

# LEVELLING UP LITTLEPORT

Levelling Up Fund Round 2 Bid

## DELIVERY PLAN



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL







**Cllr  
Anna Bailey**

Leader of East  
Cambridgeshire  
District Council

“

I wholeheartedly support this Levelling Up Fund bid. A relatively small investment to reinvigorate our already successful business growth hub, E-Space-North, and create a 4.3km cycle path, will help unlock Littleport's huge potential. On a practical level, this bid will generate 270 new jobs, promote active travel, support wellbeing and deliver a Benefit Cost Ratio of 2.8:1.

But perhaps more importantly it will inspire much-needed confidence in the town and provide the key to further funding streams, which in turn will enable Littleport to deliver its vision for 2030 for the huge benefit of everyone who lives there.

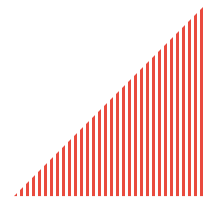
”

## Foreword

In 1881 the great philanthropist Thomas Peacock established a shirt factory in Littleport to provide work for women during the agricultural depression. He called the business Hope Brothers, aiming to give the people of Littleport something to hope for. In less than 10 years it was employing 400 local people. Years later that same business was taken over by international clothing chain and fashion house Burberry, to produce garments that would be sent around the world.

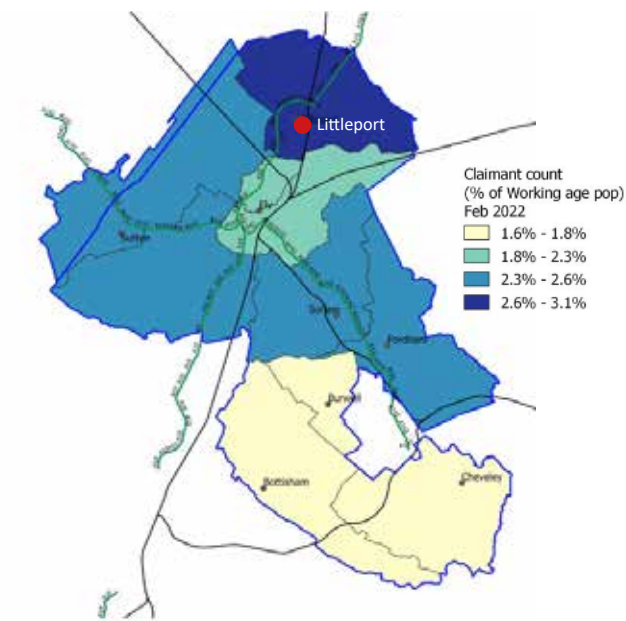
Since then, Burberry has left Littleport and a lack of investment, employment opportunities and infrastructure means this once-thriving Fenland community is now rapidly turning into a car-centric dormitory town. Reliance on Universal Credit is high and life expectancy is lower than average. Today, Littleport needs a 'new hope' to help it once again become a vibrant economy and community.

Our £6.3 million proposal aims to do exactly that. An expanded and upgraded enterprise and community hub, E-Space North, aims to fuel the next Hope Brothers bringing similar levels of employment to local people whilst also acting as a centre for networking, community life and culture. Our cycleway will link-up Littleport for the first time, providing health and welfare benefits for the wider community and encouraging a true 15-minute lifestyle for people who want to live, work and visit the town. These two tangible deliverables, which dovetail into the much larger Littleport Vision 2030, are set to level up this community both regionally and nationally by making Littleport an exemplar of dynamic, forward-thinking market towns.



# Littleport is a Priority Place

Claimant count (proportion of 16-62 population)



Indicator	North East Cambs	Greater Cambridge and Peterborough	England	Shortfall GC & GP	Shortfall England
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	3.5%	4.6%	1274	574
Economic Activity Rate	83.3%	81.1%	78.7%	178.8	2623.6
Median Full Time Earnings – Residents	£28,013	£32,086	£31,490	-£4,037	-£3,447
Median Full Time Earnings – Workplace	£25,109	£31,803	£31,490	-£6,694	-£6,381
Business Density	367.6	430.3	422.8	678.4	627.5
NVQ 4+ Qualifications	19.5%	43.3%	43.1%	-18,088	-17,936
No Qualifications	23.7%	11.1%	12.3%	9576	8664
Employment by occupation (SOC 1-3)	27.8%	50.4%	50.0%	-14,215	-13,964

Littleport in East Cambridgeshire is home to a rapidly growing community of over 10,000 people. It is rich in cultural history, with its own working marina, main line train station, schools, new educational academy, sports facilities and a successful business hub.

However, despite these strengths, Littleport is a siloed place where people face disproportionate challenges and lack of opportunity both at a local and national scale.

## Income Inequality

Littleport has the **highest reliance on Universal Credit** in North East Cambridgeshire<sup>1</sup>. Almost a quarter of all householders are living in poverty. This is caused by a combination of **high unemployment at 5.6%** compared with 4.6% in England; **low job density** and **low levels of high-skill jobs** with only 23.8% in SOC 1-3 employment. Less than one quarter of employees work in the top paid occupations - less than half of the regional average. Median workplace earnings are lower overall than regional and national averages<sup>2</sup>.

## The Beginnings of a Dormitory Town

Structural challenges, such as **poor connectivity between employment centres, the town centre and new housing developments** mean there is a disconnect between where people live, work and socialise.

Many new arrivals choose to live and sleep in Littleport but commute out of the town for employment, shopping and other activities. This contributes to high levels of

**out-commuting of around 49%.**

The result is a two-speed economy, with those able to find work elsewhere largely commuting out, whilst those who remain in the town face low and poorly paid employment opportunities.

## Lack of Investment

These factors have knock-on impacts on the viability of high street retail, leisure and evening economy.

This overall lack of footfall aligns with difficulties faced elsewhere across the country.

