

Ledbury Neighbourhood
Development Plan
2018 –2031

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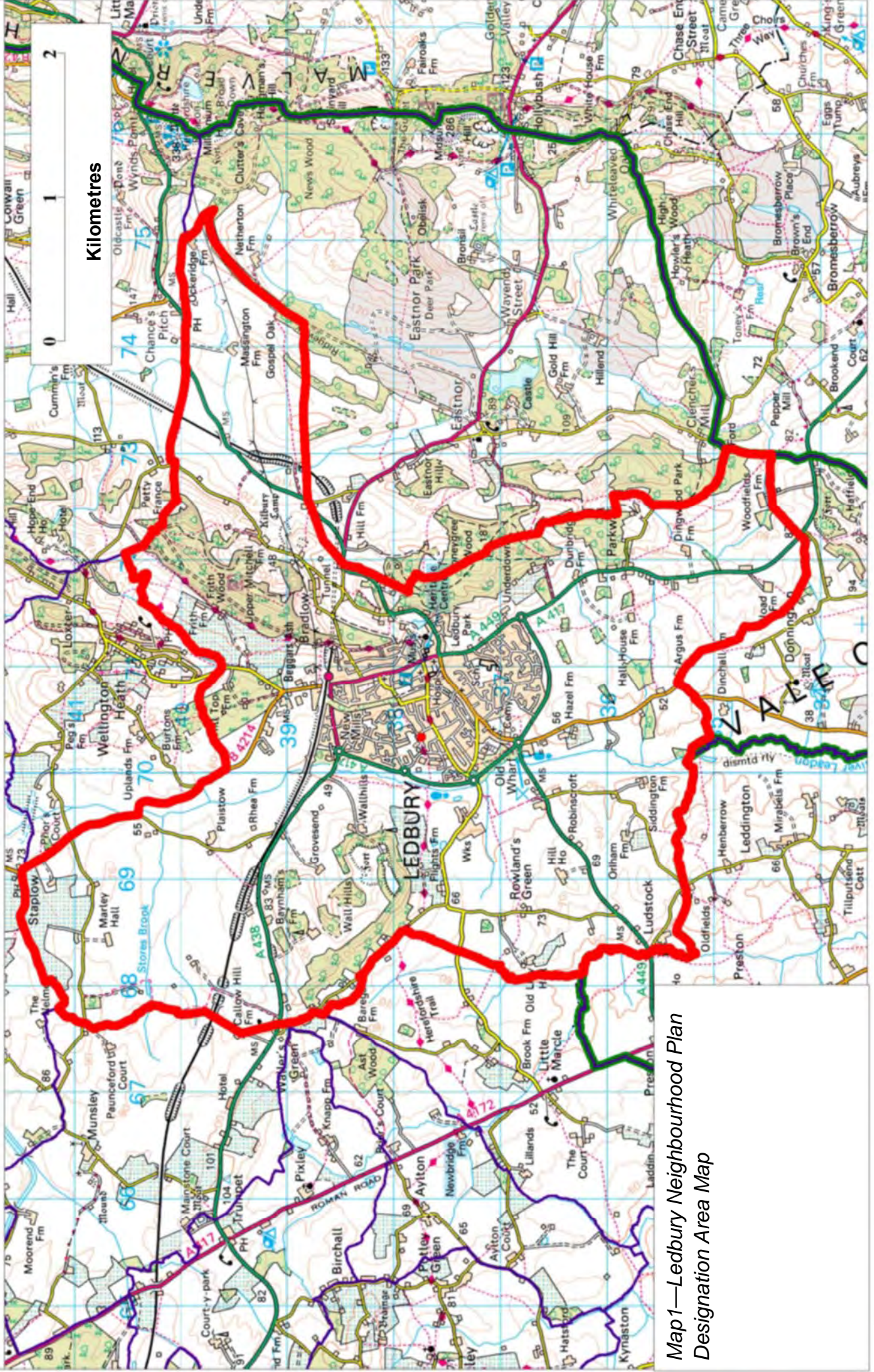
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Ledbury Neighbourhood Area



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Map 1—Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan
Designation Area Map

I. About Ledbury

Population

Ledbury is a market town with a population of 9,636 (2011 Census) and a centre for some 20 parishes in Herefordshire, as well as several villages in neighbouring Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, making a catchment population using its services and facilities of over 20,000.

Historical Interest

Since its origins as an Anglo-Saxon settlement, Ledbury has been at the crossroads of trade routes between the Midlands and Mid and South Wales. Recognised as the gateway to Herefordshire and the Welsh Marches, it is a convenient stopover offering friendly hospitality and service.

The town centre, originally formed in the 12th century, has developed around a core of 15th to 17th century buildings from the proceeds of the wool trade and to this day retains its medieval street pattern.

These maps demonstrate the growth of Ledbury from a very small town reliant on agriculture in the early 20th century, to a small but prosperous town of traders.



Key buildings include the Market House and Ledbury Park (both listed Grade I buildings by Historic England), the Barrett Browning Institute (Grade II listed) the recently restored Master's House (Grade II* listed), St Katherine's Hall and Almshouses, the Old Grammar School Heritage Centre (Grade II* listed), St Michael and All Angels Parish Church (Grade I listed) plus the Feathers and the Talbot Hotels (both Grade II* listed). The latter being former coaching inns that accommodated the travellers of that time, maintaining the town's reputation for friendly hospitality.

Source of maps: <http://maps.nls.uk/>

I. About Ledbury

Much of the retail accommodation in the centre of town is of this era and recognised as historically important or special by listings of Grade 2 or Grade 2*. The town centre is a Conservation Area. The Civic Society runs a small museum and presents lectures by visiting speakers, as well as its work on conservation and the environment.



Visitors

The town centre provides interest for tourists and historians. It is also the venue for the annual Poetry Festival, an event of national status attracting well known participants from the arts. It is a few miles from Eastnor Castle which holds events and festivals throughout the year and has excellent facilities for family celebrations. Although Ledbury is an hour's drive from Cheltenham racecourse, the town's hotels are much in demand during race meetings from visitors, owners and trainers. As well as the town settlement, the parish of Ledbury includes a large area of productive and attractive agricultural land,

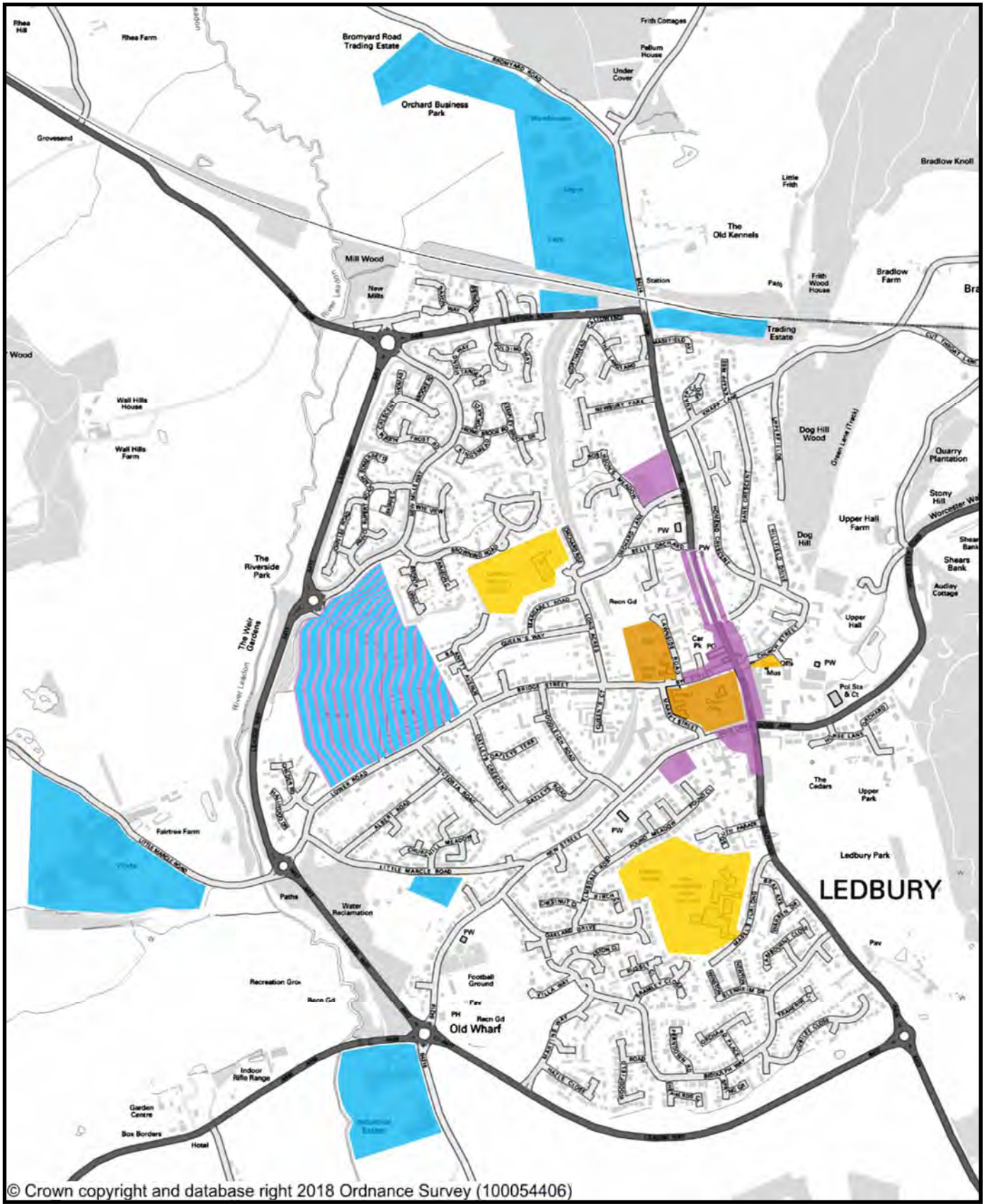
orchards and woodland. The eastern part of the parish, including Frith and Coneygree Woods, (known locally as Conigree) is within the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Ledbury has longstanding links with our armed forces and welcomes visits by the crew of HMS Ledbury, who were awarded the Freedom of the Town in 2011.

Shopping and Entertaining






The town is proud of its market, originally granted under a Charter by Queen Elizabeth I in 1584, and its thriving high street. Its independent shops feature local food, home interiors and clothing (modern and retro), as well as supporting general local needs. There are a number of specialist outlets tucked away in mews settings. Ledbury has some lovely pubs and a wide range of restaurants offering traditional British food and international menus.



I. About Ledbury



Map 2—Major non-residential land uses in Ledbury

Land Uses	
	Employment & Retail
	Retail
	Schools
	Employment
	Other Community

I. About Ledbury

Housing

Until the 1980s, the population was stable at around 3,500. In 1979 the bypass was built which led to sustained growth predominantly to the west of the town.

The town has grown much larger since the Second World War: building has extended along New Street and much of the building east of the Homend is post-war. The Langlands estate in the Homend was built in the 1960s and the quarter bounded by New Street, Gloucester Road and the bypass (called Deer Park—early 1980s) has been in-filled with well spaced single and two-storey houses.

The largest recent development was the New Mills estate (late 1990s) bordered by the bypass, Hereford Road and the disused Gloucester railway line. It comprises a development of high density 2, 3, 4 and 5-bedroomed houses. The average property price in Ledbury is the highest in the county.



Ledbury is a popular place for people to retire to – 25% of the population is 65 and over, according to the 2011 Census – 4% more than the county average. Nearly a third of households (32.5%) consist of only one person, and many of these will be elderly people.

Business

Although mainly agricultural, with growers supplying most major supermarkets and food outlets (both organic and mainstream) with plums, apples and pears, Ledbury also has a thriving light industrial base, with companies such as Amcor, Galebreaker, Ornua, Helping Hand, ABE, Heineken and Bevisol.

Ledbury has a flourishing town centre encompassing not only numerous (mainly independent) retail outlets and a twice weekly market, but also printers, accountants and solicitors. There are also health professionals such as dentists, osteopaths and physiotherapists.

In addition, a short distance from the town centre are three busy trading estates containing various commercial outlets and light industry.

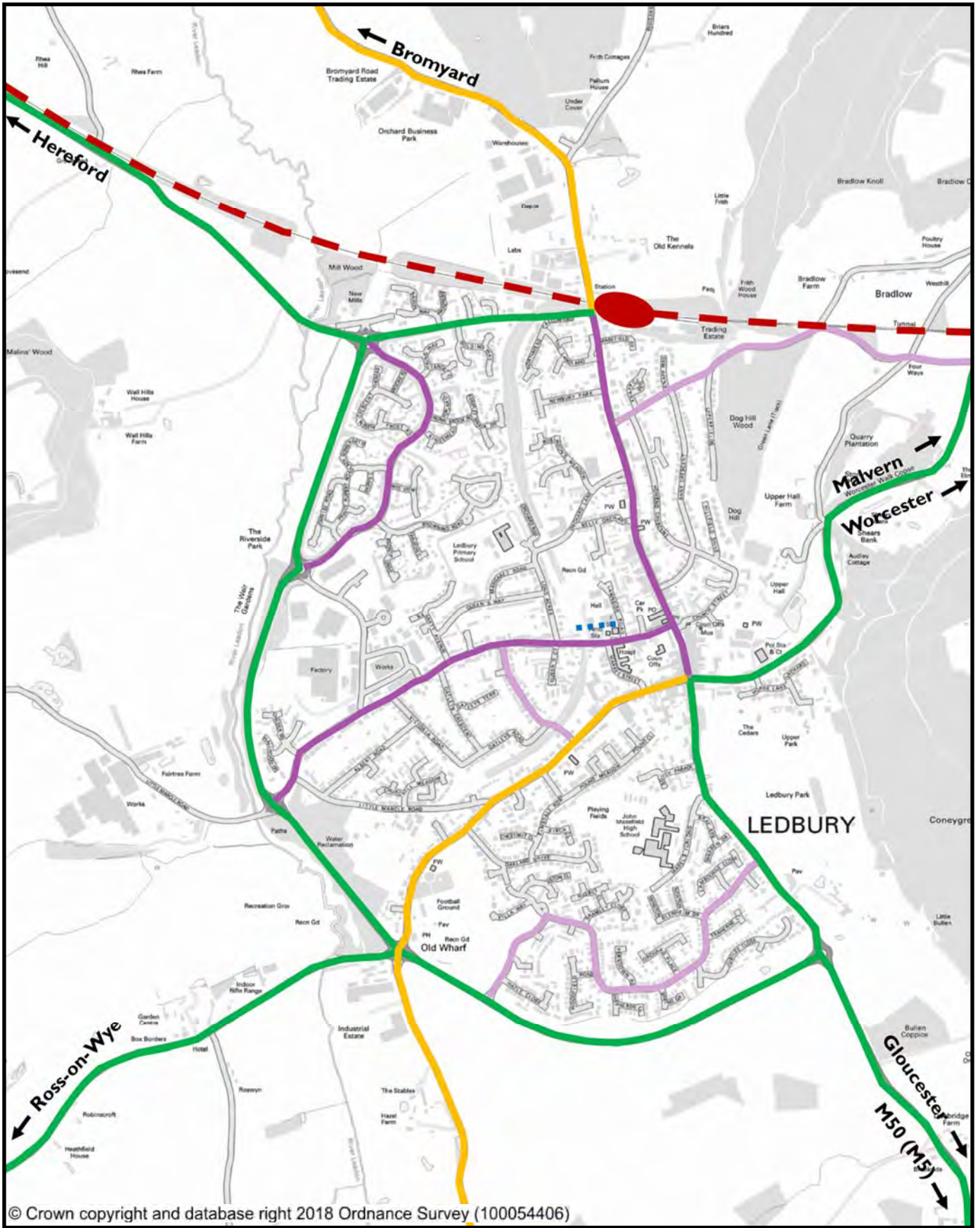
The Herefordshire Core Strategy has identified locations for new employment land, which will form the basis for new enterprises to develop and will promote the prospect of new businesses opening or moving to the town. This will generate opportunities for future employment of the residents of the new housing estates to be built to the north and south of the town.

