



# What is the plan?

## Development Principles

These development principles reflect the issues and challenges which the local community have indicated that the Littleport Masterplan needs to address. They provide the guidelines for the development frameworks and proposals which are set out in subsequent chapters of this plan.

### Embracing Littleport's rural character

To ensure that new development is set within a 'green' rural framework, so everyone can access and enjoy green open spaces, both within the town and the surrounding countryside. To enhance existing spaces and create linkages to open up new areas. To increase activity along the riverside – one of Littleport's key assets.

### Supporting business and employment

To ensure any housing growth is linked to growth in jobs in order to reduce out commuting and support the town economy. To provide adequate space and support for businesses to develop and grow in Littleport. To enhance Littleport's tourism offer to attract additional visitors to the town.

### Boosting the town centre

To strengthen the town centre by encouraging a mix of uses and services which will increase the usage and vitality of the town. To couple this with physical improvements to make the town centre an attractive place to visit. To improve walking and cycling links to the town centre to enable easy access.

### Promoting healthy and enjoyable lifestyles

To ensure that Littleport has the facilities and services necessary to tackle the deprivation around health and skills, and that new development promotes a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle for all.

### Achieving sustainable growth

To make sure that growth is appropriate for the character of the town – ensuring the necessary facilities and infrastructure to accommodate the new population are in place. To manage flood risk proactively and mitigate climate change.

### Serving the wider hinterland

To strengthen linkages between the town and hinterland and ensure that the town can supply the goods and services people require. To ensure that walkways, cycle routes and other developments extend out beyond the town to these communities where possible.

### Creating better movement and linkages

To ensure that facilities are located within easy reach, and to actively encourage a walking and cycling network to facilitate access, promote a healthy lifestyle and minimise car usage. To link up different areas of the town and make the most of the railway links.



# Development Framework I

## Embracing the Natural Landscape

### Objectives:

- To ensure that Littleport is thoroughly connected to its unique natural surroundings.
- To provide opportunities for all residents to benefit from the setting of the town, taking advantage of the river and the fenland.
- To create a network of green spaces that meet the edge of the town and extend throughout it.
- To use landscape to improve Littleport's image, increase land values, provide a focus for education, health and well being.
- To improve flood resilience and support biodiversity, habitat viability, healthy soils, water and air.
- To connect people with nature as the fabric for sustainable living.

### Commentary:

One of the most distinctive features of Littleport is its setting, rising above the surrounding fenland. But although Littleport is set in the countryside, access directly to it from the town is limited, and there is no real rationale to the location of green spaces within the town. In considering the impact of the growth of the town, visual concerns will be very significant. Fenland settlements can be seen from many miles across flat landscapes and the scale and treatment of the edges, where growth is likely to take place, is critical.

Although Littleport has no official park, it does have established green spaces through and around the town, including the River Great Ouse and the national walking trail along its bank, the playing fields at the sports centre, the mature trees and green at St George's church, various pockets of traditional orchards and a county wildlife site. There are also other routes that people use for walking and cycling, and still more that residents have identified that they would like to use.

However, there is a deficit of local green infrastructure and open space provision and developers will be required to provide provision in line with the standards identified in the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy.

This landscape and public realm framework seeks to consolidate the existing green assets into a network consisting of two parts; green 'fingers', pathways that connect the town to the surrounding landscape, and routes that connect between these fingers, creating an integrated network of green spaces.

Green infrastructure is important as it can provide functions and benefits beyond recreational space, such as improved flood resilience, sustainable drainage, urban cooling and links for biodiversity.

### Proposals:

**Green fingers connecting town to countryside** – routes which enable people to access and enjoy the surrounding countryside and the river area.

**Linking the green fingers** – routes which connect up the existing green spaces within the town creating an integrated network of green spaces and a softer landscape edge to the town.

**Improve existing green spaces** – to maximise their attractiveness and usage and provide additional green areas in the town centre and on new estates, to create informal green spaces, allotments and play areas. Examples include:

- **The Paddocks** – bring this area into public use to provide opportunities for informal leisure and recreation. Ideas include use as allotments, a dog exercise area and an area for a youth shelter.
- **Riverside** – add features to the river area to make it a destination for both boating and non-boating leisure use. Ideas for improvements include enhancing the existing marina and adding picnic and play areas.
- **The Moors** – establish area as a nature reserve to create a haven for wildlife. Potential to build on the fen skating link to attract tourists.





“ The uniqueness of Littleport depends on many characteristics, but as strong as any is the contrast of the urban character of the town within the fenland landscape in which it is situated. ”

Studio REAL, consultants

**Key**

-  Train station
-  River Great Ouse
-  Green 'fingers' connecting town to countryside
-  Green connectors between 'fingers'
-  Existing green spaces with potential for enhancement

## Development Framework 2 Balancing Future Growth Areas

### Objectives:

- To create a strengthened and improved town that will support the needs of a thriving, vibrant and growing population.
- To create a town that can deliver the physical, social and community services to support the town as a whole.
- To create a safe and comfortable place that builds on the existing character and assets of the town whilst giving it an enhanced identity in the region.

### Commentary

A fundamental issue for consideration by the Masterplan is the future level of growth which local people wish to see taking place in Littleport. Growth can provide the population base to support a comprehensive range of services, facilities and local employment and justify facilities such as the proposed new secondary school.

During consultation on the Littleport Masterplan local people made it clear that they wished to see growth take place, together with additional facilities, but they did not want to see too rapid a rate of growth.

Research has also identified that an east –west divide is developing in Littleport with restricted facilities and higher levels of deprivation in the west. Investment in this area could help to alleviate this emerging problem.

There is already a fairly substantial housing 'stock' in Littleport. Currently there are outstanding planning permissions for 759 dwellings in the town that have not yet been developed. Littleport also has a high proportion of empty properties compared to the national average. Building rates have averaged a relatively low rate of 67 dwellings per year recently, although these are picking up following a period of stalled development during the recession.

Three growth options were identified for Littleport, ranging from continuing a low growth option of 76 dwellings per year annual build rate, to a medium growth option based on 96 dwellings per year, to a high growth option of some 145 dwellings per year. Following the extensive consultation results this Masterplan recommends phased growth, with low growth over the first 10 years of the plan, followed by medium growth in subsequent years.

Flexibility in this phasing may be required if there is an upturn in the market and development is needed to deliver employment sites.

A further strong message emerged from the consultation – as a rural community local people wished to see new houses with gardens and would prefer to see lower densities of development wherever possible.

	2001-2010	2011-2021	2022-2032
<b>No of house completions</b>	617	759	960
<b>Build rate per year</b>	69	76	96
<b>Littleport population total</b>	8,800	10,628	13,098

Population statistics 2011 mid year estimates. Assumes housing occupancy of 2.5 people per dwelling.

### Proposals:

#### Short term low growth levels –

In the short term (years 1-10 of the plan period) growth should be based on the low growth scenario of approximately 76 dwellings per year annual build rate. This will result in an additional 759 dwellings by 2021.

#### Longer term medium growth levels –

In the longer term (years 11-21 of the plan period) growth should be based on the medium growth scenario of approximately 96 dwellings per year annual build rate. This will result in an additional 960 new dwellings over this time period.

These levels of growth would produce approximately 1,719 new dwellings in Littleport over the overall plan period. This would take Littleport's population up to approximately 13,098 compared to the current population of 8,800.