This impacts on levels of investment in the town, with commercial developers lacking confidence in the viability of creating office space resulting in **low availability of commercial workspace**. In some cases this is also holding up broader development, despite the demand for housing in the area due to its affordability and access to nearby towns and cities.

## Pride of Place and Wellbeing

These factors have real impacts on how people feel about their town. North East Cambridgeshire has the **third lowest level of place satisfaction** in the country according to the Demos Everyday Places survey, with 29.3% having a negative perception of the place where they live.

Although Littleport is located close to the National Cycle Network, direct **walking and cycling routes** within the town and surrounding areas are **very limited** with no easy access to green space.

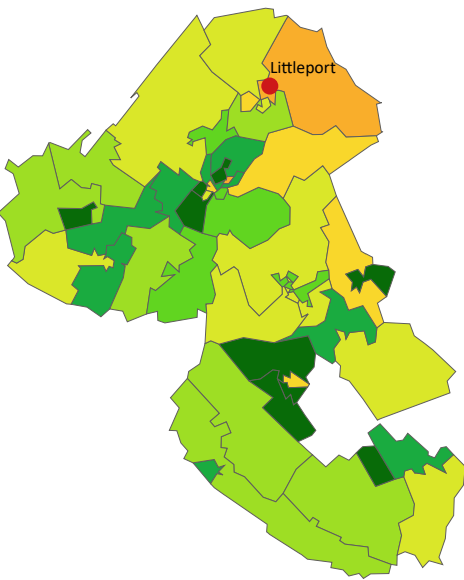
This combination of poor place satisfaction, poor access to green spaces and reliance on cars play a contributory role in levels of personal wellbeing and health. Littleport has the **lowest life expectancy** in North East Cambridgeshire.

## Reasons for Hope

Despite these challenges, there are signs of a brighter future for Littleport, if the right investment is in place to support it. A small rise in three-year GVA growth, which stands at 16% compared with 14% regionally and 11% nationally, shows Littleport provides an opportunity for overall productivity improvement.

A high economic activity rate of 83.3% indicates that there is a strong workforce base on which to build on this growth if job density can be improved. This is particularly true as housing growth continues to expand the town's population.

Levels of Deprivation



Decile 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP

MP for North East Cambridgeshire

“ I welcome the efforts of Littleport Vision 2030 in my constituency, which are looking to address the key levelling up themes of transport, regeneration and culture.

Littleport has one of the fastest-growing populations in East Cambridgeshire. It is vital that employment opportunities, commercial space and sustainable transport infrastructure keep pace with the needs of young families coming into the area.

This funding will help Littleport evolve as a thriving and successful community. I very much hope that they are successful in their application for funding and I fully support this bid.



It is vital we invest now to capitalise on this improving growth and **create employment opportunities, commercial work space and sustainable transport infrastructure** to keep pace with the needs of families coming into the area.

By providing opportunity and incentive to grow as well as to attract more businesses from the wider area to locate in Littleport, our bid looks to significantly **level-up productivity both locally and regionally**.

We will see to make Littleport a functional community with **better access to local jobs, opportunities to start a business** and an integrated approach to **active transport** that connects residential, employment and rail facilities and most importantly, engenders a **sense of pride in place**.

<sup>1</sup>Medrodynamics: East Cambridgeshire DC, Economic evidence and priorities, June 2022

<sup>2</sup>ONS (Office for National Statistics) and IMD (Indices of Multiple Deprivation) data sources



# **Levelling Up Fund Bid**

Littleport has been carefully chosen as the focus for this funding bid, following a review of proposed projects, policy and strategy to ensure government investment achieves maximum social and economic value in the East Cambridgeshire area.

Our £6.3m Levelling Up Fund (LUF) programme seeks to level-up the opportunities for Littleport's growing population to live, work and thrive sustainably in the town and inject a sense of pride of place through five objectives:

1. Enhance Littleport's economic output and productivity by seeding, attracting and developing new businesses and productive jobs
2. Stimulate new investment into Littleport including residential and commercial development by increasing confidence in Littleport as a place
3. Improve health and wellbeing of local people through active transport choices
4. Catalyse the knowledge, creative and evening economy in Littleport by supporting new businesses and creating a hub for social and cultural events
5. Support pride in place and a thriving town centre by encouraging a larger daytime population and movement throughout the town

In doing so, they address the three Levelling Up themes of transport, regeneration and culture as well as contributing direct outcomes towards Levelling Up Missions 1, 3, 7, 8 & 9 and indirectly to all 12 Levelling Up Missions.

These projects developed with our strategic partners Genecon, Metrodynamics, Cambridgeshire County Council and Littleport Parish Council, will be managed by East Cambridgeshire District Council, which in partnership with Sport England, have already successfully delivered the £13.7million Hive Leisure Centre Project in 2018 on time and on budget.

The Council will be additionally match funding the projects with 15% from secured funds. Our team and partners have both resources and expertise in place ready to start work "on the ground" this financial year and to meet the target delivery date of 2024/25.

## **Project 1** **E-Space North** **Expansion**

*A centre for flexible working, business incubation and a catalyst for Littleport's creative economy*

**Funding request**  
**£3.7 million (85%)**

**Matched funds**  
**£0.7 million (15%)**

**Net benefits**  
**£11.9 million**  
**Benefit Cost Ratio**  
**2.42:1**

This project will deliver the improvement and expansion of the East Cambridgeshire District Council's owned and significantly oversubscribed 1,912sqm E-Space North Business Centre into a dynamic hub supporting enterprise formation and growth from early stage to scale-up.

The proposed 3,325sqm facility is essential to address the shortfall in employment opportunities and market failure of commercial work space developments in the town and will support approximately 270 workers, offering a diversity of lease and space provision.

Operating as a business growth zone by day, the architecturally designed hub will also tap into the day-to-night economy, with the vision to become a training, arts, culture, heritage and community centre.



This focused support for cultural and creative industries will help Littleport encourage and capitalise on young populations moving into town from cities like Ely and Cambridge with high concentrations of creative talent.

