



East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Green Wedge Evidence Report

November 2017

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
1.1 Purpose of this Report	3
1.2 Purpose of Green Wedges	3
1.3 National and Local Policy Context.....	3
2. Assessment Methodology	6
2.1 Introduction.....	6
2.2 Stage 1: Selecting Areas of Search	6
2.3 Stage 2: Desk Based Research.....	6
2.4 Stage 3: Site Visits	7
2.5 Stage 4: Assessment.....	7
3. Assessment of Green Wedge Areas of Search	11
Green Wedge Area 1: Witchford Village – Lancaster Way Business Park	12
Green Wedge Area 2: Witchford North	20
Green Wedge Area 3: Corner of A142 and Witchford Road.....	31
Green Wedge Area 4: West of A10, Ely	38
Green Wedge Area 5: Ely – Lancaster Way Business Park.....	47
4. Recommendations	55
4.1. Introduction.....	55
4.2 Summary of Recommendations.....	55
4.3 Next Steps	56
5. Appendices.....	57
Appendix 1. Green Wedge Areas of Search	57
Appendix 2. Proposed Green Wedge Designations	58

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Report

1.1.1 East Cambridgeshire District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan. The purpose of this report is to assess areas of search between Ely, Lancaster Way Business Park and Witchford to identify whether they should be, either in whole or part, designated as a Green Wedge. This report will form part of the evidence base to support the preparation of the Local Plan.

1.1.2 Specifically, this Green Wedge Evidence Report will cover:

- **The purpose of Green Wedge** designations and their role as a plan making tool;
- **Policy background** for Green Wedges including an overview of national planning policy and the preparation of the new East Cambridgeshire Local Plan;
- **Assessment methodology** for the review of potential Green Wedge areas and assessment against purpose criteria for Green Wedge designation;
- **Analysis and evaluation** of each area of search, setting out the results of the desk based research and on site assessments and evaluation against the purpose criteria for Green Wedge designation;
- **Recommendations** for the Proposed Submission stage of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

1.2 Purpose of Green Wedges

1.2.1 Green Wedges are areas of land that are locally designated through the plan making process. One of the most important attributes of Green Wedges is their openness. To maintain openness, development within a Green Wedge must be strictly controlled. Therefore, Green Wedges perform a similar role to Green Belts, however the main difference between them is their permanence. Green Belts should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period, whereas Green Wedge policies and designations should be reassessed as part of the review of a Local Plan.

1.2.2 General policies controlling development in the countryside apply in Green Wedges, but, in addition, there is a general presumption against development which is inappropriate in relation to the purpose of the Green Wedge. For example, where settlements are in close proximity and where there is a lot of pressure for development, in these locations it may be necessary to have additional Green Wedge protection in order to prevent coalescence.

1.2.3 There are four main roles of Green Wedges:

- Prevent the coalescence of settlements, protect their individual identity and character;
- Guide the form and direction of development;
- Provide a green lung that penetrates deep into urban areas and extends to the open countryside;
- Provide a publicly accessible resource for both informal and formal recreation.

1.3 National and Local Policy Context

National Planning Policy

1.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and accompanying National Planning Practice Guidance does not specifically recognise Green Wedges as a planning policy designation, however they both promote sustainable development and do not rule out that locally valued landscapes may be identified and protected through a Local Plan. Designating Green Wedges can contribute to the delivery of sustainable development; a core principle of the NPPF.

1.3.2 The following sections of the NPPF are particularly relevant to Green Wedges:

- Para 35 - “Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes”;
- Para 58 - “Local plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area”;
- Para 73 - “Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities”.
- Para 94 - “Local planning authorities should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change”.
- Para 109 - states the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by “recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services”.
- Paragraph 114, bullet point 1, highlights that a strategic approach should be taken in Local Plans which plans “positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure”.
- Paragraph 157, bullet point 7 and 8, of the Plan Making section of the NPPF states that Local Plans should “identify land where development would be inappropriate, for instance because of its environmental or historic significance” and “contain a clear strategy for enhancing the natural, built and historic environment”.

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan

1.3.3 East Cambridgeshire District Council is reviewing its adopted Local Plan, April 2015. A new Local Plan is being prepared and, on adoption, will replace the 2015 Local Plan.

1.3.4 The first stage in preparing the new Local Plan was the Preliminary Draft stage. The Local Plan was made available for public consultation between February and March 2016. In this version of the Plan, the council did not set out an intention to introduce a Green Wedge/s in any part of the district.

1.3.5 The second stage in the preparation of the Local Plan was the publication of the Further Draft version, which was made available for public consultation between January and February 2017. This version of the Local Plan included site allocations for development as well as general policies. In this version, the council set out its intention to introduce a Green Wedge into the Local Plan to prevent the coalescence of Witchford, Lancaster Way and Ely. Views were sought on where a Green Wedge should be drawn in this area.

1.3.6 The public consultation on the Further Draft Local Plan resulted in 7 comments and suggestions in relation to a new Green Wedge in the Witchford, Lancaster Way and Ely area. Some respondents included a map or diagram with their comments, indicating where they felt a Green Wedge designation should be drawn.

1.3.7 The key issues arising from this consultation, as published in the Key Issues Report¹, were:

1

<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/EB036%20Key%20Issues%20Report%20FDLP%202017.pdf>

- Support for a green wedge policy, with several suggestions for its location/extent, focussing on an area north and south of Ely/Witchford Road, between Lancaster Way Business Park and Witchford village;
- Green wedge should be designated as Local Green Space to ensure a high level of protection;
- Green Wedge essential to protect character and identity of village;
- Green Wedge should ensure views of Ely and Cathedral from Witchford village are maintained;
- Green Wedge should seek to ensure Lancaster Way Business Park does not extend toward Witchford village;
- One objection to proposed green wedge policy on the basis that land between Witchford, Ely and Lancaster Way Business Park is classed as open countryside and is therefore protected from development.

2. Assessment Methodology

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The review of a Local Plan is the most appropriate time to consider the introduction of new Green Wedge designations. There is no nationally prescribed methodology for defining Green Wedges, therefore a methodology must be determined at a local level. There are a number of local authorities that have developed a methodology for reviewing Green Wedges, and who's Local Plans have been successfully adopted after independent examination. These methodologies generally use a combination of desk based research and site visit studies to inform an assessment of existing or potential Green Wedge areas against a set of Green Wedge purpose criteria. The methodology for this report therefore draws on these previously tested methodologies, particularly the Central Lincolnshire², and the Leicestershire methodologies³.

2.2 Stage 1: Selecting Areas of Search

2.2.1 The first step was to identify areas of search for a new Green Wedge or Green Wedges between Witchford, Lancaster Way and Ely. These were determined using the following sources of information:

- Comments and suggestions on potential locations submitted to the Further Draft Plan consultation;
- Consideration of areas of current or future development pressure, taking into account planning applications, site suggestions submitted as part of the Local Plan call for sites and, site allocations in the emerging Local Plan.

2.2.2 On this basis, five areas of search were identified for further assessment and these are shown on the map in **Appendix 1**.

2.3 Stage 2: Desk Based Research

2.3.1 Stage 2 involved desk based research for each area of search to gather factual information on assets and constraints, including:

- land uses;
- formal and informal open space, sport and recreation opportunities;
- environmental designations, including nature conservation and historic;
- landscape character;
- public rights of way and cycle routes;
- planning history;
- areas developed or proposed for development; and
- future development pressures.

2.3.2 The main sources of information for the desk based research were Ordnance Survey Mapping, GIS data, websites (such as Magic⁴), aerial photography and Local Plan evidence base documents, such as the Call for Sites Report⁵.

² <file:///H:/Downloads/PSEVR22%20LP22%20Green%20Wedges%20-%20Evidence%20Report%20Appendix.pdf>

³ http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/green_wedges_urban_fringe_green_infrastructure_enhancement_zones_and_als_march_2016_final/Green%20Wedges%20Urban%20Fringe%20Green%20Infrastructure%20Enhancement%20Zones%20%26%20ALS%20-%20March%202016%20%28Final%29.pdf

⁴ <http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/>

2.4 Stage 3: Site Visits

2.4.1 Stage 3 involved site visits to publicly accessible locations within each of the areas of search. On site information was gathered for each area covering information around land use, physical features, setting and character, landscape and visual impacts, threat of coalescence, boundaries, perception of distance between settlements and sense of separation. Photos were taken during the site visits to capture the main characteristics of each area.

2.4.2 When considering boundaries, the following was used as a guide.

- Examples of durable, clearly defined physical boundaries include: infrastructure (such as roads, railways); natural features (such as watercourses, protected woodland/hedges, and historic field boundaries); and existing development (well defined, consistent built form edges);
- Examples of features that may lack durability include: private roads/tracks, poorly defined field boundaries and inconsistent built form edges.

2.5 Stage 4: Assessment

2.5.1 Stage 4 brings together the findings of the desk based research and site visits to evaluate each area against the Green Wedge purpose criteria using a strength based assessment, as set out in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Green Wedge Purpose Criteria

Purpose Criteria	Explanation	Strength	Evidence
1. Prevent the coalescence of settlements, protect their individual identity and character	<p>Open land that preserves a physical separation between settlements, maintaining the existing settlement pattern and safeguarding the setting, identity, character of such settlements.</p> <p>Prevents development that would result in a significant erosion of a gap between neighbouring settlements or would result in the merging of neighbouring settlements, or neighbourhoods within an urban area.</p> <p>May also protect important views into and out of settlements.</p>	<p>Strong: The area provides an essential gap between two or more settlements, restricting development which would lead to the merging of these settlements.</p> <p>Moderate: Provides a gap between two or more settlements, restricting further development which may lead to the merging of these settlements.</p> <p>Weak: Provides a less critical gap between two or more settlements which is unlikely to restrict the merging or further merging between</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topography • Landscape character • Views • Perception of distance between settlements/built up areas and leaving one settlement and entering the next • Presence of built development

⁵ <https://www.eastcamb.gov.uk/sites/default/files/EB009A%20Call%20for%20Sites%20Report.pdf>

Purpose Criteria	Explanation	Strength	Evidence
		<p>settlements.</p> <p>Does not meet the purpose: The gap between settlements is sufficient that the area plays no role in preventing the merging of settlements, or settlements have already merged.</p>	
<p>2. Guide the form and direction of development</p>	<p>Helps to maintain existing and/or influences form and direction of new urban areas.</p> <p>Logical and defensible boundaries ensure the integrity of the designation is maintained</p>	<p>Strong: Area is bounded by strong and defensible boundaries which guide rather than overly restrict the form of future surrounding developments, whilst ensuring that the integrity of the Green Wedge designation is maintained. The designation is compatible with the strategic allocations for new development set out in the new Local Plan.</p> <p>Moderate: Area is mainly bounded by strong and defensible boundaries, which guide rather than overly restrict the form of future surrounding developments, whilst ensuring that the integrity of the Green Wedge designation is maintained. Some areas are weaker with less logical boundaries. The extent is generally compatible with the strategic allocations for new development set out in the new Local Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development pressure and planning consents • Local Plan Call for Sites • Compatibility with preferred site allocations in the Local Plan • Potential Green Wedge boundaries