#### New development on the western edge –

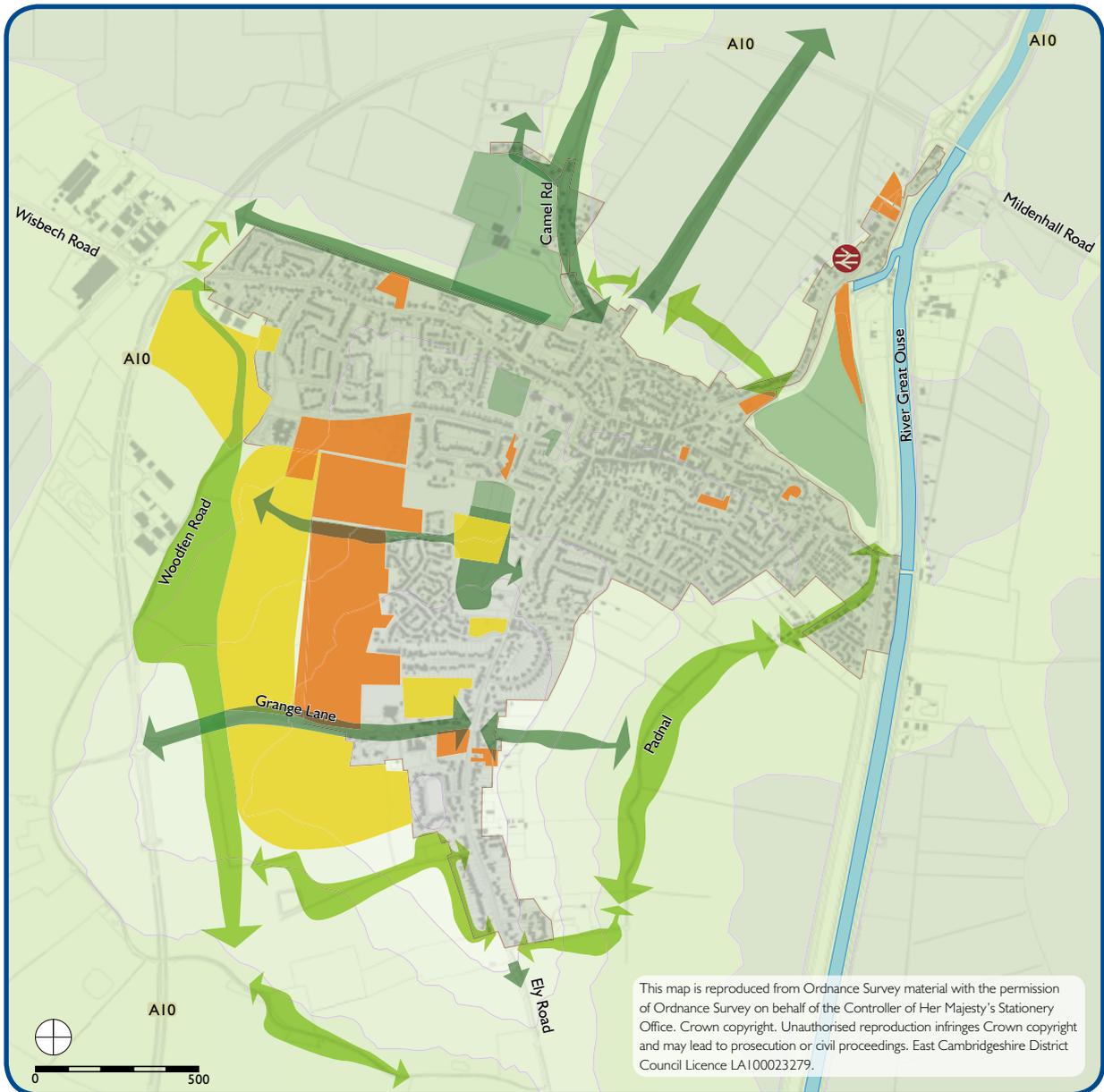
To focus new development to the west of Littleport, taking advantage of the proximity to existing road links, employment sites, and the higher land levels here compared to land to the east.

#### Densities and housing mix –

It is important to ensure that densities and design reflect the rural character and form of the area, taking advantage of rural landscaping options in areas where new housing abuts the countryside and focusing higher densities in the town centre. We have calculated the amount of land needed for housing based on an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. The housing mix should reflect local needs.

#### Affordable housing –

The East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy identifies a substantial need for affordable housing in the District, and recommends that new developments should have a minimum provision of 30% affordable housing provision.



“ We need gradual growth with facilities to support new residents. ”

Local Resident Feedback

**Key**

-  Train station
-  River Great Ouse
-  Green 'fingers' connecting town to countryside
-  Green connectors between 'fingers'
-  Existing green spaces with potential for enhancement
-  Existing housing site locations
-  Sites for potential new housing development

## Development Framework 3

### Building Business Activity Areas

#### Objectives:

- To provide an increased number and range of employment opportunities for residents.
- To attract new businesses to the area to create extra employment and boost the local economy.
- To ensure there is sufficient land and premises available to allow business growth.
- To improve Littleport's tourism offer to attract additional visitors to the town.

#### Commentary:

It is vital to the future sustainability of Littleport that housing growth is matched by growth in employment offering quality job opportunities for local people.

There are two major considerations for jobs in a growing Littleport. One is to make the necessary land available, but the other is to retain more of the local workforce in jobs in Littleport. At present only 30% of local employment is taken up by Littleport people. A target of 50% is proposed, which will both retain more income in the town and reduce out commuting. Some 8.5ha-10ha of employment land to accommodate the new jobs is needed.

There are choices for possible locations, but the major potential is to the west of the town where there is excellent access to the A10 and proximity to existing employment areas. The town centre also has a part to play in providing office accommodation and retail space. Ideas for employment around the station based on rail commuting will depend upon improvements to the service and facilities at the station and are long term aspirations.

A need for follow on business accommodation for businesses out-growing the e-space north business centre has also been identified.

Retention of existing retail and office space will support the town centre.

To support and encourage this employment growth Littleport needs to be seen as an area conducive to business and infrastructure such as faster broadband should be encouraged.

With regard to tourism, Littleport already has much to offer visitors, but more could be done in terms of raising the towns profile, building on assets such as the river and surrounding countryside, and taking advantage of the close proximity of attractions such as the Welney Wetland Centre and Ely.

#### Proposals:

##### Employment land

Short term – Woodfen Road and Land West of 150 Wisbech Road– the Masterplan proposes 7 ha of land west of Woodfen Road as the focus for light industrial and warehousing businesses and 1.6 ha west of 150 Wisbech Road for follow-on space for growing businesses. Both these sites are close to the proposed new housing and, being located within the circumference of the A10, are more accessible by cycle or on foot. The sites also have the benefit of not being located within the flood zone. The Woodfen Road site will, however, require a new vehicular access off the A10 before it can proceed, and the best approach to developing this needs to be further investigated.

Long term – Two sites across the A10 have been identified for business use, the larger of the two, however, is partially within the flood zone and access issues to the smaller site need to be addressed.

##### Town centre retail and office

**development** – retention of existing retail uses and new office development will be encouraged in the town centre. This would also create more employment in the town.

