

# North Ely Supplementary Planning Document

*GUIDANCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SUSTAINABLE URBAN EXTENSION TO THE NORTH OF ELY.*



Consultation Draft September 2013



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



Newhall, Harlow

## Foreword

This North Ely Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out the planning requirements for the development of a new community in North Ely, indicating the design and development principles which must be met to enable a special extension to a special City.

With its spectacular cathedral, gentle pace of life, and delightful riverside setting, Ely is a special place to live. It is clear, however, that there are long term growth pressures on Ely – between 2001 and 2010 the population of Ely grew from just under 15,000 to nearly 19,000 - and this growth pressure is expected to continue. The Ely Masterplan 2010 highlighted the need to successfully manage this growth, rather than just allow more housing estates to be added onto the City with little provision for the infrastructure, services and facilities needed to support the new population.

The Ely Masterplan identified the north of Ely as the last opportunity for large scale growth on the Isle of Ely, for up to 3,000 dwellings. This could take the City population to some 27,000, a level which it is considered will provide sufficient critical mass to support the facilities and services which Ely needs. The District Council is committed to creating development at North Ely that is founded upon strong principles of high quality urban design, environmental sustainability and a balanced community. The scheme will become an exemplar for sustainable development and design in Cambridgeshire.

The District Council intends that it will be modelled on innovative and sustainable principles, with generous provision of green space; bus, pedestrian and cycle networks to facilitate sustainable travel modes; and a focus on enabling home working, entrepreneurship and job creation. It will provide for a wide range of local facilities including local shops, schools, community halls and a work hub which will serve both the future residents and existing ones who already live close by. An extension to the existing Ely Country Park will provide both a tranquil rural setting around the new development and a superb facility which can be used by both new and existing City residents.

This North Ely Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared following lengthy discussions with the community, outside agencies and the landowners. Invaluable assistance has also been received from ATLAS, the central government agency charged with assisting local planning authorities in the planning of major developments. The discussions have involved substantial technical, environmental and economic research and debate to identify the key priorities for the new community. This has been challenging with often conflicting objectives, but this SPD seeks to draw these together to ensure the best outcome possible, planning for the new development comprehensively and applying sustainability principles.

This SPD is, at this point in time, a consultation draft. Over the coming weeks the views of the local community and other interests will be sought. Any representations received will then be carefully considered to see if any changes to the SPD need to be made prior to its formal adoption by the Council. It will also need to take into account progress with the draft East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, which is also nearing formal adoption.

Adoption of the SPD early next year will be just the first step for the planning process for North Ely. We have already received outline planning applications for consideration for the first phases of the development, and in the months ahead further applications are likely to be submitted. This SPD will be instrumental in ensuring that development comes forward in a co-ordinated manner, in line with the overall vision for the new community, and with maximum benefits for local people. Community consultation and engagement will continue to be a fundamental part of this process.

The area to the north of the City is the last opportunity for large scale growth on the Isle of Ely – it is a challenge and a responsibility to cherish and respond to this special place.

Councillor Peter Moakes

Chairman, Development & Transport Committee

East Cambridgeshire District Council

September 2013



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## *Preface*

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out proposals for the development of an exemplar urban extension to the North of Ely, which will enable the City to develop and grow sustainably.

This urban extension is part of a wider strategy to manage the growth of this unique Cathedral City, to enable it to respond to growth pressures, but retain its unique character and derive maximum community benefit and gains from its expansion. This wider strategy is set out in the Ely Masterplan 2010 and the East Cambridgeshire Draft Local Plan February 2013. It identified the opening up and development of North Ely as a crucial factor in the future growth of the City over the next 20 years. It also made clear that ad hoc development without consideration of the City's heritage, the community's needs or the quality of the natural landscape hinterland will not be permitted.

This SPD document aims to:

- Expand on the policies in the East Cambridgeshire Draft Local Plan to provide further more detailed and clear guidance on the development and urban design principles required.
- Ensure that the needs, views and values of the local community and key stakeholders are incorporated into the development proposals.
- Explain the steps that are expected in the planning, design, build out and management of the area.
- Establish requirements for future planning applications.
- Help the assessment and determination of planning applications

This SPD document represents the culmination of a lengthy process of discussion, extensive baseline technical studies, design development and consultation. East Cambridgeshire District Council produced a North Ely Development Framework in 2011 which set out its vision for the area. A key focus was the need for the landowners and their agents to co-operate together to provide a co-ordinated masterplan for whole of the North Ely site, rather than produce separate and unrelated plans. In July 2013, following a series of workshops with the District and County Council and other stakeholders, the landowners and their agents worked jointly together to produce their Joint Strategic Masterplan for the North Ely site. This set out their views on how it could be developed successfully and viably. All of this work has now been reviewed, refined and finalised by the District Council into this SPD document.

