



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
Local Development Framework

ELY

Conservation Area

Supplementary  
Planning Document

OCTOBER 2009



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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Ely is a compact city, and one of the jewels of England, with exceptional examples of ecclesiastical architecture found within the cathedral complex. The medieval town layout is still clearly visible, along with many high quality Georgian and early 19th century buildings. They all combine to create a city that is both interesting to visit, and enjoyable to live in.
- 1.2 The appraisal document was produced in November 2006 and amended in November 2008 to assess the character and interest of Ely. The information gained through this appraisal has been used to draw up the new designated boundary for the Conservation Area in Ely.
- 1.3 The Conservation Area has not had an in-depth appraisal carried out since 1968. This previous document made some keen observations but was limited in the area that was covered.
- 1.4 Many changes have occurred since 1968, including a major resurvey of historic buildings carried out by English Heritage in the early 1970s. A greater knowledge of the historic development of Ely has come to light through the expansion of the archaeological data relating to new finds and developments across the City.

## **2 Public Consultation**

- 2.1 The public consultation will be carried out in compliance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (17/10/06).

## **3 What are Conservation Areas?**

- 3.1 Conservation Areas were introduced in the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and have evolved through a number of subsequent Acts, concluding with the present Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and adopted government guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15.
- 3.2 Ely Conservation Area was designated in 1972 with an extension added in 1995. The definition of a Conservation Area is an 'area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).
- 3.3 The Local Planning Authority has a duty to determine which parts of their district are areas of special architectural or historic interest. Having established a Conservation Area, they are also required to carry out a periodic review of the designation and boundaries of the area. This is to ensure the area is still considered to be of value and to consider whether any areas have been overlooked or changes have occurred which need the boundaries to be redrawn. Any pressures for change in the area can thus be identified and enhancement opportunities highlighted.



- 3.4 When a Conservation Area has been designated, it increases the Council's controls, with planning applications judged by their impact on the character and appearance of the area. Greater controls over the demolition of buildings and structures are imposed, whilst the rights that owners have to do works to their properties without the need to obtain planning permission (known as 'permitted development rights') are reduced, or removed altogether. Stricter controls are also exercised over the design of new buildings, and owners must give the Council six weeks notice of their intention to carry out works to trees. Planning applications affecting a Conservation Area must be advertised on site, and in the local press, to give the public an opportunity to comment.

#### **4 What is a Conservation Area Appraisal?**

- 4.1 This document aims to assist with East Cambridgeshire District Council's duty to 'draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement' of designated Conservation Areas, as required by the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 4.2 The object of this appraisal is to describe the special character of the historic areas of Ely. Information gained from this study will be used to draw up a new boundary for the Conservation Area, and provide design guidance relating to new developments, replacement and new shop fronts, and extensions to existing buildings within the Conservation Area.
- 4.3 A section of the appraisal will centre on the historic development of Ely, including a study of the topography, archaeology, and the Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings. These topics will help to explain how Ely has arrived at the layout that is seen today, and illustrate the importance of the grain of development.
- 4.4 As with many towns and cities, Ely is made up of distinct areas of land use, and this document will look at the character of each area separately. The section on each area will look at the hard and soft landscaping; important views out of, into, and within, the area; boundary treatments; the scale of the buildings; and construction materials and architectural detailing.
- 4.5 This will help to provide the evidence for the design guidance for each individual area. By dividing up the document in this way, it will make it easily accessible and understandable for the stakeholders of Ely.
- 4.6 For each distinct area, a list of locally important historic buildings will be produced and East Cambridgeshire District Council will seek to protect these buildings from loss of character and demolition.

#### **5 Location and geology**

- 5.1 The City of Ely lies 16 miles north of Cambridge, within the District of East Cambridgeshire.

- 5.2 The highest point in the city is 20m AOD (above ordnance datum) above the Fen, which lies at approximately 0m AOD.
- 5.3 The City sits on the eastern edge of an outcrop of Jurassic Kimmeridge and Ampthill Clays. Much of the City rests on a layer of Cretaceous Lower Greensand. On the north side, as far as the Cathedral, a further layer of Chalky-Jurassic Boulder Clay lies on top. To the south, the boulder clay relates to an outcrop of glacial sands and gravels.
- 5.4 Up until the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the area surrounding the city was a wetland environment with many patches of dry land. The only connection with the mainland was via artificial causeways, waterways, and temporary paths.
- 5.5 Until the dissolution of the monasteries, the fenland wetland was well managed. After that, the care of the waterways stopped and this led to more frequent flooding and much hardship amongst the local Fenlanders.

## **6 Historical and Archaeological development**

### **6.1 Early History**

- 6.1.1 There is little surviving evidence of Palaeolithic or Mesolithic sites within Ely. This does not mean that activity was not taking place within the City area, just that it is difficult to detect. Given the extent of ground disturbance over many thousands of years, it is possible that no evidence will come to light relating to this period in prehistory.
- 6.1.2 The small amount of evidence found thus far for this period, would point to activity being carried out mainly on the lighter Lower Greensand soils. In general, that would relate to the northern part of the City.
- 6.1.3 Springhead Lane and Brays Lane have both yielded deposits that relate to the Beaker people and late Neolithic/Bronze Age periods. This is not surprising, as Springhead Lane would have led directly to the grassing land on the Fen edge, accessed during the summer months
- 6.1.4 Fieldwork has revealed a similar level of activity on the north side of the city, together with some excavation evidence and chance finds, giving support to the likelihood of a settlement near the Cathedral.
- 6.1.5 The evidence for a settlement in Ely during the Roman period relates to some coffins being unearthed, and the discovery of a possible ditch system near Brays Lane, although the actual settlement itself has yet to be discovered.

### **6.2 Saxon Period**

- 6.2.1 The archaeology of the Saxon times is more in evidence than that of the previous periods. Palace Green appears to be where the Green was set out and constitutes the main settlement area. Evidence has

been unearthed between Broad Street and Waterside that shows that Saxon activity stretched down as far as the river. This would have made Ely a large town for the time.

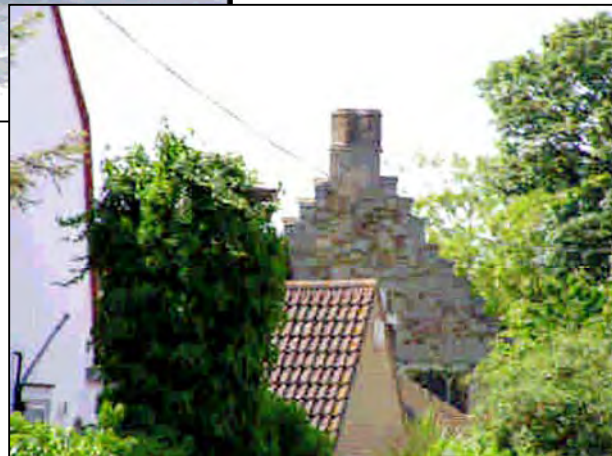
- 6.2.2 St. Etheldreda founded a monastery here, which was destroyed by the Vikings and then re-founded. There is no upstanding evidence of the Saxon cathedral left as it was completely replaced by the present building.

### 6.3 Norman, Medieval and early modern periods

- 6.3.1 It was during the medieval period that most change would have taken place in Ely. The Normans constructed a Motte and Bailey castle and the building of the Cathedral commenced in 1083. Some of the surviving buildings that serve the Cathedral date from this period, and the ecclesiastical complex is one of the best surviving examples of early medieval monastic life that still exist in Britain.
- 6.3.2 There were at least two hospitals in medieval Ely, the remnants of which can be seen at St. John's Farm, and at the wall along Cambridge Road.



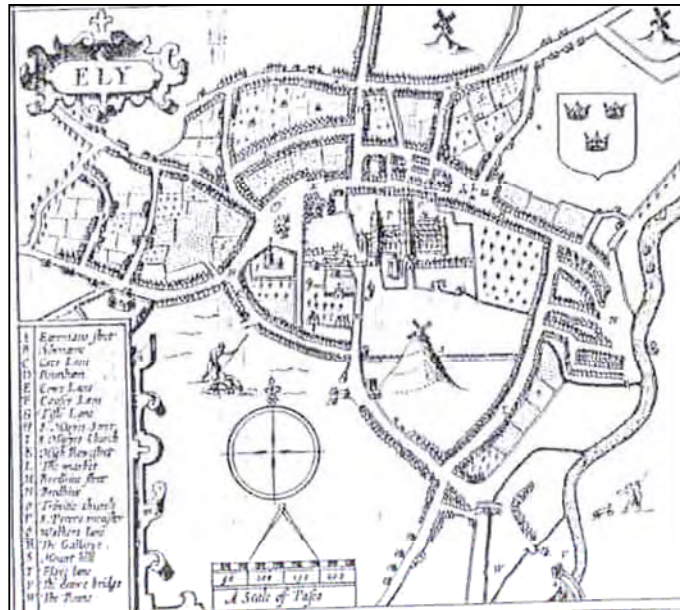
**Left:** St John's Wall from Cambridge Road



**Right:** Gable of St John's Farm

- 6.3.3 Much of the centre of the town, as far as roads are concerned, was probably laid out during this period, developing from the Saxon plan.
- 6.3.4 In 1417 Bishop Fordham commissioned a survey, which shows streets such as St. Mary's Street, then High Row Street, as well established. The Market Square had been established in its present position by this time.

