



# EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

THE GRANGE, NUTHOLT LANE,  
ELY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB7 4EE  
Telephone: 01353 665555

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## MEETING: COUNTRY PARK WORKING PARTY

TIME: 6.00pm

DATE: Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2009

VENUE: Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, Cambs

ENQUIRIES REGARDING THIS AGENDA: Janis Murfet

DIRECT DIAL:(01353) 616457 EMAIL: [janis.murfet@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:janis.murfet@eastcambs.gov.uk)

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### Membership:

#### Conservative Members

Councillor Allyson Broadhurst  
Councillor Mike Rouse (Chairman)

#### Liberal Democrat Members

Councillor Ian Allen

#### **Lead Officer:**

Darren Dixon, Head of Community Services

## A G E N D A

1. Public Question Time  
- the meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes public question time
2. Apologies **[oral]**
3. Declarations of Interest **[oral]**  
To receive declarations of interest from Members for any items on the Agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct
4. Notes – 26<sup>th</sup> March 2009  
To receive the Notes of the meeting of the Working Party held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2009
5. Chairman's Announcements **[oral]**
6. Ely Country Park Development Plan – Final Draft

**COUNTRY PARK WORKING PARTY**

Notes of a meeting of the Country Park Working Party held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, on Thursday, 26 March 2009 at 6.50pm.

**P R E S E N T**

Councillor Mike Rouse (Chairman)  
Councillor Allyson Broadhurst

**OFFICERS**

Darren Dixon – Head of Community Services  
Tracy Couper – Principal Democratic Services Officer

**I N A T T E N D A N C E**

Eoghan Sheils – Sheils Flynn Ltd

1 member of the public attended the meeting.

21. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Having received a brief, informal presentation of the draft conceptual plan for the proposed Country Park prior to the commencement of the meeting, there was a question from Councillor Nigel Bell, the County Councillor for the Ely North and East Division where the Country Park would be located, on various aspects of the plan, with responses given as follows:

Councillor Bell – Connectivity: Will Phase 3 of the proposed Country Park development connect with other cycleway/footpath routes such as the Sustrans route that connects to Wicken Fen?

Response – Yes, it is intended that this will complete the local cycleway/footpath network.

Councillor Bell – Funding: Is the funding currently identified ring-fenced, or speculative?

Response – The funding is ring-fenced from various pots such as Section 106 and Housing Growth Fund. The only speculative element is the grant from the Cambridgeshire Pathfinder Fund.

Councillor Bell – Railway Crossing: Will the railway crossing be a bridge?

Response – not at present.

Councillor Bell – Disabled Access: Is a circular route proposed?  
Is a bridge an important part of this?

Response – Disabled access is an important element of what is proposed. There will not necessarily be a bridge at the railway crossing. This will be an ongoing issue in the design of the scheme.

Councillor Bell – Country Park Trust: I have concerns about the way a Trust may be set up. Any Trust needs to have a duty to preserve the area as a Country Park and have conservation at its heart. Need to look at models elsewhere.

Response – The issues relating to the establishment of a Trust will be considered carefully and examples sought later in the process.

Councillor Bell stated that he supported the concepts as proposed.

22. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ian Allen.

23. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

24. **COUNTRY PARK WORKING PARTY NOTES**

It was agreed:

That the Notes of the Country Park Working Party meeting held on 18 November 2008 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcement regarding a country park at Ely:

“I am grateful for the considerable amount of interest in the consultations and for the positive welcome that the idea has been given.

What has come through strongly for me from many of the comments is that people want essentially what is there, but, like with much of Ely, want it done better.

For example, where there is an old footpath, as along Springhead Lane, or Lovers Lane, then it should be accessible and not overgrown or too muddy to walk along.

Where it is possible to achieve footpath and cycle links to enable people to travel around or through the park for recreation or to link up parts of the city these should be provided.

We should concentrate the more intense activities at the pocket park end. Here there are opportunities for play and children and young people should be given some good, imaginative play equipment and opportunities that fit in well with the nature of the area. There is an opportunity to plan a community orchard, for example.

There should be some well-designed parking to make it easier for those who perhaps cannot walk too far, or have very young children and picnic baskets to be able to use the park more easily.

There should be a visitors' centre so if we are encouraging more families to picnic, play and stroll in the park, then there should be decent toilet facilities and the chance to buy an ice cream. That groups using the area for education should have a teaching room, as part of the visitors' centre.

Greater protection should then be given to the 'wilder areas', with the opportunity for people to observe without intruding into sensitive areas.

Where people want to escape into a more peaceful area, then they should be able to do so.

Where people want to continue to walk their dogs they should be able to do so.

I believe all of this is possible and achievable and that all interests can be catered for, better than they are at present. I also believe that it is important that what we do here will fit with the future growth of Ely and link into the wider county and national networks of green spaces."

## 26. **CONSULTATION REVIEW**

The Working Party considered a report detailing the results from the recent consultation exercise on Ely Country Park comprising two public exhibition sessions in Ely on Thursday 15 and Saturday 17 January 2009, which were attended by approx 500 people and generated over 200 written responses to the draft proposals on display.

Councillor Broadhurst stated that one important aspect that people seemed concerned about was to preserve the natural untrammelled wilderness of the vast majority of the area and that the

new areas/facilities should be contained and not intrude into this. The issue of car access/parking also needed to be considered, as many people would access the area by car, and how this overlays the footpath and cycleway access.

It was agreed:

That the key issues arising from the consultation exercise, as summarised in Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be noted.

## 27. **DRAFT CONCEPTUAL PLAN**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Eoghan Sheils of Sheils Flynn, gave a presentation on the revisions to the draft conceptual plan for the site, which took account of the views of local people and stakeholders from the public consultation exercise and the implications on both funding and time constraints. Mr Sheils reported that it was intended to present the revised draft plan to the Country Park Advisory Group in the following week, with stakeholders being given 3 weeks to respond and the proposals then coming back to this Working Party for final recommendations to be made to Community Services Committee.

The presentation highlighted a number of issues under the following headings:

- Key Issues
  - Conservation
  - Improving access
  - Visitor facilities
- Phase 1
  - Focus recreation in/around pocket park
  - Adventure play
  - Nature meadow(s)
  - Car park
  - Circular route
  - Look-out areas to wilder spaces
  - Connection back into town centre
  - Most managed part of Country Park
- Phase 2
  - Completion of circular route along flood meadows
  - Roswell Pits area developments including adaptation of sailing club and visitor facilities
- Phase 3
  - New bridge and southern site
- Funding – Capital and Revenue

During detailed discussions on the proposals, Mr Sheils responded to comments and questions from Members as follows:

- It was confirmed that there would be no change to the existing Fisherman's Car Park.

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- The Chairman expressed concerns regarding the future of the whole area due to the varying intentions of the other landholders.
- The Chairman and Councillor Broadhurst commented that access issues would need to be considered in more detail in the future and that access in a conservation ethos should be the key issue.

In concluding, Mr Flynn stated that he had attempted to achieve a unified consensus in the revised conceptual plan.

The Chairman and Councillor Broadhurst commended the presentation and revised proposals, referring to the different components as a 'lovely layer cake'.

It was agreed:

That the presentation by Sheils Flynn on the revised site proposals and draft implementation plan for Ely Country Park be noted and submitted for further consultation with the Country Park Advisory Group.

28. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was agreed:

That the press and public be excluded during consideration of the remaining item because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category 3 Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

29. **EXEMPT NOTES – 18 NOVEMBER 2008**

It was agreed:

That the Exempt Notes of the Country Park Working Party meeting held on 18 November 2008 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting concluded at 7.50pm.

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**TITLE: ELY COUNTRY PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN - FINAL DRAFT**

Committee: Country Park Working Party

Date: 27 April 2009

Author: Head of Community Services

[H395]

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1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 To consider the final draft of the Ely Country Park Development Plan.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 To receive a presentation from Sheils Flynn on the Ely Country Park Development Plan

2.2 To approve the final draft of the Ely Country Park Development Plan for consideration by the Community Services Committee

3.0 **BACKGROUND/ISSUES**

3.1 Members received and agreed a revised visioning document at the Working Party meeting on 26 March 2009. This outline plan for the Country Park project has been circulated and commented upon by members of the Advisory Group, and provides the core vision for the final draft Development Plan, as set out in Appendix A.

3.2 The development plan is an accumulation of considerable consultation with landowners, key stakeholders and the general public. Feedback would suggest a general consensus of agreement on both the short term and longer terms aspirations of the project, whilst recognising that the plan can be adapted and modified as opportunities arise. Furthermore, the plan does not prohibit the development of projects outside the scope of this project, subject to planning approval.

3.3 The core objectives of the brief given to our consultants, Sheils Flynn, have been realised, with focus on access, conservation, education and recreation. Throughout the process, the key considerations have been to balance the needs of access and nature conservation, to prioritise financial resources, to achieve a vision that will enable partnership working, and a sustainable framework for the management of the site and longer-term aspirations.

3.4 Members will be mindful that the development plan is a visioning document and that the proposals will need planning consent. Given that many proposals in the plan are inspirational and will require further bids for

significant sums of external funding over a number of years, it is suggested that Phase 1 proposals will be developed as a matter of priority based on: -

- Certainty of delivery within financial context
- Small-scale development proposals
- Upgrade to existing access provision
- Current land use designations

Subject to Community Services Committee approval of the development plan, the Phase 1 proposals will be developed and submitted for screening by the planning department and key strategic bodies, which will inform the requirements for a full planning application.

3.5 Whilst priority 1 proposals are achievable in the short term, the development plan should be recognised as long-term programme of maintaining an area of land with significant conservation value and managing and enhancing access to the countryside and recreational amenity, in and around Ely. The approval of the development plan will provide a framework to source funding, improve natural habitats and contribute to the wider housing growth and green infrastructure agenda.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 Members are requested to note the proposals and agree the Ely Country Park Development Plan for consideration by the Community Service Committee on 14 May 2009.

#### 5.0 APPENDICES

5.1 Appendix A – Ely Country Park Development Plan

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#### Background Documents

	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
None	Rm 107 The Grange	Darren Dixon Head of Community Services 01353 616454 E-mail: <a href="mailto:darren.dixon@eastcambs.gov.uk">darren.dixon@eastcambs.gov.uk</a>





# Ely Country Park Development Plan

Sheils Flynn  
Ursus Consulting

- 1 Context
- 2 Site appraisal
- 3 Opportunities & constraints
- 4 What should Ely Country Park be about?
- 5 Stakeholder consultation
- 6 Development Plan principles
- 7 The business case
- 8 Priorities

Annex A - Levels of participation in different forms of sport and recreation

Annex B - Environmental destinations within the surrounding area

Annex C - Responses to the public consultation process

## Maps

Map 1	Location of the proposed Ely Country Park
Map 2	City context showing areas earmarked for future growth
Map 3	Cambridge Sub-regional Green Infrastructure Strategy (extract)
Map 4	Pre-drainage landscape pattern
Map 5	1833 Eau Brink Tax Map
Map 6	Local landscape character
Map 7	Gateway views
Map 8	Nature conservation
Map 9	Accessibility
Map 10	Land use
Map 11	Land ownership
Map 12	Principal 'compartments' within the future Country Park
Map 13	Opportunities and constraints
Map 14	15 minute drivetime catchments
Map 15	30 minute drivetime catchments
Map 16	Development Plan Principles - Conservation
Map 17	Development Plan Principles - Circulation
Map 18	Development Plan Principles - Interventions
Map 19	Illustrative Plan
Map 20	Pocket Park and Lavender Green entrance - detail
Map 21	Cresswells Lane and Fishing Lake - detail
Map 22	Kiln Lane and new River Ouse bridge - detail
Map 22a	Improved access into the Country Park from the north - detail
Map 22b	A safe railway crossing - detail
Map 22c	A more attractive and accessible route across the River Ouse - detail
Map 23	Roswell Pits and Cuckoo Bridge area - detail
Map 24	Priority 1 - up to 2011
Map 25	Priority 2 - 2011 onwards
Map 26	Priority 3 - 2012 onwards

## Figures

Figure 1	Fens before drainage (sketch)
Figure 2	The impact of drainage

# 1 | Context



## 1.1 Project brief

The Ely Country Park Development Plan will provide a vision and agreed framework for developing a Country Park on the land alongside the River Ouse immediately to the east of the city. It will also make the business case for developing the Country Park, setting out potential sources of funding and possible means for generating income.

Map 1 shows the location of the Country Park. The site includes Ely Common, the lakes formed from flooded clay pits (Roswell Pits), waterways, reedbeds, flood meadows and pastures alongside the River Ouse.

The brief calls for:

- clarification of how the Country Park can contribute to deficiencies in open space provision now and in the future – taking account of the planned significant housing growth
- building consensus between the mix of landowners and key stakeholders with an interest in the site
- the protection and renewal of habitats, recognising that the majority of the area has been notified as a new SSSI (extending the existing SSSI westwards from the escarpment of Ely Common to include all of Roswell Pit, the adjacent Ouse wetlands, washes and the reedbeds at Queen Adelaide Beds).
- a creative balance between habitat/landscape conservation and the demand for healthy recreational activities, from residents and visitors alike, making best use of existing rights of way and providing new footpaths, cycleways, play facilities and fishing platforms
- making best use of existing rights of way and providing new footpaths, cycleways, play facilities and fishing platforms
- consideration of opportunities for educational facilities, visitor amenities, such as public toilets, and commercial activities that may generate revenue opportunities
- links to existing open spaces along Ely riverside, car parking, footpaths and interpretation
- exploration of possibilities for further public moorings along the River Great Ouse.



- Ely Country Park Site Boundary (Phase 1)
- Nature Conservation Designation
- Important Open Spaces
- Development - Allocated and Under Construction
- 'A' Roads
- 'B' Roads
- Right of Way
- National Trail / Long Distance Route
- Proposed Footpath
- Water / Rivers

Map 1 - Location of the proposed Ely Country Park

- a clear plan of action which identifies and costs the key requirements for investment in infrastructure to meet the aspirations for enhanced recreation and amenities within, and in close proximity, to the proposed site.
- a plan for the future management of the site, which demonstrates how investment will be protected, managed and maintained. Future revenue implications, including possible endowments and commercial income streams, will also need to be assessed and identified to assure the long term sustainability of this project.

The brief summarises the key objectives of this study as:-

1. Provision of easily accessible informal green space on the edge of Ely
2. Facilitate the best use of scarce land resources
3. Protection and enhancement of environment and land assets
4. Promote and develop the heritage and recreational amenity of the area and linkages to Ely Riverside
5. Consideration the longer term aspiration to extend the Country Park
6. Develop a sustainable management plan for site.

## 1.2 Team

The project is led by landscape architects, Sheils Flynn, who are supported by transport planners, Phil Jones Associates, ecologists, Penny Anderson Associates, recreation planners, Leisure & Environment and quantity surveyors, WT Partnership. The business planning component of the project is being undertaken by Ursus Consulting.

## 1.3 Consultation

The project is steered by the Country Park Working Group and has been guided by a much larger Advisory Group, which consists of representatives from 24 key stakeholders (landowners and stakeholder representatives who have expressed an interest in the site or who have been specifically approached to provide advice on issues as they arise).



Ely Cathedral dominates the skyline in views from the riverside flood meadows to the east



A footpath leads through tranquil meadows alongside the River Ouse



Long views across Lisle Lane pastures on the eastern margins of the Isle of Ely



Reedbeds, scrub and woodland frame stunning views across Roswell Pit

Two public consultation workshops have provided opportunities for feedback from members of the public; local people have also provided feedback via online consultation (on ECDC website). We estimate that approximately 500 people visited the exhibition and a total of 185 written comments were received (either on the forms provided at the exhibition or those available online via ECDC website).

Preparation of the Country Park Development Plan is running in parallel with the development of the revised masterplan for Ely, which will set out a framework for the future growth of Ely. Clearly the two projects are inter-related and there is an opportunity for the Country Park to influence and respond to the wider masterplan.

#### **1.4 Accompanying Business Plan**

The Development Plan for Ely Country Park is accompanied by a Business Plan<sup>1</sup> (prepared by Ursus Consulting), which includes a Cost Plan (prepared by WT Partnership). This report is available separately, but the key points are summarised within this Development Plan report.

#### **1.5 Scope of the Development Plan**

This Development Plan shows the overall layout of spaces, landscape features and routes throughout the Country Park. The sequence of development, from site analysis to concept ideas and design principles is explained through a series of plans and diagrams which set out key issues to guide the decision making process and the future implementation of the Country Park.

This will remain a broad vision, but one that has been agreed by a wide range of stakeholders. The plans and design principles will provide sufficient detail to calculate the broad costs of future investment and to identify a strategy for the delivery and future management of the Country Park.

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<sup>1</sup> Ursus Consulting, May 2009, Business Case for the Proposed Ely Country Park

## 2 | Site appraisal



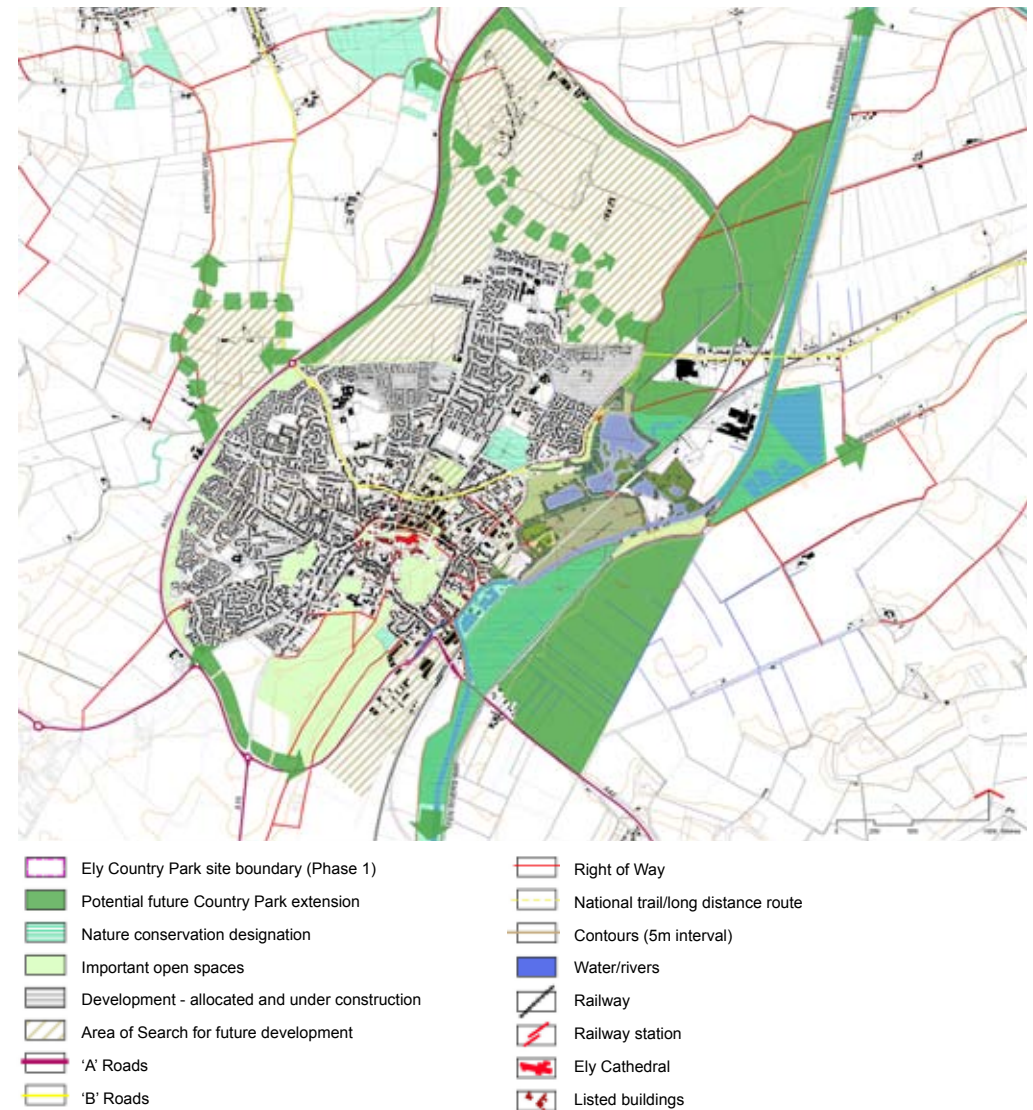


### 2.1 Policy context

The status of Ely as a growth area ensures that the city is likely to grow at a relatively rapid rate. A masterplan to guide this growth is being prepared as a separate exercise and the area of search for future built development shown on current plans suggests that the growth is likely to be concentrated to the north of the existing city centre<sup>2</sup>. With this growth comes a requirement for open space to serve the new communities and the new Country Park (phase one and future phases) will contribute to this provision.

Map 2 shows the Phase one Country Park site in relation to the city of Ely. It shows the existing open spaces within the city and indicates areas of search where future growth is likely to take place.

There are a range of potential future boundaries for the Country Park. For instance, the Phase 1 site might be extended to encompass a wider area, to the north, to the south alongside the Ouse Washes beyond the station and to the east.



<sup>2</sup> The Ely Masterplan is in preparation during the course of this study; Map 3 shows preliminary areas of search for future built development

**Map 2 - City context showing areas of search for future growth**

The ambitious growth targets for the Cambridge Sub-region (47,500 homes to be built between 1999 and 2016) are matched by proposals to use planned development to enhance and extend the network of large scale greenspaces, protected sites, nature reserves and greenway linkages. This vision is summarised in the Cambridge Sub-Region Green Infrastructure Strategy<sup>3</sup>.

