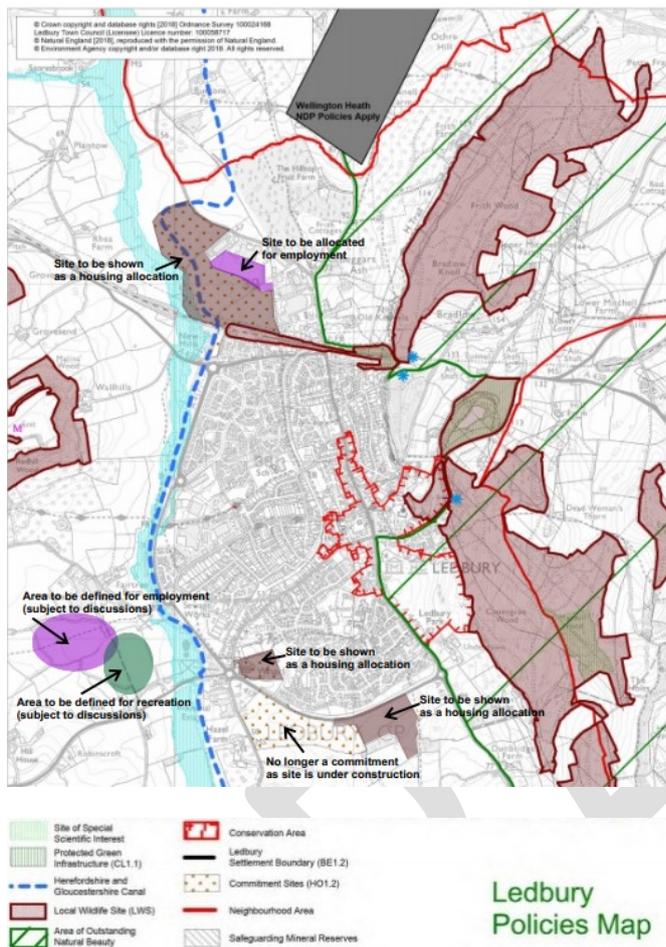


Figure 1: Settlement Boundary Option 1 – No Boundary – Map to be modified to take out references to allocations

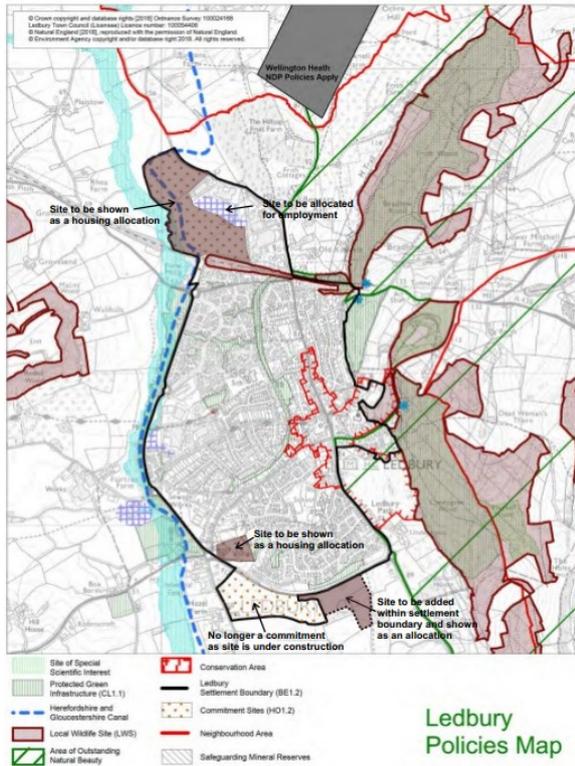


Figure 2: Settlement Boundary Option 2 - Map to be modified to take out references to allocations