6.3.5 Speed's Map of 1610 shows the Market Place and much of the layout of the Town Centre as we see it today, including many encroachments on the width of the roads for instance High Street and on the Market Place. It also shows that gardens had replaced the Bishops vineyards to the north of Forehill.

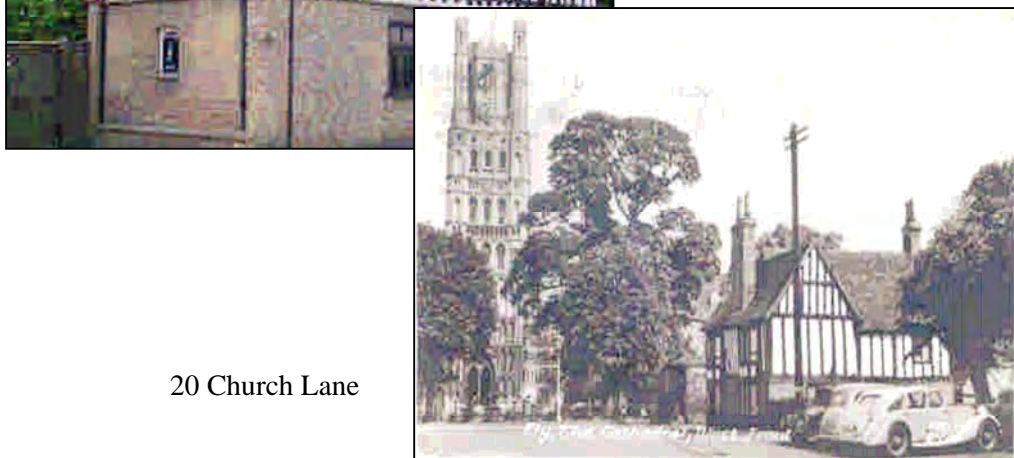


Extract from Speed's Map of 1610

6.3.6 Fine buildings were erected after the reformation, some of which can still be clearly seen in Ely.



3 West Fen Road



20 Church Lane

6.3.7 Unfortunately we have also lost many fine buildings, for instance the half-timbered houses along Broad Street, and the lovely front on number 45 in the High Street, next to Pizza Express.





Original front 45  
High Street

#### 6.4 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century

6.4.1 These three centuries saw the greatest change in the appearance of the old centre of Ely, and a major expansion in the size of the city.

6.4.2 The 18<sup>th</sup> Century saw many new facades erected over the old timber framed buildings.



High Street,  
1901

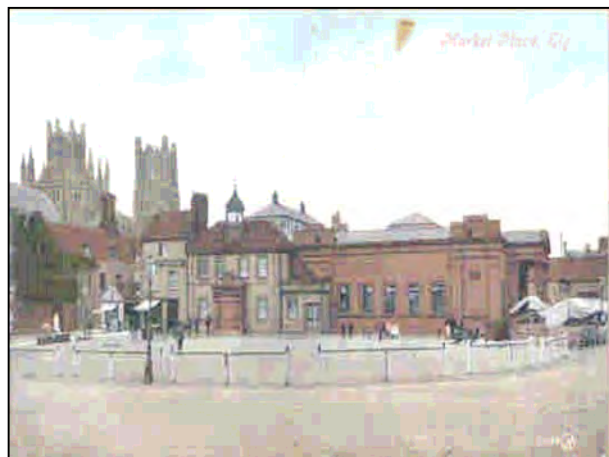
6.4.3 Gibbs shoe shop (above) is typical of an older building pretending to be much newer. This transformation can be seen all the way down the High Street, as well as elsewhere in Ely.

6.4.4 Substantial houses, such as The Chantry were erected, as well as the more lowly one-and-a-half storey buildings still found dotted around Ely.



18<sup>th</sup> century house

6.4.5 With drainage of the fens in the later 17<sup>th</sup> century, and the subsequent expansion of the land reclamation in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Ely became highly prosperous again, and many fine buildings were erected. This included properties such as the Corn Exchange and public rooms in the Market Place, sadly now gone.



Corn Exchange

6.4.6 The area expanded in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly after the introduction of the railway with 1840's. During this period, the maps of the time show a marked growth in the overall area covered by the city.



Left: Ely 1610



Right: Ely 1884



Ely 1901

6.4.7 The agricultural depression of the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and through into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, meant that development was much slower during this period, although the Church of St. Peter-in-Ely was erected in 1890. Many of the shop fronts of character, which still exist to this day, date from this period.



33 Forehill

6.4.8 Post WWII saw a great increase in housing in the city, and this has continued through until the present day. This is illustrated by the expansion to the east in the immediate post-war era, the development of the Bishops' vineyards north of Lisle Lane, and the recent developments to the northeast. There is no evidence to suggest that pressure for further development will diminish in the foreseeable future.



## 7 Zone A

### 7.1 Ecclesiastical centre

- 7.1.1 This area is dominated by the Cathedral and associated buildings. Most of the buildings are either Grade 1 Listed or Scheduled Ancient Monuments, giving them a very high degree of protection.



The College,  
c.1900

- 7.1.2 Cherry Hill, within the Park, accommodates the remnants of the motte and bailey of the Norman castle. This is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and any works must have consent from English Heritage before they are carried out.

- 7.1.3 The Park, which is entered from Ely Porta and from Broad Street, was laid out in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the typical 'English Landscape' style. It is an important historic green space within Ely, and gives an exemplary rural setting to the Cathedral.



The Park,  
1979

- 7.1.4 Kings School is a survival of the dissolution of the monasteries, and the school provides choristers for the Cathedral. Its buildings are spaced around the centre of Ely, with the main sites located adjacent to the Cathedral and Barton Square. The buildings range from early medieval, to high Victorian, to modern buildings. Many of them are of



considerable architectural merit, and have a significant beneficial impact on the character of the area.



College buildings on Barton Square

## 7.2 Palace Green

7.2.1 The Palace Green area is very important both historically and architecturally. It is where the original centre of the Saxon settlement was formed, and is bounded by the Cathedral to the east, The Bishop's Palace and The Chantry on either side, and is completed by St. Mary's Street to the west.



Left: Bishop's Palace



Right: Palace Green

- 7.2.2 It is a very fine green area, situated right in the centre of the city. It is popular for picnics etc on fine sunny days, and hosts a number of community events over the year.
- 7.2.3 Steeple Row is the area to the north of the cathedral, running behind the High Street. It has very poor visual qualities and provides a threatening and inactive boundary to the Cathedral grounds.



Steeple Row

- 7.2.4 Being the rear entrance for the shops and restaurants that front onto the High Street, it is used, in many instances, for the storage of waste bins. Prezzo and The Steeplegate tearooms are the only properties to make an attempt to provide an attractive rear elevation.
- 7.2.5 This area is the subject of a major enhancement program, led by Ely Perspective, with the backing of East Cambs District Council.

### **7.3 Back Hill**

- 7.3.1 Back Hill runs along the edge of what was the ecclesiastical enclosure and leads down to the river. It has a mixed style of properties from important School buildings, to more humble 19<sup>th</sup> century and 20<sup>th</sup> century dwellings.
- 7.3.2 The building materials found in this area range from stone to gault brick, with slate and tiles for the roofs.
- 7.3.3 There are groupings of smaller buildings, interspersed with larger buildings on big plots. There is no particular architectural style or plot size to provide a uniform appearance.

### **7.4 Barton Square**

- 7.4.1 Barton Square has a central green area, which is surrounded by pleasant well-proportioned dwellings. The Fountain Public House is on the east, with the Ely Porta and the old Cathedral close wall to the west.

7.4.2 Situated at the top of Back Hill, it provides a very attractive entrance to the centre of the city.

7.4.3 The trees are a prominent feature of the area.



Barton Square from The Gallery

Ely Porta from Barton Square



7.4.4 The materials used are a mix of stone, gault and red brick, and render, with tiles and slates for the roofs.

7.4.5 The west side of the Square is made up of mainly double fronted houses, except for the pub, which presents a gable-end on to the road.

7.4.6 This area has benefited from considerable streetscape enhancement in the past. However, it is let down by the proliferation of signs relating to the mini roundabouts and the 20 mph zone.

## 7.5 Silver Street and Church Lane

7.5.1 Although pubs at either end originally terminated this street, only the Fountain Inn now remains. The Prince Albert pub can be found half way down.

7.5.2 The road meanders along with a long curve, giving the streetscene variety and interest.

7.5.3 St. Mary's Church Steeple can be viewed through the various gaps in the building line. These need to be retained so that the feel of accessibility and legibility can be maintained.





St Mary's from Silver St  
(site of St Mary's School)



St Mary's from Church  
Lane junction

7.5.4 Many of the houses are terraced and erected in the 19<sup>th</sup> century mainly for the militia, but it is clear from Speed's Map of 1610, and some remaining older buildings, that this was an established street by this time. Some larger 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings can also be found along the street. The predominant building materials are gault brick and slate.

7.5.5 Church Lane runs along behind the Bishop's Palace, and has a wall along almost its whole length on the east side. There are a number of listed buildings on the western side.



Church Lane



- 7.5.6 The predominant materials here are red brick with plain tiles. There is some gault brick, render, and slate nearer Silver Street.
- 7.5.7 The builders yard, located half way down on the west side, has a post war house adjacent to it. The whole site would benefit from a good quality redevelopment scheme.

**7.6 Top of Barton Road and Kings School site**

- 7.6.1 The School site, particularly the fine High-Victorian building in red brick and stone that was the Theological College, dominates the top part of Barton Road by Barton Square.