Map 3 shows the location of Ely (and the Phase 1 Country Park site) in the context of this Green Infrastructure Strategy. To the north of Cambridge the green infrastructure network (and biodiversity interest) focuses on the network of rivers, floodplains and wetlands which cross the intensively farmed arable land. Ely is on the River Ouse floodplain, to the north of Wicken Fen and to the east of the Bedford Levels. The green infrastructure assets numbered on the plan (as per the GI Strategy) are:

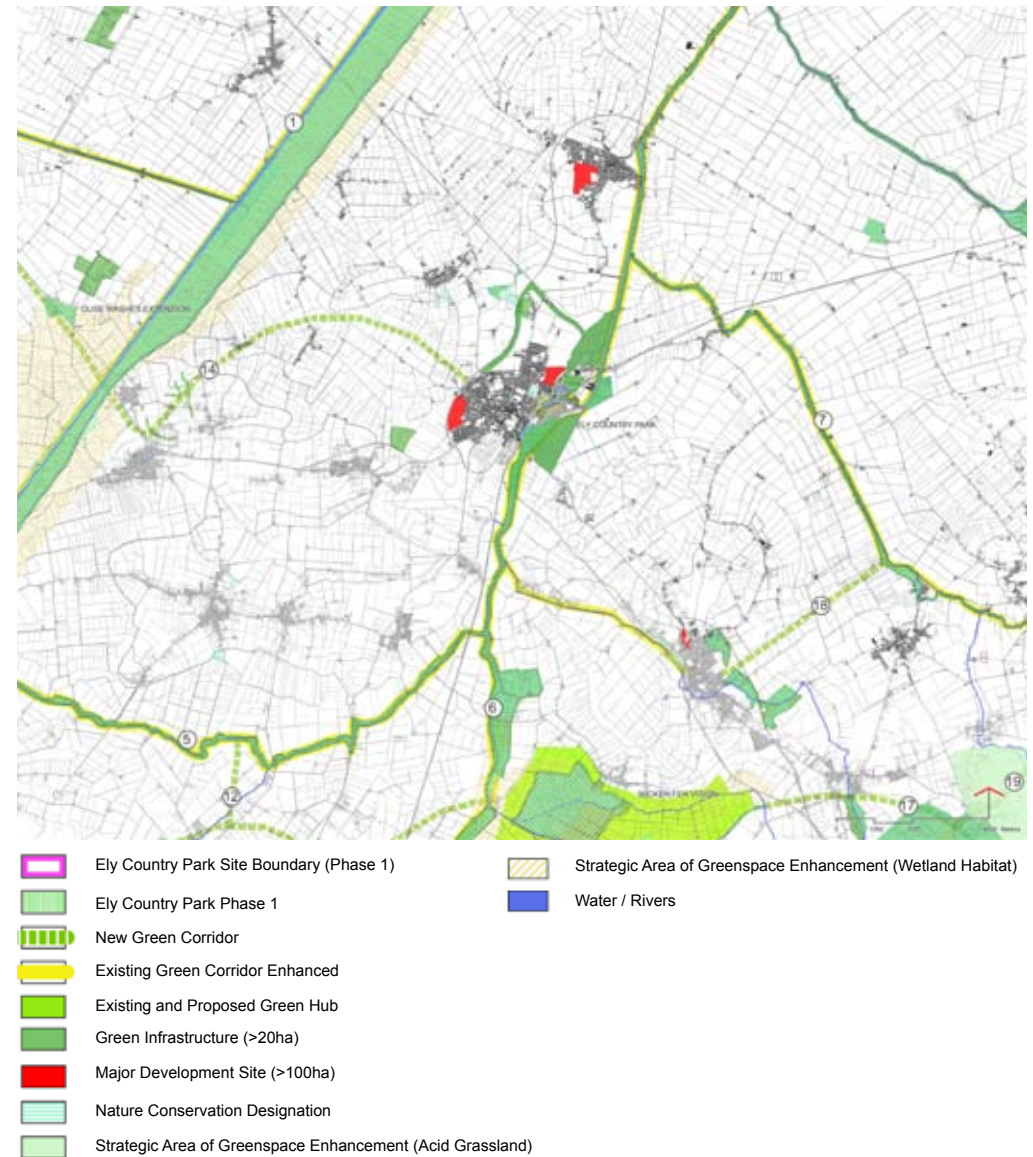
- 1 Ouse Valley Strategic Green Space Corridor
- 5 Old West River
- 6 Cam Valley - Cambridge to Ely
- 7 River Lark Enhancement Project
- 12 Northstowe, Cottenham to Old West River, Denny Abbey & Wicken Fen Corridor
- 17 Wicken to Chippenham and Thetford Forest Corridor
- 18 Soham to River Lark Green Corridor
- 19 Icknield Way Enhancement Corridor

To the south, Wicken Fen is the focus of a major habitat creation and enhancement project, The Wicken Fen Vision<sup>4</sup>.

The Development Plan for the new Ely Country Park provides an opportunity to enhance the biodiversity of this part of the River Ouse floodplain, contributing to the enhancement of the wider green infrastructure networks throughout the sub-region.

<sup>3</sup> Cambridge Horizons, Cambridge Sub-Region Green Infrastructure Strategy, May 2006

<sup>4</sup> National Trust, The Wicken Fen Vision - 2nd Consultation Draft, November 2007

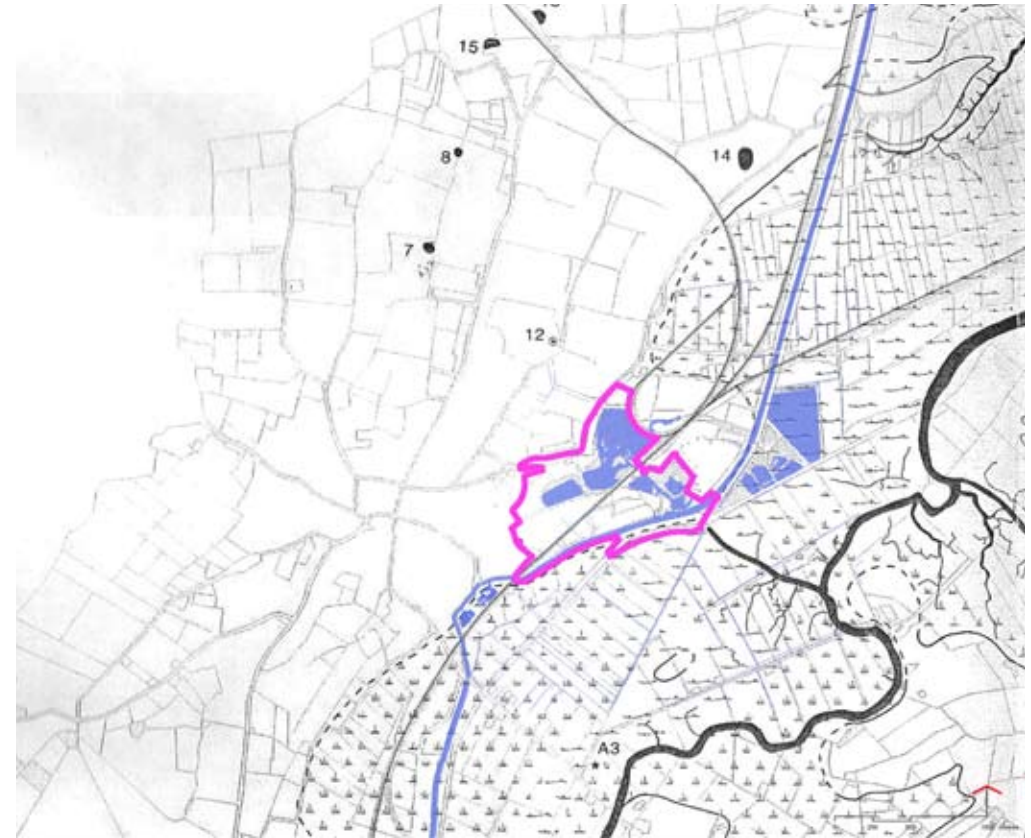


**Map 3 - Cambridge Sub-regional Green Infrastructure Strategy (extract)**

## 2.2 Historic evolution

The fens are a fascinating man-made landscape; the product of draining the tidal basin of the Wash over thousands of years. The big skies, open fields and crisp geometries contrast with the intimate, small-scale landscapes of the villages and farmsteads, which are often clustered on 'islands' of higher land.

Map 4 shows the prehistoric pattern of the landscape before the fens were drained. The settlement of Ely is on the margin of the fens; with farmland to the west and marshland to the east. The dendritic forms of the pre-drainage river channels meander freely across a wide area. These same ancient water channels are still just visible on aerial photographs of the area, even though they have long been lost to intensive agriculture.



Ely Country Park Site Boundary (Phase 1)

Years of intense drainage have caused the fenlands to shrink - Fig 2 shows the dramatic changes in level over time<sup>5</sup>. These changes mean that the Fens are criss-crossed with steep embankments and drainage channels, making access to the countryside surprisingly difficult for a landscape that is so flat. However, the site for Ely Country Park presents a superb opportunity because this historic landscape is relatively unaffected by drainage and is at a similar level to the adjacent urban area - you can walk out from the edge of Ely directly into the countryside, with views over the flood meadows and to the River Ouse.

The land immediately to the east of Ely has historically been the 'working margin' of the Isle of Ely, with a diverse mix of waterways, orchards, cress beds, causeways and quays. The area was also crossed by the historic drove road which continued as a causeway leading across the marshes to connect the Isles of Ely and Stuntney. Map 5 shows the pattern of this landscape in 1833. Roswell Hill jutted out onto the fen and the historic drove road (labelled 'Cresswells' on the map) skirted round the base of the hill.



Fig 1 Fens before drainage (sketch) and Fig 2 The impact of drainage



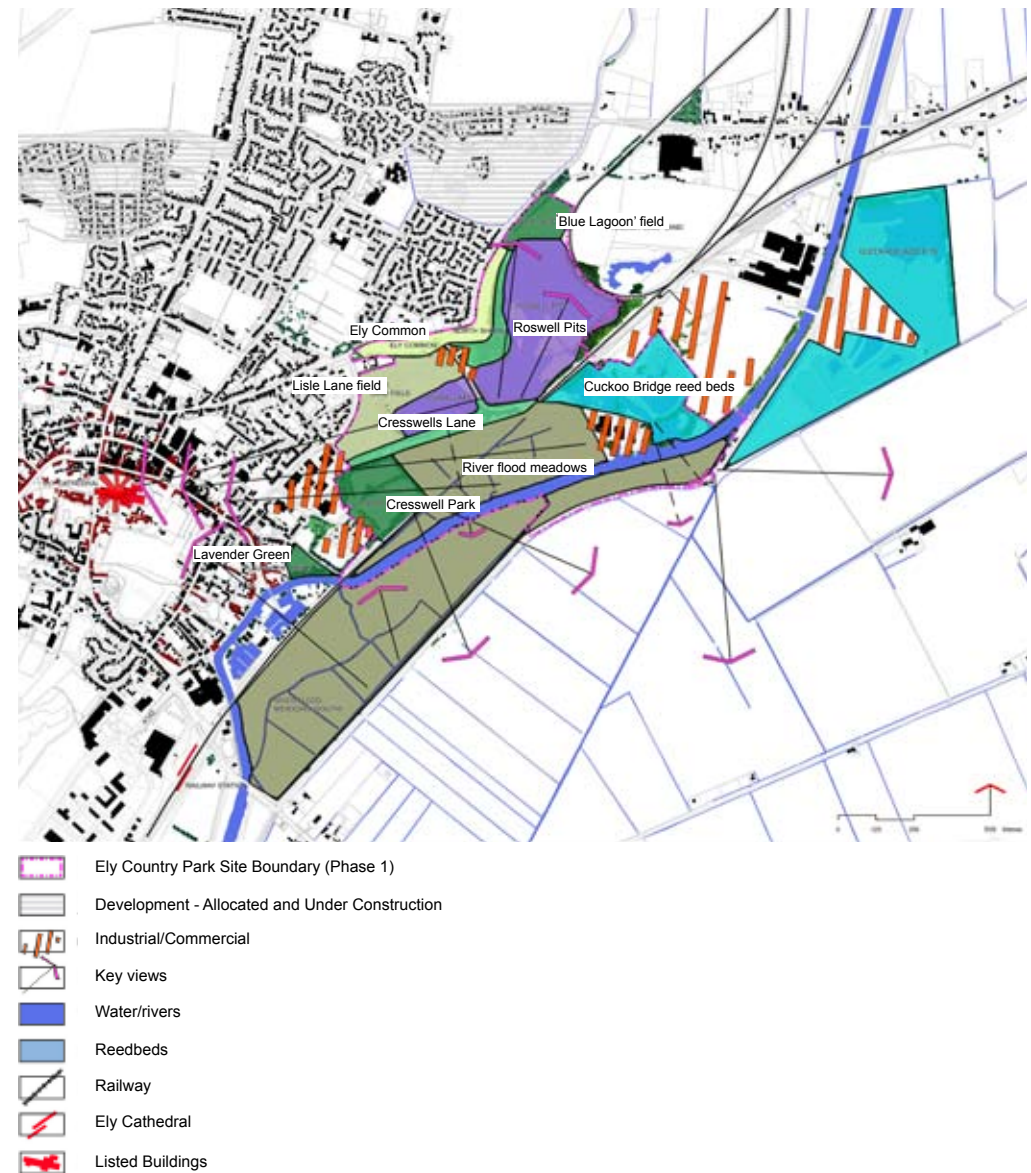
Map 5 1833 Eau Brink Tax Map

<sup>5</sup> The artist's impression (Figure 1) and photograph (Figure 2) are taken from Rex Sly, 'From punt to plough – a history of the fens', 2003

## 2.3 Landscape character

Map 6 shows how the Phase 1 Country Park site is perceived as a series of local landscape character areas:

- **Lavender Green** - an area of open informal amenity grass on the edge of the river. It marks the gateway to the Country park from the town centre
- **Cresswells Park** - a former landfill site which has been remediated to form a raised open field surrounded by woodland, scrub and hedgerows. This field is allocated as the site for a new children's play area. To the north another small enclosed field is managed as a wildflower meadow
- **Cresswells Lane** - a green lane which is the historic drove road leading from Ely to the working margins of the Fen. it is a beautiful route, fully enclosed by trees and hedgerows
- **Lisle Lane fields** - attractive sloping pastures bordered by hedgerows on the flanks of the higher land of the Isle of Ely
- **Roswell Pits** - open lakes formed from partially flooded pits which were originally dug for clay extraction. The attractive stretches of open water are set against the backdrop of the wooded escarpment of Ely Common. Ely Sailing Club is based on the northern lake, which has extensive reedbeds; the southern lake is used for angling
- **Ely Common** - a flat linear meadow which drops away to the east where a steep wooded escarpment forms the northern margin of Roswell Pit. The meadows are popular for informal recreation and the wooded escarpment is valuable for geological research as it contains an important range of fossil reptiles embedded within Kimmeridge Clay
- **'Blue Lagoon' field** - an open pasture to the north of Roswell Pits. This is the site of another clay pit - the 'Blue Lagoon' - which was subsequently filled in
- **Cuckoo Bridge reedbeds** - a complex of small pools, waterways and extensive reedbeds which connect to the Great Ouse. the area is juxtaposed against the industrial areas of the Potter Group, Hydro International and the Environment Agency Depot



Map 6 Local Landscape Character - Phase 1 Country Park

- **River flood meadows** - open grazing flood meadows with areas of pasture, scrub and wet scrapes leading down to the River Ouse.

This natural 'jig-saw' of local landscape areas provides the over-arching framework for the Country Park. But Map 6 also shows (in an orange hatch) areas with land uses which are potential detractors. these include the industrial zones and the Lisle Lane sewage works area, which is likely to be the focus of a future regeneration project.

## 2.4 Gateway views

The site of the Phase 1 Country Park is a significant gateway landscape for Ely. Some of the most iconic views of Ely Cathedral are from the river floodplain meadows within the future Country Park. It is from here that the Cathedral can be appreciated as 'the Ship of the Fens' on the higher isle of Ely.

Map 7 explains how the site of the Country Park is of particular significance for railway passengers, who experience the City of Ely via views across the future Country Park from the train. The area coloured with a pale yellow tone on Map 7 shows the broad area likely to be visible from the train.

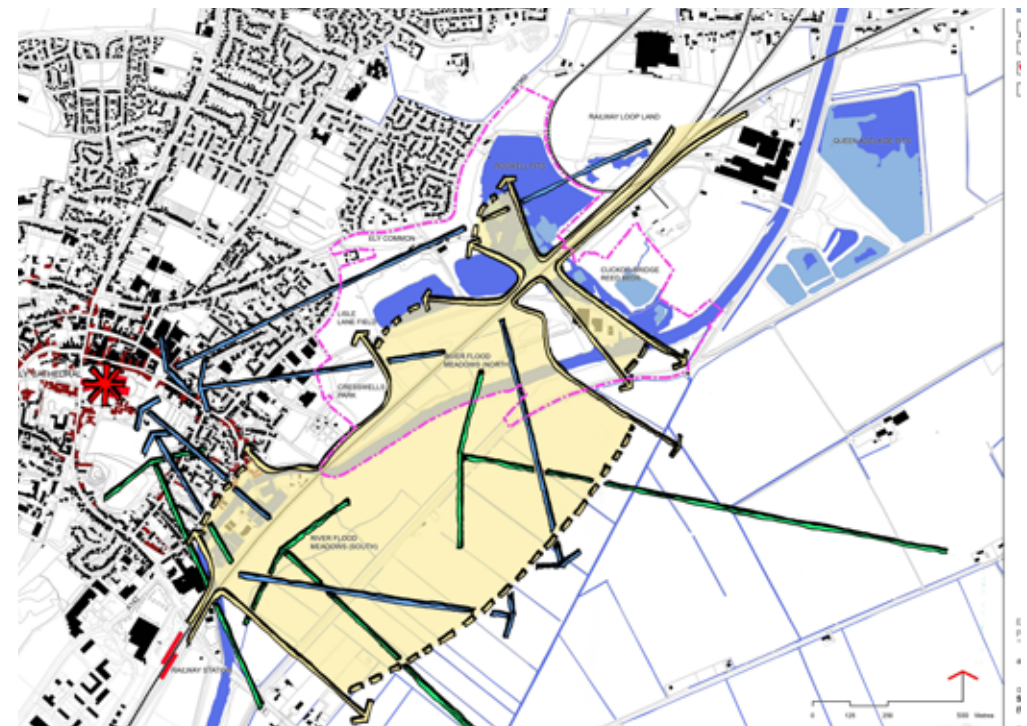
The blue arrows indicate key views from the train and the larger green arrows show the longer vistas across the flood meadows on the eastern approaches to the City.



View to Ely Cathedral



The impact of the railway



Map 7 Gateway Views

## 2.5 Nature conservation

The mosaic of wetland, grassland, woodland and scrub habitats across the Phase 1 Country Park site has an exceptionally high biodiversity value. The process of designating a new Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is well underway and the boundary of this new SSSI will extend the previous Roswell Pits SSSI, which was limited to the original face of the clay pit (the escarpment of Ely Common).

Map 9 shows the boundaries of the existing SSSI and the proposed Ely Pits and Meadows SSSI, which includes the extensive reedbeds of Queen Adelaide beds to the east of the River Ouse. The river flood meadows to the east of the river (which are currently designated as a County Wildlife Site) are also likely to be included within the SSSI once field survey records have been completed for the required length of time.

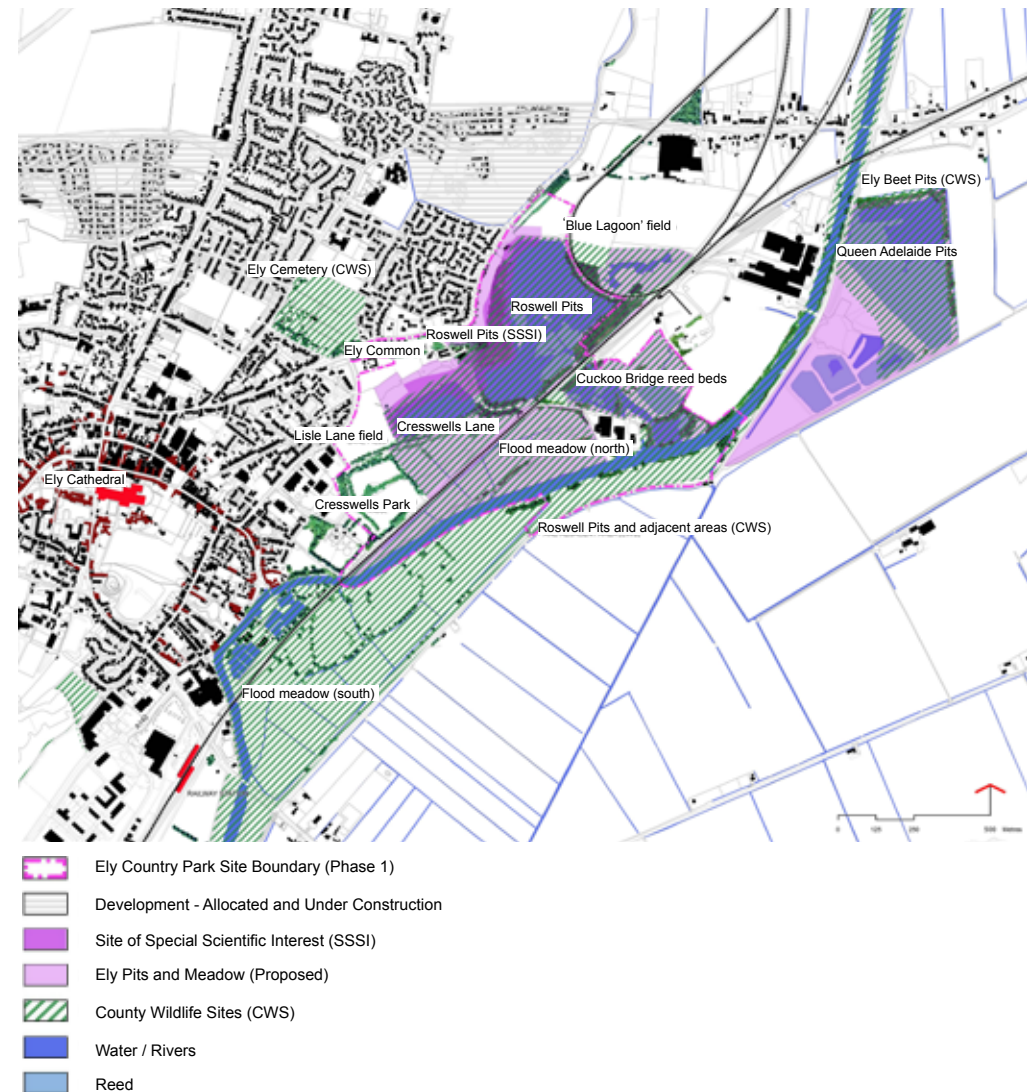
The supplement to the SSSI notification document<sup>6</sup> states that:

*Ely Pits and Meadows SSSI contains an extensive series of open waters in association with a wide range of marginal features, including islands dominated by common reed (*Phragmites australis*) and more extensive areas of reedswamp, wet ditches, rough grassland, deciduous woodland and scrub, supporting nationally important breeding and wintering bird interests. They comprise a discrete ecological unit separated by agricultural land (which is largely unsuitable for breeding and wintering wetland birds) from the nearest wetland sites, such as the Cam Washes (6km to the south) and Ouse washes (9km to the north-west).*

Ely Pits & Meadows SSSI is considered to be of special interest for its nationally important:

- **geological features** - an assemblage of fossil reptiles from the Late Jurassic, which are found in the northern outcrop of Kimmeridge Clay. The fossil assemblage of Sauropod dinosaurs (large to giant four-legged reptiles with long necks and tails) and Pliosaurus (large marine carnivores) at Roswell Pits are particularly distinctive

<sup>6</sup> Natural England, Ely Pits & Meadows SSSI - Cambridgeshire, Supporting Information: a supplement to the notification document, 10 June 2008



- **assemblage of breeding birds associated with lowland open waters and their margins** - the SSSI is regularly used by at least 13 such species, including Gadwall, Great Crested Grebe, Marsh Harrier, Kingfisher and Reed Bunting.
- **breeding and wintering bitterns** (*Botaurus stellaris*).