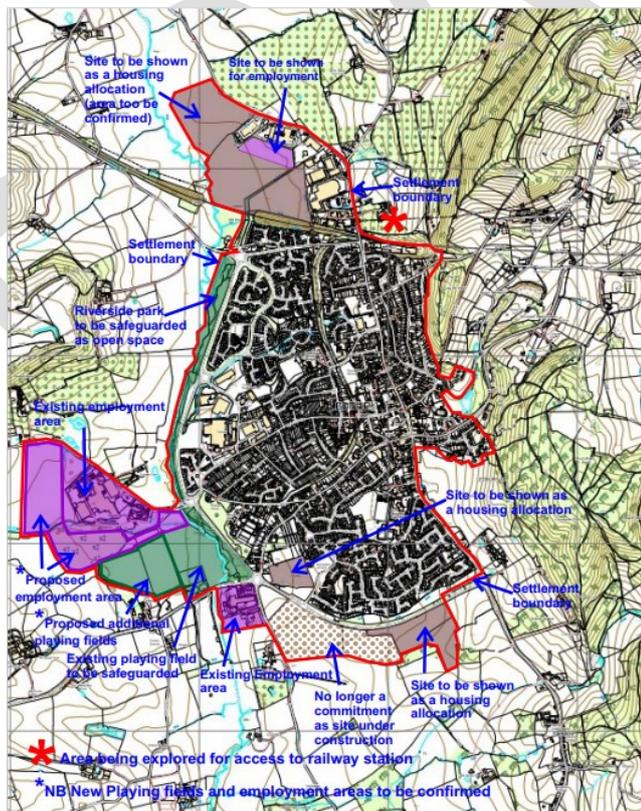


Figure 3: Settlement Boundary Option 3 – Map to be simplified with coloured key – pink employment, brown approved housing sites. Red line = proposed settlement boundary. And take out blue text and arrows thus made redundant

TOWN CENTRE OPTIONS

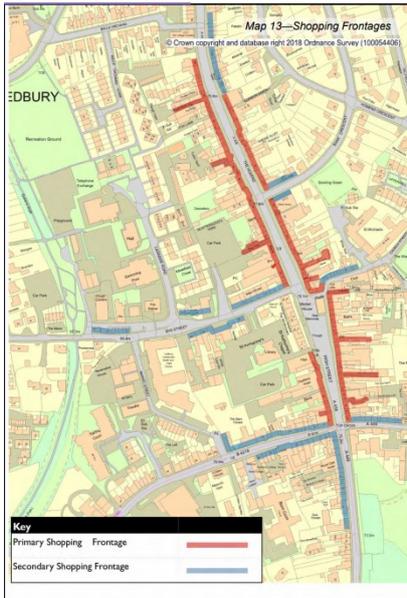


Fig 4: Option 1

Plan to be inserted

Fig 5 – Option 2 – fig 4 with frontages all in black and minus Worcester Road and most of Southend, most westerly section of Bridge Street, The Homend beyond the Methodist Church and the Gunmakers, New Street below the takeaway beyond the Talbot and the entrance to the Market Street.