Barton Road  
trees from  
Cambridge Rd

- 7.6.2 Progressing along the road, past the more modern school buildings, the area opens out. Along this stretch are many fine trees and some attractive walls.
  - 7.6.3 There are some older buildings, which are of reasonable architectural merit. But there are also some later 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings that have not fitted in so well. There is no predominant building materials used along much of the length of Barton Road, and the plots sizes vary considerably from one section to another.
  - 7.6.4 The car park needs some further screening along the path with Barton Road, as it is clearly viewed as a large expanse of tarmac.
- 7.7 Victoria Street, Castlehythe and Annesdale**
- 7.7.1 Victoria Street is now completely residential and is made up of nearly all gault brick and slate 19<sup>th</sup> century terraced houses. Some of the houses retain many of their original features such as doors and windows.
  - 7.7.2 Castlehythe is a green area at the bottom of Back Hill and provides an attractive entrance to the Conservation Area. The eastern side has a number of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century listed buildings, and a late 19<sup>th</sup> century brick and stone dwelling with unusual but attractive architectural detailing.

- 7.7.3 The western side has a number of 19<sup>th</sup> century terraced houses and some good quality late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century shop fronts. These should be retained.
- 7.7.4 The predominant materials are gault brick and slate with some render, and the scale of the buildings is mainly two-storey.
- 7.7.5 Behind Castlehythe is the old wall that bounded the lane down to the wharf, where the stone for the cathedral buildings arrived. There was also a stone castle in this area. This is listed and should be retained in as good a state as possible.
- 7.7.6 Annesdale runs down from Castlehythe to the river, and along to The Cutter public house. The scene from the river has hardly changed in the last century.



**Left:** The Cutter, 2007



**Right:** The Cutter and Annesdale, 1909

- 7.7.7 A mixed usage is found on this corner of the riverside, part residential and part commercial/tourist trade.
- 7.7.8 Managed properly, this should work well. Any proposed commercial development will need to be considered carefully, to ensure that it is compatible with the occupation of the residential properties that now exist.

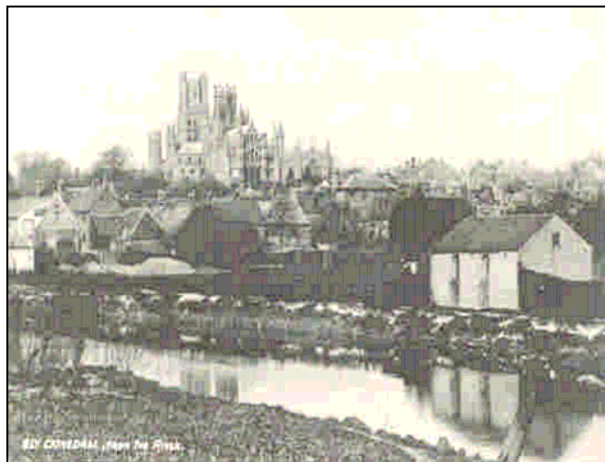
## 8 Zone B

### 8.1 Waterside & Quayside

8.1.1 This area of Ely is second only in historical importance to the Cathedral. Without this link to the outside world, Ely would never have prospered. The area still plays a strong economic role in Ely today, bringing visitors and locals alike, to eat, stroll and see the pleasure craft and rowing boats from Lincoln Bridge to the High Bridge which carries the A142.

8.1.2 Most of the buildings along Quayside are listed, as are many along Waterside.

8.1.3 Babylon, the section between the river and the railway, has an extensive Tree Preservation Order placed on it.



Ely Cathedral  
from Babylon,  
1909

8.1.4 There are clear views up to the Cathedral from here, and careful attention needs to be taken to ensure these views and glimpses remain.

8.1.5 Jubilee Gardens have helped to open up this area to locals and visitors alike. Before the gardens were constructed, it was a large industrial site. The Gardens lead one's eye up to the Cathedral, which is clearly visible on the top of the hill.



Jubilee Gardens  
from Broad St

- 8.1.6 The Maltings provide an interesting and much appreciated venue within Ely, converted in the early 1970s to a theatre, cinema, conference facility, restaurant and bar. This building is highly prominent along the Quayside, and care must be taken to make certain that it is retained and used in a manner of benefit to the City.



Maltings before conversion

- 8.1.7 Other interesting commercial activities are found in this area. The Marina, with its diverse boat types, and the Art and Antique Centers at Lincoln Bridge, together with the attractive Peacocks Tea Rooms, makes this area an exciting and vibrant place to be.
- 8.1.8 The predominant materials found in this area are gault brick, plain tiles and slate. The scale ranges from large buildings like the Maltings, the wharf and warehouse buildings by Lincoln Bridge, to small two-storey artisan cottages. Care needs to be taken with infill and roof alterations to make certain that they fit in with the surroundings.
- 8.1.9 The scale of buildings found along Waterside and Quayside has resulted in a particularly interesting roofscape, which should be carefully maintained.

## **8.2 Willow Walk area**

- 8.2.1 This area is predominately residential in character with smaller two storey dwellings, some in terraces and others detached.
- 8.2.2 Within the Willow Walk area there is an important area of open space, and this should be protected from encroachment or enclosure.
- 8.2.3 The building materials found in this area reflect those on Waterside.

## **8.3 River walk and Roswell Pits area**

- 8.3.1 The River walk along the Cresswells is a beautiful part of Ely, with stunning views up to the Cathedral. The appearance of this area is much as it would have been in the time before railways and the earlier drainage. The setting of the city from this viewpoint helps one to appreciate how the city would have looked many centuries ago.



- 8.3.2 There are particularly wonderful views from the public footpath at Cuckoo Bridge on Roswell Pits. Here you can really appreciate how the Cathedral would have looked when viewed from the fen. All at once, the comment that, 'The cathedral appears like a great ship sailing on the fen', becomes clear.



- 8.3.3 These views, and the area in general, need careful management to protect the last surviving area from which Ely can be viewed, as it would have been in the past.

- 8.3.4 All of Roswell Pits are included in an SSSI, with part of them in a County Wildlife Site, and partly covered by woodland TPO.

#### **8.4 Commercial Area of Lisle Lane**

- 8.4.1 This area is very important in maintaining the views from Roswell Pits to the centre of Ely, and up to the Cathedral.

- 8.4.2 If proposals are brought forward for consideration for new buildings in this area, they need to be low-rise and constructed in sympathetic materials to help minimise their impact. They should not distract the eye from the quintessential view of the Cathedral.

- 8.4.3 Many of the existing industrial buildings are now coming to the end of their useful life, and it is to be expected that applications will come forward for their replacement.

- 8.4.4 It is possible that either commercial or residential proposals will come forward for these sites. If that happens, then the following general design criteria will have to be adhered to, when plans are being drawn up:

- a) **Scale** - It is of paramount importance that buildings do not exceed 8m in height, otherwise they will have a detrimental impact on the views already indicated as being of importance;
- b) **Bulk** - The bulk should be broken up, so that long wall and large roof expanses do not overwhelm the building(s);

c) **Materials** - For commercial buildings, large expanses of shiny materials should be avoided, as it will again distract the eye from the cathedral. Any materials should be muted in shade. Glass in section could be acceptable, as it reflects the sky and trees around, therefore taking the impact away from the modern material. For residential buildings, the materials should be gault brick, gault tiles and/or slate. Red roof tiles should be avoided, as they will detract from the view.

8.4.5 Redevelopment will need to be of high quality to enhance the area between Roswell Pits and the centre of town.

8.4.6 The northern area rises up the hill on the lower slopes of the old ecclesiastical vineyard.

8.4.7 The old paths that lead down to the fields and river run down through Lisle Lane. These should be used to link with the town centre, through the lower southern area of Lisle Lane, and onto the Cresswells and the Common.

8.4.8 Any redevelopment of this area should use the existing lanes, or create new ones, to enhance the links up to the City centre and thereby assist in making the new development more permeable and legible.

## **9 Zone C**

### **9.1 St. Mary's Street (West End)**

9.1.1 The lower end of St. Mary's Street is a mixture of a secondary commercial area with offices and service industry premises, and residential properties.

9.1.2 There are a number of listed buildings in the street and most of the unlisted buildings are also of good quality, although built at a later date.

9.1.3 The two most prominent buildings, which would provide an opportunity to enhance the area, are the garage on the corner of Cromwell Road, and Glebe House on the Cambridge Road side of St. Mary's Surgery.

9.1.4 The garage could be improved through better signage and a more appropriate colour on the walls. Glebe House is of an unsympathetic design and material, which could be improved if a redevelopment scheme were to come forward.

9.1.5 The junction with St. Mary's Street and West End could be improved through the use of more appropriate surface materials, and better lighting columns and heads.

9.1.6 The trees on the corner of St. Mary's Street and West End are very prominent and should be retained.



**Left:** Vauxhall  
Garage, St  
Mary's St



**Right:** Trees on corner  
of St Mary's St &  
West End

9.1.7 The predominant building materials are gault brick and tiles, with some painted brickwork and slates.

9.1.8 Here, the scale is mainly two-storeys with the odd interspersed three-storey building. The roofscape provides interest, as it is broken up with chimneys and parapets.

## **9.2 Cambridge Road**

9.2.1 This is very much a residential street with mainly large, imposing dwellings, running the whole length of the road.