##### Station gateway employment uses –

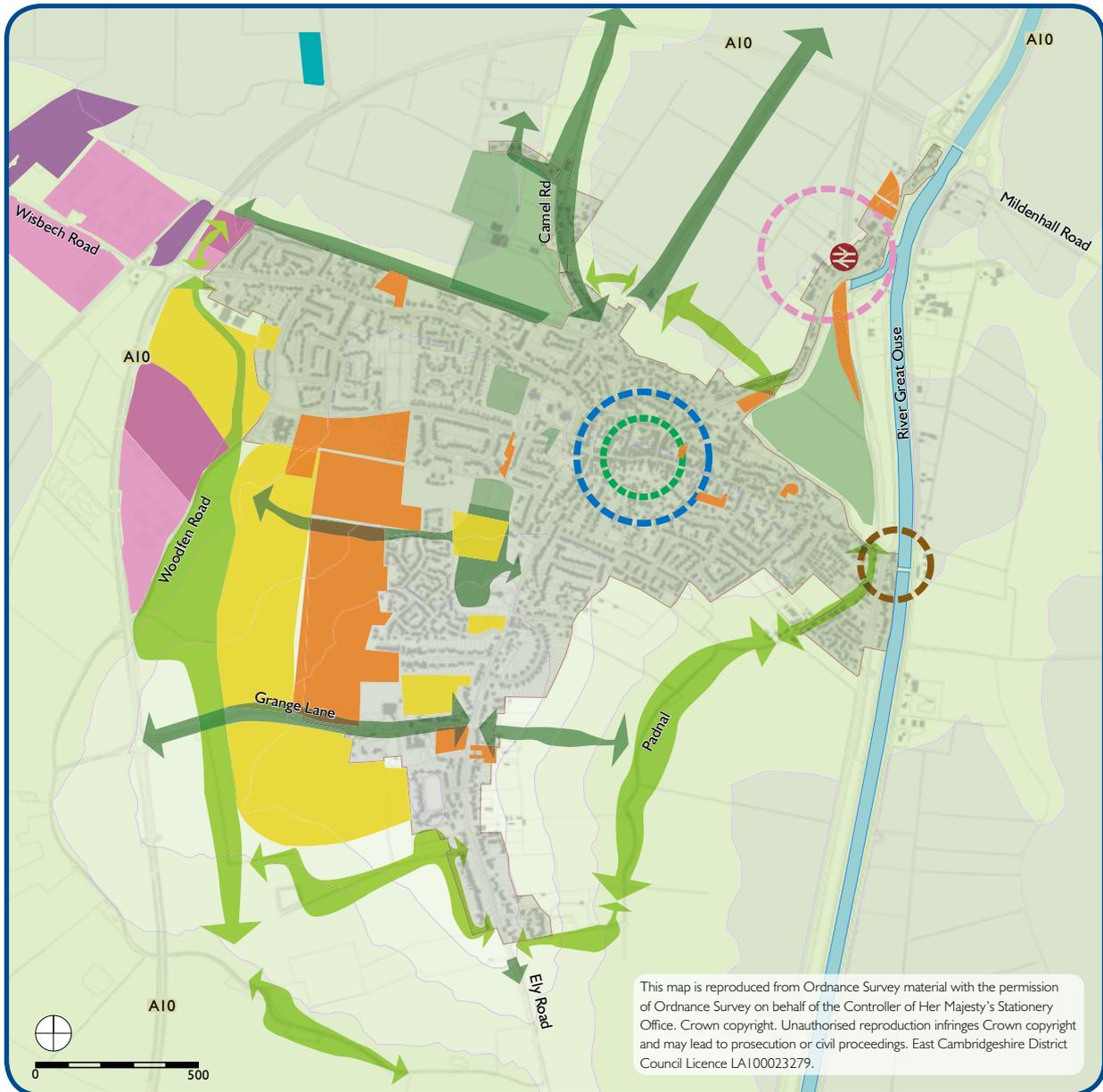
the existing employment sites in the area should be retained for employment use in the future.

##### Next Generation Broadband –

commercial provision of next generation broadband and other necessary infrastructure to facilitate business and also home working.

##### Riverside tourism development –

to maximise the tourism potential of the riverside area, encouraging development of informal walks, picnic areas, and nature reserve facilities. This will, in turn, encourage opportunities for other tourism based businesses and facilities such as tearooms, restaurants, and holiday accommodation.



**“ Employment should be spread rather than concentrated in one area. ”**  
 Local Resident Feedback

### Key

	Train station		Existing employment sites
	River Great Ouse		Potential new employment sites (short term)
	Green 'fingers' connecting town to countryside		Potential new employment sites (long term)
	Green connectors between 'fingers'		Area of existing employment
	Existing green spaces with potential for enhancement		Potential site for retail and office business
	Existing housing site locations		Area for potential tourism
	Sites for potential new housing development		

# Development Framework 4

## Expanding Community Facilities

### Objectives:

- For Littleport to play a stronger role as a local service centre providing a broad range of services and facilities for both local people and visitors.
- To ensure that residents everyday needs are provided for within Littleport.
- To ensure that existing facilities can expand to accommodate the growing community and that additional ones are provided as necessary.

### Commentary:

Littleport benefits from a number of community facilities. However, some existing facilities in the town are close to capacity or over subscribed such as the preschools, cemetery, Medical Centre and allotments. Other services are struggling with viability issues, such as Barclays Bank, which is now only open 4 days a week. And there are some facilities that the community considers essential that are currently missing, for example a secondary school and dedicated publicly owned facility for youth.

Growth will support existing and generate need for additional facilities.

Facility	Additional amount needed short term to 2021 (10,698 population)	Additional amount needed long term to 2031 (13,098 population)	Total additional needed for plan period
<b>Education</b>			
Nurseries	3 x 100 place nurseries and 3 x 50 place nurseries		
Primary Schools	1 x 2 Form Entry and 1 x 1 Form Entry (430-602 places)		
Secondary School	2-3 Form Entry (310-430 places)		
<b>Healthcare</b>			
GPs	1	1.3	2.3
Dentists	0.95	1.2	2.15
<b>Community facilities</b>			
Library space	An additional 180sq m of library space, including community meeting/activity space and facilities for partner services		
Community space	115.8 sq m	146.4 sq m	262.2 sq m
Museum space	53.1 sq m	67.2 sq m	120.3 sq m
Art space	85.4 sq m	108 sq m	193.4 sq m
<b>Leisure</b>			
Sports pitches	2.52 ha	3.19 ha	5.71 ha
Open space for casual play and informal recreation	4.75 ha	6 ha	10.75 ha

Source: East Cambridgeshire Infrastructure Investment Strategy Interim Report, August 2010, AECOM.

In response to the recent growth the town has experienced the Parish Council has identified a potential site for a new cemetery and allotments and the Medical Centre is starting to look at plans for expansion. Anglian Water has included improvement works to the sewage treatment plant, which is at capacity, in their 2010-2015 business plan.

### Proposals:

#### Schools Provision

Secondary School – following the County Council’s decision that Littleport should have a new secondary school, the Masterplan recommends that this be located on land adjacent to Littleport Leisure Centre, in view of the potential for shared use of sports facilities and playing fields, and its proximity to the town centre. Community consultation identified strong support for this location. However, the site does lie within a flood risk area, and strategic flood risk studies will need to be carried out to see if it is possible to reduce or manage this risk effectively.

Primary Schools – the medium growth scenario will require the provision of two additional Primary Schools. However, one of the new Primary Schools should be located to the east of the town to benefit residents living in that area and to reduce congestion and cross town travel.

