

WITCHAM



1. Settlement characteristics

Witcham is a small village located approximately 6 miles to the west of the market town of Ely and close to the settlements of Mepal, Sutton and Wentworth. The name of the village is likely to have been derived from the term ‘Wych Elms’ due to the trees which grow locally.

The village is centred around a cross roads and contains a number of listed buildings the majority of which date from the 13th and 14th centuries. It includes a designated Conservation Area centred around the High Street.

Witcham has a limited range of facilities – there is a village hall, a part time post office service, a church, recreation area including a play area and a public house, but there are no shops within the village.

The main features of the village are shown on map xxx.

2. Key statistics

| <i>Witcham</i> | |
|--|--|
| <i>Population¹</i> | 460 |
| <i>Dwellings² (Est)</i> | 190 |
| <i>New dwellings built 2001-2011 (net)</i> | 12 |
| <i>Estimated new dwellings 2012-2031</i> | |
| <i>Employment³</i> | 14% work from home, 50% travel up to 20km to work, 45% |

¹ Population for Witcham Parish (mid-2010), Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group

² Estimate based on dwellings in Witcham Parish (mid-2010), Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group

| | |
|---|--|
| <i>Existing public transport services</i> | travel over 20km to work Regular services to Ely (Mon-Sat) (as at 2012) |
|---|--|

3. Housing

Witcham is likely to continue to grow at a slow rate, with new housing being built on suitable 'infill' sites within the village. No new housing allocation sites are proposed on the edge of Witcham.

A 'development envelope' has been drawn around Witcham to define the built-up part of the village where infill development may be permitted. The purpose is to prevent sprawl into the open countryside. Development on infill sites will need to be in line with Policy xx.

Outside the development envelope, 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 Policy xx and other Local Plan policies as appropriate.

4. Employment

There are several businesses in Witcham including, a window and conservatory installer, turf supplier and a Bridal Design business. The District Council is keen to retain the stock of business land and premises in order to support local economic growth. Proposals to re-use employment sites for other purposes will only be permitted in certain circumstances (see Policy xx).

No new employment allocation sites are proposed on the edge of Witcham. However, suitable new employment proposals within or on the edge of the village will be supported in principle, subject to Policies xx, xx and xx.

5. Infrastructure and community facilities

Residents in Witcham have indicated a desire for improvements to the village hall, pedestrian/cycle routes and the existing play area as their top 3 priorities. A full list of priorities is set out in the table below.

| | <i>Priority</i> | <i>Suggestions</i> |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Improvements to the village/community hall | Further development and refurbishment including sport changing facilities |
| 2 | Improvements to pedestrian/cycle routes | Parish Council supporting A142 cycleway working party in completing the link between Witcham Toll and Wentworth to complete the cycleway between Sutton and Ely. |
| 3 | Improvements to the existing play area | Refurbishment and maintenance of existing play area necessary for the future. |
| 4 | Improvements to public transport/community transport | Cambridgeshire County review and consultation on only bus service for village following removal of subsidy. |

³ Distance travelled to work, East Cambridgeshire 005B Lower Layer Super Output Area (covering Mepal and Witcham), Census 2001

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| 5 | New play areas | |
| 6 | Improvements to sports ground/open space | |

The current community facilities in Witcham (including the village hall and recreation area) contribute to the quality of people's lives. The District Council will work with the County Council and Parish Council to secure funding, including developer contributions, to improve facilities wherever possible. The loss of community facilities will also be resisted under Policy xx. Proposals for new community development that benefits the village will be supported in principle, subject to Policies xx and xx.

The District Council will also continue to work in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council to try to ensure that the community retains its current levels of accessibility, and encourage self-sufficient transport services such as community transport.

6. Spatial strategy for Witcham (Map x)



Key

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Development Envelope | Conservation Area |
| Housing allocation | County Wildlife Site |
| Employment allocation | Area of International Importance for Wildlife |
| Scheduled Ancient Monument | Listed Building |
| Historic Parks & Gardens | Site of Special Scientific Interest |



**Map x
Witcham**

N



1:10,000