Travel

The town is bounded to the west and south by a bypass channelling traffic towards the M50 (5 miles away) which is the main strategic infrastructure provision for the region. All traffic to and from Malvern must pass through the historic town centre (including commercial, leisure and commuting).

Ledbury has a railway station with regular services to Hereford, Malvern, Worcester and Birmingham. The town is fortunate to have a frequent service to London, which is an important connection for commuters wishing to travel within the region and further afield. Ledbury has bus services to and from Hereford, Gloucester and other surrounding

I. About Ledbury



Map 3—Rail and road routes in and around Ledbury

Key

	A-Road		Main connective route
	B-Road		Railway Station
	Main arterial route		Railway

I. About Ledbury

towns and cities. There is a daily return National Express coach service to London.

Education



Ledbury Primary School (500 nursery and primary pupils) has academic achievement results above national levels. Pastorally it champions values-based education.

Once primary education has been completed, education continues at John Masefield High School and Sixth Form Centre (800 students) which has been rated "good" by Ofsted.

Both schools are successful and recognise there will be an increase in demand, with their preferred option to develop and improve their existing sites, rather than attempt to relocate.

John Masefield High School is an academy with specialist school status for performing arts, catering for 11-18 year olds of all abilities.

Through Lottery funding and former district council investment, the school has comprehensive sports facilities available to pupils during school hours and the rest of the community at other times. Private nursery education is also available in the local area.

Services

The town has a Fire Station, Police Station, and



rapid response Paramedic Service. There is a recycling centre in the town.

Religious services are held in the Parish Church of St. Michael & All Angels; the Baptist and Catholic Churches; and other denominations.

As of June 2017, three high street banks remain with branches for personal and business support, despite the rise in online banking.

Ledbury has two well regarded doctors' surgeries, a Minor Injuries Unit, respite short stay unit and good facilities for the elderly needing care.

Community and Sport

Ledbury has a strong voluntary sector with over 120 local groups. These include general interest clubs, education classes and support groups to the less fortunate in the community. The volunteer resource needed to support such activity is likely



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to be extended by the continuing demands made upon it to make up for the withdrawal of services by Herefordshire Council.

An admirable example of this effort is the volunteer-run Market Theatre which provides popular live shows and cinema for the community. Another success story is Ledbury in Bloom which achieved an eleventh consecutive Royal Horticultural Society gold award in the 2017 Britain in Bloom competition.

Ledbury has successful rugby union, football, cricket, running, tennis, bowling and swimming



clubs. In addition, the town has tennis courts, a bowling green and a Centenary Field recreation ground with a skateboard park, play equipment and various exercise facilities. It has an indoor swimming pool, reconstructed in 2016/17, and two leisure centres which run keep fit classes, including, yoga, kick boxing, and dancing.



2. About Neighbourhood Planning

Background and Overarching Planning Policy

National Policy

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

At the heart of the NPPF is the principle of sustainable development, The Framework identifies three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental:

- An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
- A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and
- An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

These three overarching objectives are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives.

Localism Act 2011

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

They include: new freedoms and flexibilities for local government; new rights and powers for communities and individuals; reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective, and reform to ensure that decisions about housing are taken locally. The Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) encompasses the use of land for all types of

property development, including use, design, density and affordability. It seeks to preserve those areas of land which are of benefit to the wider community, such as sites of historical interest, areas of natural beauty and community facilities.

The Influence of the Core Strategy

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

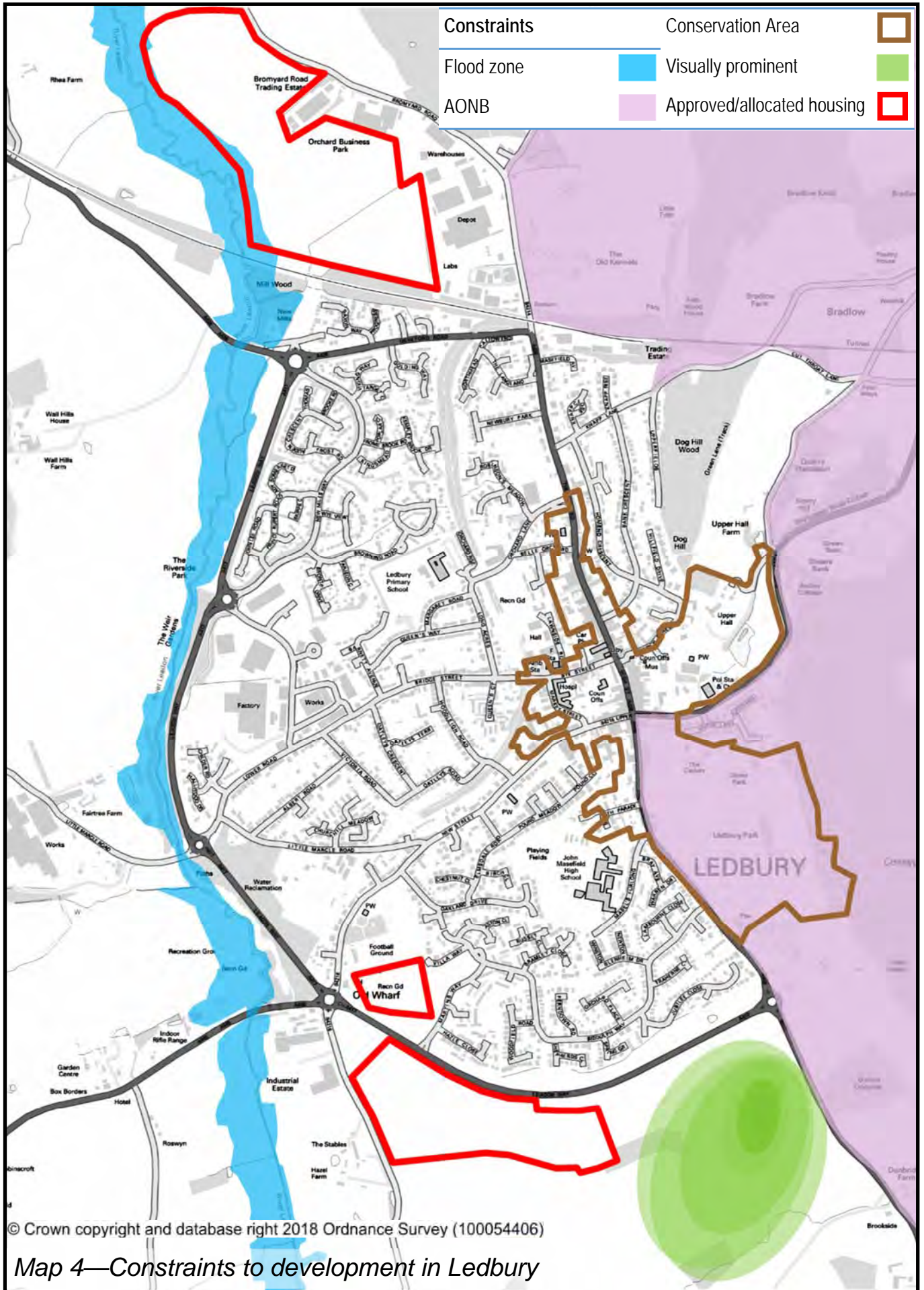
The Government's Planning Portal website is now the main online planning and building regulations resource for England and Wales. All the information and forms needed to prepare and submit a planning application are online, or can be downloaded and sent to Planning Services at Herefordshire Council.

Approvals for the development of 625 homes at the land to the north of the Viaduct and windfall developments (totalling 421 dwellings) south of the bypass and at the Cricket Club., means that residential development in the Neighbourhood Area exceeds the minimum target of 800 homes set out in the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy.

The Core Strategy was adopted in 2015, further to rigorous examination. The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to remove sites allocated to the Core Strategy and cannot delete sites that have received planning permission. Residents should note that the NDP has no impact on either the number of homes that Ledbury is expected to accommodate, or on the sites that have already been approved.

There are two policies within the Core Strategy

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2. About Neighbourhood Planning

that relate specifically to Ledbury—LB1 and LB2:

Policy LB1- Development in Ledbury

Ledbury will accommodate a minimum of 800 new homes balanced with a minimum of 15 hectares of new employment land during the plan period. The majority of new housing development will be focussed to the north of the town as set out in Policy LB2 and the strategic location for new employment of around 12 hectares to the west of the town, south of Little Marcle Road. Further development will take place through the implementation of existing commitments, infill development, and sites allocated through a Neighbourhood Development Plan. A number of sites which have future potential for development have been identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

Within Ledbury, new development proposals will be encouraged where they:

- allow for suitable small scale employment sites including live work opportunities within or adjoining the town;
- maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the existing town centre. Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 400m² in gross floor space and located outside the town centre will need to be supported by an impact assessment to determine whether there could be any adverse impacts on the town centre;
- improve accessibility within Ledbury by walking, cycling and public transport, particularly where they enhance connectivity with, for example, local facilities, new employment areas and the town centre;
- contribute to addressing deficiencies in community facilities and/or allow for infrastructure improvements (including broadband) in the town, to promote sustainable development;
- reflect and enhance the characteristic built historic

elements of Ledbury, such as its stone, brick and timber-framed buildings, medieval plan form, conservation areas and setting overlooking the Leadon Valley;

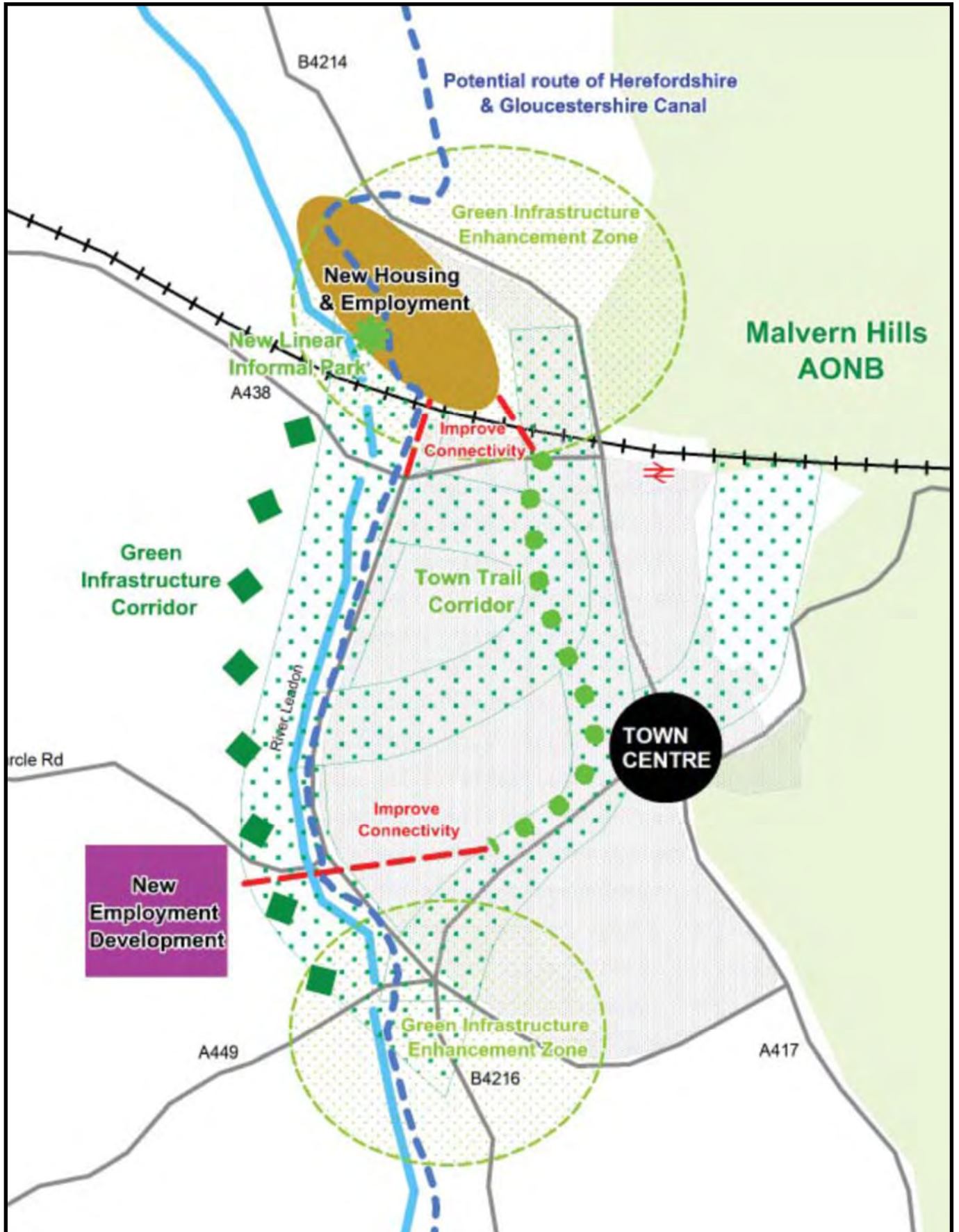
- protect and enhance its green infrastructure, including connections to the public right of way network and biodiversity, particularly the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the east and the Leadon Valley to the west;
- protect and enhance the setting of the town from eastern and western viewpoints; and, where this is not possible, incorporate appropriate mitigation measures; and
- have demonstrated engagement and consultation with the community including the Town Council.

Policy LB2 - Land north of the Viaduct

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

- mixed use development of around 625 new homes, at an average density of around 40 dwellings per hectare, comprising a mix of market and affordable house sizes and types that meet the requirements of Policy H3 and the needs identified in the latest version of the Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment;
- around 3 hectares of employment land, restricted to Use Class B1;
- a target of 40% of the total number of dwellings to be affordable housing;
- land and contributions to facilitate a restored canal to be delivered in partnership with the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust;
- a new linear informal park to link to the existing town trail, riverside walk, recreational open space and existing allotments;

Map 5—Ledbury key diagram from Herefordshire Core Strategy



2. About Neighbourhood Planning

- *the provision of developer contributions towards any identified need for new/improved community facilities/infrastructure improvements. This shall include a new 210 place primary school within the development (or an expansion of the existing primary school) and new recreational open space, play, indoor and outdoor sport facilities;*
- *provision of satisfactory vehicular access arrangements, the details of which will be determined at planning application stage;*
- *appropriate mitigation to safeguard the amenity of future occupants from unacceptable levels of noise and to safeguard the continued operation of existing businesses adjoining the area;*
- *development of bespoke, high quality and inclusive design, including accommodation that will meet the needs of older persons and that contributes to the distinctiveness of this part of Ledbury and respects the setting and significance of the listed viaduct and the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;*
- *safeguards to ensure there is no adverse impact on water quality and quantity in the River Leadon;*
- *new walking, cycling and bus links from the urban extension directly to the town trail and riverside walk under the viaduct, the railway station and town centre to create linkages to nearby development and existing community facilities;*
- *sustainable standards of design and construction; and*
- *a comprehensive sustainable urban drainage system which includes measures such as rain gardens and swales to manage ground and surface water drainage and safeguard against any increased flood risk.*

Neighbourhood Planning

Although the Government's intention is for local

people to decide what goes on in their towns, the Localism Act sets out some important guidelines. One of these is that all Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with higher level planning policy, the overarching policy for England: the National Planning Policy Framework 2011 (known as the NPPF). This "sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities."