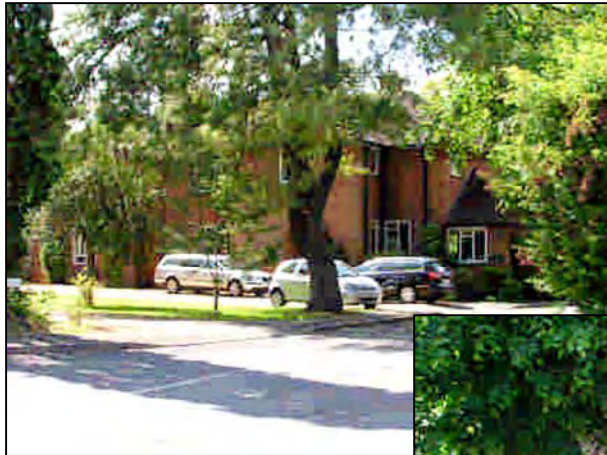
9.2.2 Many of the gardens have significant trees, which add greatly to the character of the area.

9.2.3 There are a number of interesting substantial buildings, which help to give this area a spacious and dignified feel. It provides a welcoming entrance to the city.

9.2.4 Most of the dwellings are 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the exception of 11 Cambridge Road, which is listed and 18<sup>th</sup> century in date.

9.2.5 There are no predominant materials found in this part of Cambridge Road, but an interesting mix of gault brick, red brick, slate and tile can be found.

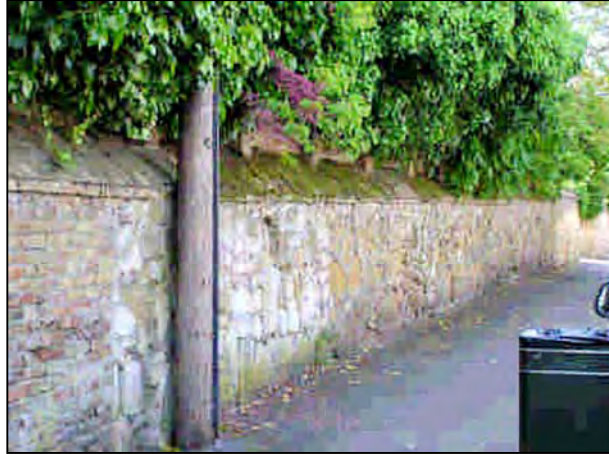
9.2.6 The boundary treatments range from stone, brick, fencing and hedging. The most attractive is the old wall that enclosed St. John and St. Mary's Hospital. This is found on the corner of St. Mary's Street and West End.



### 9.3 West End and St. John's Road

9.3.1 West End has a long medieval wall running down the south side. This enclosed the old hospitals of St. John and St. Mary, dissolved in the Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.





Wall of St John  
and St Mary's  
Hospitals

- 9.3.2 West End has a number of listed buildings and some good examples of 19<sup>th</sup> Century design.
- 9.3.3 The materials that predominate are gault brick with some render and painted brickwork, tiles and slate.
- 9.3.4 The scale of the buildings does not exceed two-storey and many are 1½ storey.
- 9.3.5 West End has one building that is particularly unsympathetic in design, and if an opportunity to redevelop the site arises, the opportunity to enhance the character of the area should be taken.



Unsympathetic  
building on  
West End

- 9.3.6 St. John's Road is dominated on the left hand side by the remains of the hospital in the fields that extend through to Tower Court.
- 9.3.7 These fields are historically very important and could hold extensive archaeological remains of the two hospitals. Any form of development here should be resisted, as it would destroy the historical importance of the site.



Fields on St  
John's Road

9.3.8 The chapel of St. John's Hospital has just been repaired with the assistance of English Heritage and East Cambs District Council. The Chapel is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

9.3.9 On the opposite side of the road to St. John's Farm is a row of listed early 19<sup>th</sup> century terraced cottages with many original features.

#### 9.4 West Fen Road

9.4.1 This area would have had a very rural feel to it before the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century when the area started to become more developed. This is shown clearly within the buildings found along this road.

9.4.2 West Fen Road is completely residential with mixed housing. There are some attractive listed buildings and a selection of good quality late 19<sup>th</sup> century dwellings.



9.4.3 There is a long wall on the left hand side. There are also a number of attractive and important trees spread along the road.



9.4.4 The materials found in this street are gault brick, red brick detailing, pan tiles, plain tiles and slate.

9.4.5 The scale is mainly two-storey with the odd 1 ½ and single storey building.





## 9.5 Hills Lane

9.5.1 Again this lane would have been rural in character up until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The road seems to have been in its present position for many centuries. The eastern side of the road was developed in two phases between the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.



9.5.2 Many of the 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings still have their original features, and even the features that have been lost could easily be reinstated.

9.5.3 Gault brick and slate are the predominant materials, and the scale is mainly two-storey.

9.5.4 The boundary treatments vary, but there are some good examples where the original front brick walls on the 19<sup>th</sup> century properties have survived.

## 9.6 Tower Court

9.6.1 This was the workhouse for the surrounding area. Built in the 1830s it is a fine example of the neo-gothic style popular at the time. Historically this is a very important building, charting the change in attitude to the poor. Situated on the other side of the fields from the medieval hospital where the poor, sick and travelers were cared for, the workhouse represents a sea-change in the level of care supplied to the poor and sick in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

9.6.2 It was converted into a hospital and then became redundant before being converted into flats.



9.6.3 The main building still has many of the original external features and is listed (Grade II).

### **9.7 Barton Road (Cambridge Road Side)**

9.7.1 There are a number of substantial individually designed dwellings from the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century on the left driving from Cambridge Road.

9.7.2 Many of these are very attractive and have fine mature trees set in the gardens.

9.7.3 There are mixed materials used in their construction, ranging from gault brick and tile through to render and thatch.

### **9.8 The Range, Silver Street and Parade Lane**

9.8.1 The Range is a run of terraced houses, originally Militia buildings including the Militia Hospital at the bottom next to the Church, that sit gable end onto Silver Street. There is a fine view down The Range to St. Mary's Church, and this should be protected.



View from The Range to St Mary's

9.8.2 The detailing on The Range is of interest, with the use of contrasting brickwork, parapets and large chimneys.

9.8.3 There are also some attractive trees found in the front gardens of The Range.

9.8.4 Silver Street and Parade Lane are characterised by the terraced properties found along them.



Parade Lane

9.8.5 The design and scale of the buildings in this area is two-storey and terraced. Mainly one room across the front, and one or two rooms deep.

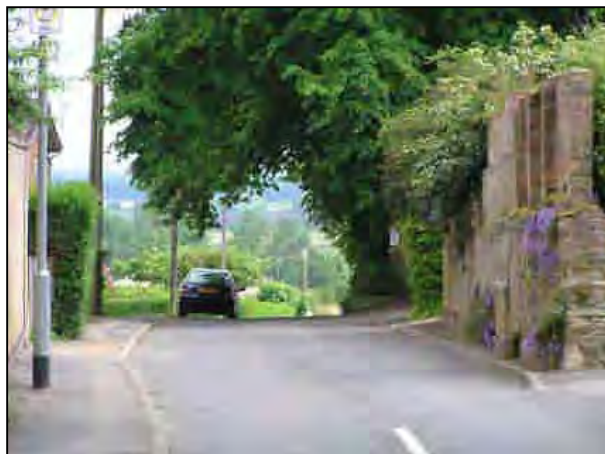
**10 Zone D**

**10.1 Nutholt Lane, Deacons Lane, Lynn Road, Prickwillow Road, New Barns Lane**

10.1.1 These roads are almost entirely residential in character. They comprise a mixture of modest terrace houses through to large imposing dwellings with outbuildings. The buildings are mainly Victorian and later. However many are well designed and have a pleasing character with good quality detailing.

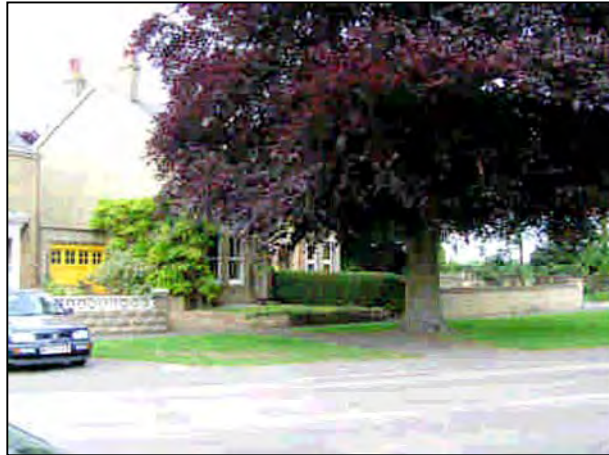


10.1.2 The views away from Prickwillow Road down Springhead Lane give a glimpse of how many of the views would have appeared in past times. These views need careful protection from shrinkage and overdevelopment.



10.1.3 There is a very important view of the Cathedral across the Paradise from Deacons Lane. Again, this view needs to be respected when considering any future applications for development.

10.1.4 There are a number of significant trees along all these roads, particularly on the corner of Cemetery Lane, Prickwillow Road and Lisle Lane forming an entrance to the Conservation Area.



Copper Beech

10.1.5 The predominant building materials are gault brick, and slate. There are some examples of render, tile and red brick.

10.1.6 The scale is mainly two-storey. This scale has been increased at the end of Prickwillow Road by the new three storey dwellings at the entrance to Douglas Court, which are set back from the road at a lower ground level, thus decreasing the impact of their greater bulk.