#### Preschool and childcare provision

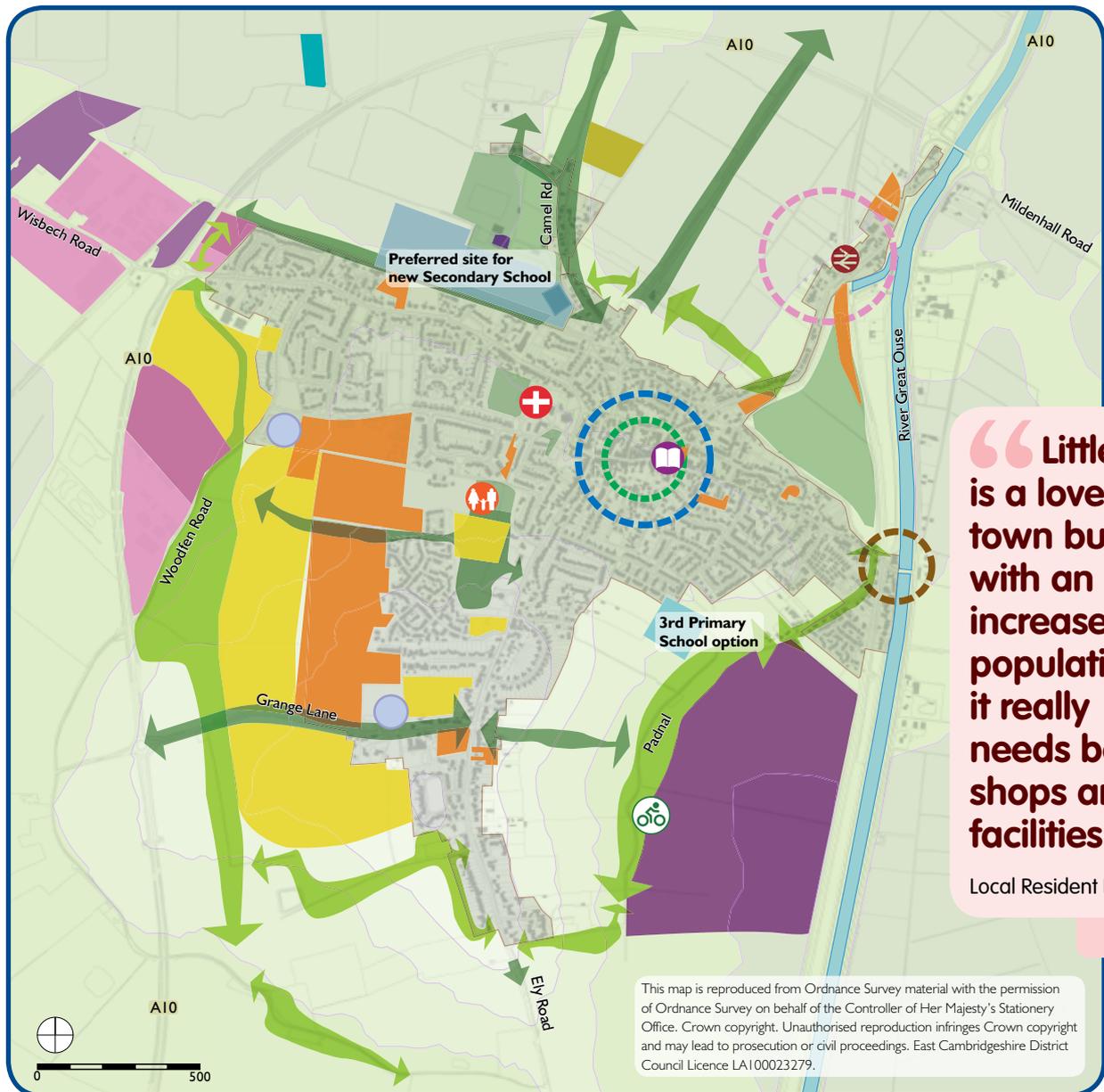
– additional private and voluntary sector provision will be needed to meet growth needs.

**Cemetery** – to accommodate the future needs of the local community, as identified by Littleport Parish Council.

**Medical Centre expansion** – the Primary Care Trust anticipate that on site expansion of the existing health centre should meet growth needs in the short term. The position will need to be reviewed in the longer term.

**Additional community space** – as growth takes place there will be additional demand for extra community and arts facilities. There would be potential to co-locate for example, expansion of library, childcare, youth and other services in the new development to the west of the town.

**Leisure opportunities to the east** – public consultation identified ideas for other leisure facilities, including, but not limited to, a golf driving range, an equestrian centre, water sports facilities, a water taxi to Ely and a hotel, located close to the river or existing leisure centre. Such facilities will need to be initiated by the private sector and operated commercially.



“ Littleport is a lovely town but with an increase in population it really needs better shops and facilities. ”  
Local Resident Feedback

### Key

Train station	Sewage Works	New Primary School (3rd) option
River Great Ouse	Area of search for potential new access into development area	Preferred site for new Secondary School
Green 'fingers' connecting town to countryside	Existing employment sites	New cemetery/allotments
Green connectors between 'fingers'	Potential new employment sites (short term)	Walking/cycling areas
Existing green spaces with potential for enhancement	Potential new employment sites (long term)	Community centre
Existing housing site locations	Area of existing employment	Existing Primary School
Sites for potential new housing development	Potential site for retail and office business	Medical centre
Leisure Centre	Area for potential tourism	Library
Potential informal leisure use		

## Development Framework 5

### Reinforcing the Town Centre

#### Objectives:

- To establish a strengthened and improved retail offer in the town centre that will encourage people to shop there and spend more money within the local economy.
- To create a 'walk in' town centre where it is easy to get around on foot and cycle whilst also providing convenient car parking for residents and visitors.
- To enhance the quality of the public realm within the town centre to make it a more attractive/pleasant place to visit.

#### Commentary:

Littleport town centre is facing a number of challenges; traditional town centre uses are leaving the town and town centre community and leisure uses are reducing. It lies off the main routes into and through town, and Main Street is not well connected to the south where much of the growth is going to occur. Yet population and employment growth must be supported by improvements in shops services and facilities.

Throughout the Masterplan process, the town centre has been one of the main priorities for local people. A lack of parking provision, more and an improved mix of retail outlets and the re-introduction of a market are just some of the improvements people would like to see.

The Masterplan proposes to focus retail and office development within the town centre with the aim of bringing more people into the town centre both to work and shop.

Whilst the new Rainbow store on Wisbech Road will meet the need for retail provision in the short term, levels of provision will need to be reviewed for longer term and suitable space made available.

The town centre was also highlighted as the area of the town most in need of physical enhancement. Though the town centre remains the most distinctive and attractive part of the town there are areas that need attention. People want a higher quality shopping environment that would make the town a more pleasant place to visit and spend time in.

Consultants Studio REAL have done some design work, looking at how key sites and spaces in the town could be improved by enhancement or development to have a positive impact on the image and appearance of the town.

It is important to make clear, however, that these proposals are ideas only, illustrating what could be done with a site should the owners be willing or sites become available.

To make the town centre more user friendly and enable walking and cycling, the Studio REAL proposals include shared surface public realm with clear visual differentiation between carriageway and pedestrian priority areas.

#### Proposals:

##### Maximise town centre shopping

– by concentrating retail uses at the western end of the town centre and providing additional retail space, through redevelopment of sites and restricting the conversion of empty commercial property to residential.

##### Town centre office and retail development

– to be encouraged in the town centre to improve the town centre offer, increase footfall and enhance viability.

##### Public realm enhancements

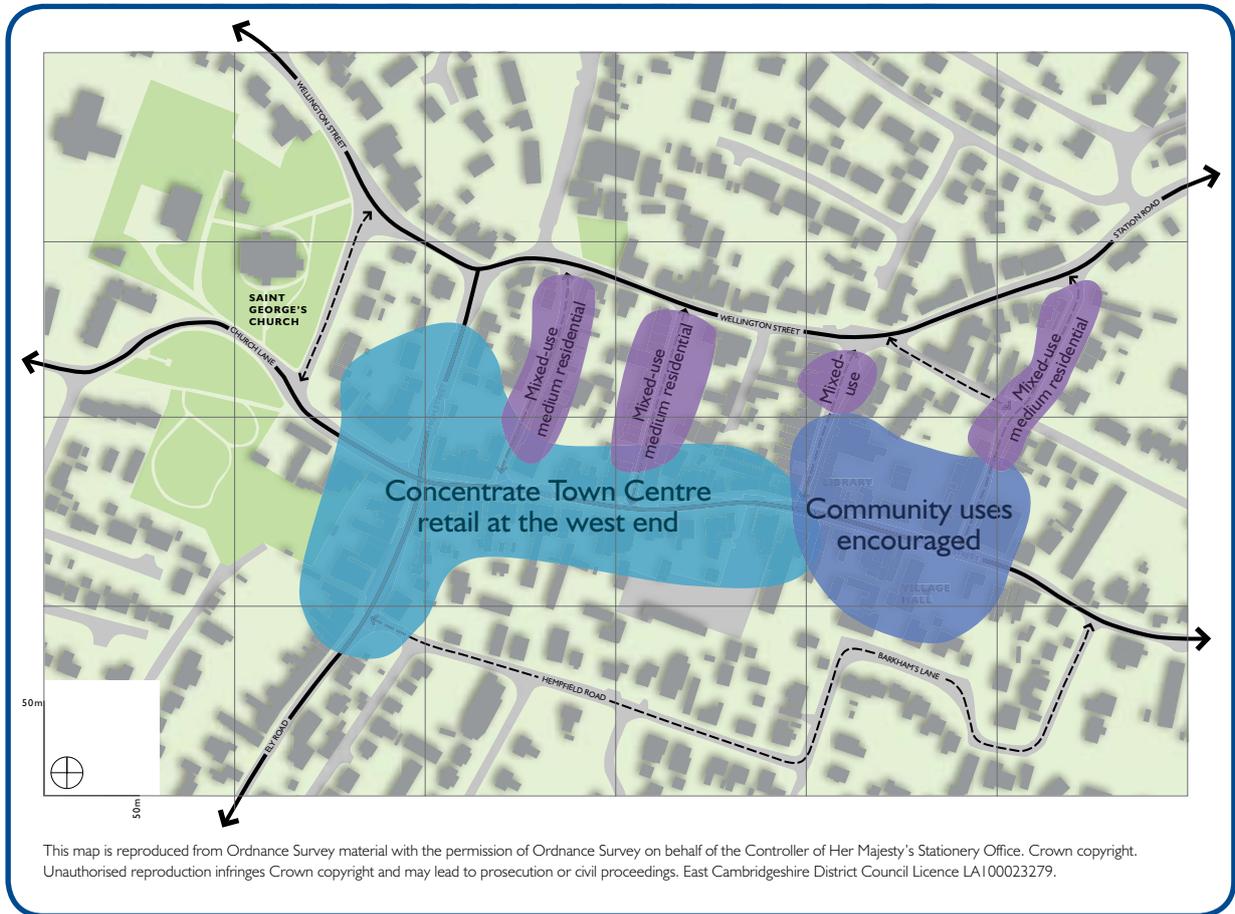
– the overall feel and attractiveness/quality of the town centre would be greatly improved by enhancement work on key frontages and the streetscape. The Studio REAL design work shows what could be achieved with investment/how Littleport could look.