The NDP can introduce planning policies to which planning applications in the plan area have to adhere, as long as they are in compliance with neighbourhood planning regulations, the NPPF and the Herefordshire Core Strategy.

Examples of such policies concern the planning of new homes, leisure facilities and opportunities to increase employment. The NDP aims to focus on guiding land use rather than stopping it. However, it also aims to protect existing facilities and areas, such as sports fields, from unwelcome development.

Neighbourhood Plans:

- **Must** contribute to achieving sustainable development
- **Cannot** be used to restrict development
- **Cannot** be used to promote a quantum of development smaller than set out in the Core Strategy.

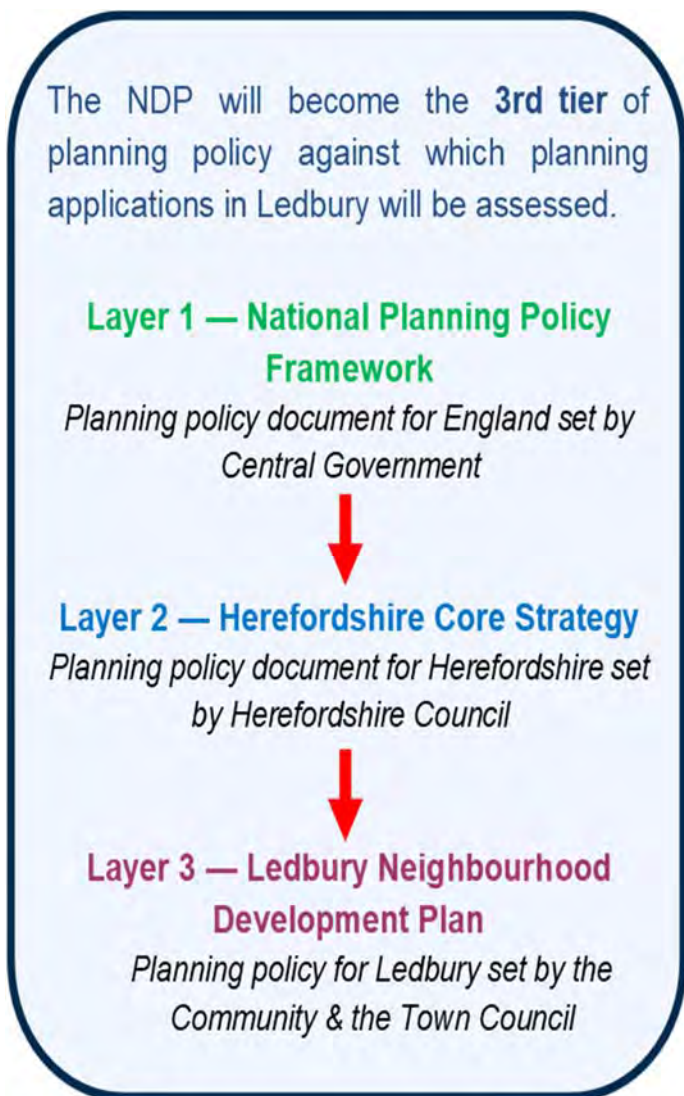
Indeed, if a Local Authority says that an area needs to grow, then communities cannot use a Neighbourhood Development Plan to block the building of new homes and businesses.

The Government White Paper on housing dated 7

2. About Neighbourhood Planning

February 2017, suggested there would be changes to the NPPF and a revised NPPF was published for consultation in March 2018. We will monitor those changes to ensure we are compliant.

Although solutions fall mainly outside the remit of the NDP, we record that the challenge will be to ensure that the commensurate growth in population is met with increased service provision when many facilities, such as health, are already operating at or near capacity. The NDP looks favourably on property having a change of use to



expand such facilities. The Call for Sites was an exercise undertaken to ascertain and identify sites in the NDP Area that might have potential for housing, employment, community or other uses. The exercise has identified a site (see Objective HO1) likely to be redeveloped which might have

provision to expand a GP surgery.

Return on Investment

It has taken thousands of hours by residents, volunteers, Ledbury Town Council (LTC) staff and Councillors, guided by paid consultants, to produce this Plan. For this investment in time and money there is a long term return. Where an NDP exists, the parish or town council becomes a beneficiary of an enhanced share of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This is a levy on developers which the town can use for infrastructure projects. Examples could be to facilitate disabled access to both platforms at the railway station (see NDP Objective TR3) or to support the restoration of the Hereford to Gloucester canal in line with the Core Strategy decision. Herefordshire are yet to adopt a CIL Charging Schedule, however once it and the NDP are adopted, Ledbury Town Council will receive 25% of CIL monies to spend for the benefit of the community.

Relationship to the Town Plan

The Ledbury Town Plan (2016) is an aspirational document which expresses residents' desires to maintain and improve the community, whereas the NDP addresses land use planning and will, once adopted, have legal weight in decision making on planning matters.

The preparation of the NDP has taken account, wherever relevant, of the views expressed in the Town Plan.

The NDP sets the planning scene for Ledbury for the next ten years or so. Ledbury is a vibrant town: the NDP's main thrust is to ensure that it continues to prosper.

Useful links

Population data sources:

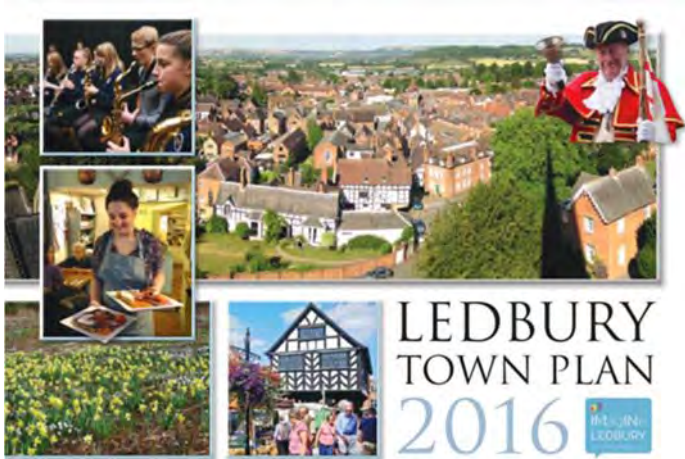
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<https://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/>

https://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/337/KeyFindings_Ledbury_locality.pdf

Evidence base for the Core Strategy:

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/559/core_strategy_-_examination_documents



Evidence base from Ledbury consultations:

www.ledbury-ndp.org

Review

The Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan will be reviewed every 5 years.

3. The Vision

Background

Ledbury lies on the edge of the Malvern Hills AONB on the River Leadon in an area of great landscape beauty. It is a market town with a long history, great heritage and a thriving community.

The following vision for the Ledbury NDP is derived from evidence gathering and extensive consultation and as such is based on the desires of the community as well as the demographic, economic, social and environmental issues facing the town.

The Vision:

Preserve and Develop Prosperity

As a prosperous market town, Ledbury will continue to be a vibrant, thriving community, both socially and economically, with an attractive, well managed and safe built environment in sympathy with the surrounding natural landscape. The town will continue to be a popular destination as an attractive place to shop for residents, the local rural community and visitors, with a successful tourist industry celebrating the town's heritage.

Preserve and Develop Wellbeing

Residents are proud of Ledbury and gain a sense of wellbeing from living here. There is a strong sense of community and there are currently good services and amenities. Infrastructure will be developed in line with the rate of housing development to maintain this.

Preserve Quality and Character

The town's population will live, work and play in high quality, flexible, sustainable/energy efficient and well designed buildings with appropriate infrastructure, which meet the needs of everyone who spends time in the town, and maintain its unique character and heritage.

Widen Employment Base

Currently there is an imbalance between housing and employment building with some 40% of the working

population commuting out of the town. The employment base will be widened in order to help develop and diversify the economy, and to continue the technology corridor from the midlands via Malvern, in order to attract high-tech and R&D businesses to Ledbury. The effect of this will be to provide the option to many residents of working in the town, and reduce the numbers commuting out of the town.

Develop Educational Facilities

Ledbury will be a willing partner in the development of higher education facilities in Herefordshire and will look to develop additional facilities and a campus for the proposed university college specialising in engineering sciences in Hereford.

Develop Sport and Recreation

Ledbury wishes to become an area of sporting excellence for all generations and intends to develop more indoor and outdoor sports facilities as the town grows.

Preserve Environment

The built environment will retain its well defined boundaries and good connectivity. Sustainable transport options such as walking and cycling, will be encouraged and public transport disabled access provisions enhanced in priority over vehicular traffic. Easy footpath network access to the surrounding countryside and beyond will be improved and maintained. The Malvern Hills AONB is the backdrop to the town and all development will be complementary to the landscape and the views. The need for related design sensitivity for these and other developments in the NDP is encapsulated in the Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan Design Guide which is a complementary document to the NDP.

Green space will be protected and biodiversity safeguarded, while the town's relationship with the open countryside will be strengthened through the prioritised use of urban trees, landscaping and decorative planting throughout all developments. There will be the opportunity to create a 'green corridor' along the

3. The Vision

safeguarded route of the projected Gloucester and Hereford canal reinstatement, largely following the route of the River Leaddon.

Nurture the Town Centre

Ledbury's role as a prosperous market town with a diverse economy, including a burgeoning tourist industry, will be protected and enhanced, while the heritage of the town will be preserved and celebrated. The town will cherish and nurture its vibrant retail core, and will grow its reputation for markets and festivals. Traders will be encouraged to provide a wide range of products, in order to enhance the standing of Ledbury as a prime visitor destination. Increasing sustainability within the town will mean that Ledbury steadily gains the reputation for being a 'Green Town'.

4. Introduction to Objectives & Policies

Section 3 sets out the overall vision for Ledbury as a whole. The Vision was developed in response to the issues identified from the evidence gathering and consultation exercises undertaken at the start of the Plan process.

The Vision helped shape the Objectives which are grouped under 6 headings:

- Housing
- Employment and Economy
- Built Environment
- Natural Environment
- Community and Leisure
- Transport and Infrastructure

Policies were then developed to deliver the Objectives. Each Objective is supported by one or more Policies which are designed to help deliver each Objective.

The Objectives and Policies are set out as below:

The Objectives are in bold

The Policies are in a coloured box

The Reasoned Justification is set out in italics after the Policies.



5. Sustainable Development

Contribution towards Sustainable Development

As described in Chapter 2, the NPPF sets out the importance of sustainable development in plan-making and decision-taking. As a consequence the principle of sustainable development was at the heart of the Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan.

In order to achieve sustainable development the LNDP does the following, all of which contribute to at least one of the three dimensions of sustainable development:

- Implements a settlement boundary in order to ensure that new residential development is located in sustainable locations, close to services and amenities.
- Supports appropriate housing growth in order to meet the housing needs of present and future generations.
- Seeks to protect and enhance the historic environment.
- Seeks to protect and enhance the natural environment and surrounding landscape.
- Includes provisions for the protection of biodiversity.
- Protects existing and encourages new employment and retail provision in order to contribute towards building a strong, responsive and competitive economy.
- Encourages food production in order to create new jobs and contribute to the local economy.
- Protects local green infrastructure and open spaces.
- Promotes the provision of new community infrastructure and protection of existing provision.

The SEA found the cumulative impact of the Plan over the short, medium and long term would be generally positive. *'The majority of the policies will have a neutral impact, as either they do not affect many of the SEA objectives, or the development objectives proposed are balanced with sustainable policies to minimise environmental impact.'*

Objective SD1:

To develop Ledbury as a forward thinking, self-reliant and sustainable lifestyle community to reflect increasing climate change challenges.

In anticipation of the environmental and lifestyle changes that climate change mitigation will require in the coming decades, it will be increasingly necessary for local communities to become more self sustaining. Early adoption and implementation of this Policy has the potential to establish Ledbury as a leading national example of a community which is self reliant and environmentally sustainable.

Policy SD1.1

Ledbury as a Self-Sustaining Community

Proposals which are aimed at developing Ledbury as a self reliant and environmentally sustainable community, such as for self build zero carbon based housing development, growing its own environmentally supporting food, generating its own renewable energy supplies and locally recycling its waste and water to improve water supply and quality, will be supported.

Proposals which promote a reduction in dependency on the private car and encourage environmentally sustainable travel habits will also be supported.

6. Housing

Housing - The Background

The Herefordshire Core Strategy sets a minimum target of 800 new dwellings for the Ledbury parish, to be provided during the Plan period (2011-2031). The bulk of this allocation (625 dwellings) will be located to the north of the town, on what is known as the Viaduct site. This site was opposed by the Town Council and the community. The site was, however, allocated in the Core Strategy by Herefordshire Council regardless and approved at examination. The site is expected to deliver most of the housing that the town requires over the Plan period and there is no desire in the town for a quantum of development significantly greater than that proposed by the Core Strategy.

Since the beginning of the Plan period, windfall provision and approved planning applications have brought forward approximately 200 dwellings. This figure includes the 100 units on the Full Pitcher, former cricket ground site. Added to this figure will be the 321 dwellings, approved following appeal, on the site south of Leadon Way. When these windfall sites are added to the 625 dwellings planned for the Viaduct site, the total considerably exceeds the Core Strategy target .

The Policies below reflect the fact that the Core Strategy target is likely to be exceeded, and seek to limit development to the immediate needs of the community, including affordable starter units for the young and new families and appropriate units for the elderly.

The NDP can also determine the design standards preferred by the community for housing and other developments. These are documented in the related Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan Design Guide which is an integral component of the NDP.

13%

Of the population of **Ledbury** are **aged 75+** compared to

Number of **over 85s** expected to *nearly double* over the Plan period with associated impacts on services.

7%

in the rest of **England**.



HOUSE SIZES

There are very few 1-bed flats and houses so shortage of properties for 1st-time buyers and downsizers



HOME OWNERSHIP



High rate of home ownership - **70%**. Consequently there are few rental opportunities

HOUSING NEED IN LEDBURY

The Herefordshire HMA identified 3 key issues:

- Under-supply of smaller affordable housing
- Under-supply of all mid-sized semis & terraced homes
- High house prices and consequent affordability issues

800

The number of new homes required in Ledbury by the Core Strategy between 2011 and 2031, which has already been exceeded.

6. Housing

Housing - Objectives & Policies

Objective HO1:

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

Community Action—Market Street Auction Rooms

The community consultations indicate that people in Ledbury want new developments on small sites which relate well to the town, are suitable for the elderly and young people, and which also provide opportunity for self build projects.