## **Project 2** **Cycle Path**

*4.3km cycling and walking loop connecting Littleport's residential, employment and rail centres*

**Funding request**  
**£1.6 million (85%)**

**Matched funds**  
**£0.3 million (15%)**

**Net benefits**  
**£7.1 million**  
**Benefit Cost Ratio**  
**3.87:1**



There are currently no dedicated pedestrian and cycling routes within Littleport.

The LTN 1/20 compliant development of a 4.3km cycling and pedestrian route is essential for connecting the employment centres by E-Space North with residential communities, Littleport Train Station and surrounding green and open spaces.

As well as encouraging a modal shift to greener, active travel, and providing wellbeing benefits through greater access to green space and surrounding nature, it will also establish the principle that all housing, work, leisure, travel and retail spaces should be easily accessible within 15-minutes.









## CASE STUDY: GARY JOHNS ARCHITECTS

We were able to secure serviced office space at E-Space at a crucial time when we were expanding rapidly and had outgrown our current premises. Agreeing our tenancy with E-Space was really easy and their approach was very flexible – something that was very important to us at the time.



Having the ability to hold large ad-hoc meetings was really useful, and the reception staff felt like an extended part of our team. We would have no hesitation in recommending E-Space to any growing business that is need of good quality spaces with flexible terms.

[www.johnsarchitects.co.uk](http://www.johnsarchitects.co.uk)

## Stakeholder engagement

Our Levelling Up Fund proposal is based on a number of strategies identifying key needs, resident and stakeholder support for interventions supporting local employment opportunities and active transport improvements. This has been enhanced with direct engagement with stakeholder highlighted by letters of support.

The consultations have included:

-  Transport Strategy for East Cambridgeshire
-  Littleport Masterplan as part of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 – public exhibitions, questionnaires, community representative workshops and schools workshops
-  East Cambridgeshire Walking and Cycling Routes Strategy
-  Cambridgeshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan consultation (ended July 2021)

We specifically surveyed all E-Space tenants for this LUF2 bid (June 2022). Of all the tenants surveyed almost one third live and work in Littleport. In total 91% of respondents travel to work by car and almost two thirds say they would consider cycling if provisions were made. Two thirds of people also said if more training and community space facilities were made available that they would use the space.

Littleport desperately needs this sort of intervention to regenerate and create renewed relevance for its increasing population.

**Nicola Tuck, Joint Managing Director, Grovemere Property Ltd**

The bid directly aligns with the region's vision and the Strategic Growth Ambition of the Combined Authority.

**Alan Downton, Deputy Chief Officer, Business Board /SRO BGS/ Energy, CPCA**

I have great pleasure in supporting this bid to improve active travel within Littleport and for the creation of much needed employment opportunities, which will come as a result of the expansion of E-Space North, our successful business centre located on Wisbech Road.

**David Ambrose Smith, County and District Councillor**

By improving the business zone around this rural market town location this funding will enable accelerated business growth, leading to access of better-quality jobs locally and help to upskill the area's population.

**Jeremy Reeve, Membership Advisor, Federation of Small Businesses, Cambridgeshire**

It is vital that employment opportunities, commercial space and sustainable transport infrastructure keep pace with the needs of young families coming into the area.

**The Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and MP for Littleport**

We live in Littleport and think the town would benefit hugely from a cycle path from the station... A quick and safe cycle route in Littleport would be beneficial and save us the extra car journeys each day.

**Littleport Resident**

The services and space that E-Space offers are very important to me.

**E-Space North Tenant**

The funding will enable accelerated business growth, leading to access of better quality local jobs and help to upskill Littleport's local population. It will act as a catalyst for much needed regenerative change in the town.

**Harvey Bibby, Chair Ely and East Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce**

Littleport is the most deprived settlement within East Cambridgeshire with high numbers of social housing and families on low incomes, and large number of additional housing currently in the planning stage. Many families still do now own a car, and safe cycle and walking routes are important, not only for travelling to employment sites and community hubs, but to increase activity to support general health and wellbeing.

**Clive Webber, Chairman, Littleport Parish Council**

These two integrated projects will no doubt help reduce the inequality that exists in and around Littleport when compared to the other parts of wider region.

**Chair, Ely Cathedral Business Group**

At Growth Works, we recognise how much of a game-changer the proposed Levelling Up Project could be for the future of Littleport and East Cambridgeshire.

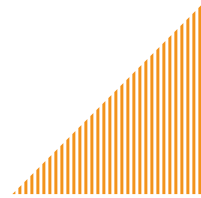
**Richard Cuda, Programme Director, Growth Works**

## CASE STUDY: PRODATA WEATHER SYSTEMS

Prodata Weather Systems has been a tenant at E-Space North since 2011. It is a specialist supplier of weather stations.

John Dann, Managing Director, said: "The centre has been beneficial to allowing us to grow through office sizes as we have expanded and taken on more team members. We will shortly be moving into a larger room again! The meeting rooms and conference facilities have also been of use in a location that's easy to get to. Being in a business centre with other small to medium businesses also gives us the opportunity to collaborate with other tenants. The E-Space team are very accommodating and will do whatever they can to see us flourish."

[www.weatherstations.co.uk](http://www.weatherstations.co.uk)



## The Case for Investment

### Lack of Infrastructure for a Growing Population

There are many challenges facing Littleport today.

A lack of investment means that while it's one of the fastest-growing areas in East Cambridgeshire with the number of properties expected to increase by over 1300 by 2030, it desperately lacks the supporting infrastructure needed to catalyse future growth.

Specifically, a lack of suitable commercial space means businesses struggle to invest and root themselves in the town. Efforts to transform the town centre have effectively stalled, limiting the range of shops, retail floor space and commercial property for growing businesses to move into.

### Leading to Lack of Jobs, Investment and Opportunity

This in turn has created a dearth of jobs. Today, many people who live in Littleport struggle to access local employment, with half (49%) of those who live in the area having to commute out of town.