Douglas Court

10.1.7 It will be important to not let infill or redevelopment increase to this height on all plots, as it will adversely change the character of the street.

## 10.2 The Cemetery

10.2.1 The Cemetery was laid out, and the chapel built, in the 1840s following the Act relating to cemeteries.



10.2.2 Surrounding the site is a dense hedge and mature trees, providing a good home for diverse ecology.

10.2.3 The Cemetery chapel's spire can be seen for some distance across the Fen.

10.2.4 The Chapel's architecture is in the high neo-gothic style and is well designed. This building should be preserved.



Cemetery hedge and trees

### 10.3 Lisle Lane area

10.3.1 Although much of this area has had major development over the last 50 years, the western side is of significant historical importance as this is where the Bishop and Abbot had their vineyards.

10.3.2 The area on the eastern side is either open to the Fen, or is industrial in nature. The views across the industrial site out to the fen, and in to the Cathedral, are important. Care should be taken over redevelopment to ensure that these are retained.

10.3.3 For further advice relating to redevelopment in this area please refer to Zone B Para 8.4 onwards.





## 10.4 The Paradise, Leisure Centre and Swimming Pool

10.4.1 This area provides an important and extensive sporting and play area for the residents of Ely.

10.4.2 There are significant trees, views of the Cathedral, and a large expanse of grass giving the area an open and natural feel that should be retained.



## 11 Zone E

### 11.1 High Street

11.1.1 The High Street is vibrant and bustling, particularly on market days.



**Left:** c.1930



**Right:** 2008

11.1.2 Shops, professional offices, banks, building societies and restaurants dominate the street.

11.1.3 The shop fronts and signage are mixed in quality. Many of the less attractive shop fronts could be replaced with more traditional designs in the future. Some of the shop fronts have extended over two buildings, making the upper storeys out of kilter with the lower ones. When replacement shop front applications are submitted, the design should be encouraged to take this into account so that the front will appear as two buildings not as one.



11.1.4 The scale is mainly three storeys or 2½ with parapets, or steeply pitched roofs.

11.1.5 Render is common, as is gault brick with tile and slate on the roofs.

## 11.2 The Market Place

11.2.1 This area has seen some of the greatest change over the centuries, from the main encroachment of the central building in the late medieval period, to the demolition of the fine assembly rooms and corn exchange in the mid 1960's.

11.2.2 The side where The Cloisters now stands has also had a marked effect on the appearance of Market Place.

11.2.3 The side that runs along the old Cathedral and monastery boundary is important in visual and historic terms.

11.2.4 There is a mixture of materials found in Market Place. Gault brick render, and painted brickwork, are found together with the stone of the medieval buildings. The roofs are slate and tile.

11.2.5 The pedestrian surface has recently been resurfaced with red paving stones with a pattern of cream and grey marked out. New columns and heads to the lighting have enhanced the lighting in the Market Place.



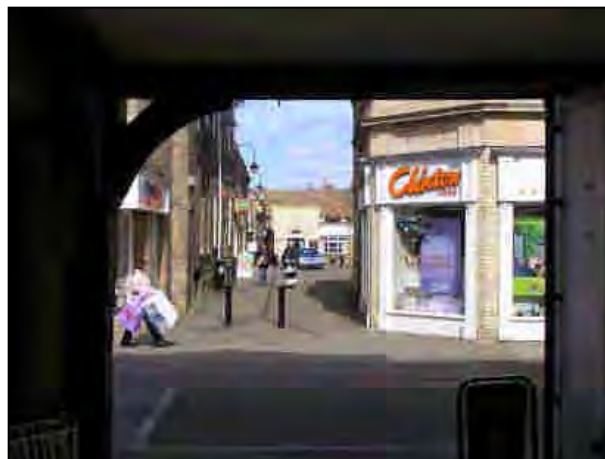
### 11.3 Market Street, and council office area

11.3.1 Market Street again has a mixture of banks, shops, restaurants and pubs that make it an interesting street to walk down.

11.3.2 Again there are some good examples of shop fronts and some poorer ones.

11.3.3 The same mixture of materials is found within the street as on the High Street and Market Place. The scale however, is lower, and the tallest building is the old Post Office nearest the Market Place. Most of the buildings do not exceed two storeys, and many are 1½ storeys in height.

11.3.4 There are two interesting cut through lanes, High Street Passage and Chequers Lane, that link through to the High Street. These are full of small and interesting shops, many of which have good quality shop fronts that should be retained. Chequer Lane



Chequer Lane

11.3.5 Views from Market Street to the Cathedral are very important, and any development that comes forward should respect these views, and not crowd or compete with them.



Cathedral from  
Market Street

11.3.6 The Council office area is made up of a 19th Century gault brick building which has had a number of uses, and is now the Council Offices. This building has had major extensions to provide further office accommodation and a Council Chamber.

11.3.7 Next to the Council Office building is the Session House (Magistrate Court). This is an early 19th Century (1820-22) purpose built judicial building. Most of the original fittings have gone, but some remain. It is an imposing and attractive building and should be retained in its present use.

11.3.8 Between Market Street and the Sessions building, is the Old Gaol, now an interesting local museum for the area.

#### **11.4 Forehill**

11.4.1 Forehill has a good selection of individual shops and a number of restaurants, pubs and estate agents.

11.4.2 The view down Forehill has hardly changed over the last hundred years. Although some of the buildings have lost their attractive shop fronts, it is possible to say that, with careful control, these could be reintroduced.





11.4.3 The only building that stands out is the poorly designed old Woolworths building. This building has recently been reopened as a discount store. Redevelopment of this site with an appropriate mix of retail/commercial and housing could be welcome.

11.4.4 At the back of Forehill runs Three Cups Walk. This fronts onto the car park of Broad Street and is an ideal place for enhancement of the setting of the Cathedral and the commercial activity of the area. This would be achieved Cathedral from Market Street through suitable redevelopment of some of the area. At present the Walk is slightly foreboding, particularly at dusk and after dark. If a more active face of development could be encouraged, to face onto the Walk, this would make the whole area more welcoming.



## **12 Acknowledgements**

The archaeological information has been compiled from the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record and the Victoria County History of Cambridgeshire.

The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record data is based on known information. Information held is constantly being updated and amended, so for more information please contact:

Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record  
Cambridgeshire County Council.  
Box ELH1108  
Cambridgeshire County Council  
Shire Hall  
Cambridge  
CB3 0AP

**Tel:** 01223 717312/712335

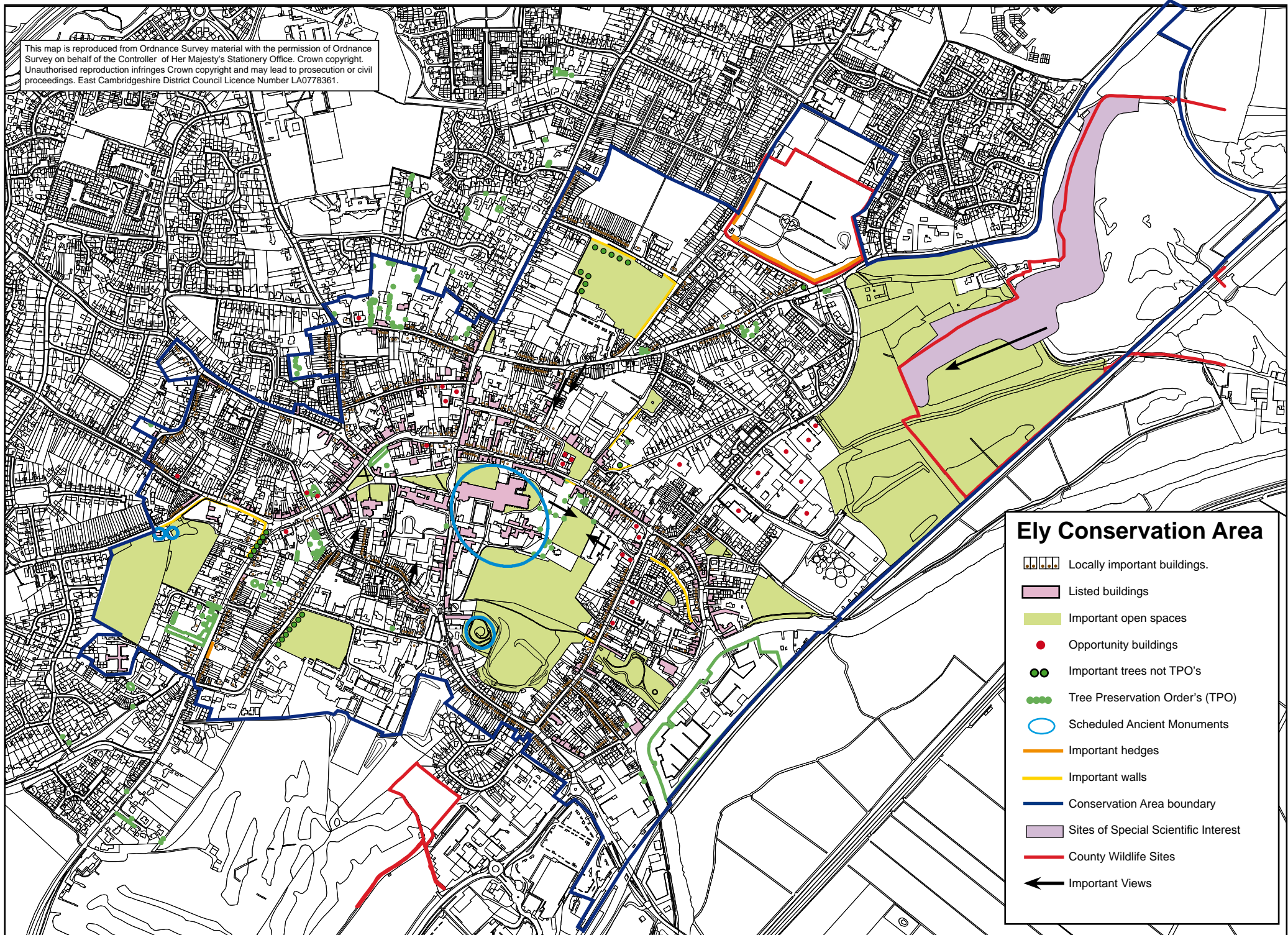
**Fax:** 01223 362425

**Email:** [arch.her@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:arch.her@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

