

ELY



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Description of Ely

Ely is England's second smallest city¹, and the main market town in East Cambridgeshire with a population approaching 18,000. Nestled in the Fens approximately 15 miles north of Cambridge, it is famous for its magnificent Norman cathedral known locally as “The Ship of the Fens”. Rich in history, Ely was the stronghold of Hereward the Wake and home to Oliver Cromwell. Ely is an important tourist destination for day trips, and has a range of other attractions including the attractive riverside, the award winning Jubilee Gardens, Ely Country Park and Ely Museum.

The city has undergone rapid growth in recent years, with a significant amount of new housing development on its north-western edge, and on a range of other ‘infill’ sites. However, employment, services, and infrastructure have not kept pace with the rising population. As a consequence there are high levels of out-commuting to jobs in London, Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, placing pressure on an overloaded transport infrastructure. One of the key challenges is to promote future commercial and employment growth to reduce this out-commuting.

Ely is a compact city, with the medieval town layout still clearly evident. The city centre remains relatively healthy, with a good mix of retail, commercial and leisure, although some uses are in need of updating/expansion. However, the historic fabric limits opportunities for new development in the central area; some ‘edge of centre’ sites will therefore need to be developed.

Ely is well connected by both road and rail. Two major ‘A’ roads, the A10 (north-south) and A142 (east-west) connect Ely to the national road network. Ely station is an important interchange point with services to key destinations including Cambridge, Stansted Airport, Norwich, London, Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool. Most of the city’s residents live within walking or cycling distance to the centre, however, pedestrian and cycle networks are fragmented and require improvement.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_cities_in_the_United_Kingdom

Key statistics

<i>Ely</i>	
<i>Population²</i>	17630
<i>Dwellings³</i>	8045
<i>New dwellings built 2001-2011 (net)</i>	2203
<i>Estimated new dwellings 2012-2031</i>	
<i>Employment⁴</i>	Of those in employment: 8% work from home, 52% travel up to 20km to work, 36% travel over 20km to work
<i>Existing public transport services</i>	Mainline railway station plus regular bus services within Ely and to Cambridge, Chatteris, Newmarket and surrounding villages

A vision for Ely

A vision for Ely in the year 2031 is set out below – followed by a set of strategic objectives to deliver and facilitate the vision. The vision provides clear direction for development in Ely and has been developed from the key characteristics and issues described above, and through consultation on the Local Plan. It has also been informed by the ‘Ely Masterplan’ (adopted 2010), which aimed to provide a holistic vision to help ensure that Ely develops in a coordinated, planned and integrated way. The Ely Masterplan can be viewed at www.eastcambs.gov.uk

Ely vision statement

“Ely will develop into a special 21st century cathedral city and Cambridgeshire Market Town, with a thriving city centre and great quality of life for its residents. A sustainable urban extension to the north of the city will provide new housing and small business opportunities as well as helping to support a range of existing and new community facilities – including a new leisure centre and multiplex cinema, new primary schools, a new transport interchange and employment hub at the station, and an extended Country Park. A new bypass will help to reduce congestion in the station area and aid economic growth. The city’s strategic location will be attractive to employers wishing to establish or expand on newly serviced employment areas on the outskirts of the city, offering a range of job opportunities to local people.”

Ely strategic objectives

1. Improve and extend the city centre, to meet the needs of an expanded population and provide a revitalised and vibrant hub that is attractive to residents and visitors alike.
2. Avoid the loss of Ely’s ‘distinctiveness’, with all new development responding positively to the unique character of this historic city.
3. Achieve sustainable growth and widen housing choice with an exemplar urban extension to the north.
4. Regenerate the area around the railway station to deliver a vibrant, mixed-use area.
5. Enable easy access to key destinations with improved walking and cycling routes and public transport services, including a new transport interchange at the railway station and southern bypass.
6. Support the retention and creation of local jobs to reduce the current high levels of out-commuting, by retaining and expanding existing employment sites such as Lancaster Way Business Park, developing new locations for business and supporting enterprise e.g. at North Ely and the Station Gateway area.

² Population for Ely city, Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group (mid-2010)

³ Dwellings in Ely city, Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group (mid-2010)

⁴ Distance travelled to work, East Cambridgeshire Lower Layer Super Output Areas 003A-003E, 004B, 004E, Census 2001

7. Provide enhanced infrastructure and facilities, from district-wide facilities to serve the wider rural community to local facilities of an appropriate scale to serve neighbourhoods.
8. Protect and enhance the historic environment, particularly in the city centre.
9. Protect and enhance the rural setting of Ely, including providing an extension to Ely Country Park.
10. Respond to climate change, taking opportunities to make the city resilient for the future including sustainable drainage systems and low carbon development.

Housing and employment strategy

Ely will be the focus for housing and employment growth over the next 20 years. This section gives an overview of the strategy and proposals for this growth. The following sections provide detail on specific development sites.

Housing

Some housing development is likely to take place within the built-up part of the city, on ‘infill’ sites. A development envelope has been drawn around Ely to define the built-up part of the city where housing development may be permitted. The purpose is to prevent sprawl into the open countryside. It is estimated there could be capacity for perhaps xx dwellings between 2011 and 2031 on infill sites. Development on infill sites will need to be in line with Policy xx.

There is an insufficient supply of infill sites to meet the levels of growth that are needed in the city, so a new housing development site is proposed on the northern edge of Ely – see Policy ELY 1. In addition, a number of mixed-use sites are proposed within and on the edge of the city – incorporating new housing in addition to commercial development. Details of these sites are set out in subsequent sections.

Development on allocation sites will need to be in line with Policies ELY 1 – ELY 9. In total around xxxx dwellings could be provided in Ely to 2031. It is hoped that the additional population will be able to support a comprehensive range of services and facilities and provide much needed investment in infrastructure. A summary of this total additional housing supply is set out in Table x.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Housing Target</i>	<i>Strategic Policy</i>
North Ely	3000	ELY 1
Station Gateway	TBC	ELY 5 and ELY 6
Paradise Quarter	64	ELY 3
The Grange	50	ELY 2
Other infill sites	TBC	See housing trajectory for details
TOTAL		

Table x.

Outside the development envelope

Outside the development envelope of Ely, housing will not normally be permitted – unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as essential dwellings for rural workers, or affordable housing. Housing schemes outside the development envelope will be assessed against Policies xx, xx and xxx, and other Local Plan policies as appropriate.

Employment

Businesses in Ely benefit from the city’s excellent transport links as well as its proximity to Cambridge and Newmarket – the internationally renowned horseracing capital. However, the Council’s Jobs Growth Strategy (2012) reveals that Ely has underperformed in relation to business development in recent years despite a planning policy framework that sought to focus growth in the market towns.