There is also a higher than average proportion of disillusioned young people, who have aspirations, but no opportunity to progress.

A lack of acceleration in development also limits the potential for Community Infrastructure Levy to be generated, which would also boost the opportunity to invest in the infrastructure the town so desperately needs.

It's a vicious circle. Without investment, there is no infrastructure, without the infrastructure businesses do not want to invest, which in turn forces people to look elsewhere for jobs; and morale, along with the economy, fails.



### A Plan for Change

The Littleport Vision 2030 Masterplan sets to reverse this trend. It outlines a commitment to provide access to good jobs within easy reach of homes, in appropriate sectors contributing to the economic future of the town. It includes a focus on investment in skills and education to underpin development of a modern workforce founded on the principles of productivity and innovation.

The first step to fulfilling the social and economic value potential of Littleport is an energy efficient, hybrid working space for both existing and new businesses, cultural space for development of community activities, and a cycleway which connects existing and new amenities within Littleport - including the train station, leisure centre and local education centres.

A relatively small amount of Levelling Up Fund grant today would mean that this step is achieved by March 2025. In addition, government support today would raise levels of confidence for further investment in additional cycleways, transport improvement, creation of a gateway area close to the station, and housing and amenity development. It would also unlock a compelling level of regional public funding and private investment, securing a flourishing future for both existing and new residents of Littleport in the years to come, which in turn would lead to a full realisation of the Littleport Vision 2030.

And as the desirability of Littleport as a place to live, work and socialise increases, so too will the existing poor and deprived neighbourhoods turn into healthy, thriving and prosperous communities.

## CASE STUDY: SKY REVOLUTIONS

"Sky Revolutions has grown significantly in the last three years. Our office and operational spaces have been critical in supporting us during this phase, and E-Space North has provided us with everything we've needed during this time – including the ability to access grow-on space. We have now moved into a second larger office meaning we've been able to continue providing high quality services to our clients with zero interruption. Flexible meeting spaces support our need for small, private management meetings and for large all-team meetings and training sessions. The site is well managed with attractive social and outdoor spaces – valued by our staff. "

[www.skyrevolutions.co.uk](http://www.skyrevolutions.co.uk)





# Littleport Vision 2030

Littleport's Vision is that by 2030 it will fully realise its potential to become a vibrant exciting place which contributes positively to the economy.

A place for people not only to live but to work, socialise and have pride in their community.

The Vision seeks to increase the GVA output of Littleport and ensure the town's residents have access to a good job within easy reach of their home, contributing towards Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's commitment to double the size of its economy.

Alongside this, improvements to the town centre, the station gateway and the creation of a country park and a marina will make Littleport a beautiful, vibrant and attractive community.



**Cllr  
David  
Ambrose-Smith**

County and District  
Councillor,  
Littleport

“Considerably more development is in the pipeline with more envisaged, as detailed in the recent Littleport Vision 2030, and the improvements detailed in this bid for funding, tie in closely with the ambitions for our town.”

## Littleport Vision 2030 Masterplan projects

### TRAIN STATION

Littleport's train station is located on the mainline with regular services from King's Lynn through to Ely, Cambridge, Stansted Airport and London King's Cross. In 2019 Network Rail announced a £27million improvement package to lengthen platforms at Littleport, enabling eight-car services to stop there, effectively doubling seats for passengers on the line between King's Lynn and Cambridge and improving access for disabled passengers.

### COUNTRY PARK

Developing a network of attractive green open spaces, including the creation of a 30 acre country park on The Moors will provide residents with vital links between the town, station gateway, marina, River Great Ouse and wider countryside.

### MARINA AND RIVERSIDE

Plans for the riverside include developing more walking routes, and improved access to green spaces. The working marina close to the station will offer water sports and be a great asset to improve tourism for the town as well as being an enjoyable place for residents.

### DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Free public wi-fi is already available throughout the town, linking to the Connecting Cambs – Cambridgeshire's ubiquitous free public wi-fi network.

### HOUSING

Local Plan proposals to grow Littleport by over 1,300 dwellings by 2031 is on track with planning applications received for 80%. East Cambridgeshire District Council's new First Homes policy also aims to ensure more new developments are affordable.

### TOWN CENTRE

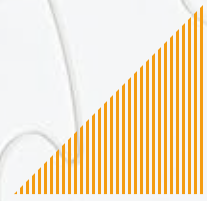
Plans to make the town centre a more attractive and pleasant place to visit include; developing retail and commercial space, improving the appearance of the town centre, and making the centre more pedestrian and cycle-friendly whilst maintaining vehicle accessibility.

### OTHER CYCLE ROUTES

A strategy is in place for a Littleport to Ely cycle path as part of a wider transport network designed to connect communities.







# Alignment with local and national policies

**East Cambridgeshire District Council Corporate Plan** – 5 key principles set out promises and actions for sound financial management, improving transport, housing, social and community infrastructure, and a cleaner, greener East Cambridgeshire. Littleport - with a significant number of sites available for commercial, residential and community development and several potential cycle paths identified as part of the County Council's Littleport Improved Active Travel Access study - offers the assets and infrastructure to build upon and improve in order to realise these commitments.

**Littleport Vision 2030** – the promotion of a business growth zone, housing and amenity development, investment in skills and innovation, and redefinition of the town centre as a community and leisure destination, will assist in the delivery of comprehensive change in the area - utilising existing infrastructure, assets and resources to their full capacity in order to catalyse development of a thriving and prosperous Littleport. The proposed cycleway and refurbishment and extension of E-Space North provides the first phase of this proposal, promoting further investment in commercial and retail spaces, and linking new residential developments with existing amenity spaces.

**East Cambridgeshire Local Plan** – the plan recognises Littleport as one of three main settlements in the area which together comprise 45% of the population of the district. Littleport is noted as being extremely localised, with a town centre suffering decline - however, the potential for the district as a favoured business and affordable housing location is also detailed, alongside a desire to reduce out-commuting (identified as 49%) and increase the number of jobs in the immediate area.

**Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Economic Recovery Strategy** - the refurbishment and expansion of E-Space North directly correlates to the aim for a focus on provision of higher- skilled jobs and opportunities for near-home working. The proposals will help improve economic growth and quality of life, positively impacting climate change and green infrastructure and reducing congestion and pollution caused by commuting.

**Transport Strategy for East Cambridgeshire** – the strategy supports the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan vision of “creating communities where people want to live and work: now and in the future”. Provision of cycleways is identified as an important element to support modal shift and encourage sustainable transport use, connecting active transport and railway provision. Referring back to the Local Plan, the strategy highlights COM7: Provide a comprehensive network of routes giving priority for walking and cycling.

**Plan For Growth** – a government policy aimed at promoting sustainable growth. A successful Levelling Up Fund bid will unlock the potential of existing assets, infrastructure and initiatives, as well as identified match funding and potential future funding. This will create extensive added value for local residents, businesses, community and cultural organisations helping to boost economic recovery and reduce inequality.

**Build Back Better** – seeks to boost economic growth through significant investment in skills to improve life chances, high quality infrastructure, and innovation in order to support struggling towns to regenerate. It aims to create jobs through access to capital, provision of a skilled workforce, and the creation of environments that foster ideas sharing and a positive response to challenges to drive success. All of these objectives are encapsulated by this proposal, which will position Littleport as a town with the space, resources and support to allow local residents to explore their aspirations, prosper and thrive, promoting entrepreneurship and productivity.

**Transport Investment Strategy** - this strategy details the need for a stronger, cleaner and more productive economy which connects people and places, promoting safer, easier, more modern and reliable forms of transportation. The introduction of the proposed new cycleway will not only offer a healthy, active travel option which supports existing and new residential and commercial development and local amenities, but also links together other sustainable transport methods and catalyses further development of modern transportation connections.

**Gear Change: A Bold Vision For Cycling And Walking** - made up of four themes, Gear Change promotes better streets for cycling and people; putting cycling at the heart of transport, place-making and health policy; empowering and encouraging local authorities, and enabling people to cycle and protecting them when they do. This proposal achieves all four of these themes, with installation of this initial cycle path offering the opportunity to unlock district-wide provision of a comprehensive cycle network in collaboration with the County Council, transforming the area and improving access and outcomes for local people.







Business accommodation and support and cultural activities available at the extended E-Space North will stimulate further growth of the town centre for activities and move-on accommodation - comprehensively increasing levels of employment, productivity, and performance locally. Active travel connectivity will boost opportunities for all residents.

### Living Standards



Wi-fi is already available in the town centre, station area and along the proposed cycleway. There is the potential to link up E-Space North along with other points across Littleport.

### Digital Connectivity



### Crime



Increased social responsibility, opportunities for positive use of time rather than ASB.



### Skills

Expansion of the well-connected E-Space North is predicted to create 270 fte equivalent roles. In addition, apprenticeships, skills training and entrepreneurship provision will catalyse further employment and skills development in the area.



### Education

Educational and enterprise opportunities enhanced by accessible active travel links to the Littleport Academy and E-Space North, and the ability to access new experiences and activities will boost achievement of aspirations and build social cohesion. Young people at school now will be motivated by options to further their careers locally as they get older

### Research and Development (R&D)



If the bid is successful confidence demonstrated by the private sector to invest in the area will increase exponentially following public sector investment in innovation, productivity and infrastructure.

The introduction of a new cycleway to connect the refurbished and expanded E-Space North with Littleport Train Station will encourage modal shift, in addition to catalysing the development of further active travel links in and around the area.

### Transport Infrastructure



### Health



The proposed cycle path will improve access to health facilities, giving local people the opportunity to make healthier life choices, improving Healthy Life Expectancy and reducing disparity between Littleport and other local areas.

### Housing

Improved employment and commercial opportunities, supported by enhanced active transport links will encourage more people to live in Littleport and boost investment in new and existing housing stock. This will further increase the amount of affordable housing options available, particularly for renters and first-time buyers.

Local leaders and communities empowered to achieve ambitious plans will help boost the profile of Littleport, generating the ability to effectively use available assets, resources and investment in the most productive way.

### Local Leadership



### Wellbeing



Improved connectivity will allow residents to access social, economic, employment, educational, transport and cultural opportunities helping to manage their work life balance and improving wellbeing.

### Pride in Place

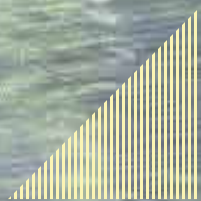


Being able to access employment, transport, educational and employment opportunities within 15 minutes will help increase levels of satisfaction and engagement. Cultural and community activities available at E-Space North will also help engender a sense of pride in place among residents, similar to what has been achieved at Spencer Mill in Soham. This in turn will increase the desirability of new housing and help close the perceived gap between Littleport and other areas in East Cambridgeshire.

Levelling up white paper missions







# Theory of Change

## Vision:

Littleport becomes a place that sets a standard for market town living, offering employment, business and entertainment opportunities on the doorstep and the advantages of countryside, vibrant town centres and connections to major cities all within 15 minutes walk or cycle.

## Efficiency:

Lack of commercial office space reduces the amount of local businesses in the area and the ability to retain them. This must be addressed by public sector intervention in facilities that catalyse business creation, attraction, growth and jobs.

## Equity:

Nearby competition for talent with some of the most advantaged cities and towns in the UK including Ely, Cambridge and London. As such, residents are disadvantaged at a national level, e.g. education levels and investment are significantly lower.

## Information Failures:

Need and demand for commercial office space is recognised in the town but private sector investment lacks confidence to deliver this. Proof of concept is required to increase investor confidence and reduce yields that will lead to market confidence and further private sector investment.

## Environment:

Littleport's lack of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure has led to a dependency on cars. This impacts the town's sense of community and environmental quality. Public investment that encourages sustainable and active transport choices will support broader wellbeing, town centre viability and pride in place benefits.