Plan to be inserted

Fig 6 – Option 3 – (frontages all black) fig 5 plus Tesco's and the Co-op

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE OPTIONS

Fig 7

Insert existing GI plan

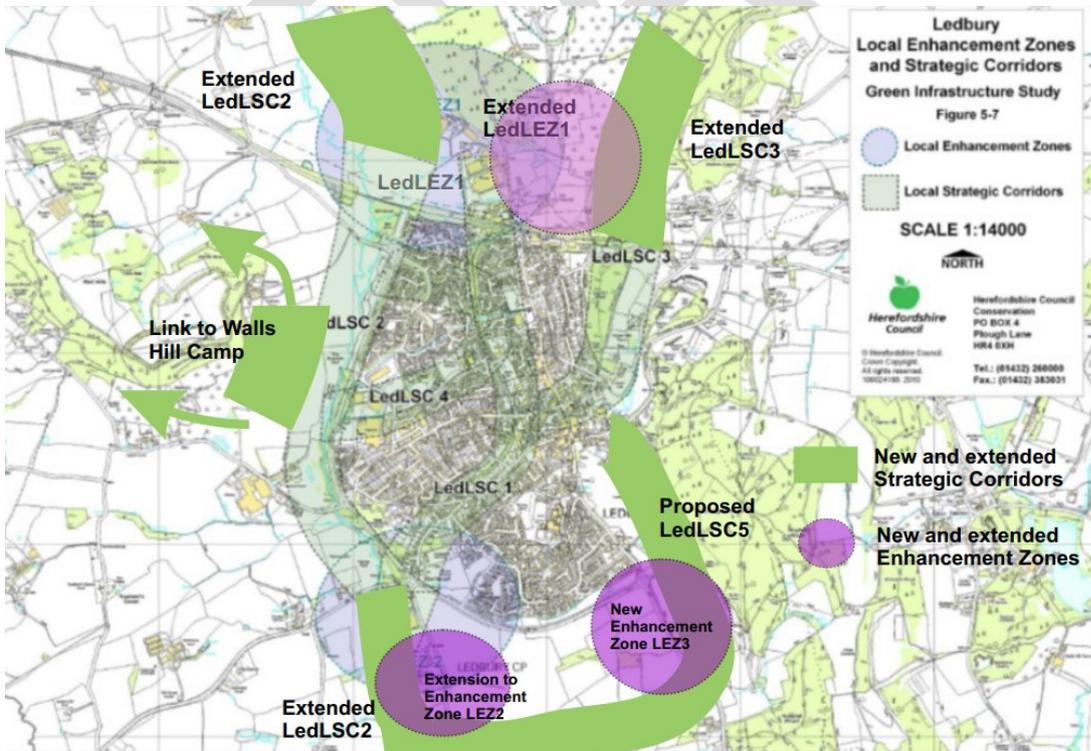


Figure 8: Current and proposed Local Strategic Corridors and Local Enhancement Zones



Figure 9: proposed green and open spaces to be protected. – to be modified to use one colour to identify all green space and adding areas not included

NOTE ON THE EDITED ISSUES AND OPTIONS PAPER

This is a brief note to explain where we are with the updated Issues and options paper and the related leaflet and questionnaire for public consultation, in advance of these meetings. The Issues and options paper is a technical document which will be available online and form the basis for the separate summarised version leaflet and related questionnaire which will be used for the first round of public consultation.

The Issues paper has been produced by the NDP technical planning consultant, Bill Bloxsome, and is supported by Samantha Banks, the Neighbourhood Planning Manager for Herefordshire Council. She describes it as 'a very comprehensive and well put together document which gives a good set of potential options for consultation.'

It is also based on considerable background work by our two consultants to produce the six topic papers sent to you, covering the settlement boundary, employment, recreation, green infrastructure, design guidance and landscape assessment (LVBA).

It has already been updated with the change of order of the issues as agreed at the last WP and we were awaiting any comment as agreed by the Friday 12th March deadline before finalising it and producing the related and synchronised leaflet and questionnaire for the meetings' approval.

However, we have received a large number of comments after the deadline and which were not received until Monday this week. The SG obviously wants to do justice to this feedback, but it has taken a significant amount of time to analyse and document, meaning it has not yet been possible to submit a final version of the paper and the other two documents as planned for today, Friday, to send as per the agenda.

The SG has therefore decided it would be best to send you all three document as more fully updated together and so it is planned to continue working on them so they can come to you on Monday. As an introduction to discussion on the Issues paper, it was felt it would be helpful to explain how the WP and SG are addressing the issues raised, as follows:

1. Some of the points raised are already covered in the Issues paper, but we agree that some elements of the Issues paper should be changed for clarity. Similar changes to improve maps will be undertaken, especially for use in the consultation leaflet, but it may not be possible to have done all of those done before the meeting.
2. Some issues raised are outside the agreed scope of this revised NDP and will therefore be left to future NDPs. As we know and as agreed in the scoping document, this revision can only address a limited number of issues.
3. Detail apparently missing on different issues is either in the appropriate topic papers, or the SG will ask the consultant to provide additional, relevant detail for the final drafts of the topic papers to be produced. It was not intended that the Issues

paper and associated consultation leaflet should include more detail than necessary for understanding the main issues.

4. Comments on which differences of opinion remain can be discussed and decided upon by councillors at our meeting on 22nd March. (These relate in particular to the location of sports facilities and proposals for the town centre)

Overall, the SG recommends the Issues and Options paper, with the two suggested public consultation documents, to you as a sound basis for proceeding with the public consultation and getting to the all important Reg 14 at the earliest opportunity. Despite these few days delay there is no reason not to, and every need to ensure we firmly adhere to the current project timescale to get to Reg 14 on schedule.