In addition, the SSSI is also used by nationally important numbers of bittern during the breeding season. It regularly supports an average of:

- one booming male bittern (representing 3.6% of the Great Britain breeding population (one of 8 SSSIs in England notified for supporting nationally important numbers of bitterns during the breeding season) and
- over winter the site regularly supports an average of two bitterns, representing 2% of the Great Britain wintering population (one of 14 SSSIs in England notified for supporting nationally important numbers of bitterns over winter).

The phase 1 Country Park is a nationally important ecological site so conserving and enhancing nature conservation interest is a key objective of the Country Park. The emerging proposals for the new Country Park must strike an appropriate balance between nature conservation and providing access and facilities for recreation -access must be carefully controlled and some recreational needs may be better accommodated within future phases of the Country Park, which are less sensitive in ecological terms.



Coppice, ancient hedgerows, scrub, woodland & groundcover line Cresswells Lane



Reedbeds in the Cuckoo Bridge area, between Roswell Pits and The River Ouse



Roswell Pits - Valuable wetland and riparian habitats, fringed by woodland and scrub



The River Ouse floodmeadows - from Springhead Lane



## 2.6 Accessibility









Map 9 shows the network of public rights of way within and surrounding the phase 1 Country Park site, The map shows footpaths, byways, bridleways and permissive routes from the definitive rights of way map<sup>7</sup>, as well as cycleways which are part of Sustrans national cycle network and the cycleways promoted by East Cambridgeshire District Council.

The Accessibility map shows that the site is criss-crossed by a network of public routes. The River Ouse and the railway present barriers to connectivity and several routes converge at two points - the railway crossing in the centre of the site and the footbridges over the River Ouse.

Some of the existing gateway entrances to the site and routes through it are ‘squeezed’ by fences, the railway and industrial uses. Some are also intimidating. Nevertheless these routes through the site provide valuable links to the network of rights of way along the River Ouse and within the expansive farmland to the east of Ely.

Overall the Accessibility Map shows the proximity of the Phase 1 Country Park site to the town centre and Ely rail station. The Country Park project has the potential to enhance accessibility to the fenlands surrounding Ely, bringing the countryside right into the city and increasing the community’s understanding and appreciation of Ely’s unique landscape setting.



-  Ely Country Park Site Boundary (Phase 1)
-  Visual / Physical Confusion and Intrusion
-  Shared Access
-  Circular Access
-  Historic 'Drove'
-  Footpaths
-  Water / Rivers
-  Reed

<sup>7</sup> Cambridgeshire County Council - Definitive Map of public rights of way



Security fencing surrounding the sewerage treatment works



The busy railway crossing on Kiln Lane in the centre of the Country Park site



The industrial area at the end of Kiln Lane - an abrupt contrast in landscape character



Public footpath 'squeezed' by security fencing alongside the Potter Group industrial site near Cuckoo Bridge

**2.7 Land use**

Map 10 shows that the routes and greenspaces within the Phase 1 Country Park site are in places ‘squeezed’ by industrial uses, particularly in the Lisle Lane area and on either side of the pools and waterways near Cuckoo Bridge.

Note that there is an extensive new residential development on the land immediately to the north-east of the Blue Lagoon site (shown as a hatch on Map 10). This increases the number of people who would benefit from living adjacent to the Country Park site.

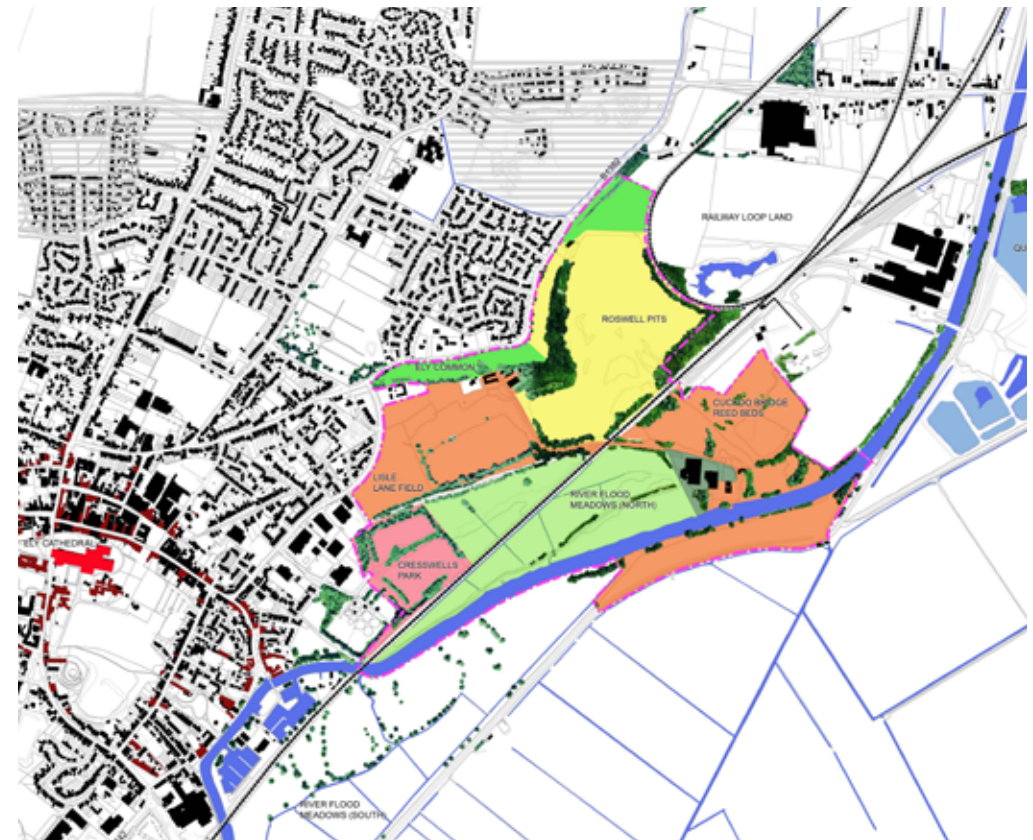


- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Town Centre                 | Reedbeds  |
| Employment/Business Use     | Railway   |
| Residential Area            | Railway Station   |
| Sewage Works                | Ely Cathedral   |
| Primary Shopping Frontage   | Listed Buildings  |
| Secondary Shopping Frontage | Development - Allocated & Under Construction  |
| Important Open Spaces       | Ely Country Park Site Boundary (Phase 1)  |
| River and Waterbodies       | Further Potential Areas of Search for Greenspace/Fen/Wetland Creation - Phase 2 of Country Park |

**Map 10 Land use**

## 2.8 Land ownership

The Phase 1 Country Park site has a complex mosaic of land ownership. This means that the process of developing a common vision for the Country Park Development Plan must take account of a wide range of issues and interests. Section 5 explains how the stakeholder consultation process has taken account of all the views expressed by local landowners, local interest groups and members of the public.



-  Ely Country Park Site Boundary (Phase 1)
-  Development - Allocated and Under Construction
-  East Cambridgeshire District Council
-  Thomas Parsons Charity
-  Mr Lee
-  Environment Agency
-  Hydro International
-  Jalsea Marine

### 3 | Opportunities & constraints



## 3.1 Interpreting the baseline information

The opportunities and constraints stage summarises and interprets the results of the site analysis, taking account of all the baseline information that has been collated. It highlights the key issues which will need to be resolved during the design process and demonstrates how the constraints can be overcome to maximise the potential benefits of the Country Park.

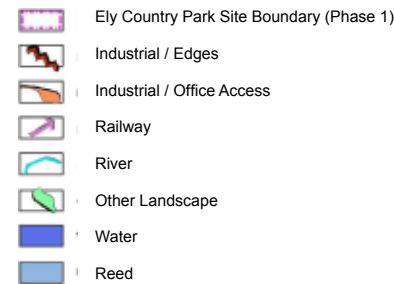
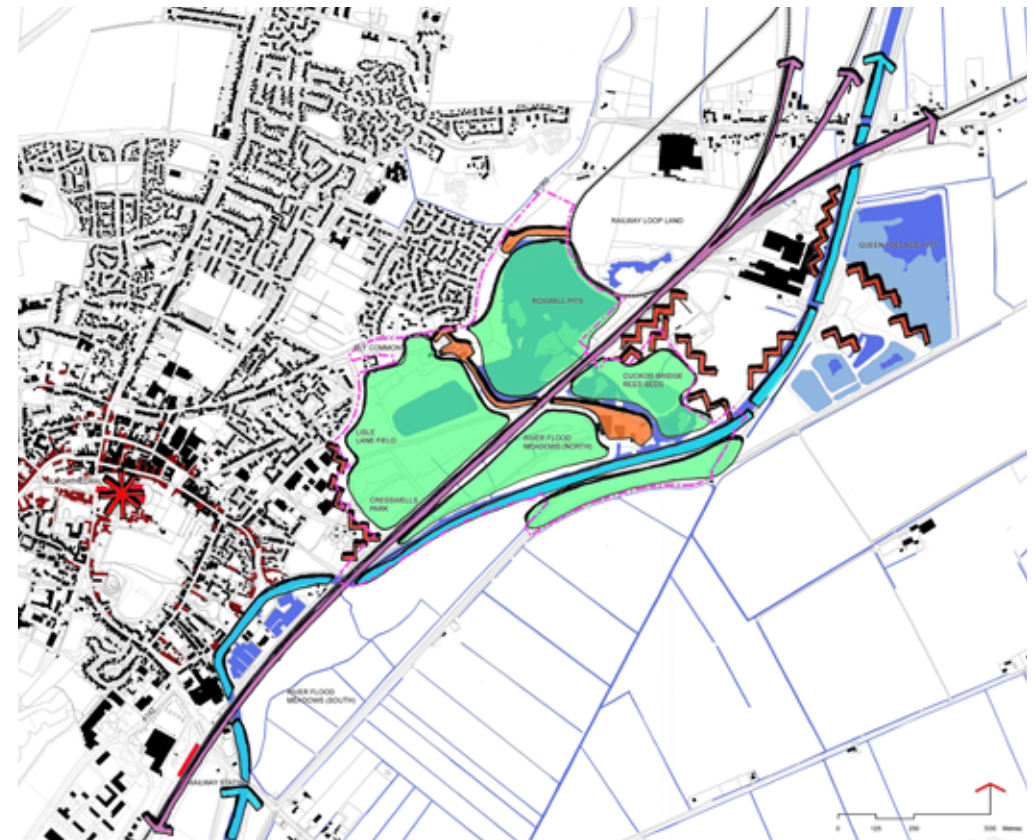
The site is perceived as a series of compartments, separated by the railway lines, by Kiln Lane and the industrial area surrounding the Environment Agency depot and by the River Great Ouse itself. The historic drove road of Cresswells Lane and the pattern of habitats across the site also contributes to this perception of the Country Park as a sequence of outdoor rooms, some enclosed and others with wide vistas. Map 12 describes the principal ‘compartments’ within the Country Park in terms of:

- open water (lakes and rivers)
- wetland
- woodland
- flood meadow
- native flowering meadows on the flanks of the ‘Isle of Ely’

## 3.2 Opportunities

Map 13 summarises the key issues to be resolved and the opportunities which arise from the creation of the Country Park:

- **creating positive gateways to the Country Park** - particularly from the town centre, adjacent residential areas and Ely Riverside. For instance there is a superb opportunity to develop links from Lavender Green, through the future Lisle Lane regeneration area to new children’s play areas and a visitor centre at Cresswells Park. The Country Park Development Plan will suggest a way to resolve the future layout of the Lisle Lane area and will also suggest how the relationship between the Country Park and adjacent industrial areas (Potter Group, Environment Agency offices and depot and Hydro International’s works) might be accommodated. By taking a























**Map 12 Principal ‘compartments’ within the future Country Park**

positive stance, the Country Park provides a clear framework and vision for the future of this strategically important landscape, which will in turn influence future plans for all the surrounding areas.

- ensuring long-term habitat conservation and enhancement** - the Country Park must secure the protection and enhancement of this nationally important ecological site, contributing to the implementation of the sub-regional green infrastructure strategy. The business plan for the Country Park must address the issue of funding for ongoing investment in an agreed landscape management plan which is designed to address site specific biodiversity requirements.
- creating an accessible Country Park** - for cyclists, pedestrians and wheelchair users alike. The Country Park provides opportunities to tackle the points of congestion (at the railway crossing and the River Ouse) and areas where adjacent land uses are a disruptive influence (industrial areas near Cuckoo Bridge and at Lisle Lane) in a creative, positive way.
- creating an inspiring destination** - this is a gateway landscape. Many of the classic postcard views across the flood meadows to Ely Cathedral are from the future Ely Country Park. It is also a landscape seen from the train by millions of people every year. The Country Park will provide new opportunities for tourism to complement the existing attractions within the city. Visual composition is a key issue in this gateway landscape and the new built interventions (bridges, buildings and structures) can be designed to complement the classic cathedral views and provide exciting new ways to experience this historic fenland fringe landscape.
- providing new public moorings** - there is a demand for an increase in the number of public moorings within the area and an opportunity to review the way in which such moorings are managed. The creation of the Country Park provides an opportunity to address this issue objectively - within Phase 1 and possibly also future phases of the Country Park.



	Ely Country Park Site Boundary (Phase 1)		Historic 'Drove'
	Sailing Club		Footpaths
	Hydro International		Footpaths / Cycleway
	Sailing Club		Shared Space
	Meadow		New River Inlet
	Play Area		Car Park
	Environment Agency		Visitors Centre
	Visual / Physical Confusion and Intrusion		Viewing Tower / Platform
	Shared Access		Rowing Club
	Vehicular Access		Bridge

Map 13 Opportunities & constraints

4 | What should Ely Country Park be like?





### 4.1 Scope to attract visitors

The site of the proposed Country Park is located close to the existing developed limits of Ely. It has potential to attract both local and non-local visitors as discussed below.

#### 4.1.1 Local visits

Local people will be encouraged to use the venue if it provides appealing recreation opportunities that are easy to reach. If the venue is to be funded by 'developer contributions' then it will need to be demonstrably clear that residents of new housing will be able to safely and easily access the venue from their homes.

The national and annual Active People Survey has found that only around 22% of adults within East Cambridgeshire District take part on at least 3 days a week in moderate intensity sport and active recreation for at least 30 minutes continuously in any one session. (Participation includes recreational walking and cycling). This figure is better than the average for England (21.3%) but is not good. Anything that helps to entice people out of sedentary lifestyles should be encouraged.

Surveys carried out of both national and local populations continually show that the most popular forms of physical recreation activity in terms of participation are those that are essentially very informal in nature. For example the table in Annex A shows levels of participation amongst adults in different forms of sport and recreation identified by the Active People Survey. Walking (which might be for many reasons – to work, to the shops, with the dog, rambling etc) clearly dominates together with swimming (all forms), going to the gym and cycling. Football and athletics will include activities such as jogging and casual five-a-side games, and this informal element will greatly bolster overall participation. The Active People statistics cover just adults. If children are to be considered by far and away the most significant activity will be play in its various forms.

Within the context of the proposed site, the kind of opportunities that might attract most local use could therefore be translated to:

- Circular walks and cycling within an attractive environment. Especially where there are things to look out for and dogs are not actively discouraged.

- Swimming- especially in the summer months if there were opportunities to use the lakes and create a small 'beach' area (as has happened for example at the Keynes Country Park near Cirencester).

- Play- especially in a natural environment, which will provide exciting and educational opportunities for children of all ages very removed from the formulaic equipped play areas that are now so common. The 'PPG 17 Study' for the District has identified a good spread of well maintained equipped play spaces in Ely. However, most are of conventional design. Increasingly, play providers see the need to offer improved opportunities for play in natural environments for a variety of beneficial reasons.

- Jogging/green gym – a high quality trim trail, but also opportunities for people to actively participate in the park's maintenance in ways organised by many local wildlife trusts (for example).

However, with all these potential opportunities proximity and ease of access will be essential. There is irrefutable evidence from many sources that regular visits to recreational opportunities are influenced by time involved and safety in access. Where the desire is to attract very frequent and regular trips by foot or bike the absolute limit is between 10 and 15 minutes travel time either way- with the very young and elderly this may be less. In relation to the city's population this walktime catchment will not cover the major part. On the other hand acceptance of some car borne visits will greatly increase the catchment of potential users. The map overleaf shows an estimated 15 minutes drivetime catchment centred on the site. The population covered by the catchment is estimated to be around 30,000 and covers the whole of Ely, and the surrounding villages.

#### 4.1.2 Non local visits

In addition to regular visits by local people there will be scope to attract less regular visits from wider afield. Perhaps such visitors may think of a visit to the Country Park as part of a longer 'destination' visit which might also include sightseeing and shopping within the City itself.

A 30 minute drivetime centred on the proposed venue would cover over 200,000 people. But, it would also overlap with the catchments of other venues potentially competing for the same type of visitor. For example, the map

on the right shows the 30 minute catchment of the proposed venue (translucent pink) and the corresponding catchments of other country parks in the sub region (translucent blue). The venues are detailed in Annex B. The most significant 'shared' catchments occur to the south and south east. To the north of the venue there is little overlap, although this is a sparsely populated area. If people use cars, the range of alternative attractions from which they can choose is so much greater.

The venue might therefore be expected to gain some use by non-local car borne visitors, but unless it is to be promoted as a major destination venue in its own right will only attract such visits on the back of trips with another primary function.

The only viable non-local visits not involving car borne travel would be by public transport, and especially the train. It is here that the proposed venue will have advantages over others. Ely has excellent rail connections in various directions and the local station is very close to the proposed site. Sustainable non-local visits to the Country Park might be encouraged through establishing a rail/cycle/local bus interconnection site at the park, similar to Brockenhurst Station in the New Forest where the station hosts a couple of cycle hire businesses in old style railway carriages. The venue could be seen as a hub for cycle day trips and holidays within the area, and the potential catchment is immense

## 4.2 Balancing nature conservation & recreation

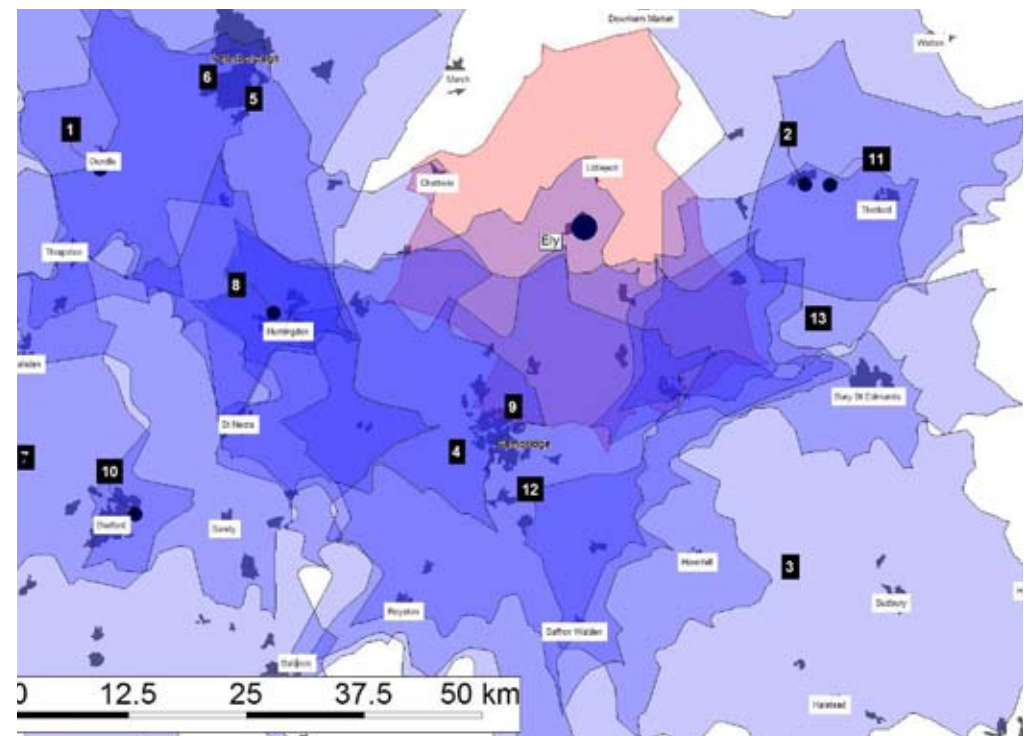
### 4.2.1 Meeting the criteria for Country Park status

Table 1 (on page 25) shows the essential and desirable criteria for accredited Country Parks, as defined by the Country Parks Network<sup>8</sup>. This is intended as a new national standard

As a new Country Park, it is important that Ely Country Park meets the 'essential' criteria, which reflect the core facilities and services that a site should possess in order to be recognised as a Country Park. The 'desirable'



Map 14 - 15 minute drivetime catchments



Map 15 - 30 minute drivetime catchments

<sup>8</sup> Country Parks Network, October 2008, Country Parks for the 21st Century - Launching the Country Parks Network Accreditation Scheme  
[www.countryparks.org.uk](http://www.countryparks.org.uk)

criteria are aspirational and are intended to serve as a guide to encourage innovation and the development of additional services and facilities beyond the minimum level.

The Country Parks Network also emphasises the importance of promotion and branding, so that members of the public understand what they should expect from a visit to a Country Park.