## Wider Reasons for Intervention:

Littleport is just one of a cluster of similar sized market towns facing similar challenges and opportunities. Positive interventions in Littleport will catalyse activity not just in the town but within a broader regional circumference.

## OBJECTIVES

- To improve health and wellbeing of local people through active transport choices
- To enhance Littleport's economic output and productivity by seeding, attracting and developing new businesses and productive jobs
- To stimulate new private investment into Littleport particularly in commercial real estate
- To catalyse the knowledge, creative and evening economy in Littleport
- To support a thriving town centre by encouraging a larger daytime and residential population, stronger pride in place and pedestrian and cyclist movement throughout the town

## INPUTS

£6,345,259  
Is the total public investment required to address market failures in delivering the infrastructure necessary to stimulate private investment. This will include:

£5,393,470 from LUF2  
£951,789 from ECDC

## ACTIVITIES

- Enhancement of E-Space North
- Expansion of E-Space North
- Diversification of lease lengths and typologies
- Creation of evening leisure and entertainment space
- Increasing targeted business support and incubation activity
- Developing new cycle and pedestrian infrastructure
- Encouraging active travel modal shift

## OUTPUTS

### Project 1

- 1,413 sqm of new employment and leisure space
- 1,045 sqm of new flexible office space
- 1,912 sqm of enhanced flexible office space
- 1 new leisure / evening activities space
- 131 new desk spaces created through refurbishment of E-Space North
- 69 businesses accessing business support and flexible office space
- Clustering of professional services businesses including improved networking and skill sharing

### Project 2

- 4.3km of new cycling and pedestrian routes and infrastructure

## OUTCOMES

### Economic

- Perception change of Littleport as a 15-minute town where employment, leisure, residential and travel options are all available within close and convenient walk and cycle range
- 270 jobs directly supported by improved and expanded E-Space North
- Increased GVA per job productivity in professional services due to cluster benefits of networks and skill sharing
- Accelerated development of new E-Space facilities in Soham and Ely
- £2.7m direct land value uplift
- £920k in catalysed or accelerated commercial development
- £7.69m in spill over land value uplift
- £2.6m in national benefits from job re/entrants over 10 years
- £4.7m in AMAT assessed active travel benefits over 20 years

### Transport and Connectivity

- Accelerated investment in expanded cycling network between Ely and Littleport
- Increased cycle trips by 82,125 to 101,105 annually
- Increased pedestrian trips by 67,525 to 224,475 annually
- £4.7m in AMAT assessed active travel benefits over 20 years

## IMPACTS

### Local Level

- Creative Industry Employment Density
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Employment Density
- Increased private investment in new town core office space
- Daytime footfall in Littleport Town Centre
- Positive place perception
- Residents attracted from neighbouring cities and urban centres to grow/start families while still retaining city work jobs
- Increased incoming footfall at Littleport Station

### National Level (Levelling Up Missions)

- Net additional GVA
- GVA per job
- Gross Median Weekly Pay
- Job Density
- Employment Rate and Unemployment
- Modal share method of travel to work
- ONS Wellbeing measures
- Commercial and residential land values
- Healthy Life Expectancy
- First Time Buyers per year





# Economic Case

Both individually and collectively the proposals within the Levelling Up Littleport programme present excellent and robust value for money. An assessment of the economic impact of the projects, prepared by Genecon in line with HMT Green Book guidelines, indicates a **BCR of 2.8:1** representing a strong return on public investment.

## Programme Level

Net Benefits, NPV	
Direct LVU	£2,762,164
Indirect LVU (Commercial)	£919,527
Spillover LVU (Commercial)	£1,668,712
Spillover LVU (Residential) support	£6,024,229
Labour Supply Impact - Jobs-related	£2,656,991
Transport Impact (2022/23 terms)	£4,718,825
Total Net Benefits, NPV A	£18,750,448
Net Costs, NPV	Total, including OB
LUF Cost B	£5,639,833
Local Co-funding cost (public) C	£1,057,051
Total Public Cost (LUF + Cofunding) D	£6,696,884
Initial BCR A/D	2.80 : 1

## E-Space North

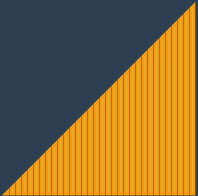
Net Benefits, NPV	
Direct LVU	£2,762,164
Indirect LVU (Commercial)	£919,527
Spillover LVU (Commercial)	£1,334,970
Spillover LVU (Residential) support	£4,216,960
Labour Supply Impact - Jobs-related	£2,656,964
Total Net Benefits, NPV A	£11,890,612
Net Costs, NPV	Total, including OB
LUF Cost B	£4,184,622
Local Co-funding cost (public) C	£738,463
Total Public Cost (LUF + Cofunding) D	£4,923,084
Initial BCR A/D	2.42 : 1