**Community and leisure uses** – these will add to the vitality and usage of the town centre and should be encouraged.

**Pedestrian priority areas** – key junctions and other areas of the town centre to be made more pedestrian and cycle friendly whilst maintaining full vehicle accessibility. Increased levels of cycle parking to be provided.



# Town Centre Concept



“ Improvements which will have a direct impact on the quality of the town centre offer. ”

Studio REAL, consultants



## Town Centre Urban Design Framework

Studio REAL produced a Town Centre Urban Design Framework which identified the key frontages in the town centre that contain street space and contribute to its character. This shows where improvement to what is a basically a strong pattern would raise overall quality of the streetscape significantly; this might be through facelifts or repair, or it could be more comprehensive redevelopment.

They then went on to provide details of how some of these areas could be enhanced. This plan sets out their vision for the town centre, further details of the individual sites examined by Studio REAL can be found in the appendix.

### Key features of the proposals:

- New shared surface public realm with clear visual differentiation between carriageway and pedestrian priority areas.
- New town centre housing with flexible ground floor units for possible future conversion to retail/commercial use.
- New ground floor retail units with residential units above.
- New corner landmark buildings.
- Courtyard arrangements containing servicing and parking for residents.
- Improvements to pedestrian and cycle connectivity.



“ A need to redefine the centre of the village. ”

Littleport Working Party





## Development Framework 6

### Moving Around

#### Objective:

- To create a town that has a range of easy and convenient choices for people, from walking and cycling, private vehicle, train, boats, buses and bridleways, to get into and around town and into the surrounding fenland countryside.

#### Commentary:

The existing road network reflects how the town first developed. It is primarily organised around a crossroads and has a T shape, with the A10 forming a ring around it to the west and north. New development needs to be integrated into this existing structure and developers will be required to carry out transport assessments, which include impact on A10, A47 and A11.

The map of the 10 minute walking radius from the town centre illustrates the dispersed nature of the key services and facilities to which people travel. The leisure centre, Medical Centre, the new Rainbow food store and Parsons Lane recreation ground are all within 10 minute walk of the town centre, but the railway station, the main employment sites, both primary schools and the new housing areas are all well beyond this. Ways to enable easy travel between these points are needed.

Additional routes serving new residential areas to the west should be planned so that they link areas together and include dedicated walking and cycle ways, which were strongly supported in public consultation work. In this way the whole town will benefit from increased integration. In some areas, particularly to the west of the town, new road links are needed to enable new areas of land to be opened up and reduce pressure on existing poor accesses and junctions.

However, a number of people also commented that some older people are less able to walk or cycle and consideration must be given to their needs. For these groups, car travel or public transport are the preferred options.

Improvements at Littleport Station, particularly for car and cycle parking, would do much to encourage more use of this sustainable means of transport. Bus services from the rural areas surrounding Littleport are sparse, and cost effective solutions need to be found for these more isolated areas.

“Encourage walking and cycling in Littleport, as the healthy, enjoyable and sustainable transport options. This needs to be a fundamental principle of the Masterplan.”

Sustrans

#### Proposals:

**Woodfen Road/A10 Access** – to open up access to land to the west of Woodfen Road. Options include a fifth leg off the existing A10/Wisbech Road roundabout or construction of a new roundabout on the A10. Both options will need to be subject to detailed traffic assessments.

**A Cycle Spine Route between Littleport and Ely** – carry out a feasibility study into potential for a purpose built cycle lane running alongside the old A10 road linking Littleport with Ely for work, shopping and leisure purposes.

**Designated cycle and walking routes** – identify walking and cycling routes through Littleport to link up key facilities and services in the town, encouraging a more active and healthier lifestyle, and enabling access to the countryside. These designated cycle and walking links need to be short, direct, well overlooked for safety, and on roads that have sufficient width. A key focus should be on links to schools, including the new secondary school, employment areas, shops and the railway station. New developments should incorporate cycle friendly roads with design and layout actively skewed in favour of these modes.

**Increased level of cycle parking** – additional sites for cycle parking should be provided within the town centre, near facilities such as schools, and in residential areas, to facilitate this mode of transport.

**Improved bus services** – the viability of a demand responsive bus/minibus service to link key facilities and services in peak periods should be investigated, potentially in conjunction with a dial a ride provider or other social enterprise, to help those who are unable to walk or cycle long distances, and for the rural hinterland areas.

**Littleport station** – investigate opportunities to increase car parking and cycling facilities serving the station. Encourage local bus operators to reroute existing bus services around Littleport to include the station as a stopping point.



### Key

	Train station		Area of search for potential new access into development area
	River Great Ouse		Main roads into and through Littleport
	Green 'fingers' connecting town to countryside		Existing secondary roads
	Green connectors between 'fingers'		Possible improvements to permeability of existing network
	Existing green spaces with potential for enhancement		Potential new road network
			Potential walking and cycling routes
			Cycle spine route

# How do we get there?



## A determination to succeed

**Turning the Littleport Masterplan into reality will require sustained and co-ordinated actions, with continued engagement with landowners, businesses and the community. The Masterplan frameworks described in the previous chapters provide the foundation upon which future detailed project specific studies, proposals and funding bids can be developed. It will require an integrated approach to delivery, enabling sustainable economic growth alongside strategic priorities such as housing, and a clear implementation programme. Crucial elements of delivery will include:**

- **Strong and integrated programme management**
- **The embedding of the Masterplan in local thinking**
- **Phasing of development and management of risk**
- **Funding**

## Strong and Integrated Programme Management

East Cambridgeshire District Council has set up a Growth Delivery Sub Committee to oversee the development of implementation plans in respect of the growth initiatives in the District. It's role is to identify and address potential barriers to growth, ensuring that there is community engagement in the development of the plans and monitoring and reviewing progress. This Sub Committee reports direct to the District Council's Strategic Development policy committee.

In addition an officer level advisory Growth Delivery Board has been set up, bringing together key advisors from stakeholder agencies across the County such as Cambridgeshire Horizons, Cambridgeshire County Council and Anglian Water. This will allow the expertise and knowledge which has been gained through growth in other parts of Cambridgeshire to be brought to the table to benefit East Cambridgeshire.