#### 4.2.2 A Country Park within an SSSI

From the outset it has been clear that the emerging plans for Ely Country Park must strike a careful balance between the need for nature conservation and recreation in an area (Phase 1 site) which has exceptionally high biodiversity value.

The SSSI designation ensures a high level of protection; the impact of all proposals for enhanced access and recreation will be carefully assessed. Those which are not appropriate within the Phase 1 site may be accommodated in future phases of the Country Park.

Shorne Woods Country Park is a popular destination just off the A2 near Gravesend. The site includes extensive ancient woodland and the Country Park is designated as an SSSI. There is a contemporary, eco-friendly Visitor Centre, which uses a wind turbine and solar panels to generate energy and which has a meeting room available for hire. The Country Park is sensitively designed to accommodate a wide range of play, education and recreational facilities, while conserving and enhancing a site which is of national importance for nature conservation. The site demonstrates how, with careful design and siting:

- visitor facilities can enhance people's experiences, provide interpretation and manage visitor pressures by focusing on less sensitive areas
- a range of controlled access/circulation options can be provided in close proximity to sensitive habitats
- picnic areas and other recreational facilities can be integrated and managed within sensitive landscapes
- imaginative play features and equipment can also be successfully integrated into Country Park contexts. Understanding the local landscape and developing a sensitive design response will always be important.



Eco-friendly Visitor Centre at Shorne Woods Country Park, with superb interpretation and education facilities



A range of options for access within a sensitive landscape and close to valuable ecological habitats



Picnic area within birch woodland at Shorne Woods Country Park



Play features can be sculptural and play itself educational - part of the wider landscape interpretation experience

<b>ESSENTIAL</b>	<b>DESIRABLE</b>	<b>ELY - SPECIFIC</b>
<p><b>Area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 10 (25 acres) in size</li> <li>• Must have an identifiable boundary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green transport policy or plan for the site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within easy walking distance of Ely town centre, the railway station and extensive residential areas</li> </ul>
<p><b>Accessibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readily accessible to the population which it is intended to serve</li> <li>• Entry free of charge</li> <li>• DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) action plan in place for site to provide inclusive and accessible facilities both indoors and outdoors, developed following an access audit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional facilities for less able visitors eg easy going trails, accessible seats and picnic benches, relevant site information in an accessible format, play equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linked to promoted regional and national footpath and cycleway networks</li> </ul>
<p><b>Character</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must predominantly consist of natural or semi-natural landscape eg woodland, grassland, wetland, heathland, parkland</li> <li>• Less than 5% total area of buildings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management and promotion of the site’s conservation interest (natural or built environment)</li> <li>• Management and promotion of historical features in the landscape (man-made or natural)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinctive mosaic of wetlands, waterways and flood meadows on the margins of the Isle of Ely</li> <li>• A historically significant landscape, which ‘tells the story’ of the fenlands through topographic change, land use and landscape patterns</li> <li>• Unique views to Ely Cathedral across the flood meadows</li> </ul>
<p><b>Facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easily followed paths, bridleways and cyclepaths eg waymarked or with a leaflet</li> <li>• Toilets on site or nearby</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor recreation facilities eg water sports, adventure sports</li> <li>• Self-guided health walk or trail</li> <li>• Visitor centre</li> <li>• Play facilities</li> <li>• Catering provision</li> <li>• Cycle or horse trails</li> <li>• Art or sculpture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor centre which is a regional attraction, with toilets, cafe, children’s play and interpretation/educational facilities</li> <li>• Nature walks, hides and a viewing tower; a strong emphasis on wildlife conservation and interpretation</li> <li>• Water sports in the form of the Ely Sailing Club (private) at Roswell Pit, public moorings, angling and Ely Community Rowing Club</li> </ul>
<p><b>Links to local communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for the local community to have an influence over the management and development of the site</li> <li>• Actively working towards customer diversity reflecting the diversity of the local community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach programme to engage and involve local people and schools</li> <li>• Active promotion to less represented sectors of the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close links to local schools, colleges and other organisations representing minority groups</li> <li>• The management trust will be inclusive, with opportunities for the local community to have an influence over the management and development of the site</li> </ul>
<p><b>Links to the wider countryside</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links from the site to the rights of way network, permissive access routes or other adjoining open space or open access areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Country Park will provide an accessible gateway to public rights of way within the adjacent fenlands, with enhanced connections over the perceived barrier of the railway and a new footbridge over the River Ouse</li> <li>• The routes within the Country park are linked to the local and long distance promoted footpaths and cycleway</li> <li>• The Phase 1 Country Park will be adjacent to and linked with future phases of the Country Park, which is turn is part of the wider green infrastructure network (as set out in the Cambridgeshire Sub-region GI Strategy).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to date Management Plan</li> <li>• Daily staff presence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent staff presence during the daytime</li> <li>• Opportunities for community involvement in practical or management tasks</li> <li>• Annual Action Plan/Work Plan</li> <li>• Achieved or moving towards Green Flag Award status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ely Country Park will be governed by a new Management Trust, which has a remit to implement an agreed management plan. The trust will provide a strategic framework for decision making and the allocation of resources</li> <li>• The visitor centre will have a full time warden</li> <li>• A local ‘friends’ group will provide additional proactive management support</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available for public or educational events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme of walks or events</li> <li>• Programme of activities &amp; events that promote healthy living and environmental awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active nature walks</li> <li>• New opportunities for outdoor events on the Riverside adjacent to the new footbridge</li> </ul>
<p><b>Information and interpretation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear entrance signage</li> <li>• Information about where visitors can go and what they can do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More detailed information and interpretation about the site and other issues</li> <li>• Brown and white tourist direction signs</li> <li>• Shown on OS map</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent interpretation to explain the evolution of the fenland landscape</li> <li>• Focus on environmental education at visitor centre</li> </ul>

## 5 | Stakeholder consultation



### 5.1 Stakeholder consultation process

The Country Park Development Plan has been informed by detailed site appraisal work and by ongoing consultation with stakeholders. The aim is to capture the ideas and aspirations of stakeholders within a creative, common vision for a new Country Park. This process has involved encouraging engagement and a degree of compromise between different stakeholder interest groups.

There were three stages:

- **preliminary meetings with landowners and key stakeholders** - meetings were held individually and in small groups. The objective was to understand the issues raised by specific landowners and interest groups in an objective way so that these could be taken into account as the design process was taken forward.
- **design workshops** with the Working Group, the Advisory Group and the wider community - these workshops were held to present the baseline information and preliminary concept design ideas and receive feedback from consultees. The preliminary workshop provided a limited opportunity for members of civic and environmental interest groups and the public to see the emerging plans at an early stage
- **public consultation** - every household in Ely received a leaflet notification of the public exhibition, which was held on a Thursday (market day) and a Saturday in mid January 2009. The district council's magazine also ran an article about the emerging vision for a new Country Park, which was published in the two weeks leading up to the exhibition.

The evidence, ideas and constraints voiced by all stakeholders have been recorded and taken into account as the proposals for the Country Park have been developed. This has been an iterative process and the drawings have been amended in parallel with the consultation. There have inevitably been some tensions, but the aim has been to develop a common vision, supported by the vast majority of consultees.

### 5.2 Key issues raised in preliminary meetings & workshops

All the points raised by stakeholders have been recorded and carefully considered. The majority have had a direct influence on the development of the proposals.

Selected issues highlighted during the stakeholder consultation are:

- **Nature conservation** - the mosaic of inter-related habitats on the site is important - more so than the individual habitats represented. These are all of value, but the links between them are critically important in nature conservation terms
- **Health and safety** - Increased numbers of people, in combination with a railway crossing, heavy lorries (on Kiln Lane) and the River Ouse means that health and safety is a key concern. There will be a need for a holistic approach, with adequate budgets for maintenance and water tight legal agreements.
- **Facilities for young people** - stakeholders called for facilities for adventure play, water-based activities, mountain biking, performance and events. Some of these facilities may need to be accommodated in future phases of the Country Park, but there is a need to plan strategically at this stage.
- **A 'Gateway to the Fens'** - there was strong support for the idea of a visitor centre with good interpretation, which could be a centre for environmental education and a gateway to the fens. Additional facilities might include children's play, cycle hire and a café.
- **The wider context** - beyond Phase 1. It is important to look beyond the Phase 1 site in preparing the Development Plan. The area zoned for Phase 1 is particularly important from a biodiversity perspective, but areas zoned for Phases 2 and 3 offer opportunities for more active recreation which could effectively take the pressure off the Phase 1 site. All phases of the Country Park should be planned in conjunction with the emerging Ely masterplan so that new residential areas are designed with this strategic greenspace in mind.

- **Future management** - the long-term protection and ongoing management of the site is critically important. The mosaic of greenspaces should be properly managed in an integrated way for the combined benefit of both wildlife and local people. A future Management Trust must have a remit and sufficient income to implement an agreed landscape management plan for the Country Park.

### 5.3 Key issues raised during the public consultation

The public consultation for Ely Country Park took place on:

- Thurs 15 January at the Babylon Gallery and
- Sat 17 January at Ely Library

We estimate that approximately 500 people visited the exhibition and a total of 185 written comments were received (either on the forms provided at the exhibition or those available online via ECDC website). Many others spoke to the consultants and expressed their opinions at the exhibition. All critical points are summarised below and set out in more detail in Annex C.

#### **Do you support the creation of a new Country Park and do you agree with the proposed location & phasing?**

Overwhelming support for a new Country Park, although some concerns about the need for changes to be implemented in a sympathetic way. Several respondents commented on the need to take account of the future increase in Ely's population and suggested that the Phase 1 site for the Country Park should be considered in the context of a firm proposal for future phases (particularly to the north, adjacent to the principal urban extension). Key points raised were:

- Only 7 respondents do not support the creation of a Country Park; one because the area is felt to be sufficiently accessible as it is and most others because they felt the Country Park plans would spoil the 'last piece of countryside left'
- Concerns about funding revenue costs of ongoing management
- Needed to protect the area from future development
- Excellent opportunity to open Ely's wildspace in a managed fashion
- Several commented on the unique qualities of this site – right on Ely's 'doorstep' and with fantastic biodiversity
- Concerns that creation of the Country Park will imply the area is available as a recreation facility – must be very clear to users which areas are accessible and which are not
- This is a huge opportunity for creating links between people and wildlife

#### **Do you know the proposed Phase 1 Country Park site and which aspects of this landscape do you value most? Have we missed anything?**

Most respondents know the area well and the majority value its natural qualities. Many commented on the value of areas which are wild and relatively difficult to access and some specifically mentioned that they appreciated the restorative qualities of the landscape with opportunities for quiet solitude. Key points raised were:

- Ely is unusual in having wild spaces so close to city centre – keep this character
- Keep some areas wild, with limited access, but with opportunities for direct viewing of wildlife and quiet solitude
- Most valued areas are Roswell Pits and the riverside washlands – both overlooking water
- The character of this landscape is extremely rare in the context of the very developed surrounding countryside
- Many feel very strongly that motorised boats on Roswell Pits would destroy this atmosphere
- Many respondents knew the area well – common activities mentioned were dog walking, bird watching, wild flower identification and photography

**We have tried to achieve a balance between nature conservation and recreation. What do you think?**

Most consider that nature conservation should be the dominate objective – many voiced concerns that the current plans suggest too much emphasis on recreation. There will be a need to assess the potential impact of the Country Park proposals on the SSSI in an objective, scientific way. Key points raised were:

- Vast majority would like to see the balance in favour of nature conservation rather than recreation, with any recreation facilities designed to be as ‘naturalistic’ as possible
- Focus recreation near the ‘town riverside’ entrance to the Country Park, leaving other areas with relatively few interventions
- Concern that plans for a visitor centre/car park, play area and circular walks will have a detrimental impact on wildlife
- Need for clear zoning, with levels of accessibility controlled in areas which are of higher nature conservation value.
- Need to assess potential impact of the proposals and visitor numbers on wildlife
- However, others comment that facilities for families, walkers, cyclists and young people should also be accommodated alongside nature conservation needs
- Given the new SSSI designation, the Country Park must conserve sensitive habitats, ruling out motor-boats, moorings and intrusive boardwalks at Roswell.
- Many commented that the area should be left as it is in its natural state, primarily for wildlife habitat; other areas more suited to recreation are available close by
- Overall, there is a need for careful and sympathetic management in order to meet both nature conservation and recreational objectives.

**A key objective of the Country Park is to make access to the countryside safe, easy and enjoyable. Do the plans achieve this?**

Opinion is divided on the appropriate level of access; some promote cycle paths and easy access, while others would prefer the bare minimum. Overall the majority are in favour of carefully designed pathways, signage and benches, with subtle interpretation and a small car park. There was also general agreement to the idea of a new foot/cycle bridge over the River Ouse. Key points raised were:

- Retain and repair the existing iron footbridge over the River Great Ouse near the Potter Group site
- The balance between routes for cyclists and walkers needs to be carefully designed – many commented that cycleways would be too intrusive and should be kept to a minimum; some felt that there was a risk of cycleways being misused - for motorbikes
- Disabled access is important and will help access for all
- Car parking is a significant issue – many want no vehicular access; some specifically ask for more. The majority are in favour of a small car park near the existing ‘Pocket Park’
- Give people access to the water’s edge
- The Country Park simply must not urbanise the rural nature of the area - routes should be designed to respect the conservation aspects of the area
- Most people are in favour of access to the water’s edge in some parts of Roswell Pits, but many are alarmed by the prospect of a circular path right around the margin of the lake
- Don’t institutionalise the park with hard surfaced paths, bins, benches, lights, CCTV etc
- Keep it simple and inexpensive – then will be sustainable – a ‘light touch’



**Do you think the proposed Country Park should be promoted as a key component of Ely's tourism offer? Do you see it as a regional attraction or a local facility?**

The majority are in favour of a visitor centre, play park and recreation 'zone' close to the Lavender Green entrance, leaving other parts of the Country Park relatively undisturbed. Most see the Country Park as being a local attraction, but one which will inevitably complement and add to Ely's overall tourism offer. The needs of boaters must be taken into account and this area recognised as being valued as a prime boating destination. There were calls for a water sports centre, with kayaking and canoeing as well as sailing, in Roswell Pit. Many commented on the need for more moorings in the Ely area, but the vast majority of respondents would like future moorings to be on the main river and specifically not in Roswell Pit. Key points raised were:

- Should be part of Ely's overall tourism offer, complementing the City's heritage based tourism and providing an extension to the popular riverside area. Could grow to be a regional attraction – has better access by public transport than Wicken Fen
- Urgent need for additional moorings in Ely, together with the increased income which will result to local traders and shops
- 'People like looking at boats as well as wildlife'
- Rowing and sailing is OK – not motorised boasts/moorings – concern over loss of tranquillity as well as damage to biodiversity
- Need more for young people, including active pursuits such as adventure play, quad biking/go-karting
- More fishing
- Scope for promoting the area to specialist groups – Visitor Centre and interpretation could be themed to focus on the city and fenland landscape, past, present and future
- The play areas needs to provide something different
- The Country Park should be promoted as a key component of Ely's tourism – the area will initially benefit local people and as it becomes a regional

attraction, will also benefit local people in boosting the economy

- Ely is the most popular destination for boaters on the River Great Ouse system and attracts visitors from the canal system nationwide, but this potential economic advantage is lost because both short and long term moorings are in short supply during the summer period, causing potential visitors to move on.
- Scope for Ely to promote itself as a destination for ornithologists – niche market.

## 6 | Development Plan principles



### 6.1 Design process

The design principles for the Country Park have been informed by the detailed site appraisal work and by ongoing consultation with stakeholders. They can be explained as a series of layers:

- Conservation
- Circulation
- Facilities

### 6.2 Conservation

The whole of the Phase 1 Country Park site is valued for its biodiversity interest, so nature conservation is a key priority. The majority of the area is conserved as a semi-natural, species-rich landscape.

The site can be described as a series of strategic management zones:

- **Wetlands** - the sequence of open water, waterway and reedbed habitats extending from Roswell Pit to Queen Adelaide Beds, will be extended and enhanced. The area is recognised as being of national importance as a habitat for bittern so the wetlands and reedbeds will be managed with the specific requirements of the bittern in mind. Public access will be carefully managed so that extensive areas of reedbed remain undisturbed.
- **Meadows** - the meadows within the Phase 1 Country Park site are of variety of types; each requires a separate management approach:
  - Ely Common meadows - species-rich grassland, managed for informal recreation
  - Lisle Lane pastures - species-rich grassland, managed by controlled grazing
  - Cresswells Park - a new wildflower meadow, orchard and recreational area, managed as an informal park for amenity and recreation
- **Flood meadows** - the flood meadows of the Great Ouse washlands are



- Woodland
- Wetland
- Cresswell Park meadow
- Ely Common and flood meadow (south)
- Lisle Lane meadow
- Flood meadow
- Hedge
- Orchard trees

exceptionally important as habitat for breeding birds such as gadwall, snipe, sedge warbler and reed bunting. These damp meadows, with areas of scrub and wetland scrapes will be managed to enhance their habitat and biodiversity value, with limited public access.

- **River meadow to the south of the River Ouse** - this riverside meadow is less sensitive (from a nature conservation perspective) and will be available for use as a site for occasional civic events, such as regattas.
- **Woodlands and hedgerows** - the network of woodlands, trees, hedgerows, coppice and scrub throughout the site will be managed to enhance habitat linkages and a varied range of woodland/meadow edge habitat. This habitat zone includes the historic drove road of Cresswells Lane, the wooded escarpment of Ely Common and the hedgerows, trees and scrub enclosing the Lisle Lane, Ely Common and Cresswells Park meadows.

### 6.3 Circulation

Map 18 shows the proposed pattern of circulation. The principles governing the hierarchy of routes are:

- **Managed public access** - Linear routes which contain and control public access are particularly important on a site where relatively large areas of land/water are visually and ecologically important. Public access to areas such as the wetlands and flood meadows will need to be carefully controlled to minimise disturbance to birds and their habitats. Some of these areas are already relatively inaccessible as a result of frequent flooding.
- **Enhanced connections to the wider countryside** - the historic drove road (Cresswells Lane) remains the key 'spine' of connection through the site which now links to a new pathway and bridge over the River Ouse. The route takes people out to the edge of the fens, where there are superb views back to Ely Cathedral and links to the network of footpaths and cycleways within the farmland to the east of the city
- **A variety of circular routes**, of different scales, which allow people to experience the Country Park at their own pace.



The key gateways to the Country Park are important ‘hubs’ where sensitive design and signage will encourage access and an appreciation of local landscapes. The key gateways are:

- **Ely Riverside via Lavender Green** - this is the key link to the town centre, where there is an opportunity for the Country Park to influence the future layout of an area of urban regeneration. The plans show a layout which could be adopted whether the sewage works site is retained or moved. The sequence of spaces begins at the riverside and a greenway leads through a future new development to the childrens’ play area at Cresswells Park (Pocket Park).
- **Ely Common** - an attractive meadow with excellent existing public access, a picnic area and framed views over Roswell Pit, which will form the gateway to the site from the residential areas to the west.
- **The ‘Blue Lagoon’ field** - a potential key gateway to the north of the Phase 1 site, which will link to future areas of planned new residential development (and possible future phases of the Country Park) to the north
- **The countryside gateway at the new River Ouse footbridge** - which will be a new gateway to the City from the east. This site is flat, has wonderful views and is easily accessed by car, footpaths and cycleways.

#### 6.4 Facilities

The key facilities - where investment will be concentrated - within the Country Park are:

- **Visitor Centre/café at Cresswells Park** - this will be a highly accessible popular gateway to the Country Park, with small car park, children’s play area, cycle hire and excellent facilities for interpretation and education. The plans also show an adventure cycling and skateboarding area. The visitor centre might have a turf roof, or perhaps a wildflower meadow extending up and over the roof; it is important that the building is designed to sit low within the landscape so that it does not compromise views to the cathedral from the riverside (particularly from the proposed landmark bridge).



- Visitors centre
- Possible locations for car parks
- Possible locations for play areas
- New landmark bidge
- River inlet
- Enhanced sailing club
- Potential future visitor facilities
- Railway crossing and shared spaces

- **Landmark footbridge and new river inlet** - an opportunity for an iconic structure, perhaps commissioned via an architectural competition. The bridge (and the wonderful views from it) will be the destination within the Country Park. The new river inlet is designed to provide separation between the flood meadow landscapes and the industrial area, but it will also provide new wetland habitats and could be used by Ely Community Rowing Club to increase the river frontage alongside their boathouse.
- **Railway crossing shared spaces and lookout tower** - the railway crossing will be carefully controlled with an area of shared space (for people and vehicles) and a fully controlled crossing point. People waiting at the crossing may choose to climb a lookout tower, with views over Roswell Pits and back to the city centre. There may also be opportunities to create framed views, perhaps through 'windows' cut in a willow wall.
- **Enhanced sailing club facilities** - there may be scope to provide new, enhanced premises, perhaps with laKe side restaurant facilities.

The Environment Agency is undertaking a detailed study which will explore the scope for creating additional public moorings within the wider River Ouse area. This study will be complete by August 2009 and East Cambridgeshire District Council will wait to find the outcome of this study before developing plans for public moorings within the Country Park or elsewhere along the River Ouse within the Ely area.


















**Map 19** shows how all the structuring elements might fit together as an integrated illustrative plan for the new Country Park.

## 6.5 Descriptions of some key detailed areas

Maps 20 - 24 on the pages that follow describe the following key areas in more detail:

- Pocket Park and Lavender Green entrance
- Cresswells Lane and Fishing Lake
- Kiln Lane and new River Ouse bridge
- Roswell Pits and Cuckoo Bridge area



 Ely Country Park Site Boundary	 Riparian planting
 Contours	 Cresswell Park meadow
 Water body	 Ely Common and flood meadow (south)
 Footpath - 'Hoggin' surface	 Lisle Lane meadow
 Existing access road	 Flood meadow
 Footpath/cycleway - Tarmac surface	 Amenity grass
 Grass path	 Hedge
 Play area	 'Orchard' style tree planting
 Woodland	

**Map 19 Ely Country Park Development Plan - Illustrative plan**

### 6.5.1 Pocket Park and Lavender Green entrance

The key recreational facilities are clustered in this SW corner of the site, close to the town centre and minimising impacts on sensitive habitats. These facilities include:

- a small car park (50 spaces) - accessed via the existing access road
- visitor centre with cafe, shop and interpretation, with facilities for environmental education
- play facilities (for all age ranges and including adventure play)

For many visitors this may be their main experience of the Country Park. The whole Pocket Park area will tell the story of the fens, integrating play and interpretation - the landscape will be designed to be perceived as a microcosm of the wider fenland landscape and will include viewing points with outlooks over the Ouse Meadows.