## Cycle Path

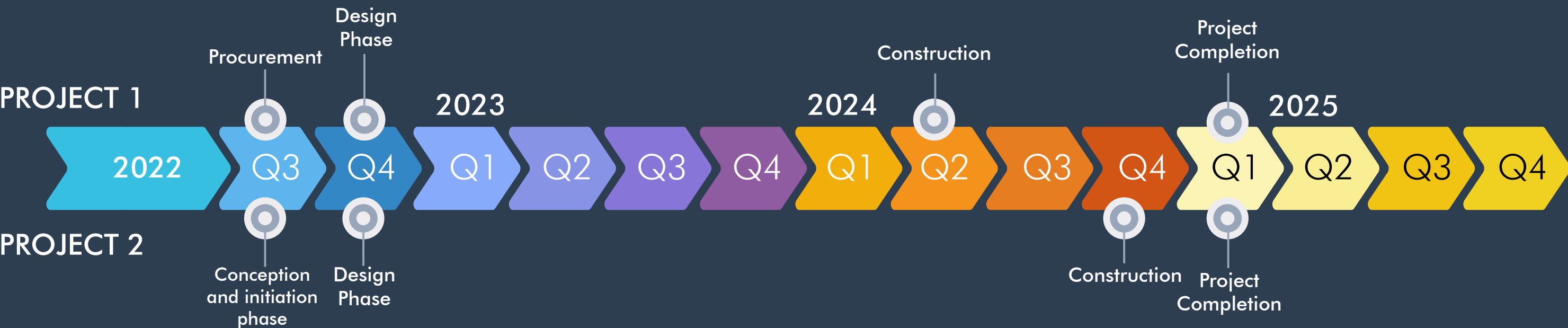
Net Benefits, NPV	
Spillover LVU (Commercial)	£333,742
Spillover LVU (Residential) support	£2,409,691
Transport Impact (2022/23 terms)	£4,718,825
Total Net Benefits, NPV A	£7,128,517
Net Costs, NPV	Total, including OB
LUF Cost B	£1,455,211
Local Co-funding cost (public) C	£318,588
Total Public Cost (LUF + Cofunding) D	£1,773,799
Initial BCR A/D	3.87 : 1

Sensitivity Tests	Programme	E-Space North	Cycle Path
SC1: Benefits Delayed by 3-years	2.52:1	2.18:1	3.49:1
SC2: 20% Lower Impacts	2.24:1	1.93:1	3.09:1
SC3: 10% Higher OB	2.59:1	2.23:1	3.58:1





# Programme Deliverability



Funding Profile	Project 1 - E Space North Extensions and Improvements		Project 2 Cycle Path	
Funding Source	LUF Grant	Local Authority Contribution	LUF Grant	Local Authority Contribution
Percentage of project	85%	15%	85%	15%
Amount	£3,738,473	£659,731	£1,654,996	£292,058
Totals	£4,398,204		£1,947,055	

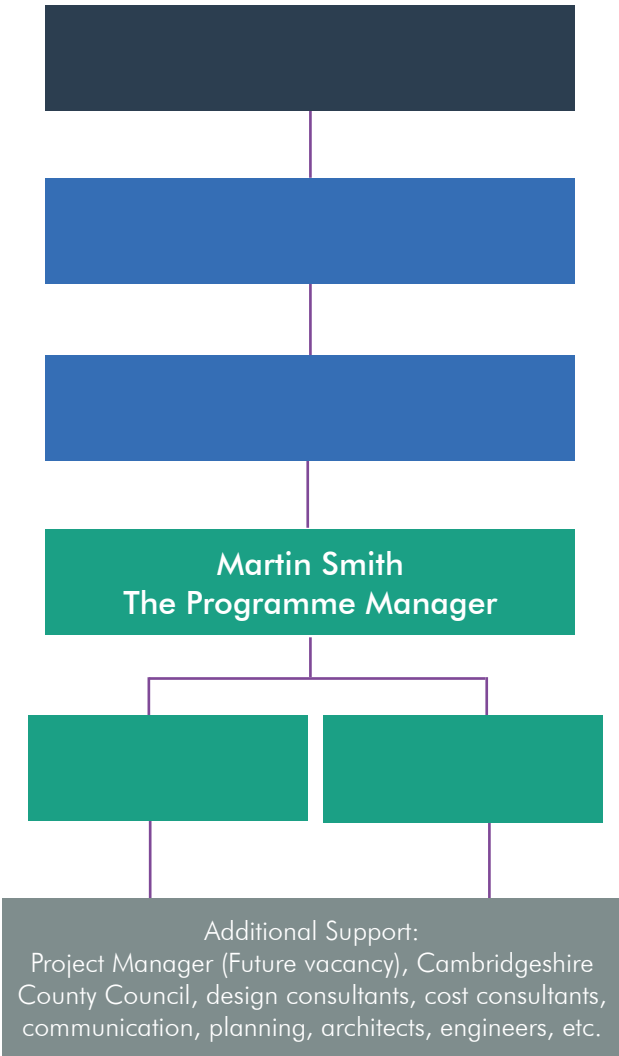
Financial Summary	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
E-Space North Extensions and Improvements	£389,846.05	£4,008,358.00	£0.00	£4,398,204.05
Cycle Path	£35,748.97	£478,783.36	£1,432,522.30	£1,947,054.63
Totals	£425,595.02	£4,487,141.36	£1,432,522.30	£6,345,258.68

## Projects Governance

The Programme Manager (PM) will be leading the project. In addition to the day to day leadership and decision making, the PM’s responsibilities will include the management of stakeholder engagement and communications, budget, risk and mitigations, procurement and management of external advisors and the ongoing delivery of the programme.

A newly appointed project manager will work with the PM. They will be responsible for ensuring that the design and construction element of the project achieves the programme, budget and contractual requirements. They will work closely with the design teams and QS during the RIBA stages and the production of tender documentation. They will lead on the procurement and management of the contractor/s. They will provide regular updates to the PM. The PM will report to the East Ccambridgeshire District Council Corporate Management Team (CMT). The CMT is the formal decision making body for reporting progress and seeking authority to proceed on financial and strategic matters. The CMT is made up of the SRO and CFO and the Chief Executive amongst others.

A Steering Group, consisting of key stakeholders, will meet bi monthly, chaired by the SRO. The remit of the group is to broker beneficial relationships and act as ambassadors for the programme.