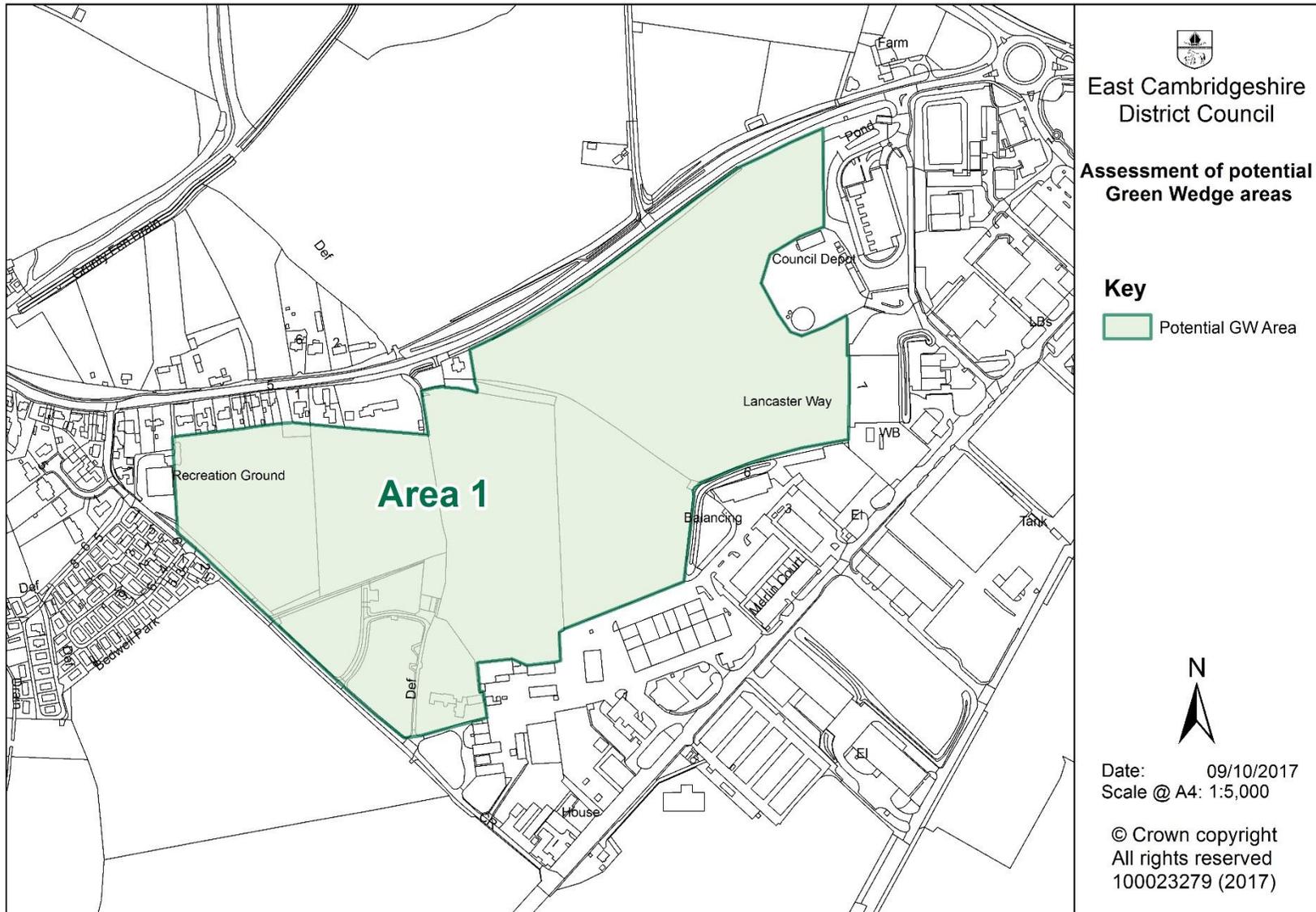
Purpose Criteria	Explanation	Strength	Evidence
		<p>Weak: While some boundaries are logical and defensible, much of the area is bounded by features that are difficult to recognise or weakly defined. The extent of the Green Wedge conflicts with the strategic allocations for new development set out in the new Local Plan, and therefore restricts rather than guides future development form.</p> <p>Does not meet the purpose: The area is bounded by features which are weakly defined or difficult to recognise. The area conflicts with the strategic allocations for new development set out in the new Local Plan. The area restricts rather than guides future development form.</p>	
<p>3. Provide a green lung that penetrates deep into urban areas and extends to the open countryside</p>	<p>Provide a direct and continuous corridor or green infrastructure network to the open countryside from existing or planned urban areas, bringing associated health benefits of green infrastructure to urban areas.</p> <p>Such corridors or networks should provide publicly accessible, multifunctional uses, for example, sport and recreation facilities, natural greenspace, agricultural land, rivers,</p>	<p>Strong: Area forms a strongly connected corridor or network of multi-functional green infrastructure which penetrates from deep within the existing or proposed urban area out into the open countryside.</p> <p>Moderate: Area penetrates deep into the existing or proposed urban area but the corridor or network of green infrastructure is</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy • Local Green Spaces Evidence Reports (2016 and 2017) • Public Rights of Way network and cycle routes • Pressure for development and planning consents • Flood Risk Zones

Purpose Criteria	Explanation	Strength	Evidence
	public rights of way, nature conservation sites.	<p>fragmented.</p> <p>Weak: Little penetration into the existing or proposed urban area. Open Spaces are weakly or not linked to one another.</p> <p>Does not meet the purpose: Overall lack of green infrastructure and no corridors or networks of green infrastructure. Area does not penetrate into the existing or proposed urban area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental and historic designations
4. Provide a publicly accessible resource for both informal and formal recreation	Provides a recreational resource, with a range of publicly accessible formal and informal outdoor opportunities for recreation, close to where people live.	<p>Strong: The area is wholly publicly accessible and provides a variety of formal and informal opportunities for recreation.</p> <p>Moderate: The area is wholly or partially publicly accessible and provides an adequate range of formal and/or informal opportunities for recreation.</p> <p>Weak: Small parts of the area are publicly accessible and provides a very limited range of formal or informal opportunities for recreation</p> <p>Does not meet the purpose: The area is not publicly accessible and provides few or no opportunities for formal or informal recreation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy • Local Green Spaces Evidence Reports (2016 and 2017) • Public Rights of Way network and cycle routes

3. Assessment of Green Wedge Areas of Search

3.1 The following section sets out the assessment of each of the areas of search identified in Stage 1. For each area, there is information gathered from the desk based research and site visits as well as photographs showing some of the main characteristics of each area. An overall assessment against the criteria for Green Wedge designation is included at the end of each section on each area.

Green Wedge Area 1: Witchford Village – Lancaster Way Business Park



General Description of Location	This area lies between Witchford village to the west and Lancaster Way Business Park to the east.
Area (ha)	17.82
Location	Witchford
Ward	Haddenham Ely South
Parish	Witchford Ely
Date of site visit	6 th July 2017

Site Visit Observations:

Land Use and Landscape	
What are the main land uses within the area of search?	The land use is predominantly agricultural land (arable), with the exception of recreational use at the village playing fields.
What are the main land uses adjacent to the area of search?	The main adjacent land uses consist of residential to the north and west, a residential park home to the west, agricultural land (arable) to the south and north, and commercial land in the form of Lancaster Way Business Park to the east and south east.
What are the main landscape features within the area of search? (e.g. hedgerows, woodland, ponds, rivers)	The prominent landscape features within the area are the mainly intact hedgerow field boundaries, punctured by mature trees. A drainage ditch runs across the middle of the area.
What are the main landscape attractors/detractors? (Landscape elements, e.g. pylons, mobile mast etc.)	The main landscape attractor is the rise and fall of the fields beyond the village playing fields in a landscape that is predominantly open and flat. These fields have an enclosed feel, due to dense field boundaries of hedgerows and trees. The main landscape detractor is the telephone pylons that run across this area near the Lancaster Way Business Park and traffic noise from Main Street which runs along the north/north west boundary of the search area.
Topography	The village playing fields in the west of this search area are flat. The landform is gently undulating moving east from the village towards Ely.
Setting and Character	
Does the area of search, in whole or part, offer and protect views/long	Views within this area are short to medium range, restricted by vegetation along field boundaries, rising landform and

views?	the built form of Lancaster Way Business Park.
Does the area of search, in whole or part, have an identifiable character and sense of place?	With the exception of the village playing fields, the landscape within this area is rural in character,
Threat of Coalescence	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Witchford village can be seen within the western portion of the area from the playing fields, however in the east from the household recycling centre, the village cannot be seen due to the undulating topography and field boundaries of dense vegetation. Looking north east from the playing fields, the top of a commercial unit at Lancaster Way Business Park is clearly visible. Ely cannot be seen from this area.
Are there long views or vistas across to the next settlement and/or across the wider landscape?	Long views are limited. There are long distance glimpses of the wider countryside to the north from the field adjacent to the Lancaster Way Business Park.
Perception of distance within the area of search to neighbouring settlements (e.g. clearly visible, moderately close, distant).	This area provides a physical gap between Witchford in the west and Lancaster Business Park in the east and south east. The perception of distance from within this area to Ely is distant as this settlement is not visible. There is some intervisibility between Witchford and Lancaster Way Business Park when viewed from the playing fields in the west, however, there is an increased perception of distance between these two areas due to the undulating landform, dense vegetation and to the fact that only the very top of the commercial units can be seen.
Are there any physical features that disrupt views? (e.g. roads, railway, pylons)	No, although views are restricted by natural features, such as hedgerows, trees and topography.
Does it provide a landscape setting for an adjacent urban area?	It forms part of the rural hinterland adjacent to Witchford village.
Potential Green Wedge Boundaries	
Description of potential Green Wedge Boundaries within the area of search	For the most part, this area would provide logical and defensible boundaries for a Green Wedge designation. To the north, the majority of the boundary aligns with Main Street, with the remainder aligning with the backs of residential properties at the edge of Witchford. To the east, the edge would be defined by the boundary of the Lancaster Way Business Park allocation in the Local Plan, which in part follows field boundaries. To the west, the boundary is weaker, as it follows the line of the village development envelope, which could change in