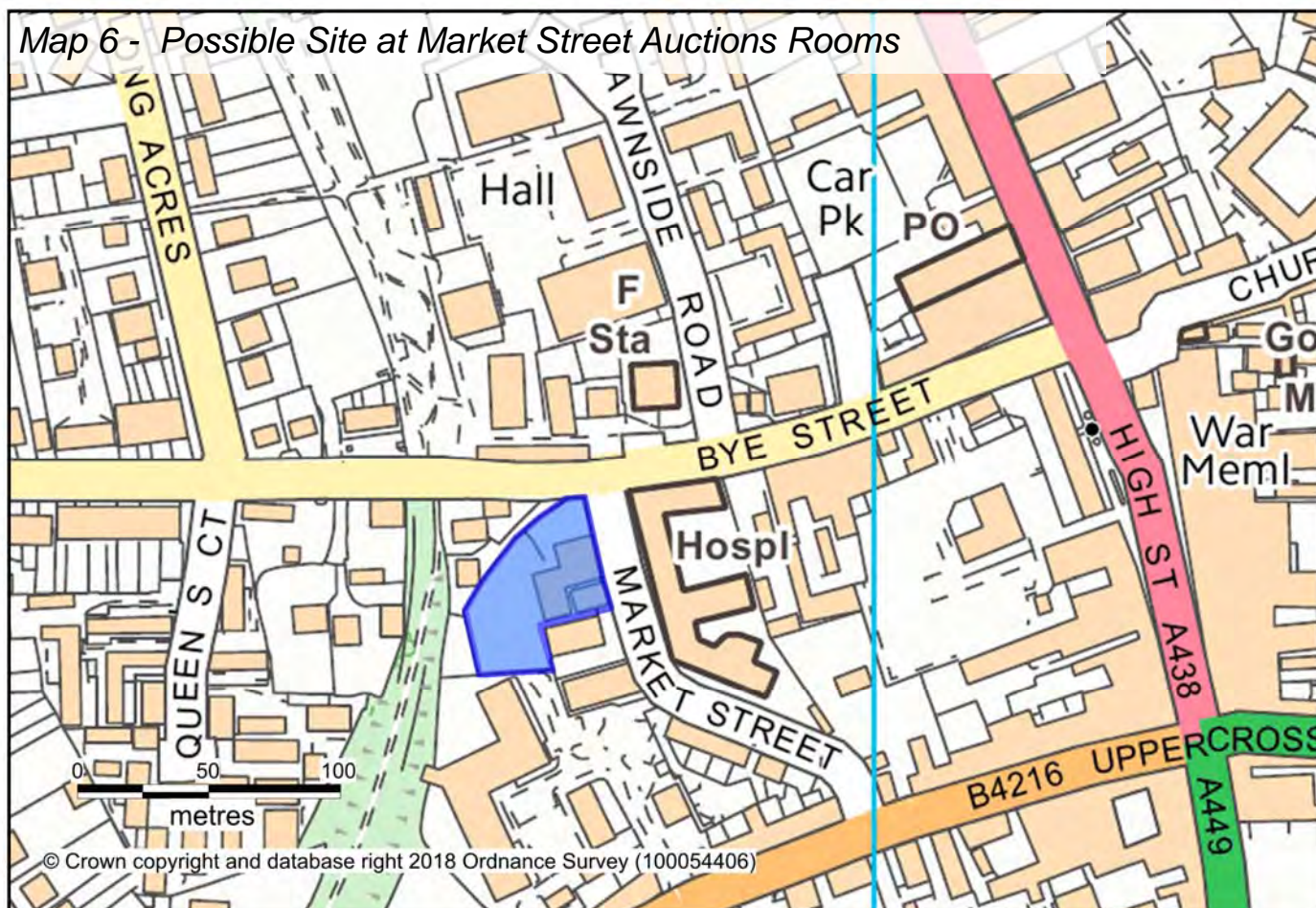
The most popular site at community consultation for these purposes was the Market Street Auction Rooms site which was selected by the public to meet these needs in the call for sites consultation.

The Market Street Auction Rooms site is considered appropriate for elderly people, due to its proximity to

the health centres; and for young people due to the proximity of the town centre. This is important in Ledbury given the demographics of the town and the desire to meet the needs of those who wish to downsize. This site could allow for the expansion of a doctors' surgery which is next door to the site, with an opportunity to add a pharmacy to the Market Surgery.

Although the site is still in active use at the time of adoption of the Plan, the NDP Group have evidence from the landowner that they are willing to release the land for development.

Any development would have to take into account the setting of the nearby Ledbury Conservation Area which will make proposed development particularly sensitive.



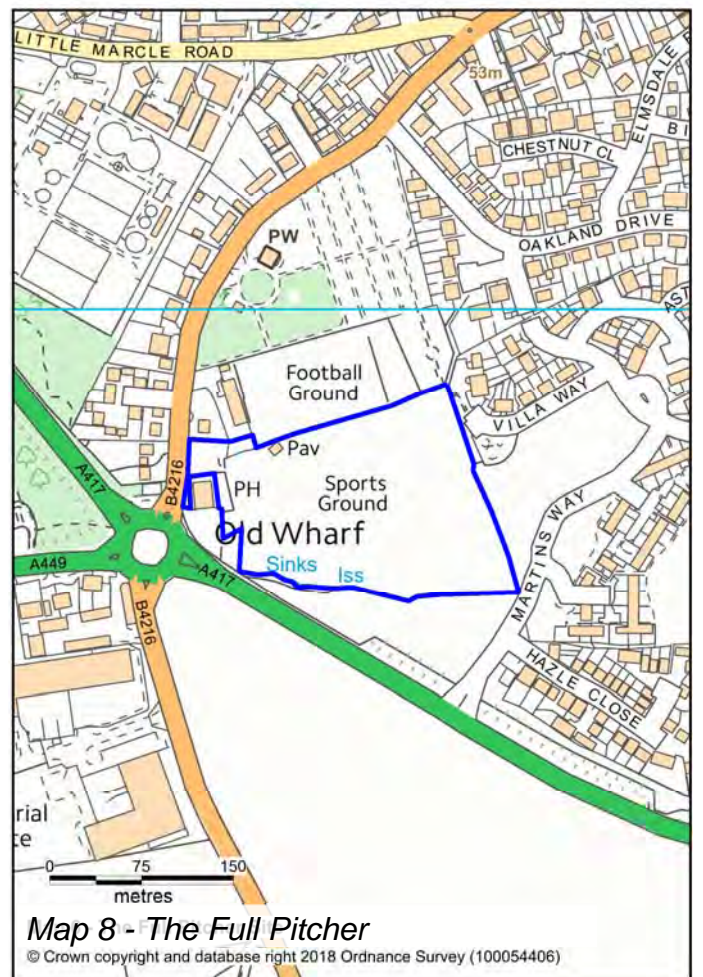
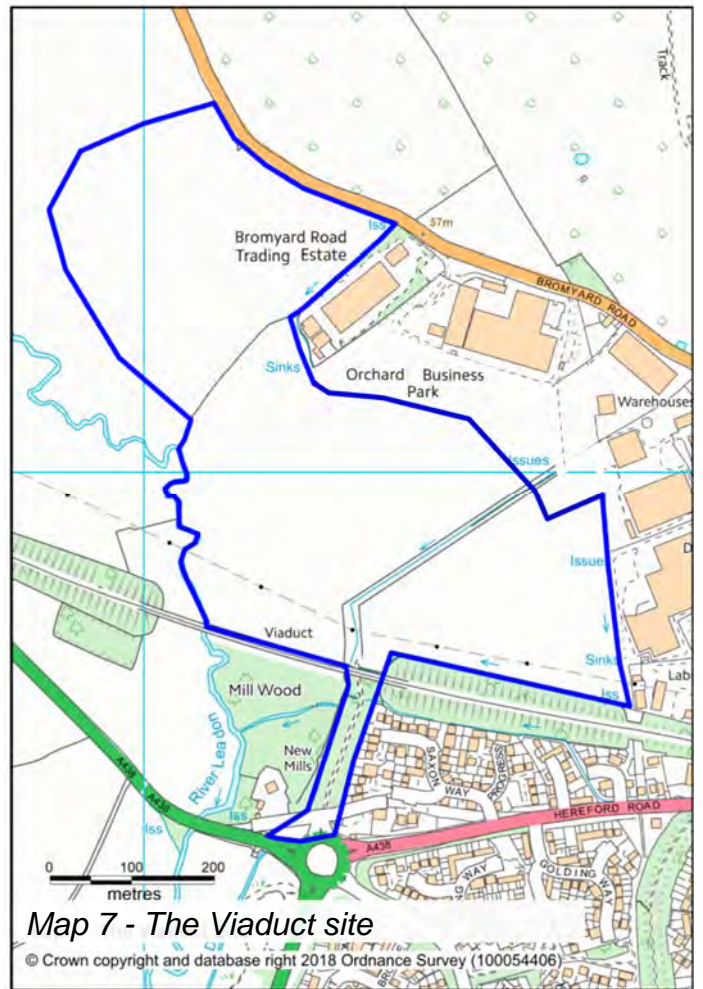
6. Housing

Whilst identified as an opportunity only, and not allocated for development, the Town Council will seek to explore ways in which an application might be brought forward on this site to deliver the aims of the community identified above.

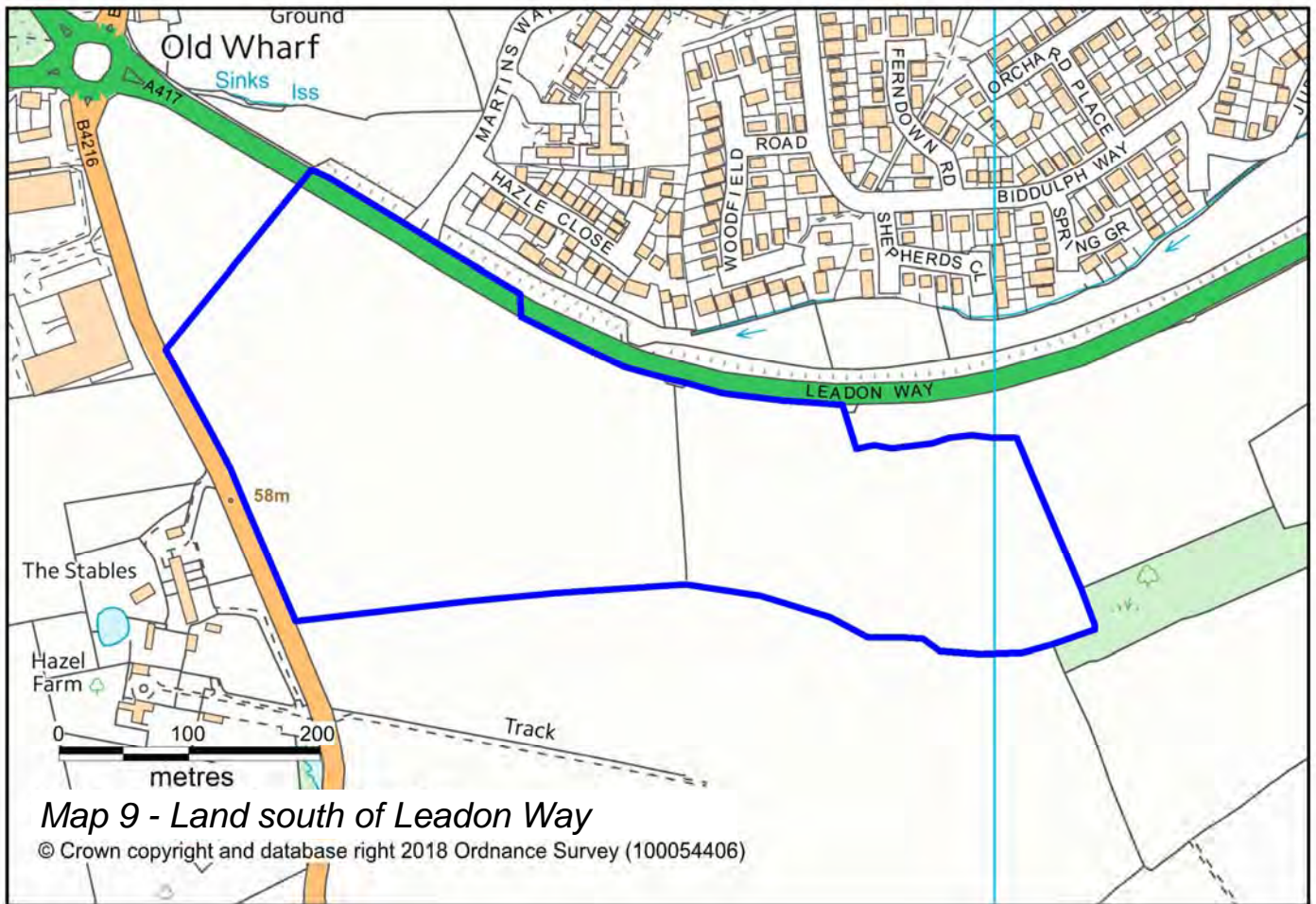
Ledbury's Large Housing Sites.

Maps 7, 8 and 9 show the Viaduct Site (identified in the Herefordshire Core Strategy for 625 dwellings), The Full Pitcher Site (planning permission for 100 dwellings) and Land South of Leadon Way (planning permission for 321 dwellings).

These three sites together amount to commitments of over 1,000 homes which the LNDP supports. It is considered that these sites, in conjunction with the site allocated by the LNDP and windfall sites that will come forward within the settlement boundary, more than meet the needs of the town in terms of housing provision over the plan period.



6. Housing



Objective HO2:

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

Traditionally Ledbury has been a low income area derived from its past agricultural dependency, although it is now a high cost housing area due to its convenient location and suitability for commuting to the Midlands and beyond. House prices are high in comparison to the rest of Herefordshire due to its popularity with those commuters and also for those wishing to retire to an attractive market town. To help meet the housing market needs and the needs of the local area

- Affordable housing (as per HCS Policy HI)
- Starter homes
- General housing for sale at market value
- Self-build opportunities
- Housing for adults and young people with disabilities and learning difficulties (C3b)

Policy HO2.1

Reinforcing Balanced Housing Communities

Proposals for windfall development in excess of 10 housing units should demonstrate the provision of a mix of building sizes, types and tenures of housing. This may include:

population, a mix of building sizes, types and tenures of housing stock is required.

The evidence from the initial NDP consultation in 2014 shows that people in Ledbury prefer new developments to be on small sites, to help encourage integration socially, and between young and old. There is a desire to encourage the young and families to the town, who

6. Housing

may then remain.

It is acknowledged that a 'satisfactory mix' of building sizes, types and tenures of housing stock will depend on the viability of a scheme.

Developments outside the town centre should be lower density in order to maintain an 'edge of the countryside' feel which is important to the community and a key characteristic of Ledbury.

The use of structured planting, trees, shrubs, etc., will be encouraged to create small areas of community within larger developments.

Policy HO2.2

Housing Density

The housing density of new development should respect its surroundings through good design which responds positively to local character. Housing densities should be within the range of 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare. In keeping with local character, housing densities should be at the higher end of this range towards and within the town centre and at the lower end of the range towards the edge of the settlement.

Objective HO3:

To recognise and provide for the growth in the needs of older persons and related specialist housing, as identified in a Study of the Housing and Support needs of Older People in Herefordshire.