# **APPENDIX A**

## **MAPS**

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### Ely Conservation Area

- Locally important buildings.
- Listed buildings
- Important open spaces
- Opportunity buildings
- Important trees not TPO's
- Tree Preservation Order's (TPO's)
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Important hedges
- Important walls
- Conservation Area boundary
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- County Wildlife Sites
- Important Views



**APPENDIX B**

**RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

## Cambridgeshire Structure Plan (adopted October 2003)

- P1/2** Protection of sites of archaeological, historic or architectural value  
**P7/6** Local Authorities will protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the historic built environment.

## East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy (adopted October 2009)

This section summarises the main Core Strategy policies that are relevant to the conservation areas.

### Policy EN 2

#### Design

All development will be designed to a high quality, reinforcing local distinctiveness. Design which fails to have regard to local context and does not preserve or enhance the character, appearance and quality of an area will not be acceptable.

New development proposals, extensions and alterations to existing buildings and structures will be expected to:

- a. Have regard to the East Cambridgeshire Design Guide;
- b. Incorporate the sustainable construction principles contained in Policy EN3;
- c. Make efficient use of land while respecting the density, character, landscape and biodiversity of the surrounding area;
- d. Be developed in a comprehensive way, avoiding piecemeal development;
- e. Retain existing important landscaping and natural and historic features and include landscape enhancement schemes that are compatible with the Council's Landscape Guidelines for recreation and biodiversity;
- f. Ensure that the scale, massing and materials of buildings relate sympathetically to the surrounding area;
- g. Provide structure by making use of existing views, vistas and landmarks and creating new ones;
- h. Create safe environments addressing crime prevention and community safety;
- i. Make a clear distinction between public and private spaces, and enhance the public realm;
- j. Ensure that places and buildings are accessible to all, including the elderly and those with impaired mobility;
- k. Provide enclosure to street and spaces through the grouping, positioning and height of buildings and landscape features, and road layouts;
- l. Incorporate the highway and access principles contained in Policy S6;
- m. Ensure that car parking is discrete and accessible and provided in accordance with Policy S7;
- n. Provide adequate waste and recycling storage/collection areas;
- o. Where appropriate, contain a variety and mix of uses, buildings and landscaping;

- p. Ensure there is no significantly detrimental effect on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers, and that occupiers of new dwellings are provided with acceptable residential amenity;
- q. Ensure that there is no detrimental effect on the appreciation of Ely as an historic cathedral city in the quality of the approaches and the quality of views of the cathedral distant and close to.

The Council may require the submission of development briefs for certain proposals, and will notify developers of this requirement at an early stage in the conception of proposals.

## **EN2 - Design**

- Well-designed, safe and attractive new development that respects its surroundings can help to raise the quality of the built environment and have a significant impact on everyday life. Good design is a key element in sustainable development and it is a strongly held aspiration of the Council to raise the standard of design in all proposals to assist vitality, and create a 'sense of place' in communities and neighbourhoods.
- The Government requires Design and Access Statements to be submitted with most planning applications. These Statements are intended to demonstrate how a proposal is functional, attractive and accessible to all. Comprehensive guidance on the format and content of a Statement is provided on the Council's website. Further information on design can be found in 'Building for Life' published by CABI, which includes advice on character, public space, design and construction, and the surrounding environment and community. Also helpful in street design is the Government publication 'Manual for Streets' which gives advice on the creation of high quality residential streets. The Council encourages developers to incorporate these principals in their proposals. Developers are also encouraged to go beyond minimum access standards contained in Building Regulations to provide higher standards of accessibility for all within public spaces and individual buildings.
- Development must be of the appropriate scale, design and materials for its location and conform to the design principals set out in the policy below. All new buildings and spaces must enhance and respect their surroundings and contribute towards local identity, whilst securing and maintaining a high level of general amenity for residents and workers in the district. The particular importance of design in areas of historic conservation is detailed in Policy EN5.
- The importance of new developments complementing and relating to their surroundings, whilst being safe and accessible to all, is established in the strategic objectives of the Core Strategy. The objectives also seek to mitigate the impacts of climate change, and the environmental performance of new buildings is addressed in Policy EN3 'Sustainable East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy construction and

energy efficiency'. Good design can reduce energy consumption and improve sustainability and the Council will actively promote development incorporating new technology and contemporary design where it provides appropriate visual context or contrast in respect of its surroundings.

- Crime, and the fear of crime, is amongst the top concerns of local communities, and these concerns are reflected in the strategic objectives of this plan. Design can make a significant contribution towards reducing the scope for crime, and create more pleasant and reassuring environments in which to live and work. In addition to appropriate design of buildings, open spaces must be safe and believed to be safe so that their full enjoyment for play, walking, sport and general amenity can be fully utilised and appreciated. Increasing natural surveillance, layout of roads and paths, planting, positioning and use of open space, and secure standards of doors and windows are areas for particular consideration. In town centers covered by CCTV systems developers will be required to consider these facilities in their design and/or contribute to the siting/re-siting of cameras where appropriate. National guidance to assist in designing out crime is contained in 'Secured by Design', and developers are advised to contact Cambridgeshire Constabulary for further advice.
- Good design can help to ensure that the best use is made of land, as required by Government guidance in PPS3. The piecemeal incremental development of an area with no regard to an overall plan or concept development of a large site can result in an unsatisfactory form of development by preventing proper consideration of how various elements, such as landscaping, open space and footpaths, fit together, thus preventing a holistic approach to design. Piecemeal development schemes that would prevent adjacent land or other nearby sites from coming forward – for example, by impeding future access, will also be resisted. However, phased development will be supported where it is related to a comprehensive scheme/master plan which addresses overall infrastructure provision, access and internal circulation by pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles, landscaping, open space and play space provision, and affordable housing.
- Good connectivity and movement between spaces requires a high standard of design. The Council is committed to reducing dependence on the car, minimising the impact of car parking, and improving accessibility for pedestrians, people with impaired mobility, cyclists, horse riders and public transport. All development proposals will be required to incorporate safe, attractive and convenient road design, access and parking arrangements and pedestrian routes as detailed in Policies S7 and S8. The advice of the County Highways Authority will be sought in relation to these issues. Development schemes should aim to protect and enhance existing links and look for opportunities to improve and expand them.



- For large and more complex schemes the Council will require a more detailed development brief to be submitted in advance of an application, and shared with the local community. Such information will show how the design has evolved and how design-related considerations have been addressed. It will also provide an opportunity for engagement of the local community at an early stage, and enable the Council to check that key issues have been addressed, thus helping to speed up the planning application process. It is not appropriate to be precise about when a development brief may be required, as much depends on the nature of the site and the proposal. Developers will need to discuss the issue with the Council at an early stage in proceedings.
- It is proposed to produce an East Cambridgeshire Design Guide to be adopted as SPD. This will contain more detailed guidance on how design should compliment local architectural traditions, and how sustainable construction techniques can be incorporated within the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy context of the quality and character of the existing built heritage. Other detailed local context information can be found in Conservation Area Appraisals, the Ely Environmental Capacity Study, the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines and Parish Plans, and these should be taken into account. Reviews of these documents will occur during the lifetime of the LDF and the most up to date material should be referred to.
- Guidance on the appropriate design of shop fronts and advertisements will be set out in the Shop fronts and Advertisements Supplementary Planning Document. Further general design guidance can be found in Government guidance document 'By Design', the companion to PPS1.

## **Policy EN 5**

### **Historic conservation**

Development proposals, within, or affecting a Conservation Area should:

- Be of a particularly high standard of design and materials that will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area;
- Retain attractive traditional features such as original doors, windows and boundary walls;
- Only involve the demolition of buildings where:
  - They are of little or no importance to the architectural, historic or visual character or appearance of the area; or
  - They are structurally unsound (for reasons other than deliberate damage or neglect) and beyond reasonable repair, and measures to sustain an existing use or find an alternative use have been explored and failed; and in all cases
  - Detailed proposals for reconstruction or redevelopment have received planning permission.

Proposals to extend alter or change the use of a Listed Building, or which affect the setting of a Listed Building will only be permitted where they would:

- Preserve the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses; and
- Support the long-term preservation of the building.

Proposals to demolish all or part of a Listed Building will only be permitted in very exceptional cases where:

- The building is structurally unsound (for reasons other than deliberate damage or neglect) and beyond all reasonable repair; and
- All possible measures to sustain an existing use or find an alternative use have been explored and failed, and preservation in charitable or community ownership is not possible or sustainable; or
- Where redevelopment would bring wider public benefits; and
- Preservation in a charitable or community ownership is not possible or suitable; and
- Detailed proposals for reconstruction or redevelopment have received planning permission.