Cllr Phillip Howells
Chair NDP WP
19th March 2021

Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan

Communications and consultation plan

for the development of an enhanced version of the current Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan scheduled to be adopted in early 2022

Communications and consultation plan objectives

1. To ensure the public (residents of Ledbury Town and the Parish) are fully informed of progress as far as reasonably possible during all stages of enhancing the current Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Ledbury NDP - which was adopted in January 2019)
2. To achieve this (especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the possible need to use virtual, digital and printed media as a primary means of communication to support social distancing) through a variety of media platforms so the public can comment or ask questions at any point and in particular during specific consultation meetings, discussions and organised events
3. To demonstrate that consultation has been adequately sought with all relevant stakeholders, including community groups and organisations, landowners and businesses likely to have an interest in or be affected by the development issues covered by the NDP
4. To carry out the number of specific consultation meetings and events necessary to substantiate sufficient public reach and volume of responses have been achieved to fully support, with adequate evidence, the resulting policies advanced in the draft enhanced NDP
5. To demonstrate that all feedback during the whole exercise has been fully considered in policy formulation and when necessary, reflected in changes to the draft NDP before a final version is produced
6. To ensure the evidence base and resulting policy formulation process has been formally documented, collated, filed and referenced in a structured format sufficient for easy and informed public access and ultimate formal examination before the plan can be put forward for an adoption referendum.

Communications plan

1. **Media to be used to advise the public, businesses and community organisations of the NDP development stages and to promote the related specific consultation rounds will include:**

For the 1st Public consultation round (under Plan A options shown below and assuming COVID secure conditions):

Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan

Communications and consultation plan

for the development of an enhanced version of the current Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan scheduled to be adopted in early 2022

- Letters and/or emails to businesses, community groups and organisations from council held and other accessible permission-based lists as identified in the Consultation Plan section below
- Public consultation leaflet and questionnaire delivered to all residences in Ledbury and the Parish
- Use of existing networks such as the U3A, Ledbury Civic Society, Ledbury Traders Association and the WEA (Workers' Educational Association) to help get the consultation messages disseminated (a full list of some 70+ Ledbury community groups is held by the annual Ledbury Community Day organisers)
- Social media – Facebook including the various different Ledbury based Facebook sites*, Nextdoor, Town Council website and especially the NDP pages of the website. Use of twitter and Instagram will also be considered if deemed relevant to reach significant numbers of Ledbury people.
- Local press – mix of news release information and paid adverts in:
 - Ledbury Focus – free monthly magazine with 6,000 copies distributed free to all households in the Ledbury area and copy deadline one month ahead; we need to provide a pre-set page copy
 - All About West of the Hills – free bi-monthly magazine with 7,000 copies distributed free to all households in the Ledbury and surrounding areas and copy deadline one month ahead
 - Ledbury Reporter – weekly newspaper with a deadline of Tuesday for the Friday issue of the same week
 - Hereford Times – weekly newspaper with the same copy deadline

* Including:

- Voice of Ledbury: 9,378 members
- Ledbury Community Action: 190 members
- Ledbury Noticeboard: 12,206 members
- Loving Ledders: 955 members
- Town Talk: Ledbury Politics: 497 members
- What's On Ledbury Area: 1,467 members
- The Shops of Ledbury: 900 like the page
- Old Ledbury: 4,331 members
- Ledbury COVID-19 Support Group: 1,465 members
- Next Door: 7% of Ledbury households = approx. 300

Member numbers quoted as at 18/03/21

Note these are substantial increases over the last few years demonstrating the much wider reach that can now be achieved through the use of social media - no doubt influenced by social isolation during the lockdowns and people finding other means to keep in contact – justifying this being included as a key element of the first round of public consultation as being viable and valid to achieve a representative response sample despite lockdown conditions.

Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan

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For the Reg 14 round of consultation (under Plan B options shown below and assuming COVID restrictions lifted):

- All the above plus posters on public notice boards, shop windows and in the library and at physical meetings with a combination of venues and presentations by different consultation groups

2. Preparation lead times

To complete the 1st Public round of consultation in April-May:

- Prior to March 2021 - Preparation, gathering the baseline evidence and producing the topic guide papers on which to base the consultation programme
- March 2021 - First news release on progress and seeking stakeholder requests to provide input, help with evidence gathering and any policy ideas/formulation input
- March to early April 2021 - Start advertising public consultation programme to be held in April-May 2021, including booking any adverts/mag space, social media and websites and email to all local organisations and groups. Design and set up online survey and post consultation documents on the NDP website
- Late March to mid-April 2021 - Design and organise production and distribution of consultation leaflet and questionnaire to all households available from mid-May with a returned deadline by end of May 2021.