The Jobs Growth Strategy highlights the potential to target the high amenity, high value-added business sectors in the area around the railway station. Other opportunities to create jobs in Ely include: expanding the successful ‘start up businesses’ sector, promoting measures to facilitate homeworking, and expanding or intensifying employment at existing sites such as Lancaster Way or the Road and Rail Distribution Centre at Queen Adelaide.

The key economic challenges facing Ely are:

- The significant imbalance between homes and jobs. Out-commuting is a key concern with a large proportion of residents leaving Ely to work (Census, 2001). The Ely New Estates Survey 2007 suggests that the level of out-commuting from new estates may be as high as xx%.
- The lack of new services, facilities and infrastructure developed over the past decade.
- The shortage of high quality office accommodation.

To meet these economic challenges, the following jobs targets are recommended for strategic sites in Ely. These targets are based on broad estimates of the scale and type of employment that might be expected to come forward and are set lower than the estimated capacity of each site in order to provide for an oversupply which enables choice in the market:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Site area and recommended mix of uses</i>	<i>Potential number of jobs</i>	<i>Jobs Target</i>	<i>Strategic Policy</i>
Lancaster Way	40.4ha: 75% B8, 25% B2	2242	1973	ELY 8
North Ely	7.5ha (3 x 2.5ha): 50% B1, 25% B2, 25% D1	1511	1330	ELY 1
Station Gateway	2.8ha B1	899	791?	ELY 5 and ELY 6
Ely Road and Rail Distribution Centre	12ha: 90% B8, 10% B2	533	469	ELY 9
TOTAL			4563	

Table x.

In total, these sites could deliver around 4500 jobs to 2031, with an additional 200-400 jobs expected to come from an increase in homeworking. This could increase the level of self-containment within the city.

It is also important to try and prevent the loss of existing business premises and land, in order to support local economic growth. This is even more crucial in the context of the current economy where viability and profits margins are low for business development, particularly speculative schemes. The Council is keen to retain the existing stock of business land and premises in Ely. Proposals to re-use employment sites in Ely for other purposes will only be permitted in certain circumstances – as set out in Policy xxx.

Large-scale new employment development should be focused in the allocated sites – in order to facilitate their development, ensure suitable access, and minimise impact on the setting and character of Ely. However, small-scale employment schemes that come forward elsewhere on the

edge of Ely may be supported in principle – subject to Policies xx, xx and xx (as set out in Chapter x).

North Ely

The principle of developing an exemplar urban extension at North Ely was established in the Ely Masterplan (2010), with a ‘phase 1’ of the development identified as a preferred broad area of growth in the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy (2009).

The site is the only remaining opportunity to accommodate large-scale growth on the edge of Ely and its development is central to both the district-wide strategy and the strategy for Ely within the plan period. The development will integrate with existing communities and create a sustainable and balanced community to high design and environmental standards with its own local services and facilities including employment areas, schools, and extensive green space. It is estimated that there is potential for approximately 3,000 dwellings.

The site is in the ownership of two main landowners and covers some 210ha of greenfield land to the north of Ely, bounded to the west by the A10, to the north-east by the railway line and to the north-west by the small hamlet of Chettisham. The southern part of the site is adjacent to an area of Ministry of Defence land to the east of the Princess of Wales Hospital.

The North Ely Development Framework (adopted as Council policy in 2011) sets out eight broad development principles to guide the comprehensive development of North Ely to ensure that it becomes a sustainable and high quality new neighbourhood. Proposals should accord with all eight principles:

1. Integrating green space into the structure of the development

Green infrastructure will form an integral part of the development for the benefit of new and existing residents. The development will provide a significant area of open space, including an extension to Ely Country Park which will help to facilitate a continuous network of accessible greenspace around the perimeter of the city. Green spaces should permeate through the development, reinforcing the character of the area and providing a network of safe walking and cycling routes. The urban areas should relate to these adjoining green areas.

2. Creating strong links to the city and beyond

A sustainable transport strategy will be vital to reduce the impact of the development on the existing highway network and the environment. The development will be well connected to the city centre and other key destinations by a network of footpath and cycle routes and a high quality bus service. A new east-west link will be provided across the site, designed as a multifunctional tree-lined avenue that is capable of accommodating buses and higher traffic flows without functioning as a ‘bypass’.

3. Locating key facilities close to housing to maximise walking and cycling opportunities

A new mixed-use area in the centre of the development will provide a comprehensive range of local services and facilities including a primary school, a modest amount of retail / commercial space, community uses and public open space. Buildings and spaces should be designed to maximise social interaction, including the development of active frontages which have a positive relationship with the new east-west link road. The visual impact of car parking areas should be minimised. Two additional local centres should be delivered – in the Cam Drive area and the south-eastern corner of the development – to provide small-scale ‘top-up’ shopping facilities and

services within easy walking distance of homes. The centres should also be a focus for employment provision, strengthening their role as a vibrant community hub.

4. Providing a range of homes and community facilities for all ages

North Ely will need to meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents – this will include the provision of a wide range of housing types, sizes and tenures including affordable housing, self-build plots and a retirement community. Discussions with Cambridgeshire County Council suggest that there will be a need for 2 primary schools within North Ely. The schools will be a key element of the development and a focus for community activity. In addition, developers should explore the potential to provide additional post-16 education facilities within the development.

5. Reinforcing the special quality and character of Ely through high quality design

North Ely must be a well-designed, high quality development that responds to the unique character of the city. Some key elements of Ely's character include its walkability, and its network of green spaces – both large and small. Proposals that do not meet high standards of design will be resisted. Design Codes (or other mechanisms) will be established to give clear guidance to developers on the environmental and quality standards that the development is expected to achieve. Various methods should be adopted to create variety and distinctiveness in the built form including the use of different 'character areas', green infrastructure, landmark buildings, and incorporation of key views of Ely Cathedral and the wider landscape. Developers should also consider using different architects and design approaches as a way of achieving variety. The construction of a 'bland, characterless housing estate', which could be anywhere in the country will not be acceptable.

6. Offering a range of local jobs

The site will need to provide a range of employment uses to complement the scale of housing growth and add value to Ely's employment offer. It is estimated that at least xx hectares of employment land will need to be provided. The exact mix of employment uses will be determined through further masterplanning work but could include high quality offices, business incubation/start up space and live/work units. The creation of jobs from other uses such as education, retail and community facilities and the facilitation of homeworking should also be maximised. In total, the scheme offers the potential to deliver around 1,300 jobs.

7. Striving to meet the highest environmental standards

The scale of development suggests that larger-scale technologies such as Combined Heat and Power may be viable options for meeting the energy requirements of the sustainable urban extension. A Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Feasibility Study will need to be produced to explore the potential for these technologies to be incorporated into the scheme.