The Council will take action to enforce repair of Listed Buildings where appropriate.

#### **EN5 - Historic conservation**

- East Cambridgeshire contains a great wealth and variety of buildings and areas that are of special importance to the character and appearance of towns and villages, the most famous being Ely Cathedral. Just as the landscape changes from open fen in the north to more undulating areas of chalk and clay hills in the south, the character of buildings and settlements also change, reflecting the considerable diversity of the area. Certain proposals affecting Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are subject to specific consent procedures, and PPG15 sets out the detailed considerations that must be followed in these applications. The Core Strategy aims to ensure that the built heritage is conserved and enhanced by sympathetic preservation and high quality design.

#### **Conservation Areas**

- The Council has designated 29 Conservation Areas in the district. These are listed in Appendix 5 and the boundaries are shown on the accompanying Proposals Map. These areas have been designated due to their particular architectural or historic interest, taking account of the overall quality of the area, mix and style of buildings, quality of open spaces, and other features which contribute to the overall character. The Council is currently undertaking a programme of Conservation Area reviews, looking at their boundaries, character and general condition through the production of Conservation Area Appraisals. In addition to the review of existing Conservation Areas the programme also includes the designation of new Conservation Areas. The Conservation Area Appraisals for both the revised and new Conservation Areas will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents to the LDF.

- Designation emphasises the special care that must be taken over the design, layout and materials of development proposals to ensure the character and appearance of these areas is retained and enhanced. Traditional features and locally characteristic designs should be recognised and reflected in development proposals. However, new development does not always have to mimic the past, and high quality designed schemes which provide a successful visual contrast with their surroundings may also preserve and enhance character.
- Demolition of buildings in Conservation Areas will be resisted, except in very exceptional cases where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the building is structurally unsound or of little or no importance to the character and appearance of the area. In all circumstances, demolition will only be allowed if planning permission has already been obtained for the redevelopment of the site, to ensure the special character of the area is preserved or enhanced.
- Where necessary, the Council will use Urgent Works and Repairs Notices, Section 215 notices and Article 4 Directions to maintain and enhance the quality of Conservation Areas.

### **Listed Buildings**

- Buildings are listed by English Heritage in national recognition of their special architectural or historic interest, and any works which affect the character of a Listed Building require Listed Building Consent. Within the district there are almost 930 Listed Buildings, about 100 of which are Grade I or Grade II\*. The high ratio of Grade I and II\* is due in part to Anglesey Abbey and the Ely Cathedral complex. The main aim of listing is to prevent alterations which are detrimental to the special character of the building or structure, including the interior. The Council is committed to identifying Listed Buildings at risk and encouraging their repair and reuse, and will take formal action to enforce repair, where appropriate. The East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy setting of a Listed Building is also important, and proposals which detract from the setting will be resisted. Similarly, where a Listed Building has landscape value, contributing to the wider setting of a settlement or the countryside, it will be necessary to demonstrate that development proposals do not adversely affect character or views.
- There is a strong presumption in favour of the preservation of Listed Buildings and demolition will be approved only in the most exceptional circumstances as set out in Policy EN5, after applicants have demonstrated that every effort has been made to keep the building. If demolition is permitted, the Council is likely to require an appropriate archive of the features and fabric that would be lost. Often the best way of preserving a Listed Building will be by securing an active, economically viable use, and sympathetic consideration will be given to proposals which help to secure the long term future of the building. Such proposals will only be acceptable where there is no detriment to the structure, character, appearance or setting of the building.

### **Locally Listed Buildings**

- Government policy in PPG15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' 2004 gives provision for local authorities to draw up lists of locally important buildings which make a valuable contribution to the local scene or local history, but which do not merit national listing. These will be given additional protection and their status will be a material consideration, but they will not enjoy the full protection of statutory listing. A local list will be developed by the Council in conjunction with local amenity groups.

### **Archaeological Sites and Monuments**

- East Cambridgeshire has a rich and varied archaeological heritage. In the north of the district, settlement from the early pre-historic period focused on the dry land of the Isle of Ely and surrounding fen margins, although well preserved artefacts and organic remains may occur in the areas of fen. Extensive evidence of Roman activity survives throughout the district, and in addition to the historic City of Ely, numerous medieval villages and towns survive to the present day. The Council wishes to make every effort to safeguard this archaeological heritage, which is vulnerable to modern development and land use. Known sites of national importance are designated as 'Scheduled Ancient Monuments', and these are shown on the Proposals Map and listed in Appendix 5. Other sites of regional or local significance are listed in the County Historic Environment Record, maintained by Cambridgeshire County Council. As most archaeological remains are yet to be discovered it is crucial that sites of potential interest are appropriately assessed. Development adversely affecting a site of known or identified national importance will be resisted and the impact of development on all types of remains should be minimised. There will usually be a presumption in favour of in-situ preservation of remains, unless it can be shown that the recording of remains, assessment, analysis, report, publication and deposition of archive is more appropriate. Such recording should take place before development starts. The Council will be guided in these issues by Government advice contained in PPG16 'Archaeology and Planning' (1990), and advice from the Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Department.

### **Historic Parks and Gardens**

- The District contains a number of areas of historic parkland and gardens that form an important part of the county's heritage and environment. The most significant sites are identified within English Heritage's 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest' and as advised by the County Council's Archaeology Team (and reflected in the list in the East Cambridgeshire District Local Plan).
- The registers have no statutory status but PPG15 states that the planning system should be used to protect the character, appearance, amenity value and setting of these sites.



**APPENDIX C**

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL GUIDANCE**

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This document has been produced in tandem with the Conservation Area Appraisal written for Ashley. Its purpose is to provide guidance to prospective developers by clearly setting out the key issues, which will influence the Local Planning Authority's decision on any planning or other application, submitted in the area.
- 1.2 This guidance should be considered in the context of the relevant national legislation and policy documents, in particular:
  - Planning Policy Guidance note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment
  - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- 1.3 This guidance and the associated Conservation Area Appraisal for the area should be read in conjunction with the supporting policies in the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy, detailed in appendix A above.
- 1.4 Conservation Area designations are not intended to 'pickle' an area by preventing all new development. Ashley has evolved over centuries and this guidance therefore seeks to ensure that the area continues to thrive, but without prejudicing the key features which define the character and appearance of the area.
- 1.5 The underlying principle of this guidance is to ensure Ashley continues to develop in a considered way, which will retain its essential character. Sustainability should, therefore, be at the heart of any development proposals, which should be durable, adaptable, and of high quality.
- 1.6 It is likely that only small areas and odd infill/replacements are likely to come forward within the Conservation Area in the future. Even so, it is important to have some ground rules laid out to help with the design of any new development, whether a complete building or an extension to an existing building.
- 1.7 This is not meant to be a prescriptive guide, but a collection of features and materials found within the Conservation Area and best practice guidance relating to scale of new builds.

## **2 Scale and form**

- 2.1 As is to be expected, the scale varies across the Conservation Area. Many of the central areas have 3 storeys with commercial uses on the ground floor and living accommodation above. Three storeys should be encouraged as a typical scale on the main commercial streets.
- 2.2 The rest of Ely has a mixture of 1½ and 2 storey buildings. This is particularly so within the mainly 19<sup>th</sup> century residential areas. Three storey residential units should not be encouraged unless the ground is falling away and the scale can be ameliorated by the topography.



### 3 Materials

- 3.1 A selection of materials can be found in Ely. Most areas have a particular set of predominant materials, but common to all of the areas of the city is the use of gault brick.



- 3.2 Red brick appears as a very expensive material on the early buildings up to the mid 18th century, and then makes a re-appearance in the mid 19th century as the architectural style moved away from the more uniform neo-classical and there was a resurgence of the gothic style.
- 3.3 There are also some examples of render and painted brick. This is usually on buildings that have had a face-lift, and conceals the fact that the building is much older than it appears. Examples can be found on the High Street and Quayside in particular.



3.4 Roof coverings come in a variety of forms but the ones since in the centre are mainly local plain tile, slate and for outbuildings pan tiles.

#### 4 Windows and doors

4.1 These features are the eyes and face of a building. Careful thought should be given to the proportion of solid to void, glazing patterns and prominence of doors.



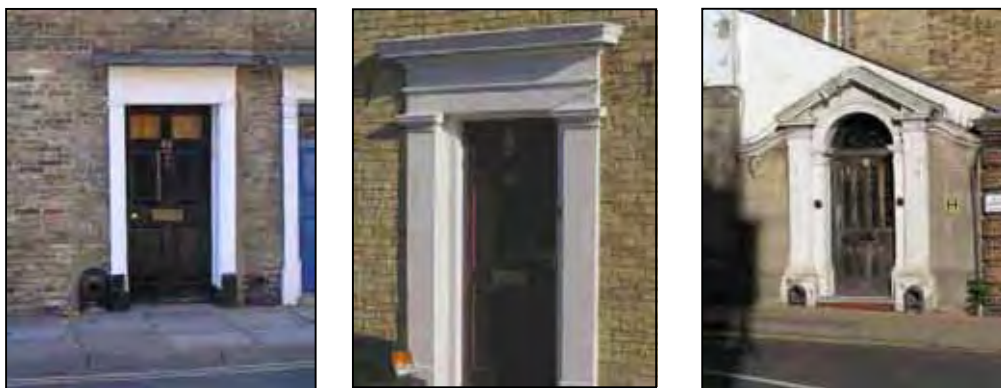
4.2 As with most areas, fashions for window style have changed over the years. It is therefore important that any design takes into consideration the styles found on the host building and surrounding buildings.