Based on information taken from the 2011 Census, the demographic of the town's population shows an increasingly elderly majority, older than 55 equals 55%.

The Policy proposals would help free up houses suitable for occupation by families. This is important to ensure that the right type of housing is available for Ledbury's ageing population. Storage for mobility scooters will encourage inclusivity, combat loneliness

and give access to amenities.

Due to an ageing population it is important to



encourage inclusivity within the community, combating loneliness often experienced by elderly residents.

Provide easier access to centrally located health and support services, ensuring such residents feel part of the community and have easy access to all amenities.

The Town Council will seek to encourage all such developments above ground floor level to be accessible via a lift.

Policy HO3.1

Housing for the Elderly

Proposals for the following types of housing will be supported, provided they comply with other policies:

- Retirement homes
- Enhanced sheltered retirement homes
- Extra care housing
- Specialist housing for people with dementia.

All new housing for the elderly to include secure storage for mobility scooters.

Objective HO4:

To provide sustainable and affordable homes for local singles and young families in

Policy HO4.1

Housing for Young People

Proposals for 1, 2 and 3 bedroom starter homes will be supported.

Proposals for C3(b) units, aimed at assisting young people who require supported housing and those in care transitioning to fully independent living, will also be supported.

order to promote balanced communities.

The high cost of property in the Ledbury parish (as described above) is one of the main reasons for local young people and families leaving the area, creating an unbalanced age demographic.

The Plan will support the building of “affordable”, low cost, 1, 2 and 3 bedroom starter units to help meet the needs of those on low incomes. Workers involved in the local agricultural industry and health and care workers, are particularly in need of this type of housing.

Providing the opportunity for the young to remain within the community will help Ledbury retain its recognised strong sense of being a caring, welcoming town, inclusive of all ages and abilities.



Objective HO5:

To encourage individual and community

Policy HO5.1

Self-Build

Self-build proposals for new dwellings will be supported, including proposals for development sites for the provision of self-build plots.

based self-build projects.

There is evidence that the people of Ledbury will support self build developments as individuals or as Community Build projects (Consultation Survey Results, section 3). The formation of Community Land Trusts will be encouraged to allow individuals to come together as a group, although at this stage an appropriate parcel of land has not been identified.

Proposals in line with the NPPF and the Core Strategy are to be encouraged.

7. Employment & Economy

Employment & Economy - The Background



According to the Herefordshire Employment Land Study 2012, Ledbury 'has a good balance of employment provision which is primarily focused on the industrial and warehouse sector. There is some office provision; however the town does not function as a key office location'.

Ledbury has two principal employment areas, at Bromyard Road Trading Estate and the recently extended Lower Road Trading Estate. There are around 10 key employers. The low number of large employers has not yet given rise to the establishment of a Chamber of Commerce; this is possibly a weakness in managing trade expansion.

Supply of employment land in and around the town is good; however some of the existing sites are tired and most date back 20 years or more. There are few high quality, modern employment units available.

Ledbury has excellent access to the M50 and the M5 making it an attractive location for industry, particularly situated around the ring road. Employment sites to the north of the town have the advantage of the nearby railway station.

Ledbury has slightly more industrial employment as a proportion of its overall employment provision

Unemployment rate in Ledbury is:

3.1%

Lower than the national average of:

4.4%

70% of those in work are in **full-time** work while **30%** are in **part-time** work



The town has more **retired** people than the national average



EMPLOYMENT LAND

'Ledbury has a good balance of employment provision which is primarily focussed on the industrial and warehouse sector'

'There is therefore potentially scope to increase the office provision in the town given the location and transport links'

RETAIL PROVISION

The town centre has a wide mix of uses:

- **50% shops** (A1)
- **13% are Financial & Professional services** (A2)
- **6.5% are Food & Drink** (excluding pubs & takeaways) (A3)



215

Approximate total number of units in Ledbury town centre

7. Employment & Economy

than the average for Herefordshire and has less office employment. The town has significantly above average sales activity, but otherwise the surveyed employment activity in Ledbury is broadly in line with the rest of the county.

The Core Strategy demands the development of a minimum of 800 new homes. To provide employment for the new residents will be a challenge.

Ledbury has visitor attractions. In 2015 its historic buildings were enhanced by the completion of the renovation of the Master's House which is the venue for the annual Poetry Festival. It is two miles from Eastnor Castle which holds a number of events throughout the year and provides a setting for weddings, festivals and other functions. Ledbury accommodates racegoers to the Cheltenham Festival. It is adjacent to the Malvern Hills and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Core Strategy promotes the rehabilitation of the Hereford to Gloucester canal which, when complete, will be a visitor attraction.

Employment & Economy—Objectives & Policies

Objective EE1:

Strengthen and grow the presence of key employment sectors by a deliverable mix of sustainable employment sites to cater for future growth. In particular, the town wishes to encourage high quality long term employment, business start-ups and creative industries.

Key employment sectors include:

- Independent and national retail
- Tourism - domestic and business: day, overnight and short visit
- Research and Science
- Manufacturing and Distribution

- **Engineering**
- **Food & Drink**
- **Agricultural services**
- **Professional services**
- **Art, Design & the Creative Industries**
- **Healthcare**
- **Sustainable technology industries such as renewable energy and recycling.**

Policy EE1.1

New Employment Sites

New employment sites (will be supported).

The regeneration, proportionate intensification or reassignment of previously developed brownfield land to employment land uses will be particularly supported.

If Ledbury cannot provide more employment, it risks becoming a commuter town; its new residents seeking employment farther afield. Bristol, Birmingham and Cardiff are commutable by car and it is intended not to promote car journeys. The policy seeks to offer support to new or expanding business: to grow the town as a regional centre with particular regard to start-ups. Increasing employment opportunities will help to ensure that Ledbury is a sustainable place for all ages in which to live, work, and play. Ledbury particularly wishes to encourage its talented young residents to stay, by ensuring it has diverse employment opportunities.

The Town Council will work to encourage applications for an Enterprise or Business Start-up Hub.



Policy EE1.2

Protecting Existing Employment Land

The change of use of employment land and premises to non-employment uses, for which planning permission is required, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that continued employment use is no longer economically viable, through the provision of evidence showing that the site or premises have been actively and openly marketed at the market value for the existing use/other suitable employment uses, for at least a 12 month

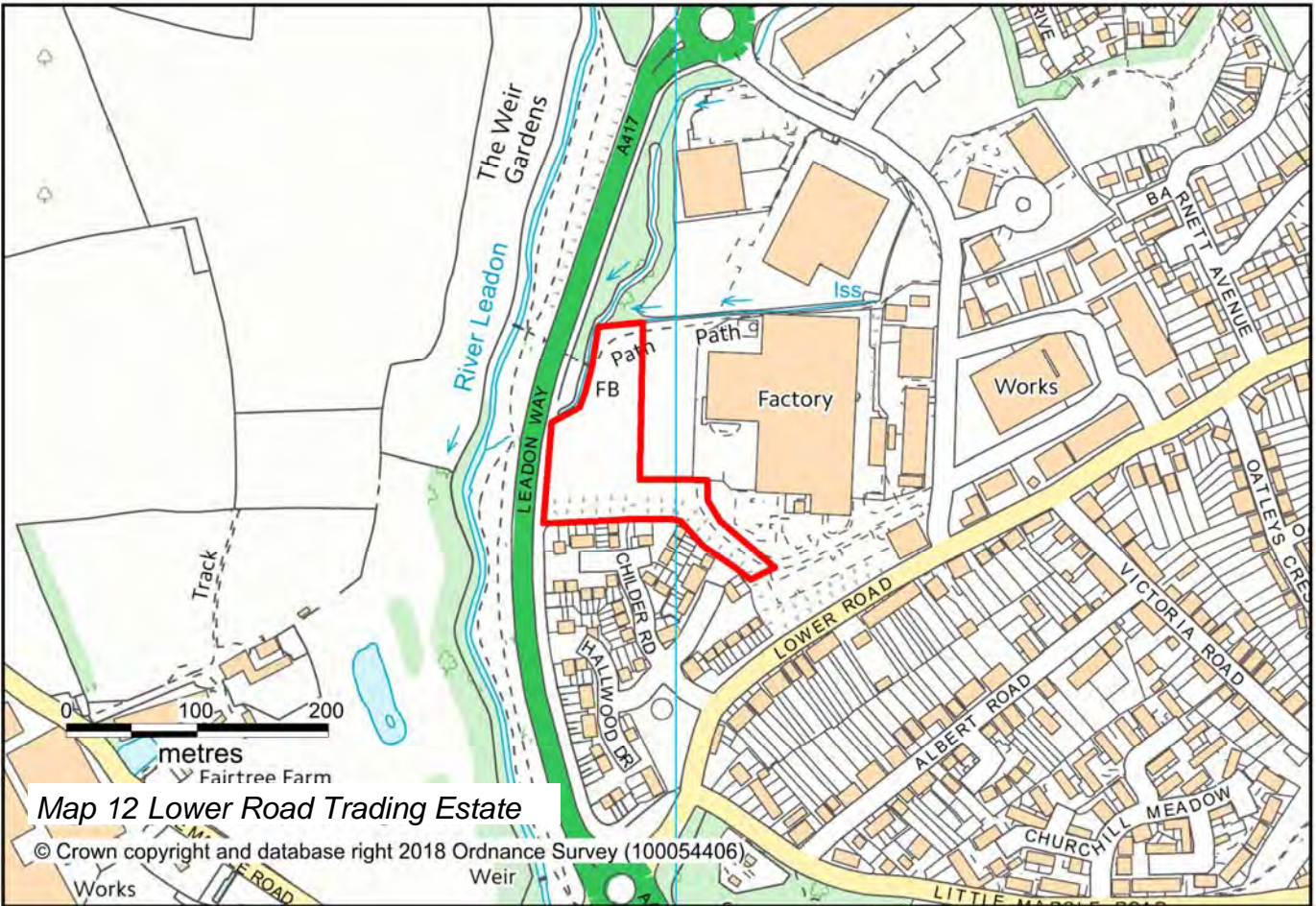
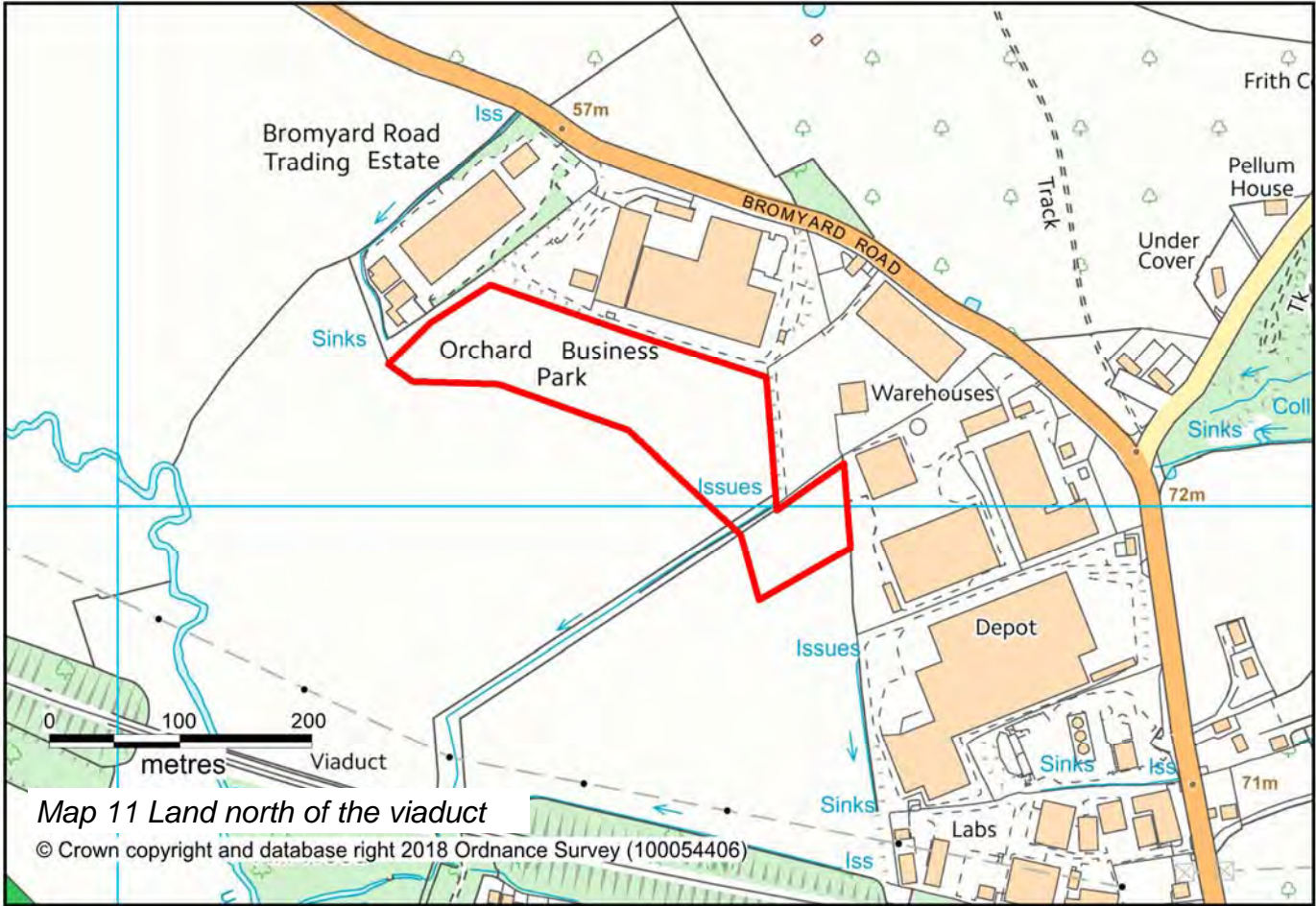
In order to sustain and grow Ledbury as a prosperous local centre, the loss of employment land to non-employment will not be supported unless the existing use is no longer economically viable and the site has been marketed at a reasonable price for at least a year for that, and any other suitable employment or service trade uses.

Ledbury’s New Employment Sites

Maps 11, 12 and 13 show Land South of the Little Marcle Road (identified in the Herefordshire Core Strategy as an area in which new employment uses will be supported), Land North of the Viaduct (identified in the Herefordshire



7. Employment & Economy



7. Employment & Economy

Core Strategy as land for employment use) and Lower Road Trading Estate (granted planning permission for employment use in 2018).

Objective EE2:

Promote and enhance facilities necessary to attract visitors and to encourage tourism.

Ledbury has excellent accommodation in old coaching inns such as the Feathers Hotel, Talbot Inn and The Royal Oak. There are a handful of B&B establishments and holiday lets, however for a town the size of

Policy EE2.1

Promoting Visitor Accommodation

Proposals which increase local hotel and visitor accommodation provision in the urban area will be supported, subject to respecting local character, residential amenity and highway safety.

Outside the urban area the re-use of existing buildings, that are structurally sound and capable of conversion without complete or substantial reconstruction and conversion, to self-catering tourism units will be supported.

Ledbury, with its heritage assets and attractions, there is a paucity of visitor accommodation. The nearest budget hotel for the business traveller is the Premier Inn, located at the end of the M50 near Ross on Wye.