8. Grouping together facilities and encouraging shared services

Where appropriate, certain community facilities should be co-located with other appropriate uses in single multi-use buildings.

Delivery

Due to the scale of the development it is estimated that it could take around 20 years to complete. As such, the site will need to be delivered in phases and landowners will need to continue working with the Council to facilitate comprehensive delivery. Temporary trade-offs, where some components are put on hold while other priorities are delivered, will be acceptable provided that the long-term vision for each component is not compromised.

The Council is currently working with the landowners on the production of a Strategic Masterplan for the whole development area, to ensure that development takes place in an integrated and coordinated fashion. The Strategic Masterplan will establish the broad location of land uses, roads, services, open space and landscaping, and examine principles such as access and movement, built form and phasing. This document will need to be submitted to the District Council for approval before planning applications will be considered.

Following the agreement of the Strategic Masterplan, the Council will update the North Ely Development Framework and adopt it as a Supplementary Planning Document. These documents will demonstrate how the site will deliver the key aims of Policy ELY 1.

Policy ELY 1: Housing-led sustainable urban extension, North Ely

Approximately 210 hectares of land is allocated for a mixed-use urban extension, comprising:

- Up to 3,000 dwellings
- 2 Primary Schools
- Approximately xxha for employment, providing xxxxm² of employment space
- Approximately xx ha for a central district centre, providing retail and community uses
- Two small local centres, providing top-up shopping facilities
- Approximately xx ha for the extension of Ely Country Park

A Strategic Masterplan for the whole site will need to be submitted and approved by the District Council before planning applications will be considered.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Be exemplar, showcasing best practice of a quality that would be recognised nationally and that stands comparison with the city's existing heritage.
- Demonstrate a phased approach to development so that jobs, facilities and infrastructure are delivered alongside housing.
- Provide a range of dwelling types and sizes to deliver a balanced community over the lifetime of the development, including 20% lifetime homes and opportunities for self build properties.
- Provide an element of affordable housing (currently 30%) as required under Policy xx.
- Provide approximately xx ha of employment land. Demonstrate that the number of jobs that can be provided on-site has been maximised.
- Pay particular attention to layout, scale, height, design and massing to ensure that the development complements and reinforces the special quality and character of Ely. Proposals will be required to:
 - Comply with guidance in the North Ely Development Framework (2011) / subsequent SPD.
 - Comply with approved Design Codes (or other mechanisms employed) to ensure high quality and locally distinctive design.
 - Adopt a varied urban design/architectural approach across the site, with strong legibility and permeability e.g. through the creation of different 'neighbourhoods' and 'character areas', green infrastructure, landmark buildings, open spaces and incorporation of key views of Ely Cathedral and the wider fen landscape.
 - Address how development on the edge will successfully integrate with the existing built form and landscape including the Princess of Wales Hospital, Ely Country Park, and the wider fen landscape.
 - Create a clear green buffer between the development and Chettisham to maintain its distinctive identity and prevent coalescence.
 - Maximise opportunities for walking and cycling by giving careful consideration to the location of key uses. Demonstrate that all homes are within a 5-minute walk of a local/district centre.

- Integrate sufficient on plot, on-street and off-street car and cycle parking into the scheme without creating excessive areas of surface car parking, recognising that levels of car ownership are high.
- Provide a “heart” for the development in the form of a mixed-use area focused around the interface between Highflyer Avenue and Lynn Road, comprising sufficient convenience shopping facilities to meet the day-to-day needs of North Ely residents and a range of other community / employment uses which create vitality and generate footfall. Smaller local centres with corner shop type ‘top up’ shopping facilities should be provided in the Cam Drive area and the south-eastern corner of the site near the entry into the new Country Park.
- Provide 2 new primary schools, one in the Cam Drive area and one within the central mixed-use area.
- Explore the potential for the provision of a post-16 education facility within the site.
- Provide a minimum 30% of the total gross site area as green infrastructure / public open space by: bringing green space into the development, delivering an extension to Ely Country Park (incorporating a mix of habitats and uses), creating green buffers to Chettisham and the A10, locating allotments in accessible locations and maximising opportunities to incorporate small-scale features including green roofs, living walls, street trees and small irregular green spaces. Maximise opportunities to make green spaces multifunctional e.g. recreation and health, food production, biodiversity, and climate change mitigation.
- Create strong transport links to the city centre and other key attractors such as the station, proposed Leisure Village and Lancaster Way by incorporating safe and attractive walking and cycling routes and high quality public transport infrastructure. The main east-west link between Thistle Corner and the A10 should take the form of a tree-lined avenue (Highflyer Avenue), fronted by development.
- Complete a feasibility assessment of the potential for significant onsite renewable energy provision (above any provision required to meet national standards). Where the feasibility assessment demonstrates that onsite renewable energy provision is deliverable, this will be required as part of the development.
- Demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in the foul sewage network.
- Demonstrate that potential noise impacts from the A10 can be adequately mitigated.
- Comply with the other policies of the Local Plan.

City centre sites

Ely has a historic city centre which provides a range of shops, pubs, restaurants and other services. The current key attractors for local residents are Waitrose and various markets, plus Ely Cathedral which attracts around 250,000 visitors a year. The city centre is focused along the High Street, Market Street, Market Place and the Cloisters shopping precinct. Ely Cathedral lies to the south of the core shopping area and leisure facilities are currently located within the Paradise area to the north.

The healthcheck carried out by the Council as part of the 2012 Retail Study indicates the following key challenges facing Ely city centre:

- Although the proportion of vacant units in Ely city centre is low compared to the national average, the natural churn of retailers indicates that it has not been immune from the effects of the downturn and increased competition from Internet retailers and competitor centres. Furthermore, the majority of businesses lost between 2010-11 were independent traders.
- Ely ranks below the national average within leisure provision, particularly hotels/guesthouses, pubs and restaurants. There are also a number of comparison uses with little or no

representation including childrens & infant wear, fitted furniture, gardens & equipment and office suppliers.

- Retailers' size requirements for new stores have increased significantly in recent years. However, Ely is a compact city with the medieval layout still clearly visible and there are limited opportunities to accommodate larger shops. As such there is unfulfilled demand from retailers wanting to move into Ely – in 2011, 12 retailers expressed an interest for a total of c.25,000 sq ft of space.
- Whilst the car parking is well located in relation to the centre it does become congested at peak times, primarily on market days and Saturdays, leading to congestion.

The Council's vision is for the city centre to be expanded and improved, offering opportunities to bring additional people into the city centre, encouraging a more lively evening economy as well as a more viable retail offer. The city centre should remain a focus for A1 retail uses since they draw pedestrians. All proposals for development within Ely City Centre should accord with Policy ELY xx. It will also be vital to ensure that any new retail developments developed outside the city centre adhere to Policy xx which seeks to protect the vitality and viability of the city centre.