	<p>the future.</p> <p>The boundary in the south/south west follows Bedwell Hay Lane, which forms a strong, defensible boundary. However, it includes Spinney Lodge and gardens, a substantial detached residential property.</p>
Does an alternative boundary or boundaries exist?	<p>Aligning the boundary in the west with the backs of properties behind the village hall would provide an alternative, stronger boundary.</p> <p>The boundary in the south/south west should be drawn so as to remove Spinney Lodge and gardens by following the curtilage of this property.</p>
Development Pressure	
What built development exists within this area of search?	<p>There is a large, detached residential property and private gardens off Bedwell Hay Lane (Spinney Lodge).</p> <p>Overall, there is very little built development.</p>
What effects would built development in this area have?	<p>Significant development within this area would reduce the physical gap between Witchford village and Lancaster Way Business Park. Development in the east of this area along Main Street could impact on the rural feel and character of the approach into the village.</p>
Public Access and Recreational Value	
Does this area of search provide opportunities for recreation; informal and/or formal?	<p>There is a playing field and children's play area at the village hall off Bedwell Hay Lane which provides formal recreation in the form of football pitches and play equipment.</p>
Can this area be accessed by the public? (Details of PRow, bridleways, cycle routes)	<p>Public access within this area is restricted to the village playing fields.</p>
Transport Infrastructure	
How is this potential Green Wedge area influenced by surrounding transport infrastructure?	<p>Transport infrastructure surrounding the area includes Main Street and Bedwell Hay Lane along its boundaries. They do not significantly impact on this area in terms of visual or amenity impact.</p>

Desk Based Research:

Planning History and Development Pressure	<p><u>Planning applications (within last 5 years):</u></p> <p>There have been no major planning applications within this area within the last 5 years. There has been 1 minor residential application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16/01107/OUT Site north of Bedwell Lane: Erection of detached two storey dwellings and garage. Refused.
--	--

	<p><u>Local Plan site suggestions:</u></p> <p>The following sites were submitted as site suggestions during the Local Plan consultation (Preliminary and Further Drafts) that fall within this area of search:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site/10/29 – A proposed mixed use for housing (840 dwellings), public open space, primary school and ancillary retail and employment. <p>The following sites were submitted as site suggestions during the Local Plan consultation (Preliminary and Further Drafts) that are adjacent to this area of search:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site/10/01 to Site 10/04 - Collectively known as the Lancaster Way Business Park <p>The submission of sites for allocation in the Local Plan indicates pressure to develop in this search area.</p>
Details of other relevant Local Planning Policies/Allocations	To the south and east of this area is a 105.5 hectare employment allocation; Ely.E2 Lancaster Way Business Park, which includes an existing mineral and waste site. As set out in Policy LP8 of the Further Draft Local Plan, this allocation is the major strategic employment area for the district. A large part of the area has national 'Enterprise Zone' status, and is a focus for job growth.
Local Plan Consultation Responses – Green Wedges	The Further Draft Plan sought views on inclusion of a Green Wedge to prevent the coalescence of Witchford - Lancaster Way - Ely. Seven comments were received; 2 objections, 4 support and 1 general comment.
Local Plan Consultation Responses – Local Green Space	The following sites were submitted as suggestions for Local Green Space designation that fall within this area of search: LGS/34/03 Sports field at the village hall, Bedwell Hey Lane
Environmental and Historic Designations (Within or adjacent) such as Conservation Area, Registered Historic Park and Garden, listed buildings.	None
Landscape Character Areas	National – 46. The Fens Ely Environmental Capacity Study – Transitional Island landscape.
Flood Risk Zone/s	This area is wholly within Flood Zone 1.
Public Rights of Way	Footpath 270/3 runs across the western end of this area from Main Street to Bedwell Hay Lane.
Green Infrastructure	Sports field and children's play area at the village hall, Bedwell Hey

	Lane Agricultural land
--	---------------------------

Site Photographs:



Photograph 1: View from village hall looking north east across the playing fields



Photograph 2: View looking north across Spinney Lodge gardens



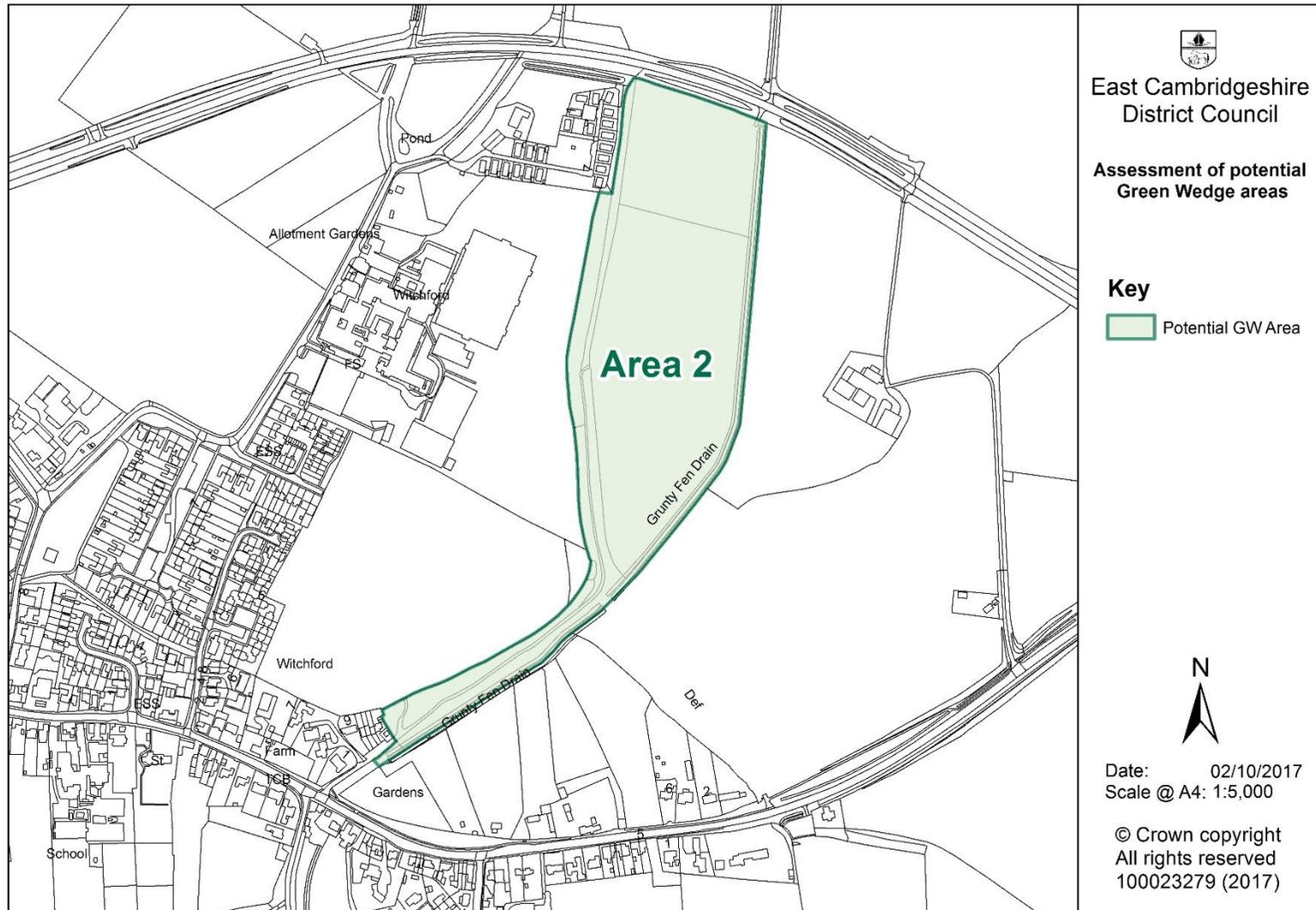
Photograph 3: View from Witchford Road looking towards the village of Witchford

Evaluation Against Green Wedge Criteria:

Green Wedge Purpose	Comments
<p>1. To prevent the merging of settlements, protect their individual identity and local character</p>	<p>The physical gap between Witchford and Lancaster Way Business Park is small. Undulating topography and dense vegetation restricts views between the two areas, increasing the perceived distance between them.</p> <p>The submission of sites for allocation in the Local Plan indicates a growing pressure to develop in this area.</p> <p>This area has the potential to meet this purpose moderately in terms of preventing the merging of Witchford and Lancaster Way Business Park and protecting the local identity and character of Witchford.</p>
<p>2. To guide the form of future development</p>	<p>This search area is largely bounded by defensible and recognisable boundary features.</p> <p>To the north, the boundary follows the backs of residential properties at the edge of Witchford and Main Street.</p> <p>To the east, the area has a weaker boundary, defined by the boundary of the Lancaster Way Business Park allocation in the Local Plan, which in part follows field boundaries.</p> <p>To the west, the boundary is weaker, as it follows the line of the village envelope, which could change in the future.</p> <p>The boundary in the south/south west follows Bedwell Hay Lane, which forms a strong, defensible boundary.</p>

Green Wedge Purpose	Comments
	<p>However, it includes along its fringes a substantial detached residential property and gardens.</p> <p>There has been some pressure to develop within this area within the last 5 years; with one minor residential planning application (refused) and residential site suggestions submitted through the Local Plan process.</p> <p>A Green Wedge in this location would prevent Lancaster Way Business Park from expanding west and eroding the physical and perceived gap between the business park and Witchford.</p> <p>This area is considered to strongly meet this purpose.</p>
<p>3. To provide a 'green lung' into the urban area</p>	<p>This area forms a green infrastructure corridor of playing fields and agricultural land, however the green spaces are not connected due to the lack of PRoW. The area does not penetrate deep into the existing built up area.</p> <p>This area performs weakly against this purpose.</p>
<p>4. A recreation resource</p>	<p>This search area is partially publicly accessible. Witchford Sports Field and play area at the village hall provide opportunities for formal recreation.</p> <p>However, the remaining land is primarily agricultural with no Public Rights of Way, providing no opportunity for recreation.</p> <p>This potential green wedge therefore performs moderately against this purpose.</p>
<p>Should this area be designated as a Green Wedge?</p>	<p>This area should be considered for designation as a Green Wedge because it meets three of the purposes for Green Wedges; preventing the merging of settlements, guiding development form and a providing a recreation resource.</p> <p>Whilst the area doesn't have the potential to prevent the merging of two settlements, it could perform a strong role in ensuring that Lancaster Way Business Park doesn't extend in a way that threatens the local identity and character of Witchford village. The area forms an important part of the rural landscape setting of the village. The expansion of the business park west would urbanise this setting.</p>

Green Wedge Area 2: Witchford North



General Description of Location	This area extends to north east and northwards from Broadway in Witchford to the A142. Lancaster Way Business Park is to the south east beyond Witchford Road.
Area (ha)	8.80
Location	Witchford
Ward	Haddenham Ely South
Parish	Witchford Ely
Date of site visit	6 th July 2017