As a consequence, if the town expands as a tourist destination and business centre, it will need to provide a better visitor infrastructure. Moreover, a new hotel would provide employment opportunities.

Objective EE3:

Promote the Town Centre as the destination of choice for retail, leisure and community activities, in order to enhance the appearance and historic character of the town.

Ledbury has a thriving centre made up predominantly of independent shops, food outlets, services and pubs. A residents' survey undertaken for the Town Plan showed that over 70% do their main food shopping in Ledbury; and a visitor survey showed that over 90% value the variety of shops. The retail area is focused along the Homend and High Street with secondary provision on intersecting streets. Local butchers and

Policy EE3.1

Retail Areas & Provision

Map 14 overleaf defines the current primary and secondary shopping frontages for ground floor units.

To preserve the current character, the change of use of A1 (Shops,) A3 (Restaurants & Cafes) or A4 (Drinking Establishments) to other use classes in the primary shopping area will not be supported. New A1, A3 and A4 provision will be supported within the primary and secondary shopping areas.

New A2 (Financial & Professional Services) and A5 (Hot Food Takeaways) will not be supported within the primary shopping area, but will be encouraged within the secondary shopping area.

New town centre development of this area will be expected to retain or enhance the existing provision of parking spaces.

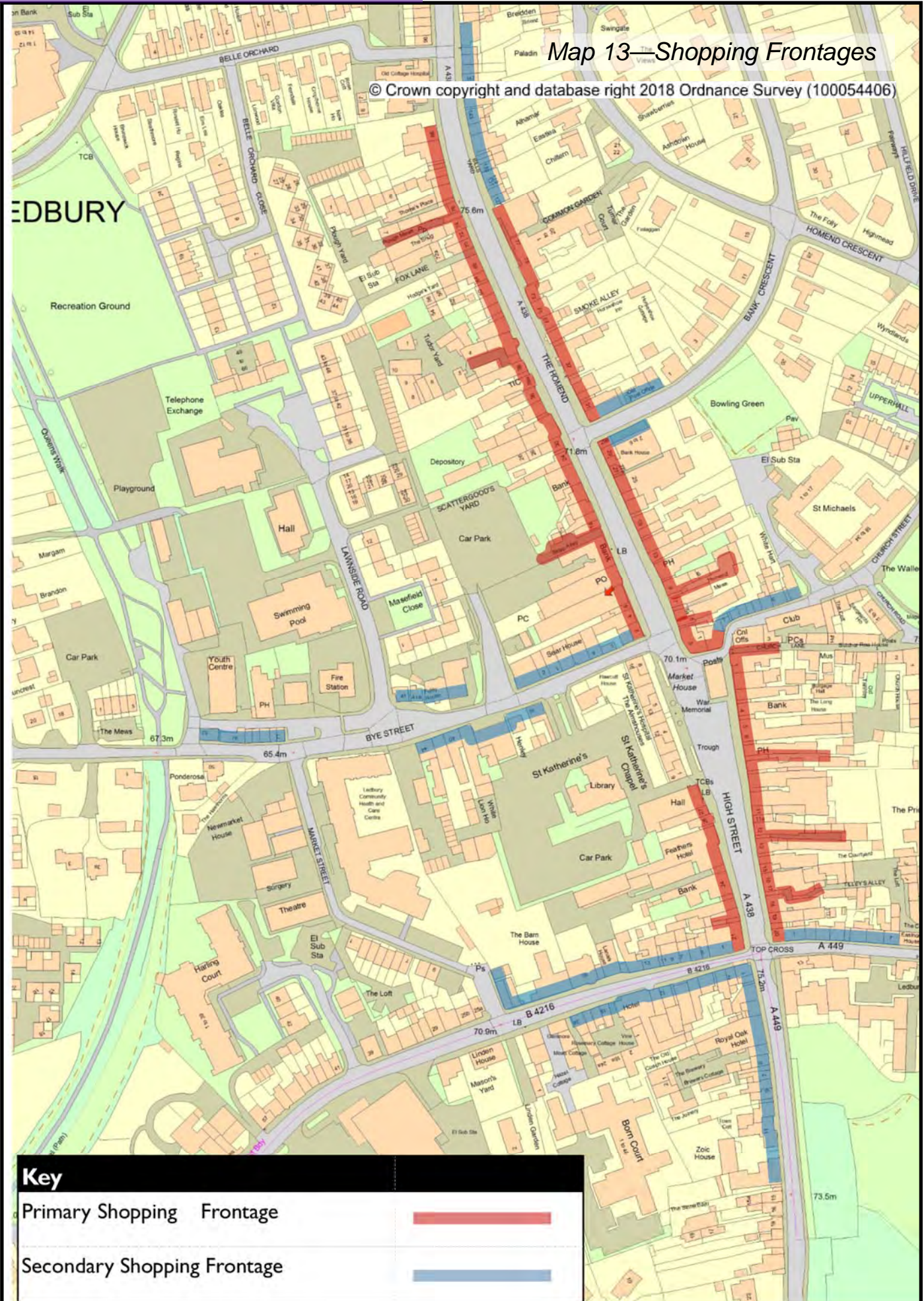
greengrocers, supplemented by twice weekly markets, provide fierce competition to the three supermarkets.



7. Employment & Economy

Map 13—Shopping Frontages

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7. Employment & Economy

which will add to the competition in that sector.

This may bring more visitors to the town and will certainly provide extra employment opportunities.

There are a number of specialist shops in and near Ledbury that attract visitors from farther afield and which have also created thriving online business.

Thus, Ledbury has a sound base upon which to expand its retail business, both as a by-product of its tourism



and by enhancing its reputation as a centre for specialist shopping. There is a need to retain a balance of type of outlet and to continue to provide support to independent enterprises.

The shopping areas have evolved over time, as some shops have closed down. Meanwhile, excellent new ventures have opened in the centrally located mews areas. This requires a repositioning of the retail boundaries of the town to reflect current use and to avoid sprawl. It will be important to contain the small scale retail interest within a reasonable distance of the three main town car parks, so that easy access for shoppers and visitors is maintained.

8. Built Environment

Built Environment - The Background



Ledbury residents are very proud of the character and appearance of the town. A compact town, with historic buildings dating back to the 15th century, Church Lane, The Market House and The Masters House, along with coaching inns, give daily pleasure to residents and are an attraction for tourists.

The preservation and enhancement of not only the historic town centre and the Conservation Area, but also the whole urban area is considered vitally important to maintain an attractive and vibrant town.

It is important that any new development takes account of the opportunities and constraints offered by individual sites and the surrounding area, to deliver sympathetically responsive design solutions that will stand the test of time.

'Ledbury has a distinctive character and a unique local identity owing to its rich history and built heritage.'

CONSERVATION AREA

A large portion of Ledbury's town centre is covered by a Conservation Area which includes a multitude of listed buildings, many timber-framed, including the 17th century Market House.



The Homend and High Street form a broad main thoroughfare through the town centre and are home to numerous historic buildings



GROWTH OF THE TOWN

3,500

Population of Ledbury in the **1980s**

10,000

Population of the town **today**

This rapid growth has shaped the character of the town - while the town centre and surrounding areas constitute the historic core of Ledbury, the north, south and west of the town date very much from the latter 20th century

8. Built Environment

Built Environment - Objectives & Policies

Objective BE1:

To ensure that Ledbury maintains its character as a rural market town, with new development sympathetic in style and form to the immediate surroundings. Future development will contribute to the preservation of the overall distinctiveness of the town and its setting.

Policy BE1.1

Design

Development should demonstrate that it is sympathetic to the character and appearance of Ledbury and where possible, that it contributes to the conservation and enhancement of the overall distinctiveness of the Neighbourhood Area. The use of design review is strongly supported.

Both national and county planning policy guidance identify the need to encourage high quality development that responds to the characteristics of the immediate and wider area. One of the main features of Ledbury is the number of listed buildings. It is important that developments seek to maintain this historic character. The Town Council will seek to encourage developers to make use of the Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan Design Guide. Further, the design review process can provide an opportunity to save time and money and speed up proposals through planning by getting design issues resolved early on.

Objective BE2:

To protect the transition from town centre to edge of town where it is more rural, so that any new 'edge of town' development maintains the character of the current settlement boundary.

The Policy seeks to maintain harmony between the urban and rural areas and minimise the visual impact of any crude change of environment.

Policy BE2.1

Edge of Town Transition

The density of housing in the vicinity of the perimeter of the town should be appropriate to the location and type of housing that is required, and its environment.

Whilst exceptions may be appropriate, buildings in the vicinity of the perimeter of the town should respect local character and not be more than 2.5 storeys in height. The protection and enhancement of existing, or establishing of new, hedgerows, woodland, green spaces, landscape features and street trees will be supported.

Development should respect the setting of the Malvern Hills AONB.

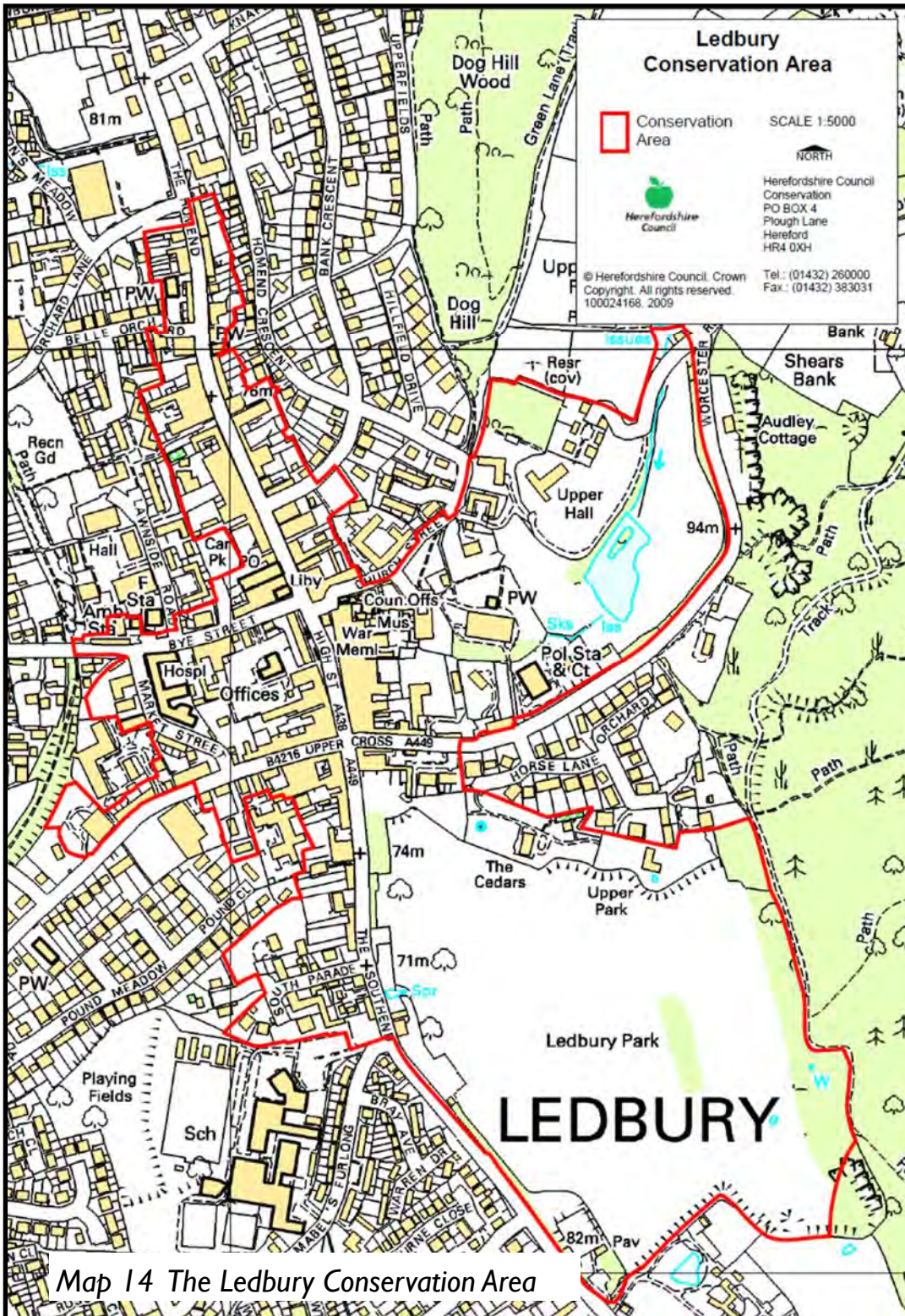


8. Built Environment

which may replace it, work together to protect this valuable resource.

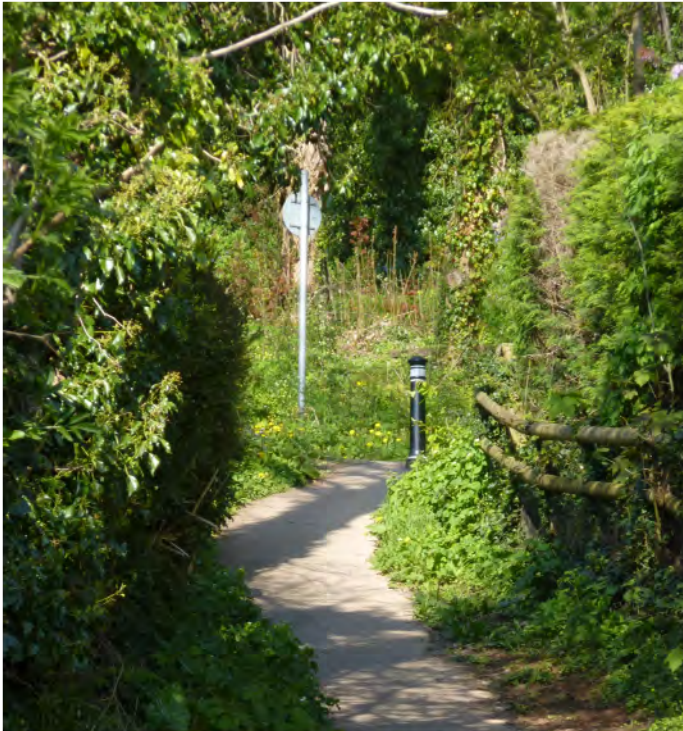
Ledbury Conservation Area

Ledbury Conservation Area is fundamental to the character of the town. National policy and guidance, particularly that set out in Chapter 12 of the Framework ('Conserving and enhancing the historic environment') and Core Strategy Policy LD4('Historic environment and heritage assets'), or any Policy



9. Natural Environment

Natural Environment - The Background



Ledbury is a traditional country market town situated in the rural and beautiful Herefordshire landscape. Open and green spaces with a wide diversity of wildlife and fauna form an important part of the town and its surrounding countryside which borders the Malvern Hills AONB.

These are features that help make the town a very attractive place in which to live and visit, with tourism being one of the principal areas of economic activity. Conserving the town's natural environment has consistently shown to be very important to the Ledbury community.

With these considerations in mind, and aware of the commensurate wider need for natural environment preservation and conservation, the Ledbury NDP includes appropriate policies that reflect both the local need and a responsibility to help sustain biodiversity.

This is also in keeping with national and Core Strategy policies, making sustainability an important and recurring theme throughout the Ledbury NDP.

Ledbury is well provided with **green infrastructure** and in particular a number of important local corridors connecting to wider areas.