A summary diagram of the Joint Strategic Masterplan and Joint Land Budget is presented over page. All diagrams and figures contained in this SPD are illustrative, and are intended to be an example of how the principles of the SPD might be interpreted. This does not rule out other interpretations, subject to compliance with the principles. Many of the illustrations and diagrams have been provided by the landowners and their agents from the Joint Strategic Masterplan, which was co-ordinated and produced by LDA Design.

The first outline applications for this site have already been developed by the applicants in parallel with the development of this SPD, and this document will be a material consideration in the determination of these applications, pending its formal adoption.

Land Use (Use Class)	Maximum Amount (GEA* where applicable)	Land Area (ha)
Green Infrastructure		111.0
Strategic Access		6.0
Residential (C3)	Up to 3,000 units	102.8
Primary School and Pre-School (D1) (x2)	5,260m <sup>2</sup>	6.2
Place of worship and/or Community Hall (D1) (x2)	2,000m <sup>2</sup>	0.3
Business Park	up to 5,000m <sup>2</sup>	2.8
Local Centres		3.6
– Foodstore (A1)	1,000m <sup>2</sup>	
– Uses within Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1	2,800m <sup>2</sup>	
– Business Units (B1)	2,800m <sup>2</sup>	
– Work Hub (B1)	500 m <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>215.9</b>

Land areas are indicative. Specific areas to be established through the planning application process to meet ECDC standards.

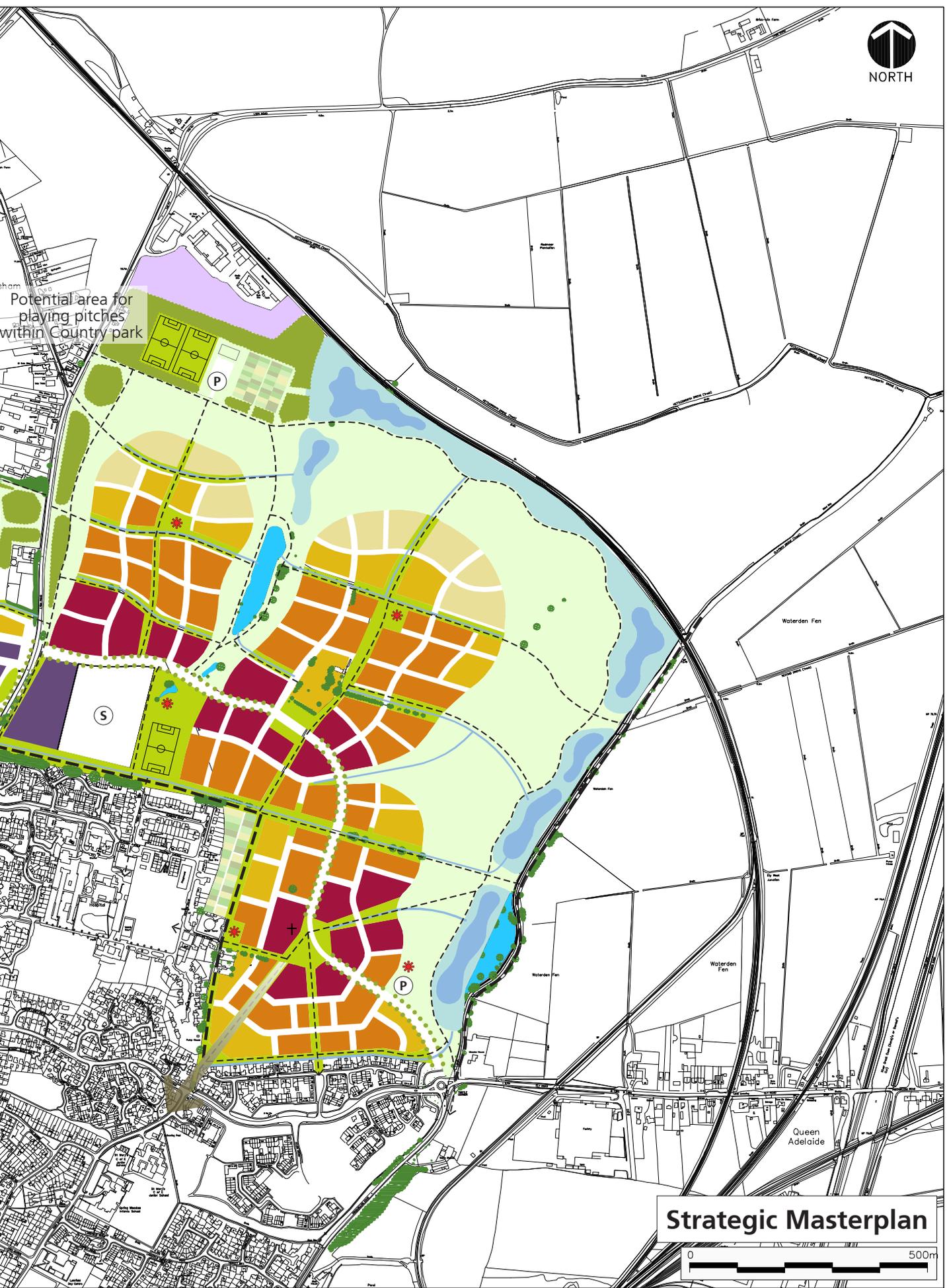
- Urban village
- Suburbia
- Green living
- Arcadia
- Local centre
- Employment area
- Ⓢ Schools
- Ⓟ Parking
- + Place of worship / community hall (Indicative location)
- ➔ Long views to Cathedral
- Country park
- Community orchard / woodland
- Allotments / paddocks
- Avenue
- Green corridors
- \* Neighbourhood play area
- Existing footpaths / bridleways
- - - Proposed footpaths / cycleways
- Surface water attenuation
- Existing woodland / hedgerow
- Existing lake