To complete the Reg 14 round of consultation in August-September:

- June 2021 - Book venues and dates for public consultation events, recruit volunteers for events
- June to July 2021 - Design and set up online and paper questionnaire on policy proposals to be used at events
- July 2021 - Advertise using media indicated, organise and produce display materials including exhibition-type policy description posters and posters for notice boards and shop windows, arrange refreshments, produce volunteer rota from the NDP WP to explain policies and encourage/collect completed questionnaires at events
- August to September 2021 - Hold public consultation events including business breakfast and evening consultation events such as for the Ledbury Traders Association, all other town centre traders and businesses in and around Ledbury

3. Hard to reach groups

- These will be reached in particular by posters and questionnaires delivered to where they could be expected to be read and seen - such as to the care homes,

Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan

Communications and consultation plan

for the development of an enhanced version of the current Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan scheduled to be adopted in early 2022

schools, food bank, library (full list below) - and with consultation visits where appropriate and/or requested

4. Resources available:

- See table in the Consultation statement and plan

5. Approval timescales:

- 1st Public consultation round: All communication materials to be ready for ED&P committee recommendation for approval at the March 2021 meeting with full Council approval at the April 2021 meeting
- Reg 14 consultation: All communication materials to be ready for ED&P committee recommendation for approval at an early to mid-July 2021 meeting with full Council approval at a late July meeting

Consultation statement and plan

1. Overview

This consultation statement sets out how the Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan WP intends to consult on the contribution to the evidence base and then formal public review and feedback stages of the NDP process leading up to Reg 16 and ultimate adoption.

Since this exercise is to amend and update the current adopted version and not to produce a totally new version of the Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan, four consultation stages are planned, including two rounds of full public consultation

- An initial invitation to participate in the Working Party and baseline evidence gathering
- A first round of evidence based public consultation to inform the development of a proposed settlement boundary and policy amendments/additions to produce a first draft of the new version of the NDP leading up to a Reg 14 submission version. The purpose of this consultation is to gain an understanding of the how the community and other stakeholders view different options suggested by the evidence base in order to draft the Reg 14 version
- A second round of stakeholder and public consultation on this draft to inform editing to produce a final version to be approved to go to Reg 16 for formal examination by the inspector
- There will be a final consultation stage on the final version of the plan incorporating any necessary or suggested inspector edits/amendments to the plan, which once confirmed as being adequately incorporated in the final plan, will go on to a referendum for adoption.

Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan

Communications and consultation plan

for the development of an enhanced version of the current Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan scheduled to be adopted in early 2022

The size of the Ledbury NDP area (the whole parish, which includes the town itself and surrounding countryside encompassed within the formal Ledbury parish borders) creates a significant challenge to consulting on neighbourhood plan documents. The population of the plan area is close to 10,000. Ensuring adequate consultant opportunities for the rural areas of the parish in particular is addressed in this plan.

In summary, the first round of public consultation, once the outcomes have been analysed, will form the evidence to produce the proposed settlement boundary and policy revisions into a Reg 14 draft of the NDP. The second public consultation round on this draft will lead to changes to the policies based on the outcomes from the analysis and in line with the agreed NDP update objectives – which may have also been refined as a result of the consultations.

2. How the consultation will be set up

We are currently very limited on conducting face to face research within current Covid-19 restrictions. Currently (March 2021) no face to face sessions can be run until lockdown is lifted, which is not scheduled to be fully removed until mid-June and even then it depends on what restrictions are put in place following the end to lockdown. Our plan would be to ensure as much consultation takes place virtually or with little or no contact as possible whilst ensuring the breadth and depth of the consultation originally planned is maintained.

This is anticipated to apply to the first round of public consultation, so we will work towards Plan A (virtual) for that stage. As lockdown restrictions are removed, we can supplement with Plan B (face to face) should restrictions allow – which is expected to be the case for the second/Reg 14 round of public consultation.