A first task for these groups will be to develop an implementation plan for the Littleport Masterplan, indicating how the vision in the plan will be realised.

Liaison mechanisms will be required with the public, local landowners and private sector interests, as well as support from officers with a range of specialist knowledge including landscaping and urban design, community development, project management and community engagement.



## Embedding the Littleport Masterplan

If the Masterplan is to be successfully executed then its vision, objectives and actions have to be well understood, not just by those implementing projects but also by the wider community.

The **local planning system** will play an important role in the delivery of the ideas in the Littleport Masterplan. The Masterplan provides a clear and robust evidence base in terms of the future spatial framework of the town and the local community's vision for its future growth, and all its proposals have benefited from community engagement in the plan's evolution. These proposals will be incorporated within the Local Development Framework statutory planning documents for East Cambridgeshire, going through the statutory planning processes, so that they can be taken forward.

A **Littleport Masterplan champion(s) role** could also be considered to assist in the embedding process. This should be a figurehead position, suitable for a Councillor appointment from the local government partners. The role of the champion would be to:

- Highlight the opportunities in the Littleport Masterplan to local developers and the local community, building early linkages with key landowners.
- Encourage collaboration with local partners to identify funding to take the ideas in the Masterplan forward.
- Maintain a high profile for the Masterplan strategy in the local media and amongst wider stakeholders such as Anglian Water, the Environment Agency and the Rail Authorities.

**High quality development standards** will also be necessary to help integrate new development into the existing community. The new Highfields housing site is a good example of what can be achieved. Clear design codes and design briefs are useful tools in helping to raise standards of design and construction and will need to be an early priority in the implementation programme. The Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth also provides a potential framework for this, taking into account four themes of community, connectivity, climate and character.

## Phasing and Risk Management

The frameworks described in the previous chapters set out the 'big picture' for a co-ordinated approach to the development of Littleport in the future. However, there are clear priorities emerging which it will be important to undertake in order to secure the vision in the Littleport Masterplan. It is also critical that projects that can be delivered earlier are identified. Such projects, if delivered to a high quality, will help create investor and community confidence, change perceptions of Littleport and set a benchmark for design quality.

The frameworks have already indicated that in the shorter term period 2011-2021 the main focus will be on developing out the stock of sites with existing planning permissions – some 759 new dwellings. In the longer term 2022-2032 it is anticipated that a further 960 new dwellings might be built.

The development of employment land, infrastructure, services and facilities need to be aligned with these levels of development. A particular focus is needed on employment development because this will be crucial to balance future levels of housing growth.

The table below indicates the suggested phasing, although this will need to be flexible, taking into account new opportunities or changed circumstances that might arise.

	Short term 2011-2021	Long term 2022-2032
<b>Development Framework 1 – Embracing the Natural Landscape</b>		
Green fingers connecting town to countryside	xxxxx	xxxxx
Linking the green fingers	xxxxx	xxxxx
Improve existing green spaces	xxxxx	
<b>Development Framework 2 – Balancing Future Growth Areas</b>		
Low housing growth rates	xxxxx	
Medium housing growth rates		xxxxx
Affordable housing	xxxxx	xxxxx
<b>Development Framework 3 – Building Business Activity Areas</b>		
Woodfen Road and Land West of 150 Wisbech Road employment sites development	xxxxx	
Wisbech Road employment sites development		xxxxx
Town Centre retail development		xxxxx
Town Centre office development	xxxxx	
Next Generation Broadband	xxxxx	
Riverside tourism development	xxxxx	
<b>Development Framework 4 – Expanding Community Facilities</b>		
Secondary School	xxxxx	
Primary Schools and Preschool provision	xxxxx	xxxxx
Cemetery	xxxxx	
Medical Centre expansion	xxxxx	
Additional commercial leisure facilities	xxxxx	xxxxx
Additional community space		xxxxx
<b>Development Framework 5 – Reinforcing the Town Centre</b>		
Maximise town centre shopping	xxxxx	xxxxx
Town centre office and retail development	xxxxx	xxxxx
Public realm enhancements	xxxxx	xxxxx
Community and leisure uses	xxxxx	xxxxx
Pedestrian priority areas		xxxxx
<b>Development Framework 6 – Moving Around</b>		
Woodfen Road/A10 Access	xxxxx	
Cycle Spine Route between Littleport and Ely	xxxxx	
Designated cycling and walking routes	xxxxx	
Improved bus services	xxxxx	
Littleport station – car and cycle parking and buses	xxxxx	

## Littleport Masterplan – Significant Risks Assessment

Any growth and change plan will be subject to uncertainties and risk, particularly when planning over a long time scale. The current economic downturn is resulting in a cautious approach by developers and investors and the economic climate is likely to be extremely uncertain over the next 4-5 years. Beyond this it is difficult to make predictions. Mitigation measures will need to be built into the Littleport Masterplan Implementation Plan to reduce this risk as far as possible.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
<b>Impact of poor economic climate on developer confidence and market demand</b>	High in short term. Medium in longer term	Significant	Phasing proposals in Masterplan provide for lower growth rates in short term. Further phasing and sequencing of development will be required in the long term implementation plans. Strict business planning techniques to ensure sustainability.
<b>Lack of co-operation from local landowners</b>	Medium	Significant	Engage landowners with the Masterplan, using local champion, and in future documentation and proposals.
<b>A lack of community/political consensus on plan</b>	Low	Significant	Continue with community consultation, involvement and engagement programme. Identification of a local Littleport Masterplan champion.
<b>Lack of public funds to implement projects e.g. secondary school</b>	High in short term. Medium in longer term	Significant	Obtain Local Enterprise Partnerships support and backing for the plan at sub regional level. Develop funding strategy. District Council to identify clear developer contributions policy.
<b>Lack of private funds to implement projects e.g. tourism facilities</b>	High in short term. Medium in longer term	Significant	Promotion of Littleport Masterplan to raise business confidence levels. Identification of local Littleport Masterplan champion to liaise with business interests.
<b>Piecemeal development by developers not complementary to the Littleport Masterplan</b>	Low	Significant	Planning briefs for specific sites. Inclusion of Masterplan proposals within statutory planning documents.
<b>Unable to secure agreement to new access off the A10</b>	Low/medium	Significant	This is essential to enable access to new housing, employment and school sites to be achieved. Traffic assessments will need to be completed to determine viability. The alternative to development in the Woodfen Road area is the Option B scenario of growth to the east of the Ely Road. However, this was less popular during the public consultation on these options.
<b>Housing growth not matched by infrastructure growth</b>	Low	Significant	Control through the statutory planning processes. Ensure ECDC infrastructure investment strategy is in place.
<b>Poor quality development</b>	Medium	Significant	Design codes and briefs to encourage high quality design. Local landowners have opportunity to specify their requirements to developers.
<b>Failure to manage traffic demand arising from growth</b>	Medium	Significant	Highways Authority controls through the planning process.
<b>Inability to afford/provide for demand for services arising from the growth</b>	Medium	Significant	Co-operative working and liaison between all groups responsible for public services – using Local Littleport Masterplan champion/ Growth Delivery Sub Committee to help raise awareness of the plan proposals amongst other stakeholders.
<b>Lack of capacity and resources in the local authorities to manage growth effectively</b>	Medium	Significant	Co-operative working with other local authorities and sharing of best practice.

## Funding

**The level of investment required to achieve the vision in the Masterplan for Littleport is significant and will represent a step change in the development of the town.**

**The type of investment will most often be determined by the nature of the project, programme or development location. Most sources of funds are likely to be tied to a specific project or programme opportunity and/or to a specific location.**

### Funding is likely to come from three main sources:

#### Private Investment

It is expected that the majority of housing and employment sites will be bought forward by private developers on a commercial basis. The Masterplan will guide developers to these opportunities and set individual development sites within the context of the vision for the whole town.