Site Visit Observations:

Land Use and Landscape	
What are the main land uses within the area of search?	The majority of this area consists of arable, agricultural fields.
What are the main land uses adjacent to the area of search?	The main adjacent land uses are agricultural (arable) fields, education (Witchford Village College) and residential (Cathedral View Park).
What are the main landscape features within the area of search? (e.g. hedgerows, woodland, ponds, rivers)	Large, open agricultural fields bounded by drainage ditches and hedgerows characterise the area. A distinctive green link/corridor exists between Broadway and Manor Road, consisting of a PRoW, mature trees and hedgerows and a nature conservation area known as Sandpit Drove. Within this corridor is a pond and adjacent picnic area, which provide an attractive feature.
What are the main landscape attractors/detractors? (Landscape elements, e.g. pylons, mobile mast etc.)	The main attractor is the PRoW route and Sandpit Drove nature conservation area, which runs along the western boundary of the potential Green Wedge connecting Broadway and Manor Road. The main detractor on the landscape is the A142 to the north, both visually and in terms of road noise.
Topography	The landform is predominantly undulating, sloping upwards to the east from the PRoW.
Setting and Character	
Does the area of search, in whole or part, offer and protect views/long views?	From the PRoW, there are glimpses of the top of Ely Cathedral and glimpses of long range views of the

	wider countryside to the north and north west. From the fields there are clear long range views of the wider countryside to the north and north west.
Does the area of search, in whole or part, have an identifiable character and sense of place?	The open, agricultural fields characterise the area as a rural working landscape. The PRoW and nature conservation area provide an important green link/corridor for people and wildlife.
Threat of Coalescence	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes, but views of Ely and Witchford are limited as a result of the topographical character. There are glimpses of Ely Cathedral from within the area, from the PRoW, but the built up area of Ely is not visible. The village of Witchford can be seen from the PRoW in the west, as can Lancaster Way Business Park from the northern end of the PRoW.
Are there long views or vistas across to the next settlement and/or across the wider landscape?	There are long views looking out of the area to the north and north west across the wider landscape. This landscape is characteristic of the fen landscape; low lying, open and expansive.
Perception of distance within the area of search to neighbouring settlements (e.g. clearly visible, moderately close, distant). Are there any physical features that disrupt views? (e.g. roads, railway, pylons)	The topography in this area has a significant influence on views across the landscape, sloping upwards to the east from the PRoW. As such, there is limited intervisibility with Ely and Witchford. Ely feels distant as the built up area is not visible, with the exception of glimpses of the Cathedral. Lancaster Way Business Park feels moderately close, as some of the commercial units are clearly visible on the skyline. Dense vegetation along either side of the PRoW prevents clear views. Within the rest of the potential GW, the A142 disrupts views of the wider countryside to the north and north west.
Does it provide a landscape setting for an adjacent urban area?	Yes it forms part of the rural hinterland of Witchford.
Potential Green Wedge Boundaries	
Description of potential Green Wedge Boundaries within the area of search	The potential boundaries are predominantly well defined by physical features. To the north, the boundary aligns with the A142. To the east and south, the boundary could follow recognizable field boundaries in the form of drainage ditches. To the west, the boundary is less well defined and therefore weaker, as it would follow a hedgerow and

	tree boundary.
Does an alternative boundary or boundaries exist?	No
Development Pressure	
What built development exists within this area of search?	There is no built development within this potential GW.
What effects would built development in this area have?	Significant development within this area would alter the rural character of this area and would impact on views from the PRoW across the area towards Ely and to the wider countryside to the north and north east.
Public Access and Recreational Value	
Does this area of search provide opportunities for recreation; informal and/or formal?	The PRoW provides opportunity for informal recreation in the form of walking, dog walking and picnics.
Can this area be accessed by the public? (Details of PRoW, bridleways, cycle routes)	This area can only be accessed by the public via the PRoW route. This provides a pedestrian link across the zone from Broadway to Manor Road and to the countryside beyond the village and A142 to the north. The rest of the area is private farmland.
Transport Infrastructure	
How is this potential Green Wedge Zone influenced by surrounding transport infrastructure?	The main influence is the busy A142, which can be seen and heard within the northern half of the area and which detracts from the sense of rurality.

Desk Based Research:

Planning History and Development Pressure	<p><u>Planning applications (within last 5 years):</u></p> <p>None</p> <p><u>Local Plan site suggestions:</u></p> <p>The following sites were submitted as site suggestions during the Local Plan consultation (Preliminary and Further Drafts) that fall within this area of search:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site/10/29 – A proposed mixed use for housing (840 dwellings), public open space, primary school and ancillary retail and employment. <p>The following sites were submitted as site suggestions during the Local Plan consultation (Preliminary and Further Drafts) that are adjacent to this area of search:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site/34/08 – 170 dwellings
--	--

Details of other relevant Local Planning Policies/Allocations	<p>To the south east of this area is a 105.5 hectare employment allocation; Ely.E2 Lancaster Way Business Park, which includes an existing mineral and waste site. As set out in Policy LP8 of the Further Draft Local Plan, this allocation is the major strategic employment area for the district. A large part of the area has national 'Enterprise Zone' status, and is a focus for job growth.</p> <p>Adjacent to the western boundary is 6.1 ha housing allocation; WFD.H3 for around 170 dwellings.</p>
Local Plan Consultation Responses – Green Wedges	The Further Draft Plan sought views on inclusion of a Green Wedge to prevent the coalescence of Witchford - Lancaster Way - Ely. Seven comments were received; 2 objections, 4 support and 1 general comment.
Local Plan Consultation Responses – Local Green Spaces	LGS/34/01 Sandpit Drove
Environmental and Historic Designations (Within or adjacent) such as Conservation Area, Registered Historic Park and Garden, listed buildings.	Grade II listed building, 16 Main Street (adjacent to southern boundary).
Landscape Character Areas	National – 46. The Fens Ely Environmental Capacity Study – Transitional Island landscape
Flood Risk Zone/s	Predominantly Flood Zone 1. The north western portion of this potential Green Wedge zone either side of Grunty Fen Main Drain (maintained by the Internal Drainage Board) is in Flood Zone 3; benefiting from flood defences.
Public Rights of Way	Byway 270/11 runs 0.989km along the western boundary of this potential Green Wedge Zone between Broadway and Manor Road.
Green Infrastructure	Byway – green corridor Manorial Weste common land Sandpit Drove natural and semi natural green space– including wildflower meadow, pond and woodland Agricultural land

Site Photographs:



Photograph 1: View across adjacent Broadway Allotments looking south east



Photograph 2: View north east along Public Right of Way



Photograph 3: View north along Public Right of Way



Photograph 4: View north towards A142



Photograph 5: The northern part of the Public Right of Way is managed as a nature conservation area by the Parish Council.



Photograph 6: View east from Public Right of Way. The top of Ely Cathedral can be seen above the barn on the left of the photo.



Photograph 7: View south from the A142



Photograph 8 View east from the A142

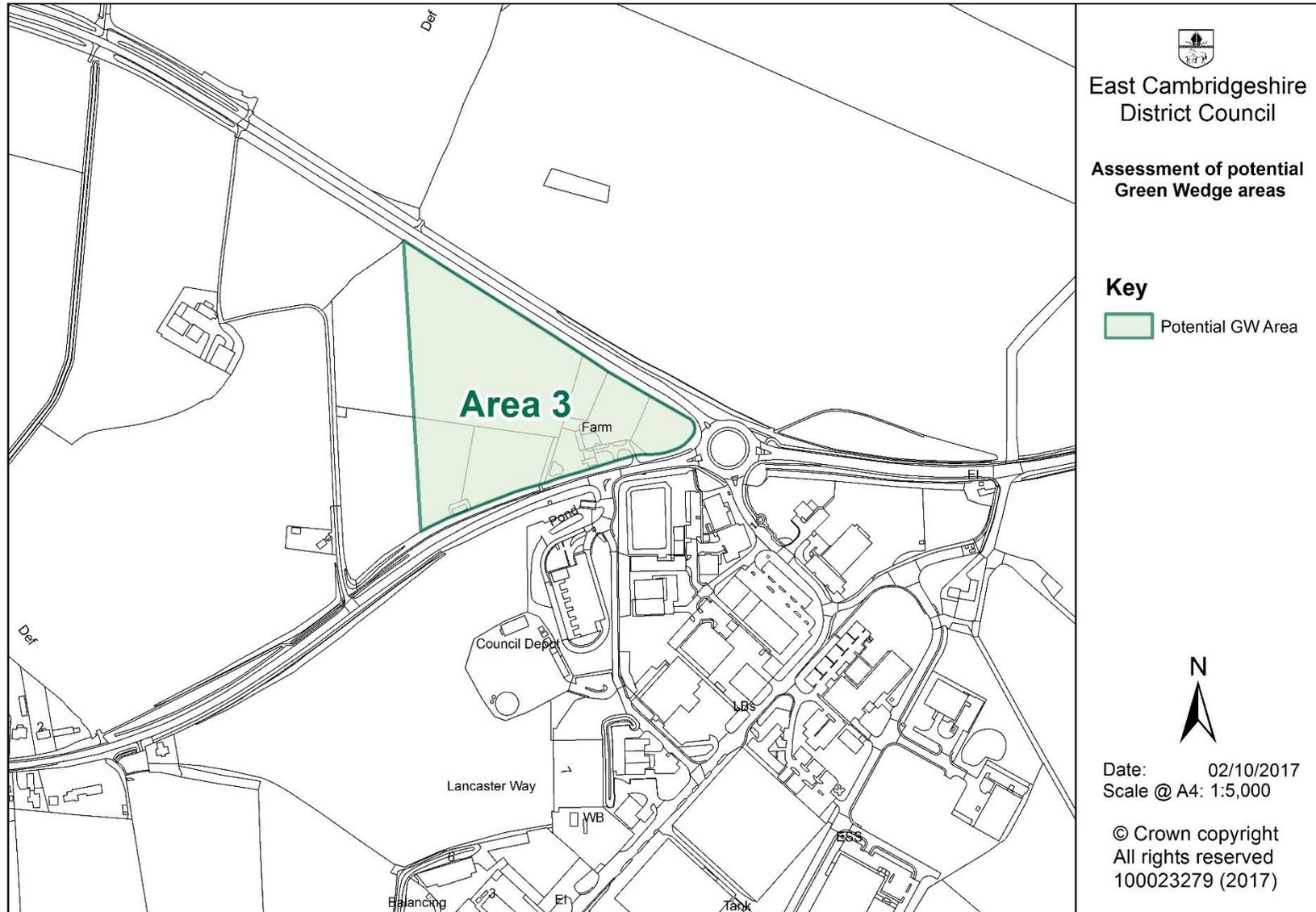
Evaluation Against Green Wedge Criteria:

Green Wedge Purpose	Comments
<p>1.To prevent the merging of settlements, protect their individual identity and local character</p>	<p>It is considered that this area does not perform a role in preventing the merging of settlements.</p> <p>There are glimpses of the neighbouring settlement of Ely (Ely Cathedral) within the area, but the built up area of Ely is not visible due to topography and dense vegetation. The perceived distance to Ely is therefore distant.</p>

Green Wedge Purpose	Comments
	<p>Lancaster Way Business Park feels moderately close, as the commercial units are visible on the skyline. However, Witchford Road does provides a physical barrier to the extension of the Business Park north or north west.</p> <p>Overall, the area is considered to perform weakly to preventing the merging of Witchford and Ely and Witchford and Lancaster Way Business Park.</p>
<p>2. To guide the form of future development</p>	<p>If a Green Wedge were to be designated within this area, there are logical and defensible features that could be used to define its boundaries.</p> <p>To the north, the area follows the A142.</p> <p>The boundary to the south and east follows drainage ditches.</p> <p>The boundary to the east is less durable, following a hedgerow, but no alternative boundaries exist.</p> <p>There have been no major planning applications within the last 5 years, but there is some pressure to develop this area, with sites suggestions submitted as part of the Local Plan call for sites and consultation process.</p> <p>If new development was to come forward in this location in the future, a Green Wedge would provide an open break between the existing built up area of the village and the new development.</p> <p>Overall the area strongly meets this purpose.</p>
<p>3. To provide a ‘green lung’ that offers a direct and continuous link from the urban area to the countryside</p>	<p>The area currently does not penetrate into the existing built up area. However, it provides strong, direct links from the village to the open countryside to the north, via the PRow network.</p> <p>The Sandpit Drove PRow and nature area was submitted to the council as a Local Green Space nomination, and therefore are highly valued by the local community.</p> <p>The PRow, as a valued recreation route and wildlife corridor, would be protected, as would views from the PRow across to the wider countryside, including views of Ely Cathedral.</p> <p>Overall, this area has the potential to perform strongly in relation to this purpose.</p>
<p>4. To provide a recreational</p>	<p>This potential green wedge is partially publicly</p>

Green Wedge Purpose	Comments
<p>resource</p>	<p>accessible. The PRow which runs along the western edge of the area provides opportunities for walking and dog walking in the countryside. The areas either side of the route have been developed by the Parish Council as a nature conservation area, providing further informal recreation opportunities for both quiet reflection, as well as nature conservation activities.</p> <p>However, the majority of land within the area is private agricultural land and currently offers no public access.</p> <p>This area is considered to moderately meet this purpose.</p>
<p>Should this area be designated as a Green Wedge?</p>	<p>As highlighted above, there is potential for a Green Wedge in this area to meet three of the four purposes; guiding development form, a green lung and recreation resource.</p> <p>Therefore consideration should be given to designating this area as a Green Wedge in the Local Plan.</p>

Green Wedge Area 3: Corner of A142 and Witchford Road



General Description of Location	This area is triangular in shape and lies between the A142 and Witchford Road, east of Witchford and north/north west of Lancaster Way Business Park.
Area (ha)	4.57
Location	Witchford
Ward	Ely South
Parish	Witchford
Date of site visit	6 th July 2017

Site Visit Observations:

Land Use and Landscape	
What are the main land uses within the area of search?	The main land use within this area is agricultural, land (arable) and pasture (horse grazed paddocks).
What are the main land uses adjacent to the area of search?	The main adjacent land uses are agricultural land (arable) and commercial (household recycling centre Lancaster Way Business Park).
What are the main landscape features within the area of search? (e.g. hedgerows, woodland, ponds, rivers)	There are few landscape features within this area, dominated by horse paddocks separated by electric fencing.
What are the main landscape attractors/detractors? (Landscape elements, e.g. pylons, mobile mast etc.)	The main landscape detractor is the busy A142, which is visible from within this area and coupled with traffic noise, detracts from the rural landscape character. Lancaster Way Business Park is also clearly visible and detracts from the rural character.
Topography	Flat
Setting and Character	
Does the area of search, in whole or part, offer and protect views/long views?	There are long views looking north and north west across the zone to the wider countryside beyond the A142.
Does area of search, in whole or part, have an identifiable character and sense of place?	The area is typical of the transitional island landscape, characterized by horse grazed paddocks that are smaller in scale than the surrounding arable fields and arable fields.
Threat of Coalescence	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position? Are there long views or vistas across to the next settlement and/or across the wider landscape?	No There are long views across the wider landscape to the north and north west.

Perception of distance within the area of search to neighbouring settlements (e.g. clearly visible, moderately close, distant). Are there any physical features that disrupt views? (e.g. roads, railway, pylons)	Lancaster Way Business Park is clearly visible due to proximity. The perception of distance to Ely and Witchford is distant, as they cannot be seen from within this area. Dense vegetation along the A142 and Main Street restrict views out of the area towards neighbouring settlements and the wider countryside.
Does it provide a landscape setting for an adjacent urban area?	This area forms part of the rural setting approaching Witchford from the east. Due to vegetation, the area cannot be seen from Witchford Road but it is clearly visible from the A142. It aligns more with the open countryside than the nearby settlement of Witchford.
Potential Green Wedge Boundaries	
Description of potential Green Wedge Boundaries within the area of search	To the north and east, the boundary aligns with the A142. To the south, the boundary follows Main Street. The potential boundary to the west is much weaker as it currently does not follow a physical feature, cutting across fields.
Does an alternative boundary or boundaries exist?	Yes. The boundary in the west could follow the line of a private round and field boundaries.
Development Pressure	
What built development exists within the area of search?	With the exception of Alderforth Farm and associated buildings, there is no built development within this area.
What effects would built development in this area have?	Significant development in this area would alter the character of the area as currently very little built development exists.
Public Access and Recreational Value	
Does this area of search provide opportunities for recreation; informal and/or formal?	No. This area is entirely private land with no formal recreation provision of PRowS.
Can this area be accessed by the public? (Details of PRow, bridleways, cycle routes)	No. This area is entirely private land with no PRow.
Transport Infrastructure	
How is this potential Green Wedge area influenced by surrounding transport infrastructure?	This area is a small parcel of land wedged between the A142 and Witchford Road. Both roads can be heard and seen from within this zone. The close proximity of these roads has an urbanizing influence on the character of this area.

Desk Based Research:

Planning History and Development Pressure	<u>Planning applications (within last 5 years):</u>
--	---

	<p>None</p> <p><u>Local Plan site suggestions:</u></p> <p>The following sites were submitted as site suggestions during the Local Plan consultation (Preliminary and Further Drafts) that fall within this area of search:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site/10/29 – A proposed mixed use for housing (840 dwellings), public open space, primary school and ancillary retail and employment. <p>The following sites were submitted as site suggestions during the Local Plan consultation (Preliminary and Further Drafts) that are adjacent to this area of search:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site/10/01 to Site 10/04 - Collectively known as the Lancaster Way Business Park • Site/10/29 – A proposed mixed use for housing (840 dwellings), public open space, primary school and ancillary retail and employment.
Details of other relevant Local Planning Policies/Allocations	To the south east of this area is a 105.5 hectare employment allocation; Ely.E2 Lancaster Way Business Park, which includes an existing mineral and waste site. As set out in Policy LP8 of the Further Draft Local Plan, this allocation is the major strategic employment area for the district. A large part of the area has national 'Enterprise Zone' status, and is a focus for job growth.
Local Plan Consultation Responses – Green Wedges	The Further Draft Plan sought views on inclusion of a Green Wedge to prevent the coalescence of Witchford - Lancaster Way - Ely. Seven comments were received; 2 objections, 4 support and 1 general comment.
Local Plan Consultation Responses – Local Green Spaces	None
Environmental and Historic Designations (Within or adjacent) such as Conservation Area, Registered Historic Park and Garden, listed buildings.	None
Landscape Character Areas	National – 46. The Fens Ely Environmental Capacity Study – Transitional Island landscape
Flood Risk Zone/s	This area is wholly within Flood Zone 1.
Public Rights of Way	None
Green Infrastructure	Agricultural land (paddocks)

Site Photographs:



Photograph 1: View north from Witchford Road



Photograph 2: View west from Witchford Road



Photograph 3: View from Witchford Road across to A142



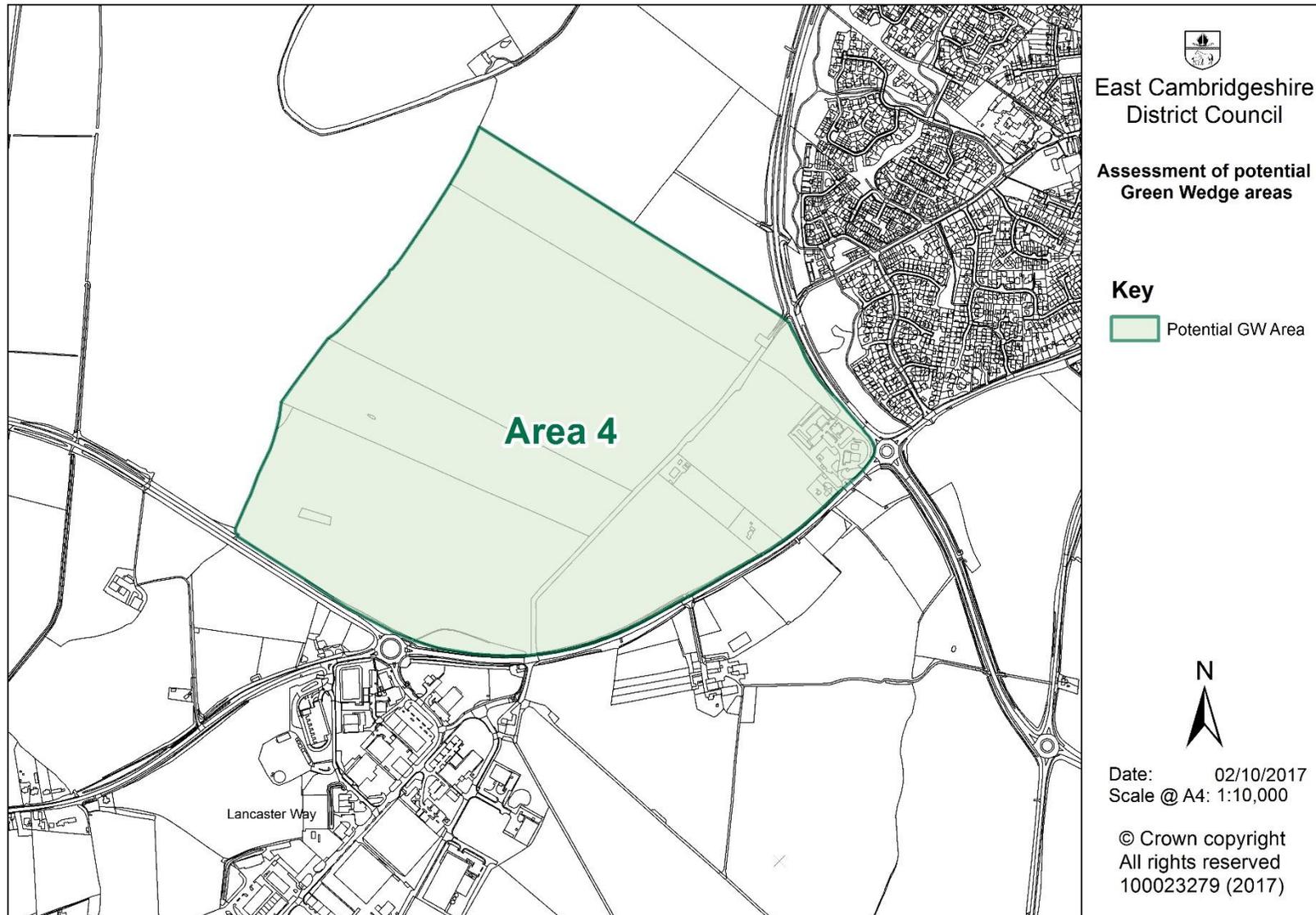
Photograph 4: View north west from Witchford Road