Running through the centre of the town is the route of the former Ledbury to Gloucester railway branch line, now forming the Ledbury Town Trail. Connecting to this to the west of the town is the Riverside Walk. And passing through Ledbury are the regional Herefordshire Trail and Geo Park Way.

Connecting to these corridors is a network of local and area footpaths providing a rich natural environment access facility which must be maintained

WOODLAND

There is extensive woodland in the vicinity of the town, including Frith Wood, Conigree Wood and Dog Hill Wood.



FLORA AND FAUNA

The area around Ledbury is **species-rich**. Legally protected and priority species of flora and fauna present include:

- Wild daffodil
- Great crested newt
- Bat
- Dormouse
- Barn owl
- Peregrine falcon
- Slow worm



9. Natural Environment

Natural Environment - Objectives & Policies

Objective NE1:

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

Policy NE1.1

Protecting Biodiversity

The conservation, restoration and enhancement of biodiversity, including that found in open spaces, trees and hedgerows, in order to promote and support wildlife and other forms of bio diversity will be supported.

Additionally, proposals for the creation of small wetland or other nature reserves and which maintain and enhance streams and open watercourses will be supported.

Given its long history in a very rural setting, Ledbury is rich in open spaces and wildlife habitats that contribute to the distinctive character and setting of the town and the surrounding countryside, which are demonstrably enjoyed by the population. The community has a clear and overwhelming desire to protect the existing wildlife habitats and level of open space in the town.



Further information on open spaces and habitats in the area can be found at www.ledburynaturalists.co.uk.

Objective NE2:

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

Policy NE2.1

Food Production in Ledbury

The conservation, enhancement and/or creation of allotments and community gardens will be supported.

Protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land for its economic and other benefits will be supported.

The availability of locally produced food has an historic importance going back centuries. Feedback from the population of the town consistently rates community gardens and areas in which allotments can be provided as being important to them, and there is demand expressed for the provision of new community garden and allotment areas.

Demand for locally produced food is also very well established and an important element of the economic wellbeing of the town and its agricultural surroundings.

9. Natural Environment

Objective NE3:

To ensure that industrial and agricultural activity in the countryside does not detrimentally impact on the existing natural beauty, biodiversity and visual appeal of Ledbury and surrounding areas.

The Plan is sensitive to the need for balancing local farming efficiency and employment with the

Policy NE3.1

Farming Landscape around Ledbury

Proposals for agricultural development, requiring planning permission, for example, intensive farming units, poly tunnels not comprising permitted development or solar farms, should demonstrate how they will protect landscape character through provision of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

importance of tourism and attracting people to Ledbury and the surrounding countryside such as the Malvern Hills AONB. These are vital economic considerations for the area. The character of the Neighbourhood Area's countryside should not be harmed by inappropriate forms of development.

Objective NE4:

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

The woods of Frith, Conigree and Dog Hill on the hills above Ledbury have been an historical and important source of employment, resource and leisure activity for centuries and continue to have that important role to the community today. Conigree, as it is known locally, is an ancient woodland site of 56 hectares which is rich

in plant and insect life, with evidence of prehistoric occupation such as Neolithic flint implements and in more recent times, the sites of a water mill and lime kiln.

Dog Hill Wood is a popular walking area of mixed deciduous woodland of mature oak, ash and yew, with wood anemones, bluebells and primroses in spring. Frith Wood is a 75 hectare wood, owned and managed by the Forestry Commission and probably identified with the wood 'half a league by a half' mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086. It has traces of human activity from well before that time and

Policy NE4.1

Protecting Ledbury's Woods

The conservation and/or enhancement of Frith, Conigree, Wall Hills and Dog Hill Woods above Ledbury, or their setting will be supported. Proposals which protect community access to these woods or demonstrate alternative proposals are in place to maintain community access to these important community assets will be supported.

Proposals which promote active woodland management to maximise habitat diversity will be supported.

its many paths allow the exploration of the flora, fauna and history of the area. All three are listed by The Woodland Trust as woods of note worth visiting.

The community regards it as vital that these woods are registered as recognised community assets to ensure that adequate notice and the right of representation are given, should any activity or change be proposed that will alter the nature of these amenity values to Ledbury and surrounding communities. The Town Council will explore opportunities to achieve this.

Community & Leisure - The Background

18

Number of **playing pitches** in Ledbury

All pitches within Ledbury have been rated **'good'** except for the junior football pitches at Ledbury Primary School which have been rated **'average'**.

12

Number which are secured for use by the community (59%)



The vision for Ledbury makes clear that the local services and facilities are an important part of ensuring good 'quality of life' for new and existing residents. The planning system has a responsibility towards health and wellbeing. Protection and enhancement of such facilities are set out within the policies. Ledbury has a higher than average ageing population requiring support. Equally important are the needs of younger people, many of whom are struggling on low incomes, and they should not be overlooked. An aim of the Plan is to establish Ledbury as a desirable location, by offering a good standard of facilities, services, and open spaces.

The Town Plan comprehensively addresses the views of residents on health services and we do not rehearse them here. We should however highlight some of the key issues.

One of the main challenges for the town is how to manage the expansion of health services to meet growing expectations of patients and the forecast increase in population. The doctors' surgeries are "at saturation point". Whilst they are taking new patients there is no capacity to cope with an expansion in the population of the town. They have already had to absorb migrants from the EU, requiring the services of interpreters. They have no capacity for taking on additional personnel: consulting rooms are

OPEN SPACE

Herefordshire Council found:



- Under provision of parks, gardens and outdoor sports facilities;

9

Number of play areas in Ledbury, the majority in the north of the town.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

4 Community Buildings - Burgage Hall, St. Katherine's Hall, Market House, Community Hall

5 Churches - Parish Church, Methodist Church, Baptist Church, St Katherine's Church, Church of the Holy Trinity

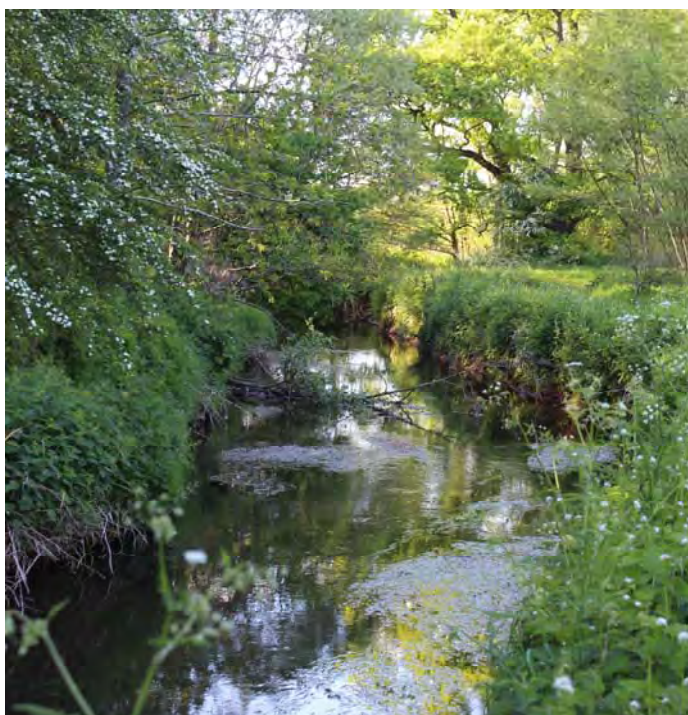
11 Pubs - Prince of Wales, Feathers Hotel, Royal Oak, The Retreat, Seven Stars, The Horseshoe, The Full Pitcher, The Brewery, The Talbot, The Royal British Legion, The Lion

10. Community & Leisure

constantly in use by GPs “hot desking” with other health professionals. The limited parking for health staff and patients is another issue. There is a need for an improved NHS dental care facility, as a service is only available one day a week in the NHS Minor Injuries Unit. Therefore, dental care can only be accessed privately or by travelling to neighbouring towns. The NDP is not the forum to address healthcare issues, but it should aim to facilitate the acquisition of property near existing services should they wish to expand.

As for leisure facilities, and especially as a means of helping to reduce the demands on health care, there is substantial evidence from consultation on the NDP and Town Plans, that the community highly values the town’s public and green spaces for recreational use. They also want to see an enhanced footpath network in and around Ledbury.

These needs are reflected through specific policies in the NDP ‘Community & Leisure’ and ‘Travel & Infrastructure’ sections. It is worth noting that two of the town’s main community assets are already protected—the Recreation Ground is protected under ‘Fields in Trust’ while the Community Hall is held in trust by the community.



Community & Leisure - Objectives & Policies

Objective CLI:

To improve and increase varied types of facilities for youth activities.

Presently, Ledbury only has a temporary building for a youth club, therefore any proposal to provide a permanent building would be regarded favourably. Clubs, associations and sports facilities are widely available to young people, but there is a shortage of non sport related facilities. Teenagers and young adults seeking advice, guidance or a safe environment currently lack support and information, and this must be addressed to provide a balanced and inclusive community.

Policy CLI.1

Young People’s Facilities

The Plan will support new or improved community facilities for the youth of the area, providing the facilities are appropriate to its location in regard of its use, size, design and its impact on neighbouring residents and traffic.



10. Community & Leisure

Objective CL2:

To provide local medical and care facilities commensurate with population growth and the increasing needs of the elderly in the community.

Policy CL2.1

Medical & Dental Facilities

Proposals which improve, or increase the capacity of and access to medical, dental and care facilities, by expansion or relocation will be supported. New facilities should be easily accessible. Proposals for the expansion of existing facilities will be supported, subject to their respecting local character, residential amenity and highway safety.

Proposals for the expansion of medical facilities at Market Street will be supported.

During the Call for Sites exercise a parcel of land was submitted which would enable the extension of one of the doctors' surgeries, both of which are close to full capacity. Currently neither surgery has plans for extension or relocation, however this may change with the proposed housing development under the Core Strategy. Alternatively, a new medical facility may be required, although there is doubt that NHS England would fund it. There is a clear need for accessible NHS dental care, which is not currently available in the town.



Objective CL3:

To protect, increase and improve all existing sport and leisure facilities for indoor and outdoor recreation and leisure, in line with national standards.

Policy CL3.1

Sports Provision

The provision of facilities for people with mobility impairment will be supported.

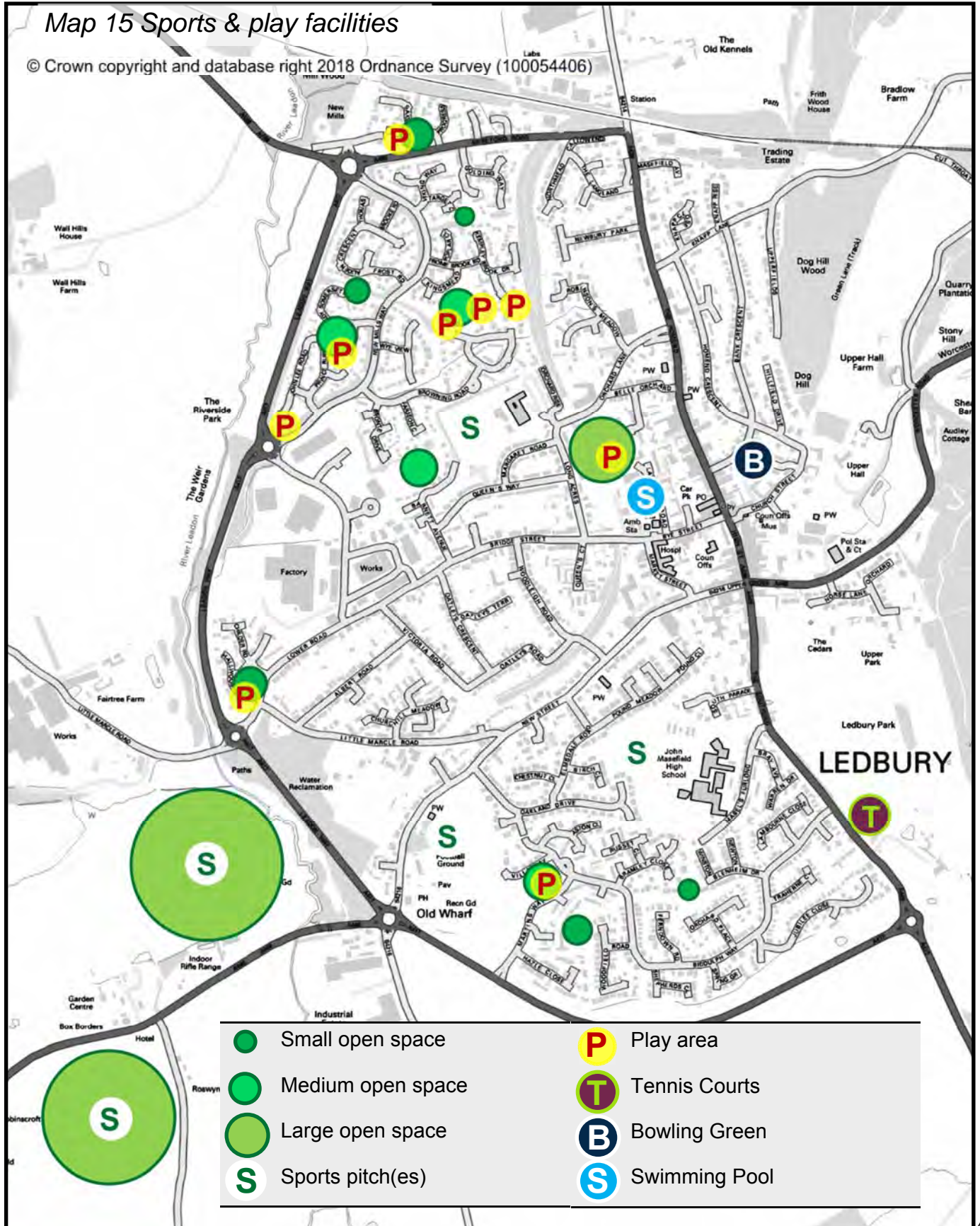
Ledbury has a strong history of participation in sporting activities including 175 years of the Cricket Club and nearly 100 years of the Football Club. In the last 30 years the added development of youth involvement, particularly in football, rugby and cricket, sports that require outdoor pitches, has put increased pressure on the available facilities. As such current availability is considerably below the National Standard as set by The Fields in Trust - approximately less than 60% of that required for the population.

Core Strategy Policy OS3 exists to protect the existing facilities from development, with the exception of where new facilities are provided as replacement. An example of this is the provision of a new cricket facility of a higher standard and security than the previous, releasing the former cricket pitch for development. Ledbury Rugby Club have secured ownership of the main sports field in town by asset transfer from HCC, and by doing so the club is able to meet its own future needs. Ledbury Swifts football club however, with 14 teams for boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 17 currently share the facility, and need to re-locate to be able to survive and expand. The Swifts require an area of 15 – 20 acres to satisfy the FA development programme requirements.

Suitable locations for new facilities are limited, by Ledbury's physical and geological constraints and by Sport England accessibility criteria (as shown on Map 4). New facilities must be easily accessible for all ages

10. Community & Leisure

and abilities in order that the club can maintain its role within the community, and must comply with Sport England criteria in relation to accessibility and safety.