The design proposals for this part of the Country Park also offer an opportunity to re-establish the island edge landscape of meadows, orchards and activities. This was traditionally a working landscape which formed a transition between the Isle of Ely and the surrounding fen

This area is owned by East Cambridgeshire District Council and so implementation of this part of the Country Park could potentially be undertaken relatively quickly and easily; it could be tied into the longer term redevelopment proposals for the wider Lisle Lane area. New and direct pedestrian/cycleway access to Lavender Green and via Bablylon Bridge to the historic Riverside and Ely town centre could form part of a series of future circular walks.




















Map 20 Pocket Park & Lavender Green Entrance - detail

### 6.5.2 Cresswells Lane and Fishing Lake

The historic character of Cresswells Lane is conserved; the only changes proposed are low key improvements to drainage and surfacing. A new cycleway will link the Visitor Centre and Kiln Lane railway crossing. This will be aligned so that it runs immediately alongside the trees which form the southern edge to Cresswell Lane. This will be a tarmac route, slightly elevated above the floodplain and tree root protection zones. It will be separated from the adjacent flood meadows by a new drainage ditch, which will provide opportunities for wetland habitat creation and will act as a barrier, prevent public access to the sensitive floodplain meadow habitats.

Riparian habitats around the fringes of the Fishing Lake will be enhanced, along with improved access for recreation and fishing. There may also be opportunities to reinstate the historic cressbeds within the meadow to the north of Cresswell Lane.



 Ely Country Park Site Boundary	 Riparian planting
 Contours	 Cresswell Park meadow
 Water body	 Ely Common and flood meadow (south)
 Footpath - 'Hoggin' surface	 Lisle Lane meadow
 Existing access road	 Flood meadow
 Footpath/cycleway - Tarmac surface	 Amenity grass
 Grass path	 Hedge
 Play area	 'Orchard' style tree planting
 Woodland	

Map 21 Cresswells Lane & Fishing Lake - detail



### 6.5.3 Kiln Lane and new River Ouse bridge

The majority of Kiln Lane is owned by the Environment Agency. The depot at the end of the lane is strategically important working site and it is important that vehicular access is maintained at all times. Access for large vehicles is required to service the Environment Agency's depot and for access to the other sites within the same industrial complex.


















Kiln Lane is also a right of way and a major recreational link between the River Ouse and residential areas of Ely to the north. It provides some superb views across the adjacent waterbodies of the Fishing Lake and Roswell Pits and it is a popular route for walkers.

There are potential conflicts between the use of Kiln Lane for recreation and its ongoing use as a strategic vehicular access road to the industrial site. Over the years, the problems have contributed to an erosion of landscape quality along Kiln Lane. The Ely Country park Development Plan seeks to resolve these issues by:

- improving access into Country Park from the north (via the EA offices)
- creating a safe railway crossing
- providing a more attractive and accessible route across the River Ouse

Map 22 shows the whole of Kiln Lane in context - Maps 23a, 23b and 23c (on the following pages) describe the issues in more detail.



 Ely Country Park Site Boundary	 Riparian planting
 Contours	 Cresswell Park meadow
 Water body	 Ely Common and flood meadow (south)
 Footpath - 'Hoggin' surface	 Lisle Lane meadow
 Existing access road	 Flood meadow
 Footpath/cycleway - Tarmac surface	 Amenity grass
 Grass path	 Hedge
 Play area	 'Orchard' style tree planting
 Woodland	

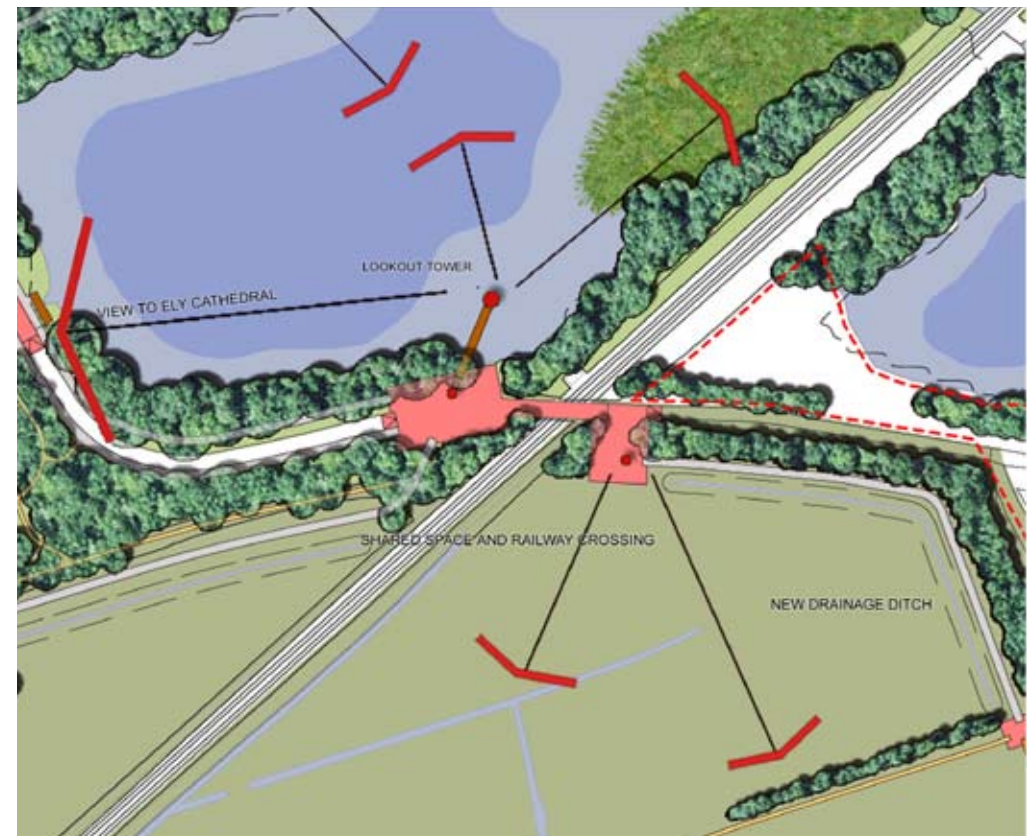
Map 22 Kiln Lane and new River Ouse bridge - detail



**Map 22a Improved access into the Country Park from the north - detail**

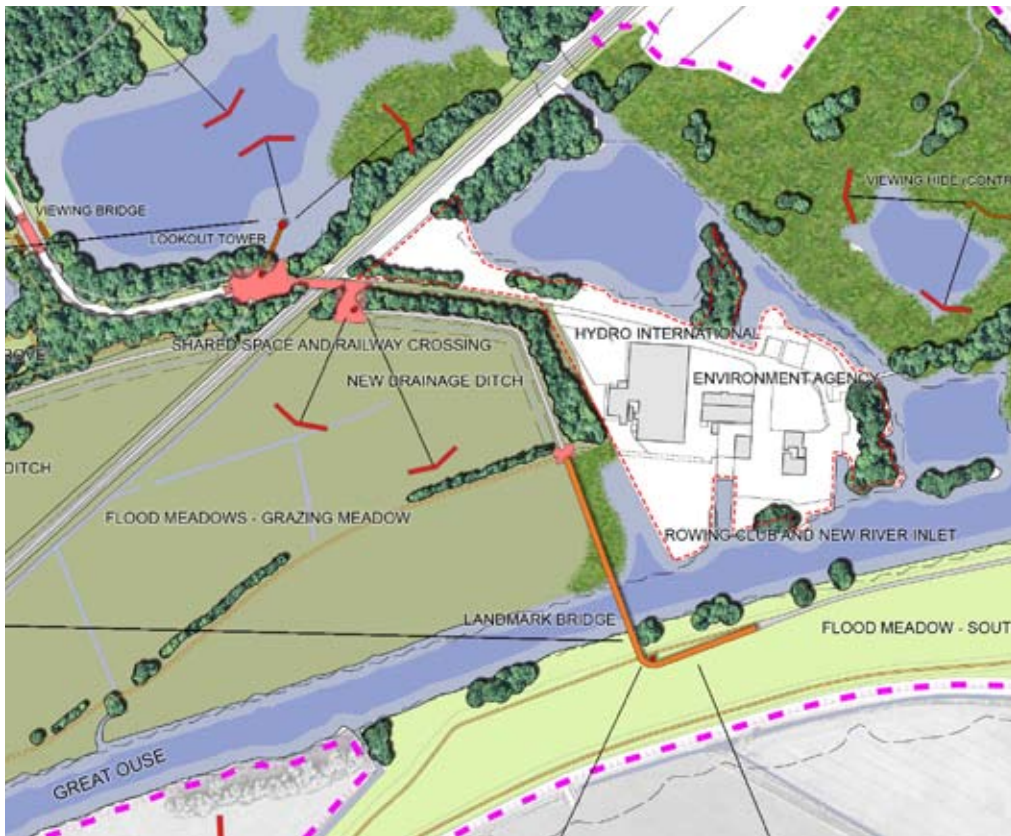
The aim is to divert pedestrian and cycleway access across land owned by the Environment Agency but which falls outside its operational requirements. Access to the northern part of Kiln Lane will be controlled so that only Environment Agency staff (or those accessing the Ely Rowing Club/Hydro International site) will be permitted.

The main pedestrian access will be to the east of the Environment Agency's offices, crossing back to Kiln Lane to the south. The new Shared Space arrangement requires that people cross Kiln Lane at specific points (rather than moving along the road) and the Shared Space would be designed to be appropriate to the rural character of the Country Park. Pedestrian access will be on new pavements on either side of Kiln Lane



**Map 22b A safe railway crossing - detail**

The use of the railway line through the Country Park is likely to increase so a new fully gated automatic railway crossing will be required. Details of the crossing will be subject to discussions with Network Rail and the detailed design of the adjacent Shared Spaces will be carefully developed to reflect the rural character of the Country Park. There will be opportunities for overlook and interpretation and there could also be modest seating, signage etc.



**Map 22c A more attractive & accessible route across the River Ouse - detail**

The combination of a new woodland planting and a new river inlet will divert people away from the industrial complex to the south of Kiln Lane and along a new cycleway/footpath link which provides access for all. The river inlet is designed to increase the riverside frontage for Ely Community Rowing Club and will also provide opportunities for new wetland and riparian habitats. The new cycleway/footpath will connect to a circular footpath along the river towards Ely and will also lead to the new landmark bridge and connections to the wider sub-regional rights of way network to the east of the River Ouse. The new bridge will provide superb views to Ely Cathedral and across the fens to the east. It will be an iconic landmark for Ely.

#### 6.5.4 Roswell Pits and Cuckoo Bridge area

From a nature conservation perspective, Roswell Pits is one of the most sensitive areas of the Country Park. The existing riparian and wetland habitat connections between the open water and reedbeds of Roswell Pits, the Cuckoo Bridge area and the Queen Adelaide Beds/flood meadows to the east are of exceptionally high ecological value (hence the SSSI designation). The Country Park proposals are intended to include a broad range of habitat enhancements to local riparian and wetland habitats, as well as to scrub and woodland habitats on the Ely Common escarpment.

Public access will be restricted to footpaths and viewing points in the Ely Common and Kiln Lane areas; a number of strategic views might be celebrated with lookout structures and platforms.

A co-ordinated, multi-disciplinary vision for vegetation management will need to be developed to take account of requirements for providing access to the geological sites on the Ely Common escarpment, retaining slope stability and habitat enhancement.

The open areas of water are valuable to the Sailing Club and may be used in future for canoeing and kayaking with minimal impact on riparian and wetland habitats. Existing fishing access and activities will be retained, particularly on the east bank of Roswell Pits.

The site to the north of Roswell Pits (the Blue Lagoon area) has potential for the development of an enhanced Sailing Club facility, with possible future car parking to serve the expanded population of Ely (resulting from the City's Growth Area status). This site might also incorporate future large scale visitor facilities, if these were required at a later date.



Map 23 Roswell Pits and Cuckoo Bridge area - detail

## 7 | The business case



### 7.1 The Business Plan

The Business Plan which accompanies the Development Plan for Ely Country Park is available as a separate document; this section summarises the principal relevant points. The phasing of implementation has been designed to reflect priorities identified during the consultation process, land tenure issues and the immediate availability of capital and revenue funds.

Some £700,000 of capital funding has already been ear-marked to meet base costs for priorities between 2009 and 2010 as follows:

- S106 monies from East Cambridgeshire District Council. £300 k from a pot applicable to 'Open space that benefits the parish'.
- Housing Growth Area Fund (Cambridgeshire Horizons)- £200 k from April 2009 over 2 years for access improvements (paths and entrances), education boards, viewing platforms, habitat renewal, play areas, moorings and planning and project feasibility.
- Local Public Sector Award (LPSA) for Cambridgeshire - £100k from April 2009 over 3 years – as for HGAF
- Cambridgeshire Pathfinder bid - £60 k from April 2009 to March 2010.

From the earliest stages the Country Park team will also prepare grant funding bids for a range of competitive grant schemes including:

- **Lottery funding** – Including Changing Spaces Access to Nature scheme run by Natural England which can provide grants of up to £0.5 million for land purchase, access, landscape restoration and management, habitat enhancement, education and interpretation activities.
- **Landfill Communities Fund** through a number of Distributive Environmental Bodies including Biffaward/RSWT, SITA, WREN, CEMEX, Cambridgeshire Community Foundation. The criteria and amounts available from each of these bodies varies but ranges from grants of £2k to £0.25 million for biodiversity enhancement, improving community amenities and access, education and interpretation.
- **Sport England** – later phases of Sport England funding for instance for enhancing rowing, sailing, fishing and other public access facilities within the Park.

- **Rural Development Programme** – a bid with the Environment Agency for development of public moorings along the River Ouse.

### 7.2 Strategic Tariff

In the longer term a securing an agreed percentage of a housing growth Strategic tariff – which is currently being discussed amongst Cambridgeshire Local Authorities – will be the Country Park's most reliable source of steady capital and revenue funding. Reflecting current housing market conditions relatively conservative assumptions have been made about a slow build up of new housing (starting with 150 houses pa from 2011) of which the Country Park might secure a 4% share. This could yield £0.2 million or more pa by 2020 to pay for further capital investment or to fund an endowment fund to meet revenue costs.

### 7.3 Revenue

A major challenge for the long term sustainability of the Country Park will be ensuring that it secures a steady source of revenue which will cover management costs in perpetuity. This will include costs for managing different landscape types and facilities, each with its own needs. Provision has been made for ongoing management costs<sup>9</sup> based on a 20 year programme for 3 types of area:

- Intensively managed grass, pathways, look-out areas and dog walking areas requiring more intensive management.
- Built facilities including the visitor centre/café, car park, play areas, site furniture and shared crossing space requiring regular maintenance.
- Extensively managed areas including grassland and river corridor managed for conservation and low intensity recreational use potentially through grazing and conservation areas improved in line with SSSI designation where ongoing management requirements will be minimal.

<sup>9</sup> Based on approximate areas, lengths and quantities, taken from capital cost plans with unit rates of £500/ha to £1,500/ha applied to each area to according to intensity of grass cutting, litter collection, arboricultural and habitats management, Health & Safety inspections for play areas and paths and periodic maintenance of buildings, bridges and play equipment.

The costs of managing the Country Park will rise as new zones are improved and new facilities developed. Costs are expected to rise from about £40,000 pa in the first few years to about £100,000 pa by the end of Phase 3.

#### 7.4 Revenue Funding

The ongoing revenue costs of the Park will be met from a range of sources including core funding from East Cambridgeshire District Council in the form of:

- **Public Mooring charges** - based on Cambridge experience Ely Country Park could benefit from a steady stream of revenue of about £25k pa in 201 by introducing £10 charges for 48 hour moorings at existing District Council sites. This is comparable to rates achieved at Inland Marinas and assumes that the Park retains all revenues net of collection costs. By 2014 this revenue could build to £34k pa but may grow further if the results of an ongoing Environment Agency identify opportunities for increasing the number of moorings along the River Ouse over the next few years.
- **Car parking charges.** From the end of Phase 1 a small car park could generate a steady flow of revenue from weekday and weekend parking, based on the possibility of transferring ownership of the car park to a future management Trust and the Trust setting car parking charges. It is assumed revenues of £10-50k could be generated.

In the later phases of the Country Park we have assumed that a number of on-site revenue earning activities will become more important. While never likely to meet all the management costs of the Park or provide long term stability they are nevertheless likely to make a significant contribution. Based on modest assumptions reflecting the current economic situation it appears likely that by 2014 the park could be raising about £70,000 pa in net profit from:

- **A Visitor Centre café and shop** - up to £15 k profit pa;
- **Other activities** - venue hire, cycle hire, day fishing permits, events and other recreational activities such as scout and forest camps;
- **Membership contributions** by a Friends of Group; and
- **A Roof tax** – based on an agreed percentage of a £100/house roof tax for

upkeep of shared space/ Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems outside the Park in the Northern Growth area.

#### 7.5 Management

A number of options have been considered for the management of the site.

##### Initial Phase 1

In view of the sensitivities over land ownership of parts of the site, the phased nature of activities and the likely funding profile, it is proposed that initially management is taken on by East Cambridgeshire District Council – who would be responsible for overall strategic direction, preparing funding bids (Lottery, Landfill Distributive Bodies etc) and for overall health and safety aspects of structural elements of the programme. East Cambridgeshire District Council will source a partnership arrangement for the conservation of the Country Park based on management plans agreed by a steering group which will include representatives from the District Council and landowners.

##### Phase 2 onwards – Ely Country Park Trust

During Phase 2 a dedicated Trust will be established. The aim of the Ely Country Park Trust will be to manage the Park for the benefit of the local community and visitors and to develop a stable financial platform for future growth. The proposed Trust will be responsible for managing the parks resources including greenspace and facilities including the visitor centre/ community space/café. It may also seek to manage greenspace and SUDS associated with the Northern housing growth area for a suitable fee.

The Ely Country Park Trust will:

- Establish itself as a company limited by guarantee, with either Community Interest Company (CIC) or charitable status. While this would involve some establishment costs, as a legal entity the Trust will be eligible for additional grants and for taking on insurance liabilities.
- Have a small Board of Management, comprising about 10 Trustees (the company Directors charged with acting in the interests of the Trust) with full decision-making authority. The Board will include representatives from East Cambridgeshire District Council and landowners within the Country Park.

- Have a small staff initially including a part time Trust manager and a part time Community Ranger to deliver its activities.
- Be accountable to:
  - East Cambridgeshire District Council through a mechanism such as a Minority Protection Agreement (MPA) which requires the Trust to keep the Council updated on progress and requires Council consent to major changes to the constitution or Business Plan.
  - A wider stakeholder group including partner agencies and user groups who will provide strategic support and feedback – through regular meetings and an annual forum.
- Establish a 'Friends of Ely Country Park Group' of volunteers and frequent users.



## 8 | Priorities



## 8.1 Overview - implementation

The drawings prepared as part of the Ely Country Park Development Plan have been developed in AutoCAD so that they can be measured and used as a basis for future detailed design development. Measurements from these drawings have been used to develop the costs used in the accompanying Business Plan<sup>10</sup>. These costs have been used to inform a breakdown of the proposals into achievable priorities.

The Business Plan has identified potential funding available for works implemented in the period 2009-2011 and East Cambridgeshire District Council is committed to use this funding to implement the Priority 1 works: the other priorities (shown below as Priorities 2 and 3) are seen as longer term aspirations, that may be developed in due course by a range of potential partners. The timescale for the Priority 1 works is fixed, but there may well be scope to mix and match the work programmes for future phases, taking advantage of the availability of funding.

## 8.2 Priority 1 – up to 2011

The focus for the first phase of implementation is on the areas which are the least sensitive from a nature conservation perspective. A series of access corridors are proposed - there is relatively little change on the length of rights of way, but the proposals aim to improve the experience of the Country Park in terms of its role as a gateway to the wider fen landscape.

Phase 1 could achieve:

- new play area at Pocket Park
- a small (50 space) car park
- enhancements and conservation works along Cresswells Lane
- improved access around the Fishing Lake

The following sections set out the key issues, future mitigation and future actions which may be relevant to the implementation of each of these components.



Ely Country Park Site Boundary	Riparian planting
Contours	Cresswell Park meadow
Water body	Ely Common and flood meadow (south)
Footpath - 'Hoggin' surface	Lisle Lane meadow
Existing access road	Flood meadow
Footpath/cycleway - Tarmac surface	Amenity grass
Grass path	Hedge
Play area	'Orchard' style tree planting
Woodland	

<sup>10</sup> Ursus Consulting, May 2009, Business Case for the Proposed Ely Country Park

### Cycleway & footpath connection



#### General Design Issues

This new path is likely to be in the order of 2.6m to 3m wide with separate lanes for cyclists and pedestrians. Where possible it will be constructed following existing footpath alignments, but it will require the construction of two completely new sections, one of which will run immediately to the south of the historic lane on the northern edge of the flood meadows and another diverting around the EA offices on Kiln Lane. Protecting adjacent habitats and root protection zones will be of prime importance as will the opportunity to create new habitats compensating for any losses. Changes to the existing railway crossing will also be needed in order to make it safer especially for younger children running ahead of their parents/guardians.

#### Future action/mitigation – up to submission of a detailed planning application

- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages in coordination with an EIA and the development of a wider Country Park masterplan.
- Progress consultations (jointly with the EA and other business users of the rail crossing) with Rail Track in order to establish options/feasibility and cost of improving safety in the context of the Country Park
- Consult widely with all other key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare a detailed planning application – coordinated with the overall priority one works and wider Country Park Masterplan

**Cost - £445,000**

### Play area (including adventure play)



#### General Design Issues

The new play areas are likely to be relatively contained towards the southern edge of the existing Pocket Park. The main design and technical challenges being the integration of the facility on top of this former landfill site avoiding any unstable areas and ensuring that no unforeseen pathways between any underground “contaminants” and “receptors” (adjacent river, watertable and users of the parks etc) are created.