Evaluation Against Green Wedge Criteria:

Green Wedge Purpose	Comments
<p>1.To prevent the merging of settlements, protect their individual identity and local character</p>	<p>This area is detached from the nearby settlement of Witchford and as such aligns more with the open countryside rather than the immediate setting of Witchford. The busy A142 and proximity to the business park have an urbanising effect.</p> <p>If this area was to be developed, it would not lead to the merging of two settlements.</p> <p>Overall this area performs weakly against this purpose.</p>
<p>2. To guide the form of future development</p>	<p>There have been no major planning applications within the last 5 years but there is some pressure to develop this area</p>

Green Wedge Purpose	Comments
	<p>through residential allocation in the Local Plan.</p> <p>Whilst some of the potential boundaries follow physical features that are strong and defensible, such as roads, the boundary to the west is weak.</p> <p>Overall, this area performs weakly in relation to this purpose.</p>
<p>3. To provide a 'green lung' that offers a direct and continuous link from the urban area to the countryside</p>	<p>There is a lack of connected, publicly accessible green infrastructure in this area, as the land use is predominantly agricultural land.</p> <p>As the area is detached from the village of Witchford, it does not perform a role in providing a direct and continuous link from the urban area to the countryside.</p> <p>This area does not meet this purpose.</p>
<p>4. To provide a recreational resource</p>	<p>None of this area is publicly accessible, therefore there are no opportunities for informal or formal recreation.</p> <p>This area does not meet this purpose.</p>
<p>Should this area be designated as a Green Wedge?</p>	<p>This potential Green Wedge area performs poorly against the four purposes, meeting two of the purposes weakly.</p> <p>An alternative option of extending this candidate Green Wedge area further west would not address any of the issues identified in this assessment.</p> <p>Therefore it is not recommended that this area (or any extended area) is designated as a Green Wedge.</p>

Green Wedge Area 4: West of A10, Ely



General Description of Location	This area lies north of the A142 and west of the A10 to the west of Ely.
Area (ha)	87.85
Location	Ely
Ward	Ely South
Parish	Ely
Date of site visit	6 th July 2017

Site Visit Observations:

Land Use and Landscape	
What are the main land uses within the area of search?	The predominant land use within this area is agricultural land (arable). Other land uses, confined to the eastern corner of the area, are commercial (service station and hotel) and residential (3 properties along A142 close to service station)
What are the main land uses adjacent to the area of search?	The main land uses adjacent to this area are residential to the east, agricultural land (arable) to the north and west, and agricultural land (horse grazed paddocks) to the south.
What are the main landscape features within the area of search? (e.g. hedgerows, woodland, ponds, rivers)	Key features of this area are fragmented hedgerow field boundaries and isolated hedgerow trees. The public byway is also a key feature, connecting Ely to the countryside.
What are the main landscape attractors/detractors? (Landscape elements, e.g. pylons, mobile mast etc.)	The main landscape attractors are the long range views of the wider countryside to the north and north west, and glimpses of Ely Cathedral from the start of the PRoW adjacent to the A142.
Topography	Gently undulating. Land in this area is higher than the land to the west and north and gently rises from west to east.
Setting and Character	
Does the area of search, in whole or part, offer and protect views/long views?	There are very limited views from Ely across area. There are short range views looking west over the A10 from the amenity green space between the residential area and the A10.
Does the area of search, in whole or part, have an identifiable character and sense of place?	Yes. With the exception of the commercial uses to the east, this area comprises of large rectilinear fields with hedgerow boundaries, providing a strong working rural landscape.
Threat of Coalescence	
Can more than one settlement be	Witchford village cannot be seen from within this area.

<p>seen from current position?</p> <p>Are there long views or vistas across to the next settlement and/or across the wider landscape?</p>	<p>There are glimpses of commercial units at Lancaster Way Business Park.</p> <p>Housing in Ely is visible from the PRoW in the far east of this area, and adjacent to the A142, there are glimpses of Ely Cathedral towering above trees with an arable field providing an open and rural foreground to the Cathedral.</p> <p>Elsewhere in this area, views of settlements are restricted by the topography and dense vegetation.</p> <p>There are long views to the wider landscape north and north west, and south east towards the rolling East Anglian Chalk National Character Area.</p>
<p>Perception of distance within potential Green Wedge Zone to neighbouring settlements (e.g. clearly visible, moderately close, distant).</p> <p>Are there any physical features that disrupt views? (e.g. roads, railway, pylons)</p>	<p>The gently undulating topography and vegetation create a feeling of enclosure and foreshorten views; therefore the perception of distance to neighbouring settlements is distant.</p> <p>Views to the north and north west are disrupted by wind farms.</p>
<p>Does it provide a landscape setting for an adjacent urban area?</p>	<p>Yes this area is part of the transitional island landscape surrounding Ely; a gently undulating landscape that connects Ely to Witchford.</p>
<p>Potential Green Wedge Boundaries</p>	
<p>Description of potential Green Wedge Boundaries within the area of search</p>	<p>To the south, the potential boundary follows the A142.</p> <p>To the east, the boundary could follow the A10.</p> <p>To the north and west, there are less obvious physical features to use as a boundary. Field boundaries would be the most likely boundaries.</p>
<p>Does an alternative boundary or boundaries exist?</p>	<p>An alternative but not necessarily stronger boundary, which would create a much smaller area, is the route of the PRoW.</p>
<p>Development Pressure</p>	
<p>What built development exists within this area of search?</p>	<p>Built development is confined to the eastern corner of the area; a service station and hotel at the A10/A142 roundabout and three residential properties along the A142.</p>
<p>What effects would built development in this area have?</p>	<p>The majority of the area is undeveloped, agricultural land. Significant built development, especially away from the A142 and A10, would detract from the rural character of the area.</p>
<p>Public Access and Recreational Value</p>	
<p>Does this area of search provide opportunities for recreation; informal</p>	<p>Yes. There are informal recreation opportunities via the PRoW which crosses the area from St John's Road in Ely</p>

and/or formal?	to the A142. The rest of the area is predominantly private farmland and provides no opportunities for recreation.
Can this area be accessed by the public? (Details of PRow, bridleways, cycle routes)	Yes but only by the PRow and at the service station. The remaining area comprises of private farmland and residential gardens.
Transport Infrastructure	
How is this potential Green Wedge area influenced by surrounding transport infrastructure?	The busy A142 is a prominent feature in the landscape that can be seen and heard from within this area. Due to topography, the A10 cannot be seen but can be heard. The A142 has an urbanizing influence on the landscape.

Desk Based Research:

Planning History and Development Pressure	<p><u>Planning applications (within last 5 years):</u></p> <p>None</p> <p><u>Local Plan site suggestions:</u></p> <p>No sites were submitted as site suggestions during the Local Plan consultation (Preliminary and Further Drafts) that fall within this area of search:</p> <p>The following sites were submitted as site suggestions during the Local Plan consultation (Preliminary and Further Drafts) that are adjacent to this area of search:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site/10/01 to Site 10/04 - Collectively known as the Lancaster Way Business Park • Site/10/29 – A proposed mixed use for housing (840 dwellings), public open space, primary school and ancillary retail and employment.
Details of other relevant Local Planning Policies/Allocations	<p>To the south and west of this area is a 105.5 hectare employment allocation; Ely.E2 Lancaster Way Business Park, which includes an existing mineral and waste site. As set out in Policy LP8 of the Further Draft Local Plan, this allocation is the major strategic employment area for the district. A large part of the area has national 'Enterprise Zone' status, and is a focus for job growth.</p> <p>To the north is a leisure allocation; Ely.L1 Downham Road sports and leisure hub.</p>
Local Plan Consultation Responses – Green Wedges	The Further Draft Plan sought views on inclusion of a Green Wedge to prevent the coalescence of Witchford - Lancaster Way - Ely. Seven comments were received; 2 objections, 4 support and 1 general comment.
Local Plan Consultation Responses – Local Green Spaces	None

<p>Environmental and Historic Designations</p> <p>(Within or adjacent) such as Conservation Area, Registered Historic Park and Garden, listed buildings.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Landscape Character Areas</p>	<p>National – 46. The Fens</p> <p>Ely Environmental Capacity Study – transitional Island landscape.</p>
<p>Flood Risk Zone/s</p>	<p>Predominantly Flood Zone 1. Along the western boundary of the area, the land falls within Flood Zone 3, in an area that benefits from flood defences.</p>
<p>Public Rights of Way</p>	<p>Byway 76/39 runs through the area from the A142 to St John’s Road in Ely.</p>
<p>Green Infrastructure</p>	<p>Agricultural land (arable)</p>

Site Photographs:



Photograph 1: View south east towards the A142 from Public Right of Way



Photograph 2: Looking north east along Public Right of Way towards A10 and Ely



Photograph 3: Looking north west from Public Right of Way



Photograph 4: View south west towards Lancaster Way Business Park from amenity green space off St John's Road in Ely



Photograph 5: Looking north east from along the A142



Photograph 6: View from footpath along A142 towards Ely. Clear views of Ely Cathedral.