- Plan A
 - Consultation material drafted with information in an Issues leaflet on each of the policy areas with key areas for decisions highlighted. This information with a questionnaire to be delivered to all households in the Ledbury parish. It is proposed to use Royal Mail for delivery to the 4,184 households according to their data and to the 450 (219 active) postcodes in the area. These will be accessible electronically on the NDP/TC website and also available to email or print and post out on request.
 - A series of Zoom sessions planned (a combination of day/evening/weekday/weekend), either targeting particular groups such as businesses, recreation groups, through schools, retailers and traders or open sessions. This will follow a presentation style session to participants, where questions can be asked to gather some qualitative and quantitative data to help develop policy proposals. Sessions can either be recorded or a note taker nominated (otherwise it is a lot to facilitate and note take for one person).

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- Plan B Event types
 - 2-day consultation event
 - Business Breakfast
 - Parent's evenings
 - Retailers and traders evening consultation event
 - Possible consultation venues
 - The Recreation Ground
 - Community Hall
 - St Katherine's Hall
 - The Masters House and library
 - The Market House
 - Town Council offices
 - The Burgage Hall

3. Consultation groups to be contacted/actually contacted (using COVID secure means as appropriate) with approximate numbers

- When setting up the Working Party
 - A leaflet asking for any NDP suggestions and for volunteers was produced and distributed by Ledbury Town Council at the Ledbury Community Day in August 2019
 - A letter was sent out to 76 local groups and organisations in October 2019 asking for any NDP suggestions and for volunteers to help with the NDP
 - Consequently, a core Working Party of some four Town Councillors/Ward Councillors, a regular dozen or more community volunteers and support from Herefordshire Council planning and funding officers have been working closely together on the NDP with the two engaged consultants (with a third associate consultant of one of these also engaged specifically on the consultation process) and Town Council office staff since early 2019
- **Target evidence base consultation by key issues and by community groups**
 - Employment
 - Heineken/UBL
 - Pugh's Auctioneers and estate agents
 - John Goodwin Estate Agents
 - Mr Bruce Gilbert – farmer and landowner of a proposed employment land off Little Marcle Road
 - Other landowners of land being allocated/included in the settlement boundary
 - Tri-services - police, fire and ambulance
 - Business outside the town centre in trading estates and elsewhere – a list of 76 business will have had individual business letters sent to the Chief Executive inviting input and comment

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- Ledbury Traders Association - all 48 members will have individually received an email with the same business letter
- All other town centre retailers and business including services such as hotels, dentists, estate agents, banks, solicitors and accountants will have had a hand delivered copy of the same business letter through their letter box to approximately 165 businesses (Traders Association duplicated)

- Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust
 - Representative of the trust
- Medical facilities
 - Ledbury Health Partnership
- Neighbouring NDP parishes
 - Dymock Parish Council
 - Wellington Heath Parish Council
- Railway station
 - The Kennels (Wilce family-owned land north of the railway station)
 - Network rail
 - West Midlands Train Network
- Sport and fitness
 - Ledbury and District Sports Federation
 - Ledbury Swifts Football club
 - Ledbury Town Football Club
 - Ledbury Rugby Football Club
 - Ledbury Cricket Club
 - Mr Alistair Young – farmer and landowner of a proposed site for a new combined Ledbury football facility
 - John Masefield Secondary High School (sports facilities)
 - Ledbury Harriers Running Club
 - Ledbury Tennis Club

- Design issues
 - Paul Neep, Architect

- Community gardens
 - Haygrove Community Gardens
 - Ledbury Allotments
 - Underdown walled garden
- Footpaths and cycleways
 - Ledbury Area Cycle Forum
 - Ledbury Walker's Club
 - Ledbury Ramblers
 - Footpaths Officer – Ian Fountaine
- Public green spaces
 - Children's Play Groups/parent groups

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- Herefordshire Green Network
- Herefordshire Wildlife Trust\
- Tree Warden
- Sustainable Ledbury

- Other green spaces and recreation areas
 - Local camping, caravanning and chalet holiday sites
 - Ledbury Park
 - Hellens
 - Eastnor Castle
 - Westons Cider