The Council's 2012 Retail Study identifies a need for an additional 6373m² of comparison (non-food) retail floorspace and 995m² of convenience (food) retail floorspace within Ely to 2031. However, these estimates are based on maintaining the current leakage rates⁵: 76% for comparison and 44% for convenience spend.

Four potential redevelopment areas were identified for city centre expansion following the Ely Masterplan (2010) as follows:

- The Grange, Nutholt Lane
- Police/ambulance stations, Nutholt Lane
- Paradise area
- Waitrose

Further work on the deliverability and suitability of the options established the Grange site as the preferred option. Details of this site are set out in the following section.

The following floorspace targets are proposed for strategic sites in Ely. In total, these sites could deliver in the region of xxxxm² of comparison floorspace and xxxxm² of new convenience floorspace. The deliverability of this retail strategy will be reassessed as appropriate throughout the plan period.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Potential Comparison Floorspace (m²)</i>	<i>Potential Convenience Floorspace (m²)</i>	<i>Strategic Policy</i>
The Grange, Nutholt Lane	4200	0	ELY 2
North Ely (district and local centres)	?	?	ELY 1
TOTAL			

Table x.

Retail-led / mixed use allocation – The Grange, Nutholt Lane

The Grange site covers an area of approximately 0.7ha and is located in a prime position to the west of the city centre. It is defined by two of Ely's primary strategic streets: Lynn Road to the west and Nutholt Lane to the north. To the south, the site provides pedestrian links to Market Street, one of the two main retail streets in the city. The site lies within Ely Conservation Area.

⁵ In retail, leakage occurs when members of a community spend money outside that community. For example, at present 76% of the money spent on non-food goods by the Ely community is not spent within the city.

The site is currently occupied by the offices of East Cambridgeshire District Council (The Grange), the former Ely Magistrates Court (Sessions House), the Job Centre and three small ancillary buildings. The Grange surface car park provides 95 spaces. To the east the site abuts small-scale residential development - the scheme will need to have regard to these sensitive uses.

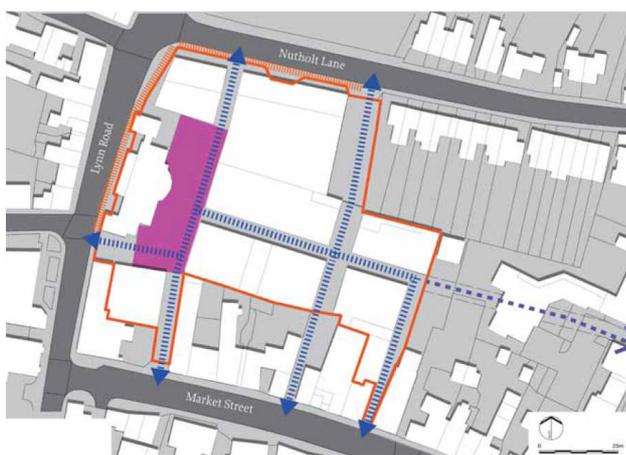
The majority of the site is owned by the District Council although Sessions House is currently owned by the Government⁶ and the Job Centre site is privately owned.

The Grange site offers a good opportunity to extend the city centre. One of the main spatial challenges of redeveloping The Grange is to accommodate a contemporary retail-led development with a demand for larger scale retail floorplates in a sensitive, fine-grained historic environment.

It is estimated that the site could provide 50 residential units (or office accommodation) and approximately 4,200m² of retail / food and drink floorspace – approximately 50% of Ely’s identified retail need. The timing of development of The Grange site will require the prior relocation of the District Council offices and coordination with the development of other potential city centre sites.

The ‘Development Framework’ in the diagram below indicates how the site could be sensitively developed. It shows the development blocks, key pedestrian routes and a new area of public open space to the rear of the Sessions House. Any redevelopment scheme will need to reflect these spatial requirements and accord with the key development principles that are set out in Policy ELY 2 below.

The second diagram shown below is an illustration of how the redevelopment of the site could be achieved. It proposes a mixed-use retail-led development, incorporating an anchor store (1500-2500m²) supported by a mix of smaller retail units. Residential flats or offices would be provided on the upper floors of the smaller retail units, but are not shown on this diagram.



Development Framework showing key pedestrian routes and development blocks



Illustrative concept for the area (ground floor land uses)

A comprehensive Masterplan will also be required prior to approval of a scheme, in order to reflect the outcome of further technical work on viability, deliverability, and design aspects. This should build on the Development Framework and reflect its key principles and elements.

HMRC has produced a report which evaluates options for reuse⁷ of Sessions House to support its subsequent sale. Four options were considered to be suitable for this historic building: residential /

⁶ Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government HM Courts Service

⁷ Ely Magistrates’ Court – Conservation and Development Plan (January 2012)

café (similar to that proposed in the conceptual masterplan), offices, civic use, e.g. museum or Tourist Information Centre and charitable trust / residential. It is likely that a scheme will come forward independently in due course, however, the wider proposals should take account of any emerging plans for Sessions House.

Policy ELY 2: Retail-led / mixed use allocation, The Grange, Nutholt Lane

Approximately xx hectares of land is allocated for a retail-led / mixed use development on land at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, comprising:

- Approximately 4200m² of comparison retail floorspace
- Approximately 50 dwellings, mainly provided in flats above (or a mix of dwellings and offices)
- A new public open space to the rear of Sessions House

Redevelopment schemes should maximise the provision of A1 comparison (non-food) retail floorspace whilst adhering to the requirements below. Redevelopment will require public car parking to be relocated offsite; it must be demonstrated that equivalent provision will be delivered either on the Paradise site, another appropriate centrally located site or mitigated through other measures.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Accord with the key spatial principles in the development framework diagram.
- Incorporate a larger floorplate retail unit within the scheme to maximise development potential.
- Enhance Ely Conservation Area and be sympathetic to the setting, appearance and character of the historic setting and nearby Listed Buildings (particularly Ely Museum and Sessions House).
- Improve the setting of Sessions House through the creation of an attractive new public open space to the south and east of the building.
- Have particular regard to the layout, scale, height, design and massing of buildings, in order to provide a high quality scheme that enhances the city centre and minimises impact on neighbouring residential uses. Appropriate storey height will generally be 2-3 storeys.
- Maximise the number of pedestrian links, as indicated on the development framework diagram, including a minimum of two north-south links from Market Street to Nutholt Lane, a link to Lynn Road to the east and future provision for a link to the east.
- Provide vehicular service access off Nutholt Lane, towards the east side of the site.
- Incorporate residential development on upper floors as appropriate. An element of affordable housing (currently 30%) will be required under Policy xx.
- Comply with the other policies of the Local Plan.