Project 1 Deliverability - E-Space North

Main Extension Construction Costs	£136,703.09	£2,597,358.74	£2,734,061.83
Break Out Space Construction Costs	£19,433.56	£369,237.69	£388,671.25
Existing Office Refurbishment Costs	£15,608.89	£296,569.07	£312,177.96
Consultants Fee Estimate	£198,500.50	£198,500.50	£397,001.00
Other	£19,600.00	£19,600.00	£39,200.00
Fitout	£0.00	£527,092.00	£527,092.00
TOTALS	£389,846.05	£4,008,358.00	£4,398,204.05

	The E-Space North site is owned by the Council as per title number CB232712 of HM Land Registry.
	A framework has been identified as the preferred methodology. This would involve the direct awarding of contracts to pre-vetted contractors. This offers the best value for money, mitigates the risk of potentially lengthy tendering processes and reduces the overall cost. This would be managed by a project manager who will be joining the team.
	Built building drawings and site surveys have already been undertaken. The scheme is now at RIBA Stage 2.
	The project has the support of a wide range of stakeholders and letters of support are provided with the bid.
	E-Space North is compliant with Local Plan policy. Early engagement with the Local Authority’s Planning department has taken place based on the draft designs.
	Match funding has already been approved by East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC).
	The Council has taken legal advice on State Subsidy with the conclusion that a subsidy does not exist.
	Subject to LUF approval ECDC’s team will be ready to begin delivery as soon as funding is released.

Delay in LUF commitment	3	2		20%	Develop a clear business case and submit on time. Ensure SRO is available to provide efficient responses to any required clarification during the appraisal process. Continue to develop delivery plans in advance of funding confirmation.	2	1	2
Risk of not securing project funding	3	5		20%	Prepare a high quality submission to demonstrate need and outputs to secure the LUF funding. East Cambridgeshire District Council funding commitments in place.	2	5	
Future COVID-19 induced or other public health emergency measures	3	3		20%	Council and partner wide COVID-19 planning to ensure efficient recovery, but limited control over externalities.	3	3	
Demolition Complications = increased costs	2	3		50%	Early engagement with demolition contractors to assess methodology given live public environment.	1	2	2
Construction Tender Price Increase	3	4		20%	Ensure competitive tendering with opportunities marketed widely. Option for enabling works package to remove risk of uncertainty.	2	2	
Inflation Allowance	5	2		75%	Healthy inflation allowance within budgets given current issues and supply chain pressures.	3	2	
Delay in the Procurement timetable	1	2	2	50%	Early engagement with procurement framework team.	2	1	2

Project 2 Deliverability - Cycle Path

Series 100 / Construction management costs		£57,986.58	£231,946.33	£289,932.91
Series 600 / Earthworks		£16,280.52	£65,122.08	£81,402.61
Series 700 / Surfacing		£69,972.71	£279,890.82	£349,863.53
Series 1100 / Footway and paved areas		£173,920.21	£695,680.83	£869,601.04
Series 1200 / Lining and signing		£6,234.38	£24,937.52	£31,171.90
Other Costs		£29,267.56	£117,070.24	£146,337.79
Design Costs	£35,748.97	£125,121.40	£17,874.49	£178,744.86
Totals	£35,748.97	£478,783.36	£1,432,522.30	£1,947,054.63

	Some purchasing of land is required, although alternative options have been identified to mitigate risk. This project is based on obtaining a 3m strip of adjacent agricultural land along the A-B section of the route along Padnal Drove and an additional section along Back Lane with multiple owners including the Environment Agency.
	Procurement will be undertaken via Cambridgeshire County Council’s Term Services Contract with Milestone Infrastructure or the Eastern Highways Alliance Framework made up of three Lots dependent on scheme value.
	Initial designs developed via the Littleport Cyclerule Study which will be developed during the first phase of project delivery. They will be following standards set out in DfT LTN 1/20 and Highways England CD 195.
	Proposals widely consulted on via the East Cambridgeshire Transport Strategy, Littleport Vision 2030 and Sustrans consultation with strong support.
	TROs on some sections may be required along with planning consent.
	Match funding has already been approved by East Cambridgeshire District Council.
	The Council has taken legal advice on State Subsidy with the conclusion that a subsidy does not exist.
	Subject to LUF approval ECDC and Cambridgeshire County Council’s team are ready to begin delivery as soon as funding is released.

Description (What might happen)	Current				Action Plan / Mitigation (What we will put in place to reduce the risk)	After Mitigation		
	Probability Score	Impact Score	Risk Importance	Probability %		Probability Score	Impact Score	Impact Importance
Delay in LUF commitment	3	2	6	20%	Develop a clear business case and submit on time. Ensure SRO is available to provide efficient responses to any required clarification during the appraisal process. Continue to develop delivery plans in advance of funding confirmation.	2	1	2
Risk of not securing project funding	3	5	15	20%	Prepare a high quality submission to demonstrate need and outputs to secure the LUF funding. ECDC funding commitments in place.	2	5	10
Statutory Undertakers: Clashes between proposals and existing utilities, leading to costly diversions and delays to delivery at construction stage	4	3	12	50%	Undertake searches early on in the design stage to identify potential clashes. Explore options in preliminary design stage which limit the need of deep excavations. Where potential clashes are identified, proactively engage with affected utilities to start conversation and agree way forward. Where potential clashes are identified and alternative options are not available, undertake investigatory works early on.	2	1	2
Resourcing: Risk of delays to project at design stage or poor design quality, due to very limited internal design resourcing	2	5	10	50%	Once the delivery of the project is confirmed, programme the design work as early as possible and highlight any resourcing issues. Provide relevant CPD to alternative resources within the team, well in advance of design work starting, should alternative resources be required.	1	2	2
Inflation: Risk of estimated costs increasing at project delivery stage, due to current high inflationary pressures	5	5	25	75%	Include allowance for cost rises due to current inflationary pressures within cost breakdown at feasibility stage. Monitor in-house contractor indices of material and labour costs throughout the project to ensure cost changes can be absorbed by allowances made at feasibility stage.	3	2	6





EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
& PETERBOROUGH**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY



Cambridgeshire  
County Council



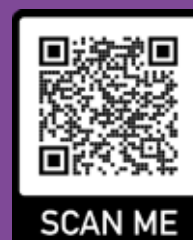
Cambridgeshire  
Chambers of  
Commerce



**GROWTH  
WORKS**



**E-SPACE**  
BUSINESS CENTRES



[www.eastcambs.gov.uk/business/levelling-up-littleport](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/business/levelling-up-littleport)

LN-722

July 2022