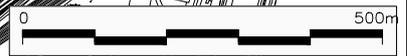
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Potential area for playing pitches within Country park



# Strategic Masterplan







# 1

INTRODUCTION



## Development Context

East Cambridgeshire is a predominantly rural district located to the north-east of Cambridge. The cathedral city of Ely is the largest settlement with a population of around 17,560.

Ely is a thriving historic market town, with a cathedral and attractive riverside. Ely is the district's main shopping, employment and commercial centre, and is also an important tourist destination.

Ely has good rail connections to London, the north and the midlands and to the rest of East Anglia, and by road is connected to Cambridge and the A14 via the A10.

### *Focus for Growth*

Ely has experienced rapid growth in recent years, with development of new housing to the north and west, and new business parks near the station and at Lancaster Way.

### *Ely Masterplan*

Ely continues to be a focus for growth within the district; the concept of a growth area to the north of Ely was first introduced in the Ely Masterplan. The Masterplan vision requires the development of 3,000 homes in North Ely by 2031. This could potentially increase the population of the City from 17,560 to approx 27,000 by 2031.

It is anticipated that this growth will help to provide a 'critical mass' to support the comprehensive range of services and facilities which local people wish to see; enhance the level of employment self-sufficiency in Ely; and enable the city to develop sustainably.

### *North Ely Development Framework*

The North Ely Development Framework (NEDF) was produced by the District Council in 2011 to establish the vision and principles that will guide the development of an urban extension to Ely. The NEDF has the status of 'Interim Council Policy' and is a material consideration in the determination of any future planning application within the site.

### *Joint Strategic Masterplan*

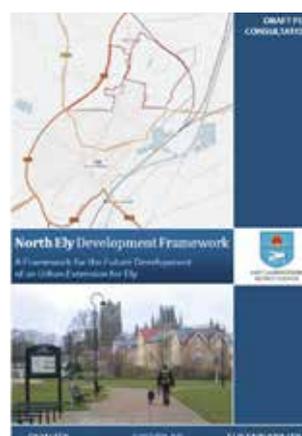
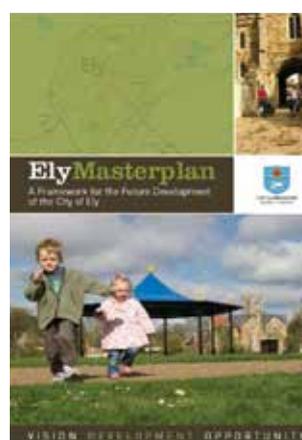
The Joint Strategic Masterplan (JSMP) was prepared by the Church Commissioners for England (the Commissioners) and Endurance Estates Strategic Land Limited (Endurance Estates) in 2013. It aimed to build on the work carried out by the District Council in the NEDF, providing further technical data and information in order

to inform future planning applications/ masterplans for North Ely.