#### Future action/mitigation – to submission of a detailed planning application

- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages in coordination with an EIA and the development of a wider Country Park masterplan.
- Co ordinate proposals with the local health officer and EA to ensure that all is in line with regulations relating to the reuse of former landfill sites. This may well include further land contamination and flood risk assessments as part of any wider EIA
- Consult widely with all other key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to ensure minimum negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare a detailed planning application – coordinated with the overall priority one works and wider Country Park masterplan

**Cost (including adventure play) - £185,000**

## Car park



### General Design Issues

The car park will be constructed to a standard engineering design but some key issues will require careful consideration in order to minimise negative environmental impact and to keep cost under control, these include:

- Design of the entrance will need to be carefully integrated vertically and horizontally with the adjacent existing road with which it connects to ensure stability on this former landfill location
- Means of drainage either by connecting into the existing road system or by positive outfall or infiltration - avoiding any negative impacts on any made up ground below.
- Details and surface finishes - sensitively chosen to reflect a “rural” character avoiding any sense of “urbanisation”

**Future action/mitigation** – to submission of a detailed planning application

- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages in coordination with an EIA and the development of a wider Country Park masterplan.
- Co ordinate proposals with the local health officer and EA to comply with regulations relating to the reuse of former landfill sites - may include further land contamination and flood risk assessments as part of any wider EIA.
- Consult widely with all other key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare detailed planning application – coordinated with the priority 1 works and wider Country Park masterplan

**Cost - £195,000**

## Historic Lane



### General Design Issues

Minimum intervention is anticipated other than works required to refurbish and maintain the existing surface and enhance drainage. A sensitive approach to these works will be required to ensure the character of the lane is protected. Of particular importance are the adjacent undulating landform/historic drainage ditches and the associated vegetation /trees that are well established. The views southwards from the lane across the flood meadows are also an essential part of the historic lane’s character, which must be protected by minimising the impact of the proposed footpath/cycleway. Greater physical and visual linkage northwards to the fishing lake is also desirable, but any interventions to achieve this will need to be carefully integrated, minimising impacts.

**Future action/mitigation** – to submission of a detailed planning application

- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages in coordination with an EIA and the development of a wider Country Park masterplan.
- Consult widely with all key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to ensure minimum negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare detailed planning application – coordinated with the priority 1 works and wider Country Park masterplan

**Cost - £125,000**

## Fishing Lake access



### General Design Issues

A low key approach is anticipated in the form of a 1.2m wide hoggin surfaced path with timber edging. This path will provide access to a series of top-of-bank viewing platforms and water level fishing platforms. It will be important to integrate opportunities for further enhancement to riparian habitats along the water's edge. Such habitat creation and the development of the paths/platforms will need to be informed by advice from Ely Beets Sport and Social Club in order to optimise the attractiveness of the lake for fishing.

**Future action/mitigation** – to submission of a detailed planning application

- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages in coordination with an EIA and the development of a wider Country Park masterplan.
- Consult with the local fishing clubs
- Consult widely with all other key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to ensure minimum negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare a detailed planning application – coordinated with the overall priority one works and wider Country Park masterplan

**Cost - £80,000**

ELY COUNTRY PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN - BUSINESS CASE ESTIMATE



ELEMENTAL ABSTRACT

	<b>PRIORITY 1</b>	<b>TOTAL COSTS (incl. Prelims &amp; Cont)</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Cycleway & Footpath Connections (incl. Railway Crossing)	393,000	445,000
Play Area (including Adventure Play)	164,000	185,000
Car Park	174,000	195,000
Historic Lane	110,000	125,000
Access to the Fishing Lake	72,000	80,000
<b>BASE COSTS</b>	<b>£913,000</b>	
PRELIMINARIES	7.5% 68,000	
CONTINGENCIES	5% 49,000	
	<b>CONTRACT COST</b>	
	<b>£1,030,000</b>	
INFLATION (see Cashflow Forecast)	-	
CONSULTANTS FEES & CHARGES (Excl.)	-	
	<b>DEVELOPMENT COST (Excl. VAT)</b>	<b>£1,030,000</b>
	<b>£1,030,000</b>	<b>£1,030,000</b>












### 8.3 Priority 2 – 2011 onwards

Following 2001, the focus of investment is likely to be targeted at completing the circular walk across the flood meadows, enhancing access into the Country Park along the main spine of Kiln Lane and improving pedestrian access to the north along Ely Common.

Phase 2 could achieve:

- a completed loop along the river meadows and link to railway line (as a footway, not a cycleway)
- improved access along Ely Common, associated with vantage points and lookouts with views across the wider fen landscape. These viewpoints take advantage of the elevated landform - a rare occurrence in the Fens
- implementation of a cycleway along the former drag-line routes on the slopes of Ely Common to the west of Roswell Pits. This work would need to be carefully integrated with measures for the conservation of existing trees and required provision of access to the slopes for geological research
- Shared Space interventions along Kiln Lane - at 5 locations
- development of a new Isle of Ely and Ouse Riverside 'edge landscape' - a new river inlet with woodland planting and creation of riparian habitats
- future visitor facilities to the north of Roswell Pits, possibly in association with an enhanced/new Sailing Club facility. This might be a venue with gym, restaurants and cafes.



 Ely Country Park Site Boundary	 Riparian planting
 Contours	 Cresswell Park meadow
 Water body	 Ely Common and flood meadow (south)
 Footpath - 'Hoggin' surface	 Lisle Lane meadow
 Existing access road	 Flood meadow
 Footpath/cycleway - Tarmac surface	 Amenity grass
 Grass path	 Hedge
 Play area	 'Orchard' style tree planting
 Woodland	

Map 25 Priority 2 - 2011 onwards

### Complete the riverside link



#### General Design Issues

This work consist of two parts

- 1 – A new footpath /cycleway approximately 2.6m to 3m wide with separate lanes for cyclists and pedestrians (aligned to allow for connection to a future bridge) connecting with the existing riverside path
- 2 – Refurbishment of the existing path across the flood meadows; the aim is to improve drainage by adjusting levels to ensure that the path is slightly elevated above normal seasonal flooding.

Protecting and indeed enhancing adjacent flood meadow habitats will be of prime importance.

**Future action/mitigation** – up to submission of a detailed planning application

- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages, co-ordinating with an EIA and the development of a wider Country Park masterplan.
- Progress consultations (jointly with the NE and the landowner) to agree extent of works and ongoing management changes. These issues should be coordinated with the priority 1 footpath and cycleway and the priority 2 edge landscape – woodland and river inlet (all overlapping with the same landownership).
- Consult widely with all other key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare a detailed planning application – coordinated with the overall priority 1 works and wider Country Park Masterplan

**Cost - £80,000**

### Footpath & viewing points along Ely Common



#### General Design Issues

These new paths are likely to be approximately 1.2m wide and, wherever possible, constructed following existing informal favoured footpaths. Protecting adjacent habitats and root protection zones will be of prime importance as will the creation of new habitats to compensate for any losses. Connections with the wider Country Park footpath network will need to be carefully considered. Viewing points, elevated above the steep Roswell Pit shore, will provide dramatic viewing points but will require careful siting and design to minimise negative impacts on existing slopes and vegetation. The viewing structures might be constructed in a combination of steel and wood, possibly incorporating existing trees

**Future action/mitigation** – up to submission of a detailed planning application

- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages, co-ordinating with an EIA and a wider Country Park masterplan.
- Progress consultations (jointly with the NE and the landowner) to agree extent of works and ongoing management
- Co-ordinate design development with a detailed assessment of slope stability, along with a comprehensive tree/vegetation survey to establish the extent of any wider engineering intervention and landscape management options and ensure the stability of the steep Roswell Pit shoreline “cliffs” as part of a longer term shared vision
- Consult widely with all other key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare a detailed planning application – coordinated with the overall priority 1 works and wider Country Park Masterplan

**Cost - £60,000**



### New 'Isle edge' landscape - woodland & river inlet



#### General Design Issues

These simple, yet important interventions will require a careful and sensitive approach to ensure that the objective of a new “gateway landscape” is achieved. The woodland planting will be straightforward, but the design of the proposed river “inlet” will require careful consideration in relation to main river water flows and will need to be designed to ensure that levels of siltation do not become an “unreasonable” management issue. If designed carefully with a proper understanding of potential impacts, construction and longer term management should be relatively simple.

**Future action/mitigation** – to submission of a detailed planning application

- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages in coordination with an EIA and the development of a wider Country Park masterplan.
- Ensure appropriate engineering input at an early stage fully co-ordinated with the EA
- Ensure that the proposals are fully coordinated with the adjacent rowing club and landowner – Hydro Engineering
- Ensure co-ordination with other priority 2 proposals
- Consult widely with all key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures, minimising negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare a detailed planning application – coordinated with the overall priority 1 works and wider Country Park masterplan

**Cost - £630,000**

### Shared Space



#### General Design Issues

At the main pedestrian crossing points along Kiln Lane and as part of a coordinated design strategy to reduce conflicts between pedestrians, cars and trains - Shared Space areas where pedestrians have priority over vehicles could offer significant health and safety advantages. Careful design will be important to ensure that they are in keeping with the concept of a Country Park, avoiding unnecessary ‘urbanisation’. Eg surfaces could be gravel-like tarmac with cattle grids within the road surface to slow approaching vehicles. Standard concrete blocks and ramps should be avoided. These areas could also be linked to the design of adjacent viewing points and platforms.

**Future action/mitigation** – up to submission of a detailed planning application

- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages in coordination with an EIA and a wider Country Park masterplan.
- Progress consultations with NE, EA and other Kiln Lane users to agree extent of works and ongoing management
- These design issues should be coordinated with a detailed assessment of traffic management issues and flows and will need to be co-ordinated with the design of the priority 1 footpath and cycleway.
- Consult widely with all other key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare detailed planning application – coordinated with the overall priority 1 works and wider Country Park Masterplan

**Cost (including Lookout Tower) - £485,000**

## Escarpment cycleway and footpath



### General Design Issues

This footpath /cycleway is likely to be approximately 2.6-3m wide and can be divided into three sections:

- 1 – Adjacent to Kiln Lane - straightforward; subject to an assessment of the extent of root protection zones.
- 2 – Roswell Pit north shore cliffs (south) - follows the alignment of historic clay pit access tracks; subject to an assessment of root protection and slope stability issues.
- 3 – Roswell Pit north shore cliffs (north) - most difficult section because of steep gradient. Likely to require some regrading of cliff and/or cantilivering of path perhaps to a similar construction as the proposed lookout structures. Need to protect adjacent habitats and root protection zones; opportunity to create new habitats compensating for any losses.

**Future action/mitigation** – up to submission of a detailed planning application

- Develop proposals to agreed design stages, coordinating with an EIA and development of Country Park masterplan.
- Progress consultations (jointly with NE and landowner) to agree extent of works and ongoing management
- Co-ordinate design issues with detailed assessments of slope stability and survey of trees/vegetation to establish the extent of any wider engineering intervention and landscape management options.
- Consult widely with all other key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare detailed planning application – coordinated with overall priority 1 works & wider Country Park Masterplan

**Cost - £195,000**

## Visitor facilities



### General Design Issues

These will be key “gateway” experiences for users of the Country Park. They are an opportunity to set a high standard of design which could become part of Ely’s iconic imagery. They do not necessarily need to be large, complex or indeed highly visible but they should be sustainable - in terms of their economic function, energy/water use and impact on the wider country park environment. They could for example incorporate green/brown roofs, replacing habitat otherwise lost by their footprint. Early feasibility studies as part of the wider Country Park masterplan will therefore be essential even if these visitor facilities are not to be constructed for a number of years.

**Future action/mitigation** – to submission of a detailed planning application

- Ensure appropriate and early feasibility studies are completed as part of the wider country park masterplan development. This will include detailed discussions with landowners and potential developers and users.
- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages in coordination with an EIA and the development of a wider Country Park masterplan.
- Consult widely with all other key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare a detailed planning application – coordinated with the overall priority one works and wider Country Park masterplan

**Cost - £1,325,000**



ELY COUNTRY PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN - BUSINESS CASE ESTIMATE

ELEMENTAL ABSTRACT

	PRIORITY 2		TOTAL COSTS (incl. Prelims & Cont)
	£	£	£
Riverside Link	71,000		80,000
Footpaths to Ely Common	53,000		60,000
Escarpment Cycleway and Footpath	173,000		195,000
Shared Space (including Lookout Tower)	430,000		485,000
Woodland & River Inlet	558,000		630,000
Visitor Facilities	1,174,000		1,325,000
<b>BASE COSTS</b>	<b>£2,459,000</b>		
PRELIMINARIES	7.5%	184,000	
CONTINGENCIES	5%	132,000	
<b>CONTRACT COST</b>		<b>£2,775,000</b>	
INFLATION (see Cashflow Forecast)		-	
CONSULTANTS FEES & CHARGES (Excl.)		-	
<b>DEVELOPMENT COST (Excl. VAT)</b>		<b>£2,775,000</b>	<b>£2,775,000</b>

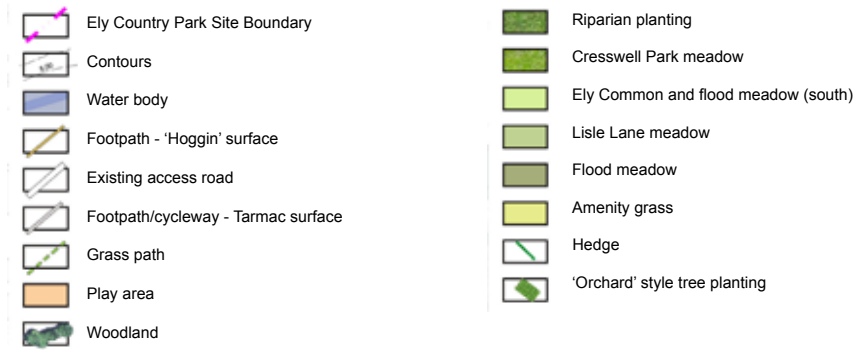
### 8.4 Priority 3 – 2012 onwards

There may be scope to develop future phases of Ely Country Park to north, where the potential sites are less sensitive (from a nature conservation perspective) and appropriate for more active recreational facilities. There is also an opportunity to complete the link across the river to the network of rights of way within the wider fenland countryside to the east of Ely

Phase 3 could achieve:

- completion of new River Ouse bridge (although if funding available this could easily be implemented much earlier)
- development of a riverside events area on the east bank of the River Ouse, with views back to the City of Ely and out to the fens
- connection of rights of way within the Country park to the wider strategic footpath/cycleway network

The new bridge over the River Ouse offers an opportunity to create an iconic contemporary landmark for Ely, which complements the historic attractions within the town centre.



Map 26 Priority 3 - 2012 onwards

### New bridge, footpath and cycleway



#### General Design Issues

A new bridge will provide “gateway and iconic” views to Ely Cathedral from the Country Park. The design should be of the highest possible quality and consideration should be given to an early feasibility study to confirm general design options and costs. The bridge design could be determined by a major design competition, but an early understanding of options would allow co-ordination with adjacent priority 2 proposals, in particular the new footpath/cycleway. The bridge will be designed to be accessible to all (wide enough for cyclists and pedestrians) and could include seating and viewing points. Recent new bridges in Newcastle and Castleford offer some inspirational precedents.

#### Future action/mitigation – to submission of a detailed planning application

- Ensure appropriate and early feasibility studies are completed as part of the wider Country Park masterplan development. This will include detailed discussions with landowners
- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages in coordination with an EIA and the development of a wider Country Park masterplan (possibly following a design competition)
- Consult widely with all other key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare a detailed planning application – coordinated with the overall priority one works and wider Country Park masterplan

**Cost - £1,140,000**

### Connect to the strategic rights of way network



#### General Design Issues

It will be essential to make sure that all local and strategic cycleway and footpath connections are adequately considered in order to achieve the objective of linking Ely and the Country Park into the wider sub-regional footpath system. Close co-ordination with Cambridgeshire County Council will be required to ensure all appropriate routes and access standards are incorporated.

#### Future action/mitigation – to submission of a detailed planning application

- Develop the proposals to agreed design stages in coordination with an EIA and the development of a wider Country Park masterplan (possibly following a design competition)
- Consult widely with all key landowners and stakeholders – ongoing through the design process
- Incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts on existing trees and habitats
- Prepare a detailed planning application – coordinated with the overall priority 1 works and wider Country Park masterplan

**Cost - £175,000**

ELY COUNTRY PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN - BUSINESS CASE ESTIMATE



ELEMENTAL ABSTRACT

	PRIORITY 3		TOTAL COSTS (incl. Prelims & Cont)
	£	£	£
New Bridge & Footpaths	1,010,000		1,140,000
Strategic Footpath Network	155,000		175,000
<b>BASE COSTS</b>	<b>£1,165,000</b>		
PRELIMINARIES	7.5%	87,000	
CONTINGENCIES	5%	63,000	
<b>CONTRACT COST</b>		<b>£1,315,000</b>	
INFLATION (see Cashflow Forecast)		-	
CONSULTANTS FEES & CHARGES (Excl.)		-	
<b>DEVELOPMENT COST (Excl. VAT)</b>		<b>£1,315,000</b>	<b>£1,315,000</b>

## Annex A - Levels of participation in different forms of sport and recreation

Activity	%	Number
Walking (moderate intensity 30 plus minutes)	22.0%	9,096,900
Swimming (all)	13.4%	5,570,100
Gym	10.7%	4,448,200
Cycling (moderate intensity 30 plus minutes)	8.5%	3,510,200
Football (all)	7.6%	3,142,300
Athletics (all)	6.0%	2,503,700
Golf/Pitch and Putt/ Putting	3.7%	1,544,100
Tennis	2.3%	939,500
Badminton	2.3%	939,500
Aerobics	1.6%	658,000
Yoga	1.4%	600,700
Ex Bike/ Ex Machine/ Spinning class/rowing machine	1.4%	589,500
Squash	1.2%	486,200
Keep fit/sit ups	1.2%	481,800
Weight training	1.1%	459,000
Bowls (all)	1.1%	443,200
Horse Riding (Any)	1.0%	421,000
Cricket	1.0%	419,600

Source: Active People 2 Survey (2007)

## Annex B - Environmental destinations within the surrounding area

### 1. Barnwell Country Park

Address Barnwell Road  
Oundle  
Peterborough  
Northamptonshire  
PE8 5PB  
Phone 01536 373625  
Web [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk)  
Size 15 hectares

Barnwell Country Park, is a peaceful mixture of lakes, riverside, grassy meadow and marsh. Barnwell has much to offer visitors, especially families with lakeside paths (mostly hard-surfaced and suitable for prams, pushchairs and wheelchairs), accessible bird hides, a great children's play area, country park shop, day ticket coarse fishing and picnic meadows, as well as the Kingfisher Lodge; an education centre (available for community and private hire).

### 2. Brandon Country Park

Address Visitor Centre  
Brandon Park  
Bury Road  
Brandon  
Suffolk  
IP27 OSU  
Phone 01473 265106  
Web [www.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk)  
Size 12 hectares

Brandon is an attractive, traditional Country Park covering 32 acres. It offers waymarked walks, tree and history trail, orienteering course, play equipment (including a wheelchair swing), cycle and easy access trails. Historical interest is provided by mausoleum, lake and imaginatively restored flint walled garden. The Visitor Centre houses a tearoom, gift shop, interpretation displays and information point. Also available is a full calendar year of events. Picnic areas. Entrance and car parking free. Opening hours and further information on 01842 810185.

### 3. Clare Castle Country Park

Address Malting Lane  
Clare  
Sudbury  
Suffolk  
CO10 8NW  
Phone 01787 277491  
Web [www.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk)  
Size 12 hectares

Ancient and modern combine here in a most unusual way. A Victorian railway station sits within the remains of a Norman Castle and the visitor centre is today housed in the old railway goods shed. The remains of the old castle moat are now a series of ponds and there are various trails giving you information on the heritage and natural history of the Park. There is a children's play area and an annual programme of events.

### 4. Coton Countryside Reserve

Address Wheatcases Barn  
Grantchester Road  
Coton  
Cambridge  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 7PZ  
Phone 01223 243830  
Web  
Size 120 hectares

A working farm with an extensive network of permissive footpaths, picnic meadows and a viewpoint giving splendid views over the historic Cambridge City skyline and surrounding countryside. The site is still under development (visitor car park to be constructed summer 2007) - but visitors are welcome to come on foot or by bike in the meantime or to find out about the Reserve by joining one of the regular events.

### 5. Crown Lakes Country Park

Address Haddon Way  
Farcet  
Peterborough  
Cambridgeshire  
PE7 3BA  
Phone 01733 453543



Web [www.naturalnet.org.uk](http://www.naturalnet.org.uk)  
Size 87 hectares

Crown Lakes Country Park was established on what was a derelict site left over from the brick-making industry. Two large brick-pits have since been flooded to create a fantastic wetland feature. It was transformed into Crown Lakes Country Park in 1997 with the planting of over 75,000 indigenous trees and shrubs by landowners O & H Hampton. The park now spans 87 acres of community parkland and is a recreational resource for many surrounding communities.

#### 6. Ferry Meadows Country Park

Address Ham Farm House  
Ham Lane  
Peterborough  
Cambridgeshire  
PE2 5UU  
Phone 01733 234193  
Web [www.nene-park-trust.org.uk](http://www.nene-park-trust.org.uk)  
Size 237 hectares and 1026 hectares

Ferry Meadows was created as part of the expansion of Peterborough and opened in 1978 forming the focal point of the larger Nene Park which stretches 6 miles along the valley of the river Nene to the west of Peterborough. Nene Park covers 1026 ha (2535 acres) of which 700ha (1730ac) is owned by the Trust in the valley of the River Nene west of Peterborough. About 276ha (682 ac) of meadows, woods and lakes are used for informal recreation, another third is used for formal sports and activities such as golf, rowing and sailing and the remainder is open countryside used for agriculture with a network of footpath and bridleways.

#### 7. Harrold - Odell Country Park

Address Carlton Road  
Harrold  
Bedfordshire  
MK43 7DS  
Phone 01767 626452  
Web  
Size 58 hectares

Situated on the banks of the River Great Ouse, Harrold -Odell Country Park was developed on a former sand and gravel extraction site. The main features

of the park are three lakes, river meadows, woodland and grassland. There are 2 circular routes around the park, one of which is surfaced, providing great opportunity to enjoy the peaceful surroundings, fantastic landscape and wildlife. There is a car park and visitor centre with toilets, café, and information room. The Park has an events programme full of exciting activities for families and there are plenty of opportunities for volunteers to get involved.