Developers make a contribution towards the community facilities which are needed as a direct result of new development taking place through Section 106 contributions.

East Cambridgeshire District Council is developing proposals for a Community Infrastructure Levy, a district wide tariff system to collect developer contributions towards new infrastructure. Essentially this is a set tariff payable on each unit of development (such as a house), which is then pooled, to provide for the increased demands on physical infrastructure (like roads) and social infrastructure (schools, play areas, doctors surgeries) resulting from new development. This proposed tariff is likely to become a future source of investment for the projects identified in the Littleport Masterplan. However, it is unlikely to secure sufficient monies from development to fund all infrastructure needs and other funding sources will be needed.

#### Public Funding

At the time of writing the future of public sector funding is unclear, as the new coalition government introduces its programme of reform. Although probably reduced, there is still likely to be mainstream funding for items such as small transport schemes, schools, environmental improvements, affordable housing and primary health care. The East Cambridgeshire Growth Delivery Sub Committee will lead discussion with the various mainstream providers to agree and align priorities to ensure that the public sector is working together to deliver the Littleport Masterplan.

There may also be continuing opportunities to access other specialist forms of funding. The forthcoming Regional Growth Fund will seek to boost local economies, and is likely to focus on developing private sector enterprise and pump prime investment finance. The East Cambridgeshire Growth Delivery Sub Committee will be proactive in securing these for the delivery of the Littleport Masterplan.

#### Voluntary Funding

Voluntary sector funding will arise as part of community action or work by charitable trusts. Whilst some of these will be small scale, organisations such as the National Lottery Funding can offer quite significant monies. Other sources, such as the Landfill Communities Fund for example, have a focus on landscape management initiatives which fits well with the natural landscape focus of the Littleport Masterplan. The East Cambridgeshire Growth Delivery Sub Committee will be seeking to attract these as work on the implementation of the Littleport Masterplan progresses.

# Glossary and background documents

## **CCC**

**Cambridgeshire County Council**  
Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for Education, Libraries and Heritage, Social Services, Roads and Traffic, Environment, Strategic Planning, Trading Standards, Waste Disposal, and County Farms Estate within the East Cambridgeshire District.

## **CIL**

### **Community Infrastructure Levy**

A proposed tariff system that the Government is planning to introduce as a more efficient means of obtaining developer contributions toward infrastructure provision.

## **Cambridgeshire Horizons**

Cambridgeshire Horizons role is to bring together all the elements of growth to ensure sustainable new communities are built throughout the County, and that the associated new services and facilities have benefits for both the new and existing residents.

## **Core Strategy**

### **East Cambridgeshire District Council Core Strategy**

One of a suite of documents within the local development framework, which sets out the long term spatial vision for the district, strategic policies and development control policies. The Core Strategy was approved in October 2009 as a Development Plan Document. As a result of the abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategy the Core Strategy is now due to be reviewed.

## **County Wildlife Site**

Sites of county significance for wildlife.

## **DPD**

### **Development Plan Document**

A document prepared by East Cambridgeshire District Council as part of the Local Development Framework. A DPD forms part of the Statutory Development Plan having been through independent examination e.g. Core Strategy DPD.

## **ECDC**

### **East Cambridgeshire District Council**

District level tier of local government administration, responsible for a range of services including development planning, environmental health, housing, building control, economic development, leisure and community facilities.

## **Green Infrastructure**

A network of multi-functional greenspace, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities.

## **HGF**

### **Housing Growth Funds**

A grant fund available from the Department for Communities and Local Government to promote housing and infrastructure growth, administered locally by Cambridgeshire Horizons.

## **LDF**

### **Local Development Framework**

A series of separate Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that set out policies and proposals for the development and use of the land in the District.

## **LEP**

### **Local Enterprise Partnerships**

Public/private partnerships that are being set up to help lead business growth and prosperity in the sub regions.

## **Littleport Parish Council**

Local 'parish' tier of local government administration, responsible for a range of services including allotments, cemeteries, village halls and play areas.

## **Long Term**

For the purposes of the Masterplan long term refers to projects for years 11-21. (Plan period 2022-2032).

## **Natural England**

Statutory body comprising the former English Nature, Countryside Agency and the Rural Development Service.

## **Ramsar Site**

Wetland of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat protected by The Ramsar Convention, an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

## **Regional Growth Fund**

A Government fund to support economic growth in parts of England hit by public sector cutbacks.

## **S106**

### **Section 106 Agreement**

Legal agreement between a Local Authority and developer in order to secure contributions (in cash or kind) towards the provision of infrastructure and services that are necessary to facilitate a proposed development e.g. provision of highways.

## **SAC**

### **Special Area of Conservation**

The SAC designation is recognition that the wildlife and habitats are particularly valued in a European context.

## **Short Term**

For the purposes of the Masterplan short term refers to projects for years 1-10. (Plan period 2011-2021).

**Continues overleaf.**

**SPA****Special Protection Area**

A SPA is a designation under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds. Under the Directive, Member States of the European Union (EU) have a duty to safeguard the habitats of migratory birds and certain particularly threatened birds.

**SPD****Supplementary Planning Document**

A document forming part of the suite of documents making up the LDF. It contains additional detail and information on policies or proposals, which are outlined in a Development Plan Document.

**SSSI****Site of Special Scientific Interest**

The designation of an area as an SSSI gives legal protection to wildlife and or geological features of the area. Natural England is responsible for designation.

**Stakeholder**

Private individual, local interest groups, local councils, public authorities, utility companies, and other organisations that have an interest in development and or specific sites.

**SUDS****Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems**

Drainage systems which seek to reduce the environmental impact of surface water discharges from new development.

**Sustainable development**

Development which enables people to satisfy their needs and secure quality of life without compromising the quality of life for future generations.

**Sustrans**

Sustrans is a charity dedicated to improving access for cyclists and pedestrians.

## Further Information

**There is an extensive library of further information available on the District Council's website in the Local Development Framework and Masterplan sections:**

[www.eastcambs.gov.uk](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk)

These list all of the regional, sub regional, district and local plans, policies and studies carried out over the last few years in relation to the development of the East Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework, as well as baseline research, newsletters, working party minutes, and consultation reports relating to the Littleport Masterplan.

**Background research documents to the Littleport Masterplan are included in a separate Appendices document which includes:**

- Littleport Facts and Figures
- Draft Littleport Masterplan Draft Options Report and Sustainability Appraisal
- Draft Littleport Masterplan Habitats Regulations Assessment
- Draft Littleport Masterplan Health Appraisal
- Draft Littleport Masterplan Town Centre Report

These appendices documents are available on the District Council's website. They can also be supplied on request.