The JSMP was produced following extensive consultation between the District Council, the developers and their consulting teams, and a number of officers from Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC). Workshops were facilitated by the Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS). ATLAS is an independent advisory service, sponsored by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and hosted and delivered through the Homes & Communities Agency, available at the request of Local Authorities to support them in dealing with complex large scale housing led projects.

### *North Ely Supplementary Planning Document.*

This document draws on all the previous work, and brings it together as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Following formal consultation with the wider community and stakeholders, and incorporation of any agreed amendments, it will be adopted by the District Council as a formal part of its statutory planning guidance. It should be read in conjunction with the policies of the draft Local Plan.



## Forthcoming Local Plan

East Cambridgeshire District Council is currently preparing a Local Plan for the District which will replace the 2009 Core Strategy Development Plan document. The Core Strategy currently makes an allocation for 500 houses in North Ely.

The Draft Local Plan (Submission version) allocates land at North Ely for a housing-led urban extension of up to 3,000 dwellings. It also makes provision for other development, such as:

- Regeneration of the station and riverside area
- Expansion of the city centre
- Expansion and development of Ely Country Park
- The proposed Leisure Village.

It will be important to ensure that the development of North Ely is integrated into the physical and social fabric of the wider city of Ely and takes account of wider planned improvements which are outlined in the Local Plan.

It is intended that this SPD is adopted alongside the adoption of the District Local Plan, and the relationship between the Core Strategy, Local Plan and NEDF and JSMP is set out in the diagram below.

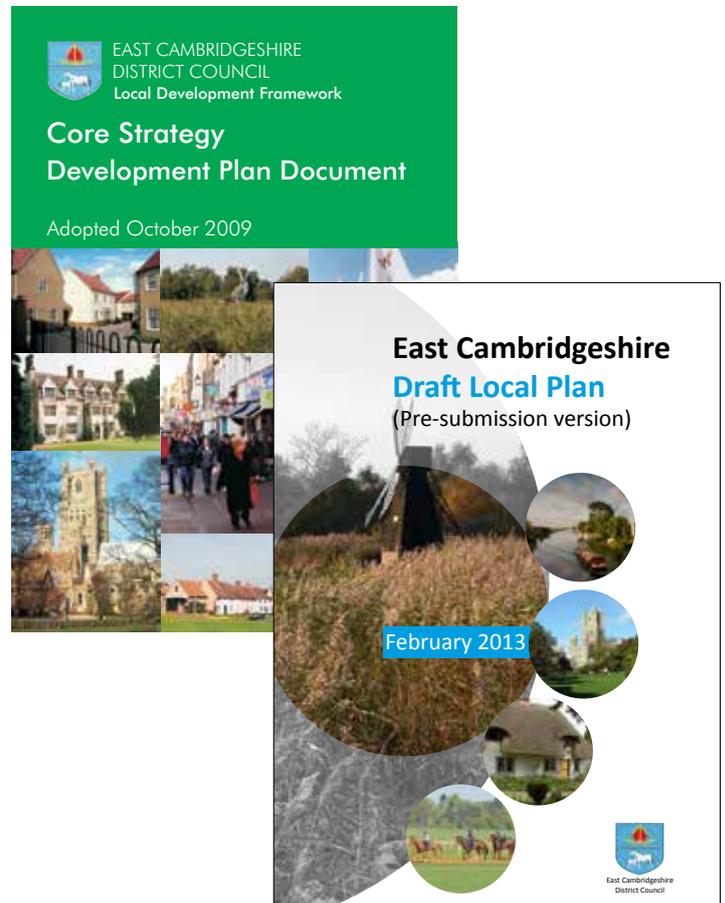
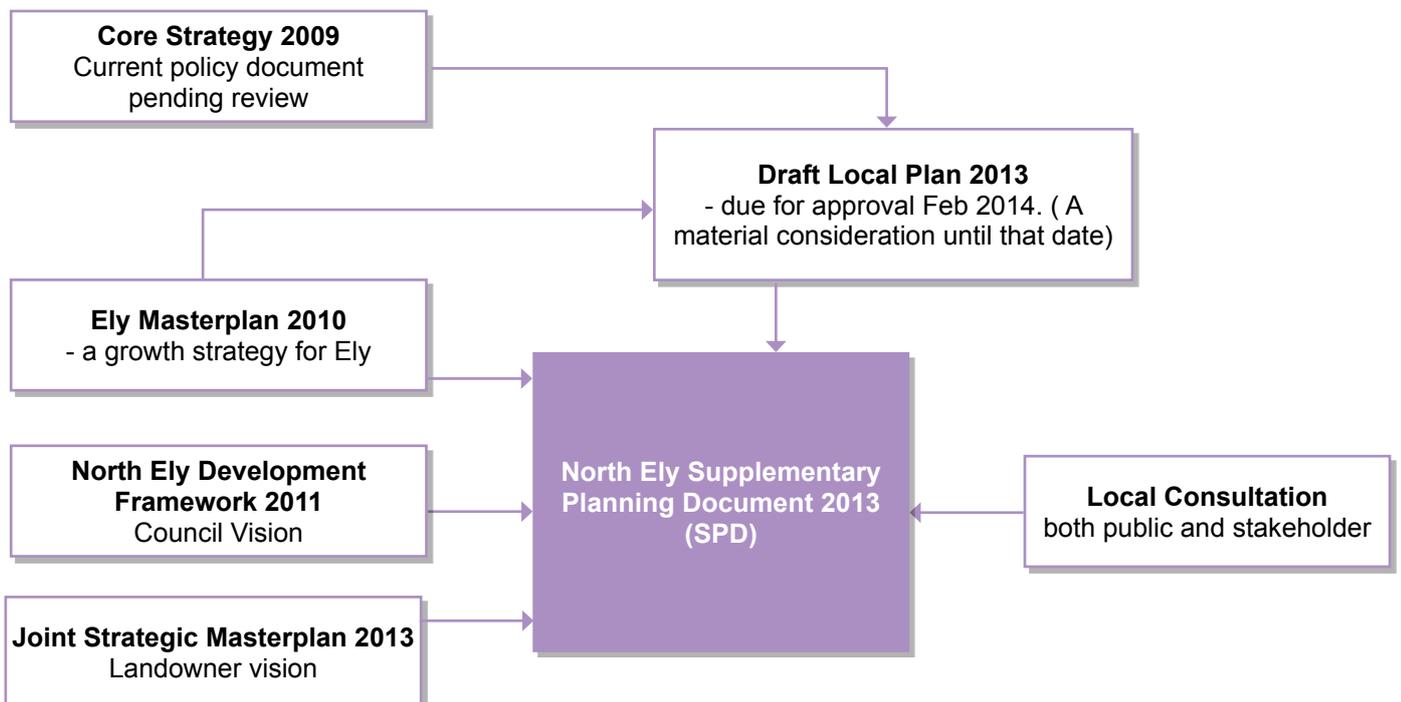