- 4.3 Dormers are common features within Ely and there are a variety of designs but flattop designs are most common. They tend to sit within the roof slope, rather than cut through the eaves, and a single window width is also most common.



- 4.4 Doors also have a selection of styles, from the grand to the modest. All designs should look carefully at the proportion of height to width of the whole façade whilst designing the door.
- 4.5 The front door should be clearly recognisable and welcoming, rather than hidden around the corner of the building.



## 5 Detailing

- 5.1 Getting the detailing right can make a building come alive.
- 5.2 The older buildings in Ely have parapet gables with tumbled brickwork. This is an attractive detail and helps visually to break up a large

expanse of brickwork. Parapets of this type are particularly typical on 1 ½ to 2 ½ storey buildings.



- 5.3 Corncicing, stringcourses and exposed brick arches are found in both the older properties and the later 19<sup>th</sup> century ones. They help to break up the façade into manageable visual parcels and can change the emphasis from a vertical view to a horizontal appearance.
- 5.4 The later buildings tended to use strongly contrasting materials to highlight the detailing, whereas the earlier ones often used the same materials, unless the building was of very high status, in which case stone would often be used.



## 6 Chimneys

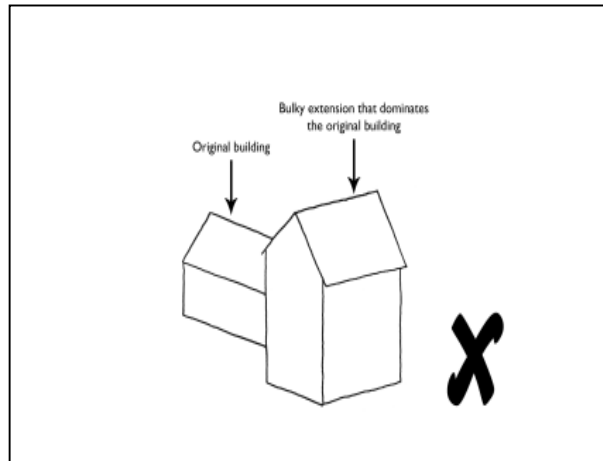
- 6.1 Within older settlements, chimneys and roofscapes play a very important role in creating interest at a high level. Ely has a rich tradition of both, and this should be encouraged in new development.

## 7 Extensions

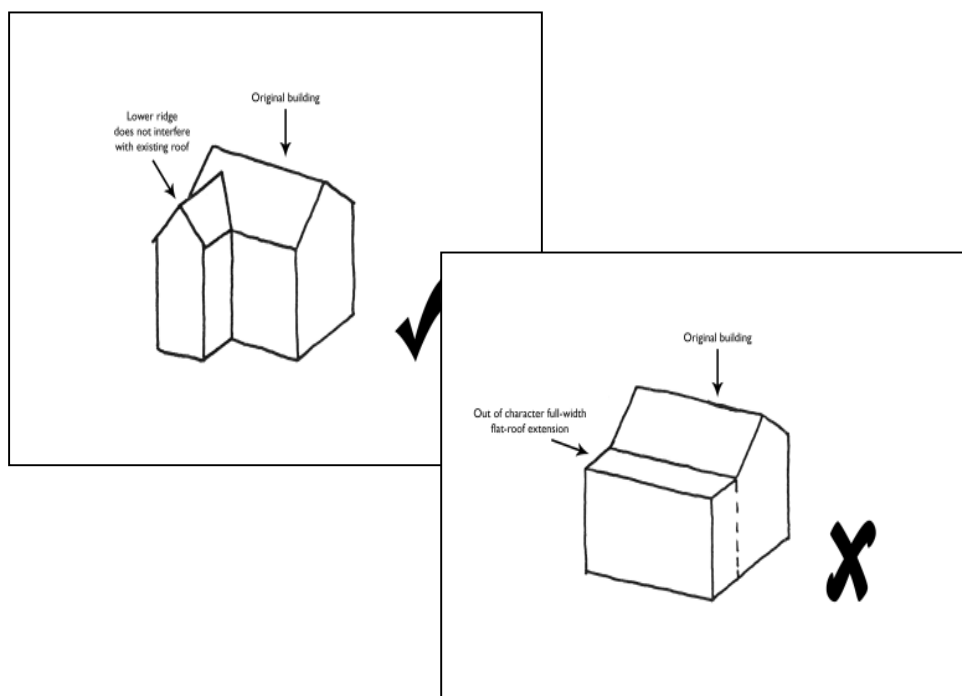
- 7.1 Extensions should always relate well to the proportions, form, massing and character of the existing building. Appropriately designed extensions will complement the original building, whilst being of interest in them.

7.2 In order to maintain the character of the original building, extensions should be subordinate and preferably of a simple design and/or construction. Innovative contemporary design of high quality will be encouraged where a successful contrast with the original building can be achieved.

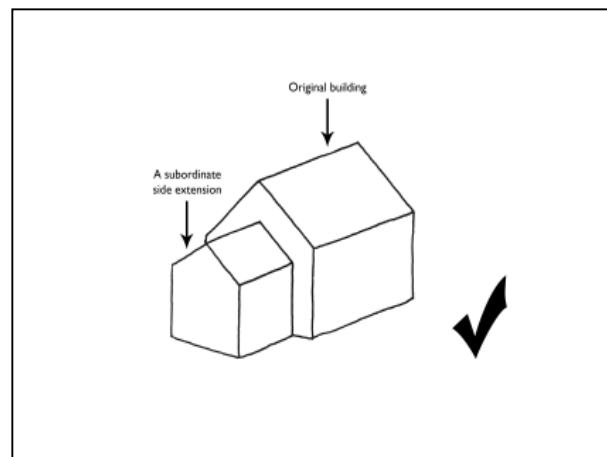
7.3 Generally, however, taking inspiration from the architectural detailing of the existing house often achieves the most successful design. The scale of the extension should respect the existing building and should not be bulky, wrongly orientated or poorly detailed.



7.4 Rear extensions are the most common type of extension as they usually offer the greatest degree of flexibility and privacy. Care is needed, however, to ensure that the effect upon neighbouring properties is kept to a minimum, i.e. an extension should not dominate the neighbour's house or garden or affect their light quality. In order to achieve this, two storey extensions on common boundaries are unlikely to be approved.



- 7.5 The eaves level of a rear extension should be kept as low as possible and particular care should be taken to ensure the ridgeline of the new roof does not interfere with the existing roof; it should not be visible from the front of the building.
- 7.6 Side extensions may be appropriate where there is sufficient space between the existing property and its neighbour to retain a reasonable separation between the buildings so that 'terracing' does not occur. Care needs to be taken to ensure that views of the cathedral are not affected if a side extension is erected.
- 7.7 In some cases, particularly when the house is of a symmetrical composition or it is one half of a semi-detached pair, side extensions should be avoided, unless the design of the extension will retain the symmetry. With semi-detached properties, neighbours should consider undertaking extensions together.



- 7.8 When side extensions are appropriate, they need to relate well to the front of the existing house, as they will often have a big impact on the appearance of the house and the street. The fenestration pattern is especially important with side extensions because the windows are often the dominant feature of a building and it is therefore important that these are repeated in extensions.
- 7.9 The walls of the extension should be recessed slightly from those of the existing building so that the original form of the dwelling is still visible. This also helps to soften the junction between old and new, which, particularly if there is a change in materials, can look awkward if directly adjacent.
- 7.10 In the case of very modest buildings, a traditional lean-to extension may be more appropriate than trying to mimic the form of the main house.
- 7.11 Front extensions should generally be avoided as they will often be highly visible in the public realm and disrupt the most important



elevation of a building. Porches may be acceptable in some cases, but are subject to the same guidelines as other extensions.

- 7.12 Roof extensions are a popular way of extending houses, but can pose considerable challenges in order to avoid damaging alterations to the character of the property.
- 7.13 Roof extensions should relate well to the local roof form and should reflect or complement the character of the property and the area. Ridgelines and chimneystacks, in particular, are often a key part of a building's character and they should not be altered unless it can be demonstrated that this would create a positive feature. The potential for overlooking should also be addressed in the design.
- 7.14 The size and number of dormer windows should be kept to a minimum and they should generally not be placed on the front elevation (or the elevation most visible from the public realm) unless it is appropriate to the design. The style of windows should be influenced by the design, proportion and arrangement of existing windows in the building. Roof lights should be of the traditional 'Conservation' type, which lie flush with the roof slope. They will rarely be acceptable on the front roof slope, particularly on formal buildings.

## **8 Converting existing buildings**

- 8.1 The conversion of redundant agricultural/outbuildings of townscape value to residential use will be encouraged provided that:
- It can be demonstrated that the current use of the building is no longer viable.
  - The appearance of the building will be maintained without the need for disfiguring extensions or alterations.
  - The amenity of adjoining residents will not be significantly affected.
  - Adequate car and cycle parking and refuse storage can be provided and suitably screened from public view.
  - Existing vehicle accesses are adequate, or appropriately sized accesses can be provided without affecting the overall townscape quality of the area, the setting of the building or involving the loss of any important tree or boundary.
  - Any important 'lost', altered or dilapidated architectural details will be restored.