Photograph 7: View north along Public Right of Way from A142



Photograph 8: View north west from where Public Right of Way meets the A142



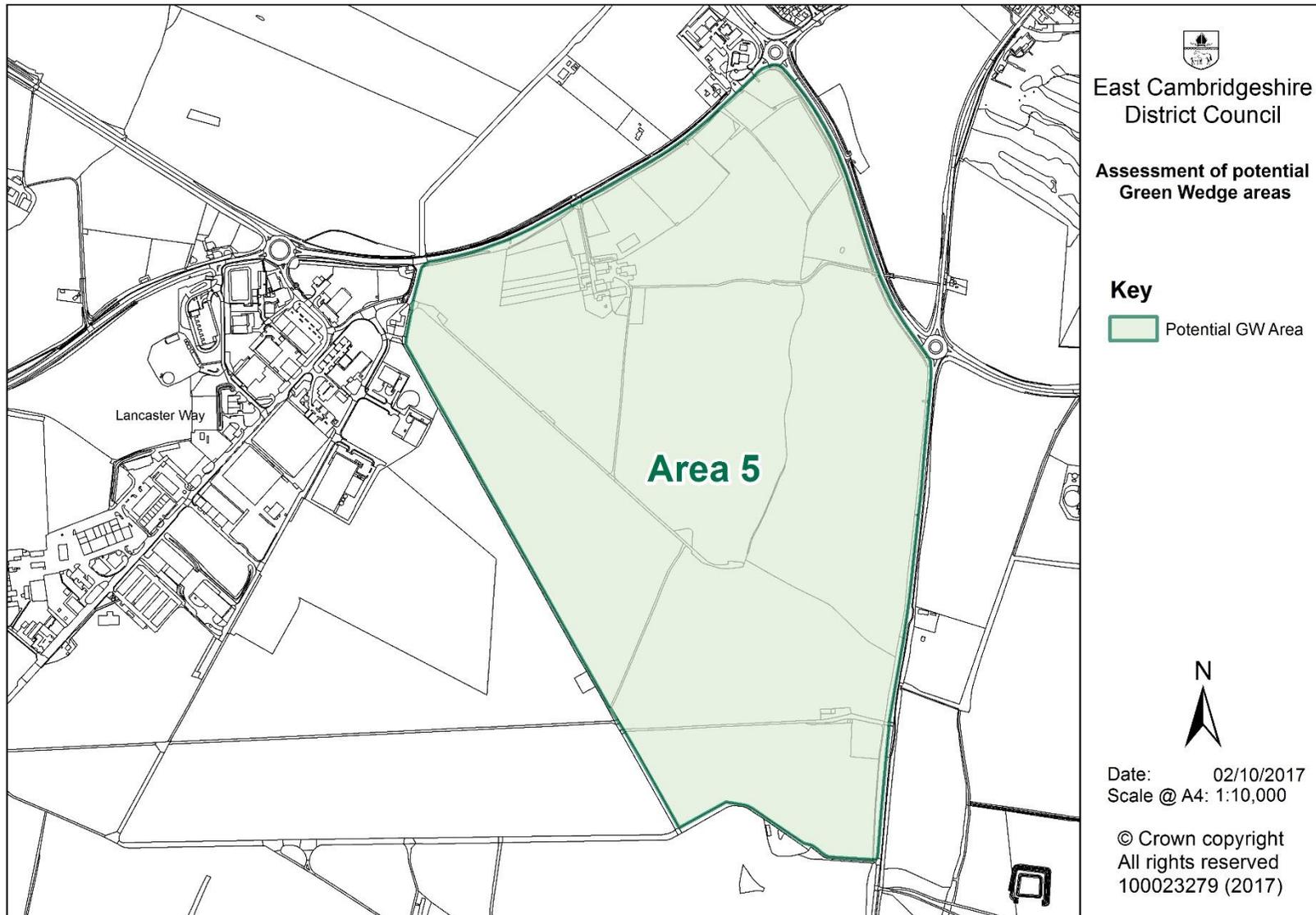
Photograph 9: Looking north west from the A142 towards the services

Evaluation Against Green Wedge Criteria:

Green Wedge Purpose	Comments
<p>1.To prevent the merging of settlements, protect their individual identity and local character</p>	<p>The physical gap between the settlements of Ely and Witchford in this location is fairly large and the perception of this gap is distant, due to the undulating topography and vegetation, which foreshorten views.</p> <p>This area is representative of the character of the transitional island landscape between Ely and Witchford; predominantly agricultural use, with hedgerow field boundaries.</p> <p>There are also views of Ely Cathedral approaching the city along the A142, which contribute to a distinctive local character and identity.</p> <p>Overall, this area weakly meets this purpose; it doesn't</p>

Green Wedge Purpose	Comments
	<p>prevent the merging of settlements, but it protects the individual identity and local character of the setting of Ely.</p>
<p>2. To guide the form of future development</p>	<p>There is currently little development pressure in this area, with no major planning applications within the last 5 years, and no residential site suggestions submitted through the Local Plan process.</p> <p>The boundaries in the east and south could be strong and defensible, aligning with the A10 and A142. To the west and north, the boundaries are less clear and would most likely have to follow natural features, such as hedgerows.</p> <p>Overall, this area meets this purpose weakly.</p>
<p>3. To provide a ‘green lung’ that offers a direct and continuous link from the urban area to the countryside</p>	<p>This area does not penetrate deep into the built up area of Ely. The A10 acts as a physical barrier between Ely and the open countryside, restricting future opportunities to create a continuous link from the urban area to the countryside.</p> <p>This area does not meet this purpose.</p>
<p>4. To provide a recreational resource</p>	<p>The land between Ely and Witchford in this area is primarily agricultural and therefore, as private land, provides no opportunity for recreation. Recreational opportunities are limited to the PRoW, which runs across the area from St John’s Road in Ely to the A142.</p> <p>The area therefore meets this purpose weakly.</p>
<p>Should this area be designated as a Green Wedge?</p>	<p>This area does not perform strongly against the Green Wedge criteria.</p> <p>Part of the area moderately meets the purpose of protecting the local identity and distinctive character of Ely, as it is representative of the transitional island character and protects views of Ely Cathedral approaching the city along the A142. However, on the whole, this area doesn’t sufficiently meet the Green wedge criteria. The council should consider the merit of alternative policy approaches to avoid adverse impact from development on the character of the transitional island landscape.</p>

Green Wedge Area 5: Ely – Lancaster Way Business Park



General Description of Location	This area lies between Lancaster Way Business Park, the A142 and the A10, to the south west of Ely.
Area (ha)	112.06
Location	Ely
Ward	Ely South
Parish	Ely
Date of site visit	6 th July 2017

Site Visit Observations:

Land Use and Landscape	
What are the main land uses within the area of search?	The main land use within this area is agricultural land (arable and horse grazed paddocks).
What are the main land uses adjacent to the area of search?	The main adjacent land uses are commercial (Lancaster Way Business Park, A142/A10 service station and hotel) and agricultural land (arable).
What are the main landscape features within the area of search (e.g. hedgerows, woodland, ponds, rivers)	Key landscape features of this area are fragmented hedgerow field boundaries and isolated mature trees.
What are the main landscape attractors/detractors? (Landscape elements, e.g. pylons, mobile mast etc.)	The main landscape attractor in this area are the long views south and south east towards the Anglian Chalk Character Area. The main landscape detractors are views of telephone pylons which cross the area in the east and the close proximity of the A142 and A10.
Topography	Gently undulating, dropping down from north to south at the A142 and again beyond the horse paddocks. Beyond the paddocks, the land is predominantly flat, typically of the fen landscape.
Setting and Character	
Does the area of search, in whole or part, offer and protect views/long views?	There are long views from the A10 across the area towards Witchford, where the Lancaster Way Business Park is clearly visible. There are also long views south towards Stretham village from the entrance to Paradise Farm.
Does the area of search, in whole or part, have an identifiable character and sense of place?	The area is typical of the transitional island landscape, characterized by horse grazed paddocks that are smaller in scale than the surrounding arable fields and large rectilinear arable fields.
Threat of Coalescence	

Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes – Ely, Stretham and also Lancaster Way Business Park.
Are there long views or vistas across to the next settlement and/or across the wider landscape?	There are long views to the north and north west, and to the south east towards the rolling East Anglian Chalk National Character Area.
Perception of distance within the area of search to neighbouring settlements (e.g. clearly visible, moderately close, distant).	The perception of distance between Ely and Witchford is distant due to dense vegetation screening and Lancaster Way Business Park which blocks views of the village.
Are there any physical features that disrupt views? (e.g. roads, railway, pylons)	Lancaster Way Business Park is clearly visible due to limited boundary treatment and flat topography, and therefore the perception of distance between Ely and the business park is moderately close. The A10 has a strong presence as it is clearly visible.
Does it provide a landscape setting for an adjacent urban area?	Yes this potential GW zone is part of the transitional island surrounding Ely.
Potential Green Wedge Boundaries	
Description of potential Green Wedge Boundaries within the area of search	The boundary in the North West could follow the A142 and in the North East the A10. In the West/South West the boundary could follow the Lancaster Way Business Park boundary (White Road). The boundary in the south would be weaker, following field boundaries.
Does an alternative boundary or boundaries exist?	No
Development Pressure	
What built development exists within the area of search?	Paradise farm and associated buildings.
What effects would built development in this area have?	This area comprises of large rectilinear fields which create the sense of openness and a rural character with little existing built development. Significant built development would detract from this character and impact on the rural setting of Ely.
Public Access and Recreational Value	
Does this area of search provide opportunities for recreation; informal and/or formal?	There are no opportunities for informal or formal recreation as the area primarily consists of private farmland.
Can this area be accessed by the public? (Details of PRow, bridleways,	No. There are no PRow within this area.

cycle routes)	
Transport Infrastructure	
How is this potential Green Wedge area influenced by surrounding transport infrastructure?	The A10 and A142 have a strong presence on the landscape, both in terms of visual and audio impacts.