Diagram 1 – Relationship between East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy, Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Document

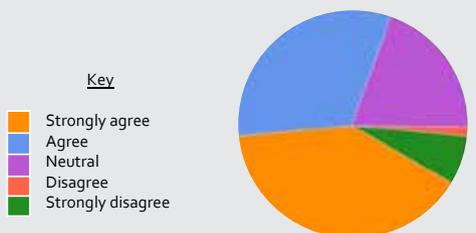


**The majority of local residents want the public open space in North Ely to be varied**



There was strong support for most of the options presented, particularly traffic-free walking and cycling routes, informal open space and woodland or community orchards.

**The majority of local residents want North Ely to be an exemplar development**



Only 8.2% of respondents disagreed with the emerging consensus that “North Ely should be an exemplar development from which others can learn for the future”. When asked to clarify their definition of an exemplar development the following priorities emerged: 1. reducing vulnerability to climate change and building energy efficient homes, 2. improving the range of habitats, wildlife and wild places, 3. creating distinctiveness and diversity within the landscape and townscape.

**The majority of local residents want North Ely to be a balanced community**



There was strong support for North Ely to be a balanced community, with a match between jobs, homes and educational, social and community facilities and also in the age profile of residents.

**Consultation**

Consultation has been an ongoing part of the process for the development of proposals for North Ely and has included the following;

- Stakeholder workshop: issues & options (April 2010)
- Stakeholder workshop: infrastructure, transport and connectivity (October 2010)
- Stakeholder workshop: design, vision, viability, phasing (November 2010)
- Councillors seminars (January and July 2011)
- Public consultation: 2 broad options (March-April 2011)
- Landowner forum: ongoing meetings throughout 2011-2012

The early stages of work were reviewed by the Cambridgeshire Quality Review Panel, a group of 12 experts whose role is to act as a ‘critical friend’ as development schemes are put together, and provide independent advice on the quality of the development being proposed. Developers will be encouraged to seek regular reviews by the Quality Panel as they develop their outline and reserved matters planning applications.

The landowners and their agents have also held their own public consultation events in relation to their plans for their individual application sites, the most recent being that by Endurance Estates in Spring 2013. The Church Commissioners conducted a major consultation exercise in 2011.