Housing-led mixed-use allocation – Paradise area

The Paradise area lies off Nutholt Lane to the north of the city centre. The site is currently occupied by the Paradise Sports Centre, public swimming pool, City of Ely Bowls Club and Newnham Street public car park which provides a total of 178 spaces. To the north is a public open space known locally as 'Paradise Field' which currently functions as a football and cricket pitch. The surrounding streets are primarily low to medium density residential. The site lies within Ely Conservation Area.

The ownership of the area is complex. Both Newnham Street car park and the Paradise Pool are owned by the District Council and are available for development in the short-term (the pool is currently on lease until 2015). The Paradise Sports Centre is also owned by the Council, however,

this is subject to a lease until 2085. The Bowls Club is privately owned. The Sports Centre and Bowls Club are in active use and it is not clear when they may become available for development.

The District Council has aspirations for the area to be comprehensively developed as a mixed-use scheme incorporating residential, car parking and possibly community uses. Housing is considered to be the most appropriate primary use for the Paradise Pool/Newnham Street car park site given its location in a primarily residential area whilst the Bowls Club site could be suitable for a multi-storey car park. The Paradise field would be retained as a key community facility and area of amenity space.

Other important considerations for any comprehensive scheme would include:

- Provision of improved pedestrian links to the city centre.
- Ensuring that development is appropriate for Ely Conservation Area and does not obstruct key views of the cathedral.
- Provision of a positive frontage to overlook Paradise field.
- Explore provision of a new vehicular access to the site from Deacon's Lane.
- Provision of multi-storey car parking, in order to support the city centre.

The delivery timescales for parts of the area under Third Party control are uncertain. The policy below provides a vision for the area and sets out key principles which redevelopment schemes for all or part of the area will need to accord with.

Policy ELY 3: A Vision for Paradise area

The Paradise area will be redeveloped as a mixed-use scheme, providing residential uses, car parking and community uses as appropriate. The development will enhance Ely Conservation Area and be sympathetic to the setting, appearance and character of the historic setting including incorporating views of the cathedral. New pedestrian links to the city centre will be provided and a new vehicular access will be provided from Deacon's Lane if feasible. Multi-storey car parking will be provided to support the city centre. The total area of Paradise Field will be retained and development will create a positive frontage to this important open space.

Ely Market Square

Ely's market square lies at the heart of the city, providing a dual role as a shopping destination and a civic square with weekly markets. The Council will support proposals which will enhance these important events to ensure that they remain attractive and competitive.

The square is a focus for activity on market days but can seem unused and uninviting at other times. Streetscape improvements were undertaken in the area in 2002 which have enhanced the environment with new street furniture. However, the current 1960s building overlooking the market square has long been considered to be unsympathetic to the historic character of central Ely and would benefit from redevelopment. The District Council will continue to work with the owner of the existing Market Place building on the potential to undertake improvement works.

Policy ELY 4: Ely Market Square

The District Council will support proposals that improve the character and appearance of the Market Square and its function as a market and activity hub for Ely.

Station Gateway

The Station Gateway is the area on the southern edge of the city around the railway station. The site covers an area of approximately 12.3 hectares and is bounded by the River Ouse to the east, the Cambridge business park to the west, Ely railway station to the south, and residential development to the north. The railway station and the area to the north of Station Road lie within Ely Conservation Area. In addition to the railway station, the area currently contains a Tesco Superstore, Standens Engineering, a car showroom and garages, vacant industrial units and other commercial enterprises.

The railway and the A142 have determined much of its character as an employment area and a public transport link for the city. However, this development is unsympathetic and blights the first impression of the city for thousands of rail and road users each day. Important views of the cathedral are framed by busy surface car parking and industrial uses block both views and direct access to the attractive riverside. In addition, congestion caused by the level crossing on Station Road isolates the station and makes the area uninviting for cyclists and pedestrians.

There is an opportunity to make some major improvements to the area. The appearance of the Station Gateway could be improved by the redevelopment of selected sites, and significant improvements could be made to the environment with the provision of a bypass. Details of the proposed bypass are provided on page x.

Transport infrastructure development will play a dominant role in the considerations for development of the area. A new bypass, as proposed, will remove the heavy industrial traffic from Angel Drove and Station Road and reduce congestion. This will address existing severance issues by allowing greater pedestrian and cycle access to the city centre and river. In turn these environmental improvements will make the site more attractive to investors, enabling a high quality redevelopment that would support the long-term sustainable expansion of Ely.

The Station Gateway is in multiple ownerships, so sites may come forward at different times. It will be vital to ensure that the redevelopment of each area contributes to the realisation of the overall vision. As such, Policy ELY 6 divides the site into five key areas. The Council will expect landowners to work together and submit a comprehensive masterplan for the relevant area. Development schemes will need to accord with the general policy for the whole area as set out in Policy ELY 5 plus the relevant part of Policy ELY 6.

The District Council is currently working on the production of a Masterplan/Development Brief for the whole development area, to establish the broad location of land uses, open space and landscaping, and principles such as access and movement and built form. Once completed this will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and used to guide planning application decisions on individual proposals.

Policy ELY 5: Employment-led mixed-use allocation, Station Gateway

Vision: The Station Gateway area will be transformed into a vibrant mixed-use area which provides an attractive gateway to the city. Existing industrial uses will be relocated where possible and the sites comprehensively redeveloped with high quality offices and some apartments framing views of the cathedral. The station will be enhanced to provide transport interchange facilities and complementary small-scale retail. Sensitively designed multi-storey car parks will provide parking for commuters and visitors. New pedestrian links will draw people to the riverside, Angel Drove and into the rest of the city.

Approximately 12.3 hectares of land are allocated for a high quality mixed-use development comprising:

- Approximately xx hectares of office space
- A new public transport interchange at the railway station
- Approximately xxxx m² of retail, linked to the redevelopment of the railway station interchange
- Approximately xx hectares of leisure
- Approximately xx residential units
- Approximately xx hectares of public open space, including public art
- Parking for approximately xxx cars and xxx cycles

Development proposals for all sites within the Station Gateway area will be expected to:

- Comply with guidance in the Ely Station Gateway SPD.
- Comply with the relevant part of Policy ELY 6 which relates to particular areas.
- Support the creation of a public transport interchange at the railway station.
- Have particular regard to the layout, scale, height, design and massing of buildings, in order to create views and increase accessibility to the River Ouse and Cathedral, minimise harm to Ely Conservation Area, and integrate development into the surrounding urban fabric.
- Support the creation of a successful mixed-use environment that is easy to navigate and attractive to both visitors and residents as a place to visit.
- Develop new attractive, flexible and usable public spaces at key locations including xxxxx.
- Support the provision of a network of new pedestrian and cycle routes to the Angel Drove and riverside area to link with new development and promote the enjoyment and use of the river and park, including additional cycle storage and parking and improved signage.
- Provide easily accessible car parking which does not dominate the character of the area.
- Provide an element of affordable housing (currently 30%) for any housing element as required under Policy xx.
- Maximise development value through high quality design and by exploiting views of the river and cathedral.
- Demonstrate that any flood risk can be adequately mitigated.
- Comply with the other policies of the Local Plan.