- Other principal community groups and organisations (using the Ledbury Community Day list of approximately 70 community organisations including the key ones listing below)
 - Ledbury Town Council
 - Ledbury Town Councillors
 - Ledbury Places
 - Ledbury Civic Society
 - Ledbury Poetry Festival
 - Community Action Ledbury
 - Community Voluntary Action Ledbury & District (CVA)
 - U3A
 - St Michael & All Angels Church
 - Catholic Church of the Most Holy Trinity
 - Ledbury Methodist Church
 - Ledbury Primary School
 - Ledbury Market Theatre

- Youth groups
 - Ledbury Scouts
 - Ledbury Air Corps
 - LYAS (Ledbury Youth Activity Services)
 - Busy Bees Pre-school
 - Market Theatre Youth Group

- Hard to reach
 - Elderly people at care homes
 - Leadon Bank
 - Shaw Health Care
 - Harling Court
 - Disabled people
 - via CVA and Age Concern

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- Young people not necessarily in formal groups via the LYAS (Ledbury Youth Activity Service) drop-in centre and John Masefield High School
- Users of the Food Bank
- Local fruit farms
- Salter's Hill Home Care and Support
- Traveller groups
- Rural populations in the villages and hamlets of the parish hinterland

4. Advertising and promotion

- As per the communications plan media platforms to be used

5. Format

- The second public consultation events will feature display story boards of the process from the beginning to the position/story so far.

6. Staffing

- Plan A
 - Max Bassett (Consultant) to help set up and facilitate Zoom sessions and polls.
 - Steering group and WP member(s) to assist in taking notes of any key points raised and be available to answer questions.
 - Max Bassett to design online survey (and print version) for sharing online or via email, collate and analyse responses alongside Zoom poll results.
 - Present results back to the Steering group in report and executive summary formats.
- Plan B (for each event)
 - Set up and dismantle will require 6 people
 - During the event the requirement will be:
 - 2 people to take contact details and issue questionnaires
 - 2 people to provide refreshments
 - 5 people to represent each of the key issues being consulted upon

7. Questionnaires/surveys

- Same format for all consultations
 - Agree Strongly, Agree, Don't Know, Disagree, Disagree Strongly and No opinion
 - Easy layout with tick boxes and then a comment box for each objective or policy

8. Budget/resources

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- See the NDP budget for overall budget estimates. We have allowed for up to £5,000 per public consultation round, although in practice we anticipate a cost somewhat less per event as indicated in the tables below.

Draft plan consultations timescales and costs

- After the 1st public consultation round in April and May 2021, analysis of the data during June and July will lead to the production of a Reg 14 draft plan which will be written taking into account all the public, local authority and stakeholder suggestions and comments.
- Assuming agreement from HC that this is appropriate as a Reg 14 document, a second public round of consultation will take place in September and October 2021 on the now completed plan to produce a Reg 16 document.
- Assuming again, acceptance that this document is suitable to be seen as a Reg 16 version, a final round of consultation on this final draft is scheduled for December 2021, with any final edits as a result incorporated with the aim of going to referendum for the revised plan adoption in January 2022.

Estimated costs 1st Public consultation round leading to a Reg 14 draft plan	£	£
		Total
Leaflet and questionnaire		
Produce copy	0	
Print 5,000 of each	400	
Free post licence	100	
Distribution by the Royal Mail	600	
Postage costs	200	1,300
Consultant support		
Questionnaire design	500	
Consultant's time to set up data analysis including keying in any manual surveys, analysing quantitative and qualitative data and producing a report	1,500	2,000
	Total	£3,300

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Estimated costs Reg 14 draft public consultation	£	£
		Total
Advertising and promotion:		
Ledbury Focus and other publications	500	
Banner - 8ft	100	
Presentation card/posters - Print A3 x 50	100	
Room hire: - 2 days event - 3 other events	250	950
Refreshments at events:		
2-days event	200	
Business Breakfast	150	
Two other events	100	450
Consultation materials and support:		
Story Boards Printing	600	
Display boards	800	
Questionnaire production and print	150	
Consultant's time to help with producing story board content and questionnaires time to set up data analysis including keying in any manual surveys, analysing quantitative and qualitative data and producing a report	1,500	3,050
	Total	£4,450

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Estimated costs Reg 16 consultation	£	£
		Total
Consultation support:		
Consultant's time to help set up data analysis including keying in any manual feedback, analysing quantitative and qualitative data and producing a report to assist with final editing	1,000	1,000
	Total	£1,000