#### 8. Hinchingsbrooke Country Park

Address Brampton Road  
Huntingdon  
Cambs  
PE29 6DB  
Phone 01480 451568  
Web [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/hinchingsbrookecountrypark](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/hinchingsbrookecountrypark)  
Size 69 hectares

A good mixture of habitats; a wide open field for games, kite flying and picnicking, woodlands for exploring and lakes to sit beside. Visitors can watch birds, hunt for minibeasts or have a barbecue using one of our fixed barbecue stands. The Cafe is open every day from 10am until 4pm, except Christmas Day, serving warm soups (winter time), home made cakes, ice creams and hot and cold drinks. The park is open all the time and parking is free. There is a programme of events throughout the year from minibeast hunting for families or basket making to den building and fishing lessons, please look at our website for more information.

#### 9. Milton Country Park

Address South Cambridgeshire District Council  
Cambridge Road  
Milton  
Cambridge  
Cambridgeshire CB24 6AZ  
Web [www.scambs.gov.uk](http://www.scambs.gov.uk)  
Size 0 hectares

100 acres of ex mineral workings on the northern edge of Cambridge, now developed as a country park with a mix of grass woodland and water areas as well as usual facilities, play equipment, centre, toilets, car park and kiosk

### 10. Priory Country Park

Address Barkers Lane  
Bedford  
Bedfordshire  
MK41 9SH

Phone 01234 221951

Web <http://www.bedford.gov.uk/Default.aspx/Web/CountryParks>

Size 100 hectares

Situated 2km from Bedford town centre and on the banks of the River Great Ouse, Priory Country Park offers a range of wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities to interest all visitors. The main lake hosts sailing and wind surfing and a slalom course draws canoeists from the region. The Park is popular with ornithologists and anglers and provides good access facilities. A visitor centre houses the local Wildlife Trust as well as Park staff. A unique timber labyrinth has recently been constructed in 2007.

### 11. Thetford Forest Park

Address c/o High Lodge Visitor Centre, Thetford Forest Park

Phone 01842 816010

Web <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/thetfordforestpark>

Size 19,000 + hectares

A major country park venue centred on the Thetford Forest, which is generally open access. The Forest is a patchwork of pines, heathland and broadleaves providing a setting for a day out, and a refuge for a rich variety of animal and plant life. High Lodge visitor centre is the focal point venue. The higher intensity activities including the children's play, car parking, bike hire, 'Go Ape' assault course and a 5,000 capacity events space are located around the High Lodge complex.

### 12. Wandlebury Country Park

Address Gog Magog Hills  
Babraham  
Cambridge  
Cambridgeshire  
CB22 3AE

Phone 01223 243830

Web [www.cpswandlebury.org](http://www.cpswandlebury.org)

Size 40 hectares

A former country estate, centred on the Wandlebury Ring ancient monument, with Iron Age and 17th/18th century garden remains, chalk grassland and woodland, on gentle chalk hills to the south of Cambridge. 12km of footpaths, circular walks, informal space to picnic and play, orienteering course, all year round family events and school visits programme.

### 13. West Stow Country Park

Address The Visitor Centre  
Icklingham Road  
West Stow  
Bury St Edmunds  
IP28 6HG

Phone 01284 728718

Web

Size 52 hectares

Country Park with reconstructed Anglo-Saxon village on its original site. Visitor facilities include 2 visitor centres with information, café, shop, toilets, nature trail, play area, - all free of charge. The Anglo-Saxon village has an admission charge and includes 8 reconstructed buildings, livestock, a display of finds in the Anglo-Saxon Centre. The country park has a number of elements, part is an SSSI, grassland, lake and rivers and some woodland.

Source: Country Parks Network and Forestry Commission

## Annex C - Responses to public consultation

### Ely Country Park – Public Consultation

The public consultation for Ely Country Park took place on:

- Thurs 15 January at the Babylon Gallery and
- Sat 17 January at Ely Library

We estimate that approximately 500 people visited the exhibition and a total of 185 written comments were received (either on the forms provided at the exhibition or those available online via ECDC website). Many others spoke to the consultants and expressed their opinions at the exhibition. All critical points are summarised and set out below.

### Do you support the creation of a new Country Park and do you agree with the proposed location & phasing?

Overwhelming support for a new Country Park, although some concerns about the need for changes to be implemented in a sympathetic way. Several respondents commented on the need to take account of the future increase in Ely's population and suggested that the Phase 1 site for the Country Park should be considered in the context of a firm proposal for future phases (particularly to the north, adjacent to the principal urban extension). Key points raised were:

- Only 7 respondents do not support the creation of a Country Park; one because the area is felt to be sufficiently accessible as it is and most others because they felt the Country Park plans would spoil the 'last piece of countryside left'
- Concerns about funding revenue costs of ongoing management
- Needed to protect the area from future development
- Excellent opportunity to open Ely's wildspace in a managed fashion
- Several commented on the unique qualities of this site – right on Ely's 'doorstep' and with fantastic biodiversity
- Concerns that creation of the Country Park will imply the area is available as a recreation facility – must be very clear to users which areas are accessible and which are not
- This is a huge opportunity for creating links between people and wildlife

- Yes, but suggest 'vision' is as wide as possible, to take account of future population growth
- Yes, providing it is within the bounds of the SSSI
- On the whole, yes – but there must be great care not to interfere with the naturalness of the space, with the minimum additional developments. Certainly support extending the 'wildspace' or park as and when possible
- In principle, it is an excellent idea in order to prevent unwelcome development and to increase the greenspace available to the public... But any changes must be sympathetically introduced and the spirit of the area, its peacefulness and the joy and pleasure its amenity offers must not be spoilt
- Is this really an appropriate place for a Country Park?
- Likes idea of CP, but not in this location, because is a popular nature reserve
- Objects to omission of Queen Adelaide Pits, southern flood meadows & land inside the railway loop
- Yes but concerns about who pays! Where is financial support for ongoing management and warden? Milton Pits Country Park mentioned by many – as a warning
- This area must be developed for the public use in such a way as to preserve its natural aspects
- No CP – leave it as it is to allow the balance to remain in favour of fauna and flora
- Yes, providing it does not adversely compromise the development of further 'country parks' or areas of land designated for leisure/nature conservancy use in other areas around Ely
- Yes, but phasing is unclear
- Believe the land needs protecting from future development, but not certain that a 'country park' with car parking and play area is required
- The location and biodiversity of the area is fantastic. There are few (if any) Country Parks in the UK with such potential. The CP should be a pivotal point for Ely, having flagship fenland species – Bittern, Marsh harrier & Bearded Tit
- Yes creation of the CP is excellent idea, however, I feel it could potentially be more focused on the fenland recreation projects – ie create more wet grassland habitats linking to the Wicken Vision

- Yes this is an excellent opportunity to open Ely's wildspace to the public in a managed fashion. I think the location is good given the basic infrastructure is already in place – will make development of the park easier
- No – leave as it is. There is public access to all this land already. Area could be promoted in its current form. Better way to spend the money would be to provide a large and challenging play area for children 8-12 years. There is nothing for this group in Ely
- Yes, I can only see this as a vast improvement to the area
- I broadly support the idea of a Country Park, as a means to an end. Although I realise that the Park would not be protected from development, I see it as a way of protecting some of the (very, very few) remaining green areas of Ely. Ideally, I would like to see the area preserved as it is, rather than being 'created' and then maintained. I realise that this is not going to happen, so the creation of a Country Park is probably the best option.
- I do have concerns that by creating this Country Park it will imply that the entire area is available as a recreation facility. It seems anathema to deny access to areas of what people will feel is 'their countryside', so it must be very clear to users which areas are accessible and which are not.
- The CP must keep Ely Common free from development
- Yes broadly agree, although consideration of areas to north would be useful to see how this links in with proposals. Low key low level enhancement to existing area is key to success – in keeping with rural surroundings
- No – leave it alone. It is the last piece of real countryside left and tarring it up to a townies idea of the countryside will spoil it
- Basically yes, but very suspicious about boat moorings either private or council owned and the car park
- Disagrees with idea of CP – sees it as a small group of people trying to justify a claim to the pot of money that ECDC has been given for the CP project. Should just maintain footpaths and leave it alone. A CP would be better situated on the wasteland off Angel Drove as easy to park, near railway
- Put the needs of wildlife first, offering long term protection for Ely's remaining green spaces. So the CP should have a 'light touch'. The long-

term running costs should be low so there should be no expensive buildings or walkways.

- Suggest initial investment is concentrated near to the existing Ely river frontage in order to increase this area's attractiveness and adding to what is already a pleasant place to wander and relax.
- Country Park should offer long term protection to Ely's remaining greenspaces
- The proposed area is in the wrong place! There is already an established nature haven, any development or building of permanent structures will have an adverse effect on an ecosystem
- I don't agree that there should be a Country Park – I also think that there will be no marina, no moorings and no motorised boats in or anywhere near the Roswell Pits area
- If a Country park will be country no more – a park will be designated, promoted, signed, mapped, interpreted, wardened, probably dotted with car parks and paths more or less paved – you will be told where to go and what to see.
- There is a major conflict between protection of wildlife and encouragement of greater access by people. I question whether any part of the SSSI should be included within the Country Park. Improved access to the countryside can be achieved by other means. Improving the footpath network around the area is probably all that is needed to improve access, without generating too much activity. All other proposals for lookouts, a visitor centre etc are over the top.

### **Do you know the proposed Phase 1 Country Park site and which aspects of this landscape do you value most? Have we missed anything?**

Most respondents know the area well and the majority value its natural qualities. Many commented on the value of areas which are wild and relatively difficult to access and some specifically mentioned that they appreciated the restorative qualities of the landscape with opportunities for quiet solitude. Key points raised were:

- Ely is unusual in having wild spaces so close to city centre – keep this character

- *Keep some areas wild, with limited access, but with opportunities for **direct** viewing of wildlife and quiet solitude*
  - *Most valued areas are Roswell Pits and the riverside washlands – both overlooking water*
  - *The character of this landscape is extremely rare in the context of the very developed surrounding countryside*
  - *Many feel very strongly that motorised boats on Roswell Pits would destroy this atmosphere*
  - *Many respondents knew the area well – common activities mentioned were dog walking, bird watching, wild flower identification and photography*
- 
- *Ely is unusual in having wild spaces so close to city centre – keep this character*
  - *Value the wild nature of the area – it is tranquil and restful and a contemplative area, a break from the bustle of Ely*
  - *Need to keep some areas wild with very limited access*
  - *Not too manicured*
  - *No constructed developed (beyond path improvement) in the core.*
  - *Need unmanaged green areas – blackberrying in season*
  - *Keen to see some clear re-construction of the cress beds on the flood meadows between the river and the railway. The flow system still exists albeit trodden down by cattle*
  - *Current level of proposed development will destroy significant wild areas*
  - *Most valuable assets are – wild and difficult to access areas, opportunities for direct viewing of wildlife and quiet solitude*
  - *Concern that area should not lose its ‘wildness’ and have intrusive walkways, notice boards, observation points etc .*
  - *Particularly value the washland adjacent to the river – has characteristics of the Black Fen*
  - *The wet grassland habitats are valuable – show how they used to be pre-drainage*
  - *The meadows along the river and Roswell Pits have a very special atmosphere – they are extremely rare in the context of the very developed surrounding countryside – feel very strongly that motorised boats on*

- Roswell Pits would destroy this atmosphere – there are other places for boats*
- *Plant willows and poplars along the river*
  - *Roswell Pit is the most important area; we strongly feel that if this is to become a well used, viable area more car parking will be essential, plus WC, rest facilities etc.*
  - *I am particularly interested in the riverside walk and nature conservation areas around the pits. I already regularly walk the area and use the pits for bird watching, bat detecting, wild flower identification and photography*
  - *I would be loath to lose any of the solitude of these areas and would be devastated to lose the diversity of wildlife. For example, at least 5 species of bat feed in the area; it is possible to sit for 30 minutes watching kingfishers feed while marsh harriers hunt over the reed bed. Over recent years my husband and I have recorded 54 bird species along the riverside area (known locally as the Coopers stretch after the fishing rights) and around Roswell pits. The presence of at least one bittern is a privilege, and to hear it is an aspiration.*
  - *I value the main area adjacent to the two main pits and the rural nature of the riverside walk*
  - *Yes, walk the area daily. Value the ‘countryside’ feel and natural surroundings. Do not feel need to have more paths – like looking across the pits, but do not need to have access to them – the beauty would be spoilt*
  - *Value unspoilt nature of Roswell Pits – it doesn’t need any development at all*
  - *Value all the landscape, as long as it is not interfered with*
  - *I live opposite and value the peace and quiet*
  - *Roswell Pits are beautiful and should be left untouched*
  - *Keep natural beauty – no tarmac paths, signs, bins etc*
  - *Concern for landscape setting of Ely in the wider landscape – key views from south and from A142 need protection – but there appears to be no action envisaged to protect this iconic view for the future. I would like to see the whole of the Ouse valley protected as a special landscape – to protect views to the cathedral and the setting of the City, which in this aspect should be rural and emblematic of its Fenland context.*

## **We have tried to achieve a balance between nature conservation and recreation.**

### **What do you think?**

Most consider that nature conservation should be the dominate objective – many voiced concerns that the current plans suggest too much emphasis on recreation. There will be a need to assess the potential impact of the Country Park proposals on the SSSI in an objective, scientific way. Key points raised were:

- Vast majority would like to see the balance in favour of nature conservation rather than recreation, with any recreation facilities designed to be as 'naturalistic' as possible
  - Focus recreation near the 'town riverside' entrance to the Country Park, leaving other areas with relatively few interventions
  - Concern that plans for a visitor centre/car park, play area and circular walks will have a detrimental impact on wildlife
  - Need for clear zoning, with levels of accessibility controlled in areas which are of higher nature conservation value.
  - Need to assess potential impact of the proposals and visitor numbers on wildlife
  - However, others comment that facilities for families, walkers, cyclists and young people should also be accommodated alongside nature conservation needs
  - Given the new SSSI designation, the Country Park must conserve sensitive habitats, ruling out motor-boats, moorings and intrusive boardwalks at Roswell.
  - Many commented that the area should be left as it is in its natural state, primarily for wildlife habitat; other areas more suited to recreation are available close by
  - Overall, there is a need for careful and sympathetic management in order to meet both nature conservation and recreational objectives.
- *Wildlife must take precedence over all other aspects – repeated by many*
  - *Vast majority would like to see the balance in favour of nature conservation rather than recreation, with any recreation facilities designed to be as 'naturalistic' as possible*
  - *Too much emphasis on built infrastructure – should be concentrated in SW*

*corner, near the town*

- *Is a recreation area already – dog walkers, bikes, children's play etc – people use the area already to enjoy nature and this process has already led to the preservation of wildlife habitats*
- *Current plans strongly favour recreation ie visitor centre, parking – this seems to significantly impair conservation*
- *Need to assess potential impact of visitors on wildlife*
- *Concern that large numbers of people will ensure rarer species leave (as at Ferry Meadows)*
- *Would support a decision to concentrate on one aspect – ie conservation of wildlife with access to view eg at RSPB sites*
- *Current proposals would have a detrimental effect on current wildlife populations*
- *Nature conservation is paramount – I don't think this is a place for invasive development to create a 'recreation space'*
- *Major focus (70%) should be on nature conservation (esp for the first few years)and given its locality, the access will follow – the plans seem to provide access, but possibly too much in important wildlife areas – will be to the detriment of wildlife*
- *Conservation seems to take priority – families and walkers should not be forgotten*
- *Make sure nature conservation takes priority over adventure play*
- *Risk of disturbance to wildlife as result of access round Roswell pits is too high*
- *Too much recreation vs nature conservation – a repeated comment*
- *Idea of extending the reedbeds would be a disaster for the sailing club as area near Kiln Lane would be inaccessible – boats don't go in single file as rely on wind direction*
- *Emphasis to date seems to be on access and not wildlife. However, I think the wildlife is what gives the character to the area and so it is paramount to conserve. Access is important too, but this can be improved with limited habitat destruction*
- *Many of species in SSSI are sensitive to human/dog disturbance (bittern, marsh harrier, bearded tit). It is important to manage existing habitats rather than destroy some habitat in Roswell Pit area with a view to providing*

more elsewhere

- Concerned that the reedbed enhancement on Roswell Pits is being used to offset damage elsewhere (circular paths etc) – doesn't think it would work and there are more species to be concerned about than just the bittern
- Plan appears to be heading in right direction – after visiting many other Country Parks on our narrowboat travels, a key feature has always been strict control of dogs
- I would like to see the balance tilted in favour of nature conservation, given its delicacy. For example, moorings on the river which already has passing boats, rowing, canoeing, fishing etc would be acceptable. Moorings in an area important to wildlife (which once driven out cannot be invited back) would be unacceptable. The area around Cuckoo Bridge is immensely rich in wildlife, some of which is nationally rare. To have disturbance along that channel would ruin this, probably irreparably
- I think it is extremely important to have a good range of recreation facilities for children and younger people. The most important thing for me is that this is well away from the nature areas!
- To create a Country Park for residents of our city then identify and exclude undesirable groups would be wholly irresponsible – young people living here need places in which they can meet and relax. It should not be assumed that this will automatically involve noise, disorder, alcohol, vandalism etc.
- In line with the new SSSI designation, the CP must conserve sensitive habitats, ruling out motor-boats, moorings and intrusive boardwalks at Roswell. There should be a clear zoning, with formal play and visitor facilities close to the city, away from key wildlife areas and the dangerous railway line.
- I am in favour of keeping the playground area/parking/other facilities down near the sewage works, allowing the rest of the site to have a light touch to preserve its natural state as much as possible
- Zone at Pocket Park fine to develop – minimum intervention around Roswell Pit areas – no cycle paths here – leave north pit alone – no need to change reedbeds here (as areas close by are being developed for this); no moorings or disturbance at all here. No car park on north Common
- Roswell Pits is a former industrial area which has become overgrown and which needs careful and sympathetic management as a conservation area

(not left to run wild).

- The idea of a protected wildlife sanctuary at Roswell along with full community use of the area is exciting. Imagine being able to observe wildlife in such an amazing location
- Nature conservation is vital – happy if adventure play is in keeping eg use of wood in construction etc.
- Need to zone recreation nearer the town – ie no boardwalks, visitor centre/moorings in Roswell Pit
- Needs to be left as it is in its natural state, primarily for wildlife habitat. Recreational areas are available close by
- I think nature would be well left alone and the facilities on offer are not going to attract many people
- The balance is about right if no motorised boats are allowed in the pits
- Too much building, boats, waste treatment services will harm the ecological balance. Birds and nature do not just rely on this area, but world migration is involved. I believe this proposal should be done through the SSSI. This is very worrying for all locals and should be thought through properly – not just because it's the modern thing to do – to change
- Change your species focus - I am quite sure this area will not be a stronghold for Bittern – but could be very important for breeding waders and other wetland species
- CP must put nature conservation and education at the top of its agenda – particularly in the light of ongoing housing growth and related pressures on habitats and farming
- Prominent info re breeding birds will be needed to assist in controlling dogs during breeding seasons – but important that dogs are given as much freedom as possible at all other times – dog walkers are a major user of the area
- Do not manicure landscape – needs to remain wild – repeated comment
- The area is an oasis for wildlife in the middle of this flat, exposed fenland county
- The area is fantastic for wildlife at present with the areas of undisturbed open water, reedbeds, woodland and grassland – an oasis between an urban area and a largely arable desert
- Leave the North Roswell Pit as it is – no cycle/footpaths. Reedbeds are being developed elsewhere and would change the landscape – please do not

suggest this

- It is essentially a wild area already. It has thrived on neglect and a relative lack of attention and public access. Any interventions must bear this in mind and not destroy what they seek to celebrate – it should remain essentially wild.
- Concern re general nature of some of the recreation proposals eg ‘enhanced sailing club facility and adventure playground – which could encompass very broad levels of activity – some of which could be contrary to the interests of nature conservation and quiet recreation

**A key objective of the Country Park is to make access to the countryside safe, easy and enjoyable. Do the plans achieve this?**

Opinion is divided on the appropriate level of access; some promote cycle paths and easy access, while others would prefer the bare minimum. Overall the majority are in favour of carefully designed pathways, signage and benches, with subtle interpretation and a small car park. There was also general agreement to the idea of a new foot/cycle bridge over the River Ouse. Key points raised were:

- *Retain and repair the existing iron footbridge over the River Great Ouse near the Potter Group site*
- *The balance between routes for cyclists and walkers needs to be carefully designed – many commented that cycleways would be too intrusive and should be kept to a minimum; some felt that there was a risk of cycleways being misused - for motorbikes*
- *Disabled access is important and will help access for all*
- *Car parking is a significant issue – many want no vehicular access; some specifically ask for more. The majority are in favour of a small car park near the existing ‘Pocket Park’*
- *Give people access to the water’s edge*
- *The Country Park simply must not urbanise the rural nature of the area - routes should be designed to respect the conservation aspects of the area*
- *Most people are in favour of access to the water’s edge in some parts of Roswell Pits, but many are alarmed by the prospect of a circular path right around the margin of the lake*

- *Don’t institutionalise the park with hard surfaced paths, bins, benches, lights, CCTV etc*
- *Keep it simple and inexpensive – then will be sustainable – a ‘light touch’.*
- *Kiln Lane needs to be kept largely traffic-free (as now)*
- *Do not surface Cresswells Lane (for cyclists)*
- *Prickwillow Road is very dangerous, with regular accidents – car park by sailing club would encourage more incidents*
- *Too much recreation and too many cyclists – will deter walkers*
- *Concerns re access around Roswell Pits (waterside of Common and east bank)*
- *No access on boardwalks (into sensitive reedbed areas)*
- *Care with bikes and motorbikes*
- *Provide dedicated cycleways – not combined footpath/cycleways*
- *Disabled access is important and will help access for all*
- *Visitors should only arrive on foot/bike – need to restrict vehicular access*
- *Major paths need all weather surfaces – some currently spend much of year under mud*
- *Car parking plans look vague and too limited*
- *Access needs to be carefully managed as quite distant from the town centre and could lead to vandalism/abuse*
- *Access from Q Adelaide – path along the road would be good – to the station*
- *Excellent signage and promotion to encourage access by foot/bike/public transport – minimal car access*
- *Keep the area quiet, tranquil and wild – no marina, hotel, no large car park, no commercial facilities*
- *There are at least 6 good children’s play parks with equipment in Ely – but this is the only wild, natural space to take children to. They like muddy puddles as much as play parks and enjoy watching nature, and car free areas. Don’t agree with hides – get dirty and smelly and need constant surveillance. Better to have open platforms which are designed for fishermen and great for children and others to get to the water’s edge and watch the wildlife.*