Transport & Infrastructure - The Background



It is national and local policy to reduce the impact of, and reliance on, car travel in order to reduce pollution and encourage better health by human effort. The town can already get congested at peak times of the day. Moreover with over 1,000 new houses planned for the town, it can be expected that the 'car population' will increase by in excess of 2,000.

Cars will, however, continue to be used by the rural population to get into the town for work, shopping and for access to financial and medical services. In addition, Ledbury is an attraction for tourists. It is hoped that tourism will increase with the addition of The Master's House to the inventory of viewable historic buildings, so access for cars and coaches must be maintained. By promoting vehicular tourism we possibly add to an already congested traffic problem. There are no easy solutions to this conundrum.

Ledbury is fortunate to have a mainline railway station, which has direct services to London. The limited capacity for parking is exceeded daily, causing overspill parking on the adjacent main roads and in surrounding residential areas. Increasing use of train services for work, business and leisure needs to be supported by appropriate, dedicated parking provision nearby.

1/4

The **station** is one of only four railway stations in Herefordshire but is in a poor state of repair.

It is possible to reach the following places by train from Ledbury by 9am:

Hereford; Malvern;
Worcester; Droitwich;
Bromsgrove; **Birmingham**;
Cardiff; **London** Paddington



TRAVEL TO WORK

65%

Of residents travel to work **by car** or **van**

24%

Of residents travel to work **on foot** or **by bicycle**

2%

Of residents travel to work **by train**

INFRASTRUCTURE

Ledbury has the following **medical facilities**:



- Ledbury Market Surgery
- St Katherine's Surgery
- Ledbury Minor Injuries Unit
- Ledbury Market Lodge

The doctors' surgeries have little scope for expansion

Broadband speeds are **reasonable** but **not fast** - range from **6mbps** to **14 mbps** depending on the location

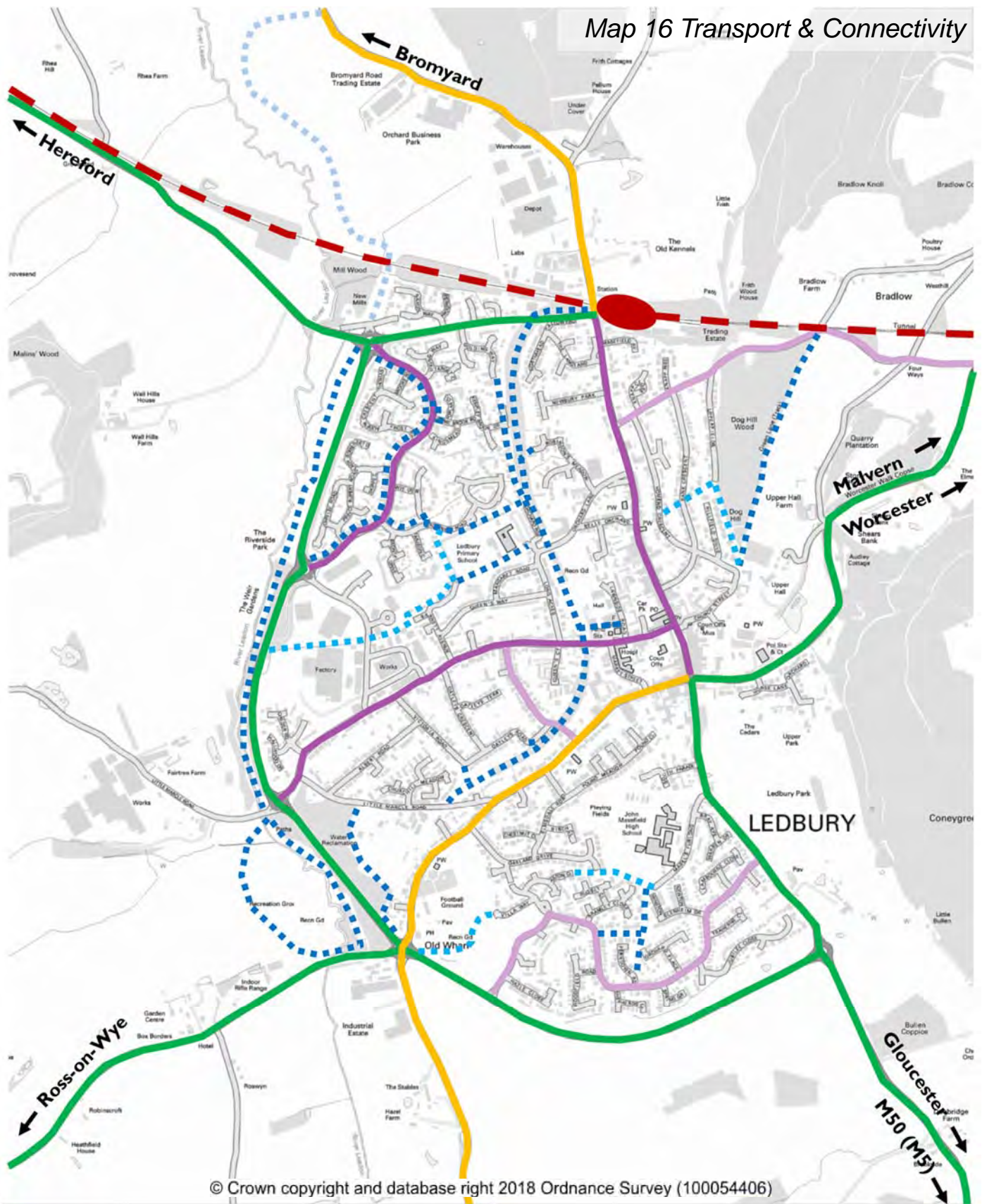


'GOOD'

Ledbury has a **Primary** School and a **Secondary** School both rated 'Good' by Ofsted

11. Transport & Infrastructure

Map 16 Transport & Connectivity



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Key	
	A-Road
	B-Road
	Main arterial route
	Main connective route
	Railway Station
	Railway
	Traffic-free path
	Traffic-free path (pedestrians only)
	Proposed traffic free-path

11. Transport & Infrastructure

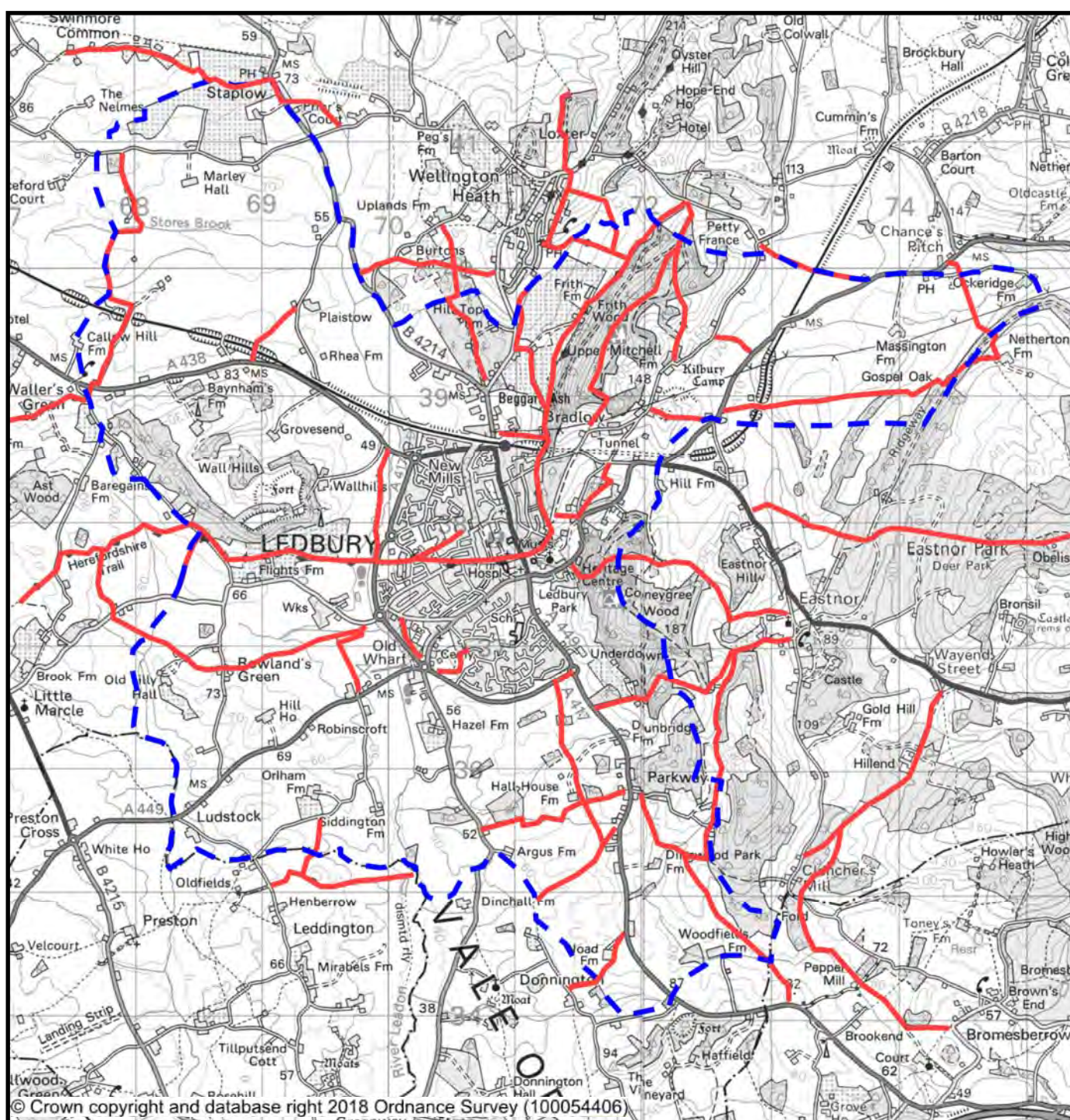
There is currently no access, other than a footbridge, to the Malvern/Worcester platform. The station is unmanned so crossing on the level is impossible. People unable to use the footbridge (wheelchair users, parents with pushchairs etc.) can only travel in the Malvern/Worcester direction by first going to Hereford. This is an intolerable burden on the less mobile and needs to be addressed.

Transport & Infrastructure - Objectives & Policies

Objective TRI:

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

Map 17 Public footpath connectivity



Policy TRI.1

Footpaths & Cycleways

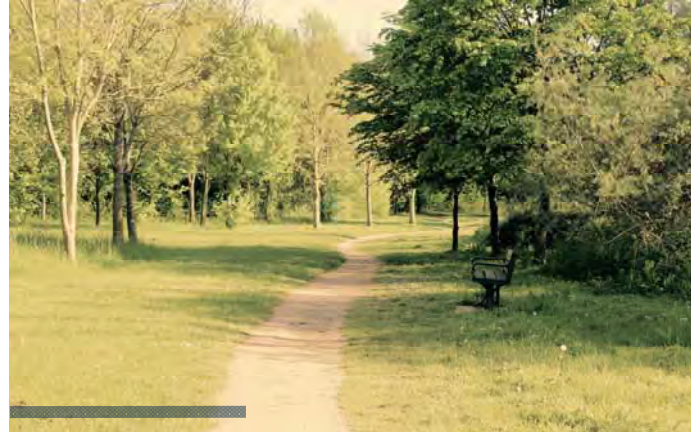
Improvements and/or extensions to the network of footpaths and cycling routes in the Neighbourhood Area will be supported, especially where they:

- Create appropriate crossing facilities dedicated to cycle, pedestrian and disabled access from the proposed strategic housing location north of the viaduct to give safe access to the station, schools, out of town shops and the town centre.
- Improve cycling, pedestrian and disabled access to and from the station and the town, especially where junctions create a hazard.
- Improve the Ledbury Town Trail to provide better cycling and disabled access along its whole length, including provision of street lighting and footbridges.
- Extend the Ledbury Town Trail at the Ross Road roundabout over Leadon Way to provide safer cycling, pedestrian and disabled access to the Rugby Club and new Cricket Club.
- Provide an appropriate crossing facility across Leadon Way at the Little Marcle Road roundabout for cyclists, pedestrians and the disabled, going to and from the Little Marcle business and farming areas.

Improvements to encourage cycling and walking connectivity through the provision and upgrade of crossings, footways and cycleways would help offset road congestion, limit and reduce air pollution, and provide a healthier option for short essential and recreational trips around the town. The new routes will focus on creating links between new and existing residential areas and local facilities and services;

predominantly schools and community facilities: and the railway station. Applications for all new development must demonstrate how account has been taken to improve the pedestrian and cycle network.

With the possibility of a Toucan crossing over the Leadon Way ring road for the proposed development south of Leadon Way, this would open up other opportunities for more crossings to provide safe routes



and support the cycling, pedestrian and disabled access priorities. Evidence from the consultations shows this is a firm desire of the people of Ledbury.

Other footpath and cycle way improvements the NDP will support include:

- *Improvements in maintenance and waymark signage on important paths leading out of the town and into the surrounding countryside;*
- *Maintaining or improving existing or adding new connecting footpaths to the neighbouring parishes of Wellington Heath (already discussed), Eastnor, Colwall, Pixley and Bosbury.*

The Town Council will seek, where possible, to establish formal LTC liaison with a Ledbury Footpaths Officer to advise when footpath improvements or maintenance is required to keep them safe and accessible.

Objective TR2:

To encourage the use of Ledbury Railway Station as a transport hub for Ledbury and district by improving access and facilities with additional parking.

Policy TR2.1

Ledbury Railway Station

Improvements to the accessibility and facilities available at the railway station, connectivity between the station and other sustainable transport modes, additional cycle parking, car parking and step free access to the Malvern/ Worcester platform, will be supported. Proposals should take account of the siting of the railway station on the boundary of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, in terms of their design.

By improving the station infrastructure, it is hoped to encourage the use of the train over cars for a range of journeys. The Core Strategy recommends consideration of an underground car park to the north. This would require a geological survey, as the area is subject to water saturation, and clearly some imaginative design will be required to achieve a long term solution.

Consideration might also be given to adding a footbridge, at platform height, across the Bromyard Road to improve the connectivity and safety to the existing footpath/Town trail network. Crossing this road is tricky at busy times and road traffic will increase after completion of the north Viaduct housing development.

It is important to maintain and enhance the railway station in Ledbury to ensure it remains a key element of a sustainable transport infrastructure.



Infrastructure Objectives & Policies

Objective IN1:

To encourage the provision of a new tri-service emergency centre for Ledbury.

The Department for Communities and Local Government and the Home Office have made funds available for the coordination of the emergency services to encourage resource sharing. “Blue Light Collaboration” was launched in 2015 and West Mercia Police are already involved. Completed projects have shown savings on vehicle maintenance, management and training. Establishment of a tri-service facility near the bypass should improve response times, as emergency vehicles on a call outside of the town would travel on less congested roads. The existing service vehicles buildings could be used for other purposes where convenience to the town centre is desirable: this might be for expanded health services, a community facility, or flats for the young.

Policy IN1.1

Tri-Service Emergency Centre

Proposals for a new tri-service emergency centre in Ledbury will be supported, subject to satisfactory access, design, impact upon residential amenities etc.

The ideal location for such a proposal would be outside of the town centre but within the perimeter of the bypass.

11. Transport & Infrastructure

The Services have no immediate plans to co-locate but welcome a reference in the Plan. For that reason no suitable land has been identified, but should any become available, the Services will be contacted to review their interest.