Policy ELY 6: Station Gateway visions by area

The District Council will support proposals for individual sites which deliver development in line with the vision for the area as set out in Policy ELY 5 and accord with the following site-specific visions/requirements:

Area 1: Railway station, Tesco supermarket and petrol station

This area should incorporate a new transport interchange for pedestrians, cyclists, buses and taxis at the railway station, along with associated car parking and small-scale retail facilities. There is an opportunity to create a new public space, taking advantage of long distance views of the cathedral. The wider site should be developed for high quality offices and apartments, and possibly an element of leisure.

Area 2: Hanson concrete, Westmill Foods, EMG Ford

Utilising the strong frontage along Angel Drove, this area should be developed for employment uses and apartments. It will be important for proposals to respect the sensitive location adjoining the County Wildlife Site.

Area 3: Standens

This area should be developed for high quality residential development, offering views of the riverside. There is potential for restaurants and cafés to occupy ground floor units along the river frontage. Strong pedestrian links should be provided to allow people to navigate easily between the station and the riverside/city centre.

Area 4: Angel Drove car park

The commuter car park will be redeveloped for employment, potentially a new business enterprise centre such as e-space. Parking for commuters will be reprovided in multi-storey car parking within Area 1.

Area 5: Octagon Business Park

The site will accommodate appropriate employment-generating uses. Any proposals containing retail uses will need to accord with Policy x and demonstrate through a Retail Impact Assessment that there will be no adverse impact on Ely city centre. Development will provide an attractive setting for this entrance into Ely, including the creation of a strong frontage along Angel Drove and consideration of the relationship of development to the Cambridgeshire Business Park. Substantial landscaping will reinforce the fen character of the site and minimise the visual impact of any car parking areas. A vehicular/pedestrian/cycle link to the Cambridgeshire Business Park will be incorporated and appropriate provision will be made for buses and taxis.

Downham Road sports and leisure hub

The Downham Road site lies on the north-western edge of Ely, close to large areas of housing in the north of the city (both existing and proposed). The site extends to approximately 4.9ha and is within the ownership of East Cambridgeshire District Council. A further 3.1ha of land to the south-west is also within the ownership of the Council.

The area already represents a major focus for leisure and sporting activity within Ely, offering opportunities to play rugby, football, hockey, tennis, squash and golf. The District Council's vision is to build on these existing facilities and create a 'sports and leisure hub' for the district with a new district-wide leisure centre and multiplex cinema. This will benefit to the economy of Ely through additional visitors, but also improve social wellbeing in terms of promoting healthy lifestyles.

The aim is to create a complete destination, where visitors can participate, eat, drink and relax, moving freely from one venue to another. There will be a need to give due consideration to the inter-relationship of different spaces within the site. It is therefore likely that a site-wide masterplan will need to be produced in advance of development.

Sports provision

There is an identified need for a larger public swimming pool and sports centre within Ely to cater for the increased population in the district⁸. The existing Paradise Pool is reaching the end of its life and is in need of replacement, however, there is insufficient space on the site to deliver the size of facility that is now required for the district. Following a thorough process of assessment, evaluation and consultation, it was concluded that the new leisure centre would be best located on land adjacent to Ely Rugby Club at Downham Road.

Planning permission was granted in 2010 for a new district-wide leisure centre, providing public sport and wet/dry leisure facilities including a main pool, studio pool and splash pool, fitness suite and flexible sports hall that could also host occasional concerts or events. The A10 barrier can be mitigated by the provision of a well-designed underpass. The proposals will allow the delivery of a new and much needed facility within the short term whilst avoiding disruption to services on the existing Paradise site.



Conceptual proposals, approved scheme

⁸ Sports Facilities and Open Spaces Assessment (2005)

Cinema

There is strong public support for a new cinema in Ely. The Council carried out extensive public consultation on four potential site options in 2012 and Downham Road emerged as the preferred location.

It is likely that the site will need to be reconfigured to accommodate both the leisure centre and cinema – if this is found to be the case, the District Council will work with developers on the completion of a site-wide masterplan.

Policy ELY 7: Leisure allocation, land at Downham Road

Approximately 8ha of land is allocated for sports and leisure uses on land at Downham Road, to include:

- A district-wide leisure centre.
- A multiplex cinema with a minimum of 5 screens.
- Complementary secondary uses such as cafés and restaurants, appropriate to the proposed role of the site as a district sports and leisure hub. Proposals will need to demonstrate that these uses will not harm the vitality or viability of Ely city centre.

If the leisure centre needs to be re-sited to accommodate the proposed cinema, then a masterplan will be for the whole site will need to be prepared and submitted alongside a planning application.

Lancaster Way Business Park

Lancaster Way Business Park lies about a mile to the south-west of the city. It is a successful location for employment, and provides industrial, warehousing and office uses on the site of the former RAF Witchford airbase.

The business park has seen significant expansion over recent years and its further development is a key element of the Council's employment strategy for Ely. The site is capable of providing a range of employment opportunities through the provision of new flexible high quality employment space. This will allow choice to companies looking to expand or move into the district, provide local jobs and reduce out-commuting. Accordingly, the Core Strategy (2009) proposed a 30ha extension to the south-east of the business park.

In line with the proposed allocation, outline planning permission to extend the business park by a further 36.6ha for a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses has been granted – capacity to provide an additional 2500-3200 jobs. This development will make Lancaster Way one of the largest business parks in the region.

The allocation for the Lancaster Way site has been extended to reflect the area that has planning permission, providing certainty for its continuing employment use.



Lancaster Way Business Park, showing the approved extension site

Policy ELY 8: Employment allocation, Lancaster Way

Approximately xx hectares of land are allocated for employment at Lancaster Way, to include: xxx, to be developed in accordance with the planning permission.

Ely Road and Rail Distribution Centre, Queen Adelaide

Ely Road and Rail Distribution Centre is located in Queen Adelaide, approximately 1.2 miles north-east of Ely city centre. The site extends to approximately xxha and is owned by The Potter Group, who provide storage and logistics services across the UK.

The site benefits from a direct link to the mainline rail network at an important interchange point within the East Anglia rail network. Currently the site provides 24,000m² of rail-connected warehousing, extensive hard standing and office accommodation.