- Need to tie in with local cycle paths
  - Would be nice to have a boarded walk around Roswell Pits, with a boarded bridge alongside the railway
  - So far so good – the small details, yet to be determined, could make all the difference
  - Scope to link to routes throughout Ely, particularly to the North (Thistle Corner & Prickwillow Road)
  - Demolition of existing iron bridge would be great mistake – needs refurbishment and to be more accessible. Would also be good to have car park at this end of CP so that visitors from Q Adelaide area do not have to park in town
  - Keep Roswell pit as it is – no paths around the perimeter so that wildlife is not disturbed. Do not like the idea of cutting trees down to make viewing points and certainly not an adventure playground, esp near the edge of a steep cliff drop of some 50ft or more. Would not appreciate a car park on the Common – likewise visitor centre – keep these near to town centre entrance
  - Don't demolish iron bridge – should be improved
  - Keep car parks to minimum to encourage access on foot or by bike. Could buses stop at the entrance or close by?
  - If you wish car access, current access is insufficient. However an environmental point would suggest discouraging car use? Current access is not sufficiently safe for large numbers of people
  - Need surveys first by wildlife trust before determining location of paths (to prevent damage to habitats)
  - Access for all is difficult to police – how do you stop bikes being ridden recklessly and large noisy groups. Access for motorised boats would lead to physical and noise pollution. Safety raises all kinds of issues – who maintains the facilities and who pays? How completely accessible to the disabled – more maintenance; more expense
  - Possibly too much!
  - The Country Park simply must not urbanise the rural nature of the area. Very simple drainage measures would stop the muddy stretches of the woodland path. Access again needs to respect the conservation aspects of the area
  - Possible concerns with linking Q Adelaide settling beds to CP in future,
- because of major bird interest – better to keep separate and out of CP
  - Boardwalks over wet areas – and dipping pond
  - Need car parks, disabled car parking and rest stops with refreshments
  - I am concerned about the parking area and how that would affect the road network in the nearby area. Has there been any traffic assessment to show that the existing infrastructure can support the additional traffic.
  - Don't believe access needs to be improved if that means hides, visitor centre, tarmac paths, hotel café etc - wildlife should be key objective
  - Too much activity – no need for so many paths. No moorings on Roswell Pits – opportunities instead on river itself
  - Very concerned about path to SE of Roswell pit – lovely landscape here and seems that path would be incompatible with aims of CP
  - I would like to see a cycle/running path around the park – something weather-proof. Very muddy at this time of year – unable to run at present along bank from EA depot to Lavender Green
  - Initially the main access appears awkward, but as the Lisle Lane area is transformed, this will be more natural. Access from the north of Ely should be improved to prevent use of cars to reach the site
  - Removal of bridge over the river – last one in the sequence seems unnecessary – many commented on value to circular walks
  - Cyclepaths don't link up – go to destinations and then return – not fun for cyclists
  - Car parks are essential as not everyone lives within walking distance of the Park
  - Would like to see waymarked routes and boardwalks
  - Concerned about traffic to east of Ely, particularly if CP was promoted for tourism
  - Don't support circular path around Roswell pits – too much impact on wildlife
  - Cycle tracks, if pursued, should be kept to the periphery of the site, avoiding key wildlife areas (eg riverside meadows) and should NOT utilise Cresswells Lane
  - New bridge would be expensive and not sure of its purpose – better to repair existing iron bridge
  - The idea of proper walkways around the park is appealing, especially as my

wife has difficulty with walking on difficult terrain

- don't spoil the area in an attempt to insure the Council against litigation by those who put themselves at risk of harm.
  - The charm of the area is its wilderness; this should be retained. However, I would suggest that the Springhead lane track between the river and the small pit could be made more accessible by levelling it and covering it with a low-maintenance material (don't widen it though – the ditches are important to the wildlife).
  - Does the Ely city bus service stop near either of the proposed entrances to the Park? If not, could it? I think it should, and there should be a place to secure bicycles at each entrance too. But please do not make it easy for people to drive to the site. Ely had car parks already – people should get out and walk.
  - Iron bridge should not be taken down – its steep steps will ensure that its use is limited – forms part of circular routes, not just around park, but Ely. But needs to be better maintained
  - In some areas you would want to restrict access to preserve the environment – ie create paths that are not too wide and have a natural surface
  - Concerned that increase in visitor numbers will spoil the quiet solitude that some areas offer – particularly if cycle paths are opened up. Fishing could be disturbed. Improve the river path but leave others alone (improving surface only)
  - Keep cycle paths away from margins of the Pits – 'family' recreational paths around Pocket park and along river floodbank. Keep through routes to boundaries of CP and away from sensitive areas
  - 'Countryside' footpaths in more sensitive areas. Low maintenance – enhance and improve existing routes, but don't destroy habitats in the process.
  - Needs improved public access – Circular walk [around Roswell Pit] is an essential part of the park
  - To encourage public use there needs to be play areas, activity training eg bird watching
  - Possible for boats and wildlife to co-habit in harmony. The Norfolk Broads are a good example of how this works in reality is the Norfolk Broads, where motor cruisers, sailing boats, fishermen and wildlife all co-exist.
- Car parks to be kept within reasonable limits, but required for sailing activities. Maybe new water sports?
  - Cycle tracks around Roswell Pit is dangerous as the banks are steep
  - Accessibility up to a point – don't want costly pathways and signage. What's wrong with leaving things as they are?
  - The car park especially will be a gift to the 'boy racers' and for travellers looking for somewhere to park
  - Not OK to have wheelchair access everywhere – paths would need to be too wide – would encourage other wheeled vehicles – bikes, buggies and motor cycles – just has to be some places where the pedestrian is unmolested. We can't all expect to be able to go everywhere – eg people without cars can't.
  - Separate sensitive areas and access to them from public spaces, where dogs, crowds etc can be controlled
  - As ECDC develops the area it should not lose sight of the work already done around Maltings, Jubilee Gardens, Cherry Hill, Cathedral environs, Market Place, Fore Hill, Waterside. This makes a fabulous short circular walk and should be the centre of any future loops out towards the countryside
  - The circular walk along Springhead Lane – Kiln Lane and the riverside should be re-surfaced in keeping with the surrounding area. I do not want to see boardwalks out of keeping with the area. The Vexamus Pit and the narrow channel leading under the railway bridge to the sailing Pit is another special area which I would be reluctant to see disturbed by increased access
  - Infrastructure should improve access to areas that are not ecologically sensitive and must be low key – unobtrusive and inexpensive
  - I like the proposed network of paths as long as these remain modest and unobtrusive
  - Leave as undeveloped as possible to provide a natural experience for all users, some provision of cycleways on some existing footpaths, but great care must be exercised not to allow too much intrusion
  - The plan doesn't clearly address two key areas – the needs of the elderly and the needs of those who are local people but who do not live in Ely

**Do you think the proposed Country Park should be promoted as a key component of Ely's tourism offer? Do you see it as a regional attraction or a local facility?**

The majority are in favour of a visitor centre, play park and recreation 'zone' close to the Lavender Green entrance, leaving other parts of the Country Park relatively undisturbed. Most see the Country Park as being a local attraction, but one which will inevitably complement and add to Ely's overall tourism offer. The needs of boaters must be taken into account and this area recognised as being valued as a prime boating destination. There were calls for a water sports centre, with kayaking and canoeing as well as sailing, in Roswell Pit. Many commented on the need for more moorings in the Ely area, but the vast majority of respondents would like future moorings to be on the main river and specifically not in Roswell Pit. Key points raised were:

- Should be part of Ely's overall tourism offer, complementing the City's heritage based tourism and providing an extension to the popular riverside area. Could grow to be a regional attraction – has better access by public transport than Wicken Fen
- Urgent need for additional moorings in Ely, together with the increased income which will result to local traders and shops
- 'People like looking at boats as well as wildlife'
- Rowing and sailing is OK – not motorised boasts/moorings – concern over loss of tranquillity as well as damage to biodiversity
- Need more for young people, including active pursuits such as adventure play, quad biking/go-karting
- More fishing
- Scope for promoting the area to specialist groups – Visitor Centre and interpretation could be themed to focus on the city and fenland landscape, past, present and future
- The play areas needs to provide something different
- The Country Park should be promoted as a key component of Ely's tourism – the area will initially benefit local people and as it becomes a regional attraction, will also benefit local people in boosting the economy
- Ely is the most popular destination for boaters on the River Great Ouse system and attracts visitors from the canal system nationwide, but this potential economic advantage is lost because both short and long term moorings are in short supply during the summer period, causing potential

visitors to move on.

- Scope for Ely to promote itself as a destination for ornithologists – niche market
- Should be both regional and local
- More say local facility only
- Should be part of the tourism offer as an extension to the riverside. Could grow to be a regional attraction – has better access by public transport than Wicken Fen
- Urgent need for additional moorings in Ely, together with the increased income which will result to local traders and shops
- More off-line moorings – man and nature can exist in tandem – people like looking at boats as well as wildlife
- No adventure play and/or car parks
- Rowing and sailing is OK – not motorised boasts/moorings – concern over loss of tranquillity as well as damage to biodiversity
- Hotels, conference centre/marina are not appropriate in a CP – play facilities (and adventure play) are OK
- Nature conservation should predominate – no need for recreation
- Need more for young people – paintballing, quad biking/go-karting
- More fishing
- Sailing club cannot continue to be successful if a large part of its water area is given over to reedbeds
- Need limited car parking to NW
- Would like to see some sports facilities – eg tennis courts
- Don't focus on sports facilities – these should go elsewhere
- Worthwhile regional attraction
- Major access routes & views would contribute to tourism, but first and foremost should be a local attraction – focused on local wildlife habitats
- Recreation not very balanced as mostly geared towards walkers rather than boating activity
- People made ref to other successful Country Parks at Huntingdon and Peterborough, which are a regional attraction

- Visitor centre would be too expensive to run – better to rely on good interpretation
- More reference to the needs of boaters – the public mooring proposal near the A142 would be dangerous for boaters and families visiting Ely due to the need to cross this very busy road at its most congested point
- Would like a campsite
- Likes the proposed adventure playground and its proximity to the city centre. Also improved parking facilities
- Don't allow private boat moorings – keep boats out – repeated comment by many
- Regional attraction – all the better to garner support to protect it
- Don't need visitor centre or large play area, which seem to use up too much available space
- Not a big enough area to absorb lots of general tourists. Try promoting to specialist groups who would be interested in SSSI
- Three play areas in that zone already – if must have another, needs to be smaller and something different
- At present this should be a local destination, but if fully linked to natural paths it could serve as a focal point for longer paths such as the Bishops Path etc. Would also encourage greater links to some of the droves around Ely
- Phase 1 will be local as small in scale – the tourism offer will follow, as the CP is established and developed
- Main Ely tourist attractions are historic and tourism should emphasise this. Perhaps have info in tourism centre, but CP does not indicate what is unique about Ely and could not cope with large numbers of people anyway.
- Keep local and as unspoilt as possible
- A local facility – if a regional attraction, it will bring too many people which will destroy its natural, wildlife space
- Should be both a local and a regional attraction – with rail access from London, a 'fenland discovery walk' with bittern, Marsh harrier, the river and on the doorstep of the city, this could be a major, major attraction – a boost to the city as a base for the Great fen project, Wicken, Ouse washes etc etc
- A local/regional attraction will automatically attract tourist – another 'tourist trap' would be merely boring in my opinion
- Yes will be valuable when the Visitor centre is in operation – as long as the interpretation is themed to people learning about the city and fenland landscape, past, present and future
- I think its attraction as a greenspace and improving the 'green' look of Ely may prove attractive to tourists, but I think it should primarily be for local people – something Eleans take ownership of and be proud. Connection of local people with their local environment is vitally important for the future of our countryside.
- I think tourism in Ely needs to be 'joined up' more – make sure the CP is not another separate thing – must be integrated
- Loos are essential, but the café should perhaps wait until established ☹ ref Milton pits
- Do not wish to see moorings on Roswell Pits – along river should be main priority in Caudle Fen direction, with benefit of Tescos for boaters to shop
- CP should definitely be promoted for tourism, particularly in conjunction with riverside walk. If car parking deemed necessary, could be a charge towards the CP
- The proposed car park to the north near the sailing club seems reasonable, but solely as a car park with no other facilities. Reason is that if a restaurant or further visitor centre was provided, it would draw visitors away from the riverside
- No moorings or changes to reedbeds on Roswell Pits. Lookout towers would incite vandalism
- Moorings outside CP on Caudle Fen would have significant benefits
- Need lots of dog bins – repeated comment
- Would like to see more access for watersports for all
- Visitor centre is unlikely to generate income and is likely to be expensive
- Would like overnight moorings for boaters to enjoy the peace and interest of late evening/early morning – like at Ferry Meadows, Peterborough
- Good to see that boat moorings has been taken into consideration
- Avoid buildings that need upkeep and certainly avoid kiosks – vandalism
- The benefit to Ely will certainly be enhanced with the increase in tourism; it gives added support to the City of Ely attractions
- Additional moorings in the Ely area will also help attract visiting boats, which normally sail past, frustrated at not being able to moor in the town

- Agree access as shown, but with more car parking
- Level of access is OK, provided there is room for people like us to come by car
- Most definitely local. Making this a regional attraction would bring with it exactly the things I do not want to see – cars, cafes, expectations of ‘leisure facilities’. Ely has already been deluged with new housing and residents, this is a chance to create a sanctuary for its residents who are sick of the sight of identikit houses and endless queues of traffic as people drive from the new estates into town to buy a bag of shopping. Please allow those of us who choose (or should that be chose) to live here because of its small market-town feeling to have a peaceful green area to use as we like with no incentive to attract visitors.
- Prefer CP to serve the needs of the local population with less promotion as a tourist attraction (allowing tourists to find it and use it as an ‘add on’ to the existing riverside attractions
- Not for tourism. Should be a greenspace for local people, accessible from the river frontage – scope for local B&Bs to benefit from preservation of areas for bird watching/wildlife
- Great need for more moorings in Ely. Moorings on the river will not present any problem, provided they are well policed to prevent people overstaying, but public mooring will not work in Roswell Pit because the site is too far from the river and could easily become dumping place for dubious craft and the banks strewn with detritus. This is an ideal mooring site, but needs to be properly managed by staff. The only way to do this is to have it as a fee paying mooring operated by the owners of the pits who have a direct interest in the proper operation of the area.
- The CP should be promoted as a key component of Ely’s tourism – the area will initially benefit local people and as it becomes a regional attraction, will also benefit local people in boosting the economy
- Local facility – not necessarily as key component of Ely’s tourism
- The views of many thousands of local pleasure boaters must be taken into account when considering the facilities to be provided in the proposed Country Park. Ely is the most popular destination for boaters on the River Great Ouse system and attracts visitors from the canal system nationwide. However, both short and long term moorings are in short supply during the summer period, causing potential visitors to move on and therefore

depriving City businesses of potential trade. The creation of the CP would provide a wonderful opportunity to provide new facilities that would enable many more visitors to visit Ely and enjoy the surrounding countryside.

- Although linear moorings on the river would be welcome, they could not provide the same degree of security and safety that could be achieved in Roswell Pits – there is evidence of vandalism and of boats being cut adrift from the existing City moorings. The provision of moorings in Roswell pits would allow pleasure boaters to enjoy the lake environment alongside other water users, such as canoeists, sailors, rowers and fishermen. The lake is vast and there is ample space to accommodate such activities without causing undue disturbance to wildlife.
- Needs no promotion
- Local facility only
- Essential that the ‘enhanced sailing centre’ is seen as a ‘water sports centre’, including canoe club etc
- Moorings would be essential to the success of the scheme – add security, as well as relieving congestion on the river. Others added that to be safe, boat moorings need to be off the river ‘main line’ in a secure location
- No motorised boats on pits at all. No more moorings (repeated comment by many)
- Catering provision is essential
- Consider significant reduction in visitor centre – use Jubilee Gardens for info and existing cafes in surrounding area negate need for another one. Equally use existing play area in Cherry Hill, which is already urbanised. Recommend do not provide parking as will be used for shopping (given current critical parking situation in Ely) also not good from environmental perspective
- Ely already benefits enormously from expenditure by visitors to the marina and there is scope for this to increase substantially as a result of increased use by boat owners – more moorings are needed to realise this benefit
- Roswell Pits must be kept without development – in keeping with surroundings. Happy for a few moorings, as long as Bittern habitats are preserved. Walks around the lakes would be wonderful
- Ely Sailing Club is a valuable element in the Roswell Pits area and their contribution to Ely should be recognised. The channel between the large islands is deep water and should be left. Reedbeds can be located in shallow water on the edges of the islands. The sailing causes minimal

disturbance – perhaps 10 hours per week. This is no place for moorings or motor boats. Also the access to the river is narrow and dangerous for two way traffic.

- This Country Park must protect Ely's remaining green areas from the decimation of natural habitats from housing estates/masterplan. We do not need an information centre or a snack/refreshment area – look at what happened to Milton CP – 'Less is more'.
- Would like jetty or steps to allow people to swim in the waterbodies
- Preferably no facilities – no BMX track in Pocket Park
- Whatever facilities are provided they should be sympathetic to the nature & wildlife – perhaps near the entrance to the park/town centre
- Need boards showing map of area at entrance, educational information for adults and children about the site and its wildlife and involvement of the local community in its management
- Need circular walking circuit
- Disabled friendly, with access for a motability vehicle and short wooden boardwalk, lookout points and hides for wildlife
- BMX track for youngsters, built in accordance with their input
- I am against boat moorings in the CP and believe that increased numbers of well managed 48 hour moorings should be made available with public consultation
- It has to be kept as natural as possible – a bit like Cherry Hill. No 'sculptures', no fancy paving, no ice cream vans, only natural materials, no development of anything existing which is natural already and no development of Ely Common. Viewpoints at significant locations and some wooden seating
- I don't like boardwalks and am against the idea of a visitor's centre or any commerce in the park
- Ely is well supplied with facilities for very young children and I would like to see facilities for older children and young people – such as skateboarding, mountain bike track – I would like it to be a place for exploring nature and some feeling of adventure, perhaps tree climbing
- Should be facilities for as wide a variety of people as possible – it should be a peaceful area, but needs to be attractive to all ages. So I would like to see adventure playground or similar for children, something for teenagers as well as quiet areas to walk and sit for older people

- The current idea of the Country Park, with wide access, a play area and visitor centre for a relatively small area is likely to develop in ways that are not in the best interests of the wildlife. The costs of maintenance, the probability of vandalism and monitoring/policing the area would be too high
- There is no need for any additional facilities – any deemed necessary should be confined to areas outside the SSSI. The Ely Nature Trail should be reinstated but there is no need for any hides or boardwalks around Roswell
- Ely should be proud to have an SSSI – it is also an asset that could attract visitors to Ely. Other local reserves (Wicken Fen, Ouse Washes, Lakenheath Fen) attract thousands of birdwatchers every year – Ely is central to these and could promote itself as a centre for specialist visitors.
- Visitor attractions could be provided, but should be limited to providing rest areas and information - small visitor centre and café - but not conference centre or hotel
- New activities could include cycling, rowing, sailing – but should not disturb wildlife areas ie not any forms of motor power
- Facilities could include some form of viewing hides overlooking water and reedbeds, but should not be intrusive
- Potential for summertime events such as theatre, concerts, proms evenings, jazz festivals, fireworks etc.
- An increased water based activity should be concentrated on the River Ouse, including canoeing facilities and public moorings. The most disturbing aspect of the plans is the idea of public moorings at the south end of the main Roswell Pit. This would bring motor craft through a peaceful and lovely stretch of backwater to the pit and would completely change the character of the area. The protection of this area of water by the exclusion of motorcraft is for me the most important issue
- CP should be viewed as a key component of Ely's tourism offer, but I also see it as being a key component of the City's offer to business and local people – both those who live in Ely and in surrounding village. So it is a national, regional and local facility, with the emphasis on its greatest assets – its ability to provide a wonderful Fenland landscape setting for the City in which the natural world predominates

### Additional general comments

- *Noise and intrusion (from road/rail) likely to increase – need to factor in the bypass*
- *Don't cut up Lavender Green with paths – field is heavily used in good weather and paths would interfere with games, leading to aggravation all round. Entrance kiosk should be at entrance not in middle of field.*
- *Concerned about the seepage from the old town rubbish tip under the proposed children's play area. There are some indications that this is still occurring – will need to be addressed to avoid wider contamination/smells*
- *To allow the benefits of the CP (phase 1) to be realised for the residents of Ely, the expansion of housing in Ely and surrounding villages should be tightly controlled and minimised. This is absolutely necessary to retain the max land for farming and to ensure that local wildlife habitats and landscape views in all directions are retained*
- *Concerned about the different landowners – would feel happier if it was all publicly owned*
- *Area needs to be legally protected to prevent further development with some form of public accountability*
- *Why does this area need a full time warden? – reduce running costs*
- *Please may we be spared the clutter of structures which have disfigured the previously pleasant small park near the cutter?*
- *This is a huge opportunity for creating links between people and wildlife. Environmental activities and community education are an ideal way to educate people and ensure people take pride in their park. There are organisations (such as the wildlife trust) with lots of experience in this and this sort of activity will be vital to the success of the park*
- *Please can the local community be involved in different aspects of the development eg clearing scrub*
- *Ely Common should be managed as a common not as a car park*
- *No warning signs because of access near water – people must use common sense*
- *ECDC has announced it has £2M for spending on community projects - it should spend this on purchasing Roswell Pits and land to the north alongside the river/meadows*
- *If powered boats are allowed in the pits where there is no natural flow, the pits will become polluted by the waste created by the cleaning and servicing of the boats and will discourage wildlife. Who will be responsible for maintenance?*
- *It is clear that the siting of a marina in the area of the Country Park or development of Ely Common would be inimical to the idea of a Country Park as such*
- *Please no buildings or displays and notices – keep it wild!*
- *Only by compulsory purchase by the Council and perhaps conservation bodies: Natural England, RSPB etc can the area be preserved for wildlife*
- *Will the path on the east side of the river continue outside the proposed park to the A142, and thereby link up with the existing path along the river to the south of the road?*
- *Concerned that the plan has been developed in isolation from adjacent sites such as the water treatment works, which could have made a major contribution to the potential success of the CP and should have been considered from the outset*
- *There are major parking and access issues in Ely – which should inform the CP process*

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