## Contact Us

**If you wish to contact East Cambridgeshire District Council about the Draft Littleport Masterplan please write to:**

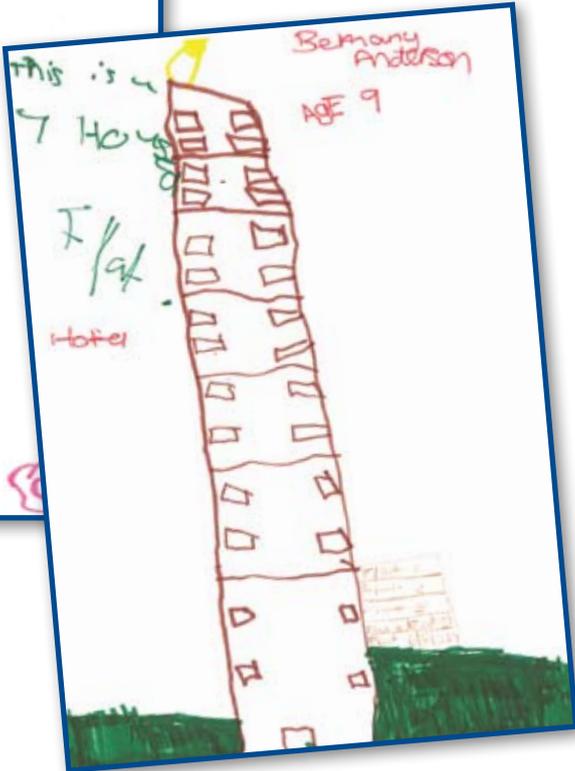
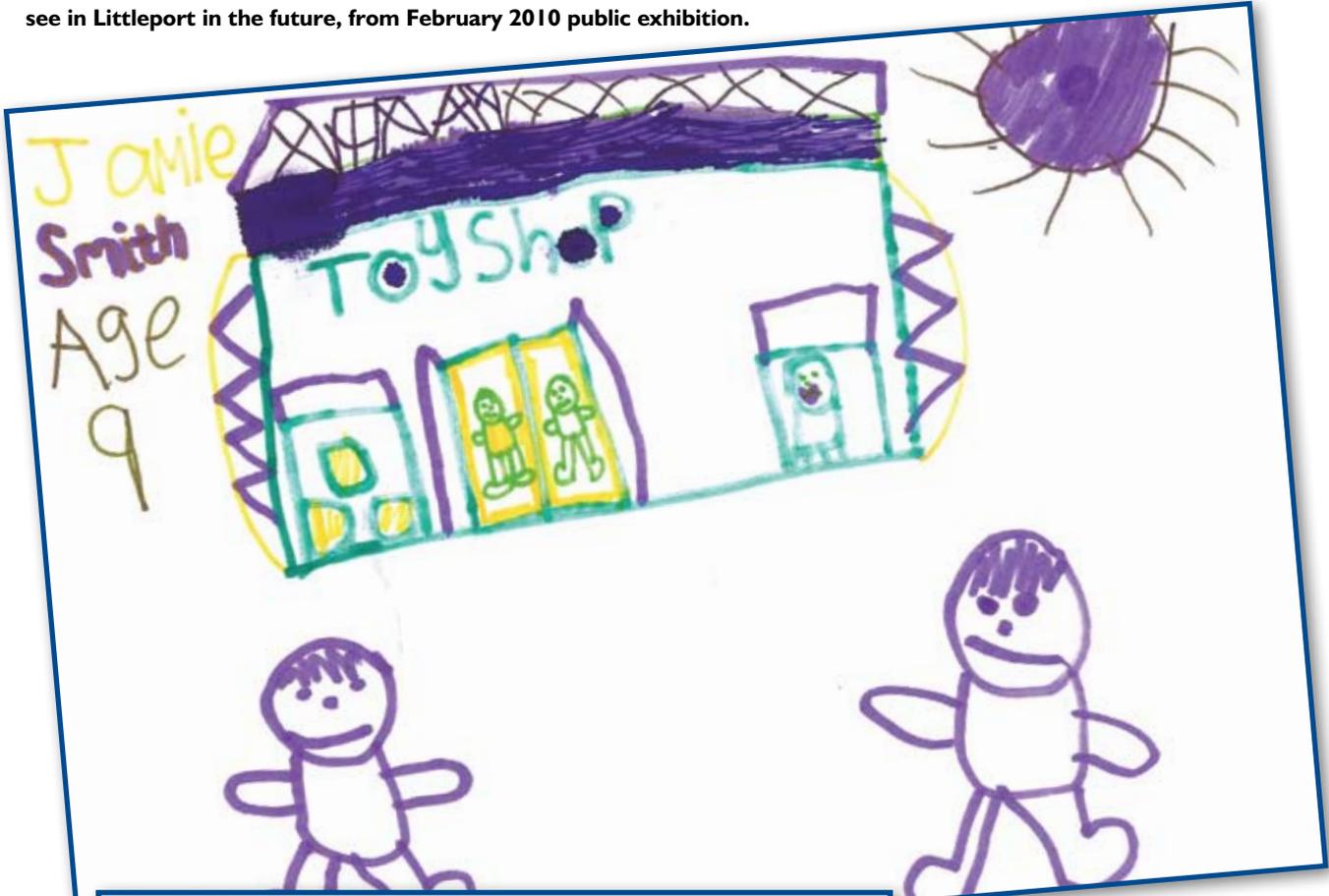
Littleport Masterplan  
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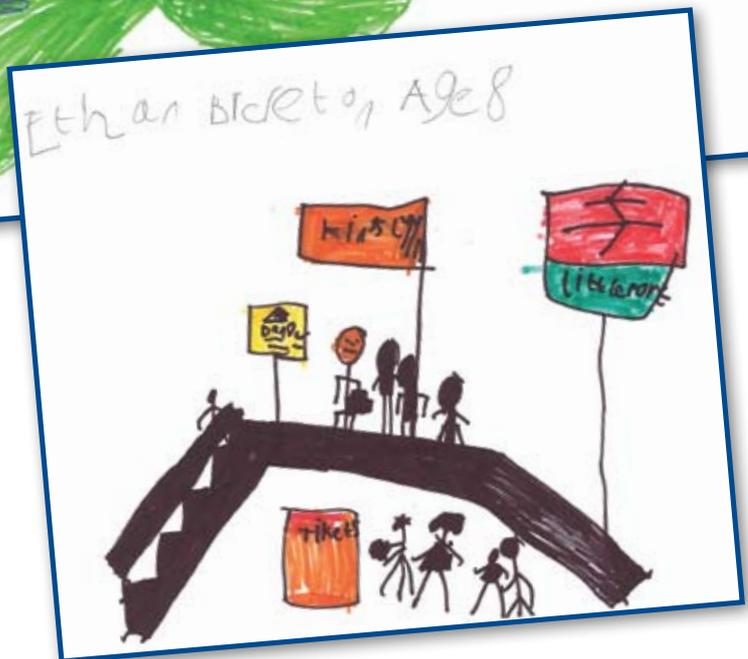
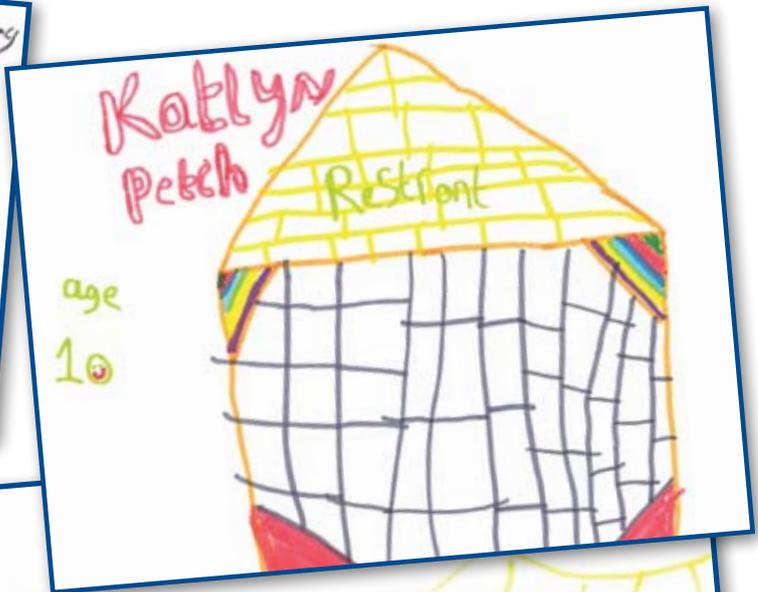
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Drawings by Millfield Primary School pupils of what they would like to see in Littleport in the future, from February 2010 public exhibition.







EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

# Littleport Masterplan

A framework for the future development of Littleport

East Cambridgeshire District Council

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Nutholt Lane

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Design: [www.dynamiccreative.co.uk](http://www.dynamiccreative.co.uk) 01353 661997.

studio | REAL were commissioned by East Cambridgeshire District Council to prepare options for a masterplan to provide a vision and strategic development framework for the future development of Littleport up until 2031. The copyright of these designs and drawings is held by studio | REAL.

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