Desk Based Research:

Planning History and Development Pressure	<p><u>Planning applications (within last 5 years):</u></p> <p>None</p> <p><u>Local Plan site suggestions:</u></p> <p>No sites were submitted as site suggestions during the Local Plan consultation (Preliminary and Further Drafts) that fall within this area of search.</p> <p>The following sites were submitted as site suggestions during the Local Plan consultation (Preliminary and Further Drafts) that are adjacent to this area of search:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site/10/14 – 267 dwellings • Site/10/15 – 390 dwellings • Site/10/01 to Site 10/04 - Collectively known as the Lancaster Way Business Park
Details of other relevant Local Planning Policies/Allocations	To the west of the area is a 105.5 hectare employment allocation; Ely.E2 Lancaster Way Business Park, which includes an existing mineral and waste site. As set out in Policy LP8 of the Further Draft Local Plan, this allocation is the major strategic employment area for the district. A large part of the area has national ‘Enterprise Zone’ status, and is a focus for job growth.
Local Plan Consultation Responses – Green Wedges	The Further Draft Plan sought views on inclusion of a Green Wedge to prevent the coalescence of Witchford - Lancaster Way - Ely. Seven comments were received; 2 objections, 4 support and 1 general comment.
Local Plan Consultation Responses – Local Green Space	None
Environmental and Historic Designations (Within or adjacent) such as Conservation Area, Registered Historic Park and Garden, listed buildings.	None
Landscape Character Areas	National – 46. The Fens

Flood Risk Zone/s	This area is wholly within Flood Zone 1
Public Rights of Way	None
Green Infrastructure	Agricultural land

Site Photographs:



Photograph 1: Looking south east from opposite the service station on the A142



Photograph 2: View south from A142



Photograph 3: View south east across horse grazed paddocks towards Anglian Chalk National Landscape Character Area in the distance



Photograph 4: View south towards Stretham village from entrance to Paradise Farm



Photograph 5: View towards Lancaster Way Business Park from A142



Photograph 6: Looking west from the A10 towards Lancaster Way Business Park

Evaluation Against Green Wedge Criteria:

Green Wedge Purpose	Comments
<p>1.To prevent the merging of settlements, protect their individual identity and local character</p>	<p>The physical gap between Ely and Witchford is fairly large.</p> <p>The perception of distance between Ely and Witchford is distant due to dense vegetation screening and Lancaster Way Business Park which blocks views of the village.</p> <p>Lancaster Way Business Park is clearly visible due to limited boundary treatment and flat topography, and therefore the perception of distance between Ely and the business park is moderately close.</p> <p>This potential Green Wedge area is representative of the transitional island landscape between Ely and Witchford; predominantly agricultural use, with hedgerow field boundaries.</p> <p>Overall this area meets this purpose weakly; it does not prevent the merging of settlements, but it does play a role in protecting the individual identity and local character of the setting of Ely.</p>
<p>2. To guide the form of future development</p>	<p>There is currently little development pressure in this area, with no major planning applications within the last 5 years, and no residential site suggestions submitted through the Local Plan process.</p> <p>The boundaries in the North West and North east could be strong and defensible, following the A142 and in the North East the A10.</p>

Green Wedge Purpose	Comments
	<p>In the West/South West the boundary could follow the Lancaster Way Business Park boundary (White Road).</p> <p>The boundary in the south would be weaker, following field boundaries.</p> <p>Overall this area meets this objective weakly.</p>
<p>3. To provide a ‘green lung’ that offers a direct and continuous link from the urban area to the countryside</p>	<p>This area does not penetrate deep into the built up area of Ely. The A10 acts as a physical barrier between Ely and the open countryside, restricting future opportunities to create a continuous link from the urban area to the countryside,</p> <p>This area does not meet this purpose.</p>
<p>4. To provide a recreational resource</p>	<p>The land in this area between Ely and Witchford is primarily agricultural and therefore, as private land, provides no opportunity for recreation. Additionally, there are no PRoW.</p> <p>This area does not meet this purpose</p>
<p>Should this area be designated as a Green Wedge?</p>	<p>This area does not perform strongly against the Green Wedge criteria, meeting two of the purposes weakly. Therefore it is not recommended that this area is designated as a Green Wedge.</p> <p>The council should consider the merit of alternative policy approaches to avoid adverse impact from development on the character of the transitional island landscape.</p>

4. Recommendations

4.1. Introduction

4.1.1 The purpose of this report was to consider whether areas of search around Ely, Lancaster Way Business Park and Witchford met the criteria for designation as Green Wedge. The report defined the purpose of Green Wedges and each of the 5 areas of search were assessed against this criteria on a scale of strongly meeting the purpose to not meeting the purpose at all.

4.2 Summary of Recommendations

4.2.2 Table 2 below sets out the final recommendations of this report by each area of search. Two areas are proposed for designation as Green Wedges in the next version of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan. **Appendix 2** shows a map of the proposed extent of the two Green Wedges.

Table 2. Final recommendations following assessment of Green Wedge areas of search

Green Wedge Area of Search	Summary of Performance Against Purpose Criteria				Recommendation
	1- Prevent Merging of Settlements	2- Guide form of development	3- Green lung	4- Recreation Resource	
Area 1. Witchford Village – Lancaster Way Business Park	Moderate	Strong	Weak	Moderate	<p>This area is recommended for designation as a Green Wedge.</p> <p>The area forms an important part of the rural landscape setting of Witchford village and would prevent the merging of Lancaster Way Business Park with Witchford.</p> <p>It is recommended that the boundaries of the area are altered prior to designation as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exclude Spinney Lodge and associated garden land; and • align the western boundary with the backs of properties behind the village hall, rather than using the boundary of the village envelope.
Area 2. Witchford North	Weak	Strong	Strong	Moderate	<p>This area is recommended for designation as a Green Wedge.</p> <p>The area performs a strong role in guiding the future form and direction of development and in providing a green lung that extends from the urban area of Witchford to the open countryside to the north.</p> <p>The boundaries of the area of search are well defined and therefore do not require alteration prior to designation</p>

Green Wedge Area of Search	Summary of Performance Against Purpose Criteria				Recommendation
	1- Prevent Merging of Settlements	2- Guide form of development	3- Green lung	4- Recreation Resource	
					as a Green Wedge.
Area 3. Corner of A142 and Witchford Road	Weak	Weak	Does not meet this purpose	Does not meet this purpose	The assessment found that on the whole this area performs weakly in relation to the Green Wedge purpose criteria and therefore it is not recommended for designation as a Green Wedge.
Area 4. West of A10, Ely	Weak	Weak	Does not meet this purpose	Weak	<p>The assessment found that on the whole this area performs weakly in relation to the Green Wedge purpose criteria and therefore it is not recommended for designation as a Green Wedge.</p> <p>The council should consider the merit of alternative policy approaches to avoid adverse impact from development on the character of the transitional island landscape.</p>
Area 5. Ely – Lancaster Way Business Park	Weak	Weak	Does not meet this purpose	Does not meet this purpose	<p>The assessment found that on the whole this area performs weakly in relation to the Green wedge purpose criteria and therefore it is not recommended for designation as a Green Wedge.</p> <p>The council should consider the merit of alternative policy approaches to avoid adverse impact from development on the character of the transitional island landscape.</p>

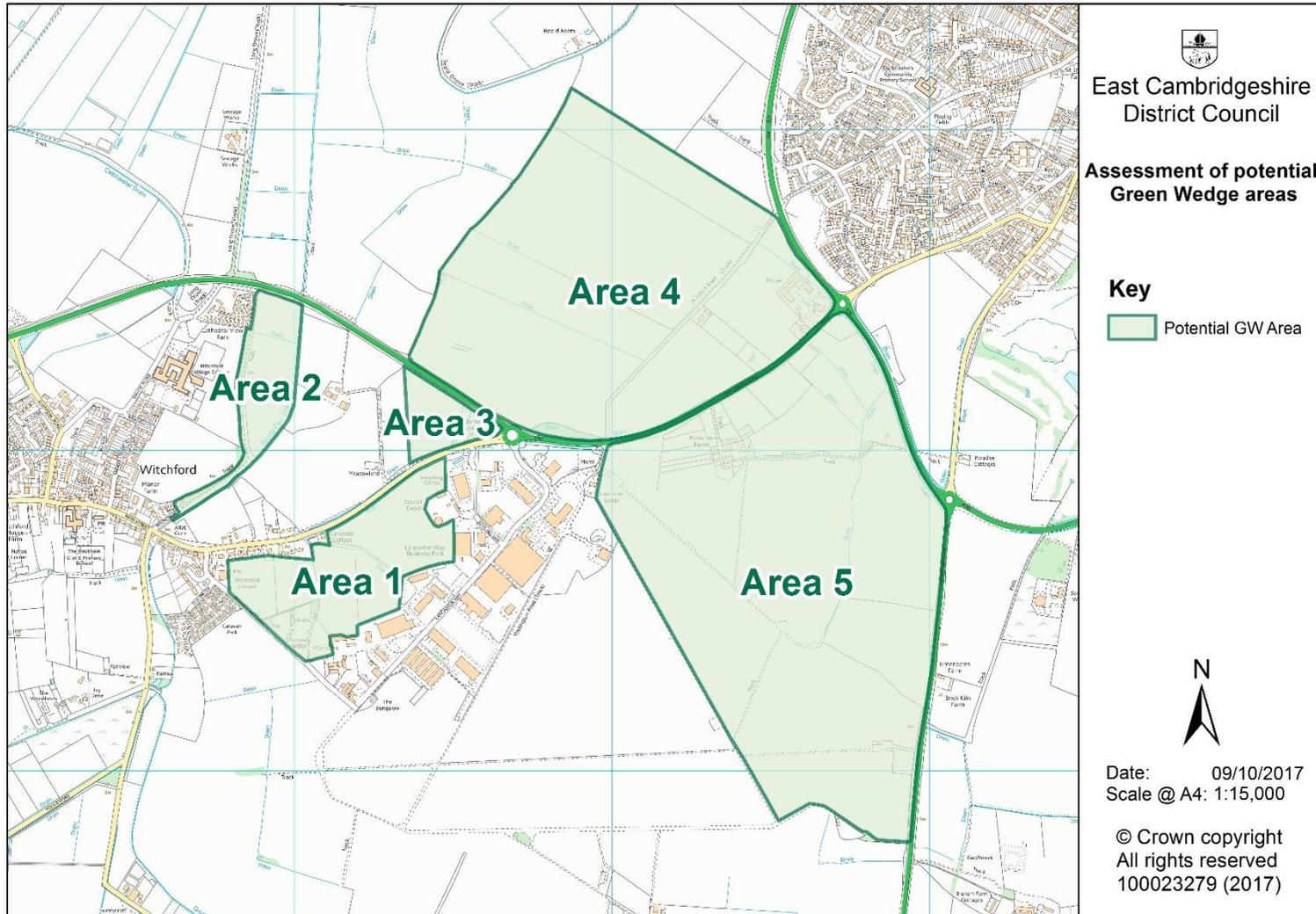
4.3 Next Steps

4.3.1 The two Green Wedges proposed for designation will be shown on the policies map, and a Green Wedge policy will be included in the Witchford chapter, of the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan. There will be an opportunity to comment on both the Green Wedge policy and designations as part of the Proposed Submission consultation. Following the consultation on the Proposed Submission version, the council will submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State, together with all the representations received, for independent examination by a Planning Inspector. For further information on the Local Plan timetable, please see the Local Development Scheme live update⁶.

⁶ <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/monitoring-and-local-development-scheme>

5. Appendices

Appendix 1. Green Wedge Areas of Search



Appendix 2. Proposed Green Wedge Designations