An additional 12ha of land within the site is available for development. This area was previously used for the storage of motor vehicles and has an authorised use for general storage and distribution (B8 employment). Due to the historic use of the site, a Contamination Assessment will be required prior to development to demonstrate that any risk can be adequately mitigated.

The site is located in a sensitive position in terms of nature conservation following the designation of 'Ely Pits and Meadows' SSSI. This comprises much of the land to the west of the site (known locally as 'Roswell Pits') and land opposite the site (known locally as the 'beet pits'). In addition, the site is bordered by the River Great Ouse to the south-east, which is designated as a County Wildlife Site. It will be important for any development to respect this setting, and ensure no adverse impact on the protected areas.

Access to the site by road is currently from the east, via a private road bridge over the river. A secondary access into the site runs from Ely Road to the north of the site. A public footpath adjoins part of the southern boundary of the site, providing an important link between Ely and two long distance footpaths – the Fen Rivers Way and the Hereward Way.

Policy ELY 9: Employment allocation, Ely Road and Rail Distribution Centre

Approximately xx hectares of land are allocated for employment development.

Development proposals within the allocated area will be expected to:

- Minimise impact on the adjacent County Wildlife Site, SSSI and Ely Country Park by providing appropriate landscaping treatment.
- Demonstrate that any contamination on the site can be adequately mitigated.
- Provide any necessary highway improvements to nearby roads.

Comply with the other policies of the Local Plan.

Other infrastructure and community facilities

Ely needs to be served by appropriate levels of infrastructure and facilities, in order to ensure the quality of people's lives and prevent unnecessary travel. This includes infrastructure such as water, energy, sewage treatment works, and roads – and community facilities such as schools, open space, health, and sport and recreation facilities.

As outlined in Chapter x, the District Council will continue to work with infrastructure providers to enable the delivery of necessary infrastructure and facilities. The District Council will also seek to secure planning obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy monies from developers towards new infrastructure and facilities required as a result of new development.

It will also be important to protect existing community facilities. As set out in Chapter x, the loss of community facilities will be resisted under Policy xx. Proposals for new community development that benefit Ely will be supported in principle, subject to Policies xx and xx.

The key future infrastructure and service requirements for Ely are set out in table xx. These have been identified through technical work, discussions with infrastructure providers, and community consultation – and are linked to the estimated future levels of growth in Ely over the next 20 years.

Transport

In the face of continuing growth, the challenge presented to Ely's transport network is to sustainably support an economically vibrant, multi-functional city while preserving the unique character and heritage that gives Ely its identity. The compact nature of the city, particularly in the central historic areas, acts as a constraint on the width of carriageway on many roads. This limits the scope for providing additional on-road infrastructure, such as dedicated cycle lanes and on-street parking bays.

Ely has several long and short stay car parks that are managed by the District Council. Parking is currently provided free of charge, however, there are plans to introduce charging. The majority of these car parks are clustered around the city centre, providing around 1,200 spaces. In addition, 200 paid for spaces are provided at Angel Drove, designed to accommodate railway station commuter traffic and free up space in the city centre car parks for visitors and shoppers.

Ely is well connected to the national railway network, with services running regularly to a variety of destinations. Bus services connect Ely with a number of the villages in its rural hinterland. Only a small number of services currently run commercially and the rest are under contract to the County

Council, and it is clear that there are pressures on subsidies. Several of the contracted services are only available on market day (Thursday). There is no bus station in Ely but the main bus stops in Market Street are served by all of the bus routes.

Walking and cycling is vital to the delivery of a sustainable transport system. The compact nature of Ely and its relatively flat topography make it ideal for walking and cycling. However, there is a shortage of cycle infrastructure and a necessity for cycle routes to be heavily reliant upon the existing road system. Current levels of walking and cycling are low – in 2007, a study estimated that 80% of movements were by cars and taxis, 14% were goods vehicles and just 4% were soft modes – 3% walking and 1% cycling⁹. There is potential to increase these low levels of cycling.

The key transport challenges facing Ely are¹⁰:

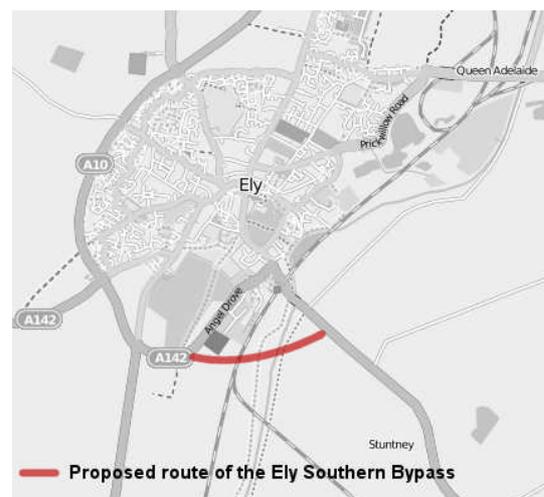
- High reliance on travel by car and low rates of cycling and walking despite the compact nature of the city, and its relatively flat topography.
- Lack of a joined up cycle network.
- Limited cycle parking in key locations.
- Lack of easily available bus route and timetable information.
- Poor bus stop infrastructure, such as a lack of seating, shelters and level boarding access.
- Problems with heavy commercial vehicles using the roads particularly in the east of the city.
- Congestion in the south of the city caused by the level crossing.
- Pressures on car parking at the station and city centre

Ely Railway Crossing

The A142 passes under the railway line via a low bridge, with lorries having to use a level crossing to the east. The level crossing is currently closed for around 35 minutes per hour and lorries queuing for the crossing block access to the underpass for other vehicles. On an average weekday 15,000 vehicles use this road, including 1,200 lorries¹¹ - causing significant rush hour delays.

Congestion at the crossing will increase in the absence of intervention as Network Rail plans to increase passenger and freight services through Ely. In addition, the underpass has the third highest vehicle strike rate in the country. Collisions result in disruption to the railway, as well as traffic, as the railway must be closed after each strike to inspect the bridge.

Enabling growth to take place in Ely without undue congestion is essential to the future success of both the city and the region. The Council has ambitions to redevelop the station area as a key gateway to the city (Policies ELY 5 and ELY 6), including a new public transport interchange to promote greater use of sustainable travel modes. The unwelcoming environment is currently hindering this opportunity; in addition to causing congestion, the high volume of traffic creates severance between the railway station and the city centre for pedestrians and cyclists.



⁹ Cambridgeshire County Council Traffic Monitoring Report, 2007

¹⁰ Ely Market Town Transport Strategy, 2008

¹¹ A142 Ely Railway Crossing Option Assessment Report, Cambridgeshire County Council, June 2012

In September 2012, the County Council considered five options including an underpass, traffic stacking system and three different routes for a bypass. It was agreed that the best solution is the construction of a bypass spanning the River Great Ouse and railway to link Stuntney Causeway to Angel Drove (above). This would reduce journey times and create a road network which supports the long-term expansion of Ely.



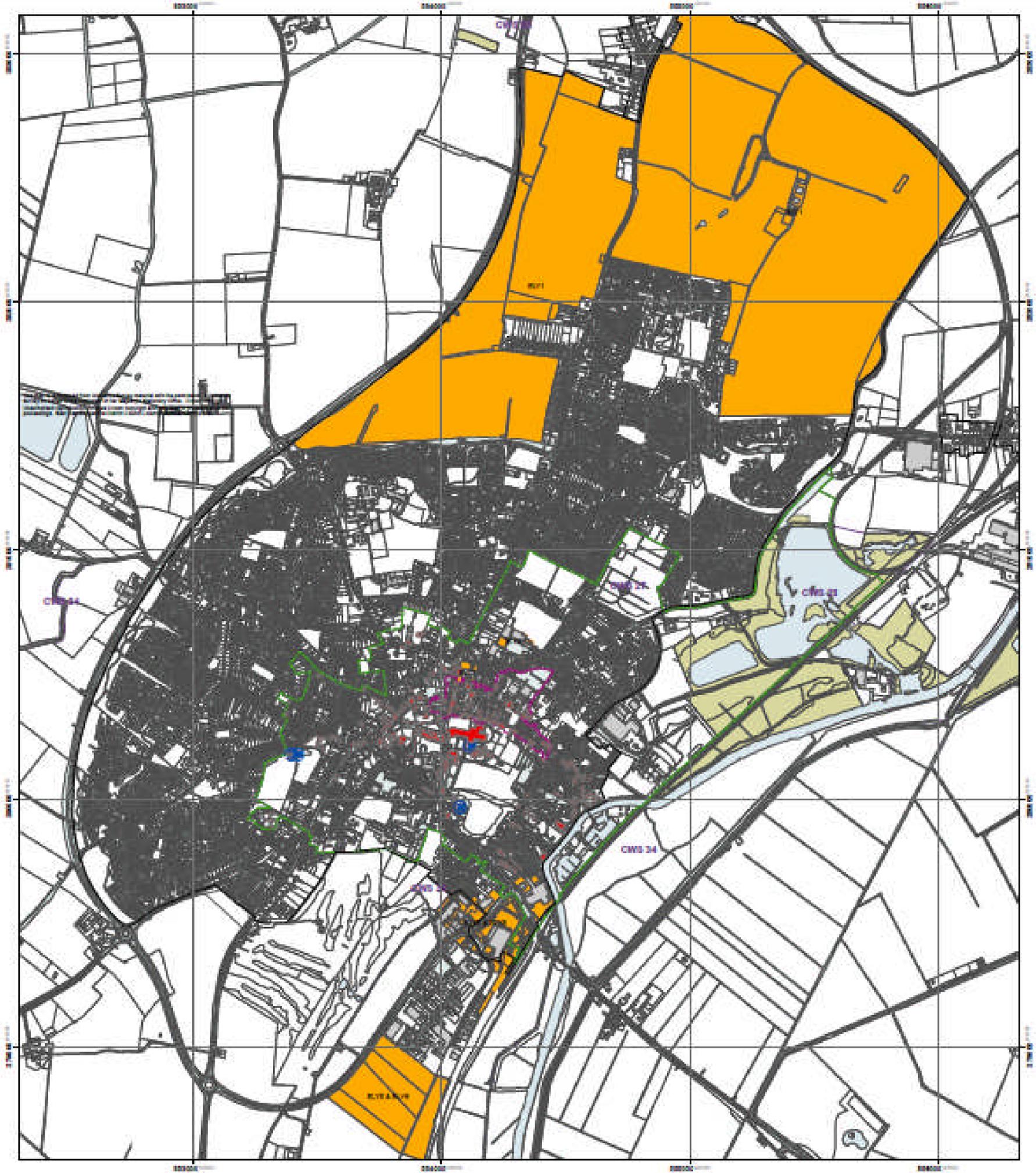
Route B photomontage view, Ely Setting Study (June 2012)

Table x.

<i>Infrastructure / facility</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Provider</i>	<i>Estimated delivery date</i>	<i>Details</i>
Upgrade to sewage treatment facilities	Sewage Treatment Works, Angel Drove	Anglian Water	2015	The Core Strategy proposed the relocation of the Cresswells Lane Sewage Treatment Works to the north of Ely. However, further investigation has concluded that relocating the works would not be a viable option. Upgrades will therefore be carried out the existing works on Angel Drove. Development proposals before 2015 will need to be supported by Anglian Water.
New primary schools	North Ely	County Council	TBC	Facilitated as part of the North Ely development (see Policy ELY 1)
New pre-school facilities and nurseries	North Ely	County Council	TBC	Facilitated as part of the North Ely development (see Policy ELY 1), as appropriate
New post-16 facilities	North Ely	County Council	TBC	Facilitated as part of the North Ely development (see Policy ELY 1), as appropriate
Princess of Wales Hospital				NHS Cambridgeshire plan to replace the existing Princess of Wales Hospital with a larger Primary Care facility, providing suitable modern accommodation. The next stage is to calculate spatial requirements, followed by the production of a masterplan by the NHS to identify the best location on the existing site for the new facility.
Extension to Ely Country Park	North Ely	ECDC / Ely City Council	TBC	Facilitated as part of the North Ely development (see Policy ELY 1)
New open space and play areas	Various	Developers	Various	Facilitated as part of new housing development schemes
New roundabout on the A10	A10 / North Ely	Developers / County Council	TBC	Facilitated as part of the North Ely development (see Policy ELY 1)

<i>Infrastructure / facility</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Provider</i>	<i>Estimated delivery date</i>	<i>Details</i>
New transport interchange	Railway station	County Council / Network Rail / ECDC	TBC	Future funding needs to be secured. CIL contributions could assist.
Streetscape enhancements in city centre	Market Place	ECDC / Ely City Council / developers	TBC	Funding to be secured. Could be facilitated via town centre development schemes or CIL.
Improvements to the pedestrian / cycle network	Various	County Council	Various	Funding to be secured. Could be facilitated via specific development schemes or CIL.

Spatial Strategy for Ely (Map xx)



Key

- Development Envelope
- Employment allocation
- Housing and Mixed use allocations
- Local Plan policy
- Town Centre Boundaries, 05
- Conservation Area
- Listed Building
- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Historic Parks & Gardens
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Area of International Importance for Wildlife
- Historic Parks & Gardens
- County Wildlife Site

Map xx
 Ely
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 1:10,000